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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS

BY-LAW NO. 10409-2023

**A BY-LAW TO AMEND THE HERITAGE DESIGNATING BY-LAW UNDER PART IV  
OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT RESPECTING 79 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 79 Beckwith Street North in its entirety as follows:

### 1.3. FORMER CENTRAL SCHOOL HOUSE

#### AUTHORIZATION

That Bylaw 4387-78 be amended in its entirety and replaced with the following:

BUILDING PROPERTY NAME:	Former Central School House
ADDRESS:	79 Beckwith St North
ORIGINAL OWNER:	Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
PRESENT OWNER:	Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
DATE BUILT:	Completed 1878
ARCHITECT/CONTRACTOR:	W. Willoughby
ORIGINAL USE:	Public School
PRESENT USE:	Municipal Administration Offices
DESIGNATION:	Canadian Register of Historic Places (2011/12/20), Part IV of the OHA, Bylaw 4350-77



#### PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The Former Central School House is a two-and-a-half storey neoclassical grey limestone building with granite elements. The property was built in 1871 and was used as a school until 1973. In 1975 it was converted to a Recreation Centre, under the jurisdiction of the Municipal Recreation Committee. In 1984, a gateway arch was added, linking the Recreational Centre to the Town Hall, and creating a new public entrance for the complex. This addition is not included in the bylaw.

The Former Central School House was originally recognized for its heritage value by the Town of Smiths Falls, Bylaw 4330-77 on December 19, 1977.



## STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

**Location (Contextual Value):** Prominently located along Beckwith St North, the former school, like the adjacent Town Hall, is a significant public building that in the 19th century, defined the neighbourhood known as “Upper Town”. The land was secured by Church of Scotland Minister, Reverend Solomon Mylne, a trustee of the local school board, to build the school in this location.

**Architectural Detailing (Design/Physical Value):** Built by W. Willoughby of Almonte in 1871, the school employs Neo-Classic and Classic Revival architectural styles, both popular throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It has an evenly proportioned façade with a classically designed pediment and the remnants of an original wooden belltower above the front entranceway. Its materials include rough-cut greyish brown limestone construction with granite elements, such as window heads with radiating voussoirs, featuring granite keystones and lugsills. Its low-pitched gable roofs are raised by a prominent cornice with a frieze adorned with small dentils. The transoms and sidelights emphasize the central entrance. The building also has paired chimneys. The granite elements include corner quoining, reflecting the neighbouring Town Hall with geometries, double-hung windows, and other similar architectural elements.

An addition was completed in 1878 to accommodate more classrooms; however, with the town growing at such a rate, it was necessary to construct another school on Russell Street in 1884 for high school students, and convert the Central School into a public school. The Central School also housed the Teaching Aids Centre and the Supervising Principal of the town's elementary schools until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The words “Public School” and the date “1871” are still present under the central gable. The belltower, however, is devoid of the bell, which was moved to Chimo School in Smiths Falls, in 1973.

**Initial Use/Conversions (Historical/Associative Value):** The property is associated with the growth of the Town of Smiths Falls. The school was opened only one year before the villages of Shawville, Elgin and Matheson were annexed to Smiths Falls in 1872. The building is a testament to Smiths Falls' early beginnings and growth through the latter half of the 19th century. Smiths Falls was the first village to be incorporated in Eastern Ontario, and the construction of the public school was instrumental in the development of the Town in this period and in making education available to a wider population. In 1865, at the urging of the School Board, the Town of Smiths Falls began to purchase land for a new school. By 1867, the School Board had begun fundraising for the new building, receiving financing from the Railway Fund and borrowing from the Town. Church of Scotland Minister and trustee of the school board, Reverend Solomon Mylne, secured the loan to build the upper town school. Reverend Mylne was married to Alice Malloch, daughter of Edward Malloch, one of the major land owners in Eastern Ontario. The Central School was used as a public school until 1973 when it was closed due to an outdated interior and a growing student population. In 1975, the building was converted into a Recreation Centre, under the jurisdiction of the municipal recreation committee, to help meet the town's demands for increased recreational services.

## HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES (CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS)

- Rough-cut grey-brown limestone;
- Granite details (corner quoins, window keystones, lugsills and radiating voussoirs);
- Low-pitched gable roof;
- Prominent cornice with frieze and details;
- Front pediment above entrance (Beckwith St);
- Date Inscription “Public School 1871”;
- Double-hung wood windows;

- Paired arched double hung windows on the second storey above west entrance;
- Base of wooden original wood bell tower at west wing; and
- Round openings at the attic level of south and north wings.

## LEGAL DESCRIPTION

- 79 Beckwith St North
- Lots 269, 270, 271, 272, part of Lots Nos. 267 and 268, part of Block C and part of Elmsley Street, as described in Instrument No. 36746.

## REFERENCES

- Canada's Historic Places [HistoricPlaces.ca](http://HistoricPlaces.ca) - [HistoricPlaces.ca](http://HistoricPlaces.ca)
- Lorrie McNamara, "The Recreation Centre (Old Central School)" (Toronto: Ministry of Culture and Recreation, 1979); 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

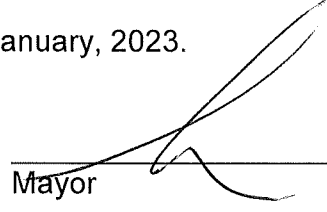


4 Old School House, ca. 1950. *Town of Smiths Falls.*

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

Read a first and second time this 16<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2023.

Read a third time and passed this 16<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2023.

  
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Mayor

  
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Clerk