Workshop Feedback Report
This report outlines the key messages heard and input from the Stakeholder Workshop held on November 20, 2015. This important workshop was held to receive input on preliminary recommendations for improving the City of Hamilton’s Heritage Permit and Heritage Designation Processes. Workshop discussion involved identifying ideas for improving the administration, education and transparency of these City processes. Invitation to the workshop was forwarded to heritage stakeholders, many of whom identified interest in attending through their response to the surveys and interviews conducted by City staff as part of the review. Twenty-eight individuals participated including property owners, HMHC, Hamilton Conservation Districts (HCD), Neighbourhood Associations, Heritage Consultants and City Staff. Participants are listed on page 13.

The purpose of the workshop was to present results on the outreach and survey input received and to discuss strategies (including preliminary recommendations) for improving the City’s existing heritage processes. An overview presentation on the existing heritage processes, goal of the review processes underway and summary of key findings was provided at the start of the workshop by Alissa Golden, Cultural Heritage Planner with the City of Hamilton.

This report prepared by Sue Cumming, MCIP RPP, Cumming+Company, the independent Community Engagement provides a summary of the workshop comments, poster feedback points and feedback through the group discussions.
The workshop was organized in two parts:

**Part One:** Presentation on key findings from the heritage process reviews including potential areas for improvements that were identified thus far and preliminary recommendations options.

**Part Two:** Small group discussions rotating around six workshop stations with the opportunity to comment on and provide ideas for improving the existing heritage processes.

During the second part, workshop participants provided input in small groups rotating around themed stations where they populated ideas and comments on poster paper placed on the walls. The interactive format provided for an exchange of ideas and perspectives with participants being able to review and provide comments on ideas posted by other groups. Six workstations were set-up around the themes depicted in the chart to the right.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heritage Permit Process</th>
<th>Heritage Designation Process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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1. **Key Messages Heard**

1. Feedback on the City staff presentation was quite positive with lots of interest in moving ahead with recommended options.

2. More prioritization of heritage conservation including a better resourced heritage permit process, more prominently displayed material on the City’s web site and more structure for information sharing between City departments are notable recommendations for protecting the City’s heritage.

3. The rate at which properties are designated in Hamilton under the Ontario Heritage Act (4 per year) is underwhelming. Notwithstanding City staff’s efforts in this regard, concerns exist about the potential loss of heritage properties.

4. Better internal City coordination was flagged as being important for ensuring that properties with a heritage interest can be protected during development review and building permit processes. Integrated databases for sharing of information on heritage status were recommended.

5. Increased transparency is recommended with the posting of Committee meeting agendas and minutes online and notification when permit applications are received.

6. Improvements to the administration of the heritage permit process were identified including streamlining delegated authority with a comprehensive list of alterations and improvements to the application and information requirements for heritage permit applications.

7. New tools are needed to assist heritage property owners. A toolkit and brochure for navigating the heritage permit process are two key ideas for increasing knowledge of requirements, methods and available resources.

8. Ideas noted for developing more understanding about heritage include community events, establishment of Heritage Week, School projects and targeted outreach with stakeholders including perspective heritage property owners and real estate agents.
9. With respect to the discussion on potential Committee restructuring, these are difficult discussions and it was evident during the workshop that there are strong and different views on which option is preferred based on which “hat” you are wearing. There is agreement amongst most participants that the existing committee process needs to be streamlined and some support for disbanding both the Heritage Permit Review Subcommittee and the Cross Melville Heritage Conservation District Sub-Committee.

10. City staff resource scarcity issues need to be addressed.

2. Heritage Permit Process: What Was Heard About Improving Administration

2.1 Streamline Delegated Authority

A key discussion theme at the workshop was the consideration of what types of alterations stakeholders were comfortable with being delegated to City staff to address without further review by a heritage committee. Workshop participants identified their level of comfort on a large wall chart by indicating a checkmark for yes, no or not sure alongside a list of types of alterations. There appears to be agreement that there are various types of alterations that could be comfortably delegated to City staff without further heritage committee review and these are shown on Figure 1. There are other alterations that participants felt required more information and they are unsure as to whether these are appropriate for delegation without more consideration. These are shown on Figure 2.

**Figure 1 – Alterations that participants feel could be included in Delegated Authority**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Alterations</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. Replacement of roofing where there is little or no change in colour, materials or design.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Installation or replacement of removable storm windows and doors with historically accurate materials and design.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Alterations in compliance with district guidelines, not including removal of additions or new additions visible from the street.</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Repair of sidewalks and driveways within the existing footprint (when same look as existing street).</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Installation of mechanical and electrical equipment, and vent stacks and exhaust pipes in inconspicuous areas not visible from the street.</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Alterations compliant with City policies (i.e. policy documents for historic windows, masonry repointing, paint removal, etc.).</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Tree removal and replacement in kind or in compliance with district guidelines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. Replacement of eavestroughs and downspouts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Foundation repair, including installation of weeping tile.</td>
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<tr>
<td>j. Repair of fences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>k. Repainting part of, or the whole of a building or structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>l. Installation of rear pools in some districts</td>
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**Figure 2 – Types of Alterations where further consideration is required and participants are unsure about how these would be delegated**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Alterations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Situations requiring “emergency” repair (It was noted that while these should be expedited, protocol is needed to ensure that this is not misused thereby, becoming demolition by neglect).</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Revisions or amendments to previously approved permits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Removal/alterations to signage within the current configuration and building coverage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Placquing for commemoration or interpretation (It was noted that this requires more review with consideration of guidelines).</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Removal and/or replacement of non-heritage features (It was noted that some of the older by-laws are not clear).</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Investigative testing in inconspicuous areas -i.e. archaeological requirements (It was noted that more information is needed about what studies and testing this is referring to).</td>
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### 2.2 Integrate Heritage Conservation with Other City Processes

A key theme noted is the need for an integrated City internal coordination system to ensure that properties with a heritage interest can be protected during the development review and the building permit processes. There appears to be support for the following:

a. Better screening for development and building permit application requirements as part of the Heritage Permit application process.

b. Better recognition by all City staff of the weight of the Ontario Heritage Act and requirement for heritage permit for alterations.

c. Development of integrated databases for sharing of information on heritage status and significance.

d. Better integration of heritage permit process into development application processes.

e. Review how to avoid conflicts through better coordination on building permit applications involving heritage properties.

f. Development of protocols for quality control (final inspections) and an internal framework for addressing Ontario Building Code provisions for Building Permits.

g. Better coordination with the Building Department on how “Orders to Comply” are worded for heritage properties. It was noted that the “to clear the property of all buildings, structures no later than” should not apply in situations involving heritage properties.

h. Work together to ensure that there are no more “partial demolitions” without HMHC review and Council approval.

### 2.3 Improve Application Process

A further key theme relates to improving the application process for heritage permits including the application form, clarity on required documentation, handling of letters of credit and peer review. With the exception of peer review, there appears to be support for the following:

a. Formalize the submission requirements in a by-law. Ensure that the authority for requirements flows from the Ontario Heritage Act.

b. Improve the Application Form to better reflect its need to be adaptable for both simple and more complex types of applications.

c. Create more online tools to assist heritage property owners.
d. Provide examples of the type of documentation required in support of an application.

e. Require the submission of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments, undertaken by recognized qualified consultants, as part of the application process, where applicable.

f. Update the heritage permit brochure to better explain key steps and expectations.

g. Consider the development of policies for Peer Reviews and Letters of Credit. There are mixed views amongst stakeholders on how Peer Review would work. Questions include: who is responsible, who pays, how legalities work (1 St. James Place was referenced), how is access to properties provided. Another consideration is whether the City would consider having a list of acceptable firms who could undertake a Peer Review (i.e. Town of Ajax).

h. More notice to HCDs, BIAs and Neighbourhood Associations when a heritage permit is being considered.

3. Heritage Permit Process: What Was Heard About Improving Education

The workshop discussion resulted in many ideas for improving education as noted in Figure 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Description of Ideas Noted</th>
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| **a. Develop a new online heritage property owner toolkit** | Develop a new toolkit to provide information on policies, guidelines and conservation resources for heritage property owners in an accessible format using plain language, lots of pictures and illustrations. While there is some interest in having a printed brochure available for distribution, there is more support for creating an online toolkit for the City's web site. Examples cited of good online toolkits were the Cities of Toronto and Victoria and the Region of Waterloo. Content could include:
  - Educational information on conservation practices and tips.
  - Community resources, links to other levels of government, information about heritage grants and tax relief and other information to help heritage property owners maintain and enhance properties.
  - Ideas for how to improve energy efficiencies with appropriate interventions – i.e. insulating roofs as opposed to replacing windows.
  - What types of alterations can be undertaken without any approval.
  - What types of alterations require approval and where to learn about what is expected for completion of the heritage permit approval process (link to heritage permit process information online).
  - Testimonials from heritage homeowners. |
| **b. Create more profile for heritage on the City’s web-site.** | Create more profile for heritage on the City of Hamilton web-site with more prominent placement on the homepage or on other key pages so as to ensure ready access to information.
  - Improve access to heritage information through more prominent links to heritage process and resources on the City’s web site. Establish links from heritage links to other City processes i.e. planning and buildings. |
<p>| <strong>c. Update the heritage permit process brochure</strong> | Workshop participants agree that the current heritage permit process brochure requires updating either on its own or as part of a new heritage property owner toolkit with a strong preference for an online resource. The following ideas were noted for how this should be done and what information should be included: |</p>
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| **d. Create an integrated inter-departmental database for information sharing** | • Create an integrated property database for sharing information about heritage properties between City departments.  
• Create better communication channels between City departments through the integration of a property database throughout the City and other mechanisms to create a full proof system for identifying when a property is a heritage property.  
• Make it easier for different departments to better address heritage conservation at different application stages. |
| **e. Develop information primers and policies on various conservation topics** | • Consider developing policy documents on key conservation issues and topics. Example topics include windows and masonry.  
• Show illustrations and photos of materials and methods.  
• Guidelines for preservation of original materials uncovered during repair – i.e. original roofing under existing roofing.  
• Could include good examples of where changes were undertaken through permit process that enhanced heritage elements. |
| **f. Provide regular updates and information to heritage property owners within the City** | • Inform every new heritage homeowner about heritage home ownership making them aware of the City’s (new) toolkit.  
• Provide information to existing and new heritage property owners advising of where to find out about current practices, opportunities and conservation resources including the following:  
• Consider mailing out an annual postcard to homeowners informing them of where to find information on the City’s web-site. |
| **g. Provide information to key stakeholders including contractors, consultants and real estate agents.** | • Develop information bulletins for key stakeholders and service providers to elevate understanding on heritage permit requirements.  
• Create a brochure for contractors and consultants about important issues and resources.  
• Once the toolkit is launched on the City’s web site, send out notices to heritage consultants about the consolidated information source.  
• Promote a better understanding amongst real estate agents of the value of heritage properties (exterior and interior features) and availability of conservation resources.  
• Work with the Real Estate Board to ensure that property listing information references that a property is within a Heritage Conservation District and, or is a heritage property. |
Recommendations | Description of Ideas Noted
---|---
h. Promote heritage conservation City-wide and celebrate Hamilton’s heritage | • Establish a City-wide Heritage Week – a celebration of heritage throughout greater Hamilton with special events highlighting major heritage sites and showcasing heritage properties.  
• Engage school children to create projects on historical/heritage places that they love and what the significance of each is. Consider holding an exhibit at City Hall to showcase student projects. Could hold contests and provide prizes.  
• Host a series of workshops and learning events showcasing heritage with different stakeholders with invitations to the public.  
• Involve Councillors and Heritage Committee Members to elevate importance of heritage conservation in the City.


4.1. Restructure Heritage Permit Review

There is agreement amongst most participants that the existing committee process should be streamlined. It should be noted that these are difficult discussions and it was evident during the workshop that there are strong and different views on which option is preferred based on which “hat” you are wearing. Some participants support disbanding both the Heritage Permit Review Subcommittee and the Cross Melville Heritage Conservation District Advisory Committee. Pros and Cons were identified for various committee restructuring options and these are found at Figure 4. The following general themes about restructuring were noted:

a. There is support for having a streamlined process with significant permits (major) dealt with by HMHC where there is more transparency and opportunities for public delegation. Minor applications (dealing with types of alterations that staff could deal with) could be dealt with by City staff through delegated authority.

b. Some would like to see fewer committees – either one sub-committee or no sub-committees. There is support for creating more representation from each HCD on the HMHC. It is recognized that the elimination of HPRC and CMHCDAC may result in longer HMHC meetings with a more diverse and representative group.

c. An important consideration noted is how to maintain local knowledge and input through a restructured committee process if the HPRC and CRHCDAC are disbanded. It was noted that this could be addressed through informal advisory committees (citizen led) for each HCD which could provide input and advice to their representative on the HMHC and through City staff.

d. There appears to be support for disbanding the CMHCDAC amongst workshop participants. It was noted that this is a difficult issue and a holdover from pre-amalgamation and that it needs to be reexamined in the context of what is happening throughout the new City with all of the other HCDs.

e. It should be noted that the discussion at the workshop did not address to what extent the CMHCDAC is being effective. The discussion focused on the practicality of having one additional subcommittee for this area and not in other HCDs. Some indicated that for the sake of equity if the CMHCDAC continues then a new layer of subcommittees should be established for all HCDs. Concerns were noted that this would be duplicative and put further strain on limited staff resources which would potentially detract for work on Heritage Designations and other initiatives.
Figure 4 – Pros and Cons Identified for Committee Restructuring Options

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option Description</th>
<th>Pros identified</th>
<th>Cons identified</th>
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| Maintain HPRS and CMHCDAC with improvements | • Advice from experts in field  
• Advice from residents in area  
• Provide Clerks staff support for HPRS  
• Serves as an example/advantage to other districts  
• Can continue to give community advice with streamlined changes | • Public, but no opportunity for public delegations or input  
• No Clerks support (to deal with conflicts)  
• Doesn’t address staff resource issues  
• Unfair to other HCD’s. Other HCDs should have this opportunity or none should  
• HPR sub-committee duplicates Cross Melville – in situations  
• Doubles the meetings for staff and any consultants |
| Restructure HPRS and CMHCDAC (advisory to staff only) | • Advice from experts in field  
• Advice from residents in area  
• Simpler process | • Less transparency  
• Lack of public input  
• Seek input from owners and districts prior to any staff decisions |
| Dissolve HPRS and CMHCDAC and shift review function up to HMHC | • Streamlined simpler review process  
• Increased transparency  
• Staff should be able to handle minor alterations (delegated authority) with HMHC dealing with significant permits. Contentious applications dealt with by HMHC.  
• Opportunity for public delegations at HMHC.  
• Public can view discussions  
• Membership on Committee should include representation from all Heritage Conservation Districts – should have policies for the make-up of MHC  
• More fair to other areas of Hamilton. | • Loss of sub-committees would restrict/dismiss opportunities for willing resident volunteers who serve on these two committees.  
• Could result in loss of advice from experts in field through discussions at sub-committees.  
• Loses local information – can lead to a less informed decision  
• Could result in longer HMHC meetings & lack of focus in HMHC – consultant/delegation time  
• Must streamline approval process for this to work  
• Staff & the HMHC will be relying on the District Plan to make decisions; the plan may not provide enough guidance to protect the values of the HCD. |

4.2. Other Ideas Noted for Improving Transparency

a. Provide copies of HPRS and HMHC meeting agendas and minutes online through the City website. There is significant support for this recommendation.

b. Consider posting information on recently approved Heritage Permits on the City website provided the owners’ identify can be protected. While there is interest in having more information posted online about approved heritage permits, it was noted that this needs to be reviewed in the context of ensuring that by posting the information it does create privacy concerns for property owners.
c. There is a desire for notification of when an application is being considered by the Committee by:
   - Requiring the applicant to post a sign in the window of a building or on the property (similar to a building permit or zoning variance sign). The sign could include the date and time of the committee meeting.
   - Having the City provide written notification to the local HCD, and other identified stakeholders (i.e. potentially the Neighbourhood Associations, BIAs, Heritage Groups) to advise when an application has been submitted and when it will be on the Committee agenda.

d. Increase public input on Heritage Permit Applications by allowing for public delegations to the Committee on applications and streaming meetings live. It was noted that the application process is one between the applicant and the City and that there needs to be some care about not making the process intimidating and also protecting the identity of each applicant. For these reasons, there are mixed views about workshop participant suggestions about having the opportunity for delegations and about streaming the committee meetings live.


a. More focus on identifying list of properties worthy of conservation. Get as many properties on the Register as possible and as fast as possible – consider transferring automatically from old ‘Inventory’. There is a concern that there are too many buildings that are vulnerable with no protection. Use Register to afford 60-day review period for all buildings of historic value (i.e. all of "Inventory" and more). Create a searchable database of designations/listing/inventory.

b. More robust approach on designating properties with additional resources to increase registration and designation of heritage properties. It was noted that the current rate of designation is insufficient and underwhelming. There is concern that the slow rate of designation – 4 properties per year - negates the significance of heritage in the City and could lead to loss of heritage resources.

c. There is concern amongst workshop participants that it is not realistic for the City with such a small staff to deal with the backlog of 50 properties. They would like to see more proactivity on this noting that heritage conservation through heritage designation and heritage permits is important and needs investment. There is significant support for addressing the scarcity of staff resources devoted to heritage. In particular, they recommend hiring staff or in the short term consultants to prepare designation reports. Participants suggested assistance through volunteering should that be appropriate and feasible.

d. Develop formal process for designating Heritage Conservation Districts. It was noted that this should include input on a process for reviewing and / or expanding existing HCDs.
e. Facilitate consent designation for designation-friendly property owners by:
   - Using “heritage easements” as provided in OHA as substitute for designation-friendly property owners.
   - Streamline the designation process when applicant is the owner of the property.
   - Reduce onus in terms of information and documentation required to support designation request.

f. While there is interest in facilitating willing owner designation, it was noted that the Heritage Designation Process should ensure that the Register is representative of all types of heritage properties not just those where the current property owner has the foresight or resources to put their request above others who don’t have the same resources at their disposal.

g. Create better framework for addressing Notices of Intention to Demolish a building or structure on a registered property.

h. Consider landscaping as part of heritage designation. A checklist should be developed to ensure that landscaping has been considered even if it does not form part of the designation in the end.

i. Provide greater financial incentives for designated properties, grants, loans, tax incentives.


The workshop discussion resulted in ideas for improving education as noted in Figure 5.

**Figure 5 – Ideas for Improving Education related to the Heritage Permit Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Description of Ideas noted</th>
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| a. Promote heritage designation City-wide            | • Promote and advocate the benefits and value of heritage designation using different methods and tools including: Digital media, tours, showcasing of properties and testimonials for existing owners of designated properties.  
  • Dispel common myths about designations.            |
| b. Encourage homeowners to have their own properties on Register | • Advertise and encourage homeowners to designate or purchase a designated home. Create a “Did you know” bulletin to provide important information to property owners.  
  • Target new and prospective homeowners.  
  • Point out economic benefits of heritage designation. |
| c. Develop Brochures to provide information on benefits of designation | • Identify financial incentives and how these apply to designated properties.  
  • Include information on the advantages including tax relief and incentives from all levels of government.  
  • Showcase best practices in conservation.           |
| d. Educate Real Estate agents and insurance brokers  | • Hold workshops and meetings to share information and discuss incentives and benefits of designation.  
  • Create information bulletins to describe process and merits.  
  • Identify how other municipalities i.e. Cities of Chatham and Windsor and Region of Waterloo are connecting with real estate agents and insurance brokers.  
  • Ensure good access to information on the City website about how the designation process works. |

There is agreement that the City should improve its online resources and information on designated heritage properties. Specific information noted includes: mapping, online Heritage Volumes, information on recent designations, descriptions of what is heritage worthy (i.e. including Twentieth Century buildings).

This workshop feedback report identifies a number of suggestions for new information including toolkits and brochures which are supported to be posted in a manner that enables better access to information and use of these tools. Participants recommend that the whole web-site needs to be reviewed to identify where heritage could be elevated and prioritized on the site.

8. Next Steps

This Workshop Feedback Report will be distributed electronically to all participants and will be made publicly available on the project website at www.hamilton.ca/heritagereview.

In the coming months, staff will be finalizing recommendations to amend the existing Heritage Permit and Heritage Designation processes that take the following into account:

- Preliminary feedback from the online surveys;
- Municipal best practice research;
- Analysis of the existing frameworks; and,
- Input from this workshop.

Once finalized, the staff recommendations will be available for public comment prior to final review by the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee and consideration by Planning Committee and Council.
Workshop Participants

Wilf Ardnt, HMHC, HPRS (Chair)
Jane Barrett, Property Owner
Rebecca Beatty, RBA Architect
David Beland, HMHC, HPRS (Vice-Chair)
Janice Brown, Durand Neighbourhood Association
David Cuming, Heritage Consultant
Richard Czerwinski, Property Owner
Alissa Denham-Robinson, HMHC (Chair)
Charles Dimitri, HMHC, Property Standards Committee
Anita Fabac, City of Hamilton
Kathy Garay, HMHC
Kayla Jonas Galvin, ARA
Chris Harrison, Stakeholder
Barb Henderson, Durand Neighbourhood Association
Jill Hill, Property Owner
Megan Hobson, Heritage Consultant
Mark McGaw, HMHC, HPRS
Frances Neufeld, Property Owner (Former CMHCDAC)
Ned Nolan, Kirendendall Neighbourhood Association
Stan Nowak, Dundas Historical Society (Former HMHC)
Carolyn Samko, City of Hamilton
Ron Sinclair, HMHC (Chair of IRWG)
Heather Travis, City of Hamilton
Tim Ritchie, HMHC
Steve Robichaud, City of Hamilton
Yonatan Rozenszojn, Durand Neighbourhood Association
Yvette Rybensky, City of Hamilton
Grace Wang, Invizij Architects

Workshop Organizers

Alissa Golden, City of Hamilton
Erin Smith, City of Hamilton
Chelsey Tyers, City of Hamilton
Sue Cumming, Cumming+Company

For further information, contact:

Alissa Golden, MCIP RPP
Development Planning, Heritage and Design, City of Hamilton
Alissa.golden@hamilton.ca
Tel: 905-546-2424 ext. 1214

This workshop facilitated and report written by:

Sue Cumming, MCIP RPP
Cumming+Company
Consultation Facilitator
Bus: 866-611-3715
Email: cumming1@total.net