

Staff Report

Report To: Community Services Committee
Report From: Jacklyn Iezzi, Heritage Coordinator
Meeting Date: April 21, 2021
Report Code: CS-21-024
Subject: Request by Chris Waller to Designate 275 8th Street East (Oretsky Fur Store) under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-21-024 respecting a request by Chris Waller to designate 275 8th Street East (Oretsky Fur Store) under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the Community Services Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Support the designation of 275 8th Street East (Oretsky Fur Store) for its design/physical value, historical/associative value, and contextual value; and
2. Direct staff to proceed with issuing Notice of Intention to Designate the property in accordance with Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Highlights:

- The current owner of 275 8th St E has applied to have the property designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- The Ontario Heritage Act requires that Council consult with its Municipal Heritage Committee prior to designating a property. It is the mandate of the Community Services Committee to act as the City's Municipal Heritage Committee under the Act.

- Staff support the designation of 275 8th St E under Part IV of the Act for its design/physical value, historical/associated value, and contextual value.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

6.1 Promote heritage conservation through the Community Improvement Plan, heritage property tax program, façade program, heritage register and designation of properties.

Background:

The current owner of 275 8th St E, Chris Waller, has applied to have the property designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (see Schedule 'A').

The subject property is not listed on the City's Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While listing of a property on the Heritage Register is often the first step that a municipality should take in the conservation, recognition, or long-term protection of a property through designation, it is not a requirement of the Ontario Heritage Act ("the Act").

A property that is not listed on the City's Heritage Register may be designated under Part IV of the Act through municipal by-law, provided that the property satisfies one or more of the criteria prescribed in Ontario Regulation 9/06 (Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest), and in accordance with the process set out in Section 29 of the Act.

Generally, if the Council of a municipality intends to designate a property to be of cultural heritage value or interest, it must serve Notice of Intention to Designate the property on the owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust and publish the notice in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality.

Section 29(2) of the Act requires that Council consult with its Municipal Heritage Committee prior to issuing Notice of Intention to Designate. It is part of the mandate of the Community Services Committee to act as the City's Municipal Heritage Committee under the Ontario Heritage Act. The process for designation is provided in Schedule 'B'.

The purpose of this report is consult with the City's Municipal Heritage Committee on the cultural heritage value of the subject property, as required by the Act, in order to make a recommendation to City Council on the merits of the request for designation.

Analysis:

This section provides an analysis of the cultural heritage value of 275 8th St E (Oretsky Fur Store) in consideration of Provincial and City policies and regulations.

Provincial Policy Statement

Planning authorities, including the City, are required to have regard for the provincial interests under Section 2 of the *Planning Act*. The conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, and archaeological interest, and the promotion of built form that is well designed and encourages a sense of place, are among the provincial interests provided under Section 2.

Furthermore, all decisions made by a municipality must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2020. The PPS recognizes the important environmental, economic, and social benefits that cultural heritage and archeological resources provide and states that significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved (policy 2.6.1).

Policy 1.7.1 (e) further states that long-term economic prosperity should be supported by encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.

City of Owen Sound Official Plan

The City's Official Plan (OP), 2006 is consistent with the policies of the PPS and states that significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes within the City, which are valued by the community, shall be conserved for the benefit of present and future residents as well as tourists and visitors (Sec 7.2.2.1).

The OP further states that the City may identify heritage resources through the process of developing a Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan, or by application by a property owner (Sec. 7.2.2.2). Where the City, after

consultation with the Municipal Heritage Committee, identifies a property as having significant cultural heritage value or interest, it may initiate the process of designation (Sec. 7.2.2.3).

The OP generally encourages owners of recognized heritage resources to have their properties designated (Sec. 7.2.2.5) and supports the identification and protection of the City's heritage resources including historical places, buildings, and areas (Sec. 3.4.2.5).

Evaluation of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest:

As noted, the *Ontario Heritage Act* permits Council to pass a by-law designating a property to be of cultural heritage value or interest provided that the property satisfies one or more of the criteria prescribed in Ontario Regulation 9/06 (see Schedule 'C').

The following provides an evaluation of 275 8th St E using the criteria prescribed by regulation:

Design/Physical (Architectural) Value

275 8th St E is located within the City's South Downtown planning area, just west of the intersection at 3rd Ave E. The subject property is regularly shaped and has approximately 8.3 m of frontage on 8th St E. An Orthophoto of the subject property is provided in Schedule 'D'.

275 8th St E is a two-storey, brick commercial building constructed sometime during the early 1900s. While the building is not considered to be a rare or unique form of a specific architectural style, its architectural value lies in its representation of an early type of material and construction method in Owen Sound as evidenced by its design, composition, and materials.

The exterior of the building boasts an original brick finish that is well kept and has seen little to no modification over the years (Schedule 'E', Figure 1).

Similarly, the second storey of the north (front) façade includes two original window openings that support the repetitive, vertical window pattern along the south side of 8th St E (Schedule 'E', Figure 1). However, original windows have been replaced with vinyl models and new openings have been created on the east (side) façade to provide for residential uses on the second storey (Schedule 'E', Figure 3).

Furthermore, the first storey of the north (front) façade maintains the original design as when the building was constructed. The ground floor

façade is capped with a simple but heavy original wood cornice, supported by brackets at either end (Schedule 'E', Figure 2). While original doors have been replaced, the original door openings, display windows and five-pane transom windows remain intact (Schedule 'E', Figure 1).

Historical/Associative Value

275 8th St E associative value lies in its connection to the Oretsky family and their contributions to the community of Owen Sound.

The Oretskys were among the City's early group of Jewish families. Benjamin and Fannie Oretsky (nee Robovsky) and their three children, Percy, Morris, and Norman immigrated to Owen Sound from Russia in 1908.

The Oretskys established deep roots in the City, where they had three more children named Max, Nettie, and Bessie, and established a successful fur business in the Downtown. A picture of the family is attached circa 1970 (Schedule F, Figure 1).

Fannie's brother, Nathan Robovsky, arrived in Owen Sound a year earlier in 1907, and ran a second-hand shop that evolved into a successful furniture store at 320 8th Street East.

Nathan was married to Goldie Cadesky, the daughter of Isaac Ezekiel Cadesky for whom the Beth Ezekiel Synagogue (Schedule F, Figure 2) is named. Their wedding was reported the first Jewish wedding ceremony held in Owen Sound. A photo of Nathan and Goldie in front of their furniture store on 8th St E circa 1930 is attached (Schedule F, Figure 3).

275 8th St E is pictured with an Oretsky Furs sign in a December 5, 1968 publication of the Owen Sound Herald (Schedule F, Figure 4). The building includes an addition at the south (rear), that is believed to have served as a cold storage vault for fur pelts by the Oretskys (Schedule F, Figure 5). Metal scaffolding type structures were previously erected within this addition that were likely used for the hanging and storage of fur goods (Schedule F, Figure 6 and 7), but have since been removed by the current owner. An original wooden doorway between the 275 8th St E storefront and vault remains intact (Schedule F, Figure 8 and 9).

The 1948-1950 Owen Sound Business Directory lists the eldest Oretsky son, Percy, as residing at 275 (formerly 277) 8th St E and the Owen Sound Fur Company is listed at the same address (Schedule F, Figure 10 and 11). Percy passed away in 1966 and the business was eventually sold.

Contextual Value

Finally, 275 8th St E has contextual value because it supports the heritage streetscape of the downtown, which is to be maintained, strengthened, and supported in accordance with the policies of the City's Official Plan.

The subject property contributes to the second storey repeated window motif along the east side of 8th St E, which visually and physically links the building to its surroundings.

The streetscape of 8th St E is comprised of several listed properties on the City's register. From the subject property to the intersection at 3rd Ave E, there are several similar two storey buildings with original brick façades that contribute to the historic feel and built form of the City's downtown.

275 8th St E remains relatively unchanged and is surrounded by examples of the built form and commercial architecture typical of the late 19th and early 20th century in the City.

Conclusion

In conclusion, 275 8th St E satisfies the criteria prescribed in Ontario Regulation 9/06.

Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* requires that Notice of Intention to Designate the property be served on the property owner and Ontario Heritage Trust and contain, among other matters, a statement of cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a description of the property's heritage attributes.

A statement of cultural heritage value and a list of the property's heritage attributes are provided in Schedule 'G'.

Financial Implications:

There are minor financial implications associated with publishing the Notice of Intention to Designate the property in the Sun Times newspaper.

Communication Strategy:

The recommendation of Community Services Committee will be provided to City Council. Following Council's decision on the matter, Notice of Intention to Designate the property will be served on the property owner and the

Ontario Heritage Trust and published in the Sun Times newspaper in accordance with Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Following Notice of Intention to Designate, there is a 30-day period in which objections to the designation may be received.

Consultation:

The property owner and Grey Roots Museum and Archives were consulted in the writing of this report in addition to the following reference materials:

- Blumenson, J.G. (1942). Ontario Architecture: A Guide to Styles and Building Terms, 1784 to the present.
- Architectural Terms by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Port Hope Branch
- City of Owen Sound Business Directory, 1948-1949.
- [Ontario's Small Jewish Communities, Owen Sound, Employment and Business](#)
- [Ontario's Small Jewish Communities, Owen Sound, The Second Wave](#)
- [Grey Roots Museum & Archives, Object Record 2012.055.001abcde](#)

Attachments:

Schedule 'A':	Application to Designate 275 8 th St E
Schedule 'B':	Process for Designation by Municipal By-law
Schedule 'C':	Ontario Regulation 9/06 – Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest
Schedule 'D':	Orthophoto
Schedule 'E':	Architectural Features of 275 8 th St E
Schedule 'F':	Historical Photos
Schedule 'G':	Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and Heritage Attributes, 275 8 th St E

Recommended by:

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