

**THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ST. THOMAS
URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE**

**ROOM 309
CITY HALL**

January 21, 2016

The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Councillor Linda Stevenson
Councillor Joan Rymal
Beth Burns, Chair, DDB
Russell Schnurr, Heritage Committee

Officials

Wendell Graves, CAO/Clerk
Matt Smale, Corporate Administrative Clerk

Regrets

Tino Clark, Heritage Committee

Guests

Vernon Martin, Vector Holdings Limited

Minutes

Moved by: Councillor Rymal – Stevenson:

THAT: The minutes of the meeting on December 17, 2016 be confirmed.

Carried.

Disclosures of Interest

Nil

Project Applications

353 Talbot Street – George Qubity and Ashraf Khodeir

The members reviewed a proposal for façade work at 353 Talbot Street. The application included a current photo as well as an artist’s rendering of the proposed alterations.

The members inquired about the proposal to stucco over brick and about the apron at the roofline.

The City Manager advised that the brickwork had significantly deteriorated and this was the reason for the stucco proposal.

Mr. Schnurr stated that the urban design guidelines emphasized brick as the preferred choice in this case and that the Committee should adhere to those guidelines.

The members noted restoration work on an adjoining building that was part of the same façade block.

The members directed that the applicant be requested to further investigate the restoration of brick and conduct a cost analysis for completing this brickwork.

The members further requested that the applicant investigate the condition and/or presence of any architectural features under a roofline apron.

The City Manager will forward the requests to the applicant and report back at a future meeting.

633 Talbot Street - Update

Mr. Vernon Martin was in attendance to provide an update on his application for 633 Talbot Street.

Mr. Martin provided the members with before and after photographs of a building he had restored at 660 Dundas Street in London. He stated that he would like to use that project as a model for his St. Thomas application.

The members inquired about the existing brickwork and the slate roof.

Mr. Martin advised that he would be looking to restore the brick in its current colour. His intention was to replace the existing roof with a synthetic slate material that was the same colour as the current roof. He further added that he intended to keep the existing roof architecture and gables intact.

Councillor Stevenson inquired about the lower level windows and if there was a way to soften that part of the façade.

Mr. Martin advised that he intended to install transom windows and would use raised panels to soften the design.

Mr. Martin noted that it was his intention to use the upper floor for residences and the lower level for a mix of residential and commercial uses.

The City Manager inquired as to when Mr. Martin would like to begin work on the project.

Mr. Martin advised that his intention was to begin work when weather permitted in the spring.

The members thanked Mr. Martin for attending and his discussion with the Committee.

Mr. Martin departed the meeting.

The City Manager advised that this project would remain as unfinished business pending receipt of finalized design drawings from the applicant.

Kettle Creek Properties – Ross and Centre Streets

The City Manager advised that no further updates were available at this time. The applicant was still finalizing plans with an intent to begin construction in the spring.

Promotion of Program

The members discussed the name of the Committee.

Councillor Stevenson recommended the Community Improvement Program Evaluation Committee.

The members agreed by consensus that a request be made to Council to consider changing the name of the Committee.

Mr. Schnurr stated that the Committee did not function as an Urban Design Committee traditionally would in other communities. St. Thomas' Urban Design Committee vetted CIP applications only rather than play an active role in the site plan process.

The members discussed ways that the program could better promoted through enhanced use of existing City resources such as providing increased links, photos, project updates, etc., on existing web and social media sites.

Mr. Schnurr suggested that promotional displays of local projects, history and/or artifacts could be displayed in prominent high traffic areas such as the Timken Centre.

The members discussed the heritage building tax relief tool and ways to better promote its use. Awareness of this tool could encourage increased interest from property owners in exploring the heritage designation process for their properties.

The members discussed the possibility of providing increased information to prospective applicants through organizations such as the real estate association and the tourism office.

The Chair suggested that property owners be recognized for completing a successful project with a small memento such as a plaque that could be displayed in their building.

The members discussed an increasing trend to rejuvenate older or heritage buildings and that as many eligible building owners as possible should be educated on all of the CIP components available to them.

Other Business

Housing Ratios

The Chair inquired about the City's stance on considering residential rehabilitation projects and if consideration was given to balancing both market rate rental units and affordable housing units.

The City Manager advised that the City did have a housing strategy document that spoke to this topic and that the document was available on the City website under the social housing heading.

Stacked Funding

The Chair inquired about applications that received stacked funding from various government sources.

The City Manager advised that there was nothing prohibiting stacked funding.

Next Meeting

To be determined.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.