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The Corporation of the City of London
Corporate Services Department



Middlesex

JEFF MALPASS
Deputy City Manager

REGISTERED

November 23, 1999

RECEIVED
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Heritage and Libraries Branch
Heritage Operations

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

Re: Designation of Victoria Park, London, Ontario
The Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18

Please find enclosed, a certified copy of By-law No. L.S.P.-3311-283, entitled "A by-law to designate Victoria Park to be of historical and architectural value.", passed by the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London on November 15, 1999 and registered as Instrument ER40128 on November 19, 1999.

for *A Geraghty*
Jeff A. Malpass
Deputy City Manager
/crg

Encl.

✓RA



CITY OF LONDON BY-LAW CERTIFICATION RECORD

I, Jeff A. Malpass, City Clerk, of The Corporation of the City of London, hereby certify that the By-law hereunder is a true copy of By-law No. L.S.P.-3311-283 of the City of London, passed on November 15, 1999.

Dated at London, Ontario, this 23rd day of November, 1999.

Signature

Form No. 0926

Bill No. 444
1999

By-law No. L.S.P.-3311-283

A by-law to designate Victoria Park to be of historical and architectural value.

WHEREAS pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 0.18*, the Council of a municipality may by by-law designate a property including buildings and structures thereon to be of historic or architectural value or interest;

AND WHEREAS notice of intention to so designate the property known as Victoria Park has been duly published and served and no notice of objection to such designation has been received;

The Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. There is designated as being of historical and architectural value or interest, the real property at Victoria Park, more particularly described in Schedule "A" hereto, for the reasons set out in Schedule "B" hereto.
2. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered upon the title to the property described in Schedule "A" hereto 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 aforesaid property and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in the London Free Press, and to enter the description of the aforesaid property, the name and address of its registered owner, and short reasons for its designation in the Register of all properties designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
4. This by-law comes into force on the day it is passed.

PASSED in Open Council on November 15, 1999.



Anne Marie DeCicco
Deputy Mayor



Jeff A. Malpass
City Clerk

First reading - November 15, 1999
Second reading - November 15, 1999
Third reading - November 15, 1999

SCHEDULE "A"

To By-law No. L.S.P.-3311-283

Victoria Park is bounded by Central Avenue, Clarence Street, Dufferin Avenue and Wellington Street including part of Princess Avenue (formerly known as Bond Street) closed by By-law registered as Instrument GD34133 in the City of London and County of Middlesex being all of PIN 08266-0001.

SCHEDULE "B"

To By-law No. L.S.P.-3311-283

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION - VICTORIA PARK

(The Block bounded by Dufferin Avenue, Clarence Street, Central Avenue, and Wellington Street)

Historical Reason

Victoria Park represents a unique combination of beauty, amenity and heritage in the City of London. The 6.25 hectare park has been a gathering place for Londoners since 1874. Victoria Park is of significant historic, architectural and cultural heritage landscape importance in five key areas:

- (a) As a registered archaeological site;
- (b) Military history;
- (c) A designed landscape;
- (d) A place of public gathering and celebration; and
- (e) Monuments

Victoria Park is a significant resource for archaeology in London, exhibiting three critical layers of historic importance. Prehistoric remains from the native occupation of the area can be found below ground, as well as, remains from the British Military occupation. The Framed Infantry Barracks which covered the northern two-thirds of the park property in the period circa 1838-1873 represents the largest and best preserved historic site in the City of London. Victoria Park is also the City's most celebrated designed landscape from the 19th Century, created by American landscape architect Charles Miller 1878. The layout of the landscape was reminiscent of an English parkland with drives and tree lined walks, fountains, floral areas and bandstand. Limited remains for this grand parkland era remain today. Victoria Park, from its conception, has continually evolved in its role and relationship to London. Its development must be seen in conjunction to the history of design, society and conventions, and the City's fiscal and management considerations of various periods. To date the park has been idealized as a pleasure ground, a venue of horticultural and artistic expression, a recreational facility and most recently a civic space for special events.

Archaeological investigations of Victoria Park indicate that the property represents the single largest and best preserved historic archaeological site in the City of London. It is arguably the most important historic archaeological site in the City by virtue of its significance to the history of the region and to the development of the municipality. Altogether, these remains represent some of the most important complex issues for future management within the property.

Archaeological assessment indicates a number of components within the park including evidence of prehistoric Iroquoian occupation sometime within the period 800-1550 AD.

Historic research has determined that the Framed Infantry Barracks covered an area of some 10 acres including the entire norther two-thirds of Victoria Park; the southern third was used as the drill ground and cricket ground. This Barracks formed an integral part of the British Military Reserve established in London following the Rebellion of 1827. The British Garrison was based in London from 1838 to 1853, when troops were withdrawn to be sent to the Crimean War, and again from 1861 to 1869. During the mid to late 1850s , the complex served as a refugee camp for escaped slaves from the United States and as the site of a racially integrated school. The barracks survived until the early 1870s, when a fire destroyed the officers' quarters, and the remainder of the structures were cleared in preparation for the creation of Victoria Park.

The barracks complex included several dozen structures surrounded by a stockade with projecting bastions. The major structures centred around a parade square. It was bounded by the soldiers' quarters to the north, the officers quarters to the south, the hospital compound to the west, and the canteen, cells, defaulters room and powder magazine to the east.

When the British Government saw no reason to retain the garrison lands, the drive to have the land become a public park began. The Municipal Council began to initiate civic improvements such as street beautification in 1871 and the establishment of a standing committee on Public parks in 1873. It was not until 1878 that London received the deed for Victoria Park. It was a this time that William Saunders presented to City Council plans for the park prepared by American Landscape Architect Charles H. Miller. In March 1878 Charles Miller came to London with the layout plans for the park. The plans were adopted, and park development proceeded as per Millers plan.

Charles Miller (1829-1902) gained prominence when he became the chief gardener for the Bureau of Horticulture for the Centennial Exhibition in 1876 in Philadelphia. Miller is known to have done two projects in Southwestern Ontario, both seemingly instigated by William Saunders. The first was Victoria Park in 1878 followed by the commission to prepare a landscape and site plan for the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph in 1882. Through various documents and letters it is known that Miller made several visits to Canada during this period of time. He was recognized as being a leading landscape designer and horticulturalist in his day.

By the end of 1879 the first phase of the parks development was completed. A total of 331 trees and 72 shrubs were added to the double row of maple trees which already surrounded the grounds. In addition walks, drives and a bandshell were installed. The final feature added at this time was the famed fountain topped with a cupid which was installed in the centre of the park along with three military guns from the Battle of Sebastopol which had been donated by sir John Carling.

Victoria Park evolved as it assumed its role as the "jewel of the parks system". In 1912 the park was placed under the responsibility of the Board of Water Commission (later Public Utilities Commission). Recreational activities became increasingly important with the introduction of the skating rink in 1914. By the 1920s a great number of the park's original elements such as iron benches, urns, fencing, had been removed due to age and condition and others were replaced with a single level illuminated one. From this time on, the park began a slow, inexorable decline. By the late 1950s and into the 1960s the residential character along the north and eastern edge was changing with the loss of residential uses, buildings not being oriented to the park, and parking lots.

An important aspect of the park's history are traditions that have evolved over time. Skating has been a part of the park since 1914. Public concerts have been associated with the site since the period of the British Garrison. The first bandstand was erected in the park in 1876. With the bandstand City Council established a fund for free weekly concerts and encouraged local bands. The Salvation Army held Sunday afternoon services in the park for many years. In recent years a bandshell was built in 1950 with funds donated by the Kiwanis Club; and the present bandshell was built in 1989, again with funds from the Kiwanis Club. A very strong tradition of festivals and special events continues in the park to the present day, with over 30 events occurring annually, most notably the Festival of Lights/Winterfest, Home County Folk Festival, and Remembrance Day Services.

Architectural Reasons

Several Monuments have become important features of Victoria Park. The Boer War Soldiers' Monument was added to the park in 1912. The sculpture was commissioned by veterans of the Boer War from Montreal sculptor George W. Hill. On November 10, 1934 the Cenotaph was dedicated. It is a replica of the cenotaph that Sir Edwin Lutyens had designed for Whitehall in London, England. This monument was commissioned by the I.O.D.E. and dedicated to "The Glorious Dead".