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CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF ESSEX

33 Talbot Street South, Essex, Ontario, N8M 1A8
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February 27, 2025

Provincial Heritage Registrar

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

RECEIVED
2025/02/27
(YYYY/MM/DD)
Ontario Heritage Trust

RE: **Various Properties in Essex Centre**

Dear Ontario Heritage Trust.

At their regular meeting on Tuesday February 18th, the Council for the Corporation of the Town of Essex issued a Notice of Intention to Designate the properties located at 87 Station Street and 18 Gordon Avenue, under section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Why were these properties selected?

These properties have been selected because they display cultural heritage value and interest.

Attached is a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the properties and a description of the heritage attributes of the properties.

Notice of Objection

A Notice of Objection to the Notice of Intention to Designate may be served on the Clerk of the Town of Essex by **Wednesday April 2, 2025**. The Notice of Objection must set out the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts.

Your cooperation with the preservation of our past is greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rita Jabbour", followed by a horizontal line.

Rita Jabbour, RPP

Manager, Planning Services
rjabbour@essex.ca
519.776.7336 ext. 1112

Where you belong



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c.c. Joseph A. Malandruccolo, Director, Legal and Legislative Services/Clerk

jmalandruccolo@essex.ca

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APPENDIX A

Carnegie Library

Municipal Address

18 Gordon Avenue, Essex Centre

Legal Description

PLAN 176 LOTS 202 & 204

General Description of Property

18 Gordon Avenue is located on the southern side of Gordon Avenue within Essex Centre. It is comprised of the former Essex Public Library: a brick building that was built in 1914 following a large donation from Scottish American Philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, to serve as the Essex Public Library.

Description of Property that has Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The area of the property that demonstrates cultural heritage value or interest is the area that encompasses the entirety of the former Essex Public Library or Carnegie Library.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Design/Physical Value

The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

18 Gordon Avenue retains significant design or physical value because it is an example of an early 20th century public library building built by Andrew Carnegie in 1914 in the Town of Essex.

The building was built in 1914 after the community received a \$6,000 donation from Scottish American Philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, on January 6th, 1911. The Beaux Arts architectural style is characteristic to other public libraries built by Carnegie at the turn of the 20th century. This is best seen in the style of the gables, window openings, building size and layout, and decorative voussoirs, alongside motifs depicting what the building's initial purpose was.

Historical/Associative Value



The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

18 Gordon Avenue retains significant historical or associative value because it has direct associations with an organization and institution that is significant to the community. The Essex Public Library played a significant role in the educational development of Essex Centre throughout the 20th century and into the 21st century.

Efforts for the construction of a public library in Essex Centre were started in 1885, 29 years prior to the opening of the building in 1914, as members of the local community felt that there needed to be greater access to education in Essex Centre. Community members began lobbying for a permanent structure for the local library after a committee was formed to create a library in 1885. In 1908, the library became a free public institution aimed at increasing the education and literacy rate in Essex Centre.

On January 6th, 1911, the community was gifted a \$6,000 donation from Scottish American Philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to construct a permanent structure for the public library. Carnegie began granting money to municipalities in the United States in the 1880's to build a public library, as he believed in open access to free education for all and worked to improve literacy rates across the world. He built libraries around the world, including building 125 libraries in communities across Canada.

In the library's first year of operation, 302 people used its services and over 5,150 books were borrowed. Throughout its years of operation, the number of books that were available for circulation was steadily increased and the Town's literacy rate steadily improved. It ceased operations in 2005, and it now houses the Essex and Community Historical Research Center.

The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

18 Gordon Avenue has historical or associative value because it demonstrates the work of prominent Windsor architect, James Carlisle Pennington or J. C. Pennington, who used the Beaux Arts architectural style, characteristic of most Carnegie buildings. Alongside designing this building, Pennington worked on designing hundreds of



buildings throughout Windsor and Essex County for over 50 years, such as the former Harrow Municipal Building and the additions made to the Essex High School in the 1920s.

Description of Heritage Attributes

The key heritage attributes that contribute to the design/physical value of 18 Gordon Avenue, includes:

- The mass, form, and style of the building,
- The brick cladding on all elevations,
- The fieldstone foundation,
- All existing window and doorway openings,
- The decorative voussoirs,
- The sign reading Public Library on the front facade,
- The existing Mansard roof line and peaks,
- The decorative gables,
- The decorative white brick pattern

The key heritage attributes that contribute to the historical/associative value of 18 Gordon Avenue, includes:

- The location of the building on the south side of Gordon Avenue,
- The sign reading Public Library on the front facade,