



Working together with our community

Council-In-Committee Meeting – June 11, 2024

Subject: 297 James St Cemetery Delhi
Report Number: OPS-24-017
Division: Operations
Department: Parks
Ward: Ward 3
Purpose: For Information

Recommendation(s):

That Council receive OPS-24-017 297 James St Cemetery Delhi as information; and

That Council direct staff to return to Council with updates, as appropriate, as staff follow the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) requirements concerning the repatriation of monuments and recognition of the site.

Executive Summary:

Historic records indicate that a cemetery existed on/at 297 James St, in Delhi, in the mid-1800's. Records further reveal that, in approximately 1920, the cemetery was 'closed'. A number of monuments from the site may be found at the current Delhi Cemetery.

As the community grew, the land on James Street was subsequently utilized by the growing population. While it was believed that the remains of those interred were also relocated, Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) investigators now believe substantial remains are still on the site.

In 2014, Norfolk County came into title of the land at 297 James Street, and upon learning of the previous cemetery use, the County has since retained and maintained the property.

In 2023, based on direction of the BAO per the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, which provides that cemetery lands are maintained in perpetuity, this property was registered under an Abandoned Cemetery License. This requires that the property be maintained as a cemetery in perpetuity by the municipality.

The BAO wishes to see monuments that were relocated to the Delhi Cemetery returned to the site.

Discussion:

Monuments relocated from the cemetery at 297 James St include family names associated with original founding families of the community.

While the century-old motivations that led to the dismantling of the cemetery may never be known, knowledge of the old cemetery is known within the community. This is evidenced by some resident inquiries. Based on this, staff believe that community engagement on this matter would be positive for all.

Financial Services Comments:

All costs associated with the operation of this cemetery are accommodated within the Levy Supported Operating Budget under the Cemeteries cost center.

The work of relocating the monuments back to their rightful home will look to be completed in 2025, the costs of the process will be reviewed and included as part of the 2025 operating budget process.

Interdepartmental Implications:

N/A

Consultation(s):

Applicable Norfolk County departments and Bereavement Authority of Ontario.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

This report aligns with the 2022-2026 Council Strategic Priority Connecting Norfolk - Bringing the community together with cultural, physical and technological linkages.

Explanation: This site provides a physical link to the people who built the foundation of the Delhi community. As such, it provides a tangible connection to the history and culture of Norfolk County.

Conclusion:

The repatriation of monuments and recognition of the property as a cemetery will bring some closure to a century-old matter; while protecting a place that is physical link to the cultural history of Delhi and Norfolk County.

Attachment(s):

- GIS image: Location of property

Approval:

Approved By:
Al Meneses, CAO

Reviewed By:
Bill Cridland, General Manager, Operations

Prepared By:
David Drobitch, Supervisor of Cemeteries and Trails