

DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

Title: 68 Queen's Road (Townhouses), Adoption MPA1900002
Date Prepared: March 30, 2021
Report To: Regular Meeting of Council
Councillor and Role: Councillor Maggie Burton, Planning & Development
Ward: Ward 2

Decision/Direction Required:

Following provincial release of the proposed amendment for the Townhouse development at 68 Queen's Road, Council may proceed to adopt St. John's Municipal Plan Amendment Number 154, 2021 and St. John's Development Regulations Amendment Number 706, 2021.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

At its February 9, 2021 regular meeting, Council decided to split the proposed development at 68 Queen's Road into two separate amendment packages – one for the proposed Townhouses on Queen's Road, the other for the proposed Apartment Building bordering Harvey Road. Council also adopted-in-principle St. John's Municipal Plan Amendment 154, 2021 and St. John's Development Regulations Amendment 706, 2020, which would rezone the southern part of the property from the Institutional (INST) Zone to the Residential Downtown (RD) Zone to allow the development of three Townhouses. These would replace the Cathedral Parish Hall and attach to the existing house at the west end of the hall. Please note that a Regional Plan amendment is not required for this proposed rezoning.

The property is located in Heritage Area 1 and the Cathedral Parish Hall is designated by Council as a Heritage Building. The property is within the St. John's Ecclesiastical District National Historic Site, which was proclaimed several years ago by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The Cathedral Parish Hall is still designated as a Heritage Building but was radically altered in the late 1960s after a fire. Approving a rezoning for Townhouses would require the removal of the designation and the demolition of the hall. The applicant proposes to re-use character-defining elements such as the brick arch. The heritage designation will remain on the 1893 house. Should rezoning proceed, the decision to remove the heritage designation for the hall would be brought to Council at the development stage.

The amendments were forwarded to the NL Department of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities for review. The provincial release has now been issued for the two amendments. It is now in order for Council to proceed with the next steps in the amendment process: adopting the amendment and setting up a public hearing.

During the provincial review, the application was sent to the NL Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation, to the Provincial Archeology Office and to Heritage NL.

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Heritage NL noted that the former Cathedral Parish Hall is not provincially designated. In their opinion, the structure has lost most of its architectural heritage value due to past loss and renovations due to fire. What remains is a shell with only a small portion of the original façade intact. They agree that the proposed Townhouses fit with the character and scale of the National Historic District. The design incorporates motifs from the original structure, along with portions of the remaining stone base of the hall's former tower. Heritage NL saw no issue with the rezoning but offered the following recommendations:

- That the City of St. John's, together with the owners of heritage buildings in the district, neighbourhood residents, Parks Canada, and other stakeholders, develop a management plan for the Ecclesiastical District National Historic Site to ensure that future development is sympathetic to its heritage values.
- That with the existing structures to be demolished, serious attempts be made to salvage as much of the useable building fabric as possible to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- That interpretive elements (for example, storyboards and/or online materials) be created to tell the story of the Parish Hall and the former Anglican school.
- That prior to and during demolition, the structure be documented.

The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation agreed with Heritage NL and offered the following recommendations from the Provincial Archaeology Office (PAO), based on a desktop assessment of the site (a review of written materials):

- Removal of the Parish Hall's foundations and footings should be monitored, allowing for updating the plan map (under construction) and recording any pre-1892 structural remains or deposits if encountered.
- This site (named PA-2) has no indicated structural remains, but there is a possibility for secondary deposits from the original construction of Fort Townshend and/or of Harvey Road itself. The PAO should consider monitoring of future groundworks in PA-2 (not anticipated in 2021).

The PAO also recommends that early 20th century structural remains or deposits be recorded. Archaeological monitoring is required during the removal of the Parish Hall's foundations and footings as well as during future groundworks in PA-2.

Should Council proceed with the amendments, staff recommend to include the provincial recommendations in their decision. If Council adopts the amendments, the next step is a public hearing. At present, the commissioner has not been confirmed. The name will be brought to a future Council meeting.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Not applicable.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: Neighbouring property owners and residents; heritage groups; business groups; potential future residents.

3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:
St. John's Strategic Plan 2019-29 - A Sustainable City – Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live.
4. Legal or Policy Implications: Map amendments to the St. John's Municipal Plan and Development Regulations are required.
5. Privacy Implications: Not applicable.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: If adopted, a public hearing will be advertised in accordance with the St. John's Development Regulations and the Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000.
7. Human Resource Implications: Not applicable.
8. Procurement Implications: Not applicable.
9. Information Technology Implications: Not applicable.
10. Other Implications: Not applicable.

Recommendation:

- 1) That Council adopt the attached resolutions for St. John's Municipal Plan Amendment Number 154, 2021 and St. John's Development Regulations Amendment Number 706, 2021. The proposed date for the public hearing is Wednesday, May 5, 2021, at 7 p.m.
- 2) That the City, together with the owners of heritage buildings in the district, neighbourhood residents, Parks Canada, and other stakeholders, develop a management plan for the Ecclesiastical District National Historic Site as future neighbourhood planning work of the Planning Division.
- 3) That the City ensure that demolition of the Cathedral Parish Hall will follow the recommendations of the Provincial Archeology Office, and the applicant salvage as much of the useable building fabric as possible, as indicated in the Land Use Assessment Report.
- 4) That Council request that the applicant add interpretive elements to the site design and document the structure before it is demolished.

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Approved by: Ken O'Brien, MCIP, Chief Municipal Planner

Report Approval Details

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Attachments:	- 68 Queen's Road - Townhouse Adoption Attachments.pdf - PLane LUAR Rev 5B Final July 2, 2020.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Mar 31, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Ken O'Brien - Mar 31, 2021 - 5:45 PM

Jason Sinyard - Mar 31, 2021 - 5:56 PM