

City of Hamilton - Heritage Permit Application Note Sheet

Address: 108 James Street North / 111 - 113 Hughson Street North, Hamilton (Tivoli Theatre, Part IV)

Permit Number: HP2024-033

Owner: 1000052623 Ontario Inc. c/o Michael Hendrie

Applicant/Agent: Landwise c/o Edward John

Description of proposed alterations:

- Demolition of the former Tivoli auditorium and lobby structures.

Notes: This property is protected by two designation by-laws: By-law No. 90-255 (lobby) and By-law No. 04-256 (auditorium). This Heritage Permit application to demolish under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act will require review and advice by the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee and a decision of Council.

Reasons for proposed alterations:

- The building is in an advanced state of deterioration, making its integration into a proposed new development untenable, as noted in the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment submitted with the application (see page 4 of Appendix A to this Note Sheet).
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Documentation submitted with application:

- Heritage Permit application form.
- Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by +VG Architects dated September 30, 2024 (**attached as HP2024-033 - Appendix A**), including:
 - Building Condition Assessment – Kalos Engineering (Appendix A.5.2)
 - Designated Substances and Hazardous Building Materials Assessment - Access Environmental Solutions (Appendix A.5.3)
 - Hazardous Building Materials Assessment – Reveal Environmental Inc. (Appendix A.5.4)

Draft Conditions for Consideration:

- That a Conservation Strategy, including a Conservation Plan, Interpretation Plan, Documentation and Salvage Report and Design Guidelines, be submitted in accordance with the recommendations of the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment dated September 30, 2024, to the satisfaction and approval of the Director of Planning and Chief Planner, prior to application for a Building Permit to Demolish the existing Tivoli Auditorium; and,
- That any minor changes to the plans and elevations following approval shall be submitted, to the satisfaction and approval of the Director of Planning and Chief Planner, prior to submission as part of any application for a Building Permit and / or the commencement of any alterations; and,
- Implementation / installation of the alteration(s), in accordance with this approval, shall be completed no later than November 30, 2026. If the alteration(s) are not completed by November 30, 2026, then this approval expires as of that date and no alterations shall be undertaken without a new approval issued by the City of Hamilton.

Note: Additional conditions may be recommended by Cultural Heritage Planning staff as part of the next part of the review of this application at the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee.

Reasons for Designation (By-law Nos. 04-256 and 90-255)

By-law No. 04-256:

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Built in 1875 as a carriage factory for J.P. Pronguey, the Tivoli Theatre complex at 108-112 James Street North has served primarily as a theatre since 1908. In 1924, the complex was substantially enlarged by an auditorium added to the rear at 111-113 Hughson Street North, to accommodate the enlarged Tivoli Theatre, the name by which the complex has since been known.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Tivoli, a vaudeville theatre and motion picture house, was the first theatre to introduce sound movies in the late 1920s. Of the numerous theatres built in Hamilton during the early 20th century, the Tivoli counted among the seven largest and grandest, the most resplendent of which were the Capitol and the Palace. All but the Lyric (now the Century) and the Tivoli have been demolished; and of these two only the Tivoli has retained any part of its original interior decor.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Interior:

The Tivoli Theatre was greatly admired for its sumptuously decorated "Italian Renaissance" interior, designed by Toronto architect, B. Kingston Hall. While a significant proportion of the original decor was removed or covered in the course of renovations undertaken in 1943, 1947 and 1954 (when the most extensive remodeling occurred), the main architectural features of the auditorium are still largely intact. These include the proscenium, the ceiling with its elliptical design, the decorative cornice and frieze below, and along each side wall: a colonnade comprising five round arches sprung from coupled pilasters. The two arches on either side of the stage still contain the original bronze statues of Caesar Augustus and the goddess Minerva. At the base of each of the other eight arches are medallions depicting the four seasons.

DESIGNATED FEATURES

Important to the preservation of the Tivoli Theatre are the original architectural features of the auditorium, including the ceilings, proscenium, colonnades, statuary, and other decorative wall elements. Excluded from designation are the more recent additions, such as the floor covering, seating and stage curtain.

By-law No. 90-255:

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Built in 1875 as a carriage factory for J.P. Pronguey, the building at 108-112 James Street North has served primarily as a theatre since 1908. In 1924, the building was substantially enlarged by an auditorium added to the rear to accommodate the Tivoli Theatre, the name by which the building has since been known.

CONTEXT

With its architecturally impressive facade, dominant corner tower, and high visibility, the Tivoli Theatre is a major contributing component of the James North Heritage streetscape. It also provides a dramatic visual terminus to the block extending from Cannon to Wilson Street. The adjacent site at the north-east corner of James and Wilson was, for many years, occupied by the Grand Opera House and Hotel, erected in 1880 and demolished respectively in 1960 and 1986.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

In the course of its history, the building at 108-112 James Street North has served many different uses: a carriage works (until 1901), a bowling alley on the second floor (1908-1964), various restaurants and retail businesses at street level (most recently the Union Furniture Co.), and of particular significance, a succession of theatres: the Wonderland (1908), the Colonial (1910-12), and the Princess (1913-23), all located in the space which became the lobby of the Tivoli Theatre, and finally the Tivoli itself.

The Tivoli has an important place in Hamilton's theatre history. The Wonderland was reputedly the city's first film theatre while the Tivoli, a vaudeville theatre and motion picture house, was the first theatre to introduce sound movies in the late 1920s. Of the numerous theatres built in Hamilton during the early 20th century, the Tivoli counted among the seven largest and grandest, the most resplendent of which were the Capitol and the Palace. All but the Lyric (now the Century) and the Tivoli have been demolished; and of these two only the Tivoli has retained any part of its original interior decor.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Exterior:

Clearly intended to make a bold statement of Pronguey's entrepreneurial ambitions, the original carriage factory was designed by Hamilton architect Albert H. Hills in the popular Second Empire style. Characteristic of this style are the steeply-pitched mansard roof with dormers, the bracketed cornices, and rich classical detailing. Noteworthy features of the Tivoli facade include the round-arched windows with two-over-two sash windows and ornate moulded surrounds, the gabled dormer windows,

and the tall mansard-roofed tower. This convex-shaped tower displays narrow, paired arched dormers surmounted by circular windows and a bracketed cornice, originally crowned by ornamental iron cresting.

The later Tivoli Theatre entrance originally featured an octagonal ticket office and an ornamental sign marquee, above which was a vertical “Tivoli” sign projecting at right angles to the street. Only the basic structure of the marquee, however, survived the major alterations made to the entrance in 1954.

Interior:

The Tivoli Theatre was greatly admired for its sumptuously decorated “Italian Renaissance” interior, designed by Toronto architect, B. Kingston Hall. While a significant proportion of the original decor was removed or covered in the course of renovations undertaken in 1943, 1947 and 1954 (when the most extensive remodelling occurred), the main architectural features of the auditorium are still largely intact. These include the proscenium, the ceiling with its elliptical design, the decorative cornice and frieze below, and along each side wall: a colonnade comprising five round arches sprung from coupled pilasters. The two arches on either side of the stage still contain the original bronze statues of Caesar Augustus and the goddess Minerva. At the base of each of the other eight arches are medallions depicting the four seasons.

DESIGNATED FEATURES

Important to the preservation of the Tivoli Theatre are:

1. the original architectural features of the front (west) and side (south) facades, including the upper-storey arched windows, moulded surrounds, bracketed cornice, and slate-covered mansard roof with its dormers and corner tower.
2. the original architectural features of the lobby and auditorium, including the ceilings, proscenium, colonnades, statuary, and other decorative wall elements. Excluded from designation are the more recent additions, such as the floor covering, seating and stage curtain.