



## Hamilton Region ACO Newsletter SPRING 2022

### **MESSAGE FROM ACO HRB PRESIDENT** – Shannon Kyles

The ACO HRB, Janice Brown in particular, did a fantastic job with Doors Open Hamilton 2022. Attendance was good. The sites, beautiful. For more on this event and others, such as our AGM on September 14, see Past/Upcoming Events section in this edition of our newsletter. Anyone interested in helping with Doors Open Hamilton 2023 please get in touch by contacting us by October 2022 at [acontariohamilton@gmail.com](mailto:acontariohamilton@gmail.com).

The re-election of the Progressive Conservative party means renewed efforts in the areas of conservation and restoration. The ACO provincial office is reiterating the **Keep, Fix, Reuse** message that we presented to MPP's during Heritage Week 2022. Re-purposing old buildings will mean a faster approach to meeting housing targets proposed by the provincial government. ACO Hamilton Region will be helping communities try to save their historic buildings and spaces.

We at the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Hamilton Region Branch wish you a splendid summer.

### **PAST/UPCOMING EVENTS**

Doors Open Hamilton 2022 – Janice Brown / Sarah Sheehan Co-Chairs DOH2022

After a two year hiatus, Doors Open Hamilton returned on May 7th and 8th. Opened to the public were 25 in-person sites, 9 walking tours, several self-guided tours, and we partnered in a special event at the Cotton Factory.

New properties never before seen included Chedoke Estate / Balfour House, the Copley Building, Millworks Creative Studios, the Gasworks, and Bridgeworks along with many favourites from past events.

Top visited sites were: Balfour / Chedoke (1,900 visitors), Burlington Canal Lighthouse and Keepers' Cottage (1,230 visitors), Gage Park Tropical Greenhouse (910 visitors), Auchmar (804 visitors – Sat. only), and Shawn & Ed Brewing Co. (800 visitors). The Cotton Factory Spring Up! Night Market attracted 3,500 visitors.





The key to carrying on this event and making each year better; **FEEDBACK**. We gathered feedback from ACO Hamilton Region board members, our volunteers, our event partners including the Ontario Heritage Trust, and our guests attending the event in May 2022.

The ACO Hamilton Branch will be hosting again in 2023. Preparations will begin in early fall. We are planning for more buildings, more tours and many other special activities. Doors Open Hamilton will return on May 6th and 7th, 2023. Mark your calendars!

***Thank you to our site hosts, our tour guides, our sponsors, our volunteers, and to you our guests who made the comeback from the pandemic a Doors Open to remember!***

Heritage Days Ancaster – Bob Maton President AVHC

Ancaster Village Heritage Community (AVHC) is inviting heritage enthusiasts to march with us in the **Ancaster Heritage Days Parade on Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>**. We'll be gathering at 9:00 A.M. on Lodor Street in Ancaster. The parade begins at 10 A.M., setting out from Academy Street and proceeding south along Wilson Street to Todd Avenue, about 2 kilometres. We'll have a classic car with us, and heritage posters to carry or bring your own. Please join us! For more information please contact Bob Maton at [bobmaton@hotmail.com](mailto:bobmaton@hotmail.com) or 905-304-0932.

ACO HRB AGM – Tentative Date September 14, 2022 5 P.M. more information to follow. At our Annual General Meeting we will be electing the Board of Directors for 2022-2023. All Directors must be an ACO member of good standing. We are currently in need of a Secretary and a Communications Coordinator. Interested? Contact us at [acontariohamilton@gmail.com](mailto:acontariohamilton@gmail.com).

Other Events/Tours

Downtown Walking Tour - For a full schedule go to [attawa.ca](http://attawa.ca) or contact [wm.king4@gmail.com](mailto:wm.king4@gmail.com)

Hamilton Cemetery Tours - For the tour schedule go to [hamiltonhistory.ca](http://hamiltonhistory.ca)

Historic Gore Walking Tour - Pick up a free self guided tour at Tourism Hamilton 28 James Street North.



## HAMILTON HERITAGE/DEMOLITION CONTROL BY-LAW UPDATE – B. Maton

Upgrade of Hamilton’s Demolition Control Bylaw Will Potentially Preserve Built Heritage Not Covered Under the Ontario Heritage Act



The demolition of the 1860 Brandon House in Ancaster, left & below, in April 2020 unleashed a torrent of fury around Hamilton that in April 2022, two years later, has resulted in revisions to the city’s residential demolition control bylaw. Jim MacLeod and Bob Maton of the Ancaster Village Heritage Community (AVHC) - who inspired and participated in the city policy process believe these revisions will make demolition permits more difficult to obtain, and will particularly help preserve heritage buildings that are not protected under the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA).



Since 2011, the city has been moving on a number of fronts to inventory Hamilton’s built heritage and to bring unprotected building stock under the protection of the OHA, but progress has been slowed by events and the building stock to be analyzed is massive, numbering in the thousands. Historic buildings like the Brandon House remain vulnerable to demolition without the protection of the OHA.

There were a number of problems with the 2009 bylaw. First, it relieved council of the onerous task of reviewing every demolition application by delegating authority to issue demolition permits for “routine applications” to city staff. “Routine applications” automatically received permits, while the criteria defining “routine applications” were quite broad.

Three criteria for automatic approvals were particularly problematic: applications by developers accumulating land for large projects; applications for permits in commercialized areas; and those in rural areas where adjacent land would not be affected.

There was no mechanism pre-demolition to consider the importance of a building in its local context, nor were developers required to replace the demolished building in timely fashion. Important neighbourhood buildings would suddenly disappear, leaving behind lots that sometimes remained vacant and rubble-strewn for years at a time.

Councillors were informed of impending demolitions in their wards well beforehand, but there was no requirement for public transparency. Councillors were therefore vulnerable to accusations of a lack of diligence, or of having pro-development or autocratic agendas when a demolition occurred. Further, in the staff report accompanying the old bylaw, developers were defined as “customers”.

Finally, the former bylaw contained no statement of its intended aims, an oversight which reinforced the dominance of developers in the process. One can easily conclude that the bylaw helped turn the city culture towards serving developers over communities.

The criteria mentioned above have now been removed from the bylaw. Routine applications remain, but now are restricted to demolition permits issued only as part of an approved site plan, an approved draft plan of subdivision, or a severance approval. Thus many more demolitions will be scrutinized as part of a replacement plan, while problems of disrupted neighbourhoods and rubble-strewn lots are potentially mitigated.

A statement of intent from the Planning Act is now included in the preamble, which boosts the standing of communities in permitting: “...Council wishes to: maintain the integrity of residential neighbourhoods; prevent the premature loss of dwelling units and the creation of vacant land; retain existing dwelling units until new uses have been considered; and, prevent the premature loss of municipal assessment...”

Not included in the bylaw per se, but an important aspect of public participation, is a city commitment to enhance volunteer efforts to inventory heritage buildings so they can be protected on the Municipal Heritage Register or become Designated Heritage under the OHA. The importance of community-building in these provisions cannot be underestimated.

Finally, the staff authors of the new bylaw identify a need to improve communication between Divisions in the city bureaucracy through the Internal Notification System, so that a standardized process for red-flagging demolition applications needing further research can be developed. AVHC has suggested flagging buildings more than 90 years old for special attention before a demolition permit is issued. If adopted, this would catch in its net buildings worthy of being preserved.

Special thanks to Alissa Golden, City Heritage Planner, and Jason Thorne, General Manager of Planning and Economic Development for their initiative on this revision. Although preserving heritage buildings is not its primary intent, the new bylaw can potentially help.

## ACO HERITAGE AWARDS NOMINATIONS -

Nominations are now open for this year's ACO Heritage Awards. We want to see as many nominations as possible, so submit your suggestions. The deadline for nominating is June 30. You can find more information about the awards at [www.acoheritageawards.ca](http://www.acoheritageawards.ca). The nomination form, plus instructions on how to nominate can be found here: <https://acoheritageawards.ca/>.



**Hamilton Region Past Winners** - Carlos Ventin Award for Municipal Heritage Leadership awarded to [Alissa Golden](#) for her dedicated work to streamline and improve the City of Hamilton's ability to conserve heritage.

Peter Stokes Restoration Award awarded to [mcCallumSather and Electric City Developments](#) for their restoration of the Westinghouse Headquarters building in Hamilton, placing emphasis on sustainability and energy efficiency.

## WE NEED YOU!

The **ACO HRB** cannot do it alone. We need your help and support. Please pass this newsletter on to those interested in conserving architecture. Membership Benefits include:

- Access to experienced parties in heritage and related fields
- Exposure to Provincial/National trends in heritage preservation and advocacy;
- Access to ACO activities;
- Access to ACO's Website Member Portal;
- Reduced individual membership rates from other aligned organizations
- Free subscription to "ACORN" magazine
- Access to "ACORN in a Nutshell"
- Access to the Branch Newsletter
- Reduced fees to Provincial/National Heritage conferences
- A charitable tax-receipt

To join go to [https://www.acontario.ca/join\\_check.php?b\\_id=7](https://www.acontario.ca/join_check.php?b_id=7) **OR** send us an email to [acontariohamilton@gmail.com](mailto:acontariohamilton@gmail.com) stating you are interested in joining or renewing and we will forward to you an application form and remittance details.

You can also find us @ACOHamiltonBranch on facebook and @ACOHamilton on Twitter and Instagram. Our social media links:

 <https://www.facebook.com/acohamiltonbranch>

 <https://twitter.com/acohamilton?lang=en>

 <https://www.instagram.com/acohamilton/?hl=en>

ACO HRB website link: [https://www.acontario.ca/branch.php?b\\_id=7](https://www.acontario.ca/branch.php?b_id=7). In order not to miss important emails please ensure you have [info@acontario.ca](mailto:info@acontario.ca) set up in your contact list.