

## Upgrades to Marylake Gatehouse approved

By Mark PavilonsEditorLocal JournalismInitiative Reporter

The historic gatehouse at Marylake will be getting some much-needed upgrades. Councillors gave their approval to the work, which includes a long list of improvements. The work to be done will include the placement of 30 existing windows with casement windows, which are to have similar muntin patterns as the existing windows. The damaged roof ridge cap will be repaired with cast-in-place concrete, to be completed in a similar colour to the existing roof ridge cap. The slate roof shingles will also be replaced with Highland Slate asphalt shingles, in a similar colour to existing slate shingles. In order for the work to proceed, council had to approve a heritage permit, since the building is 'Designated' under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Township, under its Heritage Grant Program, has agreed to award a grant of \$12,000 to the project. The subject property is located on the north-west corner of Keele Street and the 15th Sideroad. The property contains the Marylake Monastery Shrine and related place of worship, as well as various environmental and rural/agricultural lands. Staff also note the construction of St. Rita's Long Term Care Home is currently under way on the property. The Marylake Augustinian Monastery, was designated in 1984 and rules dictate that any restoration clearly reflect the heritage and character of the gatehouse and its features. The applicant has also applied for the grant under the Township's Heritage Property Grant Program, to receive matching funds for the costs associated with the proposed alterations to the property. The castle-style stone gatehouse was designed by E.J. Lennox and constructed circa 1911 as an entrance feature to the summer estate and farm property. The project was funded by the property owner, Canadian financier Sir Henry Pellat, otherwise known for his construction of Casa Loma, which E.J. Lennox also designed, in the City of Toronto. The following is an excerpt from a 1984 archival record, describing the history and construction of the gatehouse, as well as modern alterations that have taken place: 'Early in the century, Sir Henry became interested in a country estate, and so began purchasing land in King Township, just north of King City. By 1911, he had acquired approximately 1,000 acres at the northwest corner of Concession 4 (Keele Street) and the 15th Sideroad. Included in this property was a beautifully clear 40-acre lake. He named his estate 'Lake Marie' after his wife, Marie.' Over several years he improved the property, started a farm operation, and ordered the construction of the impressive iron and stone gates, the fence, and the gatehouse at the Concession 4 entrance to his estate. These were built in the same style as his Casa Loma property and designed by the same architect, E.J. Lennox. The work was probably carried out by the same contractor and even the same stonemasons. The two-storey gatehouse is basically a rectangular plan of about 30 by 40 feet. The material is similar to the gates of finely cut stone trim with fieldstone infill. It has a very steep gabled roof of grey slate. The exterior is in good condition. Modern alterations are aluminum double windows and a wooden screened front porch. The applicant wants to replace the deteriorated original slate roof shingles and the non-original windows with casement windows having similar muntin patterns as currently existing. The applicant is also proposing to repair damaged portions of the roof's ridge cap with cast-in-place concrete material of a similar color to the existing ridge cap. Staff noted that one of the key heritage attributes of the gatehouse reflects Norman and Scottish castle architecture, which includes slate roof shingles and the stone construction of the building. Staff acknowledge that the gatehouse requires restorative repairs to prolong the longevity of the structure. The applicant has acknowledged the need to obtain a heritage permit to allow the undertaking of the proposed works. The Township's Heritage Planner reviewed the work and is generally supportive. It was noted the replacement material will not detract from the overall architectural character or heritage value of the gatehouse, the proposed work is considered appropriate. The applicant advised that they are a volunteer group and are undertaking this work at no cost to the owners. The applicant advised that it is their intention to stop further deterioration of the gatehouse, with the best course of action given the limited budget and current circumstances. King's Heritage Committee emphasized the importance of maintaining a balance between respecting economic viability, restoration, and reversible interventions. The Committee considered a need to uphold the integrity and character of designated heritage properties by encouraging restoration using historically appropriate materials and techniques and also recognized the importance of the economic viability of such interventions, recognizing that overly rigid expectations may discourage preservation altogether or lead to further neglect. Given that the proposed works are largely reversible and generally respect the architectural significance of the gatehouse while also ensuring its longevity for future generations, the Committee passed a motion in support of the application, consistent with staff's recommendation. Councillor Debbie Schaefer said she's happy to see that upgrades are coming and that the work is being done by volunteers. She wants to ensure the result is a quality restoration and staff assured her the volunteers are fully aware what's

required. Staff also noted the grant money from the Township will be given to the property owners, to be disbursed as they see fit.