

**Heritage Conservation District Study
Public Consultation Session # 1
July 31, 2018**

Municipalité de Russell Township

(Question and Answer Period- Started: 7:47 pm ended at 9:05 pm)

1. What if someone wants to put an addition onto their existing building?

A Heritage Conservation District (HCD) does not prevent a property owner from proceeding with an addition to their property. Should Council vote to proceed with the HCD Plan phase (once this initial Study is complete), design guidelines for new works would be developed in conjunction with the Community. Should Council then vote to apply a HCD, these guidelines would then be applied. They essentially would act in conjunction with the existing Zoning By-laws, to help manage change.

A Heritage Conservation District is focused mainly on the view from the street. Additions to the rear of the property would not normally be affected by any proposed guidelines arising from this Study. For example, additions to the back of a house, unseen from the road or river, would not need to comply with the guidelines.

Others, such as a front or side addition, visible from the road or river, may need to apply to the proposed design guidelines. Design guidelines simply help guide the design of the addition in ways to keep it compatible with the values and character of the HCD.

2. Will a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) add more layers of bureaucracy to the existing approval process, for instance, doing 'soft renos' such as changing the windows or roof of a building?

"Soft renos," such as repairs, re-shingling roofs and painting, are not generally covered by HCD Guidelines. These are considered regular building upkeep and maintenance and are generally encouraged.

For building code-applicable renovations such as changing window dimensions, altering the roof shape or additions to the front or side of a building, the Heritage Permit of a HCD-designated property would apply and the applicant is required to fill out a 1-2 page form, lengthening the permit process by a few days.

Changes not requiring a building permit may, in some cases, still require a heritage permit depending on the heritage Design Guidelines. Based on information gathered from other municipalities, heritage permit application approval times are minimal where no building permit is required.

3. How does this affect the colour and style of the building?

Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Guidelines are customized to protect the unique values of the designated district. For example, if a character-defining element and value of an HCD was that all the buildings had red metal roofs, then there would probably be a Guideline that

recommends all new roofs in the district be red metal. In contrast, the historic Village of Russell has an eclectic character with a variety of roof styles and colours (among other varieties), so the Guidelines would likely be quite flexible on these kinds of details. This is all studied in detail in the HCD Plan phase, which may follow the current phase, should the community decide to go to that next step.

4. Which way do we go? Heritage Conservation District (HCD) or heritage designation? What's the difference? Advantages and disadvantages?

Individual property designation through Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA) offers stronger protection of an individual property and can sometimes protect interiors as well. Heritage Conservation Districts are designated under Part V of the OHA and are better suited for when the value resides across a larger area or neighbourhood. HCDs are only concerned with the exterior of properties viewed from the public realm and heritage context of the district as a whole. Therefore HCD designations (Part V) are much less concerned and rigid about protection of detailed, specific elements of individual properties.

A discussion about heritage designations for individual properties can be held and potentially presented to Council as an option either in combination with an HCD or independently.

5. Consideration should be given as well to heavy traffic patterns, i.e. tractor-trailers passing through the Village. Can the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) impose restrictions on air breaks for instance?

HCDs cannot directly control traffic. However, HCDs can influence traffic by providing Guidelines on physical attributes such as road lane widths, sidewalks, etc. For example, there could be a guideline which says to maintain overall street width or to respect/restore historic street widths, HCDs can make recommendations regarding intangibles like traffic patterns.

6. Can there be restrictions included in the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) regarding noise and truck controls?

These intangibles are not generally qualities that define a District; however, the Heritage Character Statement that defines the District values can certainly mention these if it is determined that these qualities (i.e. quiet and truck-less) contribute to or support the physical character of the historic place (District). Alternately, you can make a recommendation to Council that keeps trucks out of the area through zoning and direct traffic controls.

7. If we were to move the property line, in terms of setbacks, would we lose our porch?

This is something that should be discussed with the Township of Russell or the United Counties of Prescott and Russell as neither the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study nor designation affect the moving of property lines or removing historic porches. Council would have to decide in a separate forum to expropriate land for such things as roadway expansion.

8. Would this designation prevent one to sever the lot?

The Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study looks at historic development patterns. Guidelines will probably not be supportive of many new narrow lots in a neighbourhood of large lots and spaced-out houses. It is generally preferred that lot severances and new development follow the historic pattern; however, owing to the eclectic nature of Russell and its development patterns, the Study may find a range of lot sizes are appropriate. This analysis work has yet to be undertaken.

9. Russell is growing at a rapid pace. How do we control the speeding motorists?

Russell certainly is growing at a fast rate and will likely bring pressure to develop the core of the Village. Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) can help communities manage this change in a positive way. HCDs focus on the management of change to the physical attributes, and can make recommendations regarding intangibles like automobile speed. However, you can make recommendations to Council regarding speed limits and speed controls. See questions 5 and 6.

10. A Heritage Conservation District (HCD) is not strong enough to control and manage the change occurring in the greater Russell community. How will this affect business growth or success within the HCD?

Part of the HCD Study, is to review documents on economic development and business growth in the historic core of the Village. The HCD Plan can include recommendations to promote business growth in a manner which supports the values of the HCD.

11. Can a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) stop the road from being widened?

The United Counties of Prescott and Russell would review the HCD before it is approved. Once approved, the HCD is part of the Ontario Heritage Act, a Provincial level of legislation. A HCD helps manage change but cannot prevent a road widening. However, the Guidelines would be a consideration in making a recommendation regarding roads within a HCD.

12. Does every house within the boundaries of a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) contribute to an HDC?

The HCD Study will look at each property in detail and provide a recommended rating between 1 and 4 for its contribution to the proposed HCD. Properties rated as 1 are indispensable and critical to preserving the heritage character of the district. Properties rated as 2 and 3 provide major or minor contributions to the HCD. Properties rated as 4 do not contribute to the heritage values.

HCDs are concerned with the District more than the individual building. The criteria for each contribution as described above would look at ways a property contributes to the streetscapes, its heritage character and overall value.

13. Can you demolish a building that has a number 4 rating?

It is up to the Municipality to make the decision regarding demolition of any building in a Heritage Conservation District (HCD). The provisions of the HCD Plan would guide decisions regarding demolitions. The Municipality can determine what information is required on the

demolition permit application. Once the complete application is submitted and acknowledged by the Municipality, the Municipality has 90 days to grant or refuse the permit. Non-contributing, rated 4, buildings could potentially be demolished.

14. What would you be able to rebuild if something is demolished?

The Municipality retains the decision to approve or reject the proposed new building. Besides building and zoning regulations, they generally would want to see that you are following the Guidelines of the Heritage Conservation District (HCD). The new proposed work should be compatible, subordinate and respectful of the values of the HCD. The Plan can also include recommendations regarding rebuilds and suggest guidelines for setbacks, relationship to street, etc.

15. What about Craig Street? It's a mixed type of height and spacing? How does a Heritage Conservation District (HDC) work with that situation?

Craig Street Concession is currently in the broader study area. If it remains in the recommended HCD boundary area, the HCD Plan will include Guidelines and/or recommendations specifically for this sub-area.

16. What does the municipality's business plan dictate?

The consultants will review the business developments plan information, economic development documents, the Official Plan and other policy documents to ensure the goals of the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) harmonize with those of the Municipality.

17. What happens next in the Study?

The next step of the Study includes a public meeting to be held in late October. It will offer some general observations from consultants doing the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study as well as some options for general directions, including discussions on potential HCD boundaries.

For now the Consulting Team will be researching the history of Russell and historic development patterns and buildings in the central area. Other characteristics will be examined such as: utilities, built form, open space, streetscapes, built and natural features and amenities, building footprints, historic maps and boundaries.