

John Lavelle House

Description

The property at 338 Jarvis Street is worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value or interest, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design and contextual value. Located on the west side of Jarvis Street in the first block north of Carlton Street, the 2½-storey structure was built as one unit of an eight-part row house and in place before the recording of the tax assessment roll in 1865. First occupied by a minister with the Unitarian Church, the John Lavelle House was remodeled in 1886 with elements from the Second Empire style. With the alterations, #338 Jarvis is a mirror image of its neighbour at #340 Jarvis. The latter properties were listed on the inaugural City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in June 1973, and a Heritage Easement Agreement was registered for the property at #338 Jarvis in 1987.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The John Lavelle House has design value as a well-crafted example of Second Empire detailing applied to an earlier structure. Identified by its distinctive mansard (double-gable) roof and exuberant decorative detailing, the style was introduced to Toronto in the mid 19th century with the appearances of Government House, the Lieutenant Governor's residence on King Street West (now the site of Roy Thomson Hall) and Toronto General Hospital on Gerrard Street East (demolished). Second Empire designs were especially popular in residential neighbourhoods during the late 1800s.

Contextually, the John Lavelle House contributes to the character of Jarvis Street as it developed as a residential area in the 19th century. After Toronto was founded as the Town of York in the late 18th century, the lands north of present-day Queen Street were divided into a series of "park lots" that were awarded to associates of the provincial government. Provincial secretary William Jarvis received an allotment east of present-day Yonge Street and, in 1845, commissioned the noted local architect John Howard to prepare the plans for a residential subdivision. With Jarvis Street as the main north-south corridor, mansions for the upper classes were constructed at the north end near Bloor Street. This area adjoining the intersection of present-day Carlton Street and Jarvis Street was geared to middle-class occupants. As the John Lavelle House demonstrates, the original row houses were updated twenty years after their construction to reflect the continuing prominence of Jarvis Street as a residential corridor.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the John Lavelle House related to its design value as a well-crafted 19th century house form building, updated with features of the Second Empire style, are found on the principal (east) façade and the roof above, consisting of:

- The principal (east) façade, which extends 2½ stories above a rock-faced stone foundation with a flat-headed window opening highlighted by a stone lintel and sill
- The red brick cladding, the contrasting yellow brick quoins, hood moulds and band course, the stone keystones and lintels, and the wood sills
- The mansard roof with patterned slate cladding, the raised tower (shared with the neighbouring building at #340 Jarvis) with a bracketed cornice, and the elaborate hipped dormers with pediments, brackets and sunburst detailing
- Beneath the tower, the two-storey entrance porch that is enclosed as a sunroom in the upper floor
- Protecting the entrance, the wood detailing of the porch with a balustrade, chamfered posts, Corinthian capitals, wood tracery and brackets
- The first-floor entrance that is set in an arched masonry opening with a paneled and glazed door surmounted by a glazed transom light and flanked by a pilaster
- The second-storey sunroom over the porch, which displays semi-circular headed windows, slender engaged mullions, and ornate diagonally set tongue-and-groove cladding
- Beside the porch, the two-storey bowed bay window with flat-headed window openings in the first floor, and the round-arched window openings in the second storey, with brick, stone and wood detailing on the openings
- Beneath the porch, the concealed basement entry (which is included in the heritage easement agreement)

The party walls (north and south) are not included in the Reasons for Designation.