Bill No. D- 105

The Corporation of the City of Hamilton

BY-LAW NO. 89- *271*

To Designate:

LAND LOCATED AT MUNICIPAL NO. 37 STRATHCONA AVENUE NORTH (Former Strathcona Fire Station)

As Property of:

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL VALUE AND INTEREST

WHEREAS the Council of The Corporation 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. 1980, Chapter 337;

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(1)(a) of the said Act.

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

1. The property located at Municipal No. 37 Strathcona Avenue North 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 City Solicitor 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 owner and The Ontario Heritage Foundation by personal service or by registered mail;

(ii) to publish a notice of this by-law in a newspaper having general circulation in the Municipality of the City of Hamilton for three consecutive weeks.

PASSED this *26th* day of *September* A.D. 1989.

City Clerk Mayor

(1989) 17 R.P.D.C. 11, July 25

Schedule "A"

To

By-law No. 89-*271*

37 Strathcona Avenue North, Hamilton, Ontario

(Former Strathcona Fire Station)

Fire Hall Lot, Plan 359 being designated as Part 1, Plan 62R-7650, in the City of Hamilton, in The Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth.

SCHEDULE "B"

To

By-law No. 89- *271*

37 Strathcona Avenue North, Hamilton, Ontario

(Former Strathcona Fire Station)

Present Context

The former Strathcona Fire Station, erected in 1897, stands at the north-west corner of Strathcona Avenue North and Head Street facing Victoria Park. This small two-storey building fits comfortably into the surrounding residential area, composed largely of late 19th and early 20th century housing. Its handsome brick and sandstone facade is the most distinctive feature of the tree-lined residential streetscape forming the western boundary of Victoria Park and contributes to the scenic character of the park itself.

Historical Significance

The last of five permanent neighbourhood fire stations built in Hamilton during the late 19th century, Strathcona Firehall is now one of only three still standing. Built to replace the volunteer station established on the Crystal Palace grounds in 1880 to service the City's West End, it was initially used by the Hamilton Fire Department as a storehouse and did not become an operating fire station until 1902. Strathcona Fire Station remained in active use until 1959, when it was replaced by a modern facility at the corner of George Street and Ray Street South. The following year, the redundant firehall was leased by the City to a local theatre company whose headquarters it remained until the property was sold in 1985.

Architectural Significance

Designed by Hamilton architect, Lucien Hills, Strathcona Firehall was modelled on the prototype for three of the four earlier neighbourhood stations: a long, narrow two-storey brick structure with a flat roof and entrance facade featuring a central engine doorway flanked by a doorway and window, a row of windows on the second floor, and a decorative cornice with prominent end brackets. The facade of Strathcona Firehall is distinguished by its Richardsonian Romanesque treatment, evident in the combined use of red brick and rock-faced sandstone, transomed windows and round arches. The detailing of the stone masonry is particularly striking. The rusticated sandstone lower facade terminates in a sill course for the upper storey windows while the upper brick facade features rusticated sandstone bands and window lintels. Also noteworthy are the arches over the engine entrance and lower storey window and doorway. The row of five double-hung sash windows feature rectangular transoms with decorative borders of small coloured square panes. The segmental arch over the engine doorway originally framed a stained glass transom light, which was removed before the station closed in 1959. Also gone are the original panelled wood doors of the engine entrance and doorway, as well as the round-arched transom lights over the doorway and window. The large concrete block rear addition was erected in the late 1960s to accommodate a rehearsal and meeting hall for Hamilton Theatre Inc.

Historic Setting

Strathcona Firehall is one of the few remaining historic commercial or public buildings which serviced the West End community, and the only survivor of three important public buildings bordering Victoria Park, all erected on its west side. Lost are the Normal School, built in 1908 and destroyed by fire in 1952, and Strathcona Public School, built in 1894 and demolished in 1984. Victoria Park, one of the City's earliest and largest public parks, was developed in the 1890s on the grounds of the Crystal Palace, following the razing in 1891 of this monumental iron-and-glass exhibition building erected in 1860.

Designated Features

Important to the preservation of the 1897 firehall are the east (front) and south (Head Street) facades, excluding the rear concrete block addition.