



210 Gloucester Street
Suite 101
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 2K4.

July ##, 2020.

Lesley Collins,
Program Manager, Heritage Planning
City of Ottawa,
110 Laurier Avenue West,
Ottawa, ON, K1P 1J1.

Dear Ms. Collins,

The Centretown Community Association (CCA) greatly appreciates the city's dedication to understanding and conserving heritage buildings and neighbourhoods in Centretown.

The CCA has formed a Heritage Working Group specifically to respond to the city's initiatives. The working group looks forward to liaising closely with city staff and councillors as the work moves forward.

We wish to comment on the recommendations of the recently released ERA Architects report. At this time, we are providing high-level comments. These capture our thinking in response to the report and the directions we plan to pursue. (We will have more detailed recommendations in the months ahead, as we consider the report and ongoing developments in the work of city staff.)

The CCA supports the updating of Ottawa's Heritage Register, a comprehensive list of heritage buildings across the entire city. We appreciate the funding and staff resources dedicated to completing the Centretown portion of the register.

Regarding the updating of plans for the existing Heritage Conservation Districts (Centretown HCD and Minto Park HCD), we question the report's main recommendation. The consultants recommend abandoning the current one-to-four scale for ranking the importance of heritage properties. They recommend a one-level designation: "Contributing". There would be only one level of heritage value. The report gives no rationale for this recommendation.

This is a too-blunt instrument. There are heritage gems that fall short of elite Part IV designation yet deserve a high level of respect and protection. With only a single level of heritage significance, we fear a race to the bottom. Precedents set for properties of minimal heritage value could become norms governing development of almost all heritage properties.

The consultants themselves, in their report, use several levels of heritage value to evaluate and make recommendations as to the fate of properties. The designation regime needs nuances.

We welcome the recommendation for the Dundonald Park HCD. However, the consultants have been conservative and minimalist. There are areas of West Centretown outside the boundaries of the proposed HCD that certainly merit heritage protection. Especially, there are streets beyond the periphery of the proposed HCD that should be included. Expand this HCD. (We will provide detailed recommendations in future.)

We are concerned that there is no recommendation for a Golden Triangle HCD. The Golden Triangle has a high density of all types of heritage properties: Significant, Character-Defining and Character-Supporting Resources. Swathes of The Golden Triangle have both a density and level of heritage resources among the highest in Centretown.

Finally, we have a recommendation as to the process city staff will follow moving forward. We hope city staff will continue at appropriate points to seek public input. Specifically, we hope the city will issue draft recommendations in two areas: updating plans for the existing HCDs, and proposals for new HCDs. There need to be consultation periods on the city's draft proposals, so that public input can be considered before recommendations go to city council.

We wish to thank the city for the useful materials it has provided: the consultants report, the online interactive map, and meetings with the public.

We look forward to liaising closely with city staff as work on Centretown's built heritage unfolds.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,

Shawn Barber
President,
Centretown Community Association

c.c. Catherine McKenney