Consultation Summary
Waterdown Node Secondary Plan

Event:  Focus Group Meeting #4
Location:  Virtual Meeting held via Webex (due to Covid-19)
Date:  July 16, 2020
Time:  7:00 pm to 8:30 pm
Participants:  11 (5 Stakeholder/Residents and 6 Staff/Consultants)

Event Description
The Focus Group meeting consisted of two presentations. The first was a Staff presentation on the work undertaken for the Waterdown Village Built Heritage Inventory. This was followed by a presentation by Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI) on the Cultural Heritage Review. A copy of the presentation material was provided by email to participants in advance of the meeting. A feedback form was also provided to ensure the opportunity for participants to share any additional comments following the meeting. The presentations were followed by a Q&A and discussion period.

What We Heard

Waterdown Village Built Heritage Inventory

Following the presentation, the facilitator led a discussion on the built inventory work.

Comments noted:

Are we getting a heritage zone on Dundas Street? Having heard and talked about this at the very beginning of the process, would like to know what the status of consideration is for this?

Response by Staff: The work being completed for the Waterdown Village Built Heritage Inventory is reviewing individual sites and does not include the scope to look at a Heritage District. However, the inventories and research can help inform future studies. ASI’s work is reviewing the cultural heritage landscapes and how to protect these. This includes consideration of different approaches, which can include a heritage district or other tools.

Concerns were noted about the demolition of the Brandon House in Ancaster and not wanting to have that situation occur with properties in Waterdown.

Response by Staff: The work being done in Waterdown is unique in that the inventory is being completed while the secondary plan process is occurring. The Brandon House didn’t have any heritage status and it was not protected. The approach being taken for Waterdown seeks to avoid this situation by doing the inventory work to prevent this type of situation from occurring. Importantly the goal is to get the 11 identified significant properties designated and the inventory research is necessary for this to happen.
What are your thoughts on the expansion of the Mill Street Heritage District? We are experiencing significant development pressure at Main Street and Dundas Street. Our thought is that there needs to be some type of protection that goes up Main Street as well. I thought that this was going to be part of the process. Haven’t heard too much about that. Whether we add onto Mill Street and change the by-law or keep Mill Street as is and start another heritage district there are different ways to approach this. There are concerns about both residential and commercial properties in the core.

Staff are doing a lot of tremendous work to protect these properties. There is pressure for redevelopment and we have seen two large lots developed with larger homes that are out of character with the area. I think that we can build up, that is fine and there are lots of development projects in the area, but Mill Street to Hamilton to Dundas to Market Street should be included in some way. It was further noted that every tree on a property on Church Street was removed yesterday.

Would like to know if City is looking at expansion of the Heritage District?

Response by Staff: Work on a district expansion is outside the scope of the work that we are doing right now. It is important to complete the assessment of the individual properties and then look at options for what is the best approach for protecting these. ASI will be presenting further information that is important to consider.

Staff were asked if the photos and maps shown in the presentation could be used for the Mill Street Heritage District website. Staff indicated yes to the photos as long as they were sourced. For the maps, there are higher resolution ones coming soon which would be better for viewing on the website. It was agreed that it would be best to wait to post the higher resolution versions when they are available. Staff are willing to assist and suggested a follow-up on this.

For the 11 properties recommended for designation, we know how much work has been undertaken and by an understaffed department. If these go ahead, how many years are we looking at until designation – 5 years from now, 10 years?

Response from Staff: The work is being done in house with the funding for an intern and full draft cultural heritage reports have been completed for these properties. The intent is to bring this forward for designation at the end of this process.

### Cultural Heritage Review

Following the presentation, the facilitator led a discussion on the approaches and tools outlined and on feedback for the identified six Cultural Heritage Landscapes.

Comments noted:

Listening to the presentation, I was awestruck, and I was pleased to learn that there are so many mechanisms in place to help us stop the bad things from happening in our neighbourhoods. It seems that there are so many good things that can be done. Being realistic, however, it seems that the tools that can be used by municipalities are broad. What we are doing with this whole Secondary Plan process is important. It is important to have the details on what we can and cannot do. Unless it is specified, we may not have the protections
Wondering if the Mill Street Heritage District is being reviewed as a cultural landscape?
Response from ASI: The Mill Street HCD already has protection in place and has not been re-evaluated as part of this process.

Is there a reason why the Village of Waterdown wasn’t reviewed as part of this process?
Response by ASI: As part of inventory project we looked at the broader heritage of village and distilled that into character areas and landscapes. Didn’t see the need to do the entire village itself and felt that it was important to be more specific with these cultural heritage landscapes.

The local committee put a proposal in to expand the District which would have included Memorial Park. As ASI went through the presentation you talked about the value of parks and this seems like a good approach. We have also talked with Staff about Sealey Park which we understand would be designated by itself.

Presentation on the Cultural Heritage Landscapes is wonderful. These are wonderful places that need to be protected. You have done a really good job of highlighting these.

So, we talk about the potential tools and other best practices. If I understand this, then what we are saying is that we are identifying the desire for some of this but then what happens to put this in place? If designating Main Street corridor, would these residents have to be involved in that process? How do we actually move forward? What happens with those recommendations? What is the process? Would City Council enact some regulations, and would residents be part of this?

Response by ASI: Most of the tools can be enabled through the Secondary Plan and that is why we are doing these processes in tandem. This provides a good approach for putting policies in place to protect the cultural heritage landscapes. In addition to the Secondary Plan policies, any individual parcels where we see and where the community sees a best fit for Part 4 Designation would be addressed through the Staff processes. That could also be done at the same time as any of the built heritage resources that are queued up for Part 4 Designation. If through this process something broader is identified then a Part 5 Designation would be undertaken which involves a two-part process. This would involve a more detailed study. The ideal situation is that most of the pieces get protected through the Secondary Plan so that those protections are in place. This would not affect the consideration for an expanded District but would ensure that there is something in place in between.

Response by Staff:
Some of the tools are directly related to the Secondary Plan i.e. putting policies in place, identifying these landscapes in the plan, creating things like special policy areas or conservation plan statements. Other things we can do is look at things like what zoning changes may need to be done.

The City will be embarking on a review of low density areas very soon and due to the timing, we can ensure that the vision and direction for the Secondary Plan can inform the low density review. The Secondary Plan policy needs to be put in place to deal with these things.
Question posed as to whether the city is planning on redoing the R3 Zoning for Waterdown through this new city-wide study?

Response by Staff: We are looking through the Secondary Plan process at policies for residential areas. As mentioned we can provide input on the city-wide review of residential low density areas based on what we are hearing from the community and what policies need to be in place in the Secondary Plan to bring about the vision for the Waterdown Community Node.

Could you clarify what it means where some parts of Main Street align with an area where the zoning could be increased to allow more density.

Response by Staff: The zoning along Main Street is still recommended to be a low density zoning but, we do have a patchwork of two different zones along there. Some are zoned for single detached and others also allow semis and duplexes. There is a mix and we are looking at applying the zoning that also allows semis and duplexes along parts of it. This would be considered in conjunction with the recommendation especially around building sizes and how it fits in with the area. There is also mixed use zoning where it intersects with Dundas and we had some options for heights as well. We are looking at lowering the heights to 3 storeys in that area.

This is not all new stuff. There has to be some zoning maybe in this city or other cities that we can look at to see how it works. What has been around for 10 years or so and is working? Looking at communities that have been able to get that small-town character. Or is this all brand new?

Response by ASI: Some municipalities who have provided guidelines for specific directions for built form or building heights for conserving cultural heritage landscapes or complex of features are doing this through Secondary Plans or Official Plans. There are varying degrees of details in different approaches being taken. Some provide broad guidelines and others are more prescriptive about height, setbacks, building entrances, how buildings face, etc.

It is all going to come down to zoning. It would be nice to see some zoning that works well, and we can take a look at it.

Response by Staff: We are looking at existing examples across Hamilton where identified landscapes have been tied into zoning and applicable law for building permits.

With respect to the six identified six Cultural Heritage Landscapes, the following comments were noted:

All the information that Staff and ASI have been put together show tremendous reasons why all of these should be protected.

Agree that all of these areas have great significance and are worth protecting.

Because they are so scattered or spread out over a large geographic area, agree that they need to be protected individually. Was the intention to have specific policies for each of these areas?
Response by ASI: Would not take them all together. Would look at each for their unique character and policies that protect them. There may be some overarching policies, but we wanted to ensure that each area is protected for its own specific values.

For the Waterdown Heights Subdivision (Slide 11), there are unique heritage attributes. The houses built at the northeast corner are all 75 feet wide. If I wanted to build a monster home or apartment building, I could buy these. In your process what restrictions are you putting in place to maintain some semblance of what is there today?

Response by ASI: There would be a number of different policies. These could include maintaining lot size and frontage, not allowing severances, setting restrictions for building to lot coverage, etc. We have seen examples of such policies in Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton. It is about preserving setbacks, lot size and the ratio of building to lot coverage so that you don’t have a huge building floor plate overhanging the lot. These are the kind of things that we have identified as important to protect.

This is all good stuff. We are seeing good things to protect the Heritage District and buildings within the core of Waterdown but before this process even started it was all rezoned to 6 to 8 storeys. We have raised this before and have big concerns about how the C5 zoning applies to all of Waterdown including the heritage properties. Two examples of where this is concerning is with the Coachmen and the American House. Regarding the rezoning, we already have a Mill Street Heritage District which is in place, but the other city departments rezoned this heritage district up to 8 storeys and there is no talk of reversing this. So, it is supposed to be protected up to 3 storeys but different departments are giving out different information which is very frustrating. When real estate or property developers look into properties, they get conflicting information. the HCD says 3 storeys. Who is going to win when this goes to court? Is that zoning going to be changed and removed from the Heritage District, for the properties along Dundas and for the Mill Street HCD? This zoning is a bullseye on these properties.

Response by Staff: We are looking at that as part of this process. We do understand that it presents a conflict between the zoning heights permissions and the heritage district and that was one of the reasons why the Councillor had passed the interim control by-law so while we are carrying out this study no new development can take place. I don’t want to say that every property would see a zoning change, but we are looking at this as part of the process. We have heard loud and clear form the community. There will be an analysis of all of the properties in the district as well as all of the other properties in the C5 zoning that may need to be looked at and heights changed. We can do this through this process and intend to do this.

There are areas on Main Street and along Dundas that are much newer and modern. Along the way it would be interesting to see how these things would be applied.

I know that there is a lot of work that has gone into this. The community appreciates this work. Regardless of the work being done, what will happen if staff change? I like the approach of putting this in firm language and having the protections in place as well as the zoning in place to see the community grow and to have the heritage protections in place.
Like what you are proposing but I still would like to find a place where they have done a good job of protecting heritage – 10 years ago or more. What about Downtown Oakville. It seems to be a good example. What did they do? Can we learn something from the planners in Oakville? I would feel more comfortable if we could see how others have done this successfully.

Response by ASI: We are always looking at examples and approaches used in different communities and look at best practices and tools. It is important to note that since 2005, there has been lots of discussion in municipalities about how the Planning Act and Heritage Act can work together. Ten years ago, the policies that were used were very general and didn’t include characteristics about quality of place. The challenge is that not a lot of secondary plans were created 15 years ago with this level of detail so we can’t measure this. What we have seen in last five years is more detail. The approach being taken in Waterdown for the Secondary Plan is very detailed.

**Next Steps**

The Built Inventory work will be provided to the public for information and the City is looking at ways to provide the information virtually. There will be a virtual public meeting on the Secondary Plan in the next few months.

Focus group members were encouraged to provide other examples or comments through the feedback from.