

Heritage Guelph Meeting

April 11, 2023

### **Item 3.3: 47 Alice Street - Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act**

#### **Summary**

This report recommends that 47 Alice Street meets four of the criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest and that Heritage Guelph provide advice that City Council state its intention to designate the property municipally known as 47 Alice Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

#### **Recommendations**

That Heritage Guelph recommends that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 47 Alice Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the statement of significance provided with Item 3.3 of the Heritage Guelph agenda dated April 11, 2023.

#### **Location**

The Valeriotte Shoe Shop is located at 47 Alice Street, on the south side of Alice Street between Duke and Huron Streets (Figure 1).

#### **Background**

The property at 47 Alice Street has a pair of two inter-war period brick buildings – a late Edwardian Ontario Cottage and an associated shoe repair shop -- which were constructed in 1924 for the Valeriotte family by a local builder, Ralph Macri. The property is located on the south side of Alice Street, between Duke and Huron Streets. The property dimensions are 45 feet x 101 feet, with a lot area of 4,572 square feet (424.75 m<sup>2</sup>). The boundary of the property is legally described as Lot 40 and Part Lot 39 of Plan 244.

Situated in the heart of St Patrick's Ward, Vincenzo Valeriotte's Shoe Repairing Shop is a modest, but readily identifiable local shop building. It has significant historical value as an example of a small workshop constructed in Guelph in the 1920s by an Italian immigrant family for a new business alongside their family home. This shop was primarily patronized by local customers and contributed to the social and cultural cohesion of the local community. The building contributes to an understanding of an important period of Italian immigration to Canada and the

development of Guelph's Italian community in St Patrick's Ward. The property speaks to the working-class character of the Ward and the historical mixture of residential and industrial activity within this neighbourhood. The buildings also support the compact, low-rise character of the streetscape prevalent in the Ward today.

In 2007, the Heritage Guelph committee identified the residence and auxiliary building at 47 Alice Street as significant built heritage resources and passed a resolution to initiate the designation research process. City staff engaged in discussion with the owner at the time regarding the designation.

On [March 25, 2008](#), the Heritage Guelph committee passed a resolution recommending Council proceed with the designation of 47 Alice Street. City staff presented a report recommending Council publish the Notice of Intention to Designate, which was supported at the City Council meeting on [May 26, 2008](#) and published and served on June 9, 2008. A notice of objection from the owner at that time was received by the City Clerk on July 7, 2008. Shortly after, the objection was forwarded to the Conservation Review Board (CRB) and a hearing was held on December 3, 2008.

Based on the evidence heard, the recommendation of the CRB was delivered in December 2008 that the property known municipally as 47 Alice Street and described as Lot 40 and Part Lot 39, Plan 244, in the City of Guelph, be protected under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. At that time, the City did not proceed to designation to respect a request of the property owner to pause the process.

In their meeting of [November 14, 2022](#), Heritage Guelph passed the following motion: That Heritage Guelph supports City staff's proposal to undertake the process to consider designation of the following properties identified on the previous Council-approved work plan and/or previous Heritage Guelph motions under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act: 49 Norfolk Street (Albion Hotel), 47-49 Alice Street (Valeriotte Shoe Shop), 65 Delhi Street (Isolation Hospital) and 131 Ontario Street (Tytler Public School).

### **Historical Background**

The property parcel for 47 Alice Street was part of lands first purchased from the Canada Company on 24 December 1835 by Samuel Crawford. Crawford purchased 23 acres of land, consisting of Lot 2 in the First Range of Division F in the Township of Guelph.

Crawford sold ten acres of this land to Henry Huggard Oliver on 21 February 1838 (Figure 2). On 22 June 1846, Plan 244 was registered with the Municipality of Wellington (Figure 3). The plan subdivided a large part of Oliver's property into

forty new building lots – Lots 1 to 13 along the north side of Manitoba Street, Lots 14 to 29 along the north side of Oliver Street, and Lots 30 to 40 along the south side of Alice Street. Lot 40 was an unusually narrow lot.

Henry Oliver died on 29 July 1853. The title abstracts held at Guelph's Land Registry Office indicate that Lots 39 and 40 were first sold by Henry H Oliver's Estate on 28 June 1876: Lot 39 was sold to William Hearn and Lot 40 was sold to Fred Chadwick.

The ownership of the Lots 39 and 40 was consolidated in the hands of one owner, Michael J. Duignan, in May 1886. Duignan and his wife subsequently sold Lot 40 and the westerly part of Lot 39 to John Kinnard on 1 November 1911 for \$150. Kinnard and his wife later sold Lot 40 and the westerly part of Lot 39 to Vincenzo Valeriote on 15 August 1924 for the lesser amount of \$125. (Duignan's wife also sold the other (easterly) part of Lot 39 to Michele Valeriote on 5 September 1924 for \$250).

A \$1,000 mortgage was registered against the title of Lot 40 and the westerly part of Lot 39 on 4 October 1924, which suggests that the house was erected on the property around this time. Vincenzo Valeriote died in 1972, however Lot 40 and the westerly part of Lot 39 remained in the hands of the Valeriote family until 2004.

Late nineteenth century plans of Guelph indicate that there were no buildings on the property at 47 Alice Street in 1862 and circa 1875-77. A fire insurance plan of the street from 1907 also confirms that the lot remained empty at this date.

The outline of the main house and its associated shoe repair shop can be traced on fire insurance plans dating to February 1929 and June 1960. The fire insurance plans confirm that both the house and the shop had been constructed on Alice Street before 1929 (Figures 4-5). The plans specify that the buildings were constructed of brick and that the shop had electricity. The house, like all the other houses on the street, was built with a small set back from the street, however the shop building was set flush with the street and could be entered directly from the sidewalk.

A descendant of Vincenzo Valeriote has provided early photographs and described memories of growing up with the shop at 47 Alice Street:

"Vincenzo Valeriote was a shoemaker and 47 Alice Street was the location of his business. Like many other Italian men in the neighbourhood (referred to as St. Patrick's Ward), he built the building (what our family refers to as "the Shop") out of economic necessity. During an era when Italian immigrants were generally excluded from mainstream society and economy, men like my grandfather made their living serving families in their community. My father has told us childhood stories about delivering shoes throughout the

neighbourhood to regular customers. When I lived in the house at #47, I found baby shoes that Grandpa had made for his children, tucked under the stairs up to the attic.”

“My grandmother's brother, Jerry Raco, was also a shoemaker. This was a new trade that these men developed when they settled in Guelph.”

“This story is a special one to our family but is certainly echoed by many other Italian families in the neighbourhood. Five generations of the Valeriote family were connected to the shoe shop and its economic activity. My grandfather died in 1972 - he worked in the shop until around 1970.”

“Buildings around the neighbourhood, like the shoe shop, are a testament to the way new Italian settlers in Guelph established ways of being self-sufficient and serving their community. They are unique in that they allowed the owner to work in close proximity to their family, which was vitally important to the local Italian community of that era.”

“I know that the house at #47 was built by Mr. Ralph Macri in 1924. I don't know if the shop was also built by him. The materials used were very similar to those used in the house.”

Early family photographs of the shoe repair shop nicely illustrate the way in which this kind of small business was spatially and socially intertwined with the life of the home and the life of the street in St Patrick's Ward (Figures 6-11).

### **Architectural Description**

The house is a one storey, late Edwardian Ontario Cottage, with a hipped roof. The house is situated along the southwest side of the property at 47 Alice Street; it has a small setback from the street. The front façade has two large sash windows flank a central front door. The front door and windows of the house have been replaced. Vincenzo Valeriote's Shoe Repairing Shop is a smaller one-storey structure with a street facing gable (Figures 12-16). The shop is located on the north corner of the property at 47 Alice Street; the front wall of the building is flush with the property line. The front façade has an original single-hung sash display window on the left and a modern, half-glass door on the right. The window has one small upper pane and one large lower pane. Both buildings were constructed of red pressed brick, laid in a stretcher bond, on a concrete foundation, with rough-faced cast stone sills and lintels, and white-painted wooden soffits. The shop building has its original, white-painted wooden window frames and casings. The aluminum windows on the house are more recent additions. There are visible salt deposits and some evidence of spalling on the bricks on the front and side walls of the shop building, likely due to rising damp.

### **Statement of Significance**

The subject property is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as it meets four of the prescribed criteria for determining

cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 569/22 made under the Ontario Heritage Act. The heritage attributes of 47 Alice Street display design or physical, historical or associative and contextual value.

#### Design/Physical Value

The subject property meets Criterion 1 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of design value or physical value because it is a rare and representative example of a building type. The configuration of the property, with a family-occupied dwelling detached from a family-operated shop, is now rare in the St. Patrick's Ward neighbourhood. The buildings on the subject property incorporate simple 1920s period materials and construction techniques that survive with good historic integrity.

#### Historical/Associative Value

The subject property meets Criteria 4 and 5 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme that is significant to the Guelph community, and it yields information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture. The dwelling/shop combination contributes to an understanding of the inter-war period of immigration to Guelph (1919-1939), notably of the Italian population in St. Patrick's Ward. It was a cultural practice to establish a place of business near to their place of residence, and Alice Street is a good physical representation of this. The property is representative of an important period in the history of St. Patrick's Ward and in the development of Guelph. In addition, Vincent Valeriote operated his shoe repair business out of the auxiliary building until the 1970's.

#### Contextual Value

The subject property meets Criterion 6 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of contextual value as it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area. The dwelling and shop retain their original configuration and orientation to each other and to Alice Street. The shop continues as a long-standing 'anomaly' on the streetscape and is visually distinct as the closest structure to the street. Alice Street today has largely the same residential and 'smaller scale industry' built form that it did in its initial period of development. The close proximity of the shop to the street gives it visual prominence, making it important to the character of the streetscape.

#### Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 47 Alice Street should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- All original window and door openings and hip roof line as seen from Alice Street, of the front (north) elevation of the one-storey, 1924 dwelling;
- All original window and door openings and open gable roof line as seen from Alice Street of front (north) and west elevations of the one-storey auxiliary building formerly used as a shoe shop;
- The original wood window frames and sashes on the front and west sides of the auxiliary building relative to Alice Street; and
- The placement of the dwelling and auxiliary building within the parcel of land and relative to each other.

It is intended that non-original features may be returned to documented earlier designs or to their documented original without requiring City Council permission for an alteration to the design.

### **Staff Conclusion**

Staff have completed a review of the subject property and determined that the Valeriote Shoe Shop at 47 Alice Street meets four of the prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 569/22. Staff recommend that the property should be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Figure 1 - Subject property identified in City of Guelph GIS.



Figure 2 – 47 Alice Street (facing south) (Photo 2023 – S. Robinson)



Figure 3 – 47 Alice Street (facing south) (Photo 2022 – S. Robinson)



Figure 4 – Valeriote Shoe Shop of 47 Alice Street (facing south) (Photo 2022 – S. Robinson)



Figure 5 – Residence on 47 Alice Street property (facing south) (Photo 2022 – S. Robinson)



Figure 6 – View of Alice Street towards Arthur Street South (facing southwest) (photo 2022 – S. Robinson)



Figure 7 - Detail from T. W. Cooper's Map the Town of Guelph, 1862 showing the south side of Alice Street as undeveloped. (Guelph Civic Museum)



Figure 8 - Plan 244 (registered c. 1846, Henry Holiver – Provincial Survey)

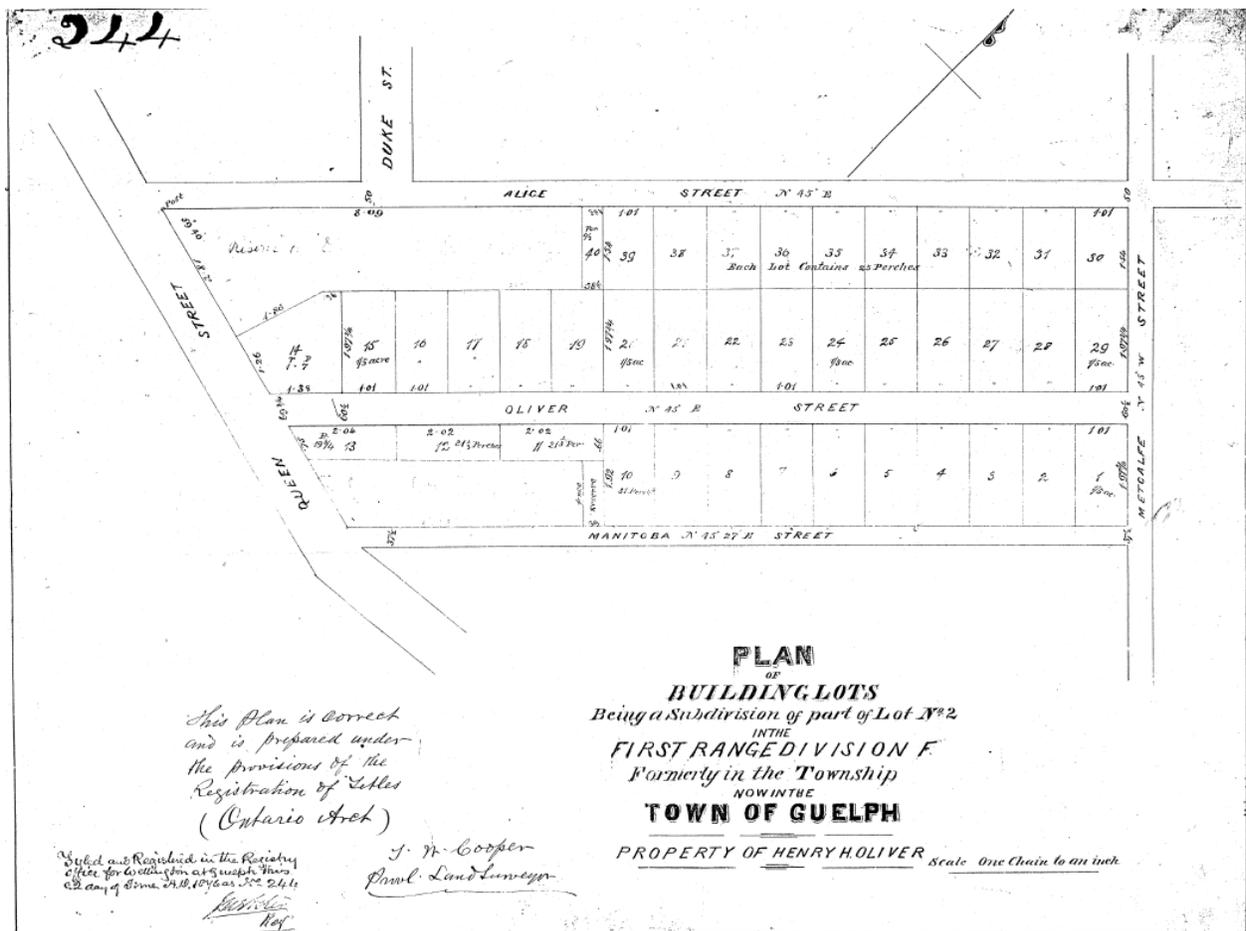


Figure 9 - Fire Insurance Plan of the City of Guelph illustrating the empty lot at 47 Alice Street, November 1907 (City of Guelph)

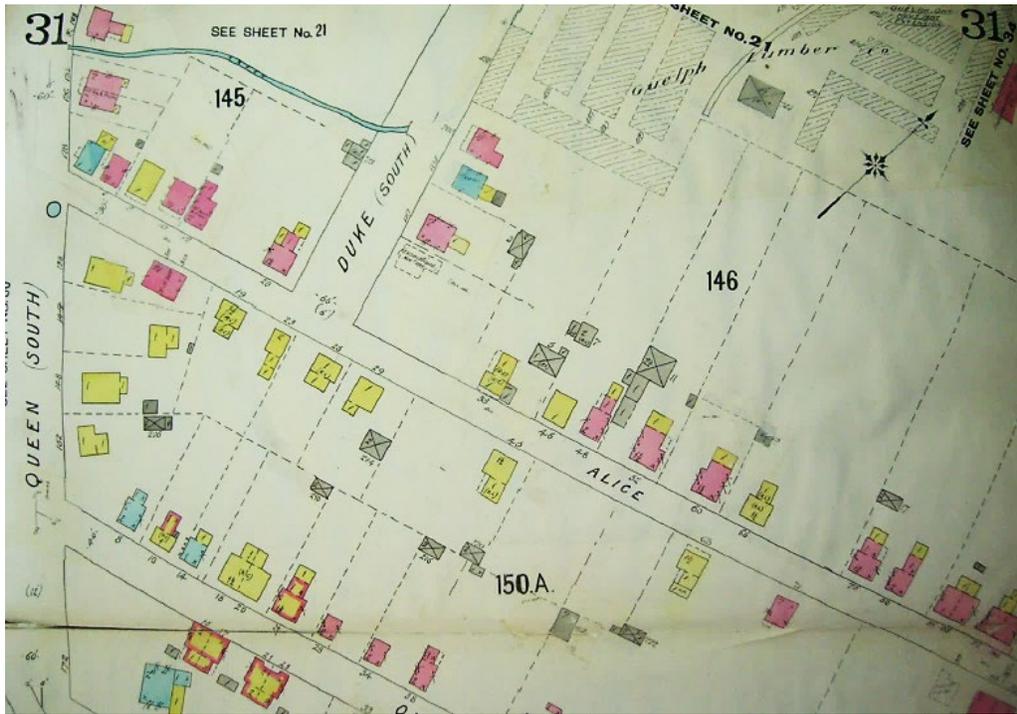


Figure 10 - Detail of Fire Insurance Plan of the City of Guelph showing the locations of the dwelling and shoe repair shop within 47 Alice Street in October 1929 (Guelph Civic Museum)

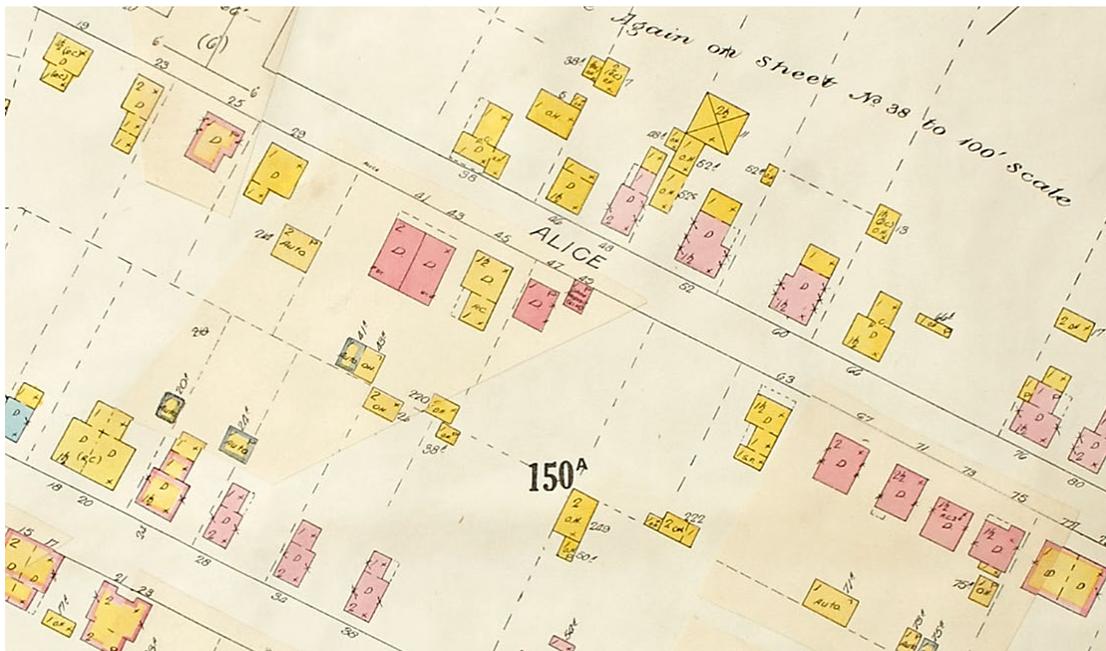


Figure 11 - Black and white photo of 47 Alice Street in the 1920s (Gayle Valeriote)



Figure 12 - Photo of Vincenzo Valeriote in the Shoe Repair shop on 47 Alice Street, date unknown (Gayle Valeriote)



Figure 13 – Photo of Valeriotte children sitting on the window sill of the Valeriotte shoe shop, ca. 1938 (Guelph Civic Museum 2000.38.3)



Figure 14 - Photo of Vincenzo Valeriotte at the rear of the shoe shop, date unknown (Gayle Valeriotte)



Figure 15 - Photo of residence on 47 Alice Street, ca. 1975 (Gordon Couling 1975)



Figure 16 - Photo of shoe shop on 47 Alice Street, ca. 1975 (Gordon Couling 1975)

