

## Report to Council

**Report Title:** Walkerton Baptist Church

**Prepared By:** Fiona Hamilton, Clerk

**Department:** Clerk's

**Date:** November 12, 2019

**Report Number:** CLK2019-38

**File Number:** C11CL

**Attachments:**

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### Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number CLK2019-38 – Walkerton Baptist Church, prepared by Fiona Hamilton, Clerk for information purposes and further approves proceeding with option \_\_\_\_\_.

### Report:

#### Background:

The Walkerton Baptist Church (located at 120 Cayley Street) held its final service on November 3, 2019 and the building has been listed for sale. The Walkerton Baptist Church building itself is a unique historic structure that is a designated heritage property in a visible location (with limited parking) at the corner of Jackson and Cayley Street. After making the decision to list the property for sale, Brockton's Heritage Committee was invited to tour the building, some parts of which pre-date the introduction of electricity to Walkerton.

The tour of the building occurred on October 22, 2019. At the next meeting of the Heritage Committee on November 4, 2019, the following motion was carried:

That the Brockton Heritage Committee request that Brockton Council consider purchasing the Walkerton Baptist Church for use as a Cultural Heritage Centre, indicating that the Heritage Committee would be willing to use a large portion of the reserve fund for that purpose if possible.

The current asking price for the property is \$249,000.00. There is \$181,053.09 in the Community Heritage Reserve Fund and another \$26,898.00 in the Heritage Reserve Fund. The Community Heritage Reserve Fund was originally established from a grant from the provincial government and was a revolving fund that assisted individuals that would apply for renovations to a municipally designated heritage building. The provincial program is no longer being administered and there are no restrictions on the use of that fund. The Heritage Reserve Fund has historically been used for acquisitions of items or documents of significant heritage value.

The building is zoned Institutional “IN” and a Change of Use permit would be required if the proposed use different from the current “Assembly” use. The Heritage has long been seeking a location to fully display the collection of heritage items and documents that have been amassed over the years. While the building itself would likely require significant upgrades (such as to the electrical system), the building is more accessible than many other heritage properties. The building could be made completely accessible with relatively little outlay.

### **Analysis:**

As noted above, Brockton’s Heritage Committee would plan on using the building to store and display heritage items and documents in a manner that would be open and available to the general public. However, it was also discussed by some Committee members that church has a fairly large hall that could be used to augment the limited meeting space at the municipal office. There is an updated and functional kitchen space that would support the use of the church as a community centre, and may also allow some revenue to be collected if the space was rented to local service clubs or other organizations. Given that some upgrades would likely be necessary, the building could be changed to accommodate a number of potential uses.

On the other hand, these potential upgrades may prove to be significantly expensive. Brockton’s Heritage Committee currently has sufficient space to store items at the Walkerton Fire Hall (although this space is not ideal for the display of those items). There would also be ongoing expenses associated with the upkeep, maintenance and rental of any proposed facility.

Council may also want to consider whether the best long-term solution from a cost perspective may be to consider a purpose built facility that could be used to serve a number of municipal purposes, such as combined works shops, municipal office space, additional recreation and community space, as well as space to display the heritage collection, as such a purpose build facility would be efficient to maintain and meet all accessibility requirements.

Staff have outlined two potential options below:

#### **Option 1:**

Decline the request of Brockton’s Heritage Committee while acknowledging the goal of securing a space to public display the collection of the Heritage Committee in the future;

#### **Option 2:**

Direct Staff to bring forward a report seeking additional instructions to staff about negotiating the potential sale of the Walkerton Baptist Church property (as direction would be required related to price, which funds could be used, more information that may be need about the proposed use).

### **Sustainability Checklist:**

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy?       | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity?     | Yes |

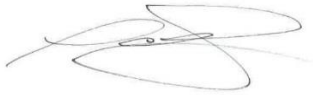
- Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? No
- Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? No

### **Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:**

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

The Brockton Heritage Committee would be willing to use a large portion of the reserve funds described above should Council wish to consider purchasing the Walkerton Baptist Church.

### **Reviewed By:**



**Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer**

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### **Respectfully Submitted by:**



**Fiona Hamilton, Clerk**

### **Reviewed By:**



**Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer**