

REPORT TO: B. Longfield, Chair and Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee

RE: **Application for Designation HR-04-1, Nixon Hall (1854), 262 Main Street West**

DATE: April 20, 2004

1.0 RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION

Resolved, that Report P.A. 04-32 regarding application for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, Nixon Hall (1854), 262 Main Street West, be received.

2.0 HISTORY

Dennis Nixon built Nixon Hall in 1854. It is fortunate that a diary exists from one of Dennis' descendants (Julie Nixon). The diary states the persons involved in the construction of Nixon Hall. It mentions that the bricklayer and the person involved with the brickwork of Nixon Hall was a Mr. Murphy. The diary also states the method of curing the pine lumber, used for 'doors, heavy casings, window sashes and molding', which involved the construction of a brick oven by the work site, where the lumber was kiln-dried. Mr. Linline of Clinton Township did indoor and outdoor woodwork. The diary mentions that stone for the foundation, sills and other stonework came from the 'mountain side'. In addition, it states that a 'very black man of the name of Bass' created the decorative stucco and plaster of Paris adornments in the house (Grimsby Independent, 1982).

The extension on the north end of the house, containing the kitchen, was built by Adolph G. Pettit (Grimsby Independent, 1982). Adolph was Julie Nixon's husband and he introduced many innovative conveniences to the house, such as a water system, a bath and gas lighting, all which were relatively new features for homes in the late 1800's.

Dennis Nixon was born November 16, 1820, son of Robert Nixon (Powell No.7, 1956: 10). Robert Nixon was an officer in the 4th Lincoln Regiment during the Rebellion of Upper Canada 1837-38 (Powell No.7, 1956: 10).

Dennis's grandfather was Allen Nixon, who was one of the first United Empire Loyalists to settle in Grimsby. Allen was active in the early municipal government of Grimsby, serving as an assessor and pound keeper in the late 1700's (Powell No.7, 1956: 7). He was also involved with the Masonic Lodge and was installed as a Junior Warden when the Lodge became instituted in Grimsby in 1799 (Powell No.7, 1956: 7).

Dennis married Mary Elizabeth Pettit, May 6th, 1845 (Powell No.7, 1956: 10).

Nixon Hall itself has had a very colorful history.

During World War 2, Nixon Hall was used as a hostel to house Farmerettes (Bromley & Powell 1989: 255). Farmerettes were high school and college girls from such places as Hamilton and Toronto. They were used as farm labor during both World Wars to help with farm chores since many young men, who normally did the farm work, were called off to war.

As the smaller scale of the opening and it is devoid of paneling at the lower portion of the window.

The attic vent consists of a lowered wooden enclosure. The trim outside the structural opening consists of a shaped stone lintel and stone lug sill.

3.2.2 Main Entrance

There is a single door to the main entrance. The door has two large vertical panels in its upper portion and two smaller panels in the lower portion.

The trim outside the structural opening is entirely composed of stone. The trim within the structural opening includes:

- Sidelights on either side of the doorway, with four panes in the upper portion and a paneled lower portion.

- A transom with three lights each separated by scrolled brackets.

3.2.3 Upper Porch Entrance

The trim outside the structural opening consists of a decorative and segmental stone lintel with a decorative keystone. The trim within the opening consists of a plain wood frame.

3.2.4 Porch

Doric columns support the two-tiered porch. Three columns are at each corner of the forward section. At the right (as one would face the porch of the rear section), there is a single pilaster built into the wall. To the left of the rear portion there is again a single pilaster and two full columns supporting this section. All columns rest on a paneled pedestal with a decorative entablature crowning them.

The lower portion allows access to the main entrance via stairs located at the center of the porch and on the east side. A molded rail with rounded supporting balusters encloses the west side of this lower portion.

The upper line of the porch is enclosed by a molded handrail and round and decorative balusters. An unusual feature of the handrails on the forward section of the upper tier. There are three decorative corner posts at each corner of the deck which supports the railings.

The Minor Gabled Side:

3.2.5 Windows

The first floor window is to the left of the main entrance. It is very similar to the first floor window described early in almost every respect. The only difference of this particular window is the flat plain lintel at the head of the structural opening.

The second floor window is located partially within the gable. This unusually designed window is comprised of two 4 over 4 double hung windows separated by a rounded mullion. The molded wood frame sits on a plain stone lug sill. The head of this window is built right into the gable. The leaded frame within the gable contains a number of diamond and triangular shaped panes.

The second floor windows are, from left to right, double hung with an 8 over 8 and 2 over 2 pane arrangement respectively.

The louvered attic vent is trimmed similarly as the other attic openings.

3.5.2 Porch and Entrance

The entrance is trimmed by side lights, with four pane arranged vertically, on either side of the doorway. A four light transom is at the head of the opening.

3.6 East Side Elevation of the Extensions

3.6.1 Windows

The basement windows have 8 fixed panes. They have a voussoir brick head and a stone sill trimming the outside of the structural opening.

On the first floor to the right of the entranceway, are two double hung windows. Each has a 4 over 4 pane arrangement and are separated by a plain mullion. The trim outside the opening consists of a flat voussoir brick head and stone lug sill. The windows are framed in plain wood.

Upper storey windows consist of a large window located directly below the gable, with a smaller window immediately to the right of this larger one (Photo 5). Each is detailed in a similar manner. Both are double hung, with a 1 over 1 pane arrangement and is framed in plain wood. The trim outside the opening consists of a flat voussoir brick head and slip sill.

3.6.2 Entranceway and Porch

A small porch leads to a side entrance. The doorway is screened and is framed in plain wood. The head of the structure opening is trimmed with a flat voussoir head.

The porch itself is enclosed in trellis work. The hipped roof is decorated with fancy eaves trim.

3.7 North Side Elevation of the Extension

The only details on this side are the upper storey 1 over 1 double hung window and a 6 paned attic window. Both these windows are trimmed as before.

3.8 West Side Elevation of the Extension

The west side of the extension is almost identical in detail as the east side of the extension.

The primary difference is the bracketed hood that covers the entrance. It has decorative brackets and roof trim.

3.9 Other Details

3.9.1 Chimneys

There are two internally octagonal chimneys on either end of the main structure, specifically at the east or west ends. All four of these chimneys are similarly designed with square bases and corbelled tops that run three brick courses high. A rectangular chimney is internally located on the north end of the main structure. It is brick and capped with corbelled masonry.

FIGURE 1



FIGURE2

South Side



Section 3.2.2



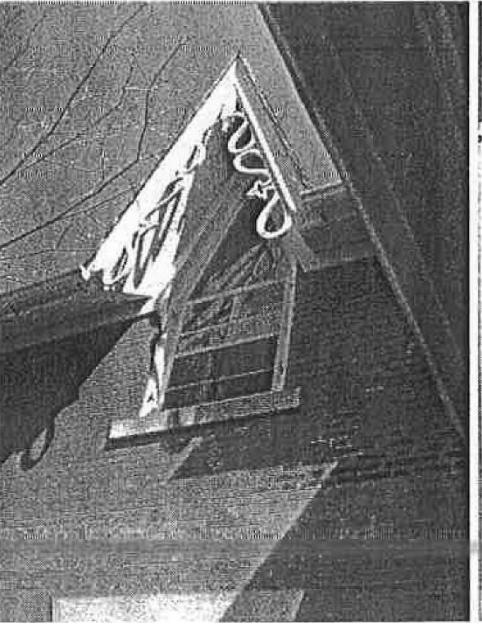
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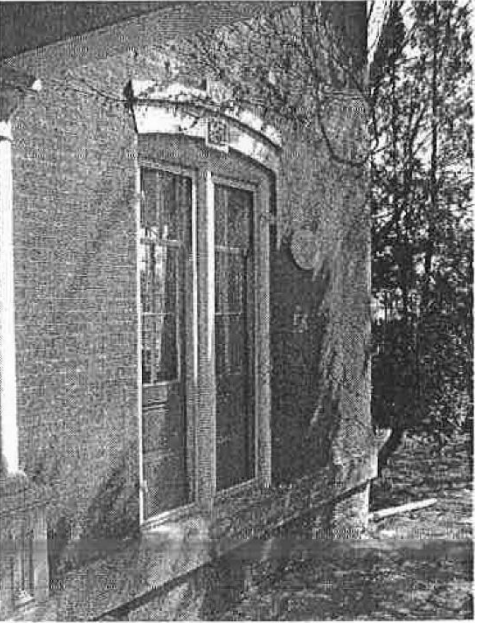
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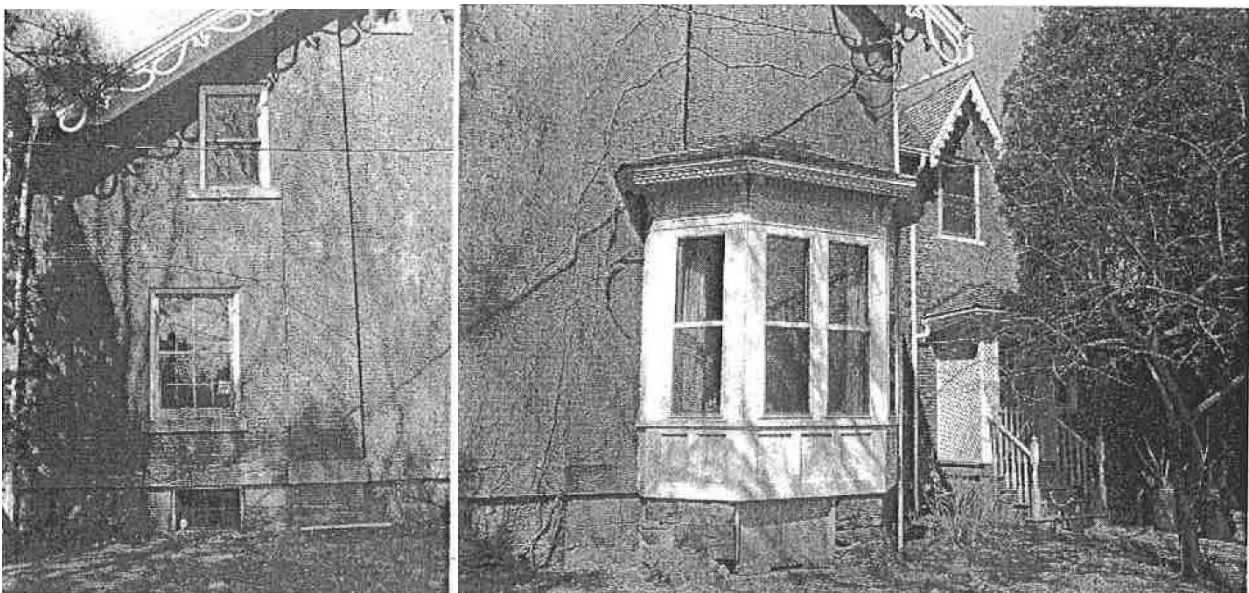


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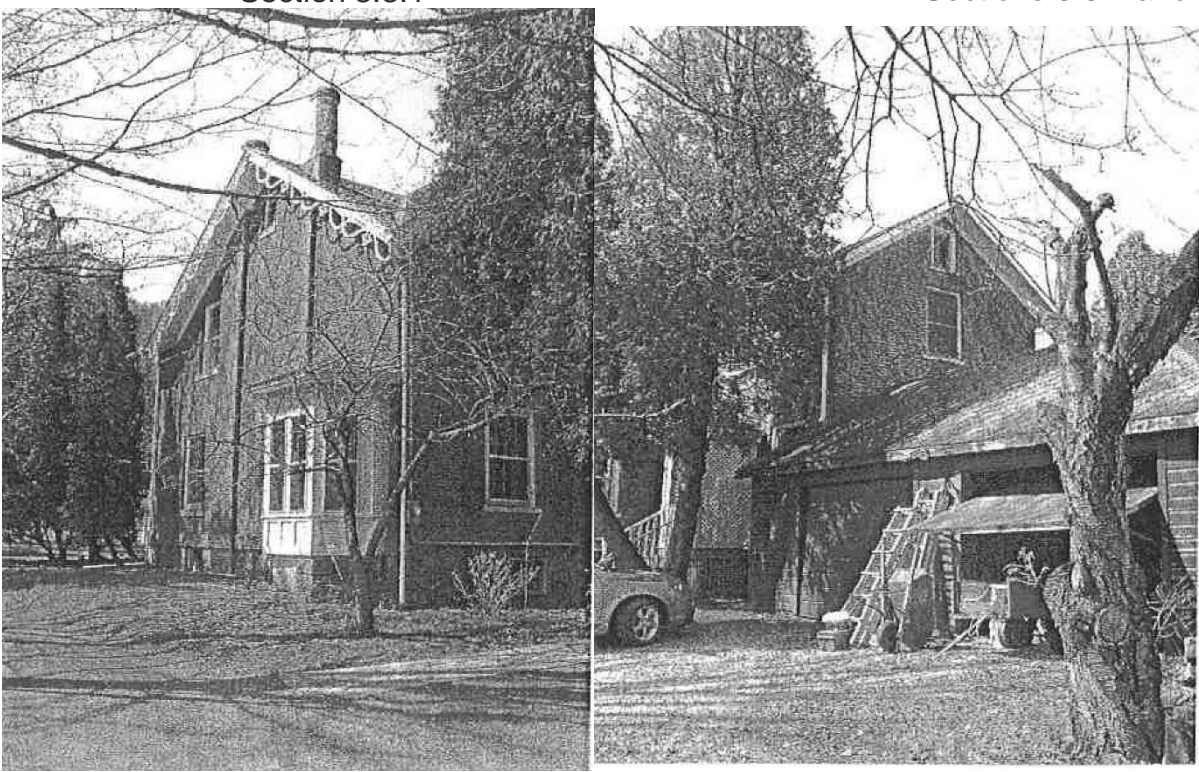
Section 3.2.5

FIGURE 3
East Side



Section 3.3.1

Sections 3.3.2 and 3.6



Sections 3.3 and 3.4

Section 3.7

FIGURE 4
West Side



Section 3.8



Section 3.5



Section 3.5



Section 3.5

