

**Conservation
Review Board**

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**Commission des
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**RE: CITY OF OTTAWA - INTENTION TO DESIGNATE
ST. CHARLES SCHOOL, 24 SPRINGFIELD ROAD**

Robert Bowes, Chair
Nathalie Boutet, Member
Conservation Review Board

October 25, 1995

This hearing was convened at the Ottawa City Hall on October 25, 1995, pursuant to section 29 (8) of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Ch. 0-18, for the purpose of reporting to the Council of the City of Ottawa whether the property known as the "St. Charles School" (also referred to as the "school"), 24 Springfield Road, Ottawa, should be designated by-law under the Act, one objection having been raised by the owner of the property.

Notice of the hearing was given under the Act in the Le Droit newspaper and in the newspaper, the Ottawa Citizen, on October 4, 11 and 18, 1995, by the Board, the relevant affidavits by the Board being Exhibit 1.

A Conservation Review Board hearing concerning the City of Ottawa's intention to designate "St. Charles School" was convened on October 25, 1995.

This Board, in accordance with its custom, had the opportunity to view the site and the surrounding area prior to the hearing.

1. Were present:

Anne M. Peck, Legal Department, City of Ottawa
Jacques P. Hamel, expert, Chairman of the Local
Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC)
Hagit Hadaya, expert, member of LACAC
Denis Power and David Chick,, Nelligan, Power, counsel for
the Ottawa Roman Catholic Separate School Board
(the "O.R.C.S.S.B.")
John J. Stewart, expert for the O.R.C.S.S.B., of
Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Limited
R. Brady and Robert Parent, O.R.C.S.S.B.
Jean-Guy and Lise Nadeau, Springfield residence,
30 Springfield Road

2. The Case for the City of Ottawa:

The case for the City was presented by Ms. Anne Peck. The first witness for the City of Ottawa was Ms. Hagit Hadaya, an architectural historian and LACAC member.

Ms. Hadaya explained that the Ontario Roman Catholic Separate School Board (O.R.C.S.S.B.) owns 24 Springfield Road, where St. Charles school is located. The O.R.C.S.S.B. wants to dispose of the property to alleviate some of its debts. A proposal was made by Le Centre multi-services A l'enfance d'Ottawa-Carleton (CMS) who received a grant from the Government of Ontario to provide a non-profit child care agency for Francophones. The CMS had been searching for a location to house this agency and to accommodate the Francophone community, and its architects chose 24 Springfield Road as a potential site. The architects were informed that St. Charles school was on the Heritage Reference List and that an intention to designate could be requested. The architects believed it was not possible to adapt the building in question within the given budget and proposed use. Plans had therefore been made to demolish the school. The Department of Planning and Development did not object to the application for a demolition permit and sent its recommendation to LACAC for consideration.

At the LACAC meeting on April 4, 1995, one of the architects present was asked to estimate the cost to renovate the building rather than to demolish it and build a new structure. The architect estimated that it would cost \$100,000.00 more to renovate and adapt. Following this meeting, LACAC encouraged CMS to apply for grants to cover some of the additional \$100,000.00. Ms. Hadaya acknowledged having been informed, after the April 4, 1995 meeting that the cost associated with the integration of the existing building as opposed to the demolition and construction of a new structure was not \$100,000.00, as previously believed, because the architects had later indicated that it would not be possible to integrate the existing structure with the proposed plans.

Ms. Hadaya testified that LACAC's mandate was not to study the economical viability of incorporating the existing building with the proposed structure but to evaluate the heritage merits of a building. She indicated that LACAC believed that the school could be preserved and integrated and still accommodate the proposed use. She added that LACAC had offered to help the owners in obtaining grants to assist with the extra costs that would be required to adapt the existing building to the proposed use. In terms of financial assistance, she said that the Corporation of the City of Ottawa could provide relief on such expenses as development charges and land purchase price to alleviate the higher cost of adapting the existing structure. Ms. Hadaya indicated that if the heritage designation is

approved, a City of Ottawa heritage restoration grant could also be applied for to facilitate renovations. In addition, Historic Ottawa Development Incorporated might also have funds available.

Ms. Hadaya explained that LACAC recommended the designation of St. Charles school, which City council approved. LACAC is not recommending designation of the interior of the building. Ms. Hadaya stated that the original building was erected in 1910 and an eight room addition was built in 1925.

The following description of the school is taken from the Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form filed by the City as Exhibit 6, tab 2:

The school is a two and a half storey, red brick structure with a stone foundation and dressed stone stringcourse, window sills and key-stones. It is rectangular and it features a symmetrical five bay front facade with double doors centrally located in a pavilion above which sits a carved stone panel inscribed with the building's name. It has a modest cornice with a central pediment. Although the addition was very close in spirit to the original section, some of the windows of the two stages differ: most of the earlier windows are three-light casement windows with an eight light transom above while the later ones are double hung sash windows, with smaller transoms above. The school appears to have been built specifically to accommodate an addition. Fire insurance plans show that, when completed, what is now the central pavilion formed the north east corner of the building, and it then became the central pavilion after the 1925 addition, which was "L" shaped in plan.

Like many school buildings constructed between 1900 and 1914, St. Charles's design reflected its function, featuring large windows to provide fresh air and to light the high-ceilinged classrooms, while making few stylistic references through applied surface ornamentation. Superficial surface decoration was limited to the large brackets under the cornice, the entranceway, and the stone stringcourse which made no direct stylistic references. The lack of direct stylistic references perhaps demonstrates the architects' experimentation with "modern" forms such as the Chicago and Prairie styles.

St. Charles School was designed by Moses Edey and Francis Sullivan, two well-known Canadian architects. Edey designed many Ottawa landmarks including the Daly Building (demolished) and the Aberdeen Pavilion. Sullivan joined his practise in 1904 as a draughtsman and received most of his early architectural training in his office. He probably worked on the Daly Building during his early years in Edey's office. Sullivan appears to have left Edey's practise in 1906, rejoining him in 1909 on a part-time basis as he was then employed in the Chief Dominion Architect's office. In 1908, Edey and Sullivan met with officials at the

Ottawa Roman Catholic School Board and by 1914 they had produced at least two schools for them, one in Eastview which has been demolished and St. Charles School. In addition, Sullivan is known to have designed Sacred Heart School at 19 Melrose Avenue. Shortly after the completion of St. Charles School, Sullivan made his first contact with Frank Lloyd Wright, whose work he is credited with introducing to Canada. Sullivan's prominent Ottawa buildings include the Horticulture Building and his own house, 346 Somerset Street East, and 429 Bay Street, all of which have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

In 1925, the eight room addition to the school was completed according to designs by Brodeur and Pilon, two local architects. Ms. Hadaya indicated that there had been few changes to the building since the addition was completed in 1925. Most windows appear to be original. The building has been re-sheathed in red brick on the front facade only.

Ms. Hadaya testified that it was typical in the early 1900s to begin with a smaller portion of a structure in expectation of funding to complete the building. It is sometimes referred to as an "extension plan".

Ms. Hadaya testified that LACAC found that St. Charles School was a physical reminder of the vitality of the French community and its struggle for French education at the turn of the century. In addition, this building is the only remaining school building of the combined work of Edey and Sullivan. She thought the building important as a transition work of Sullivan's as he became more aware of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie school of architecture. The Prairie style emphasis on horizontality is seen in the lintels and pediments of the building. Even though St. Charles School may not be the best example of combined work by Edey and Sullivan, Ms. Hadaya said that the Ontario Heritage Act does not limit its designation to the best examples of designs but it also designates designs that have architectural and historical value.

Ms. Hadaya found that this school has significant historical value because it survived a major battle for French education in 1912, when Regulation 17 was passed banning instruction in French. Ms. Hadaya went on to explain that, more recently, Bill 109 was enacted by the Ontario legislature requiring the Roman Catholic School Board to negotiate with the Ottawa-Carleton French School Board for the transfer of certain schools. In her view, the fact that the Ottawa-Carleton French School Board insisted on obtaining title of the Guigues school, partly because of its important role in the Regulation 17 dispute, and not of St. Charles School, does not diminish the historical significance of St. Charles School. She believes St. Charles School also represents the bold fight by the French to maintain French education in Ottawa.

Ms. Hadaya explained that St. Charles School was given the high score of 7 out of 9 in the Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form (Exhibit 6, tab 2) for its historical, architectural and environmental value.

Under cross-examination, Ms. Hadaya stated that LACAC discussed the possibility that the local French population might lose the projected Multi-Service Centre if designation proceeded, but felt a solution was possible which would incorporate the Centre into the existing structure.

Counsel for the City of Ottawa indicated that the Planning Department's granting of the demolition permit was not binding on LACAC because it is LACAC, and not the Planning Department, that makes recommendations regarding the designation of sites or buildings. She indicated that City Council approved the designation after great discussion and consideration of all the information including information provided by the owners.

The second witness for the City of Ottawa was Jacques P. Hamel, an architectural designer and chairman of LACAC. He explained the two evaluation phases LACAC completes to determine whether buildings or sites under review have potential merit for designation. He explained that under phase 1, the building or item under review is scored. In this case, St. Charles School scored 7 out of 9 (see the Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form, Exhibit "6", tab 2) which represents high potential for designation. He explained that phase 2 of the Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form is the actual investigation and setting out of the evaluation, which is carried out in different stages: the collection of information, the evaluation, the scoring and the categorizing.

Mr. Hamel reiterated that LACAC is not bound by a Planning Department decision to grant a demolition permit when evaluating the heritage merits of a building. He also testified that LACAC favours adaptive re-use of buildings over demolition and construction of new structures. He indicated that LACAC has offered to assist the O.R.C.S.S.B. in finding an adaptive use of the existing structure.

Mr. Hamel stated that dealing with heritage requires a different mentality than new construction; you must have a respect for the building and start with the existing fabric and reality and work from there.

Mr. Hamel then described the geographical context of St. Charles School. It is surrounded by single family houses on Springfield Road and by a new commercial development on the busy adjacent Beechwood street. He explained that St. Charles School influenced the structure of the houses surrounding it. He indicated that at the time of its construction, the school stood

out as a noble and strong structure on a prominent corner. He described that the school, being a civic building of importance, was somewhat set back from the road. The building, through the quality of its fabric and its age, lends credence to the character of the neighbourhood.

Mr. Hamel stated that before the addition in 1925, the original building stood to the left side of the property (Exhibit 12). He stated that the additions to the building respected the symmetry of the original structure. He said the existing front elevation was maintained. At the front, the spacing, number, proportions and height of the windows were all identical. The cornice work was wrapped around and continued. The banding above the foundation, the sills, keystones, fanwork and coursing of the brick were identical.

Mr. Hamel indicated that after 1925, the front facade had been re-bricked but that the brick work was original on the sides. He indicated that he does not know if the bay has been re-bricked. He indicated that the plaque on the front is not from the original part of the building. He thought that if the front bay was re-bricked, great sensitivity was used and he indicated that this does not detract from the original building; neither does the 1925 addition, as it was anticipated in the original design that there would be an addition to the building.

He was not certain that the windows on the front bay were the original ones. He acknowledged that the cartouche at the top of the door was not part of the original structure. He believed that the building, even with its modification in 1925, was worthy of designation. He believed that the architects who did the addition in 1925 respected the original building and maintained the original elements. According to him, the building now represents an integrity which is consistent with its history.

In summation for the City, Ms. Peck asked the Board to support the designation of the property. She stressed that St. Charles is the only remaining example of Edey and Sullivan's school design work; that the 1925 addition complements the original, completing the extension plan and maintaining the integrity of the building; and that the building makes an important contribution to the character of the neighbourhood. She noted that letters from Heritage Ottawa and the New Edinburgh Community Alliance indicated community support for the designation.

3. The Case for the Ottawa Roman Catholic Separate School Board (O.R.C.S.S.B.)

The case for the owner was presented by Mr. Denis Power. He called Mr. R. Brady, of the staff of the O.R.C.S.S.B., as his first witness. Mr. Brady has been employed by the O.R.C.S.S.B. for 23 years. He said that the O.R.C.S.S.B. acquired the land at 24 Springfield Road in July of 1909 (Exhibit 7). The O.R.C.S.S.B. recently identified the property as being surplus and has decided to sell the land and the building to reduce the School Board's debt. He indicated that St. Charles School was a French school until 1972, when it took different uses, such as social services offices, storage, and as a theatre. The building is currently vacant. Mr. Brady explained the proposed site development for a French Multi-Service Centre (Exhibit 7, tab 2), which would have been adjacent to the building located on the property at the rear of 24 Springfield Road, on Vaughan Road, and is currently used as a French day-care centre. He believed the proposed French Multi-Service Centre would have complemented the French day-care centre and would have been a great asset to the French community in the area.

Mr. Brady said that he was part of the negotiations that took place regarding Bill 109 for the division of assets between the Roman Catholic School Board and the Ottawa-Carleton French School Board and that the Guigues school was the property that the Ottawa-Carleton French School Board was most interested in to preserve the history of French education.

Mr. Brady indicated that the O.R.C.S.S.B. had received approval by the Committee of Adjustment for a demolition permit (Exhibit 7, tab 4) but that the prospective buyers withdrew their offer as a result of the proposed request for designation (Exhibit 7 tab 6). He admitted that the Committee of Adjustment had sent the sub-division plans to the Ontario Municipal Board as a result of an appeal by the New Edinburgh Community Alliance (Exhibit 7, tab 5), which created a delay that may also have resulted in withdrawal of the offer.

The second witness for the O.R.C.S.S.B. was John J. Stewart, an expert with Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Limited. He spoke to a report filed as Exhibit 14.

Mr. Stewart found that this building was not a good example of the combined work of Edey and Sullivan, mainly because that portion of the school designed by Edey and Sullivan had been significantly altered; only the four-bay section of the south wall retains its original appearance. He felt it was neither a signature building nor a transition building of Edey and Sullivan.

Mr. Stewart used Minutes of meetings of the O.R.C.S.S.B. to study the history of the building. He explained that the contract for the architectural design of the school was awarded to Edey and Sullivan on June 14, 1909. The drawings were completed by Edey and Sullivan and submitted by June 25, 1909, just eleven days later, suggesting that this was a very straightforward contract with little time to explore alternatives. Mr. Stewart indicated that there was no evidence from the Minutes that Sullivan participated in the drafting of the plan because all communication was between the O.R.C.S.S.B. and Edey, but he admitted that there was no evidence that Sullivan did not participate in the design.

Mr. Stewart indicated that the plan was for what was called an "extension project", which was not a major project. He indicated that St. Charles School was interesting as an example of the "extension plan" approach to designing schools so that they could be enlarged in a tasteful and well planned way. The addition by Brodeur and Pilon in 1925 shows respect for the older building, while creating a cohesive design that gives the impression that it was built in one construction campaign. Consequently, he believed the building, which is well-proportioned and of quality material, has architectural value distinct from its association with the careers of Edey and Sullivan.

Mr. Stewart said that there was no doubt that Edey and Sullivan were aware that their building would be enlarged as needed since the building committee was quite specific in requesting an "extension plan". The design was of a style typical for institutional buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The need for economy resulted in a simple form, embellished in a modest way with stone-keys and stringcourse (a photograph taken in 1916 is reproduced on page 6 of Exhibit 14).

Mr. Stewart's position was that the design of St. Charles School seems outdated and mundane when compared with the Sacre Coeur school designed by Sullivan in 1912. It was his opinion that Sacre Coeur, with its high window-to-wall ratio and the proportions of its windows was more consistent with previous work by Edey and Sullivan.

He went on to say that the severity of the 1909-10 entrance, as seen in the 1916 photograph, suggests that the early details may have been embellished in 1925 (e.g. the stone cartouche). The tapestry brick, applied more recently to the principal facade, was, he felt, a major intervention which goes against the severe, clean quality of the original design. Mr. Stewart believed that the changes transformed the school into something different from the Edey and Sullivan design.

Mr. Stewart testified that the Guigues school was the main focus of the struggle to provide French-language education in the early

1900s. St. Charles, St. Jean Baptiste and Brebeuf schools played a secondary role. It was determined that the latter two buildings are no longer in existence.

Mr. Stewart indicated that Edey and Sullivan are significant Canadian architects and that there are a number of examples of their work in the City of Ottawa. For that reason, he believes that the fragmentary evidence of their design at St. Charles School does little to further an understanding or appreciation of their work. He also believed that Brodeur and Pilon, the architects who drafted the plans for the addition in 1925, were much more responsible for the present appearance of St. Charles School than Edey and Sullivan. He acknowledged that this building might have some importance for the community and stated that its scale and setback made a positive contribution to the character of the neighbourhood. He added that there was a great need for schools when St. Charles was built and modified so that St. Charles School might be more representative of necessity than adversity.

In his summation for the Owner, Mr. Power stated that the building was not worthy of designation based on the evidence. He felt that LACAC and the City had jumped to an unwarranted conclusion on the heritage worth of the building because of the link with Edey and Sullivan. The building was not a significant example of their work and the changes made did not reflect the spirit of the original concept. He reiterated that St. Charles's role in the Regulation 17 dispute was secondary. Mr. Power criticized Council and LACAC for inadequate research and inadequate consideration of the possible effect of designation on the proposal for the Multi-Service Centre.

He also indicated that the Conservation Review Board should draw an adverse inference from the fact that City heritage staff who had prepared the background report and who had not recommended designation, were not called by the City to testify at this hearing.

Statements from Members of the Public:

Jean-Guy and Lise Nadeau are the owners of the seniors' residence located at 30 Springfield, immediately to the right of St. Charles School. Mr. Nadeau indicated that he and his wife are interested in buying St. Charles School, renovating the interior and using it to expand their capacity. He indicated that their plan to renovate St. Charles School had been approved and that they had taken great care to maintain the heritage look of the building. He indicated that his plan had been developed in cooperation with the French day-care centre at the back of the property. Mr. Nadeau indicated that he and his wife would be very interested in having a property that was designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Findings:

The Board finds St. Charles School to be of sufficient architectural and historical interest and value to merit designation for a combination of reasons. The Board's reasons include: the initial involvement of the architects, Edey and Sullivan; that the structure represents the successful completion of an "extension plan" project, with the addition by the architects, Brodeur and Pilon, which maintains the integrity of the building; the positive contribution of the structure to the character of the existing streetscape and neighbourhood; the supporting role played by St. Charles in the defence of Frenchlanguage education; and the fact that the building represents the former vitality of the Francophone population in that area of the city.

In reaching this conclusion, the Board took note of the community support for designation expressed by Heritage Ottawa and the New Edinburgh community Alliance.

Recommendation:

It is the recommendation of the Board that the St. Charles School, 24 Springfield Road, Ottawa, Ontario be designated by-law under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

While the Board recognizes that the French Multi-Service Centre could have been an asset to the local French community, it is encouraged to hear that there may be possibilities for other adaptive uses of this heritage building. The Board encourages the Owner and the City to support an adaptive use which respects the character of the building.

(Original Signed by)

Robert Bowes
Chair

Nathalie Boutet
Member

ST. CHARLES SCHOOL, 24 SPRINGFIELD ROAD, OTTAWA ONTARIO

EXHIBITS:

1. Conservation Review Board Declarations re: Notice of Hearing
2. Copy of the Deed for 24 Springfield Road
3. Statutory Declarations re: Notice of Hearing
4. Certified copy of City of Ottawa council recommendation
5. Hagit Hadaya's Curriculum Vitae
6. City of Ottawa's book of documents
7. O.R.C.S.S.B. Document Portfolio
8. "130 years of Dedication to Excellence" by Paul-Francois Sylvestre, the Ottawa Roman Catholic Separate School Board, 1856 - 1986
9. Phase 2 Evaluation Scoring Sheet
- 9A. Jacques P. Hamel's Curriculum Vitae
10. City map of Springfield Road and Beechwood Road area
11. Springfield Road and surrounding survey dated January 1992
12. Sketch of St. Charles School, before and after the extension
13. O.R.C.S.S.B. letter dated September 5, 1995 to Jacques P. Hamel, Chairman of LACAC
14. Building history report on St. Charles School prepared by Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Limited