

# HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749  
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**Item No. 9.2**  
**Heritage Advisory Committee**  
**September 26, 2018**

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee

*-Original Signed-*

**SUBMITTED BY:**

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Kelly Denty, Director, Planning and Development

**DATE:** September 9, 2018

**SUBJECT:** **Case H00462: Request to Include the Kenny-Dennis Building at 1740 Granville Street, Halifax, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality**

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## **ORIGIN**

Application by a third-party group, the Maritime Institute for Civil Society.

## **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*The Heritage Property Act*

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that should 1740 Granville Street, Halifax, score more than 50 points, the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend that Regional Council:

1. Set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the inclusion of the subject property in the registry of heritage property for the Halifax Regional Municipality; and
2. Approve the request to include 1740 Granville Street in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality, as shown on Map 1, as a municipal heritage property.

## **BACKGROUND**

Paul Armstrong, on behalf of the Maritime Institute for Civil Society, applied to include the property located at 1740 Granville Street, Halifax, known as the Dennis Building (Map 1), in the registry of heritage property for the Halifax Regional Municipality.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the Kenny-Dennis Building was constructed to house the dry goods firm T. & E. Kenny, owned by brothers Thomas and Edward. William Dennis, owner of the Halifax Herald, purchased the building in 1900. Prominent architect George Henry Jost was hired to renew the interior and add three storeys after it was ravaged by fire in 1912. The Government of Nova Scotia later acquired the building for use as office space.

The property is currently owned by the NS Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (DTIR). A report prepared by a local architect on the condition of the Dennis building in 2010 recommended its demolition because its masonry walls and windows are in a poor state of repair despite a structurally solid foundation, floors, and roof. Water leaks and air quality issues are an ongoing concern. The building was vacated in 2013 for safety concerns after a mold problem was discovered in one of the upper floors<sup>1</sup>.

On November 27, 2017, the Province issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of the Dennis Building site. As of the date of this report, the evaluation and awarding process for this RFP is still ongoing. DTIR has formally notified the municipality that they do not support the registration of the property.

This application is considered in accordance with Sections 14 and 15 of the *Heritage Property Act*.

### **HRM's Heritage Property Program**

The purpose of the HRM Heritage Property Program is to help protect and conserve significant heritage resources including buildings, streetscapes, sites, areas, and conservation districts that reflect the rich heritage found throughout HRM. One of the principal aims of the Heritage Property Program is to recognize significant heritage resources through the inclusion of properties into the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties.

Under the Heritage Property Program, all registration applications for heritage buildings are evaluated by the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) using "The Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings in Halifax Regional Municipality" (Attachment A).

The Evaluation Criteria for scoring a property and building are broken down into six categories as follows:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Highest Possible Score</b>
1. Age	25
2. Historical or Architectural Importance	20
3. Significance of Architect/Builder	10
4. Architectural Merit: Construction type and Style	20
5. Architectural Integrity	15
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Should the HAC score a property with more than 50 points, a positive recommendation will be forwarded to Regional Council.

### **Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act**

HRM's Heritage Property Program receives its authority from the *Heritage Property Act* which seeks:

*"to provide for the identification, designation, preservation, conservation, protection and rehabilitation of buildings, public-building interiors, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, in both urban and rural areas, and to encourage their continued use".*

The current application has been submitted by a third-party applicant. In HRM, heritage registration applications are most commonly submitted by the owners of heritage properties. However, the *Heritage Property Act* does not limit who may apply to register a property. For example, in 1978 the Former City of Halifax initiated the registration of many heritage properties following the adoption of the *Evaluation &*

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<sup>1</sup> "Dennis Building" National Trust for Canada, <https://archive.nationaltrustcanada.ca/issues-campaigns/top-ten-endangered/explore-past-listings/nova-scotia/dennis-building>, (March 2, 2018)

*Protection System for Heritage Resources in Halifax*, which provided evaluations and recommendations regarding unregistered heritage resources in the community.

Sections 14(2) and 15(1) under the *Heritage Property Act* require that notice of recommendation be given to the property owner at least thirty (30) days prior to any Council decision to include the property in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. The property owner is also given an opportunity to address Regional Council before it decides on the registration request. Should a positive recommendation be forwarded to Council, municipal staff will ensure the required notices are sent to the owners and deposited at the Registry of Deeds.

## **DISCUSSION**

Heritage registration applications are evaluated by the HAC relative to six evaluation criteria as outlined above and described in greater detail in Attachment A. To assist the HAC in their evaluation and scoring, staff offer the following comments based on a research report (Attachment B).

### **1. Age:**

This building at the corner of Granville and George Streets in Halifax is one of the earliest remaining stone buildings to be constructed around the Province House square. Construction began in 1841 and redeveloped to its current appearance in 1863 for the dry goods business of Thomas & Edward Kenny, the stone building has survived over 150 years including a fire in 1912 and the effects of the Halifax Harbour Explosion in 1917.

### **2. Historical OR Architectural Importance:**

#### *Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups:*

The Kenny-Dennis building has significant associations with the Kenny family and the legacy of generations of early Irish immigrants and their role in building the nineteenth century prosperity of Halifax and Nova Scotia. The Kenny-Dennis building also has significant associations with the Dennis family and the role of the Halifax Herald and Evening Mail (later the Chronicle-Herald and Mail-Star) as the newspaper of record for Nova Scotia.

The business of "T. & E. Kenny Merchants" was founded by two prominent Irish Catholic businessmen of the city who were active in civic, social, and governmental life. Sir Edward Kenny and his son went on to found the Merchants' Bank of Halifax which later changed its name to the Royal Bank of Canada in 1901. Edward Kenny served as Mayor of Halifax in 1842 and was a member of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia from 1841-1867. Kenny was a supporter of Confederation, and this led to his appointment to the Senate and then to a position in the first Cabinet of John A. MacDonald in 1867.

In 1900, William Dennis purchased the Kenny building and made it the headquarters of the Halifax Herald newspaper. In 1912, William Dennis was appointed to the Senate on the advice of the Prime Minister, Robert Borden, where he served until his death in 1920.

### **3. Significance of Architect or Builder:**

David Stirling was the architect of the 1863 redevelopment of the building with construction carried out by George Blaiklock. After 1912, the interior was renewed and three more storeys were constructed by Samuel Brookfield under the design plans of architect George Henry Jost.

Stirling was a Scottish architect (1822-1887). Among his Halifax buildings were the Halifax Club (1862), the residence of Alexander Keith (1863), and Fort Massey Presbyterian Church (1870) — now Fort Massey United Church. He was appointed architect for the Dominion Government in Nova Scotia with responsibility for federal buildings in the Province.

George Henry Jost was a native Nova Scotian. During his early years as an architect, Jost collaborated with the builder Henry Peters on the design of St. Patrick's Church on Brunswick Street. He went on from there to become the sole teacher of architectural drawing at the Victoria College of Art & Design (now NSCAD University).

George Blaiklock and Samuel Brookfield were both prolific construction contractors in Halifax and around the Maritimes.

#### 4. Architectural Merit:

##### Construction type or building technology:

This building was originally constructed by T. & E. Kenny Merchants in 1841 as a two-and-a-half storey Georgian stone warehouse with a hipped roof. In 1863, the Stirling design doubled the footprint area to its existing dimensions, added two storeys to the building, a hipped roof, and the two existing granite façades facing Granville Street and George Street. These granite walls are supported by brick and rubble backing and its joints are only 1/8", laid with lime putty.

In 1901, when William Dennis purchased the building, the hipped roof was removed and another storey was added. After the 1912 fire leveled the building and much of the block, the Jost design essentially reconstructed the shell of the building in steel and concrete to improve the structural stability of the four-storey granite façades and to support three new storeys.

It is somewhat rare to see Edwardian additions on Mid-Victorian buildings in Halifax but there are several examples. However, it is very rare to see a Mid-Victorian building completely renovated using modern materials such as steel and concrete during the Edwardian period.

##### Style:

Architect David Stirling designed the Mid-Victorian building consisting of the first four storeys of the Kenny-Dennis building. Its stone façades, classical symmetry, and simplicity complement the Province House. Architect George Henry Jost designed the Edwardian addition consisting of the top three storeys of the Kenny-Dennis building and the central arched entrance. The Neoclassical design of this addition complements Stirling's Mid-Victorian building.

Character-defining elements relating to Stirling's Mid-Victorian building include:

- four-storey masonry structure with granite stone block walls;
- hung windows, within each bay, with matching widths and varying heights on each storey;
- granite stone plinth, water table, lug sills, string courses dividing each storey, and strong bracketed cornice above the fourth storey; and
- square openings in the plinth course, within each bay, capped by an arched carving in the water table.

Character-defining elements relating to Jost's Edwardian addition include:

- three-storey brick structure on top of a four-storey structure;
- triplet hung windows, within each bay, with matching widths and heights;
- lug sills supporting triplet windows divided by subtle engaged columns, string courses dividing each storey, and strong bracketed copper cornice; and
- central arched entrance with transom window framed by engaged Doric columns supporting an entablature which contains the letters "19" over the left column, "12" over the right column, and "Dennis" in between the columns and above the entrance.

## 5. Architectural Integrity:

The architectural integrity of the building, including Stirling's 1863 redevelopment and Jost's 1912 redevelopment, is very good. There have been no additions to the building since 1912 except for a fire escape stair enclosure, clad in horizontal corrugated metal siding, installed on the outside of the west wall. Utility equipment, including gas meter risers, were installed in some of the openings in the plinth course.

## 6. Relationship to Surrounding Area:

The Kenny-Dennis Building (1863) is an important architectural asset contributing to the heritage character of Province House and its surrounding area. It is the earliest extant example of a building that respects the immediate context of Province House Square.

Other buildings around the perimeter of Province House, built after the Kenny-Building, also complement the Classical architecture of Province House including the Old Post Office Building (1863), the Howard & Son Building (1867) on Hollis Street, the Acadian Recorder Building (1900) on Granville Street, the Bank of Commerce (1906) on George Street, the Jost addition to the Kenny-Dennis Building (1912) and the J.W. Johnston Building (1928), the Bank of Nova Scotia Building (1931), and the Provincial Building (1935).

### ***Third Party Registration***

The *Heritage Property Act of Nova Scotia* allows third parties (persons with no ownership interest in a property) to apply for heritage registration. These applications can be controversial because the property owner(s) may not be supportive of the application. Other than the initial registration of multiple buildings by the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth upon the creation of the municipal heritage registries in the early 1980s, there have been few examples of applications for registration that were not initiated by the property owner. The following describes four recent examples of third party registration:

1. 2263 Brunswick Street (St. Patrick's Church) was considered for registration against the objections of its owner on July 22, 2014, and successfully added to the register of municipal heritage properties. The registration was initiated by staff to correct an error in the original registration where the Notice of Registration was placed on title on the abutting manse property at 2267 Brunswick Street but this notice clearly addressed St. Patrick's Church building as the intended recipient of the of the heritage status.
2. Neighbouring property owners applied to register 851 Young Avenue to prevent demolition in April 2016. The owner proceeded to demolish the property before HAC could consider the application.
3. In September 2017 a group of local residents applied to register 5375 Kaye Street, Halifax (also known as United Memorial Church) as a third party applicant. HAC recommended in favour of registration, but Regional Council voted against registration at its June 5, 2018 meeting following objections from the property owner.
4. In April 2017, a neighbouring property owner applied to register an unaddressed lot on Great Beech Hill Road in Lower Sackville against the wishes of the property owner citing historical First Nations use of the site. At its meeting on May 23, 2018, HAC recommended against registration due to insufficient evidence of age or cultural associations on the property.

Considering the possibility that these types of applications could become more commonplace, staff have standardized their approach to notify property owners when a third-party application has been submitted for their property. Under the *Act*, owners are not required to be notified until a date has been set for the heritage hearing, at which point they are provided an opportunity to speak to the application before Regional Council. In this case, staff have notified the owner upon receipt of the application package and have informed them about the implications of registration.

### ***Response from Property Owner and Future Development of the Property***

The property owner (DTIR) does not support the application to register its property at 1740 Granville Street as a municipal heritage property (Attachment C). They note that on November 27, 2017, the Province issued an RFP for the Sale or Lease of Land and Buildings at 1740 Granville Street, 1730 Granville Street and 1724 Granville Street. They relate that the maintenance and look of the Dennis Building and the entire development was specifically referenced in this RFP and that all shortlisted proponents provided for the retention of the façade of the building. An amendment to the RFP requirements in June 2018 stipulates that the Province will retain ownership of the lands and will be leasing the site to the successful bidder rather than selling. The RFP submission period was officially closed on July 26, 2018, and DTIR is currently evaluating the submissions.

The Province will also review and approve all proposed designs and the RFP requires that all municipal zoning and by-law approvals are met. These three properties are within the DH-1 Zone and are permitted a 22-metre pre-bonus height and a 28-metre post-bonus height. A development project of this scale will require an application for site plan approval and consideration by the Design Review Committee.

If this application for municipal heritage registration is successful, Regional Council would also need to review and approve any substantial alteration to the exterior of the Kenny-Dennis Building, based on the advice of its Heritage Advisory Committee and municipal staff before any permit can be issued for the development.

The current application to include the subject property in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality is evaluated based on the property's heritage value and the evaluation criteria established in the Heritage Property By-law (H-200).

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The HRM costs associated with processing this application can be accommodated within the approved 2018/2019 operating budget for C002 – Urban Design.

### **RISK CONSIDERATION**

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this Report. The risks considered rate Low.

To reach this conclusion, consideration was given to operational, financial, and/or strategic risks.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The community engagement process for a heritage registration is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy. The level of community engagement was information sharing achieved through public accessibility to the required Heritage Advisory Committee meeting. As a provision of the *Heritage Property Act*, no registration of a municipal heritage property shall take place until Regional Council has given the owner of the property an opportunity to be heard.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No concerns identified.

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. The Heritage Advisory Committee may choose to refuse the application to include 1740 Granville Street in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality if the property scores less than 50 points based on the evaluation criteria.
2. The Heritage Advisory Committee may choose to forward the application to include 1740 Granville Street in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality to Regional Council without a recommendation.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Map 1: Location Map

Attachment A: Evaluation Criteria

Attachment B: Research Report

Attachment C: Letter from Property Owner

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Seamus McGreal, Planner III, 902.490.4663

***-Original Signed-***

Report Approved by:

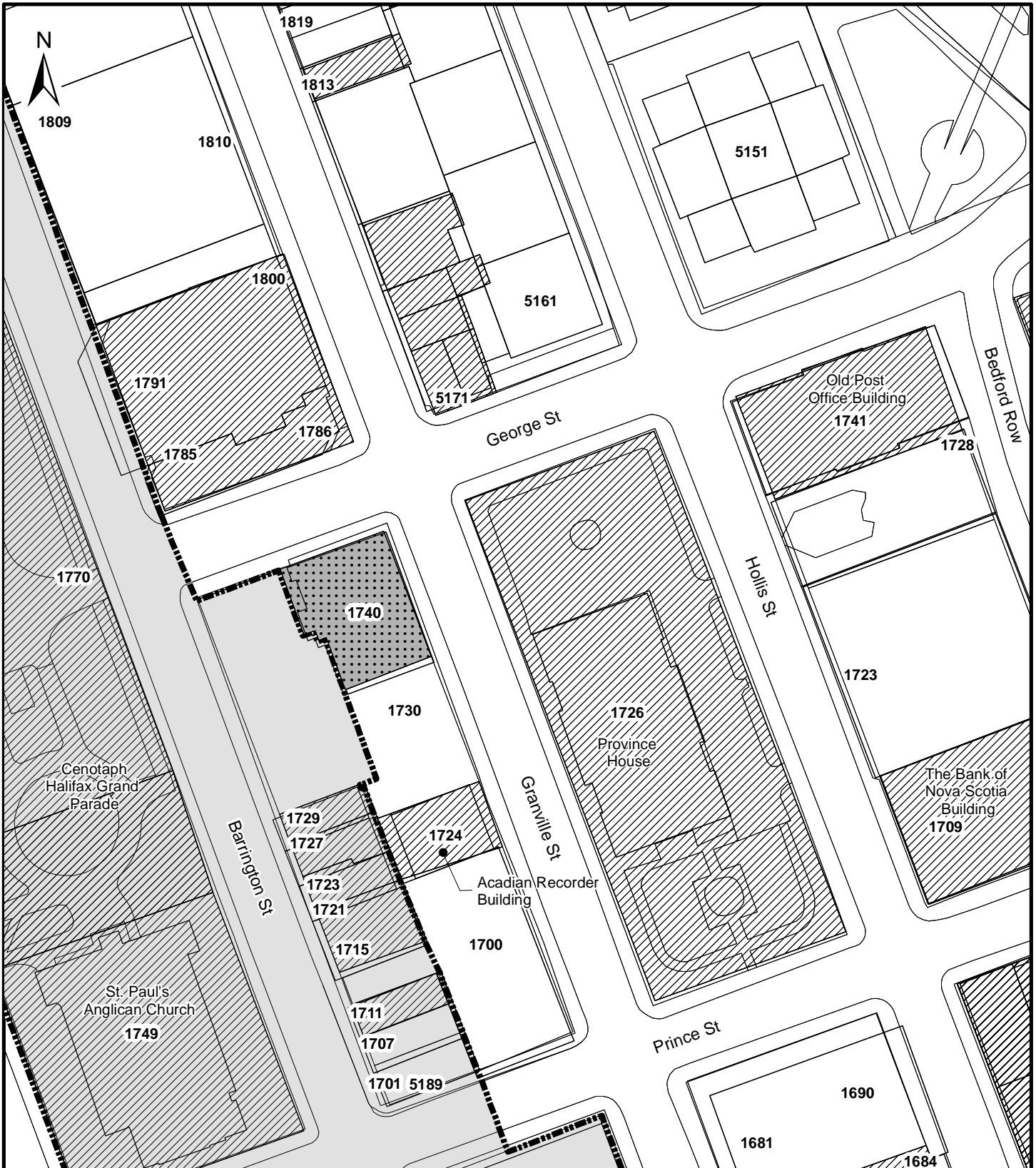
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Kurt Pyle, A/Manager, Heritage Property Program, 902.490.6011

***-Original Signed-***

Report Approved by:



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Eric Lucic, Manager Regional Planning, 902.430.3954

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**Map 1 - Location Map**

1740 Granville Street, Halifax

-  Subject Property- Kenny / Dennis Building
-  Registered Heritage Property
-  Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District boundary

**HALIFAX**



HRM does not guarantee the accuracy of any representation on this plan.





## **ATTACHMENT A:**

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

**Heritage Property Program  
Community & Recreation Services**

**March 2013**

**EVALUATION CRITERIA  
FOR REGISTRATION OF HERITAGE BUILDINGS (Revised 2004)**

**1. AGE**

Age is probably the single most important factor in the popular understanding of the heritage value of buildings. The following age categories are based on local, national and international occasions that may be considered to have defined the character of what is how the Halifax Regional Municipality and its architecture.

Date of Construction	Points	Timeline
1749 - 1785	25	Halifax Garrison Town to the Loyalist migration
1786 - 1830	20	Boom period following construction of Shubenacadie Canal
1831 - 1867	16	From Boom to Confederation
1868 - 1899	13	Confederation to the end of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century
1900 - 1917	9	Turn of the Century to Halifax Harbour Explosion
1918 - 1945	5	The War Years
1945 - Present	3	Post-War

*\* Maximum score of 25 points in this category*

**2. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE**

A building can receive points for:

- A) Having specific associations with important occasions, institutions, personages and groups,  
**OR**  
B) For being architecturally important unique/representative of a particular period.

**2A) Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups**

Nationally	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	16 - 20	
Moderately Related	11 - 15	
Loosely Related	1 - 10	
Provincially	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	11 - 15	
Moderately Related	6 - 10	
Loosely Related	1 - 5	

<b>Locally</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Intimately Related	11 - 15	
Moderately Related	6 - 10	
Loosely Related	1 - 5	
No relationship to important occasions, institutions, personages or groups.	0	

*\* Maximum score of 20 points in this category, scoring from one of the three categories only*

## **2B) Important/Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era**

<b>Importance</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Highly important, Unique, or representative of an era	16 - 20	
Moderately important, Unique, or representative of an era	11 - 15	
Somewhat important, or representative of an era	10 - 1	
Not important, Unique, or representative of an era	0	

*\* Maximum score of 20 points in this category.*

## **3. SIGNIFICANCE OF ARCHITECT/BUILDER**

Is the structure representative of the work of an architect or builder of local, provincial or national importance?

<b>Status</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Nationally	7 - 10	
Provincially Significant	4 - 6	
Locally Significant	1 - 3	
Not Significant	0	

*\* Maximum score of 10 points in this category.*

#### 4. ARCHITECTURAL MERIT

The assessment of architectural merit is based on two factors:

A) **Construction type/building technology**: which refers to the method by which the structure was built (early or rare uses of materials), and building techniques;

AND

B) **Style**: which refers to the form or appearance of the architecture.

<b>Construction Type/Building Technology</b>		
<b>A) Construction type</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Very rare/ early example	7 - 10	
Moderately rare/ early	4 - 6	
Somewhat rare/ early example	1 - 3	
Not rare/ common example	0	
<b>B) Style</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Very rare/ early example	7 - 10	
Moderately rare/ early	4 - 6	
Somewhat rare/ early example	1 - 3	
Not rare/ common example	0	

*\* Maximum score of 10 points for Construction Type, and a maximum score of 10 for Style - a total maximum of 20 points in this category.*

#### 5. ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

Architectural Integrity refers to the extent to which the building retains original features/ structures/ styles, not the state of the building's condition.

<b>Architecture</b>	Consider any additions/ removal/ alterations to windows, doors, porches, dormers, roof lines, foundations, chimneys, and cladding.	
<b>Exterior</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Largely unchanged	11 - 15	
Modest changes	6 - 10	
Major changes	1 - 5	
Seriously compromised	0	

*\* Maximum score of 15 points in this category.*

**6. RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING AREA**

<b>Points</b>	<b>Comments</b>
6 - 10	The building is an important architectural asset contributing to the heritage character of the surrounding area.
1 - 5	The Architecture is compatible with the surrounding area and maintains its heritage character.
0	Does not contribute to the character of the surrounding area.

*\* Maximum score of 10 points in this category.*



## Attachment B

# Research Report

## Kenny-Dennis Building

In support of Heritage Registration Application H00458

### Prepared by:

Seamus McGreal, Planner III  
Heritage and Policy  
Planning and Development

**Based on information submitted by the applicant**

September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

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## Age

This structure at the corner of Granville and George streets is one of the earliest remaining stone buildings to be constructed around the Province House square (Figure 1).

Originally built as a three-and-a-half-storey stone warehouse in 1841 for the dry goods business of Thomas & Edward Kenny, the building was completely redeveloped with a new four storey stone façade in 1863. The existing stone building has survived over 150 years including a fire which levelled much of the block in 1912 and the effects of the Halifax Harbour Explosion in 1917 (Figure 2).

Following the neighbourhood fire of 1912, the new owner, William Dennis, made repairs and additions to the building to house the headquarters of the Halifax Herald newspaper. Its structural integrity was reinforced and three new storeys were added.

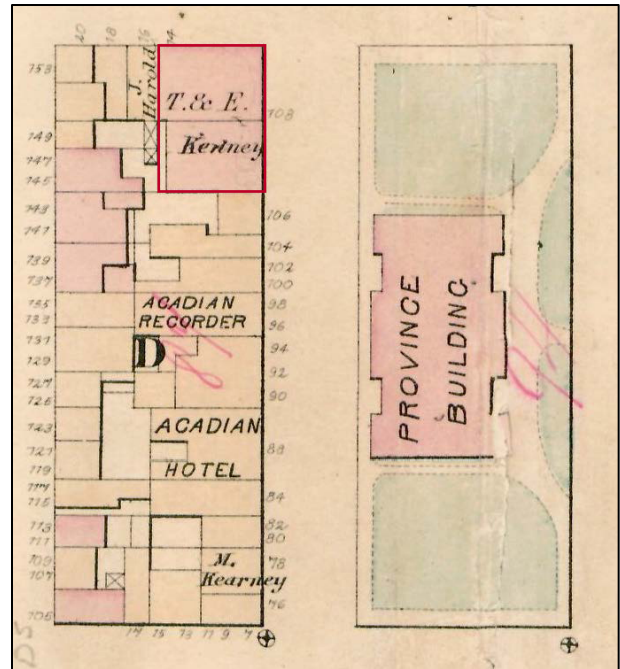


Figure 1: Hopkins Atlas from 1878 showing the Kenny-Dennis Building, outlined in red, standing on its existing footprint, across from Province House, after its redevelopment in 1863.

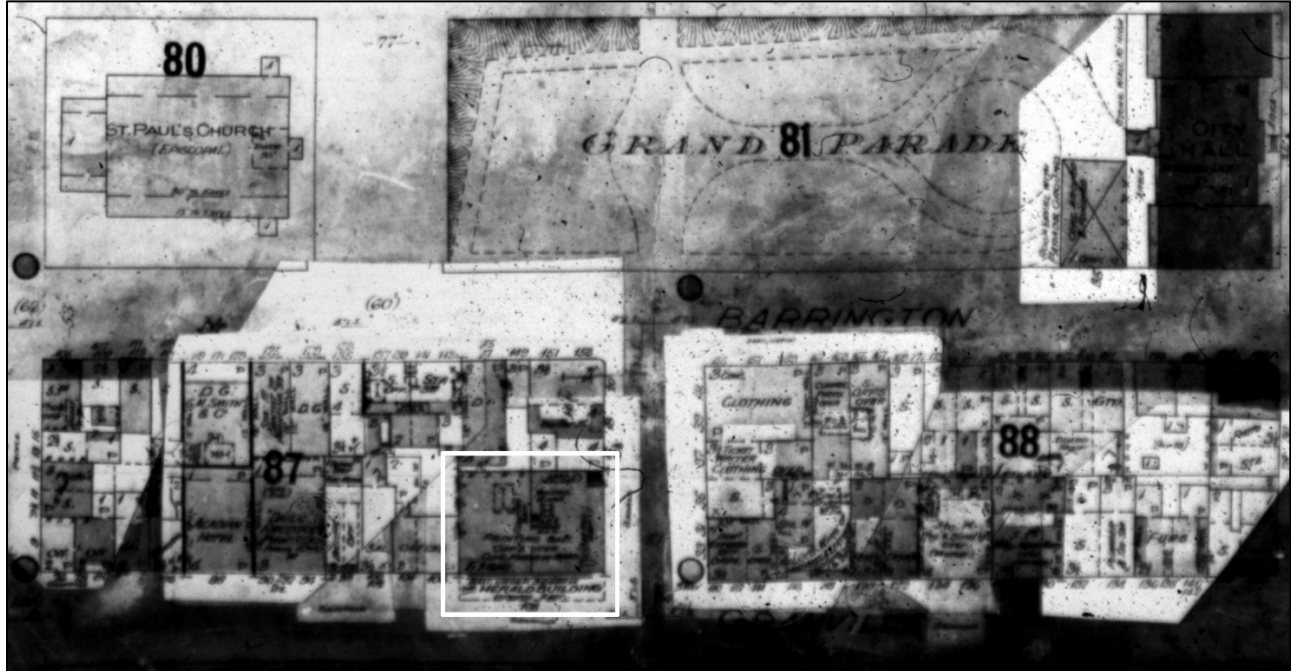


Figure 2: the Kenny-Dennis Building, outlined in white, from the 1911 Fire Insurance Plan showing the Grand Parade and surrounding buildings one year before the fire destroyed much of the block.

# Historical or Architectural Importance

## Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups

The Kenny-Dennis building has significant associations with the Kenny family and the legacy of generations of early Irish immigrants and their role in building the nineteenth century prosperity of Halifax and Nova Scotia. The Kenny-Dennis building also has significant associations with the Dennis family and the role of the Halifax Herald and Evening Mail (later the Chronicle-Herald and Mail-Star) as vehicles for freedom of expression in a democratic society.

The business of “T. & E. Kenny Merchants” was founded by two prominent Irish Catholic businessmen of the city who were active in civic, social, and governmental life. The Kenny building at George and Granville was the foundation for the Kenny brothers’ early business as dry goods merchants and textile manufacturers. Sir Edward Kenny became one of the founders of the Union Bank (Figure 3). Several years later, Kenny and his son went on to found the Merchants’ Bank of Halifax. Under the leadership of Edward’s son, the bank flourished and changed its name to the Royal Bank of Canada in 1901.



Figure 3: Sir Edward Kenny (1800-1891).  
Source: NSARM



Figure 4: William Dennis (1856-1920).  
Source: NSARM

Edward Kenny served as Mayor of Halifax in 1842, and was a member of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia from 1841-1867. Kenny was a supporter of Confederation, and this led to his appointment to the Senate and then to a position in the first Cabinet of John A. MacDonald in 1867. His son, Thomas Edward Kenny was elected as a member of parliament and became one of Prime Minister John A. MacDonald's trusted advisors on finances and railways.

In 1900, William Dennis (Figure 4) purchased the Kenny building and made it the headquarters of the Halifax Herald newspaper. The building was a particularly fitting location, across from Province House, where freedom of the press had been won. Dennis, a British immigrant, started with the newspaper as a reporter in 1875 and became its editor-in-chief and President in 1890. He took over complete ownership and carried the newspaper and became known as “the Man who made the Herald”. In 1912, William Dennis was appointed to the Senate on the advice of the Prime Minister, Robert Borden, where he served until his death in 1920.

## Important / Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

### Construction type or building technology:

The building was originally constructed by T. & E. Kenny Merchants in 1841 as a two-and-a-half storey Georgian stone warehouse with a hipped roof. In 1863, the Stirling design doubled the footprint area to its existing dimensions, added two storeys to the building, a hipped roof, and the two existing granite façades. The granite walls are supported by brick or rubble backing and its joints are only 1/8", laid with lime putty.

In 1901, when William Dennis purchased the building, the hipped roof was removed and an additional full storey was added. After the 1912 fire leveled the building and much of the block, the Jost design essentially reconstructed the shell of the building in



Figure 6: The Kenny-Dennis building showing the shell of the four-storey granite façade topped by the one-storey 1901 addition, shortly after the fire in 1912. Source: NSARM

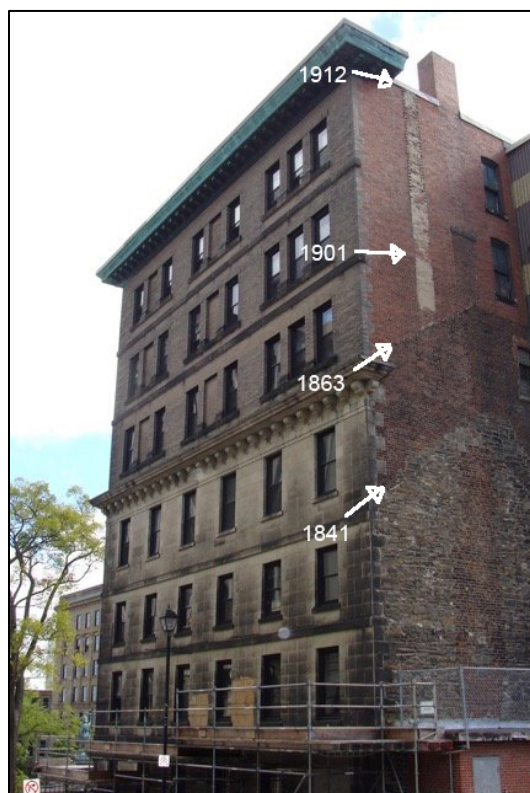


Figure 5: Variations in types of masonry on the west elevation reveal the four stages of construction from 1841, 1863, 1901, and 1912.

steel and concrete to improve the structural stability of the four-storey granite façades and to support three new storeys (Figure 6). Some of the granite, damaged by the fire, was repaired or replaced. The renovated building had wired glass in steel sash windows.

It is somewhat rare to see Edwardian additions on Mid-Victorian buildings in Halifax but there are several examples. However, it is very rare to see a Mid-Victorian building salvaged from a fire and completely renovated with an upper storey addition using modern materials such as steel and concrete during the Edwardian period (Figure 5).

Style:

Architect David Stirling designed the Mid-Victorian building consisting of the first four storeys of the Kenny-Dennis building. Its stone façades, classical symmetry, and simplicity complement the Province House as well as its sparing classical details such as the strong horizontal string courses that divide the first four storeys. The front façade is divided into ten bays lined with simple windows. It includes a strong bracketed cornice above the granite walls.

Architect George Henry Jost designed the Edwardian addition consisting of the top three storeys of the Kenny-Dennis building. The classically-inspired design of this addition complements the original building with string courses and a strong bracketed cornice (Figure 7). However, it also contrasts the original building's stone walls with brick walls divided into five bays, instead of ten, each with narrow triplet windows divided by engaged columns, possibly an influence of the Beaux Arts style. A prominent central entrance was added to the stone façade which identifies the building with the new owner at the time with the letters "Dennis" and the year of construction "1912" (Figure 8).



Figure 7: The classically-inspired Kenny-Dennis Building as seen from the grounds of Province House. Photo: Aaron Segart

Character-defining elements relating to Stirling's original Mid-Victorian building include:

- four-storey mass masonry structure with granite stone block walls;
- ten-bay width and six-bay depth;
- tall hung windows, within each bay, with matching widths and varying heights on each storey;
- granite stone plinth, water table, dark lug sills, dark string courses dividing each storey, and strong bracketed cornice above the fourth storey; and
- square openings in the plinth course, within each bay, capped by arched carvings in the water table.

Character-defining elements relating to Jost's Edwardian addition include:

- three-storey brick structure on top of a four-storey structure (Figure 9);
- triplet hung windows, within each bay, with matching widths and heights;
- lug sills supporting three windows divided by subtle engaged columns, string courses dividing each storey, and strong bracketed copper cornice; and
- central arched entrance with transom window framed by engaged Doric columns supporting an entablature which contains the letters "19" over the left column, "12" over the right column, and "Dennis" in between the columns and above the entrance.



Figure 8: Front facade of the Kenny-Dennis Building showing central arched entrance, dark string course, dark lug sills under the windows, and plinth course with square opening capped by arched carvings in the water table. Source: Google Street View 2009.



Figure 9: Upper three storeys of the Kenny -Dennis Building showing triplet hung windows within each of five bays on the front façade with strong bracketed cornices above the original granite façades and on top of the brick addition. Source: Google Street View 2012.

## Significance of Architect / Builder

David Stirling was the architect of the 1863 redevelopment of the building with construction carried out by George Blaiklock. After 1912, the interior was renewed and three more storeys were constructed by Samuel Brookfield under the design plans of architect George Henry Jost.

Stirling was a nationally significant architect. In the course of his forty-year career, he left a legacy of distinctive architecture in Halifax and in the province, especially in the classical and Italianate styles (Figures 7 and 10). Originally from Scotland, he was the son of a stonemason. Among his Halifax buildings were the Halifax Club (1862), the residence of Alexander Keith (1863), and Fort Massey Presbyterian Church (1870) — now Fort Massey United Church. He also designed buildings throughout Nova Scotia and Ontario. He was appointed architect for the Dominion Government in Nova Scotia with responsibility for federal buildings in the Province.



*Figure 10: Keith Hall (1863), the residence of Alexander Keith, was designed by David Stirling in the more ornate Italianate Style and constructed the same year as the classically-inspired granite walls of the Kenny-Dennis Building.*

George Henry Jost was a provincially significant architect. He was a native Nova Scotian who had trained as an architect in David Stirling's Halifax office during the 1870s. In early work, Jost collaborated with the builder Henry Peters on the design of St. Patrick's Church on Brunswick Street. He went on from there to become the sole teacher of architectural drawing at the Victoria College of Art & Design (now NSCAD University), then moved on to running his own practice.

George Blaiklock and Samuel Brookfield were both prolific construction contractors with projects in Halifax and throughout the Maritimes. Blaiklock was involved in the construction of many buildings in the provincial capital including St. Matthew's Church, the Grafton Street Methodist Church, the Mary Queen of Scots House, and four warehouses on Granville Street, one of which was the granite Kenny Warehouse. Brookfield was a prominent Maritime builder with projects including a court house in Saint John, King's College Chapel in Windsor, All Saint's Cathedral in Halifax, as well as the Chronicle Building, the Merchants' Bank, the Bank of Commerce, Barrington Street buildings, and the Dennis Building in downtown Halifax.

## Architectural Integrity

The architectural integrity of the building, including Stirling's 1863 redevelopment and Jost's 1912 redevelopment, is very good. There have been no additions to the building since 1912 except for a fire escape stair enclosure, clad in horizontal corrugated metal siding, installed on the outside of the west wall (Figure 11). Utility equipment, including gas meter risers, were installed in some of the openings in the plinth course.

In 2013, a structural engineer assessed the basic structure of the building as sound but repair work is required soon. Overhead protective scaffolding was installed to protect pedestrians against the risk of falling material including stucco and masonry brick debris ahead of future remedial work.

There does not appear to be an immediate mold issue after tests were conducted. However, there is a normal musty odour that is common when old plaster walls dry out.

Further studies are necessary to determine the full extent of the conservation needs of the building including an actual condition assessment, probable costs for repair, and a concept for a rehabilitation project.



*Figure 11: An enclosed fire escape with corrugated metal siding does not cover up character-defining elements, however, nor does it complement the building's character.*

## Relationship to Surrounding Area

The Kenny-Dennis Building (1863) is an important architectural asset contributing to the heritage character of Province House and its surrounding area. It is the earliest extant example of a building that respects the immediate context of Province House Square.



Figure 12: On the block opposite the Kenny-Dennis Building, the ornate Italianate style of the Old Post Office frames the northern approach to Province House Square. Photo: Google Street View

Other buildings along the Hollis Street perimeter of Province House, built after the Kenny-Building, also complement the Classical architecture of Province House including the Old Post Office Building (c. 1868) and the Howard & Son Building (1867) albeit in a more ornate Italianate classical style (Figure 12). The Bank of Nova Scotia Building (1931) and the Provincial Building (1935) also complement the classical style of Province House in the later Beaux Arts tradition.

The classical theme continued around the perimeter of Province House Square: the Acadian Recorder Building (1900) on Granville Street; the Bank of Commerce (1906) on George Street; the Jost addition to the Kenny-Dennis Building (1912) and the J.W. Johnston Building (1928) both on corner lots containing classical triplet windows on brick walls above stone walls, on the lower levels of the façades (Figures 13 and 14). In the early 1990s, most of the post-1912 buildings immediately surrounding the Kenny-Dennis building were demolished. These lands are currently vacant and used as surface parking lots.



Figure 13: the Beaux Arts style of the Acadian Recorder Building employs a modern approach to the classical theme of the area.



Figure 14: The Johnston Building has a similar design to the Kenny-Dennis Building as it frames the southwest corner of Province House Square. Source: Google Street View.



## References

Kassner Goodspeed Architects Ltd. "Dennis Building 1740 Granville Street, Halifax, NS. – Assessment of Exterior Wall Condition" (NS Department of Transportation & Public Works, 2005).

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Rosinski, Maud. *Architects of Nova Scotia*. Halifax: Province of Nova Scotia, 1994.



Transportation and  
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**Attachment C**  
**Letter from Property Owner**

May 8, 2018

Seamus McGreal  
Planner III  
Urban Design & Heritage  
Planning and Development  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
PO Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5

Dear Mr. McGreal,

**Re: Request to Consider 1740 Granville Street (the “Dennis Building”) for Inclusion in the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties**

I am writing in response to your letter to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal dated April 5, 2018, regarding the above noted matter.

Please accept this letter as notice that the Province of Nova Scotia (the “Province”) opposes the application made by MIRCS Institute to have the Dennis Building added to the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties and asks that the Halifax Regional Municipality deny this third party request.

On November 27, 2017, the Province issued a Request for Proposals for the Sale or Lease of Land and Buildings at 1740 Granville Street, 1730 Granville Street and 1724 Granville Street (the “RFP”). The RFP closed on January 11, 2018.

The look of the Dennis Building and the entire development was specifically referenced in Subsection D.1.1, the Design Approval portion of the RFP:

Because of the prominent location of the Site to One Government Place and across from historic Province House, the Province has a vested interest in the visual impact of any building façade along Granville Street. The Developer shall submit to the Province, at the end of both the design concept stage and design development stage, the proposed exterior plans and elevations of the Granville Street façade. These plans and elevations will be reviewed by the Province and the Province may, 1) approve them as submitted; or 2) disapprove of them and provide the Developer with recommendations for reasonable changes. If these changes are incorporated by the Developer in a revised submission, that submission will be subjected to another review and approval or disapproval by the Province. Only upon written approval of the design development stage plans by the Province, acting reasonably, and all necessary Halifax Regional Municipality zoning and

by-law approvals, can the Developer proceed with construction of the Development. If the Province and the Developer cannot agree on a design within Three (3) months of reviewing the latest version of the plans, then it shall be submitted to arbitration under the Nova Scotia Arbitration Act.

Subsection D.1.6 of the RFP contained wording involving maintaining the Dennis Building:

The Dennis Building's granite façade, which is located on both Granville and George Streets, must be preserved in its current state or dismantled and reinstalled to match its current design.

The RFP also required respondents to demonstrate how the design would complement the historic nature of Province House and surrounding grounds and were further required to demonstrate previous experience and knowledge of working with heritage building restoration and preservation and the incorporation of modern building components and design.

As you can see from the excerpts and paragraphs above, the Province is making every effort to ensure that the Dennis Building retain the heritage look and feel that is appropriate for this area of Halifax.

As you are well aware, Halifax Regional Municipality has the final say in what development takes place at the Dennis Building through the design review process, providing an additional safeguard that the development of the Dennis Building maintain its heritage character.

It should be noted that all of the submissions received and, more importantly, all of the Design Presentations and Preliminary Design Review Process with the shortlisted proponents, provided for the retention of the façade of the Dennis.

Again, I ask that you deny the request of MIRCS Institute to have the Dennis Building added to the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties as this will do no more to ensure the Dennis Building maintains its heritage character than what the Province is currently doing, but instead will impede the development of a very important piece of the downtown Halifax core.

Yours truly,

Shannon Delbridge  
Executive Director  
Public Works and Strategic Initiatives

c: Paul LaFleche, Deputy Minister, Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal