

Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Legislative Services

Planning Services

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Municipal Heritage Committee

Date: January 27, 2016

Subject: Ontario Heritage Act – Intent to Designate
11658 Talbot Trail, Community of Howard

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

1. The Intention to Designate the property known as 11658 Talbot Trail, Community of Howard, described as Part of Lot 102, Con STR (Howard), under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value or interest, be approved, based on the recommendation of the Municipal Heritage Committee.

Background

Our inheritance of architecture and cultural landscapes is an irreplaceable asset and resource. In Ontario, the task of conserving these important assets is primarily a municipal responsibility. The *Ontario Heritage Act* provides a framework within which municipalities can act to identify and conserve properties of historical and/or architectural significance. Council has established the Municipal Heritage Committee to advise Council on heritage matters.

11658 Talbot Trail, also known historically as “Eatonville Roadhouse” / “Park Hotel”, is listed on the Municipal Heritage Register, as shown in Appendix “A”.

Comments

Under the *Ontario Heritage Act* S. 27(3) the owner of a property listed on the Municipal Heritage Register must provide notice of their intention to demolish or remove the building or structure. Such notice shall be accompanied by such plans and shall set out information as Council may require.

In December 2015, Planning Services received written notice of the owners' intention to demolish the building located on the property known as 11658 Talbot Trail.

Council has established the Municipal Heritage Committee to advise and assist it on matters relating to the *Ontario Heritage Act* such as this. Specifically in this case, the restriction on the demolition of properties listed on the Municipal Heritage Register.

At its meeting of January 20, 2016, the Municipal Heritage Committee considered the request and passed a motion recommending that the property at 11658 Talbot Trail be recommended to Council for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act* would further restrict the demolition of the house on the property and require municipal approval for proposed alterations that are likely to affect the property's heritage attributes.

Administration has contacted the property owner regarding the *Ontario Heritage Act* processes regarding demolition of a listed structure, and designation. The property owner does not support designation of the property under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The Designation Report for 11658 Talbot Trail is attached as Appendix "B". The report contains a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property, as defined by one or more of the criteria under *Ontario Regulation 9/06*, and a description of the heritage attributes of the property.

Council has two options regarding the designation process, which are as follows:

- 1) Proceed with the designation process - Notice of Council's intention to designate the property is served. If there are no objections, the final request to designate comes back to Council. Should there be an objection(s), there is an appeal process to the Conservation Review Board before the final request comes back to Council for final decision.
- 2) Not to proceed with the designation process - the property is not designated and the house may be demolished in accordance with the conditions of the demolition permit.

Council Directions

The recommendation in this report supports the following Council Directions:

Jobs:

Everyone in Chatham-Kent who wants to work is able to work in meaningful employment

People:

Chatham-Kent is a welcoming community where people choose to live, learn, work, and play

Health:

Chatham-Kent is a healthy, active, safe, accessible community within a healthy natural and built environment

Financial Sustainability:

The Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is financially sustainable

Has the potential to support **all** Council Directions

Neutral issues (does not support negatively or positively)

Consultation

The Municipal Heritage Committee was consulted in accordance with Section 29(2) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and recommends that Council give notice of its intention to designate the property known as 11658 Talbot Trail, Community of Howard, under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value or interest.

The owner of 11658 Talbot Trail was consulted regarding the recommendation of the Municipal Heritage Committee and does not support the recommended heritage designation.

Financial Implications

Designation under the Act is an eligibility requirement of the Heritage Property Tax Relief Program. If the property owner meets all of the eligibility requirements of the program, they may be entitled to a prescribed level of tax relief. Tax relief for eligible properties is at a rate of 25% in 2016.

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Attachments: Appendix "A" – Municipal Heritage Register entry for 11658 Talbot Trail, Community of Howard
Appendix "B" – Proposed Designation Report for 11658 Talbot Trail, Community of Howard

Ontario Heritage Act – Intent to Designate
11658 Talbot Trail, Community of Howard

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Community of Howard

11658 Talbot Trail



Date Added to Registry: 18-Jan-2010

Historic Period and/or Date of Erection: Circa 1915

Historical Significance: Initially this structure was constructed as a hotel to hold out of town guests. Following its years as a hotel the building was used by the Canadian Government during the Second World War to hold Japanese citizens. The Japanese that lived here were a believed threat to the security of the country. Few, if any of the citizens, turned out to be spies or terrorists. The Federal Government has apologized to the Canadian Japanese community for what transpired during the war years.

Architectural Significance/Description: This building has a number of maintenance issues. Nevertheless, Art Deco design features are present. Few buildings in Chatham-Kent have details related to this movement.

Contextual Significance: The height, size, and location of this building make it a landmark along Talbot Trail.

Legal Description: PART OF LOT 102, CON. S.T.R. (HOWARD) HOWARD



DESIGNATION REPORT

The Eatonville Roadhouse Property Talbot Trail Howard Township

Description of Property

The Eatonville Roadhouse property is located at 11658 Talbot Trail in the former township of Howard in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, legally described as Part of Lot 102, Con STR (Howard). The property consists of a c.1925 stucco finished cement block two storey building in the Art Deco style originally constructed as a hotel.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Historical/Associative (OHA Reg. 9/06):

The property has four important historical associations:

- To early 20th century transportation
- Prohibition/depression
- Rondeau Park in its prominent days as a recreational destination
- Japanese re-location during World War II

The property was acquired by J.A. "Pop" Eaton in 1925 who, although from Orillia originally, had associations with a hotel in Chicago. In the days before Highway 401, Kings Highway #3 was one of the main east/west transportation routes through southern Ontario and was becoming increasingly busy as more and more people acquired automobiles in the 1920s. The mobility created by the automobile also led to a tremendous expansion of interest and use of Rondeau Park that became a centre for recreational activities, dances, concerts, etc. Eaton identified the corner of No. 3 Highway and present day Kent Road 15 (that runs to Rondeau) as an ideal location for a roadhouse.

There were two lots that were available on this corner, one on the southwest corner in Harwich Township, and one on the southeast corner in Howard Township. The southeast corner lot was less expensive so Eaton purchased it and built his roadhouse in 1926 as well as a detached two storey garage with gas pumps to the east and a drive-through hot dog stand (thought to be the first in Canada) in between. Interestingly, he constructed the building using hollow tiles covered with heavy concrete and swirled stucco - an extremely unusual building technique. Behind the main building and between the garage and hot dog stand was a court yard. A circular driveway connected to No. 3 Highway, east of the garage, was lined with cedars ran behind the complex to Rondeau Road. Along No. 3 Highway was a 1 to 1.3 meter walled fence with pillars topped with lighted 1/3 meter glass globes. Inside the main building were rooms, laundry, kitchen, a bar and dance floor.

Unfortunately, Eaton's business did not thrive. In the days of prohibition and local option, Mr. Eaton had inadvertently built his roadhouse in the "dry" township of Howard (the lot across the road that was more expensive was in Harwich that was "wet"). Consequently, Mr. Eaton could not serve alcohol. Mr. Eaton subsequently leased the building but no one could make a profit, the circumstance no doubt made worse by the Great Depression that began in 1929.

Around 1936, Mr. Eaton transferred title to the property to Howard Pyne of Ridgetown in exchange for money owing. The name of the operation was changed to the "Sunset Hotel" and later to the "Park Hotel". Mr. Pyne sold bootleg liquor and beer out of the hotel in the 1930s but after complaints from hotel owners in Blenheim and Ridgetown, the police enforce the prohibition and the bootlegging ended. Mr. Pyne then led a campaign to change Howard to a wet township but the local churches, as well as people who bootlegged from home, opposed the legalization and his campaign failed when put to a public vote.

The most significant association of the property occurred in 1942 when Mr. Pyne entered into an agreement with the Federal Government to rent the roadhouse as an internment camp for 55 Japanese men from British Columbia. A recap of the history of Japanese re-location during World War II is beyond the scope of this report. Suffice it to say that it was a significant event in our national history. An RCMP officer acted as guard and director and the men were paid to work at Rondeau Park clearing timber and brush. They constructed a Japanese bath in the garage at Eatonville that was "six feet long, three feet wide, about four feet deep and was built over a brick metal firebox." When the men came in from work, Mr. Pyne "would fill it with water and start a fire under it. The men would shower and clean themselves thoroughly and would then take turns sitting in it for some time"* . The camp closed in 1943.

Kent County hosted several such camps including one at the Harold English farm in Harwich Township, at the Frances Ouellette farm in Dover, at the fairgrounds in Dresden, and at the municipal grounds in Valetta. Eatonville is the last surviving building associated with this history in Chatham-Kent and may be the only remaining structure in Ontario.

Mr. Pyne then built a large (2000 bird) hen house on the property and sold chickens to dealers, tourists, and Rondeau cottagers. In the 1950s, the hotel became the Pynes' home until the property was sold by Howard Pyne's daughter in the early 1960s.

Design/Physical (OHA Reg. 9/06):

The Eatonville Roadhouse property consists of a stucco clad block two storey rectangular building with a one storey extension on three sides built in the Art Deco style in 1926.

Contextual (OHA Reg. 9/06):

The structure on the Eatonville Roadhouse property occupies a prominent position on the southeast corner of two main roads, the Talbot Trail (formerly Provincial Hwy No. 3) and Kent Bridge Road. It is highly visible from all directions and is a distinctive landmark.

Description of Heritage Attributes/Character Defining Elements:

Exterior; Main Structure:

- Footprint
- Hollow tile construction
- Exterior stucco
- Exterior stucco pilasters, north facade
- Window and door placement throughout
- Window sash (4 over 1), second storey
- Roofline, first floor

Contextual:

Key elements of the Eatonville Roadhouse property that support its contextual significance are:

- Placement in relation to two well used roads (Corner of Talbot Trail and Kent Bridge Road)
- Massing in relation to the surrounding flat countryside making it highly visible.

Sources:

- Jerrel R. Hind *The Eatonville Roadhouse/Park Hotel* prepared for the Chatham-Kent Heritage Advisory Committee, 20 January, 2016. (This research paper includes extracts from newspaper articles as well as an *extensive interview with Ralph Pyne, son of long-time owner of the property Howard Pyne.)