

# DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

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**Title:** 68 Queen's Road, Heritage Designation, SUB2100022

**Date Prepared:** July 7, 2021

**Report To:** Regular Meeting of Council

**Councillor and Role:** Councillor Maggie Burton, Planning & Development

**Ward:** Ward 2

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## **Decision/Direction Required:**

To consider removing the municipal heritage designation from the Cathedral Parish Hall at 68 Queen's Road, to allow its demolition.

## **Discussion – Background and Current Status:**

The proposed removal of the City's heritage designation for Cathedral Parish Hall at 68 Queen's Road has been discussed since the rezoning application was made in 2018 to allow redevelopment of the site. The property at Queen's Road includes the recently renovated house at 70 Queen's Road (built in 1893 and also designated by Council as a heritage building) and is located in Heritage Area 1, is in the St. John's Ecclesiastical District National Historic Site, and is zoned Institutional (INST) along the front of the property and zoned Open Space (O) along the rear of the property, bordering Harvey Road.

The property is proposed to be developed as 3 townhouses along Queen's Road, attached to the existing house, as well as a large apartment building at the rear of the property along Harvey Road. Council has separated the two developments into two amendment packages. Council has approved the rezoning along Queen's Road from the INST Zone to the Residential Downtown (RD) Zone for the townhouses, which will come into legal effect after it is registered by the Province and published in the *NL Gazette*. The developer has submitted subdivision and demolition applications to proceed with the townhouse development; these are being reviewed by City staff.

## Demolition Plan

Excerpts regarding the demolition, taken from the land-use assessment report (LUAR), are attached. Before issuing a demolition permit, Council must decide whether to remove the heritage designation from the Parish Hall. As part of the demolition requirements, the applicant has submitted a demolition plan which does not refer to any of the demolition methods proposed in the LUAR, and therefore staff have asked for a revised demolition plan. To date, nothing new has been submitted.

## Townhouse Design

The LUAR was required for rezoning and was adopted by Council on June 14, 2021. To prepare the report, the applicants met with the City's Built Heritage Experts Panel (BHEP)

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several times; the final design in the LUAR reflects the Heritage Panel's recommendations and Council's decisions (attached). These included using character-defining elements of the Parish Hall in the new design. Regarding the brick archway in the Hall, the BHEP recommended:

*a stronger commitment to preserve, retain and use the existing arch in the new design. The Panel is not agreeable to demolition of the arch simply for the purpose of reducing cost. **The original materials of the archway to be incorporated into the new design as in the original arrangement. Otherwise the arch to remain in its current location.***

The applicant agreed to incorporate the archway into the new center townhouse. This was part of the design approved by Council.

At the current subdivision and development stage, the applicant has proposed several changes to the design. This includes no longer using the original arch in the central townhouse, as well as changes to window size, shape and placement, changes to the dormer windows, adding balconies on the 3rd floors, different materials, and removing some of the decorative brick work. There is no reference to the character-defining elements of the Hall.

The applicant attended the June 30 Heritage Panel meeting to discuss the proposed changes. They advised that the archway is in too poor a condition to be used on the townhouses, but they intend to use the materials in a sculptural and/or interpretative element as proposed in the LUAR. Following the meeting, the Heritage Panel asked for additional information before making a recommendation to Council on the design. Once the information is received from the applicant, the Panel's recommendation will be brought to Council for consideration.

#### Next Steps

The applicant is seeking a demolition permit now so that construction can begin on the townhouses as soon as the amendment is gazetted and development approval issued. Removal of the heritage designation is required before a demolition permit can be issued.

The Heritage Panel considered the request for removal of designation and offered the following recommendation:

*That Council insist on adherence of existing processes as it relates to the proposed townhouse development at 68 Queen's Road i.e. development approval considerations first and demolition consideration thereafter. The Panel is concerned that to remove the designation which will allow demolition at this time will result in any further changes to the design and erosion of potential heritage features in this development.*

As the design of the building has not been confirmed and approved by Council yet, should Council decide to remove the heritage designation from the Cathedral Parish Hall, it is recommended that the demolition plan be updated to specify that key elements from the entrance (such as the classical revival arched brickwork, pilasters, keystone decoration, dentals and quoining) will be salvaged by hand-deconstruction and stored on pallets offsite in the St. John's metro area in a weather-protected building, as stated in the LUAR that was prepared by the applicant and approved by Council. This would allow the applicant to begin

demolition while ensuring that the original materials are protected until the final design is approved.

**Key Considerations/Implications:**

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Not applicable.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: Neighbouring residents and property owners; built heritage groups.
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:  
*St. John's Strategic Plan 2019-2029 - A Sustainable City* – Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live.
4. Legal or Policy Implications: Should Council decide to remove the municipal heritage designation of the Cathedral Parish Hall, the building will be removed from the City's list of designated Heritage Buildings.
5. Privacy Implications: Not applicable.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: Not applicable.
7. Human Resource Implications: Not applicable.
8. Procurement Implications: Not applicable.
9. Information Technology Implications: Not applicable.
10. Other Implications: Not applicable.

**Recommendation:**

That Council remove the municipal heritage designation from the Cathedral Parish Hall at 68 Queen's Road, subject to a demolition plan that shows that the character-defining elements from the entrance (such as the Classical Revival arched brick transom, pilasters, keystone decoration, dentals and quoining) will be salvaged by hand-deconstruction, labelled and stored in a weather-protected building until the final design of the development is approved.

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

### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	68 Queen's Road, Heritage Designation, SUB2100022.docx
Attachments:	- 68 Queen's Road - Heritage Designation Attachments.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jul 8, 2021

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

**Ken O'Brien - Jul 7, 2021 - 4:20 PM**

**Jason Sinyard - Jul 8, 2021 - 9:56 AM**