



NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

127 Main Street West

TAKE NOTICE that Grimsby Town Council, on November 6th, 2023 resolved to issue a Notice of Intention to Designate LT 69 & PT LT 70, Corporation Plan 4; PT 1, 30R-2538 ; GRIMSBY as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The Reason for the Notice of Intention to Designate is to recognize the physical, associative and contextual value that **127 Main Street West** contributes towards the Town of Grimsby's inclusive heritage.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

127 Main Street West is a representative example of the early Loyalist Georgian architectural style. The style accumulated the British architectural fashions during the reign of King George I, King George II and King George III (1750 - 1820) and was a modification of the Renaissance Style. The structure at 127 Main Street West was constructed in the Loyalist Georgian Style around the year 1800. Oral history states that the structure was initially used to support the Nelles Loyalist mill on nearby Forty Mile Creek. Once the structure was no longer needed it was brought down the creek to its current site, to be used as the Nelles Merchant shop. The construction of the building is said to have been completed using rejected ship beams. Key identifying features of 127 Main Street West include; the gable front façade, the gable returns, symmetrical window openings, centrally located front door with side light, shallow pitched roof, and early stone foundation. Georgian Gable front buildings that were built at this time were often used as commercial buildings.

127 Main Street West is heavily associated with the Nelles family, the Fitch family, the first merchant shop and the first post office located within the "The Forty". Robert built the Merchant Shop around 1800. At the time of its operation, this was the only Merchant shop within the town, offering goods and services including selling grain and meat. The shop also operated as the Post Office starting in 1829 when Henry Nelles (Robert's Son) became postmaster. Henry served as postmaster for 13 years, after which his son Robert F. Nelles took over in 1842 and operated out of the Merchant Shop until 1855. Although the Post Office moved from the shop in 1855, the Nelles family continued to run the service with Adolphus Nelles in 1855 to 1867, H.E. Nelles from 1867 to 1892, and H.E. Nelles' wife Mrs. Nelles from 1892 until her death. Ultimately amounting to around 60 years of Nelles ownership.

Dr. William Fitch and his family arrived in Grimsby in 1849. They lived in a house at the corner of Main and Maple, eventually moving into 125 Main Street West. After buying it from Robert Fanning Nelles, William Sr. also acquired the adjacent property with the merchant store. Dr. Fitch was well respected within the Village and was active in St. Andrews Church, Dr. Fitch passed in 1869 and his wife in 1898. William's son, William Jr. was known around town at "Doc", and live at 125/127 Main Street West. He operated a general store in the Malakoff building on Main Street, where he sold groceries and dispensed medicine to the community.

“Doc” also operated the first Telegraph office within the Town, and was agent for the Great Western Telegraph Company. During some renovations of 127 Main Street West in the 21st century, hundreds of old glass medicine bottles were found, indicating that “Doc” operated out of the old Nelles Merchant shop as well. “Doc” lived until 1938.

The historic structure at 127 Main Street West provides a understanding of our community. This structure contained the first merchant within “the Forty “and provides insight into how this corridor developed, during the early settlement of the United Empire Loyalists.

This portion of Main Street was an important commercial corridor and contained industry such as the Nelles family mills and Gibson quarry. This structure and its use as a commercial building contributed directly to commercial industry present at the height of the area’s development.

The merchant shop was built by the notable Nelles Family. The Nelles family constructed many of the foundational buildings within this portion of Main Street during the height of the United Empire Loyalist settlement. The Nelles family were one of the most significant families to have settled within Grimsby and contributed directly to success of the Town. The Nelles family owned significant property between Grimsby and the Grand River.

127 Main Street West maintains and supports the early Loyalist development character within the Main Street West corridor of Grimsby. Built in the early 1800’s, the structure displays the early evolution of the Downton core. The structure was built at a time when wheat farming and mills were prevalent within the village. These farms and mills helped to support the families and build the local economy. At the time of construction the Merchant Shop would have been an integral piece of “The Forty”.

The structure 127 Main Street West is one of the few remaining structures initially built by the Nelles family at the turn of the 19th century. This Structure is historically linked to the early settlement village established by the founding families of “The Forty.” This structure was used as the first merchant shop and the first post office within the village and was integral to the surrounding industry.

Historically, the structure at 127 Main Street West would have been considered a landmark structure within this portion of the early Loyalist settlement. This was the only merchant shop and post office within "the Forty" at the time of construction. Many community members would have interacted with this site during their common, daily life. The merchant shop also contained the Town’s post office, which would have been the central location of the community’s early regional communication.

HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES TO BE DESIGNATED

The Heritage Attributes to be designated at 127 Main Street West include:

- Loyalist Georgian architectural style
- Gable front façade
- Symmetrical facade
- Shallow pitched roof

- Gable returns
- Centrally located front door with side lights and pilasters
- Early foundation

OBJECTIONS

Any objection to this designation must be filed no later than 30 days after the date of publication of the notice of intention in a newspaper. Objections should be directed to Bonnie Nistico-Dunk, Town Clerk, Town Clerk, 160 Livingston Avenue, Grimsby ON, L3M 0J53.

MORE INFORMATION

Any inquiries may be directed to Bianca Verrecchia, Heritage Planner at 905-945-9634 ext. 2122 or by email bverrecchia@grimsby.ca

Last date to file Notice of Objection: December 16th, 2023