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THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF WINDSOR

12615

IN THE MATTER OF "THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT"  
AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AND PREMISES KNOWN AS  
1380 YPRES AVENUE IN THE CITY OF WINDSOR  
IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

REGISTERED MAIL

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

**TAKE NOTICE THAT** the Council of the Corporation of the City of Windsor intends to designate the property, including lands and buildings known as 1380 Ypres Avenue as a property of architectural and/or historical value or interest under Part IV of "The Ontario Heritage Act":

**Statement of Significance/Reasons for Designation  
1380 Ypres Avenue**

**Registered Plan 1155, east 18 ft of Lot 942 & all Lots 943 & 944**

Description of Historic Place

The Harris House, located at 1380 Ypres Avenue, was listed on the Windsor Municipal Heritage Register on June 9, 2008. At some point in 1986, the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had requested for the property to be designated; however he withdrew his request shortly after to sell the property. On February 29, 2016, the owners of the property, [REDACTED] and the late S [REDACTED] [REDACTED] requested heritage designation for this property. The owners had volunteered the Harris House for the Doors Open 2016 event in September, which celebrates built heritage by allowing the public to visit heritage sites.

**Proposal:**

The request is to designate this property individually, under provisions of Part IV of "The Ontario Heritage Act" regarding municipal designation.

Ontario Regulation 9/06 provides criteria for designation under "*The Ontario Heritage Act.*" Part 1.(2) of the regulation is underlined for emphasis:

"A property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
  - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
  - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
  - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
  
2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
  - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
  - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
  - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
  
3. The property has contextual value because it,
  - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
  - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
  - iii. is a landmark."

Designation requires consideration from Council in two steps: The Notice of Intention to Designate (current step), which provides direction for the City Clerk to give notice to the owner, a newspaper and others of Council's intent to initiate the heritage designation. After thirty days, and if there is no objection, the Council may pass a by-law to designate the property in accordance with "*The Ontario Heritage Act.*"

The Harris House meets more than one of the criteria for designation listed above.

### **Architectural Considerations:**

The Harris House is a two storey home with architectural expressions from the Modernist Movement. More precisely, the design is a combination of residential design elements found in the International Style and Prairie Style. The Harris House is representative as one of Windsor's earliest residential examples of the Modernist architectural style. The Modernist movement encompasses the ideas that the form of the building should be based on the volume of the space the building was used for, efficiency in layout, and overall lack of ornamentation and decorative detailing.

The Harris House reflects the "Elemental" and "Rectilinear" architectural design motifs that commonly define the International Style, including the breakup of the massing with the use of elemental modules which reflect the functional layout of the interior spaces. Other International Style elements include the asymmetrical facade, angular edges, plain smooth wall surfaces, flat roof design and metal casement windows flush with outer walls.

The Prairie Style elements include the horizontal proportions seen in the building, the emphatic flat roof, deeply projecting eaves beyond the walls, rectangular triple set of windows, centered chimney with horizontal narrow stones on the east elevation, plain use

of materials like stucco and strips of natural wood. The many windows allow for bright spaces in the interior. The second floor of the house is nearly half the size of the first floor area with the un-built area used as a large expanse of open roof deck delineated by thin railing. On the ground floor, the breezeway extends into more open space.

Some other unique exterior features of the building include the trellis-like eave projection details, and the seven semi-circular concrete basement window wells that surround the building. The one-story breezeway on the north elevation connecting to the stucco garage on the north elevation is similar in style and material to the rest of the building, and provides an extension of the eaves and open deck area above it. Details of the garage design include the curved walls above the narrow rectangular windows and stone sills. The wood frame garage door has the same simplistic and clean rectilinear style.

There are many modern featured details in the interior, some of which were very advanced technology used for its time. The Flutex glass in the vestibule, insulating thermo-paned ground floor windows, radiant hot water heating in floors and recessed/indirect ceiling lights were all emerging technologies and materials of the day. Other elegant features of the interior that remain are the curved walls, wall niche, simplistic designed Italian marble fireplace, original bathroom fixtures, and laminated wood panel and another fire place in the den. The open floor plan design allows easy movement/flow from one room to another. However, the interior features are not proposed to be part of the designation.

The Harris House has received architectural interest over the years and has been featured in several different publishing. The Harris house was reported in the "Windsor Daily Star" article dated December 31, 1948 as one of the "higher-priced private homes" constructed in that year. The Harris House was also featured in an "International Metropolis" article dated December 16, 2013 and in a book by John Blumenson (architect & architectural historian) on Ontario Architecture.

### **Alterations/Additions/Renovation/Architectural Integrity**

Even though the subject lands were subdivided in 1924, they were left vacant for many years. The subject property construction was completed in 1948 and was located on Lot 943 & Lot 944 of Registered Plan 1155. Based on historic fire insurance plans, only the 1952 fire insurance plan showed the development within the block. The 1952 plan shows the two storey subject property and the one storey detached garage, both constructed of concrete block.

The main building and garage appear to be largely original with little exterior alterations. The redwood siding on the second floor was stained and painted at some point in time. According to the architectural drawings, wood shutters were to be installed on the second floor however it is undetermined if they were installed. The drawings also show what appears to be wood frame enclosure for the breezeway, which now has sliding glass doors.

The original design of the property included a walk-out rock garden with glass doors from the basement to the north side of the dwelling. According to information provided by the current owner from the son of the original owners, this feature had drainage issues and the original owners filled in the space with concrete.

The previous owners, the [REDACTED], also bought the eastern half of Lot 942 to accommodate a pool with a picket-fence. The kitchen has been remodelled several times.

The house is in good condition and has maintained much of its architectural integrity.

### **Historical or Associative Considerations:**

The subject property is located within the South Walkerville area, which was made up of formerly lands in the Town of Walkerville as well as the City of Windsor, with the dividing line being the alley between Lincoln Road and Gladstone Avenue. After World War I and during the time of industrial growth, Windsor and border cities were experiencing population growth which resulted in a pressing housing shortage. Through the prosperous years of growth in the 1920s, Canadians continued to remember and honour those who had contributed greatly to the war. The first subdivision to develop lands on the south end of Walkerville in 1921 had its east-west streets named after famous battle sites during World War I.

As housing needs continued to grow, the portion of lands bounded by Vimy Road on the North, Kildare Road on the east, Ypres Avenue on the South, and Forest Avenue on the west, were registered as subdivision Plan 1155 on November 21, 1924 by Essex Real Estate Company Ltd., signed by Clyde Curry. He advertised it as the Memorial Park Development and was selling them as 40-foot lots, also marketing in the 1925 advertisement that there was a 32 acre Parkland within the subdivision which had been sold to the City of Windsor, who would designate it as Memorial Park to honour the War.

Some lots were bought and constructed on, however it was not until the late 1940s after World War II that the South Walkerville area was truly built out. Based on Land Registry Office records, Clarence and Marion Harris bought the land in 1945. The construction of the building was completed in 1948. The 1948 City Directories show that there were not many residents living on Ypres Avenue yet. Residents living on Ypres Avenue were located close to Lincoln Road crossing on the west and then Kildare Road on the east. The Harris family was listed in the City directories from 1949 onwards, with the record including Clarence as a financial agent, working at Motor-Mart which was a used car sales business, subsequently recorded to be at Owner's Auto Exchange business in the 1960 City directory.

Subsequent owners include [REDACTED] who held ownership from 1986 to 2011 when [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] bought the property.

Garnet Andrew McElroy (1897-1986) was a Windsor architect who designed many of the commercial buildings for S.S. Kresge & Co., which was the largest 20th century retail company (renamed Kmart Corporation and now evolved into Sears Holdings Corporation). He is most known for his progressive designs using Art Deco and Modernist architectural styles. McElroy studied at the Detroit Technical Institute and the University of Michigan, then trained under local architect Gilbert J.P. Jacques and was a draftsman under Detroit architect Albert Kahn from (1917-1919). He opened his own practice in Windsor in 1921 then joined S.S. Kresge Co. as a staff architect in their Detroit office in 1923 and continued as a consultant for many years after. He also operated in a separate partnership from 1928-1931 under McElroy, McIntosh & Gauthier. McElroy resided in Windsor and remained active until 1969. His local works include the Assumption College High School and Chapel (1957), Cunningham Sheet Metal (1928) on Kildare Road, and the Wilkinson Shoe Store (c.1930) on Ouellette Avenue.

## **Contextual Considerations:**

The subject property is located on a visible corner on the northwest of Ypres Avenue and Moy Avenue. Although originally subdivided as forty feet lots in the registered plan, many of the properties fronting onto Ypres Avenue east of Woodlawn Avenue opposite what became the Memorial Park were developed into lots with larger frontages.

Should the Harris House be designated, it would be the first in the South Walkerville area, although several more are recognized by listing on the municipal register.

## **Official Plan Policy:**

The Windsor Official Plan includes (9.0) "A community's identity and civic pride is rooted in physical and cultural links to its past. In order to celebrate Windsor's rich history, Council is committed to recognizing, conserving and enhancing heritage resources."

Objectives include (9.2.4) "To increase awareness and appreciation of Windsor's heritage resources and encourage participation by individuals, organizations and other levels of government in heritage conservation."

Also, (9.3.2.1) "Council will identify Windsor's heritage resources by: ... (c) Researching and documenting the history and architectural and contextual merit of potential heritage resources on an individual property basis".

(9.3.6.1) "Council will manage heritage resources by: ... (e) providing support and encouragement to organizations and individuals who undertake the conservation of heritage resources by private means"

(9.3.7.1) "Council will integrate heritage conservation into the development and infrastructure approval process by: ... (f) utilizing the demolition control provisions of the Planning Act and the Heritage Act to assist in the protection of heritage buildings and structures"

If designated, modifications or additions that affect any identified heritage feature will require approval by Council, after consultation of the municipal heritage committee. If not designated, inappropriate changes could be made to the building and demolition may be more readily allowed.

The City will pay the costs of legal notices and registering the by-law amendment with the Land Registry Office. The Committee's heritage operating budget will cover the cost of the designation plaque. Once designated, the owner could apply for grants from the City's Community Heritage Fund to repair features identified in the designation, and they could request property tax reductions for the costs of eligible improvements under the City's heritage tax rebate program.

The policy planner met the owners on-site and discussed identified heritage features. Consultations have also been made with the city's landscape architect Stefan Fediuk, and Planner II-Urban Design, Adam Coates.

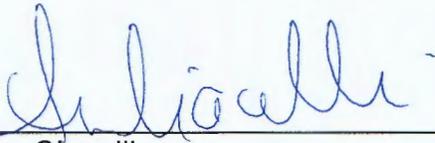
The Harris House located at 1380 Ypres Avenue is one of the earliest residential examples of the Modernist architectural style featuring design elements from the International Style

and Prairie Style. Designed by Windsor architect Garnet A. McElroy, its emphatic flat roof design, use of smooth stucco and red-siding and stone materials, corner windows and deeply projecting trellis-like eaves, and stone capped and veneered chimney, are rare for its time. The long-time residents and original owners of the building were financial agent Clarence Harris and his wife Marion. Administration recommends initiating the designation process for the Harris House under Part IV of the "*Ontario Heritage Act*" to recognize and conserve its historical, architectural, and contextual features for years to come.

Any person may, within thirty days of the publication of this notice, send by registered mail or deliver to the Clerk of the City of Windsor notice of his or her 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 City of Windsor shall refer the matter to the Conservation Review Board for a hearing.

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**DATED** at Windsor, Ontario this 22th day of September 2016  
Anna Ciacelli, Supervisor of Council Services



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Anna Ciacelli  
Supervisor of Council Services

AC/pw