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Department of Community  
& Development Services  
TELEPHONE 905-468-3266  
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The Town of  
**Niagara-On-The-Lake**

1593 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD  
P.O. Box 100  
VIRGIL, ONTARIO  
L0S 1T0

February 21, 2012

ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST

The Ontario Heritage Trust  
10 Adelaide Street East  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5C 1J3

FEB 24 2012

RECEIVED

**REGISTERED MAIL**

**RE: The Secord-Murdoch House – 217 Four Mile Creek Road, Part Lot 90  
Niagara Part 1 30R4854, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake  
Notice of Passing of By-law No.4491-11  
Ontario Heritage Act, Part IV**

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Pursuant to the provisions of Section 29(6) (a) (ii) of the Ontario Heritage Act,  
R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18, please find enclosed a copy of:

By-law No.4491-11, being a by-law to designate the Secord-Murdoch House, 217  
Four Mile Creek Road.

Sincerely yours

Holly Dowd  
Town Clerk

Enc.

THE CORPORATION  
OF THE  
TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

**BY-LAW NO. 4491-11**

(215 Four Mile Creek Road)  
(Roll No. 2627 020 025 03600 0000)

A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE THE PROPERTY KNOWN MUNICIPALLY AS THE SECORD-MURDOCH HOUSE, 215 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD, IN THE TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, AS BEING OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

**WHEREAS** Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of cultural heritage value or interest;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has caused to be served on the owner of the lands and premises known as the Secord-Murdoch House at 215 Four Mile Creek Road, in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake In the Province of Ontario and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust, notice of Intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality;

**AND WHEREAS** the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule 'B' hereto;

**AND WHEREAS** no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the clerk of the municipality.

**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake enacts as follows:

1. There is designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest the real property known as the Secord-Murdoch House at 215 Four Mile Creek Road in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in the Province of Ontario, more particularly described in Schedule 'A' hereto.
2. The municipal solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule 'A' hereto.
3. The Clerk is hereby authorized to cause copy of this By-law to be served on the owners of the aforesaid property and on the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of the passing of this By-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation.

**READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND PASSED ON THIS 29<sup>TH</sup>  
DAY OF AUGUST, 2011**

  
LORD MAYOR DAVE EKE

  
TOWN CLERK HOLLY DOWD

**SCHEDULE "A" TO  
BY-LAW 4491-11  
215 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD**

Part Township Lot 90, Niagara being Part 1, 30R-4854; Niagara-on-the-Lake

PIN #46374-0024 (LT)

## SCHEDULE 'B'

### Description of Property

The original portion of the Secord-Murdoch House is a 1 ½ storey 5 bay stone building. To the rear the house descends down towards Four Mile Creek providing for an above ground basement level. The house is located on a relatively large irregularly shaped lot on the east side of Four Mile Creek Road south of Warner Road. Recent additions include a rear living space, new dormer windows and a garage which is located to the north of the original house.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The Secord-Murdoch House's cultural heritage value consists of the fact that it is one of the earliest houses constructed in Niagara-on-the Lake. Documentation indicates that the oldest part of the building to the north was constructed c.1790 while the southern portion of the building was constructed c.1830.

The house is situated on a large irregularly shaped lot and is located on the northern portion of the property immediately adjacent to Four Mile Creek Road. To the rear the house descends towards Four Mile Creek, taking advantage of the steep topography in this location.

The house has a 5-bay façade and a gable roof. There are three brick internal chimneys, two at each gable end and one in the centre indicating the location of the dining room, parlour and cooking fireplaces. The entrance door is located slightly off centre, further evidence that the house was constructed in 2 phases. There are two small windows with 6 over 6 panes on either side of the door. The proportions of the building and the small windows set low in the front façade are characteristics of the Georgian style. The location close to the road is a further indication of an early date.

The c.1790 north portion of the building is constructed with Whirlpool sandstone likely quarried on the property. According to documentation, the building is the earliest surviving example of a Whirlpool sandstone building in Niagara. The stone was quarried between St. Davids and Queenston and was the most important building stone in Niagara Township prior to the late 1830's.

The c.1830 south portion of the building is constructed with fieldstone likely collected from the surrounding cultivated fields. It is one of the earliest examples of fieldstone construction below the Niagara Escarpment. The below street grade portion of the south end appears to be part of the 1830's addition.

Early photographs show that the stone exterior of the house had been entirely "harled" and rendered in lime. Harling and lime rendering were commonly used in Scotland and northern England as an application to cover rubble stone masonry. Its purpose was twofold – to improve the aesthetics of the building and to weatherproof the walls. Currently, all of the harling has been removed from the building with the exception of the south wall. There may be other examples of this technique in the area; but the Secord-Murdoch house could be one of the oldest.

The interior of the house remains largely intact and contains many original and unique features. The dining room, which is in the oldest portion of the house, contains a built in cupboard with paneled doors and a fireplace with an early walnut mantel. The dining room also contains some interior shutters, original beams and trim. The parlour in the 1830's portion of the building has a number of Greek Revival details including the robust fireplace mantel, baseboards and window trim. This section of the building also has wide pine flooring and a deeply set French door with divided lights.

The Secord-Murdoch House's cultural heritage value also includes its association with the original United Empire Loyalist settlers in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The property was deeded to Peter Secord from the Crown in c.1798 and continued to be occupied by members of the Secord family until the 1860's. The property was purchased by Alexander Murdoch, a native Ayrshire, Scotland, in 1925 and has remained in the Murdoch family since that time.

St. Davids was burned during the War of 1812. There is some evidence, however, that the house was spared because of its use as a hospital by American troops.

#### **Description of Key Heritage Attributes**

Key exterior and interior attributes that reflect the value of the Secord-Murdoch property as one of the earliest buildings in Niagara-on-the-Lake and an example of the vernacular Georgian style include:

- The entire exterior of the original c.1790 house including the Whirlpool sandstone and fieldstone and the remaining harling on the south wall.
- The 3 brick chimneys.
- All fireplaces and fireplace mantels including the basement cooking fireplace.
- The built in cupboard in the dining room
- Original wide pine floors in the parlour.
- Existing original door and window trim and baseboards.
- Original interior shutters.