

Centretown Heritage Study As We Heard It Report

Phase 1 recommendations Online consultation June 15 to July 31, 2020

Given the impacts of COVID-19, the City adjusted its plans for public consultation. Instead of an open house, property owners in the study area were mailed a letter dated June 17, 2020 inviting them to view the Phase 1 recommendations online at ottawa.ca/centretownheritage and to provide comments by July 31, 2020.

The website featured an interactive map where users could search for their address and find out what the recommendations are for their property. The interactive map contains data for approximately 3000 properties. A project overview, the final report from the City's consultant and an updated timeline for the project were also available online.

The City collected feedback on the Phase 1 recommendations through an online feedback form, by email and through a dedicated phone line, 613-580-2463.

All together, staff received 77 responses during the consultation period:

- 39 responses were sent to staff by email
- 24 responses were submitted using the online feedback form
- 14 phone calls were made to 613-580-2463

Responses were received from a variety of stakeholders:

- property owners
- renters
- former residents of Centretown
- law firms
- consulting firms

In general, the responses fell into to a few larger categories:

- 26 Looking for clarification on the recommendations
- 17 Against increased heritage protection
- 15 Support for increased heritage protection
- 10 Other
- 7 Change of property owner or address
- 2 Requests for property reports

The responses categorized as “Other” include comments about a monument at Minto Park, interest in being hired to work on the study and notice that an email was sent to staff.

The responses contain a significant amount of personal information and many relate to a specific property. To protect the privacy of participants, a complete transcript is not included in this report. A selection of responses submitted using the online feedback form is provided below:

The consultants' proposed HCD is too conservative. It excludes many fine streets.

Heritage protection makes it harder to develop new buildings and intensify downtown areas

It drives up prices, reduces the chance for low income and supportive housing, and generally shuts out new Canadians, people with low incomes, and all those not already living in the 'historical' area. Please don't designate anything else 'historical' - it's just a codification of latent racism / class-ism.

Si nous sommes désigné patrimoine, je ne veux pas avoir à obtenir la permission de la ville pour entreprendre des travaux à l'extérieur de ma maison, comme peindre la porte de ma maison.

Minto Park's special area devoted to murdered women is a disgrace - it looks neglected and weed-infested. It must cause extra pain to the relatives who visit it to commemorate their loved one.

Appropriate maintenance of this building as a residence would be hindered by any level of heritage designation. The City's record on complicating matters almost guarantees that any designation of the building would involve increasing interference in the maintenance of the home and reduce its sale value. Please do not add my home to this register.

More needs to be done to protect heritage properties in Somerset Ward 14. Demolition by neglect is unacceptable. Commercial and residential properties should be identified, and tax incentives offered to property owners to maintain the condition of their properties. Residential properties are as important as commercial. There should be a heritage district established in the Golden Triangle.

Although I think that some buildings in Centretown are heritage worthy we are more concerned with some of the trends of allowing buildings to deteriorate and left derelict example Somerset house or the small commercial site on the corner of Bay and Gladstone. I believe that unless the City enforces its own bylaws and creates true incentives or disincentives, no amount of designations or other impediments to developers will actually help.

The heritage registry and associated policies is an unreasonable additional burden on Centertown property owner. It's an inequitable treatment and discourages renewal of the housing stock with more sustainable buildings. And also runs counter to densification.

I welcome this study. In a nutshell, my home was built around 1905 on Lewis Street, and I think it would warrant a heritage designation.

Please insist that developers respect the old buildings - the prevalence of facadisms and demolition by dereliction are obvious signs of poor understanding of the potentials of the assets.

Don't make my house a heritage property unless you are willing to buy it at market value from me ahead of time.

Next steps

City staff will consider all feedback received during the online consultation period, which may include revising some of the Phase 1 recommendations.

City staff will notify property owners with any updates or changes to the recommendations related to their individual properties.

The Centretown Heritage Study Working Group will continue to meet and provide guidance on the next phases of Centretown Heritage Study.

For more information, please contact:

Lesley Collins, MCIP RPP
Program Manager, Heritage Planning Branch
Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department
613-580-2463
heritage@ottawa.ca