

# Plans progressing on chapel

By Marcia Love  
Rep/Ex Staff

Hope Christian Reformed Church's century-old chapel will be remaining a part of the community for years to come, thanks to the efforts of a local group.

A society has been formed for the preservation of the old church building. The group had its first meeting on April 12, with its seven founding directors present.

After it became public that the white clapboard church located on Highway 16 north of Stony Plain had been put up for sale for \$1 in an effort to keep it preserved and in use, several members of the community took action to ensure it wouldn't leave the site where it was built in 1912.

The chapel was put up for sale online through Kijiji over a year ago, with the intention the buyer would move it to a new location. But several residents didn't want to see it go, and in January the congregation decided to accept an offer from the local group.

"We're off to a really strong start," said Russ Graff, a Town of Stony Plain councillor and former pastor of the church who is spearheading the plan. "We have a really good team, and I'm impressed with the people that we have with our initial board of directors. Having such a talented group is a huge benefit, and we have a really good working relationship with the Hope congregation."

The board of directors is comprised of Reuben Bauer (historian), Patricia Auger-LaChance (treasurer), Louis Bourassa (secretary), Delta Powney, Matthew Blimke, Josey Hitesman and Graff (president).

Graff expects the society will have limited funds in the first year, but they intend to complete urgently needed work.

"We hope to do some painting this summer and other things that need immediate attention, like getting a leak in the roof patched," he

as well as developing a strategic plan which will require professional assessment of the structural needs.

"We want to proceed with caution so as not to harm the building's historic value and potential as a designated historic resource of the province," Graff noted.

The group is hoping to make arrangements to have the church remain on the same parcel of land as Hope Christian Reformed Church's current church building, which was constructed in the 1980s.

The goal is to maintain the historic value of the church, which could potentially be open to the public for special occasions, such as weddings, Graff said.

"What we're talking about is a long-term plan so that the church will be there even after we're gone," Graff said. "We want to have it preserved for future generations, and that's going to require a careful and studied approach."

A membership drive is expected to be held in the fall.

The society will be meeting again in May and June and invites anyone interested in finding out more information about the group to contact Graff or any of the directors.

*mlove@postmedia.com*  
Twitter: @MarciaTheLovely



Photo by Marcia Love Reporter/Examiner

Hope Christian Reform Church's century-old chapel is being handed over to a local society, which will first focus on roof repairs and painting the building this summer.

## 6.4 Historical Resources

### Goal

To contribute to the preservation, rehabilitation and reuse of historical resource including archeological and palaeontological resources.<sup>16</sup>

### Policies

1. Municipalities are encouraged to identify, in consultation with Albe Community Development, significant historical resources within th boundaries.
2. Within the scope of their jurisdiction, municipalities are encouraged contribute to the preservation and enhancement the historical resour identified in accordance with policy #1 so that those resources may used and enjoyed by present and future generations.<sup>17</sup>