

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

December 6, 2004

To: Toronto Preservation Board
Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Subject: 425 Cherry Street (Canadian National Railways Office Building) - Inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties
Toronto Centre-Rosedale - Ward 28

Purpose:

This report recommends that the property at 425 Cherry Street (Canadian National Railways Office Building) 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 425 Cherry Street (Canadian National Railways Office Building) 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:

As part of its review of potential heritage properties in the West Donlands area, staff identified the property at 425 Cherry Street. Staff have evaluated the property and determined that it merits inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The inclusion of the property on the Inventory of Heritage Properties would enable staff to monitor any applications affecting it and encourage the retention of its character defining features.

Comments:

A location map (Attachment No. 1) and photographs (Attachment No. 2) are attached. The Reasons for Listing are listed below.

Reasons for Listing

The property at 425 Cherry Street is recommended for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties for its cultural resource value or interest. The construction of the office building in 1923 followed the federal government's incorporation of Canadian National Railways (CNR) as an amalgamation of five defunct railway companies. Built on the northeast corner of Front Street East and Cherry Street, the building was later occupied by the CN Police and used by the CNR until 1970.

The site has been associated with railway uses since the turn of the 20th century when the Grand Trunk Railway (one of the companies absorbed by the CNR) established freight yards in this location. Contextually, the Canadian National Railways Office Building is important in relation to the former Palace Street School, located on the southeast corner of Front and Cherry Streets, opposite. Dating to 1859, the former school (later converted to a hotel and currently known as the Canary Restaurant) is recognized on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The Canadian National Railways Office Building complements the Palace Street School with its setback on a corner lot and its low-scale brick-clad form.

The heritage attributes of the Canadian National Railways Office Building are found on the exterior walls and roof. Rising two stories above a stone base with window openings, the structure is clad with red brick and trimmed with brick, precast stone and wood. On the north elevation, a brick chimney extends above the low-pitched gable roof, while a tripartite parapet with stone trim, a blind rondelle and brick corbelling marks the principal (west) façade. Facing Cherry Street, the west wall is organized into three bays by brick piers with stone caps. The main entrance is centred in the first floor where the surround is marked by brick voussoirs. On either side of the entry, pairs of large segmental-arched window openings display brick voussoirs and stone sills. In the second storey, a pair of segmental-arched window openings is placed above the entry, while the outer bays display trios of segmental-arched window openings, some with wood shutters. The side (north and south) elevations extend four bays where the organization and detailing of the fenestration is repeated from the west façade. Secondary entries are found on the latter walls, with the door opening on the south elevation surmounted by a brick panel. There are no significant features on the rear (east) wall.

Conclusions:

It is recommended that City Council include the property at 425 Cherry Street (Canadian National Railways Office Building) on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

Contact:

Rita Davies
Executive Director of Culture
Tel: 416-397-5323
Fax: 416-392-5600
E-mail: rdavies@toronto.ca

Joe Halstead
Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

List of Attachments:

Attachment No. 1 – location map (425 Cherry Street)
Attachment No. 2 – photographs (425 Cherry Street)





