

REVISED REASONS FOR DESIGNATION (2012):
160 GERRARD STREET EAST
(STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE)

ATTACHMENT NO. 2

Allan Gardens

Former City of Toronto By-law No. 481-86, designating the property at 160 Gerrard Street East under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act is amended to revise the Reasons for Designation to describe the site's cultural heritage values and attributes as set out in the 2005 amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act.

Description

The property at 160 Gerrard Street East is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the three categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located in the city block bounded by Gerrard Street East (south), Sherbourne Street (east), Carlton Street (north) and Jarvis Street (west), Allan Gardens is a City of Toronto park and a significant open space in the Garden District between Yonge Street and the Don River.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Allan Gardens is a rare surviving example of a botanic gardens and public park established in mid-19th century Toronto that was founded by and named for George William Allan, a noted property owner, land developer, politician and philanthropist, who reserved a portion of his family's Moss Park Estate for the creation of a horticultural gardens. Allan donated the nucleus of the present site to the Toronto Horticultural Society, which is significant as the first organization of its type in Ontario and among the oldest in Canada. Allan Gardens is associated with the City of Toronto architect Robert McCallum, the noted landscape architect J. Austin Floyd, and Scottish sculptor David Watson Stevenson, all of whom contributed to the evolution of the park.

Allan Gardens also yields information that contributes to an understanding of the development of Toronto, from its aboriginal origins, its settlement and subdivision as part of the late 18th century park lot system, its layout in the mid-19th century as a private "botanical garden" amidst an upscale residential neighbourhood, and the successive changes over more than 150 years as a public park with significant open space for civic, cultural and recreational pursuits in Toronto. As a registered archaeological site, Allan Gardens includes evidence of both pre-contact and historic Euro-Canadian history that reflects the evolution of Toronto.

From a design perspective, Allan Gardens contains a unique extant collection of greenhouses associated with a public garden that illustrates the evolution of glass technology from the Edwardian era to the later 20th century. The iconic palm house that stands as the centrepiece on the grounds purports to be the oldest surviving structure of

its kind in Canada, and one of a select few remaining in North America. The greenhouse additions, as well as the auxiliary buildings, demonstrate the development, use and successive changes to the site, and the tall brick chimney attached to the boiler room is a visible feature on the grounds.

Contextually, Allan Gardens stands as a landmark in Toronto where its open space, iconic structures and special features reflects the history of horticulture in the city. The site continues to define, support and maintain the character of the Garden District, the downtown Toronto neighbourhood that derives its name and origins from the park. The gardens form the nucleus of the surrounding residential neighbourhood where the tree-lined streets were laid out in relation to the park and continue to contribute to the views in and out of the site. Allan Gardens is also visually, historically, functionally and physically related to its surroundings through its landscaped grounds interspersed with structures, pathways, trees and plants.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of Allan Gardens are comprised of expansive landscaped grounds with a pathway system that has evolved over time, the interconnected complex of eight horticultural buildings as well as a monument to Robert Burns, the collection of nearly 300 trees ranging in age from 50 to 150 years, the extensive plant collection, archaeological resources, and key views both inside and out of the park, specifically:

Landscape Features

- The system of pathways crossing the site, including the north-south axial corridor linking Gerrard and Carlton Streets, the east-west passage between the Palm House complex and the Robert Burns Monument and Sherbourne Street, the diagonal paths at the northeast, southeast and west ends of the park, and the meandering pathways adjoining the structures
- The collection of nearly 300 trees, representing 47 different species
- The plant collection, both outside and under glass in the greenhouses

Structures

Palm House, 1910:

- The placement of the structure near the west end of Allan Gardens, west of the north-south axial path and facing east toward Sherbourne Street, where it forms the nucleus of the eight-part complex of horticultural buildings
- The scale, form and massing of the single-storey structure
- The materials, with brick, stone, wood, glass and metal
- The circular brick-clad base with sandstone detailing
- The fenestration, with wood-framed windows, sidelights and transoms beneath a frieze with dentils
- The iconic 16-sided dome with curved trusses supporting the glazing (the original steel components were replaced with aluminum ones)

- Above the dome, the clerestory windows separating it from a small cupola with a finial
- The square corner pavilions, which are faced with sandstone, decorated with incised pilasters and reliefs, and covered by small domes with finials
- The entrances to the Palm House, which are placed on the east facades of the pavilions and were converted from the original three-part windows with transoms
- Between the entries, the colonnade where the original entrance was changed to windows and the portico removed

North Conservatory, 1956 (Greenhouse No. 2)

- The placement of the North Conservatory, which is connected to the Palm House (south) and the Arid House (west) The scale, form and massing of the single-storey structure
- The long rectangular plan
- The masonry base with glazed walls and a gable roof with glazing bars (the original bars have been replaced)
- The entrance where double doors are surmounted by a wood portico, pediment and brackets

Arid House, 1957 (Greenhouse No. 1)

- The placement of the Arid House, which is connected to the North Conservatory (east) and the Children's Conservatory (north)
- The scale, form and massing of the single-storey structure
- The long rectangular plan
- The glazed walls beneath a steel-framed and glazed gable roof
- The entries on the gabled end walls, and the connection to the former University of Toronto Greenhouse (Children's Conservatory) to the north

Children's Conservatory, 2004 (former University of Toronto Greenhouse)

- The placement of the Children's Conservatory, which is connected to the Arid House (south)
- The scale, form and massing of the single-storey structure The long rectangular plan, with the structure organized in three parts
- Above a fieldstone base, the steel frame containing continuous bands of wood-framed windows with transoms
- The glazed hipped roof that is extended in the centre by a hip-roofed monitor with finials
- On the north façade, the round-arched portico with Tuscan columns (which were replicated from the original) that adjoins a glazed vestibule with tiered fanlights
- The adjoining wings, which are covered by glazed gable roofs

South Conservatory, 1924 (Greenhouse No. 4)

- The placement of the South Conservatory, which is connected to the Palm House (north)
- The scale, form and massing of the single-storey structure The long rectangular plan
- The masonry base, glazed walls and gable roof with glazing (the curved eaves were removed)
- The north section of the structure, which retains wood framing and wood sash windows from the 1894 freestanding south conservatory
- The south part of the conservatory with the steel framing
- The set of double doors that is surmounted by a wood portico with brackets

Tropical Houses, 1957 (Greenhouses 5 and 6)

- The placement of the Tropical Houses, where the Tropical House also known as Greenhouse No. 5 is connected to the South Conservatory (east) and attached to the Administration Building (west)
- The scale, form and massing of the pair of single-storey structures that are placed side-by-side
- The steel-framed glazed gable roofs that are connected at the eaves
- The wood framed walls supporting the glazing
- The entrance on the west elevation of Greenhouse 6

Administration Building, c. 1923

- The placement of the Administration Building, which is attached to the Tropical House also known as Greenhouse No. 5 (east)
- The scale, form and massing of the single-storey structure
- The rectangular plan under a flat roof
- The brick cladding, with brick banding on the west and south facades and stone detailing
- The main entrance, which is placed on the north wall, with a secondary entry on the east elevation
- The brick voussoirs and stone keystones and sills on the openings

Boiler Room and Chimney, 1910

- The placement of the Boiler Room and Chimney, which is connected to the Palm House (east) by a link building (the link is not identified as a heritage attribute)
- The scale, form and massing of the single-storey structure
- The rectangular plan beneath a flat roof
- The brick cladding with brick and stone detailing
- The stepped roofline at the west corner with stone quoins, and the parapet walls on the north and south elevations with stone cornices
- The door and paired window openings with brick and stone detailing
- The tall brick chimney with inset panels and crenelles

The Robert Burns Monument

- The placement of the monument at the east end of the grounds near Sherbourne Street where it faces west toward the Palm House
- The structure, composed of marble and bronze
- The four-sided marble base with classical detailing and, on each side, a bronze relief with a quotation from Burns' poetry
- The bronze statue of Scottish poet Robert Burns in a standing position

Archaeology

- The archaeological site at Allan Gardens under the Borden registration number AjGu-80, encompassing the property bounded by Gerrard Street East (south), Sherbourne Street (east), Carlton Street (north), and Jarvis Street (west), apart from the properties at the northeast corner of Gerrard and Jarvis and the southeast corner of Jarvis and Carlton

Key Views

The key views of Allan Gardens that extend inside and outside of the property are:

- The view from Carlton Street along the north-south axial corridor south to Gerrard Street East and Pembroke Street toward the historical location of "Moss Park" near Queen Street East
- The view from Gerrard Street East along the north-south axial corridor north to Carlton Street and Homewood Avenue toward the historical location of "Homewood" near Wellesley Street East

The key views inside Allan Gardens are:

- The view to and from the Palm House complex and the Robert Burns Monument and Sherbourne Street
- The view from the north-south axial corridor to the spires of Jarvis Street Baptist Church (130 Gerrard Street East) and (former) St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (383 Jarvis Street) 'book-end' the site
- The view from Jarvis Street to the distinctive brick chimney on the boiler room with the iconic dome of the Palm House beyond
- The views from both ends of the diagonal pathways at the northeast, southeast and west ends of the park, as well as the views from both ends of the meandering pathways in the west part of the grounds