

60 Lowther Avenue - Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

Date: August 21, 2023

To: Toronto Preservation Board

From: Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

Wards: Ward 11 - University-Rosedale

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 60 Lowther Avenue under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, according to the Statement of Significance and description of Heritage Attributes found in Attachment 3.

Located in the Annex neighbourhood on the north side of Lowther Avenue, between Bedford Road and Admiral Road, the property at 60 Lowther Avenue contains a 2 1/2 storey house form building constructed in 1906 as the residence for Miller Lash, a prominent Toronto lawyer. The Miller Lash House was designed by the esteemed architectural firm Sproatt & Rolph (in association with S.G. Curry, consulting architect).

60 Lowther Avenue has been known as the "Friends House" since 1949, when the property was acquired by the Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (otherwise known as Quakers) and the Georgian Revival style dwelling was adaptively reused as their Friends (Meeting) House. In 1969 a rear addition, designed by John Leaning, an Ottawa-based architect and member of the Quaker community, was added to accommodate an increase in membership. In addition to and supporting its Friends House function, the property has become an important meeting space for various community organizations. In this way, the property continues to contribute to the collective environment and dynamic character of the Annex neighbourhood.

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation for the property at 60 Lowther Avenue and determined that the property meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. A property may be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, if it meets two or more of the nine criteria.

The subject property at 60 Lowther Avenue was added to the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties (now, Heritage Register) in 1976.

Designation enables City Council to review proposed alterations or demolitions to the property and enforce heritage property standards and maintenance. The Religious Society of Friends, owners of 60 Lowther Avenue, will be undertaking chimney restoration and soffit/dentil conservation work in accordance with a 2022 Toronto Heritage Grant award of 50% of costs up to a maximum of \$45,500. Designation of the property is required to satisfy a condition in the Letter of Understanding between the City of Toronto and the Religious Society of Friends (dated August 5, 2022).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 60 Lowther Avenue under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance; 60 Lowther Avenue (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 3, to the report, August 21, 2023, from the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning.
2. If there are no objections to the designation, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the Bill in Council designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council included the subject property at 60 Lowther Avenue on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register on June 9, 1976.

On July 19, 2022, City Council adopted Item 2022.MM47.89 which approved the grant awards for the 2022 Toronto Heritage Grant Program for 20 heritage properties, including 60 Lowther Avenue to assist in the restoration and conservation work of the chimney and the wood soffits/dentils of the subject property.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.MM47.89>

POLICY AND REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Plans and Policies

The conservation of cultural heritage resources is an integral component of good planning, contributing to a sense of place, economic prosperity, and healthy and equitable communities. Heritage conservation in Ontario is identified as a provincial interest under the Planning Act. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>

Further, the policies and definitions of the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) identify the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage evaluation and heritage conservation will be implemented.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>

<https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-place-to-grow-office-consolidation-en-2020-08-28.pdf>

Ontario Regulation 9/06 sets out the criteria for evaluating properties to be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The criteria are based on an evaluation of design/physical value, historical and associative value and contextual value. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009>

Official Plan

The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime and provides policies to guide decision making within the City. It contains a number of policies related to properties on the City's Heritage Register and properties adjacent to them, as well as the protection of areas of archaeological potential. The Official Plan should be read as a whole to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for priority setting and decision making. The Official Plan can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

Heritage Places of Worship

3.1.6.47 Religious heritage properties constitute a substantial portion of the City's cultural and architectural heritage. Those religious heritage properties that remain in active use for worship purposes will be subject to the policies of this Section of the Plan which, in the event of any conflict, will take precedence over the other policies of this Plan.

3.1.6.48 Religious properties may be listed on the Heritage Register and designated under Parts IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act. The designating by-law shall be consistent with the policies of this Official Plan. 3.1.6.49 The liturgical elements of any religious heritage property in active use for worship shall be excluded from the heritage

conservation provisions of this Plan. For the purposes of this section, “liturgical element” means a building element, ornament or decoration that is a symbol or material thing traditionally considered by a religious organization to be part of the rites of public worship.

3.1.6.50 Faith groups will advise the City as to the identified liturgical elements to be identified in the designating by-law.

3.1.6.51 So long as the place of worship remains in active use for religious purposes interior alterations related to the rites of worship including removal, alteration or installation of structures, fixtures and/or liturgical elements will not be subject to the heritage policies of this Plan.

3.1.5.52 If a heritage review is required for the interior alterations not related to the rites of worship it will be undertaken by the City and faith groups with the mutual goal of conserving the property’s cultural heritage values and respecting and protecting the faith group’s rites of worship.

3.1.5.53 The City will, in consultation with faith groups, establish a protocol to implement these policies.

COMMENTS

City Council included the property located at 60 Lowther Avenue on the City of Toronto’s Heritage Register in 1976.

At its meeting on July 19, 2022, City Council approved a Heritage Grant award to the Religious Society of Friends of 50% of costs up to a maximum of \$45,500 for chimney restoration and soffit/dentil conservation work. Council was informed that during the heritage grant application review, a legal review of the heritage status of the subject property determined that the property was not designated under the East Annex Heritage Conservation District as it had been incorrectly assumed by the owner and noted in the City’s property file records. As such, staff would bring forward a staff report as soon as possible to resolve this matter relating to the property’s heritage designation.

Designation is required to satisfy a condition in the Letter of Understanding (dated August 5, 2022) of the grant award between the City of Toronto and the Religious Society of Friends, the Heritage Grant recipient. City staff are advancing this report at this time to satisfy the condition of payment of the grant award approved by City Council in anticipation the conservation work will be completed in December 2023.

60 Lowther Avenue

Research and Evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06

The research and evaluation of the property has also been informed by communications received from members of the Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. The Religious Society of Friends did not identify any liturgical elements.

While the research and evaluation of the property referenced above is, in staff's determination, sufficient to support the designation of the property at 60 Lowther Avenue, it should be noted that new and additional relevant information on the subject property further expanding on its cultural heritage value following community input and additional access to archival records may be incorporated in the final version of a Part IV designation by-law.



60 Lowther Avenue showing the south (principal) and west (garden) elevations. City of Toronto Archives, 1991.

1. DESCRIPTION

60 Lowther Avenue - Friends House/Miller Lash House	
ADDRESS	60 Lowther Avenue
WARD	Ward 11
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Con 2 FB PT LOT 23

NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Annex Neighbourhood ¹
HISTORICAL NAME	Miller Lash House
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1906
ORIGINAL OWNER	Miller Lash
ORIGINAL USE	Residential (detached house form)
CURRENT USE*	Institutional *This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Sproatt & Rolph, architecture firm; S.G. Curry, consulting architect
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick cladding with brick and stone detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Georgian Revival
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See Section 2
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Listed June 9, 1976
RECORDER	Heritage Planning: Ana Martins and Emma Doedens
REPORT DATE	August 2023

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation section of the report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 60 Lowther Avenue and applies evaluation criteria as set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06 to determine whether it merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest. The application of the criteria is found in Section 3 (Evaluation Checklist). The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in the Conclusion of the report. Maps and Photographs are located in Attachment 1. The archival and contemporary sources for the research are found in Attachment 2. The Statements of Significance are contained in Attachment 3.

i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
	The area now known as the City of Toronto is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit (1805), and the Williams Treaties (1923) signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

¹ This report references the entire Annex neighbourhood as it is historically known. In the late 20th century, Spadina Road became the dividing line when the area became popularly known as the East Annex and the West Annex, with the subject property located in the former.

1793	The Town of York (Toronto) is founded, followed by the subdivision of the land between present-day Bloor Street and St. Clair Avenue into 200-acre farm lots.
1808	Peter Russell acquires substantial acreage in York Township, including Park Lot 23, which was eventually inherited by members of the Baldwin family.
1885	Toronto developer Simeon Herman Janes acquires a portion of land at the south end of Lot 23.
1886	S. H. Janes and Company advertises the "Toronto Annexed Plan" for the area bounded by Lowther Avenue, Huron Street, Davenport Road and a line east of Bedford Road and registers Plan M6.
1887	The City of Toronto annexes the unincorporated area north of Bloor Street West and west of Yorkville.
1902	1903 <i>Atlas of the City of Toronto</i> by Goad Company shows that the original lot configuration of the subject property included the entire corner of Lowther Avenue and Bedford Road (present day 60 Lowther Ave., 60 Bedford Rd., and 70 Bedford Rd.). Subject property is not yet built.
1906	A house occupied by Miller Lash appears in the 1907 City Directory, ² located at 60 Lowther Avenue.
1909	Atlas of the City of Toronto by Goad Company shows the building footprint of the subject property to the west of 60 Bedford Road. A small, square building is shown on the northeast of the lot, fronting onto Bedford Road, which is presumed to be the garage and driveway entrance to 60 Lowther Avenue.
1941	Miller Lash passes away and his widow, Clarice Lash, sells the property to Lillian Clarke whereafter it operates as a multi-tenant residence into the mid-1940s.
1949	The Toronto Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends purchases the subject property and begins using it as their Meeting House.
1950s	The Toronto Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends saw a rise in membership numbers as a result of former American members relocating north in order to abstain from the draft for the Vietnam War.
1960s	Internal discussions among the Toronto Friends began concerning the construction of an addition to the subject property for a new, purpose-built meeting room. The Ottawa-based, Quaker architect John Leaning is selected to design the Meeting Room addition.
1969	Leaning's addition is completed; it opens in January 1970.
1976	The subject property located at 60 Lowther Avenue is listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register.

² Publication date reflects information collected from the year prior

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following section outlines the history and facts related to the properties which are the basis for determining historical or associative value of Criteria 4, 5 or 6 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The Annex Neighbourhood

The subject property at 60 Lowther Avenue is located within the Toronto neighbourhood known as the Annex, which developed in the late 19th century within the approximate boundaries of Bloor Street West to the south, Avenue Road to the east, Dupont Street to the north, and Bathurst Street to the west. The subject property is specifically part of the "West Annex" neighbourhood, an area whose development history is related and contributes to the rest of the Annex, and yet possesses a distinct character from the whole.³

The comparatively recent history of the Euro-Canadian colonial development of the West Annex relates back to the Park Lot system of land distribution that followed the establishment of the provincial capital at York (present-day Toronto).⁴ Park Lots were a series of large, approximately 100-acre plots of land running north-south between present-day Queen and Bloor Streets that were granted to prominent families (primarily men) that were involved in most of the political and economic decisions that concerned Upper Canada (Ontario) since the 1790s.⁵ The site of the subject property is located within the historic Park Lot 23, which was part of the land holdings of Peter Russell, administrator of the government of Upper Canada.⁶

In the early 19th century, two significant land acquisitions resulted in the growth of the substantial Baldwin estate, which encompassed the eastern half of what is the present-day West Annex. In 1813, Phoebe Willcocks inherited Lot 24 from her father; her husband was William Warren Baldwin. William Warren's brother, Augustus Baldwin, inherited most of Lot 23 in 1817. By 1818, the Baldwins had constructed a country estate called Russell Hill that was located at the northern end of Lot 23.⁷ The example set by the construction of Russell Hill (and later its replacement mansion, Glen Edyth, in 1872) marked a trend in the area for the construction of family estates and summer homes.⁸ Consequently, this led to the development of the lands to the south and the establishment of farmlands and pastoral grounds soon followed.⁹ Portions of the Baldwin estate were sold off throughout the mid-19th century, and the property divisions

3 The West Annex boundaries, while substantially interconnected with the wider Annex community, are generally defined by Bathurst Street (west), Dupont Street (north), Bedford Road (east), and Bloor Street West (south).

4 "Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act - 70 Lowther Avenue," City of Toronto, City Planning, 2017, 11.

5 "West Annex Phase II: Historical Context Statement and Heritage Survey Project," ASI Heritage, December 2022, 42.

6 "70 Lowther Avenue," City of Toronto, City Planning, 2017, 11.

7 Ibid.

8 "West Annex Phase II," ASI, 44.

9 Ibid.

that occurred at this time established many of the street and lotting patterns that persist in the West Annex to date.¹⁰

Simeon Janes and "The Toronto Annex"

Perhaps the most significant individual to influence the early development of the West Annex was Simeon Janes, a dry goods dealer and land developer who purchased a southern portion of the Baldwin estate in 1885, which included the south end of Lot 23. The southern portion approximately corresponds to present-day Bedford and Spadina Roads to the east and west, respectively, and Dupont and Bloor Streets on the north and south; this area of land was not part of the City of Toronto at the time of Janes' purchase.

On his newly acquired land, Janes planned two subdivisions to parcel and sell for residential development.¹¹ In order to ensure the properties developed on the lots would have proper water, sewage, and street paving services, Janes applied to the Toronto City Council with a proposal to request the City annex his lands within their jurisdiction and thereby undertake the provision of those utilities.¹² Janes was following a precedent set by the Village of Yorkville, which was annexed by the City of Toronto in 1883. In 1887, the City Council agreed to Janes' proposal and his two subdivisions became part of the City of Toronto.¹³ Janes was the first to utilise the term "Annex" as a title for his subdivisions, and to popularise it through the advertising process for the property parcels.¹⁴ "The Toronto Annex" became one of the earliest annexations of land for urban expansion in the City of Toronto.¹⁵

Simeon Janes had a clear vision for the design of The Toronto Annex: he planned straight street patterns around small lots intended for comparatively large house forms for the financially affluent target audience he was marketing towards. Most significantly, Janes advertised The Toronto Annex as an exclusively residential subdivision in order to create a refined neighbourhood environment that might appeal to this demographic. Janes' decision resulted in the Annex's largely detached and semi-detached house form typology to the exclusion of almost any commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings from his designs.¹⁶ For the most part, purchasers and contractors buying into The Toronto Annex followed Janes' plan; his design ideals appealed to prospective property owners who worked in professional and business careers (such as lawyers and bankers) and had the financial means to commission architect-designed homes (prominent Toronto individuals such as George Gooderham and Timothy Eaton both built their family homes in the area).¹⁷

10 *Idem*, 30.

11 This report focuses on the subdivision plan that corresponds with Lot 23.

12 Jack Batten, *The Annex: The Story of a Toronto Neighbourhood*, (Erin, Ontario: Boston Mills Press, 2004), 8.

13 Registered as Plan M6. An additional two blocks west of Kendal Avenue were also annexed by the city at this time, however, these blocks were not owned by Janes and were not part of his planned subdivisions.

14 Batten, 8.

15 "West Annex Phase II," ASI, 46.

16 Batten, 33.

17 Batten, 33.

One of the lasting impacts of Janes' dominant residential typology was the enactment of a series of by-laws to deter aspects of urban development that were perceived as detrimental by the wealthier residents.¹⁸ One example of this was By-Law No.8868 that prohibited "the use of land or the erection or use of buildings on the property fronting or abutting on either side of Lowther Avenue, from the rear of the properties fronting on the west side of Avenue Road to St. George Street, for any other purpose than that of a detached private residence."¹⁹ Exceptions to the exclusionary by-laws in the early development of the Annex were provided for fire stations, churches, and primary schools.²⁰

Miller Lash

60 Lowther Avenue was built for the prominent Toronto lawyer and businessman Miller Lash, who lived at the property for thirty-five years from its construction in 1906 until his death in 1941. Miller Lash was the son of Zebulon Aiton Lash (1846-1920) and Elizabeth Miller. His father co-founded the Toronto law firm of Blake, Lash, Anglin and Cassels.

Educated at Upper Canada College, the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall Law School, Miller Lash (1872-1941) joined his father's law firm where he specialized in corporate law.²¹ He served as the president of the Brazilian Traction Light and Power Company (later Brascan) and chaired the Board of Directors of the Mexican Light Power Company and Mexican Tramways.²² A director and vice-president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, Miller Lash was also the president of the York Land Company that was instrumental in the development of areas of the City of Toronto and the surrounding townships.²³ Miller Lash was active in the Liberal party and, in 1921, received a K. C. from the first Mackenzie King government.²⁴

In 1913, Miller Lash began to develop an extensive country estate along Highland Creek. Lash retained the original farmland but added a three-hole golf course and other amenities.²⁵ Lash commissioned the Buffalo-based architect Edward B. Green to construct his summer estate, dubbed The Miller Lash House, and an adjacent Icehouse that were both situated at an elevated point above Highland Creek. A carriage house was also built to the south of the house. The University of Toronto purchased the estate in 1963 for the location of a suburban campus, and in June 1998 the City of Scarborough designated the Miller Lash House and Icehouse under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (By-Law No.302-1998). The Carriage House on the estate was designated Part IV by the City of Toronto Council in 2001 (By-Law No.744-2001). As Miller Lash's Toronto-based residence, 60 Lowther Avenue represents another piece in

18 "West Annex Phase II," ASI, 62.

19 Building Record File No. 4888, Building Records, Toronto and East York, 1949.

20 "West Annex Phase II," ASI, 63.

21 "Miller Lash, 68, Industrialist, Dies at Home," *The Globe*, 9 October 1941, 5.

22 Ibid.

23 "By-Law No. 744-2001: To designate the property at 130 Old Kingston Road (Miller Lash Carriage House) as being of architectural and historical value or interest," City of Toronto, City Planning, 2001, 4.

24 "Miller Lash," *The Globe*.

25 "130 Old Kingston Road," 4.

the collection of properties associated with a significant industrialist figure of 20th century Toronto society.

After Lash's passing, his widow Clarice Lash sold the property to Lillian Clarke whereafter it operated as a multi-tenant residence in the mid-1940s, housing a few notable Toronto figures like William Charles White (Bishop White) and Zerada Slack,²⁶ followed by a short-lived occupancy by the Magazine Digest Publishing Company in 1948.²⁷ In 1949, the Toronto Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends purchased the property and began using it as their Meeting House, a function for which it is still used today.

Architects

Sproatt & Rolph

The Miller Lash house was designed by the notable architecture firm Sproatt & Rolph, one of Canada's most important architectural partnerships of the early 20th century.²⁸ In 1899, Sproatt and Rolph formed an enduring partnership that lasted over three decades, with Rolph's fine skills and abilities as a builder complementing Sproatt's exceptional talent as a designer.^{29 30} As partners in one of Toronto's leading firms, they acquired a reputation for their wide range of commissions including those for residential, institutional, ecclesiastical, commercial, and industrial buildings and their practice extended its influence across Ontario and as far as Manitoba and Nova Scotia.

In their thirty-four-year partnership, they collaborated on some of the most renowned landmarks in Canadian architecture. In Toronto, Sproatt & Rolph produced many landmark buildings, such as Hart House at the University of Toronto (which popularized the Collegiate Gothic style in Canada after its completion in 1919) as well as the Memorial Tower, Burwash Hall (1909-1912) for Victoria College, the Bishop Strachan School (1912), the Royal York Hotel (1929), Eaton's College Street Store (1930) in association with Montreal's Ross and Macdonald, the Canada Life Building (1931), and the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission Building (1935) on University Avenue (the former in association with other practitioners).

Throughout their partnership, including the interval from 1905 to 1907 when Samuel G. Curry was associated with the firm, Sproatt and Rolph were recognized for producing many residential commissions, many of which were featured in publications including the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Journal, Canadian Homes and Gardens,

26 William Charles White, or Bishop White, was the first Anglican bishop for Honan, China and was further involved with the research, teaching, and curation of Chinese antiquities with the University of Toronto and the Royal Ontario Museum. Zerada Slack was an athlete who also taught at the University of Toronto; in her honour, the Zerada Slack trophy is granted to graduating female athletes.

27 Short-lived due to its violation of By-Law No.8868 that prohibited non-residential uses for properties in this area of the Annex, unless in the case of church-use.

28 Globe, April 18, 1937

29 "Sproatt, Henry (1866-1834),"

https://oaa.on.ca/Assets/Common/Shared_Documents/Awards/Honour%20Roll/SPROATT,%20Henry.pdf

30 "Rolph, Ernest Ross (1871-1958)"

Canadian Architect & Builder, Contract Record, and Construction (Journal).³¹ Their residential clients were frequently high-profile and prominent Canadians such as philanthropist Sigmund Samuel (104 Forest Hill Road), Charles T. Currelly, Director of Archaeology at the Royal Ontario Museum (19 Wychwood Park), financier Edward Rogers Wood (84 Queen's Park; known today as Falconer Hall at the University of Toronto), and lawyer and politician Leighton McCarthy (45 Walmer Road; known today as the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study) amongst many others.³²

In 1925, the firm Sproatt & Rolph was awarded the prestigious Gold Medal by the American Institute of Architects - marking the first time Canadian architecture, and a Canadian firm were recognized by the AIA.³³ Architect John M. Lyle, one of Canada's most influential architects of the first half of the 20th century, attributed Sproatt & Rolph's success to their ability to arrive at "an honest solution of the problem in plan, coupled with a common sense and harmonious treatment in elevation...[their work has] none of the theatrical architectural clan-trap so much in evidence in Canada".³⁴ Both Sproatt and Rolph were members of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, and Fellows of the Royal Institutes of British and Canadian Architects. Rolph was a member of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.

S.G. Curry

Samuel George Curry (1854-1942) first began work as a draftsman for Robert Gage in Kingston, Ontario, but moved to Toronto in 1879 and entered into a partnership with Frank Darling that lasted until 1892. He alternated between working alone and in a series of brief partnerships, including the interval between 1905 and 1907 when he was an associate with the firm Sproatt & Rolph.³⁵ From 1917, he worked under his own name until his retirement. Curry contributed to the formation of the Ontario Association of Architects in 1890 and was the local architect for the Federal Department of Public Works frequently appointed to supervise the construction and management of its projects.

John Leaning

John Leaning (1926-2022) was an Ottawa-based architect, urban planner, community organizer, and pioneer in heritage preservation in the capital city.³⁶ Born in 1926 in London England, Leaning received his architectural training at the Liverpool School of Architecture and early in his career worked in the office of the French architect, Le Corbusier.³⁷ Leaning immigrated to Ottawa in 1955 and in a few short years became the

31 Robert Hill's entry on Henry Sproatt documents the firm's residential commissions and their corresponding write-up in architectural periodicals.

32 Robert Hill, "Sproatt, Henry," <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1322>

33 Ibid

34 John Lyle, "Sproatt and Rolph – An Appreciation," The Journal Royal Architectural Institute of Canada," July-Aug. 1925, p126

35 Robert Hill, entry for S.G. Curry

36 Robert Smythe, "John Leaning (1926-2022): his Centretown legacy," <https://centretownbuzz.com/2022/11/john-leaning-1926-2022-his-centretown-legacy/>

37 David Pritchard, "John Leaning - architect and author," <https://glebereport.ca/articles/john-leaning-architect-and-author/>

Chief Architect to the National Capital Commission (1958-68) under the direction of French planner Jacques Greber, guiding the preservation of Sussex Drive (1965) and the Mackenzie King Estate, and the planning of Sparks Street Mall (1964).³⁸ He is best known for his work on Ottawa's Centretown Redevelopment Plan in 1972, which re-directed an urban renewal scheme, and the Glebe Plan in the 1960s - both of which point to his early advocacy for walkable and human-scaled communities. His approach to both architecture and urban planning was to “deal with the environment as we presently find it, accentuate the best, eliminate the worst, and build the new to fit the old.”³⁹ John Leaning was also a member of the Quaker community.⁴⁰

The Religious Society of Friends and the Meeting House

The Religious Society of Friends⁴¹, otherwise known as Quakers or Quakerism,⁴² was founded in England around 1652 by George Fox (1624-1691) during the Puritan Revolution and originated from Fox's questioning the rigid structure of contemporary religious practices.⁴³ Fox and those who came to sympathise with his beliefs did not consider themselves to be creating a new church or a new religion; rather, they sought a return to the roots of Christian faith and worship.⁴⁴ These roots are exemplified by Fox's rededication to what the Friends call the inward light, which refers to the belief that the power of the Holy Spirit is strongest where it resides within each and every individual.⁴⁵ This experience is also reflected in a few of the Friends' core values, which include: equality of the sexes, of status, and of age; simplicity in one's clothing, speech, and ways of living; and a dedication to peace, with an emphasis on abstaining from military conflicts and in settling disputes among themselves.⁴⁶

At the core of Quaker practice are the series of Quarterly, Monthly, and Preparative Meetings that culminate in the Yearly Meeting.⁴⁷ The meetings are known for their sustained periods of collective silence and contemplation in a communal group setting that is held within a Meeting House, or Meeting Room.⁴⁸ At times the silence is interspersed with moments of “vocal ministry” from participants who feel moved to

38 Robert Smythe, "John Leaning"

39 Randal Marlin, "A tribute to a great architect and planner," <https://glebereport.ca/articles/john-leaning/>

40 David Pritchard, "John Leaning"

41 Within the parameters of this report, it is only possible to give a summary of the history of the Religious Society of Friends. In order to better appreciate the nuances of this belief system, it is recommended that the reader refer to the source citations for further reading.

42 The individuals who identified with this belief initially referred to themselves as “Seekers” but following a few other iterations the collective name of “Friends” was settled upon in reference to words spoken by Christ in the Bible: “I have called you friends.” Those who opposed the Friends' viewpoints, instead, took to calling them Quakers, in derision of the trembling emotion that sometimes characterized their meetings. The name gained popularity and is typically used with more frequency than the Religious Society of Friends, or Friends.

43 Arthur G. Dorland, *The Quakers in Canada: A History* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1968), 1.

44 Ibid.

45 “Who Are the Quakers?” *Canadian Friends Historical Association*, accessed 4 August 2023, <https://cfha.info>

46 “Who Are the Quakers?”

47 Dorland, 1.

48 Idem, 4.

speech.⁴⁹ This practice emphasises stillness and the importance of listening, whether to one's own inner voice, or to the contributions of other members.⁵⁰ The meetings are also a time for the Friends to make collective decisions that affect the Society.⁵¹

The Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends dates to 1880 when Samuel and Elias Rogers relocated their families south from the meetings on Yonge Street, in Newmarket.⁵² ⁵³ The Rogers were not the first to practise Quakerism in the city, but the existing members were dispersed, and their meetings were held in various homes.⁵⁴ As their numbers grew, several pre-existing buildings were purchased over the years until 1911 when the Friends commissioned the construction of a new Meeting House at 111 Maitland Street.⁵⁵ By the 1940s this space proved to be quite large for their purposes, and internal discussions were begun as to the possible relocation to a smaller property.⁵⁶

The allocated property committee began by looking at a building within the Annex neighbourhood at 225 St. George Street, which meant that they would need to consider the impact of By-Law No.8868 that prohibited non-residential use in the area.⁵⁷ After this first deal fell through as a result of an unsuccessful by-law appeal, the committee pivoted to look at 60 Lowther Avenue because it fell within the 1945 provision of By-Law No.16335 that acted to "repeal By-Law No.8868 in so far as it prevents the use of existing buildings on the north side of Lowther Avenue...for church and certain residence purposes."⁵⁸ Even though Friends do not define their Meeting Houses as churches in the sense of their being holy or consecrated spaces, they submitted the necessary permits to identify their use within the umbrella term of "church" in order to qualify for the by-law amendment.⁵⁹ In 1949, the Toronto Friends purchased the property at 60 Lowther and successfully repurposed the residence as their Meeting House.⁶⁰

49 "Your First Time in a Quaker Meeting?" Toronto Monthly Meeting (Toronto: Friends House Library, n.d.).

50 "Who Are the Quakers?"

51 Ibid.

52 Kathleen Hertzberg, "Quakers in Upper Canada," *Spirit of Toronto 1834 - 1984*, ed. Margaret Lindsay Holton (Toronto: Image Publications, 1983).

53 The Newmarket Meeting House was purpose-built and has ties with the Rogers family, who were instrumental in establishing Quaker practice in the area. This is the same Rogers family who eventually established the prominent company of Rogers Communications Inc.

54 Hertzberg, "Quakers in Upper Canada."

55 Now known as 99-105 Maitland Street, the Salle Currie Hall, owned and operated by Canada's National Ballet School and designated Part IV in 1978.

56 Jane Sweet, "Toronto Monthly Meeting Minutes: 21 January 1948," The Religious Society of Friends. Email message to authors, July 28, 2023.

57 Jane Sweet, "Toronto Monthly Meeting Minutes: 3 March 1948," The Religious Society of Friends. Email message to authors, July 28, 2023.

58 Building Record File No. 4888, Building Records, Toronto and East York, 1949.

59 Ibid.

60 This conversion of function followed a trend of less mainstream religions and spiritual practices moving into the Annex neighbourhood (in particular on Brunswick Avenue, Huron Street, and Lowther Avenue), such as the First Church of Christian Science at the corner of St. George Street and Lowther Avenue, the New Apostolic Church on Dupont, and the Tibetan Buddhists on Madison Avenue, close to Bloor Street.

In 1953, the Toronto Friends membership numbers had grown to the point that multiple meetings often occurred in different rooms at 60 Lowther simultaneously.⁶¹ By the 1960s, the Vietnam War created an additional influx from former American members who relocated north in order to abstain from the draft.⁶² It became apparent that additional space for meeting was necessary, and discussions began in the late 1960s to construct an addition to the subject property for a new, purpose-built meeting room.⁶³ The Ottawa-based, Quaker architect John Leaning was selected to design the addition, which was completed in 1969 and opened in January 1970.

Apart from housing the weekly Friends meetings, the rooms throughout the building are rented out by various community organizations whose activities range in focus from environmental action, human rights, mental health, the arts, community advocacy, social justice, and education. For example, some of the organizations who rented rooms in 2019 included Amnesty International, Greenpeace, the Law Union of Ontario, the Toronto Sacred Harp Singers, the Festival Players, Camp Shomria, and dozens more that together represent a diverse convergence of community activity operating out of 60 Lowther Avenue.⁶⁴ Underpinning each of these organizations' use of the rental rooms is the provision that their general objectives and practices align with those of the Religious Society of Friends.⁶⁵ Additionally, there are guest rooms available on the upper floors for visiting Friends to use, and a public library on the ground floor. Each of these functions contributes to the welcoming and friendly character of both the Religious Society of Friends, and the building space itself.

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The following section provides an architectural description and analysis related to the property which will establish the basis for determining design or physical value of Criteria 1, 2 or 3 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

Located on the north side of Lowther Avenue, just west of Bedford Road, the subject property at 60 Lowther Avenue comprises a two-and-a-half storey detached house-form building on a rectangular plan with a one-storey rear addition added in 1969. Built in 1906, the design of the Miller Lash House⁶⁶ is a unique and skillful representation of the

61 "Friends House: 60 Lowther Avenue," Committee of Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, (Toronto: Friends House Library, 2007).

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid.

64 Some of these organizations rent the rooms on a short-term, hourly basis, while others occupy a more permanent, long-term status. The Friends Day Care has been located on the building's second floor since the 1970s, for instance, and the Canadian Friends Service Committee bases their operations out of the south-east corner office.

65 Some of these include: the Canadian Friends Service Committee that has operated from the building's first floor south-east corner office for several years, a children's daycare on the second floor, the Refugee Committee and Refugee and Settlement Services Worker, and others.

66 Several other buildings associated with Miller Lash are included on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register as part of Lash's Highland Creek estate at 130 Old Kingston Road: the Miller Lash House and Icehouse (Part IV 1998; By-law 302-1998), and the Carriage House (Part IV 2001; By-law 744-2001). The subject property was his Toronto residence.

Georgian Revival style in its architectural treatment and site plan, demonstrating a high level of architectural design. Constructed in red brick with white mortar joints and grey stone detailing, the house is set behind a landscaped front garden, which extends past a low masonry gateway and continues along the west elevation up to a pergola. (Image 6) There is additional greenspace and a surface parking lot at the rear (north and northeast respectively) of the property. In their site plan for the property, Sproatt & Rolph responded to the L-shape lot with a driveway entrance from Bedford Road,⁶⁷ which is the northeast section of the property, with the house-form building laid out as a rectangular two-and-a-half storey block with a solarium as well as verandah oriented to the garden, or west elevation. Originally, a pathway led through the garden, to the stairs of the main entrance portico and continued to the public sidewalk.

Following its completion, the Miller Lash House appeared in the August 1910 issue of *Construction: A Journal for the Architectural Engineering and Contracting Interests of Canada*, a Canadian architectural periodical. It is interesting to note that the article's description of the building's architectural treatment and response to site conditions presents the west elevation as carrying the principal features of the design with "the portico opening at the centre of the terrace, and the verandah at the side of the dining room with its adjoining pergola extending into the garden". Originally, the driveway, accessed from Bedford Road, would present the west elevation and garden upon entering the property and provide access to an entrance via the "portico from the terrace" understood to be the present-day solarium before one would make their way to the main entrance on the south elevation.⁶⁸ (Images 7-9)

The building's design represents the Georgian Revival style, one of the most popular of the 20th century colonial revival styles for domestic design, first appearing in Canada by the 1910s.⁶⁹ Influential New York City architects McKim, Mead and White, who utilized elements of the style to design residences for their most affluent clients, promoted the style in the early 1900s before it made its way to Ontario.⁷⁰ It is a style also noted to be amenable to free interpretations of its prototype, i.e., English and Dutch colonial architecture from the 18th and early 19th centuries, resulting in various subtypes.⁷¹

Key characteristics of the Georgian Revival style include a façade with symmetrical disposition of architectural elements, a centrally located entrance as its focal point, harmonic proportions, and references to the Greek and Roman orders and elements including columns and porticos. While the Millar Lash House displays key elements of the Georgian Revival style, there are unexpected and site-specific variations. As architectural historian Patricia McHugh notes, the Miller Lash House is "a rousing reincarnation of the red-brick cube with freely adapted Georgian details".

67 This entrance is presumed to have connected to Bedford Road through present-day 70 Bedford Road, which is now a separate, vacant property parcel.

68 "Residence of Mr. Miller Lash, Toronto," *Construction: A Journal for the Architectural Engineering and Contracting Interests of Canada*, vol. 3, no 9, August 1910.

69 Leslie Maitland et al., *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles*, 2003, p. 150

70 Ibid, p. 152

71 Cyril Harris, *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, 1998.

The principal or south elevation of the Miller Lash house exhibits the Georgian Revival style in its largely symmetrical composition with an accentuated centrally placed main entrance portico. Constructed in grey stone, the slightly raised and stepped forward portico features Tuscan columns supporting an entablature with a simple frieze of repeating triglyph and guttae. (Image 9) However, the portico is flanked by a slight asymmetry with an adjacent pair of multi-pane, sash windows with grey keystones to the left and a three-part square-sided bay window framed by grey stone pilasters supporting a simple entablature to the right. (Image 11) The disposition of the remaining architectural elements enforces the symmetry of this principal elevation with the pair of chimneys, triple dormers, and the arrangement of multi-pane sash windows with grey keystones and stone sills. (Image 12)

The west or garden elevation, which also exhibits features and characteristics of the Georgina Revival style, includes a semi-circular brick-clad solarium with tall multi-pane windows set between stone Tuscan Doric columns and flanked by three-part square-sided bay windows - a visual link to the bay window on the principal elevation. (Images 13-15) Grey stone banding extends across the window bays and solarium. A pergola constructed of eight brick piers sits at a right angle to the square-sided bay window to the north, which originally connected to the verandah to the north that has since been demolished.

Other identifying elements of Georgian Revival featured on the Miller Lash House include front-sloping side-gabled roofs - appearing here as a pair - punctuated with dormers on the south, west, and east elevations, eaves/soffits and gables ornamented with dentils, red brick quoining on both the south, west, and east elevations, and multi-pane sash windows with keystones and stone sills. Archival photographic documentation indicates that the windows on the south, west, and likely east elevations also featured shutters but have since been removed. (Images 6, 12, 14, and 16)

Interior Plan and Features

A description of the interior plan and design features of the Miller Lash House appeared in the August 1910 issue of architectural periodical, *Construction Journal for the Architectural Engineering and Contracting Interests of Canada*, which described the design intent of the interior plan. It stated that the plan was organized to allow natural light from at least two sides to enter the main rooms on the ground floor including the reception room, library, and dining room. The central hall, which is square in plan, links the entry from the lobby and vestibule to the solarium and finds its antecedents in English domestic architecture of the 1650s.

Of note is how the Georgian character of the exterior of the house is reflected in the architectural treatment of these interior spaces. (Images 17-21) The walls of the central hall are panelled to a height of five feet in oak, stained in a rich brown finish while the upper portion is finished in plaster with a detailed ceiling cornice with square dental coving. The space includes a grey stone fireplace with a simpler oak mantelpiece. Both the library and dining room are panelled in oak, which is carried up to the detailed cornice, and include dentils followed by a tight pattern of toothed dentil coving. Both rooms feature a grey stone fireplace with oak mantelpieces detailed with references to the Greek orders and iron fixtures.

The library contains built-in oak shelving both open and enclosed with glass doors. To the right of the lobby of the main entrance, the reception room contains plaster walls and a prominent mantelpiece in marble with classicist stylist elements, which are carried out throughout the room. The verandah is accessed through three arched doorways constructed in brick.

Later Addition

In 1969, a building permit was issued to construct a rear one-storey addition to the designs of John Leaning architect. (Image 22) According to archival documentation, John Leaning indicated that the design intent of the addition was to ensure consistency with the Friends' belief in simplicity; the interior planned with careful regard for textural and sculptural elements, colour, acoustics, light sources and fixtures; and that the garden was intended to be an extension of the room.⁷² The west elevation of the one-storey cinder-block addition is a window wall with sliding doors which provide access to a lawned greenspace. The copper fascia and sculptural down spouts complement the simplicity of the cinder-block construction. (Image 23) Approximating a square-plan, the addition is offset to the 1906 structure, with a slight southeast orientation and rounded corners on the east, offering a less-than-perfect form.

Additional Alterations

Building records indicate that in 1949, a building permit (#4888) was issued to erect a fire escape on the west elevation of the building and convert a dormer window into a doorway. In 1969, there were a number of interior alterations undertaken as well as the removal of a verandah on the northwest portion of the building to facilitate the construction of the new rear addition.

iv. CONTEXT

The following section provides contextual information and analysis related to the property which is the basis for determining contextual value of Criteria 7, 8 or 9 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The location of the property at 60 Lowther Avenue is shown on the map included as Figure 1 in Attachment 1 (Maps and Photographs). The property is located on the north side of Lowther Avenue near the corner of Bedford Road in the historic Annex neighbourhood. The property at 60 Lowther is part of a collection of late-19th and early 20th century, low-rise, architect-designed house form buildings along Lowther Avenue, many of which are listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register, including the properties at 70 Lowther Avenue (Part IV 2018), and 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 84, and 88 Lowther Avenue (all listed between 1973-1977). The subject property is adjacent to the western boundary of the East Annex Heritage Conservation District (HCD), which contains the first large-scale residential HCD designated by the City of Toronto in 1994, and is near to the Madison Avenue HCD (designated in 2019). The construction date of

⁷² Minutes from the Friends' Business Meeting from June 15, 1969 reporting John Leaning's rationale for the proposed design.

60 Lowther also falls within the development peak of the West Annex, which occurred between 1900 to 1910 (with its apex in 1907).⁷³

The Park Lot patterns formed the initial land divisions of the neighbourhood, but it was the subsequent planning of Simeon Janes and his Toronto Annex that proved to have the most influential impact on the growth and development of the West Annex neighbourhood, and the types of buildings that populate it.⁷⁴ In the southwest corner of the West Annex (on Walmer Road, St. George Street, Bedford Road, and the south end of Spadina Road), there is a noticeable concentration of the architect-designed residences that reflect Janes' original design scheme.⁷⁵⁷⁶ As an architect-designed home built for a successful Toronto lawyer, the subject property at 60 Lowther Avenue exemplifies this pattern of development through its location, building typology, and in the social demographic represented by its elaborate design.

Post-war social changes that started in the 1920s resulted in an increased rate of renting in the West Annex, precipitated by war widows who could no longer afford or maintain their spacious homes without the added income of a rented-out room.⁷⁷ In response, wealthier residents began to relocate to neighbourhoods like Parkdale or Rosedale (which had the added benefit of larger lot sizes that could accommodate new, estate-like homes); this in turn accelerated the process of the area's transition.⁷⁸

Eventually, this shift in function would open the door for non-residential uses to move into the existing buildings and convert them to commercial or institutional uses; the large house forms were ideal for office spaces, private clubs, and religious orders.⁷⁹ However, as ASI notes in their comprehensive historic context statement for the neighbourhood, "the conversion to rooming houses typically had little impact on the exterior of homes, [which resulted] in streetscapes generally maintaining their appearance."⁸⁰

The change in use of 60 Lowther Avenue from a single-unit residence for a wealthy family, to a multi-tenanted residence, to its current organizational function as a Meeting House precisely follows the historical use patterns seen throughout its surrounding context of the West Annex neighbourhood. Furthermore, the minimal exterior alterations required to facilitate its transition are typical of the area's development for large house forms converted to non-residential uses.

73 "West Annex Phase II," ASI, 62.

74 "West Annex Phase II," ASI, 30.

75 Idem, 59.

76 The less financially affluent members of the neighbourhood built their homes on the edges of the Annex's boundaries, towards the north and northwest to be closer to Dundas Street and the railways to the north of the neighbourhood.

77 "West Annex Phase II," ASI, 82.

78 "West Annex Phase II," ASI, 82.

79 Idem, 83.

80 Ibid.

3. EVALUATION AND APPLICATION OF O.REG 9/06 CRITERIA

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act, and the City of Toronto is also required to use these criteria when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. There are a total of nine criteria under O. Reg 9/06. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or "✓" if it is applicable to the property, with explanatory text below.

DESIGN OR PHYSICAL VALUE

The property has design value or physical value because it	
1. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.	✓
2. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	N/A
3. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

Representative example of a style

The Miller Lash House has design value as a unique example of the Georgian Revival style dwelling whose value also resides in the skillful application of the style in its response to the site's configuration.

Characteristic elements of the Georgian Revival style are present in the following features of the Miller Lash House: its rectangular form, two-and-a-half storey volume with an unusual double gable roof punctuated by chimneys and dormer windows, the symmetrical arrangement of elements, including the central entrance with its stepped forward portico, and the original window openings with keystones and stone sills; the unexpected bay window on the south elevation that is mirrored on the west elevation flanking a centrally-placed solarium; its red-brick cladding and quoin details; decorative dentil details; and finally, as a gesture to the Greek orders, its columns, pilasters, and entablature in grey stone. The Georgian Revival character of the exterior of the house is reflected in the interior design of the main rooms including the reception room, dining room, library, and central hall, which feature classicist stylistic elements.

HISTORICAL OR ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

The property has historical value or associative value because it	
4. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	✓
5. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	✓
6. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	✓

Direct association with a person that is significant to a community

The subject property at 60 Lowther Avenue is valued for its association with the prominent Toronto lawyer and businessman, Miller Lash. The property, which was built for Miller Lash in 1906, was used as his Toronto-based residence until his death in 1941. The association with Miller Lash is significant to the history of the West Annex community as it exemplifies the early 20th century architect-designed residential buildings constructed in the area for financially affluent Toronto residents.

Several other buildings associated with Miller Lash are included on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register as part of Lash's Highland Creek estate at 130 Old Kingston Road.

The University of Toronto purchased the estate in 1963 for the location of a suburban campus, and in June 1998 the City of Scarborough designated the Miller Lash House and Icehouse under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (By-Law No.302-1998). The Carriage House on the estate was designated Part IV by the City of Toronto in 2001 (By-Law No.744-2001).

Direct association with an institution that is significant to a community

The subject property is also valued for its association with the Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (or Quakers), who have owned and used the building as their Meeting House since 1949. In addition to housing the Friends' weekly meetings, the rooms throughout the building are regularly rented out by various community groups and organizations whose objectives align with those of the Religious Society of Friends. This multi-purpose, community-focused function contributes to the community activist character for which the West Annex is known.

Yields information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture

60 Lowther Avenue (Friends House) yields information that contributes to an understanding of Quaker traditions, as well as the Quaker community specific to Toronto. Founded by George Fox in the 17th century, the Quakers are a religious community who practice a return to the roots of Christian faith and worship. There is no codified style of architecture associated with Quakerism and their Meeting Houses, nor are they consecrated buildings. The general amenability in the Quaker use of space resulted in minimal alterations to the subject property's exterior built fabric. This aligned with the adaptive reuse processes that typified the evolution of the West Annex neighbourhood, which has largely retained its residential character while introducing commercial and institutional uses. The most prominent change of the 1969 north elevation addition reflects trends in Toronto Quaker membership, which increased in the 1960s when American members relocated to Canada to avoid the Vietnam War draft.

Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community

The property demonstrates the skillful work of the partnership of Sproatt & Rolph (1899 to 1934), one of Canada’s most important architectural partnerships of the early 20th century. As partners in one of Toronto’s leading firms, they contributed a significant body of work to the City of Toronto, including several landmark buildings currently on the City’s Heritage Register. Noted for its skillful and site responsive application of the Georgian Revival style design, the Miller Lash House reflects Sproatt & Rolph’s approach to prominent residential commissions in the early 20th century. Their residential architecture was widely published from 1901 to 1931, and a few of the firm’s notable/noteworthy commissions are in the vicinity of the Miller Lash House.

CONTEXTUAL VALUE

The property has contextual value because it is	
7. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.	✓
8. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.	✓
9. a landmark.	N/A

Important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area

The subject property supports and maintains the character of the southeast section of the historic Annex neighbourhood, which is recognised by its intact collection of low-rise, architect-designed house form buildings dating to the late-19th and early 20th centuries, many of which are listed on the City of Toronto’s Heritage Register, including: 70 Lowther Avenue (Part IV 2018), and 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 84, and 88 Lowther Avenue (all listed between 1973-1977). The eastern edge of the subject property’s property parcel abuts the westernmost boundary of the East Annex Heritage Conservation District (HCD), which contains the first large-scale residential HCD designated by the City of Toronto in 1994.

Physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings

60 Lowther Avenue is physically, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings in the West Annex neighbourhood, where it sits on the north side of Lowther Avenue near the corner of Bedford Road, facing south to overlook Taddle Creek Park. It is part of a concentration of substantial, architect-designed house-form buildings on the block that are characterized by fine architectural detailing and landscaped setbacks, as seen at the subject property. The construction of these house forms was influenced by Simeon Janes and his Toronto Annex subdivision plan, which initially marketed the area as an exclusively residential enclave. Additionally, the property’s construction date falls within the development peak of the West Annex, which occurred between 1900 to 1910 (with its apex in 1907).

The adaptation of 60 Lowther Avenue from a residential to an institutional function reflects a common trend in the post-war development of the West Annex. Its community

and character experienced a diversification of demographics and functions within the pre-existing buildings. Furthermore, the minimal exterior alterations required to facilitate its transition are typical of the area's development for large house forms converted to non-residential uses.

CONCLUSION

Designed by the esteemed architectural firm Sproatt & Rolph (in association with S.G. Curry, consulting architect) the Meeting House/Miller Lash House is a unique and skillful example of the Georgian Revival architectural style, particularly in its response to the site's configuration. Located in the Annex neighbourhood, known for its architect-designed residential buildings, it was constructed in 1906 as the residence for Miller Lash, a prominent Toronto lawyer. In 1949, the property was acquired by the Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (otherwise known as Quakers) and was adaptively reused as their Friends (Meeting) House.

The adaptive reuse of 60 Lowther Avenue from a residential to an institutional function is reflective of the evolution of the West Annex's post-war community and character in its response to the diversification of demographics and community needs. In this way, the community-focused functions of 60 Lowther Avenue contribute to the community activist character for which the West Annex is known.

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 60 Lowther Avenue and determined that the property meets 6 out of 9 criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act. As such, the property should be designated.

The Statement of Significance (Attachment 3) 60 Lowther Avenue comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate.

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SIGNATURE

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Senior Manager, Heritage Planning
Urban Design, City Planning

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Maps and Photographs

Attachment 2 – List of Research Sources

Attachment 3 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation)



Figure 1. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown. The red rectangle marks the location of the sit (City of Toronto iView Mapping, 2023).

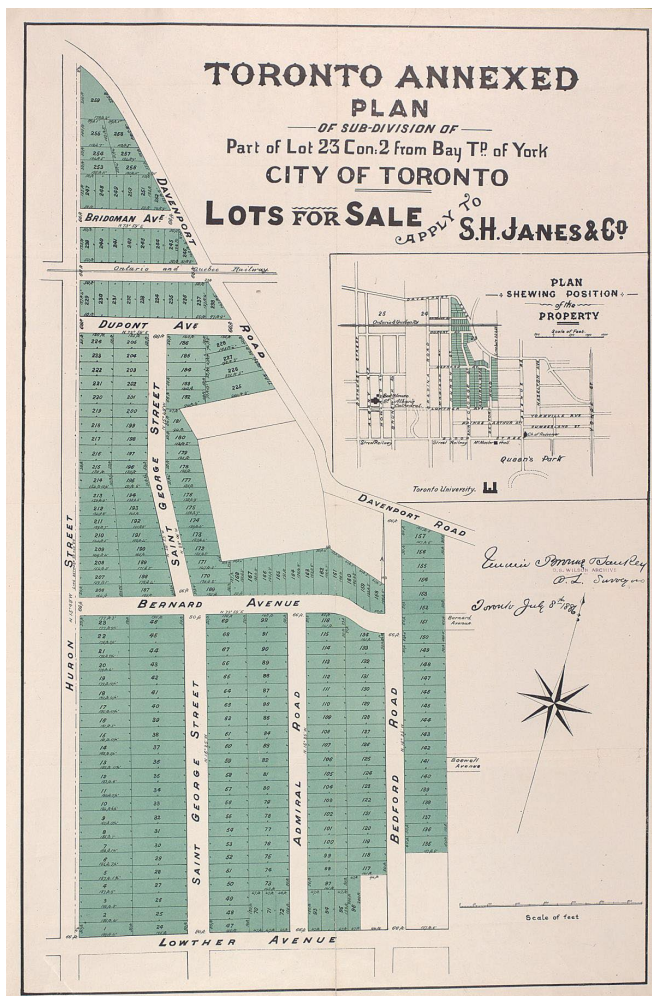


Figure 2. "Toronto annexed, plan of sub-division of part of lot: 23 con 2 from Bay, tp. of York, City of Toronto" by Unwin, Browne & Sankey, 1886. Toronto Public Library.

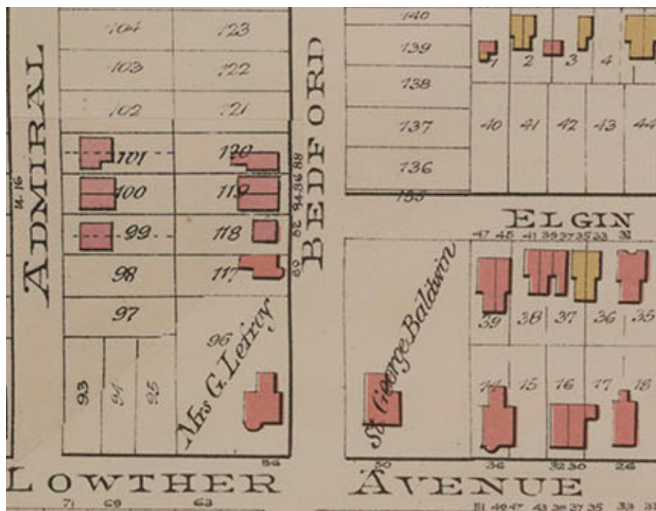


Figure 3. Charles Goads, Atlas of the City of Toronto and Suburbs, 1903 (City of Toronto Archives). Shows future site of subject property that is included within the single parcel 96 at the corner of Lowther Avenue and Bedford Road, owned by Mrs. G. Lefroy.

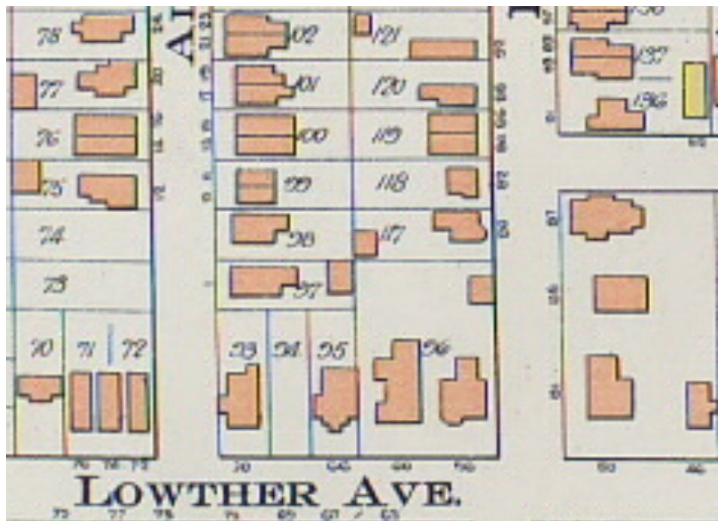


Figure 4. Charles Goads, Atlas of the City of Toronto and Suburbs, 1910 (City of Toronto Archives). Shows building footprint of subject property.

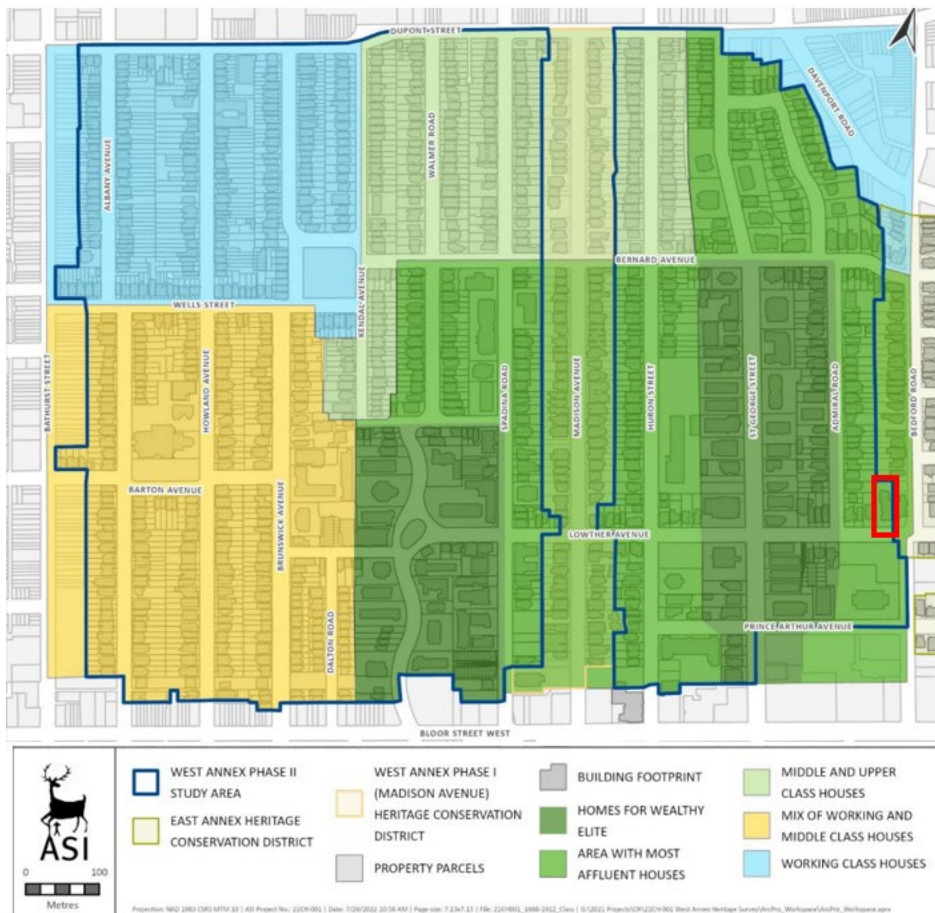


Figure 5. Map reproduced from ASI's "West Annex Phase II: Historical Context Statement and Heritage Survey Project" (December 2022) that illustrates the approximate economic and social class distribution of the original neighbourhood residents, as indicated by the designs of the extant building stock. Subject property is indicated in red.



Figure 6. The property at 60 Lowther Avenue showing the south and partial view of the west elevations. The property is set back from the public realm with a lawned front yard. A partial view of the narrow pathway and masonry gateway is shown. (City of Toronto Archives, 1941)

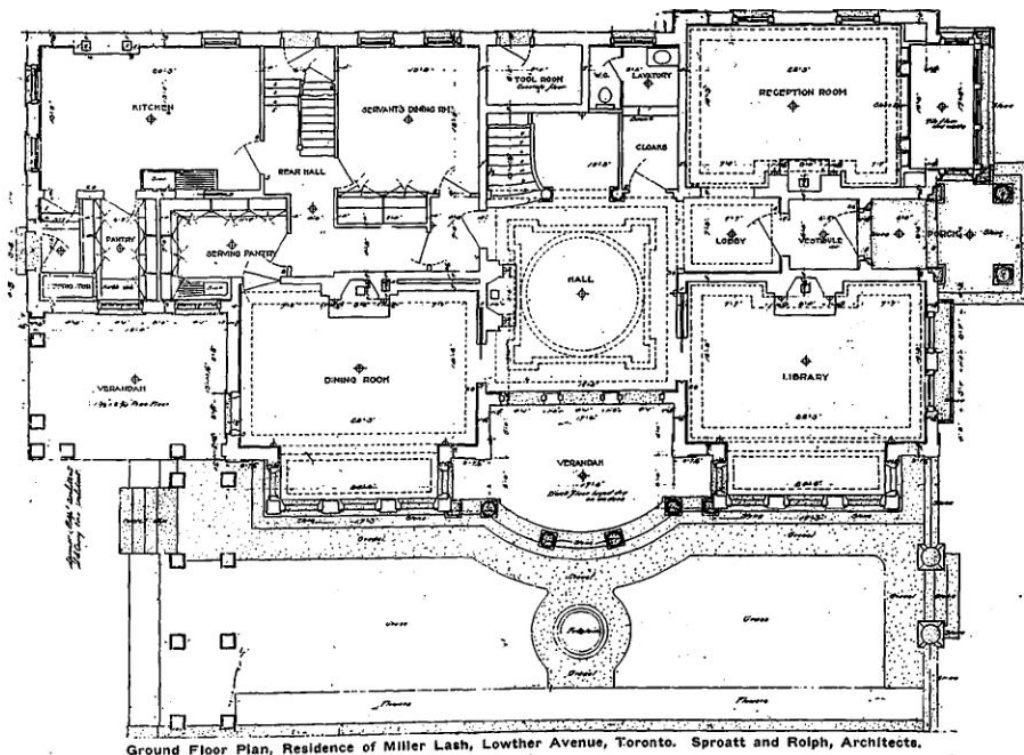
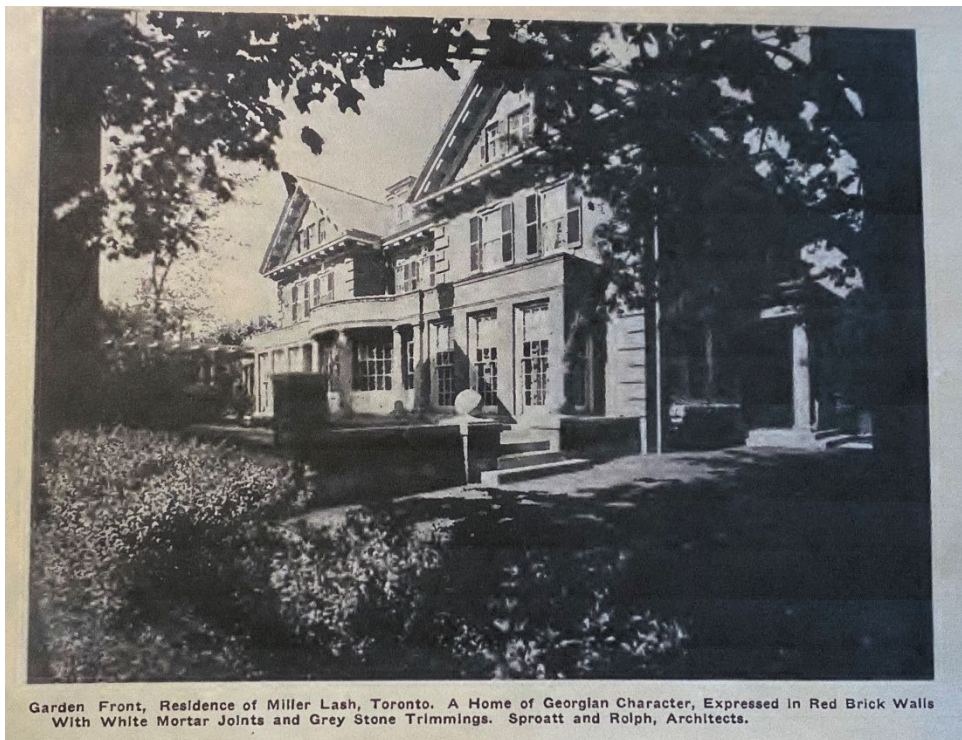


Figure 7. Ground Floor Plan of the Miller Lash House. The entrance from the driveway was to the north of the west elevation with a pathway extending from the pergola to the south masonry gateway to the south. (*Construction Journal.*, Vol 3 No. 9, August, 1910)



Garden Front, Residence of Miller Lash, Toronto. A Home of Georgian Character, Expressed in Red Brick Walls With White Mortar Joints and Grey Stone Trimmings. Sproatt and Rolph, Architects.

Figure 8: Garden or west elevation showing a symmetrical disposition of architectural elements, with a centrally placed solarium. (*Construction Journal*., Vol 3 No. 9, August, 1910)



Figure 9. Bedford Road looking north at Lower Avenue with the red arrow indicating the property's garage. (City of Toronto Archives, 1948)



Figure 10. Main entrance portico on the south elevation with Tuscan Doric columns and entablature. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 11. Triple window bay with Tuscan Doric pilasters to the right of the columned main entrance portico. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 12. South or principal elevation showing a largely symmetrical composition characteristic of the Georgian Revival style. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 13: West or garden elevation viewing south from the pergola with a view of the solarium and flanking window bays. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 14. West elevation showing elongated window bays, dentils on gable end, and symmetry (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 15. Solarium with Tuscan Doric columns in stone (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 16. South and east elevations. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 17. Central Hall with solarium past the arched doorways to the left and partial view of the dining room. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 18. Library with its oak paneling and central fireplace. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 19. Dentils on covered ceiling. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 20. Reception room with marble fireplace and Georgian Revival stylistic elements applied on mantelpiece. (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 21: Details in reception room (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 22. The 1969 rear addition to the north of the 1906 structure. (City of Toronto Building Records, 1969)

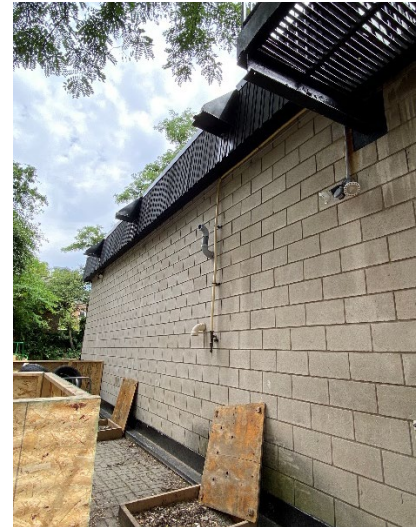


Figure 23. Rear addition in cinder block and copper (Heritage Planning, 2023)



Figure 24. Street context photo showing 60 Bedford Road, the property to the immediate east of 60 Lowther Avenue (Heritage Planning, 2023).



Figure 25. Street context photo showing 70 Lowther Avenue, located west of the subject property (Heritage Planning, 2023).

Archival Sources

- Building Records, Toronto and East York, Build Records Files No. 85838 (1945), 4888 (1949), 3246 (1950), 3884 (1969), and 4860 (1969).
- City of Toronto Archives, Photographic Collection.
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)**

The property at 60 Lowther Avenue 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 for municipal designation under the categories of design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value.

Description

Located in the Annex neighbourhood on the north side of Lowther Avenue, between Bedford Road and Admiral Road, the property at 60 Lowther Avenue contains a 2 1/2 storey house form building constructed in 1906 as the residence for Miller Lash, a prominent Toronto lawyer. Designed by the esteemed architectural firm Sproatt & Rolph (in association with S.G. Curry, consulting architect) the Friends House/Miller Lash House is a unique and skillful example of the Georgian Revival architectural style, particularly in its response to the site's configuration. Several other buildings associated with Miller Lash are designated under Part IV as part of Lash's Highland Creek estate at 130 Old Kingston Road in Scarborough, presently owned by the University of Toronto, including the Miller Lash House and Icehouse (By-Law No.302-1998) and the Carriage House (By-Law No.744-2001).

In 1949, the property was acquired by the Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (otherwise known as Quakers) and was adaptively reused as their Friends (Meeting) House. In 1969, a rear addition, designed by Ottawa-based architect John Leaning, who was also a member of the Quaker community, was added to the property to accommodate an increase in membership. In addition to and complementing its Friends House function, the property has become an important meeting space for various community organizations. In this way, the property continues and contributes to the history of an active community character for which the West Annex is known.

The subject property at 60 Lowther Avenue was added to the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties (now, Heritage Register) in 1976.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Friends House/Miller Lash House has design value as a unique example of the Georgian Revival style dwelling whose value also resides in the skillful application of the style in its response to the site's configuration.

Characteristic elements of the Georgian Revival style are present in the following features of the Miller Lash House: its rectangular form, two-and-a-half storey volume with an unusual double gable roof punctuated by chimneys and dormer windows, the symmetrical arrangement of elements, including the central entrance with its stepped forward portico, and the original window openings with keystones and stone sills; the unexpected bay window on the south elevation that is mirrored on the west elevation flanking a centrally-placed solarium; its red-brick cladding and quoin details; decorative dentil details; and finally, as a gesture to the Greek orders, its columns, pilasters, and

entablature in grey stone. The Georgian Revival character of the exterior of the house is reflected in the interior design of the main rooms including the reception room, dining room, library, and central hall, which feature classicist stylistic elements.

The subject property at 60 Lowther Avenue is valued for its association with the prominent Toronto lawyer and businessman, Miller Lash. The property, which was built for Miller Lash in 1906, was used as his Toronto-based residence until his death in 1941. The association with Miller Lash is significant to the history of the West Annex community as it exemplifies the early 20th century architect-designed residential buildings constructed in the area for financially affluent Toronto residents. Several other buildings associated with Miller Lash are included on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register as part of Lash's Highland Creek estate at 130 Old Kingston Road: the Miller Lash House and Icehouse (Part IV 1998), and the Carriage House (Part IV 2001).

The property demonstrates the skillful work of the partnership of Sproatt & Rolph (1899 to 1934), one of Canada's most important architectural partnerships of the early 20th century. As partners in one of Toronto's leading firms, they contributed a significant body of work to the City of Toronto, including several landmark buildings currently on the City's Heritage Register. Noted for its skillful and site responsive application of the Georgian Revival style design, the Miller Lash House reflects Sproatt & Rolph's approach to prominent residential commissions in the early 20th century. Their residential architecture was widely published from 1901 to 1931, and a few of the firm's notable/noteworthy commissions are in the vicinity of the Miller Lash House.

The subject property is also valued for its association with the Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (or Quakers), who have owned and used the building as their Meeting House since 1949. In addition to housing the Friends' weekly meetings, the rooms throughout the building are regularly rented out by various community groups and organizations whose objectives align with those of the Religious Society of Friends. This multi-purpose, community-focused function contributes to the community activist character for which the West Annex is known.

60 Lowther Avenue (Friends House) yields information that contributes to an understanding of Quaker traditions, as well as the Quaker community specific to Toronto. Founded by George Fox in the 17th century, the Quakers are a religious community who practice a return to the roots of Christian faith and worship. There is no codified style of architecture associated with Quakerism and their Meeting Houses, nor are they consecrated buildings. The general amenability in the Quaker use of space resulted in minimal alterations to the subject property's exterior built fabric. This aligned with the adaptive reuse processes that typified the evolution of the West Annex neighbourhood, which has largely retained its residential character while introducing commercial and institutional uses. The most prominent change of the 1969 north elevation addition reflects trends in Toronto Quaker membership, which increased in the 1960s when American members relocated to Canada to avoid the Vietnam War draft.

The subject property supports and maintains the character of the southeast section of the historic Annex neighbourhood, which is recognised by its intact collection of low-rise, architect-designed house form buildings dating to the late-19th and early 20th centuries, many of which are listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register, including:

70 Lowther Avenue (Part IV 2018), and 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 84, and 88 Lowther Avenue (all listed between 1973-1977). The eastern edge of the subject property's property parcel abuts the westernmost boundary of the East Annex Heritage Conservation District (HCD), designated by the City of Toronto in 1994.

60 Lowther Avenue is physically, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings in the West Annex neighbourhood, where it sits on the north side of Lowther Avenue near the corner of Bedford Road, facing south to overlook Taddle Creek Park. It is part of a concentration of substantial, architect-designed house-form buildings on the block that are characterized by fine architectural detailing and landscaped setbacks, as seen at the subject property. The construction of these house forms was influenced by Simeon Janes and his Toronto Annex subdivision plan, which initially marketed the area as an exclusively residential enclave. Additionally, the property's construction date falls within the development peak of the West Annex, which occurred between 1900 to 1910 (with its apex in 1907).

The adaptation of 60 Lowther Avenue from a residential to an institutional function reflects a common trend in the post-war development of the West Annex. Its community and character experienced a diversification of demographics and functions within the pre-existing buildings. Furthermore, the minimal exterior alterations required to facilitate its transition are typical of the area's development for large house forms converted to non-residential uses.

Heritage Attributes

Design or Physical Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 60 Lowther Avenue as a representative and unique example of a Georgian Revival residential building:

Exterior:

- The scale, form and massing of the two-and-a-half-storey building on a raised basement, within a rectangular plan
- The materials, with the brick masonry construction featuring stone and wood detailing
- The two gable roofs punctuated by dormers on the south, west, and east elevations, and two chimneys on the south side and one on the north
- The brick quoining
- On the south elevation, the two Tuscan Doric columned main entrance portico with entablature of repeating triglyph and guttae with two pilasters that steps forward on a raised platform approached by steps and a square-sided bay window with pairs of pilasters to the right
- On the west elevation, the semi-circular, four Tuscan Doric columned solarium flanked by square-sided bay windows and pairs of Tuscan Doric pilasters
- All original window openings with their symmetrical arrangements, stone sills, and stone keystone details
- Original sash windows and patterns of window glazing

- The deep projecting wood cornice, cornice returns on the side elevations, and wood eaves with dentils, as well as gable ends with dentils

Interior:

- The interior features of the reception room, library, and dining room including the oak-panelled walls, oak mantelpieces and stone fireplaces, and classicist decorative elements as well as the arched doorways leading to the solarium

Historical or Associative Value

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 60 Lowther Avenue as an example of the work of the architects Sproatt and Rolph, and as an architect-designed house form whose features were retained when the property was adaptively reused for an institutional function:

- The subject property's Georgian Revival style design features, which are demonstrative both of the skilled work of Sproatt & Rolph and the status of the property as an architect-designed home for an affluent property owner, Miller Lash (an association that typified the early character of the southeast areas of the Annex)

Contextual Value

Attributes that contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 60 Lowther Avenue as defining, supporting, and maintaining the historic character of the area and being historically, visually, functionally, and physically linked to its setting:

- The setback, placement, and orientation of the building, mid-block on the north side of Lowther Avenue
- The property's setting within the southeast area of the Annex neighbourhood, where it contributes to a collection of late-19th and early 20th architect-designed house forms that are set back from the street