



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of June 13, 2019

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** June 5, 2019
From: Andrea Hudson, Acting Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development
Subject: Heritage Alteration Permit Application No. 00235 for 603-607 Pandora Avenue

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council authorize the issuance of Heritage Alteration Permit Application No. 00235 for 603-607 Pandora Avenue to authorize the demolition of the heritage-designated Plaza Hotel, historically known as the Hotel Westholme, conditional upon the following elements being salvaged, documented and stored by the applicant with a photographic inventory provided to the City, all under the supervision of a heritage consultant, for the purpose of integration into a future proposed development, to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development:

- two round polished granite columns
- a selection of white glazed brick
- heavy structural timbers that only suffered minor fire damage
- a selection of wood columns below the Government Street elevation
- any existing cast iron columns encased in the remaining portion of the main floor façade facing Government Street
- sidewalk prisms.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

In accordance with Sections 605 and 606 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may issue a Heritage Alteration Permit which allows the demolition of the Plaza Hotel.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations for a Heritage Alteration Permit Application for the property located at 603-607 Pandora Avenue, known as the Plaza Hotel and originally known as Hotel Westholme. The proposal is to allow for demolition of the fire damaged heritage-designated Plaza Hotel to address safety concerns, remove debris, and further excavate the site. A fire on May 6, 2019 destroyed the structure; however, there are some elements identified by staff as having heritage value and worthy of being salvaged for integration into a future proposed development for the site. These elements consist of:

- two round polished granite columns that flanked the original entry to what was once the Hotel Westholme, and were found encased in a metal surround from a later alteration that protected them from fire and structural damage

- a selection of white glazed brick from the upper storeys that survived with minimal damage
- a selection of heavy structural timber
- any existing cast iron columns in the remnant of the main floor façade
- a selection of the square tapered wood columns below ground level at the property line parallel with the sidewalk.

Sidewalk glass prisms have also been found beneath the existing Government Street sidewalk that are intact and could potentially add to the prism stock within the City's existing inventory of heritage architectural artifacts for repurposing opportunities.

Staff recommend that Council authorize the issuance of Heritage Alteration Permit No. 00235 for 603-607 Pandora Avenue to authorize the demolition of the Plaza Hotel. Staff also recommend this resolution be advanced to the June 13, 2019 meeting of Council in view of the urgency of alleviating the hazard to the public.

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposal

The proposal is to allow the demolition of the fire damaged heritage-designated Plaza Hotel, originally known as Hotel Westholme, at 603-607 Pandora Avenue to address safety concerns, clean up the site, remove debris, and further excavate the site. It is recommended that, under the supervision of the owners' heritage consultant, elements identified by City staff as having heritage value and being salvageable be carefully documented, removed and properly stored by the applicant, until future integration into a proposed new development for the site can be arranged.

Staff toured the site on May 24, 2019 with the owners' representative to undertake a heritage assessment of what remained of the Plaza Hotel. Upon investigation, staff found two polished granite columns flanking the original main entry to the hotel that were seemingly untouched by the fire due to being encased in a metal surround from a later alteration. Staff also found a number of white glazed brick units that had fallen from the upper storeys but suffered little to minor damage. A number of heavy structural timbers also suffered minor fire damage, and the remains of the front façade of the main level facing Government Street could potentially still encase cast iron columns. Square tapered wood columns below ground level at the property line parallel with sidewalk were also discovered. Sidewalk glass prisms have also been found beneath the existing Government Street sidewalk that are intact and retain heritage value, and could potentially add to the prism stock within the City's existing inventory of heritage architectural artifacts for repurposing opportunities.

The applicant has confirmed the project's heritage consultant has been consulted to ensure standard procedures, as recommended by the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, are followed for on-site protection of these elements until integration into a future proposed development for the site is completed. This also includes a photographic inventory of all salvaged elements

The owners have also communicated that all existing contaminated material and walls inside the fenced area will be removed from the site in accordance with provincial guidelines and prior to the erection of hoarding along the site's property line, as proposed on Attachment E. The owners intend to present initial concepts of a new design in the fall of 2019.

ANALYSIS

Official Community Plan

Chapter 8 of the *Official Community Plan* (OCP) includes the following objectives:

- 8 (i) That heritage values are considered in land management at every scale from sites to local areas.
- 8 (j) That heritage property is conserved as resources with value for present and future generations.

Despite these policies contained in the OCP, issues for public safety must also be taken into consideration and therefore demolition is recommended.

CONCLUSIONS

Staff recommend that Heritage Alteration Permit No. 00235 to permit demolition of the Plaza Hotel be approved as soon as possible, with the condition that elements identified as salvageable be properly documented, removed and stored by the applicant for integration into a future proposed development for the site.

ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council decline Heritage Alteration Permit Application No. 00235 for the property located at 603-607 Pandora Avenue.

Respectfully submitted,



John O'Reilly
Heritage Planner
Development Services Division

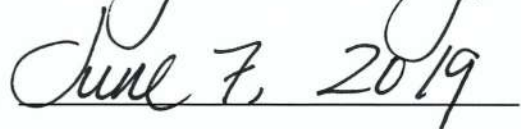


Andrea Hudson, Acting Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:



Date:



List of Attachments

- Attachment A: Subject Map
- Attachment B: Aerial Map
- Attachment C: Statement of Significance
- Attachment D: Photographs
- Attachment E: Plans date stamped May 29, 2019
- Attachment F: Applicant's letter date stamped May 29, 2019.