

**AFFECTS
WARD 8**

CITY OF HAMILTON

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Long Range Planning and Design Division

Report to: Mayor and Members Committee of the Whole	Submitted by: Lee Ann Coveyduck General Manager
Date: May 17, 2002	Prepared by: Stephanie Barber
File: LACAC	(905) 643-1262 Ext. 204

SUBJECT: Recommendation to Designate Under the Ontario Heritage Act, Part IV, the Root Cellar on the Property at Fennell Avenue and West 5th (Mohawk College) in the Former City of Hamilton (PD02097) (Ward 8)

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) That the request for designation by Mohawk College of the Root Cellar as a property of historic or architectural value or interest pursuant to the provisions of Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, 1990, be approved.
- (b) That Corporate Counsel be directed to take appropriate action to designate the Root Cellar, Mohawk College under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, 1990, as described in the attached Reasons for Designation (Appendix C).

Lee Ann Coveyduck
General Manager
Planning and Development Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Mohawk College has requested a designation of the Root Cellar under the Ontario Heritage Act. The structure is considered to be of heritage significance, notably its historical associations with an important institution: the Hamilton Asylum for the Insane (later the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital) and its architectural significance, as a rare surviving example of an institutional root cellar with a brick masonry vaulted interior.

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BACKGROUND:

In a letter dated July 25, 2001 from Kim Van Louwe, General Manager, Mohawk Students' Association (MSA), a request was made by the MSA of Mohawk College to have the building known as the Root Cellar, a former root cellar on the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital farm, designated under the Ontario Heritage Act (see Location Map, Appendix A). LACAC was advised of this request at its meeting on August 16, 2001 (copy of letter attached as Appendix B). The Committee supported the request in principle and staff subsequently undertook research. Copies of historic photographs and primary/secondary source material were provided by Kim Louwe. Additional photographs and newspaper articles were provided by Tony Butler from the project files of Gerrie & Butler, the architectural firm responsible for designing the first buildings on the Mohawk College campus and overseeing the conversion of the former root cellar to a pub. The draft Reasons for Designation were circulated to LACAC at its last meeting held November 15, 2001. They have been circulated to the College's Board of Directors and the Mohawk Students' Association. The approval to proceed with designation was received from the College on April 11, 2002.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES:

The Cellar is worthy of designation under the Ontario Heritage Act because of its historical associations with an important institution: the Hamilton Asylum for the Insane (later the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital) and its architectural significance, as a rare surviving example of an institutional root cellar with a brick masonry vaulted interior (see accompanying Reasons for Designation: Appendix C).

Photographs are attached as Appendix D.

LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Pursuant to subsection 29 (2) of the Ontario Heritage Act Council is required to consult with LACAC respecting its intention to designate a property under Subsection (1). At its meeting of May 16, 2002 the City of Hamilton LACAC endorsed the staff recommendation to approve the Intent to Designate the Root Cellar, Mohawk College, Hamilton.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Financial – not applicable.

Staffing – not applicable.

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Legal – not applicable.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

Official Plan policies of the former City of Hamilton support the conservation, protection and management of cultural heritage features. Designation of the Root Cellar will be in accordance with these policies.

CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES:

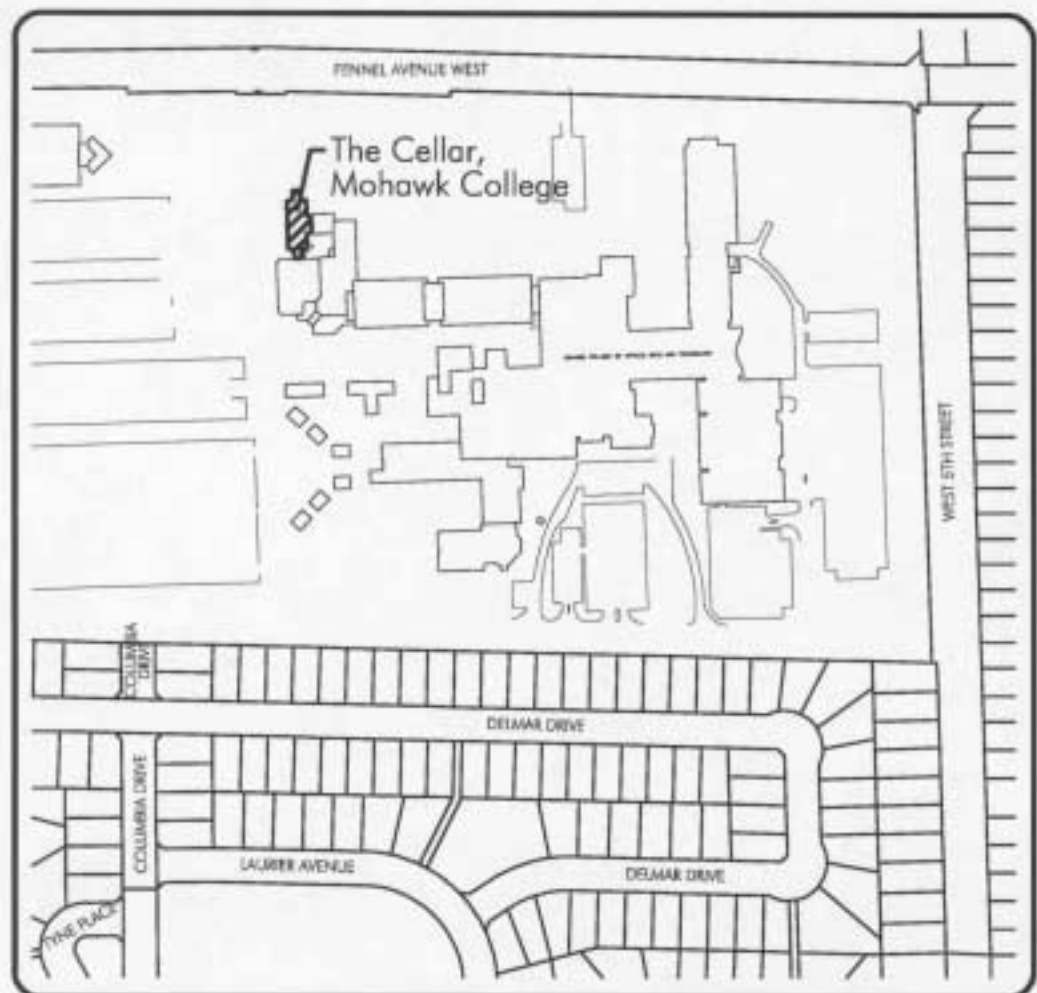
Not applicable.

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

The designation of The Cellar at Mohawk College will help to protect and enhance a valuable heritage resource and will therefore contribute to the Vision 2020 goal of preserving our built and natural heritage.

:SB

Attachs. (4)



<p>Proposed Designation City of Hamilton</p>	<p>Planning and Development Department Location Map</p> <p>Legend</p> <p> Subject Lands The Cellar, Mohawk College</p>	<p>Reference File No.</p> <p>Scale NOT TO SCALE</p> <p>Date Nov., 2001</p> <p>Drawn By L.M.</p> <p>APPENDIX 'B'</p>
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RECEIVED APR 11 2002

MOHAWK COLLEGE
OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

April 2, 2002

Mr. David Cuming
Senior Heritage Planner
Heritage and Urban Design Section
Planning and Development Department
City of Hamilton
City Hall
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario
L8P 4Y5

Dear Mr. Cuming:

Re: Application for Heritage Designation of The Cellar

The Mohawk Students' Association (MSA) and Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology would like to make application to the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) and the City of Hamilton for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act for *The Cellar* located on College property at 135 Fennell Avenue West in Hamilton.

For its part, the MSA is a separately incorporated body from the College as a non-share capital entity. Its mandate is to represent the interests of the full-time fee-paying students of Mohawk College and to operate the Student Centre, an asset of the Corporation. *The Cellar* is an important part of the operations of the Student Centre. Currently, it is a restaurant/bar serving the needs of all Mohawk College students, staff and the community. Typically, it operates Monday to Friday during the days and evenings.

Importantly, the College is the owner of the land and, like the MSA, is supporting this application request for designation.

On January 16, 2002, the Board of Directors of the MSA unanimously approved the following motion--

"That, the MSA Board of Directors support the application for designation of The Cellar as an historical building."

MOHAWK COLLEGE
OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY
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A month later, at a meeting of the Mohawk College Board of Governors held on February 13, 2002 (341st Meeting), the following motion was approved--

"That, the Board of Governors support the application for the designation of The Cellar as an historical building."

In consultation with both yourself and Anne Gillespie, we have received an information package related to the process of designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. Having reviewed the information, we believe that it would be of benefit to the MSA, the College, the City of Hamilton and the community to designate *The Cellar* under the *Act* in view of its historical significance.

The Cellar was originally constructed in 1891 as a Root House under a contract with the Asylum for the Insane (the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital) as tendered by the Department of Public Works. Over the past 110 years, it has served a number of functions and today it is part of the Student Centre at the College. A copy of the construction contract and specifications are enclosed for your reference. Also enclosed are a few photographs of *The Cellar* and some related articles about the building.

The building has a number of interesting features that, we believe, make it quite unique. It is a rural remnant in an urban setting. The interior of the building is structured in 18 cove-like areas all of brick construction. The exterior stonework is of a type not readily found in the area. We are aware of only one other structure in Ontario similar to *The Cellar*; it is located near Kingston.

We would also be pleased to show you or representatives of the LACAC our facility at any time in furtherance of this application. If we can address any questions regarding this request, please feel free to contact Kim Van Louwe at (905) 575-2391.

Thank you for your consideration of our application. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Kim Van Louwe
General Manager,
Mohawk Students' Association



Cal Haddad
President,
Mohawk College

Encl.

The Cellar, Mohawk College, 135 Fennell Avenue West

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Present Context: The Setting of Mohawk College

Constructed in 1891 as a root cellar for the Hamilton Asylum for the Insane, this low stone building located on the grounds of Mohawk College now serves as a pub known as *The Cellar*. It is part of the Student Centre, which is maintained and operated by the Mohawk Students' Association. The Student Centre comprises three distinct but connected buildings surrounding an enclosed sunken courtyard, known as *Mitchell Terrace*. It is situated at the north-east corner of the main building complex on the east side of Governor's Boulevard, the main entrance to the campus from Fennell Avenue West.

The campus of Mohawk College is located on the north side of Fennell Avenue between West Fifth Street and Hillfield-Strathallan College directly across from St. Joseph's Centre for Mountain Health Services (former Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital). The Fennell campus was inaugurated late in 1967 and construction of the first buildings commenced the following year. The Students' Association then discovered the old root cellar, which was adapted for use as a pub when the first adjoining student centre (now *Alumni Hall*) was built in 1974. The entire complex was known as the *Arnold Centre*, the name still on the sign over the north entrance to *The Cellar*. When the new Student Centre was constructed in 1985-6, the root cellar building was connected to it at the south end (see Adaptive Re-Use). After the larger pub in the lower level of the Student Centre (*The Arnie*) was opened, the original pub was closed and for about six years the root cellar space was used first as a study hall and then offices. By popular demand, it was subsequently turned back into a pub/ restaurant, re-opened in 1992 as *The Cellar*, which has since provided a quieter, more intimate setting than *The Arnie*.

Historical Value: The Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital Farms

Both Mohawk College and Hillfield-Strathallan College were built on farmland previously owned by the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital. The existing hospital buildings occupy the Mountain-brow site of the original building (demolished) erected in 1875 as the *Asylum for Inebriates*. In 1876, this building was converted to and renamed the *Asylum for the Insane*. As the institution grew numerous more buildings were erected; the name was changed in 1920 to the *Ontario Hospital, Hamilton* and in 1968 to the *Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital*.

Psychiatric hospitals throughout North America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were usually located away from built-up areas in quiet, salubrious rural environments. Such institutions were planned and functioned as self-sufficient communities; hence, agriculture was essential to their operation. To meet the food requirements of patients

and staff, farming activities ranged from raising livestock (for meat and dairy products) to growing grains, fruit and vegetables. The first farm buildings, including a wood root-house, were located south of the main building on the north side of the road which is now Fennell Avenue West. When the original Asylum property was found to be insufficient for farming purposes, additional land was purchased to the south: 95 acres in 1888 and 8 acres in 1890. The latter included the Andrew homestead, which was most likely the two-storey farmhouse located to the west of the root cellar. The first three farm buildings to be constructed in 1891 were the root cellar, horse stable and barn. An orchard and vegetable garden were situated to the west. Just after the turn-of-the-century, this building cluster included a slaughterhouse constructed of brick, a stone implement shed, a metal cattle barn, two stone silos and some smaller outbuildings. In 1909, 176 acres of farmland, known as Hickory Farm, was acquired to the south. When agricultural activities ceased in the early 1960s, the redundant farmland was sold off and buildings demolished to make way for new development. The root cellar and the potting shed (on the present-day hospital grounds) are the only surviving remnants of the agricultural component of the hospital's operation. The root cellar is also one of only two remaining historic buildings associated with the former Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital and now located on the grounds of Mohawk College. (The other one is a substantial 2-storey brick dwelling facing Fennell Avenue and located close to the western boundary of the hospital property, near Hillfield-Strathallen College.)

Architectural Value: Design and Construction of the Root Cellar

Before the widespread use of refrigeration the root cellar, along with the ice house and the spring house, were common types of food storage facilities. Primarily used for the storage of root vegetables, apples and other garden produce suitable for long-term storage, the root cellar was designed to maintain a fairly constant temperature: cool in summer and above freezing in winter. To provide this insulation, root cellars built as free-standing structures were usually buried partially or entirely underground and were commonly built with exterior stone walls. Some of the more elaborate structures had vaulted brick or stone interiors designed to maximize the insulation value of the cellar.

The former Hamilton Asylum root cellar was an extremely well built structure designed by the well-known Department of Public Works Ontario architect, Kivas Tully. It was built to a rectangular plan and oriented on a north-south axis to Fennell Avenue. The building form comprised a long, low, one-storey structure with wings at each end (originally serving as entrance and exit ramps for wagons bringing in and taking out garden produce) and a continuous wide-eaved, shallow-pitched gable roof. The exterior walls are rubblestone masonry. The existing corrugated steel roof installed in the late 1970s replaced an asphalt-shingled roof, which was an earlier replacement for the original wood-shingled roof. The main section of the building was sunk about five feet below grade for better insulation value. The most significant architectural feature of the building is its impressive vaulted interior construction. A brick barrel-vaulted ceiling is sprung from two rows of nine barrel-vaulted alcoves, which originally served as storage bins. Each round arch comprises three rows of brick masonry sprung from piers

measuring 1 and 1/2 bricks in width and the exposed stone foundation walls at each end.

The Cellar is one of only a few surviving institutional root cellars in the province, and possibly the only one with a vaulted interior. Two other known examples connected with other psychiatric hospitals in Ontario are a largely underground root cellar built for the Brockville Asylum and a similar one built for Lakeshore Mimico Asylum (both without vaulted interiors).

Adaptive Re-Use of the Root Cellar as a Pub

Gerrie & Butler, the architectural firm responsible for the design of the first campus building complex, also designed the first student centre and the conversion of the root cellar into a pub. As the structure was well-suited to this new use, only minimal alterations/ additions were required, such as the creation of entrance stairwells at each end, the installation of concrete flooring and exposed mechanical ductwork. Since the new Student Centre was built in 1986, the stone root cellar has formed the east perimeter wall of Mitchell Terrace. An outside entrance to this courtyard from the main entrance driveway was created by the installation of a doorway on the west façade of the south wing. The east wall was entirely removed and a new wall section with a set of double doors built at the south end of the main structure. This entrance has been permanently closed since 1998. The original north entrance is now a fire exit and secondary entrance.

The adaptive re-use of the root cellar as a pub/ restaurant resulted in a number of interior alterations. The main entrance is now from the lower level of Alumni Hall (in the centre of the east wall of *The Cellar*). A secondary entrance at the lower level was created by extending the space beyond the new upper south wall to connect *The Cellar* to *The Arnie*. Non-heritage components added in 1974 or 1985-6 are identified below (see exclusions in Designated Features). There has been only one structural change to the barrel-vaulted masonry: the removal of one section of the long barrel vault at the south end (pub entrance) undertaken at the time that exterior alterations were made to link the root cellar to the new Student Centre and create an outside entrance to the enclosed courtyard.

Designated Features

The former root cellar at 135 Fennell Avenue West is designated for those historical and architectural values described in the foregoing, notably as a rare surviving example of an institutional root cellar associated with the historical development of an asylums in a rural settings and the architect KivasTully.

Important to the preservation of the former root cellar are:

- The original building form including the architectural features of the north, east and west facades, comprising the stone masonry walls with arched windows, the wood-framed entrance opening on the north façade, and the broad gabled roof with wood

fascia and soffits. Excluded are the modern fixed pane windows, all aluminum and glass entrance doors, and the corrugated steel roofing.

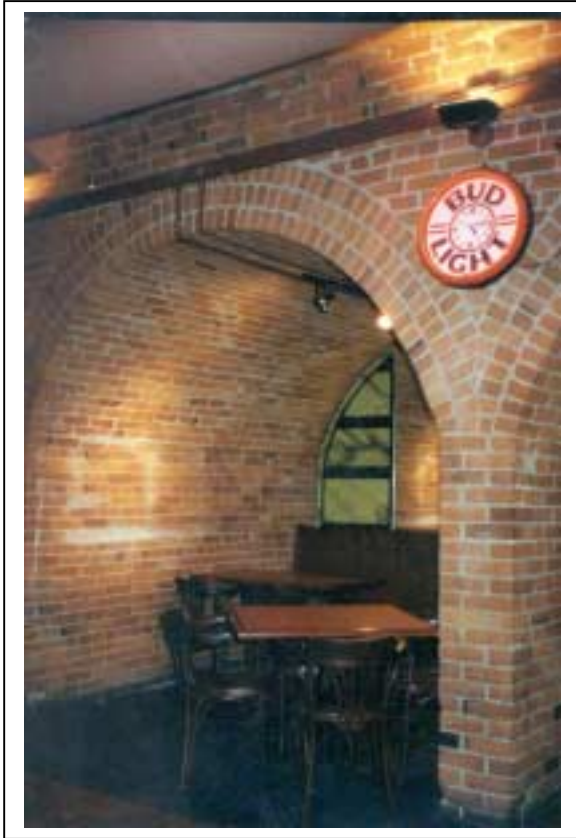
- The barrel-vaulted interior space with its long central vault sprung from two rows of barrel-vaulted alcoves, the brick masonry piers, arches and walls, stone walls of the alcoves (hidden by bench seating and mirrors) and exposed stone foundation walls at each end. Excluded are all modern additions and finishes, including the concrete floor, mirrors and built-in wood benches fixed to the original stone walls of the alcoves, mechanical ductwork, bar counter, lighting fixtures, the platform supported on stainless steel posts (originally terminated by a stairway), and the three sets of modern interior entrance doors.



The Cellar – Front entrance and side elevation



The Cellar – Side elevation



The Cellar – Interior alcove



The Cellar – Interior central vault