



The members of the NOTL Canada Sesquicentennial Committee met on November 29, 2016 in the Rotary Room at the NOTL Library at 1:30 pm.

**PRESENT:** Bill Cowie, Rick Meloen, Richard Coyne, Sheldon Randall, Tony Chisholm, Clare Cameron, John Mather, Bill French, Cheryl Morris, Sarah Bowers (representing Cathy Simpson), Sarah Kaufman, Amanda Gamble, Peter Martin. Guests included several people who had expressed interest (following the public info session & through the website) in joining subcommittees

**REGRETS:** Tim Jennings

**ABSENT:** Janice Thompson, Jim Alexander, Terry Flynn, Pat Darte

Co-Chair Bill Cowie called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:**

There were no conflicts of interest declared at this time.

**MATTERS FROM MINUTES:**

No matters arising.

**DELEGATIONS:**

There were no delegations made at this meeting.

AGENDA for November 29, 2016 approved by all.

MINUTES of November 15, 2016 meeting were approved by all.

**PRESENTATION:**

No presentations.

Co-chair Rick Meloen announced that the Committee's grant proposal to the Ontario 150 Secretariat for the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport has been accepted in the amount of up to \$400,000. This grant is to be spent on the Confederation Celebration Roadshow (this project may be renamed) that will run from April to September 2017. Further details will be shared after a discussion with the Secretariat on December 7, 2016.

**BUSINESS:**

1. Sub committees' reports (Note: in the interest of time, the committee has decided to hear from only those subcommittees with reports)
  - a. **Finance:** Tony Chisholm. Following the announcement of the Ontario 150 Secretariat's grant, a revised budget will be set and shared in an upcoming Committee meeting.
  - b. **Legacy:** Tony Chisholm. The proposal to adopt the Upper Canada Heritage Trail was shared with the Committee who were in agreement to go forward. The proposal was explained in the minutes of Nov 15, 2016. See appendix A at the end of this document for the full report.
    - A motion to Council to approve this project was moved by Bill French, seconded by Richard Coyne.
  - c. **Communications:** Bill French
    - Report on public information session of Nov. 15, 2016 is attached in Appendix B at the end of this document.
    - Committee's grant proposal process/criteria will be posted on the website as soon as the budget is set.

- d. **New Year's Eve:** Cheryl Morris
  - Special event request has been approved for the public gathering on Queen St. Preparations are underway and volunteers will be called by Bill French to help setting up.
  - Tickets for the St Andrews dinner/dance are nearly sold out.
- e. **Canada Day weekend:** Rick Meloen
  - First subcommittee meeting took place Nov. 17 with Barbara Worthy (writing script for play), Bravo Niagara (music), Holmes Hooke (considered for emcee) along with several members of the Committee.
  - This meeting turned into a brainstorming session with everyone providing suggestions on what to include in the Friday, June 30/17 event at Centennial Park.
  - A site visit will take place Dec. 6 with Garden City Fireworks, Alex Burbidge, Kevin Turcotte and co-chairs of Committee.
- i. **225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** Cheryl Morris
  - Ryan Donnelly from Wayne Gates' office had forwarded a letter from Speaker Levac that he is interested in attending the event but can offer no financial support.
  - Invitations to dignitaries will be discussed in a meeting with the Lord Mayor on Dec. 15.
- j. **Education:** no report
- k. **Logistics:** no report
- l. **Sponsorship:** no report

2. New business:

- Peter Martin: New ice rink near the Agora in Fort George will be open Dec. 10/16. This is in conjunction with Vintage Inns. On January 7/17 a Canada 150-themed event will have music, ice show, snowman-building, etc. Event runs noon-9:00pm.
- Bill French: Has been approached by someone in the community to host a cycling event. Interested organizers will meet in the new year.
- Rick Meloen: Santa Claus parade participation – antique truck, 2 logo banners, hand out Canada 150 flags & buttons. Volunteers are signed up to help.

Meeting ended at 2:45 p.m.

**Next meeting: 1:30 p.m. Tuesday December 13 at Mori Room, NOTL Community Centre.**

## Appendix A

### **Legacy Subcommittee Report**

Members: Bill Cowie, Rick Meloen, Sarah Kaufman, Tony Chisholm, ex-officio Cheryl Morris

One of the key projects the Canada 150 Committee wishes to undertake is a lasting, physical commemoration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Confederation.

The Legacy subcommittee has discussed several ideas that have come forward from Committee members as well as from community groups in Niagara-on-the-Lake. They are:

- Splashpad
- HMS Ontario plaque
- Gateway to NOTL
- Individual project in each community (e.g. gazebo in Queenston's new park)
- Upper Canada Heritage Trail

The one that stands out and has captured our imagination above all is the Trail. There are several reasons for this choice:

#### **Historical importance:**

- UCHT follows the old Erie and Ontario Railway line, constructed in 1854, linking Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) (the First Capital of Upper Canada) with Niagara Falls and the Great Western Railway. It was responsible for breathing life into the Town of Niagara following the years after the War of 1812 by attracting tourism, population and commerce. Rail operations ceased in the mid-1950s.
- Trail was continuous from the escarpment to the Commons at King/John St. (across from the Pillar & Post).

#### **Communities & users linked:**

- For 50 years, the trail corridor has been used by cyclists, equestrians, runners, walkers, cross-country skiers, etc. Many diverse organizations enjoy the trail including: Upper Canada Equestrian Assoc. (UCEA), Queenston Residents Assoc., St. Davids Ratepayers Assoc., & the Niagara Bruce Trail Club.
- The UCHT corridor provides a continuous connection from the southern terminus of NOTL (Niagara Escarpment) with the federally-owned Niagara Commons.
- The trail (at least the former rail right-of-way) actually goes all the way to the dock area where the Sailing Club is now. Other potential legacy projects in the dock area could be considered in the future.
- The UCHT is the only unimproved multi-use trail in the Town's Official Plan. It crosses the epicentre of the Wine Route in NOTL, a key destination for cycling, eco-tourism and agri-tourism.

#### **Environmental importance:**

- While the automobile was responsible for the decline of the railway, it seems fitting that a shift from the automobile to a renewed priority on active transportation (cycling, hiking, equestrian) has the potential to breathe new life back into the Upper Canada Heritage Trail.

#### **Current Issues:**

- Recently an approximate 100 ft. section of the former railbed (below the Escarpment) washed out and the trail became impassable. As a result of safety concerns, the trail was closed with barricades installed.
- With the lack of access and regular use over the last few years, the washed-out area continues to erode, the vegetation has begun to take over and the trail is in danger of "disappearing". A sense of urgency has emerged to ensure the trail is restored for future generations.
- Lack of signage and unmaintained paths compromise safety of using the trail.

- No current plans: action, management, stewardship and no vision.
- If left as is, the trail will continue to erode and become even less utilized.

**How the Canada 150 Committee can lead this project:**

- Political / leadership role – provide “clout” to the cause.
- Stakeholder Role - participate in creating a vision for the trail.
- Provide expertise and knowledge.
- Organize an event to announce trail’s restoration. Add sponsorship program (e.g. adopt a piece of the trail)
- Provide new signage at beginning and end of trail, with markers at points between.
- Set the vision and long-term strategy and hand off to Town and UCHT Committee at the end of Canada 150 Committee’s life

**Additional information:**

- Supporting Ontario Trails Act (June 2016) to protect and improve Province’s urban, suburban and rural trails network (while encouraging its expansion)
- Provide trails community with enhanced tools to develop, operate and promote trails
- Remove barriers to help connect and expand trails across the Province
- Increase trail awareness and promote local tourism by enabling the recognition of trails of distinction, supporting communities and jobs
- Enable the development of a classification system to help users find trails that match their interest and ability
- Key Benefit of the Act for Landowners (regarding liability): clarifies that users of the recreational trails use them at their own discretion and risk.

**Potential partners in trail preservation and management:**

- Ontario Land Trust Alliance
- Niagara Land Trust Foundation – local organization
- Community & sponsors

## Appendix B

NOTL Canada Sesquicentennial Committee: Public Information Session  
November 15, 2016, 7:00p.m.-8:00pm, Mori Room, NOTL Community Centre

The information session was advertised in both the Advance and the Town Crier for two weeks prior to the date. Notices were on the main page of notlcanada150.ca as well as the Facebook page. Posters were placed on usual notice boards in Old Town, Queenston, St Davids, Virgil and Niagara on the Green.

The meeting began with Lord Mayor Pat Darte welcoming the audience of approximately sixty (60) people. A PowerPoint presentation followed.

Bill Cowie presented the Committee mandate, members and organizations they represent. He mentioned the subcommittees and said they needed more members.

Rick Meloen then talked about the Committee's pending budget and outstanding grant applications. He also described the Living Flag project and how photos and videos can be accessed on the website.

Bill French followed by describing what the Committee has done so far in terms of communications through various channels. He then described how people can get involved and to contact the Committee via the Forms page on the website:

- volunteering to work on subcommittees and helping during events
- submitting events to appear on our website
- submitting planned events for consideration of funding/marketing support, and
- submitting new events for consideration of funding support

There were several questions from the audience.

The session ended at 8:00 pm. Some people lingered to chat with the presenters and with the Lord Mayor.

The Committee believes that this session was very worthwhile to enhance awareness of what will happen in NOTL regarding sesquicentennial celebrations, as well as letting people know that the Committee welcomes input and participation from the community.