Authority: Item 3, Committee of the Whole
Report 02-006 (PD02029)
CM: February 27, 2002

Bill No. 243

City of Hamilton

BY-LAW NO. 02-243

To Designate:

LAND LOCATED AT MUNICIPAL NO. 758 OLD HIGHWAY 8 (ROCKTON)

As Property of:

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL VALUE AND INTEREST

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Hamilton did give notice of its intention to designate the property mentioned in section 1 of this by-law in accordance with subsection 29(3) of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18;

AND WHEREAS no notice of objection was served on the City Clerk as required by subsection 29(5) of the said Act;

AND WHEREAS it is desired to designate the property mentioned in section 1 of this by-law in accordance with clause 29(6)(a) of the said Act.

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the City of Hamilton enacts as follows:

1. The property located at Municipal No. 758 Old Highway 8, Rockton, Hamilton, Ontario and more particularly described in Schedule “A” hereto annexed and forming part of this by-law, is hereby designated as property of historic and architectural value and interest.

2. The Corporate Counsel is hereby authorized and directed to cause a copy of this by-law, together with reasons for the designation set out in Schedule "B" hereto annexed and forming part of this by-law, to be registered against the property affected in the proper registry office.

3. The City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed,

   (i) to cause a copy of this by-law, together with reasons for the designation, to be served on The Ontario Heritage Foundation by personal service or by registered mail;

(ii) to publish a notice of this by-law once in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Hamilton.

PASSED and enacted this 11th day of September, 2002.

Mayor

Acting City Clerk

Schedule “A”
To
By-Law No.

758 Old Highway 8, Rockton, Hamilton, Ontario

Part Lot 21, Concession 4, Beverly, as described in BV776, former Town of Flamborough, now City of Hamilton

Schedule "B"
To By-law No. 02-

St. Albans Church and Cemetery
758 Old Highway 8, Rockton, Hamilton, Ontario

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Context

St. Albans Anglican Church and Cemetery is located on Old Highway 8 just south of the Village of Rockton, in the former Town of Flamborough (now the City of Hamilton). Its small burial ground is located on the north side of the church. Adjoining the church property is a larger triangular-shaped burial ground to the east, originally known as the Morden (Methodist) Cemetery and now owned and operated by the City as Rockton Cemetery. The rural character of the village is still largely undisturbed. Opposite the church on the other side of the road is a 19th century Ontario farmhouse. Limited suburban development in the vicinity of the church consisting of well-spaced, and for the most part modest-sized houses has not undermined the pastoral setting.

History

The church, located on Lot 21, Concession IV, in the former Township of Beverly, stands on lands that were originally part of a two-hundred acre Crown Grant to Philip Carter in 1796. Following the transaction the property passed through several owners with a number of parcels of the original 200 acres being sold off. A half-acre parcel was eventually sold for $75 by Margaret Blackburn to the Church Society, Diocese of Toronto on March 3 1869.

In that year, the present church, known as "St. Albans the Martyr", was built and a burial ground established to the north-east. The church was consecrated in 1871 and the first rector was Reverend R.J. Harrison. From 1869 to 1889, services were held twice daily on Sundays. During the first half of the twentieth century, the congregation slowly declined; and by 1949, services were held only once a month and ceased altogether in 1950. Since then the church has been occasionally used for services and concerts.

Prior to construction of St. Albans Anglican worship originated in the Township as a small congregation or mission at Romulus, near Sheffield, where Reverend Boomer of Galt held services. Anglican services in Rockton likely commenced in the late 1850s in the Beverly Township Hall, where they continued to be held until 1869 when St. Albans was erected. Only St. Albans, Grace Church (Waterdown) and Christ Church, (at Bullock's Corners in the former Township of West Flamborough) remain as examples of Anglican churches from the former townships of Beverly, East Flamborough and West Flamborough. St. Albans is now a rare surviving example of a rural Anglican church.

The small burial ground has 28 graves with approximately 25 standing markers of granite or marble. Interments date from 1871 (John Anderson) to 1983 (Hannah Abel). The gravestones bear the names of some early settlers to the area, including the Riddell, Alardyce, Vingo, and Rayner families. The most prominent individual buried here is Robert Kernighan a local poet and writer (1855-l 926), whose grave is marked by a cairn.

Architecture

Constructed of locally quarried stone and designed in the Gothic Revival style, St. Albans is a simple but handsome example of a rural Anglican parish church. Its cruciform plan was typical of Anglican parish churches although many of the smaller rural churches were laid out with a simple rectangular plan. The main axis of the church has a very steeply-pitched gable roof echoed by the smaller roofs over the transepts and entrance vestibule, all with exposed rafters. The roof is crowned by a wood belfry with a spire-like roof positioned above the transepts. The main entrance to the church on the west facade is through a vestibule with a Gothic-arched doorway with a pair of solid wood doors. Flanking the entrance vestibule are lancet windows; just below the roof peak is a triangular vent (plastered over on the interior). The side and end walls of the transepts feature paired lancet windows; the rear altar wall has a triple lancet window. All of the lancet windows have sloping stone sills; all but the chancel windows are filled with diagonally-paned leaded glass.

The sparsely decorated interior has plain plastered walls above pine wainscotting and pine flooring. It is furnished simply with wood pews, a pipe organ, altar railing and furnishings (table, two reading stands, bishop's chair and bench) and three chandeliers for oil burning lamps. The plastered gambrel ceiling is articulated with wood ribbing. The focal point is the three stained glass windows in the chancel representing Faith, Hope and Charity, which were a gift from Chief Justice Harrison (brother of the Rector) from Toronto. On the north wall is a memorial plaque honouring Robert Kirkland Kernighan. Due to its occasional use only since 1950, the interior has never been serviced with electric lighting or a heating system.

Desist-rated Features

Important to the preservation of St. Albans Church and Cemetery are:

- the original rubblestone walls and buttresses, cut stone sills, lancet windows, three doorways with plain vertical board doors, the steeply-pitched gable roofs with exposed rafters, and wood belfry with bell.

- the interior space, finishes and all built-in features: plastered walls and ceiling, wood ribbing, leaded and stained glass windows, wood pews, altar furninishings, chandeliers, and Kernighan plaque.

- the burial ground with its marble and granite grave markers.