

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Tuesday, September 10, 2024
Subject	106 Carden Street: Notice of Intention to Designate

Recommendation

1. That the City Clerk be authorized to publish and serve notice of intention to designate 106 Carden 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.
-

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council publish its intention to designate the property known as 106 Carden Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Key Findings

The Royal Hotel building at 106 Carden 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. Staff have determined in consultation with Heritage Guelph that the property meets seven 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

106 Carden Street is located on the northwest side of Carden Street across the street from the Guelph Transit Terminal (Attachment 1, Figure 1). The legal description of the subject property is Lots 2 & 3, Plan 8; Part Lots 1 & 4, Plan 8, Parts 24 & 25, 61R11523; Guelph. Attachment 1, Figure 2 shows with the dashed yellow line what portion of the building on the property has cultural heritage value and contains heritage attributes.

Background

The Royal Hotel at 106 Carden Street is a historically prominent building in the culturally significant 'Market Ground' area of the Old Downtown cultural heritage landscape of Guelph. The Market Ground area was established by John Galt in his 1827 plan for the Town of Guelph (Attachment 3, Figure 1). The massing and form of the street wall has remained relatively unchanged since the 1870s. The Royal Hotel building sits on Lot 2 and 3 of Plan 8, registered in 1855 (Attachment 3, Figure 2). The empirical evidence available shows that the first buildings on Lots 2 and 3 of Plan 8 played an important role in the development of the City's judicial services and provided a hub of community for the early settlers of Guelph. The inns, taverns and hotels that quickly sprung up in the area, of which the Royal Hotel was one of the first to be built, served as natural meeting places for both established locals and recent newcomers.

Although a hotel was established on the property in 1851, it is reputed that "Suffolk House", the first hotel, was built in the early 1830s. According to historian Gordon Couling, this makes the Royal Hotel property Guelph's oldest continuously operating business, and the building is possibly one of the oldest stone hotels in the province still in operation. Both Lots 2 and 3 began their development in the 1830's according to the land registry abstract, with notable owners including William Clarke in January 1842 and the illustrious hotel developer John Thorp. Thorp appeared in the "Canada Business Directory" of 1851 named as proprietor of the British Hotel, before James O'Neil sold the Royal Hotel to Charles and William Williams in 1871, which brought about a change in name: Anglo-American to the Royal Hotel (Attachment 3, Figure 9).

The subject building is referenced in the 1875/1878 Fire Insurance Plan. In 1878, according to the fire insurance plan of 1875/1878, there was still a 2½-storey, 5-bay wide building and a 2-storey, 4-bay wide stable building to the left of the 1862, 3-storey limestone building (Attachment 3, Figure 5). By 1892, according to the FIP of 1881/1892, the two buildings to the west had been replaced by the 3-storey, 5-bay wide limestone buildings that exist today (Attachment 3, Figure 7).

The Royal Hotel is steeped in Guelph's changing history. A hotel has stood on the property since the 1830's and although the majority of the building seen today is from 1862, it represents an integral element in Carden Street's commercial, social, and cultural development. The Royal Hotel has been the backdrop for two royal visits, been one of the seats of local court, and provided elegant rooms for patrons. The Royal Hotel continues to be one of the first buildings viewed upon arrival at Guelph Central Station and thus serves as a bookend to the Carden St/Wilson St streetscape, the historic Market Ground area, and Guelph's Old Downtown cultural heritage landscape (Attachment 3, Figure 11, 12, 13).

Building Description

The current Royal Inn and Suites comprises the 17-bay, 3-storey limestone building on Carden Street and the 6-bay wide, 3-storey brick building on Macdonell Street (Attachment 2, Figures 3 and 4). The development of the property was completed over stages from 1862 to 1946. The window and door openings, scale, roofline, and limestone façade remain relatively unchanged from the building constructed in stages from 1862-1892. The wooden lintels above the main stable doors from the 1840's livery is still visible on the western most block of the hotel (Attachment 2, Figure 5).

Statement of Significance

The heritage attributes of 106 Carden Street display design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value, thus 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* (Attachment 4).

Design/Physical Value

The subject property satisfies Criterion 1 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.

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 remain 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. Although these interior features have not been identified as heritage attributes, Heritage Planning staff encourage that the central stairway and the heavy timber roof framing members of the original building be retained.

Historical/Associative Value

The subject property meets Criterion 4 due to its direct association with 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 early Guelph settler farmers 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 Ground 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 Ground 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

This report recommends the following heritage attributes at 106 Carden Street for 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

Financial Implications

None.

Consultations and Engagement

On April 8th, 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.

On July 8th, 2024, Heritage Guelph [passed the following motions](#):

THAT Heritage Guelph supports the heritage attributes identified for 106 Carden Streets, with the following amendments to note that scale refers to the existing wood opening, and cast-iron columns and that the limestone is local Guelph-Wellington limestone, as outlined in the staff report dated July 8, 2024; and

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.

Heritage Planning has reached out to the property owner previous to the July 8, 2024, Heritage Guelph meeting to make them aware of the staff reports being considered by the committee and to inform them that Heritage Planning staff are in the process of preparing a staff report to Council recommending Council publish its intention to designate the property. No response has been received to date by Heritage Planning from the property owner.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Property Location

Attachment-2 Current Photos

Attachment-3 Historical Images

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

Departmental Approval

Report Author

Stephen Robinson, MA, CAHP, Senior Heritage Planner

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:

Terry Gayman, P. Eng.
Acting Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Infrastructure, Development and Environment
519-822-1260 extension 2369
terry.gayman@guelph.ca