

56 York Boulevard, Hamilton

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

Introduction and Description of Property

56 York Boulevard includes a three-storey plus mansard roof limestone Renaissance Revival commercial building built in two phases in 1856 and 1881. The later 1911 addition of a four-storey building constructed of brick masonry is a representative example of an Edwardian Classicism commercial building.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

56 York Boulevard (stone portion) is a representative example of the Renaissance Revival style for commercial buildings. Built in 1856, with a later 1881 addition, it is a good example of this architectural type, expressed through its balanced façade, massing, varying arched window and door openings and stone detailing with oversized keystones and contrasting vermiculated and smooth masonry. The stone building displays both astylar and columnar stylistic influences. However, given that the structure is devoid of obvious Classical orders and detailing, the subject building is best described as an astylar version of Renaissance Revival.

56 York Boulevard (brick portion) is a representative example of the Edwardian Classicism style for commercial buildings. Built in 1911 the structure is emblematic of a commercial building designed in the Edwardian Classicism architectural style. This is expressed through the building’s brick construction, massing, fenestration, the use of brick banding along the façade, stone detailing on string courses, sills, and keystones, parapet wall and prominent stone surround on the façade entrance.

56 York Boulevard (stone portion) displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic value expressed through its carved stone finishes with scrollwork, varying arched window and door openings, intricate vermiculated detailing and interior courtyard.

56 York Boulevard represents direct associations with the textiles and clothing production industries that were and remain significant to the growth of Hamilton. Late 19th and early 20th century growth and development in Hamilton is attributed to its manufacturing prowess, particularly in textile production. As the home to the iconic clothing manufacturer Copley Noyes and Randall, the building at 56 York Boulevard represents an organization that has been significant to the City of Hamilton for nearly 130 years of continuous service as one of the founding pillars of the local fashion industry, preceding the now well-known textile and fabric hub of nearby Ottawa Street. The subject buildings are of the few remaining structures in the City of Hamilton that represent this textile boom.

56 York Boulevard demonstrates the work of Frederick James Rastrick (stone building) and Alfred Wavell Peene (brick building) who are significant architects.

Frederick James Rastrick, a prominent Hamilton architect who practised in the area in the 19th century. Rastrick was a key part of the development of the professional association of architects in Ontario. Rastrick served as the vice-president of the Association of Architects, Engineers and Land Surveyors of Canada, the first president of the Canadian Institute of Architects and a member of the council of the Ontario Association of Architects in 1889. From 1854 to 1857, Rastrick served as the appointed engineer for the County of Wentworth. Alfred Wavell Peene was a prominent late 19th century and early 20th century architect who practiced extensively in Hamilton and is credited with civic, commercial and residential buildings throughout the city.

56 York Boulevard is important in maintaining the historical character of the area’s mid-19th century development as an economic centre in downtown Hamilton. While much of the surrounding blocks have been redeveloped, 56 York Boulevard continues to maintain the historic nature of the streetscape. Further, the buildings support the historical character of the City of Hamilton as a textile manufacturing centre for over 130 years. The City’s prowess in textiles is exhibited in the many mills and industrial buildings associated with textile production, some of which remain today, like the Cotton Factory on Sherman Avenue and the subject building.

56 York Boulevard has contextual significance as a landmark. Prominently placed at the southwestern and southeastern property boundaries on the northwest corner of the busy intersection of York Boulevard and MacNab Street the three-storey plus mansard limestone building is a preeminent feature of the streetscape that helps communicate the historic nature of the area. The property’s positioning across from a major city centre, the Hamilton Farmer’s Market and Central Branch of the Hamilton Public Library further elevates this property’s streetscape status. For these reasons, the stone building is considered a landmark.

Description of Heritage Attributes

The stone building at 56 York Boulevard is a representative example of a commercial building constructed in the Renaissance Revival architectural style.

The property contains the following heritage attributes that reflect these values:

- Three-storey plus mansard roof building constructed of whirlpool limestone;
- Balanced façade;
- Mansard roof dormers;
- Projecting string courses;
- Bracketed stone cornice;
- Varying arched fenestration on the front façade and east elevation;
- Stone frontispiece chimney fronting MacNab Street with scrollwork detailing;
- Interior courtyard and courtyard fenestration; and,
- Vermiculated stone detailing on first storey façade and east elevation.

The brick building at 56 York Boulevard is a representative example of a commercial building designed in the Edwardian Classicism architectural style.

The property contains the following heritage attributes that reflect these values:

- Four-storey building constructed of brick masonry;
- Balanced façade;
- Brick banding or channelling on the front façade;
- Parapet Wall;
- Segmentally arched fenestration on the front façade;
- Stone trim and accents around openings; and,
- Oversized decorative architectural elements, including:
 - Façade entrance surround; and,
 - Stone keystones.

56 York Boulevard displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic value

through its hand carved stone finishes with scrollwork, varying arches, and intricate vermiculated detailing. The property contains the following attributes that reflect these values:

- Three-storey plus mansard roof building constructed of whirlpool limestone;
- Balanced façade;
- Mansard roof dormers;
- Projecting string courses;
- Bracketed stone cornice;
- Varying arched fenestration;
- Stone frontispiece chimney fronting MacNab Street with scrollwork detailing;
- Interior courtyard and courtyard fenestration; and,
- Vermiculated stone detailing on first storey façade and east elevation.

56 York Boulevard’s interiors are representative of a turn-of-the-century industrial/manufacturing building. The property contains the following interior attributes that reflect this value:

- Wood and cast-iron pillars on all floors in both the brick and stone building; in particular, the decorative cast-iron pillars on the first floor of the stone building; and,
- Vaults with metal doors found in both the brick and stone building, some with graffiti dating to the 19th century.

56 York Boulevard has historical associations related to the growth of the City of Hamilton in the 19th and 20th century as a manufacturing centre, specifically related to the City’s history related to the development of the textile manufacturing. The property contains the following attributes that reflect these values:

- Copley Noyes and Randall sign; and,
- Prominent location at a main crossroads.

56 York Boulevard has direct associations with Frederick James Rastrick, a prominent architect practicing in the City of Hamilton in the 19th century. The property contains the following attributes that reflect this value:

- Three-storey plus mansard roof building constructed of whirlpool limestone;
- Balanced façade
- Mansard roof dormers;
- Projecting string courses;
- Bracketed stone cornice;
- Varying arched fenestration;
- Stone frontispiece chimney fronting MacNab Street with scrollwork detailing;
- Interior courtyard and courtyard fenestration; and,
- Vermiculated stone detailing on first storey façade and east elevation.

56 York Boulevard has direct associations with Alfred Wavell Peene, a notable local architect practicing in the City of Hamilton. The property contains the following attributes that reflect this value:

- Four-storey building constructed of brick masonry;
- Balanced façade;
- Brick banding or channeling on the front façade;
- Parapet wall;
- Segmentally arched fenestration on the front façade;
- Stone trim and accents around openings; and,
- Oversized decorative architectural elements, including:
 - Façade entrance surround; and,
 - Stone keystones.

56 York Boulevard is important in maintaining the historical character of the area’s mid-19th century development as an economic centre in downtown Hamilton. The property contains the following attributes that reflect this value:

- Three-storey plus mansard roof building constructed of whirlpool limestone;
 - Balanced façade;
 - Mansard roof dormers;
 - Projecting string courses;
 - Bracketed stone cornice;
 - Varying arched fenestration;
 - Stone frontispiece chimney fronting MacNab Street with scrollwork detailing;
 - Interior courtyard and courtyard fenestration;
 - Vermiculated stone detailing on first storey façade and east elevation; and,
 - Copley Noyes and Randall sign.
- Four-storey building constructed of brick masonry;
 - Balanced façade;
 - Brick banding or channelling on the front façade;
 - Parapet Wall;
 - Segmentally arched fenestration on the front façade;

- Stone trim and accents around openings; and,
- Oversized decorative architectural elements, including:
 - Façade entrance surround; and,
 - Stone keystones.
- Prominent location at intersection of MacNab Street and York Boulevard.

56 York Boulevard has contextual significance as a landmark. The property contains the following attributes that reflect this value:

- Three-storey plus mansard roof building constructed of whirlpool limestone;
 - Balanced façade;
 - Mansard roof dormers;
 - Projecting string courses;
 - Bracketed stone cornice;
 - Varying arched fenestration;
 - Stone frontispiece chimney fronting MacNab Street with scrollwork detailing;
 - Interior courtyard and courtyard fenestration;
 - Vermiculated stone detailing on first storey façade and east elevation; and,
 - Copley Noyes and Randall sign;
- Prominent location at intersection of MacNab Street and York Boulevard.