



Information Update

TO:	Council Business Planning (Committee of the Whole) Economic Development Meeting
DATE:	April 19, 2017
SUBJECT:	Museum Redevelopment Project Update AD 17-06
SUBMITTED BY:	Michael Kirkopoulos, CAO Shannon McKay, PM Consultant

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Report AD 17-06 regarding the Town of Lincoln Museum Redevelopment Project Update be received for information.

INFORMATION:

Building on the momentum from late last year, the Town of Lincoln's museum redevelopment project has made considerable progress in the first quarter of 2017. This briefing report highlights for Council the significant accomplishments, deliverables and planned project milestones.

Site Activities:

Heritage House Sale

To the delight of many, the Town was successful in its attempts to preserve and sell the Heritage House as a key component of building site preparations.

A local and familiar family, Jeff and Kathleen Moyer, who over the years donated a significant number of objects to the museum collection will now have a closer tie to the Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty. Planning and preparations are underway to move the structure from the site and make the Heritage House new home on a property within the Niagara Region, in the Township of Wainfleet.

The date and logistics of the "House Move" are still being planned as its removal is dependent on the successful completion and archaeological clearing of the areas around the building structure. As archaeological fieldwork proceeds and the move logistics are finalized, details will be communicated to both Council and the public and it is hoped that many will turn-out to witness the building move.

Archaeological Fieldwork:

Commencing on April 3rd, archaeological assessment fieldwork and monitoring resumed. This work will continue as weather permits, ensuring that soil conditions due to recent and active precipitation make work feasible. As advised by both the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport (MTCS), Review Officer and Six Nations, adverse or poor weather conditions could compromise the quality of fieldwork and/or the integrity of archaeological features and strata and this is not permissible.

The archaeological excavations will continue until the site has been cleared for construction. Operating at peak capacity in May, the fieldwork will include a crew of 18 including two Native Monitors who will work to complete Stage 4 hand block excavation and test unit assessment on both the museum building site and new parking area. To safely manage and protect the active archaeological site, necessary precautions have been taken and a perimeter fence has been installed. At present, the estimated time of completion is mid-June.

Ellis Property Geotechnical and Slope Stability Assessment

Staff from the Town (Planning, Facilities & the Museum) have been working with the Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) to identify key and mutually beneficial requirements for inclusion in an updated Slope Stability Assessment RFP which will be issued by OHT in the next few weeks. The findings, including erosion hazard limits, key development recommendations and an ongoing monitoring strategy will be included in the report deliverable. This information will ultimately serve to inform and dictate any safe setback distances, development restrictions and or limitations related to the relocation / reconstruction of the High Barn on the museum site which is anticipated in Phase two of the project.

It is also important to note that once deemed to be an active construction site, access to the Ellis Property trail stairs will be prohibited. Both up and downbound access will be closed to the public to ensure both workplace and public health and safety measures are abided by. Working with OHT, the Town will ensure appropriate signage is posted and extensive communications is done.

Interim location of the Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty

Renovations at 4996 Beam Street, Beamsville

The facility 'facelift', consisting primarily of new carpet, paint, furniture and museum appropriate lighting at the **Town of Lincoln Museum and Cultural Centre** are almost complete. Staff continue to organize, coordinate and execute the move of Heritage House contents as well as all directional signage to this new location, set to officially open mid-May. The Jordan Historical Museum will close at the end of April to allow staff sufficient time to prepare the new space for its opening.

Exhibits & Programming

Museum staff have been working tirelessly to prepare for the move and have planned new exhibits, events and programming which leverage the additional space and allow for a wide array of text, artifacts and art to be displayed. Staff are incredibly enthusiastic about the opportunity to showcase artifacts that have never been on display before; present updated exhibit content, and research and plan two entirely new exhibits.

Building on a museum and cultural centre's purpose to serve the needs of the public and entice visitors to return and continue to revisit the museum with each exhibit changeover, the interim location affords the historical museum an opportunity to remain interesting, thought-provoking and relevant.

The anchor exhibits include two large Spring/Summer exhibits and with another full exhibit rotation planned for the Fall. Between each large exhibit rotation, the artifacts will be changed on a regular/monthly basis affording visitors the opportunity to engage with different objects and content, while meeting appropriate conservation requirements that allow the items a chance to rest and be packaged up appropriately.

The Spring/Summer 2017 List of Exhibits includes: a Past and Present Museum Display; a History of the Fry House Display; a History of the School House Display; the delicate and unique Fractur Display; A "Women in Lincoln" Display, recognizing and celebrating notable women who have been influential in the Town of Lincoln and a Home 'Sweet' Home" Exhibit / Display.

Canada 150th Anniversary Art Exhibit

Capitalizing on the expanded cultural scope as identified in the facility name, ***The Town of Lincoln's Museum and Cultural Centre***, programming will also include a unique Lincoln Art Exhibit planned in celebration of Canada's 150th Anniversary. This exhibit seeks to establish new linkages with local artists residing in the Town of Lincoln who will be able to showcase and ultimately, sell their work from the show. Artist categories include: 2 and 3D, student, amateur and professional. Underway for over a year, the project has is in partnership with Mr. Peter Dillman an independent Fine Art Professional. Costs are being recovered through a grant and community sponsorship.

Development Project Funding & Fundraising

The CAO along with Project and Communications staff have recently met with Mr. Lloyd Haines, Chair of the Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty Valley Association to discuss preliminary plans for the million-dollar Heritage Gift Shop Committee pledge and cheque presentation to the Town. Additional details and an event date are forthcoming and will be communicated to Council and community partner stakeholders very shortly. Coinciding with this event, staff hope to 'kick-off' an expanded community fundraising campaign.

Schematic Design & Business Plan

Site Constraints and Limitations:

There are a few natural and historical site constraints and limitations, which have presented unique design challenges and have ultimately changed the early conceptual site plan drawings from October 2nd, 2015. These include the Ellis Property geotechnical stability issues; the findings of the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey which confirmed the extent of the cemetery grounds and location of internments; and the Stage 1 and 2 archaeological results from 2010/2011.

Ontario Heritage Trust's expressed concerns about all three of these issues and in particular, slope stability and erosion also included a restriction to avoid any construction within 15m of the stable top bank and valley edge. The proposed updated Geotechnical and Slope Stability Assessment will further confirm and inform the 2015 preliminary slope stability assessment recommendations and is expected this summer.

Design:

Working closely with +VG Architects and by directly visiting other museums much time and effort has gone into planning and defining building program requirements to maximize museum opportunities for future programming, exhibits, collections storage and resourcing. Several different floor plans have been reviewed, critiqued and refined. The design being presented this evening is the result of careful consideration, discussion, debate and most cleverly reflects a building layout which is forward-thinking, innovative and affords the greatest opportunity for efficient and effective museum and cultural operations and services as well as new and increased revenue generation.

Business Planning and Moving Forward

As the importance of museums and cultural centres continues to be studied and analyzed worldwide, there are a plethora of opportunities to learn from others.

The traditional role of museums is to collect objects and materials of cultural, religious and historical importance, preserve them, research into them and present them to the public for the purpose of education and enjoyment. Beyond bridging generational gaps, museums have the ability to connect people from different cultures and regions by offering a glimpse into the lives of people from other regions of the world, other ethnicities, and those who have different experiences from what others may perceive as the norm. Many rural communities, like parts of the Town of Lincoln have long had a museum that honours it's history. This will remain but also grow. Museums have historically been seen as cultural institutions whose prime function is education and learning. This newly constructed museum and cultural center will serve a valuable purpose for those who visit and move to this area as a way to get a glimpse into the local society and events that have influenced and shaped this region to what it is today.

In today's municipal landscape, museums are intrinsically linked to the culture and fabric of community. Many cities and towns have started to exploit their cultural resources to significant effect. Through the tourists they attract, museums can have a significant economic impact on a community and are often the anchor of a cultural experience in the municipality they are located. They also play an important role as cultural institutions and as pieces of the cultural and tourism industry. As the Town of Lincoln evolves, the museum and cultural center will play a key role.

Museums must be proactive in their approach to the execution of their mandate. Museums have become very important institutions that are respected and valued in this and every community. They must however change with the times and be innovative, people-oriented, community-minded, programme-focused, professionally administered with well-trained personnel and above all, children-friendly, if they are to play a role in the evolution of the Town and its changing dynamics and residents.

As suggested this museum project will kick start a cultural conversation and expansion of ideas that will be integral in both creating a cultural cluster both in Jordan and Beamsville and can be a useful strategy for economic revitalization. The impact of cultural clusters may be defined as follows:

- beautify and animates the area it is in
- attract residents and tourists to the municipality
- complements adjacent businesses
- enhance property values
- expand the tax base
- contribute to a creative, innovative environment

As municipalities have changed, so has culture and therefore, the economic role of museums has become more important. Museums have the potential to add value to their community by attracting cultural tourists. As the demand for cultural tourism has grown here in Lincoln and elsewhere in the Region, this and other local museums have become and must become, key partners in the cultural tourism industry, and greater emphasis is now being placed on their leisure function.

Through both the historical preservation of cultural heritage and new and creative expressions of one's place, through art, exhibits, programming and collaboration, the Town of Lincoln will, like others, be in a position to capitalize on the many social, economic and cultural impacts and benefits great institutions have on a community.

ATTACHMENTS

Presentation slide deck to be distributed at the meeting.