



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. John's Considers Approval of 6,780 Square Foot Home in the Battery. Historic Trust supportive of Council's decision to refer proposal to the Built Heritage Experts Panel.

St. John's, NL – November 15, 2017: Today at Committee of the Whole, St. John's City Council heard a presentation from Susan Rideout-Vivian against the proposed construction of a 6,780 square foot house in the Battery at 180, 182 and 184 Signal Hill Road. The proposed house does not comply with existing rules regarding permitted development in the Battery. Although City staff is recommending approval of the project, this morning Council referred the proposal to its Built Heritage Experts Panel for further input.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Historic Trust has been following this proposal with concern for the impact the proposed house could have on the heritage value of the Battery neighbourhood. The footprint of the proposed house at 3,390 square feet is approximately five times larger than the average residential footprint in the Battery. Dr. Cory Thorne, president of the Historic Trust, said: "The house is substantially larger than the norm for the Battery. The Trust is concerned that the creep of inappropriately large homes will permanently alter the unique character of this historic neighbourhood." The Battery Guideline Development Study commissioned by the City in 2004 advised that, "Controlling the size of buildings is the only way to protect views and the image of the battery".

In addition to concerns about the proposal itself, the Trust has concerns about the current process being followed with respect to approval of new development in the Battery and other heritage areas. Dr. Thorne said, "The Battery Guideline study demonstrates the sensitivity and concern from many stakeholders regarding management of this neighbourhood. At a minimum, the rules and regulations should require consultation with the Built Heritage Experts Panel prior to making decisions about developments such as this one. Although not required by law, we were pleased to see the City take that step at this morning's Committee of the Whole Meeting."

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