Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report

To	Heritage Guelph
Date	Monday, July 8, 2024
Subject	**106 Carden Street: Heritage Attributes and Designation Recommendation**

Recommendation

1. That Heritage Guelph supports the heritage attributes identified for 106 Carden Street as outlined in the staff report dated July 8, 2024; and
2. That Heritage Guelph recommends that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 106 Carden Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Heritage Guelph supports the proposed heritage attributes for 106 Carden Street and that Heritage Guelph recommends that Council publish its intention to designate the Royal Hotel at 106 Carden Street under Part IV pursuant to Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, as it meets seven of the nine criteria set out therein.

Report

The legal description of the subject property is Lots 2 & 3, Plan 8; Part Lots 1 & 4, Plan 8, Parts 24 & 25, 61R11523; Guelph

Statement of Significance

The subject property is worthy of designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act as it meets seven of the nine prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act. The heritage attributes of 106 Carden Street display design/physical, historical/associative and contextual value.

Design/Physical Value

The subject property satisfies Criterion 1 of the Ontario Heritage Act because it is a representative and early example of Guelph's architectural styles throughout the 19th century. Three of these styles related to the Royal Hotel are Neo-classical lightness, Georgian formality/proportion and Italianate decoration, all of which reflect Guelph's vernacular commercial architecture. The building seen today was constructed in stages over a period of 20 years. However, changes to the property gradually changed the face of Carden Street from 1-½ and 2-storey buildings in the 1830s to 3 and 4-storeys in the 1880s.

The subject property meets Criterion 2 as it displays a high degree of craftsmanship seen in its load-bearing ashlar masonry construction using local smooth-faced, hammer dressed limestone with the majority of joints being tape pointed. This pointing method accentuates the rectilinear stonework and helps to visually square any imperfect edges. Although asymmetrical in its original design due to the triple window feature, the façade shows typical aspects of Georgian architecture through its proportioned and balanced asymmetry. The repetitive nature of the large windows is indicative of Neo-classical form and lightness and the trademark flat arch limestone heads with a centre keystone and thin, tooled limestone sills are indicative of the simplicity of Georgian design. The curved window lintels in the later block and the brackets in the eaves are reminiscent of Italianate detailing.

The side gable roof has a low-medium pitch with four firewalls corbelled at the façade. Each firewall supported two stone chimney shafts connected by a flat parapet wall with large copings. Not all of the original ten chimney shafts have survived but three over the middle sections have retained their original stone caps. The firewalls are corbelled out at the eaves to form a natural transition from façade to parapet. The detailing is also reminiscent of Italianate and Georgian architecture. The eastern most corner of the building has large quoins to help provide strength in the wall construction.

The interior contains only two items of historical interest: the original central staircase and the original heavy timber roof framing construction (queen post trusses) seen in the attic. Heritage Planning staff recommend that the central stairway and the heavy timber roof framing members are important extant features of the original building that should be retained.

Historical/Associative Value

The subject property meets Criterion 4 due to its direct to the founding of Guelph, as it was part of the initial development of Lots 2 and 3 of John Galt's 1827 Plan for the Town of Guelph. Built with Guelph's locally quarried limestone, there has been a hotel on this property since the 1830s which makes the property the oldest continuously operating business in Guelph. As a hotel in the 1830s the property offered sanctuary to the pioneers of Guelph providing them with food and lodgings while downtown Guelph established itself as a functional town. Many prominent people have stayed at the hotel throughout its hotelier history, and the Royal Hotel has been synonymous with two Royal visits to Guelph, prominent speeches by politicians, and was the first seat of local judicial court.

The subject property meets Criterion 5 because it yields important information about the culture and community of Downtown Guelph, particularly the development of hotels in Guelph's downtown. There are historic and possibly physical links to what could have been the first hotel in Guelph. Although many hotels were built on Carden Street in the latter half of the 19th century, the Royal Hotel was the first to be established and as such has a direct link to the community that founded Guelph.

Contextual Value

The property meets Criterion 7 because of its prominent front façade forms the beginning of an uninterrupted block face on Carden Street that is a fundamental part of the north street wall of the Market Grounds area of the Old Downtown cultural heritage landscape.

The property meets Criterion 8 because the Royal Hotel building is important in defining and maintaining the heritage character of the Carden Street streetscape and John Galt's Market Grounds area. The Royal Hotel also forms part of a cultural heritage landscape with connections to the Town Hall, Wilson Street and the adjacent railway station.

The subject property meets Criterion 9 because, as one of the first properties to be built upon in Guelph's downtown, the Royal Hotel is a prominent part of the historical and social development of downtown and thus has long served as a major landmark in this area of Guelph since the mid-19th century. The structure was built on Lots 2 and 3 of Registered Plan 8, a plan devised by John Galt in 1827 and surveyed by John McDonald in 1855. Lots 2 and 3 are two of six lots that hold a prominent position in relation to the planning of Guelph's downtown and the Market Ground area and, as such, any building constructed on these lots was an integral part of that initial development.

Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 106 Carden Street should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- 3-storey, building mass and gable roof lines of the 1862 and 1880-1892 blocks
- Limestone roofline firewalls, corbelled details and parapets from the 1862 and 1880-1892 blocks
- Existing limestone chimney stacks, shafts and remaining chimney pots
- Exterior limestone walls including: smooth-faced, hammer dressed ashlar limestone, the presence of tape pointing, stone heads, limestone sills, quoined corners
- Shape and location of all original window and door openings based on historical images and references
- Two carved date stones (one above the triple windows on the third floor and the other above the first floor window in the right block)
- Wooden lintels above the first floor openings (possibly from the original 1840 construction in the left block)
- Scale of opening of the main entrance and two cast iron columns located either side of the Carden Street entrance door

Consultations

On April 8, 2024, Heritage Guelph passed the following motion:

THAT the comments provided by Heritage Guelph members on the '106 Carden Street: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report' be provided to staff and Council for their consideration.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Property Location

Attachment-2 Current Photos

Attachment-3 Historical Images

Departmental Approval

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