

June 23, 2014

To: His Worship the Mayor
and Members of City Council

Re: Application to designate École Connaught Community School (2124 Elphinstone Street)
as a Municipal Heritage Property

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE MUNICIPAL HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- JUNE 9, 2014**

That the application to designate Ecole Connaught Community School, located at 2124 Elphinstone Street including the lands legally described as Lot all, Block 394 and Plan Old 33 as a Municipal Heritage Property be APPROVED.

MUNICIPAL HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE – JUNE 9, 2014

The following addressed the Committee:

- Catherine Gibson;
- Patricia Elliot, nominator for the designation of École Connaught Community School, addressed the Committee; and
- Mark Whiting, representing Regina Public Schools

The Committee adopted the following resolution:

That the application to designate Ecole Connaught Community School, located at 2124 Elphinstone Street including the lands legally described as Lot all, Block 394 and Plan Old 33 as a Municipal Heritage Property be APPROVED.

Recommendation # 2 does not require City Council approval.

Donald Black, May P. Chan, Rhonda Lamb, Ken Lozinsky, Ray Plosker, David McLennan, Joseph Ralko, Ingrid Thiessen, and Tyler Willox were present during consideration of this report by the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee.

The Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee, at its meeting held on June 9, 2014, considered the following report from the Administration:

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the application to designate Ecole Connaught Community School, located at 2124 Elphinstone Street including the lands legally described as Lot all, Block 394 and Plan Old 33 as a Municipal Heritage Property be DENIED.
2. That this report be forwarded to the June 23, 2014 City Council meeting.

CONCLUSION

The Administration has reviewed an application to designate Connaught School as a Municipal Heritage Property and considered the addition of the School to the list of properties on the *Heritage Holding Bylaw*¹. The City of Regina (City) recognizes this is a significant landmark in Cathedral and the oldest remaining public school in Regina. It has played an important role in Regina's history; in particular the Cathedral neighbourhood and in many families' lives.

In the review process the Administration consulted the property owner, the Regina Public School Board, who has advised it is not their intent to retain the building on site. The practice of the Administration has been to not pursue Municipal Heritage Property designation (designation) without property owner consent. Therefore, Administration is recommending that the application for designation be denied.

The City is open to further discussion with the School Board to explore options mentioned in their letter provided as Appendix B-2. The property owner has expressed a willingness to look at retention of some building materials into a future development as a means to commemorate the role of the School in the community.

BACKGROUND

Administration initially received a request to add Connaught School to the *Heritage Holding Bylaw* and recently received an application to designate Connaught School as a Municipal Heritage Property from Patricia Elliott, a resident.

Applications for designation as Municipal Heritage Property are considered in accordance with section 11 of *The Heritage Property Act*. However, City practice has been to not pursue designation without property owner consent.

DISCUSSION

Heritage Assessment

As described in the Statement of Significance provided as Appendix C-1, the heritage value of Connaught School lies in its connection with the development of education in Regina, its architect, and its architectural style. Built in 1912, it is the oldest public school in Regina still being used for its original purpose. The school is of value for its architectural styling, which manifests the ideal elements of a school from the time period: practicality, economy and beauty. Its design is vernacular and functional rather than monumental. The heritage character of it is defined by elements such as the masonry walls with applied decoration, double staircase on front façade and the pattern of fenestration.

Connaught School was a pioneer in community schooling and dual-track French-English education and for many years it was the only dual-track community school in Canada. It was named in honour of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, who was the Governor of Canada from 1911-1916. It was designed by a prominent local architect, James Henry Puntin, who made an important contribution to architecture in Regina. He was appointed as Architect to the Regina Public School Board in 1912 and designed many substantial school buildings in

¹ "A 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" – Bylaw No. 8912

Regina during the next 20 years, including major additions to Regina College (1914) and the new complex for Luther College (1925).

In summary, the heritage value of the Connaught School lies in its connection with the development of education in Regina, its architect and its architectural style. Built in 1912, it is the oldest public school in Regina still being used for its original purpose. If demolished the only other public schools left in the city will post-date 1920. Only Balfour, Davin and Thompson Schools are listed under the *Heritage Holding Bylaw* and none of the remaining public schools in the city of Regina are protected as Municipal Heritage Property.

Addition to the *Heritage Holding Bylaw*

As indicated in the Background section of this report, Administration initially received a request to add Connaught School to the *Heritage Holding Bylaw* (Appendix B-1).

The purpose and intent of the *Heritage Holding Bylaw* is to list properties that possess heritage value and the potential for designation as a Municipal Heritage Property. These properties can be temporarily protected for a 60-day period following the receipt of an application to alter or demolish. This affords the City with the opportunity to consider whether or not to pursue designation. The City's practice has been not to pursue designation as a Municipal Heritage Property where the property owner is not in consent.

The *Heritage Holding Bylaw* was established in 1989. It was based on a broad, comprehensive inventory of properties with heritage value in the city's older neighbourhoods that took place in 1981 and 1982. In 1989, approximately 300 properties were listed under the *Heritage Holding Bylaw*. At the time the *Heritage Holding Bylaw* was established, the City did not seek property owner support to add properties to this bylaw.

Since 1989, nearly 70 properties have been removed from the *Heritage Holding Bylaw*, likely because they were demolished or possibly because they were designated. In 2005, 50 properties were considered for possible addition to the *Heritage Holding Bylaw* including Connaught School. Administration's approach at the time was to send notice to these property owners. Only 15 of these owners responded that they would support an addition to the *Heritage Holding Bylaw*. A response was not received from the owner of Connaught School at the time.

The City plans to review the *Heritage Holding Bylaw* and ensure it includes an up-to-date list of properties. The City does not plan to immediately undertake this work, although it may be advanced in the coming years as the City considers broader cultural policy. For property owners, an up-to-date list would increase predictability and certainty by informing their plans long before decisions are made. An up-to-date list would also reduce the number of circumstances where properties are not listed, but are found to have heritage value after the process to redevelop begins.

Municipal Heritage Property Designation

Administration recently received an application for designation of Connaught School as a Municipal Heritage Property. A copy of the application can be downloaded from the link below:

https://saveourconnaught.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/compressed_municipal-designation-package.pdf

The Heritage Property Act provides City Council with authority to designate any property as a Municipal Heritage Property (designation). Designation of a building provides statutory protection. A permit for demolition or alteration of a designated property could be denied indefinitely, unless City Council is satisfied that the heritage value of the property will be retained to its satisfaction and heritage defining elements protected, or the denial is successfully overturned by the Saskatchewan Heritage Property Review Board.

Designation of a building also requires the owner to obtain prior written approval from the City before it is altered or demolished. This ensures the proposed alterations do not have a negative effect on its character. Under designation Council could also establish guidelines that would apply to infill development on the property to ensure the infill is sympathetic in design.

City Council is not required to have the owner's consent to designate a property or provide compensation under *The Heritage Property Act* and Council may decide whether it is reasonable to use this authority. However, as indicated previously it is not administrative practice to recommend designation without owner consent. Accordingly, Administration recommends denial of the application for designation.

Provincial Heritage Designation Application

The Administration received correspondence from the applicant (Patricia Elliott) that Heritage Regina and Save our Connaught Heritage co-submitted an application on May 23, 2014 for designation of Connaught School as a Provincial Heritage Property. The City confirmed with the Heritage Conservation Branch of the Province of Saskatchewan that it has received an application for Provincial Heritage Property designation for Connaught School. The timelines for processing this application are not yet determined but one of the application requirements is property owner consent.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Environmental Implications

Life cycle assessments indicate that retaining and re-using buildings is more environmentally friendly than new construction, especially in cases where a building is replaced entirely and the old structure is sent to the landfill. To this end, re-use of the subject building, if possible, would correspond to the City's broader objective of promoting environmentally sustainable development.

Policy and/or Strategic Implications

Design Regina: The Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2013-48, commonly known as *Design Regina* provides policy direction to "encourage owners to protect historic places through good stewardship and by voluntarily designating their property as a Municipal Heritage Property." A historic place is defined in *Design Regina* as a building that has been recognized by City Council for its heritage value.

Part B.6 of *Design Regina*, the Cathedral Area Neighbourhood Plan, states: “Of particular interest is the concentration of institutional buildings with significant heritage value that front onto 13th Avenue from Cameron Street to Elphinstone Street. These include the Holy Rosary Cathedral, the Chancery Office, Westminster United Church, Connaught School and Connaught Library.”

Policy direction is also provided in *Design Regina* to protect, conserve and maintain historic places and to leverage and expand funding, financial incentives and other means of support to advance the conservation of historic places.

Other Implications

None with respect to this report.

Accessibility Implications

None with respect to this report.

COMMUNICATIONS

Administration consulted stakeholders including Heritage Regina, Heritage Saskatchewan, Biographies Regina, the Architectural Society of Saskatchewan, and the Cathedral Area Community Association. All were supportive of the initial request to add the property to the *Heritage Holding Bylaw*, as stated in Appendices B-3 and B-4 and were also supportive of potential designation.

Administration also contacted the property owner. The Regina Public School Board has indicated that it would not consent to the designation of Connaught School. A copy of the written response is provided as Appendix B-2.

Subject to concurrence with the recommendations contained in this report, in order to proceed with designation of the property and in accordance with *The Heritage Property Act* a notice of intention to pass a bylaw must be served on the owner and published in the Leader Post.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

City Council approval is required to amend Schedule A of the *Heritage Holding Bylaw No. 8912*. In addition, pursuant to section 11 of *The Heritage Property Act*, the authority to designate Municipal Heritage Property, by bylaw, also rests with City Council.

Respectfully submitted,

MUNICIPAL HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Ashley Thompson, Secretary