

HERITAGE COLCHESTER

**FRIENDS OF THE COLCHESTER
SCHOOLHOUSE**

**PRESENTATION TO
THE TOWN OF ESSEX COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF
MARCH 15, 2021**

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PREAMBLE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the December 7, 2020 Regular Council Meeting, Council for the Town of Essex proposed by resolution declared the following property as surplus land in accordance with By-Law 855 (Policies & Procedures for the Sale and Disposition of Surplus Lands By-law):

- **Description:** 195 Bagot Street (Lot 5 W/S Bagot Street, PL 18 Colchester; Pt Lot 5 E/S Sydenham Street, PL 18 Colchester Pt 2, 12R6837, Essex)

Under Section 270(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, municipalities shall adopt and maintain policies with respect to the sale and other disposition of surplus land.

Council is expected to consider the adoption of a by-law approving the sale of this property by way of direct private sale at its Regular Meeting starting at 6:00pm on Monday, December 21, to be held electronically via livestream on YouTube at youtube.com/EssexOntario. If any person wishes to appear as a delegation at the meeting, please submit a delegation request to the Clerk's Office (clerks@essex.ca or 519-776-7336) no later than 4:30pm on Friday, December 18.

Individuals or organizations may also submit written comments regarding the declaration to clerks@essex.ca or by mail to Clerks' Office, 33 Talbot Street South, Essex, ON, N8M 1A8, with the subject line "Surplus Lands".

For more information, please contact:

Rob Auger
Town Solicitor/Clerk
519-776-7336 ext. 1132

Perry Basden attended the Regular Meeting of Council of Monday, December 21, 2020, and voiced objection to the sale of the property as the property is the location of the S. S. #2 Colchester Schoolhouse which was constructed in 1881 and is listed with the Town of Essex as a Heritage property.

As a result of Mr. Basden's objection and by other residents of the Colchester Centre, the proposed action by the Town of Essex was deferred until the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of Council to be held on January 18, 2021 at which time the proponent of an unknown development for the site would come forward with his plans for the use of the property

At the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of Council of January 18, 2021 Mr. Basden once again raised an objection to the Town of Essex Notification of Declaration of Surplus Lands (195 Bagot Street). At that time Mr. Basden voiced the opinion that the process was flawed in as much as the Town of Essex had not consulted with the Town of Essex Heritage Committee, and other reasons as can be found in the minutes of the meeting.

Mr. Basden also indicated that minutes of past Heritage Committee meetings did show interested individuals coming forward to gather ideas of what the Town of Essex plans were for the property since purchasing it in 2008. The Town of Essex and the Heritage Committee failed in many respects to actively support those persons in accomplishing their goal.

It was often explained by the Town of Essex Heritage Committee of a way forward whereby individuals could form a non-profit organization that would create a “Friends of the Colchester Schoolhouse” as indicated in several years of past minutes of the Town of Essex Heritage Committee minutes.

At the meeting of January 18, 2021 Mr. Basden indicated he would be willing to take the lead in establishing such a group with proposed affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society as a non-profit entity. Such a group could apply for funds and grants that would not be available to the Town of Essex.

The proposed Notice of Declaration of Surplus Land was once again deferred until the meeting to be held on March 15, 2021. Council directed Mr. Basden to present a plan regarding the formation of a group for the purpose of funding and preservation of the schoolhouse as well as funding for future expenses for maintenance and upkeep.

As a report to the Town of Essex Council this document was prepared and developed to fulfill that request.

SECTION 1

INITIAL PLANS FOR “FRIENDS OF” FORMATION

As a result of the above actions taken by Perry Basden, residents of Colchester Centre and the surrounding area, as well as anyone who had shown an interest in the preservation of the Colchester Schoolhouse, were contacted and formed a core group of individuals with the intent of developing a plan for restoration of the schoolhouse. The core group formed a Board of Directors which would focus the effort of the many people that came forward and volunteered their help to meet Council’s request.

A Board of Directors was formed to guide the group toward the future restoration of the schoolhouse as well as to search for and begin to develop various sources of information.

One of the first agreements made was to change the name from what had often been referred to as “Friends of” by the Town of Essex Heritage Committee as well as Council of the Town of Essex.

It was decided that the name would be changed to **Heritage Colchester**. The name was selected for various reasons one being that it would define the intentions and focus of the group to Colchester Centre area.

There is another Heritage group in the Town of Essex, that being Heritage Essex whose primary goal was restoration and upkeep of the Train Station in Essex Centre. The Heritage Colchester name would demonstrate a similar nomenclature with the existing Heritage Essex with both groups being situated within the Town of Essex.

The name Heritage Colchester could also be used in the Colchester Centre area should future heritage related opportunities in Colchester Centre be realized as of Historical or Cultural significance.

1.1

ESTABLISHMENT OF A BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A first step toward meeting Council’s request was the formation of a Board of Directors with appointed positions. The Board of Directors will focus on moving the process forward in an orderly manner while fulfilling the requirements toward achieving incorporation as a not-for-profit corporation in the Province of Ontario through affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society.

The Board of Directors consists of five positions, those being a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Director.

The purpose of the Board of Directors may be considered multi-faceted at this time. The primary goal of the Board of Directors is to focus those who have shown interest and are engaged and actively working to fulfil the requirement placed upon the group by the Town of Essex Council at the Regular Council meeting of January 18, 2021.

It is the intent of the Board of Directors to hold those offices until such time as the proposed Mission Statement, Constitution and By-Laws are developed, a paid Membership base is attained, and progress is being made toward stabilization of the Not-For-Profit Incorporated group.

The Board of Director positions are as stated below.

President	Perry Basden, [REDACTED]
Vice-President	Cindy McPhedran, [REDACTED]
Secretary	Jennifer Ridsdale, [REDACTED]
Treasurer	Caroline Quick, [REDACTED]
Director	Anne Beneteau, [REDACTED]

1.2

DEVELOPMENT OF A MISSION STATEMENT, CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

The Board of Directors, in consultation with the Ontario Historical Society, has developed a Mission Statement for Heritage Colchester. In addition, a Constitution and By-laws were drawn up and presented at an open meeting for review of those who indicated their support for the goals and objectives of Heritage Colchester. The Mission Statement, Constitution and By-Laws were sent via email to persons who have shown support for the restoration and for the purpose of receiving comments from those members.

The documents were also sent to the Ontario Historical Society for review and comment. Changes as suggested by the OHS as well as from other interested parties were made.

A portion of the documents appears here for reference and is not complete to shorten the size of this presentation.

HERITAGE COLCHESTER

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 1 – MISSION STATEMENT

The Purposes of Heritage Colchester will be:

- to promote the greater public awareness of the historical past of the Colchester Centre area and its importance to the early development of Ontario,
- to preserve the past through identification and research of historically significant structures being restored by Heritage Colchester,

- to compile authentic records of such structures with available documents and photographs for the public benefit,
- to provide funding toward the restoration and maintenance of identified buildings and structures through application for grants, through corporate donations, through public donations and fund-raising events,
- to carry out activities ancillary and incidental to the attainment of the above charitable purposes.

ARTICLE 2 – NAME

The organization shall be officially known as **Heritage Colchester** and its Head Office shall be located at such place in the Town of Essex as the Board of Directors of Heritage Colchester may from time to time determine.

ARTICLE 3 – NON-PROFIT STATEMENT

Heritage Colchester is Incorporated as a non-profit organization in the Province of Ontario as an affiliate of the Ontario Historical Society. Heritage Colchester shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members and any profit or other accretions to Heritage Colchester shall be used in promotion of its objectives as stated in Article 1.

ARTICLE 4 – MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to all people interested in the mission of Heritage Colchester. The membership fees and categories shall be established each year at the Annual General Meeting.

ARTICLE 5 – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall be from January 1st to December 31st of the same year.

ARTICLE 6 – MEETINGS

1. The Annual General Meeting of Heritage Colchester shall be held within the first six months of the previous year at such place and time as the Directors may fix from time to time. The purpose of the Annual General Meeting shall be to receive annual reports of Heritage Colchester and its Officers, to Elect members of the Board of Directors, to consider and, if appropriate, amend or re-enact the Constitution and By-Laws and to transact any other business as may properly come before the meeting.

2. Notice of such Annual General Meeting will be posted by means that, from time to time, the Board of Directors deems appropriate. The accidental omission to give notice of any meeting to any member of Heritage Colchester shall not alone invalidate any resolution passed, or proceedings taken at such meeting of members if the meeting has been properly called to order and conducted.
3. A Special Meeting of the members may be called by the President, or a resolution of the Board of Directors or by petition of one-tenth of the membership in good standing. Notice of such meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting and be published by means that from time to time be determined.
4. General Membership Meetings shall be held at stated times and places at the call of the President and/or the Executive.
5. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be called at the President's discretion or by written request of two Board of Directors Members.
6. A quorum for General Membership Meeting or Special Meeting shall consist of one-quarter of the members in good standing. A quorum for Board of Directors Meetings shall be three elected Officers and two Committee Members.
7. The Roberts Rules of Order shall be the guide in all matters at every meeting.
8. The President, or in his/her absence, a Vice-President, in their absence, the Secretary shall preside at all meetings. If all three are absent or decline to act the members may choose one of their numbers to act.
9. Each voting member is entitled to one vote and a simple majority shall constitute a decision.
10. The President shall cast the deciding vote in cases of a tie.

ARTICLE 7 – THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. The Board of Directors shall consist of a minimum of 5 Directors with the following position: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Director at large.
2. The members of the Board of Directors shall be elected by the general membership of Heritage Colchester at the Annual General Meeting and shall serve in these offices for a period of two years, or until a successor shall have been elected or appointed.

3. A retiring member shall be eligible for re-election.
4. A vacancy on the Board of Directors shall be filled by appointment made by the Board of Directors and the person so appointed shall retain the office for as long as the vacating member would have retained the same.

ARTICLE 8 – AMENDMENTS

The Constitution of Heritage Colchester may be repealed, amended, or re-enacted by a vote of two-thirds of the votes cast at an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting called in the appropriate manner. The Membership will be given notice within 30 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting.

ARTICLE 9 – BYLAWS

1. An Annual General Meeting shall have the power to enact such By-Laws under and in accordance with the terms of the Constitution as may be deemed necessary or advisable by the majority vote.
2. An Annual General Membership Meeting shall have the power to amend or repeal, by majority vote, any By-Law previously enacted under the terms of this Constitution.

Article 10 – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

1. All nominees for the Office of the Board of Directors or Committees shall be members in good standing.
2. A Nominating Committee shall be named by the President at least two months preceding the Annual General Meeting. The Vice-President shall be a member. This committee shall draw up a slate of Officers/Directors for the Annual General Meeting.
3. Additional nominations to this slate of Officers and Directors shall be accepted from the membership up to and during the Annual General Meeting.
4. Such nominations must be accepted by the candidate.
5. Where any elected office is contested, the vote for that office shall be by secret ballot.

ARTICLE 11 – AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

All Cheques, drafts, trade acceptances, promissory notes, leases, contracts, bills of sale, etc. of Heritage Colchester shall be signed by two Officers as designated by the Board of Directors. The two signing officers shall not be members of the same family.

ARTICLE 12 – COMMITTEES

The Board of Directors shall have the power to set up and disband Standing Committees, Special Committees, and any Ad Hoc Committees as it deems necessary in order to transact and conduct the business and projects of Heritage Colchester.

No Committee shall have the power to make decisions affecting the policies and the finances of Heritage Colchester without approval of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE 13 – EXECUTIVE PROTECTION

No Officer, Director, Chairperson, or Committee Member shall be liable for the acts, neglects, or the defaults of any other member, nor for the loss, damage, or misfortune which happens during the execution of the duties of his/her office, unless the same shall happen through his/her own willful neglect, default, or dishonesty.

ARTICLE 14– PROVISIONS FOR DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of the Society and after payment of all debts and liabilities, any remaining surplus of the Society, shall be distributed or disposed of to like minded organizations in the Town of Essex or other areas of Ontario or charitable organizations that are registered under the Income Tax Act, whose aims and objectives of which are beneficial to the Colchester Centre community history, as part of the Town of Essex.

ADOPTION

This original document of the Constitution and accompanying By-Laws was completed and put forth to interested parties via email to such parties for public comment and is considered as adopted.

An outline of the By-Laws of Heritage Colchester are represented below without full text and is used to indicate the fulfillment of the requirement of the Ontario Historical Society. Full text is available upon request.

BY-LAWS of HERITAGE COLCHESTER

BY-LAW NUMBER 1

INDEX

ARTICLE NUMBER

- ARTICLE 1 – MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES AND FEES**
- ARTICLE 2 – HONOURARY MEMBERSHIP**
- ARTICLE 3 – PROVISIONS FOR RESIGNATION, DEATH,
OR REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**
- ARTICLE 4 – VOTING RIGHTS**
- ARTICLE 5 – DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
- ARTICLE 6 – STANDING COMMITTEES**
- ARTICLE 7 – OBSERVER STATUS**
- ARTICLE 8 – SIGNING AUTHORITY**
- ARTICLE 9 – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**
- ARTICLE 10 – REMUNERATION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
- ARTICLE 11 – REMEMBRANCE DONATIONS**

SECTION 2

INCORPORATION AS AN AFFILIATE WITH THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Board of Directors has developed the Mission Statement, Constitution and By-Law documents and those were submitted as draft documents to the Ontario Historical Society for review and comment. After review by the Ontario Historical Society made on February 6, 2021, several minor wording changes were suggested and agreed upon.

Rob Leverty, of the Ontario Historical Society, indicated that Heritage Colchester had met the requirement as laid out in the Application for Affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society should Heritage Colchester wish to proceed.

A meeting of the Board of Directors of Heritage Colchester was held February 6, 2021 and passed a motion to apply for and complete such affiliation as soon as possible. The Ontario Historical Society was contacted with a request to hold a virtual meeting for such purpose.

On February 10, 2021, the Board of Directors filed for incorporation as a not-for-profit corporation in the Province of Ontario through affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society. Heritage Colchester is currently waiting for the registration to be completed by the Province of Ontario.

2.1

REGISTERED CHARITABLE STATUS (ONGOING)

It is the intent of the Board of Directors of Heritage Colchester to file documents with Canada Revenue Agency for the purpose of being recognized as a Registered Charitable Organization. This action will allow Heritage Colchester to give Tax Receipts to be used for income tax purposes.

The filing for recognition by Canada Revenue Agency is not expected to be approved for approximately six months due to Covid-19 restrictions, with many Government employees working remotely as well as a backlog of such registrations.

2.2

MEMBERSHIP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Since the Regular Council Meeting of January 18, 2021, a group of residents of Colchester Centre have met on a regular basis via virtual meetings to put together plans that will meet and exceed the requirements of Council.

Heritage Colchester invited anyone who may share the same interest an objective to attend virtual meetings currently being held on a weekly basis. By such action, anyone interested in supporting Heritage Colchester by their participation will broaden the membership base, to utilize and tap into the talents and abilities of all who are interested.

The positions of the Board of Directors were selected as a previously stated requirement for affiliation with the Ontario Historical Society. The Board of Directors has acted to guide the volunteer members in the direction needed to meet Council's request for a plan to achieve the necessary commitment from the Town of Essex Council.

In the long term, the Board of Directors will continue to guide the project through to fruition and achieve the goal of restoration of the Schoolhouse for use by the community, provide meeting space to groups, families, and for events of a cultural and heritage nature.

The Board of Directors will work diligently toward securing funding from government grants, corporate, endowments, private donations and other sources of revenue to make the restoration and future of the Colchester Schoolhouse a sustainable resource for the Colchester Centre community.

2.3

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

In the short-term, individuals who have joined the group have been a wealth of knowledge and have offered service to Heritage Colchester in support of the goals and objectives of Heritage Colchester.

Through their efforts and collaboration Heritage Colchester has formed several committees to focus on the immediate need to fulfill the Action Plan as requested by Council.

The same committee structure can and will be utilized in future endeavours to achieve the goals and objectives of Heritage Colchester. Other Committee structures as outlined in the By-Law's will be put into place as necessary for the ongoing and future restoration and funding processes. It is envisioned that committee's other than those listed here will be developed and initiated on an as needed basis to focus on an identified need.

To date the following committees are actively working toward near term goal as well as toward the long-term benefit of Heritage Colchester.

1 - COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND USES FOR THE SCHOOLHOUSE AND GROUNDS.

A committee was formed to study and identify uses for the Schoolhouse during various stages of restoration. Consideration was given to not only fundraising events but also focused on civic, social, and charitable programs hosted inside the Schoolhouse and on the adjoining property.

The Activities and Uses Committee did not have to look too far to find a basis for uses for the Schoolhouse. As a result of the development and release of a study commissioned by the Town of Essex in April of 2012, the **Colchester Centre Master Landscape Plan** was already developed by Ekistics Planning and Design and had been previously presented to Council.

Many of the items in that document have been implemented in Colchester Centre but a number of ideas have sat idle for many years, one of those ideas included the restoration and uses for the Schoolhouse and the recognition of the area as the cultural hub of Colchester Centre.

Colchester Center Master Landscape Plan, April 2012

Uses for the Schoolhouse can be found near the back of the Plan and labeled as Appendix A. On page 34 of Appendix A there is indication that an on-line survey was completed and covered various proposed uses for the Schoolhouse. One item of specific interest is shown as
Item 21. Which community activities would you like to see the old schoolhouse used for? The results of the survey are printed in part below:

21. Which community activities would you like to see the old schoolhouse used for?

The Top 12 uses are shown below:

Recreation and Community Market were tied for First Place	73.6%
Youth programs	69.0%
Auditorium/Performance Space	68.2%
Public Meetings	67.9%
Senior Citizen Programs	65.5%
Public Art	60.5%
Community Dances	57.6%
Extended Education	46.9%
Public Computer Access	39.8%
School Related Activities	34.5%
Bingo	26.5%

From the percentages it would be easy to focus on several areas with a response over 60% and from those items a wide range of activities could be envisioned.

The Committee for Development of Activities and Uses has also identified uses which can be expanded from the above Headings and can be found on the next page.

Recreation	Community	Youth Programs
Fitness/Yoga	Weekly Farmers Market	Mom & Tot
Cycling Rest Stop	Internet Café/Learning	Brownies/Cubs
Basketball/Volleyball	Historical Scavenger Hunt	Kids "Go Fly a Kite"
Kids play area	Book Club	Kids "Great Lakes"
Community Garden	Leave a Book, Take a Book	Water ecology".
Beehive Boxes	Rental Space – Family events	Hula Hoop Olympics
	Picnic Tables & Benches	1881 Classroom teaching

Auditorium/Performance Space	Public Meetings	Senior Program
Clubs/lessons, Adult and children Pottery, Paint Night, photography Acoustic Music, Outdoor Concert	Meeting Space for many Functions.	Card Clubs/Fitness Book Clubs/Speakers Night/Social Tea

Public Art	Fundraisers
Art/Cultural Displays Local Artifacts Black History Month Heritage Week Local early businesses	Wine & Cheese Local Craft Beer Car/Motorcycle Shows Silent Auction

And many more!

2. COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION AND MEDIA TECHNOLOGY

A committee has been assembled to help establish the presence of Heritage Colchester through electronic media such as Facebook, Facebook Messenger, and the Heritage Colchester Website.

Facebook Messenger has been used for short term volatile (non-durable) communications. It has served Heritage Colchester well in disseminating information quickly but is limited to shorter messages without the ability to capture the information exchanged for future use.

A **Facebook page** was developed and launched February 3, 2021 for the purpose of disseminating information regarding Heritage Colchester to a much wider audience and to raise awareness of the proposed Colchester Schoolhouse restoration project. The Heritage Colchester Facebook page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/Heritage-Colchester-349943692745521/>

The Facebook page allows individuals who may wish to offer comment and support to contribute ideas and comments, or to have their questions answered via a more immediate response. To that end, an email address has been set up to respond to such queries.

Email messages can be sent directly from the Facebook page to Heritage Colchester through the **email link: heritage.colchester@outlook.com**. That same email address can be used for normal electronic communication by Heritage Colchester should anyone wish to communicate in a more private manner.

A **Website** for promotion and information available to the public was established and became operational on February 14, 2021. Website can be found at www.heritagecolchester.ca. The website allows easier searching for Heritage Colchester and will share the same look and feel

with the Facebook page. It is also an interactive site that allows viewers of the website to make comments, such as identifying persons in a featured photograph of attendees at the school many years ago. The web page also allows for contact to Heritage Colchester through the above email link.

3. COMMITTEE FOR PRINT AND GRAPHICS MEDIA

A committee has been assembled to produce and have published any type of print and graphics media as required by Heritage Colchester. One of our members is a professional graphics designer and has offered services to Heritage Colchester. This type of media is often designed with information gathered from the members as to the actual content and intent of the media, whether that be the design and wording for printed flyers or to ensure continuity between various other types of media, be it electronic or printed.

4. COMMITTEE FOR FUNDING AND REVENUE RESOURCES

Heritage Colchester has a group that is looking at all possible avenues of funding availability, whether that be from Municipal, Provincial, or National grants or donations. We are also gathering information and establishing a database of Corporate and Institutional donors and well as endowment possibilities and private donors.

The database will indicate the source of funding for grants, the amount of funding that can be applied for as well as the timeline for filing grant applications and when such funds will be available to Heritage Colchester.

The COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION AND MEDIA TECHNOLOGY will work closely with the COMMITTEE FOR FUNDING AND REVENUE RESOURCES, in as much as one of the links between the two Committee's will be for a proposed GoFundMe initiative used to generate donations through use of Information and Technology platform, GoFundMe. Consideration is also being given with regards to raising funds through the National Trust for Canada under the "This Place Matters" funding platform.

5.COMMITTEE FOR BUILDING STRUCTURE, PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT, AND MANAGEMENT

A Committee has been designated for the purpose of establishing priorities for restoration of the Schoolhouse, to gather information from architects, contractors and other interested parties for the purpose of working toward the restoration and maintenance of the building.

At the present time efforts by this committee have been limited to the gathering and reviewing information based on past efforts made by the Town of Essex. Until such time as Heritage Colchester is allowed to proceed this Committee can be considered as "on stand-by". However, the Committee has been able to investigate stages of the proposed restoration as outlined here

SECTION 3

STAGES OF PLANNING FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE SCHOOLHOUSE

The intended use of this plan is the expressed desires of Heritage Colchester with the objectives of the restoration and preservation of the Colchester Schoolhouse and the development of the surrounding land area for public use.

ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVANCY OF ONTARIO

Heritage Colchester has been in contact with the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and will utilize their services to ensure that the key architectural elements are retained and preserved, if possible, during all phases of the restoration and preservation.

STAGES OF PLANNING - SOURCE INFORMATION

The Plan was developed with consideration given to several sources of information found in the past, present and future studies.

Consideration was given to past Plans, such as the Colchester Centre Master Landscape Plan completed in April of 2012; from Plans currently now in effect or under review such as the Official Plan for the Town of Essex; and the Colchester Centre Secondary Plan; as well as alignment with plans currently being given consideration by the Town of Essex; namely the Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

This portion of Heritage Colchester Stages of Planning for the Restoration of the Schoolhouse will refer to the **Colchester Master Landscape Plan**. The Official Plan, the Colchester Secondary Plan and the Climate Change Adaptation Plan will serve as reference in other areas of this document.

In the Colchester Centre Master Landscape Plan there is made mention on page 34 of the **Sullivan Street School – Cultural Node of Colchester**, and further states the same Master Plan,

“The Sullivan Street School was historically one of the most important civic spaces in Colchester. Since the school closed, the site has evolved from a social centre to a natural space, home to a rare family of Chimney Swifts. Adjacent to the United Church and one of Colchester’s historic Cemeteries, the school has the potential to become the keystone in a cultural core for the Community.

The School building itself will be restored to become a community and educational centre. Interior programming space could support environmental, cultural, and social activities such as community meetings, art classes, and site interpretation, and could like into Church events.

The exterior spaces would be developed in support of the cultural node intention for the site. A Settler’s garden provides a range of garden spaces including community-tended vegetable plots, a traditional Victorian kitchen garden, a butterfly garden, and a naturalize Carolinian

forest garden. A newly constructed gazebo makes reference to the architecture of the historic Colchester Reef lighthouse and creates outdoor space for strawberry socials and church teas. Scattered throughout the site, interpretation tells the story of the school itself, its ecological evolution (i.e. the story of the Chimney Swifts) and other Colchester tales.

Parking is accessed off Bagot Street, and supports the site uses as well as ancillary waterfront and look off visitors.”

Page 35 of the same document goes on to further describe the area.

“The Cemeteries of Colchester are part of the village’s unique history. Building off the adjacent cultural node of the Sullivan Street School and Church, the construction of a cemetery trail and look-off in the unopened road allowance it provides a logical place for interpretive signage speaking to the history of the cemetery itself, and some of Colchester’s more notable and colourful residents. It also facilitates the development of historic and cultural programs such as haunted cemetery walks, historical tours, or bird watching, and formalizes the view from one of the Villages best natural look-offs”.

For the above reasons Heritage Colchester agrees that the building should be restored and preserved for future generations and the area of Bagot Street and Sullivan Street be designated by signage and other identifiers as the Cultural Centre for Colchester in keeping with the recommendations of the Colchester Centre Master Landscape Plan of 2012.

3.1

Heritage Colchester has developed a simple plan to restore the schoolhouse. While its simplicity appears easy to attain at first glance, implementation of the plan will require much more detail than is presented here. Architectural Conservancy Ontario will be assisting in evaluating and detailing exactly what should be done during the planning stage.

It is envisioned that the plan for restoration will be done in three phases. Each phase will allow for more use of the interior space and may include improvements to the grounds around the schoolhouse which, by their design, can be used for generating revenue for Heritage Colchester to further their activities.

PHASE 1

RESTORATION ASSESSMENT LEVEL – STRUCTURE INTEGRITY ASSESSMENT

Phase 1 will involve mostly research of the history and other attributes of the structure that are considered historically significant and should be retained. During this time a determination of what work has been completed by others and if that work should be kept intact or removed from the structure as being architecturally incorrect.

During this phase an assessment can be determined to what level of restoration would be best for the intended use of the structure. Obviously, it cannot be restored to the original 1881 standard as built, without running water, lighting, and utilizing a wood stove for heat. To follow that plan of action would severely curtail uses for the structure for summer evening or off season uses.

During Phase 1 a thorough inspection of the physical structure from the basement up to the roof peak would be necessary. Based on such an inspection the scope of work necessary toward restoration can be determined. This will require that the building is stable and any major defects are identified.

From that inspection, estimates for repairs can be gathered and priorities can be set to facilitate that portion of the restoration. A timeline may be established while the necessary funding processes can begin to ensure the portion of the renovation will be completed without debt or obligation.

During this time the existing plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems should be inspected, and cost estimates gathered with the goal of bringing these items up to current code.

Plans should also be made to ensure any accessibility issues are addressed and included in any estimates. A discussion should be undertaken with the Town of Essex with regard to the washroom facilities as to whether they would be used for public use by people using the greenspace or only for use by visitors to events held in the Colchester Schoolhouse.

It is envisioned that during Phase 1 the building could be opened occasionally with due regard for safety, so that visitors, tourists and donors or potential donors may have a look at the scope of work being undertaken.

During Phase 1 it may be possible that members of Heritage Colchester may be able to perform some of the work in the form of labour for cleaning, minor restoration or other functions within the capability of the members. The work hours provided by the members can substantially reduce the overall cost of the project.

PHASE 2

RESTORATION – ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL, ETC.

Upon completion of the first phase, a similar review process as above would be used to establish the scope of work and final estimates for items identified in Phase 1. It will be necessary to stage the restoration in a manner that items such as utilities, lighting, heating, and cooling, and other mechanical systems in need of repair or replacement are completed with

due regard to the historic nature of the building and that any historic features are not damaged or destroyed by utility and mechanical work being proposed.

Ongoing fundraising events may be held during daylight hours in the greenspace around the Schoolhouse to expand awareness and maintain interest in the project. It may be possible to hold some events inside the Schoolhouse, but such events would have to be considered with due regard for safety as well as the level of restoration work being undertaken at that time.

PHASE 3

INTERIOR FIT OUT AND GREENSPACE DEVELOPMENT

The third phase of the Schoolhouse will focus on fitting out the interior spaces with period appropriate furnishings appropriate to the intended uses of the space. It may be necessary to have some of the interior furnishings be removable should other functions need space without furnishings, such as art exhibits or cultural performances

The exterior greenspace may be considered as part of Phase 3. However, it may be possible to begin this Phase in conjunction with the first two phases based on cost estimates and how much area around the actual Schoolhouse is required for items such as scaffolding or other equipment required for the restoration.

The school grounds can be used as public entertainment space which can focus on acoustic music venues or other purposes utilizing lower sound levels with unamplified entertainment to maintain the quieter aspect in keeping with the residential area of the neighbourhood.

The Community Garden concept can be expanded to meet current and future needs. The Garden area can also be used as a teaching venue for children and adults alike.

It is envisioned that the greenspace also be developed as a parkland with picnic tables, tourist amenities with availability of covered structures such as a gazebo or similar structures which may be available for rental for larger family gatherings. As such this concept was put forth in the Colchester Centre Master Landscape Plan and should be revisited for implementation during this phase.

Consideration for such structures should be aligned with the Official Plan for the Town of Essex, the Colchester Centre Secondary Plan as well as the Climate Change Adaptation Plan currently being considered.

SECTION 4

LONG RANGE PLANNING

WHY RESTORATION SHOULD BE COMPLETED

Town of Essex Official Plan

With consideration to the Town of Essex Official Plan, some of the statements in that plan clearly outline **why the Schoolhouse should be saved and restored.**

If one were to read Page 11 of the Plan under Section 2 - The Plan and more specifically to

- **2.1 Purpose of This Plan** it clearly states: **to protect and enhance cultural heritage** and natural heritage landscapes and resources, biological and ecological functions.

- under **2.3 - A Sustainable Community**, Item a) Vision Statement reads The Town of Essex is a community which provides for the long term social, environmental, economic, and **cultural needs of its residents.**

- under **4.1 General Provision**

4.1.1 A Sense of Place (added by OPA 6, July 26, 2017)

Many factors contribute to making our Town an attractive, unique and welcoming place. **Practising good urban design, valuing our agricultural economy and rural communities, preserving and enhancing our cultural and natural heritage, identifying with our past** and encouraging physical forms of development that positively influence the quality of our community and the welfare of our residents, in a resilient and sustainable manner, **build our sense of community and sense of place.**

4.2 Planning Principles

i) **to encourage cultural heritage preservation and restoration efforts;**

4.5 Cultural Heritage and Archeological Resources

Significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes will be identified, recognized and, where proper management of these resources is possible, efforts will be made

to ensure their conservation. Built heritage resources include buildings, structures, monuments and cemeteries associated with architectural, social, political, economic or military history.

- a) the property has **design value or physical value** because it: i) is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method;
- b) the property has **historical value** or associative value because it: i) has direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to the community.

4.6 Visual Amenity (amended by OPA 6 , July 27, 2017)

A memorable and liveable community instills **comfort and pride and a sense of community.** **The PPS mandates that significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be preserved.**

5.17 Lands Designated “Parks and Open Space”

The provision of a variety of recreational opportunities is critical to the maintenance of healthy communities in the Town of Essex. Through the designation of lands for “Parks and Open Space” purposes and by land acquisition, the Town strives to ensure that sufficient recreational, open space and park facilities are provided to meet the leisure needs and desires of present and future residents, businesses and visitors to the Town.

Section 9 - Implementation and Interpretation

9.5 Existing Land Uses

Certain lawfully existing uses may, by their nature or location, not satisfy or conform to the land use policies or applicable land use designation in this Plan. They may have been established at their location for a long period of time and accepted as such within the neighbourhood or constructed as permitted uses in compliance with previous zoning.

A designated heritage property will meet one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:

- a) the property has **design value or physical value** because it: i) is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method;
 - ii) displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
 - iii) demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement and
 - iv) exhibits sufficient features of architectural and/or historical value to merit designation in its present condition or with only such restoration work as an owner of the building or structure might reasonably be expected to undertake;
- b) the property has **historical value** or associative value because it: i) has direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to the community;
 - ii) yields or has the potential to yield information that contributes to an understanding of the community or an earlier culture, such as an archaeological site, or

- iii) demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to the community;
 - c) the property has contextual value because it: i) is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area;
 - ii) is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
 - iii) is a long-standing municipal landmark.
-

Town of Essex, Colchester Hamlet Guide Plan

12. 1 Colchester Hamlet Guideline Plan

The promotion of tourism was seen as desirable and such actions could provide improved recreational, commercial and community use opportunities. **It was suggested that Colchester should maintain and enhance its unique character.**

Colchester Centre Master Landscape Plan

Other item of particular interest to Heritage Colchester can be found in the **Colchester Centre Master Landscape Plan** and were mention as suitable uses of the property itself in alignment with the restored Schoolhouse as well as a much broader vision for the area.

It is envisioned that the area around the Schoolhouse as well as surrounding heritage buildings and cultural areas will be identified by signage and define the area as the **Cultural Centre of Colchester Centre**. Such action will generate Historic and Genealogical researchers and tourists to an identifiable area where they can find much of the physical early history.

The concept for the Historical area for Colchester Center was presented as part of the Master Landscape Plan through the normal process of development from concept to information gathering sessions with residents and finally putting together as the plan for presentation to the Town of Essex and to residents. **That information can be found on Page 34 of the Master Landscape Plan.**

It is suggested by Heritage Colchester that the Colchester Master Landscaping Plan be revisited with the intention of fulfilling many of the concepts and ideas in the plan which refer to the cultural centre as described above.

HERITAGE COLCHESTER – LONG RANGE VISION

Heritage Colchester asks that the Town of Essex support the concepts for this unique area of Colchester Centre by declaration of the Bagot Street and Sullivan Street as a Historical Centre for Colchester.

The goal of restoration of the Colchester Schoolhouse can be achieved in conjunction with the designation of the area as the Historical Centre of Colchester for use by the public and as a tourist attraction and will relieve the Town of Essex of the costs involved in such restoration works.

Heritage Colchester respectfully submits this document to The Town of Essex for consideration as a viable plan to fulfill the desire of many Colchester community members as well as the desires of the Town of Essex Council.

To achieve the goal of Heritage Colchester, we hereby request that negotiations be held between the Town of Essex and Heritage Colchester for the purpose of coming to an agreement that will be mutually beneficial to both parties.

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