

Restoration of Historic Palmerston Gates (Trinity Niagara)

(City Council at its regular meeting held on October 3, 4 and 5, 2000, and its Special Meetings held on October 6, 2000, October 10 and 11, 2000, and October 12, 2000, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)

The Toronto Community Council recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following communication (August 29, 2000) from Councillor Pantalone:

Recommendations:

- (1) That the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism (Heritage Preservation Services) and the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services take actions necessary to develop a Restoration Study for the historic Palmerston Gates, by a qualified restoration professional, to include technical specifications for the restoration of the Gates, a capital cost estimate, and a maintenance cost estimate and plan for City staff, to be completed by April 2001;
- (2) That the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services allocate in the 2001 Operating Budget sufficient funds to complete the restoration work for the two pairs of Gates;
- (3) That following the Restoration Study the capital work be tendered to an experienced restoration contractor and the work be completed under the supervision of the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism (Heritage Preservation Services) and the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services; and
- (4) That maintenance costs identified in the Restoration Study be allocated on an ongoing basis in the operating budget of the appropriate City Department.

Discussion:

The historic Palmerston Gates and their Lamp Posts (“the Gates”) are a very special local feature defining both Little Italy and Palmerston Boulevard, and are a valuable heritage resource for the City. They have unfortunately been in a deteriorated condition for many years. They are creating a public safety and potential liability concern and need to be repaired and restored. One of the Gates has a pronounced lean that has increased approximately 5-6 centimetres in the year 2000 alone, and requires immediate stabilization.

The Palmerston Gates were likely built between 1905 and 1912 as part of the initial development of the Boulevard for which they are named. There are two pairs of Gates that mark the entrance to Palmerston Boulevard, one pair at College Street and one at Bloor Street. They have been listed on the City’s Inventory of Heritage Properties since 1973. The Gate’s piers are on City property and some of the metal work is located on private property.

A lack of regular maintenance, poor control of water runoff, frost heave and general wear and tear have taken a toll on the granite piers and iron railings of the Gates. Despite several attempts to initiate a program to repair and restore the Gates, there is no restoration plan in place and there

are currently insufficient funds allocated to complete the restoration work, which is estimated to cost in the order of \$60,000 to \$100,000.

However, progress toward the restoration project has commenced. As a part of a recent development application at the northeast corner of College Street and Palmerston Boulevard adjacent to the Gates, the Owner agreed to provide the City with a \$12,000 contribution that is to be used for a restoration plan for the two pairs of Gates, or toward the restoration cost itself. The Owner agreed to provide these funds prior to Council passing a zoning by-law to permit the proposed mixed use development.

I strongly believe that it is essential to allocate, in the 2001 budget, the funds required to do the restoration work on the Gates so that the public safety concerns can be addressed, and so that this valuable heritage resource can be restored before further damage occurs.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.