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# THE CITY OF WINDSOR

COUNCIL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

VALERIE CRITCHLEY  
CITY CLERK

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER  
TO OUR FILE NUMBER **MBA/7082**

October 22, 2012

Ontario Heritage Trust  
10 Adelaide St. E., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M5C 1J3

Dear Sirs:

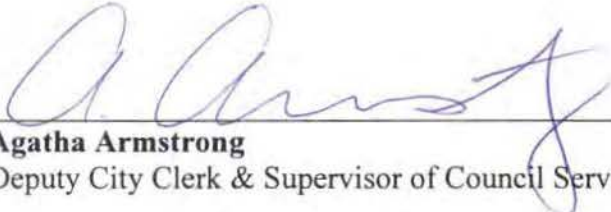
**Re: Amendment to Designation of 2021 Ontario Street**

Council at its meeting held October 15, 2012 passed By-law Number 148-2012, "A By-law to amend By-Law 58-2008, a By-Law to designate the lands and premises situated within the City of Windsor, municipally known as 2021 Ontario Street, to be of cultural heritage value or interest under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18, as amended."

- \* By-law 148-2012 outlining the reasons for the amendment is attached. Notice of the amendment of the By-law will be published in the Windsor Star on October 27, 2012.

If you have any questions in this matter, please contact Karen Kadour at 255-6211, extension 6430, quoting file number MBA/7082 when you call.

Yours very truly,

  
**Agatha Armstrong**  
Deputy City Clerk & Supervisor of Council Services

AA/ks  
*attachment*

BY - LAW NUMBER 148-2012

A BY-LAW TO AMEND BY-LAW 58-2008, A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE THE LANDS AND PREMISES SITUATED WITHIN THE CITY OF WINDSOR, MUNICIPALLY KNOWN AS *2021 Ontario Street*, TO BE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER O.18, AS AMENDED

Passed the 15<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2012.

**WHEREAS** by By-law Number 58-2008 passed on April 14, 2008 the Council of The Corporation of the City of Windsor designated the lands described in Schedule "A" annexed hereto and forming part of this by-law, under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act to be of cultural heritage value or interest;

**AND WHEREAS** upon consideration of the recommendation of the Windsor Heritage Committee, The Corporation of the City of Windsor deems it desirable and expedient to amend By-law 58-2008 by deleting the interior items from the list of heritage features, and to add an exterior feature and minor editing changes to the reasons for the designation of the lands, municipally known as *2021 Ontario Street*, more particularly described in Schedule "A" annexed hereto and forming part of this by-law (the subject lands);

**AND WHEREAS** notice of intention to so amend By-law 58-2008 was given to the owner of the subject lands and published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality, on *Saturday, August 25, 2012*;

**AND WHEREAS** no Notice of Objection served on the Clerk of the Municipality within thirty (30) days after the date of publication of the Notice of Intention in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality.

**THEREFORE** the Council of the Corporation of the City of Windsor enacts as follows:

1. That By-law Number 58-2008 be amended by deleting Schedule "B" attached thereto and substituting Schedule "B" attached hereto.
2. This by-law shall come into force and take effect after the final passing thereof on the day upon which it is electronically registered in the Land Registry Office for the County of Essex (No. 12)."

  
EDDIE FRANCIS, MAYOR

  
CLERK

First Reading - October 15, 2012  
Second Reading - October 15, 2012  
Third Reading - October 15, 2012

SCHEDULE "A"

LOTS 103, 104 AND 105 ON PLAN 684 WALKERVILLE; PART LOT 102 PLAN 684  
WALKERVILLE AS IN R1299075; WINDSOR S/T EASE IN GROSS AS IN  
CE376779

P.I.N. 01131-0512 (LT)

2021 Ontario Street  
City of Windsor, County of Essex

## SCHEDULE "B"

### REASONS FOR DESIGNATION:

#### Description of Historic Place

The Low-Martin house at 2021 Ontario Street, situated diagonally on the southeast corner of Devonshire Road in the heart of the former Town of Walkerville, is a famous landmark in Windsor. It was built in 1928 for Harry Low, a tool-maker who became a well-known rumrunner during Prohibition. It later became the home of renowned Canadian politician Paul Martin Sr. Both the main house and the rear garage/servant's quarters are in the Cotswold-style, built of rusticated stone with an unusual, undulating roof with contours similar to thatch.

#### Historic Value

The Low-Martin house was built in 1928 for Harry Low, a toolmaker who became one of the giants of the rum-running trade during Prohibition. The house was originally called "Devonshire Lodge" and these words are embedded in the front walkway. It cost Harry Low nearly \$130,000 to build in 1928. Ultimately, the Depression and legal problems lost Low his house on Ontario Street in the early 1930s, and Low died in relative obscurity in Windsor in 1955.

In 1961 renowned Canadian politician Paul Martin Sr. and his wife Nell bought the house. Paul Martin has been referred to as "Windsor's most famous son" and has made his mark in local and Canadian history - representing Windsor from 1935 to 1968, serving as High Commissioner to Great Britain in the 1970s, and helping establish many of Canada's social programs. Paul Martin Jr. followed his father's footsteps into politics, serving as Canada's Finance Minister before becoming Prime Minister on December 8, 2003.

#### Design Value

It is likely that builder George Lawton designed and built the 4,000 square-foot main house and a 1,700 square foot servant's quarters/garage to the rear in consultation with the original owner, Harry Low. The Low-Martin house is a 2-½ storey rusticated stone English Cottage or "Cotswold" style house - the only one of this style in the city and perhaps in all of Essex County. It is sited diagonally on the lot facing the corner of Ontario and Devonshire Rd. Its convex façade is composed of numerous bays with elements such as jerkin-headed gables, a conical roof over the rounded bay, a recessed balconette over the arched recessed entrance, leaded glass, and oriel windows.

The roof is characterized by shingles that "roll" over the eaves. The undulating roof originally consisted of four layers of wafer thin wooden shingles imported from England laid over a complex wooden framework. In the 1960s John Braithwaite, roofer, used asphalt shingles in layers to emulate the rolled appearance.

A garage/servant's apartment in the same style, with access from Argyle Road, is located east of the house. A garden wall and winding stone path leading to the main entrance complement the main structures.

The interior boasts a magnificent spiral oak staircase between the first and second floors, "drip" plaster ceilings, oak parquet floors, walnut wall panels, and a cloister with 20 foot ceilings and 16 feet of windows of beveled leaded glass.

#### Contextual Value

The Low-Martin house is one of Windsor's most important, beautiful and recognized homes - a heritage landmark in the former Town of Walkerville - one of the last remaining nineteenth century garden/company towns left in the world. Walkerville (amalgamated with Windsor in 1935) was founded by Detroit distiller Hiram Walker in 1858 and the Walker family supported and guided the town's development for seven decades. The town developed from north (Detroit River) to south (largely Ottawa Street),

and the Low-Martin house (constructed in 1928) is one of the finest estate homes built during Walkerville's later stages of development.

### **Character Defining Elements**

#### **Items that contribute to the historical value of the Low-Martin house include:**

- Its association with toolmaker turned infamous "rumrunner" Harry Low who had the estate, known as Devonshire Lodge, built in 1928;
- Its association with renowned politician, the Right Honorable Paul Martin and his wife Nell (parents of former Prime Minister Paul Martin Jr.) who owned the house for some 34 years (1961-1995);
- Its association with well known Liberal party politicians who were guests to the house - including Prime Ministers Lester B. Pearson and Pierre Trudeau.

#### **Exterior features that contribute to the architectural value of the Low-Martin house (main house and rear garage/servant's quarters) include:**

- Its association with well-known local builder, George Lawton, who built the house and likely designed it in consultation with Low;
- Its rare English "Cotswold" Cottage style - the only known house of this style in Windsor;
- Its estate status with crescent-shaped main house and garage/servant's quarters behind;
- Its original landscape elements - the rear garden wall and winding stone path;
- Its overall quality construction of rusticated stone with limestone trim, decorative wooden elements, and copper eaves/downspouts;
- Its undulating roof that emulates thatch (originally clad in wafer-thin wooden shingles) featuring the conical roof over the rounded bay and jerkin-headed gables;
- Its architectural embellishments such as asymmetrical bays, recessed balconette over the arched recessed entranceway, and oriel windows with leaded beveled glass;
- Its recessed arched stone main entrance with ornate arched wooden door;
- Its leaded beveled glass windows of varied sizes/uses with the prominent non-figurative design being an upper triangle, central tri-pane design over a bottom bi-pane motif;
- Its small paned wooden windows, primarily in 4/4 design where leaded glass is not used;

#### **Characteristics that contribute to the contextual value of the Low-Martin house include:**

- Its status as a landmark home in the former Town of Walkerville - one of the last remaining nineteenth century garden/company towns left in the world;
- Its status as one of the last remaining estate properties in Walkerville - consisting of a main house and garage/servant's quarters;
- Its site configuration that results in unobstructed views of the prominent main house spanning the SE corner of Devonshire Road and Ontario Street, with garage/servant's quarters behind.