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ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT

MAY 05 2011

RECEIVED

Department of Planning
& Development Services
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The Town of Niagara-On-The-Lake

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER 0.18

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AND PREMISES KNOWN MUNICIPALLY AS **215 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD, THE SECORD-MURDOCH HOUSE** (Part Lot 90), IN THE TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

TO: THE ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST, 10 ADELAIDE STREET EAST,
TORONTO, ONTARIO, M5C 1J3

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake intends to designate the property, including the lands and building known municipally as **215 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD, THE SECORD-MURDOCH HOUSE** as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of The Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18.

Description of Property

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 original portion of the Secord-Murdoch House is a 1 ½ storey 5 bay stone building. 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 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 [REDACTED] in 1925 and has remained in the [REDACTED] 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.

Any person may, not later than the 3rd day of June, 2011, send by registered mail or deliver to the Clerk of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake notice of their objection to the proposed designation, together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts. If such a Notice of Objection is received the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake shall refer the matter to the Conservation Review Board for a hearing.

Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake the 5th day of May 2011.


Holly Dowd, _____ Clerk