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Legislative precinct Enceinte parlementaire

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Tuesday 19 March 2024 Mardi 19 mars 2024

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Clerk: Christopher Tyrell
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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Tuesday 19 March 2024

COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA PROCÉDURE ET DES AFFAIRES DE LA CHAMBRE

Mardi 19 mars 2024

The committee met at 0900 in room 151.

LEGISLATIVE PRECINCT

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Good morning, folks. The Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs will now come to order.

We have with us this morning some guests. We've got Jelena Bajcetic, director of the precinct properties branch, and David Bogart, bilingual communications officer from the parliamentary protocol and public relations branch. It's nice to see you again.

Ms. Bajcetic and Mr. Bogart are here today at the request of the subcommittee on committee business to provide a presentation on the history and heritage of the legislative grounds in preparation for a tour that we will have.

I will turn folks' attention to them and hand it over to them for their presentation today.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Thank you very much, everyone, for the opportunity to present.

There are two documents that you have in front of you. One is a handout that just gives you a bit of an inventory of what we have on the site. The second package in front of you is our presentation that we're going to be going through that is also on the screen in front of you.

The summary of our presentation: We are going to do an overall introduction of the site plan, that's going to provide a visual of the inventory on the grounds. We will discuss some of the character-defining elements of the site. David will provide us with some in-depth history on some of the monuments, statues and memorials around the site. And we will go through some of the work that we are currently working on that involves the grounds.

Going to the overall site plan of the grounds, you will see by the diagram that this shows the location for all statues, monuments and plaques throughout the site; there are over 30 in total, and of those 30, 10 are monuments. Those monuments are a part of the government's art collection, and they manage those monuments; we take on the maintenance—so all of the annual maintenance and conservation of those monuments, the assembly manages. Beyond that, there are about 18 plaques around the grounds, nine of which are associated with tree dedications, four are associated with the Heritage Trust, and four are related to various gardens on the grounds.

Now, looking at the plan: It doesn't show on the plan, but overlaid on top of that are a number of utilities and easements. There are three transportation and utility easements, and they are all located on the east side of the property. And as far as underground infrastructure goes, there are seven public and private owners of infrastructure that go underneath our property. Within those, for example, one of the owners does have seven different types of infrastructure that go under the grounds. Over the years, you can imagine, there is a number of abandoned and unknown infrastructure that has been identified, as well, and the highest concentration is around the south end of the property.

This next slide: The diagram that you see here is the 1927 site plan of the grounds, and this site plan was identified specifically for the master plan that was completed in 1991, which included the grounds. It's a good example that shows what some of the existing heritage character-defining elements are that still exist on the site:

- —the first one was open lawns with tree canopy around the building;
- —another character-defining element was the south drive, with the associated east and west drives;
- —the axial walkway that leads down to University Avenue;
- —the geometrical seasonal floral beds that are along the main walkways; and
- —the commemorative statuary that are throughout the site.

So those elements were really punctuated as being defining elements for the site that were tagged for preservation and restoration.

Over time, since this plan, we have seen some major impacts and changes to the site, and the majority of those came through the introduction of the vehicles. So the road alignments—you can see how the west-side road alignment has now straightened out. All of the roads have become quite a bit wider, changing some of the landscape on the property and pedestrian access. Because of the amount of vehicular infrastructure that has gone around, it has made pedestrian access to the site more difficult.

The removal: There was a historical context of the site—where there were horse chestnut trees that lined University Avenue up to the Legislative Building. That was all removed to accommodate vehicles. Then, the largest impact was accommodating vehicles on the site

itself—so that was the introduction of parking and the widening of the drives.

I will pass it over to David now to give some background on the monuments, statues and memorials on the site.

Mr. David Bogart: Thanks, Jelena.

Good morning, everyone. Thank you very much for having us.

I've spent a lot of time over the last number of years that I've been at the Legislature doing some research on the grounds. When I first got here, there was very little information available, so we've sort of pieced this story together, from an interpretive standpoint, over the last three decades.

For a number of years, I worked with the city of Toronto and provided a heritage tour of the grounds that was part of their summer walking tour program. For that, we started to pull together pieces of the information. They're available to all of us, but it's sort of hard to find them, because there's no one concise history of the grounds at Queen's Park put together.

We did some more research for the 150th anniversary of the site in 2010. We put out a booklet, and we gathered some heritage maps. I started to learn a lot more about the early days of the grounds.

We're going to do a little time travel here. I'm going to take you back. We can go back even further than the 1860s, but this lovely leafy view here is College Avenue. It used to run from Lot Street, which is now Queen Street, up to the site here at Queen's Park. This was a private right-of-way that was created with the creation of King's College. King's College was founded in the late 1820s under Archdeacon John Strachan, and it was supposed to be the site of a High Anglican college. This was a very generous land grant that was given to the college—almost 166 acres of land.

The reason I'm showing you this private right-of-way is to get into your minds, "What came first: the chicken or the egg?" In the case of the way we think about those monuments outside as objects, try to take them out of your mind and think about the site itself first and the organic creation of this area that began to attract the public.

This was at a time in the 1850s when Toronto was growing very rapidly. This avenue became a place of recreation. Remember that the waterfront area was being rapidly developed for the railways, with a lot of shipping commerce coming into Toronto harbour. People were losing their green space in downtown Toronto, something that was very valuable to them, and so this private right-of-way became a place where people would come to stroll, ride early versions of bicycles, ride their horses, and have carriage rides, picnics on a Sunday.

There are things that you could not do on the site. On the left-hand side, on the fencing there, there's a sign that says, "Please, no shooting and no gambling." These were just some of the rules, but the public was welcome to use these grounds during the day. This became a very popular site. With the public coming onto the grounds, the city began to think, "Well, what can we do to make this sort of official? We'll open a park." So the city acquired almost 50 acres of Queen's Park through a lease from King's College, and in 1860, they opened Queen's Park. It was opened on September 10, 1860. There was a ceremony that took place on the site, at the south end of what is now the grounds—by the Prince of Wales, who later became King Edward VII—and the park was dedicated to Queen Victoria.

0910

The plan was to install a monument of the Queen. You'll notice there's a monument here, but then notice as well what's in front of it—those two cannons. Those guns really form Toronto's first public monument. They were a gift from Queen Victoria to major cities throughout the British Empire to celebrate the British and French victory in the Crimean War in the 1850s. These guns arrived in Toronto, really a relatively small community still, and with great pride they were paraded throughout the city. They decided that a great place for these would be in the new park. So it was here that they formed what was called a gun garden. As you notice, someone watching here, the statue is a bit misleading. This came along a few years later. It was plopped in here by an artist by the name of Marshall Wood, who was basically a travelling salesman with monuments, and he ended up selling one to the federal Parliament in Ottawa—a different version of this that is still in the parliamentary library. But he plopped this on a temporary wooden pedestal near the guns, and the city didn't like it and decided not to keep it, so they told him to take it away. In 1874, Mr. Wood had to remove it. The statue apparently ended up somewhere in Quebec, we think. And then along came another plan here. The city replaced that statue with a nice cast iron fountain that's here on the grounds. This lasted until the time that the John A. Macdonald statue was put up in 1894.

The next thing is getting to how some of the other monuments came to the grounds. Currently, when we think about how predominant the Legislative Building is here and the influence of the government on putting monuments on the site—that really wasn't the case. It really was the public that was interested in establishing some of these memorials.

The first major statue that was put up—this was actually on the University of Toronto grounds across the street from us—is the volunteers' monument. This was an effort that was done through public fundraising. It was dedicated to some of the University of Toronto students who went to fight the Fenians during a raid in 1866 in the Niagara region. The Americans basically got across the border and stayed there for a couple of days, but because of lack of reinforcements, they pulled back. However, during the raid, several students from the University of Toronto succumbed to wounds—some of them became sick, and several were killed. So there was a great deal of outpouring of grief by the families of the students who were lost. Eventually, as a very small, still pioneer society, that was a major effort to repel an invading army by militia

brigade. This was not a federal army that was formed to repel these invaders.

So this monument that was raised was truly grand. Thousands of dollars were raised publicly to put this up. There's a marble figure at the top, of Britannia. It's made of sandstone. This is maintained by the city of Toronto. It has been a hard statue to maintain from deterioration, but it's still there. It's in fairly good condition. Again, it's not on our grounds currently. This was at Queen's Park, on land between the University of Toronto and what eventually became the Legislature, but the city's public park.

Moving along now to the statue of George Brown: This is another effort that was done by the George Brown Memorial Committee. This statue—you'll notice the date, 1884. I want to remind you that the Legislative Building was not erected until 1893. This is another monument that predates the construction of the building. This was again publicly fundraised. George Brown was a Father of Confederation. He was also the editor of the Globe newspaper. He was a Reform politician. You may have heard the term "Clear Grits." He was part of that movement that eventually formed the Liberal Party. Mr. Brown died tragically. You may be aware that he was shot by a former disgruntled employee in his office, in the spring of 1880, and died of gangrene six weeks later. So there was a great deal of sadness and remorse for his loss, and out of thanks to his work and his efforts as one of the fathers of the country, they erected this fine monument here at Queen's Park through public efforts.

Moving along, a few years later, we have the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald. This, again, was a public fundraising effort by the Macdonald Memorial Committee. The minutes of the committee are apparently still in the Toronto Reference Library today.

If you're wondering about the cost of some of these monuments, we found some figures. The first one I showed you was around \$6,000. Mr. Macdonald's was around \$10,000; that was raised through a committee, and some of them hit up some rather wealthy donors to get the statue done.

This was unveiled in front of a massive crowd of close to 15,000 people in October 1894. Gone was the fountain at that point in time.

The next year, another public fundraising effort saw the raising of the Northwest Rebellion Monument. For those of you who are not familiar with what this commemorates—again, these were families who were grieving the loss of family members in Western Canada. This was due to the attack versus Louis Riel and the Métis people in Western Canada. So this monument does not recognize the Métis; it recognizes the RCMP, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the North West Mounted Police, who went to combat the Métis and unfortunately suffered losses. I will leave it at that—although every year, as you may have seen recently, the Métis flag is raised during a flag-raising ceremony. One of the recognitions that the Métis do give to this monument is—and I'm not sure if they're still continuing this—they do lay a wreath at the monument on Louis Riel Day, usually in November.

Again, I'm not sure if that practice continues. To see, really, how they feel about this monument today, it might be good to tap into connections with the Métis Nation here in Ontario.

I'm going to move along. This last monument here that had to do with sort of a cross between public subscription and government funding starts us into a different era. This was the statue of John Graves Simcoe. This was an effort by the Ontario Historical Society to get a monument of Upper Canada's first Lieutenant Governor raised here at Queen's Park. So we're starting to move into a post-Confederation era, when a lot of Canadians were starting to look at the founders of the country and recognizing them from a more long-standing historical standpoint. There was a grant that was provided by the Legislature for this statue. They provided two grants, apparently; one of \$3,000 and another one of about \$500 to get this monument raised, but the rest was done through public fundraising through the Ontario Historical Society.

This leads us into a different era. After this—in fact, even the year before this—the statue of Queen Victoria had been raised on the grounds. Her Majesty the Queen passed away in 1901 and, at that time, the province felt that they wanted to establish an official monument for the Queen at the site, and they brought over a statue of the Queen by Mario Raggi. This was purchased from England, but the base is made of granite from Quebec, and there are two engraved plaques that were done by a Canadian artist on the base of the Queen Victoria monument.

All of these, by the way, are listed in the inventory in your handout. I didn't include the slides here for you, but you can take a look at the other monuments on the tour. If any of you are interested in more detail about these, we can take a look when we go outside on the tour of the grounds.

The other thing I didn't mention here that is of interest historically, from the point of view of these monuments, is the first public commission of Walter Allward, who was a rather famous Canadian sculptor. Mr. Allward was 19 when he received this public commission. He was a Toronto almost-self-taught sculptor. He worked at the Toronto Brick Works, got training there, and went to Central Technical college down the street here. He has five monuments that he sculpted on our grounds, and this was the first one; Simcoe's was the second. He went on to be involved with three other projects. Mr. Allward also was the sculptor of the Vimy Memorial in France that was unveiled in 1936—so quite a prolific Canadian sculptor. We don't have a lot of concise documentation about him either, so the fact that he has a legacy on the grounds is of interest.

I'm going to move on now to talk about some of the monuments—and again, if you have questions about some of the statues that I mentioned already, we can cover those shortly. I wanted to just highlight here—and Jelena, feel free to jump in here with some of these. We chose just a few to highlight that are a little bit unusual.

The Chair of the Committee, when we had a subcommittee meeting out on the grounds, was interested in finding out about plaques and things that we would have a difficult time moving or things that were together with other objects that would be challenging if a move ever had to take place. I think this is probably one of them. The is the Post One monument. You'll find this out on the east grounds. It's kind of an unusual project. This was the province of Ontario's only official Confederation project in 1967. That seems a little bit unusual; you'd think they'd do something a little grander. But this was a cross-country project that established official survey markers across Canada. That's why the map of Canada is on the marker itself. Right in front of the monument on the grounds, this is the actual survey marker, so moving that to a different location would defeat the purpose of the actual marker.

The other thing that's interesting about what's underneath us is that there's a time capsule. I couldn't find it, but there's a great newspaper picture of Premier Robarts standing with a youngster putting stuff in this container that was sunk on the grounds here at Queen's Park.

I'm not sure if you're aware—this is a trivia question—that there's a second time capsule on the grounds. I don't know if anyone else knows where that might be. Any guesses? It's on the roof of the building. I don't know if the roof is going to be touched in the restoration, but—

Mr. Mike Harris: Makes total sense.

Mr. David Bogart: Yes, why not?

All of the staff at the time signed a seating plan, the members signed a seating plan, and they stuck it in this cylinder that's on the top of the roof. It was stuck up there in 1993, when the roof was fixed. Those two objects at the top of the roof are known as finials, and in the east finial is a time capsule. So there are two on the grounds. So this is a rather unusual monument.

Of course, here's a favourite now, the flowering cherry trees. Again, Jelena was mentioning a few of the plaques that have trees, arboreal memorabilia or things attached to them. This is a project that was from the Sakura Project by the Japanese consulate back in 2005. These trees have matured beautifully on the grounds, and every spring we seem to get more and more interest, especially since access to High Park sometimes is—I've noticed that we've had a little bit more interest in these trees in mid-April than we had before. The trees were a bit smaller about a decade ago.

But there are several others. There's actually one in your package here that is dedicated to the jubilee of King George V. I've got a picture of it as a seedling, basically, and it's still here on the grounds, which is quite something for almost a 90-year-old tree. There's a picture of it in your package here.

Then, more recently: Some of you have asked about Indigenous representation or recognition on the grounds and, this, really, until 2022—this plaque here is a dedication that was done for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's platinum jubilee. It is dedicated to Her Majesty's connection to Indigenous peoples and the relationship between the crown and Indigenous peoples of Ontario and, of course, of Canada. There's a series of gardens that are dedicated

to Her Majesty on the west grounds. There are three rose gardens, and Jelena convinces me that hopefully, thanks to some efforts, the roses will look better in the coming years; they haven't been as successful recently. But this garden is supposed to have tobacco plants in connection with our Indigenous peoples.

Remember how we started this part of the presentation in terms of public interest, public access, the public wanting to come to use the grounds?

Mr. Harris, I have to admit, last week you were saying that people just don't come as much to the grounds and use it as a place to play, and I have to disagree with you, because I see a lot of that still happening—people playing frisbee or soccer or yoga. There's a yoga class that takes place, and there's a gentleman who likes to come and sunbathe here almost daily when the temperature is, like, 10 degrees over. So people still enjoy just coming and organically using the space.

And they also still memorialize here. Just as another aside to the situation with the John A. Macdonald monument: Of course, back in 2021, with the discovery of unmarked graves in Western Canada, you may remember that there was a significant shoe memorial—shoes that were placed at the front of the building, and they were also placed around the Sir John A. Macdonald monument. I just wanted to finish with this, because as much as we started with thinking about how the public started memorializing on these grounds back in the 1860s and 1870s, this is another memorial that has formed organically today through the public, who have been to the grounds and have left something that they wanted to make a personal connection to memorializing an event here. These shoes that are still outside around the John A. Macdonald monument still form a memorial that we recognize today on the grounds.

At that, I will stop my part of the presentation and turn it back over to Jelena.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Just in closing, we are working on some foundational studies related to supporting the rehabilitation project, and one of them is called the historic structures report. We were about 50% complete on the historic structures report many years ago, so now we're looking at fully completing the report. That report does include both the building and grounds. While a lot of people associate heritage conservation and the importance of preservation with buildings, the same is true for landscapes. The grounds will be included as a part of that historic structures report, and it's going to have some comprehensive information about the history of the grounds, the various heritage character-defining elements of the grounds, condition assessments and attributes. It will also give a conservation plan. And those documents are typically used to guide any decisions and changes that are made or contemplated for the site in the future.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): When will that be anticipated?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: We're looking at completion in about a year and a half.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Do either of you have anything else you'd like to add before we move to questions?

Mr. David Bogart: We're okay.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): In that case—I had seen a few hands earlier on, but I'll keep a formal speakers list.

Mr. Harris.

Mr. Mike Harris: Thank you for being here.

It was great to wander around a couple of weeks ago and see some of this first-hand. I know the committee is looking forward to getting out on Thursday and having a bit of a look around.

It's good to hear that you are confident that people are still using the grounds and gardens. I think with the challenge of having the northern end of Queen's Park closed for the last little while, it probably has brought a little bit more people to the public spaces here.

One thing we didn't really talk about, and I did bring it up when we had gone for our tour, was who owns or administers that park across the street and how that works with what we are doing here. What impacts could you see, as we're moving forward with our project, on the park across the street? And what might have to happen with that as we go forward?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: You're talking about Queen's Park, north of Wellesley Street?

Mr. Mike Harris: Yes.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: That park is owned and operated by the city of Toronto. They are currently doing some transportation work there with the TTC, at the north end of that park, and they recently had undergone rehabilitation of their grounds there.

I think one of the biggest impacts on our site is what's happening around us. There are a lot of considerations for the site that are related to security, related to vehicles, related to the proximity of roadways and related to space—not a lot of space. From the 1927 plan that you saw, over the years, we have really condensed and shrunk the amount of space that we have.

I think the considerations in doing a rehabilitation of this kind for a building and a site of this significance really are going to revolve around having some information and some context around what's happening around us and how those things around us can help, and maybe even provide opportunities for us to help improve the conditions on our site.

There are a lot of stakeholders around us, and I think there are a lot of opportunities that can be looked at as far as how some of those partnerships can work at enhancing the grounds and coming up with some ideas to improve the conditions around the building. With the rehabilitation, we are looking at a 50-to-100-year improvement—so thinking long-term at what those benefits would be.

Mr. Mike Harris: Are those discussions currently ongoing? Have they started yet?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Not to any extent that's relevant. I know in the media there has been some talk about Queen's Park Crescent West being part of a project that

the city of Toronto is looking at to develop land around University Avenue into parkland. One of the considerations they had, which they were looking at in previous proposals that were brought through by private donors, was the full closure of Queen's Park Crescent West—turning that area into parkland and having Queen's Park Crescent East be a north-south roadway. So there are impacts like that.

0930

I think right now, where we're at in developing the historic structures report and the foundational documents—those things will identify some of those opportunities, but the discussions will need to start happening as we develop the restoration of plans.

Mr. David Bogart: Could I just make another point there?

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Yes.

Mr. David Bogart: Thank you. Just one thing with respect to the north park: The city did quite a lot of work over the last decade to improve the pathways through the park. They've put some nice rehabilitation into the path, and they rehabilitated the monument at the centre of the park—you may be familiar that it has had the King Edward statue for many years. As a University of Toronto student—that statue was sort of abused over the years, but they've taken a lot of care to preserve it properly now, and they put in a new pedestal around it.

I usually take my walks up to the park and sit there, and I watch what happens with the public interacting with that monument now. I spent a lot of lunch hours last summer watching tourists and visitors walk around it, go up to it and be completely fascinated with it, taking pictures and really engaging with this monument that's quite imposing. It's almost heartening to see it, with this sort of colonial statue of King Edward. It was a gift of the Jackman family. That statue is actually from India. It was brought here in 1969, so it didn't originate here. It was shipped over here after it was not wanted anymore in India.

I just wanted to make the comment that I find it interesting the way the public is engaging with that style of monument today versus a different approach with it. They're treating it quite respectfully, and I'm glad to see it.

Mr. Mike Harris: Is that Lieutenant Governor Jackman's family?

Mr. David Bogart: I think so, yes—the Jackman Foundation. That was the funding that brought it over here in 1969.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Rae.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Thank you to our presenters.

Just a quick—

Interjection.

Mr. Matthew Rae: I'm holding up a prop. Sorry, Chair. The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I'll let it slide—pun intended.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Is this fountain where Sir John A. Macdonald is now? I'm just wondering where this was.

Mr. David Bogart: Yes. There was a pumphouse for it just behind it, and in early pictures of the grounds, you can still see this wooden pumphouse on the south end of the

ground that used to facilitate that monument. It's kind of an interesting part of the infrastructure.

Mr. Matthew Rae: I was just curious, because obviously it's not currently on the grounds.

You mentioned a 2010 booklet that the province or the Legislature commissioned. Can we get a copy of the booklet?

Mr. David Bogart: Sure. We do have the text available. We did print it. It's a bit out of date now. But yes, absolutely. It should be available in the library, but we still have the archival material.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Yes, I was just curious to see and understand where we've gone from there.

Mr. David Bogart: Yes, it has nice maps in it of the grounds, too.

Mr. Matthew Rae: I know we have, as you highlighted, some nice natural monuments, and the trees as well. In Ottawa, when we went there, and from my time working in Ottawa—there are not a lot of trees around the House of Commons, so they really didn't have to consider that in a restoration. But the cherry trees are rather close to Queen's Park, the building itself. I know it's really down the road, but I was just trying to think of how we maintain that, potentially.

Do we know of other examples of other Legislatures where they have natural stuff they cannot necessarily move?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: I don't know if anyone has been over to U of T—with some of the work that they've been doing over there, they have set up some protection zones around trees to try to mitigate any risk to them during construction.

Depending on the scale of development that happens on this site, some might need different types of plans to either relocate or replant in other locations, depending on the type of development.

We do annually get tree assessments done, so we have in-depth knowledge about the conditions of all the trees. At times, they become a safety issue, and those things will all be considered.

But yes, that will definitely be a consideration in the design of the site, to preserve what we have and try to maintain or relocate what we have to.

Mr. David Bogart: There is an example in the pamphlet of one of the plaques that was moved that was really close to the building. When they did the project to better secure the foundation of the building about 15 years ago, they had to remove one of the trees that was planted in 1977 for Her Majesty's silver jubilee. It's in the booklet here. You'll notice that on the east grounds, the plaque was relocated, and then the Legislature replanted a birch tree to continue the legacy of the plaque.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Oosterhoff. Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Thank you for your presentation and your obvious passion for the subject.

It's very interesting to see the evolution of the values that are personified through the memorials that are brought forward. For something like the North-West Rebellion, there might be a very different monument today from our perspective, but it's a snapshot in time.

I have a question about process. There are a lot of plaques, as well, inside the building. I've always wondered who decided at one point—or what is the process. I'll give you an example. By the elevator, there's the 100th anniversary of the Italian community in Ontario—I wondered who decided, "This is where we're going to put that 100th anniversary."

Nowadays, we all do heritage months. It seems like we've replaced plaques with every member bringing forward a heritage month or a heritage day or a heritage week. Every other week, we're debating one of those bills, but it seems like in the past, everyone did plaques for everything. It would be the 37th birthday of someone and they got a plaque somewhere, it seems like.

Mr. Mike Harris: That's 10 years away for Sam.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Yes. Exactly.

Who actually decides that? Who says, "Here's where we're going to put the Italian plaque"?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: That's a good question.

I've been here about 14 years. I haven't seen any new plaques come up in that time, so a lot of them predate my knowledge of that.

I don't know, David, if you have any examples.

Mr. David Bogart: Again, I think we're assessing the history of the building from a very recent standpoint. Remember that the Office of the Assembly was not formed until the 1970s. We're celebrating our 50th anniversary just this year. Prior to that, a lot of these older plaques would have been arrangements with the government and members within the government. This was a department of the Ministry of Government Services up until the 1970s, so a lot of those were probably requests that came through members, through local communities, through agreements with the department, because there really wasn't an administration of this building that would have controlled that aspect—so it was a bit of a more ad hoc, I guess piecemeal type of additions that happened over time.

I'm glad, in a way, that you brought that up, because there's also opportunity for some of these plaques within the building. I'm not sure if you are aware of one of the most significant in terms of my historical standpoint, in terms of diversity in the building—the plaque that's right across from the chamber. If you go up, you'll see the plaque that honours the No. 2 coloured battalion. When you think about the timing of that—there was a ceremony here on the front steps of the building, and there's a fantastic archival picture we have showing a group of African Canadians and Black Canadians, members of the troops that went to serve overseas. In 1920, there was Premier Drury standing in the middle of this group of African Canadians at that time, dedicating that, and that's still here. The Black Canadian community is aware of it. It really celebrates a very interesting part of our history. Apparently, there was a journalist who was really prolific-there was a paper that was put out, with an African Canadian audience. He was really an advocate within the community, and I have a feeling that that connection was the force that got that plaque on the wallby just a lot of advocating here.

So, again, other organizations probably took the same role. There are a number of them that fall under that category. We should put together a proper inventory of them, too.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: So that's the past. Let's take a similar example. I know it's a little bit speculative, but let's say I met with an Indigenous delegation, and they said, "There's no recognition of the Indigenous soldiers. We noticed when we were walking past the chamber. There's the coloured battalion, which is great. But what about all the Indigenous soldiers? We should have a plaque." And I said, "I agree." They said, "So how do we get the plaque?" And I said, "I have no idea." And then they said, "Well, who do we talk to about putting in a plaque?" And I said, "Again, I don't know. Maybe talk to protocol branch. Talk to David. He'll tell you." They said, "We'd like to have it right beside that one." Who decides where it goes? This is speculative, but the thought process is—is it us? Is it this committee? Is it the Minister of Legislative Affairs? I don't know.

0940

Mr. David Bogart: The Speaker's office, basically, would take a look at the request, because that initially was part of the policy of plaques in the building today.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Yes, there is a policy that deals with what types of monuments, statues and things can come onto the property. At this point, it would be through the Speaker and Board of Internal Economy, and then they would determine the way forward on how that could be implemented.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Last question—I promise: Was that what happened with, for example, more recently, A Remarkable Assembly? Because that's internal, on location—the A Remarkable Assembly pictures of the women in the assembly.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: I'm not familiar with that.

Mr. David Bogart: That was an exhibit. The Remarkable Assembly exhibit honours and celebrates the participation of women at this Legislature. It was put up back in 2013. There was interest by members, especially women members, of this Legislature—that they were not represented on the walls of this building. Lining the walls of that hallway, there were reproductions, from the National Gallery, of Upper Canada and Canada West Speakers that were just—the context really wasn't there, so the suggestion was made to Speaker Levac, at the time, that it would be great to find more women's representation on the walls. That idea was formulated during the time Speaker Levac was in office, and our office, parliamentary protocol, took the interest in doing the research. We have an exhibit coordinator who worked at putting together the exhibit. That wall just north of the Speaker's office, on that west side, celebrates women's firsts in our Legislature—the first two women who were elected, the first woman minister, the first women to hold certain cabinet positions and so forth, right up through the picture of Kathleen Wynne that's on the wall. This is the idea with that exhibit—that it's ongoing, so it will change through time. That's a permanent legacy to women's participation at this Legislature from a political standpoint and a non-political standpoint.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I lied about "one last question," because it's tied in with this—

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): It's the will of the committee. Will we let him continue?

Okay. Go ahead.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Again, it's the process that I'm really curious about. Who decides that's where it goes? Again, for the example of where the other plaques—the Italian and the coloured battalion—are, who decided? Was it the Speaker who said, "We're going have it here in this location, the northwest wing, across from my office. I think that's a good place for it. Instead of with all the other large portraits of men centre stage in front of the chamber, we're going to put them off in a corner on the northwest wing"? Who makes that decision?

Mr. David Bogart: I think at that time there was an opportunity there, because those pictures had been on the wall for 20 years and they were not in the best condition, and so they had to be taken down. Most of them were, as I mentioned, not originals; they were all copies. And so, because of the empty wall space there, that was seen as an opportunity.

In the rest of the building, a lot of the historical portraits throughout the hallways still belong to the archives. It's only recently that the Legislature has been coordinating the portraits for our former Speakers. The portraits of the Premiers are under the archives, and a lot of the historical portraits around the staircase are under the archives. A lot of the old genre pieces, part of the Ontario collection of art—again, that's the archives.

So there's a bit of negotiation when any of the stuff is moved around, in consultation with the archives, versus, "This is archival art, but we also need portraiture."

That stuff that was at the end of that hallway didn't really belong to the Legislature or the archives, so that was a good opportunity in that space—and that's probably why. So there is some speculation about why those ended up there.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Because eventually, to the committee—

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I'm going to cut you off, because I have Ms. Hogarth on the list. I'm happy to put you back on the list shortly.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Sam kind of took my question about the procedure, but I was thinking more outside—I noticed some of the statues that are outside were moved over time. Who decides where they go? What happens if you decide not to use a statue? What's the process around moving that statue, and who decides where that statue goes? Do you sell it? How does that work?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Well, the statues themselves are under the Archives of Ontario, so they have their policies, I would assume, on that.

I know there was contemplation about moving Mowat in the past, and I know part of their engagement on whether it would be relocated would be discussing with any relatives of the artist who are still here, or any relatives of the family members who are still here. Part of that was engagement and having that discussion.

We also involve heritage architects and landscape architects in determining historical relevance and where things could be relocated, because all of the statues are located in historically prominent locations, and locations that are important to the site. I think an example of that is the location of the current Queen Elizabeth monument. The original location contemplated by the group who was putting that forward was in the east grounds, located behind another statue. Obviously, for a monument of the Queen, it was not a prominent location and not a desired location, so through doing some historical background and looking at the site, we tried to find an area that would be of equal importance as the other statues on site. That was part of the discussion of where to locate that particular statue.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Just a follow-up: Is it a panel decision on where these statues are placed?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Yes. The QEII—through the master planning that we have, there was only really one location left on the grounds for a statue of that prominence. That really was the last spot, according to the historical information on the site.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Is there any protocol behind moving statues as the building may change or the building may push out? I'm not sure what the final decision is on the building. What would be the process of determining the placement of some of these prominent statues?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: I think that's one of the benefits of the historic structures report. The historic structures report is going to identify what's prominent. As we get into design and we know what needs to be relocated, those discussions would happen with Archives of Ontario and a process would be put in place for how to deal with what is impacted on the site that is a part of the archives collection,

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Prominent today—but we also have to look at what's going to be prominent in the future as well, because this is a snapshot in time right now.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Yes, and so part of the design would probably also include what are future areas of commemoration and what those can look like too. They would develop an area that would say, "Okay, in the future"—because right now, our site is pretty full. In the redevelopment, there is an opportunity there to identify any key areas or other ways commemoration can happen on the site.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I think that's a point that we shouldn't forget—the future.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I had a few more people on the speakers' list. I'm going to throw myself on there quickly.

One of the things that has been raised, like about the Japanese cherry trees—there are relationships that exist with the consul general and their office. I know that, whatever decisions ultimately are made—if it's a replant, if it's a "protect them," if it's a "replace them early," all of that can still maybe be figured out. But for some of the other monuments or structures, are there still existing

relationships that the committee can be made aware of? For example, the family of—if it's the artist or whatnot—even just to compile; not to be in the weeds, so to speak, but so that at that time of construction, we can provide, "These are the existing folks who would be interested in weighing in." Is that part of the structures report that's coming? I think that might be something forward-thinking.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: It might not go into that much detail about, specifically, every single association, like who was the group that put forward each dedication, but I think that's information that we can put together.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Not to put too fine a point on it now, but I think the committee has been interested from the beginning in figuring out its scope of work, because we could live in the weeds. And we want to be useful. We don't want to duplicate work. Obviously, there's a lot of existing work. I think that if there is something that you and your teams would recommend for the committee to focus on that might be helpful—if we choose to bring people forward, delegations, to weigh in or to be involved in the process, I think maybe that's something to park, for you to think about.

I know that we would like to figure out what lies beneath. We've talked about what's under the ground.

When you say that there are seven public and private owners and however many different kinds of infrastructure—should the committee be reaching out or looking at existing agreements or contracts or things like that?

Mr. David Bogart: Just one example to keep in mind: In terms of the monuments and plaques we've talked about this morning—a lot of them I can't think of, over the years, that have a specific public connection, but there is one to keep in mind, which is the plaque that honours the Air India disaster that took place in the 1980s. There is a plaque in the tree on the ground. Every year, on the national day for the recognition of victims of terrorism, I believe there is a gathering that does take place at that plaque. But that is almost an exception to what else is out there right now, because I can't think of any other that does tie in. Obviously, that's a very important and personal connection for a number of Canadians and people of this province, based on that disaster, and that's why that plaque is there. So it is a gathering place—for them, at least—as one example.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The only other thing I'd ask: Is the city of Toronto and their infrastructure plans that butt up against—this is something that came up at the subcommittee walk-around, and you've raised it again here. Is that something we could have a better understanding of in the future—because I think there's enough interest in knowing what you know about the area surrounding us and what this committee might have to be aware of.

Mr. Leardi.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: With regard to the south lawn, do we have a map of registered easements?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: We do.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Do we have a map of unregistered potential common-law easements?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: That I don't know.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: And that would be hard to get. Is it absolutely impossible to contemplate underground parking?

Interjections.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: No. That's why I'm asking about easements.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: No, I don't think it is out of the question.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: It's not entirely out of the question.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: No.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Is it 90% out of the question?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: I don't know. I know from past planning reports, there was contemplation for underground structures.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: If we could get the parking underground, that would earn us a lot of above ground space.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Yes, and I think in the long term, that's one of the things that has been identified on a lot of the master planning—to reduce or eliminate vehicles from the site, both from safety and just from functionality. The building was never meant to have cars be parked right up against it; hence, the issues we have with falling ice and snow. The building was designed under certain circumstances that have changed over time.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Last question, with regard to potential off-site parking: Immediately to the east, where the tunnel goes to the Whitney Block, is there any potential contemplation of underground parking anywhere over there—again, to get the cars off the site to buy us more above ground space?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Are you specifically speaking about south of Wellesley, or south of the Whitney Block?

Mr. Mike Harris: Like underneath University Avenue—the Queen's Park circle.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: South of Wellesley and east of Queen's Park circle.

Mr. Mike Harris: There is a parking lot underneath—Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Yes, there's the Whitney parking garage in that location.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Any potential for expansion?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: I would think so. It's only a two-level garage, which is pretty modest in today's—

Mr. Anthony Leardi: So that's just what I wanted to point out—that we could buy a lot of above ground space if we could send the parking underground.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Agreed.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Sarrazin.

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: Thank you for the presentation.

On MPP Leardi's point: Do we have all the details of the underground infrastructure? We know there's a subway on the eastern part of the property, but in front, on the south side of the building—do we have details of what's there, within the first 500 feet or something like that?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Yes, we do have quite a bit of information for the south tip of the property because we were looking at doing some projects in that end, so we did do some scanning, and we do have some underground surveys for those areas. We do have a good idea of what utilities we have around the site, but I'd say that most detail is on the south end. But we do have quite a bit.

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: Is that something we're going to be looking at? Is that something we're going to be able to consult, like these documents? I know it probably had nothing to do with—half your documents—like, you're building this study on, what is it, foundational documents or whatever? So that will be part of it? Or it's mostly for monuments?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: The historic structures report will look at the details of the site, so it will look at underground as well.

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: I think it's important to see that before we start any discussion on what we want to do in the future.

On another point: Can we get a copy of this, or did we already get a copy of this?

Interjection: We did. Last night, late.

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: Sorry about that.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Harris.

Mr. Mike Harris: The parkette that is adjacent to Whitney Block does have a few, sort of, statues and there is a monument there currently. Is that a space that we could use to temporarily house anything that would need to be moved off the property here—that could go over there? I know there's always a bit of an interesting relationship, if you will, between the LAO and OPS and who administers what at Whitney Block. Is that something that has been evaluated or are you putting that into some of your further reports? What are the plans there?

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: It hasn't been evaluated. It was contemplated from very early on—because Whitney Block was intended to continue right to Grosvenor Street. So there is a block of Whitney Block that was never built there. It was always looked at as, "Okay, that location could be an opportunity to build, and build some kind of connection to Whitney Block that could support, maybe, the rehabilitation and that could encompass perhaps expanding all the underground parking infrastructure there, too, and updating that as well." So it was looked at as a possibility. It's in proximity; it's still within the precinct of legislative and government buildings, and it's provincially owned land.

Mr. Mike Harris: Has there been any discussion with the OPS in regard to what's happening with the Macdonald Block, Hepburn, with our rehabilitation over the next little while? Is there an ability to tie any of that in together to try to maximize space? When we're looking at two or three city blocks, it's pretty substantial. But the OPS base in Whitney Block probably takes up more than what the physical Queen's Park building does. I don't know.

We talk about parking. Obviously, we don't have access to that parking. That parking is only for OPS employees—I assume not LAO employees, and certainly not for us. So what's that relationship like, and is there a way for the committee to help bridge some of that or start discussions? I'm just trying to get at a bit more background as to how that has gone. I don't mean just parking—just in general.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: I think, above my level, maybe there have been discussions about those things—at my level, not really. I know, through the ministry that has responsibility for the rehabilitation project, we've had some discussions about what some of those ideas could be, but from my understanding of that, those were not options that we were asked to pursue at that point.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. West.

MPP Jamie West: I just want to start by echoing everyone's thanks for your presentation. Also, I want to thank you for your passion on this. You can tell it's more than just a job that you're working on, so I appreciate that.

I think on Thursday—I know it's coming up soon we're going to be doing a tour walk of the area. Do you have any thoughts about what the best way of structuring that is, in terms of—do we start at the very south and work north? Are there certain targets we should see that are like the one we did with the co-chair, just as a briefing. There are plaques and monuments that I walked by several times and never really noticed the significance of it. For example, there's the time capsule—that can't, definitely, be moved. Are there trees and things that we have to be very cautious about that we should know about? There are several questions that came up about infrastructure and subway lines and—I'm trying to think of the right word utilities and things that we should know are in certain areas. I don't know if you've given any thought, since the walk we had, about where we should go or how we should structure that walk.

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Mr. David Bogart: That's a really good question. When we did the programming with the city of Toronto, being involved with it, we kind of designed it chronologically. There was a historical context to it. But that might not apply to what your needs are, in terms of what your interests are. So it really depends on the committee. We could follow it through on a historical standpoint or, if you prefer to just flip things around and do things more in a structural standpoint—it really would depend on your interest. We're at your disposal in terms of what you would like to do. I think, from a historical standpoint and a structural standpoint, we could manage it almost any way you wish—so whatever you would like to do.

MPP Jamie West: I was really just trying to think of what would be the most efficient way of getting the information across.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: When I've done it in the past, one of the ways that worked pretty good was starting at the north wing—so, looking at the north wing from the park and just talking a little bit about the context and connection between the park and the Legislature. In that location is

where we can really see the change that has happened around the building, with the parking and with the change in connection as well. With that north park, there used to be a walkway from our north entrance door right through the park, and the rehabilitation actually eliminated that walk-through. So there are some interesting things we can talk about there, looking at the building and parking—and then we make our way around the site there and then end back

Mr. David Bogart: I think, too, we haven't really taken a look at the west grounds. There has been some interest, especially with respect to University Avenue that passes the west part of the grounds and how changes to that could impact the site.

Also, there is some interesting background with the William Lyon Mackenzie Memorial, which was really one of the last fundraising- and committee-oriented projects on the ground. So that's another option. We hadn't really seen that side. But we'll leave it up to the committee.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I would remind folks on Thursday to wear appropriate walking shoes if we're going to be on the grounds and on the road and whatnot

What you just suggested probably hits what the committee has talked about in the past—what we would be ultimately responsible for if there are decisions to be made. If there are city of Toronto plans that are going to have an impact, I think we'd like to know that. I was eavesdropping on this side about the logistics of things: what we cannot move, what we might move, what could be for someone down the road to think about—if there's a monument row, for example. All of these things, though—the logistics are important.

I know that when we had done the subcommittee walkaround, that's why we felt this presentation was important—to be able to delve into some of the historical pieces and have an appreciation for that—but maybe not on the walking tour as much. The chronology may not be as relevant on that tour.

Are there any other things that members would like to focus on or consider for the tour on Thursday, specifically—what we can ask our fine tour guides? I imagine there will be others who join us as well, as they had on the—yes. Is there anything else you'd like to know or have pointed out?

Mr. West.

MPP Jamie West: I said it earlier, but I think the utility lines and underground infrastructure—it doesn't have to be exact, but just, "In this general area is the trunk line for the steam," or whatever else, so we have a rough idea in our head.

Ms. Jelena Bajcetic: Yes. No problem.

Mr. Mike Harris: The other thing, too, that we haven't really talked much about—and I don't want to digress here. I'm just saying, on the tour, if there are any areas where you view maybe the building could potentially grow, whether that means taking up some of the parking space or what have you—maybe pointing out some of that. I know, as we're going around the north side of the building,

that could be a potential area where there could be some growth. If there's an opportunity to touch on some of that, I think that would be helpful for us as well.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Are there any further questions while we have our presenters here? No? In that case—a reminder that we will see them again on Thursday at 1 o'clock, at the grand staircase.

I would like to thank you both very much for today's presentation. We'll see you on Thursday. Members of the committee—we've got just a few more quick things to talk about, so we will release you. Thank you very much.

Specifically, about Thursday: We have the start time. We don't have an end time, because it will be an organic walking tour. But would the committee like to have conversation right on the heels of that meeting, the tour here? Would we like to come back after that tour and think about next steps?

Mr. Mike Harris: I think some time just to sort of digest—

Ms. Christine Hogarth: While it's fresh in our heads. The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): It can be whatever the committee wants. But we could maybe load up research—

Mr. Mike Harris: I'm just wondering what time we allotted on Thursday?

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): What does the committee feel? It's a 1 o'clock start. We technically have, I think, until 6 booked. But as far as I know, there's nothing preventing us from taking the time we'd like to take.

Mr. Leardi.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I think Mr. Harris expressed what I'm thinking. We're going to need time to digest what we saw and then come back and talk about it.

Mr. Mike Harris: I think that's my preference as well. The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Okay. I misunderstood that. In that case, if we came back here afterwards and touched base or gave research something—or certainly, we can wait until the following Tuesday—

Mr. Mike Harris: We could come back and say, "Hey, what do you guys think? Do you want to chat about this now, or do you want to have some time?" Maybe there are a couple of things that we'll want to chat about, but we don't need a whole two-hour session.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): And there may be something that we would like to hand over to research, as we tend to do.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: While it's fresh in our heads. That's what I was thinking.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): So we'll allow a bit of time—not plan to take a full meeting, but touch base after that. Would that be an open session or closed session?

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I think we should do closed.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Okay. So if that's a closed session, then we'll schedule a meeting to go over it more at length.

Other points for discussion? Mr. Sarrazin.

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: I won't be able to make it. Do I need somebody to cover for me on that day, because of the meeting afterwards?

Mr. Mike Harris: We'll take that offline.

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: That's what I thought.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. West.

MPP Jamie West: I was looking at my calendar to figure out—oh, we're meeting at the grand staircase, okay. That's what I was looking for. I was trying to find it while asking the question, so I wouldn't need to do this.

Mr. Mike Harris: I believe we are expecting some snow too, over the next little bit, so just keep that in mind for Thursday. It might be a bit muddy.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The only other thing that I would add, and maybe we can take this up at another meeting—the committee had been interested in what Nick brought forward on the Bellevue House, the historic site in Kingston. The committee discussed maybe having presenters, in person or on Zoom, to talk to us about their process. However, that said, I know that they're opening back up to the public soon, so if the committee wanted to take a look at that as a—

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Site-visit tour.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Well, the interest is the work that they had done with the Sir John A. Macdonald legacy—but it's up to the committee what they feel would be worthwhile in terms of what we would learn, either from a site visit or from the folks who went through that consultative process.

Mr. West.

MPP Jamie West: I was going to bring this up probably on Tuesday, because they don't reopen until May. I wasn't sure if they were active when they're closed or not.

I think we need to have those conversations not just from Bellevue House, but other stakeholders as well, to have that sort of rounded—how do we make these impressions? But I think we need to make that plan not ad hoc.

Mr. Mike Harris: Why don't you and I, subcommitteewise, chat about that? And then we can bring it back.

MPP Jamie West: Sure.

The Chair (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Is there any other item that folks want to talk about while we are here together, before Thursday? Okay.

Is there anything else that you would need from us? Okay.

In that case, seeing no further business, see you on Thursday. This meeting is adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1010.

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