

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

83 Benton Street

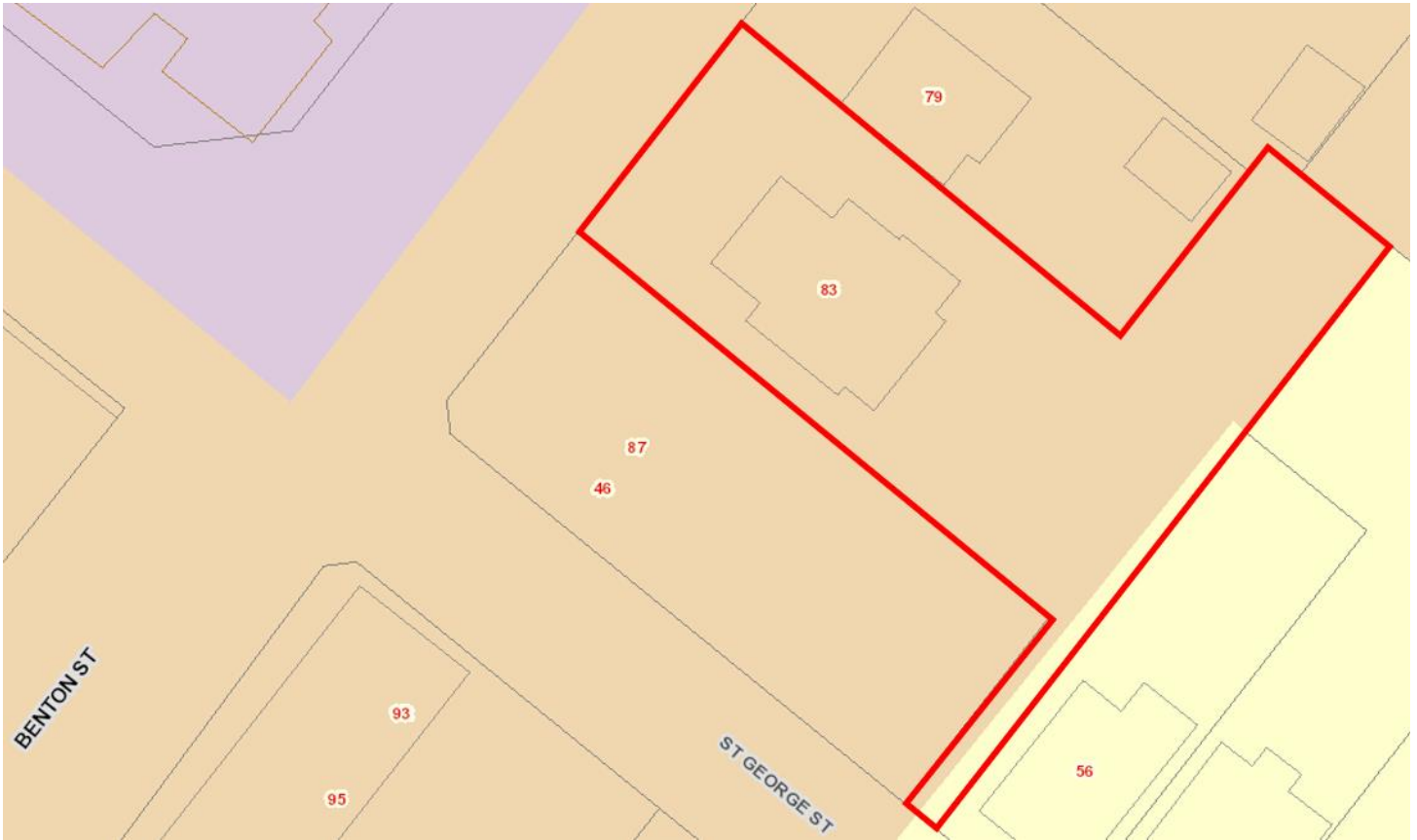


Figure 1.0: Location Map – 83 Benton Street

Summary of Significance

Design/Physical Value

Historical Value

Contextual Value

Social Value

Economic Value

Environmental Value

Municipal Address: 83 Benton Street

Legal Description: Plan 205 Part Lot 2, 4, 7, 9 and 10 Together with & Subject to ROW

Year Built: c. 1886

Architectural Style: Italianate

Original Owner: Adeline & Conrad Bitzer

Original Use: Residential

Condition: Good

Description of Cultural Heritage Resource

83 Benton Street is a two-storey late 19th century brick house built in the Italianate architectural style. The house is situated on a 0.32-acre parcel of land located on the east side of Benton Street between St. George Street and Church Street in the Cedar Hill Planning Community of the City of Kitchener

within the Region of Waterloo. The principal resource that contributes to the heritage value is the house.

Heritage Value

83 Benton Street is recognized for its design/physical and historical/associative values.

Design/Physical Value

The Italianate architectural style originates from the romanticism of the mid-1800s. Italianate buildings are often two-stories in height and, feature low-pitched roof with wide eaves and brackets beneath; tall, narrow arched windows; and, a square cupola or tower (McAlester, 1984). Six principal subtypes can be distinguished, including approximately 15% that represent the centered gable subtype that may showcase a simple or compound plan with a front facing centred gable that projects from a low-pitched hipped roof (McAlester, 1984). In 1865, *The Canada Farmer* journal printed elevations and plans for a two-story square plan farmhouse with a symmetrical design featuring a centred gable frontispiece, hung windows with hood molds, corner quoins, chimneys and panelled front door with transom and side lites (Blumenson, 1990; Kyles, 2016). These elevations and plans were unique to Ontario.

83 Benton Street demonstrates design/physical value as a unique example of the Italianate architectural style and a rare example of the Italianate subtype known as centered gable. This example of the centred gable subtype is a variation of the farmhouse elevations and plans introduced in 1865. The building is two-stories in height and features a low-pitched hipped roof with the remnants of a cupola or tower, a front-facing centered gable with lunette window, wide overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets, tall and narrow segmentally arched door and window openings, double entrance door, and a full-width hipped roof one-storey verandah with square beveled corner posts and decorative brackets. The 1/1 hung windows do not appear to be original as their flathead does not match the segmentally arched window opening. The house is in good condition.

Front Elevation (North Façade)

The front façade of the building is three bays wide and faces Benton Street.

The prominent centre bay features buff (yellow) brick construction; a low-pitched hipped roof with the remnants of a cupola or tower; a front-facing centred gable containing a lunette window with brick surround and wood sill; wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions; fascia, soffit and frieze board; segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills; full-width hipped roof one-storey verandah with square beveled corner posts and decorative woodwork; and, a double entrance segmentally arched wood door with lower panels and upper lites.

The two end bays are setback approximately 16 feet from the centre bay, are about 6 feet wide, and the ridge of their cross-hipped roofline aligns with the rear of the main hip roof. These bays feature buff (yellow) brick construction; a low-pitched cross-hipped roof; wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) brackets; fascia, soffit and frieze board; rubble stone foundation and, the eastern bay displays segmentally arched false window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills while the western bay displays segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills.

Side Elevation (East Façade)

The side façade of the original building is three bays wide. The bay closest to Benton Street features buff (yellow) brick construction; a low-pitched hipped roof with the remnants of a cupola or tower; wide

overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions; fascia, soffit and frieze board; evidence of an original chimney; and, rubble stone foundation. The middle bay features buff (yellow) brick construction; a low-pitched cross-hipped roof; wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions; fascia, soffit and frieze board; paired segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills on both the first- and second-storey; and, rubble stone foundation. The end bay has minimal visibility from the sidewalk and Benton Street.

Side Elevation (West Façade)

The side façade of the original building is three bays wide. The bay closest to Benton Street features buff (yellow) brick construction; a low-pitched hipped roof with the remnants of a cupola or tower; wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions; fascia, soffit and frieze board; evidence of an original chimney; and, rubble stone foundation. The middle bay features buff (yellow) brick construction; a low-pitched cross-hipped roof; wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions; fascia, soffit and frieze board; paired segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills on both the first- and second-storey; and, rubble stone foundation. The end bay is visible from St. George Street and features: buff (yellow) brick construction; gable roofline; wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions; fascia, soffit and frieze board; segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills on both the first- and second-storey; a door opening on both the first- and second-storey; and, rubble stone foundation. This façade also features a non-original two-storey verandah.

Historical/Associative Value

The historic and associative values relate to an early property owner, the original building owner and the Bitzer family. The property (lot 20) was purchased by Christopher Blum in 1871 (Bitzer, 2014). Christopher Blum was the great-great-uncle of property owner in 2014 (Bitzer, 2014). His niece and husband, Adeline and Conrad Bitzer, built the building around 1886 (Bitzer, 2014). Conrad Bitzer (b. January 11, 1853; d. September 22, 1903) was an honoured citizen who practiced law, held several political offices and was actively involved in various associations and boards. Conrad obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto in 1878 and went on to study law in the office of Bowlby and Clement in Berlin until he was called to the bar in 1881 (Berliner Journal, 1903). He was the first German-speaking lawyer in Berlin (Wikipedia, 2023). Between 1882 and 1892 he practiced law in partnership with Alex Millar, K.C. and in 1892 he began his independent practice (Berliner Journal, 1903). Conrad served as Deputy Reeve and Reeve of the Town and County Council in 1890 and 1891 and Mayor of Berlin in 1892 (Berliner Journal, 1903). He was a member of the Berlin School Board, the Berlin High School Board, the Berlin High School ex-Pupil's Association, the St. Peter's Lutheran Church, the local YMCA, and the liberal party (Berliner Journal, 1903). His involvement with the school boards continued until his death in 1903 (Bitzer, 2014). He also served on the finance and railroad committee of the second Saengerfest festival committee in 1897 (Berliner Journal, 1897).

Conrad and Adeline had six children who were born and/or raised at the family home located at 83 Benton Street (Koch, 1986; Wikipedia, 2023). Three of their children held political offices and were active in various associations and boards. Arno Lindner Bitzer (b. February 7, 1858; d. July 16, 1933) served as an alderman between 1917 and 1919 (Bitzer, 2014; Bonk, 2024). Armin Moritz "Arnie" Bitzer (b. October 4, 1885; d. 1967) was an electrical engineer (KW Record, 1967; Bonk, 2024). He served as a lieutenant with the Canadian Signal Corps during WWI, the Public Utilities Commission in 1939 and 1940, the Family Relief Board, and the secretary of the Kitchener Taxpayers Association (KW Record, 1967). Armin served as an alderman between 1958 and 1960 (Bitzer, 2014) and was a

vocal opponent of the civic centre project, which he appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (KW Record, 1967). Wilfrid Laurier Bitzer (b. February 10, 1896; d. 1996) was born in the house at 83 Benton Street (Bonk, 2024; Koch, 1986). He was the youngest child and was named after Wilfrid Laurier who was the Prime Minister at the time of his birth (KW Record, 1996).

Wilfrid Laurier Bitzer began his real estate career in the 1940s and retired in 1990 at the age of 94 (KW Record, 1996; KW Record, 1990). Wilfrid partnered with Michael Budaker forming the real estate firm of Bitzer-Budaker Ltd., which operated between 1983 and 1990 (KW Record, 1990). He was the president of the K-W Real Estate Board in 1951 (KW Record, 1996). Wilfrid was also active in the German community and was known as the German 'Godfather' (KW Record, 1981). He was a founding member and a long-time president of the Trans Canada Alliance of German Canadians, a founding and honorary member of the German Business and Professional Men's Association and the founder of the Canadian Society for German Relief (KW Record, 1996). His work with the Canadian Society for German Relief earned him a Federal Republic of Germany's Medal First Class in 1975 (KW Record, 1996). He was honoured in 1981 for his work with the German community that included helping German immigrants to come to Kitchener, helping them with language barriers, helping them process immigration forms and acting as a liaison between West Germany and its former citizens (KW Record, 1981). He was the Honorary German Consul between 1956 and 1981 (Bitzer, 2014). He served as a Kitchener Alderman from 1954 to 1957 and was active with other community groups including the Granite Club, the Rotary Club of Kitchener and the Concordia Club (KW Record, 1996). At the time of his death, Wilfrid was known in the real estate industry as it's "elder statesman" (KW Record, 1996).

Paul Jewitt Bizer (b. 1931, d. May 12, 2020) was the grandson of Conrad and Adeline Bitzer (Bonk, 2024). Paul was born in Toronto but returned to his ancestral home at 83 Benton Street when he was nine years old (KW Record, 2020). He attended Kitchener Collegiate Institute and Waterloo College (now Wilfrid Laurier University) before becoming a civil servant in the Saskatchewan government (KW Record, 2020). He served as a Kitchener Alderman between 1977-1979 and helped to launch the Centre in the Square (Bitzer, 2014; KW Record, 2020). He was a lifelong member of the United Church of Canada, including Trinity United Church in Kitchener (KW Record, 2020).

The Bitzer family was honoured on the German Pioneer's Day in 2012 (Bitzer, 2014).

Heritage Attributes

The heritage value of 83 Benton Street resides in the following heritage attributes:

- All elements related to the Italianate architectural style of the house, including:
 - Front Elevation (North Façade)
 - three bays;
 - orientation towards Benton Street;
 - prominent centre bay features:
 - buff (yellow) brick construction;
 - low-pitched hipped roof with the remnants of a cupola or tower;
 - front-facing centred gable containing a lunette window with brick surround and wood sill;
 - wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions;
 - fascia, soffit and frieze board;
 - segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills;

- full-width hipped roof one-storey verandah with square beveled corner posts and decorative woodwork; and,
 - double entrance segmentally arched wood door with lower panels and upper lites.
- two end bays feature:
 - a setback approximately 16 feet from the centre bay;
 - buff (yellow) brick construction;
 - low-pitched cross-hipped roof;
 - wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) brackets;
 - fascia, soffit and frieze board;
 - rubble stone foundation; and,
 - eastern bay displays segmentally arched false window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills while the western bay displays segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills.
- Side Elevation (East Façade)
 - three bays;
 - buff (yellow) brick construction;
 - low-pitched hipped roof with the remnants of a cupola or tower;
 - wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions;
 - fascia, soffit and frieze board;
 - evidence of an original chimney;
 - paired segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills on both the first- and second-storey; and,
 - rubble stone foundation.
- Side Elevation (West Façade)
 - three bays;
 - buff (yellow) brick construction;
 - low-pitched hipped roof with the remnants of a cupola or tower;
 - rear facing gable at the back of the house;
 - wide overhanging eaves supported by large (not paired) decorative brackets and small (paired) decorative modillions;
 - fascia, soffit and frieze board;
 - evidence of an original chimney;
 - paired segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and wood sills on both the first- and second-storey;
 - door openings on both the first- and second-storey; and,
 - rubble stone foundation.

References

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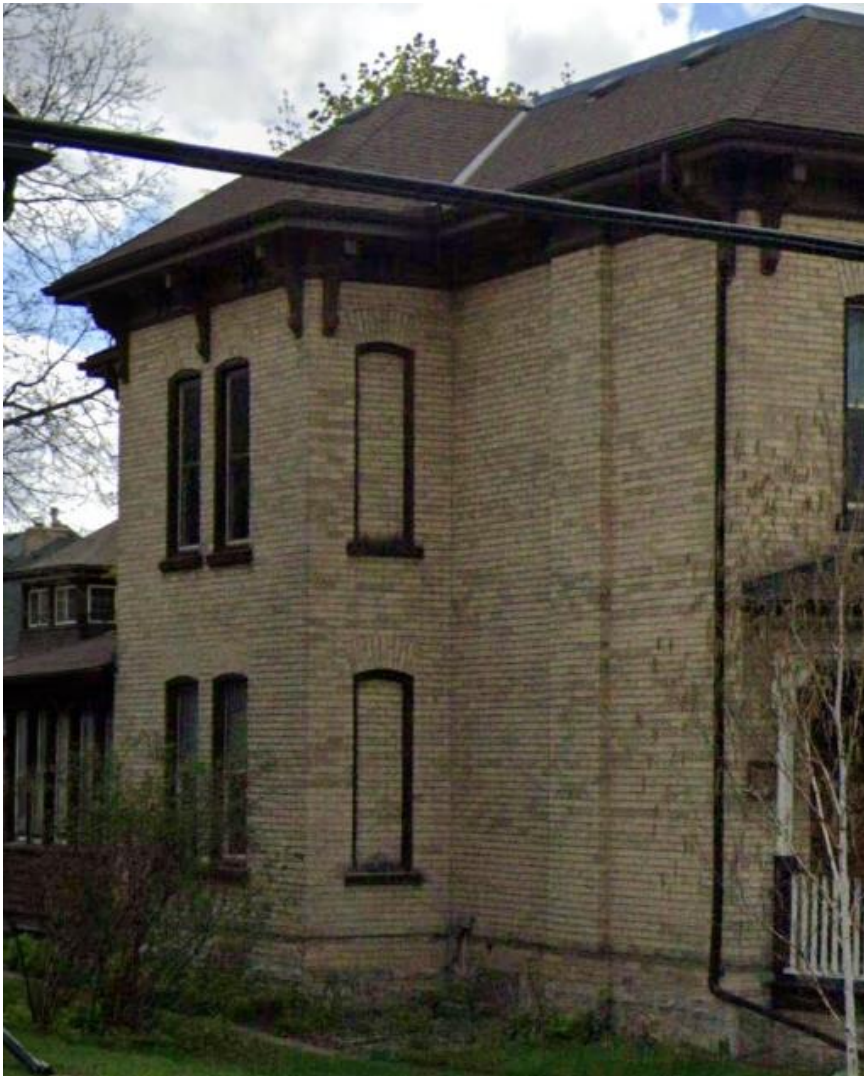
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Photographs



Front Elevation (North Façade) – 83 Benton Street



Side Elevation (East Façade) – 83 Benton Street



Side Elevation (West Façade) – 83 Benton Street

CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION FORM

Address: 83 Benton Street Recorder: Michelle Drake

Description: c. 1886, Italianate Date: July 3, 2024

(date of construction, architectural style, etc)

Photographs Attached:

Front Facade Left Façade Right Façade Rear Facade Details Setting

Designation Criteria	Recorder – Heritage Kitchener Committee	Heritage Planning Staff
1. This property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement. <i>* E.g. - constructed with a unique material combination or use, incorporates challenging geometric designs etc.</i>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.</p> <p><i>* Additional archival work may be required.</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5. The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.</p> <p><i>* E.g - A commercial building may provide an understanding of how the economic development of the City occurred. Additional archival work may be required.</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.</p> <p><i>* Additional archival work may be required.</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or</p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>

<p>supporting the character of an area.</p> <p><i>* E.g. - It helps to define an entrance point to a neighbourhood or helps establish the (historic) rural character of an area.</i></p>		
<p>8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.</p> <p><i>* Additional archival work may be required.</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.</p> <p><i>* within the region, city or neighborhood.</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Notes

Additional Criteria	Recorder	Heritage Kitchener Committee
<p>Interior: Is the interior arrangement, finish, craftsmanship and/or detail noteworthy?</p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Completeness: Does this structure have other original outbuildings, notable landscaping or external features that complete the site?</p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>

<p>Site Integrity: Does the structure occupy its original site?</p> <p><i>* If relocated, is it relocated on its original site, moved from another site, etc.</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Alterations: Does this building retain most of its original materials and design features? Please refer to the list of heritage attributes within the Statement of Significance and indicate which elements are still existing and which ones have been removed.</p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Alterations: Are there additional elements or features that should be added to the heritage attribute list?</p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Condition: Is the building in good condition?</p> <p><i>*E.g. - Could be a good candidate</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

<p><i>for adaptive re-use if possible and contribute towards equity-building and climate change action.</i></p>		
<p>Indigenous History: Could this site be of importance to Indigenous heritage and history?</p> <p><i>*E.g. - Site within 300m of water sources, near distinct topographical land, or near cemeteries might have archaeological potential and indigenous heritage potential.</i></p> <p>Could there be any urban Indigenous history associated with the property?</p> <p><i>* Additional archival work may be required.</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Research Required</p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Research Required</p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Research Required</p> <p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Research Required</p>
<p>Function: What is the present function of the subject property?</p> <p><i>* Other may include vacant, social, institutional, etc. and important for the community from an equity building perspective.</i></p>	<p>Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Office <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> - _____</p>	<p>Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Office <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>

<p>Diversity and Inclusion: Does the subject property contribute to the cultural heritage of a community of people?</p> <p>Does the subject property have intangible value to a specific community of people?</p> <p><i>* E.g.- Waterloo Masjid (Muslim Society of Waterloo & Wellington Counties) was the first established Islamic Center and Masjid in the Region and contributes to the history of the Muslim community in the area.</i></p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Research Required</p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Research Required</p>
	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Research Required</p>	<p>N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Research Required</p>

Notes about Additional Criteria Examined

Recommendation

Does this property meet the definition of a significant built heritage resource, and should it be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act? (Does it meet two or more of the designation criteria?)

N/A Unknown No Yes

If not, please select the appropriate action for follow-up

- Keep on the Municipal Heritage Register
- Remove from the Municipal Heritage Register

Additional Research Required

Other: _____

General / Additional Notes

TO BE FILLED BY HERITAGE PLANNING STAFF:

Date of Property Owner Notification: _____