

Item No. 11.5.1 /
Halifax Regional Council
June 10, 2014

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed
Emma Sampson, Chair, Heritage Advisory Committee

DATE: May 23, 2014

SUBJECT: Case H00396: Application to consider 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth as a Municipally Registered Heritage Property

ORIGIN

Motion passed at a meeting of the Heritage Advisory Committee on May 7, 2014.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 21 of the Halifax Charter regarding Standing, Special and Advisory Committees.

By-Law H-200 Respecting the Establishment of a Heritage Advisory Committee and a Civic Registry of Heritage Property.

RECOMMENDATION

The Heritage Advisory Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council:

1. Set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the application of 276 Portland Street as a municipally registered heritage property; and
2. Approve the registration of 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth as shown on Map 1 of the March 10, 2014 staff report under the HRM Heritage Property Program.

BACKGROUND

At the May 7, 2014 meeting of the Heritage Advisory Committee, staff presented the application by Todd and Jane Kramers to have their property located at 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth registered as a municipal heritage property.

DISCUSSION

The Committee evaluated the application using the *The Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings in Halifax Regional Municipality*. The property scored 61 out of a possible 100 points; therefore, the Committee is recommending the heritage designation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None associated with this report. The attached staff report addresses financial implications associated with process the application.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Heritage Advisory Committee is an Advisory Committee to Regional Council comprised of 10 volunteer members of the public and two Councillors. The meetings are open to the public and the agendas and minutes are posted at www.Halifax.ca.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

ALTERNATIVES

No Alternatives were provided.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 'A': Staff report dated March 10, 2014
Attachment 'B': Heritage Advisory Committee's Scoring Summary

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.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: Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Heritage Advisory Committee
March 26, 2014

TO: Chair and Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed
Brad Anguish, Director, Community & Recreation Services

DATE: March 10, 2014

SUBJECT: Case H00396: Application to consider 276 Portland Street,
Dartmouth, as a Municipally Registered Heritage Property

ORIGIN

Application by Todd and Jane Kramers

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Heritage Property Act

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the application; and
2. Approve the registration of 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth, as shown on Map 1, under the HRM Heritage Property Program.

BACKGROUND

Todd and Jane Kramers have applied to have their property located at 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth, registered as a municipal heritage property (Map 1). The property contains a single detached home which is a rare example of Late Victorian plain architecture and is situated near existing registered municipal heritage properties on Portland, Summit, and James Streets.

HRM's Heritage Property Program

The purpose of the HRM Heritage Property Program is to conserve significant heritage resources including buildings, streetscapes, sites, areas, and conservation districts that reflect the rich heritage found in local communities throughout the entire region. One of the principal aims of the Heritage Property Program is to recognize significant heritage resources through the registration of properties into the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties.

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", as shown in Attachment D. To provide a basis for the review of the application an Historical Research Report was developed, as contained in Attachment A, to assist the Committee when scoring the building using the evaluation criteria.

The evaluation criteria for scoring a property and building are broken down into 6 categories as follows:

Criterion	Highest Possible Score
1. Age	25
2. Historical or Architectural Importance	20
3. Significance of Architect/Builder	10
4. Architectural Merit: Construction type and Style	20
5. Architectural Integrity	15
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10
Total	100

Should the HAC score a property with more than 50 points, a positive recommendation will be forwarded to Regional Council.

Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act

HRM's Heritage Property Program gets its authority from the *Heritage Property Act* which seeks:

"to provide for the identification, designation, preservation, conservation, protection and rehabilitation of buildings, public-building interiors, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, in both urban and rural areas, and to encourage their continued use".

Under Sections 14(2) and 15(1) of the *Heritage Property Act*, HRM must give notice of its recommendation to the property owner at least thirty (30) days prior to any Council decision to

register the property. The property owner is also given an opportunity to address Council before they make a decision on the registration request.

DISCUSSION

Evaluations of heritage registration applications are carried out by the Heritage Advisory Committee and are based upon the six evaluation criteria as outlined above and described in greater detail in Attachment D. To assist the HAC in its evaluation and scoring, staff offers the following comments in relation to each criterion.

1. Age:

The building at 276 Portland Street was built in 1902 making it 112 years old (Attachment A).

2. Historical OR Architectural Importance:

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

The property has historical associations with the Pearce family and Charles Pearce in particular who was the original owner and occupant:

Charles Edward Pearce was a marine engineer born in Dartmouth on August 21, 1873. He had the house at 276 Portland Street built in 1902. He married Nettie Euphemia Wallace that summer. The house remained with the Pearce family until 1994.

As a marine engineer, Charles Pearce and the other employees of the Dartmouth Ferry Commission played an important role in the aftermath of the Halifax Explosion on December 6, 1917. Dartmouth ferries had most of their windows blown out, but stayed afloat all night to transport Dartmouth victims to hospital in Halifax and to bring rescue workers, equipment and supplies back to Dartmouth. As chief superintendent, Charles Pearce presided over the ferry service during the busiest period in its history. In 1944, the ferries carried more than 1,400 vehicles and 16,500 passengers each day. To put that into perspective, ferry ridership in 2012 was approximately 3,200 passengers per day. The five-fold difference helps to illustrate the importance of the ferry service to move individuals, vehicles and commercial goods across the harbour before the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge opened. During his tenure as chief superintendent, Charles Pearce also oversaw the design and construction of the Governor Cornwallis, which was the first ferry to be built in Dartmouth since the Chebucto in 1864. It was launched in 1941 but caught fire 1944 after a series of technical issues.

Charles Pearce retired from the Dartmouth Ferry Commission in 1945. He died in 1956. He lived just long enough to see the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge open and begin to transform Halifax and Dartmouth and the relationship between their citizens and harbour ferries.

2. B) *Architectural Importance of a Particular Period:*

The building is influenced by the Second Empire style and, as such, the building is a rare example of Late Victorian plain architecture common to Dartmouth and Halifax. The building is characterized by a mansard roof with dormers and an enclosed front porch. This porch was added by Charles Pearce sometime between 1920 and 1934. The porch is a common feature of the large quantity of independent houses constructed after the devastation of the Halifax Explosion and in

the decades following World War I when there were changes in the demand for housing and in architectural styles. As such, the porch reflects a rare transition where a new style is appearing out of an older one with gentle and sensitive amalgams apparent in the pediment over the front entrance and in the window scheme.

3. Significance of Architect or Builder:

Plans for the building were prepared for Charles Pearce by architect Herbert Elliot Gates. Gates is described in his obituary as one of the province's outstanding architects. He was born in Dartmouth and worked out of his office in Halifax. Gates' architectural accomplishments include a major addition to the Halifax County Court House (1907), the Nova Scotia Technical College (1908), and the Provincial building on Hollis Street (1935) designed in collaboration with A.R. Cobb and S.P. Dumaresq.

4. Architectural Merit:

4. A) Construction type or building technology:

The building was designed and built on a stone foundation as a wood-framed residence with a mansard-style roof and wooden shingle cladding.

4. B) Style:

The character-defining elements of 276 Portland Street include:

- two-storey wooden structure with mansard-style roof and rear ell;
- original stone foundation;
- proximity to street with no setback from front property line;
- pediments above the larger front dormer and the area above the front porch door;
- shed roof above front window and porch;
- oxeye window to the left of the original front entrance;
- textured, coloured glass, window on the left external wall (where the internal stairs reach the second floor);
- wood shingle cladding; and
- brick chimney.

5. Architectural Integrity:

The building retains its architectural integrity: its original features, structures, and styles as follows:

- the structure of the building is predominantly wood-framing and is original to the construction of the building;
- the building foundation, including the rear ell, was observed to be stone masonry which is original to the building construction;
- the cladding predominantly includes wooden shingles in good condition;
- front enclosed porch addition is sympathetic to the building's original design; and
- rear open porch does not detract from the character of the original building.

6. Relationship to Surrounding Area:

The house at 276 Portland Street was the first building constructed within its existing streetscape and it is an important architectural asset contributing to the heritage character of the surrounding area. It is situated on a section of Portland Street, between Five Corners and Old Ferry Road, along which there is a high proportion of surviving family dwellings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a variety of styles: Late Victorian Eclectic, Gothic, Second Empire, Cottage, Bungalow and Arts and Crafts.

Some of the larger properties have municipal heritage designations: 245 Portland Street (the Henry Harrison House), 287 Portland Street (the James Austin House), 289 Portland Street (the Thurso House) and 296 Portland Street (the Harold Austin House). Several other nearby properties also have municipal heritage designations on Pleasant, Summit, and James Streets.

Conclusion

The building at 276 Portland Street expresses the social history of Dartmouth due to its association with Charles Pearce and his family, and due to its Late Victorian architecture with gentle transitions to a new style emerging after the Halifax Explosion and World War I. Staff has evaluated the property under the Heritage Building Evaluation Criteria and it is their opinion that it will score more than the 50 points required for the successful registration of a municipal heritage property.

Therefore, staff recommends that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the application and approve the registration of 276 Portland Street under the HRM Heritage Property Program as shown on Map 1.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with processing this application can be accommodated within the approved 2013/14 operating budget for C-310 Planning & Applications

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 public accessibility to the required Heritage Advisory Committee meeting. As a provision of the *Heritage Property Act*, no registration of a municipal heritage property shall take place until Regional Council has given the owner of the property an opportunity to be heard. Therefore, only the property owner(s) will have the opportunity to speak at the heritage hearing.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No concerns identified.

ALTERNATIVES


1. The Heritage Advisory Committee may choose to recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve the application for heritage registration based upon the information outlined in this report. This is the recommended course of action. The *Heritage Property Act* does not include appeal provisions of Council decisions regarding heritage registrations.
2. The Heritage Advisory Committee may choose to recommend that Halifax Regional Council reject the application for heritage registration. The *Heritage Property Act* does not include appeal provisions of Council decisions regarding heritage registrations.

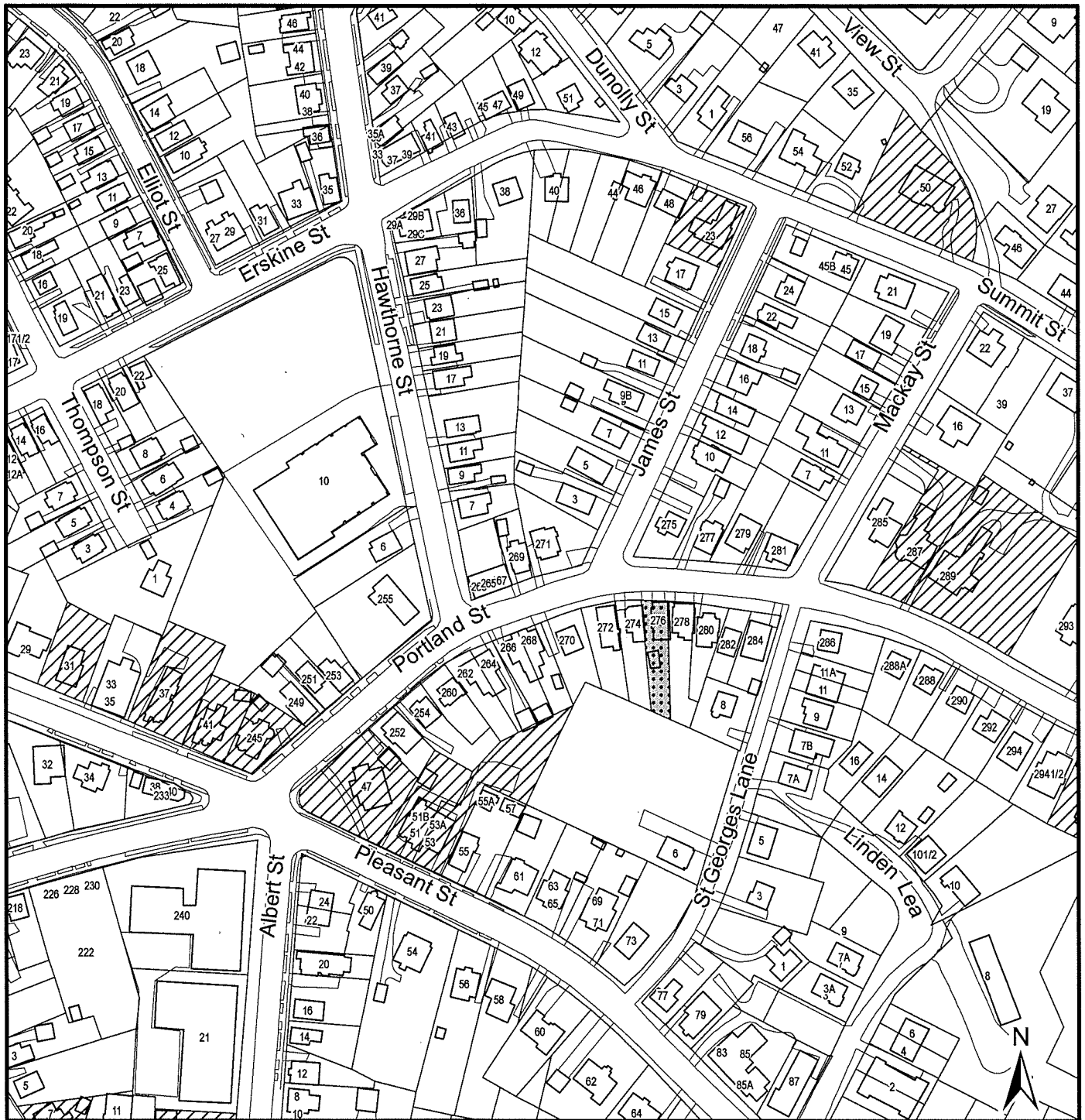
ATTACHMENTS

- Map 1: Location Map – 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth
- Attachment A: Research Report for 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth
- Attachment B: Photographs of 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth
- Attachment C: Additional Photographs of 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth
- Attachment D: HRM Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings

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

Report Prepared by: Seamus McGreal, Heritage Planner, 490-5113
Leah Perrin, Development Technician Intern, 490-4398


Report Approved by:  Original Signed
Kelly Depty, Manager, Development Approvals, 490-4800



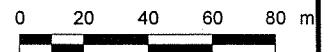
Map 1 - Location

276 Portland Street
Dartmouth

 Subject Property

 Municipally Registered
Heritage Property

HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS



Downtown Dartmouth
Land Use By-Law Area

HRM does not guarantee the accuracy
of any representation on this plan.

ATTACHMENT A

RESEARCH REPORT FOR 276 PORTLAND STREET, DARTMOUTH

HRM Heritage Property Program
Heritage & Design, Community Development
PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5

24 September, 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

Application for heritage registration – 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth

We are applying to have our house at 276 Portland Street, Dartmouth considered a heritage building under the HRM Heritage Property Program. We purchased the house in December, 2012, and live there with our two children.

We consider our house to be suitable for heritage registration based on its age, location and appearance, its original occupants and its architect. We think of ourselves as custodians as much as owners; we are hopeful that a heritage registration will help preserve the physical structure and the story of Charles Edward Pearce and his family.

The Pearces are likely in many respects to have been an ordinary family, who in time appear to have achieved a comfortably middle-class livelihood, but the arc of their story runs alongside, and sometimes intersects with, significant (or simply interesting) events in Dartmouth in the first half of the twentieth century in a way that we feel contributes to the “official” and “unofficial” picture of that period.

A. Age of Property

The house located at 276 Portland Street (PID: 236299) was built in 1902 for Charles Edward Pearce.

The land on which the house is built was lot #11 of a subdivision plan drawn by the architect, Herbert E. Gates, in 1897 for James and Irene Simmonds. Charles Pearce acquired the lot from James and Irene Simmonds on March 25, 1902.¹

¹ Appendix 4 and the warranty deed dated 25 March, 1902 by which the lot was conveyed by James and Irene Simmonds to Charles Edward Pearce (recorded at the Registry of Deeds, Halifax, in Book No. 347 at Page 647). James Simmonds was briefly mayor of Dartmouth (1888-1889) and a partner in the hardware firm of James Simmonds & Co. The James Simmonds house at nearby 51-53 Pleasant Street is a municipally registered heritage property (<http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=5325>).

Charles Pearce obtained a mortgage for \$1,200.00 on May 7, 1902 from Edmund M. Walker.² Presumably this amount was used to fund the construction of the house on the undeveloped lot.

The May 28, 1902 edition of the *Canadian Contract Record* records on page 2 that "Herbert E. Gates has prepared plans for...a house for Chas. E. Pearce."³ It is not known which contractor built the house from those plans.

It seems likely that the house was built in the summer of 1902. Charles Pearce married Nettie Euphemia Wallace on August 18, 1902 in Dartmouth,⁴ and no doubt they would have wanted to move in after the wedding.

Copies of historic photographs of the house are included at Appendix 5. They are undated, but from the surrounding scene they must be taken at some point between 1902 and 1905 (other than Photo 3 of Helen Madeline Pearce as a schoolgirl, which we date to c. 1910).

The house at 274 Portland Street, to the immediate right of 276 Portland Street (viewed face on), was built c. 1905. The house at 278 Portland Street, to the immediate left, was built c. 1908. Neither house appears in the photographs. Houses further up and down the street were built at later dates.⁵

The Portland Street location is confirmed by, amongst other things, the elevation of the road, the rear elevations of two properties in the background, which match properties still standing on Pleasant Street (at numbers 69 and 73), and the flagpole visible to the right of the house, which corresponds with the position of a flagpole at St. George's Tennis Club (Photo 1 at Appendix 5). St. George's moved to its current location behind 276 Portland Street c. 1900. A cross is visible on the white flag in the photograph, which is very likely to be the St. George's Cross (i.e. the English flag). The club still raises the St. George's Cross during the summer. These photographs belong to the "Pearce collection" (collection of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum), which also associates the Pearce family with the property.⁶

² The mortgage is recorded at the Registry of Deeds, Halifax, in Book No. 352 at Page 289. The mortgage was repaid by 1915; the release of mortgage is recorded at the Registry of Deeds, Halifax, in Book No. 459 at Page 153.

³ Available to view online at:
http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.8_06062_643#oocihm.8_06062_643/2?r=0&s=1&_suid=1379528993391085582740107409

⁴ Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics (online).

⁵ NS Department of Culture, Recreation & Fitness Inventory Site Forms for 274 Portland Street, 278 Portland Street and other houses in the area (collection of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum).

⁶ Charles' father lived on Water Street, Dartmouth and later 11 North Street, Dartmouth. Charles' brother, William, lived on 192 Portland Street (Source: McAlpine's Halifax City Directory, various years).

These pictures show the house before the enclosed front porch and rear porch were added, and before the detached shed to the rear of the house was built (see Photos 1 and 2 at Appendix 5). It is not known when these additions were made, although from their appearance and materials it seems likely that they were early additions – possibly in the decade or so after Charles Pearce repaid the mortgage (see footnote 2 above).⁷ His career was on the up by then (see section C. below), and he may have had more disposable income for home improvements. There is no record of a later mortgage of the property by members of the Pearce family.

Although not original to the date of construction, we believe that the porches are sympathetic structural modifications that enhance the “liveability” of the house and do not materially detract from the original design. The small pediment above the porch door echoes the pediment above the large dormer on the mansard roof. One of the eight-pane windows in the front porch originally slid open, although at some point it was painted shut. A screen to fit the opening is still in the rafters of the shed. That feature suggests a time when Portland Street was a very much quieter place, and may also help date the front porch to the early part of the twentieth century. The railing on the rear porch has a built-in box, with doors on opposite sides (i.e. one facing out from the railing, and one facing into the back door). This may have been for milk delivery, so that the delivery man could leave the milk in the box without going onto the porch, and the Peaces could collect the milk from the porch without going down. In their own way, the porches have become part of the history of the house.

B. Relationship to the surrounding area

The house at 276 Portland Street is situated on a section of Portland Street, between Five Corners and Old Ferry Road, along which there is a high proportion of surviving family dwellings from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a variety of styles: Late Victorian Eclectic, Gothic, Second Empire, Cottage, Bungalow and Arts and Crafts. Some of the larger properties have municipal heritage designations: 245 Portland Street (the Henry Harrison House), 287 Portland Street (the James Austin House), 289 Portland Street (the Thurso House) and 296 Portland Street (the Harold Austin House). Several other nearby properties also have municipal heritage designations, along Pleasant Street, on Summit Street and on James Street.

The house was one of the first structures standing on the section of Portland Street from Hawthorne Street to MacKay Street/St. George’s Lane.⁸ The property backs on to St. George’s Tennis Club, one of the oldest tennis clubs in Canada. St. George’s was

None of these locations are possible alternative matches. There were no other Peaces living in Dartmouth at the time. Other photographs in the “Pearce collection” identify Nettie and Helen Pearce.

⁷ The right corner of Photo 2 at Appendix 5 appears to show some leveling of the ground behind the house, which may have been in preparation for erecting the shed.

⁸ From a review of the NS Department of Culture, Recreation & Fitness Inventory Site Forms for houses in that area (collection of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum). See also Photo 1 at Appendix 5.

founded in 1885 and moved to its current location along St. George's Lane (formerly Mott's Lane) c. 1900.

We consider the house to be a very good example of its style (with early modifications) and an asset to the surrounding area.

The NS Department of Culture, Recreation & Fitness Inventory Site Form for 276 Portland Street (prepared July 30, 1986) comments that: "this building helps to maintain both image and scale of the streetscape" (see Appendix 7).

*Architectural style*⁹

The house is a two story wood frame dwelling in the Second Empire style, with a mansard roof in the front elevation and part of the rear elevation. It has two shed dormers at the front, and a third shed dormer at the rear of the house.

There is modest exterior decoration: (i) pediments above the larger front dormer and the area above the front porch door; (ii) an oculus window to the left of the original front entrance; (iii) brackets at the top edges of the mansard roof (front and rear); (iii) a dentil motif above the front windows (now visible inside the front porch)¹⁰; and (iv) a textured, coloured glass window on the left external wall (where the internal stairs reach the second floor).

We understand that houses of this style were somewhat common in Halifax and Dartmouth in the period, although few remain in substantially unaltered condition. Another Second Empire house on 20 Hester Street, in the North End of Dartmouth, is a municipally registered heritage property. 276 Portland Street has no sisters in the immediately surrounding area, and contributes to the mix of architectural styles along that part of Portland Street.

The interior of the house, including doors and fittings, fireplaces, radiators, baseboards, wainscoting and other wood trim, is substantially unchanged. The Pearce family's 92-year ownership of the house may have spared it from ill-judged renovation in the '60s and '70s, when "new" was equated with "better".

Original façade

The house has wood shingle cladding in a style that substantially matches the original cladding from the historic photos (see photos at Appendix 5 and Appendix 6). The

⁹ To prepare this section, I have referred to the Inventory Site Form for the property at Appendix 7 and Allen Penny's *Houses of Nova Scotia: An illustrated guide to Architectural Style Recognition* (Halifax: Formac Publishing Company and the Nova Scotia Museum, 1989).

¹⁰ The dentil motif above the original front door is presumably hidden inside the roof of the front porch. Compare Photo 1 at Appendix 5 with Photo 1 at Appendix 6.

shingling on the rear external wall of the house (not visible from the street) was re-shingled at some point with larger shingles.

We consider the current colour scheme (blue with yellow and white trim) to be suitable for a house of its period.

An enclosed front porch and a rear porch were added sometime after original construction. Although they alter the original façade of the house, we believe the materials and appearance are nonetheless complementary to it, and over time the porches have become integral parts of the house.

The windows in the enclosed front porch, the transom window above the (original) front entrance and the front double windows appear to be original or early. The panes of glass in the enclosed front porch and the double window show distortions when looked at obliquely, which may help date them to the early part of the twentieth century. There is no record of the Pearces making a compensation claim after the Halifax Explosion, so the panes of glass in the double window, at least, may have survived.¹¹ The window in the pantry and the decorative windows at the bottom and top of the stairway appear to be original. Other windows were replaced in 2003 with single hung PVC sash windows, but the style and orientation of the window frames have not been altered.

The house sits on its original stone foundation.

Architectural details

Please see above and the photographs in Appendix 6.

C. Historical associations

i. The original owners: Charles Edward Pearce and his family

(a) Charles Edward Pearce (1873-1956)

Charles Edward Pearce was born in Dartmouth on August 21, 1873.¹² Charles Pearce was a marine engineer, like his father and grandfather before him. His father, William Pearce, was chief engineer of the Halifax Steamboat Company and its successor, the Dartmouth Ferry Commission. On his death, William Pearce was remembered as “one of the best known and highly respected residents of Dartmouth”.¹³ Charles’ grandfather,

¹¹ Alternatively, the house might have suffered minor damage and the Pearces did not see fit to make a “small” claim in view of the devastating damage done to the North End. Very few claims were made in the streets around 276 Portland Street (Halifax Explosion Reconstruction Forms: Dartmouth, NSARM, MG 60 Vol.586).

¹² Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics (online).

¹³ Newspaper clipping at Appendix 8: “William Pearce, Sr.”

Abraham Pearce, had also been chief engineer of the ferry service.¹⁴ When Charles became chief engineer of the Dartmouth Ferry Commission in 1915¹⁵, he completed a unique inter-generational hat-trick (and judging from the pictures of Charles and William at Appendix 8, these were men who liked hats!).¹⁶ Later Charles did one better, serving as chief superintendent from 1933 until 1945.¹⁷ During that time, he had day-to-day operational responsibility for the ferry service and its employees, reporting only to the Ferry Commissioners. Charles Pearce worked for the Dartmouth Ferry Commission for more than 30 years.

As detailed in Part A. above, Charles Pearce had the house at 276 Portland Street built in 1902. He married Nettie Euphemia Wallace that summer. Their first child, Helen Madeline Pearce, was born on January 13, 1904.¹⁸

At that time, Charles Pearce is listed in the Halifax City Directory as an “engineer”. In the 1907-08 directory, he is listed as an engineer on the CS Mackay-Bennett. The Mackay-Bennett was a transatlantic cable repair ship owned by the Commercial Cable Company.¹⁹ By 1912, Charles Pearce was an engineer at the Dartmouth Ferry Commission.

There are numerous references to Charles Pearce in Joan and Lewis Payzant’s history of the Dartmouth ferry, *Like a Weaver’s Shuttle* (1979).

Charles Pearce maintained a daily log book from 1915 to 1945: the first eighteen years as chief engineer; the last thirteen as chief superintendent. The log books are held by the Municipal Archives. Several of his entries are quoted in *Like a Weaver’s Shuttle*. They open a fascinating window into the day-to-day business of ferrying passengers and goods across the harbour, and also provide occasional glimpses of the wider world, e.g. referencing the Halifax Explosion in 1917, the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary in 1935, and the V-E Day Riots and the Bedford Magazine Explosion in 1945. The entries reveal something of the man as well as his vocation, and preserve the measure of his voice through time.

¹⁴ Abraham Pearce emigrated from England with his family, including a young William Pearce.

¹⁵ Payzant, Joan and Payzant, Lewis. *Like a Weaver’s Shuttle: A History of the Halifax-Dartmouth Ferries* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1979) p. 143.

¹⁶ Newspaper clipping at Appendix 8: “Three Generations”.

¹⁷ Payzant and Payzant pp. 143 and 175.

¹⁸ Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics (online).

¹⁹ The Mackay-Bennett is also well-known for her part in the Titanic story. The Mackay-Bennett was chartered by the White Star Line to recover bodies after the Titanic sank. Her crew recovered 306 of the 328 bodies found from the 1,517 who died (Source: NSARM Virtual Archives, RMS Titanic Archives: Resource Guide). Charles Pearce was working at the Dartmouth Ferry Commission by 1912, but he may have known some of the crew on board the Mackay-Bennett who faced that grim task.

The Halifax Explosion

Charles Pearce and the other employees of the Dartmouth Ferry Commission played an important role in the aftermath of the Halifax Explosion on December 6, 1917:

“Dartmouth ferries, transporting students and workers across the harbour at the time of the explosion, had most of their windows blown out but managed to stay afloat. The boats and their crews would work all night transporting Dartmouth victims to hospital in Halifax and bringing rescue workers, equipment and supplies back to Dartmouth.”²⁰

In recognition of their efforts, the Ferry Commissioners passed the following resolution at their March, 1918 meeting:

“Resolution: That this commission desires to place on record its deep appreciation of the action of Superintendent Hunter, and the crews under his charge, who during the 6th day of December stuck to their posts and kept up communications between Halifax and Dartmouth the whole of that day without interruption. This in face of the fact that they were ignorant of the fate of their families was an act for which courage and devotion to duty was unsurpassed by any other body of men on that day.”²¹

The resolution’s crescendo may overstate things somewhat, albeit with good intentions. Nonetheless, it seems clear that the ferries and their crews contributed to the rescue and relief efforts after the explosion, and that Charles Pearce, as chief engineer, would have made his own important contribution to those efforts.

The Second World War and the Governor Cornwallis

Charles Pearce presided over the ferry service as chief superintendent during the busiest period in its history. In 1944, the ferries carried more than 500,000 vehicles and 6 million passengers²², or approximately 1,400 vehicles and 16,500 passengers each day. To put that into perspective, ferry ridership in 2012 was approximately 100,000 passengers per month²³ (no vehicles, of course), or 3,200 passengers per day. The five-fold difference helps to illustrate the importance of the ferry service to move individuals, vehicles and commercial goods across the harbour before the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge opened in April, 1955. The populations of Halifax and Dartmouth increased

²⁰ Chapman, Harry. *In the Wake of the Alderney: Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, 1750-2000* (Halifax: Nimbus, 2001) p. 202.

²¹ Payzant and Payzant: 147.

²² Payzant and Payzant: 182.

²³ <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/120807cai02.pdf>

dramatically during the war, but even pre-war ridership appears to have been twice current ridership – nearly 2.5 million passengers made the crossing in 1939.²⁴

During his tenure, Charles Pearce also oversaw the design and construction of the Governor Cornwallis, which was the first ferry to be built in Dartmouth since the Chebucto in 1864.²⁵ With the demise of the Dartmouth Marine Slips, it seems safe to say that the Governor Cornwallis will remain the last ferry to be built in Dartmouth.

Charles Pearce suggested to the Ferry Commissioners that he should approach William Roué, a naval architect and his neighbour on nearby James Street, about designing the new ferry. Roué agreed.²⁶ Roué, of course, is best known for designing the Bluenose. (It is tantalizing – and probably also realistic – to imagine William Roué having a cup of tea with Charles Pearce in our front room. Certainly they were acquainted, and were neighbours for more than 30 years.)

The Governor Cornwallis was both a step into the past and a step into the future. She was built of wood instead of steel but, at Charles Pearce's recommendation, with diesel-electric engines instead of steam propulsion. In addition, to help relieve traffic congestion at the ferry terminals in Halifax and Dartmouth, the Governor Cornwallis was the first (and also the last) ferry to ply the harbour with three car lanes.²⁷

The Governor Cornwallis was launched on November 20, 1941. Schoolchildren in Dartmouth were given a half-day holiday to attend.²⁸ Unfortunately the Governor Cornwallis had a short and troubled life. After a series of technical issues (exhaustively recorded in Charles Pearce's log books), the Governor Cornwallis caught fire on December 22, 1944 and was beached on George's Island, from which she finally slid off and sank to the bottom of the harbour.²⁹

Charles Pearce retired from the Dartmouth Ferry Commission in October, 1945.³⁰ This does not appear to have been linked to the Governor Cornwallis episode (he was 72 in 1945 and due a rest), although it must have been tremendously upsetting for him to see his legacy consumed first by fire, then by water.

²⁴ Payzant and Payzant: 182.

²⁵ Payzant and Payzant: 163.

²⁶ Payzant and Payzant: 162.

²⁷ Payzant and Payzant: 165-166.

²⁸ Payzant and Payzant: 166.

²⁹ Payzant and Payzant: 168.

³⁰ He was retained in an advisory capacity to provide him with the equivalent of a pension. Payzant and Payzant: 175.

Charles Pearce died on January 4, 1956. He lived just long enough to see the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge open and begin to transform the relationship between Halifax and Dartmouth, and the relationship between their citizens and the harbour ferries.

(b) *Nettie Euphemia Pearce (née Wallace) (1879-1972)*

We do not know much about Nettie Pearce. Like Charles, she was born in Dartmouth. It seems likely that she stayed at home to raise their children, Helen and Ronald. She only appears in the Halifax City Directory after Charles' death (as his widow).

(c) *Helen Madeline Pearce (1904-1994)*

Photo 3 at Appendix 5 is thought to show Helen Pearce as a schoolgirl – possibly on her first (or a first) day of school. The visible parts of the front porch of the house in the background exactly match 274 Portland Street. The same oculus window and scalloped shingles can still be seen next door.

Helen Pearce may have lived at 276 Portland Street for most (if not all) of her life. She is listed at that address in the Halifax City Directory over most of the period (and at any rate, she is not listed anywhere else in Halifax or Dartmouth). In the 1926-1927 directory, she is listed as a stenographer at the Royal Securities Corp. By 1937 she was working as a stenographer at T M Bell & Co, by 1940 she was an assistant accountant at the Montreal Trust Company on Hollis Street in Halifax, and by 1950 she was an accountant at the same company. She appears to have worked for the Montreal Trust Company until her retirement in the early 1960s.

The newspaper clipping at Appendix 8 shows an elderly Helen Pearce standing beside a steam engine model constructed by her grandfather, William Pearce. The model is in the collection of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum.

Helen Pearce does not appear to have married, or to have had any children.³¹ She is buried with her parents at Mount Hermon Cemetery on Victoria Road, Dartmouth.

(d) *Ronald Edward Pearce (?-?)*

We do not know much about Ronald Pearce, Charles and Nettie's only son. He does not appear in the Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics, which stop at 1912, so he was probably born sometime after 1912.

³¹ Helen Pearce's obituary in the Chronicle-Herald on May 10, 1994 only mentions her brother Ronald and his wife Bertha, who by then were living in Bogota, Columbia. The bequests in her will were to Ronald, Bertha, their daughter Helen Christine Pearce (presumably named after her aunt Helen), two friends, to the United Baptist Church in memory of her father and to the Grace United Church in memory of her mother (Registry of Deeds Book 5566/Page641/Doc 19539).

Ronald Pearce is first listed at 276 Portland Street in the Halifax City Directory in 1937, but no occupation is identified. By 1940, he was a chemist at the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant on Grafton Street in Halifax. By 1941, he was a chemist at the Imperial Oil Refinery. He is not listed in the 1945 directory or subsequently.

Petroleum was “essential” to the war effort, and the Imperial Oil Refinery was “an important supplier” throughout the Second World War.³² As an on-site chemist, Ronald Pearce would have played his part to ensure that the supply continued.

At Helen’s death, Ronald Pearce was living in Bogota, Columbia with his wife.³³

ii. The architect: Herbert E. Gates

The plans for the house were drawn for Charles Pearce by the architect Herbert Elliot Gates.³⁴ Herbert Gates (1874-1944) was born in Dartmouth and trained in Edward Elliot’s office in Halifax. By 1898 he had opened his own office in Halifax.³⁵ The house for Charles Pearce is likely to have been a “bread and butter” commission for Herbert Gates in the early part of his career. Herbert Gates designed a number of significant structures in Halifax and Dartmouth, including the Dartmouth Ferry Terminal (designed 1902 and built in 1906 – now destroyed), the Masonic Hall on Ochterloney Street (1909 – now destroyed), a major addition to the Halifax County Court House on Spring Garden Road (1907), the neoclassical Nova Scotia Technical College on Spring Garden Road (1908 – now the Medjuck Building of Architecture and Planning, Dalhousie University) and the Provincial Building on Hollis Street (1935 – with Andrew Cobb and W.M. Brown).³⁶

We consider the house to have additional historic interest through its association with Herbert Gates, who was remembered in his *Halifax Herald* obituary as “one of the province’s outstanding architects”.³⁷

The contractor is unknown.

³² Chapman: 285.

³³ See footnote 31 above.

³⁴ See page 2 above and the entry for Herbert E. Gates in the *Biographical Dictionary of Canadian Architects in Canada (1800-1950)* available online at: <http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1585>

³⁵ Rosinski, Maud. *Architects of Nova Scotia: A Biographical Dictionary 1605-1950* (Halifax: Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs, Heritage Section, 1994) p. 241.

³⁶ *Biographical Dictionary of Canadian Architects in Canada (1800-1950)*.

³⁷ Rosinski: 242.

D. Chronological list of owners

Date	Names	Occupation/status
1902-1956	Charles Edward Pearce	Marine Engineer, later Chief Engineer (1915 to 1933) and Chief Superintendent (1933 to 1945) of the Dartmouth Ferry Commission
1956-1972	Nettie Euphemia Pearce (née Wallace)	Widow of Charles Edward Pearce
1972-1994	Helen Madeline Pearce	Daughter of Charles and Nettie, formerly an accountant at the Montreal Trust Company in Halifax
1994-1996	Ronald Barry Bryant and Marie Bryant	unknown
1996-1999	Leonard V. Roblee	unknown
1999-2007	Peter James Boyd and Joanne Catherine Boyd (née Hickman)	unknown
2007-2010	Samuel Edward Patchell	unknown
2010-2012	Andrew Thomas Murdoch and Jennifer Melanie Reynolds	unknown
2012-present	Todd Maarten Kramers and Jane Louise Kramers	Lawyer Project Manager

Sources: (i) Charles Edward Pearce: deed (Book 347/Page 647/Doc 417); (ii) Nettie Euphemia Wallace: life interest from the will of Charles Edward Pearce (Book 373/Page 572/Doc 848); (iii) Helen Madeline Pearce: inherited on mother's death (see (ii) above); (iv) Ronald and Marie Bryant: deed (Book 5571/Page 41/Doc 21051) (note: sold out of Helen Pearce's estate); (v) Leonard Roblee: deed (Book 5904/Page 1026/Doc 25778); (vi) Peter and Joanne Boyd: deed (Book 6389/Page 125/Doc 16375); (vii) Samuel Patchell: deed (Doc 88090528); (viii) Andrew Murdoch and Jennifer Reynolds: deed (Doc 9729734); and (viii) Todd and Jane Kramers: deed (personal records).

E. Summary

We consider 276 Portland Street to be suitable for heritage registration by virtue of its age, appearance and relationship to the surrounding area.

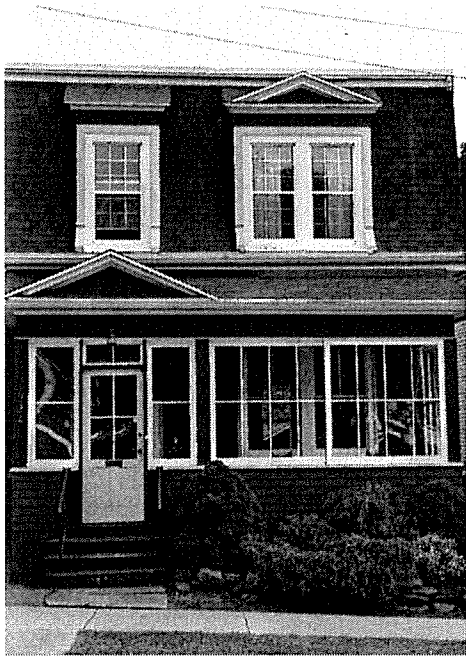
We also consider it to have historic value for its association with the architect, Herbert Gates, and as the home for more than 90 years to the Pearce family – in particular, Charles Pearce, who gave long and well-documented service to the Dartmouth Ferry Commission. Charles Pearce was not a judge, a doctor or a wealthy entrepreneur, but his contribution to the story of Dartmouth seems to us to be no less noteworthy. After all, what says more about Dartmouth than the ferry? And in Charles Pearce's day, even the local grandees paid their fares and took their seats onboard.

Yours sincerely,

Original signed

Todd and Jane Kramers
276 Portland Street
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
B2Y 1J9

**ATTACHMENT B
PHOTOGRAPHS OF 276 PORTLAND STREET, DARTMOUTH**



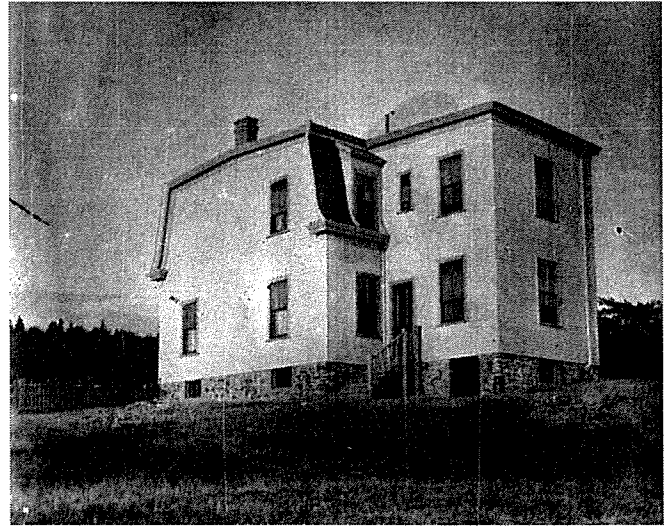
**Figure 1: Existing image of the front of the building
(T. Kramers)**



**Figure 2: Existing image of the rear side of the building
(T. Kramers)**



**Figure 3: Historic photograph of the property c. 1905
(Pearce Collection, Dartmouth Heritage Museum)**



**Figure 4: Historic photograph of the rear side of the building
c. 1905 (Pearce Collection, Dartmouth Heritage Museum)**

**ATTACHMENT C
NEWSPAPER ARTICLE AND ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPH**



Figure 1: Newspaper clipping, possibly from 1933, unknown newspaper (Pearce Collection, Dartmouth Heritage Museum)



Figure 2: Existing image of the streetscape (T. Kramers)

ATTACHMENT D

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION OF HERITAGE BUILDINGS in HRM

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.

Date of Construction	Points	Timeline
1749 - 1785	25	Halifax Garrison Town to the Loyalist migration
1786 - 1830	20	Boom period following construction of the 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) **OR** B):

- A) Having specific associations with important occasions, institutions, personages and groups,
- 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	<i>* Maximum score of 20 points in this category, scoring from one of the three categories only</i>

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	<i>* Maximum score of 20 points in this category</i>

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	
Not Significant	0	<i>* Maximum score of 10 points in this category.</i>

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	<i>* Maximum of 10 points for Construction Type, AND a maximum of 10 for Style - a total maximum of 20 points this category.</i>

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	<i>* Maximum score of 15 points in this category.</i>

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:

ATTACHMENT 'B'

SCORING SUMMARY

Property	Date Reviewed	Reviewer
276 Portland Street, Dartmouth	May 7, 2014	Heritage Advisory Committee

Criterion	Highest Possible Score	Score Awarded
1. Age	25	9
2. a) Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups OR 2. b) Important/Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era	20	15
3. Significance of Architect/Builder	10	6
4. a) Architectural Merit: Construction type/building technology	10	2
4. b) Architectural Merit: Style	10	5
5. Architectural Integrity	15	14
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10	10
Total	100	61

SCORE NECESSARY FOR DESIGNATION

50

Designation Recommended?

YES



NO

