

Dec. 1, 2022

Dear Mayor Guthrie and Guelph Council,

I have been told that at the upcoming December 6 Council meeting regarding appointments to Advisory Committees, there may be a motion recommending a Councillor sit as a non-voting member of Heritage Guelph.

If this is introduced, on behalf of Heritage Guelph, I applaud the motion and cannot strongly enough encourage its' adoption.

In the 2021 [Heritage Committee Review and Facilitation Summary](#) by Municipal Government Wayfinders Ltd., adding a Councillor to Heritage Guelph was twice listed as a key "opportunity for improvement" under Communication (pg. 25) and under Resources. (pg. 27)

In the [Executive Summary Best Practices](#) component of that report, it was municipal staff of comparator municipalities who spoke highly of having councillors sitting on Heritage Committees,

**Oakville:**

When discussing the role of two Councillors on the committee, staff described participation of Council members on the committee as "very helpful". Staff expressed that Council members on the committee help to keep the communication strong between the committee and Council at critical decision points. In addition, staff confirmed that residents appreciate the fact that members of Council are involved with the committee.

**Waterloo**

Staff indicated that the member of Council who sits on the committee is viewed as very helpful at communicating the committee's views at the Council table. The Council member is an advocate for the committee, helping curb rigidity by encouraging flexible and objective discussions.

**Ottawa**

Staff advised that the addition of five members of Council to the committee has elevated the profile of heritage significantly not only with Council, but in general. This change has been viewed as beneficial...

There is further advice on this topic from the Provincial Government by way of their publication the [Ontario Heritage Tool Kit](#) . The Tool Kit recommends that:

*Most councils and MHCs have found that having one or two municipal council representatives on the advisory committee helps to maintain lines of communication between council and its Municipal Heritage Committee.*

Finally, in the [Prioritization Exercise](#) directed by Municipal Government Wayfinders, putting a Councillor on Heritage Guelph was the #1 priority of the committee.

It is both a daunting and exciting time for Heritage Conservation in Guelph.

As we assess the consequences of Bill 23 on heritage issues, we are also on the cusp of Guelph's bicentennial; 2027 should be the greatest celebration of Guelph's cultural and architectural heritage that we see in our lifetime.

Including a councillor on the Heritage Guelph membership is an important and welcome way to meet our challenges, leverage our opportunities, improve communication and to honour our shared commitment to heritage conservation.

As chair of Heritage Guelph, I strongly support the implementation of this recommendation.

There are hyperlinks in the email above, and I have included those links separately below. Please don't hesitate to contact me if there are questions or comments,

I remain,  
Yours Truly,

P. Brian Skerrett  
Chair  
Heritage Guelph



Heritage Committee Review and Facilitation Summary <https://pub-guelph.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=17243>

Prioritization Exercise (Heritage Guelph Minutes Sept 13 2021) Attachment #2 <https://pub-guelph.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=1832>

Ontario Heritage Tool Kit  
[http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/Heritage Tool Kit Your community Eng.pdf](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/Heritage_Tool_Kit_Your_community_Eng.pdf)