Re: 112 King Street East, Hamilton (former Royal Connaught Hotel)

WHEREAS, the historic building located at 112 King Street East, Hamilton is currently vacant, open to the elements and is believed to be facing an uncertain future;

AND WHEREAS, the building has been the subject of discussion at the Hamilton LACAC (Municipal Heritage Committee) meetings;

AND WHEREAS, the Municipal Heritage Committee believes the property to be of Cultural Heritage Value due to its historical, architectural and contextual values as described in the following reasons;

Historical Value - The Royal Connaught Hotel was a community-inspired project owned and financed by local citizens and built at a cost of $1 million. His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught, the then-Governor-General of Canada, turned the sod in May, 1914, and the building was formally opened by Sir John Hendrie, a Hamilton citizen and Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, in June of 1916.
Design/Architectural Value - Designed by Essenwein and Johnson of Buffalo in association with the Hamilton firm of A.W. Peene, the hotel was built in the Edwardian Classical style characterized by its large, rounded windows on the first floor, the pedimented windows on the third, eleventh and twelfth floors, and the prominent, overhanging cornice. The west tower, designed by the well-known Hamilton firm of Hutton and Souter, was added in 1930-31.

Contextual Value - The Connaught Hotel was the primary hotel facility in Downtown Hamilton for over 60 years, during which time it hosted numerous major dignitaries. The ballroom and rooftop restaurant served as Hamilton’s prime venue for renowned, international entertainers. Even in its vacant state the building continues to maintain a highly visible and impressive presence in the Gore Park area and is listed on the City’s Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and/or Historic Interest.

NOW, THEREFORE, Hamilton LACAC (Municipal Heritage Committee) respectfully advises Council that 112 King Street East, Hamilton (the former Royal Connaught Hotel) should be considered as a priority for future designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.