
TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: LEASE OF 36 MULCASTER STREET- GREY & SIMCOE FORESTERS REGIMENTAL MUSEUM

WARD: 1

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CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: C. LADD, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to enter into a new lease agreement with the Grey & Simcoe Foresters Foundation for the continuation of a Heritage Site which houses the Grey & Simcoe Foresters Regimental Museum at 36 Mulcaster Street on terms acceptable to the Directors of Legal Services and Facilities & Transit.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

2. The purpose of this staff report is to enter into a new lease for 36 Mulcaster Street with the Grey & Simcoe Foresters Foundation (GSF) for 5 years with an option to renew for up to a further 5 years.
3. Beginning in 1997, the GSF operated a small museum in a wing of the building located at 36 Mulcaster St. In 2010, the GSF expanded its operation to the remaining portions of the building. It operates three days per week and is staffed by volunteers and a volunteer curator. Additional collection material is stored at the Armouries Building at Queen's Park.
4. The building at 36 Mulcaster Street is designated under Part IV Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as a locally significant building by City By-law 95-157. Any alterations to the building require the approval of Council. Heritage Barrie, the City's municipal heritage committee, assists and advises Council with respect to such requests for alterations.
5. In 2009, significant upgrades to the building were undertaken at the City's expense in order for the building to be used by the general public for museum purposes. These upgrades included alterations to allow barrier free access, the addition of life safety features and the upgrade of existing washrooms facilities.

6. The building restoration was initiated by the BIA as a special project. Former MPP Joe Tascona had previously established a constituency office in the building and was retrofitted to fit a commercial purpose. The conversion of the building to a public assembly required the necessary renovations.
7. The building currently operates as a museum with exhibits highlighting historical military contributions from the Grey & Simcoe Foresters Regiment.
8. The current lease term commenced on January 15th, 2010 and will expire on January 15th, 2015.

ANALYSIS

9. The GSF approached the City of Barrie about renewing their existing lease prior to its expiration in January 2015. They are requesting an early renewal with a firm term so that when they approach funding organizations such as the Ontario Trillium Foundation they can confirm that their museum operations have a stable location.
10. The GSF has requested that the new lease be on the same terms and conditions as the existing lease. Their view, with which staff agrees, is that the GSF have been providing a valuable cultural resource to Barrie residents and that the existence of the museum enhances the historic nature of the building at 36 Mulcaster St.
11. The proposed lease would be under the following terms and conditions:
 - a) A term of 5 years at the rate of \$1.00 per year commencing on January 15th, 2015, with an option to extend for a further 5 year term if all parties mutually agree.
 - b) The City continue to pay for the annual operating costs of the building including hydro, gas, electricity, water and general building maintenance.
 - c) On January 1st of each year during the five year term or any subsequent extensions, the GSF provide the City with Certificates of Insurance in the amount of \$5 million, with the Corporation of the City of Barrie named as insured. The GSF provide copies of tenant insurance (proof of liability and content insurance for their operations) and agree to indemnify the City.
 - d) The GSF provide an annual report to the City including but not limited to a statement of operating expenses, visitorship, special events, fundraising activities, and updated strategic plans for the sustainability of their operations, for the following calendar year no later than December 31st of each year.
12. In accordance with the City of Barrie's Plan for Culture, Building a Creative Future, which encourages a strategic approach to ensuring sustainability, the GSF have requested a minimum term of 5 years which is in agreement with staff's recommendations.
13. The lease period being proposed will accommodate the GSF's strategic planning and implementation, development of relationships with partners and sponsors, evolution of programming relevant to the space, its audience and engagement in measurement, review and analysis, to serve its strategic planning initiatives.
14. The City of Barrie's report on its Arts and Culture markets, titled Created in Barrie, revealed that those most likely to participate in Barrie's Arts and Culture scene live in the older neighbourhoods and include a combination of "almost retired", "retired" and "just starting out with kids". Considering Barrie's position as the regional cultural hub, many social and economic

opportunities lie in programming a diverse downtown stage that will engage residents and visitors alike. Building a Creative Future, Barrie's Plan for Culture referred to the downtown as a container for our cultural resources.

15. Community history and in particular military history is popular amongst the retired and almost retired population segment. The GSF Museum is well positioned to satisfy the needs of those curious about Barrie and its military history. Its position opposite our national gallery and a short walk from the historic Barrie jail form the beginnings of a cultural node as detailed in the Downtown Commercial Plan. Further evolution of the museum's offerings should exploit opportunities for more experience based programming and partnerships that take the programming out of the physical confinement of the Armoury building.
16. The GSF Museum is a significant and complimentary element in a programming mix that is important to the increase of foot traffic and spending in our downtown.
17. The Armoury building at 36 Mulcaster is an important asset in the City of Barrie's Heritage portfolio. Animation of the facility allows us to derive an ongoing benefit. The GSF provide appropriate, credible and relevant programming and are a direct link to the building's past.
18. The aforementioned benefits and its potential economic return from downtown spending make the continuation of the GSF lease at a nominal fee a prudent investment for the City of Barrie.
19. Measurement, data collection, review and analysis, planned over the next 5 years will provide increased information to assist the GSF, staff and Council in important strategic planning for the future of the Armoury Heritage asset.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

20. There are no environmental matters related to the recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES

21. The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1

General Committee could recommend that the City of Barrie decline entering into an Agreement with the GSF for use of the historic building at 36 Mulcaster Street

This alternative is not recommended as the building is considered to be a key heritage asset in terms of both the Downtown Commercial Master Plan and the City's Cultural Plan.

FINANCIAL

22. The annual operating budget for the building is approved at \$16,103 for 2014 and provided for in the Facilities & Transit operating budget.

23. The most current rate charged to a 3rd party for occupancy of this facility was approximately \$16,800 per annum in 2007. The amount consisted of \$12,500 base rent and \$4,300 for property taxes. Current market rates for this space may differ from the amounts noted.

LINKAGE TO 2010-2014 COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

24. The recommendation(s) included in this Staff Report support the following goal identified in the 2010-2014 City Council Strategic Plan:
- Create a Vibrant and Healthy City Centre
25. 36 Mulcaster Street is located directly across the street from the McLaren Art Gallery and is identified as part of the "Artistic" neighbourhood identified in the Downtown Commercial Master Plan.