



City of Port Moody

Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: December 31, 2019
Submitted by: Community Services Department – Cultural Services Division
Subject: Wharfinger's Office

Purpose

To provide Council with key areas for consideration in evaluating the request from the Arts and Culture Committee to relocate the historic Wharfinger's Office from Maple Ridge to Port Moody.

Recommended Resolution(s)

THAT the report dated December 31, 2019 from the Community Services Department – Cultural Services Division regarding Wharfinger's Office received for information.

Background

On September 19, 2019, the Arts and Culture Committee (Committee) discussed the opportunity of moving an 11'x13' heritage building, called the Wharfinger's Office, currently located at the Port Haney Wharf in Maple Ridge, to Port Moody for use as an artist studio. The building is currently owned by the Maple Ridge Historical Society and they are looking to dispose of the building as the repeated repairs are becoming too costly for the Society. The following motion was forwarded by the Committee to Council for consideration:

ACC19/025

THAT the City acquire the Wharfinger's Office from the Maple Ridge Historical Society and relocate it to Port Moody for potential conversion into an artist studio.

On October 8, 2019 Council considered a report dated September 25, 2019 from the Arts and Culture Committee, titled Potential Acquisition of the Wharfinger's Office from the Maple Ridge Historical Society and passed the following resolution:

RC19/408

THAT this item be referred to the next available Committee of the Whole meeting for consideration.

Discussion

The following background information was provided by the Maple Ridge News.

The subject building was built in 1935 for use as a real estate and insurance office. It was moved to the Haney Wharf in the 1950's where it served as the office for the Towing Tugboat boat company. It is from this use that the building became known as the Wharfinger's Office. The building was rescued, restored, and installed at the Port Haney Wharf in 1992. The Maple Ridge Historical Society is looking to either dispose of or tear down the building as the annual repairs and graffiti cleanup are too costly for the Society.

The Purpose of a Wharfinger's Office

A Wharfinger's Office is an office that oversees the operations or management of a commercial wharf. A Wharfinger is defined as the person who is responsible for goods delivered to the wharf and is responsible for day-to-day activities, including slipways, keeping tide tables, and resolving disputes. The Wharfinger generally kept an office located at the Wharf.

Staff is not aware of a Wharfinger's Office, or Wharfinger role historically being located anywhere in Port Moody.

Technical Considerations

As Council referred the consideration of acquiring the Wharfinger's Office to a Committee of the Whole meeting, staff have not been requested to complete a thorough assessment of acquiring the Wharfinger's Office. To support Council in the Committee discussion, staff have prepared the following key technical areas for Council to consider based on electronic documentation and photographs. If this project moves forward, staff will coordinate a site visit and full analysis.

1. Building Location

No specific location was identified by the Arts and Culture Committee. Following is a list of potential locations and significant information to consider with each location.

a. Rocky Point Park

- A new Rocky Point Park Master Plan and site specific archeology review are planned for 2021-2022. The current Rocky Point Park Master Plan recommends minimizing the number of small buildings located throughout the Park. Due to site constraints and park planning under way, staff do not have a specific location that can be recommended at this time.

b. Queen's Street Plaza Area

- A building could be added to Queen's Street plaza, although it would impact other activities in the area such as filming. The gravel parking lot located on the north side of Clarke Street, across from Queen's Street Plaza, could also be considered. No assessment of the demand on this parking area has been completed. If Queen's Street Plaza or City parking land near the Plaza is considered, staff recommend contemplating this building in the context of a larger vision and planning exercise for the plaza. A capital plan project to look at increasing pedestrian traffic and supporting community placemaking at the plaza is for planned for 2020-2021.

c. Clarke Street

- The City does not own land on the south of Clarke Street; therefore, a private partnership would be required if this location is considered.

d. Kyle Centre Campus

- A new Kyle Centre and Kyle Park are planned at this location. Site planning has not occurred. Staff do not recommend committing new elements to the site until planning is complete.

e. Other

- In looking at other potential locations to site the building, staff recommend that only sites without competing uses be considered.

2. Planning and Zoning

- City planning generally recommends looking at items in the larger community context rather than on a case-by-case basis. It is unclear if the plan is to acquire the building as a standalone use or anticipated to be part of a larger initiative that could include other buildings. The larger context should be considered.
- Depending on the location, consideration should be given to the intended use for the building and site development requirements such as setbacks.
- Heritage preservation principles recommend preserving 'in place' to maintain historical context. When a building is moved, the historical context is often lost. Historical context of the building and Port Moody should be considered.

3. Building Condition and Building Codes

- A City initiated structural building assessment should be considered to determine the current building condition prior to acquiring. The building assessment should look specifically at structural integrity and hazardous materials to ensure the building can be moved, as well as to estimate any related repair costs.
- Consideration should also be given to assessing the building roof, exterior finishing, energy efficiency, and electrical conditions.
- If the building is intended to be occupied, plumbing facilities may need to be installed for its occupants.

4. Building Servicing Requirements

- The building will need to be connected to services including electrical, water, sanitary, and fibre optics. The location and costs associated with connecting to these services will vary depending if the services are at the site or need to be extended from a right-of-way. The cost and complexity of the servicing requirements will be specific to each site.

5. Energy Efficiency

- Historic buildings generally do not meet current energy efficiency standards and generally have not been constructed with low-carbon materials and heating/cooling systems. The City's greenhouse gas emission targets may want to be considered in acquiring a new building.

6. Vandalism

- The building has been subject to vandalism at its current location. Generally, principles to consider that can reduce vandalism are siting in an area where there is good natural surveillance (e.g. a caretaker in the area), good site lines to the building from the street and sidewalks, high foot traffic, lighting, and landscaping design. Staff recommend considering the potential for vandalism in looking at locations to site the building.

Initial Cost Estimates to Acquire and Renovate the Wharfinger's Office:

The following cost estimates are based on building photographs.

Structural Engineering Assessment:	\$2,000-\$4,000
Moving the Building:	\$25,000-\$50,000 (assuming building is structurally sound to move)
Site Preparation and Building a Foundation:	\$15,000-\$20,000
Utility Services:	\$30,000-\$90,000
Remodel Costs:	\$25,000-\$50,000 (exterior repairs, bathroom, electrical upgrading, and interior upgrading)
Annual Maintenance/Insurance/Utility Costs:	\$5,000-\$10,000

Staff do not recommend acquiring the Wharfinger's Office as the costs of relocating, siting, and remodelling the building are anticipated to be in excess of building a new building. In addition, the historic context of a Wharfinger's Office is not part of Port Moody's heritage. If this project moves forward, it will impact the delivery of other capital and strategic initiatives across multiple departments.

Other Option(s)

If Council would like staff to consider adding artist studio space on City land, staff can add this project to the 2021 budget and work plan.

Financial Implications

There are no fiscal implications at this time.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

There are no communications or civic engagement needs at this time.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

If the Wharfinger's Office is used as an artist studio, this project could align with the Council Strategic Plan Priority/Objective Economic Prosperity – create an attractive and vibrant community through events, arts, and culture.

Report Author

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General Manager of Community Services

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Wharfinger's Office.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jan 14, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

André Boel, General Manager of Planning and Development - Jan 9, 2020 - 6:42 PM

Lesley Douglas, General Manager of Environment and Parks - Jan 10, 2020 - 12:58 PM

Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Jan 10, 2020 - 5:47 PM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Jan 12, 2020 - 8:14 PM

Tracey Takahashi for Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Jan 13, 2020 - 12:28 PM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Jan 14, 2020 - 1:53 PM