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City Clerk's Office

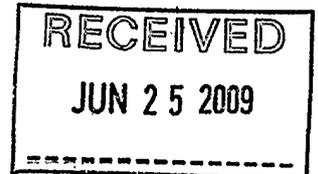
Ulli S. Watkiss  
City Clerk

Secretariat  
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**IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT  
R.S.O. 1990 CHAPTER 0.18 AND  
97 ST. GEORGE STREET  
CITY OF TORONTO, PROVINCE OF ONTARIO**

**NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE**



Elizabeth Sisam  
Assistant Vice President  
Campus Facilities and Planning  
University of Toronto  
McMurrich Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
12 Queen's Park Crescent  
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10 Adelaide Street East  
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E.R.A. Architects Inc.  
10 St. Mary Street, Suite 801  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4Y 1P9

Take notice that Toronto City Council intends to designate the lands and buildings known municipally as 97 St. George Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

**Reasons for Designation**

**Description**

The property at 97 St. George Street is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, associative and contextual value. Located on the east side of St. George Street, north of Hoskin Avenue, the John Downey House (1890) is a 2½-storey house form building that remained in residential use until 1929 when the Canadian School of Missions acquired the site and added a southeast wing. Included on the inaugural City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1973, the property is now part of the University of Toronto's St. George Campus.

## Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

### Design Value

The John Downey House is a representative and well-crafted example of the Queen Anne Revival style, which was popular for residential architecture at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The style is identified by the varied silhouette, the mixture and texture of the materials, the selection of window styles, and the ornamental detailing. The Queen Anne Revival styling of the John Downey House is exemplified by the oversized west gable with its terra cotta cladding, bargeboard, brackets, and projecting eaves with a dentiled cornice and modillion blocks. The smoothness of the red brick surfaces is contrasted by the rough sandstone detailing. Its design combines various window shapes that range from flat-headed and segmental-arched to round-arched, the latter highlighted with hood moulds. The three-sided bay window on the west façade, the oversized oriel window on the south elevation, and round-arched stairhall window on the north wall are highlights of the design.

Attached to the John Downey House, the two-storey southeast wing was designed in the Neo-Gothic style to distinguish the addition from the original house and to reflect the religious affiliation of the Canadian School of Missions, which commissioned it. Neo-Gothic designs were popular for ecclesiastical and educational buildings during the interwar period. The features of the style that are applied to the southeast wing are the monumental chimney on the gabled south elevation, the pointed-arch opening with leaded glass on the south wall, and the lancet windows with stone surrounds on the west façade where the elevated west entrance incorporates a pointed-arch door surround. The original use of the wing is revealed in the stone name band on the enclosed porch reading "Canadian School of Missions".

### Associative Value

The John Downey House is associated with a person of significance to the commercial history of Toronto. The dwelling was in place by September 1890 when it was owned and occupied by Downey, a well-known Toronto solicitor whose law partners included Sir Oliver Mowat, a Father of Confederation and Premier of Ontario who was Downey's neighbour on St. George Street. Following Downey's death in April 1894, his family first rented then sold 97 St. George Street to Albert Nordheimer (1854-1938). During his occupancy of the property for over two decades, Nordheimer assumed the presidency of the Nordheimer Piano and Music Company, which had been founded by his father and uncle in the 1840s. The firm became the largest publisher of sheet music in Canada while manufacturing a range of pianos at its West Toronto factory. Beyond its business supremacy, the Nordheimer Company was noted for its promotion of both local and international musicians. A trained musician and composer, Albert Nordheimer served as the Consul-General for the Netherlands after his retirement. The property was retained by members of the Nordheimer family until 1929.

The property at 97 St. George Street is also linked to an institution of importance to the community. In 1929, the property was acquired by the Canadian School of Missions, a forerunner to today's Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries. The school was founded in the World War I era by representatives of various Christian denominations to train prospective candidates for overseas missions and provide a centre for returning missionaries. After occupying temporary quarters, the Canadian School of Missions purchased the property at 97 St. George with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation. Architect A. Mackenzie Brydon prepared the plans for interior alterations to the house and the addition of the southeast wing, where the second-floor chapel was marked by the large pointed-arch window on the south elevation. The presence of the school on St. George Street was followed by other Christian training institutions, particularly the Chinese Inland Mission

at #150 and the Presbyterian Deaconess and Missionary Training Home at #156. The Canadian School of Missions retained the property until 1969, when it was acquired by the University of Toronto.

### **Contextual Value**

The John Downey House is historically linked to its surroundings as a surviving house form building typical of those erected along St. George Street in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when the tree-lined boulevard was an exclusive residential neighbourhood adjoining the University of Toronto's campus (south) and Queen's Park (east). While most of the house form buildings on St. George Street were in place before 1900, by the 1920s many had been acquired or replaced by institutional edifices. Standing in its original location, the John Downey House shares its setback and height with other former residential buildings on St. George Street, including the neighbouring W. D. Matthews House (1890) at #89 that anchors the northeast corner of Hoskin Avenue where it is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

### **Heritage Attributes**

The heritage attributes of the John Downey House related to its design and contextual value as a representative and well-crafted late 19<sup>th</sup> century residential building that was expanded for institutional use and is linked to the historical character of St. George Street are:

- The scale, form and massing.
- The 2½-storey house form building, with the two-storey southeast wing.
- The materials, with red brick cladding and brick, sandstone, limestone, slate, clay, terra cotta, wood and glass detailing.
- On the house form building, the steeply-pitched gable roof, the roof detailing that includes wood-trimmed gabled dormers, and the pattern and placement of the fenestration.
- On the southeast wing, the pattern and placement of the fenestration on the west façade, the enclosed porch containing the west entrance, and the portion of the south wall under the gable with the chimney and the pointed-arch window opening.
- The placement of the building on the east side of St. George Street, where its principal (west) façade follows the setback of the adjoining former residential buildings along the street.

Notice of an objection to the proposed designation may be served on the City Clerk, Attention: Rosalind Dyers, Administrator, Toronto and East York Community Council, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Toronto, ON M5H 2N2, within thirty days of the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 2009, which is July 20, 2009. The notice must set out the reason(s) for the objection, and all relevant facts.

Dated at Toronto this 19<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2009.

Uli S. Watkiss  
City Clerk