

Draft Statement of Cultural Heritage Value – The Cedars (1266 Riverside Drive)

Description

The property located at 1266 Riverside Drive is located on the north side of the Thames River in the City of London, Ontario, east of the Byron Bridge. The two and a half storey white wood frame structure located on the property, locally known as the Cedars, faces Springbank Park across the Thames River. Access to the property from Riverside Drive is down a steep escarpment.

Legal Description: CON 1 PT LOT 26 RP 33RP3434 PARTS 1,2 (former London Township)
Roll Number: 010330013000000

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Cedars is of cultural heritage value because of its physical or design value, its historical or associative value, and its contextual value.

With respect to its physical or design value, the Cedars draws stylistic references to vernacular Italianate architectural style. The prominent double arcade verandah on the south elevation of the building emphasizes the relationship of the Cedars to the Thames River, with reciprocal views to Springbank Park. The double arcade verandah of the Cedars is uncommon in London, contributing to its significance. The distinctive and symmetrical form of the white, wood-clad two and a half storey dwelling with its cross gable roof and flanking brick chimneys contributes to the recognition of the Cedars as a landmark.

The historical or associative value of the Cedars is derived to its associations with prominent Londoners, as well as its role in supporting boating and leisure activities along the Thames River. The Cedars was constructed in the 1880s by William Knox on land located in Concession I of the former London Township. John Pocock, part owner of the London Shoe Company, subsequently purchased the Cedars. In 1906, the Cedars was purchased by Herbert A. Sabine, owner of Sabine & Company a wholesale and imported cloth business in London. By 1920, the Cedars became the permanent home of the Sabine family and remained within the ownership of the extended Sabine family until 1978. This part of the former London Township was annexed by the City of London in 1961.

Following the construction of the Springbank Pumphouse in 1876 and the subsequent establishment of Springbank Park, Thames River outings became a popular pastime for pleasure-seeking Londoners. John Pocock maintained an athletic club at the Cedars with a gymnasium and facilities for boating, bowling, and shooting to attract day-trippers. Boating and racing activities were popular summer activities. To capitalize on this, Pocock reportedly maintained twenty to thirty canoes and rowboats at docks on each side of the Thames River.

The Cedars is of contextual value because it is important in supporting the historic character of Springbank Park as a visually prominent landmark on the north side of the Thames River, opposite Springbank Park. Although the docks have been removed, the Cedars is physically, visually, and historically linked to Springbank Park and the Thames River.

Heritage Attributes

Heritage attributes that support the cultural heritage value or interest of 1266 Riverside Drive are:

- The form and scale of the Cedars, a two and a half storey white wood frame structure which is visually prominent when seen from the south side of the Thames River;
- The cross gable centred on the south façade;
- Within the gable, a balcony framed within an arch;
- The four bay double arcade verandah in a vernacular Italianate style across the south façade and one bay on the east and west façades. Arches on the south façade of the ground level appear slightly flattened with round arches on the storey above as well as on the east and west façades;
- The patten of voids (doors and windows) which provide visual and physical access to the double arcade verandah on the ground and upper storeys;

- The gable roof extended to cover the double arcade verandah;
- Wood siding, in particular, the chevron-laid wood siding on the double arcade verandah and gable;
- Two windows on the upper floors of the east and west façades each framed with exterior trim including vertical muntins. The two windows in the pediment of the gable roof are shaped with decorative trim used to create a pointed arch in the upper lights. The lower level windows are rectangular with a decorative hood moulding above each;
- A white brick chimney on both the east and west walls;
- River stone foundation; and,
- Unobstructed scenic views of the Cedars to and from Springbank Park.

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