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Planning Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

Thursday, January 25, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.

MODL Council Chambers, 10 Allee Champlain Drive, Cookville NS

In Person and Via Audio and Video Conference

- 1. Call To Order**
- 2. Introduction of Committee Members and Staff**
- 3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**
 - 3.1. Nomination and Election of Chair
 - 3.2. Nomination and Election of Vice Chair
 - 3.3. Mi'kma'ki Territorial Acknowledgement
- 4. Review of Procedure for Public to Address the Committee (below)**
- 5. Approval of Agenda (any other items to be added)**
- 6. Approval of Minutes of Thursday, November 24, 2023**
- 7. Business Arising from Minutes**
- 8. Planning Advisory Committee Matters**
- 9. Heritage Advisory Committee Matters**
 - 9.1. Substantial Alteration to St. John's the Evangelist Anglican Church..... 1-6
- 10. Added Items**
- 11. In Camera**
- 12. Next Meeting Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024**
- 13. Adjournment**

Procedure for Addressing the Committee

An opportunity will be provided to all citizens to address the committee on each agenda item shown on this agenda or added to the agenda by the committee. Individuals who wish to address the committee are asked to note the following:

- On each matter on the committee's agenda, the Chair will seek public comment upon the completion of staff's presentation.
- Each person shall state their name.
- All statements and questions shall be directed to the Chair.
- Presentations shall be limited to ten (10) minutes. Persons wishing to address the committee a second time will be given opportunity to do so once all others in attendance have had the opportunity to address the committee. Persons addressing the committee for a second time shall limit their presentations to five (5) minutes.

Anyone wishing to address the committee on a matter not included on this agenda can have the matter added to the next meeting's agenda by contacting Jeff Merrill, Director of Planning and Development Services, at 902-541-1340 or by email at planning@modl.ca



Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Request for Decision

Report to: Heritage Advisory Committee

Submitted by: Ella R. Gindi, Heritage Planner

Date: January 25, 2024

Re: Substantial Alteration to St. John's the Evangelist Anglican Church

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Heritage Advisory Committee consider making a positive recommendation to Council, permitting the proposed alteration as requested by the applicant.

Motion

That the Heritage Advisory Committee recommends to Council to approve the proposed alteration to the municipal registered heritage property St. John's Evangelist Anglican Church

Background

- Following By-law 043 subsection 10 (1), Planning staff received a letter on November 29, 2023, requesting an exterior alteration to the St. John's Evangelist Anglican Church, located at 388 LaHave Islands Rd. Bell Island –a registered municipal heritage property (letter attached).
- The building underwent adaptive reuse as its function transitioned from a religious gathering place to a venue.
- The building currently has a 4ft X 6ft deck with steps without accessible entrance to mobility aid. The existing wooden deck and steps were added in 2015 after the removal of a concrete structure at the main entrance, as approved by the council.
- The alteration request was to replace the existing 4ft X 6ft deck to 6ft X 6ft and replace the deck's steps with a wheelchair ramp.
- Staff reviewed the proposal against Council's policy for the review of alterations to Municipal Heritage Properties and as per Subsection 5, clause e (viii) regarding stairs,

porches and decks, the policy emphasizes considerations related to removal or addition of all or part of the structure. Furthermore, Subsection 6(b) regarding non-substantial alteration explicitly addresses repairs or replacement of existing materials, where no size, style, placement, orientation, or materials change is intended to municipally registered heritage properties are deemed to be **substantial alterations** and require the review and approval of the Heritage Advisory Committee and Council.

The question for the Advisory Committee is whether the proposed alteration adversely affects the heritage essence of the building's exterior architecture or if prioritizing accessibility is paramount considering the building's intended use as a venue space.

Discussion

Built in 1903, St. John Evangelist Anglican Church is a modest Victorian Gothic Revival building. The church rests on a small knoll with the main entrance facing the water. The Municipal Heritage Designation applies to the building and building footprint. The church (PID #60357928) was registered in 1997 as a Municipal Heritage Property. The reasons provided for heritage designation at that time were associated with:

- **Age:** of the structure (erected in 1903)
- **Local historical significance:** The Church was built by local carpenter Thomas A. Hemeon, who is also credited with building five other Lunenburg County churches.
- **Building architectural style:** Modest Victorian Gothic Revival character-defining elements includes:
 - Central Gothic window with tracery over main entrance;
 - Wooden clapboard and corner board construction;
 - Original stone foundation;
 - Cross gabled steeply pitched roof;
 - Finial on gable over main entrance;
 - Double hung paneled door for main entrance;
 - Gothic inspired arched stained glass windows;
 - All remaining interior elements related to its original use as a church.

As such the deck and steps are not considered to be a character defining element.

The church has gone through adaptive reuse since the church ceased its role as a religious gathering space in the 1970s and has since been repurposed by the LaHave Island Museum as a venue for various events, including weddings and ceremonies like the annual fisherman memorial ceremony, which pays tribute to community fishermen who lost their lives at sea. As a result, the building holds profound significance for the local community.

Standards and guidelines:

Rehabilitation involves the sensitive adaptation of an historic place or individual component for continuing or compatible contemporary use, while protecting its heritage value. Rehabilitation entails adaptively repurposing a historic site or component for contemporary use while preserving its heritage value, including the replacement of missing features with accurate replicas or compatible new designs. Rehabilitation allows buildings compatible use through actions aimed at communicating and conveying their heritage value.

Consider Rehabilitation as the primary treatment when:

- (a) Repair or replacement of deteriorated features is necessary
- (b) Alterations or additions to the historic place are planned for a new or continued use;** and,
- (c) Depiction during a particular period in its history is not appropriate.

Moreover, the development aligns with the following General Standards for Preservation, Rehabilitation and Restoration:

Standard 7: Evaluate the existing condition of character-defining elements to determine the appropriate intervention needed. Use the gentlest means possible for any intervention. Respect heritage value when undertaking an intervention.

Standard 12: Create any new additions or related new construction so that the essential form and integrity of an historic place will not be impaired if the new work is removed in the future.

Additional Guidelines For rehabilitation regarding Accessibility:

Providing people of all ages, interests and abilities with access to historic places is highly desirable and a frequently mandated social goal. Generally, the solutions that best balance accessibility needs with heritage value are those that enhance the use and appreciation of an historic place for everyone. Work should be carefully planned and undertaken so that impact on an historic place’s heritage value and character-defining elements is minimized: the objective is to provide the highest level of access with the lowest level of impact. Since the deck and steps are not deemed to be Character Defining Element, there is not conflict with replacing the current deck to be wider in order to accommodate a wheelchair accessible ramp.

Standards and Guidelines: Accessibility Consideration	
Complying with accessibility requirements in a manner that conserves character-defining circulation systems or features.	Damaging character-defining circulation systems or features while making modifications to comply with accessibility requirements.

Conclusion:

After a thorough evaluation, it has been determined that the structure, designated as a municipal heritage property, has undergone no substantial modifications since its designation. According to the staff’s assessment, the deck and steps are not considered character-defining elements, aligning with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

Replacing the current deck and steps with a larger deck accommodating a wheelchair ramp is proposed, ensuring improved accessibility without compromising the property's heritage significance. This alteration is seen as essential to enhance usability for all visitors. Neglecting to make these modifications may inadvertently exclude a portion of the population from accessing the venue.

The building serves as a venue for diverse events such as weddings, musicals, and the annual fisherman memorial service. Given its vital role as a community gathering space, the planning staff recommends that the Heritage Advisory Committee prioritize the proposed alteration, emphasizing its positive impact on cultural and community aspects over potential impacts on architectural elements.

Report Preparation	
Department	Planning & Development Services
Report Prepared by	Ella R. Gindi
Report Approved by	Jeff Merrill, LPP, MCIP
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	



APPENDIX I



