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7.1.1

Heritage Advisory Committee
September 28, 2011

TO: Chair and Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Austin French".

Austin French, Manager, Planning Services

DATE: September 8, 2011

SUBJECT: **Case H00353: Application to Consider 1141 Cartaret Street, Halifax
as a Municipally Registered Heritage Property**

ORIGIN

Application by Victoria Grant for registration of 1141 Cartaret Street, Halifax as a municipal heritage property.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that should 1141 Cartaret Street, Halifax score more than 50 points, the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend that Regional Council:

1. Set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the application; and
2. Approve the registration of this property, as shown on Map 1, under the HRM Heritage Property Program.

BACKGROUND

Victoria Grant has applied to have her property - Oakland Cottage, the former home of builder, George B. Low - registered as a municipal heritage property, and has submitted historical information and photos in support of the application, as shown on Map 1 and Attachment A. Staff have supplemented this with additional photos and historical information, as shown in Attachments B, C and D.

Under the Heritage Property Program, all registration applications for heritage buildings are evaluated by the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) using *The Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings in Halifax Regional Municipality* shown in Attachment E.

Should the property score more than 50 points, a positive recommendation will be forwarded to Regional Council, and in order to meet the requirements of sections 14(2) and 15(1) of the Heritage Property Act, notice of this recommendation will be provided to the property owner at least thirty (30) days prior to any Council decision to register the property. The property owner will also be given an opportunity to be heard before Council votes on the HAC recommendation.

DISCUSSION

Evaluation for potential heritage registration is carried out on the basis of six criteria, as laid out in Attachment E. To assist the HAC in its evaluation and scoring, staff offers the following comments in relation to each criterion.

1. Age:

The subject property includes two buildings – Oakland Cottage (the main house), built in 1899, and an old workshop/carriage house, built in 1897. The property was developed at a time when Halifax was expanding outward from the city centre and the large estates in the central and southern part of the Peninsula between Robie Street and the North West Arm were being subdivided and developed. “Oakland Cottage” was one of the first houses built on the block bounded by South Street, Waterloo Street, and Oakland Road, as shown in Attachment C. The house is unusual in that it is built of concrete block.

2. Historical OR Architectural Importance

2. A) Specific associations with important institutions, personages and groups:

George B. Low

Oakland Cottage was built by George B. Low, who was a well established builder in turn-of-the century Halifax and a pioneer in the modern use of concrete. The property remained in his family ownership for more than 100 years until 2001 when it was sold to the present owner. His company constructed the A.M. Bell Building on Granville Street in 1904 - the first all-concrete building in Halifax, as well as other well-known landmarks including the Bengal Lancers stables

(Bell Road) in 1908, the University Avenue Fire Station, the building presently housing the Halifax Folklore Centre on Brunswick Street, some parts of the Oxford Street and Chebucto Road Schools, and (it is believed) the bridges spanning the railway cuttings throughout Halifax. He also built four other concrete block houses on nearby properties and, in so doing has a strong association with the development history of this particular neighbourhood. (see Map 1 and Attachment C).

Margaret L. Low

George Low's daughter, Margaret was noted for her work in the Dalhousie Medical Science Laboratories and the Halifax Pathological Institute during its formative years between the two world wars. She inherited Oakland Cottage and owned it until 1968.

Robert Smith (Honorary Colonel) Low

George Low's son, Robert, is noted for his career as a military builder for a number of Canadian military bases and for his prominent role in the reconstruction of Halifax after the Halifax explosion. He lived in Oakland Cottage during his childhood, and also spent a period of time working in his father's construction company.

2. B) Architecturally important unique/representative of a particular period:

The House

Oakland Cottage is unusual in that it is built of concrete block, which was not a common building material in house construction in late 19th century Halifax. As such, the house might be regarded as a precursor to the more widespread use of the material in the early 20th century, notably in the Hydrostone area.

The Workshop/Carriage House

The workshop/carriage house was built two years before the main house, in 1897, and is located in the rear yard of the property. It is constructed of concrete with fieldstone cladding, and a wood framed attic and roof. There are concrete lintels over the windows and doors. The gable ends of the roof are stuccoed over wood frame.

Both structures are relatively rare examples of early concrete house construction in Halifax. In the interior, the carriage house contains an intact corner manger, as well as some tools and plaster moulds and medallions, vestiges of George Low's work.

3. Significance of Architect or Builder

George Low was one of Halifax's early practitioners of concrete construction and the builder of a number of prominent buildings which still stand today.

4. Architectural Merit

4. A) Construction type or building technology:

See 2B above.

4. B) Style:

Oakland Cottage has elements of the Late Victorian Stick style and the late 19th - early 20th century Arts & Crafts style.

- When originally built (see historic photos in Attachment A), the 2 ½ storey, gable roofed house was stuccoed and the gable ends were rendered to appear like Tudor half-timbering, similar to some later houses in the Hydrostone area. However, this feature was later hidden when the upper storey and gable end were re-clad with wood shingles.
- The windows had (and still have) upper sashes with multiple, diamond-shaped panes.
- On the northwest corner, the three-sided bay window on the ground floor forms a diagonal inset beneath the rectangular corner of the second storey, with the underside decorated by 'stick' or 'twig' brackets. The south side of the bay window is integrated with a bracketed and interestingly cantilevered front porch roof.
- The porch deck itself has an interesting combination of a concrete block railing (knee wall) with concrete corner pillars, and traditional wooden entrance steps.
- There are hip-roofed dormers on both sides of the roof.
- The concrete foundation is scored to create the impression of stone blocks.
- The original house had a narrow, two-storey extension on the back, which was later extended across the full width of the house. The ground floor was further extended into a single storey rear addition. (Compare historic and modern photos in Attachment A).
- The front property line is marked by ornamental, concrete corner pillars.

5. Architectural Integrity

Despite having been altered over the years, the house retains significant elements of its original form and style. Perhaps the most significant alteration has been the re-cladding of the original stuccoed upper storeys with wooden shingles. This tends to disguise the underlying concrete structure and renders the house less intact than the neighbouring concrete houses also built by Mr. Low at 1155 and 1111 Cartaret Street (see Attachment A). The workshop/carriage house and has not been altered at all from the original.

6. Relationship to Surrounding Area

Oakland Cottage has an interesting relationship with its surroundings.

- It was one of the first houses to be built on the block and its name reflects its original proximity to the old Oaklands Estate and the fact that Cartaret Street was originally part of Oakland Road. (See Attachment C).

- The design of the house is similar to its neighbours to the north (1149 and 1155 Cartaret), both of which were built by George Low. (Attachment B).
- Like Oakland Cottage, 1149 and 1155 Cartaret, as well as 1132 Waterloo all have concrete pillars marking their property corners.

Conclusion

Although slightly altered from its original exterior design, Oakland Cottage remains substantially intact and makes a significant contribution to the built heritage of Cartaret Street and the surrounding area.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with processing this application can be accommodated within the approved operating budget for C-310.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy. The level of community engagement was information sharing, achieved through the HRM website and public accessibility to the required Heritage Advisory Committee meeting.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council could approve the application for heritage registration based on the information outlined in this report.
2. Council could reject the application for heritage registration. The Heritage Property Act does not include appeal provisions for decisions of Council regarding the heritage registration.


ATTACHMENTS

Map 1:	Location Map – 1141 Cartaret Street, Halifax
Attachment A:	Historical Research & Photos Submitted with Application
Attachment B:	Additional Photographs
Attachment C:	Historic Maps: Evolution of Property and Surrounding Area
Attachment D:	Record of Property Ownership
Attachment E:	Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings in HRM

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/hac/index.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Bill Plaskett, Heritage Planner, 490-4663

Report Approved by: Austin French, Manage of Planning Services, 490-6717



Report Approved by:

James Cooke, CGA, Director of Finance/CFO

ATTACHMENT “A”

Historical Research and Photographs submitted with Application

Letter of Support for Heritage Registration of Oakland Cottage
1141 Cartaret Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 3P2

2 November 2010

In 1899, the well-known Scottish contractor, George B. Low built Oakland Cottage as his family home. Constructed of wood and concrete, it is an attractive two-and-a-half storey example of Victorian Stick architecture. In the 1930s, a small addition was put on the back. Shingles on the upper storeys were added some time later. Aside from a modern deck on the eastern side, little else has been done to alter the home's exterior.

Mr. Low was a 'moulder' and pioneer in the modern use of concrete. The building's thick exterior walls and ornate plasterwork in its formal living and dining rooms are a testament to his expertise.

The storey-and-a-half carriage house at the back of the lot predates the home by two years. (The date 1897 is incised over the lintel.) Made of stone and concrete, the exterior of the carriage house appears virtually unchanged from our earliest photos of the site. With its high peaked roof and prominent gable, it resembles a traditional English cottage.

Family lore suggests the carriage house was originally part of Low's concrete works. Tools, large moulds and remnants of plaster medallions still in the loft would bear this out. The carriage house is solid and the roof is weather tight but its original windows need to be replaced.

The Low Family

George B. Low emigrated with his family from Scotland to Halifax by way of the United States in 1886.

By the time Oakland Cottage was built fifteen years later, he had established himself as a prominent businessman. His company constructed the first concrete building in Halifax (the A.M. Bell Building on Granville Street) as well as other well-known landmarks such as the Bengal Lancers stable, the University Avenue fire station, the Morris Confectionary, the Folklore Centre and at least some parts of the Oxford Street and Chebucto Road Schools.

Gordon Low, grandson of G. B. Low, told us when we purchased the house in 2001 from him that his grandfather also built the four other concrete houses found on Cartaret and Waterloo streets. Gordon also believed George was responsible for the bridges spanning the railway cuttings throughout Halifax but we have been unable to find proof of this. A concrete spindle found in the carriage house, though, does appear to match those on the

bridge.

Many of Low's buildings have unfortunately been demolished over time, including the House of the Good Shepherd, the Maritime Business College and the Commercial Cable Company.

Five of Mr. Low's eight children survived to adulthood. Most prominent of these was Robert Smith Low who helped in the reconstruction after the Halifax Explosion. Here is a short introduction to Colonel Low's work from the Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region.

The single most influential person in reconstruction operations was Colonel Robert S. Low, the general manager of a prominent Ottawa construction company. Born in Michigan, Low was educated in Halifax where he also entered his father's contracting company. Responsible for many major projects in Cape Breton, he attained national fame as the military builder responsible for Valcartier, Camp Borden, Camp Hughes, and Sacrée Camp. In 1914, Low was appointed Honourary Lieutenant-Colonel Officer Commanding the 4th Pioneers Canadian Expeditionary Force and in 1916 was promoted to full Honourary Colonel.⁴⁰ The day after the explosion, Low was called by the military to Halifax to organize and superintend the work of emergency repairs "and to provide temporary accommodation for the homeless as quickly as possible".

Vol. XVIII No. 2 Spring/Printemps 1989

- *Articles, Acadiensis, Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region*. The Halifax Relief Commission and Labour Relations during the Reconstruction of Halifax, 1917-1919: Pgs 81 & 82; Morton, Suzanne.

Colonel Low died in 1919 of complications from a war wound.

Another prominent member of the family was Margaret Low. She is described in the opening paragraph of "Local Girls and Lab Boys": Gender, Skill and Medical Laboratories in Nova Scotia in the 1920s and 1930s" by Peter L. Twohig of Dalhousie University

"IN MAY 1919 MARGARET LOW was hard at work in her Halifax home, patiently cutting histological sections with a microtome, mounting slides and taking them up to Dalhousie University's Medical School, where students used them in their studies. Low had attended the medical college from 1900 to 1902 although she never completed her medical education. Instead, she worked first in the university's medical science laboratories and then in Halifax's Pathological Institute during its formative years between the world wars. For nearly 30 years Low was a dynamic presence among laboratory workers, offering "faithful and efficient service". She was often responsible for training other women and was

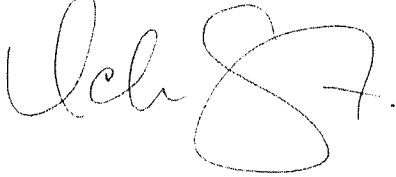
remembered by her co-workers as the unquestioned authority in the day-to-day work in the lab. Her value was evident in 1927-28 when, due to the extended absence of the director, Low was responsible for supervising laboratory operations. " (Acadiensis, Vol. XXXI, No. 1 Autumn/Automne 2001)

List of Owners

We understand that Margaret inherited Oakland Cottage from her father, the original builder, George B. Low. Margaret divided the house into two flats at some point so her nephew Gordon Low, and his family could live here too. (We're told that Gordon was a musician who needed a place to stay after he fell off the Lord Nelson stage and broke his back. He nevertheless lived well into his nineties.) Gordon inherited Oakland Cottage from Margaret. We bought it from Gordon in October 2001.

Victoria Grant

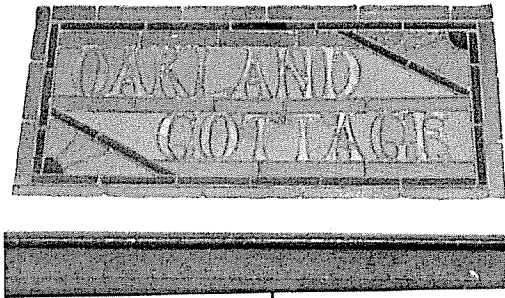
Owner:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Grant', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

ATTACHMENT "A" (continued)
Photos Submitted with Application

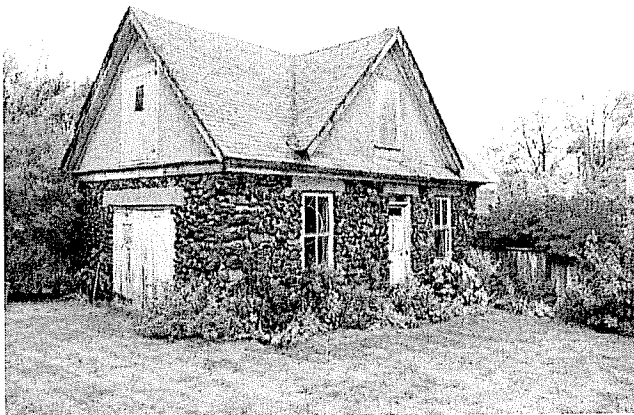


George B. Low House; built 1899



Name in transom widow over front door.

ouse; built 1897

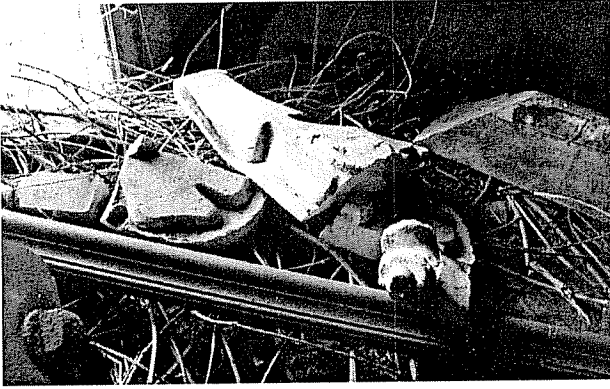


Carriage House; built 1897

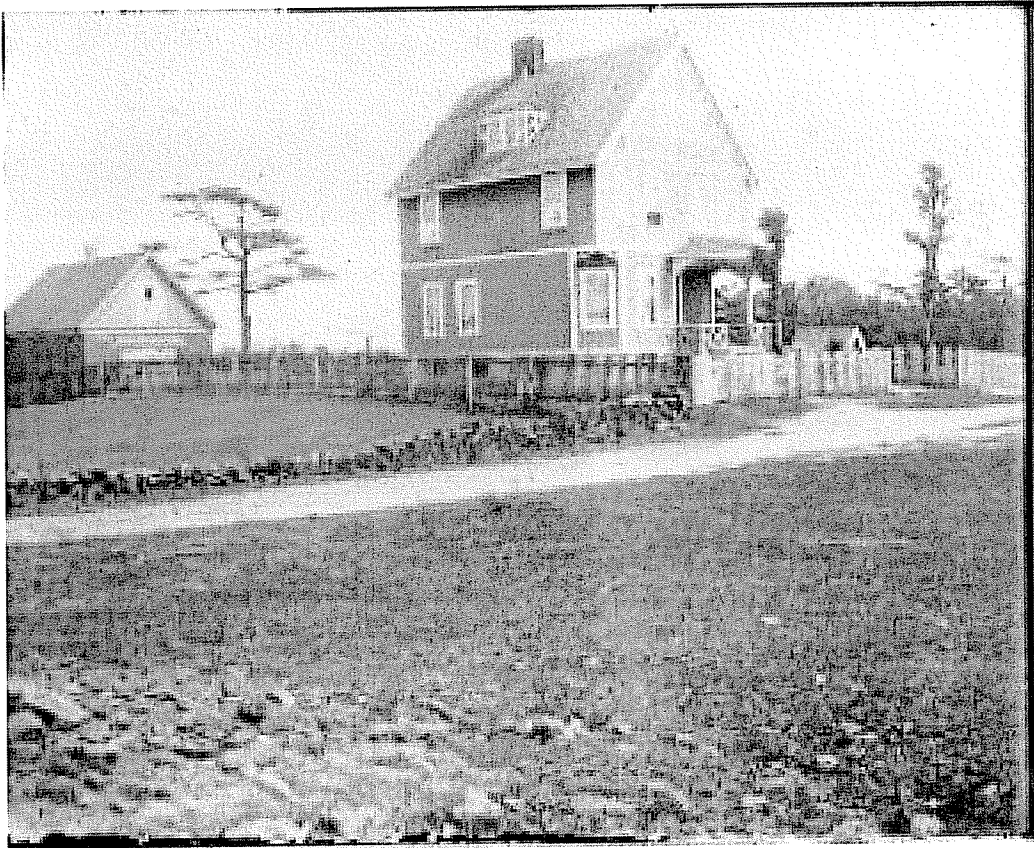


Date 1897 incised in stone above lintel over carriage house double door.

ATTACHMENT "A" (continued)

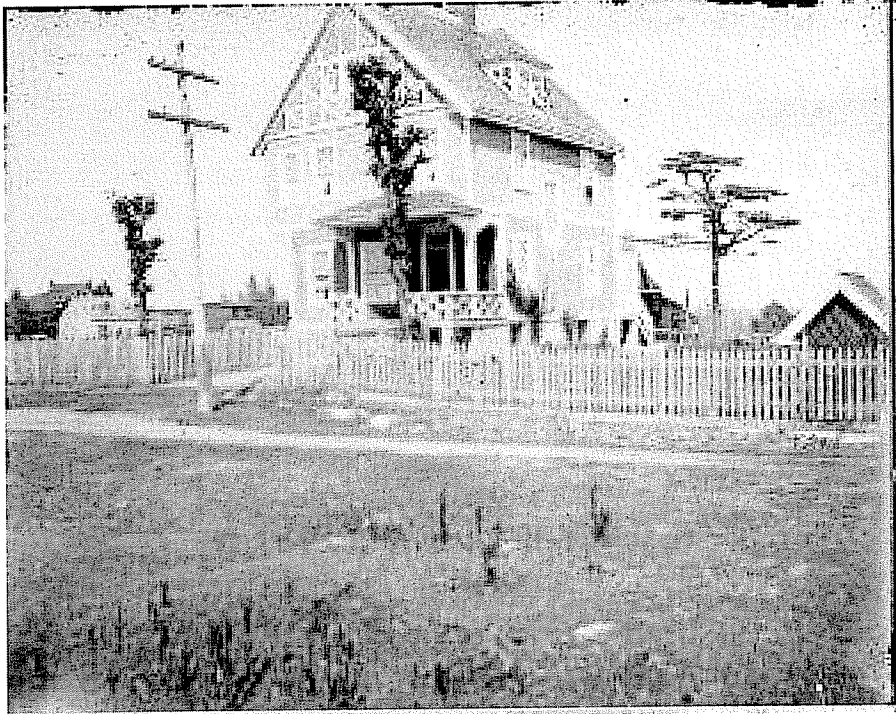


Moulds and remnants of plaster medallions in loft of carriage house.

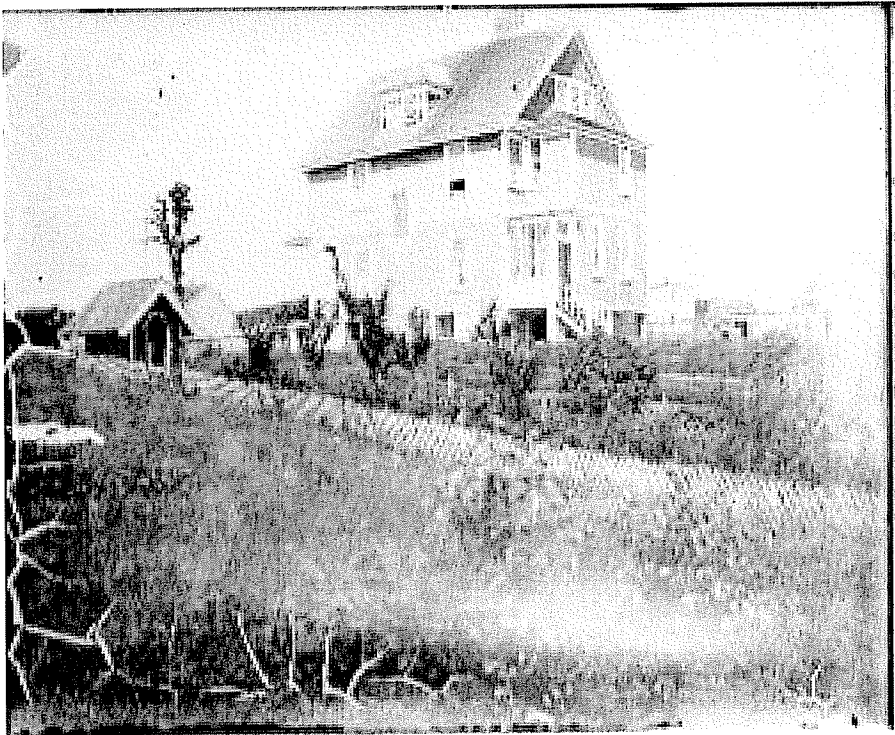


Carriage House and Main House, with Cartaret Street a dirt track in the foreground, early 1900s.

ATTACHMENT "A" (continued)

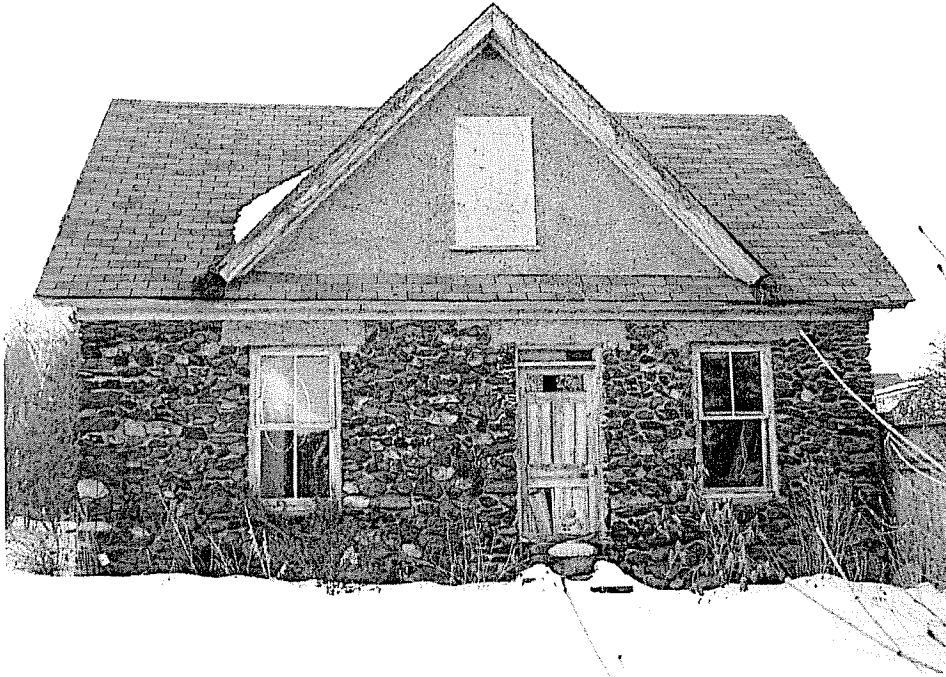


Main house, with carriage house visible in rear, early 1900s

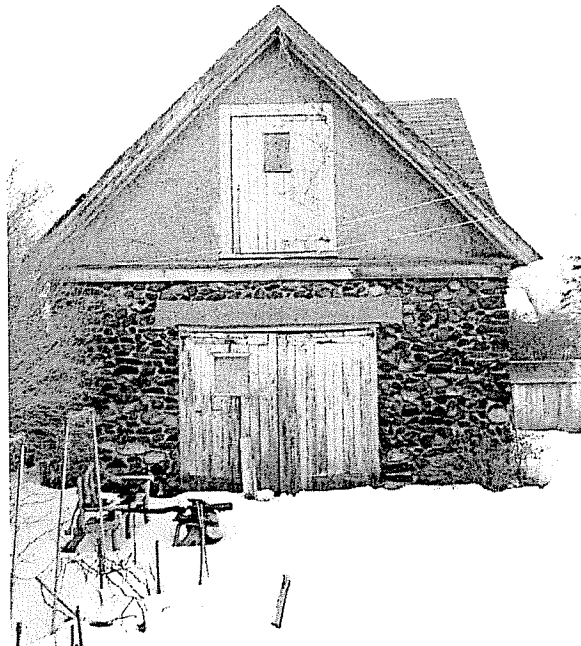


Main house, rear view, early 1900s

ATTACHMENT "B"
Additional Photographs



Carriage House: Side Elevation



Carriage House: End Elevation

ATTACHMENT "B" (continued)



Front and South side



Front and North side

ATTACHMENT "B" (continued)



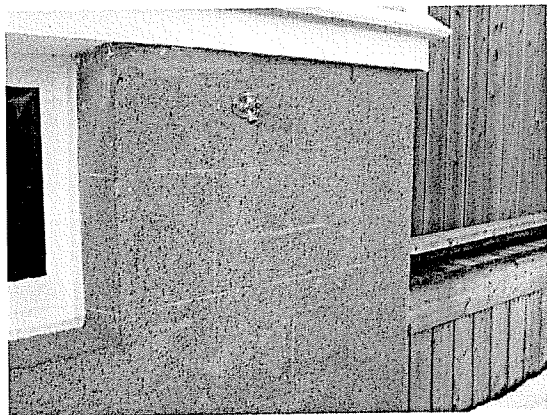
Rear Elevation



Rear and North side

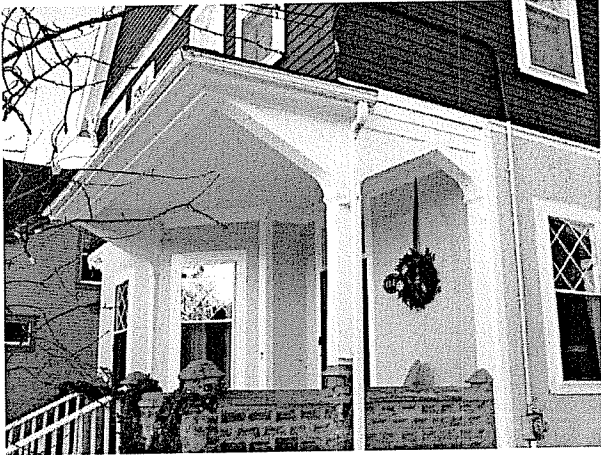


Rear and South side



Scored concrete foundation

ATTACHMENT "B" (continued)



Porch Detail



Corner Detail



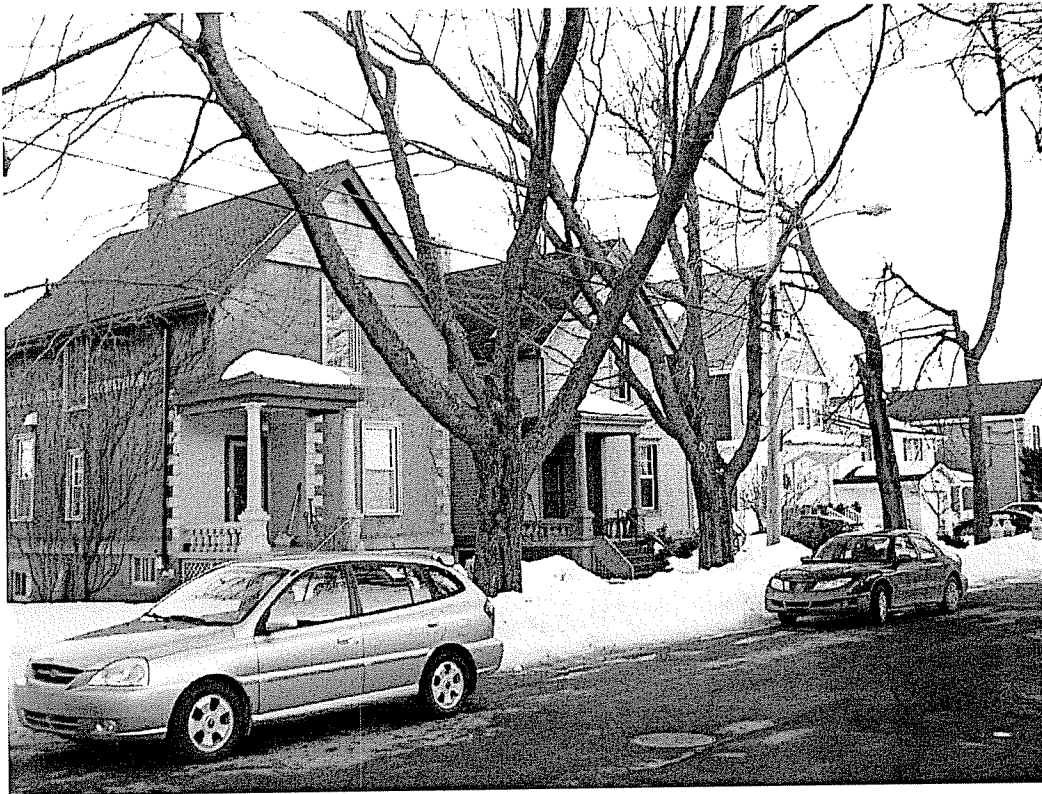
Window details



Concrete Pillars at Property Line



ATTACHMENT “B” (continued)



Two adjacent houses (1155 and 1149 Cartaret Street) also built by George B. Low



1155 Cartaret has original concrete exterior; 1149 Cartaret has been re-clad with wooden shingles

ATTACHMENT "B" (continued)



1111 Cartaret Street, at corner of Cartaret Street & Oakland Road, also built by George B. Low.

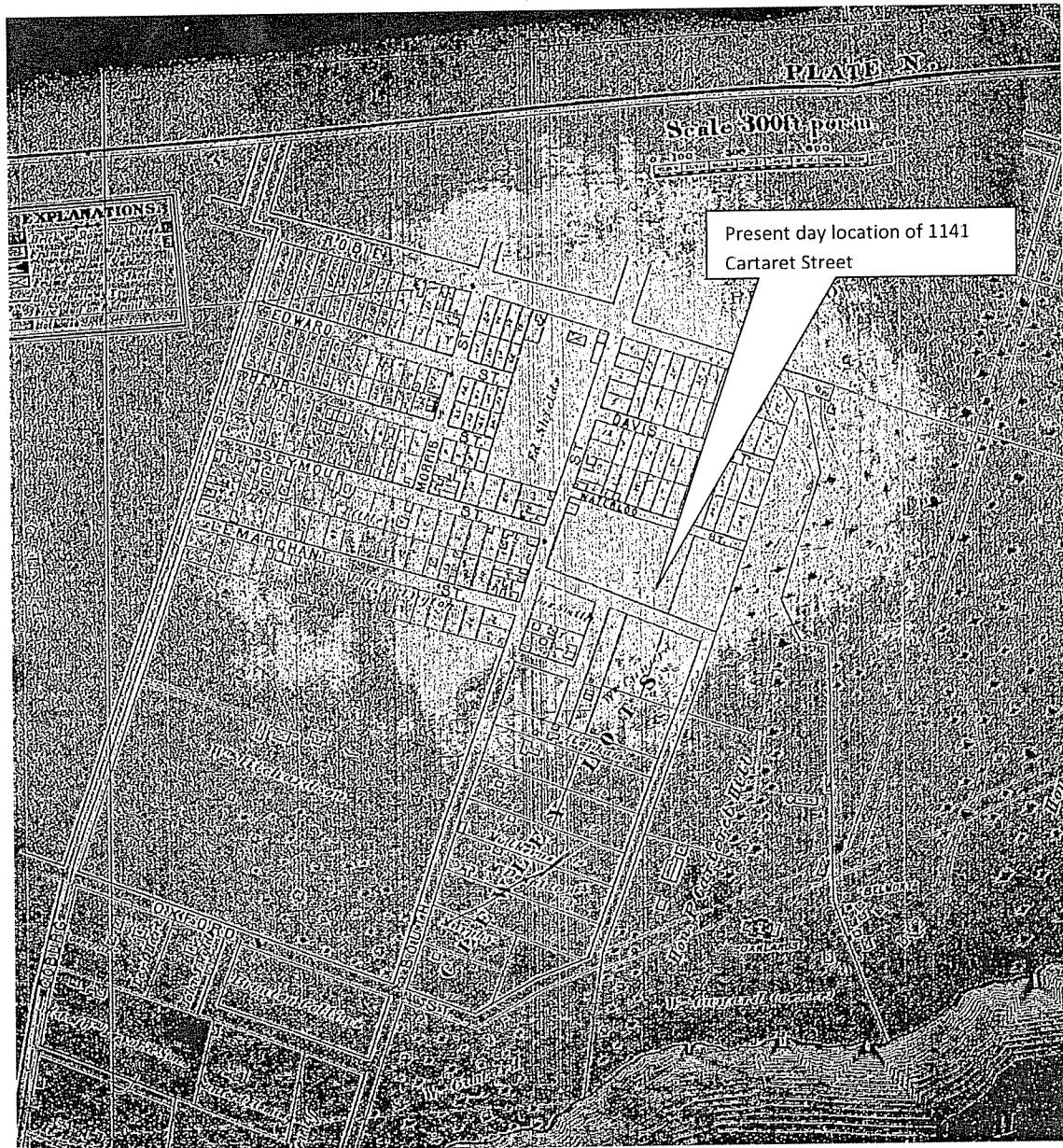


1132 Waterloo Street, also built by George B. Low.

Images from GoogleMaps

ATTACHMENT "C"

Historic Maps Illustrating the Evolution of the Cartaret-Waterloo Block



1878 Insurance Plan (Hopkins Atlas)

In 1878, Cartaret Street was not named as such but was part of Oakland Road which bordered the Oaklands Estate which had been established by William Cunard in the early 1860s but was sold to Philip Cartaret-Hill in 1871. Philip Cartaret-Hill was Mayor of Halifax from 1861-64 and Premier of Nova Scotia from 1875-78. The Oaklands Estate had a number of subsequent owners but was subdivided and redeveloped after 1914 when the railway to Ocean Terminals was cut through the property. At that time, Oakland Road was extended through to Robie Street, and the short section connecting with South Street was re-named Cartaret Street. The block of land between Cartaret/Oakland and Waterloo Streets was owned by Edward Shields and remained vacant until 1897 when it was subdivided and developed.

O U T S I D E

S E T T L E M E N T

OAKLAND

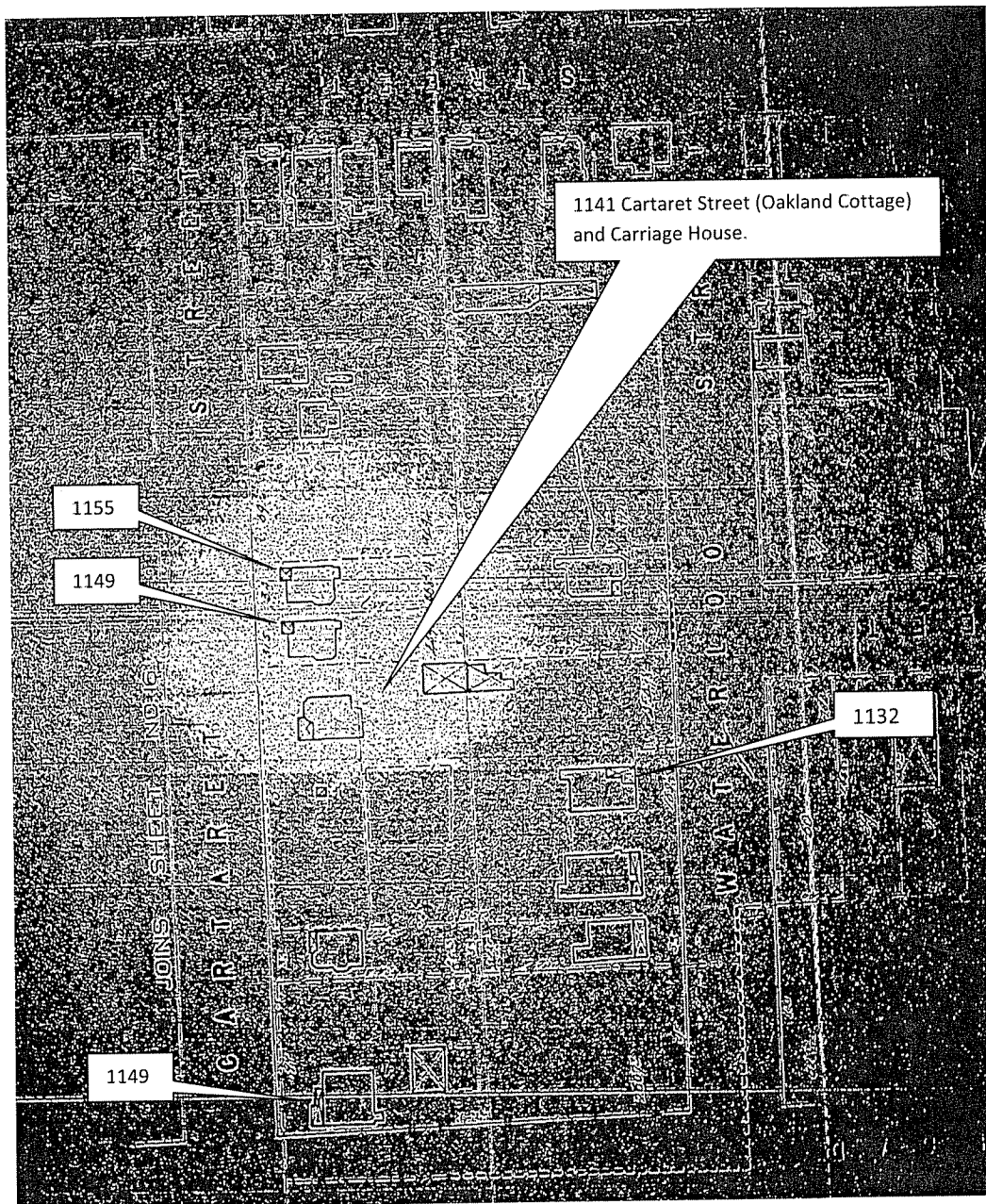
OAKLAND

Location of George B. Low's
"Oakland Cottage"

Beverly Property, B. L. & Co. 1880

In 1897, Cartaret Street was still known as Oakland Road. George B. Low built his carriage house in 1897 and his residence two years later in 1899. He named the house "Oakland Cottage".

ATTACHMENT "C" (continued)



City of Halifax Assessment Plan, 1918

By 1918, a number of other houses had been built within the Cartaret-Waterloo block. Four of these were concrete houses built by George B. Low, in addition to his own house. All five are still standing.

ATTACHMENT "D"

1141 Cartaret Street

Deed Description and Chain of Ownership

SCHEDULE "A"

ALL that certain lot, piece or parcel of land situate, lying and being on the east side of Cartaret Street in Halifax, Nova Scotia, said lot being land of C. Gordon Low and being shown on a plan entitled "Survey Plan #1141 Cartaret Street" prepared by John A. McElmon & Associates Ltd., dated September 15, 1978 (a true copy of said plan being attached hereto as Schedule "B") said lot being and intended to be Lots 24 and 26 of a plan of Subdivision of Property of the late Edward Shields, prepared by J. R. Austen May 26, 1897 and registered at the Registry Office for Halifax County as Plan No. 262, said lot being more particularly described as follows:

BEGINNING on the eastern boundary of Cartaret Street at a point distant two hundred thirty-three and eighteen hundredths feet (233.18') from the northern street line of Oakland Road said point being also the northwestern angle of Lot 28;

THENCE N 18° 35' 16" W along the boundary of Cartaret Street sixty-eight feet (68.0') to the southwestern angle of Lot 22;

THENCE N 71° 46' 52" E along the southern boundary of Lot 22, one hundred thirty-four and ninety-five hundredths feet (134.95') to the western boundary of the lots fronting on Waterloo Street;

THENCE S 18° 25' 00" E along the western boundary of the lots fronting on Waterloo Street, sixty-eight feet (68.0') to the northeastern angle of Lot 28;

THENCE S 71° 46' 52" W along the northern boundary of Lot 28, one hundred thirty-four and seventy-five hundredths feet (134.75') more or less to the point of beginning, all bearings being astronomic (grid) referenced to Meridian 64° 30' W being the central meridian for Zone 5 of the 3° transverse mercator projection.

BEING AND INTENDED TO BE the same lot of land conveyed by Annie A. Shields Freeman, Executrix, and William Nisbet, Executor, of the Last Will and Testament of Edward Shields, to George B. Low, by Deed dated the 8th day of July, 1897, and recorded in the Registry of Deeds Office at Halifax aforesaid, on the 17th day of January, 1898, in Book 327 at Page 392; and subsequently devised and bequeathed by Margaret Lewis Low to the said C. Gordon Low by Will dated the 23rd day of December, 1968, and recorded in the Registry of Deeds Office at Halifax on the 14th day of July, 1977, in Book 3135 at Page 375.

Chain of Ownership

George B. Low	1897 - ?
Margaret Lewis Low	? - 1968
C. Gordon Low & Olga C. Low	1968 - 1979
C. Gordon Low	1979 - 2001
Victoria Grant	2001 - present

ATTACHMENT "E"

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION OF HERITAGE BUILDINGS

1. AGE

Age is probably the single most important factor in the popular understanding of the heritage value of buildings. The following age categories are based on local, national and international occasions that may be considered to have defined the character of what is how the Halifax Regional Municipality and its architecture.

Construction Date	Points	Timeline
1749 - 1785	25	Halifax Garrison Town to the Loyalist migration
1786 - 1830	20	Boom period following construction of Shubenacadie Canal
1831 - 1867	16	From Boom to Confederation
1868 - 1899	13	Confederation to the end of the 19 th century
1900 - 1917	9	Turn of the Century to Halifax Harbour Explosion
1918 - 1945	5	The War Years
1945 - Present	3	Post-War

** Maximum score of 25 points in this category*

2. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

A building can receive points for:

A) Having specific associations with important occasions, institutions, personages and groups,

OR

B) For being architecturally important unique/representative of a particular period.

2A) Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups

Nationally	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	16 - 20	
Moderately Related	11 - 15	
Loosely Related	1 - 10	

Provincially	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	11 - 15	
Moderately Related	6 - 10	
Loosely Related	1 - 5	

Locally	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	11- 15	
Moderately Related	6 - 10	
Loosely Related	1 - 5	
No relationship to important occasions, institutions, personages or groups.	0	

** Maximum score of 20 points in this category, scoring from one of the three categories only*

2B) Important/Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

Importance	Points	Comments
Highly important/ unique/representative of an era	16 - 20	
Moderately important / unique / representative of an era	11 - 15	
Somewhat important / representative of an era	10 - 1	
Not important/ unique/representative of an era	0	

** Maximum score of 20 points in this category.*

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF ARCHITECT/BUILDER

Is the structure representative of the work of an architect or builder of local, provincial or national importance?

Status	Points	Comments
Nationally Significant	7 - 10	
Provincially Significant	4 - 6	
Locally Significant	1 - 3	

** Maximum score of 10 points in this category.*

4. ARCHITECTURAL MERIT

The assessment of architectural merit is based on two factors:

A) Construction type/building technology: which refers to the method by which the structure was built (early or rare uses of materials), and building techniques;

B) Style: which refers to the form or appearance of the architecture.

Construction type/building technology		
A) Construction type	Points	Comments
Very rare/ early example	7 - 10	
Moderately rare/ early example	4 - 6	
Somewhat rare/ early example	1 - 3	
Not rare/ common example	0	
B) Style	Points	Comments
Very rare/ early example	7 - 10	
Moderately rare/ early example	4 - 6	
Somewhat rare/ early example	1 - 3	
Not rare/ common example	0	

** Maximum score of 10 points for Construction Type, and a maximum score of 10 for Style – a total maximum of 20 points in this category.*

5. ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

Architectural Integrity refers to the extent to which the building retains original features/ structures/ styles, not the state of the building's condition.

Architecture	Consider any additions/ removal/ alterations to windows, doors, porches, dormers, roof lines, foundations, chimneys, and cladding.	
Exterior	Points	Comments
Largely unchanged	11 - 15	
Modest changes	6 - 10	
Major changes	1 - 5	
Seriously compromised	0	

** Maximum score of 15 points in this category.*

6. RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING AREA

Points	Comments
6 - 10	The building is an important architectural asset contributing to the heritage character of the surrounding area.
1 - 5	The Architecture is compatible with the surrounding area and maintains its heritage character.
0	Does not contribute to the character of the surrounding area.

** Maximum score of 10 points in this category.*

SCORING SUMMARY

Property	Date Reviewed	Reviewer

Criterion	Highest Possible Score	Score Awarded
1. Age	25	
2.a) Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups OR 2. b) Important/Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era	20	
3. Significance of Architect/Builder	10	
4. a) Architectural Merit: Construction type/building technology	10	
4. b) Architectural Merit: Style	10	
5. Architectural Integrity	15	
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10	
Total	100	

SCORE NECESSARY FOR DESIGNATION

50

Designation Recommended?

YES ☐

NO ☐

COMMENTS
