

Work on Laskay Hall progressing

By Mark Pavilons

The relocated Laskay Hall will join the King Museum in becoming focal points for the community.

Laskay Hall arrived at its new home at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre last August.

Staff have worked hard to prepare the site, but there have been complications along the way.

The weather, building condition and utility hookups all provided their own unique challenges.

The most significant issue, staff said, was the condition of the structural beams under the hall. As the building was raised off the ground for transport, it was discovered that many of the wooden beams had been decimated by carpenter ants. The ants had also affected some of the walls and doors. This led to a redesign of the supports under the hall, and required additional architectural and engineering support.

This was actually a blessing in disguise, as the issue was dealt with and will actually increase the building's lifespan.

Hydro proved tough, and electricity was connected Feb. 8, even though requests were made last October. The site is still awaiting final approval from Enbridge.

The extreme cold during some parts of the winter delayed some work.

At this point, the structural work is done and most of the basement is finished. Utilities and fixtures are being installed.

The next steps are the reconstruction of the front door and side door. Staff said both deal with structural issues, as well as accessibility. Painting of the interior, washroom and kitchen renovations will follow.

Ramps and railings will be installed in April or May and the final grading and seeding will take place after that.

Staff is working on selling the property of the hall's former home on Weston Road. Some problems with the property arose, including septic system limitations.

Staff suggested increasing the size of the lot by "stop up and closing" the southern portion of Second Street, and having part lots merge onto it. This will resolve the septic issues and will also resolve the outstanding unopened road allowance, which was never intended for practical use.

The property was surveyed and the septic system can be placed with no impact on neighbouring wells.

The Township hopes to sell the land to offset the costs of the hall's relocation, which went over budget by roughly \$125,000.

The total for the move was \$425,000 and the Township set aside \$300,000 in the 2017/18 budget, which included the sale of the property.

Staff is recommending the property be sold to any potential buyer. Hopes are the selling price can offset the \$125,000 shortfall.

If that doesn't happen, staff will report back to council on alternative financing.