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Ontario
Heritage
Foundation

Office of the
Chairman

File No.:	3528
Return by:	

Memorandum to: Mr. R. G. Bowes
c.c. Mr. S. A. Otto

Re: Gordon House, Amherstburg

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Remarks:

*C. C. ...
Review ...*

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG

BY-LAW NO. 1421

A By-law to designate Property located within the Town of Amherstburg as being of Historical and Architectural Value to the Heritage of the Town of Amherstburg.

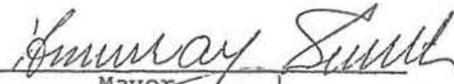
Passed this 28 day of June , 1976.

WHEREAS certain lands and buildings located thereon, within the Town of Amherstburg and hereinafter described, are deemed to be of historical and architectural significance;

AND WHEREAS in the opinion of the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Amherstburg, it is expedient and desirable to designate the said property to be of historical and architectural significance;

THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. That for the reasons aforesaid, the property including buildings and lands within the Town of Amherstburg as described in Schedule "A" attached hereto, which schedule forms part of this By-law, be and the same is hereby proclaimed to be designated in accordance with the provisions of Section 4, Bill 176 of The Ontario Heritage Act and Amendments thereto.
2. This By-law shall come into force and take effect on the day following the final passing thereof by the Council of the Town of Amherstburg.



Mayor



Clerk

1st Reading: June 28, 1976

2nd Reading: June 28, 1976

3rd Reading: June 28, 1976

This is to certify that this is a true copy of By-Law 1421 passed in open Council on the 28th day of June, 1976.



Clerk

SCHEDULE "A"

IV) THE GORDON HOUSE

Location

All and singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situated, lying and being in the Town of Amherstburg, in the County of Essex and Province of Ontario and being composed of all of Lot 4 and Part of Lot 5, west side of Dalhousie St., Registered Plan No. 1, also noted on Instrument No. 432591 and known as Municipal No. 290 Dalhousie St., in the Town of Amherstburg.

Historical Significance

The present structure, known as the "Gordon House", is situated on Lot 18 of the original town plot, as laid out under the orders of Captain Hector McLean. The lot was first issued about 1797, to a George Sharp, who died in 1800, and who apparently had not erected a dwelling house on the site prior to his death.

Based on a military plan of 1804, it is almost certain that the present house was constructed during the period of 1800-1804. A watercolour view of Amherstburg, done in 1813 by Margaret Reynolds, clearly shows the present structure on the site. Both the 1804 maps and the 1813 sketch indicate a dock and storage buildings at the river's edge.

The first known occupant of the house was the Honourable James Gordon, who received a Patent for the lot (replacing the original military grants) in 1821. Gordon came from Scotland as a young man, and went into business as a merchant in Amherstburg. He attached himself to the militia and was present in most of the engagements in the district in the War of 1812. In 1820 he was made a member of the Executive Council.

The original town lots fronting on the river were acquired by merchants, who built their houses along present-day Dalhousie Street, and who built docks and warehouses along

The Gordon House - Continued

the river, The Gordon House is the last remaining of the merchants' establishments located along the river which still stands on its original site. One other, the Park House, also remains, but has been relocated some distance from the original site.

Only three structures of the pre 1812 period in Amherstburg are known to have survived to this date, the Gordon House being the only one of the three still on its original site.

Structurally, the house is believed to be of timber framing, with stone or brick fill, covered by a clap-board siding. Although aluminum siding has been applied to the building, its exterior appearance has not been significantly altered.

Summary of Available Information re Gordon House

- 1797 Military Plan of this date indicates a long building (?) extending across Lot 18. The present structure was definitely not present at this time.
- 1798 Letter of Feb. 2 from Captain Hector McLean refers to a letter October 19, 1797, and indicates that notice has been given for the granting of lots, on which a habitable house is to be erected within twelve months.
- Letter of May 13 from McLean indicates that all lots have been given away, and that further lots are to be laid out.
- 1799 A map of this date indicates that the lot is held by a Mr. G. Sharp.
- 1800 A map of this date indicates lot still held by Mr. G. Sharp. At the present time we have no further specific legal references to lot owners until 1821, when a Patent was issued to Mr. James Gordon.

George Sharp died at Montreal January 17, 1800. A brief reference in the John Askin papers suggests he had not taken steps to settle at Amherstburg, and in all probability had not erected a structure on the site.

The Gordon House - Continued

- 1804 A military plan of this year indicates a structure similar in shape to the present structure, as well as a building and dock at the river-edge. The whole complex is very similar to that portrayed in the 1813 Reynolds Sketch, which has been confirmed as the present structure.
- 1813 Positive proof of the existance of the present structure in the Reynolds' "Sketch of Amherstburg, 1813".
- 1821 Patent for Lot 18 issued to James Gordon.