

The properties at 838-844 Yonge Street are worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for their cultural heritage value, and meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the three categories of design, associative and contextual values.

Description

Located on the west side of Yonge Street between Cumberland Street (south) and Yorkville Avenue (north), the Moses Staunton Buildings (1876) consist of a row of four attached three-storey commercial buildings. The sites were listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now known as the Heritage Register) in 1974.

Statement of Significance

The Moses Staunton Buildings have cultural heritage value for their designs as fine representative examples of commercial buildings with a high degree of craftsmanship where the original decorative detailing was drawn from the popular architectural styles of the late 19th century. The buildings were designed and constructed as a row of commercial buildings that forms part of an intact block on Yonge Street in the former Village of Yorkville.

The properties at 838-844 Yonge Street are also valued for their historical association with the Village of Yorkville (1853-1883), which was an incorporated municipality prior to its annexation by the City of Toronto. When the Moses Staunton Buildings were constructed, they were part of the commercial district along Yonge Street serving the brick yards, breweries and related industries that formed the basis of the community.

Contextually, the Moses Staunton Buildings contribute to the character of Yonge Street, north of Bloor Street where they reflect the late 19th century development of the area at the time it evolved from an independent village to a city neighbourhood along the important corridor known as Toronto's "main street."

The Moses Staunton Buildings are also historically, visually and physically linked to their surroundings on Yonge Street where they are integral parts of the intact group of contiguous late 19th century commercial buildings that extends along the entire block on the west side of the street from Cumberland Street to Yorkville Avenue and marks the east entry into the commercial heart of the former Village of Yorkville.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the properties at 838-844 Yonge Street are the Moses Staunton Buildings with:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the buildings on the west side of Yonge Street between Cumberland Street (south) and Yorkville Avenue (north)
- The scale, form and massing of the row of three-storey buildings that face east onto Yonge Street
- The materials, with the brick cladding with contrasting brick, stone, wood and metal detailing (the southernmost units at 838, 840 and 842 Yonge have been painted or paint washed)
- The rooflines with the fire walls that are articulated by the brick parapet with corbels and the metal and wood cornices with dentils, brackets and mouldings, apart from the northernmost unit at 844 Yonge where the parapet detailing and the cornice have been removed
- The principal (east) elevations of the row of three buildings, where each individual building extends three bays
- On each individual building in the row, the first (ground) floor with the surviving wood elements on the storefronts, including the unit at 838 Yonge that retains most of its original features
- In the second and third stories of each building that forms part of the row, the trios of segmental-arched openings with the brick labels with keystones and corbel stops
- The continuous brick band courses with dentils extending across the east elevations of all three buildings at the levels of the stone sills