



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Committee

From: Jane Fernyhough
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services

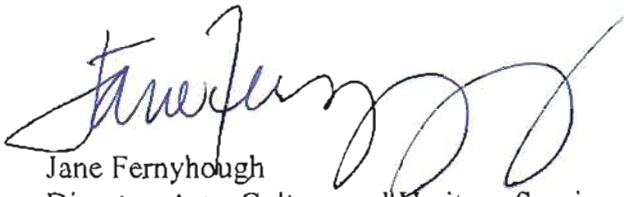
Re: Branscombe House - future uses

Date: September 6, 2013

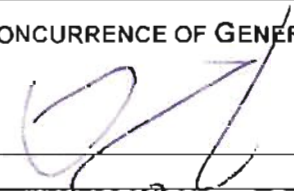
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Staff Recommendation

That the report, titled Branscombe House – future uses, dated September 6, 2013, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be received for information.



Jane Fernyhough
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
(604-276-4288)

REPORT CONCURRENCE			
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Capital Buildings Project Development Parks Division	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
REVIEWED BY DIRECTORS	INITIALS: DW		

Staff Report

Origin

At the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting of May 28, 2013, staff were requested to report on the planned future uses for the restored Branscombe House. This report responds to that request.

The restoration of the 1905 historically significant Branscombe House on the Railway Greenway contributes to Council term goal 9.1: Arts and Culture: Build culturally rich public spaces across Richmond.

Analysis

In July, 2012, the City entered into a construction agreement with an informal consortium of local business people to stabilize and restore the historical Branscombe House.

The rehabilitation of the exterior and the restoration of the interior lower floor including the addition of two washrooms accessible from the interior and one trails washroom accessible from the exterior are nearing completion.

The agreement indicated that the restoration would accommodate public use on the ground floor so the house could be used for catered events such as meetings, workshops and small receptions. The potential for a living suite upstairs that could be used for a caretaker or an artist in residence was included.

The report also indicated that the long term use of the house should be developed in conjunction with the Railway Greenway Linear Park Vision and Concept Plan to ensure complementary uses.

When the current restoration phase is completed, the occupancy permit will allow for public assembly up to 30 people. It could become a 'rentable' property in the City's inventory of public meeting and workshop spaces.

Current zoning of the property is School and Institutional (SI). This zone provides for a range of educational, recreational, park and community oriented uses. Permitted uses of this zoning include recreation, exhibition and convention facilities, education and entertainment.

The Parks Division has been preparing a park design for the area surrounding the house. The park plan is being designed to be sympathetic to the heritage aspect of the Edwardian Builder style of the house.

Should Council wish to reconsider the potential uses for Branscombe House a Request for Proposals could be issued. While this has not proved successful in the past, the house will be substantially restored to a state that the private sector may come forward to propose a viable project that would complement the Railway Greenway Linear Park.

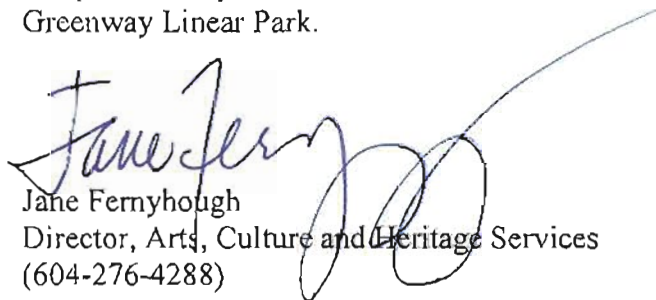
A request has been submitted to the 2014 Capital Budget process to finish the restoration of the upper floor as a suite and install a basic catering kitchen on the lower floor which will enhance the uses on the ground floor.

Financial Impact

No financial impact.

Conclusion

Through a partnership with a local business the rehabilitation of the exterior and the restoration of the interior lower floor of Branscombe House are nearing completion. The lower floor has been restored to allow public assembly to accommodate meetings, workshops and small receptions. Any future uses of the house should complement the location on the new Railway Greenway Linear Park.



Jane Fernyhough
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
(604-276-4288)