

Public Release
December 11, 2017



**Town of Aurora
Additional Items to
Heritage Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda**

Monday, December 11, 2017
7 p.m., Holland Room

- **Delegation (a) Jim Burkitt, GOW Hastings Architects; Re: Item 1 – HAC17-028 – Request for Feedback, Restoration of the Aurora Armoury, 89 Mosley Street**
- **Item 4 – Additional Information to Item 1 – HAC17-028 – Request for Feedback, Restoration of the Aurora Armoury, 89 Mosley Street; Re: Correspondence from ERA Architects Inc. dated December 8, 2017**



Legislative Services
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Aurora, ON L4G 6J1

Delegation Request

This Delegation Request form and any written submissions or background information for consideration by either Council or Committees of Council must be submitted to the Clerk's office by the following deadline:

4:30 p.m. Two (2) Days Prior to the Requested Meeting Date

Council/Committee/Advisory Committee Meeting Date: Heritage Advisory Committee, Mon 11Dec2017	
Subject: Aurora Armoury Renovation	
Name of Spokesperson: Jim Burkitt	
Name of Group or Person(s) being Represented (if applicable): GOW Hastings Architects	
Brief Summary of Issue or Purpose of Delegation: Speaking to the agenda item on renovation of Aurora Armoury - that will become a vibrant community gathering space and home to a world-class training facility specializing in culinary skill building, commercial brewing and viticulture.	
Please complete the following:	
Have you been in contact with a Town staff or Council member regarding your matter of interest? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, with whom? Anthony Ierullo, Jeff Healey	Date: Dec 1-5, 2017
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I acknowledge that the Procedure By-law permits five (5) minutes for Delegations.	



ERA Architects Inc.
10 St. Mary Street, Suite 801
Toronto, Canada
M4Y 1P9

Jim Burkitt
Gow Hastings
275 Spadina Road
Toronto, ON M5R 2V3
T: 416-920-0031 x225

December 8, 2017

Dear Jim:

Re: Heritage Feasibility Memo for 89 Mosley Street, Aurora (“the Armoury”)

We have prepared this memo to evaluate the proposal to rehabilitate the property at 89, Mosley Street, Aurora. The property is designated by by-law 5615-14 under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and contains the Armoury, a former Recognized Federal Heritage Building. As the building is no longer owned by the federal government, federal policies and the FHBRO Heritage Character Statement are no longer applicable. The impact of the proposed development is evaluated against the heritage attributes as described in by-law 5615-14.

Like most buildings dating from the 19th century, this building has undergone several major renovations in order to protect it from deterioration, to ensure its functionality, and to meet contemporary standards. The designation by-law describes “all facades, entrances, window openings, chimneys, and trim, together with construction materials, their related building techniques and landscape features” as heritage attributes. The intent of the designation by-law is to protect the building; however, if all the described heritage attributes are to be retained, they would inhibit the conservation of the building. For example, the aluminum siding, asphalt roof, and the chain link fence along the west elevation as a landscape feature would be considered heritage features due to this all-encompassing description. It is the opinion of ERA, in line with heritage best practices, that all later elements should not be considered heritage attributes. The attributes listed under the separate section “exterior elements” in the designation by-law are more in keeping with heritage best practices.

ERA has reviewed the proposed development and finds it is an appropriate next chapter in this building’s evolution because it will restore the relationship of the building to Aurora Town Park, reactivate the building with a compatible new use, and conserve the cultural heritage value of the building as a place of community activities and as a former militia drill shed through its adaptive reuse. Furthermore, it proposes an architectural approach that facilitates reintegration into the community fabric and interprets historical elements, such as vertical wood siding, in a manner that is distinguishable as contemporary in accordance with Parks Canada’s *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

A Former Recognized Federal Heritage Building

Until the point of sale two years ago, the property was owned by the Department of Defense and was a Recognized Federal Heritage Building. When a Recognized Federal Heritage Building is no longer owned by the federal government, its FHBRO Heritage Character Statement becomes an archival document and is no longer applicable. As part of the disposal process of federally recognized properties, a covenant that outlines the conservation approach is often included in the sale documents. The Town designated the building and included this covenant in the sale documents:

The purchaser agrees to preserve, protect and maintain the heritage character defining elements of the premises as described in municipal By-Law Number 5615-14 passed on the 22nd Day of April 2014.

Cultural Heritage Value

The cultural heritage value of the building is clearly defined in by-law 5615-14. As previously mentioned, if a strict retention of all the described heritage attributes were applied, the conservation of the building would be inhibited. For example, it is the opinion of ERA that the recladding of the building with new vertical wood siding based on existing archival evidence is a more appropriate conservation approach than repairing or replacing the cracked and failing aluminum siding that was installed in 1983. The cultural heritage value extends beyond the architectural features of the building to its association with “civic and community activities” as described in by-law 5615-14.

Preliminary Condition Assessment

The architectural value of the simple gable roof and wooden frame building is utilitarian in nature. A number of later alterations were implemented in order to maintain the building’s functionality, protect it from the elements, and meet contemporary standards. A preliminary review of these later alterations include:

- A new asphalt roof;
- New ventilation outlets on the roof and in select openings;
- New flashing and downspouts;
- New horizontal vinyl siding;
- A new garage door;
- A new accessibility ramp;
- A new entrance vestibule; and
- A chain link fence separating the building from the adjacent parkland.

While ERA has not conducted a site visit to the building, it is clear that some of these alterations are necessary to maintain the functioning use of the building and some are candidates for removal and replacement.

Evaluation of the Proposal

The selected approach for this project is rehabilitation, defined as the sensitive adaptation of an historic place or individual component for a continuing or compatible contemporary use, while protecting its heritage value. For new additions, Parks Canada’s *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, states:

Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.

A civic building has a unique role in a community's identity. It is common for major architectural upgrades to be a part of an adaptive reuse or expansion of these kind of buildings. For example, the Maple Leaf Gardens transformation into a grocery store and university sports centre, the Frank Gehry addition on the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Michel Lee-Chin addition on the Royal Ontario Museum. Architectural upgrades, that are distinguishable as contemporary, are in line with best practices.

In order to rehabilitate the building for a new use - as a culinary college and event space - there are a number of proposed alterations. Most significantly, the one storey shed attached to the south elevation will be replaced by a new addition. This replacement will allow for a commercial kitchen with appropriate ventilation located outside of the main building and is integral to the proposed new use. ERA recommends exploring a subtle adjustment to distinguish the original rectangular plan and one storey volume of the building from the new addition.

A number of new window and door openings will be inserted along the east and west elevations, which will facilitate improved visual and physical connections to the park and streetscape condition along Lamont Street. All existing window and door openings along the north elevation will be retained. ERA recommends that the retention and integration of one or more of the original horizontal windows be explored. In conversation with ERA, Gow Hastings has noted that the removal of the easternmost original window on the north elevation was an oversight and will, in fact, be retained.

The other exterior elements described in the designation by-law - including the low-pitched front-end gable roof, east elevation brick chimney, and original truss framing - will be conserved. The original trusses will be exposed, reinstating their visibility, which is currently compromised by a drop ceiling. The landscape will be rehabilitated to reconnect the building, physically and visually, to Aurora Town Park.

Recommendations for Further Consideration

In summary, ERA recommends:

- Properly documenting the building with measured drawings and donating them to the appropriate archives;
- A full condition assessment, which includes destructive testing for original siding and reviewing the foundations;
- Consider exploring a subtle adjustment in the design of the relationship between the original volume of the Armoury and the new south side addition, which could include enlarging the proposed break, a change in glazing, or a different material choice; and
- Discuss whether there is an interesting and appropriate way to retain one or more of the original horizontal window openings on either the east or west elevations.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call us at 416-963-4497.

Sincerely,



Philip Evans, BArch RAIC
Principal, ERA