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September 21, 2011

Ontario Heritage Trust
10 Adelaide Street East
TORONTO ON M5C 1J3

**Re: Notice of Intent to Designate - George Stephens Building
14 King Street West, Community of Chatham
Municipality of Chatham-Kent**

At the Council Meeting held September 12, 2011, Chatham-Kent Council approved the Municipal Heritage Committee's recommendation for the Intent to Designate the George Stephens Building, located at 14 King Street West, in the Community of Chatham, under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value and interest.

The Notice of Intent to Designate was advertised in Chatham-Kent Matters on Wednesday, September 21, 2011, with the last day for filing a Notice of Objection being Thursday, October 20, 2011, (copy attached).

If no appeals have been received, a By-law to designate the property will be prepared for Council's consideration.

Sincerely,



Ryan Jacques
Acting Development Planner

c Municipal Heritage Committee

Attachment(s)

Canadian Register of Historic Places Nomination
George Stephens Building, 14 King Street West,
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

*any field that appears in grey is mandatory

Identification

Historic Place Name	George Stephens Building		
Other Names	#	Type:	Name:
	1	Other	14 King Street West
	2	Other	Retro Suites

Recognition

Authority:	Local Government (ON)
Recognition Type:	Municipal Heritage Designation Part IV
Recognition Date:	yyyy-mm-dd (To be added after council approval)

Location

Location

Building Number:	14
Street Name:	King Street West
Postal Code:	N7M 1C6
Locality:	Chatham
Community:	Municipality of Chatham-Kent
Upper Tier:	n/a

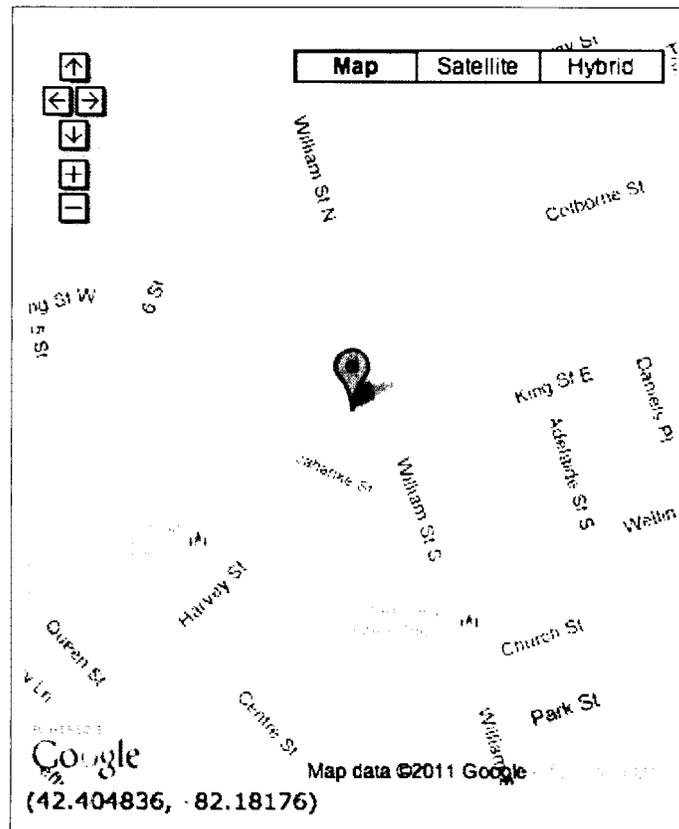
Coordinates

UTM		Latitude/Longitude	
Determination:	n/a	Determination:	Geocoding
Datum:	n/a	Datum:	NAD83
Zone:	n/a	Latitude:	42.404836
Northing:	n/a	Longitude:	-82.181760
Easting:	n/a		
Borden #:	n/a	Borden #:	n/a

Boundaries

Boundary Description:	Part of Lot 81, Old Survey, Municipality of Chatham-Kent.
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Map



Description

Statement of Significance

Description of Historic Place: i.e. Description of Property	14 King Street West, known historically as the George Stephens Building, is located on the south side of King Street West, west of William Street in the City of Chatham, Municipality of Chatham-Kent. The property consists of a three-storey commercial building with a tin façade that was built in 1888 by local Chatham architect, T. J. Rutley.
Heritage Value: i.e. Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest	<p><i>Historical or Associative Value:</i></p> <p>The George Stephens Building was built in 1888 by Thomas John Rutley (1847-1910). Rutley was a well-known local architect who was responsible for the design of numerous buildings in Chatham. The extent of his contributions to the built form of the City has not been determined, but he is clearly associated with many local landmarks including the Central School (1893), Harrison Hall (1890), and the Thomas Stone Store (1888).</p> <p>The George Stephens Building was built for local businessman and politician George Stephens (1846-1916). The site housed his hardware business that was founded in 1872 in a building on the same location. He owned the business with his brother William, and subsequently D.H. Douglas was made a partner. The ads for the store cited, "Geo Stephens Hardware Stoves and Implements," and listed items for sale such as paints, cutlery, guns, fur coats, buggies, roofing and cut glass. In 1913, the business was sold to Doug Allison and continued to operate as a hardware store under the name, A.D. Allison Hardware Co. Zink Hardware and the Chatham Shopping News also operated from the building at later dates.</p> <p>In addition to owning and running the hardware store, George Stephens was an active politician. He served on Chatham City Council in 1899 and 1900. On November 7, 1900, he was elected as the Member of Parliament for the County of Kent. During his time as an M.P. he secured the dredging of the Thames River. Stephens only served one term as M.P., being defeated in 1904 by Albert Clements.</p> <p><i>Design or Physical Value:</i></p> <p>The George Stephens Building is a rare surviving example of cast-iron frame construction on a commercial building in North America. The large window areas are made possible by the use of a light-weight cast-iron frame (as opposed to wood and brick construction). This building method was a forerunner of the modern skyscraper and originated on the east coast of the United States in the 1840s, spreading to Chicago in the 1850s and was used for commercial construction into the 1890s.</p> <p>It was believed that the front of this building was created from cast-iron, however, restoration in the 1990s revealed that the façade is actually tin. The tin front is affixed to wood panels that are attached to brick exterior. Tin fronts provided the ability for ornate detailing and were cheaper than stone. As a local supplier of construction materials, it is speculated that George Stephens crafted the façade himself. The detailed ornamentation including the pillars at the edges of the façade, window surrounds, rows of medallions and leaves, and bracketed cornice show the malleability of tin.</p> <p>The three third storey windows are framed by an arch with a keystone and each window is topped by a semi-circular transom. Inside the arch in gold relief is the</p>

words, "Geo Stephens," and the construction date, "1888." Typical of commercial buildings of the 1880s, the structure has a decorative cornice with brackets and a flat roof. Also of note, the centre window on the second storey was the largest pane of glass used in a commercial structure in Chatham at the time of its construction. It was used to display the stoves that were sold in the Geo Stephens store.

The George Stephens Building was a forerunner of innovation. It had the first elevator in Chatham, and during restoration a tube running from the basement to the top floor was discovered and is believed to have served as a primitive intercom system.

Contextual Value:

King Street is the historic main street of Chatham and the south side has historically been the busier side of the street, housing some of the oldest brick buildings in the City. This area has come to represent the centre of business and the home to many of the area's hostelrys. Throughout the 1850s and 60s, the corner of King and William Streets housed the first Baptist Church and from there along the south side of King to the Market Square was a series of wood frame shops, such as William Northwood's grocery store, the Dublin House and R.O. Smith's furniture store. The corner's historic prominence was enhanced by the nearby industry across McGregor's Creek, including the T.H. Taylor Woollen Mill at 14 William Street North, built in 1869, and the Beaver Flour Mill, built in 1872, but which burnt down in the 1980s.

It was not until the 1880s that these buildings at King and William Streets were replaced with the brick structures that exist today and have come to house many of the City's most successful businesses. The structures from the Bates Building at 28-34 William Street South and around the corner to 16 King Street West form a continuous commercial front. Most of these buildings are two or three storeys, therefore maximizing their frontage on the main street. The basements of all the structures on this prominent corner were connected and it was believed that they were used in rum running during the era of prohibition.

Sources:

- Chatham Directory, 1876-1877, 1915, 1919.
- Chatham Driving Tour
- Commemorative Biographical Record of the County of Kent*, 1904.
- Community on Thames*, 1987.
- Historic King Street, Chatham, Ontario*, K. Stoney and C. Naismith, 1978.
- Municipality of Chatham-Kent Heritage Register
- Municipality of Chatham-Kent Land Registry Records
- There Was a Time*, Jim & Lisa Gilbert.
- Windfall*, 1979.

Character-Defining Elements:
i.e. Description of Heritage Attributes

Key exterior elements of 14 King Street West that contribute to its value as a rare commercial example of cast iron construction with a tin façade include its:

- three storey cast iron construction
- tin façade affixed to wood panels, attached to the brick exterior
- uniquely large centre window on the second floor
- set of three windows on the third storey with a larger centre window, each of which is topped by a semi-circular transom
- gold relief writing on the third storey of the façade: "Geo Stephens" and "1888"
- detailed ornamentation on the tin façade including the pillars at the edges of the façade, window surrounds, rows of medallions and leaves, bracketed cornice and arch with keystone

	<p>- flat roof</p> <p>Key elements of 14 King Street West that support its contextual value include its:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - location near the corner of King and William Streets - proximity to McGregor Creek and commercial businesses in downtown Chatham - forms part of continuous commercial store fronts that stretch from 28-34 William Street South to 16 King Street West
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Contributing Resources	Type:		Count:	
	Building		1	
Area (m²)	289			
Dates of Significance	#	Type:	From:	To:
	1	Construction	1888	1888
BA	#	Type:	Name:	
	1	Architect	Thomas John Rutley	
	2	Builder	n/a	

Function Category and Type

Category and Type	#	Function:	Category:	Type:
	1	Historic	Commerce	Shop or Wholesale Establishment
	2	Current	Commerce	Hotel, Motel or Inn

Theme

Theme Category Type	#	Category:	Type:
	1	Developing Economies	Trade and Commerce

Images

	Image 1:	Image 2:	Image 3:
File Path:	n/a	n/a	n/a
Image Type:	Contemporary Photograph	Contemporary Photograph	Contemporary Photograph
Caption:	Façade of 14 King Street West	Detailed View of the Tin Façade of 14 King Street West	Contextual View of 14 King West
Description:	Featured is the tin façade and gold relief writing that reads "Geo Stephens" and "1888," 2011.	Featured is the intricate and decorative tin façade of the Geo Stephens Building, 2011.	Northwest view of the row of commercial structures that line King Street West, 2011.
Copyright:	Lindsay Benjamin, 2011.	Lindsay Benjamin, 2011.	Lindsay Benjamin, 2011.
Miscellaneous Info:	n/a	n/a	n/a



Image 1

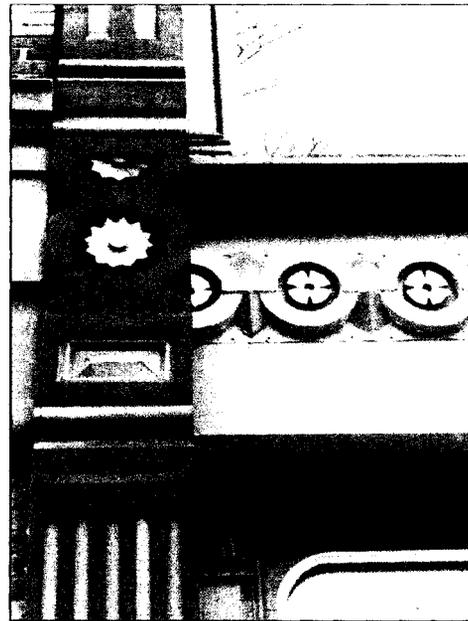


Image 2



Image 3

Resources

Location of Documents:	Chatham Cultural Centre 75 William Street North Chatham Ontario N7M 4L4		
Collections:	n/a		
Related Link	URL:	Type:	Description:
	http://www.chatham-kent.ca	Local Government Website	Municipality of Chatham-Kent Website
	http://retrosuites.com	Other	Retro Suites Website

Management

Ownership Type:	Private (Taxable Corporation)
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