

Hamilton Monthly Meeting Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Hamilton, Ontario

Greening Case Study



Mission and Background:

The Hamilton Monthly Meeting Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is located in Hamilton, Ontario. Their main message is:

The way is available to all. It may be particularly attractive to those strongly concerned with peace and social justice and to those with a meditative or mindfulness practice who seek a supportive community.

Quakers meet in silent worship to strengthen this connection and bear witness to its power in our lives. From the stillness that puts us in touch with the Divine comes our corporate testimony of simplicity, honesty, and non-violence. Work towards just and equitable treatment of all human beings and close attention to the health and sustainability of our communities and the environment that supports them are examples of these testimonies.

Historically these testimonies have led many Quakers to the forefront of movements for social justice: prison reform, abolition of slavery, pacifism, and indigenous rights, among others.

Meeting for Worship every Sunday at 10:30 am at Hamilton Quaker Meeting Religious Society of Friends located at 7 Butty Place, Hamilton, ON L8S 2R5

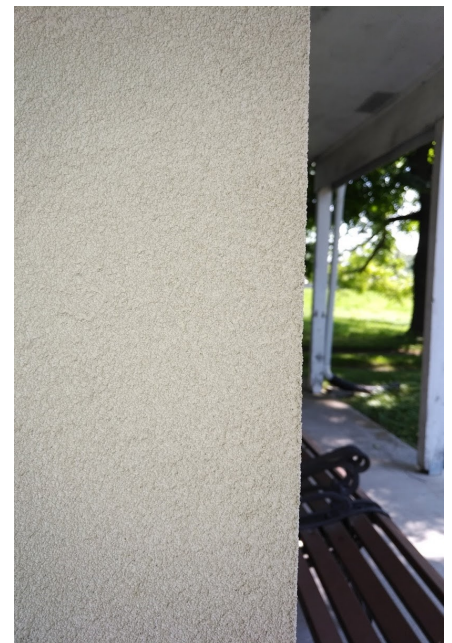
Green Actions:

Adding more insulation in 2010s:

Their first major energy retrofit was to add a cladding around their building, it was a layer that provided more insulation for the building. This retrofit was spearheaded by member, the late Helen Brink who campaigned for this project for a number of years. It was through her dedication to the environment that led to the cladding retrofit to happen over a decade ago.

For Helen, the expense of improving the insulation of the Quaker House was motivated by the environmental improvements, as the expense did not bring in a huge financial return quickly. But after years of discussion, some financial backing, the members decided through unity to go ahead with the insulation.

Visually, an added benefit of cladding is that it freshens the look of the building.



In 2016, the windows were replaced with more energy efficient ones. Condensation was building up and the plastic was breaking down making them harder to open. Shortly after, in 2018, the furnace needed to be replaced as it was no longer operational.

Both these retrofits came out of necessity as well as needing the upgrades. Both were replaced with more energy efficient successors.

In the summer of 2018, the roof was replaced with a new steel roof. A steel roof would last longer with a life expectancy of 50-75 years versus 15-25 years for a shingled roof. As well, they reflect heat lowering cooling costs. Lastly, at the end of their life cycle, steel roofs are recyclable.



Other Eco-Actions:

Quaker House is powered by Bullfrog Power, how it works as stated on their website:

"Bullfrog makes sure that for every kWh of electricity you use, a kWh from a pollution-free, renewable source is put on the grid on your behalf."

Lessons Learned:

Environmental stewardship does not always translate into immediate financial gain, so it is not always about making an economic case to take on energy retrofits. But members found that environmental concerns might become the tipping point to act.

It takes a champion that is collecting data and researching the best options that is essential to making change happen.

While it may take time and there are some costs involved, it is better to try then to do nothing.

Benchmarking:

Quaker House joined the Energy Benchmarking project in 2019 and they are looking forward to seeing their energy usage reports from year to year.

Memorable Moments:

In March 2019, members hosted an Earth Hour service in partnership with the Ecological Churches of West Hamilton (EcoWHam). The focus was to provide a space to reflect, pray, meditate on the environment and included a call to action.

