

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1254 UNION STREET



Summary of Significance

Design/Physical Value

Historical Value

Contextual Value

Social Value

Economic Value

Environmental Value

Municipal Address: 1254 Union Street

Legal Description: GCT Lot 59 Part Lot 1 & 10; 58R-1977 Part Lot 1, 2 & 8

Year Built: c. 1902 with various additions

Architectural Style: Industrial Vernacular (with modest Spanish Eclectic influences)

Original Owner: Ontario Sugar Company

Original Use: Sugar Beet Factory (Warehouse)

Condition: Good

Description of Cultural Heritage Resource

1254 Union Street is a two-storey early 20th century yellow brick former warehouse built in the Industrial Vernacular architectural style, with additions demonstrating modest Spanish Eclectic influences. The

building is situated on a 5.63 acre parcel of land located on the north side of Union Street just before Union turns into Sereda Road in the Northward Planning Community in the City of Kitchener within the Region of Waterloo. The principal resource that contributes to the heritage value is the original former warehouse building and the former machine shop.

Heritage Value

1254 Union Street is recognized for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values.

Design/Physical Value

The former warehouse and former machine shop buildings have design/physical value because they are a representative example of the Industrial Vernacular architectural style. The former warehouse also exhibits modest Spanish Eclectic influences through several later additions.

The history of the subject property is quite complex, with many additions and removals throughout the years. The main warehouse building and the former machine shop are the only two remaining buildings from the original complex that was first built in the early 1900s.

The 1894, revised 1904 Fire Insurance Plan showed that the processing factory was one-third of a mile long when it was occupied by the Ontario Sugar Company, and included eleven (11) buildings in its entire complex. Out of these buildings, building No. 2 and building no. 5 are the buildings still standing today.

Original Former Warehouse Building

The subject property has design value because it is a representative example of the Industrial Vernacular architectural style with modest Spanish Eclectic influences. It is two storeys in height, and still contains many of its original elements including but not limited to; main hip roof, yellow brick construction including decorative details; brick pilasters between bays; and segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs. The Spanish Eclectic influences can be seen in the later additions through the small arched windows and prominent arched entranceways.

The main building was constructed in 1902 and has undergone several alterations over the years. The protruding portico to the building is not original, and was most likely constructed between 2003 and 2006, along with the addition immediately behind it that was built with tan brick construction, with brick pilasters on each side and a parapet at the top. The addition covered most of the front façade of the original building, leaving only a bay of windows on each side of the original façade visible from the street. There is a single-storey addition on each side of the building that was constructed between 1904 and 1925. In 2005, the warehouse building was renovated by the owner at the time to serve as a private residence that was inspired by the “Road to Santiago de Compostela”, a century old-walk in Northern Spain, and later transformed into an award-winning event space.

Former Machine Shop

The original portion of the Former Machine Shop was built in 1902, with an addition that was constructed between 2017 and 2018. The building is one-storey in height, of tan brick construction with a hipped roof and arched windows.

Historical/Associative Value

The property has associative value because it has direct associations with the Ontario Sugar Company, the Breithaupt family in its operations, and Ebenezer Herrick Dyer (E.H. Dyer Co.) in the design of the original factory buildings.

In 1901, local businessmen were considering the idea of establishing a sugar-beet factory in Berlin (present-day Kitchener). To assess the cultivation of sugar-beets in Waterloo, several experiments were conducted in the same year, and many incentives were given to investors and farmers in the form of bonuses, tax exemptions, and grants to purchase farmland. On December 26th, 1901, Samuel Williams, who was the president of the Berlin Board of Trade, announced that the Ontario Sugar Company had elected Berlin to build its new half million-dollar sugar beet factory. In 1902, the Ontario Sugar Company finalized its purchase to buy 69 acres of farmland in the Township of Waterloo, with 49 acres being from Daniel Fries and 20 acres being from the Breithaupt Family. Operations of the factory were strategically supported by its proximity to the Grand River, which was used to deliver 5 million gallons of water daily to the factory, and the Grand Trunk Railway which was accessible via the establishment of six bank lines on the property.

A portion of the factory's land was previously owned by the Breithaupt family, and they were also involved in establishing the company in Berlin. They were well known in the community, as their contributions were highly significant to the development of Kitchener. J.C. Breithaupt and W.H. Breithaupt were the director and the president, respectively, of the Ontario Sugar Company at the time of the closure of the company.

The design and construction of the factory was contracted to E.H. Dyer Company of Cleveland. The company was founded by Ebenezer Herrick Dyer. He established the first successful sugar beet plant in the United States in the latter half of the 19th century. He was also responsible for the construction and design of over fifty (50) sugar refining factories globally thereafter. Dyer was known as the 'father of the sugar beet industry in America'. Even though the building has undergone many alterations over the years, this building is one of the last remaining from the original complex that was initially constructed, and some of the original architectural elements still remain intact and visible today.

The property also has associative value because it has potential to yield information regarding the rapid economic and industrial expansion of Berlin at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. Berlin (now Kitchener) was experiencing major economic development during time, with the establishment of many industrial companies. The establishment of the Ontario Sugar Company also significantly contributed towards Berlin's industrial development. At the time of the opening of the factory, Berlin began to refer to itself as the "Sugar Beet Capital of Canada". The opening and processing within this factory represented the first sugar what was produced using Canadian beets. Furthermore, operating the plant created hundreds of permanent and seasonal jobs.

The property is associated with Ron Doyle, a local visionary, community builder, entrepreneur, and philanthropist who was behind the transformation of the former factory into an event space. The project was inspired by the 800 kilometre Camino de Santiago pilgrimage Doyle completed in Spain in 2001. Doyle was also behind Lot 42, a local event space for high profile gatherings, and A Better Tent City, a small community of vulnerable residents in individual cabins.

Most recently, the property was occupied by the Hacienda Sarria Market Garden, operated by the Working Centre. The Hacienda Sarria Market Garden was a volunteer-driven initiative to develop an

inclusive, hands-on learning environment to demonstrate, promote, and share knowledge about sustainable local food production and environmental stewardship.

Contextual Value

The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings. The buildings remain in their original location and are still located in close proximity to the Grand River. This strategic location of the factory at the time of its establishment contributes to its contextual value even though the surrounding landscape has seen immense change in the years since. The factory was also situated close to the Grand Trunk Railway. The railway was used to bring beets from farms to the refinery, and the river was used to power the refinery and discharge effluent. The factory was built on a slight rise of land providing it prominence in the landscape.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of 1254 Union Street reside in the following attributes:

- All elements related to the construction of the main original warehouse building (c. 1902), along with the wings on the warehouse building (c. 1904-1923) including:
 - The location, massing, and scale of the original portions of the c. 1902 former warehouse building, including original features of the single storey wing additions (1904-1923);
 - The style and appearance of the main hip roof of the c. 1902 portion of the building;
 - Flat and shed rooflines on the wings of the original warehouse building;
 - Yellow brick construction including decorative stepped masonry details and brick pilasters between bays on all facades;
 - Segmentally arched original window openings with brick voussoirs;
 - Original arched window openings;
 - Segmentally arched original door openings with brick voussoirs at the south, east, and west elevations.
- All elements of the original portion of the former machine shop (1902) (excluding later additions) including:
 - The location, massing, and scale of the former machine shop;
 - Yellow and red brick construction;
 - The style and appearance of the hip roof;
 - Original arched window openings with brick voussoirs; and
 - Original arched door openings with brick voussoirs.
- All elements related to the contextual value of the buildings including:
 - The original location of the original former warehouse and former machine shop on the subject property.

References

MHBC Planning Ltd. (August 2023). Heritage Impact Assessment Report – 1254 Union Street.

Seto, S. (2021). *Waterloo Region business leader Ron Doyle, described as 'a visionary', dies at 69*. KW Record: Kitchener, ON.

Photographs



Front Elevation (South Façade) (MHBC Planning, 2023)



Side Elevation (East Façade)



Rear Elevation (North Façade)



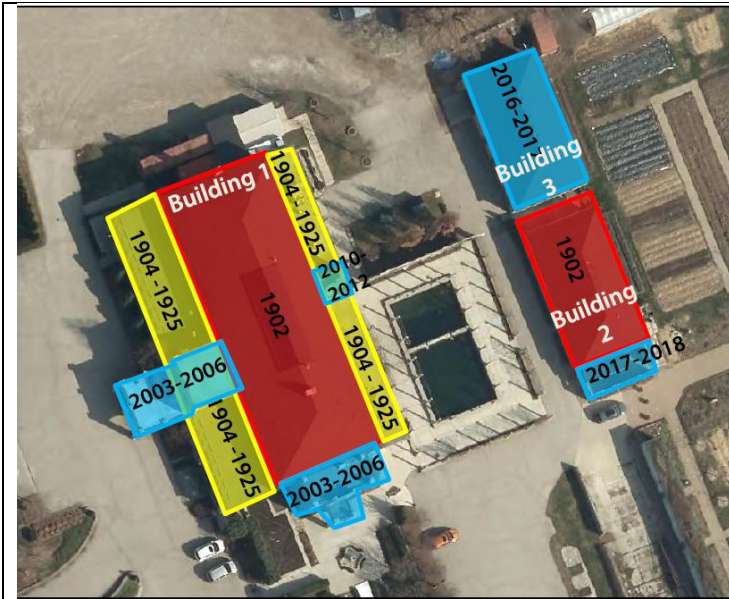
Side Elevation (West Façade)



Image of 1902 former machine shop building (MHBC Planning, 2023)



Image of 1902 warehouse building prior to 2005 alterations, facing southwest (MHBC Planning, 2023)



Aerial image with overlay of construction dates (source: MHBC Planning, 2023)