

Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report



To Heritage Guelph
Date Monday, July 10, 2023
Subject **131 Ontario Street: Heritage Attributes and Designation Recommendation**

Recommendation

1. That Heritage Guelph supports the heritage attributes identified for 131 Ontario Street as outlined in the staff report dated July 10, 2023; and
 2. THAT Heritage Guelph recommends that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 131 Ontario Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act
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Executive Summary

Tytler Public School at 131 Ontario Street is listed as a non-designated 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. This report recommends that Tytler Public School meets five of the prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 569/22 made under the Ontario Heritage Act. This staff report provides a draft list of heritage attributes and staff’s recommendation that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 131 Ontario Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The key findings and recommendations of this report align with Strategic Plan priorities areas. The designation of Tytler Public School at 131 Ontario Street 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 continues to build strong, vibrant, safe and healthy communities that foster resilience in the people who live here. The conservation of cultural heritage resources is aligned with building and maintaining vibrant and resilient communities.

Report

Location

The subject property is located at 131 Ontario Street, east of Short Street and west of York Road. Legal Description: PLAN 113, Lot 50, Lot 51, Lot 8 to 10, Part Lot 11, Part Lot 7, Part Lot 52

Statement of Significance

The subject property is worthy of designation under section 29, Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act because it meets five of the prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 569/22. The heritage attributes of 131 Ontario Street display: design or physical, historical or associative, and contextual value.

Design/Physical Value

The subject property meets Criterion 1 of 569/22 because it exhibits design or physical value as a rare example of the Romanesque Revival style of Edwardian educational architecture in the City of Guelph. Additionally, it is the only elementary school in the City of Guelph that combines the Romanesque Revival, Collegiate Gothic, and mid-century Modernist architectural styles in one structure.

Historical/Associative Value

The subject property meets Criterion 4 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 because it has direct associations with the theme of education and industrialization in St. Patrick's Ward through the course of the twentieth century. Tytler's architectural expansion throughout the twentieth century attests to the growth of industry and influx of workers residing in St. Patrick's Ward. The six phases of school construction on the site (1878, 1908, 1912, 1921, 1965, and 1968) convey the history of St Patrick's Ward throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The various phases of expansion directly parallel the expansion of industry and housing in St. Patrick's Ward during the twentieth century.

The subject property meets Criterion 5 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 because it yields information that contributes to an understanding of the St. Patrick's Ward Community. The children of St Patrick's Ward were educated on this site from 1878-2013, and it has served the community as a meeting place and venue for public events. The five phases of construction that compose the current structure yield information on the growth of the traditionally working-class St Patrick's Ward community.

The subject property meets Criterion 6 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 because it reflects the educational ideas of Inspector of Public Schools, Dr. William Tytler, the City of Guelph's most significant educational reformer of the early twentieth century. Additionally, the 1908, 1912, and 1921 constructions reflect the architectural work of William Mahoney, one of the most significant Guelph-based architects of the early twentieth century.

Contextual Value

The subject property meets Criterion 6 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 because it is important in defining, maintaining, and supporting the character of the area. Tytler Public School is an integral component of the Ontario Street and Toronto Street streetscapes, and the Ward West cultural heritage landscape. Located in the heart of St. Patrick's Ward, the subject property represents one of the only institutional buildings in the neighborhood. With a height and massing significantly larger than

most non-industrial structures in the area, the building is a landmark in the community.

Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 131 Ontario Street should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- The building form of the 1908-1921 school buildings, including:
 - Hipped and flat roof on 1908 construction
 - Hipped roof on 1911 and 1921 constructions
 - Hipped roof dormers
- The red brick frontispiece facing Ontario Street, including:
 - Building form
 - Window openings
 - Ornamental brickwork
 - Arched entryway
- The red brick and stone two-tiered frontispiece facing Toronto Street, including:
 - Window openings
 - entryway
 - Crenellated stone parapets
- The window openings on the 1908, 1912, and 1921 portions of the subject property (note: not the replacement window frames and sashes)
- 1912 fire escape on west façade, including the carved datestone

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.

Staff Recommendation

Staff have completed an evaluation of the subject property and determined that Tytler Public School at 131 Ontario Street meets five 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.

Consultations

Heritage staff have had numerous meetings and correspondence from December 2022 – present with planning staff from the Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) to discuss designation of 131 Ontario Street. UGDSB has worked collaboratively with City of Guelph heritage planning staff by providing research material and access to the site. UGDSB is supportive of this intention to designate.

On June 12, 2023, Heritage Guelph passed the following motion:

THAT the comments provided by Heritage Guelph members on the '131 Ontario Street: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report' be provided to staff and Council for their consideration.

Attachments

Attachment-1: Historic Documents
Attachment-2: Historic Photographs
Attachment-3: Current Exterior Photographs
Attachment-4: Current Interior Photographs
Attachment-5: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report

Departmental Approval

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