

Wesley Mimico United Church

Description

The property at 2 Station Road 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 all three categories of design, associative and contextual values. Anchoring the northwest corner of Station Road and Mimico Avenue, Wesley Mimico United Church is a church dating to 1923 with an extension made in 1953. The property was recognized on the heritage inventory of the former City of Etobicoke, and listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 2006.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Wesley Mimico United Church has cultural heritage value as a well-crafted 20th century church that blends features of the Late Romanesque Revival and Neo Gothic (Modern Gothic) styles. Its exterior design is distinguished by the east tower on Station Road and the detailing of the south façade facing Mimico Avenue, which represents the seamless integration of the 1923 and 1953 parts of the complex. On the interior, the vaulted ceiling in the sanctuary (which is supported on two pillars through the use of an innovative steel framing system) and the suspended laminated wood floors are unique features of the design.

The architects for Wesley Mimico United Church, Horwood and White, are significant as important 20th century designers whose firm was a direct descendant of Henry Langley's practice. Its principals, J. C. B. Horwood and Murray A. White trained with Henry Langley and his nephew Edmund Burke, two of Toronto's most important historical architects, and continued their mentors' innovative approaches to design in their own practice. Both Horwood and White sought out additional training in the United States, bringing back skills in the latest American materials and methods that they applied in their extensive portfolio. Horwood and White's commission for Wesley Mimico United Church was a deeply personal one for Horwood, who was a member of its congregation and a Mimico resident. His son, architect Eric Horwood, who headed the firm of Horwood and White until 1969, designed the 1953 addition to Wesley Mimico United Church.

Wesley Mimico United Church is valued as an institution of significance in the community. Its roots lie in the introduction of Methodism to Etobicoke in the mid 19th century where the congregation first built a church in Mimico in 1863. Relocating to its current location in 1923 where it expanded 30 years later, Wesley Mimico United Church continues to serve the local community as a place of spiritual guidance and neighbourhood outreach.

Contextually, Wesley Mimico United Church has value for its historical and visual relationship to its setting in Mimico. Since the early 20th century, it has contributed to the institutional and

historical core of the community northeast of Lake Shore Boulevard West and Royal York Road. Wesley Mimico United Church stands with other institutional buildings on the adjoining streets that contribute to and support the story of Mimico's development over 150 years and its sense of place today.

As an important institutional building with a distinctive tower that anchors a corner lot in the heart of the community, Wesley Mimico United Church is valued as a local landmark in Mimico.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 2 Station Road are:

- The Wesley Mimico United Church building
- The placement, setting and orientation of the church building on the northeast corner of Station Road and Mimico Avenue
- The scale, form and massing of the long rectangular three-storey plan with the engaged transepts at the four corners and the narthex at the south end
- The materials, with brick cladding and brick, stone, wood and glass detailing
- The low-pitched gable roof with parapets, stone coping, and the clerestory with window openings
- On the principal (south) façade, the stepped frontispiece with stone and brick band courses and buttresses
- The main (south) entrance, where steps lead to a trio of round-arched openings, with a pair of wood doors with glass inserts and transoms in each opening
- Surmounting the south entry, the monumental round-arched opening that incorporates round and round-arched windows
- The fenestration on all elevations, with the round-arched and flat-headed window openings with brick trim, and the stained glass windows in some of the openings
- The buttresses on the east and west elevations that organize the pairs of window openings
- The square tower, which is located midway along the east elevation and has corbelled brickwork beneath a multi-side spire with gothic detailing (the original entrance to the church was on the east wall of the tower)
- On the interior, the sanctuary, with the vaulted and beamed ceiling supported on two pillars above the suspended and laminated wood floors