

Glen-Leven Apartments

Description

The property with the confirmed municipal address of 1325 Bayview Avenue is worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value and interest, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, historical and contextual value. Located on the east side of Bayview Avenue on property extending from Sutherland Drive (south) to Airdrie Road (north), the apartment complex known as the Glen-Leven Apartments was completed by 1940 when it was first documented in the city directories. The garages at the rear (east) of the site were altered with the addition of second-storey dwelling units according to plans prepared by Toronto architects Chapman and Hurst in 1964 (the garages are not included in the Reasons for Designation).

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Design or Physical Value

The Glen-Leven Apartments have design value as a well-crafted example of an apartment complex from the World War II era that is distinguished by its low scale, placement on the site, and Georgian Revival features. Based on late 18th and early 19th century English precedents, the Georgian Revival style (also known as Colonial Revival) was popular during the World War I period and afterward, where residential designs featured symmetry, decorative brickwork, and refined Classical elements.

The Glen-Leven Apartments incorporate the U-shaped plan popularized for apartment complexes since the 1920s. It is part of a group of three neighbouring apartment complexes at #1325, 1351 and 1365 Bayview that feature different configurations, but share a similar scale and architectural appearance. The Glen-Leven Apartments, in particular, display a sophisticated approach to land use, with an axial design that organizes the components around the U-shaped complex at the centre, with the entrances either overlooking the adjacent streets or facing the central courtyard.

Historical or Associative Value

With its position along Bayview Avenue between Sutherland Drive and Airdrie Road, the Glen-Leven Apartments are associated with the evolution of Leaside as the community matured after World War I. In 1912, the directors of the Canadian Northern Railway commissioned the noted Montreal landscape architect Frederick G. Todd to lay out a model town on a 1000-acre tract southeast of Bayview Avenue and Eglinton Avenue East. The property, formerly owned by members of the Lea family, was the site of a Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) junction named “Leaside”. While Leaside was incorporated as a municipality in 1913, the development of its distinct residential and industrial sectors was largely delayed by World War I. During the conflict, the federal government established the Leaside Airfield for the training of Royal Flying Corps pilots,

which brought recognition to the locality as the terminus of the first airmail flight in Canada in 1918. Following the war, access to Leaside was improved with the completion of the Leaside Bridge across the Don River and the Millwood Road CPR Underpass, which attracted industry and housing to the area. The Glen-Leven Apartments were completed at the outset of World War II.

The Glen-Leven Apartments are historically associated with Howard Talbot, a contractor and politician linked to the development of Leaside. Talbot established a construction business in the 1920s and, by the close of the decade, began assembling land in Leaside. His projects ranged from detached residences and duplexes to low-rise apartment buildings. According to the book, *Leaside* (Pitfield, 1999, 166), the apartment complexes on Bayview Avenue represented his most ambitious venture in Leaside. After serving as a municipal councillor, Talbot was elected as Mayor of Leaside in 1938, retaining the position until 1947. During Talbot's tenure, he was responsible for bringing new industries to the community, and initiated the construction of Leaside's first permanent municipal building (completed in 1949) at the corner of McRae Drive and Randolph Avenue. The latter property is recognized on the City's heritage Inventory.

Contextual Value

Extending along the east side of Bayview Avenue between Sutherland Drive and McRae Drive, the Glen-Leven Apartments are visually prominent on the street opposite Mount Pleasant Cemetery. With the neighbouring Strathavon Apartments (#1351 Bayview) and the Kelvingrove Apartments (#1365 Bayview) to the north, the Glen-Leven Apartments form part of the series of low-scale multi-unit residential structures that define the character of Bayview Avenue near the south end of Leaside. North of McRae Drive, the property at 1477 Bayview Avenue containing the Garden Court Apartments (completed 1941) is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the Glen-Leven Apartments related to its design value as a representative example of a World War II era apartment house with Georgian Revival detailing are found on the exterior walls and roofs, consisting of:

- The scale, form and massing of the five two-storey apartment buildings that form the complex
- The layout of the buildings, with a large three-part U-shaped structure organized around a deep courtyard entered from Bayview Avenue, detached buildings at the northwest and southwest corners of the property that face west toward Bayview Avenue, and single buildings on Sutherland Drive and Airdrie Road, respectively
- The application of red brick for the cladding, quoins, stringcourses, and window trim (flat arches and sills)
- The organization of each structure into three parts, with the centre section protected by a steeply-pitched hipped roof with brick chimneys and the outer units covered by flat roofs

- On the central U-shaped building, the placement of the entrances to the units on the walls facing the courtyard (with access to the basement on the left or north wing) where paneled doors with single lights are protected by open porches with tent roofs, wood latticework posts, and cornices with scalloped trim
- The symmetrical arrangement of the flat-headed window openings, which are duplicated in each storey, and range from single diminutive openings to larger Venetian windows
- The continuation of the pattern of flat-headed window openings on the other walls of the central U-shaped building and on the others in the complex, where some of the entrances are placed in segmental-arched brick surrounds with fanlights
- The wood shutters on many of the window openings, which are characteristic of the Georgian Revival style
- On Bayview Avenue, the low brick wall with brick pedestals, stone trim and ironwork detailing that marks the open end of the landscaped courtyard

The six detached two-storey garages at the rear (east) end of the site are not included in the Reasons for Designation.