

Minutes of the Heritage Committee  
for the Corporation of The Town of Tecumseh

A meeting of the Heritage Committee for the Town of Tecumseh was scheduled to be held on April 15, 2019, in the Sandwich South Meeting Room at Town Hall, 917 Lesperance Road, Tecumseh at 6:00 pm.

**1. Call to Order**

The Chairperson calls the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

**2. Roll Call**

**Present:**

|            |                   |
|------------|-------------------|
| Chair      | Chris Carpenter   |
| Vice-Chair | Marian Drouillard |
| Member     | Rhonda Dupuis     |
| Member     | Charles Gray      |
| Member     | John Levesque     |
| Member     | Rita Ossington    |

**Also Present:**

|  |                  |
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| Manager Committee & Community Services | Christina Hebert |
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**Absent:**

|            |               |
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| Councillor | Bill Altenhof |
| Member     | Dwayne Ellis  |

**3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

None reported.

**4. Delegations**

**a. Sandwich South Historical Society Re: Sandwich South Town Hall and Downing McCarthy House Heritage Designation Property**

Ms. Judy Wellwood-Robson provides an overview of the evidence-based revision the Sandwich South Historical Society has undertaken in regards to the Sandwich South Town Hall (SSTH). It has been historically documented that the land where the SSTH was located on Highway #3 had been donated by Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sylvester.

She explains, after extensive examination of records from various sources, documentation proves that in 1896, Mary (Downing) McCarthy owned and gifted the land to the Township of Sandwich South. The December 15, 1896 minutes of the Sandwich South Council Meeting and the land records of lot 302 North of Talbot Road further confirm Mrs. McCarthy gifted the property.

Ms. Wellwood-Robson details the history of the land and documents discovered which evidence Mrs. Mary (Downing) McCarthy owned the land. During this period in history, women were seldom publicly involved in the politics of the times and women were not recognized as person(s) in the *British North America Act*. Therefore, any property owned by a married woman and any monies she made belonged to her husband. In actuality, Mrs. McCarthy hosted the Town Hall meetings in her house/tavern from 1893 to 1896 and then donated the land for a Town Hall to be built.

She explains the importance of accurately reflecting this meaningful and symbolic event in our local history which signifies the strong influence pioneer women had in the growth and development of the early settlement.

**Motion: HC - 9/19**

Moved By                      Member Rhonda Dupuis  
Seconded By                Vice-Chair Marian Drouillard

**That** the Heritage Committee recommends consideration be given to correcting the records, where possible, to reflect Mrs. Mary (Downing) McCarthy as having donated the land where the Sandwich South Town Hall was located on Highway #3, including the Town's website, the photograph located in the Sandwich South Meeting Room and the Heritage Park storyboard.

**Carried**

On behalf of the Sandwich South Historical Society, Ms. Wellwood-Robson further advises of the historical research and interest in designating the Downing McCarthy House/Tavern and Barn, located at 2725 Highway #3. She provides a detailed description of the building, which is believed to be constructed in two stages – the original part was built between 1848 – 1857 and the bar room was added on around 1859-1861. The barn would have been constructed sometime between 1850 and 1865. The architectural features of the building are also noted.

Ms. Wellwood-Robson indicates the building is a significant historical landmark as it is one of the last remaining local house taverns, a former stage coach stop, the location of the first post office of the area and the site of the first meetings of the newly formed Township of Sandwich South. Additionally, its unique architectural style stood out on the corner of Highway #3 and Oldcastle Road and was often used as a point of location when describing the centre of the Oldcastle Hamlet.

The Members express appreciation to Ms. Judy Wellwood-Robson and the Sandwich South Historical Society for the presentation this evening.

**5. Communications**

None.

**6. Reports**

None.

**7. Unfinished Business****a. Heritage Property Listing**

The Committee reviews the current list of potential heritage properties and discussion ensues regarding the next selection of properties to move forward to the 'Listing'.

The following properties are suggested for consideration: 2725 Highway 3, St. Mark's by the Lake Anglican Church and Lakewood Golf Course.

The Members will further review the list of potential heritage properties prior to the next meeting so that the final selection of properties to move forward can be determined.

**b. Tecumseh Heritage Articles**

The Vice Chair advises she will work on drafting the next article for the Committee's review.

**8. New Business**

None.

**9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Heritage Committee will be held on May 27, 2019.

**10. Adjournment**

**Motion: HC - 10/19**

Moved By Vice-Chair Marian Drouillard

Seconded By Member John Levesque

**That** there being no further business, the April 15, 2019 meeting of the Heritage Committee now adjourn at 7:28 pm.

**Carried**

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Chris Carpenter, Chair

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Marian Drouillard, Vice-Chair