**Minutes – Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management – October 5, 2015**

## REPORTS

**Item No. 1 Application to Review the Historical Designation of 294 Burrows Avenue**

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management laid over the matter to its meeting on November 2, 2015.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Gerbasi,

That the matter be laid over to the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management on November 2, 2015.

Carried

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 18, 2015, the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee recommended to the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management that the application for removal from the List of Historical Resources, Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship Church (St. Giles United), 294 Burrows Avenue, be denied.

# ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

**Title:** Application to Review the Historical Designation of 294 Burrows Avenue

**Critical Path:** Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management – EPC – Council

## AUTHORIZATION

| Author | Department Head | CFO | CAO |
|---|---|---|---|
| J. Kiernan | M. Pittet | N/A | M. Jack<br>COO |

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council concur with the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee's recommendation to deny the request to remove the former St. Giles Presbyterian (United) Church at 294 Burrows Avenue from the List of Historical Resources.

## REASON FOR THE REPORT

The Public Service has received a request to remove the former St. Giles Presbyterian (United) Church at 294 Burrows Avenue from the List of Historical Resources under the terms of the Historical Resources By-law No. 55/2014.

On June 18, 2015, the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee recommended to the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management that the application to remove Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship Church (St. Giles United), 294 Burrows Avenue, from the List of Historical Resources, be denied.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Historical Resources By-law 55/2014 section 27(1), the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management must consider the recommendations from the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee within 90 days after receiving the recommendations.

As per section 27(2), the Director of Planning, Property and Development is authorized to provide a report with respect to the application for consideration by the SPC on DDHRM at the time it considers the recommendations of the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee.

As per section 27(3), the SPC on DDHRM must consider whether the resource continues to embody heritage values sufficient to justify its continued inclusion on the List, and if applicable, the hazard posed by the resource and may, in addition, consider the economic viability of conserving the resource using the following criteria from section 18(2):

a. The condition of the resource;

b. The costs of the continued repair and maintenance of the resource;

c. The importance and value derived from the conservation or continued conservation of the resource;

d. The efforts that have been made by the owner to date to conserve the resource; and

e. The merits of alternative proposals for the resource or the site on which it is located, other than conserving the resource by adding it to the List.

As per section 27(4), in considering an application to remove from the List, the SPC on DDHRM must not consider the merits of alternative proposals for the resource or the site on which it is located unless the owner has obtained zoning approvals and building permits consistent with his or her plans for redevelopment of the site.

As per section 20(1), the determinations of the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage, and Riverbank Management concerning an application to remove from the List of Historical Resources are recommendations to Council that must be considered by Council with 60 days of the meeting of the SPC on DDHRM at which the recommendations were made.

As per section 20(3), after considering the recommendations of the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee and the SPC on DDHRM together with the recommendations made by the Executive Policy Committee, Council may list or remove the resource from the List.

As per section 21(1 & 2), the determinations of the SPC on DDHRM are deemed to be final decisions that are not to be considered by Council and may not be appealed if:

a) They are identical to the recommendations of the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee; and
b) The owner does not formally oppose the recommendations

The owner is deemed not to oppose the recommendations of the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee if her or she neither:

a) Appears in person or by agent at the meeting of the SPC on DDHRM at which the recommendations are considered to advise of his or her opposition; nor
b) Advises the City Clerk in writing of his or her opposition to the recommendations of the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee prior to the meeting of the SPC on DDHRM at which the recommendations are considered.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The owner of the building submitted a request to the Public Service to remove the building at 294 Burrows Avenue from the List of Historical Resources in order to allow future purchasers to maximize the potential development of the site, which may include the demolition of the building.

The Public Service and the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee do not support the removal of this building from the List of Historical Resources because of its outstanding historical and architectural significance in the heritage value it embodies.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

If 294 Burrows Avenue, former St. Giles Presbyterian (United) Church, remains on the List of Historical Resources:

- A Historic Property Notice (caveat) will remain filed against the title of the building with the Winnipeg Land Titles Office as per City of Winnipeg Charter Section 157.1(3) in order to notify the owner(s) and potential purchasers that the property is identified on the List of Historical Resources, and as such is subject to the Historical Resources By-law No. 55/2014.
- All alterations to the Character-Defining Elements (above) will continue to require approval under a Heritage Permit as per the Historical Resources By-law No. 55/2014.
- The resource will continue to be protected from demolition.
- The resource will continue to be eligible for applicable heritage grants issued under the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg, and will be viewed favourably by other granting agencies.

## HISTORY

The building at 294 Burrows Avenue, former St. Giles Presbyterian (United) Church, was added to the List of Historical Resources under the Historical Resources Bylaw 55/2014 on February 29, 2000. Its entire exterior, as well as the interior whole auditorium including organ are listed as Character-Defining Elements.

On March 30, 2015, on behalf of the building owners, Mr. Paul G. Scambler of Clay and Company Barristers and Solicitors submitted a letter of request to remove the building and its listed elements from the List of Historical resources (see *Appendix A*). The letter notes that the sanctuary is no longer in use and is in such poor shape that it poses a safety hazard, that attendance and membership is low, and that maintenance requirements for the church have become cost prohibitive. The letter also notes that the owners want to remove the heritage designation in order to pursue an alternative use for the property. An architect's budget for

repairs that itemizes the costs estimated for building repairs was included in the submission (see *Appendix B*). This budget estimates that repair costs would be in excess of $1.8 million.

Since it was designated as a historical resource, Certificate of Suitability #5-2001 was issued for the installation of a sprinkler system; no other Certificates of Suitability (now known as Heritage Permits) were issued for repairs or alterations to the protected elements of the building.

After receiving the request to de-list, building inspectors from the Development and Inspections Division toured the building and noted that the sanctuary posed no immediate safety hazard.

The building is currently unoccupied and is listed for sale. No alternative proposals for the resource or for the site on which it is located have been received by members of the Public Service.

The HBRC conducted a site visit on May 14, 2015 to observe the heritage value of the building. The committee compared these observations to the original heritage evaluation made during the time it was added to the List, and concluded that, in terms of its embodied heritage value, nothing of significance had changed to warrant removal from the List.

The building is deemed to embody heritage values attributed to the following (*See Appendix C for a History of this building)*:

1. The former St. Giles Presbyterian (United) Church was built in a north Winnipeg residential neighbourhood in 1907-08.
2. This church recalls the substantial population of Scottish descent that settled in Winnipeg's North End. It was recently the home of a mainly First Nations' congregation affiliated with the Baptist Union of Western Canada and engaged in extensive community outreach programs.
3. It is a red brick building with restrained limestone highlights and many stained-glass windows, stands on its prominent corner site as a dignified expression of Late Gothic Revival architecture.
4. The design by C.S. Bridgman relies for effect on bulky massing in simple forms rather than on the liberal use of decoration that characterized the flamboyant Victorian Gothic compositions of preceding decades.
5. The stately architectural discipline carries through to the interior where a beautiful vaulted auditorium and sweeping gallery radiate in curved seating from a magnificent platform and choir-organ loft finished in golden oak.
6. Many of its original exterior and interior features remain intact.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

## Financial Impact Statement Date: July 8, 2015

## Project Name:

### Application to Review the Historical Designation of 294 Burrows Avenue

**COMMENTS:**

That the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage, and Riverbank Management concur with the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee's recommendation to deny the request to remove the former St. Giles Presbyterian (United) Church at 294 Burrows Avenue from the List of Historical Resources.

There are no financial implications associated with this recommendation.

*"Original Signed By"*
Mike McGinn, CA
Manager of Finance

## CONSULTATION

### In preparing this report there was consultation with:

City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings and Resources Committee

## OUR WINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

The recommendation to retain this 294 Burrows Avenue on the List of Historical Resources aligns with policies under Our Winnipeg Section 02 A Sustainable City, 02-3 Heritage:

*Winnipeg has a rich and complex history. Our heritage resources are inseparably tied to our culture, identity, cultural perspective, collective consciousness and sense of place. In Winnipeg, heritage resources support and represented by a distinct mix of cultures, ideas and values. This facet of our identity provides us with variety in neighbourhood design and architecture, expresses various social values, and provides an invaluable legacy of resources that are distinctly our own.*

*The conservation and reuse of existing buildings can also align with numerous sustainability objectives such as waste minimization, natural resource protection and compact urban form.*

*Direction 2: Conserve, protect and celebrate the significant heritage resources that illustrate the broad range of Winnipeg's heritage values by:*

- *Recognizing the importance of a broad range of tangible heritage resources throughout the city that illustrate a unique sense of place and community pride.*
- *Identifying, designating, and protecting the City's most significant heritage resources.*

*Direction 6: Plan for the sustainable development of healthy neighbourhoods based on their particular historic identity and character by:*

- *Encouraging the sustainable reuse of existing building stock and historic infrastructure.*

## SUBMITTED BY

| | |
|---|---|
| Department: | Planning, Property and Development |
| Division: | Urban Design |
| Prepared by: | Rina Ricci |
| Date: | August 6, 2015 |
| File No.: | O:\Reports Directive\Planning and Land Use\Heritage\2015 Reports\Application to Review the Historical Designation of 294 Burrows Avenue.doc |

## Appendix A

Request to Remove 294 Burrows Avenue from the List of Historical Resources

Adobe Acrobat Document

## Appendix B

Architect's Budget for Repairs

Adobe Acrobat Document

## Appendix C

294 Burrows Avenue – St. Giles Presbyterian (United) Church



In the heady decades of Winnipeg's early development, established churches often were called on to sponsor missions as a temporary means of accommodating new congregations in rapidly growing residential districts. That was how St. Giles Church, the first Presbyterian congregation in the North End, got its start.

It was formed in 1884 as the North Presbyterian Mission with support from St. Andrew's Church on Elgin Avenue and students at Manitoba College. Prayer meetings initially were held in a store at Main Street and Burrows Avenue. As membership expanded, the group was able to build its own facilities.

Its first church (1885-86) was a small frame structure at Main Street and Limit (Aberdeen) Avenue. The second (1888-89) was a brick building on Selkirk Avenue, but it too was soon outgrown. In 1906, the congregation chose a new site, the southwest corner of Burrows Avenue and Charles Street. The following year, local architect Charles S. Bridgman prepared the plans and the Imperial Plumbing and Building Co. began construction at a cost of $35,000. The premises were dedicated in March 1908.

St. Giles Church is of solid brick construction. It rises two storeys from concrete footings and a rough-cut stone foundation to a superstructure of iron columns and brick walls topped by a complex hip and gable roof. Red brick and stone accents provide the exterior finishes. Several arched and/or flat-headed windows light each elevation, including the raised foundation.

Typical of Protestant churches of its era, St. Giles displays the Modern or Late Gothic Revival style of architecture. As such, its design emphasizes massing rather than elaborate ornamentation. Key features include pointed arches above the main doors and windows, a crenellated tower at the northeast corner, and tracery-adorned Palladian windows on three façades. Smooth-cut stone bands mark the divisions

between the foundation and superstructure, and the first and second storeys. Another belt course doubles as a continuous sill under pairs of louvered arches in the upper part of the tower. Additional stone details include coping, sills, buttress and merlon caps, and a finial atop the front (east or Charles Street) entrance. Also of note are two circular windows (oculi) in the tower.

The front, north (Burrows Avenue) and south elevations are similar in design. The rear (west) façade has an angled two-storey extension that originally contained a gym, clubroom, and rooms for the choir and minister. A cross-gable roof encloses the main part of the complex. The roof also has a central hip section that is topped by a four-sided, gable-shaped lantern.

The sanctuary holds up to 1,100 people. At the west end are a platform, Tudor archway and raised choir and organ loft. Wooden pews divided by centre and side aisles radiate outward from the platform. A horseshoe-shaped gallery provides additional seating.

Architect Bridgman (1875-1965) designed at least two other local churches – St. Luke's Anglican and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Cross – prior to his St. Giles commission. An Ontarian, Bridgman came to Winnipeg in 1903 after working as an architect in New York City for several years. He subsequently planned numerous commercial and residential blocks, warehouses and institutional buildings, including the historically designated Anvers and DeBary apartments and Dawson-Richardson Warehouse. He moved to London, Ontario in the latter 1930s, planned air-training stations during World War II, and later worked with his architect-brother Gordon Bridgman.

St. Giles Church has not been altered significantly since its construction. Over time, however, its congregations experienced considerable change. In the mid-1920s, St. Giles became part of the United Church of Canada. Membership later peaked, then began to dwindle due to attrition, the movement of families from the inner city to the suburbs, and other factors. The congregation eventually disbanded. Its building stood vacant for a period before being sold in 1973 and occupied by the Elmwood Bethel Mennonite Church. That congregation, in turn, has been succeeded by the Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship, part of the Baptist Union of Western Canada.