



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor Richard Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Debbie Edmonds, Manager of Licensing and Legislative Services

DATE: May 14, 2004

REPORT NO.: CL-2004-0015

RE: Ontario Heritage Act Designation of Barber Paper Mill

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. CL-2004-0015 regarding the designation of Barber Mill property municipally known as 99 River Drive be received.

THAT staff proceed with the notification requirements as set out in the Ontario Heritage Act.

AND FURTHER THAT staff bring forward a by-law to designate the Barber Mill property located at 99 River Drive pending the expiry of a 30-day appeal period.

BACKGROUND:

In 1992, Heritage Halton Hills toured the site and prepared a preliminary designation report, which went no further. In 1993, a Public Advisory committee made recommendations resulting in the draining of the millpond and opening of the dam. Over the next ten years, the property was subjected to neglect, vandalism, and squatters resulting in a large fire in 2003, which gutted the 1869 building. The other three buildings (closest to the river) are all structurally sound and worth preserving as an excellent example of heritage industrial architecture within the setting of an industrial complex of the 19th century.

On March 2nd, 2004, Mark Rowe, Chair of the Heritage Halton Hills Committee presented a report entitled, "Barber Paper Mill Heritage Halton Hills Designation Report" as a delegation to Council.

At that meeting of March 2nd, 2004, Council passed Resolution No. 2004-0055 which directed staff to prepare a report regarding the designation of the Barber Paper Mill located at 99 River Drive, Halton Hills, in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.

The property owner has made applications to amend the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan and Zoning By-law to develop the former Barber Paper Mill site. Three pre-consultation meetings have been held involving the Town, Region of Halton, and Credit Valley Conservation staff. Town Planning staff intend to report on the owner's proposed applications in October 2004.

COMMENTS:

The following is a paraphrased excerpt from the report entitled, "Barber Paper Mill Heritage Halton Hills Designation Report" to justify the designation:

Description

The Barber Paper Mill is a late 19th century industrial complex on the banks of the Credit River in the Town of Halton Hills. The site covers 5.24 hectares (12.9 acres). North of the buildings is the original waterpower dam site. The complex includes a boiler house, a three-storey finishing building, power building and race building. Building #3 incorporates the oldest structure dating to 1854. Although not included in the designation, the stone ruins of the dynamo building located about three kilometers downstream, built to supply additional power to the mill, contribute to the heritage value of the site.

Heritage Value

The Mill represents the paper making industry that was instrumental in the development of Georgetown. Founded and operated by the Barber family, leading industrialists in Canada West and early Ontario, the complex produced paper for all of Canada from 1854 until 1948. The paper industry was the leading Georgetown employer by the turn of the century and gave the town the nickname of "Paper Town". In 1888, with the construction of the dynamo downstream, the Barber Paper Mill was reputedly the first industrial use of electricity, transmitted over a distance, in North America. No other industrial complex of this size remains in Halton Hills. The Mill complex has always been a local landmark representative of the community contributing distinctive character to the surrounding landscape.

Character-Defining Elements

The site's excellent representation of a late-19th century industrial complex is reflected in:

- Use of limestone as the principal building material.
- The 1854 date stone is set into building #3 which has been dressed on the exterior.
- The oldest original building in the best repair is the 1858 three-storey finishing building (#8).

- The 1888 buildings erected to house the electrical machinery. Built of stone, they are crowned with three rows of butt-ended yellow "Cheltenham" brick soffits.
- The 1888 boiler house (#12) built of yellow "Cheltenham" brick.
- The only chimney remaining on site - a steel tube with a flared base, resting on a pier of limestone. It sits next to building #12.
- The dam structure adjacent to the property, which backed up the Credit River to provide a head of water to generate waterpower.

The Mill's role as a pioneer in using electricity transmitted over a distance for an industrial use is reflected in:

- The small power building (#7), on the riverside, originally for steam power in 1858, it became the connection point for the electricity generated downstream starting in 1888.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

One of the six directions of the Town's Strategic Plan is to 'Preserve and Enhance our Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage. Specifically, Action Item 1.17 recommends that we 'continue to collaborate with Heritage Halton Hills to implement heritage preservation programs'.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the recommendations by Heritage Halton Hills, Council direct staff to proceed with the notification process and preparation of the by-law to designate the Barber Paper Mill under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Edmonds, Manager of
Licensing and Legislative Services

Karen Landry, Town Clerk

Robert C. Austin, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer