

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Tuesday, June 11, 2024
Subject	14 Neeve Street: Notice of Intention to Designate

Recommendation

1. That the City Clerk be authorized to publish and serve notice of intention to designate 14 Neeve 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 Law House at 14 Neeve 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

14 Neeve 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 9/06 (as amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22; see Attachment-4).

Heritage planning staff, in consultation with Heritage Guelph, have completed a [Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report](#) and [Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest](#). Staff have determined that the property meets five of the criteria used to determine cultural heritage value according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 (as amended by O. Reg 569/22) under the Ontario Heritage Act. Therefore, the property merits individual heritage designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The key findings and recommendations of this report align with 2024-2027 Strategic Plan priority 6.1.4 to conserve our cultural heritage resources.

Future Guelph Theme

City Building

Future Guelph Objectives

City Building: Grow and care for our community space and places

Financial Implications

None.

Report

Location

14 Neeve Street is located on the east side of Neeve Street, north of Surrey Street and south of Fountain Street. The legal description of the property is 712850047 – PT LOTS 3 & 4, PLAN 33, *PT 2 61R4475; LOT 4, PLAN 269; LANE, PL 269, AS IN ROS587105; City of GUELPH

Historic Background

Lots 3 and 4 of Plan 33 first appear in the land title abstracts in 1870, when they were sold by Walter Lawson and Allan Neeve, after whom Neeve Street is named, to Canada Company surveyor and map maker Fred J Chadwick. Chadwick owned Lots 3 and 4 until 1873, when they are sold to Francis and Emma Law.

Francis Law, born in Lincolnshire, England in 1830, first arrived in Guelph during the early 1850s; a time when there were only two residences on the west side of the Speed River. Law was one of the early settlers of the region; trapping furs north between Luther marsh and Amaranth Township, working on the Grand Trunk Railway and quarrying stone, including the stone used to build George McKenzie Stewarts home, later named Craiganour by owner Donald Guthrie, part of the grounds of Homewood Health Centre. After some extensive travel, Law settled in Illinois in 1866 to work as an innkeeper and there he met his future wife, Emma Smedley. Returning to Guelph in June of 1866, Law brought Emma to Guelph and reunited with his trapper partner John Hewer to establish a business selling fish. In the late 1860s and onwards, Law began to acquire lands around Neeve Street and the Grist Mill lands on the west side of the Speed River.

By 1878 Francis and Emma had constructed a two-story stone residence 26 x 30 feet, containing seven rooms. Contractors: Wm. Slater. Stonework: M. Robinson. Plastering: M. Tobin Jr, painting. Cost \$800 (Guelph Mercury Building Operations Nov 28, 1878). William Slater was a noted stonemason and bricklayer, who was active across Guelph between 1872 and 1897, with over 14 entries under his name in the Guelph Mercury Building Operations, most notably as the stonemason that constructed St. James Church on Paisley and Glasgow, with R.G Windeyer acting as architect (Guelph Mercury Building Operations, Oct. 23, 1891).

The Law House is located on the north side of Neeve Street, which at this time would have been a natural boundary of Market Square, the Mill Lands, and Guelph's overall downtown district (Attachment-1, Figure 1). The Laws also had a frame stable, and barn built at the cost of \$75 in 1878 (Guelph Mercury Building Operations Nov 28, 1878). The barn and stable housed horses, grain bins, hay mow and a wagon. Later updates included removing the stalls and grain bins and updating the stable for workshop use. The property also included outbuildings such

as an icehouse – later converted for garage use. Examination of the Fire Insurance Plans for Guelph show that the stable may not be in its original location. It may have been dismantled and rebuilt as a converted garage behind the house in the 1920s (the original location was fronting Neeve Street).

The Law House was inhabited by the Law family for 134 years. On the ground floor there was a large living room, a parlor and a master bedroom, while the second floor contained four bedrooms, with an attic above. The basement originally contained a dirt-floor root cellar and a wood floor kitchen with southwest-facing windows. According to Francis' grandson Henry Law, the layout of the house changed significantly over time both to adapt to changes in technology but also to support the growing family. In the 1871 census Francis and Emma had four children, by 1891 they had seven. Francis Law died in 1924 at the age of 94, but during his time he contributed to Guelph as a member of the merchant working class and witnessed its transition and growth as a community.

Frederick Law, who inherited the property after the death of his parents, would raise eleven children in the house, which was not an uncommon family size for the period. During renovations in the 1920s and 1930s, the kitchen was moved to the first floor and part of the living space was converted for this purpose. Frederick allowed the property to act as a refuge for people travelling along the railways during the Great Depression. Namely, due to the property's proximity to the railway, many people ended up sleeping amongst the chokecherries or in the hay loft of the barn and stable, sometimes even inside the Law House on the living room couch. Additionally, they were always invited inside for Sunday dinner, at least those who maintained good behaviour.

Building Description

The Law House at 14 Neeve Street is a two-story stone detached residential dwelling with a hipped roof flanked by twin yellow brick chimneys on the north and south elevations. The three-bay façade is symmetrical, with a central front entrance containing a modern vinyl door, flanked by two rectangular window openings containing modern sash window units. The second floor of the façade contains three rectangular window openings, which appear to contain original wood sash windows. The façade also features ornamental corbelled caps, hammer-dressed quoins, and tooled sills and lintels.

The property contains two ancillary structures: a garage and a small barn. The garage is located to the northeast of the Law House and is constructed of cinder block and stone with a front-gabled roof. The rear portion of the garage is constructed of stone and is likely a remnant of Francis Law's icehouse. There is a small window beneath the gable on the west elevation, and a painted wood single-car garage door.

The barn is a side gabled, timber frame, 1.5 storey construction with a cast-in-place concrete foundation. The barn is clad in board and batten and metal sheeting. The south elevation contains 3 doors: a single door at ground level, a double door at ground level, and a hayloft door beneath the eaves. There are two small windows on the west elevation, and one on the east elevation. It is likely that the barn is constructed of materials salvaged from the previous ancillary structures that can be seen on the property in the 1911 Fire Insurance Plan. The barn does not appear in the Fire Insurance Plan until 1929.

Statement of Significance

The subject property is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act because it meets five of the nine prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 as amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22. The heritage attributes of 14 Neeve Street display: design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value.

Design/Physical Value

The subject property meets Criterion 1 because it is a representative example of a stone residence built in the neo-classical vernacular style.

The subject property meets criterion 2 because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship. The stonemasonry of William Slater demonstrates a mastery of the craft.

Historical/Associative Value

The subject property meets criterion 4 because it has direct associations with Francis Law, a significant merchant in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The subject property meets criteria 6 because it reflects the work of stonemason William Slater, a significant nineteenth-century stonemason who built several notable structures in the City of Guelph, principally St James the Apostle Anglican Church.

Contextual Value

The subject property meets criterion 8 because it is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings. 14 Neeve is linked to 130-132 Surrey Street East, which was built by Francis Law in 1914. Additionally, the property's proximity to the railroad permitted the property to function as a refuge and boarding house for people travelling along the railways during the Great Depression.

Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 14 Neeve Street should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- Form and massing of the two-storey, 3-bay, hipped roof, limestone detached residential dwelling.
- Yellow brick chimneys
- Limestone exterior walls, including quoins, lintels, and sills.
- All original window and door openings

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

None.

Consultation and Engagement

On March 4, 2024, Heritage Guelph [passed the following motion](#):

THAT the comments provided by Heritage Guelph members on the '14 Neeve Street: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report' be provided to staff and Council for their consideration.

On May 6, 2024, Heritage Guelph [passed the following motion](#):

THAT Heritage Guelph supports the heritage attributes identified for 14 Neeve Street as outlined in the staff report dated May 6, 2024; and

THAT Heritage Guelph recommends that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 14 Neeve Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Heritage planning staff have discussed this proposed designation with representatives of the property owner, who indicated that they do not object to the designation.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Location

Attachment-2 Historic Documents

Attachment-3 Current Photographs

Attachment-4 Ontario Regulation 9-06 Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Departmental Approval

Krista Walkey, MCIP, RPP, General Manager, Planning and Building Services

Report Author

Jack Mallon, Heritage Planner I, Policy Planning

This report was approved by:

Krista Walkey, MCIP, RPP
General Manager, Planning and Building Services
Infrastructure, Development and Environment
519-822-1260 extension 2395
krista.walkey@guelph.ca

This report was recommended by:

Jayne Holmes, P. Eng., PMP
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Infrastructure, Development and Environment
519-822-1260 extension 2248
jayne.holmes@guelph.ca