

**Conservation
Review Board**

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**Commission des
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**RE: CITY OF OTTAWA - INTENTION TO DESIGNATE THE BOOTH BARN
COMPLEX (BUILDING NO.114-118), CENTRAL EXPERIMENTAL FARM**

Gerald Killan, Member October 4, 1996 Stuart W. Henderson, Member

THIS HEARING was convened at the City Hall in the City of Ottawa on October 4, 1996 pursuant to Section 29 (8) of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O.1990, Ch.0.18 (as amended) for the purpose of reporting to the Council of the City of Ottawa whether the property known as the Booth Barn Complex, (Building No.114-118), Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, Ontario, hereinafter referred to as the "Booth Barn Complex", should be designated by By-law, under the Act, an objection having been raised by the ostensible owner of the property, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

A NOTICE OF HEARING was given under the Act in the Ottawa Citizen on September 20, 1996 by the Board, the relevant Affidavit by the Board being Exhibit No.1. The Board, in accordance with its established practice, had the opportunity to view the site and the encompassing area prior to the Hearing. The City of Ottawa was represented by Anne Peck, Solicitor, and called two witnesses, Gordon Cullingham, a former member of Ottawa LACAC, and Edgar Tumac. The owner was not represented at the Hearing and correspondence had been received by the Board from the Department of Justice advising of their planned non-attendance on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and also objecting to the jurisdiction of the Board. There were other representatives from community organizations in Ottawa who appeared and gave representations in favour of the designation of the property.

THE CASE FOR THE CITY OF OTTAWA

The City provided the Board with a certified true copy of the Indenture dated June 26, 1929, confirming ownership by the Crown. The Board was also provided with the City's Exhibit book (Exhibit 4) which contained a comprehensive summary of the relevant documents with respect to this matter.

Witness - Gordon Cullingham

The Board was satisfied that Mr. Cullingham could give evidence as an expert and was qualified to give expert testimony with respect to matters in the heritage field.

Mr. Cullingham gave the Board a chronological background as to how this property came before LACAC on March 19, 1996 as it had been alerted that the complex had been declared surplus by the owner and it was possibly in threat of demolition.

The witness confirmed that LACAC recommended designation of the complex on April 2, 1996 on the basis of a number of important factors. Firstly, he related that the profile of the farm itself remains very visible from the main arteries surrounding the experimental farm and continues to be a presence in the midst of an urban area. It is believed that the main structure was originally constructed between 1867 and 1890 and all or part of the original structures were constructed by J. R. Booth who became one of the most opulent of timber barons in the Ottawa Valley. Mr. Booth died in 1925 at the age of 99 and in 1929 the property was expropriated by the Federal Government for use in its animal husbandry program. The active use of the farm by Federal Officials in the Agricultural Field continued until approximately the mid 1980's.

From an architectural perspective the LACAC of Ottawa considered it a typical example of post and beam construction symbolic of late 19th century barn construction. The integrity and massing of the complex has changed little over the years with additions of silos in the 1930's and the unique "Boom Town" facade on the southern portion which the witness noted was an idiosyncratic addition to a barn.

From a contextual perspective, the witness stated that the complex is an important part of a landscape that the people of Ottawa have come to know and love. When it was originally constructed it was located in Rural Ontario far from downtown Ottawa. When obtained by the Federal Government in 1929, it was still on the periphery of the City and today it is lodged centrally in the middle of the City of Ottawa. The uniqueness of the barns are exemplified because of their distance from the rest of the experimental farm and there would appear to be great interest from the Community at large to preserve the structures. The Historic Ottawa and Development Inc. has indicated its strong interest in maintaining the property as a depository for used construction material with all financial liabilities being assumed by their Organization (Exhibit 6). The witness also wished to reiterate to the Board that LACAC is willing to assist the Federal Government in any way it can to find an appropriate user of the building complex and to work collaboratively to achieve the goal of preserving the structures. The City of Ottawa passed a recommendation prior to the Board's attendance in Ottawa for the Hearing urging the Federal Government to declare the Booth Barn Complex a National Heritage Site.

Witness - Edgar Tumac

Mr. Tumac was confirmed by the Board as an expert and qualified to give such testimony with regard to matters in the heritage field and he proceeded to review the analysis undertaken by the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office by Janet Wright in 1983. Mr. Tumac noted the comprehensive analysis undertaken by Ms. Wright in her

report and noted that the criteria utilized by the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office emphasized national as opposed to local importance with little emphasis upon a Municipal focus and notwithstanding such criteria, the Federal Government's report supports the preservation of the complex. This witness believed that there were no other comparable examples of this complex on the experimental farm as a whole. He likened the complex to a Community's first log house. He noted that the architecture was not necessarily remarkable in and of itself, but the aggregate quality of the complex was a prominent example of vernacular architecture in the late 19th century and it is a "landmark" for the sake of symbolizing a barn as opposed to the "campus" feel of the rest of the experimental farm.

Mr. Tumac also stated that the Federal Government has a history and precedent of allowing the designation of Federally owned buildings (Exhibit 7) and not opposed to the jurisdictional issue of the Provincial Designation process. He reiterated that LACAC has always been prepared to work with the property owner of this rare example of private farming heritage. He believed that the tired look of the present condition of the buildings would not be difficult to overcome and that the broader public would see the merits of the buildings once they are brought back from their dilapidated look.

REPRESENTATIONS SUPPORTING THE CITY OF OTTAWA:

Heritage Canada Foundation - Douglas Franklin

Mr. Franklin provided the Board with a copy of his presentation (Exhibit 8) and expressed regret, on behalf of Heritage Canada, that the Federal Government was objecting to the designation of the farm as it was Heritage Canada's belief that the Booth Barn Complex comprised a critical element of the cultural landscape of the experimental farm and that its fields, groves and buildings should be managed and protected in a comprehensive way. It supports the Community as acting in good faith to protect the complex and stated the belief that local citizens are in the best position to promote community values with respect to Heritage matters.

Heritage Ottawa - Jennifer Rosebrugh

This witness is the President of Heritage Ottawa, a volunteer organization for the advocacy and education of heritage issues in the Ottawa area. Ms. Rosebrugh stated that she had attended a meeting with Dr. Dorrel, the Director General of the Central Experimental Farm, in October of 1995, with a view to discussing Agriculture and AgriFood Canada's plans for the Booth Barn Complex. Ms. Rosebrugh was hopeful at that time that alternative uses could be found for the property. The witness reviewed the willingness on behalf of the community at large to work with the Federal Government to identify those components of the Booth Barn Complex of greatest heritage value. The proposal set forth by the Historic Ottawa Development Inc. was supported by the witness's Organization but that there had been no further feedback or response from

The Board, as set out above, could not concur with the Federal Government's position both with the jurisdictional issue and the conclusions regarding the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Offices. It is regretful to note the uncooperativeness on the part of the Federal Government, firstly evidenced by their failure to attend at the Hearing of this Board notwithstanding the objection filed and also the apparent unwillingness to cooperate or respond to seemingly viable options that have been put forth by agencies within the City of Ottawa.

The Board also finds that the Report of the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office conducted under the auspices of the Federal Government, in fact, completely supports the proposition that the Booth Barn Complex should be maintained and preserved in its present location. The conclusion of the report itself (Tab 6) Exhibit 4, Page 24 states that the property: ". . .represents one of the oldest surviving barns at the Central Experimental Farm and provides a good example of square timber construction of the Ottawa Valley. Its value is enhanced by its association, first, with one of Ottawa's most powerful lumbermen, J. R. Booth and, second, with the research of the Animal Husbandry Division of the Central Experimental Farm." It is difficult, if not impossible, to rationalize any other conclusion in the reading of this Federally mandated report than to maintain this complex for its historical, architectural and contextual significance.

The Board also finds it difficult to reconcile the audacity of such obfuscation on the part of the Federal Government in not cooperating with the parties in this process, many of whom have spent untold energy and expense in order to ultimately benefit the Agricultural Ministry itself in enhancing the Central Experimental Farm location.

The Booth Barn Complex is a stunningly unique locale situated in an urban setting and detailing a fascinating aspect of Ottawa's and Canada's history.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is the recommendation of the Board that the Booth Barn Complex, Central Experimental Farm (Building #114-118), Ottawa, Ontario be designated by By-law under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The Board notes that it has been the practice of the Federal Government to allow, for the most part, the designation of Federally owned structures and it is evident that there has obviously been a good rapport in the past between the City of Ottawa and the various Federal Governments of the day. It is both these levels of Government along with that of the Provincial Government, under the Ontario Heritage Act, that are the equal custodians of the Nation's Capital Heritage. It is the Board's sincere hope that this relationship continue to coexist between whatever Federal Agency is directly responsible for any such site and the City.

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(Original Signed by)

Gerald Killan, Member

Stuart W. Henderson, Member

LIST OF EXHIBITS

1. Affidavit of Notice of Hearing
2. Certified true copy of Deed
3. Statutory Declaration regarding Notice of Intention to Designate
4. City of Ottawa's Book of Documents
5. Map of Experimental Farm
6. Correspondence from Historic Ottawa Development Inc.
7. List of Federal Properties designated by the City of Ottawa
8. A draft of statement given by Douglas Franklin on behalf of the Heritage Canada

Foundation

9. Correspondence from Heritage Ottawa to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
10. Various photographs of the site
11. Supplementary Exhibit: Package of material received from the City of Ottawa from Heritage Ottawa.
12. Supplementary Exhibit: Correspondence from Department of Justice Canada dated October 2, 1996 and correspondence from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, dated June 4, 1996.