

# TORONTO STAFF REPORT

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August 4, 2005

To: Toronto Preservation Board  
Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Director, Policy & Research, City Planning Division

Subject: 10 Toronto Street (Seventh Post Office) - Intention to Designate under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*  
Toronto Centre-Rosedale - Ward 28

Purpose:

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 10 Toronto Street (Seventh Post Office) 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 of intention to designate in the daily newspaper is included in the approved 2005 Policy and Research budget.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council state its intention to designate the property at 10 Toronto Street (Seventh Post Office) under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- (2) if there are no objections to the designation in accordance with Section 29(6) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the solicitor be authorized to introduce the Bills in Council designating the property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
- (3) if there are any objections in accordance with Section 29(7) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Clerk be directed to refer the proposed designation to the Conservation Review Board; and
- (4) the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

City Council listed the property at 10 Toronto Street on the first City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in June 1973. Constructed as Toronto's Seventh Post Office in 1851-1853, in 1959 the property was acquired by financier E. P. Taylor as the headquarters of Argus Corporation. More recently, the building has served as the offices of Hollinger Corporation.

Given the recent changes at Hollinger and the heritage importance of the building, it is recommended that City Council state its intention to designate the property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Comments:

A location map (Attachment No. 1) and photographs (Attachment No. 2) are attached.

The following Statement of Reasons for Designation is intended for publication according to the provisions of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The Reasons for Designation are attached (Attachment No. 3) and include a description of the heritage attributes of the property. The complete Reasons for Designation will be served on the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust and included in the designating by-law.

Statement of Reasons for Designation

The property at 10 Toronto Street is recommended for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural resource value or interest. Completed in 1851-1853, the Seventh Post Office (later the headquarters of Argus Corporation) is one of Toronto's earliest surviving stone buildings and a city-wide landmark.

The Reasons for Designation, including a description of the heritage attributes of the property, are available for viewing from the City Clerk's Department or from Heritage Preservation Services, Policy and Research, City Planning Division, City of Toronto.

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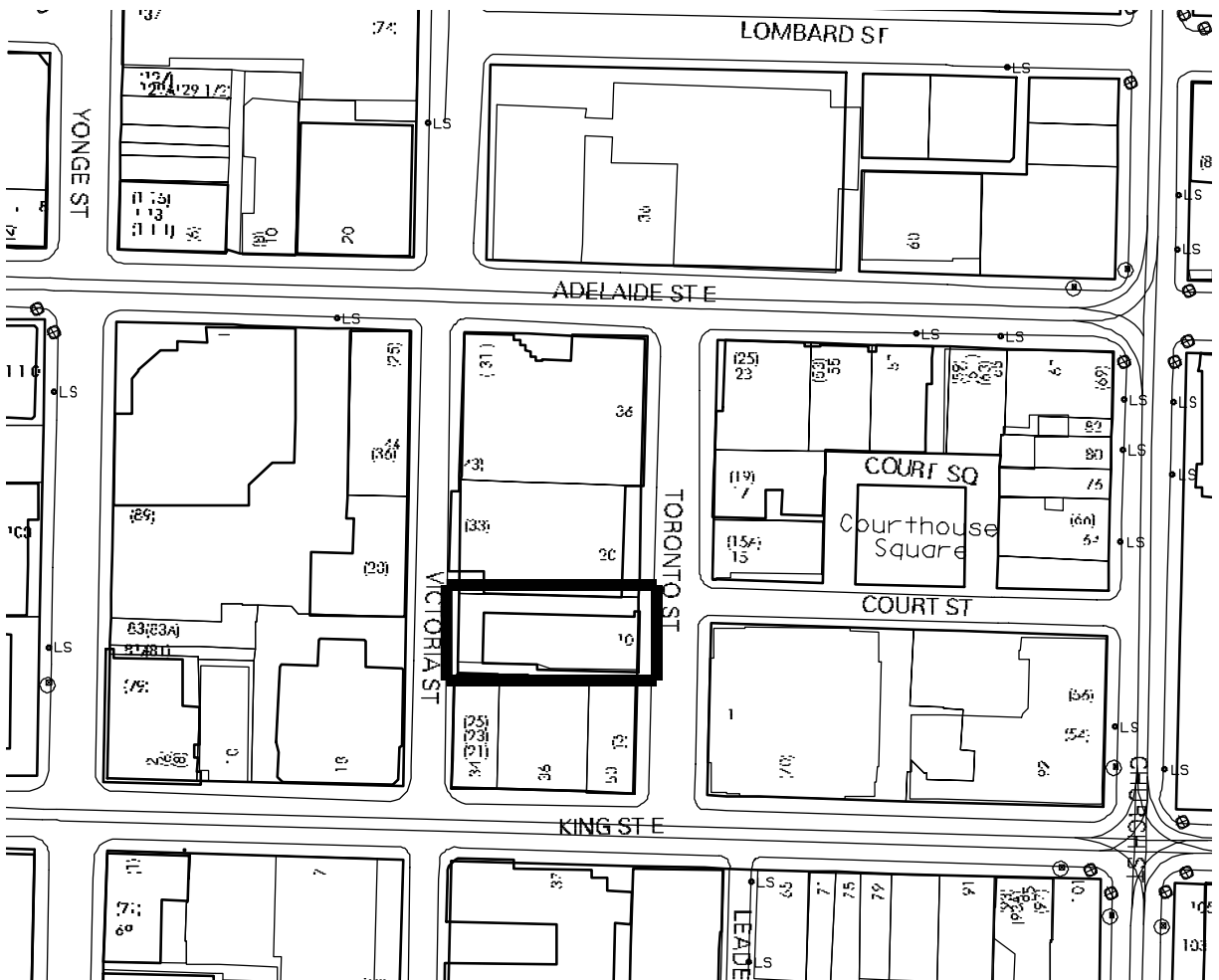
Barbara Leonhardt  
Director, Policy & Research

List of Attachments:

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map (10 Toronto Street)

Attachment No. 2 - Photographs (10 Toronto Street)

Attachment No. 3 – Reasons for Designation (10 Toronto Street)





principal (east) facade



rear (west) wall

The property at 10 Toronto Street is worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural resource value or interest. In 1851, when Britain relinquished control of postal services in the pre-Confederation United Provinces of Canada (present-day Ontario and Quebec), the Legislature of Canada West authorized the construction of the Seventh Post Office in Toronto. The building was completed in 1853 on the west side of Toronto Street, between King Street West and Adelaide Street West. Architect Frederic Cumberland prepared the plans during the period when his partnership with Thomas Ridout ended and he formed a new architectural firm with William Storm. Cumberland's design incorporated separate entrances for men and women, with a side (south) entry to provide access to the second floor. The Seventh Post Office became the offices for the Department of Inland Revenue (the precursor of Revenue Canada) in 1872. Two years later, architect Henry Langley oversaw alterations to the building that replaced the two east entrances with a single central entry. The building served as a branch of the Bank of Canada beginning in 1937. Toronto financier, E. P. Taylor, acquired the site in 1959 as the headquarters of Argus Corporation, the investment and holding company he founded in 1945. Under Taylor's direction, a third storey was added to the rear (west) end of the structure. The federal government designated the Seventh Post Office as a National Historic Site in 1958. The property at 10 Toronto Street was listed on the inaugural City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1973.

The Seventh Post Office is architecturally significant for its Greek Revival design and as an early surviving stone building in Toronto from the same period as St. Lawrence Hall and St. James' Cathedral (the latter was also designed by Cumberland). It is representative of the practice of the early Toronto architect, Frederic Cumberland, whose design was inspired by the Erectheum Temple at the Acropolis. Historically, it is one of only two surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century post offices in Toronto (the Fourth Post Office, with portions dating to 1825-1827, survives at 252 Adelaide Street East where it is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*). The Seventh Post Office is city-wide landmark and an important contextual feature on Toronto Street, where the former Consumers' Gas Company Building (1876) at #17 and Excelsior Life Building (1914-1915) at #36 are designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The heritage attributes of the Seventh Post Office are found on the exterior walls and roof. Clad with limestone, the structure rises three stories, with the uppermost floor concealed behind the colossal portico that marks the principal (east) façade. On this wall, stout corner piers support the plain entablature, which is crowned by the Royal Arms of England. Four semi-engaged Ionic columns organize the openings. The main entrance (dating to 1874) is centered in the lower storey where double panelled wood doors are placed in a Classical surround with a brackets and a fanlight (a similar entry was added to the west wall). On either side, the flat-headed window openings (originally door openings) contain multi-paned sash windows. Above a cornice with dentils, the second-storey window openings have bracketed sills and are slightly reduced in height. Similar window openings (some blind) are placed on the side (north and south) elevations and the rounded rear (west) wall, where the third-storey addition is distinguished by the colour of the stonework.