Downtown Oakville Heritage Conservation District Study

Community Group Focus Meetings

January, 2012

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Presentation Overview

• HCD Study process: A quick review
• Ontario Heritage Act and HCDs
• What is a district?
• How does it work?
• Break
• Overview of schedule and next steps
• Stage 1: Study/Assessment
• Stage 2: Plan and Guidelines
HCD Study process

• Proceeding under Council direction
• Following a three stage process:
  • Background and Issues Report
  • Phase 1: Heritage Study/Assessment
  • Phase 2: Heritage Conservation District Plan
• Decision point by Council at conclusion of Phase 1

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What is a heritage conservation district (HCD)?

- an area with a group or complex of buildings, or a larger area with many buildings and properties, which has cultural heritage value
- a concentration of heritage resources with special character or historical association that distinguishes it from its surroundings.

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Provincial guidance:

• **concentration of heritage** buildings, sites, structures; designed landscapes, natural landscapes that are linked by aesthetic, historical and socio-cultural contexts or use.

• **framework of structured elements** including major natural features such as topography, land form, landscapes, water courses and built form such as pathways and street patterns, landmarks, nodes or intersections, approaches and edges.

• **visual coherence** through the use of such elements as building scale, mass, height, material, proportion, colour, etc. that convey a distinct sense of time or place.

• **distinctiveness** which enables districts to be recognised and distinguishable from their surroundings or from neighbouring areas.
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Concentration:

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Granary (1855), Oddfellows (1883)
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Radial station (1906), post office (1939)

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Commercial terraces and blocks

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Polite and vernacular architecture

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Framework of structured elements

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Visual cohesion and distinctiveness

• To be confirmed through analysis and results of fieldwork:
  • Built heritage inventory
  • Landscape inventory
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Potential boundary determined by:

- Concentration of heritage resources
- Framework of structured elements
- Visual coherence
- Distinctiveness

- Must be documented in the heritage study/assessment and defensible against these “tests”
How does a district work?
How does a district work?

- Primarily through municipal review of changes to properties within the designated area (heritage permits):
  - Includes privately owned property and municipally owned property
  - Proposed changes to properties should fit the guidelines of the Heritage District Plan (created in Phase 2 with community input)
What requires a heritage permit?

• To be decided in Phase 2 – the Heritage District Plan based on community input

• Typical heritage permits are for:
  • Alterations likely to directly impact heritage features – i.e. building additions, removal of features and buildings, change of materials, as well as alterations to non-heritage features on important building facades that contribute to the streetscape.

• Two types of heritage permit applications – minor and major
Major and minor heritage permits

- Major Permits – require review by the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee and decision from Council. Process must be complete within 90 days; typically takes around 60 days.
  - Large additions, new storefronts, partial demolitions
  - Minor Permits – can be approved through delegation to staff. Process typically takes 3-7 business days.
  - Signage, landscaping, exterior lighting, non-heritage features, small additions.
When is a heritage permit not required?

• This will be decided in the Phase Two based on community input. Each Plan is different.

• Typically includes:
  • routine maintenance or minor repairs
  • roofing, re-painting, patching,
  • interior changes
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Break:

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Overall project schedule

• How we propose to proceed

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Study Work Plan Overview

• Background Phase (Completed):
  – Initial meeting with Town Staff (done).
  – Preliminary Site Visit (done).
  – Kick-off meeting with Heritage Oakville (done).
  – Kick-off meeting with public and community groups (November 8th, 2011)
  – Prepare Background and Issues Identification Report and submit to Town Staff (done).

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Study Work Plan Overview (cont’d)

• Phase 1 – Study/Assessment:
  – Meet with Town Staff to discuss Phase 1 and community engagement program, based on background work.
  – Host meetings with community groups (we are here).
  – Circulate project newsletter to community, property owners, Heritage Oakville.
  – Complete historical research, evaluate building stock and landscapes within study area.
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Study Work Plan Overview (cont’d)

• Phase 1 – Study/Assessment:
  – Prepare documentation of heritage resources through historical research and field inventory of buildings and spaces, in public and private realm.
  – Review and assess Town policies and development proposals.
  – Prepare draft Study/Assessment
  – Present draft to community to gain feedback and revise
  – Present final Study/Assessment to Council.
Phase 1 - Study/Assessment

- Follows requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act.
  a) examine the character and appearance of the area...to determine if the area should be preserved as a heritage conservation district;
  b) examine and make recommendations as to the geographic boundaries of the area to be designated;
  c) make recommendations as to the objectives of the designation and the content of the heritage conservation district plan required under section 41.1;
  d) make recommendations as to any changes that will be required to the municipality’s official plan and to any municipal by-laws, including any zoning by-laws.
Study Work Plan Overview (cont’d)

• Phase 2 – Plan and Guidelines:
  – If Council directs Phase 2 to proceed, attend meetings with Town and Heritage Committee to introduce and discuss Phase 2.
  – Prepare newsletter and circulate to community.
  – Develop draft guidelines to conserve heritage character of the area.
  – Recommend any required changes to the Town’s Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

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Study Work Plan Overview (cont’d)

• Phase 2 – Plan and Guidelines (cont’d):
  – Prepare draft Plan and Guidelines and present to community and Heritage Oakville.
  – Hold follow-up meetings with specific community groups
  – Prepare final draft of Plan and Guidelines and present to Council.
Plan requirements under the OHA

Content of plan:

• A statement of the objectives to be achieved in designating the area as a heritage conservation district.

• Explanation of the cultural heritage value or interest of the proposed heritage conservation district;

• A description of the heritage attributes of the heritage conservation district and policy statements, guidelines and procedures for managing change in the district; and

• A description of the alterations that the owner of property in the heritage conservation district may carry out without obtaining a permit.
Comments and Questions?
Contact for Information

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