



# TORONTO STAFF REPORT

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July 31, 2003

To: Toronto Preservation Board  
Etobicoke Community Council

From: Joe Halstead, Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

Subject: 34 Riverdale Drive (Franklin Carmichael Art Centre) – Inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties  
Etobicoke North - Ward 2

Purpose:

This report recommends that the property at 34 Riverdale Drive (Franklin Carmichael Art Centre) be included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council include the property at 34 Riverdale Drive (Franklin Carmichael Art Centre) on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties; and
- (2) the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

The Etobicoke Community Preservation Panel has nominated the property at 34 Riverdale Drive for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. Culture Division staff has evaluated the site and determined that it merits inclusion on the Inventory of Heritage Properties as a property of cultural heritage value or interest.

The property, which is owned by the City of Toronto, contains the Franklin Carmichael Art Centre. The Franklin Carmichael Art Group offers arts programming on the site where the Dr. Agnes Ann Curtin House and the Franklin Carmichael Art Gallery are located. The property has historical, architectural and contextual significance, as described in the Reasons for Listing. The Etobicoke Community Preservation Panel provided research information to assist in the preparation of the Reasons for Listing.

The Reasons for Listing are outlined below. A location map (Attachment No. 1), and photograph (Attachment No. 2) are attached.

#### Reasons for Listing:

The property at 34 Riverdale Drive is recommended for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties for its cultural resource value or interest. Located on the west side of Riverdale Drive, east of Islington Avenue and south of Albion Road, the Franklin Carmichael Art Centre consists of the Dr. Agnes Ann Curtin House and the adjoining Franklin Carmichael Art Gallery. The residence was constructed in 1934 for Dr. Curtin (1889-1977), one of the first female graduates from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto following the admittance of women to the medical school in 1906. An accomplished artist and associate of the Group of Seven, Dr. Curtin founded the Franklin Carmichael Art Group in 1952 and offered community art classes at her residence. The Franklin Carmichael Art Gallery opened behind the house in 1971. Dr. Curtin deeded the property to the former Borough of Etobicoke. The site is historically significant for its connection with Dr. Curtin and the arts in Etobicoke. Architecturally, the house is an unusual example of log construction in Etobicoke that is complemented by the adjoining art gallery. A significant component of the Thistletown neighbourhood, the Franklin Carmichael Art Centre is placed in a natural setting with mature trees on the east edge of Curtin Park.

The heritage attributes of the former house and the art gallery are found on the exterior walls and roofs. Rising 1½ stories, the Curtin House features a rectangular plan with a 1½-storey rear (west) wing that extends past the south wall of the house. The structure is clad with round logs with cornerboards and horizontal moulding between the stories. The gable roof has gabled wall dormers and brick chimneys. Flat-headed door and window openings with wood trim are found on all elevations. The fenestration incorporates casement openings and multi-paned sash. The bay window, placed on the south wall of the wing, is an important element. Behind (west of) the house, a 1½-storey Franklin Carmichael Art Gallery displays a hip roof with a gabled dormer, a symmetrical principal (south) façade with flat-headed door and window openings, and similar fenestration on the adjoining walls.

#### Conclusions:

It is recommended that City Council include the property at 34 Riverdale Drive (Franklin Carmichael Art Centre) on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

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List of Attachments:

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map – 34 Riverdale Drive  
Attachment No. 2 – Photographs – 34 Riverdale Drive

LOCATION MAP: 34 RIVERDALE DRIVE



*Not a legal description; the portion of the property containing the Franklin Carmichael Art Centre (former house, studio and outbuilding) is outlined*

PHOTOGRAPHS: 34 RIVERDALE DRIVE

ATTACHMENT NO. 2



former Dr. Agnes Ann Curtin House  
(now Franklin Carmichael Art Centre)



art studio at Franklin Carmichael Art Centre