

# Staff Report



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To	<b>City Council</b>
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services
Date	Tuesday, June 13, 2023
Subject	<b>49 Norfolk Street: Notice of Intention to Designate Pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act</b>

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## Recommendation

1. That the City Clerk be authorized to publish and serve notice of intention to designate 49 Norfolk Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.
  2. That the designation bylaw be brought before Council for approval if no objections are received within the thirty (30) day objection period.
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## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council publish its intention to designate the Albion Hotel at 49 Norfolk Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The cultural heritage significance and heritage attributes of the property are described in this report.

### Key Findings

49 Norfolk Street is listed as a built heritage resource on the City of Guelph's Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

A property may be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act if it meets at two or more of the criteria used to determine cultural heritage value or interest as set out in Ontario Regulation 569/22. The prescribed criteria from the Regulation are listed in Attachment-4.

Heritage planning staff, in consultation with Heritage Guelph, have compiled a statement of cultural heritage value including proposed heritage attributes of 49 Norfolk Street. Staff recommends that the property meets six of the criteria used to determine cultural heritage value or interest as set out in Ontario Regulation 569/22 under the Ontario Heritage Act and, therefore, merits individual heritage designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

### Strategic Plan Alignment

The key findings and recommendations of this report align with Strategic Plan priority areas. The designation of the Albion Hotel under Part IV, Section 29 of the

Ontario Heritage Act contributes to the City's priority of Building our Future. By conserving significant built heritage resources, the City moves in a direction that continue to build strong vibrant, safe and healthy communities that foster resilience to the people who live here. The conservation of cultural heritage resources is aligned with building and maintaining vibrant and resilient communities.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

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## **Report**

The legal description of 49 Norfolk Street is PT LOT 113, PLAN 8, AS IN ROS519826; S/T ROS519826; CITY OF GUELPH. The property is approximately 346 m<sup>2</sup> in size and currently owned by Albion's Legacy Inc.

The subject area was part of the original Galt Plan of the Town of Guelph. The property is located at the northeast corner of Norfolk and Macdonell Streets, across from the Basilica of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The property is enclosed on the northeast and northwest sides by the former Guelph Mercury building. The hotel faces Norfolk Street to the west and Macdonell Street to the south (Attachment-1, Figure 1). The limestone three-storey building encompasses the majority of the lot with a small, paved portion at the southeast corner where a two-storey metal patio provides a fire exit and exterior access to the upper levels.

The Albion Hotel has been in constant use since its construction until 2020 when it was left vacant. The property has been used as a hotel, restaurant, bar and event space.

## **Historical Background**

The property is part of Lot 113 of Plan 8 as seen in Attachment 2, Figure 1. Lot 113 was first purchased from the Canada Company on May 17, 1833, by William Gregg and went on to be owned by multiple individuals (Attachment 2, Figure 2). The 1828 Map of the Town of Guelph and the 1855 Plan of the property shows that the lot remained vacant in the mid-1800s (Attachment 2, Figure 3) but by 1872, the three-storey stone structure, along with its adjacent horse stables, can be seen in a Bird's Eye View of the Downtown core (Attachment 2, Figure 4). Cooper's map from 1875 also illustrates that the stone structure of the Albion Hotel was built and in use (Attachment 2, Figure 5). By the late 1800s, the Albion Hotel is recorded on the Fire Insurance Plan (Attachment 2, Figure 6). The adjacent horse stables seem to no longer be in use during this time (in past Fire Insurance Plans the area was labelled accordingly as Livery, Stables, etc.) and by 1920 the stables were sold and subsequently used as a car garage.

Multiple sources detail that the original structure on the property was built in the 1850s by the Stell family. John and Magdalene Stell owned Lot 113 for only a short period (1857-1858), but the family allegedly constructed the first timber framed structure, known as "Stell's Tavern". The current stone structure was most likely constructed between 1864-1867 by Patrick and Rosanna Murphy. The values of the property dramatically increased in 1864 and 1867 respectively, most likely due to construction of buildings on the property. The inn was originally named the "Murphy House" but by 1867, the Directory of the County of Wellington listed the establishment as the Albion Hotel, with Patrick Murphy as its proprietor.

Unfortunately, Patrick Murphy passed away in 1871, leaving Rosanna as proprietor of the Albion with four children to parent alone. Rosanna Murphy quickly remarried and became Rosanna Wait in 1872, in order to eventually acquire and maintain ownership of the Albion Hotel (widows were not entitled to their husband's assets at this time). By 1881, Rosanna Wait was able to obtain ownership of the property and enlist John McAteer as the proprietor (Attachment 2, Figure 7). John McAteer went on to buy and manage the Western Hotel after retiring from leasing the Albion Hotel. Hugh Malone took ownership in 1889 and he managed the property until 1913 when Simon Fagel took over as proprietor (Attachment 2, Figure 7). Fagel maintained management until 1917 and enlisted multiple family members in running the business with Albert Fagel as the hostler as well as Carrie Fagel and Mary Fagel as waitresses. In 1922, Mrs. Mary P. Thompson purchased the hotel from Hugh Malone and operated the premises for over thirty years (Attachment 2, Figure 8). This long duration cemented Mary Thompson as one of the most successful hotelkeepers in Guelph. Mary Thompson and Rosanna Wait are unique examples of independent widows thriving in a male dominated industry. Multiple photos of the Albion Hotel from this time can be seen in Attachment 2, Figures 9-17.

The subject property was part of the booming hotel industry in Guelph during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Hotels were integral to a growing Guelph economy as there was high demand for short term stays to support the railway and agricultural industries. In 1843, less than twenty years after Guelph was founded, the Town already boasted nine taverns to support a population of 700 people. The first church services were held at taverns, as well as dances, banquets, meeting of agricultural societies (e.g., Fat Stock Show) and other social organizations. In "History of the Albion Hotel (1856-1985)", Michèle DuCharme noted that in the mid-1850s, "Guelph had a great influx of Irishmen... who were helping to build that great marvel, the railway," which increased the need for taverns and hotels. In fact, by 1888 there were twenty-two (22) hotels within a one-mile radius of the Downtown core and Macdonell Street was sometimes referred to as "Whisky Street" because of its many taverns and inns. Unfortunately, once the automobile became more and more popular, the number of hotels in Guelph decreased as the ability to easily travel made staying in hotels unnecessary.

In the 1850s, Wellington County and the Guelph Fat Stock Show were known as the centre of the stockbreeding industry in Ontario. Guelph hosted the Provincial Christmas Fat Stock Show and Sale many times during the 1880s and 1890s and eventually became the permanent home for the annual agricultural fair. A photo of the Fat Stock Show taking place in front of the Albion can be seen in Attachment 2, Figure 9. Many hotels are conveniently placed Downtown within close proximity to the Market Square (modern day City Hall) which provided respite for farmers and their livestock.

The Albion Hotel stands in a prominent location within the Downtown core of Guelph. The property is directly across from Catholic Hill and the Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate, the tallest point within the Downtown core, and is within the protected view area as defined in the City of Guelph's approved Zoning By-law. As a limestone structure on the corner of Macdonell and Norfolk Streets, the Albion Hotel is an important anchor in this view corridor with the Basilica at its apex. The historic and current images of the Albion Hotel show how the subject property is directly

linked to the Basilica based on its close proximity and view of Catholic Hill (Attachment 2, Figures 14-16; Attachment 3, Figure 8).

## **Architectural Description**

The lot originally housed a two-storey frame inn that was demolished in the 1860s to make way for a three-storey stone hotel building. Horses' stables also constructed in stone were located adjacent to the property, which formed the traditional whole of Lot 113 for the Albion Hotel. The current structure at 49 Norfolk Street is a three-storey building built in the Neo-Classical style and constructed of local limestone with 18-inch-thick timbers. It has an irregular hip transition to flat roof, and L-shaped floor plan (later addition) (Attachment 3, Figure 1).

The main entrance opening on Norfolk Street, the current main doorway, is original to the building. The door and its frame with a transom window and sidelights is a modern replacement. The two flanked smaller doorway openings in the second and fourth bays of the front elevation were created after 1917 and now have modest modern design doors (compare Attachment 2, Figure 11 with Attachment 3, Figures 2-5). The main entrance is oriented toward Norfolk Street, and with the building's L-shaped design includes an entrance facing Macdonell Street. Four two-over-two sash windows are mimicked symmetrically on all three exposed floors, on all elevations. Above the front entrance there are two former balcony door exits, smaller than the entrance below, but have in recent years been excluded from their original use. On the south façade on the second floor, there exists a small balcony. A stoned in portion of a former doorway on the ground floor of the south façade is visible to date.

The hotel has been changed from its original form and these modifications include replacement of the windows, removal of three chimneys and several balconies, canopies, a former entrance now stoned-in, extensive interior renovations and a rear addition. However, the majority of the original openings remain intact, along with the balconies present above both street entrances. The hotel displays a round-headed centre opening on the second floor (formerly balcony access), a five bay (four bays above to Macdonell) design, balcony on the south façade and an extensive outdoor patio enclosing the L-shaped footprint. The hotel may always have had a sign hanging from the corner of the building (Attachment 2, Figures 11-12, 14-15). The current sign dates from the 1940s and was refurbished about 2007) (Attachment 3, Figure 6).

The L-shaped building footprint is closed off by a two-story patio that is servicing two former fire exits (an inner porch can be seen in past Fire Insurance Plans over both doors) (Attachment 3, Figure 7). Officially, ten exits exist for the hotel: five located on the ground floor, three exits on the second floor and two on the third. Currently, approximately forty windows exist on the façade, with the possibility of up to ten more prior to the development of the adjacent structures. The quantity of windows is also iconic of the Neo-Classical design. Without the rear two-storey patio addition, the current footprint of the building is consistent with the footprint as it was shown on the Fire Insurance Plan, 1897 (revised 1916).

## **Statement of Significance**

The subject property is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as it meets six 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 49 Norfolk Street display design or physical, historical or associative and contextual value.

### **Design/Physical Value**

The Albion Hotel building meets Criterion 1 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of design or physical value as a representative example of a local establishment built in the Neo-Classical style constructed with local limestone, a staple material of early Guelph construction.

### **Historical/Associative Value**

The Albion Hotel building meets Criteria 4 and 5 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of historical or associative value in its contribution to the booming hotel industry in Guelph during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the overall development of Downtown Guelph.

### **Contextual Value**

The Albion Hotel building meets Criteria 7, 8 and 9 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of contextual value as it is important in defining, maintaining and supporting the historical character of the Downtown core of Guelph as well as the Norfolk and Macdonell streetscapes. As an early limestone building, the Albion Hotel is historically associated with the first wave of the hotel industry in Guelph, a uniquely popular trade in the city. Additionally, the Albion Hotel is within a protected view corridor, visibly linked to the Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate Conception and is an important business and landmark of the Downtown core.

### **Heritage Attributes**

The following elements of the property at 49 Norfolk Street should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- all exterior stone walls
- all hip and flat rooflines
- original door and window openings
- west and south balcony design
- cruciform shaped sign on the southwest corner of the building, "Albion Hotel"

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

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### **Consultations**

At 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).

At their meeting of [April 11, 2023](#), Heritage Guelph passed the following motion:

That Heritage Guelph recommends that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 49 Norfolk Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the statement of significance provided with Item 2.4 of the Heritage Guelph agenda dated [March 13, 2023](#) and include all revisions noted by committee members at the April 11, 2023 meeting.

Heritage Guelph members provided comment in their April meeting and via email. Committee members requested clarification on parts of the historical background and requested that more emphasis be placed on female ownership/proprietorship as well as the connection to Guelph's agricultural history. All comments submitted are addressed in this document.

## **Attachments**

Attachment-1 Location of the Albion Hotel, 49 Norfolk Street

Attachment-2 Historical Images of the Albion Hotel

Attachment-3 Current Photos of the Albion Hotel

Attachment-4 Ontario Regulation 569/22: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value of Interest

## **Departmental Approval**

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