



REPORT

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Laura Loney, Manager of Heritage Planning

DATE: March 27, 2024

REPORT NO.: PD-2024-026

SUBJECT: Intention to Designate Under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act – 499 Guelph St

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2024-026 dated March 27, 2024 and titled “Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act – 499 Guelph Street” be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council state its intention to designate the property at 499 Guelph Street, known as Norval Presbyterian Church, legally described as “LT 2 EAST OF DRAPER STREET PL NORVAL AS IN EW2722, PT LTS 11 & 12 CON 11 ESQ AS IN EW2768, PT LT 3 EAST OF DRAPER STREET PL NORVAL AS IN EW5283; EXCEPT PT 1 20R7356 & PT 20R20592; HALTON HILLS/ESQUESING”, under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as recommended by Heritage Halton Hills;

AND FURTHER THAT the Town Clerk proceed with serving a Notice of Intention to Designate as mandated by Section 29(3) of the Ontario Heritage Act;

AND FURTHER THAT once the 30-day objection period has expired, and if there are no objections, a designation by-law for the property at 499 Guelph Street be brought forward to Council for adoption;

AND FURTHER THAT, should the property be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, any proposed alterations to or removal of the existing wrought iron fence at the subject property requiring approval of a heritage permit be delegated to staff.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- At the February 12, 2024 meeting of Council, staff were directed to prioritize the property at 499 Guelph Street (Norval Presbyterian Church) for research and evaluation;
- The subject property meets Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and,
- Staff are recommending that Council state its intention to designate the property.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

The property at 499 Guelph St is an irregularly shaped parcel at the intersection of Draper Street and Guelph Street and contains a late-nineteenth-century Gothic Revival church building. The property was listed on the Town's Heritage Register during Phase 2 of the Town's Heritage Register process (2011) and was identified as a good example of ornate Gothic Revival style church architecture, associated with the religious history of Norval and with Lucy Maud Montgomery and Reverend Ewan MacDonald. The property has most recently been home to Norval Presbyterian Church, however the congregation's last service took place in February 2024.

The property at 499 Guelph Street, Norval has been researched and evaluated by staff following Council's direction at the February 12, 2024 meeting of Council to prioritize the property as part of the Town's Council-approved Heritage Register prioritization strategy to respond to *Bill 23, More Homes, Built Faster Act, 2022*¹.

On February 15, 2024, staff sent a letter to the owners of the property on file, the Presbyterian Church of Canada, advising them of Council's direction. Staff subsequently had several conversations with church representatives and Trustees, and advised that the Research and Evaluation Report for the property would be reviewed at the March 20, 2024 meeting of Heritage Halton Hills. Representatives of the National Office of the Presbyterian Church in Canada contacted staff on March 13, 2024 on behalf of the church Trustees to request additional information regarding the process, and on March 15, 2024 representatives confirmed that they would be in attendance at the Heritage Halton Hills meeting.

Heritage Halton Hills reviewed the final Research & Evaluation Report for the property at its meeting of March 20, 2024. Representatives from Norval Presbyterian Church attended this meeting and expressed concerns regarding notification processes, impacts on future uses for the property, insurance, and re-sale value. Staff and committee members discussed these issues with attendees and indicated their availability to answer questions and support the Trustees throughout the process. Following this discussion, the following motion was carried:

¹ Bill 23 stipulates that municipalities have a two-year window to determine whether properties on the Heritage Register warrant designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. If not so designated after two years, properties must be removed from the Heritage Register.

Recommendation No. HHH-2024-0016

THAT Heritage Halton Hills Committee recommend Council issue a Notice of Intention to Designate for the property at 499 Guelph Street for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The property has been identified as having physical and design value as a representative example of a late nineteenth-century Gothic Revival Church, with significant historical and associative value with ties to the religious development of Norval, with local architect and builder Walter McKay, and with Lucy Maud Montgomery and Reverend Ewan Macdonald. The property is also contextually significant with the church serving as a landmark at the corner of Guelph Street and Draper Street in Norval.

As described in the Research & Evaluation Report, the identified heritage attributes of the property include:

- The setback, location, and orientation of the church building along Guelph Street in the community of Norval within the Town of Halton Hills;
- The scale, form, and massing of church building on a stone foundation with steeply pitched gable roof, buttresses, and central tower;
- The materials, including brick exterior and detailing, stone detailing including hood moulds, lintels, stone courses and capping on buttresses, wooden stained-glass windows throughout; as well as the wrought-iron fence extending along the south lot line and a portion of the west lot line;
- On the front (south) elevation:
 - The central buttressed tower, featuring:
 - The pointed arch door opening with stone hood mould, brick voussoirs, transom stained-glass window with wooden tracery, and wooden door;
 - The date-stone above the entrance, inscribed with “PRESBY^N CHURCH ERECTED A.D. 1878”;
 - The single pointed arch window opening with stone hood mould, brick voussoirs, and stone sill with stained glass window featuring wooden tracery, and above the paired pointed arch openings with wooden louvers featuring a stone hood mould, brick voussoirs, and stone sill;
 - At the tower roof, the base of the steeple with detailed cornice featuring arched brick detailing, brick turrets on squared bases are located at each corner of the tower with steeply pitched slopes rising to a peak on octagonal bases, and the steeple featuring wooden louvered openings with pointed roofs featuring trefoils and terminates in a finial;
 - On either side of the central tower:

- Segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs at grade with stone course extending along the front elevation above;
- Buttresses extending upwards at the corners terminating with brick turrets on squared bases are located at each corner of the tower with steeply pitched slopes rising to a peak on octagonal bases;
- Large, pointed arch window openings with stone hood moulds, brick voussoirs, and stone sills, featuring stained glass windows with wooden tracery;
- Brick detailing at the parapet;
- On the side (east and west) elevations:
 - Brick buttresses with stone caps dividing the elevation into four bays;
 - Segmentally arched door and window openings at grade within the stone foundation, with brick voussoirs;
 - Large, pointed arch windows within each bay with stone hood moulds, brick voussoirs, and stone sills;
 - Stained glass windows with wooden tracery;
- On the rear (north) elevation, the projecting, buttressed, gable-roofed bay with centrally placed pointed arch window openings with brick voussoirs, stone sill and featuring a stained-glass window with wooden tracery; and,
- The wrought iron fence along the south and partial west lot lines.

The interiors were not identified as heritage attributes as part of this report.

Staff note that church representatives have indicated significant concerns regarding the long-term maintenance and repair of the wrought iron fence; church representatives have been advised by specialists that repair and/or replacement will be extremely challenging.

It is staff's opinion that the fence does contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property. However, staff acknowledge that should future repair and/or replacement of the fence not be feasible, removal of the fence may be the most reasonable option for property owners in the long-term. Staff recommend that the fence be included as a heritage attribute in a designation by-law for the subject property, however that approval of alterations to or removal of the fence in future be delegated to the Commissioner of Planning and Development.

Based on the identified cultural heritage value of the property, and as the property meets criteria for designation per Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria, staff are recommending that Council designate the property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report identifies natural areas and heritage as one of the Town's Strategic priorities.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement was not needed as this report is administrative in nature.

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Heritage Halton Hills was consulted in the preparation of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have any financial implications.

Reviewed and approved by,

Bronwyn Parker, Director of Planning Policy

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning & Development

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer