

Report to London Advisory Committee on Heritage

To: Chair and Members
London Advisory Committee on Heritage

From: John M. Fleming
Managing Director, Planning and City Planner

Subject: Request for Designation of 432 Grey Street by the Trustees of the London Congregation of the British Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada

Meeting on: Wednesday September 12, 2018

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, with the advice of the Heritage Planner, this report **BE RECEIVED** and that notice **BE GIVEN** under the provisions of Section 29(3) of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O. 18, of Municipal Council's intent to designate the property located at 432 Grey Street to be of cultural heritage value or interest for the reasons outlined in Appendix D of this report.

Executive Summary

Summary of Request

At its meeting held on June 12, 2018, Municipal Council directed Heritage Planners to prepare a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest for the Fugitive Slave Chapel at its new location at 432 Grey Street (Resolet 3.1-10-PEC), pursuant to direction from the Municipal Council during the repeal of the heritage designating by-law for 275 Thames Street.

Purpose and the Effect of Recommended Action

The purpose of the recommended action is for Municipal Council to issue its notice of intent to designate the property under Section 29(3) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Rationale of Recommended Action

Staff completed an evaluation of the property at 432 Grey Street using the criteria of O. Reg. 9/06 and found that the property has significant cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Analysis

1.0 Background

1.1 Property Location

The property at 432 Grey Street is located on the north side of Grey Street between Colborne and Maitland Streets (Appendix A). The property is adjacent to 430 Grey Street, the location of the Beth Emanuel British Methodist Episcopal Church (c1868), which is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as well as being listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places (CRHP).

The area surrounding 432 Grey Street is commonly known as the SoHo (South of Horton) Neighbourhood, and has existed within the same boundaries since London's inception in 1840. Historically, this area has been associated with the Black settlement in London during the mid-1800's, and its early days as a place of refuge on the Underground Railroad.

1.2 Cultural Heritage Status

The property at 432 Grey Street is not presently listed on the *Register (Inventory of Heritage Resources)*, however, the building on this property (known as the Fugitive

Slave Chapel) was previously designated at its original location at 275 Thames Street (L.S.P.-3432-10). In November 2014, the Fugitive Slave Chapel was moved from 275 Thames to 432 Grey Street, and Municipal Council direction has since been (pursuant to direction during the repeal of designating by-law L.S.P.-3432-10) to re-designate the building once its relocation was complete.

1.2.1. Background: Current Heritage Status

In March 2013, a request for demolition was made by then owner of 275 Thames Street (along with two other properties at 277 and 281 Thames Street). All three properties were listed on the *Register (Inventory of Heritage Resources)*. At its meeting on April 30, 2013, Municipal Council concurred with the Planning and Environment Committee's (PEC) recommendations, specifically that it: 1) did not intend to designate the properties at 277 and 281 Thames Street; and, 2) defer[red], with the owner's consent, the demolition request for 275 Thames Street pending the possible relocation of the building to another site. Due to a perceived degree of uncertainty regarding the future of the Slave Chapel building, the PEC recommended that Municipal Council issue a notice of its Intention to Designate the property at 275 Thames Street under Section 29 (Part IV) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as a building of cultural heritage value or interest (PEC, September 24, 2013). On December 3, 2013, 275 Thames Street was designated by By-Law L.S.P.-3432-10. In November 2014, the slave chapel was moved (excluding an attached garage and rear kitchen wing) from its original address at 275 Thames Street to 432 Grey Street. In February 2016, designation of 275 Thames Street was repealed – by By-Law L.S.P.-3450-64 – to allow for its re-designation on its new property at 432 Grey Street (2015-11-11 Resolet 2015-C01A; 2/24-PEC). In June 2018, Municipal Council directed that a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest be prepared for the Fugitive Slave Chapel at its current location at 432 Grey Street (2018-06-13 Resolet 3.1-10-PEC).

1.3 Description

The building located at 432 Grey Street (known as the Fugitive Slave Chapel) is a 1-storey, wood-framed structure built in the vernacular style. Archival research suggests that the original structure was built in the mid-19th century, between 1853 and 1855 (Jenkins, pp6-10). The building is approximately 732 sf [24' x 30'-6"] (Rutledge). The wood superstructure – for the most part – is original and constructed with bents of Eastern White Pine (Knight). Inspection in 2015 by structural engineer James Knight shows that: “the materials of construction, and the ways in which they were used, are all very representative of good quality, mid-1800s Ontario construction” (Knight, p3).

Originally located at 275 Thames Street, the building then sat on a stone foundation and was likely raised and replaced with cement block with the addition of a crawl space (Jenkins, p12). At its currently location at 432 Grey Street, the building sits on a new poured concrete foundation (which includes a full basement) and steel beams that support the main floor (Appendix B). The building has a pitched-end, front facing gable roof. The front entrance is centered between two window openings to form a symmetrically balanced front façade. The original roof form remains, now clad with modern asphalt shingles. The exterior had been clad in a combination of angel stone and aluminum siding – another modern intervention; most of this cladding has since been removed.

Over the years, there has been an accrument of internal and external materials that have obscured the building's original details; pictorial archival records are also scarce, which has made it difficult to piece together a complete picture of what the original Slave Chapel building may have looked like. Since 2015, a team of heritage experts and members from the Fugitive Slave Chapel's Preservation Project Committee have tasked themselves with carefully tearing back the multiple layers of accumulated materials covering up the building (Tausky, 2017; 2018). This first-hand, on-site investigation coupled with a review of the earliest known photograph depicting the Slave Chapel (Appendix C), have yielded the following about its likely original attributes:

- Original timber-frame building was very solidly constructed, with four east-west bents inserted in thick beams, sills, and plates, and with vertical studs inserted between;

- Exterior clad with tongue and groove pine clapboards;
 - façade was distinguished by the use of narrower boards (1x4 T&G) than those used along the sides and back
- The seven windows were once the same, fairly large size and while symmetrically placed on the front and back, the two on the west and one on the east seemed to have been located simply for considerations of convenience;
 - 4 over 4 sash windows
 - peaked-arched window shape with similarly peaked wooden window trim
- Side door at rear;
- Transom above front door;
- Central chimney;
- Interior consisted of one large room – proven by the existence of horizontal, beaded wainscoting along the inside of all exterior walls; and,
- Building-wide podium was never constructed across the north part of the structure – indicated by removal of the added hardwood flooring in the northwest section of the house

To prevent its demolition, the building was moved in November 2014 from its original address at 275 Thames Street to 432 Grey Street. Now situated alongside the historic Beth Emanuel Church at 430 Grey Street, both buildings – side-by-side – represent two eras of a common history of the Black community in London. Originally functioning as a place of worship in the mid-1800s for members of London’s African Methodist Episcopal Church, sometime after 1869, the Fugitive Slave Chapel was converted to a residential dwelling; its use remained so to the present. Prior to relocation, the building was abandoned – used for storage by Aboutown Transport – and the integrity of its structure and historical content remained vulnerable. With its relocation to 432 Grey Street, plans are to restore and repurpose the building, likely to be used as “a museum and education place; teaching about Slavery, the Underground Railroad and London’s Black history” (McNeish). Currently it is covered with a tarpaulin.

1.4 Historical Background^a

The building at 432 Grey Street was originally located at 275 Thames Street, part of Lot 26, south of Bathurst Street, in the City of London. Recent research by H. Neary has established a chain of title dating to 1847 when Crown Land was acquired (Appendix C). Records show that on September 6, 1847, carpenter William Clark received the original deed for the lot. The *Indenture* describes the property’s location: “Lot 26 commencing at 118 feet south of the south side of Bathurst Street, running 30 feet along Thames Street then east 110 feet”. On October 14, 1847 Clark sold his parcel of the lot for twenty two pounds and two shillings (£22 10s.) to the Trustees of the “African Methodist Church [...] in trust that they shall erect, or cause to be built there on, a house or place of worship for the use of the Members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.” Trustees included William Hamilton, Benjamin Harris, Henry James, Henry Logan, John Osburne, Thomas Wingate, and George Winemiller; all were members of London’s Black community. Described as being located in the “heart of the ‘Hollow’”, this area was where many Black Londoners lived prior to being able to afford to buy or rent property in other parts of the City (Jenkins, 6; ref Neary).

Sometime after 1848, Trustees of the “African Methodist Church” built a small frame church on Thames Street. The precise date of its construction is not known for sure, but based on Jenkins’ research, the building of the Slave Chapel was likely completed between 1853 and 1855 (Jenkins, 6-10). This date range was established based on: 1) the *Abstract of Deeds* for both Lots 25 and 26, south of Bathurst; 2) *Railton’s* 1856-1857 City Directory; 3) the *Indenture* (Instrument 104) from the land records; and, 4) an examination of works of art depicting the area in and around the property at 275

^a Historical background drawn from T. Jenkins, January 20, 2015. “Conservation Plan 2014: The Fugitive Slave Chapel, 432 Grey Street, City of London, ON,” pp4-10.

Thames Street. These combined sources also confirm that the building at 275 Thames Street was a place of worship for London's Black community by the mid-1850's.

With the abolishment of slavery across the British Empire (1833) and by means of the Underground Railroad, Upper Canada became a sanctuary for Black slaves from the U.S. Most of the Black immigrants coming to Canada before the Civil War settled in the larger towns and cities; by the 1840s, the London area had a sizeable number of Black refugees. As a consequence of the United States' Fugitive Slave Act, the number of "fugitive slaves" passing through the Underground Railroad reached its peak between 1840 and 1860 (Jenkins, 4; ref Ontario Heritage Trust). According to D. Hill in *Freedom Seekers*, "London was a prime sanctuary as it was small, offered fugitive slaves a cheap place to live and, being inland, there was less of a threat of kidnapping" (Jenkins, 4; ref Hill, 51). City records reveal that London had also become an important central meeting place for Black refugees from other parts of Ontario (Jenkins, 5; ref Hill, 54). It is suggested that John Brown – an American anti-slavery advocate of the pre-Civil war period – visited London on more than one occasion, and it is possible the chapel was associated with these visits. It is reputed that in the summer of 1858, John Brown stopped by the "little church on Thames Street" and *held a meeting to recruit people to help with the cause* (Jenkins, 5; ref Carty).

"Two old city residents, one of whom came in 1842, told Carty that Brown was regularly in London in the early summer of 1853, and that he was regarded as a fanatic. One of the men also said that Brown was the principle speaker at a meeting of black people in the little church on Thames Street, when only those who had the password were admitted. Apparently a plan was formulated to create a company of blacks to be drilled in London who would join their brothers from Windsor, Chatham and St. Catharines when the time was ripe for a raid on American slave holders" (Grainger, 46).

Religion was important to London's African Americans as their deep faith gave them hope after a long period of oppression. The African Methodist Church (i.e. the Fugitive Slave Chapel) ultimately symbolized a spiritual gathering place that provided a sense of freedom and safety.

With an increase in prosperity, many in the Black community relocated to an area near the corner of Grey and Maitland streets (Judge, et al., sec 4). In May 1869, the Trustees of the British Methodist Episcopal Church sold 275 Thames Street, and the congregation moved to 430 Grey Street where a new, larger church was built – known as Beth Emanuel British Methodist Episcopal Church. After 1869, the once Slave Chapel building at 275 Thames Street became a residential dwelling. From 1944 to 2000 it was owned and occupied by members of the Mancari Family. Since 2000, it has been used for storage purposes by Aboutown Transport. More recently in November 2014, the Slave Chapel building was moved to 432 Grey Street, a vacant lot beside 430 Grey Street, its daughter church – Beth Emanuel British Methodist Church. Beth Emanuel is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as well as being listed on the Canadian Register of Historic Places (CRHP)

1.5 Request to Designate

At the May 9, 2018 meeting of the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH), Rev. Dr. Delta McNeish – pastor at Beth Emanuel (BMEC) Church – addressed the LACH and indicated support for designation of 432 Grey Street. In June 2018, Municipal Council directed that a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest be prepared for the Fugitive Slave Chapel at its current location at 432 Grey Street (2018-06-13 Resolet 3.1-10-PEC).

2.0 Legislative and Policy Framework

2.1 Provincial Policy Statement and Official Plan

The *Provincial Policy Statement* (2014), issued pursuant to Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, provides policy direction of matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Section 2(d) of the *Planning Act* identifies "the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest" as matters of provincial interest. The *Planning Act* requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters "shall be consistent with" the *Provincial Policy*

Statement.

Provincial Policy Statement 2.6.1 states that “significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.” “Significant” is defined in the in the *Provincial Policy Statement* as, in regards to cultural heritage and archaeology, “resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest for the important contribution they make to our understanding of the history of a place, and event, or a people.”

Chapter 13 of the *Official Plan* (1989, as amended) includes the objective to “protect in accordance with Provincial policy those heritage resources which contribute to the identity and character of the City.” Policies support the designation of properties under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The protection of our cultural heritage resources is one of the strategic directions (Direction #7-5) of *The London Plan* (adopted 2016). Policies of the Cultural Heritage section of the City Building Policies support the identification and conservation of cultural heritage resources using the policy tools of *The London Plan* and the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

2.2 Ontario Heritage Act

Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* enables municipalities to designate properties to be of cultural heritage value or interest as per prescribed criteria (Regulation 9/06), Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* also establishes consultation, notification, and process requirements, as well as a process to appeal the designation of a property. Appeals to the Notice of Intent to Designate a property, pursuant to Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, are referred to the Conservation Review Board (CRB); however, the final decision regarding designation is made by Municipal Council. Should no appeals be received within the 30-day appeal period, the property is designated. Owner consent is not required for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

2.3 Strategic Plan and Roadmap SoHo

The *Strategic Plan for the City of London 2015-2019* identifies heritage conservation as an integral part of “Building a Sustainable City” (6.B). Key neighbourhood place initiatives outlined in *Roadmap SoHo* – a community improvement plan (CIP) for regeneration of this area – focus on preserving, promoting and celebrating SoHo’s heritage (pp2, 33). The SoHo Neighbourhood has a history from the early days of London, as a place of refuge on the Underground Railroad.

3.0 Cultural Heritage Evaluation

3.1 Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Research and evaluation were undertaken to determine if the building at 432 Grey Street merits protection under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The criteria of *Ontario Heritage Act* Regulation 9/06 establishes criteria for determining the cultural heritage value or interest of individual properties. These criteria are:

- i. Physical or design value;
- ii. Historical or associative value; and.or,
- iii. Contextual value.

A property is required to meet one or more of the abovementioned criteria to merit protection under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

3.2 Evaluation

A summary of the evaluation of the property at 432 Grey Street is highlighted in the table below:

Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest – O. Reg. 9/06		
Criteria		Evaluation
The property has design value or physical value because it,	Is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ early wood-framed structure dating from (1853-1855), built in the vernacular style ✓ the structure, originally used for the intended purpose as a house of worship, marks the oldest extant structure used as a church in London and is the first African Methodist church in London
	Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ the materials of construction, and the ways in which they were used, are all very representative of good quality, mid-1800s Ontario construction
	Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	not believed to demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement
The property has historical value or associative value because it,	Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ it has association with the Black community which took shape in the formative years of London's early growth ✓ its use as a chapel as a branch of the African Methodist Episcopal Church which, in 1856, became the British Methodist Episcopal Church. ✓ its association with the later construction of Beth Emanuel British Methodist Church at 430 Grey St ✓ it is a built remnant of the community of African Canadians whose roots are anchored in the history of the Underground Railroad
	Yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	
	Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ structure associated with the Underground Railway with probable links to the activities of John Brown, the American anti-slavery advocate of the pre-Civil war period
The property has contextual value because it,	Is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area	not believed to support or maintain the character of the immediate area surrounding the property
	Is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ historically linked to its surroundings in SoHo as an area where – in the late 1800s – a more prosperous Black community relocated from the Thames St area ✓ situated adjacent to Beth Emanuel Church at 430 Grey St, together both buildings represent two eras of a common history of the Black community in London
	Is a landmark	not considered to be a landmark

Table 1: Evaluation of the property at 432 Grey Street using the criteria of O. Reg. 9/06

4.0 Conclusion

432 Grey Street is a significant cultural heritage resource in the City of London and should be protected under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, found in Appendix D, articulates the significance of this property.

Prepared by:	Laura E. Dent, M.Arch, PhD, MCIP, RPP Heritage Planner
Submitted by:	Gregg Barrett, AICP Manager, Long Range Planning & Research
Recommended by:	John M. Fleming, MCIP, RPP Managing Director, Planning and City Planner
Note: The opinions contained herein are offered by a person or persons qualified to provide expert opinion. Further detail with respect to qualifications can be obtained from Planning Services.	

September 5, 2018
LED/

- Appendix A Property Location
- Appendix B Images
- Appendix C Historical Information
- Appendix D Statement of Cultural Heritage Value of Interest

Sources

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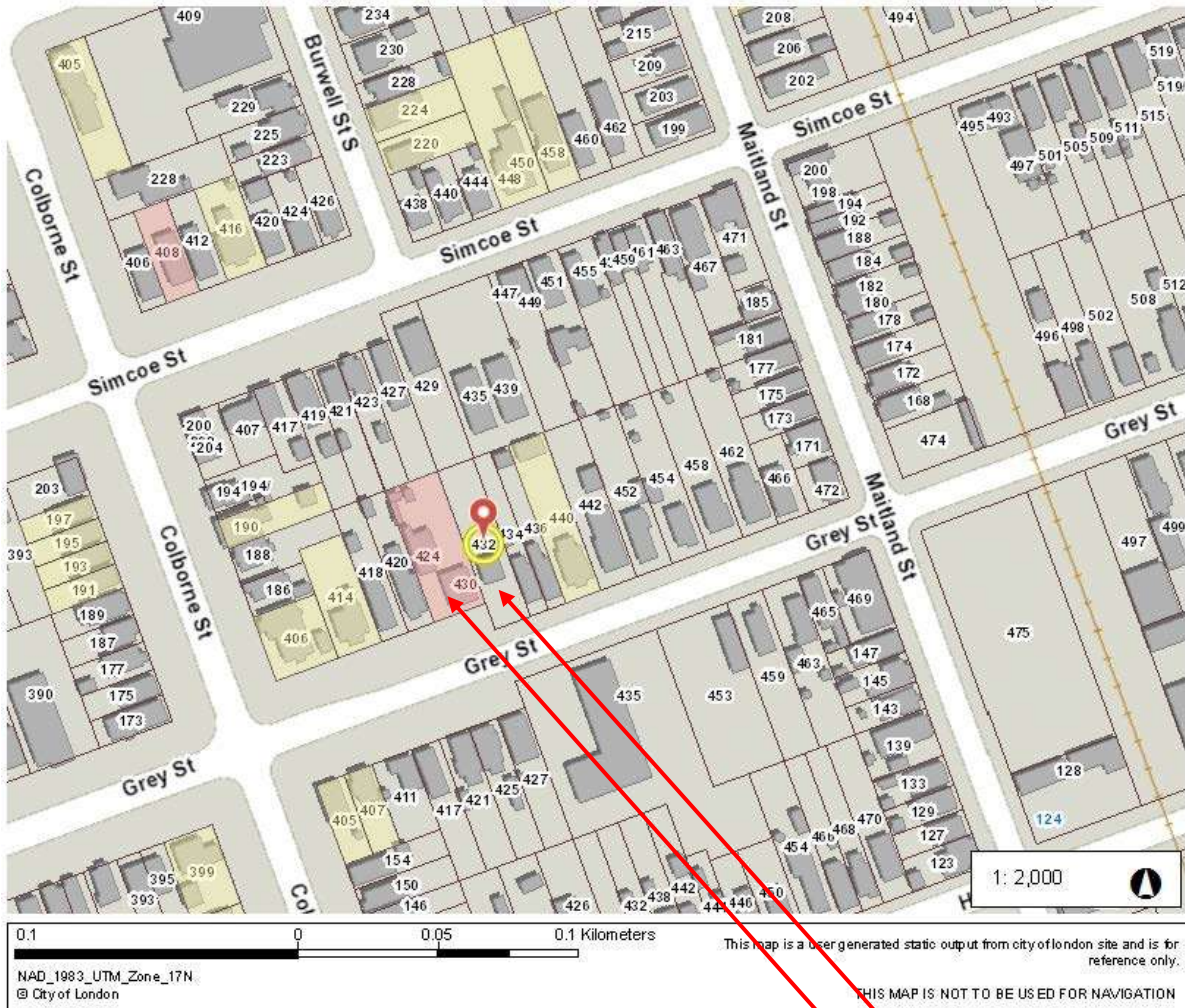
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Appendix A – Property Location



Map 1: Property location of 432 Grey Street

Note: Heritage listed properties are shaded yellow and heritage designated properties are shaded red.

432 Grey Street
430 Grey Street – Beth Emanuel Church



Map 2: Aerial View of 432 Grey Street and adjacent properties

Appendix B – Images



Image 1: Photograph of plaque installation at 275 Thames Street by the London Public Library in recognition of the property's historical significance (August 1986)



Image 2: Photograph of the building at 275 Thames Street in 2001, front facade



Image 3: Photograph of the property at 275 Thames Street in 2012 showing streetscape



Image 4: Photograph of the building at 275 Thames Street on November 17, 2014 being lifted for relocation to 432 Grey Street



Image 5: Photograph of the Fugitive Slave Chapel building being relocated to 432 Grey Street, November 11, 2014



Image 6: Photograph of the Fugitive Slave Chapel building being position onto new concrete foundation at 432 Grey Street, April 24, 2015



Image 6: Photograph of Beth Emanuel British Methodist Church and Fugitive Slave Chapel side-by-side on Grey Street properties (April 15, 2015)



Image 7: Fugitive Slave Chapel building covered with a tarpaulin (July 27, 2017)

Appendix C – Historical Information

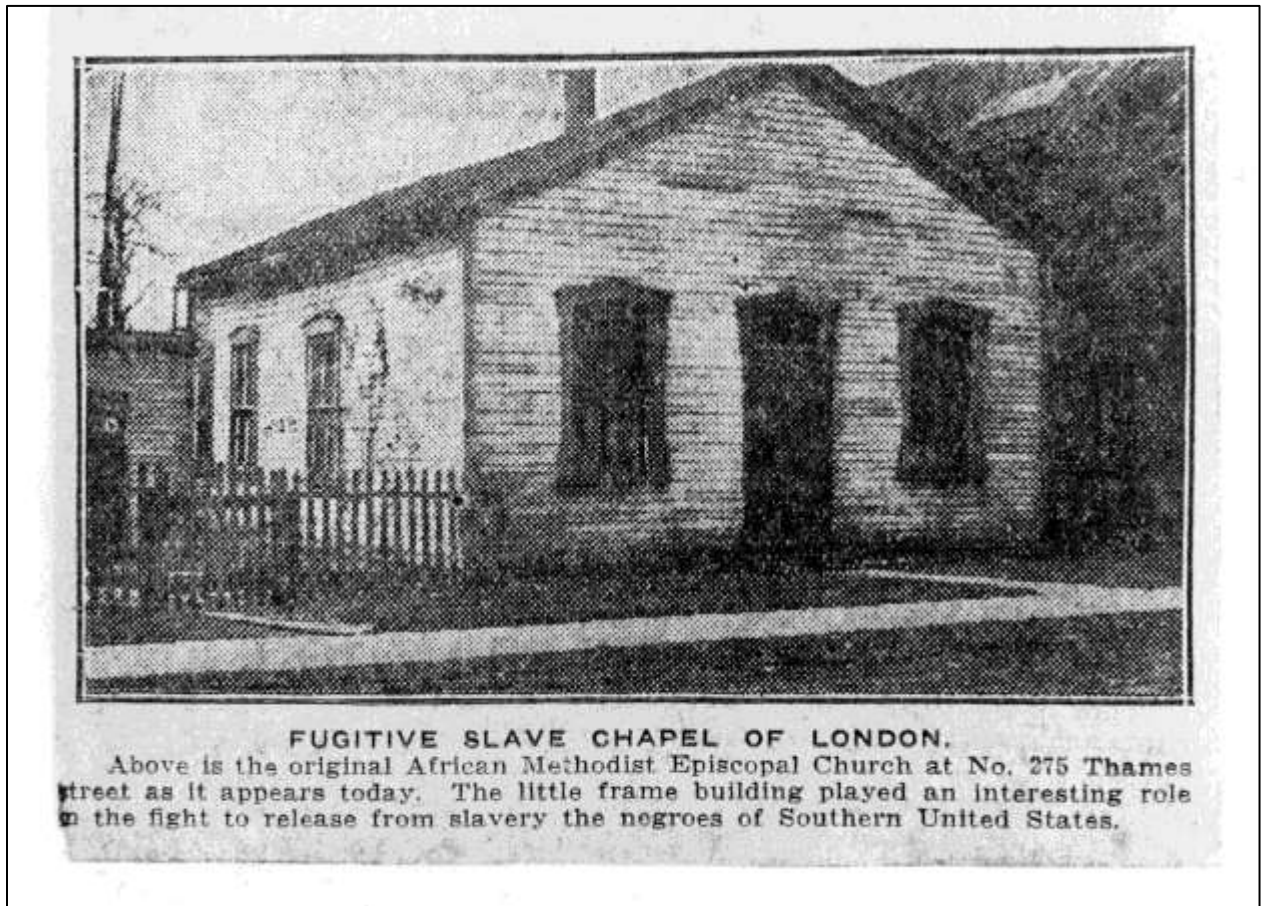


Figure 1: 1926 London Advertiser photograph of the "Fugitive Slave Chapel" (Carty, 1926)

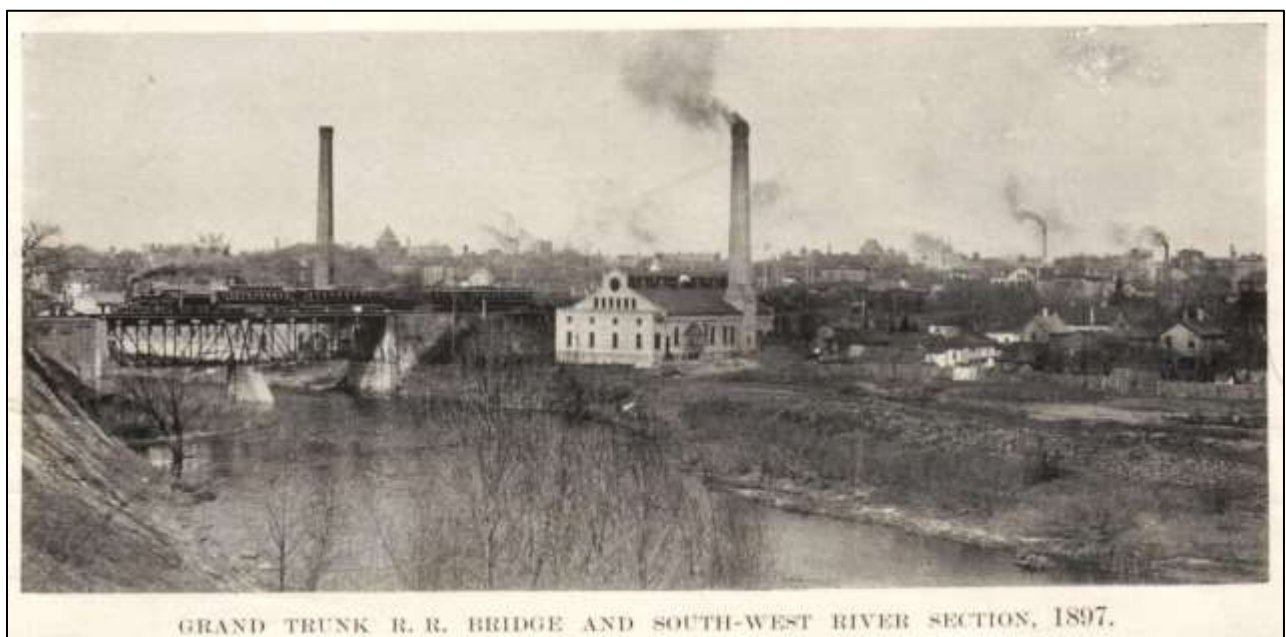


Figure 2: 1897 view from Wortley Road of properties backing the Thames River at Thames Street



Figure 3: Detail of Sheet 41 of the 1892, revised 1907 Fire Insurance Plan showing the property at 275 Thames Street, prior to relocation to 432 Grey Street. Courtesy Western Archives.

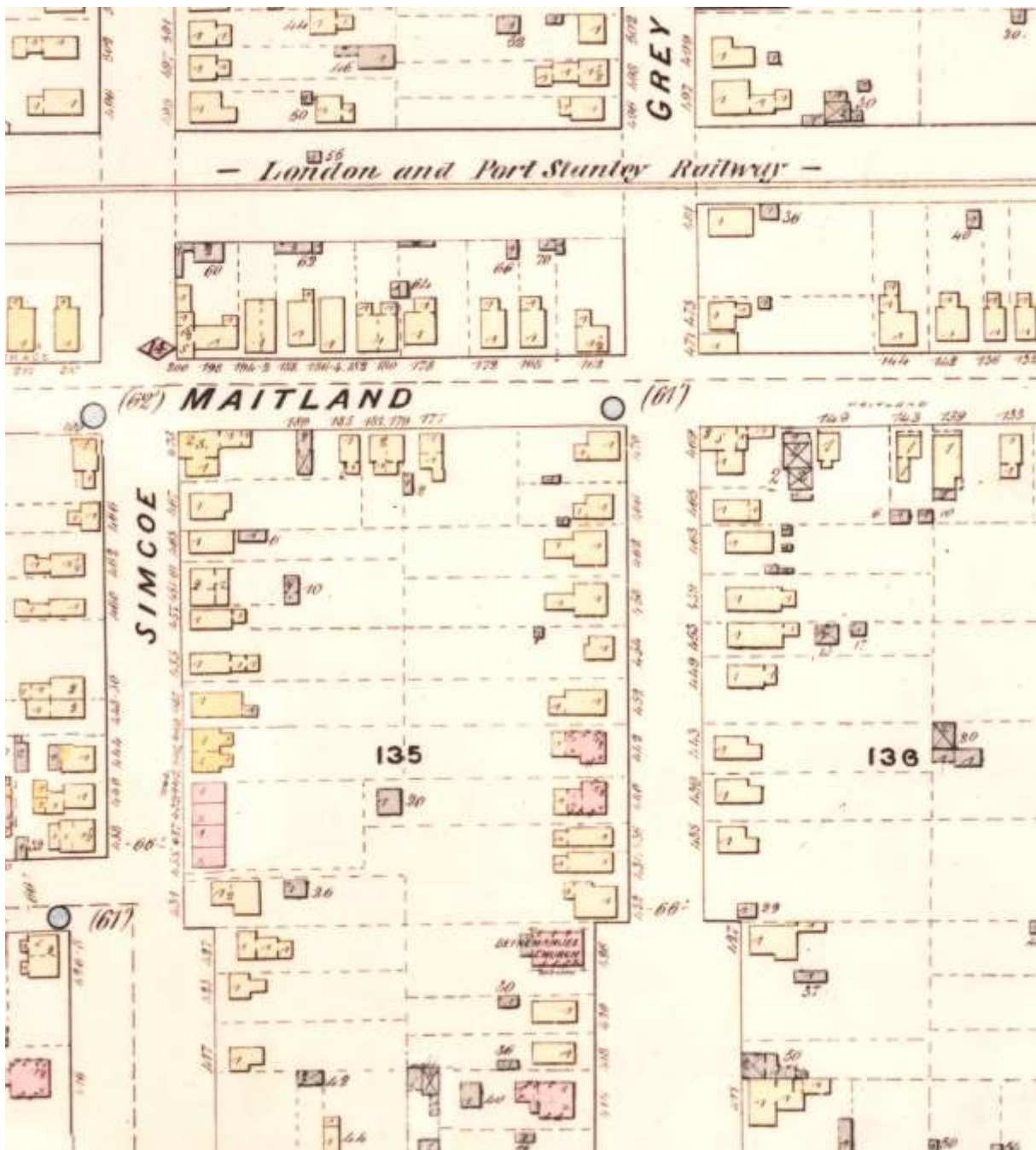


Figure 4: Detail of Sheet 25 of the 1881, revised 1888 Fire Insurance Plan showing the property at 432 Grey Street, adjacent to 430 Grey Street property with Beth Emanuel Church indicated. Courtesy Western Archives.

Figure 5: Chain of Title for 275 Thames Street, 1847-1944 (compiled by H. Neary)

Chain of Title, part Lot 26, S. Bathurst St., currently 275 Thames St.

1. Patent, 8 Sept. 1847, Crown to William Clark, all ½ acre.
2. #104, B&S, 14 Oct 1847, WC to Wm Hamilton et al (trustees, AME Church), 30x110, £22.10s, African Methodist Church.
3. #9225, B&S, 1 Sept 1858, WC to Benjamin Harris (cooper), 23x110.
4. #3865, 2B&S, 5 April 1866, BH to James Seale (cooper), 23x110, \$50.
5. #6113, B&S, 15 May 1869, trustees BME Church to James Seale (cooper), 30x110, \$100.
6. #6599, B&S, 9 May 1870, JS to Solomon Johns, (cooper), 30x110 and 23x110, \$300.
7. #9104, B&S, 17 July 1903, SJ to Robert A. Ross, (grocer), 53x110, \$500.
8. #11195, B&S, 6 April 1906, RR to Joseph Coulson Judd (barrister), 53x110, \$700.
9. #11199, B&S, 10 April 1906, JCJ to Eliza Ann Ward (widow), 53x110, \$700.
10. #34003, Grant, 13 April 1939, execs EAW to Elizabeth Spicknell (niece of EAW) 53x110, \$1.00.
11. #35359, B&S, 23 Mar 1942, execs ES to Mely Spinochia (married woman), 53x110, \$400.
12. #356074, B&S, 20 July 1943, MS to Frances Roberta Calcutt (married woman), 53x110, \$900.
13. #36645, B&S, 17 April 1944, FRC to Angus Campbell (retired farmer & Rozilla, wife), 53x110, \$1700.
14. #36699, Grant, 22 May 1944, AC to Thomas Mancari (carpenter, & Lillian, wife), 53x110 \$300.00 and mortgage of \$1475.00.

Appendix D – Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Legal Description

PLAN 178 PT LOT 13 N/S GREY REG

Roll Number

432 Grey Street: 050140037000000

Description of Property

The property at 432 Grey Street is located on the north side of Grey Street between Colborne and Maitland Streets. It is adjacent to 430 Grey Street, which is the location of Beth Emanuel British Methodist Episcopal Church (c1868). The building on the property at 432 Grey Street (known as the Fugitive Slave Chapel) was originally located at 275 Thames Street, part of Lot 26, south of Bathurst Street, in the City of London. It is a 1-storey, wood-framed structure, dating from 1853-1855, and built in the vernacular style. The building originally functioned as a place of worship for the African Methodist Episcopal Church congregation (at 275 Thames Street), and was later sold in 1869 and converted to a residential use. The building was relocated to 432 Grey Street in 2014.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property at 432 Grey Street is of significant cultural heritage value because of its physical or design values, its historical or associative values, and its contextual values.

The cultural heritage interest of the property and building at 432 Grey Street is based on its associations with: 1) the early development of the Black community in London; 2) its later connections to the Underground Railway; and, 3) the emergence in London of a branch of the African Methodist Episcopal Church – later renamed the British Methodist Episcopal Church. The building, originally used for the intended purpose as a house of worship, also marks the oldest extant structure used as a church in London and is the first African Methodist church in London. The building's construction dates from the mid-1800s and reflects wood-framing using bent structural system and assembly. Its current location historically links the building to its surroundings in SoHo as an area where – in the late 1800s – a more prosperous Black community relocated from the Thames Street area. Situated adjacent to Beth Emanuel Church at 430 Grey St, together both buildings represent two eras of a common history of the Black community in London.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes which support or contribute to the cultural heritage value or interest of the property at 432 Grey Street include:

- The one-storey vernacular cottage style building form with pitched-end gable roof;
- A symmetrical front façade with a single centered door and two evenly spaced window openings;
- Original exterior materials dating to the time of construction; including (but not limited to) all wood elements used on the exterior, bent structural system and assembly; and,
- One open, non-divided interior space or room.