

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Environment
Date	Tuesday, July 15, 2025
Subject	30-32 Eramosa Road: Objection to Notice of Intention to Designate 2025-210

Recommendation

1. That the Notice of Objection to the intention to designate 30 and 32 Eramosa Road dated May 16, 2025 from Adam Stewart be received.
 2. That the designation by-laws for 30 and 32 Eramosa Road be approved.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the property owner's notice of objection to the intention to designate 30 and 32 Eramosa Road and to bring the heritage designation by-law before Council for approval according to the provisions of section 29, Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Key Findings

A property may be designated under section 29, Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act if it meets two or more of the criteria used to determine cultural heritage value or interest as set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06.

The heritage attributes of the Robertson Foundry building at 30 and 32 Eramosa Road 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 30 and 32 Eramosa Road display: design or physical, historical, or associative, and contextual value.

Designation enables Council to review proposed alterations to the heritage attributes listed in the property's designation by-law, enforce heritage property standards and maintenance, and refuse demolition.

A notice of intention to designate 30 and 32 Eramosa Road was published and served on the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust on March 27, 2025 (Attachment-1). An objection to the intention to designate was received by the City Clerk on May 16, 2025 from the property owner of 30 Eramosa, Adam Stuart, on behalf of himself and the owner of 32 Eramosa Road (Attachment-2).

According to section 29, subsections (6-8) of the Ontario Heritage Act, Council has until July 24, 2025 to decide whether to proceed with the designation and, if so,

may pass a by-law. The proposed by-law (2025) – 21026 is included in Attachment-3.

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

Costs associated with notices and registration of by-laws are covered by the City's global advertising budget. Additional costs may be incurred if the designation by-law is appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Report

Following the staff reports to Council on April 8, 2025 recommending issuance of notices of intention to designate for [30 Eramosa Road](#) and [32 Eramosa Road](#), Council directed the City Clerk to publish and serve notice of intention to designate the properties pursuant to section 29, Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The notice of intention to designate was published in the newspaper on April 17, 2025 (Attachment-1) and served on the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust on the same date.

The notice of intention to designate stated that any person may send a notice of objection to the proposed designation, before 4 p.m. on May 16, 2025. The notice must be sent by registered mail or delivered to the Clerk of the City of Guelph and must set out the reason for the objection and all relevant facts. If a notice of objection is received, the Council of the City of Guelph shall consider the objection and make a decision whether or not to withdraw the notice of intention to designate the property within 90 days after the end of the 30-day objection period. If Council decides not to withdraw its intention to designate, a heritage designation by-law must be passed within 120 days after the date of publication of the notice of intention to designate. Council must publish a notice of passing of the designation by-law which is followed by a 30-day appeal period when appeals of the by-law may be given to the Ontario Land Tribunal for a hearing and decision.

The subject property has been listed as non-designated on the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties under section 27, Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act since Council expanded the heritage register to include the Burcher Stokes Inventory in 2009. Heritage Planning staff, in collaboration with Heritage Guelph, have been evaluating properties listed on the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in anticipation of the removal of all non-designated properties at the end of 2026, as per the timeline imposed by the Provincial Government in Bill 185.

In selecting properties to evaluate for heritage designation, heritage planning staff and Heritage Guelph prioritized properties with known historical, architectural, and

contextual value. 30 and 32 Eramosa Road was identified by Heritage Guelph as [one of the top designation priorities of 2024](#) because it was one of the first iron foundries in the City of Guelph.

Notice of Objection

A Notice of Objection was received by the City Clerk on May 16, 2025 from Adam Stewart, the property owner of 30 Eramosa Road, on behalf of himself and the owner of 32 Eramosa Road (Attachment-2). The notice disagreed with Heritage Planning staff's evaluation of the property against the provincial criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest. The owner believes that the property's change of use from industrial to residential prevents the property from meeting the criteria. The owner raised concerns about Adam Robertson's sympathies for the Confederate States of America during the American Civil War. Lastly, the owner believes that the stone masonry does not demonstrate a mastery of the craft.

Heritage Planning Staff Response to Notice of Objection

The Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report of 30-32 Eramosa Road is based on detailed research and architectural analysis and was supported by the Heritage Advisory Committee at their February 6, 2025 meeting.

The property is demonstrably one of the earliest examples of an iron foundry in the City of Guelph. The stone building that now composes 30 and 32 Eramosa Road was purpose-built as an iron foundry and machine shop for Adam Robertson, and the Fire Insurance Plans clearly demonstrate that the original function of the structure was an iron foundry. This building represents a significant industrial evolution in the City of Guelph. Prior to the establishment of iron foundries, iron tools and implements would have been produced by blacksmiths. The introduction of iron foundries in the mid nineteenth century allowed for tools to be produced in larger quantities and sold at more affordable prices.

Although the building is now a semi-detached residence, this does not detract from its heritage value or its contribution to understanding the Guelph's industrial history. There are many examples of designated industrial buildings in the City of Guelph that have been converted to residential use, including the Mill Lofts at 26 Ontario Street, Alice Block at 120 Huron Street, and the Stewart Mill Lofts at 60 Cardigan Street.

While functionalist in its architectural styling, it is the opinion of Heritage Planning staff and the Heritage Advisory Committee that the Robertson Foundry displays a high degree of craftsmanship in its stone masonry, including the large cut stone quoins, lintels, sills, and rubble stone walls. It should be emphasized that the construction of stone walls with rubble stone requires a very high degree of expertise.

The objection disagrees with the staff assessment that the property has direct association with Adam Robertson. However, the Land Title Abstracts, City Directories, and Fire Insurance Plans all clearly demonstrate a direct association with Adam Robertson. This property is also associated with a plot organized by Adam Robertson to manufacture cannons and grenades for the Confederacy during the American Civil War, and to smuggle them to the Confederate States of America. As was clearly explained by staff to the property owner, the acknowledgement of

this dark episode in Guelph's history is not intended to celebrate Robertson or his Confederate sympathies, but to educate the public that the populace of Guelph were very divided in their support for the North and the South during the American Civil War. Designation is intended to recognize Guelph's history, both the good and the bad.

Lastly, the objection is critical of the heritage attributes identified by Heritage Planning staff and the Heritage Advisory Committee. The heritage attributes were identified as contributing to the property's cultural heritage value. Staff used historical photography, the Fire Insurance Plans, and clues in the stone masonry to identify the original windows on the structure. The portico over the entry doors conveys the structure's conversion from industrial use to a residential use.

Financial Implications

Costs associated with notices and registration of by-laws are covered by the City's global advertising budget. Additional costs may be incurred if the designation by-law is appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Consultations and Engagement

A letter was sent to the property owners dated February 3, 2025 to inform them that their property would be considered for designation by City Council. Staff received an email response from Adam Stewart and discussed the history of the property as well as the designation process.

At the [February 6, 2025 meeting of Heritage Guelph](#), the Committee passed the following motions:

- That Heritage Guelph advises City Council that 30 Eramosa Road merits designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; and
- That Heritage Guelph advises City Council that the committee supports the heritage attributes recommended in the staff report titled "30 Eramosa Road – Draft Council Designation Report" and dated February 6, 2025
- That Heritage Guelph advises City Council that 32 Eramosa Road merits designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; and
- That Heritage Guelph advises City Council that the committee supports the heritage attributes recommended in the staff report titled "32 Eramosa Road – Draft Council Designation Report" and dated February 6, 2025

Attachments

Attachment-1 Notices of Intention to Designate - 30 and 32 Eramosa Road (April 17, 2025)

Attachment-2 Objection to Notice of Intention to Designate (May 16, 2025)

Attachment-3 Proposed By-law Number (2025) – 21105 30 Eramosa Rd

Attachment-4 Proposed By-law Number (2025) – 21106 32 Eramosa Rd

Attachment-5 30-32 Eramosa Objection - Staff Presentation

Departmental Approval

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