

Wallace Millichamp Houses (1873)

Description

The property at 592 Church Street is worthy of inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties for its cultural heritage value. Located on the west side of Church Street between Dundonald Street (south) and Gloucester Street (north), the Wallace Millichamp Houses (1873) were constructed as 2½-storey semi-detached houses and were later known as the Gloucester Apartments (now identified under a single street address).

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Wallace Millichamp Houses have design value as surviving examples of late 19th century semi-detached houses with Second Empire features, which was one of the most favoured architectural styles for residential designs during the Victorian era. The visibility of the building on Church Street is enhanced by the distinctive mansard (double-gable) roof with dormers that is a hallmark of the Second Empire style, as well as the twin bay windows that mark the separate dwelling units. The Wallace Millichamp Houses (1873) were among the earliest residential house form buildings along this section of Church Street, and they contributed to the fashionable appearance of the neighbourhood.

Contextually, the Wallace Millichamp Houses (1873) are historically linked to their surroundings as part of a group of surviving residential buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries on the west side of Church Street, north of Dundonald Street, and on the south side of Gloucester Street, west of Church Street. The house form buildings and apartment houses in this block reflect the appearance of the Church Street neighbourhood adjoining Wellesley Street East from the era when it was one of the most desirable residential areas in Toronto. As early as 1858, the Boulton Atlas showed the first subdivision of the lands adjoining this section of Church Street where additional property was subsequently severed from the “Dundonald” estate. Development began in the 1870s when the Wallace Millichamp Houses (1873) were among the first single and semi-detached houses in the block, and continued following the opening of Dundonald Street in 1903 when additional house form buildings and small-scaled apartment houses were introduced. As a collection, the Wallace Millichamp Houses (1873) and their neighbours in the block retain the scale and attention to period detailing identified with the historical Church Street neighbourhood.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the Wallace Millichamp Houses (1873) related to the building’s design and contextual value as a well-crafted example of late 19th century semi-detached

houses designed in the Second Empire style and historically linked to the development of the Church Street neighbourhood are:

- The scale, form and massing
- The materials, with buff brick cladding and brick, stone, wood and slate detailing
- The mansard roof with extended eaves, round-arched dormer windows and, on the north and south ends, brick chimneys
- The principal (east) façade, which is symmetrically organized with a centrally-placed entrance
- The east entrance, where the flat-headed door surround incorporates quoins and is flanked by segmental-arched window openings with keystones
- The two-storey open verandah with modillion blocks and paired columns that protects the east entry, incorporates a balcony in the second floor, and is a later addition
- Flanking the east entrance, the 2½-storey bay windows with segmental-arched window openings, hood moulds, and keystones
- On the north and south elevations, the fire break walls with segmental-arched window openings, with the south wall abutting the adjacent house form building at 584 Church Street
- The setback of the Wallace Millichamp Houses on the west side of Church Street