

Heritage File
5522 Russell

HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
10 MARCH 1994

TO: Chairman and Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee
FROM: Director of Development and Planning
DATE: 2 March 1994
SUBJECT: St. Mark's Church - 5522 Russell Street
Application for Heritage Property Registration

ORIGIN: Application by Reverend John Smith, Rector

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Heritage Advisory Committee evaluate the property located at 5522 Russell Street and provide a recommendation to City Council.

RECOMMENDED BY:


Director of Development and Planning

CITY MANAGER'S CONCURRENCE:


City Manager

BACKGROUND:

The City of Halifax received an application from Reverend John Smith on 29 July 1993 to register St. Mark's Church (see attachment #1). The church is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Russell and Gottingen Streets (see attachments #2,3). The present church building was constructed in 1920 in accordance with plans by Halifax architect W.J. Busch. This church was for many years the Garrison Church of the Royal Canadian Regiment and Navy and this is its principal historical association.

DISCUSSION:

To assist the Committee to conduct an evaluation, staff has identified what is believed to be the relevant information from the attached history of the church (see attachment #4).

1. Age of Property:

The church cornerstone was laid on 18 July 1920. A Parish Hall, adjacent to the church, was started in 1948 and it opened on 28 February 1949.

2. Historical Associations:

a) Occasions, Institutions, Persons:

One of the most historically significant associations with St. Mark's Church was its status as the Garrison Church of the Royal Canadian Regiment and the Royal Canadian Navy. It held this status from 1920 to 1970. Through these associations, St. Mark's Church hosted a number of important ceremonies related to Army and Navy life. In 1933 a Royal flag (called "the colours" in military parlance) was presented by King George V to the Royal Canadian Regiment. The colours were held by St. Mark's Church and the presence of the colours in the church was considered to be an honour. Later, on 19 July 1937, a second set of colours was presented to the Royal Canadian Navy by King George V. This also resided in the church. In addition to the honour of holding these colours, the church hosted weekly services for these two branches of the military. Military parades were held each Sunday from Wellington Barracks and the Dockyard to St. Mark's Church.

The church was active in its own right and the history of 1950 indicated that there was a Sunday school, two choirs, and no fewer than 14 societies (see attachment #4).

b) Eras:

Staff did not identify any specific era associated with this property.

3. Context:

The immediate area consists of a wide variety of uses including: St. Joseph's Church on the northeast corner of Russell and Gottingen; MacKay School on the southeast corner; and the church Rectory, which has the outward appearance of a single family dwelling, on the north west corner (see attachment #3).

The architecture use and scale of these buildings is fairly consistent with the residential context of the area. The age of the buildings varies, but most were built in the twenty years following the Harbour Explosion of 1917.

4. Architectural Merit:

St. Mark's Church is of typical design for church buildings constructed from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. The facade is original to its 1920 date of construction with a few minor alterations.

It is the opinion of staff that it is a good example of the Neo-Gothic architectural type, and competently displays characteristics such as flanking towers, gothic arched windows and a large rose window on the east facade.

The north bell tower is a particularly handsome composition of a rectangular tower base, with gothic arched windows, three lancet windows and an octagonal tower with louvred windows and turret topped by cross. The south tower, in contrast, appears to be altered and the resultant composition is of inconsistent design (see attachment #2).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications at this time. The building is in need of some exterior repairs, and it is currently being maintained by the congregation.

ALTERNATIVE:

The alternative is not to register the property.

SUMMARY:

The Rector of St. Mark's Church has made application for the heritage registration of the church, located at 5522 Russell Street. This report recommends that the Heritage Advisory Committee evaluate the property and provide a recommendation to Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Application for Registration
- 2) Photos of St. Mark's Church
- 3) Map of Area
- 4) History of St. Mark's Church 1866 - 1950

PREPARED BY:



Dan Norris, Heritage Planner

APPROVED BY:

Simpson McLeod, Supervisor of Real Estate



DN/gmj