



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Charlie Toman, Planner – Development Review

DATE: February 11, 2014

REPORT NO.: PDS-201⁴3-0008

RE: Intent to Designate the Forbes House property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act
401 Draper Street, Norval

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PDS-2014-0008, dated February 11, 2014, with respect to “Intent to Designate the Forbes House property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act”, 401 Draper Street, Norval, legally described as Lots 3 and 4 North of Guelph Street, Plan Norval, Town of Halton Hills, Regional Municipality of Halton, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council indicate its intention to designate the Forbes House property, located at 401 Draper Street, Norval, under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act as recommended by Heritage Halton Hills;

AND FURTHER THAT the Clerk’s Office proceed with the notification requirements as set out in the Ontario Heritage Act;

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

BACKGROUND:

The preparation of this report was triggered by a recommendation made by Heritage Halton Hills that the Forbes House, located on at 401 Draper Street in Norval (see **SCHEDULE 1: LOCATION MAP**), be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

In April 2013, Tom Pettingill, the owner of the subject property, approached members of Heritage Halton Hills and requested that the dwelling be considered for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

On November 20, 2013, for reasons identified in the attached designation report (see **SCHEDULE 2: DESIGNATION REPORT**) prepared by members of Heritage Halton Hills with assistance from heritage architect Ian McGillivray through the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario's "Preservation Works!" program, the Committee adopted the following motion recommending the exterior face of the dwelling be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act:

Recommendation No. HERITAGE-2013-0056

THAT Heritage Halton Hills receive and approves the Forbes House (The British Hotel) Designation Report as presented;

AND THAT the report be forwarded to staff to prepare a report to Council regarding designation of the Forbes House (The British Hotel).

CARRIED

401 Draper Street is *listed* on the Town's Municipal Heritage Register and is described as being a good example of a three-bay Georgian residence.

COMMENTS:

As identified in the designation report, the circa 1840's two storey Georgian-style dwelling was used as a hotel from the late 1850's to late 1880's and is associated with the Forester family of Norval and Major (Dr.) Armitage Lytton Forbes who served with the Royal Army Medical Corps in World War One and World War Two.

The significant architectural attributes identified in the Designation Report include:

- Original 6 over 6 windows
- Wooden lap siding and original rear entrance door
- Shallow side-gable roof with shingled gable ends and prominent eaves

Heritage Halton Hills identify the dwelling as meeting the criteria for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Council has two options regarding the designation process, they are as follows:

- 1) Proceed with designation – Notice of intent to designate is then served. Should there be no objections, the designation by-law for Council approval will be brought forward. Should there be objections, there is an appeal process to the Conservation Review Board before the final request comes back to Council for final decision.
- 2) Not to proceed with the designation.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report relates to the Town's desire to Preserve, Protect and Promote our Distinctive History specifically, strategic objective D.2 "To encourage the preservation and enhancement of the historical character of the Town's distinctive neighbourhoods, districts, hamlets and rural settlement areas" and D.4, "To use the conservation of built heritage and cultural heritage landscape resources to enhance the character and vitality of neighbourhoods, and to provide opportunities for economic development and tourism."

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

If designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, the property will be eligible for the Town's Heritage Property Tax Relief Program.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:

If Council decides that designation under Part IV is warranted, staff will provide Written Notice of Intention to Designate as required by Section 29 (3) of the Ontario Heritage Act in the manner and form and to the persons and agencies prescribed by the Ontario Heritage Act.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

Since the recommendations of this report are not related to a major project, policy or initiative, sustainability implications are not triggered and hence there are no direct sustainability implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION:

Consultation between the Heritage Halton Hills Committee, Planning, Development & Sustainability, Clerks and the property owners of 401 Draper Street, Norval, led to the preparation of this report.

CONCLUSION:

It is recommended that Council indicate its intent to designate the Forbes House at 401 Draper Street, Norval under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlie Toman, MCIP, RPP
Planner, Development Review

John Linhardt, MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning, Development &
Sustainability

David Smith
Chief Administrative Officer

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SCHEDULE 1 to PDS-2013-0008
LOCATION MAP



Source:
Teranet Parcel Fabric, Property Code Data - Provided by Teranet
Aerial Spring 2013 - Provided through the Region of Halton

Produced by
TOWN OF HALTON HILLS
2014

¹⁴
SCHEDULE 2 to PDS-2013-0008
DESIGNATION REPORT

The Forbes House
(Formerly the British Hotel)



**Heritage Halton Hills
Designation Report
November 20, 2013**

By Patricia Farley
Assisted by Ian McGillivray, Architect
(See attached report)



The Forbes House

(Formerly the British Hotel)

Present Location

The Forbes House is presently located at 401 Draper Street, Norval, Town of Halton Hills, having Assessment Roll Number: 070.003.11300.0000. The property is identified as Part of Lot 12, Concession 11 East, Esquensing and occupies a wedge-shaped corner lot at the intersection of Guelph and Draper Streets.

Legal Description:

PIN: 25059-0119 (LT), Lots 3 and 4 North of Guelph Street, Plan Norval, Town of Halton Hills, Regional Municipality of Halton (**Map #1**).

This property is Listed on Phase II of the Town of Halton Hills Heritage Register under subsection 27(1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Original Location

Prior to being reoriented toward Draper Street in the early 1950s, the structure was known as 487 Guelph Street (**Map #2**).

Historical Background

The present owner, Tom Pettingill (10475 Winston Churchill Blvd., Norval), who has requested his property be Designated under the Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, purchased the house in 1973. It is presently occupied by his daughter, Helen Pettingill.

From 1948 until his death in 1973 the property was owned by Major (Dr.) Armitage Forbes (1890-1973) who served with the Royal Army Medical Corps in both WWI and WWII. When Dr. Forbes purchased the house it was located on the same two village lots it presently occupies, but at that time its façade was oriented toward Guelph Street. Norval native Norma Tripp, recalls that in the early 1950's, Dr. Forbes had the house rotated to face Draper Street. She went on to say, The Forbes House was jacked up for some time while men worked underneath and a new cinder block foundation was built. Norma also believes part of the structure was removed at that time because it had rotted. The "architectural void" visible on the rear of the structure (**Figure #1**) also suggests the removal of a wing.

Since its construction, circa 1840, the house has frequently changed ownership (**Appendix A**). John Miller, who later became one of the directors of the Toronto-Guelph Plank Toll- Road, owned the property briefly in the mid 1830's. One of the most notable owners from 1853 to 1857 was James Forster, the grandfather of renowned Canadian Portraitist and Norval native, J. W. L. Forster.

Perhaps, the most notorious owner was Robert Colgan, who is listed in business directories as the proprietor of The British Hotel, Guelph Street, Norval and an innkeeper, from when he first purchased the property in 1857. (See below)

Colgan , Robert , Norval, innkeeper, *Canada Directory of Professional and Business Men*, (Montreal: John Lovell, 1857), page 475

Colgan , Robert , Norval , proprietor , British Hotel, Guelph St., *Fuller's Counties of Peel and Halton Directory for 1866 & 1867, C*, (Blackburn's City Steam Press, Toronto, 1866), page 54

Colgan , Robert , Norval , inn keeper , *County of Halton Directory, 1869-70*, (Hamilton: A. Lawson and Co., 1869), page 14

As quoted below, in her book, "Norval History 1820–1950", Joan (Browne) Carter mentions a reference to Colgan and the British Hotel in the diary of Charles Unwin, a young surveyor, who was hired to survey the Hamlet of Norval.

"The diary also reflected some of the tensions that arose when one of the workers visited a house of ill-repute, and when a hassle with Robert Cogan [sic], proprietor of the British Hotel, Guelph St. resulted in a fistfight and a visit to Georgetown Magistrates, Messrs. Kennedy and Barber."

A report in the Canadian Champion, Milton on May 3, 1866 also makes reference to Mr. Colgan as being an innkeeper.

In 1886, Robert Colgan sold the property, and married Elizabeth Ferrier of Barrie. The property was then owned for only two months by saddler, Edward Nixon, a possible relative of the late Ann (Nixon) Colgan. It was subsequently sold to another innkeeper, Louis Mason, who owned it until 1888. After that time, there is no record of a hotel being operated on the premises and it presumably became a private residence.

Site Analysis

The Forbes House, having a municipal address of 401 Draper Street, Norval, is a two storey frame structure that rests on a cement block basement, and is supported by large round log beams. It is prominently located at the corner of Guelph and Draper Streets, across from the Norval Presbyterian Church. The structure occupies a wedge shaped property that consists of Village Lots 3 and 4. Land registry records show that in 1958 the Province of Ontario paid \$7,000 to buy a portion of Lots 3 and 4, E. Draper "for the purposes of Ontario". This building appears to be the original structure on this site dating back to Norval's earliest days when a ford, and later a bridge, over the Credit River at the end of Draper Street (**Map #1**) made it a busy thoroughfare into the village.

Other than its reorientation toward Draper Street sometime in the 1950s and the newer foundation, this humble building, with a footprint of just 28' 6" X 18' 8", has remained largely unchanged since it was originally constructed circa 1840. Much of the Heritage Streetscape that surrounds the house, including the Norval Presbyterian Church, Manse and Caretaker's Cottage, along with the neighbouring house at 403 Draper Street, has also been preserved.

The façade presents as a symmetrical three bay vernacular interpretation of Georgian Style architecture covered in lap siding with simple corner trim (**Figure #2**). Given the depth of the interior window wells, the present siding may hide original log construction. Stylistically, the gabled front porch is unlikely to be original. The moderately pitched side gable roof has original interior chimneys on each end and features shingled gable ends and prominent eaves returns (**Figure #3**). Two over two double hung sash windows likely replaced the original six over six style, one of which remains on East side second floor (**Figure #4**).

The front door was recently replaced with a steel door, while the original wooden door remains at the back of the house (**Figures 1 & 5**). The rear face of the structure presents a bit of a conundrum with its prominent "architectural void" (**Figure #1**) which is an area with no windows. Since stylistically this type of construction tends to rely heavily on symmetry we might assume that local resident Norma Tripp's recollection of a portion being removed in the 1950's is correct. Inspection of the upstairs hallway also suggests a doorway or opening to a rear wing may have been covered.

Reasons for Designation

Description

The Forbes House at 401 Draper Street, Norval, is an excellent example of an early village home that reflects a vernacular interpretation of Georgian-style architecture. It is a three bay, two storey frame structure with a side gable roof and a small gabled front porch. The horizontal lap siding may cover original log construction.

While many original features remain, the interior may have been renovated in the 1920s or 30s as evidenced by the unusual placement of the stairs and a square newel post. The claw foot tub, kitchen sink and bead board wainscot also reflect that era.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

This building is of cultural heritage value as an excellent example of a simple village home in the early to mid-19th century. As one of the oldest structures in the Hamlet of Norval it contributes to the historical streetscape of the village and is important in maintaining the historical context of other landmark properties on Draper Street. As the former British Hotel, it points to the importance of Norval as a stopover for the 19th Century traveller using the Toronto-Guelph Road.

Description of Heritage Attributes

- A construction date of Circa 1840
- Used as a hotel from circa 1857 until circa 1888, a stopover on the Toronto-Guelph Road
- Association with the Forster family (owned 1853-1857 by the grandparents of renowned Canadian portraitist and Norval native, J. W. L. Forster)
- Association with Major (Dr.) Armitage Lytton Forbes, loved and respected Norval resident, who served with the Royal Army Medical Corps in WWI and WWII
- Excellent example of a plain, 2 storey, 3 bay vernacular village home
- Shallow side-gable roof with shingled gable ends and prominent eaves returns
- One original 6 over 6 window (North elevation, upstairs)
- Wooden lap siding and original rear entrance door
- A Norval landmark, that is one of the oldest structures in the village proper

Current Owner Tom Pettingill, who has requested that this report be named: The Forbes House, in honour of his dear friend, "Doc Forbes".

It should be noted that Mr. Pettingill secured the services of Heritage Architect, Ian McGillivray, through The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario's "Preservation Works!" program. Mr. McGillivray's assessment report is attached and after discussion of the report with the Heritage Halton Hills Committee, Mr. Pettingill has expressed his intent to explore remediation of the structural issues raised in the report.

Resources

Abstract of Land Transactions for Esquesing Township
Milton, ON

Atlas of Halton County, 1877

Carter, Joan (Browne)
Norval History 1820–1950
Printed in Canada 2006

Censuses of the Dominion of Canada

Fuller's Counties of Peel and Halton Directory
1866 & 1867

Halton Peel Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society
Records of Hillcrest Cemetery, Norval

McGillivray, Ian
McGillivray-Architect
Evaluation, Former British Hotel, 401 Draper Street, Norval

Maxwell, Mary Elizabeth
To Walk a Country Mile
Moulin Publishing Limited, 1997

Newspaper Archives
Georgetown Herald
Guelph Advertiser
Milton Champion
Northern Advance

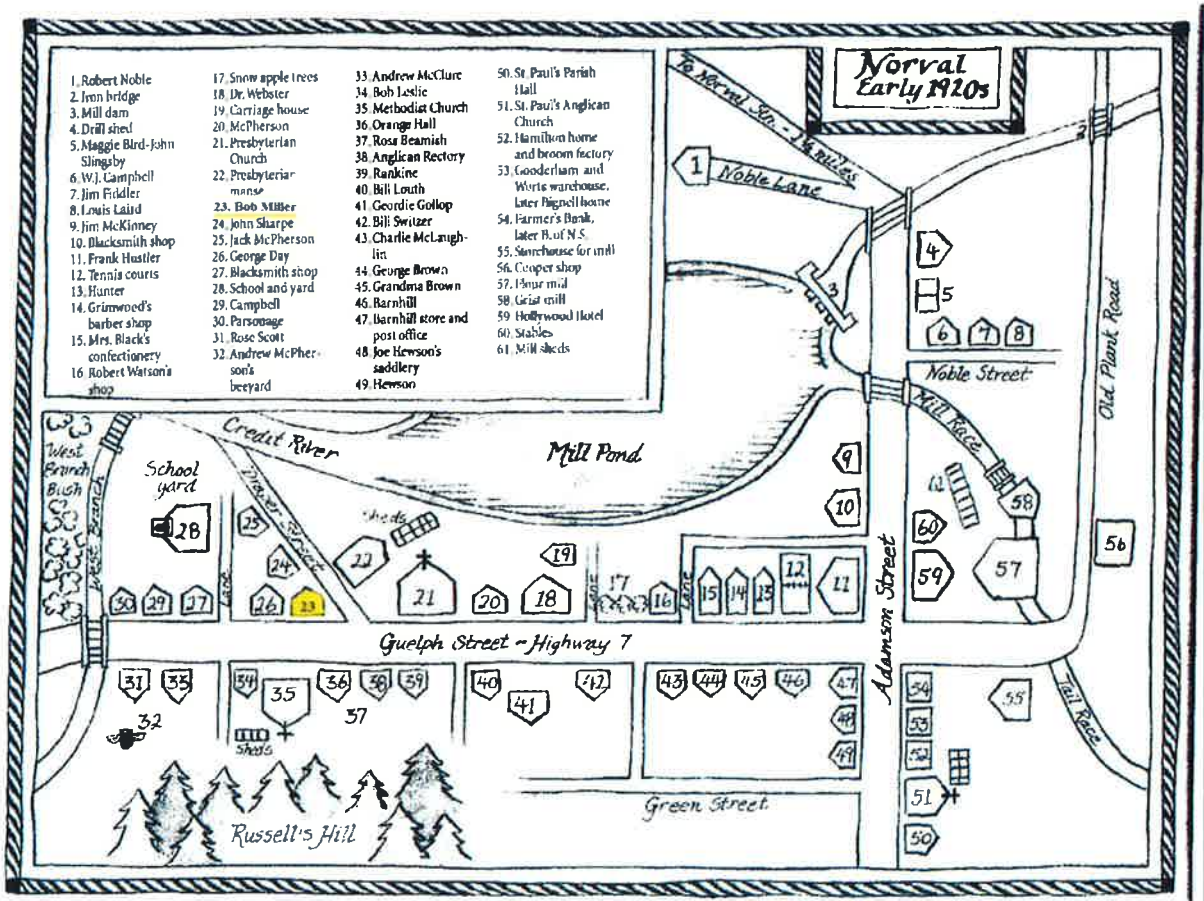
Our Ontario (Website)
<http://ourontario.ca/>

Photography
Farley, Patricia
McGillivray, Ian

Map #1
Showing village lots 3 & 4, and the Credit River Bridge, circa 1877
Detail from page 21 in "Atlas of Halton County"



Map #2
Showing the house oriented towards Guelph Street, circa 1920
Page 31 in "To Walk a Country Mile"



Appendix A

Ownership of 401 Draper Street/487 Guelph Street, Norval

Sept. 4, 1973: Tom Pettingill, retired Engineer
July 27, 1948: Major (Dr.) Armitgae Forbes, Royal Army Medical Corps
Sept. 22 1944: John Louth
Nov 8, 1929: George Greg/Day (?)
Aug. 28, 1915: Bob Miller, retired farmer, famous for his shorthorn cattle
Sept. 25, 1914: James Brown
Sept. 8, 1913: Robert Lewis
Sept. 7, 1906: Mary (Maxted) Wiggins
July 17, 1888: Donalda Bradford
Aug. 27, 1886: Louis Mason, Innkeeper
June 25, 1886: Edward Nixon, saddler
Oct. 31, 1857: Robert Colgan, proprietor, British Hotel, Guelph Street
Dec, 22, 1853: James Forster, grandfather of portraitist, J. W. L. Forster
No date: William Ross
Nov. 12, 1841: Neil McLean
Mar. 30, 1841 Donald Campbell
Aug. 1, 1840 John Hunter
Apr. 26, 1837 Samuel Davis
July 2, 1836 John Miller, later a director of The Toronto-Guelph Road
No date Henry Castle



Figure #1: Showing "void" & rear door
Courtesy: Ian McGillivray



Figure #4: Original six over six window



Figure #2: Façade



Figure #5: Original rear door



Figure #3: Eaves return
Courtesy: Ian McGillivray