To: Chair and Members
Emergency & Community Services Committee

From: Bill Manson, Chair
Hamilton Historical Board

Date: ____________________________

Re: Hatt (Red) Mill Commemorative Plaque (Report 09-002(HHB)) (Ward 12)

Recommendation:

That the wording for the Hatt (Red) Mill commemorative plaque, hereto attached and marked as Appendix A to Report 09-002(HHB), be approved.

Background:

This plaque commemorates the Hatt Mill, also known as the “Red Mill” due to its distinctive colour. The mill, which was located in Ancaster, served both local farmers and those from as far away as Galt, Guelph and Woodstock, and was one of the major mills that operated along the Ancaster Creek.

This plaque has been requested by the Ancaster Township Historical Society. Research was conducted by the Joint Plaquing Sub-committee.

The attached commemorative plaque text (Appendix A to Report 09-002(HHB) has been approved by the Joint Plaquing Sub-committee and its parent Volunteer Committee, the Hamilton Historical Board.

Financial Implications:

The funds for the manufacture and installation of the Hatt (Red) Mill commemorative plaque are provided by the Ancaster Township Historical Society.

Analysis/Rationale:

It is the mandate of the City of Hamilton Joint Plaquing Sub-committee to recognize Hamilton sites of architectural, prehistoric and/or historical importance with commemorative plaques. Plaques may be awarded for the following reasons.
Architectural Reasons which may include age, style and/or location. The building is noted for one or more of the following characteristics:

- an outstanding example of an architectural style
- an exceptionally early building
- an unusual building, type, structure, or composition
- the first or last of a kind
- an important visual landmark
- a special relationship between building and site
- the work of a major architect
- a group of buildings which form an important streetscape
- an exemplary restoration or adaptive re-use project

Historical/Prehistoric Importance

- close association with a noteworthy person (to recognize his/her lasting importance; selected because of his/her association with the place)
- close association with a noteworthy event
- effectively illustrates a significant, broad pattern of cultural, social, political military, economic or industrial history or pre-history

Staff Consultation:

Yes  X   No  □

Director, Culture Division, Community Services
Manager of Museums & Heritage Presentation, Community Services
Heritage Presentation Coordinator, Community Services
THE RED MILL

Richard Hatt became one of the most influential men in this region. He emigrated from England in 1792 and worked in a store in Newark (Niagara). In 1795 he petitioned the government for land for himself, his siblings and father. They arrived in Canada in 1796 with equipment to build a mill and operate large farms.

To obtain a source of waterpower, Richard and his brother Samuel purchased this site on Ancaster Creek in 1798 and built a gristmill and sawmill 200 feet downstream on the western edge of Old Dundas Road. They painted the structure red with the only available paint. It was a large mill for the time with a 36-foot undershot water wheel that turned three millstones. It could produce thirty bags of pot barley and twenty barrels of flour a day. To utilize inferior grain the brothers built a distillery supplying the mash to adjacent hog fattening pens. The mill served farmers from as far away as Galt, Guelph and Woodstock.

The Hatt brothers widened the Indian trail to Dundas to improve business but in 1804, they sold the mill and moved down to Dundas where they eventually purchased mills and water rights on Spencer Creek. Subsequent owners of the Red Mill leased the property but it never flourished. In 1887, the machinery was dismantled and by 1908, the mill was gone.

Ancaster Township Historical Society
Hamilton Historical Board
2009

226 Words

Original submitted by Jim Green.
Checked, corrected and verified by R. Williamson,
Chairman, JPSC.

Introduction

The theme of this plaque is the Red Mill. However, what distinguishes it from dozens of other mills in the area is that it was built by Richard Hatt. He was a distinguished area entrepreneur, businessman, politician, magistrate, War of 1812 veteran and newspaper owner. It is the essence of this man that makes the Red Mill important and should be referred to in the plaque.

References

- Picturesque Dundas Revisited, Olive Newcombe, Dundas Historical Society, pp. 9-11
- Dixon-MacKenzie Archives, HPLSC p. 448
- Wikipedia Encyclopedia – “Richard Hatt came to Canada in 1792 and originally started business as a merchant at Niagara”.
- Dundas Biographies, Dundas Public Library, Hamilton Spectator, 1945
- Dundas Biography, Craig Burch, President Ontario Genealogy Society, 1984
- Sophia Pooley’s Story, A First Person Narrative by Jane Mulkewich, Dundas Valley History Society Website
- Hatt Family Vol. 1, Janis Duench, 1997
- A Plan of Ancaster Township, 1822 – the map shows a sawmill and gristmill on the Hatt site.
- Archaeological & Historic Sites Board, Dept. of Public Archives of Ontario,
- History of the Town of Dundas, Part 1, Roy Woodhouse,
- The Petition of Richard Hatt Senior, dated 1797, Ontario Historical Society Papers

Note: A three-page, detailed analysis of every fact in every sentence was prepared for the JPSC record.