

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

53 Church Street



Summary of Significance

- Design/Physical Value
- Historical Value
- Contextual Value

- Social Value
 - Economic Value
 - Environmental Value
-

Municipal Address: 53 Church Street

Legal Description: Plan 394 Part Lot 41 Plan 393 Part Lot 45

Year Built: c. 1875

Architectural Style: Vernacular with Romanesque influences

Original Owner: Unknown

Original Use: Religious

Condition: Good

Description of Cultural Heritage Resource

53 Church Street is a two-storey late 19th century brick church built in the Vernacular architectural style with Romanesque influences. The church is situated on a 0.49-acre parcel of land located on the south side of Church Street between Benton Street and Peter 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 church.

Heritage Value

53 Church Street is recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values.

Design/Physical Value

The property municipally addressed as 53 Church Street demonstrates design/physical value as an early example of a 20th century, religious building, displaying Vernacular architecture with influences from the Romanesque Revival architectural style. The Romanesque Revival architectural style originates in 19th century romanticism and is distinguished by its use of round arches (Blumenson, 1990). These round arches were considered primitive, not widely accepted, and often the primary distinction between the Romanesque Revival and the Gothic Revival architectural style (Blumenson, 1990).

The design/physical values relate to the design, composition, craftsmanship and details of the church. The church is an example of the Vernacular architectural style with Romanesque influences with many intact heritage attributes in good condition.

Front Elevation (East Façade)

The front elevation faces Church Street, is built with buff (yellow) brick, and features a three bay wide symmetrical façade with buttresses between each bay and a steeply pitched front-gabled roof.

The central bay features: buff (yellow) brick construction; buttresses with caps; front-gabled roof with brick corbels; round window opening with brick hoodmould, including keystone and dripstones; paired semi-circular 1/1 windows and window openings with brick hoodmould, including keystones and dripstones, and angled sills; front-gabled entrance with semi-circular door opening; and, wood doors with square panels, elongated lites and wood paneled transom.

The left bay features: buff (yellow) brick construction; buttresses with caps; continuation of the front-gabled roof with brick corbels; semi-circular 1/1 window and window opening with brick hoodmould, including keystone and dripstones, and angled sill; and, paired semi-circular windows and window openings with brick voussoirs and angled sills.

The right bay features: buff (yellow) brick construction; buttresses with caps; continuation of the front-gabled roof with brick corbels; and, semi-circular 1/1 window and window opening with brick hoodmould, including keystone and dripstones, and angled sill.

Side Elevations (South & North Façades)

The side facades are seven bays wide and feature: buff (yellow) brick construction on the second storey; primarily concrete ashlar parging on the first storey; brick pilasters; semi-circular 1/1 windows and window openings, with brick hoodmoulds, including keystones and dripstones, and angled sills; and, segmentally arched window openings.

Historical/Associative Value

The historic and associative value relates to the use of the land and the various congregations that have occupied the building over time, including Wesleyan Methodist Church (1842- c. 1880); United Brethren in Christ (c. 1880-1907); Congregational Church (1907-1921); Grace Tabernacle (1921-1935); Mennonite Brethren (1935-1953); Bethel Evangelical Lutheran (1953-1966); and, Martin Luther Evangelical Church (1966-present). The land has a long history of religious use beginning with the Wesleyan Methodists in 1842 (Kolaritsch & Horne, 1984-85). The United Brethren in Christ congregation purchased land and a small frame building from Wesleyan Methodists in 1868 (Kolaritsch & Horne, 1984-85).

The Wesleyan Methodist Mission dates to 1841 in Berlin (now Kitchener) when the congregation first began to meet in homes and other buildings (Uttley, 2008). By 1842, the Wesleyan Methodist Church purchased 1 acre of land on lot 41 for a chapel and cemetery (Kolaritsch & Horne, 1984-1985; Uttley, 2008). With their limited resources, the congregation of 120 people was able to construct a frame building (Uttley, 2008). The Trust of the Methodist Church of Canada sold a ½ acre of the property to United Brethren in Christ in 1868 (Kolaritsch & Horne, 1984-1985). The United Brethren in Christ congregation retained the cemetery until 1876 when the lands were sold to William Moyer and the remains/ashes were moved to Mount Hope Cemetery allowing for the cemetery lands to be sold for building lots (Uttley, 2008). In 1889, a division at the General Conference occurred when amendments were proposed to the Constitution of the Church resulting in division within the congregation (Uttley, 2008). The congregation on Church Street eventually joined the Congregational Church in 1906 (Ambrose, 1993). The Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church Golden Jubilee booklet (1999) provides a history of the congregation between 1949 and 1999. This congregation was founded by Pastor C.T. Wetzstein, who spoke both English and German. He welcomed refugees during and after WWII resulting in the need to establish a German language congregation in 1949 known as the Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church. This congregation bought the property at 53 Church Street in 1953 for \$23,000 (Kolaritsch & Horne, 1984-1985). In 1952, contractor Oscar Wiles (b. February 26, 1893; d. March 27, 1980) started excavation for the foundation of the annex designed by W.H.E. Schmalz (Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1999; City of Kitchener, 1952). The church was re-dedicated on May 24, 1953 and provided German language services (KW Record, 1953). The Trust of the German Evangelical Martin Luther Church bought the property in 1966 for \$33,000 (Kolaritsch & Horne, 1984-1985).

W.H.E. Schmalz (b. July 29, 1890) was born in Berlin (now Kitchener), studied architecture at the University of Toronto, and apprenticed with the firm of Darling & Pearson (Hill, 2022). He worked as an architect from 1914 until c. 1960 during which time he designed or co-designed various buildings and structures such as the Economical Mutual Fire Insurance building on Queen Street North, several church buildings and additions, structures at Victoria Park (e.g., entry gates, boat house), and the Cenotaph now located at Duke and Frederick Streets (Hill, 2022).

The 1952 building addition was constructed by Oscar Wiles and Sons Ltd, established in 1927 as Oscar Wiles General Contractor. This contracting company has built several houses, churches, schools, and factories within the area, with their first job being the construction of the former KW Record building located at the intersection of Duke and Queen Street.

Contextual Value

The contextual values relate to the contribution that the church makes to the continuity and character of the Church Street streetscape. The placement and massing blend with adjacent buildings and much of the building stock on both sides of Church Street, particularly in terms of setback and height.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage value of 53 Church Street resides in the following heritage attributes:

- All elements related to the design/physical value of the church built in the Vernacular architectural style with influences from the Romanesque architectural style, including:

- Orientation towards Church Street, two-storey height, rectangular plan, buff (yellow) brick, buttresses or pilasters between each bay and steeply pitched front-gabled roof;
- All elements of the three-bay front (east) elevation, including:
 - The central bay features: buff (yellow) brick construction; buttresses with caps; front-gabled roof with brick corbels; round window opening with brick hoodmould, including keystone and dripstones; paired semi-circular 1/1 windows and window openings with brick hoodmould, including keystones and dripstones, and angled sills; front-gabled entrance with semi-circular door opening; and, wood doors with square panels, elongated lites and wood paneled transom.
 - The left bay features: buff (yellow) brick construction; buttresses with caps; continuation of the front-gabled roof with brick corbels; semi-circular 1/1 window and window opening with brick hoodmould, including keystone and dripstones, and angled sill; and, paired semi-circular windows and window openings with brick voussoirs and angled sills.
 - The right bay features: buff (yellow) brick construction; buttresses with caps; continuation of the front-gabled roof with brick corbels; and, semi-circular 1/1 window and window opening with brick hoodmould, including keystone and dripstones, and angled sill.
- All elements of the side elevations, including:
 - Width of seven bays; buff (yellow) brick construction on the second storey; primarily concrete ashlar parging on the first storey; brick pilasters; semi-circular 1/1 windows and window openings, with brick hoodmoulds, including keystones and dripstones, and angled sills; and, segmentally arched window openings.

References

Ambrose, R. W. (1993). *Waterloo County Churches: A Research Guide to Churches Established Before 1900*. Kitchener, ON: Waterloo-Wellington Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society.

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church. (1999). *Golden Jubilee Short History of Bethel 1949-1999*. Kitchener, ON: Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church.

City of Kitchener. (1952). *Building Permit # 13547*. Kitchener, ON: City of Kitchener.

Hill, R. G. (2022). *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950*. Retrieved from <http://www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/2721> on August 9, 2024.

Horne, M. & Kolaritsch, D. (1984-1985). *LACAC Report*. Kitchener, 1984-1985.

KW Record. (1953). *Membership Gains Shown by Churches*. KW Record: Kitchener, Ontario.

Uttley, W.V. (2008). *A History of Kitchener, Ontario*. Milton, ON: Global Heritage Press.

Photographs



Front Elevation (North Façade)



Front and Side Elevation (North and West Facades)



Side Elevation (East Façade)



CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION FORM

Address: 53 Church Street Recorder: Michelle Drake

Description: _____ Date: July 29, 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.	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><i>* E.g. - constructed with a unique material combination or use, incorporates challenging geometric designs etc.</i></p>		
<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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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>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>* Additional archival work may be required.</i></p>		
<p>7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or 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>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>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"/> 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>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"/> 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>

Notes

Additional Criteria	Recorder	Heritage Kitchener Committee
<p>Interior: Is the interior arrangement, finish,</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>craftsmanship and/or detail noteworthy?</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"/> 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>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 for adaptive re-use if possible and contribute towards equity-building and climate change action.</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>Indigenous History: Could this site be of importance to Indigenous heritage and history?</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><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"/></p> <p><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"/></p> <p><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 type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Office <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious</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 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> <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: _____