

City Street Cleaning Stables and Office Building

Description

The property at 426 Coxwell Avenue is worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, 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 west side of Coxwell Avenue, north of Gerrard Street East, the site contains the 2½-storey City Street Cleaning Stables and complementary Office Building that historical records indicate were in place in 1919. The property was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1981, and a Heritage Easement Agreement was registered four years later. The buildings have been converted for residential housing.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The City Street Cleaning Stables and Office Building have design value as early 20th century municipal buildings embellished with elements from the Period Revival style, which interpreted features from English medieval architecture. Period Revival details, including the cross-gable roofs with pedimented gable ends, the surface treatment of the walls with brick and stucco differentiating the stories, and the varied shapes of the fenestration, are evident on the Office Building and Stables, including the pair of rooftop cupolas that highlight the latter structure.

The property was developed by the City of Toronto to provide services to the expanding residential communities at the east end of the municipality. After the completion of a railway overpass on Coxwell Avenue, north of Gerrard Street, opened the area to development, the City Works Department constructed a pumping station at the foot of Coxwell Avenue. Further north, the Eastern Works Division established a yard with stables to house the horses and equipment (including water pumpers and sweepers) used to clean city streets before motorized vehicles were introduced. After horses were replaced by trucks, the stables and adjoining office building were used for storage. In 1984, the City of Toronto renovated the property and converted the buildings for affordable housing, with nine units in the former stables and two in the adjoining office building. The Toronto architectural firm of Oleson Worland prepared the award-winning designs.

Historically, the property is associated with the architectural practice of W. W. Pearse. As City Architect from 1914 to 1919, Pearse supervised the alterations to the Poplar Plains Pumping Station, which is recognized on the City's heritage inventory.

With their location close to Coxwell Avenue and architectural features, the City Street Cleaning Stables and Office Building are landmarks on Coxwell Avenue.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the City Street Cleaning Stables and Office Building related to the complex's design value as examples of early 20th century municipal buildings highlighted with elements from the Period Revival style are found on the exterior walls and roofs, consisting of:

Stables

- The 2½-storey rectangular plan, with the long (east) wall flanking Coxwell Avenue
- The gabled roof with cross gables, stepped parapets, and two cupola vents with pyramidal roofs and chevron detailing
- The brick and stucco cladding with brick detailing
- The fenestration, mixing segmental-arched, flat-headed, and round window openings with brick trim

Office Building

- The single storey rectangular plan, with the narrow (west) wall facing Coxwell Avenue
- The gabled roof with a ridge pole and, at the east end, a stepped parapet with a round window opening
- The brick facing and detailing, with stucco cladding beneath the parapet
- The fenestration, mixing segmental-arched and flat-headed window openings with brick trim
- The entrance on the principal (north) facade

The low brick walls marked by brick piers with stone caps that flank the entrance to the property between the two buildings are identified in the heritage easement agreement and included in the Reasons for Designation.