

1213 Danforth Avenue: Allenby TheatreDescription

The property at 1213 Danforth Avenue 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 or physical value and contextual value. The Allenby Theatre was constructed in 1935 on the south side of Danforth Avenue, east of Greenwood Avenue. More recently known as the Roxy Theatre, the property was included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1985.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Allenby Theatre has design or physical value as a representative example of a movie theatre from the era between World Wars I and II with Art Deco design features. The abstracted Classical and geometric elements associated with Art Deco made the style particularly popular for movie theatres.

Historically, the Allenby Theatre is associated with the architectural partnership of Kaplan and Sprachman, the Toronto firm founded in 1921 whose practice included commissions for over 30 movie theatres across Canada. In Toronto, their most recognizable designs include the Eglinton Theatre (1936) at 400 Eglinton Avenue West, which is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The contextual value of the Allenby Theatre is related to its location as a landmark on Danforth Avenue where, with its scale and detailing, it stands out among the neighbouring commercial properties.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the Allenby Theatre related to its design or physical value as a representative example of a movie theatre from the period between World Wars I and II with Art Deco styling are found on the principal (north) facade and the roofline above, consisting of:

- The application of buff brick for the cladding with black brick and precast stone trim
- The division of the lower storey into three parts with a box office opening flanked by double entrance doors and storefronts, and a projecting marquee protecting the box office area and entries
- Above the marquee, the extended parapet with rounded corners, incorporating horizontal brick bands and a vertical stone pylon (the original theatre signage has been removed)

- On either side of the central parapet, the treatment of the upper storey with stepped and rounded corners; the brick pilasters with stone caps that wrap over the stone cornice and separate the window openings; and, the flat-headed window openings, with the outer openings surmounted by brick and stone pilasters with abstracted decoration at the cornice line
- Above the two-storey north façade and behind the central parapet, the curved stone parapet that marks the north edge of the flat roof (the remainder of the roof to the south is not included in the Reasons for Designation)

The side elevations (east and west) and the rear (south) wall have no distinguishing architectural features and are not included in the Reasons for Designation.