



City of Port Moody

Minutes

Heritage Commission

Minutes of the meeting of the Heritage Commission held on Thursday, May 13, 2021 via Zoom.

Present

Councillor Meghan Lahti, Chair (arrived at 7:05pm)
Councillor Diana Dilworth, Vice-Chair
Dianna Brown
Laura Dick (arrived at 7:16pm)
Christopher Pope
Rebeca Salas
Joan Stuart

In Attendance

Jess Daniels – Policy Planner
Philip Lo – Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

Call to Order

- 1.1 The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

2. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes

- 2.1 HC21/009
Moved, seconded, and CARRIED
THAT the minutes of the Heritage Commission meeting held on Thursday, April 8, 2021 be adopted.

3. Unfinished Business

4. New Business

Descendants of the Komagata Maru Delegation

4.1 Delegation: Raj Singh Toor

Mr. Raj Singh Toor, a direct descendant of one of the Komagata Maru passengers, gave a presentation regarding recognition for the Komagata Maru tragedy, noting the following:

- the Komagata Maru arrived in Vancouver on May 23, 1914 with 376 passengers, all of which were British subjects and were British passport holders;
- the Canadian government denied the passengers entry, and no food, water, nor medication were provided to the passengers;
- the ship was forcefully sent back to British-ruled India, and British troops open fired on the passengers when the ship returned to India;
- around 20 passengers were killed, with many injured and imprisoned;
- the BC government formally apologized in 2008; the federal government apologized 2016, and the City of Vancouver apologized for its role on June 10 2020;
- the City of New Westminster passed a motion to recognize the passengers, and renamed a ferry dock and trail in memory of the passengers;
- Delta also passed a motion to recognize the injustice suffered by the passengers;
- Port Moody has a direct connection to the incident, as many of the passengers were workers in the lumber mills in Port Moody; and
- the delegation requests action from the City to commemorate the incident, such as renaming a park or a street, or the installing a storyboard at Rocky Point Park.

The Commission members thanked Mr. Toor for his delegation, and noted the following:

- the Commission expressed support for the Komagata Maru campaign;
- the City has a long-standing history with its sawmills;
- Mr. Toor can consider reaching out to the owners of the sawmills to begin conversations around the history of South Asians working in the sawmills;
- Commission member Laura Dick will provide Mr. Toor with contact information for the sawmill owner to potentially begin the conversation.

Mr. Toor left the meeting at this point and did not return.

The Commission noted the following in discussion:

- Council did not specify the form of commemoration when it referred the delegation to the Commission; the Commission is free to make its own recommendation;
- a storyboard on the incident near the Pigeon Creek stone marker can be considered;
- storyboards around Metro Vancouver on this incident seem to have the same pictures and content, with the same story being told in each municipality;
- a storyboard can be placed at a location with visible water view, and highlight stories about ships docking at Port Moody;
- the Society can partner with the City to create an impactful storyboard which highlights the City's direct connection to the tragedy; and
- there may be additional information directly from the sawmill which can further connect the story to Port Moody.

HC21/010

Moved, seconded, and CARRIED

THAT a storyboard concept be explored with the Komagata Maru Society to commemorate the incident;

AND THAT the Heritage Commission be directed to work with the Komagata Maru Society to draft the storyboard content and to facilitate outreach with potential partners.

Storyboard Subcommittee Update

4.2 Storyboard Subcommittee

The Subcommittee noted that research at the museum is ongoing, and that the pandemic has made this more difficult.

Stone Marker Subcommittee Update

4.3 Stone Marker Subcommittee

The Subcommittee noted that there have been difficulties in accessing the museum due to the pandemic.

Indigenous Subcommittee Update

4.4 Indigenous Subcommittee

The Indigenous Subcommittee noted the following:

- while attempting to move forward with heritage language project, the Subcommittee received some feedback regarding whether or not and how effectively the Subcommittee can partner with the First Nations community to carry this project out;
- there are some perceptions that the City needs to commit to additional work to understand its own history

and its impact on First Nations history, and to improve relationships, before undertaking broader outreach and collaboration work;

- it may be unfair to expect Indigenous communities to provide support for the work, and the Subcommittee did not want to give the impression that this was the expectation;
- the Subcommittee may not carry enough weight to conduct this work, which may be out of the scope of the Subcommittee or the Commission; and
- the Subcommittee recommends a call to action to acknowledge the need for reflection and to put together an action plan to commit resources into this work.

HC21/011

Moved and seconded

WHEREAS the City of Port Moody has committed to meaningful redress and reconciliation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Port Moody formally commit to undertaking a critical reflection of its historical relationship with Indigenous peoples and their lands;

AND THAT an appropriate third party be identified to carry out the work;

AND THAT the appropriate resources be determined and allocated to plan, research and report the findings;

AND THAT the resultant report outline future actions that the City of Port Moody will take to appropriately acknowledge the findings, prioritizing transparent collaboration with Indigenous peoples with a right and interest in the place we now know as Port Moody.

The Commission noted the following in discussion:

- the motion is intended to be “step zero” of the truth and reconciliation process and must be done first, as while the City is committed to reconciliation, it has not investigated and reflected on its past to understand where and how reconciliation and change can begin;
- it is important for the City to undertake its own work and not rely on Indigenous people to tell the story, as it would not call on Indigenous peoples to recall their own trauma as it relates to actions from all levels of government, and allows the City to do its own learning;
- research into the City’s historical documents, bylaws, policies, etc., may yield previous unknown facts about

- the City's relationship with Indigenous peoples;
- a third party or volunteer support can be used to support this work, depending on funding and the availability of external expertise;
- liaising with Indigenous leadership requires a different protocol and should be done with care;
- Council can decide to incorporate this into existing and ongoing work to establish relationships; this work may take some time;
- the Squamish Nation released a 2021 heritage policy which is in depth and discusses paths of communication, and what the Squamish people want to see moving forward regarding reconciliation; and
- 2022 is the beginning of the United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages; the Heritage Commission can consider including this in its future work plans.

The question on the main motion (HC21/011) was put to a vote; the following motion was CARRIED:

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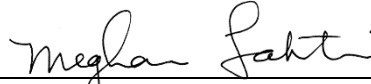
5. Information

Staff Updates

5.1 There were no staff updates.

6. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:21pm.



Councillor Meghan Lahti,
Chair



Philip Lo,
Committee Coordinator