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NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

IN THE MATTER OF THE
ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990

AND IN THE MATTER OF PREMISES LOCATED AT
1209 COUNTY ROAD 2
(Former Brockville Psychiatric Hospital)
TOWNSHIP OF ELIZABETHTOWN-KITLEY



TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley intends to designate the buildings at the following municipal address as a property of cultural and historical value or interest under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O., 1990*.

MUNICIPAL ADDRESS:

1209 County Road 2, in the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:

Designation is being sought for the facades of the Administration Building and the adjoining six cottages (three on the east side and three on the west side) of the former Brockville Psychiatric Hospital (BPH). This unified structure is located on the grounds of the Brockville Mental Health Centre located at 1209 County Road 2.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE/INTEREST

The Brockville Lunatic Asylum, as this building was originally named, is a physically imposing example of Ontario's early decision to support a system of institutions for the care of those defined as "mentally defective". It was the last major purpose-built mental health facility constructed by the Province of Ontario in the 19th century. As an institution and significant employer, the Brockville Psychiatric Hospital has long been a mainstay of the community and a source of civic pride both as an architectural landmark and as a centre of excellence in progressive mental health care.

These structures were designed in one time period by a single office, the architectural staff of Ontario's Public Works department under Chief Architect Kivas Tully and built in 1894-5 as a unified architectural composition. The use of the ridge traversing the property as the site for the "public face" of BPH distinguishes this institution from other Ontario hospitals. Its elevation provided fine views in all directions, including panoramic vistas of the surrounding countryside and the St. Lawrence River. In the type of "moral treatment" practiced in provincial asylums at the end of the 19th century, vistas of water and rural landscapes were thought to possess a calming effect on the overactive and over-stressed minds of the mentally disturbed.

DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES

The hilltop range of the original hospital structure, 154 feet above the St. Lawrence River and consisting of the administration, main and six cottage buildings are arrayed in a gently curving crescent on the crest of a ridge. Terraced and formalized, it provides the location of the most impressive structural component of the complex. Unfortunately, the richness of the original Queen Anne style for these central buildings has already been undermined by the loss of the central cupola, some of the brick bays, the extensive wood veranda, and many of the wood trim details. However, there are still in evidence some of the original terracotta, polished granite, and stained glass highlights within the brickwork, and remnants of decorative wood trim. Because the main components of these original buildings survived, albeit, in much modified form, and because additions were generally compatible in style, scale and materials, this assemblage likely still possesses more design aesthetic cohesion than most other groupings of extant asylum buildings. One purpose of this proposal to designate is to prevent any further destruction of the heritage façade when the building is eventually put to other uses.

Of particular interest is the early use of architectural terra cotta ornamentation on the main buildings. These terra cotta inserts were manufactured by the Rathbun Company of Deseronto in a new plant devoted to architectural terra cotta opened two years earlier, in 1892. The Rathbun Company was the first to manufacture this type of product in Canada.

Any person, within thirty (30) days of the first publication of this notice, may send, by registered mail or delivered to the Clerk of the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley, notice of his/her objection to the proposed designation together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts. If such a Notice of Objection is received, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley shall refer the matter to the Conservation Review Board for a hearing.

DATED this 30th day of September, 2010

Yvonne L. Robert
Administrator-Clerk