

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH

BY-LAW NUMBER 05-195

BEING A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE CERTAIN PROPERTIES IN THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH UNDER THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, c. 0.18 (544 McDonnel Street)

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH BY THE COUNCIL THEREOF HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the hereinafter described properties be and they are hereby designated to be of historical and architectural value or interest pursuant to the provisions of the Ontario heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 0.18, for the reason hereafter stated:

a) 544 McDonnel Street

Part Lots 15, 16, 21, 22 Plan 121; Pt Cambridge Street Plan 121
Peterborough As Closed By M38972 As In R569033; T/W R327972;
Peterborough

REASON FOR DESIGNATION

Built in 1920 to serve as office and administration space for the Bonner Worth Mill properties, it is the architecturally most intact building of the remaining mill complex. As part of the extant Bonner Worth Mill buildings, it has important connections to labour, political and industrial history, as well as excellent architectural value.

The Bonner Worth Mill properties were the site of one of Peterborough's most violent labour disputes, which itself had provincial and national repercussions. Labour organization began in Peterborough at both Bonner Worth and Auburn Woolen Mills, and the strike of 1937 was the first of its kind in Peterborough leading to violent confrontations and division within the community.

Within the context of Ontario labour history, the Peterborough strike of 1937 resulted in an inquest into wages and working conditions, ordered by Premier Mitchell Hepburn. The inquest produced Special Order No. 1, which set minimum wages for men and women in the textile industries. This was the first legislation of its kind, and made under the provisions of the Minimum Wage Act of 1937.

The strike had political ramifications as well. The day after Peterborough workers returned to work, Premier Hepburn called an early election. Riding on the success in Peterborough, Hepburn condemned the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), and successfully portrayed them as communist sympathizers. He won a landslide victory over Conservative candidate Earl Rowe.

Within a national context, the involvement of the CIO struck fear into the hearts of Canadian industrialists. Although individuals involved in the Peterborough strike denounced any connection to the organization, both the media and the government played on public fears. Local papers announced the forthcoming involvement of textile workers across the nation, but such support never materialized. Linked with violence and communism, the CIO was viewed with suspicion across Canada.

Examined within the framework of industrial activity in Peterborough, the Bonner Worth Mill properties are a testament to Peterborough's industrial success. Constructed during the peak of industrial expansion in early twentieth century Peterborough, the Bonner Worth Mills company (later Canadian Woolens, and then Dominion Woolens and Worsteds) flourished and contributed to the overseas war efforts during World War I. The buildings continued to be used for industrial purposes for many years after Dominion Woolens and Worsteds left Peterborough.

The building's architectural value lies in its representation of an intact industrial administrative centre. Located between the two main factory buildings, the administrative building was designed by local architect William Blackwell, one of the most prominent architects in Peterborough history, and founder of Ontario's longest continually running architectural firm. William Blackwell's other notable projects within the City include: the YMCA building at George and Murray Streets, and the Nicholl's Hospital, now demolished.

The building is also a good example of the Classical Revival style, as illustrated through the building's classical cornice and entablature, and pediment door surround with pilasters. The building's square and symmetrical form, as well as the lunettes over the ground floor French doors are also Classical elements.

By-law read a first and second time this 12th day of September, 2005

By-law read a third time and finally passed this 12th day of September, 2005

(Sgd.) Sylvia Sutherland, Mayor

(Sgd.) Nancy Wright-Laking, City Clerk