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June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023

10 Adelaide Street

Toronto, Ontario

M5C 1J3

Attention: Ontario Heritage Trust

To whom it may concern,

RE: Notice of Intention to Designate 129 Main Street West under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*

Please find the Notice of Intention to Designate enclosed for the property at 129 Main Street West, Grimsby, Ontario, Canada.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Take care,



Garrett France-Wyllie  
Heritage Planner  
Planning Department  
Town of Grimsby | 905-945-9634 X.2103  
[gfrance-wyllie@grimsby.ca](mailto:gfrance-wyllie@grimsby.ca)

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Ontario Heritage Trust



## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

### 129 Main Street West

**TAKE NOTICE** that Grimsby Town Council, on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 resolved to issue a Notice of Intention to Designate PT LT 68, Corporation Plan 4; PT 1, 30R-2280 ; GRIMSBY as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

**The Reason** for the Notice of Intention to Designate is to recognize the physical, associative and contextual value that **129 Main Street West** contributes towards the Town of Grimsby's inclusive heritage.

#### **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

The structure at 129 Main Street West is a rare, unique, and representative example of a style. 129 Main Street West is a one storey house built in the Regency architectural style. Regency style became popular at the beginning of King George IV's reign (1811-1820). Known during his lifetime as the "Prince of Pleasure", George IV was indulgent and lavish, regency style reflects George IV's habits and overindulgent life style. Some key physical attributes include; the one-storey rectangular building footprint, shallow pitched hipped roofs, paired windows, wide and central entrance way, lime plaster rendering, symmetrical facade, red brick chimney, stone foundation, side lights, door surround, front door, portico with gingerbread trim above the front and side doors, brackets under the porticos, brackets supporting the window boxes on the front façade, concrete/ stone front steps, the ice house, and the Catalpa tree with the "U" shaped branch, placed between the front door and driveway.

The property demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement. The property features an original ice house, which would have been a modern invention and scientific achievement at the time. Ice houses were constructed by wealthy families to help preserve food during the summer months. Ice houses would typically have been built from stone or wood, with sawdust used as insulation, and sometimes the small building would be partially set into the ground. The ice house on the subject property is built of Grimsby sandstone, features a hipped roof and is partially recessed into the gradual slope of the escarpment face at the southern property line. The ice house also has an original wooden window and door. Ice blocks would have been collected during the winter months and stored inside the building, it was uncommon for a block to last longer than one day outside of the ice house, so the building would have to be large enough to store ice for the duration of the summer. The historical ice house located on the property is both a rare and unique method of construction to find in today's landscapes.

The property at 129 Main Street West is associated with the Nelles and Bingle families. The Nelles Family was instrumental in the development of the Township of Grimsby, and one of the first UEL families to settle in Grimsby.

Col. Robert Nelles came to "The Forty" in the early 1780s with his Father Hendrick "Henry" and younger brother after the American Revolutionary war ended in 1783. The Nelles family became quite prominent within Grimsby, Shortly after settling the Nelles brothers built and operated a Grist mill. In an assessment roll in the year 1806 Robert had the Grist mill, a saw mill, and a merchant shop as well as various cattle, horses, oxen and pigs. In 1787 with more UEL settlers

Robert met and fell in love with Elizabeth Moore daughter of John and Dinah Moore, They married in 1788 and began life in his father's log cabin (125 Main Street West). Robert Nelles began building a new structure in 1788 and finished construction in 1798, "The Manor" now known as Nelles Manor held incredibly important events, the most notable being the ball to celebrate the end of the war in 1814. Robert Nelles served as Township Warden from 1797 to 1802, and in 1803 was elected a member of parliament. When his wife Elizabeth died, Robert married a widow named Maria Bingle. She brought with her two children from her previous marriage, her daughter Catherine and her son Thomas. Robert and Maria had six children together including Charles Nelles who inherited the Manor and land. Robert and Maria raised 15 of their children in the Manor.

In 1842 Charles inherited Nelles Manor along with his father's land, and 10 years later in 1852 was a part of the construction of "Canterbury Cottage" across the street from the manor. It has also been shared by the decedents of the Bingle family, that Thomas Bingle was also involved in the construction of the home. The cottage was built in Regency style and was deeded to their sister Catherine Bingle-Porter in 1852.

Thomas Bingle and his brother Charles Nelles were very involved within the Grimsby Community. The decedents of the Bingle family also shared that by 1848 Thomas Bingle was taking subscriptions for the building of a railway that would pass through Grimsby which would include its very own station. Thomas Bingle also worked with his brother as a young man, (Henry Nelles) in the mills, the store and the post office. After Henry's death in 1841, Thomas had a dry-goods and grocery store.

Catherine Bingle married Dr. Francis Porter in 1831, they had a daughter together named Maria Jane. Dr. Porter practiced within Grimsby for a few years, before moving to Niagara. Catherine and her daughter Maria Jane moved back to Grimsby and into Canterbury Cottage in 1850s. Catherine and Maria Jane along with Maria Jane's husband George and their two Daughters lived in the cottage.

The Cottage was also home to a very important figure in Grimsby, Janet Powell. She lived in Canterbury Cottage starting in 1933. Janet was an ancestor of Jonathan Pettit and devoted most of her life to Grimsby's local history. On January 14th 1949 Janet hosted a meeting in her residence to reconstitute and resume the Grimsby Historical Society, after it stopped operations in 1922 after the death of its president William Drope. The Grimsby Historical Society was started in 1913, many of the original members rejoined in 1949. The group that gathered in Canterbury Cottage held their first meeting in March of 1949.

The property has the potential to yield information that contributes to the understanding of a community or culture. The cottage which is located on Main Street West, a former Indigenous trail, is easily identified by the large catalpa tree in the front yard, the tree is believed to have been altered by the Neutral Indigenous peoples as a trail marker in a "U" shape. Located behind 129 Main Street West is a trail which leads to the Grand River. The mouth of the forty mile creek provided the shortest distance by trail to the Grand River, which was a significant gathering place for the Indigenous Peoples. The proximity to this trail further solidifies the statement that the catalpa tree was used as an Indigenous signal tree. At the time when Indigenous travel routes were being used, this tree would have been in a very significant location. Early in Grimsby's development there were only so many access points to cross the escarpment with one of those access points being located behind this residence. This conclusion is further

strengthened by the size and age of the tree, the proximity to travel route, and the purposeful manipulation of the tree branches in the traditional “U” shaped pattern.

This “U” shape technique was used by the Indigenous peoples as a way to mark the land and communicate a nearby trail. This connection to the indigenous peoples provides further information about the first peoples who inhabited our lands.

The property is important in defining and maintaining the character of an area. The setback and architectural style of 129 Main Street West shows the evolution of what started as a main thoroughfare and trade route to a residential corridor. Built in 1855 the cottage supports the mid-19th century character of the area. The house is associated with the Nelles and Bingle family and the building shows characteristics similar to 125 Main Street West located just two lots over. 125 Main Street West was built by Robert Nelles and was one of the first houses within the family.

The property is physically and visually linked to its surroundings. Located on the Main Street West corridor, 129 Main Street West maintains a setback with old growth trees. The tree on the left side of the property with its unique “U” shaped branch is said to have been bent like that by the Neutral peoples and used as a signal tree along the escarpment.

The property is a landmark. The house is one of the cornerstone buildings along Main Street West. The cottage is bordered to the east by Forty Mile Creek. The cottage is easily identified by the large catalpa tree in the front yard, the tree is believed to have been altered by the Neutral Indigenous peoples as a trail marker in a “U” shape, the proximity to the base of the escarpment, Forty mile creek and the Mountain Street access help solidify these beliefs.

### **HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES TO BE DESIGNATED**

The Heritage Attributes to be designated at 129 Main Street West include:

- One-storey rectangular building footprint in the “Regency” style
- Shallow pitched hipped roofs
- Paired windows
- Wide and central entrance way
- Lime plaster rendering
- Symmetrical façade
- Red brick chimney
- Stone foundation
- Side lights, door surround, front door
- Wooden soffits and fascia
- Portico with gingerbread trim above front door
- Portico on the east façade above side door
- Brackets under the porticos
- Brackets supporting the window boxes on the front façade
- Concrete/stone front steps
- Ice house
- The Catalpa tree with the “U” shaped branch, placed between the front door and driveway
- Setback from Main Street

## **OBJECTIONS**

Any objection to this designation must be filed no later than 30 days after the date of publication of the notice of intention in a newspaper. Objections should be directed to Bonnie Nistico-Dunk, Town Clerk, Town Clerk, 160 Livingston Avenue, Grimsby ON, L3M 0J53.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

Any inquiries may be directed to Bianca Verrecchia, Heritage Planner at 905-945-9634 ext. 2122 or by email [bverrecchia@grimsby.ca](mailto:bverrecchia@grimsby.ca)

**Last date to file Notice of Objection: July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

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