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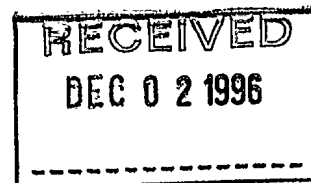
The City of  
Niagara Falls  
Canada



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**Doug Darbyson**  
Director of Planning &  
Development

November 25, 1996



**REGISTERED MAIL**

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

Dear Sir or Madam:

**Re: Notice of Passing of By-law  
Willoughby Township Hall  
11211 Sodom Road, Niagara Falls**

The Council of the Corporation of the City of Niagara Falls has passed a by-law which designates the above-noted land and building as property of historic and architectural value and interest under the terms of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990. Enclosed is a copy of By-law 96-243 which includes the reasons for the designation. A public notice advising of the passing of this by-law is being published in the local newspaper in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact me at extension 4231.

Yours truly,

  
Alex Herlovitch  
Deputy Director of Planning & Development

AH/tc  
Encl.

c: E. C. Wagg, City Clerk

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**CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS**

**By-law No. 96-.....<sup>243</sup>**

A by-law to designate the property at 11211 Sodom Road, known as the Willoughby Township Hall, to be of historic and architectural value and interest.

WHEREAS Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, within the municipality to be of historic or architectural value or interest;

AND WHEREAS The Corporation of the City of Niagara Falls has caused to be served upon the owner of the property described in Schedule "A" hereto and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to designate the property and has caused such notice of intention to designate to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality on September 28, 1996;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out as Schedule "B" hereto;

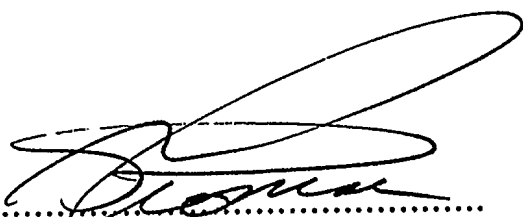
AND WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served upon the Clerk of the municipality.

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. The property, more particularly described in Schedule "A" hereto, known as the Willoughby Township Hall, is hereby designated to be of historic and architectural value and interest.
2. The City 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 City Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owner of the property and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Niagara Falls.

Passed this 18th day of November, 1996.

  
.....  
E. C. WAGG, CITY CLERK

  
.....  
WAYNE THOMSON, MAYOR

First Reading	November 18, 1996
Second Reading	November 18, 1996
Third Reading	November 18, 1996

**SCHEDULE "A" to By-law No. 96-.....<sup>243</sup>**

All and singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate lying and being in the City of Niagara Falls, in the City of Niagara Falls, in the Regional Municipality of Niagara, formerly in the County of Welland and being composed of parts of Lot 12, Concession 3 in the former Township of Willoughby and being more particularly described as follows:

FIRSTLY: Commencing at the Southeast angle of said Lot 12;  
Thence West 264 feet;  
Thence North 165 feet;  
Thence East 264 feet;  
Thence South 165 feet to the place of beginning.

As described in #561 (1877).

SECONDLY: Commencing at a point 264 feet West of the Southeast angle of said Lot 12;  
Thence West 132 feet;  
Thence North 165 feet;  
Thence East 132 feet;  
Thence South 165 feet to the place of beginning.

As described in #581 (1877).

## HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

### WILLOUGHBY TOWNSHIP HALL 11211 SODOM ROAD

#### DESCRIPTION

Current Owner: The Corporation of the City of Niagara Falls

Original Owner: The Corporation of the Township of Willoughby

Date of Construction: 1877

Legal Description: Part of Lot 12, Conc 3, former Twp of Willoughby

Municipal Address: 11211 Sodom Road, Niagara Falls

#### HISTORY

The history of Willoughby Township and the Township Hall are taken from the writings of Francis Petrie and supplemented by research of instruments at the Registry Office. Willoughby Township was first settled in 1784 with its pioneer settlers for the most part coming from the disbanded Butlers' Rangers. These settled primarily along the River and along the township's inland creeks.

The township was first surveyed in 1787 and received its name Willoughby in 1792 from Governor Simcoe. Willoughby was first known as Township Number Three when it was first surveyed in 1787 and the number was changed to Willoughby in July, 1792 when the first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, so named it after the town of Willoughby in Lincolnshire, England. Simcoe had the Town Offices Act passed at Niagara in 1793 which gave Willoughby its first officials. A Crown Patent for 400 acres of land was granted to Samuel Street, July 23, 1798 which included the lands on which the Hall stands.

Progress was slow in the township because of its marshy interior and the setbacks of the War of 1812, the Rebellion of 1837, and the Fenian Raid of 1866, all of which resulted in much activity over Willoughby's lands.

The population of the township was small with only 450 people there in 1817, and land was valued at 25 shillings an acre. On November 16, 1835, the executors of Samuel Street transferred 50 acres of the east half of Lot 12 to Michael Dietenback. In turn Michael Dietenback sold the east 50 acres of Lot 12 along with additional lands to Jacob Morningstar.

But 1850 saw the passing and institution of the Baldwin Act whereby Willoughby became an incorporated township with a reeve and councillor. This local political body had no meeting place to conduct township business so it held its monthly meeting in various township inns and taverns or in the reeve or councillors' homes.

By 1877, after 27 years of these transient meetings, the township council, under Reeve William Marshall, decided to purchase lands for a permanent township hall. On March 31, 1877, Jacob Morningstar conveyed 1 acre of land in the southeast part of Lot 12, Concession 3, fronting on Sodom Road to the Corporation of the Township of Willoughby for \$75. An additional half acre to the rear (west) side of the 1 acre lot was sold to the Corporation by Jacob Morningstar.

On it was erected that same year a 25 by 40 foot frame clapboard building, one storey high. The builder was David Morningstar and its total cost was \$600. Mr. Morningstar, also erected in 1877, school house Number 7 on Lyon's Creek Road at a cost of \$400.

The Township Hall had a magnificent round, twisted spoke style window over the entrance, surrounded by the words Willoughby Township Hall and, in its centre, the date 1877. This was removed, or possibly covered up, when the entire building was remodelled in 1966 and its exterior covered with white asbestos siding. The former wording was replaced with a long, horizontal sign stating Willoughby Township Hall - 1877.

Since the town hall was far too roomy to be restricted to political and municipal purposes for such a small township population, it was used for many a church and social program and was the regular setting for community concerts and stage performances. Until the mid 1950's, there was a high stage in the hall's west end, with dressing rooms on either side. Many early township school shows and exhibitions were held here and for several years it was the scene of Willoughby Remembrance Day services.

Two important township organizations first saw the light of day here, as well. One of these, the Willoughby Women's Institute, was organized September 26, 1907, and has met there monthly ever since.

For more than 45 years, this Women's Institute held annual Thanksgiving Day dinners in this hall, as well as catering to dozens of wedding receptions, until the Township Municipal offices were moved into the building, in the mid 1950's. This same group bought the hall's two pianos, the first in 1912, and the present one in 1939. A kitchen, 12 by 25 feet, was added in 1934 on the back of the hall. The entire building was wired for electricity in 1929 for \$59.

In 1955 the high ceilings were lowered, the interior renovated, washrooms built, and the township clerk had his office here in 1958.

The other organization to originate here was the Willoughby Volunteer Fire Department. This much needed township service came into being in the spring of 1950 and it was the fire fighting headquarters until the present hall, directly across the road, was built in 1952.

The Willoughby Museum and The Willoughby Historical Society held their founding meetings here and the latter still uses the hall for their regular monthly meetings. When Willoughby Township was amalgamated with Niagara Falls in January 1970, this historic little hall was declared surplus, along with the one at Chippawa, and both were put to other uses. The Willoughby Township Hall became the Willoughby Community Centre. The Hall is now owned by the City of Niagara Falls.

## ARCHITECTURE

The exterior design of the Willoughby Township Hall is similar to other government buildings constructed throughout this period. The front facade is symmetrically arranged with a round headed window on either side of a central doorway. The entrance had a round headed opening with a semi-circular fanlight with double doors. Originally a round window was located in the front gable end. The window mullions were arranged in a swirl pattern; around the perimeter of the window in raised letters were the words Willoughby Town Hall and in the centre has the date 1877. The building was finished in clapboard siding with cornerboards and a wood shingle roof.

The style of the building owes its design origins to the Classical Revival style. The details have been simplified to reflect the rural influences, whereas on a more elaborate building the arcading and details of eave returns would have been more fully developed. The Classical Revival style was frequently selected for government buildings because of its association with democratic principles of ancient Rome and Greece.

The exterior has been altered through the reduction in size of the front entrance and covering or removal of the round gable window. The exterior has been covered with asbestos siding commonly called John Mansville siding after the manufacturer. The building retains its original window sash, although the simple hood mouldings appear lost to the exterior changes. To the north of the building is a board and batten maintenance building which reflects the rural nature of the community. A large concrete block and garage has been added to one end of the maintenance building.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

The Township Hall represents the last vestige of the former rural Township now lost to amalgamation of communities through regionalization of the county government. It is the tangible evidence of the community pride and spirit which developed around the agricultural settlement of Welland County.

The Township Hall has a strong historical significance to the area and was the location of many community group activities and the building in which birth was given to community organizations and functions.

Removal of the asbestos siding could return much of the original character through the restoration of the fine line of the narrow clapboard siding. Restoration of the doorway and round window would recreate much of the original appearance. The building retains its original 4 over 4 window sash in the round headed frames.