

Authority: Toronto and East York Community Council Item 32.4,
as adopted by City of Toronto Council on March 31 and April 1, 2010
Enacted by Council: December 1, 2011

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW No. 1318-2011

**To designate the property at 19 and 21 Dundas Square (Hermant Buildings 1913 and 1929)
as being of cultural heritage value or interest.**

WHEREAS authority was granted by Council to designate the property at 19 and 21 Dundas Square, municipally known as 21 Dundas Square, (Hermant Buildings 1913 and 1929) as being of cultural heritage value or interest; and

WHEREAS the *Ontario Heritage Act* authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures located thereon, to be of cultural heritage value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the land and premises known as 21 Dundas Square and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust, a Notice of Intention to designate the property and has caused the Notice of Intention to be posted on the City's web site for a period of 30 days in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 162, Notice, Public, Article II, § 162-4, Notice requirements under the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and

WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "A" to this by-law; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection was served upon the Clerk of the municipality;

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The property at 21 Dundas Square, more particularly described in Schedule "B" and shown on Schedule "C" attached to this by-law, is designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest.
2. The City Solicitor is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "B" to this by-law in the proper Land Registry Office.
3. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owners of the property at 21 Dundas Square and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust and to cause notice of this by-law to be posted on the City's web site for a period of 30 days in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 162, Notice, Public, Article II, § 162-4, Notice requirements under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

ENACTED AND PASSED this 1st day of December, A.D. 2011.

FRANCES NUNZIATA,
Speaker

ULLI S. WATKISS,
City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

SCHEDULE "A"

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION (STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE)

19 Dundas Square: Hermant Building (1913)

Description

The property at 19 Dundas Square is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, associative and contextual value. Located on the south side of Dundas Square, west of Victoria Street, the Hermant Building (1913) is a 10-storey commercial office building, which is adjoined by the 15-storey commercial office structure, also known as the Hermant Building (1929) at 21 Dundas Square. Both properties are recognized on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Hermant Building (1913) has design value as a representative example of an early 20th century commercial building that displays a high degree of craftsmanship with its application of decorative terra cotta. The building is illustrated in *Terra Cotta: artful deceivers* (1990) as one of a select group of surviving buildings in Toronto that retain this type of fireproof clay cladding. The Hermant Building (1913) also demonstrates technological achievement for its early use of reinforced concrete construction to support the heavy manufacturing equipment required by the original principal occupant, the Imperial Optical Company of Canada. As constructed, the building had an innovative glazed wall system with large pivoting windows that gave the north façade the appearance of transparency.

Historically, the Hermant Building (1913) is associated with Percy Hermant, a person of significance in the community as a businessman and philanthropist. In 1900, Hermant founded the Imperial Optical Company, which became the largest of its type in Canada for the production and sale of optical instruments, eye glasses and other visual aids. Under the leadership of Percy Hermant and his son, Sydney, Imperial Optical was also influential in the training and accreditation of opticians in Canada. Percy Hermant sponsored scholars at the University of Toronto and secondary schools in the city, and was president of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of Toronto.

The Hermant Building (1913) was designed by the prolific Toronto architectural firm of Bond and Smith. After forming a partnership at the close of the 19th century, Charles Herbert Acton Bond and Sandford Fleming Smith became the sought-after designers for residential edifices in the Forest Hill, Poplar Plains and Annex neighbourhoods. Their practice included a range of building types, including commercial commissions for the Ideal Bread Company Factory (1912) on Dovercourt Road and the Mason and Risch Piano Company Warehouse (1911) on King Street West, with the latter project involving the application of decorative terra cotta. During the same period, Bond and Smith completed the Hermant Building (1913) and relocated their office to the premises. The pair's plans for the Hermant Building (1913) were profiled in the April 1914 issue of *Construction* magazine.

Contextually, the Hermant Buildings at 19 and 21 Dundas Square together form a pair of landmark buildings overlooking Dundas Square. When completed in 1913, the first Hermant Building was briefly the tallest building in Toronto when most of the early skyscrapers were located in the city's financial district to the south. The adjoining Hermant Building surpassed its neighbour in height and anchored the southwest corner of Victoria Street. With the recent creation of public open space and amenities on Dundas Square, the Hermant Buildings (1913 and 1929) have gained greater visibility in their setting.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 19 Dundas Square are:

- The commercial office building completed in 1913.
- The scale, form and massing of the structure, which rises 10 stories to include the penthouse.
- The reinforced concrete construction with white terra cotta cladding.
- The flat roofline with a penthouse on the south end and a stepped parapet on the principal (north) façade.
- The organization of the principal (north) façade above the first floor storefront by piers that extend from the second to the ninth floor where they are ornamented with classical motifs.
- The fenestration on the north façade, with flat-headed window openings, some of which have metal grilles and railings.
- The setting of the building on the south side of Dundas Square, west of Victoria Street and beside the Hermant Building (1929) at 21 Dundas Square.

21 Dundas Square: Hermant Building (1929)

Description

The property at 21 Dundas Square is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, associative and contextual value. Located on the southwest corner of Dundas Square and Victoria Street, the Hermant Building (1929) is a 15-storey commercial office building, which is adjoined by the 10-storey commercial office structure, also known as the Hermant Building (1913) at 19 Dundas Square. Both properties are recognized on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Hermant Building (1929) has design value as a representative example of an early 20th century commercial building that displays a high degree of craftsmanship with its Art Deco influences. Its design, as a mid-sized skyscraper, employed the stylized classical Art Deco motifs on the exterior and interior, with decorative paneling along the roofline facing Dundas Square and Victoria Street, as well as crown moulding on the first-floor lobby.

Historically, the Hermant Building (1929) is associated with Percy Hermant, a person of significance in the community as a businessman and philanthropist. In 1900, Hermant founded the Imperial Optical Company, which became the largest of its type in Canada for the production and sale of optical instruments, eye glasses and other visual aids. Under the leadership of Percy Hermant and his son, Sydney, Imperial Optical was influential in the training and accreditation of opticians in Canada. Percy Hermant sponsored scholars at the University of Toronto and secondary schools in the city, and was president of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of Toronto.

The Hermant Building (1929) was designed by Benjamin Brown (1890-1974), purportedly the first practicing Jewish architect in Toronto. Brown established a private practice in 1913 and "was soon sought after by many Jewish clients in the clothing trade who commissioned him to design functional loft buildings constructed of reinforced concrete and dressed in stylish Art Deco cladding of cut stone and brick" (Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1210). Among his best known projects are the series of commercial warehouses on Spadina Avenue that are recognized on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties, with the Tower Building (1927) at #110, Balfour Building (1930) at #119, and Fashion Building (1929) at #126, as well as the neighbouring Commodore Building (1929) at 317 Adelaide Street West. It was during this period of activity that Brown received the commission for the Hermant Building, with the plans prepared in 1929.

Contextually, the Hermant Buildings at 19 and 21 Dundas Square together form a pair of landmark buildings overlooking Dundas Square. When completed in 1913, the first Hermant Building was briefly the tallest building in Toronto when most of the early skyscrapers were located in the city's financial district to the south. The adjoining Hermant Building surpassed its neighbour in height and anchored the southwest corner of Victoria Street. With the recent creation of public open space and amenities on Dundas Square, the Hermant Buildings (1913 and 1929) have gained greater visibility in their setting.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 21 Dundas Square are:

- The commercial office building completed in 1929.
- The scale, form and massing of the structure, which rises 15 stories to include the penthouse.
- The buff brick cladding with cast stone detailing.
- The flat roofline with a penthouse on the south end and Art-Deco inspired stone panels along the north and east edges.

- The organization of the principal (north) and east façades above the first floor storefronts by piers that extend from the second through the 14th floors and are separated at the 13th- and 14th-floors by relief panels with Art Deco designs.
- The fenestration on the north and east facades, with the flat-headed window openings.
- On the first-floor interior, the lobby with a stepped ceiling and Art-Deco inspired crown mouldings.
- The setting of the building on the southwest corner of Dundas Square and Victoria Street, beside the Hermant Building (1913) at 19 Dundas Square.

SCHEDULE "B"

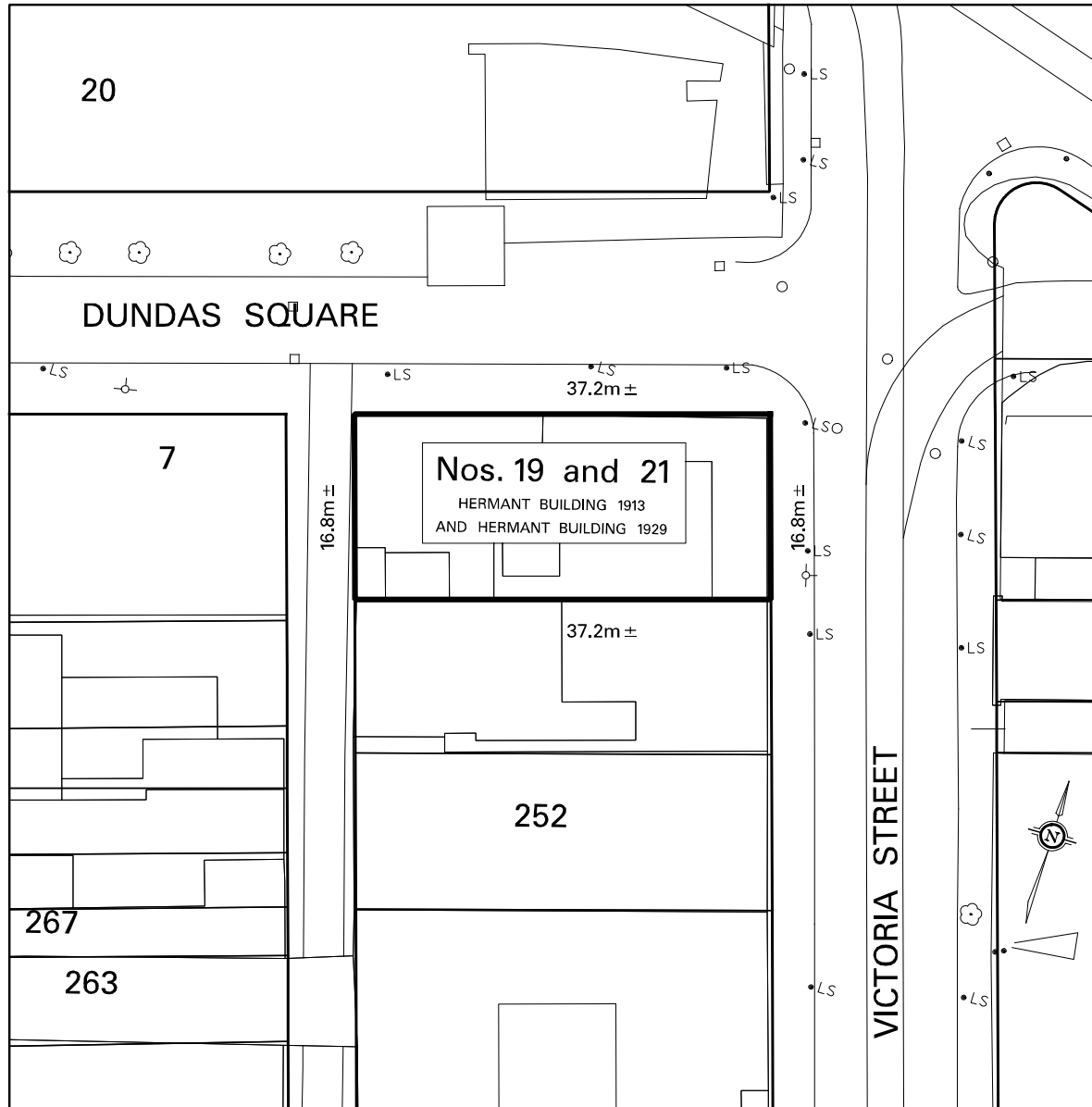
Part of PIN 21098-0091 (R)

Lot 22 on the west side of Victoria Street on Plan 22A

City of Toronto Province of Ontario
Registry Division of the Toronto Registry Office (No. 66)

The hereinbefore described land being delineated by heavy outline on Sketch No. PS-2010-091 dated November 12, 2010, as set out in Schedule "C".

SCHEDULE "C"



Toronto

TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION
SURVEY & MAPPING SERVICES

NOTE:
THIS SKETCH IS NOT
A PLAN OF SURVEY
AND HAS BEEN COMPILED
FROM SURVEY NOTES AND
OFFICE RECORDS. IT SHALL
NOT BE USED EXCEPT FOR
THE PURPOSE INDICATED
IN THE TITLE BLOCK

CHECKED BY: JOHN HOUSE
PREPARED BY: DWAYNE PITT

PROPERTY INFORMATION SHEET

NOS. 19 AND 21 DUNDAS SQUARE (HERMANT
BUILDING 1913 AND HERMANT BUILDING 1929)
LAND DESIGNATED AS BEING OF CULTURAL
HERITAGE VALUE AND INTEREST.

(NOT TO SCALE)

WARD 27 – TORONTO CENTRE-ROSEDALE
DATE: NOVEMBER 12, 2010

SKETCH No. PS-2010-091