
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 11, 2004
File No.: 6800-00
To: City Manager
From: Planning and Corporate Services Department
Subject: Brent's Mill Buildings
Report prepared by Greg Routley

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council consider designation of the property legally described as DL 531 Except Plan B1589, 25187, 30395 & M14878, Except Part Red on PL attached to DD19525& Part Lying to the North of the Railway shwn on PL Attached to DD 1952D located at the 2135 Leckie Place, Kelowna BC, commonly known as the future 'Brent's Mill Heritage Park' as a Municipal Heritage Site pursuant to Section 967 of the Local Government Act.

AND THAT the Heritage Designation Bylaw be forwarded to a Public Hearing for further consideration.

HERITAGE DESIGNATION BYLAW BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This report has been prepared to complement the Heritage Designation Bylaw for the property located at the northwest corner of Leckie Place and Dilworth Drive. Pursuant to Section 968 of the Local Government Act, the information contained in this report must be made available to the public in advance of the Public Hearing on the Heritage Designation Bylaw.

Heritage Value and Heritage Character – Brent's Mill Buildings:

The Brent's Grist Mill buildings represent an important part of the pioneering history of Kelowna and of British Columbia. The historic buildings are made up of the Brent grist mill and house, a milk shed and a log building. The grist mill building is the oldest industrial building in Kelowna and is the oldest surviving grist mill in British Columbia.

Frederick Brent ran a water-driven flour-mill from 1872 to 1893. During this time, he attracted settlers and natives from all over the Okanagan Valley to have their wheat ground into flour. Those waiting for their wheat to be ground would often camp along side Pion Creek, which was renamed as Mill Creek in recognition of its important relationship with the grist mill.

Compatibility of Conservation with the OCP and other community planning objectives:

Designation of the Brent Mill buildings is compatible with the policy direction of the Kelowna Heritage Register and the Kelowna Official Community Plan. The OCP includes policies that are intended to promote the conservation of heritage buildings listed in the Kelowna Heritage Register. It states that the City will demonstrate a commitment to heritage conservation by ensuring that City-owned heritage properties be maintained in an appropriate condition. The OCP also states that the City will encourage owners of properties listed in the Heritage Register to voluntarily provide long-term heritage protection to their properties through the use of a Heritage Designation Bylaw.

Compatibility of Conservation with Lawful Uses of the Property and Adjoining Lands:

The Official Community Plan designates the future land use of the subject property as Major Park / Open Space. The surrounding properties are designated as a mix of Major Park / Open Space, Industrial and Commercial. Use of the subject property and heritage buildings for park purposes would be compatible with these land uses.

Condition and Economic Viability of the Property:

In 2001, the City of Kelowna commissioned consultant services to conduct a conservation and feasibility study on the relocation of the Brent's Grist Mill buildings. The study concludes that it would be feasible, from a heritage conservation perspective, to rehabilitate the Brent's Grist Mill heritage buildings for use within the context of a Heritage Park. The adaptive re-use of the buildings could be made economically feasible if a new revenue generating building were to be incorporated on the site.

The Brent's Grist Mill Conservation and Feasibility Plan includes a concept plan that identifies the proposed location of the Brent's Grist Mill buildings, the location of a new building and parking area as well as the landscaping, buffering and site circulation concepts. To complement the concept plan, additional information has been provided outlining options related to programming the site and to site enhancements options.

The Conservation and Feasibility Plan takes into consideration the proposed alignment of the future North End Connector roadway that would utilize a portion of the City-owned property on the north side of Mill Creek.

Locating the grist mill, house and dairy barn buildings on the north side of the creek provides for the best site development configuration, as the natural, park-like setting would be most historically in keeping with the original setting of the Grist Mill buildings. The portion of the City-owned property located on the south side of Mill Creek could be used for parking and other uses, including an interpretive center and other revenue generating uses.

The size and structural configuration of the heritage buildings limit the ability to generate enough revenue to financially support the maintenance and management of the Heritage Park so a new building will need to be constructed to allow the project to be as self-supporting as possible. For security purposes, the Brent's house is proposed to be restored to accommodate an on-site resident caretaker.

Another major element of the Conservation and Feasibility Plan includes the proposal to connect the proposed Brent's Grist Mill Park with the proposed Mill Creek Linear Park and the proposed public trail within the rail corridor. The Grist Mill Park could provide interpretive, parking and staging areas that would complement these trail systems.

Possible Need for Financial or Other Support to Enable Appropriate Conservation:

The City of Kelowna has already relocated the buildings and placed them on new foundations. The City has also set aside funds in the 2004 budget to cover the costs associated with servicing the buildings. The Central Okanagan Heritage Society has committed to covering the costs associated with the restoration of the heritage buildings. In this regard, the COHS will raise funds and use volunteers, similar to what they have done with the Guisachan Heritage Park. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the COHS will also lease the property from the City as they do with the Guisachan Heritage Park.

As the heritage buildings are publicly owned and have irreplaceable historical and architectural values, the City of Kelowna and the Central Okanagan Heritage Society have made a commitment to their ongoing conservation. The City and the Society will endeavor to maintain the special features and overall integrity of the heritage buildings so that they may continue to serve as a community amenity and heritage resource for the benefit of present and future generations.

SUMMARY

Given the significant heritage value of the Brent's Mill buildings and their contribution to the community as cultural, educational and aesthetic heritage resources, it is recommended that Council consider designation of the buildings and advance the Heritage Designation Bylaw to a Public Hearing. Designation of these heritage buildings demonstrates that the City of Kelowna maintains its commitment to the promotion of heritage conservation in the community.

Signe K. Bagh, MCIP
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Approved for inclusion ☐

R.L. (Ron) Mattiussi, ACP, MCIP
Director of Planning and Corporate Services

GDR/

c.c. Director of Parks and Leisure Services