



Hamilton

REPORT 11-001

HAMILTON MUNICIPAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE

**Thursday, January 20, 2011
12:00 noon, Room 816
Hamilton City Hall, 8th Floor
71 Main Street West, Hamilton**

Present: A. French (Chair)
A. Denham-Robinson (Vice Chair)
Councillors L. Ferguson, B. McHattie and M. Pearson
M. Adkins, A. Charlton, M. Kirk, S. Nowak, R. Simpson,
S. Stewart-Greene, K. Wakeman, S. Wray

**Absent with
Regrets:** G. Zajac

Also Present: M. Sergi, Manager, Community Planning and Design
D. Cuming, Senior Project Manager, Heritage and Urban
Design
M. House, Cultural Heritage Planner
J. Muller, Cultural Heritage Planner
Raoul Tanna Assistant Cultural Heritage Planner – Student
A. Rawlings, C. Newman, City Clerk's Office

THE HAMILTON MUNICIPAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE PRESENTS REPORT 11-001 TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE AND RESPECTFULLY ADVISES AND REQUESTS:

- 1. Federal Building/Revenue Canada Building 150 Main Street West (Item 9.2)**

Whereas the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee is aware that a demolition permit has been applied for in order to permit the demolition of the former Revenue Canada Building located at 150 Main Street West, Hamilton; and

Whereas the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee has identified the former Revenue Canada Building as a building of concern; and

Whereas the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee agrees with the findings of Building Report 93-110, prepared by Parks Canada for the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office which conferred upon the property its second highest heritage rating of a “recognized building”

Whereas the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee has reviewed the requirements of Ontario Regulation 9/06, Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest for the purposes of designating property under Clause 29(1)(a) of the Ontario Heritage Act; and

Whereas the former Revenue Canada Building located at 150 Main Street West meets specified criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06 including but not limited to:

- the design value being a representative example of Department of Public Works design embodying elements traditional to the 1950s, combined with elements of contemporary avant-garde practice according to plans drawn up by Hamilton architect Hugh D. Robertson of Husband, Robertson and Wallace with construction being undertaken by the local firm of Pigott Construction Company Limited; and,
- the incorporation of artistic works displaying a high degree of artistic merit notably bas-relief sculptures by renowned Canadian sculptor Elizabeth Bradford Holbrook depicting iconic images of Canadian economic life (fishing, farming, lumber and industry) and Canadian wildlife (bears, caribou, beaver and geese); and
- the direct historical associations with the theme of post-war construction in Canada and the growth of 1950s government operations, activities and programs in response to population growth and public demand; and
- the associations with persons and institutions during the 1950s notably the new Minister of the Federal Department of Public Works, Robert Winter, and the new Deputy Minister, Major General H.A. Young; and
- the associations with work, career and achievements of local Hamilton architect Hugh D. Robertson of Husband, Robertson and Wallace, construction by the local firm of Pigott Construction Company Limited and the artist Elizabeth Bradford Holbrook; and

- contextual value as a landmark on Main Street West and in maintaining visual and historical linkages to its surroundings and other public buildings on Main Street West.

And Whereas the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee is mandated under Subsection 28(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act “to advise and assist the council on matters relating” to Part IV of the Act; and

Whereas Subsection 29 (1) of the Ontario Heritage Act enables the Council of a municipality to designate by by-law property that is of cultural heritage value or interest if such property satisfies the prescribed criteria; and

Whereas the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee is of the opinion that the property satisfies the prescribed criteria; and

Whereas the urgency of the current situation requires the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee to act immediately and with due diligence the Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee respectfully advises as follows:

That the Notice of Intention to Designate 150 Main Street West, a designating by-law under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and all other supporting documentation available within this period and any other recommendations that may be reasonable and suitable in such circumstances be approved

That Council be advised that for the purposes of consultation with the Municipal Heritage Committee prior to the giving of notice of Council’s intention to designate as required under Subsection 29(2) of the Ontario Heritage Act that this motion and advice shall be deemed to constitute such consultation and be in compliance with such requirement; and

That the Planning Committee support and direct such a designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act to be initiated and executed at the earliest opportunity and without delay; and

That the City Solicitor be directed to take appropriate action to designate the former Revenue Canada Building, 150 Main Street West, Hamilton, under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, in accordance with the Notice of Intention to Designate, attached as Appendix “B” to Report 11-001.

FOR THE INFORMATION OF COMMITTEE:

(a) Federal Building, 150 Main Street West (Item 9.2)

Art French introduced the matter and spoke to the draft Motion which had been provided to the Committee. His points included but were not limited to the following;

- the item has been on the HMC Agenda under “Buildings and Landscapes of Concern” for awhile. Main visible heritage features are Elizabeth Holbrook’s bas relief sculptures on Main Street façade.
- Owner has now applied for a demolition permit, so there is urgency here.

On a Motion (Adkins/Wakeman), the Motion was placed on the floor.

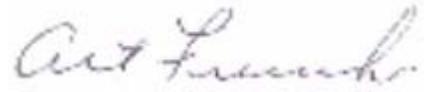
Committee discussed the matter, and raised various questions. The staff responses included the following:

- Owner initially applied for a site plan approval, now has requested a demolition permit. These two applications do not need Council approval
- General Manager of Planning and Development Department had advised Planning Committee on January 18, 2011, that the proposed development on the site looked very positive, good news for the Downtown, was in favour of it
- Designation under the Ontario Heritage Act could be viewed as a management tool, the most effective tool to protect the historical aspects of the building
- Main challenge in designating is carefully describing the heritage attributes of the building
- how the Holbrook carvings are tied into the building is not known
- Gave example of William Thomas Building on James Street South, engineer’s report was provided, described stabilization requirements, information used in preservation of heritage features

Councillor McHattie said he had heard that the owner was willing to preserve the artwork.

On a Motion (Adkins/Wakeman), Committee unanimously approved the recommendations as outlined in Item 1 of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

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

**Art French, Chair
Hamilton Municipal Heritage Committee**

**Alexandra Rawlings
Co-ordinator
Planning/Advisory Committees
Thursday, January 20, 2011**

CITY OF HAMILTON

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

**The Former Revenue Canada Building
150 Main Street West, Hamilton**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT and the property in the City of Hamilton known municipally as 150 Main Street West, Hamilton.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Hamilton intends to designate this property as being a property of cultural heritage value or Interest.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The former Revenue Canada Building is a six storey building with a stepped-back seventh floor built around a steel frame supporting reinforced concrete floors and façades of brick and stone. Situated at 150 Main Street West, at the intersection with Caroline Street South in Hamilton, the Revenue Building was built by the Federal Department of Public Works (1953-55), according to plans drawn up by Hamilton architect Hugh D. Robertson of Husband, Robertson and Wallace with construction being undertaken by the local firm of Pigott Construction Company Limited. The property's cultural heritage value is vested in its historical and associative value, design value and contextual value.

The former Revenue Canada Building is directly associated with the historical theme of post-war construction in Canada and the growth of government operations, activities and programs. This early 1950s construction reflected the aspirations and energy of a dynamic minister of the Department of Public Works, Robert Winter, and a new Deputy Minister, Major General H.A. Young. The former Revenue Canada Building represents the growth of new post-war construction undertaken in response to growing public demand and expanding governmental activity as part of the Federal government's role in Hamilton's regional economy, including both industry and an agricultural hinterland extending throughout the Niagara Peninsula.

The design of the former Hamilton Revenue Canada Building is considered to be a sober, dignified response to this prominent corner site and reflects a 1950s avant-garde approach with its asymmetrical elevations and accents. It represents a clear departure from the traditional historicist references and classical vocabulary of architectural features typically used in government and institutional buildings. The architect Hugh D. Robertson was a partner in the Hamilton firm of Husband, Robertson and Wallace, whose work includes the Hamilton Public Library (Mountain Branch). Construction was undertaken by the local and prolific firm of Pigott Construction Company Limited responsible for a number of Hamilton projects, including the Pigott Building on James Street South, Hamilton.

The structure is built to an irregular plan with an asymmetrical principal façade on Main Street West and secondary façades on Caroline Street South and George Street. The building combines traditional materials on the exterior, namely masonry work of red brick in the main façade framed with stonework used at the first floor and in two projecting frontispieces on the Main Street West façade, in window surrounds and across the sixth floor. The principal entrance is accented with delicately executed bas relief sculptures and bronze doors. The sculptures, designed and executed by nationally acclaimed artist Elizabeth Holbrook, represent the 1950s economic themes of Canada's post-war prosperity: fishing; agriculture; lumbering and manufacturing. These are complemented by a panel depicting icons of Canadian wild life, namely geese, beaver, caribou and bears.

The contextual value of this building is currently vested in its physical presence for five-and-a-half decades as a notable and prominent corner landmark on Main Street West, on the eastern slope of the Iroquois Beach Ridge. Historically, the construction and opening of a new federal building was greeted in 1954 with considerable community and media attention. The building represented a contemporary trend to build new public structures and was followed in the 1960s and 1970s with modern structures including, a new City Hall, the Board of Education building, Hamilton Art Gallery and Hamilton Place theatre and symphony hall located to the east along Main Street West.

Description of Heritage Attributes

The former Revenue Canada Building exhibits the following heritage attributes, attesting to the property's cultural heritage value vested in its historical and associative value, design value and contextual value:

- The overall massing and form of the seven story building occupying a prominent corner lot at the intersection of Main Street West and Caroline Street South utilizing masonry construction, notably red-brick and stone.
- The modest avant-garde design by Hamilton architect Hugh D. Robertson of Husband, Robertson and Wallace, that displays asymmetrical elevations and accents defining the different functional spaces of the building's interior, most notably the public spaces or the stair and elevator lobbies contained in the west pavilion or frontispiece.
- The sculptural bas relief of iconic Canadian images of economic life and wild life designed and executed by Elizabeth Holbrook.
- The entire Main Street West façade (the south façade) including but not restricted to a central, multi-bay, red brick section framed on either side by projecting multi-bay pavilions of stone set towards the west and east ends of the façade with stone defining the enlarged ground floor storey and the sixth floor storey. This façade also contains prominent stone mouldings that frame the almost-square windows of the central section, and the grouped windows of the end pavilions, all of which contain metal muntins and rails.
- The finely designed bronze doors and transom contained within the principal entrance of the west pavilion or frontispiece together with the flanking four-panel bas relief sculpture on either side containing depictions and icons of Canadian

economic life (fishing, agriculture, lumbering, and manufacturing) and nature (geese, beaver, caribou and bears); flanking metal flag holders; and inlaid commemorative masonry unit.

- The entire Caroline Street South façade (the west façade) including but not restricted to the, multi-bay, red brick wall with stone defining the enlarged ground floor storey and the sixth floor storey; and the prominent window mouldings of stone that frame the almost-square windows containing metal muntins and rails.
- The George Street façade (the north-west corner façade) restricted to the seven-bay, red brick wall with stone defining the enlarged ground floor storeys and the sixth floor storey; together with the recessed eight storey central bay, and the prominent window mouldings of stone that frame the almost-square windows containing metal muntins and rails.
- The masonry Arms of Canada (otherwise known as the Royal Coat of Arms of Canada or the Arms of Her Majesty in Right of Canada) located between the seventh and eighth floor on the east façade, but not including the red-brick wall.

The supporting material may be viewed in the Office of the City Clerk, 71 Main Street West, during regular business hours.

Any person may, within 30 days after the date of publication of the Notice, serve written notice of his or her objection to the proposed designation, together with a statement for the objection and all relevant facts.

Dated at Hamilton, this day of , 2011

R. Caterini
City Clerk
Hamilton, Ontario