Authority: Item 7, Committee of the Whole
Report 02-024 (PD02097)
CM: June 12, 2002

BILL NO. 308

City of Hamilton

BY-LAW NO. 02-308

To Designate:

LAND LOCATED AT MUNICIPAL NO. 135 Fennell Avenue West, Hamilton, Ontario

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.135 Fennell Avenue West, 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.

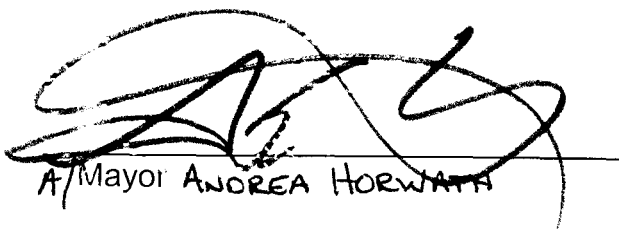
2. The Corporate Counsel is hereby authorized and directed to cause a copy of this by-law, together with reasons for the designation set out in Schedule "B" hereto annexed and forming part of this by-law, to be registered against the property affected in the proper registry office.

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 13th day of November, 2002.





Schedule “A”
To
By-Law No. 02-308

135 Fennell Avenue West, Hamilton, Ontario

Part Lots 16, 17 and 18, Concession 5, Barton, Part 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 on Plan 62R-2887, except Parts 1, 2 and 3 on 62R-6829; Part of the Road Allowance between Lots 16 and 17, Concession 5, Barton, closed by by-law HL62017, being Part 7, 62R-2887, except Part 2 on Plan 62R-6829; subject to HL144747, HL253794, Hamilton

PIN (Property Identification No.) 17044-0001 (LT)

Schedule "B"
To By-law No. 02-308

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

The Cellar
135 Fennell Avenue West, Hamilton, Ontario

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Present Context: The Setting of Mohawk College

Constructed in 1891 as a root cellar for the Hamilton Asylum for the Insane, this low stone building located on the grounds of Mohawk College now serves as a pub known as The Cellar. It is part of the Student Centre, which is maintained and operated by the Mohawk Students' Association. The Student Centre comprises three distinct but connected buildings surrounding an enclosed sunken courtyard, known as Mitchell Terrace. It is situated at the north-east corner of the main building complex on the east side of Governor's Boulevard, the main entrance to the campus from Fennell Avenue West.

The campus of Mohawk College is located on the north side of Fennell Avenue between West Fifth Street and Hillfield-Strathallan College directly across from St. Joseph's Centre for Mountain Health Services (former Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital). The Fennell campus was inaugurated late in 1967 and construction of the first buildings commenced the following year. The Students' Association then discovered the old root cellar, which was adapted for use as a pub when the first adjoining student centre (now *Alumni Hall*) was built in 1974. The entire complex was known as the *Arnold Centre,* the name still on the sign over the north entrance to The Cellar. When the new Student Centre was constructed in 1985 6, the root cellar building was connected to it at the south end (see Adaptive Re-Use). After the larger pub in the lower level of the Student Centre (The *Arnie)* was opened, the original pub was closed and for about six years the root cellar space was used first as a study hall and then offices. By popular demand, it was subsequently turned back into a pub/ restaurant, re-opened in 1992 as The Cellar, which has since provided a quieter, more intimate setting than The *Arnie.*

Historical Value: The Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital Farms

Both Mohawk College and Hillfield-Strathallan College were built on farmland previously owned by the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital. The existing hospital buildings occupy the Mountain-brow site of the original building (demolished) erected in 1875 as the *Asylum* for *Inebriates.* In 1876, this building was converted to and renamed the *Asylum for the Insane.* As the institution grew numerous more buildings were erected; the name was changed in 1920 to the *Ontario Hospital, Hamilton* and in 1968 to the *Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital.*

Psychiatric hospitals throughout North America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were usually located away from built-up areas in quiet, salubrious rural environments. Such institutions were planned and functioned as self-sufficient communities; hence, agriculture was essential to their operation. To meet the food requirements of patients and staff, farming activities ranged from raising livestock (for meat and dairy products) to growing grains, fruit and vegetables. The first farm buildings, including a wood root- house, were located south of the main building on the north side of the road which is now Fennell Avenue West. When the original Asylum property was found to be insufficient for farming purposes, additional land was purchased to the south: 95 acres in 1888 and 8 acres in 1890. The latter included the Andrew homestead, which was most likely the two-storey farmhouse located to the west of the root cellar. The first three farm buildings to be constructed in 1891 were the root cellar, horse stable and barn. An orchard and vegetable garden were situated to the west. Just after the turn-of-the-century, this building cluster included a slaughterhouse constructed of brick, a stone implement shed, a metal cattle barn, two stone silos and some smaller outbuildings. In 1909, 176 acres of farmland, known as Hickory Farm, was acquired to the south. When agricultural activities ceased in the early 1960s, the redundant farmland was sold off and buildings demolished to make way for new development. The root cellar and the potting shed (on the present-day hospital grounds) are the only surviving remnants of the agricultural component of the hospital's operation. The root cellar is also one of only two remaining historic buildings associated with the former Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital and now located on the grounds of Mohawk College. (The other one is a substantial 2-storey brick dwelling facing Fennell Avenue and located close to the western boundary of the hospital property, near Hillfield-Strathallen College.)

Architectural Value: Design and Construction of the Root Cellar

Before the widespread use of refrigeration the root cellar, along with the ice house and the spring house, were common types of food storage facilities. Primarily used for the storage of root vegetables, apples and other garden produce suitable for long-term storage, the root cellar was designed to maintain a fairly constant temperature: cool in summer and above freezing in winter. To provide this insulation, root cellars built as free-standing structures were usually buried partially or entirely underground and were commonly built with exterior stone walls. Some of the more elaborate structures had vaulted brick or stone interiors designed to maximize the insulation value of the cellar.

The former Hamilton Asylum root cellar was an extremely well built structure designed by the well-known Department of Public Works Ontario architect, Kivas Tully. It was built to a rectangular plan and oriented on a north-south axis to Fennell Avenue. The building form comprised a long, low, one-storey structure with wings at each end (originally serving as entrance and exit ramps for wagons bringing in and taking out garden produce) and a continuous wide-eaved, shallow-pitched gable roof. The exterior walls are rubblestone masonry. The existing corrugated steel roof installed in the late 1970s replaced an asphalt-

shingled roof, which was an earlier replacement for the original wood-shingled roof. The main section of the building was sunk about five feet below grade for better insulation value. The most significant architectural feature of the building is its impressive vaulted interior construction. A brick barrel-vaulted ceiling is sprung from two rows of nine barrel-vaulted alcoves, which originally served as storage bins. Each round arch comprises three rows of brick masonry sprung from piers measuring 1 and 1/2 bricks in width and the exposed stone foundation walls at each end.

The Cellar is one of only a few surviving institutional root cellars in the province, and possibly the only one with a vaulted interior. Two other known examples connected with other psychiatric hospitals in Ontario are a largely underground root cellar built for the Brockville Asylum and a similar one built for Lakeshore Mimico Asylum (both without vaulted interiors).

Adaptive Re-Use of the Root Cellar as a Pub

Gerrie & Butler, the architectural firm responsible for the design of the first campus building complex, also designed the first student centre and the conversion of the root cellar into a pub. As the structure was well-suited to this new use, only minimal alterations/ additions were required, such as the creation of entrance stairwells at each end, the installation of concrete flooring and exposed mechanical ductwork. Since the new Student Centre was built in 1986, the stone root cellar has formed the east perimeter wall of Mitchell Terrace. An outside entrance to this courtyard from the main entrance driveway was created by the installation of a doorway on the west facade of the south wing. The east wall was entirely removed and a new wall section with a set of double doors built at the south end of the main structure. This entrance has been permanently closed since 1998. The original north entrance is now a fire exit and secondary entrance.

The adaptive re-use of the root cellar as a pub/ restaurant resulted in a number of interior alterations. The main entrance is now from the lower level of Alumni Hall (in the centre of the east wall of The Cellar). A secondary entrance at the lower level was created by extending the space beyond the new upper south wall to connect *The* Cellar to *The Arnie.* Non-heritage components added in 1974 or 19856 are identified below (see exclusions in Designated Features). There has been only one structural change to the barrel-vaulted masonry: the removal of one section of the long barrel vault at the south end (pub entrance) undertaken at the time that exterior alterations were made to link the root cellar to the new Student Centre and create an outside entrance to the enclosed courtyard.

Designated Features

The former root cellar at 135 Fennell Avenue West is designated for those historical and architectural values described in the foregoing, notably as a rare surviving example of an institutional root cellar associated with the historical development of an asylums in a rural setting and the architect KivasTully.

Important to the preservation of the former root cellar are:

- The original building form including the architectural features of the north, east and west facades, comprising the stone masonry walls with arched windows, the wood-framed entrance opening on the north facade, and the broad gabled roof with wood fascia and soffits. Excluded are the modern fixed pane windows, all aluminum and glass entrance doors, and the corrugated steel roofing.

- The barrel-vaulted interior space with its long central vault sprung from two rows of barrel-vaulted alcoves, the brick masonry piers, arches and walls, stone walls of the alcoves (hidden by bench seating and mirrors) and exposed stone foundation walls at each end. Excluded are all modern additions and finishes, including the concrete floor, mirrors and built-in wood benches fixed to the original stone walls of the alcoves, mechanical ductwork, bar counter, lighting fixtures, the platform supported on stainless steel posts (originally terminated by a stairway), and the three sets of modern interior entrance doors.