



**City of Richmond**

**Report to Committee**

**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee      **Date:** September 11, 2006

**From:** Kate Sparrow, Director Recreation & Cultural Services      **File:**

**Re:** Referral to examine the vessel "Brora Thor"

**Staff Recommendation**

That Council receive this report for information.

*K Sparrow*

Kate Sparrow, Director  
Recreation and Cultural Services  
(4129)

Attach: (1)

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY			
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>	
Budgets .....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Bill White</i>	
<b>REVIEWED BY TAG</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>REVIEWED BY CAO</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>DS</i>	<i>GD</i>	

## Staff Report

### Origin

At the General Purposes Committee meeting of September 5, 2006, the following staff referral was made:

That staff be authorized to examine the vessel "Brora Thor" and to report to the Committee on the potential for acquiring the ship.

Staff were further requested to include in the report on the potential for acquiring the "Brora Thor", information on (i) the impact of such a ship being moored at the Britannia Heritage Shipyard from a tourist and environmental point of view, and (ii) how the acquisition of the ship would fit into the City's waterfront plan.

### Analysis

#### The Ship

The Brora Thor (ex Francis Lynn II, ex W.F.M.) was built in 1922 in False Creek by Arthur Moscrop. She was one of three tugs built in this yard at the same time, the other two being the SS Master and SS Swell. She is 107 feet overall, 85 feet on the waterline, beam of 21 feet, draft of 10 feet, with a displacement of 96.5 tons. She has massive construction of fir frames of 7 inches on 6-inch centers, with 3" inner and outer planks, galvanized fastenings and yellow Cedar decks. She is powered by a GM6-110 diesel engine of 285 break horsepower. She carries 3,500 gallons of fuel in 2 tanks and 1,000 gallons of water. Attached are a number of photos of the vessel. (Attachment 1)

Over the years she has undergone many changes, the most notable being the conversion to a sailing schooner in 1987. Her current configuration as a yacht has 3 heads, two showers and 12 berths in four staterooms.

The ship was last dry docked in April 2005 at which time a survey was conducted and maintenance completed. The current owner has supplied copies of the latest survey which indicates that the vessel is in generally good condition. At that time she was painted, new zincs applied, and several planks and butt ends were replaced. As a pleasure vessel she requires a certified crew of two, a master and an engineer. Currently, she does not meet the Department of Transport Canadian Shipping Inspection (DoTCSI) regulations for the carrying of passengers.

#### Waterfront Plan & Britannia Heritage Shipyard

The vision outlined in the Council endorsed Waterfront Amenity Strategy (February '03) for the Steveston area is:

*The Steveston waterfront area, with its working fishing harbour, historic village centre, active street life, festivals and beautiful riverfront setting, will be an unique and popular place to live, work and play and a key visitor destination for the region.*

The vision for Britannia Heritage Shipyard as outlined in the 2001 Business Plan is:

*“for the Britannia Heritage Shipyard Park to be a publicly accessible waterfront heritage park and working museum with passive, active and interactive activities, focusing on the local industrial marine heritage. Emphasis is on the west coast wooden commercial fish boat building and repair that was historically based in Steveston; and the cultural mosaic and living conditions of the labour force on the Steveston waterfront.”*

The Waterfront Plan encourages animation and activities on the waterfront that promote our rich maritime heritage and a regionally significant port.

The experience of Tall Ships 2002 proved to be a major draw for the community and visitors. Subsequent visits to Richmond by other tall ships have had exceptional interest for the public. The Sailing Vessel Concordia has twice berthed at Britannia and has received wide spread interest and media attention. Having a tall ship regularly at Britannia provides one more enhancement to the visitors' experience. The vessel would generate value to the overall tourism attraction of the City of Richmond. The overall impact is very hard to quantify without a business plan that would analyse the return on the investment.

While there is no historical record of halibut schooners being built or serviced at Britannia, there are historical records of sailing vessels loading canned salmon at Britannia, before it was converted to a shipyard.

Environmental impacts of mooring a sailing vessel such as the Brora Thor would be minimal. All vessels with anti-fouling bottom paint leach a small amount of toxic chemicals into the water. Given the number of vessels currently berthed in Steveston harbour, this vessel would have little impact overall.

### Potential Uses

The opportunities for use include at least four possible options:

1) As a museum exhibit:

The vessel could be used as a museum exhibit to represent a typical halibut schooner from the early 1900's. There were many sailing vessels involved in the early halibut, cod and salmon fisheries on the west coast. Typically, they were based on the schooner rig of the east coast fisheries. As such, this vessel's schooner rig is representative of the halibut schooners, even though the rig is built on a tugboat hull. There would need to be some reconstruction, notably to the Pilothouse. Much of the interior, including all contemporary furnishings and navigational electronic equipment, would need to be removed and fish holds installed. The living and working areas for the fishermen crew would need to be rebuilt. All areas of the ship would require interpretation and exhibits to show an early 1900's halibut schooner. The costs of these modifications have not been determined. There are no DoTCSI regulations related to this use.

## 2) As a School Program Platform:

The vessel could be used as a floating classroom, taking school students on trips with an environmental / geographical focus. The program would need to be developed with support from the Richmond School Board and incorporated into the school curriculum. The operational costs of this type of program have not been determined nor have the charges for the students. There is no assurance that the School Board would support a program of this type or that the teachers would find the program of value as a field trip. The DoTCSI regulates the carrying of passengers on vessels and this vessel does not meet those regulations at this time. It is not known how much it may cost to make the necessary changes to meet those regulations. There are additional regulations relating to the qualifications of captains and crew for passenger vessels engaged in this type of work, which will be an operational cost.

## 3) As a Sail Training Ship.

The vessel could be used to provide a sail training experience for youth and / or adults. There are several successful models for this type of activity the closest being the Sail and Life Training Society (SALTS) who operate the Pacific Grace and the Pacific Swift out of Victoria. The American Sail Training Association (ASTA) has numerous examples and resources for sail training programs. The business case and operating model for a sail training program has not been determined. Currently, this vessel does not meet the DoTCSI regulations for use as Sail Training. Some modifications would be required for this use. The cost of these modifications or the operational costs have not been determined at this time.

## 4) As a Combination of 1, 2, and/or 3.

The vessel could be used for a combination of uses. The most plausible would be as a museum and as a classroom. One of the problems of this type of use is when the vessel is being used as a classroom and away from the dock, it reduces the museum experience and when it is at the dock it is not available for classroom experiences.

No thorough investigation or business case analysis has been done for any of these options. Operational costs of crew and fuel would depend on the use to which the vessel is put.

### Financial Considerations:

#### 1) Capital

- Capital: asking purchase price is \$325,000 USD plus 7% PST
- Costs related to conducting a survey and sea trial: \$6,000-\$8,000
- Costs for modifications for use are unknown at this time depending upon intended use and operating model.

## 2) Operational

- Insurance - the current cost of insurance is \$10,000 per year as a pleasure craft, and could be up to \$17,000 per year if used for programs such as sail training. (estimate by Marden & Campbell).
- Annual maintenance costs estimate as a pleasure craft \$32,500 USD (rule of thumb in the industry is approximately 10% of the purchase price)
- Operating and program costs are dependant upon use.

### Next Steps:

Should Council wish to proceed with the purchase of this vessel next steps would include:

- a detailed business case including analysis of uses; potential expenses and revenues; and operating models. Once the uses are determined the DoTCSI requirements can be determined and costs for modifications can be estimated. Uses will also dictate criteria for determining what would constitute a satisfactory sea trial.
- an offer in writing with a deposit (10% of the purchase price) for the purchase of the vessel subject to certain conditions to include:
  - a satisfactory purchase survey. The owner has indicated that he would prefer the Point Hope Shipyard in Victoria for a haul out and survey. This would cost approximately \$6,000.
  - a satisfactory sea trial. The 6 – 7 hour trip from Genoa Bay to Point Hope Shipyard could serve as the sea trial. Persons familiar with large sailing vessels and sail training such as the staff at SALTS would be requested to take this voyage to evaluate the suitability for sail training. Costs for this transport: approximately \$500. (\$250 fuel plus costs for crew)

Should the two conditions be met but Council decides not to proceed with the sale, the deposit (32,500 UDS) would be forfeited.

### **Financial Impact**

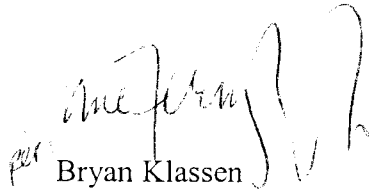
The Capital costs include the purchase price (to be negotiated), plus any retrofitting required for intended uses. Funding sources could include 2006 surplus should there be any, capital program and/or potential sponsorships.

Ongoing operating costs would be identified as an additional level request for 2007 and in base operating budgets thereafter.

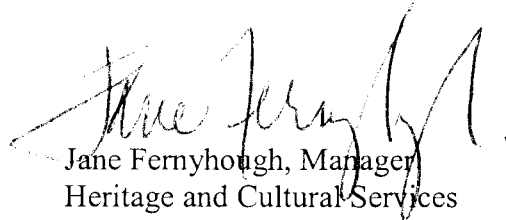
Initial deposit, purchase survey and sea trial: approximately \$32,500 USD plus \$6,000-\$8,000. This could come from the Council Provision account.

**Conclusion**

Staff were requested to investigate the potential for acquiring the vessel Brora Thor. This report outlines potential uses and steps to be taken should Council wish to proceed with the purchase.



per  
Bryan Klassen  
Site Supervisor  
(8044)



Jane Fernyhough, Manager  
Heritage and Cultural Services  
(4288)

Attach: (1)

**Attachment 1**

**PHOTOS OF The Brora Thor**







