



**Conservation
Review Board**

Ministry of
Culture, Tourism
and Recreation

**Commission des
biens culturels**

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**RE: TOWN OF OAKVILLE INTENTION TO DESIGNATE
156 RANDALL STREET OAKVILLE, ONTARIO**

Heather Broadbent, vice-Chairman

March 10, 1994

A hearing was convened under Section 29(8) of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18 for the purpose of reporting to the Council of the Town of Oakville whether the building known as 156 Randall Street should be designated for historical and architectural reasons. The hearing was held March 10, 1994 at the Oakville Arena, 133 Rebecca Street, Oakville.

Representing the Town was Beatrice Howell, Town Counsel, with Anne Bobyk and Mabel Wilson. The objector, Steve Peros Sr., was present with William (Bill) Kent, Solicitor, Ryrie, Ford, Kerr.

As is customary, the Board viewed the building and its location prior to the hearing. The site was revisited after the hearing. The Declaration of Notice of Hearing by Board staff was entered as Exhibit 1.

Ms. Howell opened for the Town of Oakville and presented the first witness, Mrs. Ann Bobyk. A member of the Oakville LACAC for six years, Mrs. Bobyk had formerly served with the York LACAC for five years. Mrs. Bobyk's degrees are in Anthropology and Archaeology and she serves on the local Museum Board. Mrs. Howell entered several exhibits which are listed in Appendix 1. Referring to the Heritage Structure Report (Exhibit 4) and Exhibit 7, a map of the area with a colour code for neighbouring buildings, streetscape and photographs, Mrs. Bobyk described the history of the building and its contextual relationship to the area.

Mr. Peros then drew the Board's attention to the fact that one of the structure illustrations on the exhibit was located a little further south than in reality. All present agreed that the exhibit was slightly incorrect in that regard. Mrs. Bobyk went on to explain this proposed designation's relationship to the area including Thomas Street and Randall Road. She noted that Oakville wishes to retain its historic ambience and that the subject building

is within walking distance of two historic conservation districts and a future one. There are several designated and listed buildings in the area. The witness said the subject area presented a strong sense of old Oakville and the public has demonstrated a strong wish to retain the historic ambience of the original Town. Mrs. Bobyk spoke of the importance of people and not just buildings in establishing a community and referred to the house as being one of many examples of Ontario Vernacular in the Town. She made reference to the fact that most of the very early Oakville houses are modest structures. It is the second generation of homes which are more grand.

In cross-examination, Mrs. Bobyk did not agree that few of Oakville's designated buildings are in the central business district and described several that were. Mr. Kerr also asked about specific brick structures. Mr. Peros asked if the building had been renovated and also suggested it had been relocated. He mentioned that the building had not been recorded in a book by Susan and David Peacock. Mrs. Bobyk said that many other historic buildings were not listed in that publication. She agreed that the dormers had been added. In reference to a comment that the buildings in the area were all of similar height and dimensions, Mr. Peros noted that an adjacent building owned and constructed by him, had been designed to reflect that theme. Mrs. Bobyk noted that a designated building does not have to continue in its original use or purpose. In answer to a question from the Board, the witness elaborated on the significance of a shoemaker and other now defunct professions in a settlement community; pointing out the particular significance of a shoemaker in the Ontario climate.

The second witness was Mrs. Mabel Wilson. In her own words, Mrs. Wilson eloquently described the occupancy of the house by her in-laws and later her own family. Her late husband had been involved in community activities including playing and coaching hockey and firefighting (he eventually became the first full-time fire chief in the Town). He was a firefighter for forty-six years. Mrs. Wilson said that the building had never been moved but during her family's ownership it had been elevated to allow a full basement.

Under cross-examination, Mrs. Wilson was asked about possible alterations to the structure and whether she knew of the very early history of the structure at the time of her occupancy or later. In answer to other questions Mrs. Wilson agreed that the house had been sold in 1979 and that the new owner had also purchased adjacent properties. Mr. Peros then discussed various impacts on the property and neighbourhood since 1979. At the time of new lot alignment, Oakville has required an

addition to the road allowance the front of the lot. Mr. Peros expressed an opinion that this meant that the Town intended to take down the building as its front was cited on or abutting the road allowance. He also explained that the zoning for the land allowed what he described as four times the lot coverage, as that category did not have a parking space requirement.

Mr. Peros was given some latitude by the Board to discuss his opinion of other heritage designations in Oakville and whether, if they were truly important, the Town did not purchase the buildings. Mr. Peros concluded with the opinion that an itinerant shoemaker was not important to the history of early Oakville.

Under cross-examination it appeared that there was a question as to whether the required expansion to the road allowance at the time of the lot realignment had been registered on title.

Solicitor Bill Kerr suggested that "ambience" is a subjective thing and that the context of this particular site and area was not of significant quality to warrant preservation nor was historic designation appropriate or necessary.

Findings

The small house has received the type of alterations and additions that could be expected in a building of such vintage. It is typical of the homes and workplaces of tradespeople in the small urban centres of Upper Canada and was built of locally available materials by local builders. It was apparent to the Board that the significance of a resident shoemaker in early Ontario communities was not clearly understood by all hearing participants. The Heritage Structure Report revealed a history of owners and occupants who had contributed to the evolution of the Village and Town of Oakville in their own way. The contributions of all the former residents of 156 Randall Street culminated in the significant occupation by the Wilsons, so eloquently related by witness Mabel Wilson.

The evidence of the objector illustrated that the Town of Oakville has, in this section of the Town, been sending very mixed messages through various planning steps and the initiation of heritage districts and individual designations. The Board would have appreciated hearing evidence from a Planner. Expansion of a road allowance at the time of rearrangement of lots did not however indicate that the building must be demolished as the construction of the building would predate the passage of a by-law enabling the municipality to acquire expanded road allowances.

There is no question that the building is also contextually in keeping with its surroundings and this was reinforced by a new building constructed by this owner. The Board is of the opinion that the word "itinerant", used several times in evidence, had a different meaning for several of the persons present at the hearing. The Board again noted that Mr. K. Argue who had objected to this and several other designations in the Town was again not present.

RECOMMENDATION:

In the opinion of the Board the building at 156 Randall street is appropriate for heritage designation for contextual, historical and architectural reasons. Each reason was confirmed in the evidence it heard and exhibits received.

The Board further recommends that the Town of Oakville consult with the owner on ways to address the discrepancy between the existing use, the present zoning, and the expansion of the road allowance. Although not as favoured as it was in the past, density transfer is an option which the Corporation could explore with its Planning Department.

It was also noted by the Board that the retention of this structure allows for greater lot coverage since the subject building predates any road allowance expansion.

(Original Signed by)

Heather Broadbent
Vice-Chairman

LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit #

- 1 Affidavit by Nancy Smith re Notice of Hearing
- 2 Certified copy of Minutes of Council Meeting relating to Heritage Designation.
- 3 Certified copy of Deed
- 4 Heritage Structure Report
- 5 Copy "Town of Oakville Designated Buildings"
- 6 Photographs
- 7 Area Map