

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

July 7, 2003

To: Toronto Preservation Board
Toronto East York Community Council

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

Subject: 39 Queen's Park Crescent East - Designation under Part IV of the Ontario
Heritage Act
Toronto Centre - Rosedale - Ward 27

Purpose:

This report recommends that the property at 39 Queen's Park Crescent East be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report. The cost of publishing the notice to designate in the daily newspaper is included in the approved 2003 Culture Division Operating Budget.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council state its intention to designate the property at 39 Queen's Park Crescent East under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and
- (2) the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

The property at 39 Queen's Park Crescent East (Thomas W. White House) is included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. In 2002, the City of Toronto Tourism Division requested that the property be designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in conjunction with the onset of festivities scheduled to honour the renowned Canadian theorist and

educator Marshall McLuhan. The Culture Division recognizes that a successful collaboration can be made with the Tourism Division if designation coincides with one of several initiatives, specifically, the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the University of Toronto Centre for Culture and Technology; the naming of the McLuhan Lane roadway, and/or the opening of the “Toronto International McLuhan Festival of the Future,” in October 2003.

The Reasons for Designation are outlined below. A location map (Attachment No. 1), and three photographs (Attachments No.s 2, 3 and 4) are attached.

Reasons for Designation:

The property at 39 Queen’s Park Crescent East is recommended for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural resource value or interest. Located on the east side of Queen’s Park Crescent East between St. Joseph Street and Wellesley Street West, the property contains a residential building and two stables. The site is historically significant for its association with financier, Sir Thomas White, land mortgage specialist Lieutenant Colonel James Mason and the internationally recognized media and communications expert, Marshall McLuhan. Architecturally, the house and stables are important surviving examples of residential construction in the Queen’s Park neighbourhood.

Built in 1903 according to the designs of Toronto architect George W. Gouinlock, the Thomas W. White House blends elements of the revival styles that were popular during the early 20th century. The heritage attributes of the building are found on the exterior and interior. With brick cladding, an irregular plan and varied massing, the building stands 2½-stories on a stone foundation. Its peaked roof has slate cladding, semi-circular, shed- and peaked-roofed dormers, clustered chimneys, pendants and finials. The front (west) entrance is sheltered by an open porch with paired columns supporting a pediment with mock half-timbering, vergeboard and a drop pendant. The front door, placed in an elaborate stone surround with truncated ionic columns, quoining and a keystone, is surmounted by an entablature with an entrance light. Fenestration incorporates segmental openings with stone sills and wood trim and, on the rear (east) elevation, some flat-headed openings. Single, double, triple and quadruple window groupings contain combinations of clear, coloured and stained glass, the latter with crests and fleur-de-lis motifs. Important interior elements are found in the basement, first and second levels, which display plaster mouldings throughout and wood applied to panelling, pilasters, wainscoting, floors, doors and surrounds. Tile-faced mantelpieces with wooden surrounds are found on each level. The built-in cabinets in the front room and dining areas and the pocket doors leading to the front hall are additional features. Specific to the stair are the globe fixtures, turned balusters, stained glass stairwell window, and the cased opening above the landing to the second floor.

Located behind the Thomas W. White House, the south stable was built after 1900 and has been occupied almost continuously since 1968 by the Centre for Culture and Technology at the University of Toronto, founded by Marshall McLuhan. Heritage attributes exist on the exterior and interior of the building. The 1½-storey structure incorporates a rectangular plan with brick cladding and brick and stone detailing. The pitched roof has peaked and shed-roofed dormers with returned eaves and multi-paned windows with wood trim. The pattern of the fenestration, the front door and second-storey (north) door with sidelights and a hoist on the north elevation

are important exterior elements. The interior has wood panelling, simple mouldings and cased and arched openings. The first-floor mural entitled 'Pied Pipers All' by French designer René Cera is an important feature.

The north stable was reapportioned to the site from the neighbouring lot at 43 Queen's Park Crescent East, a property originally owned by Lieutenant Colonel James Mason. Designed by Toronto architect George W. Gouinlock in 1903, it is a good example of a Tudor Revival outbuilding with a rectangular plan. Heritage attributes are found on the exterior of the building. The stable rises two stories beneath a cross-gabled roof with exposed eaves and a wooden lantern. The first storey is clad in brick with limestone quoining and, above a dentil course, the second storey has plaster and wood mock half timbering. The window and door configuration incorporates round-headed openings with exaggerated voussoirs on the first storey and flat-headed openings with wooden sills and lintels on the second storey. The highest door in the west elevation exhibits fixed, multi-paned glass and braced wooden panels while, on the north and south elevations, tripartite windows contain six-over-one glazing beneath shaped wooden lintels.

Comments:

Culture Division staff recommend that the property at 39 Queen's Park Crescent East be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Conclusions:

It is recommended that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 39 Queen's Park Crescent East under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Contact:

Rita Davies
Executive Director of Culture
Tel: 416-397-5323
Fax: 416-395-0278
E-mail: rdavies@toronto.on.ca

Joe Halstead
Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

List of Attachments:

- Attachment No. 1 Location Map – 39 Queen's Park Crescent East
- Attachment No. 2 Photograph – 39 Queen's Park Crescent East (Thomas W. White House)
- Attachment No. 3 Photograph – 39 Queen's Park Crescent East (North Stable)
- Attachment No. 4 Photograph – 39 Queen's Park Crescent East (South Stable)