

Collingwood Heritage Committee

May 2025

Dear Mayor Hamlin, Deputy Mayor Fryer, and Council Members:

At our last meeting we received an update that the due diligence period for the grain terminals has been extended pending further investigations. We thought we would take this opportunity to revisit some of our continuing concerns about maintenance of the property and the celebration of its landmark significance to the town of Collingwood.

First of note, is that we would like to acknowledge the restoration of lighting for the terminals as a good step in enhancing their appearance. This was item 8 on the checklist of items that we had suggested previously should be undertaken in a continuing maintenance program over time for the terminals.

Also of note, if you have not already done so, we recommend that you see the current Museum exhibition on the terminals building. This is excellent work by Lindsay Cook and her team. One specific item that may catch your attention is the reference to the CD Howe Company, Consulting Engineers in the design of the terminals. This may be one of his last terminal designs before his practice is curtailed by the Depression after which he runs for election, becoming a major political figure in Canada before, during and after the war years as “Minister of Everything”.

Our committee really appreciates the excellent work that Adam Gallant, as project manager has taken in both managing the maintenance and the on-going investigations for the terminals. He has provided valuable and informative tours of the terminals to members of our heritage committee and conducted extensive research into background of the terminal’s construction and operations.

At this juncture we again want to take this opportunity to encourage Town Council and the project team that is negotiating the final agreements with the development group, that this is the ideal time to harness the goodwill surrounding the project by jointly committing to a maintenance and repair program for the terminals.

It appears very likely that the proposed development is going to be take many years to complete. We suggest developing and continually updating a budget and estimates for critical repair and maintenance that are going to be needed in the coming years. One consideration is to set aside a reserve fund that continues to expand to accomplish future critical repairs.

In no particular order of priority, our list of important items to consider remains:

1. Replace the roofing material including any associated asbestos abatement required
2. Test wash of the exterior with a view to eventually repainting the exterior with a white primer compatible with any future final coating system
3. Repaint the Terminals signage on the silos
4. Remove bird guano from the marine tower
5. Repair any windows or otherwise seal off the marine tower from future guano contamination
6. Continue to maintain the full and safe elevator operation
7. Clear and hoard off the area at the base of terminals to include graphics and signage describing the future proposed development
8. Install an exit stair system to the top of the grain terminals bin floor that could allow for future public tours

This is clearly in the interest of all parties to present the building in its best possible image, demonstrate public confidence in the proposed new development, reduce the potential for increasing maintenance costs, and preserve for future generations this landmark in the event there are economic changes that might delay its ultimate redevelopment in the current proposed schedule.

The preservation of the terminals is not only a local issue but attracts province wide attention. The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario lists the terminals as a heritage landmark that they consider to be at risk. As a result, they have also taken an active role in liaison with the terminals and harbour action group. Reconfirming the municipal commitment to long term maintenance of the terminals would be seen as a very positive step.

We again thank you taking the time to consider this important aspect of ensuring the successful completion of this project.

Sincerely,

David Jefferies, Chair

Collingwood Heritage Committee