

The property at 68 Baby Point Road (Conn Smythe House) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under all three categories of design, associative and contextual value.

Description

The property at 68 Baby Point Road contains the Conn Smythe House (1926-7), a 2½-storey house form building on the north side of Baby Point Road, west of Humbercrest Boulevard and opposite Baby Point Club Park. It is also located within an Archaeologically Sensitive Area identified in the City of Toronto's Archaeological Management Plan and is part of the registered archaeological site known as AjGu-7.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Conn Smythe house is valued for its design as a fine and well-crafted representative example of the Arts and Crafts style, combining Tudor Revival Style elements, typical of the houses in the residential enclaves developed by the Humber Valley Surveys along the Humber River. The representative elements of the Arts and Crafts are present in the materials, especially stucco and river stone, the leaded glass casement windows and by the informal and asymmetrical composition of these elements and the building massing. The Tudor Revival is displayed in the half timbering, the composition of the projecting gable-roofed bay and by the main entrance featuring a stone archway with a flattened pointed arch, the heavy panelling of the door and the prominent wrought iron strapping of its hinges and door handle.

The property is valued for its association with its first owner, Conn Smythe, who commissioned the house and owned it until his death in 1980. Smythe is famous for his co-ownership and founding of the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team, initiating the construction of Maple Leaf Gardens (1931), the Hockey Hall of Fame (1961-62) and Hockey Night in Canada radio broadcasts. Smythe served in both World Wars, was wounded and was also a prisoner of war. He was devoted to promoting the causes of the Ontario Society of Crippled Children and the Ontario Community Centre for the Deaf. The property also has historical value for being built in Baby Point, one of the subdivisions planned by the Humber Valley Surveys, initiated by the developer Robert Home Smith and Home Smith & Company, along the Humber River Valley in 1911.

Situated on the Baby Point peninsula in the Humber River Valley the property is historically linked to Aboriginal use of the site as a stopping and trading point on the Toronto Carrying Place route, to the 17th century Aboriginal village of Teiaiagon, and subsequent French trading posts and the settlement of the area in the early 19th century by James Baby.

The house is valued for its association with the Toronto architect George R. Gouinlock, who was well-known in the 1920s for his work in the Tudor Revival style. In 1961 Smythe commissioned Allward & Gouinlock, to design the Hockey Hall of Fame at the Canadian National Exhibition.

The property at 68 Baby Point Road also has cultural heritage value related to its contextual importance in maintaining and supporting the picturesque garden suburb character of the Baby Point planned subdivision. Its massing, form and set back along with its informal architectural style and details including stucco and river stone, leaded casement windows and Tudor elements are important to contributors to this character. As one of the original houses built to meet the planning guidelines of the Humber Valley Surveys, the house is valued for its visual and historic link to its surroundings.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 68 Baby Point Road are:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building on the north side of Baby Point Road
- The scale, form and massing of the 2½-storey house above the raised stone base
- The materials, with the stucco cladding and the stone, wood and stucco detailing
- The gable roof with the extended and flared eaves and bargeboards, and the exposed wood rafters, the cross gable roof at the east end of the south façade with a drop pendant, the shed-roof dormer on the south slope, and the stuccoed chimney at the west end.
- The principal (south) elevation of the house, which is divided horizontally by the band course that extends across the side (east) elevation
- In the first (ground) floor of the principal elevation, the main entrance with the stone surround, the panelled wood door with the glazing and wrought iron strap hinges and door handle, and the metal-seamed canopy (over the door) with the flared eaves and chamfered curving wood brackets
- On the principal elevation in the right bay, the single-storey three-sided bay window with the wood detailing, which is surmounted by the projecting gabled jetty with the three-part window opening, with transoms, and the wood half-timbering with the quatrefoil motifs. Above the second floor window, the decorative wood band with a slightly pointed central apex and decorative carved elements
- The remaining fenestration on the principal elevation that consists of flat-headed window openings, with the large four-part window (left of the entrance) with the transoms, quoined stone surround and stone sill, the oriel window (left side, second storey) with the three-part window in the bracketed wood surround, and the two-part window (above the main entrance) with the stone sill
- The leaded glass window glazing on the principal (south) elevation and side (east) elevation
- The exposed side (east) elevation, where the asymmetrically-placed flat-headed openings contain double and triple windows
- The pair of stone gates posts on the east side of the house, one of which is attached to the east elevation
- The west wing, which is slightly set back from the main house and replicates its cladding, roof line, fenestration and detailing

- The lands surrounding the buildings on the property which are part of the archaeological site, identified as Baby Point-Teaiaigon (AjGu-7)

Please note: the north and west elevations and the garage are not identified as heritage attributes.