

TIMELINE for Hyatt and MacDonald houses @ 29 August 2021

- 1993 Sandbanks Provincial Park Management Plan commits to preserving the Hyatt (Gray) (1869) and Macdonald (1878) houses.
- 2012 Engineering report finds both buildings stable except for one wing.
- 2017 Ontario Parks initiates studies of the houses, without community input.
- 2019**
- 6 Dec Posting on Environmental Registry of Ontario by Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks for MECP to change Sandbanks Provincial Park Management Plan to allow demolition of Macdonald and Hyatt houses to “help ensure the health and safety of Park visitors”
- 12 Dec Prince Edward Heritage Advisory Committee (PEHAC) motion requesting that the Heritage Impact Assessments for the 2 houses be posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) and that the public comments period be extended to 45 days from the date of posting of the Heritage Impact Assessments (no response to this request)
- 18 Dec Four PEHAC members (one of whom is a structural engineer) meet Park Superintendent on site and visit the 2 houses.
- 2020**
- 16 Jan PEHAC motion to authorize Chair to draft a letter to ERO on PEHAC’s behalf and that Chair request the Mayor to send a letter to MECP and the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries (MHSTCI)
- 20 Jan PEHAC submits letter to ERO with recommendations, including that Ontario Parks “seek the creation of a joint public/private partnership to restore and repurpose the MacDonald and Hyatt properties as commercially viable accommodation for park visitors.”
- 12 Feb Heritage architect Edwin Rowse (founder, with Michael McClelland, of ERA Architects Inc.) writes to MHSTCI expressing concerns.
- 28 Feb Edwin Rowse makes a site visit, then submits his detailed condition assessment to ERO: He found that Ontario Parks’ “heritage planner provided no credible basis for her recommendation to demolish.” Edwin also recommended “third-party involvement in the development and management of the buildings ... [which] would necessarily involve a ... study for their retention, rehabilitation, and repurposing, including the development of a financial analysis and business case.”
- 10 Mar Report from Municipal Manager of Planning to Mayor and Council, with draft letter for Mayor; report gives reason for action:

“... elevate the issue to the level of importance needed to foster public dialogue and a sharpened focus on constructive alternatives to demolition.”

“Through raising public and political awareness and discussion in the cultural heritage of the homes, Provincial support for the improvement and conservation of the homes may be secured.”

Mayor’s letter:

“This correspondence is intended to reinforce the position of the Heritage Advisory Committee, and strongly encourage the review of alternate options to demolition ... and to seek a path to respecting the Sandbanks Provincial Park Management Plan which originally recognized the heritage value of the buildings proposed to be demolished.”

15 Sept “Notice of Completion of Category B Project Evaluation”
“come into disrepair ... [therefore] demolition ... commemoration”
“the majority of concerns expressed were in regard to the loss of the buildings ... and the cultural heritage they possess”
“comments submitted regarding the potential to invest in the restoration of the buildings... buildings are of no use to the park, restoring ... not recommended”
opportunity to “submit additional written comments ... by October 15, 2020”

7 Oct **Solution arises:** Heritage architect Philip Evans of ERA Architects offers to do a feasibility study, then a proposal for adaptive reuse and entering into a leasehold with Parks. Philip Evans has financial backing and his work would address Ontario Parks’ health & safety concerns. Win-win for Parks & County & public.

2021

4 Feb Ontario Parks declines Philip Evans’ offer of feasibility study and offer to lease. Ontario Parks’ “Decision Document” later reveals that Ontario Parks was concerned that pursuing a single source offer would not adhere to procurement policy. Note: If Ontario Parks issued a Request for Proposals under the procurement policy, this would not be an issue.

Site prep begins: snow clearing, brush clearing, heavy equipment arrives.

18 Feb PEHAC motion:
THAT the Prince Edward Heritage Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct the Mayor to urgently contact Ontario Parks and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to:
(a) urge Ontario Parks to pause the demolition of the MacDonald and Hyatt houses to allow a heritage architect a reasonable time to prepare a feasibility study for the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of the houses that would ensure the conservation of their cultural heritage value and would address Ontario Parks’ concerns regarding health and safety; and
(b) express that the Municipality rejects commemoration as an acceptable mitigation for demolishing these historic farmhouses on the Lake Ontario waterfront.

- 4 Mar Edwin Rowse launches legal proceeding for a “stay of demolition”. On 8 Mar 2021, Judge Corbett rules that the matter must be determined through a judicial review, with a hearing scheduled for Sept 15, 2021.
- 8 Mar Philip Evans, Edwin Rowse, and Hyatt descendent Sarah Sinclair make deputations to Council in support of the PEHAC motion. In light of the legal proceeding, Council declines to approve PEHAC’s motion.
- 31 Mar Last day of the Sept 1–Mar 31 permitted “demolition window”
- 1 April Demolition paused to protect nesting birds and bats.
- 11 May Edwin Rowse withdraws his application for judicial review.
- 28 May **A new path forward:** Ontario Parks announces new policy to seek innovative ideas and proposals from the private and not-for-profit sectors:
<https://news.ontario.ca/en/backgrounder/1000218/ontario-investing-in-enhancements-and-upgrades-to-provincial-parks>
- June Community group Save Heritage Sandbanks Homes (SHSH) formed with the mission “To save and repurpose the Hyatt and MacDonald houses to enrich the visitor experience at Sandbanks Provincial Park and to preserve and promote Prince Edward County's Cultural Heritage: <http://saveheritagesandbankshomes.com>
- July/Aug SHSH campaigns to connect the public and the private and not-for-profit sectors with the Ontario government to find new and innovative ideas that will allow for the preservation and repurposing of the Hyatt and MacDonald homes.
- 17 Aug Council unanimously approves a motion to “**authorize the Mayor to send a letter** to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks requesting that the Ministry seek innovative options for preservation of the Hyatt and MacDonald houses as an alternative to demolition, respect Municipal strategic priorities and planning policy regarding cultural heritage to ensure building preservation, and to pursue a protection strategy for these provincially owned heritage assets for the future benefit of the citizens of the Province of Ontario.”
- 17 Aug SHSH member speaks with Minister Piccini, who will review the file and get back to SHSH
- 18 Aug Mayor writes Minister Piccini requesting that:
 “the Ministry seek innovative options for preservation of the Hyatt and MacDonald houses as an alternative to demolition, respect Municipal strategic priorities and planning policy regarding cultural heritage to ensure building preservation, and to pursue a protection strategy for these provincially owned heritage assets for the future benefit of the citizens of the Province of Ontario.”
- 22 Aug SHSH releases its Survey Results showing 96% of residents and Park visitors support saving and repurposing the Sandbanks heritage homes

- 27 Aug MECP releases public statement to CKWS Global Kingston News, reiterating Ontario Parks' position that the houses need to be torn down for health & safety reasons
- 29 Aug SHSH requests urgent review by MECP and MHSTCI of the application of the *Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties* to the Hyatt and MacDonald Houses to ensure compliance in light of new information arising. SHSH writes Minister Piccini to respectfully ask whether MECP's statement to CKWS Global Kingston News confirms his decision to demolish the houses.
- 1 Sept Demolition can happen from September 1 onward.