

The properties at 581 and 583 Markham Street are worthy of inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register for their cultural heritage value.

Description

Located on the northeast corner of Markham and Lennox Streets, the properties at 581-583 Markham Street contain a pair of 2½-storey semi-detached house form buildings. Archival records indicate that buildings were in place by September 1891 and occupied by the owner, brick layer Charles Corbetta and his tenant, Reverend James Rankin, pastor at the neighbouring Bathurst Methodist Church. In 1959, the properties were acquired by local entrepreneur Edwin "Honest Ed" Mirvish.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The properties at 581-583 have cultural heritage value for their design as late 19th century house form buildings that are representative examples of their type with features derived from the popular styles at the close of the Victorian era, including the Italianate. The houses retain their architectural integrity with original surviving features.

The Charles Corbetta Houses are historically linked to Mirvish Village, the famed artists' enclave created by Ed Mirvish and his family on Markham Street between Bloor Street West and Lennox Street. Originally acquired for additional parking for the nearby "Honest Ed's" retail complex, the houses were saved and converted as an artists' enclave with studios as well as restaurants and unique shops, including the sculpting studio of Anne Maklin Mirvish at 581 Markham. Mirvish Village became a cultural and tourist destination in Toronto, including the properties at 581-583 Markham Street.

Contextually, Charles Corbetta Houses at 581-583 Markham Street assist in defining, maintaining and supporting the character of Mirvish Village, which consists of the collection of preserved detached, semi-detached and multi-unit house form buildings dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries that contribute to this special area within the Palmerston neighbourhood.

The properties at 581-583 Markham Street are also visually, historically, physically and functionally connected to their setting on the east side of Markham Street in Mirvish Village where they complement the neighbouring house form buildings in scale, setback and vintage detailing, and anchor the northeast corner of Lennox Street.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the buildings known historically as the Charles Corbetta Houses on the properties at 581-583 Markham Street are:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the buildings on the northeast corner of Markham and Lennox Street, with the principal (west) elevation on Markham and the south side wall on Lennox
- The scale, form and massing of the 2½-storey rectangular plans
- The materials, with the brick cladding and the brick, stone and wood detailing
- The hipped gable roof, with the pair of chimneys on the south end (the chimneys have been altered)
- The principal (east) elevations, which are designed as mirror images with the main entries placed side-by-side in the centre of the wall and flanked by gabled frontispieces
- The main (east) entrances, which are elevated and set in round-arched surrounds
- On the east elevation, the fenestration, with the flat-headed openings with stone lintels and glass transoms in the first (ground) floor and, above the entries the round-arched openings with the brick detailing in the outer bays of the second storey that are repeated on a small scale in the attic level where the original wood windows survive (the first-floor windows have been altered)