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Ontario Heritage Trust

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS

BY-LAW NO. 10408-2023

**A BY-LAW TO AMEND THE HERITAGE DESIGNATING BY-LAW UNDER PART IV
OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT RESPECTING 77 BECKWITH ST NORTH**

WHEREAS Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act RSO 1990, as amended, authorizes the Council of the municipality to designate a property as having cultural heritage value or interest where prescribed criteria is met and the prescribed process is conducted;

WHEREAS Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act RSO 1990, as amended, was further amended in accordance with Bill 108, More Homes More Choices Act, with changes in effect as of July 1, 2021;

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls finds it desirable to amend existing heritage designating by-laws to be consistent with the amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act RSO 1990, as amended;

WHEREAS Section 30.1(2) of the Ontario Heritage Act RSO 1990, as amended, exempts amendments which update the heritage designating by-law to make it consistent with the requirements of the Act, including amendments to the Act in accordance with Bill 108, More Homes More Choices Act, from providing the statutory notification for amendments to an existing heritage designating by-law prescribed by Section 29 of the Act;

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls provided the property owner with non-statutory, written notification of the intended changes to the existing heritage designating by-law;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls enacts as follows:

1. THAT By-law 4350-77 in accordance with Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act RSO 1990, as amended, shall be amended to replace the designation for 77 Beckwith Street North in its entirety as follows:

1.2. SMITHS FALLS TOWN HALL

AUTHORIZATION

That Bylaw 4350-77 be amended in its entirety and replaced with the following:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| BUILDING PROPERTY NAME | Smiths Falls Town Hall |
| ADDRESS | 77 Beckwith St North |
| ORIGINAL OWNER | Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls |
| PRESENT OWNER | Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls |
| DATE BUILT | 1859 |
| ARCHITECT / CONTRACTOR | Ezekiel Shipman (Architect), John Dodds and William and Francis Ballantyne (Builders) |
| ORIGINAL USE | Town Hall |
| PRESENT USE | Town Hall |
| DESIGNATION | Canadian Register of Historic Places (2011/12/20), Part IV of the OHA, Bylaw 350-77 |



PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

This two-and-a-half storey neoclassical brown limestone building, with granite elements such as lintels, sills, and corner quoining, is prominently located along Beckwith St North, between Church St East and Gladstone Ave. In 1857, the land was purchased for the construction of a Town Hall for the village of Smiths Falls, and the building was completed in 1859.

The Smiths Falls Town Hall was originally recognized for its heritage value by the Town of Smiths Falls, Bylaw 4330-77 since December 19, 1977.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

Location (Contextual Value): The Town Hall is located along Beckwith St North (Highway 15), a major arterial road through Smiths Falls, as evidenced by the neighbouring important buildings, including the First Baptist Church, the Westminster Presbyterian Church (1926) to the south and Smiths Falls Public Library (1903) to the north, all constructed between the mid-19th century and the early-20th century. The Town Hall saw the construction of the neighbouring Old School in 1871 on the adjacent lot. These proud public buildings defined “Upper Town”, and the area where socially prestigious residential streets would be laid out from, in the years following.

Architectural Detailing (Design/Physical Value): The Town Hall is a rough-cut grayish brown limestone building with granite details including evenly-lined pilastered quoins, interpreting a classical order with a capital and base. Other granite architectural details include jack arches with keystones above doors and windows, lugsills below the windows and granite string courses. The roof is of medium-pitched gables with returned eaves. A transom window and sidelights surround the front entrance on Beckwith Street. The roof is visually framed with a simple heavy cornice, including a central triangular pediment featuring a semi-circular date stone with the words "Town Hall, 1859" above the protruding entrance portico. When the building was completed in 1859, it included an upstairs hall for public events, while the council chamber, jail cells and municipal offices were located on the ground level.

Initial Use/Conversions (Historical/Associative Value): The Town Hall has been a landmark of the Beckwith Streetscape for over 160 years. Smiths Falls was the first village to incorporate in Eastern Ontario in 1854, and the first in Lanark County to build an ambitious town hall in 1859. While it has maintained its original function as a Town Hall and municipal offices, the building has hosted indoor fairs, dances, classes, meetings, and an annual ball at various points in time. Lectures, traveling exhibits and shows, and church services also took place here. The building has also housed the Smiths Falls Police Department, the Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Economic Development, the Council Chambers and Mayor's Office. These various uses have maintained the building's historical and associative significance to Smiths Falls.

Evolution: Although the exterior of the building has remained largely intact, the Town Hall has seen some modifications over the years. In 1876, a red brick hose drying tower was added to the southeast corner (the top part of which has since been removed), and in 1890, George Dart constructed a red brick mansard addition onto the northeast corner. A third addition was added in 1947, a red brick structure that is thought to have been built by the Pepper Brothers.

A modern extension was added behind the Town Hall and Old School in 1983, to provide supplementary space, and a gateway link masonry arch was added in 1984 between the two heritage properties, which would act as the new public entrance (the 1983 addition is not included in the designation.)

HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES (CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS)

- Rough-cut gray-brown limestone;
- Granite details including quoined pilasters interpreting classical order with a capital and base;
- Jack arches and keystones above doors and windows;
- Lugsills below the windows;
- Granite string courses;
- Medium-pitched gables with returned eaves;
- Transoms and sidelights surrounding the front entrance on Beckwith Street;
- Simple heavy cornice; and

- Triangular pediment featuring a semi-circular date stone with the words "Town Hall, 1859" above the entrance.

INTERIOR ATTRIBUTES

- Exposed rubble stone walls with wooden framing in ground floor main entrance;
- Plaster window casings with operable, wooden framed, double hung windows on the ground floor;
- Bricked-in original window openings with rough stone lintels on the ground floor;
- Exposed decorative tin ceiling with tin cornice on the second floor;
- Simple, painted wooden wainscoting along stairs from ground to second floor;
- Simple, painted wooden baseboards on second floor;
- 4 panel painted wooden doors with simple wooden casing in second floor; and
- Painted brick wall in second floor.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

- 77 Beckwith Street North.
- Lots 267 and 268 north side of Church. St. E., Town of Smiths Falls, Lanark Country.

1. REFERENCES

- Canada's Historic Places HistoricPlaces.ca - HistoricPlaces.ca
- Lori McNamara, *The Town Hall*, (Toronto: Ministry of Culture and Recreation, 1980)
- Town of Smiths Falls Bylaw 4350-77; Smiths Falls LACAC Files
- Lockwood, Glenn J.: *Smiths Falls: A Social History of the Men and Women in a Rideau Canal Community, 1794-1994.*

SITE PLAN



IMAGES



3 Town Hall c.1897. *Heritage House Museum.*

2. THAT this By-law shall come into effect upon its passing.

Read a first and second time this 16th day of January, 2023.

Read a third time and passed this 16th day of January, 2023.

Mayor

Clerk


