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Town of Aurora
Committee of the Whole Report
No. PDS25-031

Subject: Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-02
Aurora War Memorial and Cenotaph

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Manager, Policy Planning and Heritage

Department: Planning and Development Services

Date: March 4, 2025

Recommendation

1. That Report No. PDS25-031 be received; and
2. That the site works for the Aurora War Memorial Peace Park and Cenotaph as proposed through Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-02 be approved.

Executive Summary

This report provides Council with an overview of the proposed site works and enhancements for the Aurora War Memorial Peace Park and Cenotaph (14659 Yonge Street).

- The property is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, and site works are required to receive Council approval.
- The proposed work will correct engravings and enhance the property through numerous upgrades.

Background

The property is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, and site works are required to receive Council approval

The property was designated in 2008 through By-law No. 4977-07 and is recognized as a significant community gathering place to memorialize those who made the ultimate

sacrifice during global conflicts. The Cenotaph was constructed in 1925 out of granite and stands at 73 feet high. The Altar of Sacrifice was erected in 1960. The Aurora War Memorial and Peace Park has important contextual value as one of the community's most significant landmarks.

Analysis

The proposed work will correct engravings and enhance the property through numerous upgrades.

Previous report CMS24-015 outlined a number of enhancements to consider ahead of the 100th anniversary celebrations of the Aurora War Memorial. The designation by-law for the property recognizes protections for all inscriptions and engravings on the memorials, as well as for natural park elements.

An overview of the proposed work, which require heritage permit approval, is as follows:

- 1) Correction of a Misspelled Name
 - Fred Luxon is listed on the memorial however his last name is misspelled as Luxton, which will be corrected (see supporting evidence under Attachment #1)
 - Through staff's delegated authority, the street signs for 'Luxton Avenue' will also be corrected
- 2) Correction of Medal Attribution
 - Wilfred Petermann has a Military Cross incorrectly attributed to his name, which will be corrected (see supporting evidence under Attachment #2)
- 3) Park Enhancements
 - Removal of the existing lock stone, re-levelling of the base, re-installation of the stones and spray/sealing of the asphalt pathways.
 - Addition of permanent seating by including 4 benches.
 - Electrical upgrades to supply additional lighting around the Korean War Memorial and Light Armoured Vehicle (LAV).
 - Re-fabrication and Replacement of wreath standards.
- 4) Preventative Conservation Maintenance
 - Touching up general painting or lead lettering, cleaning of masonry, etc.

These updates will ensure the property is enhanced for the 100th anniversary celebrations with all site works being considered sympathetic to the heritage attributes of the property.

Advisory Committee Review

The Heritage Permit Application was presented to the Heritage Advisory Committee for review on February 3, 2025. The Committee was generally supportive of the site works proposed through the Heritage Permit Application and also inquired about the updating of 'Luxton Avenue'. Through staff's delegated authority, the street signs for 'Luxton Avenue' will also be corrected.

Legal Considerations

Under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act, any alterations that would potentially impact the heritage character of a designated property requires Council's consent. This legislative requirement is implemented in the Town of Aurora through the process of a Heritage Permit Application, which is subject to Council's approval in consultation with the Heritage Advisory Committee. Council must typically make a decision on a heritage permit application within 90 days after the notice of receipt is served on the applicant, otherwise Council shall be deemed to have consented to the application. The 90-day deadline for this permit application is April 23, 2025. However, this application is Town-initiated and pertains to Town-owned lands and therefore can be extended without any limit under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Financial Implications

This proposed work will be completed as part of a capital project in support of the Aurora War Memorial 100th anniversary whose proposed project scope was previously presented to Council through report CMS24-015. Site works and enhancements are specifically anticipated to be \$53,500, with the project led by Community Services. This project will be presented to Council for its formal adoption shortly.

Communications Considerations

As site works proceed, appropriate updates will continue to be made available to the public.

Climate Change Considerations

Site works will continue to ensure the sensitive protection and enhancement of landscape elements on site.

Link to Strategic Plan

The conservation of heritage resources supports the Strategic Plan goal of Supporting an Exceptional Quality of Life for All through its accomplishment in satisfying the requirements under Celebrating and Promoting our Culture.

Alternatives to the Recommendation

1. That Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-02 be refused.
2. That Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-02 be approved, subject to any modifications or conditions of approval.

Conclusions

Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-02 seeks to initiate several site improvements and enhancements to the Aurora War Memorial and Peace Park. Since the property is individually designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, Council approval of the site works is required.

Attachments

1. Attachment #1 – Documentation on Spelling of Luxon
2. Attachment #2 – Documentation on Petermann
3. Attachment #3 – Consultant Summary of Work

Previous Reports

CMS24-015 dated May 7, 2024, and Heritage Advisory Committee Memorandum dated February 3, 2025.

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on February 13, 2025

Approvals

Approved by Marco Ramunno, Director, Planning and Development Services

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer