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CITY OF PORT COLBORNE  
239 KING STREET, 835-2900  
POSTAL CODE L3K 4G8

**IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT,  
R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER O.18**

**AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AND PREMISES  
AT THE FOLLOWING MUNICIPAL ADDRESS IN  
THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO**

**NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE**

To: Ontario Heritage Foundation  
10 Adelaide Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5C 1J3

**TAKE NOTICE** that the Council of the City of Port Colborne intends to designate the property, including the lands and buildings, at the following municipal address as a property of architectural and historical value or interest under Part IV of The Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18

**269 KILLALY STREET WEST  
FORMER REFORMED MENNONITE MEETING HOUSE**

**AMENDED REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION**

The end of the Revolutionary War brought large numbers of Mennonites from Pennsylvania into the Niagara Peninsula. As pacifists, they were under suspicion by the rebels, and the British government offered them freedom of religion and language, exemptions from bearing arms, and land grants. In 1790, the families of Abraham Neff (born York County, Pennsylvania of German Swiss origin), Christian Knisely and Christian Stoner became the first white settlers of Humberstone Township. In 1798, the Crown granted Abraham Neff the land he had settled, 200 acres comprising all of Lot 30, Concession 2. Circa 1818 to 1825, the first Mennonite meeting house, a log structure, was built at the south-east corner of the Neff property. This was the first Christian church of any kind erected in Humberstone Township. The Mennonites tended to migrate in groups and form compact ethnic communities, and during the early 19th century they formed the

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largest Christian denomination in the Township. The Mennonite church arose from the Anabaptist movement of the 16th century, and was named for Menno Simons, a Friesian priest. The Reformed Mennonite church came into being in 1833 after its organizer, Bishop John Herr of Lancaster, Pennsylvania made his first visit to Humberstone, receiving 70 people into church fellowship. Church leaders ordained at the time were John and Abram Stoner and deacons Benjamin Morningstar and Jonas Sherk. This was then the main Reformed Mennonite congregation in Ontario. Reformed Mennonites stress the importance of God's Holy Spirit within the church. Services are sermon based and ministers are selected from the congregation. In addition to a strong Biblical and evangelical emphasis, church members do not participate in public affairs, neither taking oaths, nor holding office, nor serving in the military.

In 1871, George Neff sold 1/2 acre on the south-east corner of Lot 30 to the Trustees of the Mennonite Church of Humberstone and the present brick meeting house was erected on this parcel, just south of the original log church, in 1872. The spare and simple architectural style of the meeting house reflects the Reformed Mennonite doctrine of simplicity and avoidance of worldliness. Distinguished by a few well placed Italianate details, it is especially noteworthy for the almost perfect preservation of both the exterior and interior. The rectangular building is constructed of buff and red brick set on a foundation of random coursed field stone and has a simple gable roof with wooden eaves and fascia. A set of interior wooden doorways leading from the north vestibule to the main part of the building, were once used as the original main entrance to the meeting house. The lower rectangular vestibule, located at the north end of the structure, is excluded from the designation. All the windows and doors have shallow segmentally arched tops, with the arch mimicked above in brick relief. The windows of the main building are double hung, 16 over 16 panes, and most retain their original sash weights and cords. A wide panelled entrance at the south end of the building is framed on all sides in brick relief. The interior original wood plank floor and simple board wainscot survive in their entirety in the main room. The building ceased to be a house of worship when it was sold by the congregation in 1974. Since that time it has remained a private residence.

Notice of objection to the proposed designation, together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts may be served on the Clerk of the City of Port Colborne before the 16th day of June 1995.

Dated at the City of Port Colborne this 17th day of May, 1995.

L. C. Hunt  
City Clerk