

Staff Report



Development Services Department

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REPORT TO: Heritage Kitchener

DATE OF MEETING: May 6, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Garrett Stevenson, Director of Development and Housing Approvals,
519-783-8922

PREPARED BY: Michelle Drake, Senior Heritage Planner, 519-783-8909

WARD(S) INVOLVED: Ward 10

DATE OF REPORT: April 14, 2025

REPORT NO.: [Report Number]

SUBJECT: Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-IV-005
122 Frederick Street (The Registry Theatre)
Alterations to Exterior Limestone Steps

RECOMMENDATION:

That pursuant to Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-IV-005 be approved to permit the repair and/or replacement of the exterior limestone steps at The Registry Theatre on the property municipally addressed as 122 Frederick Street, in accordance with the supplementary information submitted with the application, subject to the following condition:

1. That prior to commencing work on site, the following be reviewed and approved by Heritage Planning staff:
 - a. the scope of work;
 - b. the methods and materials, including sample replacement stone; and,
 - c. a test panel showing replacement stone and new mortar.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to present Heritage Planning staff's recommendation for the proposed repair and/or replacement of the exterior limestone steps at The Registry Theatre at the subject property municipally addressed as 122 Frederick Street.
- The key finding of this report is that the repair and/or replacement of the exterior limestone steps will follow recognized heritage conservation practices to ensure that there will be no negative impacts to the heritage attributes of the subject property.
- There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- Community engagement included consultation with the City's Heritage Kitchener committee.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

The Development Services Department is in receipt of Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-IV-005 seeking permission to repair and/or replace the exterior limestone steps at The Registry Theatre (the former County of Waterloo Registry Office), at the subject property municipally addressed as 122 Frederick Street. The subject property is owned by the City of Kitchener.

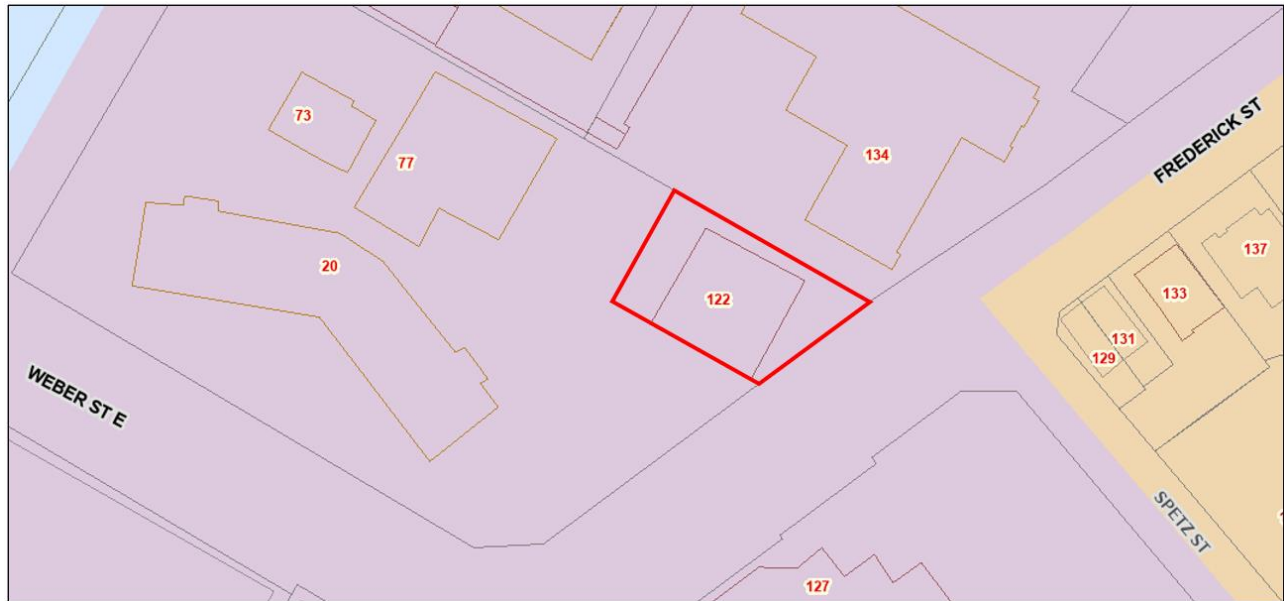


Figure 1. Location Map

REPORT:

The subject property is located on the west side of Frederick Street between Weber Street East and Spetz St, within the Civic District Cultural Heritage Landscape. The Registry Theatre (the former County of Waterloo Registry Office) was built in 1939 by Dunker Construction. The building is an outstanding examples of Art Deco architecture.

The subject property is individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Designating By-law 91-115 designates the property as being of historic and architectural value being comprised of all elevations and rooflines of the exterior and the front lobby of the interior. Designating By-law 91-115 identifies the following external heritage attributes:

- All elevations and rooflines;
- Limestone parapets;
- All window openings, limestone spandrels, lintels and sills, and metal muntins;
- Main entrance, including limestone steps, light standards, double-leaf bronze and glass doors, shaped and decorated lintel, limestone architrave and mosaic with County of Waterloo, City of Kitchener and City of Galt crests/seals.

As a result, issuance of a Heritage Permit is required to carry out alterations to the exterior of the building, including repairs which may impact the heritage attributes.

Proposed Alterations

The applicant is proposing to repair and/or replace the exterior limestone steps that lead to the front entrance of The Registry Theatre. A previous Heritage Permit Application (HPA-

2016-IV-009) approved the repair of two of these limestone steps. At least one limestone step must be replaced. Several others show various levels of deterioration and may require repair and/or replacement.



Figure 1.0 Exterior Limestone Steps at 122 Frederick Street



Figure 2.0 Existing Condition of Exterior Limestone Steps at 122 Frederick Street



Figure 3.0 Exterior Limestone Step that Requires Replacement at 122 Frederick Street

It is anticipated that the scope of work may involve both repair of existing mortar and limestone, and the replacement of existing limestone.

Repairs may be required for the mortar joints, treads, and risers. The repair of mortar joints may require the following: removal of all loose mortar; removal of dust and debris from joints; re-pointing with Type N mortar; tinting of new mortar match existing; and, tooling joints to match existing. The repair of limestone may require the following: removal of limestone that has split away and maintain for reuse; removal of dust and debris, and, the use of thermos-setting resin adhesive (tinted to match existing limestone) to glue limestone back in place. The repair of finer lines in the limestone may require patching with Type N mortar.

The replacement of existing limestone may require the following: removal of loose mortar, limestone, dust and debris; selection of an appropriate limestone replacement; removal of steps (since they are ship lapped); placement of new limestone; resetting of existing limestone; and, the repair of mortar joints.

Following completion of repairs and/or replacements, the applicant is proposing to apply KEIM Fixative, which is a clear binder, thinner, and consolidation agent intended to help deteriorating stone and reduce the impacts of salt damage.

The Federal “*Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*” provides the following recommended guidelines for masonry repairs:

- Retaining sound and repairable masonry that contributes to the heritage value of the historic place;
- Repairing masonry by repointing the mortar joints where there is evidence of deterioration, such as disintegrating or cracked mortar, loose bricks, or damp walls;

- Removing deteriorated or inappropriate mortar by carefully raking the joints, using hand tools or appropriate mechanical means to avoid damaging the masonry;
- Using mortars that ensure the long-term preservation of the masonry assembly, and are compatible in strength, porosity, absorption and vapour permeability with the existing masonry units. Pointing mortars should be weaker than the masonry units; bedding mortars should meet structural requirements; and the joint profile should be visually compatible with the masonry in colour, texture and width;
- Duplicating original mortar joints in colour, texture, width and joint profile;
- Replacing in kind extensively deteriorated or missing parts of masonry elements, based on documentary and physical evidence;
- Repairing masonry by patching, piecing-in or consolidating, using recognized conservation methods. Repair might include the limited replacement in kind, or replacement with a compatible substitute material, of extensively deteriorated or missing masonry units, where there are surviving prototypes. Repairs might also include dismantling and rebuilding a masonry wall or structure, if an evaluation of its overall condition determines that more than limited repair or replacement in kind is required; and,
- Replacing in kind an irreparable masonry element, based on documentary and physical evidence.

The Provincial “*Eight guiding principles in the conservation of built heritage properties*” provides the following recommended principles:

- Repair/conservate rather than replace building materials and finishes except where absolutely necessary. Minimal intervention maintains the heritage content of the built resource;
- Repair with like materials. Repair to return the resource to its prior condition, without altering its integrity; and,
- With continuous care, future restoration will not be necessary. With regular upkeep, major conservation projects and their high costs can be avoided.

In reviewing the merits of this application, Heritage Planning Staff note the following:

- The subject property is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- The proposed masonry repairs and/or replacement will extend the life of the exterior limestone steps;
- Heritage Planning staff will review and approve the final scope of work, the methods and materials, and the test panel to ensure that they follow good conservation practices, including the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines and the Province’s Eight Guiding Principles; and,
- The repairs and/or replacement of the exterior limestone steps will not adversely affect the character of the property nor the façade of the building.

In accordance with the Heritage Permit Application form, the approval of any application under the *Ontario Heritage Act* shall not be a waiver of any of the provisions of any by-law of the City of Kitchener or legislation, including, but not limited to, the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Zoning By-law.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the Heritage Kitchener committee meeting.

CONSULT – The Heritage Kitchener committee has been consulted regarding the Heritage Permit Application.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- *Ontario Heritage Act*
- *CSD-16-042 (HPA-2016-IV-009 – 122 Frederick Street)*

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services Department

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-IV-005