

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Wednesday, November 13, 2024
Subject	22 James Street East: Notice of Intention to Designate

Recommendation

1. That the City Clerk be authorized to publish and serve notice of intention to designate 22 James Street East 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

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council publish its intention to designate 22 James Street East 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

The brick structure at 22 James Street East 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.

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 four of the nine criteria used to determine cultural heritage value according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 (as amended by Ontario Regulation 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

The subject property is located at 22 James Street East, on the north side of James Street East, to the east of Gordon Street. The property's legal description is Plan 302, PT Lot A, DESC INCL RP 61R5259, PART 3, CITY OF GUELPH.

Background

The recorded history of Lot A begins in 1892 with its sale to Christian Kloefer, a local businessman and politician. While he never lived there, it seems that he used the lot as an investment tool as parcels were sold to working-class locals and other businessmen, namely William Johnson, the owner of the Boathouse, which still stands on the opposite bank of the Speed River.

The most consequential history of the property, however, is related to the development of the Toronto Suburban Railway (TSR). Opened in the 1890s, the TSR was a collaboration of industries across the province; the cars were built in Preston, the electronics were built in Peterborough, the tracks were made with Algoma steel, and the line was powered by Niagara Hydro. It quickly stepped into its role as a commuter railway between Toronto and its surrounding suburbs such as Weston, Lambton Mills, and the Junction.

By 1912, the TSR planned an extension from Toronto to Berlin (now Kitchener). Ahead of this expansion, the property at 22 James Street, then known as Bay Street, was purchased by the TSR to serve as a transformer substation to power the Guelph-Berlin line. The substation was designed by George Briggs, of Mackenzie, Mann, & Company, a railway-contracting partnership, and financial holding company that, among other commissions, built and promoted Canada's third transcontinental railway, the Canadian Northern Railway. Between 1912-1918, Briggs designed all passenger stations and related structures for the Eastern Division of the Canadian Northern Railway. In 1920, he was appointed superintending architect for the Canadian National Railway (CNR) and is well-known for designing the major CNR resort hotel, Minaki Lodge near Kenora, Ontario.

The start of the First World War and an amendment to the Hydro Electric Railway Act in 1914 stifled interest in extending the line from Guelph to Kitchener, but the Toronto-Guelph line went ahead full-steam. As plans for expansion to Kitchener were scrapped, the recently complete Beaux-Arts structure was no longer needed as a substation and was thus converted into a railcar barn. With one hundred official stops along its route, ranging from open-front shelters and flag-stops on the side of the tracks to purpose-built stations in Georgetown and Acton, electric service between Guelph and Toronto began. While Guelph and Toronto were well served by other railways, the TSR was the only public transit option available to many communities along the TSR's route.

The railway was a cornerstone of the local economy; for example, the car carried milk from the Ontario Reformatory prison farm, and on Sundays an extra car was added to accommodate extra baggage accumulated on shopping trips to Toronto. In 1918 the owners of the TSR went bankrupt, and the line was purchased by the newly formed Canadian National Railway. The last TSR train left Guelph on August 15, 1931. While the Guelph branch was never profitable, during its time it provided a vital service to the communities it passed through.

By 1932 the property was sold by the Canadian National Railway to Joseph Wolfond, a well-reputed local businessman who operated a towing/automotive service company. In 1952 the property was sold to Clarence Redwood, a carpenter from the Brooklyn neighbourhood, who converted it into the apartment building that it remains as today.

Building Description

The property is a restrained and functional form of Beaux-Arts, namely characterized by the stylistic elements on the pilasters, the monumental windows, a highly visible central entrance, and the architectural symmetry. Beaux-Arts originated in the 1890s as a synthesis of Classical Greek and Roman styles with Italian and French Renaissance styles. The structure has a cast stone foundation and is constructed of brick. Twin brick pilasters are on either side of the entrance, with one on each corner, and are topped with sheet metal Tuscan capitals. It has a sheet metal cornice surrounding the whole building, and a corrugated steel hipped roof. It has half-round, two-storey windows, although these are not original.

Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 22 James Street East should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- Building form, including:
 - Two-storey building with rectangular footprint
 - Hipped roof
- Symmetrical facade
- Brick exterior walls, including:
 - Paired, monumental, brick pilasters topped with sheet metal Tuscan capitals on either side of the entrance
 - Brick pilasters topped with Tuscan capitals on each corner of the building
- Sheet metal cornice surrounding the whole building
- All original window and door openings

Consultations and Engagement

At the [June 3, 2024 meeting of Heritage Guelph](#), the committee passed the following motion:

That the comments provided by Heritage Guelph members on the 22 James Street West: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report' be provided to staff and Council for their consideration.

At the [September 9, 2024 meeting of Heritage Guelph](#), the committee passed the following motion:

That Heritage Guelph supports the heritage attributes identified for 22 James Street East as outlined in the staff report dated September 9, 2024; and

That Heritage Guelph recommends that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 22 James Street East pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Heritage Planning staff sent a letter dated August 20, 2024, to the property owner to inform them their property is being considered for designation by City Council. Staff did not receive a response.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Property Location

Attachment-2 Historical Photographs and Documents

Attachment-3 Current Photographs

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

Departmental Approval

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