

CENTURY MANOR TASK FORCE 2
Monday February 23, 2015
7:30 p.m.

Nash/Jackson House, Battlefield Park

Present: Pat Saunders, Madeleine Mant, Joe Mielko, Frank Bernt, Susan Ramsay, Leanne Pluthero, Gary Pluthero, Christina Begley, Bill Sommer, Robin McKee, Diane Dent, Helen Kirkpatrick

1. Call to Order, Welcome

Meeting was called to order by Pat Saunders. Introduction of Gary Pluthero, our guest for the evening.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Bill moves for the acceptance of agenda.

Frank seconds.

Group votes to approve.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Jan. 19/15) Madeleine Mant

Joe noted that we had been confused as to which architectural group was meeting in Hamilton in May; minutes have been corrected.

Madeleine moves for the acceptance of the corrected minutes.

Christina seconds.

Group votes to approve.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

(a) Freedom of Information (Craig Burley)

Craig is not present, but his request for information was acknowledged by Infrastructure Ontario (IO) on January 22, 2015. He requested information concerning the cost of security for Century Manor since 1995 when the building was vacated, the name of the Property Management company hired by IO to manage the property, what repairs IO has done since 1995 and their associated costs, and how often inspectors visit to inspect the interior and exterior of property. Letter signed by Mia Velez, FIPPA Coordinator.

Frank wondered what the timeline for the freedom of information request would be. Pat will stay in contact with Craig to see what his expectations are for the timeline and what his continued interest in the task force will be.

(b) Letter to the Premier, response from Michael Coteau (Pat Saunders)

An answer from Michael Coteau (Minister of Tourism, Culture, and Sports) was received on February 3, 2015 (he was CC'd on Kathleen Wynne's response). He

notes that the IO is working to finalize a strategy to dispose of the former Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital lands.

Helen suggested Pat should respond to keep the dialogue open. Helen and Pat will work together to draft a response. Robin suggested that the questions the Task Force has should be included in order to generate a response (e.g., who is making the final decision? Who do we really need to be talking to? Can they clarify 'disposal of the lands'?).

Christina noted that there had been a small article in the Spec concerning the disposal of the hospital lands. Leanne will find it and follow up.

Frank suggested contacting the provincial opposition parties, Diane noted that this had already been done without success.

(c) Adapted letter to Premier (Christine Lei)

Christine is not present. No discussion.

(d) Century Manor Report by Nina Chapple

Bill wants permission to put Nina's report online. Diane notes that the reasons for designation should be on the City website (under part 4 of the designation act they should be publicly available, therefore they can be reposted on the website). Susan, Madeleine, and Robin state their thoughts that the report should be available online. Bill asks if Pat could ask the government if we can have permission to post the report – she will follow up for next meeting.

(e) Mandate and/or Mission Statement (Robin McKee)

Bill has put up a draft mission statement on the website and asks for everyone to look at it and provide feedback. Robin notes that we need to differentiate the mandate and mission statement.

(f) Crowdfunding

Everyone is requested to take a look at Abdolah's website and provide commentary for next meeting. The following is cut and pasted from the January 19th minutes:

"Pat shared information from Abdolah – he suggests that crowd funding could be advantageous for Century Manor. He says that using a webpage to ask for endorsements to save Century Manor could bring more attention to the issue beyond Hamilton and lead to seed funding. Project page would include History of Century Manor (Spec articles and pertinent details), and Updates (i.e., meetings, press, potential solutions). He's provided the following link as an example:
<http://spacehive.com/thebeatingheartofancoats>."

(g) Architects Ontario conference (Helen Kirkpatrick)

Helen wondered if we could get involved with this group (e.g., providing a leaflet at the conference etc.). Helen will try her best to get in contact with the group to see if a connection can be made. Susan notes that Tourism Hamilton will have information. Robin is doing a cemetery tour for them during their conference. Bill notes that it would be architects who would be doing the actual adaptive reuse of the building. Robin noted that Bill Kearns was a good contact.

(h) Facebook & Twitter report (Leanne Pluthero)

Leanne started up a new Twitter page for the cause last week. Ted McMeekin just started following the page. Various mental health groups are following. Many retweets are occurring from both Hamilton and Toronto. Conversations are slow on the Facebook page, but the most popular topic is individuals expressing that they want to see inside. Leanne posts a new picture of the building each Thursday. Suggestions for reuse are being made (e.g., Mohawk overflow, hotel, museum etc.). Some negative remarks have been brought forward, some people want it torn down. @savecentury is the Twitter handle.

Leanne notes that most requests she receives are from individuals wanting more information.

List of “inmates” is apparently posted online and people contacted Leanne after realizing that their family members either worked there or had stayed there. It is among the first links that comes up on Google when you search “Century Manor,” which the group was not pleased about. It was confirmed that we are not linking to this page from any of our social media platforms.

Bill suggested Leanne send him a blog post so he can post it on the website.

(i) Video (Matt Colella)

Matt sent regrets – information on the video will have to wait.

5. *New Business*

(a) Website (Bill Sommer)

The e-mail Bill is maintaining: savecenturymanor2@gmail.com

The website includes: links to other heritage building websites, a blog, background information on the building, task force meeting minutes, Pat’s letter to the

government, information on other historic building projects (e.g., The Lawn). The group is encouraged to look at the website on their own time.

The current website is <https://savecenturymanor2.wordpress.com/>. If we put forward \$18 we could lose the Wordpress designation. The group agrees that this will help the website become easier to find and Bill has volunteered to put forward the money.

(b) New Interests

(i) History of Psychiatry (Helen)

Helen noted that Dr. David Wright (Queens) has undertaken research on the historical epidemiology of mental illness and Victorian asylums in Ontario and used to work at McMaster. Helen wondered if the group wanted to contact him (the group agreed this could be a useful contact). Helen will therefore reach out to Dr. Wright. Robin noted that Dr. Wright could be a potential public speaker for the next public event concerning Century Manor. Further, Nina Chapple would be an excellent speaker for such an event.

(ii) History of Century Manor (Pat)

Glenn Deans had contacted Pat concerning a possible MA research project at Laurier involving psychiatric history between 1840 and 1950. Since the e-mail he has updated Pat to let her know that his research has slightly shifted focus and will no longer involve Century Manor.

(c) Facilitator

Pat asked some of her union colleagues to volunteer to help the task force find some direction. What is the next step? Bill noted that we could link up with other fundraising/friends groups to see if they have any advice on how they developed their action plans. Bill will get in contact with some of the groups he has linked to on the Century Manor website. Frank will also look into making some contacts.

(d) Other

Norris Podetz has done some beautiful sketches of Auchmar and has agreed to do some sketches of Century Manor. He has provided paperwork so the artwork can be used without recompensation for a particular period of time.

Robin queried if we were going to have another public meeting. Helen and Madeleine noted that we should send out the first wave of letters and get the freedom of information data from Craig before we set up another public meeting. The group agrees that another public meeting would be a great idea, but the task force needs to have some concrete data to share with the public.

6. Date, Time, and Location of Next Meeting

Christchurch Cathedral (252 James Street North)

Monday March 30

7:30 p.m.

7. Adjournment

Helen moved to adjourn the meeting.

Christina seconded the motion.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Report submitted by Madeleine Mant.