

April 11, 2016

To: Members,
Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee

Re: Heritage Designation Application (16-H-03)
Somerset Block - 1806 Smith Street

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the application to designate the Somerset Block, located at 1806 Smith Street and including the lands legally described as Lot 41, Block 310, Plan No. 00RA12095, as Municipal Heritage Property be approved.
2. That the City Solicitor be instructed to prepare the necessary bylaw to:
 - a. Designate the subject property as Municipal Heritage Property.
 - b. Identify the reasons for designation and character-defining elements as stated in Appendix A-4 to this report.
 - c. Provide that any subsequent alterations to the property be consistent with the "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada."
3. That Schedule A of the *Bylaw of the City of Regina to Deny a Permit for the Alteration or Demolition of Properties that the Council of the City of Regina may wish to Designate as Municipal Heritage Properties No. 8912* (commonly known as the Heritage Holding Bylaw) be amended to remove the property listed as Item 1.34 (Somerset Block) upon designation.
4. That this report be forwarded to the May 11, 2016 Regina Planning Commission meeting for a recommendation and to the May 30, 2016 City Council meeting for approval, to allow sufficient time for the service of the required notice of intention to pass the necessary bylaw and for advertising of the required public notice for the respective bylaw.

CONCLUSION

The Administration has determined that the Somerset Block, built in 1929, is of heritage value as a Municipal Heritage Property. The building is of high architectural and historical value for its:

- Pedestrian-oriented retail storefront design that was typical of the early twentieth century.
- Connection with the commercial and retail history of downtown Regina.
- Connection with original owners and contractors Hipperson Construction, a well-known local leader in the construction sector in Regina.

The designation of the Somerset Block as a Municipal Heritage Property is consistent with the heritage policy objectives of *Design Regina: The Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2013-48* (Official Community Plan).

Accordingly, the Administration recommends approval.

BACKGROUND

The Administration has received an application to designate the Somerset Block at 1806 Smith Street as a Municipal Heritage Property. The subject property is listed under Schedule “A” to the Heritage Holding Bylaw.

Applications for designation as Municipal Heritage Property are considered in accordance with section 11 of *The Heritage Property Act*.

The owner intends to submit a corresponding application under the Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program, which would be considered separately by the Finance and Administration Committee and City Council.

DISCUSSION

Municipal Heritage Designation Application

The owner of the Somerset Block located at 1806 Smith Street proposes to designate the property as a Municipal Heritage Property. The Somerset Block is listed as Item 1.34 on Schedule A to the Heritage Holding Bylaw. The Heritage Holding Bylaw was adopted by City Council on September 11, 1989, pursuant to the requirements of Section 28 of *The Heritage Property Act*. The Heritage Holding Bylaw contains a list of buildings (Schedule A) that have been identified as having heritage value and that City Council may wish to designate as Municipal Heritage Properties. In the process of designating a property City Council approval is also required to remove the subject property listed from the Heritage Holding Bylaw.

The subject property is identified in Appendix A-1 and A-2 of this report, In addition, a photograph of the building is provided in Appendix A-3.1.

When an application for Municipal Heritage Designation is received, the Administration assesses the heritage value of the property and prepares the necessary decision items for the Regina Planning Commission and City Council. Typically, key activities undertaken include:

- Prepare a Statement of Significance on the heritage value of the property.
- Score the heritage value of the property using evaluation criteria.
- Advise stakeholders of the application.

Statement of Significance

A Statement of Significance documents the reasons why a property has heritage value and what elements must be retained in order to protect the heritage value of the property. The Statement of Significance guides how the City of Regina will apply the “Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.” The Statement of Significance must form part of a Conservation Plan, which is a requirement of an application under the Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program. The Statement of Significance for this property is attached to this report in Appendix A-4.

The Somerset Block was built in 1929 and is a two-storey, brown-coloured brick commercial building at the corner of Smith Street and 11th Avenue. The building is distinguished by continuous store fronts along 11th Avenue and Smith Street. The aesthetic value of the building resides in its small-scale commercial design. It is an excellent example of pedestrian-oriented

retail storefront design that was typical of the early twentieth century. The historic value of the property resides in its location. When the construction of the building was contemplated in the late 1920s, Regina's main retail and business area was centered along 11th Avenue and Scarth Street.

The building is also of historic value for its association with Hipperson Construction. Hipperson Construction was the original owners and contractors and maintained their office there from the early 1950s until recently. Hipperson Construction became a well-known local leader in the construction sector and responsible for constructing many of Regina's heritage buildings such as the Ackerman Building, the Qu'Appelle Apartments and many churches and schools.

Heritage Evaluation

The Administration has undertaken an evaluation of the property using criteria to identify the architectural and historic value of the subject property. The Administration's evaluation is attached to this report in Appendix A-5 and indicates that the property is of moderately high architectural and historic value and for viability due to its context in downtown Regina. The Somerset Block has a total evaluation score of 81 out of 100.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

The property owner intends to apply for tax exemption under the Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program. The financial implications of the application will be addressed in a report to the Finance and Administration Committee.

Environmental Implications

Further, conservation of the building contributes to the City's broader policy objective under the Official Community Plan of promoting environmentally sustainable development.

Policy and/or Strategic Implications

One of the goals in the Official Community Plan is to support cultural development and cultural heritage including the protection, conservation, and maintenance of historic places. The Official Community Plan also establishes the City's role in this goal area to encourage property owners to voluntarily designate properties through the availability of incentive programs. In 2014, the Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program was updated to provide up to ten years of property tax exemption for approved conservation work. Since the update, three applications have been approved under the new Program by City Council.

This approach is consistent with the following policies within the Official Community Plan:

- Build partnerships and work collaboratively with community groups, other levels of government, and the private and voluntary sector to encourage cultural development opportunities and conserve historic places.
- Encourage owners to protect historic places through good stewardship and voluntary designation.
- Leverage and expand funding, financial incentive programs and other means of support to advance the conservation of historic places.

Heritage designation of the subject property, as well as its conservation, will enhance the building's long-term economic viability and protect its character-defining elements. Designation will also ensure the building's continued contribution to the historical and architectural character of the downtown Regina neighbourhood.

Other Implications

According to *The Heritage Property Act*, City Council's decision to designate a property as a Municipal Heritage Property should be based on an assessment of its heritage value. *The Heritage Property Act* does not require an assessment of the property's financial viability or the owner's plan to undertake work on a property.

If City Council wishes to proceed with designation and consider the matter at a subsequent meeting, the owners would have an opportunity to object to the proposed designation according to the process outlined in *The Heritage Property Act*.

Accessibility Implications

None with respect to this report.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Administration provided information on this application to the Regina Downtown Business Improvement District (RDBID) and heritage advocacy groups including Heritage Regina and the Architectural Heritage Society of Saskatchewan for comment.

Heritage Regina and the RDBID indicated that they support the application. Comments have not been received from the Architectural Heritage Society of Saskatchewan.

The applicant and other interested parties will receive a copy of the report and notification of the meeting to appear as a delegation in addition to receiving written notification of City Council's decision.

In accordance with *The Heritage Property Act*, notice of City Council's intention to consider a designation bylaw will be:

- Served on the registrar and the property owner.
- Published in a least one issue of the Leader-Post.
- Registered in the Saskatchewan Land Registry against the title(s) for the parcel of land.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

City Council's approval is required, pursuant to Section 11 of *The Heritage Property Act*.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louise Folk", written in a cursive style.

Louise Folk, Director
Development Services

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Diana Hawryluk", written in a cursive style.

Diana Hawryluk, Executive Director
City Planning & Development

Report prepared by: Liberty Brears