ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST

An agency of the Government of Ontario

FIDUCIE DU PATRIMOINE ONTARIEN

Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT
R.S.O. 1980, CHAPTER 337 AND
14 CARLTON STREET
CITY OF TORONTO, PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

NOTICE OF PASSING OF BY-LAW

To: Toronto Electric Commissioners
14 Carlton Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5B 1K5

✓ Ontario Heritage Foundation

Take notice that the Council of the Corporation of the City of Toronto has passed By-law No. 523-91 to designate the above-mentioned property to be of architectural and historical value or interest.

Dated at Toronto this 22nd day of October, 1991.

B Caplan

Barbara G. Caplan
City Clerk

✓

No. 523-91. A BY-LAW

To designate the property at 14 Carlton Street (Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building) of architectural and historical value or interest.

(Passed September 16, 1991.)

Whereas by Clause 16 of Neighbourhoods Committee Report No. 10, adopted by Council at its meetings held on August 12, 13 and 14, 1991, authority was granted to designate the property at 14 Carlton Street of architectural and historical value or interest; and

Whereas the Ontario Heritage Act authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historic or architectural value or interest; and

Whereas the Council of The Corporation of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the lands and premises known as 14 Carlton Street and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation notice of intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality once for each of three consecutive weeks; and

Whereas the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "B" hereto; and

Whereas no notice of objection to the said proposed designation has been served upon the clerk of the municipality;

Therefore the Council of The Corporation of the City of Toronto enacts as follows:

1. There is designated as being of architectural and historical value or interest the real property more particularly described and shown on Schedules "A" and "C" hereto, known as 14 Carlton Street.

2. The City Solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "A" hereto in the proper land registry office.

3. The City Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owner of the aforesaid property and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Toronto.

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BARBARA G. CAPLAN
City Clerk.

ARTHUR C. EGGLETON,
Mayor.

Council Chamber,
Toronto, September 16, 1991.
(L.S.)

SCHEDULE "A"

In the City of Toronto, in the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and Province of Ontario, being composed of Lots 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, part of Lot 120 and part of the Lane according to Plan 34, the said part of the Lane being closed by City of Toronto By-law 13147 registered as Instrument 24315EP; parts of Lots 2 and 3 on the east side of Yonge Street and parts of Lots 1, 2 and 3 on the north side of Carlton Street all according to Plan 203; and part of Block A according to Plan D194 the said Plans and By-law being registered in the Land Registry Office for the Metropolitan Toronto Registry Division of Toronto (No. 64), all designated as PART 1 on a plan of survey deposited in the said Land Registry Office as 63R-3096.

The hereinbefore described land being delineated by heavy outline on Plan SYE2479, dated August 15, 1991, as set out in Schedule "C".

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SCHEDULE "B"

Reasons for the designation of the property at 14 Carlton Street (Toronto Hydro-Electirc System Building):

HERITAGE PROPERTY REPORT

Basic Building Data:

Address:	14 Carlton Street (near northeast corner of Yonge and Carlton Streets)
Ward:	6
Current Name:	Toronto Hydro Head Office
Historical Name:	Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building
Construction Date:	1931-32
Architect:	Chapman and Oxley; H. A. Bodwell and A. E.Salisbury, associates, Toronto Hydro-Electric System
Contractor/ Builder:	Anglin and Norcross, foundations; A. W. Robertson Limited, superstructure
Additions/ Alterations:	display windows altered; transoms added in second-storey
Original Owner:	Toronto Electric Commissioners
Original Use:	commercial (office building)
Current Use:	commercial (office building)
Heritage Category:	C

Recording Date: February 14, 1991

Recorder: HPD:ka

HISTORY:

1. Toronto Hydro-Electric System:

In the late 1800s, the harnessing of Niagara Falls for the production of electric power by water-driven turbines marked the end of the reliance in Ontario on Pennsylvanian coal as an energy source. In 1893, the Niagara Falls Power Company was the first of three Canadian manufacturers to build generating plants on the Canadian side of the Niagara River.

As early as 1900, a campaign began in Toronto to obtain hydro- electric power, particularly as a means to stimulate the industrial growth of the city. A committee of the Board of Trade reported that, "cheap electric power would be a great boon to our city, especially to smaller manufacturers, and that reasonable measures should be taken to procure a power connection with one of the companies operating at Niagara Falls." While the committee queried "whether or not Toronto, as a city, should control this proposed Niagara connection," the Electrical Development Company (which included Henry Pellatt, financier and future owner of Casa Loma, as a principal) received permission from the provincial government to produce and distribute power at Niagara, enabling it to deliver electricity to Toronto from its own generating plant by 1907.

In the meantime, many proponents of hydro-electric power in Toronto determined that public ownership of transmission and distribution systems was the best means to reduce energy costs. In January, 1903, the City of Toronto applied to the Ontario government for the right to generate power at Niagara, and was refused on the grounds that the municipality lacked a comprehensive plan for exercising this role. After this setback, Toronto joined other interested municipalities to "respectfully suggest and urge upon the Government of Ontario the advisability of the government building and operating, as a government work, lines for the transmission of electricity from Niagara Falls to the towns and cities of Ontario...." Following the formation of the Ontario Power Commission (1903) and the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Inquiry (1906) to investigate the practicality and financial feasibility of transmitting publically-funded power from Niagara throughout the province, a new provincial Conservative government introduced "An Act to Provide for the Transmission of Electric Power to the Municipalities." The Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario was formed in June, 1906, with Adam Beck, a provincial cabinet minister, the former Mayor of London, and an early advocate of public power, as chairman. The next year, the Commission, popularly known as "Ontario Hydro," signed its first contract with the Ontario Power Company for the supply of Niagara-generated energy.

During the 1907 election in the City of Toronto, the populace voted in favour of the passage of Toronto Hydro Debenture By-law #5036 under the Power Commission Act. The by-law allowed "that it shall be lawful for the said municipal corporation to enter into a contract with the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario for the supply to the said Corporation for thirty years of 15,000 continuous horsepower or more of electrical power and energy for the uses of the municipal corporation and the inhabitants thereof, for lighting, heating and power purposes...." The mandate enabled the City to oversee the expansion and improvement of a municipal distribution system to meet the anticipated industrial demand and the ongoing requirements of its commercial and domestic customers. In 1908, Toronto was one of fourteen cities and towns to negotiate agreements with Ontario Hydro, whereby the latter assumed the role of distributing agent, buying power from private companies and selling it to municipalities. The money collected by Ontario Hydro financed the construction of its own production and transmission systems, and the gradual acquisition of private enterprises, including the Ontario Power Company in 1917 and the Toronto Power Company in 1922.

In June, 1908, the City of Toronto contracted with Ontario Hydro for the supply of 7460 kilowatts of electricity. According to Chapter 119 of the Ontario Statutes of 1911 (City of Toronto Act), completion and management of a "Toronto Hydro-Electric System" was vested in the "Toronto Electric Commissioners," a board consisting of three members. The first Commissioners were H. L. Drayton, representing Ontario Hydro, Toronto Mayor George R. Geary as ex- officio, and P. W. Ellis, City Council appointee and chairman. Power acquired through Ontario Hydro reached Toronto in May, 1911.

The Toronto Hydro-Electric System was staffed initially by a Managing Engineer (later the General Manager) under the supervision of the City Engineer, with an office at City Hall. Over time, the growing staff was dispersed to various buildings, particularly following a fire in 1917 which rendered the head office at 226 Yonge Street unusable.

2. Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building:

In 1930, the Toronto Electric Commissioners proposed the construction of a new head office containing the administrative, accounting, merchandising, and service departments, and the executive offices. The scheme received the required approvals from the Board of Control, City Council, and Ontario Hydro, and land on Carlton Street near the northeast corner of Yonge Street was purchased in January, 1931. This precinct was evolving from a residential neighbourhood north of the downtown core to a popular commercial centre with the opening of Eaton's College Street Department Store in 1930, a project followed by the construction of Maple Leaf Gardens in 1931. The latter complexes, exhibiting Art Deco ornamentation, set an architectural standard for the area. The Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building was designed by Chapman and Oxley, one of the most important architectural firms in Toronto during the early 20th century (Attachment III). Chapman and Oxley were assisted by H. A. Bodwell and A. E. Salisbury of the Toronto Hydro-Electric System.

The Toronto Hydro-Electric System building was constructed during the six-month period between November, 1931, when the cornerstone was laid, and May, 1932, when the official opening was held. The cassions and foundation were installed by Anglin and Norcross, and the superstructure was built by A. W. Robertson Limited, contractors. The project, employing over 200 men during the early stage of the Depression, was described in contemporary accounts as "the largest contract carried out in the city in the past year," and "as a splendid example of saving that is possible through present low costs, as well as of careful planning and excellent workmanship." The Daily Commercial News and Construction Record applauded the project as "a vivid example of the value of construction in stimulating industry by pumping money into every line of its activities, and in relieving unemployment."

Trade journals boasted that "naturally, the building is Canadian throughout. As far as possible, local, and failing that, produced- in-Canada materials were specified. The frame is of reinforced concrete and structural steel construction, steel having been brought from England; Queenston limestone is used in facing....Equipment has been manufactured and installed by reliable Canadian firms." The centre section of the edifice was built of structural steel to support a tower planned for future expansion, but never executed. The contractors utilized fire resistant and waterproof materials, and up-to-date technology, such as acoustical ceilings, concealed radiators, and automatic sprinklers in the ground floor and basement. The air conditioning method for the first storey and mezzanine (with air inserted through two-storey columns and removed via floor grills) was described as "the first complete system of this type to be installed in Toronto, and probably in Canada for a store." Consulting engineer, H. H. Angus, noted that "the use of compressed air (via coal-fired boilers) is comparatively new...."

The exterior of the building, with its stone cladding, was highlighted by decorative sculpture and the use of bronze for the two-storey principal entrance, office entry, spar, and show windows. Six large single-plate display windows on the Carlton Street facade and the west elevation were identified as among the largest in Canada, ranging from 110 by 138 inches to 134 by 164 inches in size.

The Toronto Electric Commissioners spent $1,335,000 to construct their new headquarters. The success of the design was reflected in a contemporary account noting that the "present and future needs of the Commission and provision of a building worthy of the city were factors of prime importance; and the architects are to be congratulated on the skill with which they have satisfied every necessity, whether practical or aesthetic."

ARCHITECTURE:

The Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building displays the linear composition and sculptural program identified with Art Deco styling. The structure, constructed of steel and concrete, is faced with Queenston limestone and trimmed with polished marble and copper. The design retains the typical Classical organization of plinth (extended to two stories), shaft, and decorative modified cornice.

The Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building displays a large rectangular plan extending seven bays along Carlton Street and 12 bays on the side elevations. Above the plinth, the structure rises in two independent wings (only one completely visible from Carlton Street) with fenestration on all sides. The space between the two wings was reserved for a tower which was never built.

On the principal (south) facade, a system of vertical piers organizes the horizontal rows of rectangular openings. The monumental main entrance, rising midway up the two-storey plinth, is centered in the wall in a marble-faced recession with geometrical carving. The end bays contain a single entrance (west) and a narrow shop front (east) with floating transoms. The four large display windows dispersed throughout the lower storey now are subdivided vertically by stone panels in an alteration that does not detract significantly from the integrity of the design. The wide second storey is decorated with sculpted stone panels celebrating water power, with a coat-of-arms placed over the principal entrance.

Above the plinth, projecting and incised piers outline the centre bays and extend from the third floor to the roof to terminate in sculpted gargoyle-like heads. In the upper floors, rectangular windows set in pairs are flanked by singular openings in the end bays. The windows in the centre portion of the fourth floor (planned for the executive offices of the Toronto Electric Commissioners) are embellished with ornamental balustrades, while those in the outer bays display decorated aprons. The linear panels found beneath the openings on the top floor of the principal facade are repeated below the fourth- and tenth-storey openings on the remaining elevations. A copper-trimmed cornice with geometrical sculpture delineates the roof.

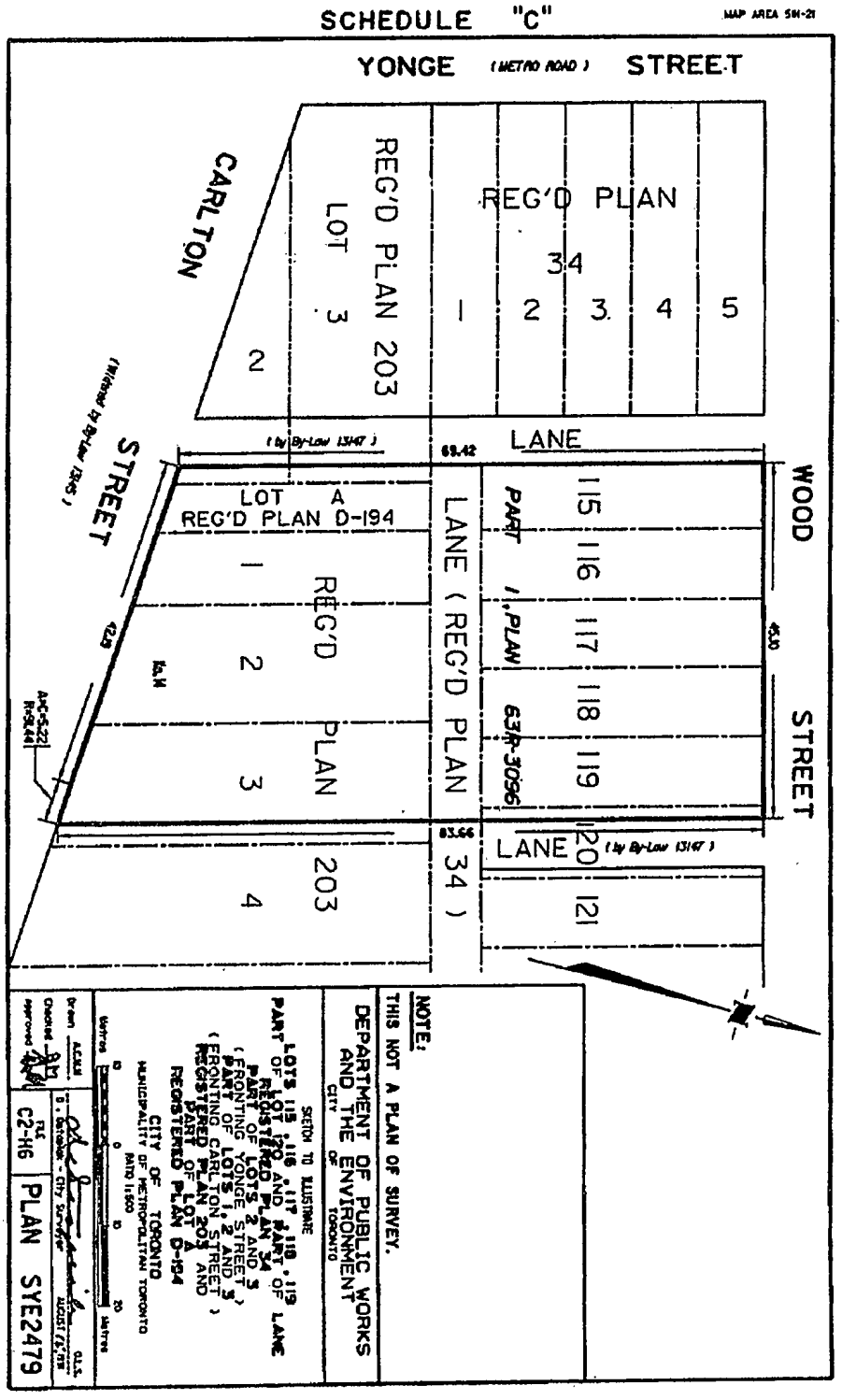
The Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building displays a solid integrity of design where decorative features are kept to a minimum. The structure is typical of the mid-sized "skyscrapers" of the first half of the 20th century, with ornamentation inspired by the restrained geometric forms of the Art Deco style introduced in the late 1920s. Similar features were employed in the plans for the second headquarters of the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario at 620 University Avenue, designed by another prominent Toronto firm, Sproatt and Rolph, and built in 1935.

CONTEXT:

The Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building is located on the north side of Carlton Street, on the curve in the roadway directly east of Yonge Street. The structure is separated from the adjacent buildings by narrow lanes, while the open space (reserved for expansion) between the north wall of the building and Wood Street has been filled in part. The property shares its proximity to one of the major commercial intersections in the City of Toronto with the neighbouring Eaton's College Street Department Store at 444 Yonge Street and Maple Leaf Gardens at 438 Church Street, which have similar dates of construction and stylistic features.

SUMMARY:

The property at 14 Carlton Street is identified for architectural reasons. The Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building was constructed in 1931-32 as the headquarters for the public utility company according to the designs of the prominent Toronto architectural firm of Chapman and Oxley. The 10-storey building, constructed of steel and concrete with limestone facing and marble and copper trim, features a two-part plan with a recessed centre. The design blends Classical organization with the linear composition and sculptural program identified with Art Deco styling. The Toronto Hydro-Electric System Building is a well- executed example of a mid-sized skyscraper designed by an important architectural firm.


SCHEDULE "C"
MAP AREA 5H-21
YONGE (METRO ROAD) STREET
CARLTON STREET
(Widened by By-Law 13145)
REG'D PLAN 203
LOT 3
2
REG'D PLAN 34
1
2
3
4
5
(by By-Law 13147)
69.42
LANE
WOOD STREET
LOT A
REG'D PLAN D-194
1
REG'D PLAN 203
2
3
4
12.19
15.14
ACCESS RESTRICTED
LANE (REG'D PLAN 34)
PART 1, PLAN 63R-3096
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
45.10
83.66
LANE
(by By-Law 13147)
NOTE:
THIS NOT A PLAN OF SURVEY.
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND THE ENVIRONMENT
CITY OF TORONTO
SKETCH TO ILLUSTRATE
PART OF LOTS 115, 116, 117, 118, 119 AND PART OF LANE
REGISTERED PLAN 34
PART OF LOTS 2 AND 3
(FRONTING YONGE STREET)
PART OF LOTS 1, 2 AND 3
(FRONTING CARLTON STREET)
REGISTERED PLAN 203 AND
PART OF
LOT A
REGISTERED PLAN D-194
CITY OF TORONTO
MUNICIPALITY OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO
SCALE 1:500
METRES 0 10 20
Drawn ACMH
Checked
Approved
FILE C2-H6
PLAN SYE2479
D. CATANIA - CITY SURVEYOR
O.L.S.
REGISTERED
SYE2479