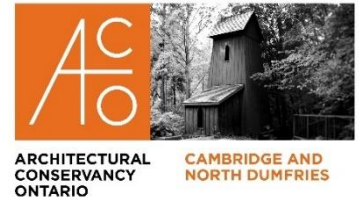


**7 June 2022  
City of Cambridge  
Special Council Meeting  
Re: Signage at McDougall Cottage Historic Site**



**Presented by Karen Scott Booth, Vice President  
ACO Cambridge**

Mayor McGarry, Councillors, City Staff, members of the public,

I'm speaking on behalf of the board and members of ACO Cambridge to address the Region's request to alter a designated property, specifically by adding proposed signage at McDougall Cottage.

We strongly urge council to deny this highly inappropriate request for signage that is in violation of the city's own bylaws.

This course of action should be scrapped for the following reasons:

MHAC deals with requests to alter signage on a regular basis and is very knowledgeable and careful in its deliberations and recommendations to council.

- In this case, MHAC rejected the request by a vote of 8-1. That alone speaks volumes – your own advisory committee cannot support this request.

The city's sign by-law dictates the size and number of signs permitted.

- The application is requesting a sign that is over **3 times larger** – that's 316% larger - than is permitted.
- The consequence of this sign's greater size is that it will permanently obscure approximately one third of the front façade's designated attributes: the distinct coursed grey granite and limestone quoining.

We request that council simply adhere to its own by-law!

The sign by-law for designated properties says that: "no business establishment shall have more than one sign per storey for each building face of such establishment."

- In fact, council is being asked to permit *two* signs, one with an image, and one with an artist's interpretive statement in addition to the two already on site. That totals **four** signs.

This sign is proposed to be replaced every 1-2 years, meaning that each time a sign is added to or replaced on a designated property, the addition or change goes before MHAC.

- Are you really prepared to ask MHAC members - citizen volunteers – to be continually evaluating applications and repeat applications that they have already rejected *twice*?

Placement of this proposed sign is highly problematic. and is contrary to the designating by-law.

- Not only does it obscure a designated attribute, but it endangers the very building itself. Excavating within inches from the foundation and the building for the sign supports is a severe risk.
- A sign so close to the façade – purported to be only 10 inches away – would prevent regular inspection and maintenance of the stone and mortar.
- The registered easement of 1 foot around the building prohibits such close interference.
- This sign puts a vandalism target on McDougall Cottage, leaving the sign and the cottage vulnerable to tagging, graffiti, and other destructive activities.

Not only the building and its foundation are imperiled.

- Excavating the front of the property to put a sign there also destroys much of the attractive period garden, a classically symmetrical structured shrubbery knot garden, yet another key feature of the cottage style.

ACO members respect the inclusion of Indigenous populations. According to Michelle Bartlett, Supervisor of the Region's Historic Sites, no formal consultation with the area's Indigenous groups was conducted. Apparently a 'survey' was circulated but there's no published evidence of response or results.

McDougall Cottage was purchased in the mid 1980s by Heritage Cambridge in order to preserve the building and its context within the community. The City of Cambridge concurred when the property was designated in 1988. This particular proposal is flawed, is contrary to the city's own by-laws, and should be rejected by council as such.

Thank you