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Toronto

RECEIVED
MAY 28 2007
CONSERVATION REVIEW
BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT
R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER O.18 AND
888 YONGE STREET
CITY OF TORONTO, PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

NOTICE OF PASSING OF BY-LAW

To: 888 Corporation
12 Yonge Street, Ground Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M4S 3C3

Ontario Heritage Foundation
10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 1J3

Take notice that the Council of the Corporation of the City of Toronto has passed By-law No. 1997-0668 to designate 888 Yonge Street as being of architectural and historical value or interest.

Dated at Toronto this 19th day of December, 1997.



Sydney K. Baxter
City Clerk

No. 1997-0668. A BY-LAW

*To designate the property at 888 Yonge Street as
being of architectural and historical value or interest.*

(Passed December 8, 1997.)

WHEREAS by Clause 6 of Executive Committee Report No. 25, adopted by Council at its meeting held on December 8, 1997, authority was granted to designate the property at 888 Yonge Street as being of architectural and historical value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the *Ontario Heritage Act* authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historical or architectural value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of The Corporation of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the land and premises known as No. 888 Yonge Street and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation Notice of Intention to designate the property and has caused the Notice of Intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "B" to this by-law;

AND WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served upon the Clerk of the municipality;

THEREFORE the Council of The Corporation of the City of Toronto enacts as follows:

1. The property at 888 Yonge Street, more particularly described and shown on Schedule "A" to this by-law, is being designated as being of architectural and historical value or interest.
2. The City Solicitor is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedules "A" and "C" to this by-law in the proper Land Registry Office.
3. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owner of the property at 888 Yonge Street and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Toronto as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

BARBARA HALL,
Mayor.

SYDNEY K. BAXTER
City Clerk.

Council Chamber,
Toronto, December 8, 1997.
(L.S.)

SCHEDULE "A"

In the City of Toronto, in the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and Province of Ontario, being composed of parts of Lots 1 and 2 according to Plan 270 York registered in the Land Registry Office for the Metropolitan Toronto Registry Division (No. 64), the boundaries of the said land being described as follows:

PREMISING that the westerly limit of Yonge Street has an assumed astronomic bearing of North 16 degrees and 00 minutes West and relating all bearings herein thereto, then;

COMMENCING at the northeasterly angle of said Lot 2;

THENCE South 89 degrees 05 minutes and 50 second West, along the existing northerly limit of said Lot 2, being along the site of the southerly face of the southerly wall of a brick building formerly standing on Lot 3 as shown on said Plan 270, a distance of 38.28 metres, more or less, to a point distant 23.77 metres measured easterly along the existing northerly limit of said Lot 2 from the northwesterly angle thereof;

THENCE South 2 degrees 31 minutes and 30 seconds East, 25.31 metres, more or less, to a point in the northerly limit of Davenport Road distant 18.29 metres measured easterly thereon from the westerly limit of said Lot 1;

THENCE South 83 degrees 30 minutes and 30 seconds East, along the northerly limit of Davenport Road, 2.90 metres to a point of curve;

THENCE easterly along the last mentioned limit, being a curve to the left having a radius of 91.44 metres, an arc distance of 12.60 metres, more or less, the chord being 12.59 metres, more or less, measured on a course of South 87 degrees 27 minutes and 20 seconds East, to the end of the said curve;

THENCE North 88 degrees 35 minutes and 50 seconds East, continuing along the last mentioned limit, 26.79 meters, more or less, to a point of curve;

THENCE northeasterly along the limit of Davenport Road as widened by City of Toronto By-law 12771 (13078 EM), being on a curve to the left having a radius of 1.90 metres, an arc distance of 3.46 metres, more or less, the chord being 3.00 metres, more or less, measured on a course of North 36 degrees 17 minutes and 55 seconds East, to a point in the westerly limit of Yonge Street;

THENCE North 16 degrees and 00 minutes West, along the westerly limit of Yonge Street, 24.72 metres, more or less, to the point of commencement.

The westerly limit of Yonge Street and northerly limit of Davenport Road as confirmed under the Boundaries Act by Plan BA-1743 (CT414297).

The herein described land being delineated by heavy outline on Plan SYE2870 dated November 28, 1997, as set out in Schedule "C".

SCHEDULE "B"

Heritage Property Report

Masonic Temple
888 Yonge Street

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Attachments:

- I Short Statement of Reasons for Designation
- II Location Map
- III Photograph

Heritage Toronto
(Toronto Historical Board)

Heritage Property Report

Basic Building Data:

Address: 888 Yonge Street (northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road)

Ward: 6

Current Name: Masonic Hall

Historical Name: Masonic Temple

Construction Date:	1918
Architect:	William F. Sparling Company
Contractor/Builder:	none found
Additions/Alterations:	dates unknown, window altered to door, and interior alterations to auditorium
Original Owner:	Masonic Temple Corporation
Original Use:	institutional
Current Use*:	vacant
Heritage Category:	Notable Heritage Property (Category B)
Recording Date:	August 1997
Recorder:	HPD:KA

* this does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined in the Zoning By-law

Historical Background:

In the 19th century, the area north of the intersection of Yonge and Bloor Streets was part of the Village of Yorkville, a community which was annexed by the City of Toronto in 1883. The suburb featured a regular grid-like street pattern west of Yonge Street, except for Davenport Road, the former trail linking the Don and Humber River valleys.

By 1900, Yonge Street north of Bloor Street contained a mixture of commercial and residential buildings. Examples include the commercial blocks at 826 through 848 Yonge Street, dating to the 1870s and included on the *City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties*. The northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road housed the Christian Workers Church, a facility that disappeared by 1908. To the north, a suburban station of the Toronto Railway Company occupied the property at 892-900 Yonge Street beginning in 1905.

The Masonic Temple was completed in 1918. The project was designed by William F. Sparling, an architect based in Toronto since 1905. Prior to establishing his own firm, Sparling was involved in a partnership with Samuel Curry from 1910 to 1917. Curry and Sparling's projects included the Toronto Trust and Guarantee Building at 302 Bay Street in Toronto's financial district, and alterations to the Granite Club on Church Street. In 1927, Sparling prepared plans to convert Casa Loma into apartments. As a partner in Sparling, Martin and Forbes, he designed the Loblaws Groceries Company warehouse at 500 Lake Shore Boulevard West in 1928 and the Pierce Arrow Showroom at 1140 Yonge Street in 1930. The latter properties are listed on the *City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties*.

The property at 888 Yonge Street was owned and developed by the Masonic Temple Corporation on behalf of the Grand Lodge of Ancient and Accepted Masons of Canada in the Province of Ontario. An international fraternal organization, freemasonry originated in the guilds formed by skilled stone masons in medieval

Britain. Modern freemasonry dates from 1717, when the Grand Lodge of England was formed by working, or "operative" masons, with membership sustained by "accepted", or non-masons. Freemasonry was introduced to Canada in 1738. In 1858, Masonic "lodges" in the future Province of Ontario united to form the Grand Lodge of Canada. This name was changed to the Grand Lodge of Ancient and Accepted Masons of Canada in the Province of Ontario in 1887. As a semi-secret organization with elaborate rites and rituals, Masons promoted brotherhood and morality while engaging in relief work. Members of individual Blue Lodges were eligible to hold three "degrees". Further degrees were earned in either or both of two branches of advanced Masonry: Scottish Rite and York Rite. All Blue Lodges were under the jurisdiction of a Grand Lodge, headed by a Grand Master.

The development of the Masonic Temple at Yonge and Davenport was inspired by the former Masonic Hall at 18-20 Toronto Street (now demolished). Designed in 1858 as a commercial building with a concert hall for the piano manufacturing firm of A. and S. Nordheimer, the company altered its design to include assembly rooms for the existing nine Masonic Lodges in Toronto. The Masons occupied the premises until 1900, by which time the order expanded to include new lodges and buildings beyond the downtown core.

With the completion of the Masonic Temple at 888 Yonge Street, the ground floor included a foyer, lobby and auditorium with a stage and gallery seating in the mezzanine level. With a capacity of 1200 seats, the auditorium provided revenue to the owners through bookings by local and international musical performers. During the late 20th century, the stage welcomed a variety of reputed artists, ranging from Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra to the Platters and Led Zeppelin. Above the ground floor and mezzanine, the upper floors were divided into lodge rooms. Each floor was designed with a mezzanine level with balconies overlooking the various rooms. The Blue Lodge rooms were located on the floor over the auditorium, with the Scottish Rite and Preceptory Room in the storey above.

Architectural Description:

The design of the Masonic Temple was inspired by the Renaissance Revival style of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While initially drawn from Italian palaces and townhouses, "the Renaissance Revival was more successfully adapted to commercial buildings, banks and offices than to houses" (Blumenson, 96). This version of the style featured rich Classical motifs derived from Venetian prototypes.

The design for the Masonic Temple takes advantage of the irregularly-shaped site formed by the intersection of Davenport Road with Yonge Street. The building is set close to the street lines, with a rounded corner overlooking the intersection. The building, rising the equivalent of six stories, is covered by a flat roof (originally designed for processions). Constructed of reinforced steel and tile, the Masonic Temple is clad with Indiana limestone and tapestry brick. The treatment of the Yonge and Davenport facades follows the Classical organization of base, shaft and cornice. The stone-clad first storey is separated from the upper floors by a wide belt course interspersing window openings with paired sash windows between brick panels. The upper stories are clad with brick beneath a stone cornice with mouldings and dentils topped by a brick parapet. The rounded corner features sculpted stone panels.

While attention is drawn to both the east (Yonge) and south (Davenport) facades, the main entrance to the ground-floor auditorium is located on the Yonge Street wall. Entrance doors are recessed behind an open portal of three round arches springing from Doric columns. The portal is accentuated by fluted pilasters with sculpted capitals and floriated rondelles. Inside, a central door is set between flat-headed window openings set in stone enframements with corbelled sills (one opening has been altered to form a narrow entrance). The portal is flanked by flat-headed window openings with pilasters and entablatures. A stone cornice divides the lower storey from a mezzanine level lined with small openings. Above the mezzanine, a balcony is set in a three-part Palladian-styled opening. On each side, single flat-headed window openings have stone

cornices. In the upper floor, three nearly-square window openings with paired windows are set in stone enframements.

The south facade, extending seven bays, is organized by fluted stone pilasters. This wall features two entrances, including one for members of the Masonic Lodges, and flat-headed window openings in the first floor. Above, the upper stories repeat the pattern and detailing of the fenestration introduced on the east facade. Some of the windows are blind, and many contain steel sash and wire glass. The north wall is angled where it abuts the neighbouring building. On the rear (west) wall, window openings are placed according to interior uses.

Important interior features are the hardware with Masonic emblems and millwork in the hallways and lodge rooms on the upper floors. Two patterned tile floors with Masonic emblems survive in the Blue Lodge Room on the second floor and the Scottish Rite and Preceptory Room on the third floor. On the main floor, the auditorium has decorated ceiling beams and a gallery.

Context:

The Masonic Temple at 888 Yonge Street is a prominent landmark on the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road. The building was envisioned as part of a scheme to redevelop the four corners where Yonge Street meets Davenport Road and Church Street as a commercial node north of the Yonge and Bloor intersection. The proposal was never fully realized.

Opposite the Masonic Temple, on the northeast corner of Yonge and Church Streets, the former Grand Central Markets Building (currently Canadian Tire) at 837 Yonge Street was completed in 1929. Although low in scale, it complements the Masonic Temple with its stone cladding and Classical detailing. The Grand Central Markets Building is included on the *City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties*. Other local landmarks are the Yorkville Branch of the Toronto Public Library and Fire Hall Number 10, located at 22 and 34 Yorkville Avenue, respectively, and listed on the *Inventory of Heritage Properties*.

Summary:

The property at 888 Yonge Street is identified for architectural and historical reasons. Completed in 1918 and commissioned by the Masonic Order, the building incorporates an auditorium with lodge rooms above. It represents the work of Toronto architect William F. Sparling in solo practice. With its Renaissance Revival styling and stone embellishments, the building is a significant example of early 20th century design. The Masonic Temple is a prominent landmark on the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road.

Sources Consulted:

Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, 1900 ff.

Blumenson, John. Ontario Architecture. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1990.

City of Toronto Directories, 1900 ff.

The Davenport Trail. Toronto: Community History Project, 1995.

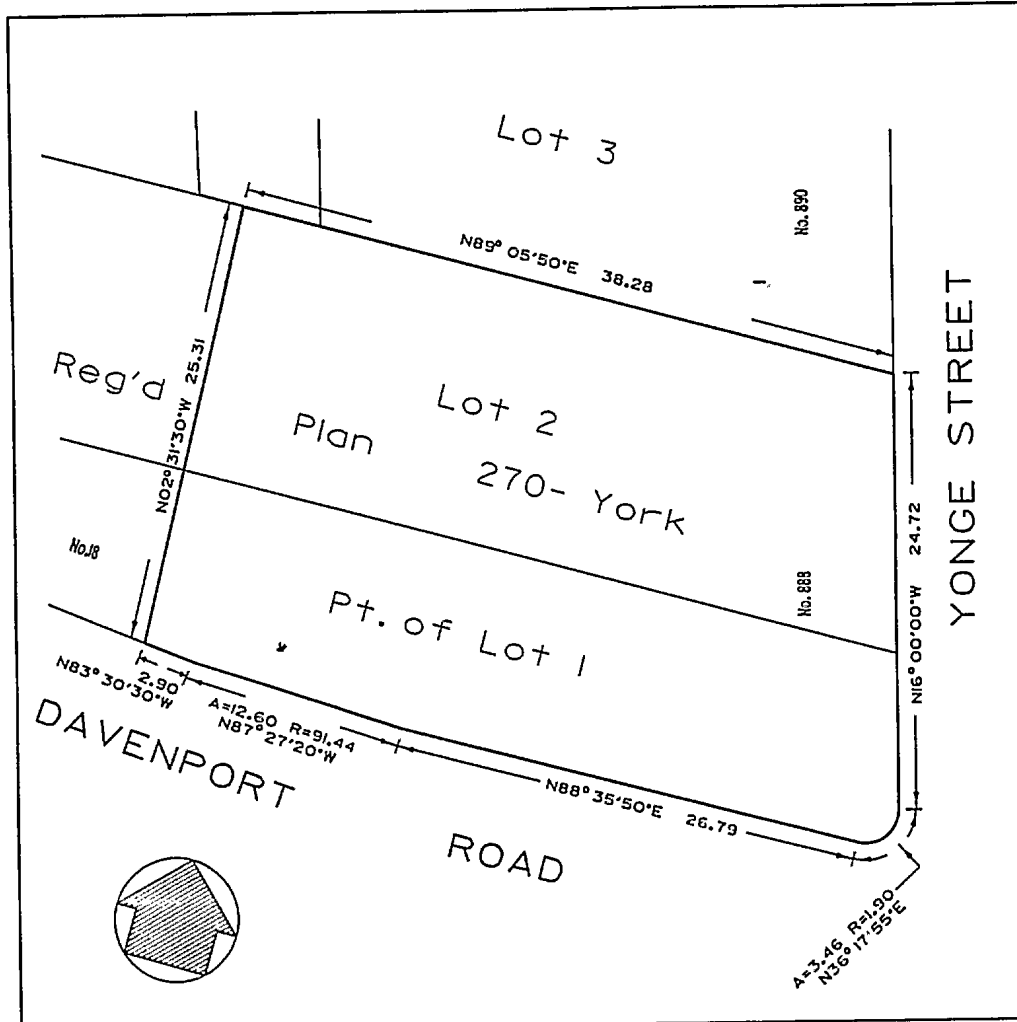
Dendy, William. Lost Toronto. 2nd ed. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993.


"Freemasonry". Entry in The Canadian Encyclopedia. 2nd ed. Vol. III. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1988.

"Masonic Temple, Yonge and Davenport". Construction (September 1918), 275-281.

SCHEDULE "C"

MAP AREA 50.83



 Premises No. 888 Yonge Street

NOTE:
THIS SKETCH IS NOT A PLAN OF SURVEY
AND HAS BEEN COMPILED FROM SURVEY
NOTES AND OFFICE RECORDS, IT SHALL
NOT BE USED EXCEPT FOR THE PURPOSE
INDICATED IN THE TITLE BLOCK.

CITY WORKS SERVICES
CITY OF TORONTO

SKETCH TO ILLUSTRATE

LAND DESIGNATED AS
BEING OF ARCHITECTURAL AND
HISTORICAL VALUE OR INTEREST



Drawn ME
Checked W.J.M.
Date: Nov. 28, 1997

W. Kowalenko - City Surveyor

FILE
Y:150

PLAN SYE2870

SYE2870