

Authority: Toronto Community Council Report No. 12, Clause No. 50,
as adopted by City of Toronto Council on September 28 and 29, 1999
Enacted by Council: March 2, 2000

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW No. 120-2000

To designate the properties at 399 Brunswick Avenue (Robert Smith House) as being of architectural and historical value or interest.

WHEREAS authority was granted by Council to designate the property at No. 399 Brunswick Avenue (Robert Smith House) as being of architectural and historical value or interest; and

WHEREAS the *Ontario Heritage Act* authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historical or architectural value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the land and premises known as No. 399 Brunswick Avenue and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Notice of Intention to designate the property and has caused the Notice of Intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and

WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "A" to this by-law; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation was served upon the Clerk of the municipality; and

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The properties at No. 399 Brunswick Avenue, more particularly described on Schedule "B" and shown on Schedule "C" attached to this by-law, is designated as being of architectural and historical value or interest.
2. The City Solicitor is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "B" to this by-law in the proper Land Registry Office.
3. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owners of the properties at No. 399 Brunswick Avenue and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Toronto as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

ENACTED AND PASSED this 2nd day of March, A.D. 2000.

CASE OOTES,
Deputy Mayor

NOVINA WONG,
City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

SCHEDULE “A”

HERITAGE PROPERTY REPORT

399 Brunswick Avenue: Robert Smith House

This report comprises the “Long Statement of Reasons for Designation” under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act for the property at 399 Brunswick Avenue (Robert Smith House). It contains Basic Building Data, as well as sections on Historical Development, Architectural Description, Context, Summary and Sources.

Basic Building Data:

Address:	399 Brunswick Avenue (east side of Brunswick Avenue, north of Lowther Avenue)
Ward:	23 (Midtown)
Current Name:	not applicable
Historical Name:	Robert Smith House
Construction Date:	1902
Architect:	G. M. Miller and Company
Contractor/Builder:	Thompson Brothers
Additions/Alterations:	dates unknown, verandah partially enclosed and balcony replaced; 2-storey rear (east addition)
Original Owner:	Robert Smith, lumber merchant
Original Use:	residential (single family house)
Current Use*:	not applicable; * <i>this does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined in the Zoning By-law</i>
Heritage Category:	Notable Heritage Property (Category B)
Recording Date/Recorder:	December 1999/HPD: KA

Historical Background:

West Annex:

When the Town of York was established in 1793, the land north of present-day Bloor Street and west of the Don River was divided into a series of Park Lots that Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe awarded to government officials. Lot 25, located east of Bathurst Street, was granted to John McGill who established a country estate named “Davenport” on the acreage. In 1821, the property was acquired by Joseph Wells (1773-1853), a retired British officer who divided the site into three allotments that were distributed among his heirs. Beginning in 1862, the Wells lands were further subdivided. Building lots were laid out around three north-south streets originally named for members of the Wells family but later renamed Albany, Howland and Brunswick. The annexation of the area by the City of Toronto in 1888 coincided with the extension of streetcar service along Bloor Street West. The neighbourhood is now identified as the West Annex.

Robert Smith House: 399 Brunswick Avenue

With its proximity to the central core of the city, the West Annex neighbourhood attracted prominent residents, including Robert Y. Eaton, president of the T. Eaton Company, who lived at 383 Brunswick Avenue. Landowners commissioned the pre-eminent Toronto architects of the period to design their residences.

William and Robert Smith, the owners of the adjoining properties at #397 and 399 Brunswick Avenue, engaged the Toronto architectural firm of G. M. Miller and Company to prepare plans for the lots.

In solo practice since 1886, George M. Miller (1854-1933) was a noted Toronto architect whose commissions included the Gladstone Hotel (1889-1890) at 1204 Queen Street West, Havergal Ladies College (1898) at 354 Jarvis Street, City Dairy (1900) and Stables (1909) at 563 Spadina Crescent, and Wycliffe College Chapel (1911) at 5 Hoskin Avenue. His work for the prominent Massey family included modifications to the Hart Massey House at 515 Jarvis Street (1900), plans for the Lillian Massey Household Sciences Building at the University of Toronto (1908-1912), and consultant for Massey Hall at 15 Shuter Street (1894). All of the above-noted properties are listed on the *City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties*.

In 1902, identical houses were completed at 397 and 399 Brunswick Avenue for William and Robert Smith, brothers and partners in the family’s lumber business. William Smith resided at #397 until his death in 1924; his widow, Charlotte, retained the site until 1931. The following year, the property was occupied by the Sun Diet Sanatorium, renamed the Health Service Sanatorium in 1933. The house stood vacant until 1937 when the Church Army in Canada began an occupancy that lasted until 1998. Robert Smith remained at 399 Brunswick Avenue until 1939 when the property was acquired by the Church Army. The properties at 397 and 399 Brunswick Avenue were included on the *City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1974*.

Architectural Description:

Exterior: 399 Brunswick Avenue

The Robert Smith House displays features of the Queen Anne style of the late 19th century. Inspired by 16th and 17th century prototypes, the style was created in Britain by architect Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1923) and his associates. Medieval features, especially asymmetrical plans, projecting wings, varied window types and complicated rooflines, were mixed with Classical motifs using a variety of cladding materials.

The Robert Smith Houses is constructed of red brick and trimmed with brick voussoirs, stone sills and wood surrounds. The building is covered by a cross-gable roof with a brick chimney and, in each gable, shingled cladding. A wall dormer with a gable roof, shingle cladding and brackets extends from the south slope.

The principal (west) facade is organized into two bays. On the right, a two-storey bay window has flat-headed window openings with brick voussoirs and stone sills. The bay window is surmounted by a bracketed gable containing a Classically detailed two-part window opening and shingled cladding. Left of the bay window, the principal entrance is elevated in the first floor. It contains a wood door with a glass insert and a stained glass transom and is placed beside an oval window with brick voussoirs. A single flat-headed window opening is positioned above the entry. The Robert Smith House retains its wood verandah with Classical columns, architrave and wood detailing which extends across the principal (west) facade and along part of the south wall (where it is currently enclosed).

The long south wall has a two-storey bay window incorporating a stained glass window, a projecting centre wall and flat-headed window openings. The pattern of fenestration continues on the north wall with the addition of a small stained-glass window lighting the interior hall and a monumental segmental-headed opening with a large stained glass window and transom. The 2-storey rear (east) south addition on #399 is not included in the Reasons for Designation.

Interior: 399 Brunswick Avenue

The Robert Smith House retains important interior elements. On the first floor, the long entrance hall features an elaborate staircase with wood panelling, stairs, turned balusters, moulded handrails and carved newel posts. The entrance hall leads into a double parlour divided by a wall with two archways and a double fireplace with carved wood surrounds, dentilled mantles, and mirrors. The fireplace in the front (south) parlour is more intricately detailed and features a marble surround and tiled floor. Its counterpart in the rear (north) parlour has a metal insert and grate. In the south parlour, the plaster ceiling and mouldings are important features. Both rooms have panelled wood wainscoting and wood door and window surrounds. Another fireplace is found in the front (south) bedroom on the second floor. No other interior elements are included in the Reasons for Designation.

Context:

The Robert Smith House is located on the east side of Brunswick Avenue, north of Lowther Avenue. The house shares its setback and landscaped setting with the neighbouring property at 395 Brunswick Avenue (William Thompson House) and the identical house at 397 Brunswick Avenue (William Smith House). In the predominantly residential streetscape between Bloor Street West and Wells Street, the semi-detached houses at 324-326 and 416-418 Brunswick Avenue are listed on the *City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties*.

Summary:

The property at 399 Brunswick Avenue is identified for architectural reasons. The William and Robert Smith Houses are identical residences designed for two brothers by the important Toronto architectural firm of G. M. Miller and Company. The buildings display features identified with the Queen Anne style popularized at the end of the 19th century. The Robert Smith House at 399 Brunswick Avenue has significant surviving interior elements. With their setback on landscaped lots, the properties make an important contribution to the Brunswick Avenue streetscape in the West Annex neighbourhood.

Sources:

Arthur, Eric. Toronto. No Mean City. 3rd ed. Rev. by Stephen A. Otto. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1986.

Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, 1900-1910.

Blumenson, John. Ontario Architecture. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1990.

Building Permits #140 and #141, 16 December 1901.

City of Toronto Directories, 1900 ff.

Lundell, Liz. The Estates of Old Toronto. Erin, Ont.: Boston Mills Press, 1997.

McHugh, Patricia. Toronto Architecture. A City Guide. 2nd ed. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989.

Subject: By-law: Designation of Premises 399 Brunswick Avenue (Robert Smith House) under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (Ward 23-Midtown)
Files: B37-H4

SCHEDULE "B"

In the City of Toronto and Province of Ontario, being composed of part of Lot 25 in Concession 2 From the Bay in the Geographic Township of York designated as PART 8 on Plan 64R-16561 deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Metropolitan Toronto Registry Division (No. 64).

The hereinbefore described land being delineated by heavy outline on Plan SYE2938 dated February 23, 2000, as set out in Schedule C.

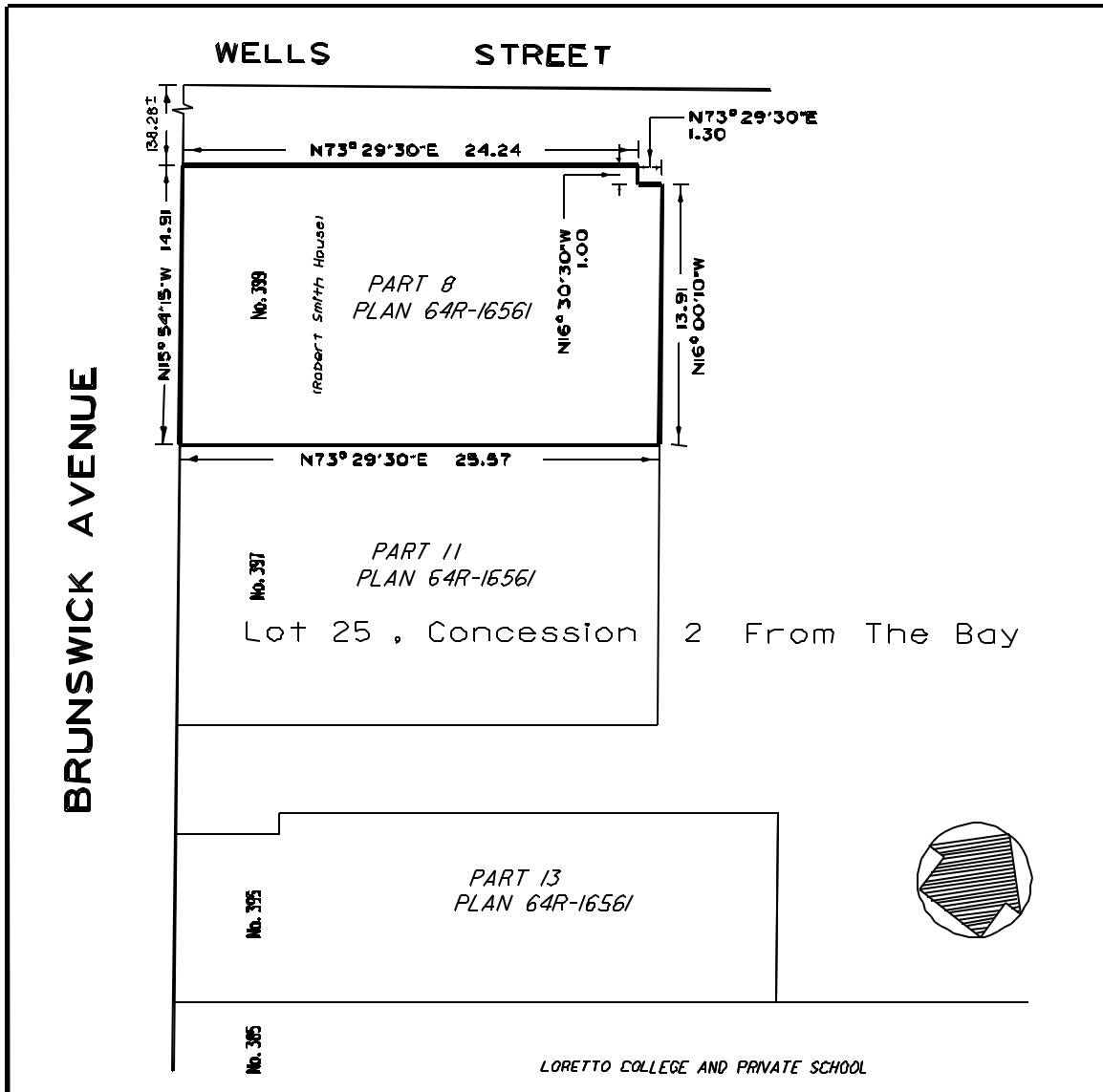
O. L. S.


City Surveyor

Toronto, February 23, 2000

WJM

Schedule 'C'



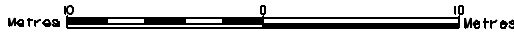
 Premises 399 BRUNSWICK AVENUE

NOTE:
THIS SKETCH IS NOT A PLAN OF SURVEY
AND HAS BEEN COMPILED FROM SURVEY
NOTES AND OFFICE RECORDS. IT SHALL
NOT BE USED EXCEPT FOR THE PURPOSE
INDICATED IN THE TITLE BLOCK.

Toronto
WORKS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

SKETCH TO ILLUSTRATE
**LAND DESIGNATED AS
BEING OF ARCHITECTURAL AND
HISTORICAL VALUE OR INTEREST**

RATIO 1 : 300

Metres  Metres

Drawn <u>ME</u>	W.Kowalenko-City Surveyor	
Checked <u>W.J.M.</u>	FILE 837-H4	PLAN SYE2938
Date: Feb.23, 2000		

SYE2938