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## CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF ESSEX

33 Talbot Street South, Essex, Ontario, N8M 1A8

p: 519.776.7336 f: 519.776.8811 | [essex.ca](http://essex.ca)

June 24, 2024



**RECEIVED**  
2024/06/26  
(YYYY/MM/DD)  
Ontario Heritage Trust

RE: **Grace Baptist Church Located at 120 Talbot Street North in Essex Centre**

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Dear Town of Essex Property Owner.

At their regular meeting on Monday June 17, the Council for the Corporation of the Town of Essex issued a Notice of Intention to Designate your property at 120 Talbot Street North under section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

### **Why was my property selected?**

Your property has been selected because it displays cultural heritage value and interest.

Attached is a Statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a description of the heritage attributes of the property.

### **Notice of objection**

A Notice of Objection to the Notice of Intention to Designate may be served on the Clerk of the Town of Essex by **July 27, 2024**. The Notice of Objection must set out the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts.

Your cooperation with the preservation of our past is greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,

**Rita Jabbour, RPP**

Manager, Planning Services

[rjabbour@essex.ca](mailto:rjabbour@essex.ca)

519.776.7336 ext. 1112

*Where you belong*



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**c.c.** Joseph A. Malandruccolo, Director, Legal and Legislative Services/Clerk

[jmalandruccolo@essex.ca](mailto:jmalandruccolo@essex.ca)

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### **APPENDIX A**

#### **Municipal Address**

120 Talbot Street North, Essex – Grace Baptist Church

#### **Legal Description**

PLAN 206 LOT 3 LOT 4

#### **General Description of Property**

120 Talbot Street North is located on the west side of Talbot Street within Essex Centre.

It is comprised of the Grace Baptist Church: a red brick church that was built in 1875 on Medora Avenue and moved to the current property following the 1907 Essex Rail Explosion.

#### **Description of Property that has Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

The area of the property that demonstrates cultural heritage value or interest is the area that includes the Grace Baptist Church building built in 1875.

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

##### ***Historical/Associative Value***

*The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.*

120 Talbot Street North retains significant historical or associative value because it has direct associations with beliefs, organizations, and institutions that are significant to the community. The church was built on the southern side of Medora Ave. in 1875 and was a pillar within the community, aiding in the development of religion, education, and community within Essex Center. The church housed some of the earliest congregations in Essex Center, such as the Methodist Episcopal Church congregation from 1875 until 1884 and the First Baptist Church starting in 1888.



The church was built in 1875, primarily through the efforts of George Wilson, a local businessman and property developer who worked closely with Alexander Cameron, Edwin C. Lewis, and James Robinson, and was dedicated on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1875. It served as the Methodist Episcopal Church until 1884 when the church amalgamated with another Methodist Church in the community, the Grace Methodist Church located on the corner of Fox and Gordon Street. After its closure, the building would become an educational pillar within the community. Church trustees would rent out the building temporarily to the local school board and serve as the 1st public high school in Essex Center from 1884 until 1885, with the original Essex High School opening.

In 1888, the church was sold to a local Baptist Congregation for \$1,000 and would become the First Baptist Church of Essex. In 1907, the church was severely damaged following the 1907 Essex Rail Explosion, with only the church's frame being salvageable. The congregation opted to move the church frame to its current location on Talbot Street following the incident and worked to restore the building to its former glory. Each member of the congregation could pledge 10 cents to purchase bricks for the exterior and fund the rebuilding effort.

The church would remain open until 1969, when the expanding congregation would move into a larger building on Maidstone Ave. A new congregation would take over the building soon after and rename it the Grace Baptist Church of Essex.

### ***Contextual Value***

*The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.*

120 Talbot Street North retains contextual value because it is both functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. It is historically linked to its surroundings due to its relocation to the property following the 1907 Essex Rail Explosion, as a means for the congregation to preserve their beloved church. This allowed the church to remain a part of the community and help shape the look of Talbot Street North.

It is functionally linked to its surroundings as there is still an active congregation within the building and it continues to serve as an important religious and communal space within the Town of Essex.



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### **Description of Heritage Attributes**

The key heritage attributes that contribute to the historical/associative value of 120 Talbot Street North includes:

- The location of the church on the western side of Talbot Street North within Essex Centre,
- The mass, form, and style of the church building,
- The red brick cladding on all levels of the building,
- All existing window openings and stained-glass window pieces with brick voussoirs and underscored by brick sills,
- Inset engraved stone,
- The roof lines and peaks.

Key Exterior attributes that contribute to the contextual value of 120 Talbot Street North, Include its:

- The location of the Church on the western side of Talbot Street North within Essex Centre.