

127 Hughson Street North, Hamilton

## **STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST AND DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES**

### **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

The property, municipally known as 127 Hughson Street North, Hamilton is a former industrial complex. The western section of the building was the original four storey factory built circa 1911 and was joined to the storefront located at 144 James Street North. The eastern section of the building was opened in 1929 and was known as 'Style Park'. The building is a vernacular industrial building that features Art Deco influences.

127 Hughson Street North is located on the east side of Hughson Street North, Hamilton. The property is east of James Street North, west of John Street North, north of Wilson Street, and south of Cannon Street East.

### **DESIGN / PHYSICAL VALUE**

The property is a representative example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century vernacular industrial building with art deco influences. This value is represented in the decorative façade of the 1929 east section of the building and displays brick pilasters, unique brickwork, stylized parapets and a decorative entrance and foyer area which are representative of an Art Deco style of this era. The massing and large window openings reinforce the industrial history of the building. The two stone 'F's' located in the parapets and the 'F' located in foyer flooring are a unique feature to the building and represent the Firth Brothers.

### **HISTORICAL / ASSOCIATIVE VALUE**

The property has associative value in its direct association with Norman and John Firth. Norman Firth began a clothing business in Hamilton in 1909. Eventually joined by his brother John, the brothers incorporated as Firth Brothers Ltd. in 1918 with Norman acting as president. The Firth Brothers had a storefront, located at 144 James Street North, and the original section of the factory (west section) was located at the rear of the storefront. The brother's clothing operation was very successful and in 1929, they expanded the factory. The new building, known as 'Style Park' cost the company \$250,000, revitalizing the area and allowing the Firth Brothers to expand their operation vastly. Members of the Firth family owned and operated the business until 1974. The property has associative value as a contributor to the industrial heritage of Hamilton.

## CONTEXTUAL VALUE

The property has contextual value for its location in what may be considered Hamilton’s first industrial neighbourhood. The Firth Brothers manufacturing operations began as a small-scale family run business and grew throughout the early 20th century. The property acts as a reminder of the neighbourhood’s industrial past and reinforces the mixed use nature which has historically been associated with the area. The property is one of the largest industrial buildings in the immediate area and is important in defining and maintaining the industrial character of Hughson Street North.

### **Description of Heritage Attributes**

The Cultural Heritage Value or interest of the property resides in the four storey east section of the structure, built in 1929.

Key heritage attributes associated with the split level foyer include:

- The use of marble, brass and wood;
- The marble and pebble tile Firth Brothers ‘F’ logo at the top of the stairs; and,
- The timber rafters with dentils and decorative supports.

Key heritage exterior attributes of the 1929 east section of the building associated with the façade include:

- Vernacular interpretation of Art Deco style architecture;
- Red brick construction and polychrome brick façade;
- Brick pilasters;
- The multi-panelled window profiles and the locations, configuration, size, scale, and shape of these openings which reinforce the industrial character of the building;
- Brick work, including a double herringbone pattern and soldier courses with square-shaped stone insert;
- Decorative and symmetrical use of stone throughout the brickwork, including at the top and bottom of the brick pilasters;
- Flat roof with a pair of decorative parapets with centrally placed stone ‘F’s’;
- Defined main entrance with stone lintel, pilasters, and dentils;
- Decorative brickwork above the main entrance; and,
- Large rectangular transom and sidelights openings found at the front door.