

REPORT TO: Heritage Kitchener

DATE OF MEETING: November 1, 2022

SUBMITTED BY: Garett Stevenson, Interim Director of Planning, 519-741-2200 ext. 7070

PREPARED BY: Deeksha Choudhry, Heritage Planner, 519-741-2200 ext. 7291

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 9

DATE OF REPORT: September 29, 2022

REPORT NO.: DSD-2022-450

SUBJECT: HPA-2022-V-027
Victoria Park Boathouse
Proposed Alterations, New Addition and Patio

RECOMMENDATION:

That pursuant to Section 42 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, Heritage Permit Application HPA-2022-V-027 be approved to permit the alterations of the Boathouse, the new addition and patio on the property municipally addressed as 57 Jubilee Drive in accordance with the supplementary information submitted with the application and subject to the following conditions:

1. That the Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment be approved by the Director of Planning prior to the issuance of this permit and final site plan approval;
2. That the final signage and any additional lighting be detailed on a Site Lighting Plan, to be reviewed and approved by the City's Heritage Planner prior to the issuance of the final site plan approval;
3. That the design and content of the commemorative plaque be reviewed and approved by the City's Heritage Planner prior to the issuance of the final site plan approval;
4. That the final proposed materials for the proposed alterations to the Boathouse, new addition and patio be shown on detailed Building Elevation Plans, to be reviewed and approved by the City's Heritage Planner, prior to the issuance of this permit and final site plan approval; and
5. That the final building permit be reviewed and approved by the City's Heritage Planner prior to the issuance of a building permit in accordance with the final approved site plan.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to present staff's recommendation to approve the proposed alterations of the Boathouse, including a new proposed addition and cantilevered patio on the property municipally addressed as 57 Jubilee Drive (within Victoria Park).

- The key finding of this report is that the proposed development will not adversely impact Victoria Park or the Victoria Park Area Neighborhood Heritage Conservation District.
- There are no financial implications to the City associated with this report.
- Community engagement included posting this report and associated agenda in advance of the meeting and consultation with the Heritage Kitchener Committee.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Heritage Permit Application HPA-2022-V-027 proposes several alterations to the existing Boathouse building, including a new addition on the west (side) façade of the building, as well a cantilevered patio extending over the water (Victoria Park Lake) at the subject property municipally addressed as 57 Jubilee Drive. The building is located within the Victoria Park Area Neighborhood Conservation District and is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The building was originally built in 1929 but was heavily modified after a fire in 1967. The building is City-owned and it currently vacant and not in use. The proposed development provides an opportunity for the adaptive re-use of the existing Boathouse through some alterations of the existing window and door openings as well as introducing new openings. Mitigation measures, including but not limited to, installing planter beds in various place around the subject property, having a clearly distinguishable but compatible addition, installing a commemorative plaque, and ensuring that other design interventions are compatible will ensure that the proposed development does not have an adverse negative impact on the existing Boathouse building, Victoria Park, or the Victoria Park Area Heritage Conservation District.

BACKGROUND:

The Development Services Department is in receipt of Heritage Permit Application HPA-2022-V-027 seeking permission to make alterations to the Victoria Park Boathouse, a new addition to accommodate washrooms, and a cantilevered patio on the subject property municipally addressed as 57 Jubilee Drive, located within the Victoria Park Area Heritage Conservation District (VPAHCD) (Fig. 1).

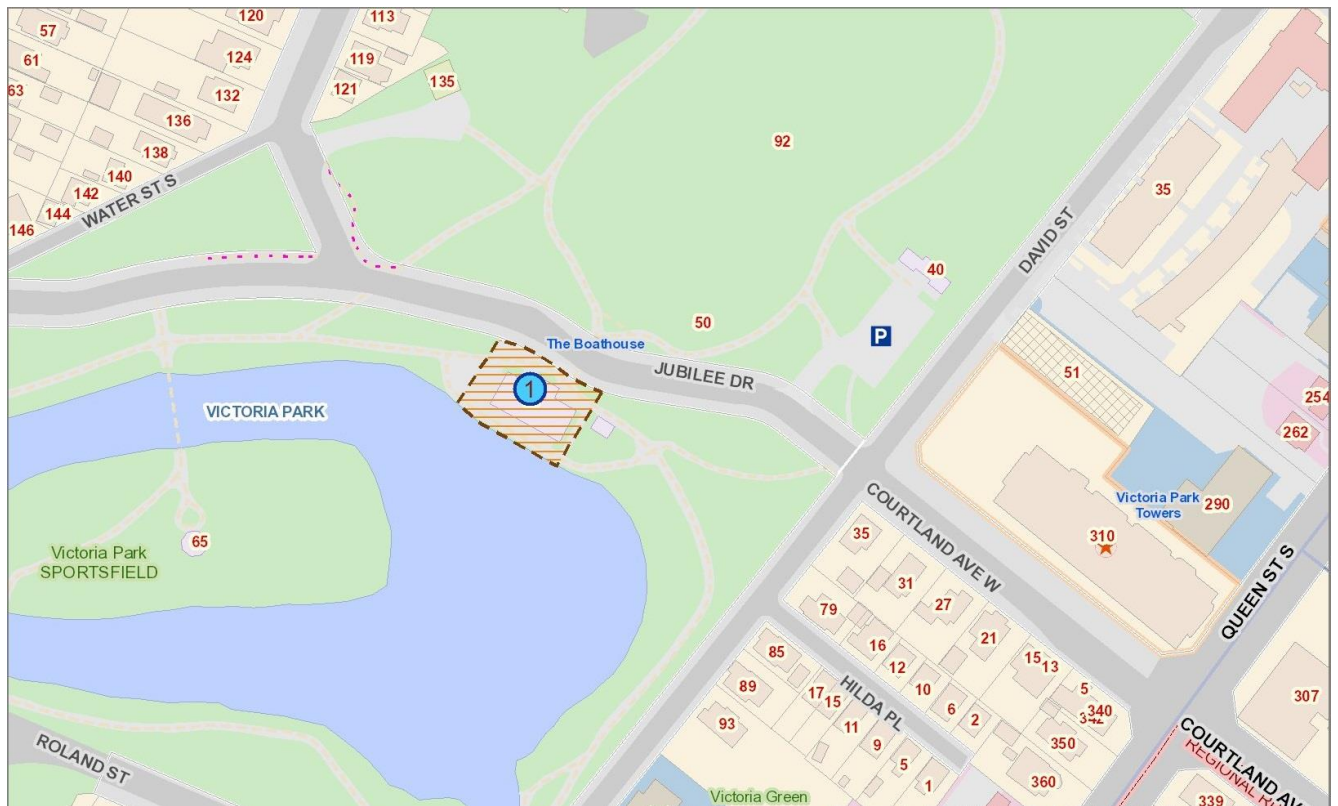


Figure 1. Location Map of the Boathouse.

REPORT:

The subject property on the south side of Jubilee Drive between David Street and Water Street South. The subject property is located within the Victoria Park Area Heritage Conservation District and is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (Fig. 2). The subject property is also located within the Victoria Park Cultural Heritage Landscape.



Figure 2. Front façade of the Boathouse.

Victoria Park

According to the VPAHCD Plan, Victoria Park is one of Canada's finest examples of a civic park in the 18th Century Romantic Landscape style. It was laid out in 1894 with the advice of landscape engineer George Ricker. The key features of the Park include:

- Naturalistic character;
- The lake;
- Woods;
- Sweeps of grass;
- Meandering drives and paths;
- "Antique" buildings and monuments; and
- Vistas

The enhancement and conservation of these key landscape qualities has been deemed essential to maintain the park's historic landscape ideas, and the appropriate design of contemporary park elements.

Boathouse

The Boathouse building is a one-storey building of brown brick and a cottage-style roof and was originally built in 1929. It was initially used to store canoes and as a temporary shelter for visitors of the park and was designed by architect Charles Knetchel. In 1967, there was

a fire which destroyed the upper storey and significantly damaged the original building. It was heavily modified and re-constructed to its current state. Since it was originally constructed, the Boathouse has been used for boat rentals, skating in the winter, as a tea house, a pub, and most recently a restaurant/bar.

Presently, the Boathouse is vacant. The proposed development aims to restore the building to its original use - as a public amenity space, as well as a place for residents and visitors to enjoy the lake and surrounding Romantic Landscape of the Park. In order to achieve this, a few changes are proposed by the operator to improve the building, and to introduce new amenities that would enhance the user's experience, while still ensuring that the changes remain compatible and sympathetic to the building, the Park, and the HCD (Attachment A) (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. Rendering showing the proposed Boathouse development

Proposed Alterations to the Existing Boathouse Building

Some alterations have been proposed to the existing Boathouse building. They include:

- Altering a number of window and door openings, as well as introducing new openings. Some of these changes are required to make the building compliant to the building code;
- Introducing new signage for the Boathouse;
- Introducing a new ramp at the entrance of the Boathouse to make the entrance accessible;
- New Planter bed at the entrance of the Boathouse; and
- A commemorative Plaque to describe the history of the site.

Alteration of Existing Openings and Introduction of New Openings

The existing footprint of the building will remain the same, however, a number of alterations are proposed to existing window and door openings, along with the introduction of some new openings. According to the elevations provided, changes on the north (front) elevation include centralizing the entrance to the Boathouse through the removal of two existing windows. On the east façade, changes include closing the existing window opening and introducing a new door opening that would lead to the proposed addition. The south (rear) façade includes the most changes, with the introduction of a new large folding partition doors by removing two windows, enlarging the existing door in the centre of the facade, and introducing another door on the right side. The west elevation also includes the introduction of a new folding partition door. All the new doors will be glass, making it distinguishable and contemporary from the historic portion of the building. These elevations are also available in Appendix B of the Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) attached with this report (Attachment B) (Fig. 4).



Figure 4. Elevations showing the proposed changes of openings on the Boathouse.

The current windows are not original to the Boathouse. Wherever they are being retained, the current windows are also proposed to be replaced with new aluminum windows in the existing openings.

New Signage and Planter Beds for the Boathouse

Updated wooden signage for the Boathouse is proposed to be placed in front of the building (Fig. 3). It will be enhanced with ground mounted lighting. A new planter bed is also proposed to be placed with the proposed sign. It will act as a landscaping buffer between the road and the Boathouse. Planter beds have also been proposed in other places on the site:

- By the proposed washroom addition; and
- Between the cantilevered patio and the walkway on the western side of the Boathouse

Commemorative Plaque

A commemorative plaque has also been proposed to inform visitors of the history of the site, and of Victoria Park. The plaque has been proposed to be placed in the entrance lobby of the Boathouse, although that is subject to change. The content and design of the plaque have not yet been finalized. Staff will be working with the applicant to finalize the content and design of the plaque in the coming months.

Proposed Addition on the East Façade of the Boathouse

A washroom addition is required to service the proposed use of the Boathouse as a restaurant and venue space. The washroom addition is proposed to be located on the east façade of the Boathouse towards the rear. It is proposed to be clad in Mitrex – with an appearance of either stone or wood so that it is compatible with the Boathouse and the surrounding Romantic landscape of Victoria Park.

Cantilevered Patio

One of the other major changes proposed in the surrounding landscape of the Boathouse is a new cantilevered patio, spreading across the entirety of the existing patio space, with a small portion located above the water (Fig. 5 &6). The patio will include a steel-frame cantilevered structure with a composite wood decking system. It will also include a 1.07 m high surface mounted glass guards for safety and to create maximum visibility of the lake and the surrounding landscape. No supports are proposed to be located within the lake.



Figure 5. Rendering showing the cantilevered patio over the water.



Figure 6. Image of what the rear portion of the Boathouse looks like currently.

Draft Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Boathouse

A scoped Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) dated September 23, 2022, and revised October 7, 2022, was required to assess the impacts of the proposed development on the Boathouse and the surrounding landscape. The scoped HIA provided a history of the existing Boathouse, outlined the proposed development and assessed the impacts of the proposed development against the *Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (Attachment B) and the VPAHCD Plan. The HIA made several recommendations that have been incorporated in the proposed redesign of the site. Some of the conclusionary remarks made in the HIA include:

- *The proposal maintains the existing building footprint which is a positive ecological impact;*
- *Re-introduction of commercial and retail functions have been made that were vital to the historic success of the area;*
- *The proposed development preserves the original historic use of the Boathouse building;*
- *The proposal creates a more natural and prominent front entrance point that works well with the symmetrical balanced façade;*
- *Proposed enlargement of the existing rear façade openings will offer a new view from the Boathouse, this creates a middle ground of the exiting foreground and lake in the background.*
- *Use of natural materials like wood in the proposed washroom addition for the soffit and interior cladding;*
- *Replacing concrete paving with grass (low-mid height planting up to the edge of Jubilee Road) to provide a buffer between the walkways and proposed deck railing;*
- *The proposed washroom additions and alterations do not negatively impact the existing views to the Lake and the commons from David Street, Roland Street, and Park Street (Jubilee Drive);*
- *A commemorative installation is recommended to be proposed. This education intervention will describe the history of the site to the park visitors and future used at the subject site.*

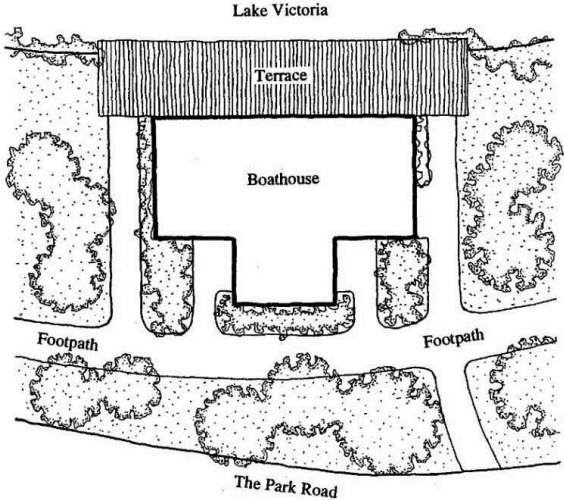
The scoped HIA is still in its draft stage and has not yet been approved by the Director of the Planning.

Victoria Park Neighborhood Heritage Conservation District Plan

The Victoria Park Neighborhood Heritage Conservation District Plan includes various policies and guidelines for alterations, additions, and conservation of the Romantic Landscape of the Victoria Park. The VPAHCD Plan identifies that the Boathouse should be redesigned so that they better fit into the Romantic Landscape style of Victoria Park. The Plan also states:

“The two features that require particular improvement are the Pavilion and Boathouse. These are larger buildings that need to be finished and landscaped in a manner that blends them more successfully into the park.”

The VPAHCD Plan further lists out certain measures that could be included as part of the improvement of the Boathouse design:

VPAHCD Plan Guidelines/Policy	Commentary
<i>Relocating exterior wall-mounted conduits and services so as not to be visible.</i>	There are currently no visible wall-mounted conduits and services, apart from the lamps that are currently on the building.
<i>Coordinating all signage type, size and colour as to be blend with the building facade</i>	The proposed signage will be made of wood, located at the front of the building, and will blend in with the building façade and the overall landscape of the Park.
<i>Remove roof spot lights but retaining antique wall-mounted globes using white light.</i>	The current roof of the building is not original, having been re-roofed in 2020. For now, the roof spot lights will not be removed, and the antique wall-mounted globes will be retained.
<i>Removing all existing timber retaining walls, posts and features and replacing with a simple rectangular water-side timber terrace.</i>	<p>A cantilevered patio has been proposed to be installed, which respects the vision for the water-side timber terrace (Fig. 7). The patio will, however, will extend over the water, but will not have negative impact on the lake or the water.</p>  <p><small>Suggested improvements to the Boathouse include the removal of all the timber retaining walls and paving to be replaced by a far simpler landscape that blends into the broader park character. This landscape would include a new waterfront terrace and grass with low-storey plantings around the Boathouse and up to the edge of the Park Road.</small></p> <p>Figure 7. Excerpt from the VPAHCD Plan showing 'suggested improvements' to the Boathouse.</p>
<i>Removing brick paving and replacing with grass and low to mid-storey planting up to the edge of the Park Road.</i>	The current brick paving that surrounds the front façade of the Boathouse is proposed to be retained for now. However, planter beds with low to mid-

	<p>height planting have been proposed in various locations around the Boathouse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the front of the building to provide a buffer between the building and Jubilee Drive; and - On either side of the building to provide a landscape buffer between the new proposed addition on the east façade and between the walkway and proposed cantilevered patio and the walkway on the west façade.
<i>Extending the principle gravel lakeside footpath past the Boathouse.</i>	Not applicable. The existing footpath does go past the Boathouse currently.

Table 1. Assessment of the proposed development according to the guidelines and/or policies within the VPAHCD regarding the Boathouse.

Additionally, the VPAHCD Plan also includes certain policies and guidelines for new additions within the District and for the conservation of the Romantic Landscape style of the Park. Summarized below are these conformity of the proposed development with the relevant guidelines and/or policies:

VPAHCD Plan Guidelines/Policy	Conformity of the Proposed Development
<p><i>Victoria Park Lake</i></p> <p><u><i>Conservation Guideline:</i></u> <i>The lake should be conserved as an open, uninterrupted body of water.</i></p> <p><i>Signage:</i></p> <p><u><i>Conservation Policies:</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Signage style shall be simple and direct and contribute to and enhance the naturalistic park character.</i> <i>2. Signage shall be discreet and inconspicuous while effective</i> 	<p>The proposed cantilevered deck will extend from the Boathouse above over the water. However, no structural infrastructure is proposed be installed in the lake to support the deck, ensuring that it is conserved as an open, uninterrupted body of water.</p> <p>Furthermore, the cantilevered patio would be a reversible design intervention, which could be removed in the future, if necessary, without having an adverse impact on the lake.</p> <p>The proposed signage uses traditional and simple materials like wood, which would enhance the naturalistic park character. The signage will be discreet, with ground mounted lighting and the colour palette will be coordinated with other painted features in the Park. The proposed signage will also</p>

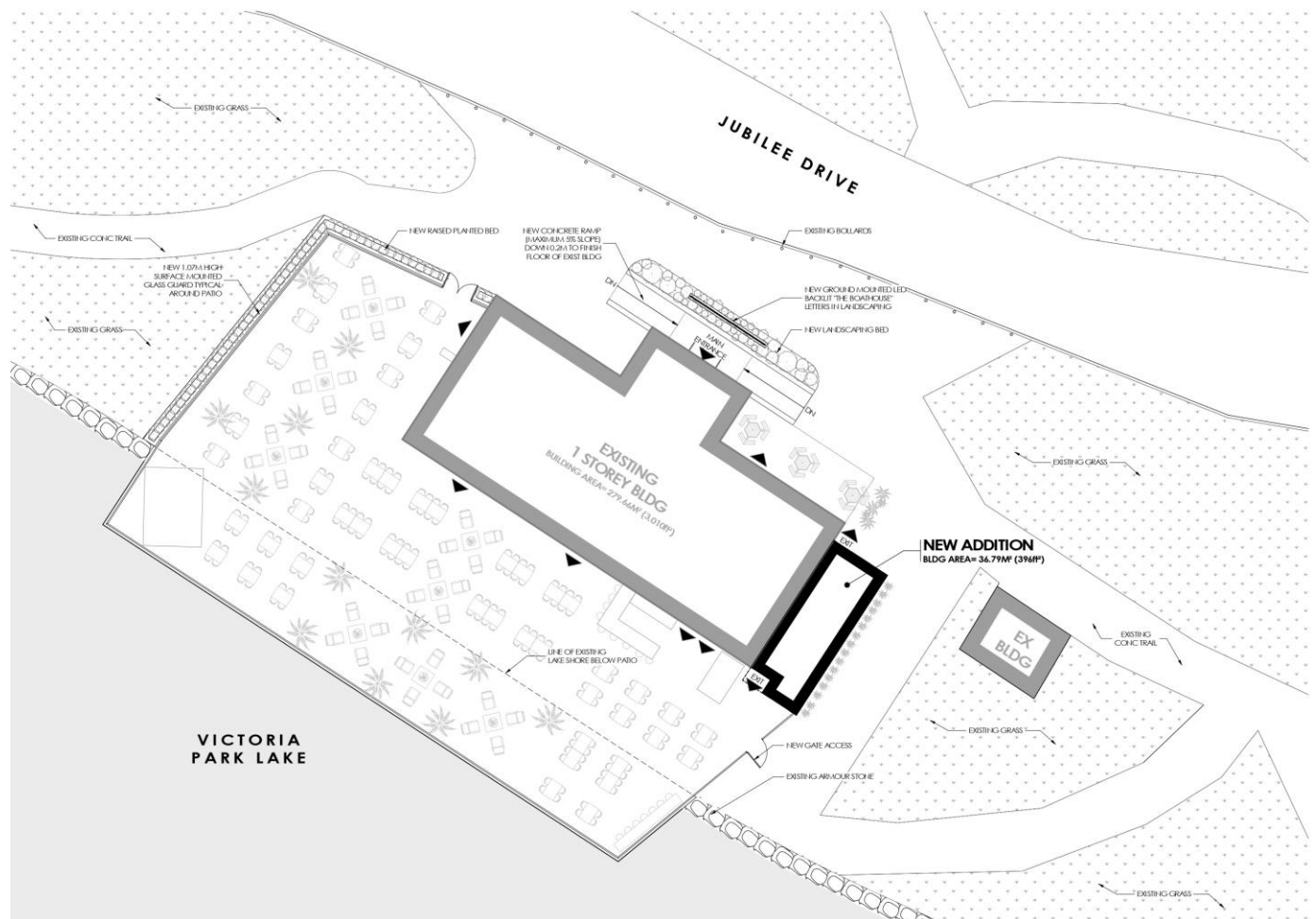
<p>3. <i>A classic forest green colour, which is historically appropriate, shall be considered as the base background colour</i></p> <p>4. <i>Signage colour palette shall be coordinated with all other painted features in the Park.</i></p> <p>Vistas</p> <p><u><i>Conservation Guideline:</i></u> <i>The following intermittent vistas in the Park should be conserved and enhanced:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The sequence along the Park Road (Jubilee Drive) in both directions, including views to the Commons and Lake; and</i> <i>• Views from David Street and Roland Street to the Commons and Victoria Park Lake</i> 	<p>be compatible with the overall Romantic Landscape of the Park.</p> <p>There will no impact on the existing views and vistas.</p>
<p><i>Building Addition Policies</i></p> <p><i>Location – Additions shall be located to the rear or rear side of the existing historic building so as to maintain the original principal façade as a visual entity. Where additions are brought forward, they shall not visually dominate or overpower the existing historic building.</i></p>	<p>The proposed addition is located on the rear side of the east façade of the existing building, thus maintain the principal façade as a visual entity.</p>
<p><i>Design – A clear distinction between the old and new building design is encouraged. Contemporary design for additions is encouraged that is complementary in terms of scale, mass, and texture to the existing or neighboring historic building.</i></p>	<p>The new addition is contemporary in its design and is visually distinguishable but compatible with the existing Boathouse building.</p>
<p><i>Height – Height of additions shall complement the predominant height of the original building and immediate streetscape.</i></p>	<p>The proposed height of the addition is one-storey, complementing the predominant height of the original building and the immediate streetscape.</p>

<i>Materials – For additions, materials typical of the Area shall be used, with an emphasis on brick, stone and wood.</i>	The proposed addition will be clad in Mitrex cladding, to give the visual appearance of stone or wood. Furthermore, given that the building has been modified extensively since the 1960s, contemporary materials are being used to keep the addition distinguishable but compatible with the existing building.
<i>Roof – Original historic roof shapes, finishes, chimneys and details shall be conserved. The roof of the addition shall be similar or complementary to the existing historic building or style in the Area.</i>	The roof of the proposed addition will be flat, which will be complementary to the Boathouse. There is an opportunity for planting on the roof, in order to make the proposed addition ecologically friendly.
<i>Entrances – New entrances to additions are encouraged to be located on secondary rather than principal facades.</i>	Entrances are proposed on the front and rear facades of the addition. However, since the addition is recessed from the principal façade of the original existing building, the entrances will not negatively impact the existing Boathouse building.
<i>Windows – The appearance, placement and proportion of height to width of windows shall be similar or complementary to the existing historic building style or as established in the vicinity. Closing-in of existing windows shall be avoided, but, when, unavoidable, windows should be made blind to retain an impression of their past presence.</i>	Since the addition would just include washrooms to service the restaurant and venue space, no windows are proposed on the addition.

Table 2. Assessment of the proposed development according to the guidelines and/or policies within the VPAHCD regarding the alterations, new additions, and conservation of the Romantic Landscape style of the Park.

Forthcoming Site Plan Application

The applicants also need to submit a Stamp Plan 'A' Site Plan Application to undertake the proposed work (Fig. 8). Staff are anticipating that some of the elements of this proposal which have not been finalized yet – such as the commemorative plaque or any changes in materials – will be dealt with and finalized prior to full site plan approval. Staff will be working with the applicant to fulfill these conditions as the site plan application process progresses. As part of the conditions for approval for the Site Plan Application, a heritage permit would be required to undertake the proposed work, which is why the conditions of approval outlined for this heritage permit application are also required to be fulfilled prior to the final site plan approval. This will ensure that conditions relating to heritage elements outlined in this heritage permit application will be implemented through the site plan approval process. This will also ensure that the final plans are consistent with the approvals associated with this heritage permit application.



Heritage Planning Comments

In reviewing merits of this application, heritage planning staff make the following comments:

- The property municipally addressed as 57 Jubilee Drive is located within the Victoria Park Area Heritage Conservation District and is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- The proposal involves the adaptive re-use of the Boathouse building and restoration of its original use as a public amenity and gathering space;
- A number of alterations to door and window openings have been proposed, as well as the introduction of new openings on all facades of the building and replacement of windows;
- The proposed development also includes a new addition on the rear side of the east side of the building, as well new signage and installing an accessibility ramp;
- A cantilevered patio has also been proposed which would extend over the water;
- The existing Boathouse building has the original footprint of the building, but has been extensively modified after a fire in 1967 and years after;
- All of the changes proposed are contemporary in nature and design, but are still compatible with the existing Boathouse, Victoria Park, and the HCD;
- All the changes proposed will not have an adverse impact on the existing Boathouse, the Romantic Landscape style of Park, and the overall District;

- The modifications proposed through this heritage permit application are required to re-purpose the existing vacant building in order to restore it to its original intended use and to better utilize this resource in Victoria Park; and

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener Committee meeting.

CONSULT – The Heritage Kitchener Committee will be consulted regarding the subject Heritage Permit Application.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Ontario Heritage Act, 2021*

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services Department

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Heritage Permit Application HPA-2022-V-027

Attachment B – Scoped Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Boathouse