

To: Chair and Members of the Preservation Review Board

From: Juan Estepa, ASLA, CSLA, CNU-A
Manager, Heritage and Urban Design

Date: October 7, 2022

Copy: Ken Forrest, MCIP, RPP, Director of Growth and Community Services

Subject: **605 Queen Street (Lemont House) – Application for Heritage Designation**

Issue

An application has been received from the City's Manager of Real Estate, Ryan Seymour, on behalf of the owner (the City of Fredericton) to designate 605 Queen Street (Lemont House) as a municipal heritage conservation area under By-law No. L-4, City of Fredericton Heritage Preservation By-law. Staff is seeking the views and comments of the Preservation Review Board prior to Council's consideration of a by-law to amend By-law No. L-4, to include the subject property.

Background

Description

The subject property, 605 Queen Street, located at the lower end of Queen Street adjacent to St. Anne's Point Boulevard (see Appendix 'A'), consists primarily of a 2 ½-storey brick structure in the Second Empire style completed by 1882 (see Appendix 'B' for complete Statement of Significance).

Prior to commenting on the eligibility of 605 Queen Street as a municipal heritage conservation area, the following overview of the history of heritage conservation by municipal by-law in Fredericton is provided for context.

Heritage By-law Designation History in Fredericton

The first application of a heritage by-law in Fredericton was in 1984, an area comprised of approximately 60 properties bounded by Queen, St. John, Church, and Brunswick Streets, and was the result of a public process that included a vote wherein the majority of the property owners agreed to be part of the municipal heritage conservation area.

Similarly, in 1997, after a public process that resulted in a vote of the affected property owners in favour of designation, City Council added the the Waterloo Row/University Avenue to the heritage by-law, bringing the Saint Anne's Point Heritage Preservation Area to approximately 350 properties.

In 2005, City Council designated for the first time a single property, 289 Westmorland Street, as a municipal heritage conservation area. This was a by-product of an agreement with the property owner to designate in exchange for a transfer of development rights to another property.

The most recent municipal heritage conservation areas were added in 2009, in the form of five single properties in the Queen's Square neighbourhood after an extensive public process failed to secure a majority vote in favour of a neighbourhood designation. These individual properties were added to the Fredericton Heritage Preservation By-law at the request of the property owners.

To date, City Council has never designated any municipal heritage conservation areas without first establishing clear designation criteria, as well as securing the consent of the majority of the eligible property owners in the proposed heritage area, or in the case of an individual eligible heritage conservation area, the consent of the property owner.

Discussion

Eligibility for Designation as a Municipal Heritage Conservation Area

In 2015, City Council adopted the Fredericton City Centre Plan, a long range planning document that sets out a vision for the City Centre over the next several decades. A key component of the City Centre Plan, comprising an entire chapter of the document, was the identification of heritage resources and potential heritage conservation districts within the City Centre, based on the heritage designation criteria established in previous municipal heritage designation processes.

In the Heritage Resources Inventory Map of the City Centre Plan (see Appendix 'C'), the subject property is indicated at the top left by the blue arrow. It is highlighted in green indicating it is a 'significant' heritage property that meets the heritage designation criteria established by the City, and therefore eligible for designation as a municipal heritage conservation area.

The heritage value of 605 Queen Street, also known as the Lemont Building, is associated with its Second Empire design style, the significance of its earliest known owner, William Lemont, and its use during the 20th century as a community cultural centre (see Appendix 'B', Statement of Significance, for additional information).

Recommendation

Fredrictonians value their city's unique heritage resources, which is why a key component of the City Centre Plan celebrates Fredericton's unique historic buildings and encourages their preservation. Historic architecture is central to our community's identity and "sense of place," and contributes to Fredericton's high quality of life. Time and again, from the City Centre Plan to the recent Imagine Fredericton process, citizens have told us how much they love Fredericton's built heritage, and how the City should do more for the conservation of these unique, city-defining resources.

Based on the foregoing, it is Staff's recommendation that By-law No. L-4, City of Fredericton Heritage Preservation By-law, be amended to include the property located at 605 Queen Street (Lemont House).

Submitted by: _____[signed]_____
Juan Estepa, ASLA, CSLA, CNU-A
Community Heritage Officer

Appendix 'A' – 605 Queen Street, Existing Conditions



Fig. 1: 605 Queen St. – North Elevation



Fig. 2: 605 Queen St. – West Elevation



Fig. 3: 605 Queen St. – East Elevation



Fig. 4: 605 Queen St. – South Elevation

Appendix 'B' – 605 Queen Street, Statement of Significance

605 Queen Street Lemont House

Description

This 2 ½-storey brick structure was completed by 1882.¹ The Second Empire style building is situated on the lower end of Queen Street in view of the St. John River.

Heritage Value

The heritage value of this structure is associated with its design style, the significance of its earliest known owner, and 20th century use as a community cultural centre. William Lemont, son of variety store merchant Martin Lemont, was one of the earliest known owner/occupants of this house, taking up residency by 1887.² William Lemont entered the family business at age 14, and remained in the trade for more than 50 years.³

William Lemont's son, W.B. Lemont resided in this house until the 1940s. In 1949, it was proposed to convert the Lemont building into a community centre, containing space for the York-Sunbury Historical Society Museum, a reading room for young men, the Fredericton Art Club, The Victorian Order of Nurses and the Children's Aid Society. A bequest of \$60,000 from the Hon. W.G. Clark estate, probated in

April 1948, was granted to the York-Sunbury Historical Society for a museum. The will indicated that a building, either built or purchased, be named in honour of his son, John Thurston Clark.⁴

In 1949, the former Lemont building became known as the John Thurston Clark Memorial Building. Ten years later, the Province approached the City of Fredericton for a building exchange, swapping ownership of the Customs House for the John Thurston Clark Memorial Building. As soon as the deal was struck, the name of the swapped buildings also changed, with "Lemont" being restored to the building at 605 Queen Street.⁵

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements associated with the Second Empire style building at 605 Queen Street include:

- 2 ½-storey brick construction
- Second Empire style elements, including Mansard roof
- Heavy hooded, rounded window openings inset into Mansard roof line
- Large window openings on lower storeys of building

¹ This building appears on the 1882 Perspective map of Fredericton, drawn by Rev. Hubby. Given that this building does not appear on the 1878 Halfpenny Map, suggests that this structure was constructed sometime between 1878 and 1882.

² RS 419, Records of the Fredericton Municipality, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Taxation Roll, 1887.

³ *The Capital*, 15 December 1881, Thursday, p. 3 "Among the Merchants"; *The Daily Gleaner*, 15 November 1917, Thursday, p. 12 "William Lemont Dies at the Home of Son in Alabama".

⁴ RS 310, Historic Sites Branch Records, PANB, Minutes of the Military Compound Board, 8 April 1976.

⁵ RS 310, Historic Sites Branch Records, PANB, Minutes of the Military Compound Board, 8 April 1976; *The Daily Gleaner*, 8 August 1959, Saturday, p. 1-2 "Province, Fredericton Exchange 3 Properties.

Appendix 'C' – Heritage Resources Inventory Map, Fredericton City Centre Plan

