



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Subject: Designation of St. Albert Place as a Municipal Historic Resource

Recommendation(s):

1. That the City Manager give notice to the owners of the building and land described below of Council's Intention to designate the building and land as Municipal Historic Resources:

St. Albert Place
Plan 7720845; Block A
5 St. Anne Street

2. That the City Manager, or his designate, be appointed to implement matters arising from the issuance of the Notice of Intention to Designate the above noted property as a Municipal Historic Resource.

Report Summary:

This report seeks Council's direction to begin the process of designating St. Albert Place and the land upon which the building sits as a Municipal Historic Resource. Getting Council authorization to serve a Notice of Intention to Designate as a Municipal Historic Resource is the first step in the designation process.

Report:

Section 26 of the *Historical Resources Act* authorizes a municipality to designate historic resources as municipal historic resources. An historic resource is defined by the *Historical Resources Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. H-9 ("HRA") as "... any work of nature or of humans that is primarily of value for its palaeontological, archaeological, prehistoric, historic, cultural, natural, scientific or esthetic interest including, but not limited to, a palaeontological, archaeological, prehistoric, historic or natural site, structure or object." It is the opinion of the Administration that St. Albert Place merits designation as a municipal historic resource.

St. Albert Place was officially opened on December 8, 1983. The building is a three-storey reinforced concrete structure with masonry and glazed walls having an approximate floor area of 130,000 square feet. The building was designed by Douglas J. Cardinal, a renowned Canadian and international architect. The following is a description of St. Albert Place from the website www.djcarchitect.com.

St. Albert Place was conceived as a meeting place for the political, civic, administrative, cultural and community activities of the City of St. Albert, just outside of Edmonton, Alberta. It was to be a demonstration of the accessibility of government to the community, and a focal point for community participation in government affairs. Under one roof, the complex includes: Council Chambers, administrative offices, a museum, an auditorium, a public library and arts and crafts facilities. To bring these diverse and hitherto dispersed functions into one building,



we carried out an extensive programming process that involved the City and Provincial levels of government as well as the staff of the departments using the building.

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The tightly wedged site between a downtown street, river parkland and a high court building manages to embrace the 133,150 square feet of space without the feeling of being out of place. The design responds to the urban constraints with playful geometry and articulate facades on the street side, while the park side terraces back from the river's edge, permitting pedestrians to walk up the building terraces and use the park and its walkways. In its urban context, St. Albert Place complements the area in form and style of architecture.

The designation bylaw will restrict the destruction, disturbance, alteration, restoration or repair of the building or structure permanently. The current proposal is to designate and regulate the entire structure. The Administration realizes that because the building will continue to be used and must continue to be renovated to meet the needs of users a total restriction on alterations to the building is not practicable. The Administration and staff of the Arts and Heritage Foundation will be working with representatives of the provincial Historic Places Stewardship section of the Culture and Community Spirit Department to clarify what are the defining elements of the building and how those defining elements can best be maintained. It is anticipated that specific regulations will be prepared for Council consideration. Once put in place the regulations will be help to ensure the integrity of the defining elements.

Financial Implications

Beyond the nominal costs of registering the designation bylaw at the Land Titles Office there are no out of pocket expenses arising out of the process of designating St. Albert Place as a municipal historic resource. Over time the costs of maintaining an historic resource may be higher than maintaining a structure that has not been designated, as the designation requires that maintenance work be undertaken in a manner that respects the historic character and defining elements of the resource. A precise quantification of the potential difference in the maintenance costs has not and probably cannot be done at this time.

Legal Implications:

The municipality must give notice to the owner of its intention to designate a building or site as a municipal historic resource. As was the case with other municipally owned resources, this means that the City will give notice to itself. While it may seem foolish or unwarranted for the City to give notice to itself the wording of the *Historical Resources Act* makes Council's ability to pass a designation bylaw conditional upon this notice having been given. Passage of a designation bylaw without giving the appropriate notice and waiting the required sixty days could result in the validity of the designation bylaw being questioned by the province or some other individual or entity.

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