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County of Lennox & Addington



TOWNSHIP OF ERNESTOWN

AUG 17 1994

REGISTERED MAIL

August 11, 1994

Ontario Heritage Foundation
10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 1J3

Dear Sir or Madam:

RE: Designation of Fairfield House
as having Historic Architectural Value
Notice of Passing of By-law

At its meeting of August 8th, 1994, Council of the Corporation of the Township of Ernestown enacted by-law 94-34 which has the effect of designating Fairfield House and the surrounding site as having historic or architectural value or interest. A copy of the by-law is attached and this letter serves as notice under Section 29(6) of the Ontario Heritage Act, Chapter 0.18, R.S.O. 1990.

Please note this by-law is being registered against the property affected at the Lennox and Addington County Registry office.

If you have questions on this matter, please contact the undersigned at your convenience.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Murray Beckel".

Murray Beckel
Township Planner
MB/sc

Attachment

c.c. M.G. Wade, P. Eng., CAO/Clerk

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ERNESTOWN

BY-LAW NO. 94-34

Being a By-law to designate the Fairfield House in Amherstview as an historical property pursuant to Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18.

WHEREAS Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990, C. 0.18 as amended, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of architectural and historical value; and

WHEREAS the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee has recommended to the Council that the Fairfield House in Amherstview be designated an historical property; and

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Ernestown has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises known as the Fairfield House, Bath Road (Highway 33) in Amherstview and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in the same newspapers having general circulation in the municipality once; and

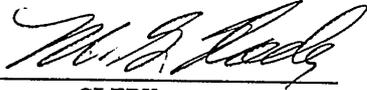
WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the Clerk of the municipality;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Township of Ernestown enacts as follows:

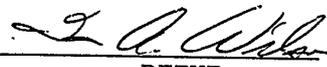
- 1) There is designated as being of architectural and historical value the real property known as the Fairfield House, Bath Road in Amherstview, more particularly described in Schedule 'A' hereto. The reasons for this designation are detailed on Schedule 'B' attached hereto.
- 2) The municipal solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule 'A' hereto in the proper land registry office.
- 3) The Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served on the owner of the aforesaid property and on the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of the passing of this by-law to be published in the same newspapers having general circulation in the municipality.

Read a First and Second Time this 8th day of August, 1994.

Read a Third Time, Signed, Sealed and Finally Passed this 8th day of August, 1994.


CLERK

CERTIFIED A TRUE COPY
OF BY-LAW NUMBER 94-34
PASSED BY THE COUNCIL
OF THE CORPORATION OF


REEVE

THE TOWNSHIP OF ERNESTOWN

THE 8th DAY OF Aug. 1994


CLERK

SCHEDULE 'A'

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Part of lot 37, the Broken Front in front of Concession 1, Township of Ernestown, County of Lennox and Addington, in the said Township, which said parcel or tract of land may be more particularly described as follows:

COMMENCING at a point in the Northerly limit of the Kings Highway No. 33, distant therein Westerly 836.4 feet from the limit between Lots 37 and 38;

THENCE North 49 degrees, 31 minutes, 30 seconds East along the Northerly limit of said highway, a distance of 166.95 feet to an iron survey post;

THENCE continuing along the Northerly limit of said highway on a curve to the left of radius 1,398.33 feet, an arc distance of 154.30 feet;

THENCE North 34 degrees, 13 minutes West along a wire fence a distance of 314.72 feet to an iron survey post;

THENCE South 49 degrees, 49 minutes West a distance of 119.48 feet to an iron survey post;

THENCE North 44 degrees, 09 minutes West a distance of 160.05 feet to an iron survey post;

THENCE South 48 degrees, 12 minutes West along a fence a distance of 186.1 feet to an iron survey post;

THENCE South 35 degrees, 44 minutes East along a fence-line a distance of 479.1 feet more or less to the point of commencement;

SCHEDULE 'B'

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

The interior and exterior of the timber framed building referred to as the Fairfield House and the surrounding site are designated as historically and architecturally significant for the following reasons:

1) Exterior Architectural Significance

Fairfield House has stood on the shore of Lake Ontario since 1793 and the original timber-framed, two and a half storey, clapboard-covered house has survived an outstanding physical record from Ontario's first ten (10) years of settlement.

The Province has marked the building's significance with a plaque as "a superbly example of an 18th century building" and "an outstanding physical record of 18th century building techniques." The timber-framing with clapboard covering and the steeply pitched gable roof with ridge parallel to the length of the house, as well as the interior details original in the vernacular building traditions of New England. The rectangular centre hall floor plan, the facade with balanced fenestration on either side of the entrance door, the two chimneys at opposite ends of the house, and fireplace woodwork details show the influence Georgian styles had on the vernacular building by the late 1700s. The double verandah and french windows on the second level were added to the facade about 1860.

The 1793 kitchen wing contains a complete small house frame, separate from and possibly earlier than the main house. The second storey was added in the 1860s. The shed connects with the kitchen and formerly had a stone bakeoven, as well as an attached pantry.

2) HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The historical significance attaches beyond the walls of the house to include physical parts of the site. House and site together represent important parts of the everyday history the Fairfield family shared with their Ernestown neighbours through the generations. At the time of Loyalist settlement, many others landed in Township 2 with similar refugee experiences so that the lakefront at Fairfield House is an important link with this initial settlement.

Fairfield House was built as a farmhouse and was the focus of an active family farm, a way of life that continued to be typical of Ernestown Township until the late 1950s. To the east of the house, within call of the kitchen door, stood a stock barn, for which photographic and archaeological evidence remains. Orchard trees were planted on the north hillside and also west of the house, where a few apple trees remain in the park.

The lake was the prime travel route for the early Fairfields. Sons and grandsons of William Fairfield became involved with lake shipping for periods of time and in the 1830s the John C. Clark diary refers to boats being built at Fairfield's place. In time the road from Kingston to the settlements to the west passed in front of Fairfield House. In 1802 the first license for a tavern at the house was taken. What was at first known simply as the shore road or Front Road, had become known the Bath Road by 1831. Traffic continued to pass the front door of Fairfield House until the highway location was shifted north of the house about 1960 for the formation of Fairfield Park, leaving the historical road bed within the park. In 1984 the heritage of the early highway was commemorated when Highway No. 33 was designated the Loyalist Parkway.

Although the Fairfields who stayed resident at Fairfield House continued the traditions of the farming community, they were active in Township government and militia in the mid-1800s. Other sons and daughters of William Senior settled on their own lots within the Township. Most prominent of these were William and Benjamin who were active in the early phases of the community that became Bath.

3) ARCHITECTURAL HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

As a Loyalist-era frame building, Fairfield House was already a valuable historical artifact thirty-five years ago. In 1959 much of Ontario's Loyalist "inventory" had been destroyed through the Seaway and Ontario Hydro projects along the St. Lawrence valley waterfront. Even without such planned destruction, early wooden houses had been lost through the years through weathering and fire, as well as the tendency of later owners to modify the first framed houses to make them appear more up-to-date or to replace them entirely by more modernly styled houses.

The 1851-2 Census of Canada records that frame house were 69 per cent of all houses in Ernestown Township. As the most typical form of house, frame buildings are important for historians interested in an accurate picture not only of Ernestown but of the province. Fairfield House itself provides evidence for both the building methods and the conception of living space familiar to the first decade of construction in Upper Canada. There is no alternate source for this.

4) INTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The interior of house stands as its own documentation. Fairfield House retains its structural integrity because the family never forced it to contain a twentieth century heating system which would have introduced extensive destruction of original material. Plumbing was confined to the westerly side of the kitchen wing. Similarly electrification of the house was modest, although it did effect some baseboards. The degree of survival of material and detail is unusual, so that what follows is an inventory of what is actually in the house.

Between the oak structural frame, the exterior walls are filled with stacked split oak boards separated by clay mixed with straw. This system provided interior surfaces for finished plastered walls without nailing up lath. The interior partitioning of the second floor hall is also of this form. Handmade bricks and vertical boards are the other partitioning materials defining the original Loyalist-era layout of rooms to left and right of a central hall, on all levels. The stairs combine short straight runs of treads with winders and small landings to connect floors. The only decorative wood used in the house is the cherry handrail, balusters, and posts of the stairs.

White pine was used for the floors and the interior woodwork, which includes a variety of moulding profiles applied to a range of components from ceiling, wainscot, and partition boards, cornices, chair rails, baseboards, as well as joinery of cupboards, doors, windows, and fireplace surrounds. Woodwork and floors, except in the attic, were painted, but plastered walls and ceilings were coated with whitewash or pigments in size, not paint. In the work of the 1980s, paint (irreversible) has not been introduced to walls or areas that the Fairfields had not painted. The floors of the downstairs hall and dining room have painted patterns from the 1800s, which have been kept in place and covered by protective simulations of the patterns. Interior paint has not been stripped, but paint sequences sampled. The presence or absence of colours in areas are important evidence of stages of use and decoration within the house.

An early set of physical changes are linked to a changed use for part of the house. A tavern license was taken out in 1802. The southeast room appears to have been refitted for this public use by the removal of a corner cupboard and the introduction of a new side door. The west hall of this room retains the outlines of shelves. Later in the 1800s, the family brought the room back to domestic use and updated the woodwork by applying taller baseboards over the Loyalist ones. This set an example of non-destructive change for those working with the building in the 1980s.

Another set of changes that can be traced through architectural evidence involve the west parlour and adjoining bedroom. As part of this complex, a small window was added north of the fireplace, in place of the loyalist-era cupboard. This may have been done to compensate for loss of daylight from the north when access to the window of the bedroom to the north was blocked off. This change may have been done about the 1820s, based on mouldings found. The work of 1984 was concluded before the west window could be reinstalled.

A greater change to the Loyalist building came with the addition of the verandahs across the front and with the replacement of the original windows by French windows opening on to the second story verandah. The large east room was divided into a north and south bedroom by a paneled wooden partition with large double doors. Paint evidence shows this partition and the French windows to be contemporary. A new doorway gave the south bedroom access to the hall. A new small bedroom communicating with the verandah was formed from the south end of the hall.

The kitchen of Fairfield House is in a wing attached to the northerly wall of the main house. The frame of the small building that is part of the kitchen structure may have been one of the earlier Fairfield houses. The foundation of a large fireplace remains in the northwesterly corner of the wing. A charred beam is evidence of a fire in the north end of the kitchen. This may have led to the reshaping of the kitchen with the removal of the fireplace and the introduction of a window in its place. Work of the 1980s included the reproduction of sash for kitchen windows based on one surviving original. The wing's second story, with two bedrooms above the kitchen, was added in the early 1860s. In the work of the 1980s, the original room layout was reestablished, although a small washroom was retained in the northwest corner of the area.

The kitchen communicated through its side porch with the shed that still stands east of the kitchen wing. The north stone wall of the shed included a stone bake oven. There was also a wooden privy attached to the shed's north wall at the end close to the barn. This structure was a basic component in the working domestic complex.