



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To: Council

From: Jill Hogan, Commissioner, Development Services

Date: September 8, 2025

Report No: DS-054-25

Subject: Recommendation Report - Notice of Intention to Designate - 8048 Twiss Road_ Dennis Hunter House

Recommendation: **THAT** Staff Report DS-054-25 entitled: "Notice of Intention to Designate - 8048 Twiss Road_Dennis Hunter House be received and;

THAT Milton Council recognizes the historic house at 8048 Twiss Road in the Town of Milton as being of heritage significance;

THAT Milton Council designate the property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18 for the reasons outlined in the Reasons for Designation attached as Appendix 1 to this Report;

AND THAT the Town Clerk provides the Notice of Intention to Designate as outlined in Section 29 (4) of the Ontario Heritage Act;

AND FURTHER THAT once the thirty-day objection period has expired and if there are no objections, a designation by-law will be brought forward for Council adoption.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Dennis Hunter House is a two-and-a-half-storey, smooth red brick house that is a good example of late Victorian architecture transitioning into an Edwardian architectural style. The bricks used for this house are from the local brickworks. It also has historical value because of its connection to Frank McNiven.
- The property's current owner has voluntarily responded to the heritage designation program and desires that their property be designated.
- Staff has evaluated this historic home as a significant built heritage resource for the Town of Milton and should be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. (See Appendix '1')

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This significant heritage resource fulfils more than two of the evaluation criteria set out in Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (R.S.O. 1990), Ontario Regulation 9/06 (See Appendix 2). As such, it is worthy of designation under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

REPORT

Background

The Dennis Hunter House is a two-and-a-half-storey, smooth red brick house that is a good example of late Victorian architecture transitioning into an Edwardian architectural style. The bricks used for this house are from the local brickworks. Its cultural heritage value lies in its historical and architectural significance. Frank McNiven, who served as Councillor and Reeve, governor of the Halton County Jail, the area's Police Chief, and Town of Milton assessor, owned this house from 1920 to 1946.

Discussion

Historically, the house was built in 1900 by Dennis Hunter. He was the son of the pioneer James Hunter, who came to Canada from County Antrim, Northern Ireland. In 1837, he bought this 100-acre farm at Lot 1, Con 2 in the former Township of Nassagaweya. Dennis acquired the property from his father, James, in 1886 and passed it on to his son, Daniel. Daniel sold the property to Frank McNiven in 1920.

The house was constructed in 1900, shortly after the closure of the short-lived Terra Cotta Brick Company in Campbellville. As such, the red terra cotta bricks would have come from the other local brickworks in Milton Heights. These high-quality bricks are found on many buildings that were built in Milton during the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, and this building is a good representative example of their use.

This property is of historic value because of its direct association with Frank McNiven, who owned the property from 1920 to 1946. The McNiven's were a prominent family from the Kilbride area. McNiven Road is named in their honour. Frank served on numerous local boards and councils. He served on the Nassagaweya Township Council and was Reeve in 1928. While owning the property, Frank and his wife, Ruby, moved to Milton in 1936 and were appointed Governor and Matron of the Halton County Jail. Frank also served as Police Chief of Milton, Assessor for the Town, and the Chair of the Town's first Planning Board. More information on Frank can be found in the Milton Historical Society's "Milton Area Biographies".

Discussion

Physically, the farmhouse is a two-and-a-half-storey smooth red brick house with a field stone foundation that is covered by a cement render. The house has a box-like form, wide projecting eaves. The inclusion of two expansive ground-floor windows reflects the influence of the burgeoning Edwardian Classicism style that became popular in the early twentieth century. The asymmetrical form, front gable dormer and decorative detailing reflect the Romanesque Revival period, being a popular style in Ontario during the latter half of the Victorian era from 1880 to 1900.

Its principal facade includes a hipped roof projecting wing that faces southeast towards Conservation Road (formerly known as Steeles Avenue). This wing has a central gable dormer window with an arched "Romanesque" window and returned eaves. A wide ground-floor window breaks the symmetry of the projecting wing. Originally, the house included decorative gingerbread detailing around the gable window and wooden brackets below the eaves. The front entrance is recessed and includes a modern wood porch. The northeast facade facing Twiss Road is bisected by a tall exterior chimney that once was likely to have included a corbelled chimney cap. Symmetrical windows are placed at the second-floor level; however, at the ground floor level, a wide window exists on one side of the chimney with a small arched "Romanesque" window on the other. Four asymmetrical windows exist on the north-west facing facade with one cellar window below. The rear (or southwest-facing) facade includes one narrow window and a modern vinyl-sided single-storey addition. A second tall interior chimney with a corbelled chimney cap protrudes through the rear hipped roof slope.

All the windows include voussoirs, and all but the window in the front gable dormer include rusticated limestone sills. The inclusion of an arched window on the ground floor level is an unusual feature in Milton, likely reflecting the influence of the Romanesque Revival. A brick water table runs around the exterior of the property. The original single-leaf four-panel wooden entrance door with plain transom remains. It retains its original "wavy" glass, decorative wood trim detailing around the glass panel and its original highly decorative hinges.

Internally, the house retains much of its original details, including its original staircases (two between the ground and second floor and a steep attic stair), panel doors, door hardware, high baseboards and ornate window and door casings. Whilst these reflect the highly decorative detailing that was popular in the Victoria era, they are beginning to include some simpler "geometric" forms that became increasingly popular in the Edwardian period. Of note in this regard are the "chunky" newel posts of the front staircase.

Character Defining Elements/Heritage Attributes:

Important to the preservation of the property are the following character-defining elements/heritage attributes:

Discussion

- The original massing of the two and a half storey smooth brick house with a projecting front bay and central gable dormer above.
- Low hip roof with wide projecting eaves
- Smooth red brick exterior cladding and brick water table
- Gable dormer with arched window and returned eaves
- Placement of windows and door openings
- Plain red brick voussoirs above window and door openings with rusticated limestone windowsills
- Single leaf four-panel wooden front entrance door with original "wavy" glass insert, decorative trims and rectangular transom
- Two single-flue red brick chimneys
- Historical home of Frank McNiven, who served as Councillor and Reeve, governor of the Halton County Jail, the area's Police Chief, and Town of Milton assessor.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the optimal conservation and protection measures for this heritage property is the designation of the property.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact associated with this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Hogan
Commissioner, Development Services

For questions, please contact: Anthony Wong, Senior Policy
Planner

Phone: Ext. 2565



Attachments

- Appendix '1'_Reasons for Designation for 8048 Twiss Road
- Appendix '2'_CHVI Evaluation_ 8048 Twiss Road
- Appendix '3'_Photographic Record Heritage Attributes_ 8048 Twiss Road

Approved by CAO
Andrew M. Siltala
Chief Administrative Officer

Recognition of Traditional Lands

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The Town of Milton shares this land and the responsibility for the water, food and resources. We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.