



CITY OF HAMILTON
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Planning Division

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	October 20, 2015
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Preliminary Screening for the Request to Designate 460 Concession Street (George L. Armstrong School) Under Part IV of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> (PED15159) (Ward 7)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Ward 7
PREPARED BY:	Chelsey Tyers (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1214 Madeleine Giroux (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2664 Steve Robichaud Director of Planning and Chief Planner
SUBMITTED BY:	Jason Thorne General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That Council include 460 Concession Street, Hamilton (George L. Armstrong School) in the Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, as per the provisions of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and that staff make appropriate amendments to the Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest;
- (b) That Council direct staff to undertake a Cultural Heritage Assessment of 460 Concession Street, Hamilton (George L. Armstrong School), shown in Appendix “B” of Report PED15159, to determine whether the property is of cultural heritage value worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- (c) That the Cultural Heritage Assessment work be assigned a low priority and be added to staff’s work program for completion in 2025, as per the attached Appendix “G” of Report PED15159;
- (d) That, if 460 Concession Street, Hamilton (George L. Armstrong School) is determined to be of cultural heritage value or interest, a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and Description of Heritage Attributes be prepared by

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staff for Council's consideration for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;

- (e) That a copy of Report PED15159 be forwarded to the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee for information;
- (f) That a copy of Report PED15159 be forwarded to the property owner for information;
- (g) That a copy of Report PED15159 be forwarded to the Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society (HMHS) for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 30, 2014, the Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society (HMHS) requested the designation of 460 Concession Street, Hamilton, known as George L. Armstrong School, under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (see Appendix "A").

The subject property located at 460 Concession Street (see location map attached as Appendix "B" and photographs attached as Appendix "C"), comprises a three-storey institutional building designed by architect Walter Grayson Brown and constructed in 1929, with a two-storey addition designed by William Russell Souter and constructed in 1953. The property is owned, occupied and maintained by the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB). This property is listed on the City of Hamilton Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and / or Historical Interest.

Under the Council-approved Designation Process (see Appendix "D"), this Report contains background on the request and a preliminary evaluation of the subject property using the criteria contained in *Ontario Regulation 9/06* (see Appendix "E"). The preliminary evaluation of the property provides the basis for whether future Cultural Heritage Assessment work is warranted and recommends assignment of a work program priority for this work.

Through this Report, staff have determined that George L. Armstrong School meets all three of the criteria and is considered to have design / physical value, historical / associative value, and contextual value. Staff recommend that Council direct staff to carry out a Cultural Heritage Assessment of 460 Concession Street, Hamilton, to determine whether the property is of cultural heritage value worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Staff recommend that the Cultural Heritage Assessment work be assigned as a low priority within the staff work program as the property is well-maintained and is not under immediate threat for redevelopment or demolition. The further research and assessment work will provide Council with adequate information upon which to base a decision regarding designation under the

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Ontario Heritage Act. The Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee will be consulted during the preparation of the Cultural Heritage Assessment and the staff Report.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 7

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: None.

Staffing: None.

Legal: The City’s Legal Counsel was consulted in the preparation of the original staff Report regarding the formal Designation Process (Report PED08211), the recommendations of which are summarized below:

As per the Council-approved Designation Process (see Appendix “D” to this Report), this Report provides staff with direction to complete further research and evaluation of the property for a later decision by Council. If staff are directed to proceed, Council will make a decision on designation at a subsequent stage in the designation process when it has before it a staff Report, the Cultural Heritage Assessment, a draft Designation By-law, advice from the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee, and the positions of the property owner and any other interested parties.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The subject property, located at 460 Concession Street, Hamilton, is occupied by the George L. Armstrong School. The school is listed on the City of Hamilton Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and / or Historical Interest.

Under the Council-approved process for considering requests for designation, a preliminary screening was conducted (see the Analysis and Rationale for Recommendation section of this Report) referencing the criteria contained in *Ontario Regulation 9/06* (see Appendix “E”) to determine if further Cultural Heritage Assessment work is warranted.

Work Program Priority:

The Council-approved Designation Process provides for the prioritization of detailed research and assessment work. Within the annual work program, Planning staff can typically process three to four properties through the designation process, including the preparation of the comprehensive Cultural Heritage Assessment reports and the processing of the designation By-laws in conjunction with the City Clerk’s Division. According to the Council-approved process, Council may assign a high, medium, or low

priority to a designation request. These priorities generally fall within the following time frames:

- A high priority would direct staff to prepare the Cultural Heritage Assessment within the first and second year of the work program;
- A medium priority would direct the designation request to the third through the seventh year of the work program; or,
- A low priority would direct the request to the eighth through the eleventh year of the work program.

Work program priorities are assigned based on a number of factors, including:

- Risk to the property with respect to demolition or removal;
- Funding eligibility;
- Heritage value associated with the property;
- Current level of property maintenance;
- The property is City-owned; and,
- Work program / staff resources.

The currently approved work program priorities are contained in Appendix “F” to this Report.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP):

Volume 1, Section B.3.4 - Cultural Heritage Resources Policies of the UHOP states that the City shall “protect and conserve the tangible cultural heritage resources of the City, including archaeological resources, built heritage resources, and cultural heritage landscapes” (B.3.4.2.1(a)), and “identify cultural heritage resources through a continuing process of inventory, survey, and evaluation, as a basis for the wise management of these resources” (B.3.4.2.1(b)). The policies also provide that the “City may, by By-law, designate individual and groups of properties of cultural heritage value under Parts IV and V, respectively, of the *Ontario Heritage Act*” (B.3.4.2.3). These policies demonstrate Council’s commitment to the identification, protection, and conservation of cultural heritage resources, and the recommendations of this Report meet the intent of these policies.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

This Report is the initial stage in the consideration of a request for designation. A copy of this Report will be forwarded to the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee for information as per the Council-approved process (see Recommendation (e) of this Report). The owner of the subject property, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, was notified of the request for designation and the preparation of a preliminary screening report. The owner will be forwarded a copy of this Report as per the Council-approved process.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The George L. Armstrong School, municipally known as 460 Concession Street, Hamilton, is bounded by Concession Street to the north, East 18th Street to the west, and East 19th Street to the east (see location map attached as Appendix “B”). The subject property is located in the Inch Park Neighbourhood in Ward 7. The 4.56 acre property is comprised of a three-storey institutional building designed by architect Walter Grayson Brown in the Collegiate Gothic architectural style and constructed in 1929. There is a two-storey addition designed by architect William Russell Souter and constructed in 1953. In addition, there is a newer addition built c. 1980 and as of the writing of this Report there is an addition on the east side of the rear c.1980 addition currently under construction.

Preliminary Evaluation - Ontario Regulation 9/06:

In 2006, the Province issued criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The regulation identifies three broad categories of criteria: Design / Physical Value, Historical / Associative Value, and Contextual Value, under which three subsets of criteria are further identified (see Appendix “E”). The following provides a preliminary evaluation of the subject property using the criteria contained in Ontario Regulation 9/06 - Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest:

1. Design / Physical Value:

The George L. Armstrong School is a three-storey institutional building designed by architect Walter Grayson Brown. It was constructed in 1929 and designed in the Collegiate Gothic style, a form of the Neo-Gothic architectural style frequently employed for early twentieth-century schools and universities in Canada. An addition was constructed in 1953, designed by William Russell Souter, a prominent Hamilton architect. The addition consists of two side wings, with the easterly portion projecting into the rear.

The design / physical value of the original portion of the school lies in its architectural features typical of the Collegiate Gothic style, including the brick façade with stone and

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coloured accents, its symmetrical composition, the horizontal rhythm of the fenestration, the prominent front entrance with a stone archway, the brick parapet, and the large landscaped front lawn.

The 1953 addition is generally sympathetic to the original building design and is composed of brick with concrete accents and characterized by the horizontal rhythm of the fenestration.

Historical / Associative Value:

The land for the George L. Armstrong School was purchased in 1919 for \$15,000, and the school was constructed in 1929 in response to the rapid post-war residential development that occurred on the Escarpment, commonly referred to as the “Mountain.” It was named for prominent community member and School Board trustee, George L. Armstrong, who served as trustee from 1904-1933. It is the last early Mountain school to remain extant after S.S. Number 3 Barton School, Inverness School, and Brantdale School were all demolished in the mid- to late-twentieth century.

The historical value of the property also lies in its association with prominent Hamilton architects Walter Grayson Brown, who designed the original 1929 structure, and William Russell Souter, who designed the 1953 addition. Brown was responsible for the design of many local institutional buildings, including Grace Anglican Church (1919), Prince of Wales Public School (1921-22), A.M. Cunningham School (1928-29), and a major addition to Lloyd George Public School (1929-1930). Souter was responsible for many local commercial, industrial and ecclesiastical works, including the Basilica of Christ the King (1933), the Steel Company of Canada Ltd. building (1946), Dalewood Middle School (1948), St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic Hospital (1950), and several McMaster University buildings (1949-50).

2. Contextual Value:

The George L. Armstrong School is located on a 4.56 acre property bounded by Concession Street to the north, East 18th Street to the west, and East 19th Street to the east (see location map attached as Appendix “B”). The property encompasses roughly two-thirds of the city block. The building has a deep setback from Concession Street, reinforcing the prominence of the architectural style and its landmark status.

The site shows landmark value with its identification on early Hamilton mapping including the Canadian Civic Map Service’s Map of Hamilton dated February, 1936, and the J.W. Tyrrell and Co. map of the City of Hamilton, dated 1921.

Conclusion:

Staff concludes that the property located at 460 Concession Street, Hamilton, is of potential cultural heritage value or interest sufficient to warrant further research and assessment of the property for potential designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Work Program Priority:

At the time of preparing this Report, the HWDSB has no documented interest in declaring the property surplus. Through the HWDSB surplus process, the City would be circulated for comment should the property be considered for surplus in the future before further cultural heritage assessment work is conducted. City staff would have the opportunity to inform Planning Committee and Council of any concern of impending surplus and recommend reassignment of the work program priority for designation, as deemed necessary.

For these reasons, staff recommend that this work be given a low priority within the staff work program (see Recommendation (c) of this Report). The assignment of a low priority to the subject designation request would place the research and preparation of a Cultural Heritage Assessment on the staff work program for 2025, and would not displace any of the existing priorities (see Appendices “F” and “G”).

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Council may consider the following alternatives:

1. Do Not to Complete a Cultural Heritage Assessment

Council may direct staff to not complete a Cultural Heritage Assessment and no further work will be completed by staff. This alternative is contrary to the Council-approved process for considering requests for designation, whereby legitimate requests for designation must be addressed and cannot be dismissed without complete consideration of all the issues (see Legal Implications section of this Report).

2. Assign Different Work Program Priority

Council may assign a different work program priority for further Cultural Heritage Assessment than recommended by staff. Given the consideration of all the factors noted in the Analysis and Rationale for Recommendation section of this Report, staff are of the opinion that the recommended work program priority is warranted.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #1:

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective:

1.6 Enhance Overall Sustainability (financial, economic, social and environmental).

Staff Comments:

The approval of the recommendations of this Report demonstrates:

- Council's commitment to the Council-approved Designation Process and to existing planning policies; and,
- Council's commitment to conserving cultural heritage resources, as directed by Provincial and Federal level policies.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

- Appendix "A": Request for Designation Letter
- Appendix "B": Location Map
- Appendix "C": Photographs
- Appendix "D": Council-Approved Designation Process
- Appendix "E": *Ontario Regulation 9/06*
- Appendix "F": Requests to Designate Properties Under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Priorities (as Amended by Report PED14191)
- Appendix "G": Requests to Designate Properties Under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Priorities (as Amended by this Report)

CT/MG/th