

65 Sussex Street North, Town of Lindsay (Alexandra Public School)

Heritage Designation Evaluation

Lindsay

PT LT 4 PL 148 AS IN TL31034 EXCEPT R304408; PT LT 17 N/S FRANCIS ST,
18 N/S FRANCIS ST, 19 N/S FRANCIS ST PL TOWN PLOT AS IN TL2915
EXCEPT R304408; KAWARTHA LAKES

PIN: 63220-0116 (LT)

2023



Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990. A property is eligible for designation if it has physical, historical, associative or contextual value and meets any two of the nine criteria set out under Regulation 9/06 of the Act. A heritage evaluation of the property has determined that 65 Sussex Street North has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

1. The property has design value or physical value because it:

i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method:

The property is a representative example of an early twentieth century Beaux-Arts school in Lindsay. The property, which was constructed between 1910 and 1911, displays characteristics typical of early twentieth century Beaux-Arts schools erected in urban areas such as large banks of windows with lintels and lugsills, a central entrance with Classical surrounds, coursing, and columns.

ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit:

The property displays a typical degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit for a building of this type.

iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement:

There are no specific technical or scientific achievements associated with this property.

2. The property has historical or associative value because it:

i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to the community:

The property has direct historical associations with the history and development of education in Lindsay. The school was constructed between 1910 and 1911 to replace the older North Ward school as part of a wider upgrade of school facilities in Lindsay in response to a growth in primary education in the early decades of the twentieth century.

ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:

The property yields information regarding the development of education in Lindsay in the early twentieth century as a public school serving the north ward of Lindsay from 1910 onward.

iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to the community:

The school reflects the institutional work of Toronto-area architect James Ellis who was well known throughout the province for his institutional commissions. He designed a wide array of schools throughout central and eastern Ontario in the early twentieth century in a consistent Beaux-Arts style which emphasized bold Classical features and symmetrical massing.

3. The property has contextual value because it:

i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:

The property defines and supports the character of this area of Lindsay which includes a wide array of historic buildings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The school is one of the area's primary institutional buildings and helps define the character of the area as a residential neighbourhood on the north side of Lindsay.

ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings:

The property is historically linked to its surroundings as part of the early twentieth century development of this area of Lindsay which underwent substantial growth in the early decades of the century.

iii. is a landmark.

The property is a landmark as the longstanding public school in this area of Lindsay and for its prominent position at the intersection of Sussex Street North and Colborne Street West.

Design and Physical Value

65 Sussex Street North, also known as Alexandra Public School, has cultural heritage value as a representative example of Beaux-Arts educational architecture in Lindsay. The building, which was constructed between 1910 and 1911 as a replacement for an older public school serving the North Ward of Lindsay, demonstrates the key characteristics of Beaux-Arts educational design as executed in urban areas, including symmetrical massing with a central hall, large banks of windows on upper and lower storeys, heavy cornices and Classical design elements. The school is particularly notable for its Classical entrance surround with oversized columns, parapets and highly formalized symmetry which are unique amongst early twentieth century schools in Lindsay. The school is also demonstrative of trends in educational architecture which developed and matured in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century emphasizing new ideas regarding hygiene, ventilation, and safety incorporated into school design.

School architecture evolved substantially throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, as communities across Ontario grew and developed. This was the case in Lindsay as it was in other rapidly urbanizing areas throughout the province. Many early school buildings were not purpose-built structures and classes often took place in residential structures or churches; in Lindsay, for example, the earliest known common school was operated out of the Methodist meeting house on Wellington Street. However, as communities became more established, purpose-built structures were quickly erected, often in frame or log and highly utilitarian in design. They were built to serve a pressing need – provision of space for educating children – and lacked any sort of specialized facilities or decorative architectural elements. These early schools were usually constructed by community members without any external input from architects or provincial education officials. The first official public school building in Lindsay was of this type, a frame schoolhouse erected at the northwestern corner of Kent Street West and Albert Street North in 1852.

By the second half of the century, school architecture had evolved rapidly, particularly in urban communities where there were funds to invest in new school buildings where industrialization and increasing in population were bringing new prosperity to many communities across the province. Financial security and additional resources, as well as a desire to emanate prosperity and permanence through a rush of civic enthusiasm, led to the construction of a range of new schools in up-to-date architectural styles.

The shift from utilitarian to more architectural design was assisted by two factors: the increasing number of architects in nineteenth century Ontario and the proliferation of pattern books across the province. On one hand, the increasing number of architects in the province in the second half of the

nineteenth century, both those who immigrated to the province and those born there, meant that professional design expertise was increasingly available for school design and communities and local school boards hired architects to design their schools in the latest styles. This was particularly the case in urban areas where more architects were located and where the new schools being constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century were larger than their rural counterparts which were usually one room. Pattern books, on the other hand, provided both knowledge and information to communities where the services of architects were not available, a particular boon for rural and remote communities, but also helped disseminate wider ideas related to technical aspects of design. The importance of pattern books for the development of school architecture in Ontario was much the same as for domestic and institutional architecture, where booms in pattern book availability also assisted in the wide spread of popular nineteenth century architectural styles across the province.

Increasingly, the provincial government was also becoming involved in school construction and design. Ontario's Department of Education was formed in 1876 out of the earlier Department of Public Instruction and, as the government body in charge of education across the province, was active in providing and promoting school design. As the education system across the province became more regularized, so too did the variety of rules, regulations and guidance provided to schools and school boards across Ontario, including regarding architecture. While local schools were not obligated to use the designs provided by the government, they were increasingly required to conform to a variety of regulations regarding school construction and safety and the pattern provided in these texts adhered to the standards set by the Department. These texts generally included a range of guidelines on different aspects of school, as well as example school designs and architectural details that local schools could incorporate into new construction.

One of the major developments in school design in the late nineteenth century was with regard to ideas around the integration of provisions related to health safety into educational architecture. The late nineteenth century had seen the rise of the social reform movement which looked to the health of children as one of its primary challenges, particularly in urban areas where the proliferation of slums and poor quality housing meant that many children were living in abject poverty with little or no access to running water or sanitary systems. Although children in poverty were a primary point of interest for this movement, the importance of children's health was a universal concern. Increased understanding of communicable disease and the impact of the environment on health meant that a variety of strategies and initiatives were developed to address this concern. Reformers of this period saw physical infrastructure as an important indicator and promotor of health through the

provision of clean air and comfortable temperatures. Children who lived in warm homes with good air circulation had better health and would grow up into better and more productive members of society. So too it was with schools where comfortable temperatures in both winter and summer and fresh air circulating throughout the buildings was seen to translate into a better atmosphere for learning and increased educational attainment. The extension of this emphasis on health was on increased sanitation through the provision of clean, preferably indoor, bathrooms and running water. Light was also a factor to increase the ability of students to see and read well and to promote good ocular health; indoor electrical lighting was developing around the turn of the century, but was not widely used under the 1920s meaning that light needed to come from the outdoors through substantial windows in classrooms with high ceilings. This new emphasis on health-related matters translated directly into architectural design choices, such as large windows, bigger classrooms, and provisions for central heating and plumbing. As a result, schools of this period were complex architectural forms with significant mechanical systems and the design of buildings needed to evolve to reflect and support these physical, as opposed to aesthetic concerns. By the time Alexandra School was designed in 1910, these ideas were well integrated into dialogue regarding school design and their use was nearly universal across new schools being designed and built both in Ontario and across North America.

While the health and well-being of children drove design choices around issues such as lighting and plumbing, safety was also a concern, particularly with regard to fire safety. Although concern around fire safety had been taken into account in school design since the late nineteenth century, one of the major drivers in developments in fire safety, in particular, was the 1908 fire at Lake View School in Collinwood, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland, where 172 children were killed, in large part, due to the architectural design of the building where small exits and hallways and limited point of egress made escaping from the building extremely difficult and a flammable wooden structure made the fire move quickly through the multi-storey late nineteenth century building. This was not the only school fire in turn of the century North America, but certainly one of the most devastating and well-publicized and its tragic outcome put concerns around safety once again to the fore. As a result, an increased awareness of fire safety and the importance of architectural measures to prevent fires from spreading and allowing children to quickly exit school buildings was quickly integrated to educational architectural design, in part by choice but also by new fire safety regulations for public buildings implemented in jurisdictions across North America throughout the next several decades. This awareness translated into certain very specific design features such as the integration of large hallways and unobstructed exits, the increased use of concrete as a fire barrier, particularly between floors, and a move away from

wood stoves as heat methods and towards centralized heating using alternative fuel sources. For urban schools, where there was more than one classroom, multiple stories and a large number of students, the need for considering architectural and physical issues with regard to fire safety was an even greater consideration due to the increased complexity of disaster response in a large structure.

Despite a substantial emphasis on practical elements, school design also evolved aesthetically in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, generally reflecting the prevalent design trends and popular styles of the day. Although this was also the case in rural areas with one and two-roomed school houses, it was at its most dramatic in urban areas where larger buildings and bigger budgets gave substantial scope for architectural experimentation and the integration of a range of design features. By the time Alexandra Public School was designed in 1910, the stylistic preference for educational architecture was the Beaux-Arts style and this is the style the new school was built in.

The Beaux-Arts style dominated Canadian school architecture throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. This style, which originated in France in the early nineteenth century, used an eclectic mix of exaggerated Classical forms on generally symmetrically massed structures to create a dynamic, expressive architectural form. While European examples of this style tended to be highly decorative, the adaption of the Beaux Arts in North America, where it enjoyed a period of popularity from about 1880 to 1920, was more subdued and focused instead on the use of a range of eclectically combined Classical stylistic motifs, heavy masonry and subtle polychromy. This style was used almost exclusively on public buildings, including government buildings, certain types of commercial buildings such as banks, institutional structures like theatres, and schools. This coincided with a period preference for Classical forms in architecture across building types, such as the Edwardian Classical style which evolved from and often overlapped stylistically with Beaux-Arts architecture but was also used in residential structures.

In school architecture, specifically those erected in urban areas, a number of key features emerged within the Beaux-Arts type. These schools were usually multiple storeys and composed with symmetrical massing, but often on H- or U-shaped plans, with a central hall and entrance, although they often included entrances on both the front and side elevations. Almost exclusively constructed in brick, they integrated a range of decorative elements that included a number of eclectic and exaggerated Classical elements, such as cornices along the roofline, columns and pilasters, pediments and substantial entrance surrounds. Most noticeably, they were characterized by large banks of tall sash windows; this feature derived from ideas surrounding ventilation and lighting, not from the Beaux-Arts style more broadly, but quickly became

associated with Beaux-Arts school design because of its prevalence across these types of structures.

These trends in school architecture and design, and conversations about them, can be amply demonstrated in the development of Alexandra Public School. The current school is a replacement for an older school serving the North Ward. Constructed in 1876, there is little evidence as to what the school looked like, but it was a two-storey white brick structure approximately on the location of the current building. It was likely constructed in a Victorian style. What is known about the building is that it was not of quality construction, something that was quickly recognized and was causing substantial problems by the early twentieth century; it was also substantially overcrowded, another safety concern. In 1902, at a meeting of the Lindsay Town Council, it was noted that:

The north ward school too is overcrowded at times. By seating it more closely room could be made. It was put up 25 or 30 years ago and very badly built. The walls are thin and in places one can see clear through the cracks in them. It is almost impossible to head them and they have no system of ventilation at all... This state of affairs should not exist in Lindsay where we have one of the finest teaching staffs in the province. The health of both teachers and pupils is endangered by such buildings.¹

Concerns about safety were foremost in the minds of local leaders contemplating the replacement of the old building, although overcrowding was also an issue; a second, temporary school had been established in an old Presbyterian church on Francis Street to deal with the additional students and it too had been deemed unsafe.

Discussions continued regarding the construction of a new school, and funding it, over the next several years, but the consistent focus was on the safety and size of the existing structure. By 1909, it was decided that the school was too unsafe for repairs to continue and it was to be razed and reconstructed. Construction on the new school – the present building – began in 1910 and the building was completed and opened in early 1911.

As with other school buildings constructed around this time, it was highly representative of the architectural ideas and priorities of the early twentieth century and their execution in urban areas. The school is, by virtue of its location, an urban school and its architecture is reflective of that. From its initial settlement in the 1820s, Lindsay had developed into a thriving regional

¹ “The People Will Be Asked for \$14,000 for a New School,” *The Watchman-Warder* June 19, 1902, 1.

centre throughout the nineteenth century. The designation of the community as the county seat alongside economic factors including the evolution into a key regional railway hub and the development of a substantial industrial base throughout the second half of the century meant that it rapid grew from an early mill site to an urban centre. by the turn of the century, around 7,000 people lived in the town, making it by far the largest settlement in then-Victoria County. In accordance with its growing urban station, the architectural fabric of the community developed throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century grew to reflect this, with a range of public buildings including schools, churches and commercial buildings designed to contribute to the urban fabric that was perceptibly different from the surrounding rural landscape.

The subject property clearly fits within this pattern of development, particularly when compared with the one-room school houses erected in nearby hamlets in Ops, Emily and Mariposa Townships. Its size alone designates it as an urban school, as does its massing and layout. The two-storey design is rarely found in smaller communities and massing around a central hall arranged with two wings clearly suggests an urban location. Its location, set on landscaped grounds, at the northwest corner of Sussex Street North and Francis Street further emphasized it massing and urban focussed design where it could be seen from both streets and in the intersection, where it is surrounded by the suburban development of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Lindsay.

The school itself displays a range of Beaux-Arts forms and is highly consistent with the trends in school architecture prevalent at the time of its construction. It contains entrances on both the front and side elevations, with a highly ornate protruding entrance bay which includes double doors with a rounded transom, oversized Corinthian columns stretching from the first to second floors, and a substantial oriel window on the second storey. Additional Classical features include: the rusticated brick foundation and quoins; coursing; radiating polychromatic voussoirs and keystones; concrete lintels and lug sills; and the entablature with dog-tooth coursing. The school is particularly notable for its parapet roof which sets it apart from other Lindsay schools built around the same period and serves to emphasize the massing bays of the school overall. Its polychromatic appearance is highly typical of Beaux-Arts style schools which were usually executed in red brick, like the subject school, and embellished with cast concrete or buff brick decorative elements, as this building is. Similarly, its large banks of windows are also highly typical of this architectural type and are demonstrative of the wider conversations around health and safety that informed school design. The wide hallways and large classrooms on the interior of the school are also consistent with the emphasis

on health and safety to provide space, light, and ventilation to students and teachers.

A report on the architecture of the new school was made in the Lindsay Watchman-Warder in February 1911 as the school was nearing completion and a group from the local school board and the Town took an inspection tour. Of the perceptions of the school, the newspaper reported:

The school, having been built on a knoll, stands out prominently and, at a distance or even close range, presents a very creditable appearance and one could hardly imagine anything detrimental could be said.... Generally speaking, the building is a first-class one from top to bottom.²

The author went on to note the sanitary water system, updated heaters and radiators, and classrooms that were “light, bright and airy.” The practical and safety considerations of the schools were clearly recognized at the time, but its architectural design was discussed very little except for general observations regarding its pleasing appearance; this was very typical of descriptions of school architecture at this time which almost invariably emphasized the practical over the aesthetic despite the prevailing use of the Beaux-Arts style at the time.

There were four Beaux Arts schools constructed in Lindsay around the turn of the century, and all four remain extant. The earliest of these, Queen Victoria Public School on John Street, was constructed between 1893 and 1894 while the others were constructed in the early 1910s: Central Public School between 1910 and 1911, King Albert Public School in 1913 and the subject property between 1910 and 1911. Central Public School and Alexandra Public School were constructed at the same time and often discussed and reported on together. They all display similar features, although Queen Victoria is the least similar of the four, likely due to its much earlier date of construction at a time when Victorian styles were transitioning into Edwardian ones. Like Alexandra Public School, the other three schools implemented various aspects of Classical design, including rustication, cornices, and columns, and are clear examples of this stylistic type. The subject property is the most ornate of these four examples but provides a highly representative example of how this building type was executed in Lindsay around the turn of the twentieth century.

Historical and Associative Value

65 Sussex Street West has historical and associative value in its role as a local public school. Opening in 1911, the school was constructed as part of a general upgrade of education facilities in Lindsay in the early twentieth century as part

² “Two New Schools Are Satisfactory,” *The Watchman-Warder* February 16, 1911, 1.

of an expansion of the education system and growth in public school pupils. It yields information regarding the development of education in Lindsay throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Lindsay as a long-standing public elementary school in the community, serving the suburban North Ward of the town. The building is also believed to reflect the work of Toronto-area architect James Ellis who designed and executed a substantial number of educational facilities in the Beaux-Arts throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including in central and eastern Ontario.

Education evolved substantially through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries both in Lindsay and across Ontario. Formal education in Ontario, then Upper Canada, reached back to the late eighteenth century with the passage of the Schools Act in 1799 which established the ability create schools and requirements for teacher certification. In this early period, most schools were fee-paying or associated with religious organizations, or both, meaning that education was very much not universally accessible to children across the province. The first tuition free, non-denominational school, known as a common school, opened in Niagara in 1804, but the requirement to pay tuition for schooling remained for much of the first half of the nineteenth century, and participation in education remained low because of it. Most students in the early century were from upper and upper middle class background, located in urban areas and attending fee-paying schools.

Nevertheless, the provincial government increasingly took interest in ensuring that education was provided to communities across the province. The early eighteenth century saw a significant growth in population in the province, including more families, in part due to the influx of United Empire Loyalists in the late eighteenth century, in combination with migration from Britain and Ireland. By 1816, the Common Schools Act had been passed which created school boards and enabled local communities to build schools and hire teachers through local trustee, effectively enabling the development of local, municipally-led education efforts with rules and standards enforced by the province. 1841 saw the passage of the Education Act which created a provincial superintendent to oversee education across Ontario and to allow municipalities to collect taxes from the parents of school aged children to help support schools, in addition to both government grants and tuition. In 1846, a new version of the Common Schools Act was passed which allowed municipalities to tax their entire tax base to fund school and, crucially, to make schools free, although fees were still allowed to be charged. By 1871, the School Act was passed, mandating universal free education and, by extension, compulsory attendance now that fees were no longer an issue.

By the middle of the century, access to education was vastly improved across the province, including in rural areas and newer communities, such as Lindsay,

which were quickly developing during this period as a result of these changes made at the provincial level and the growing recognition that the education of children across the province was an important area of concern for the provincial government. Communities such as Lindsay which were rapidly developing and growing as a result of increased settlement, urbanization and industrialization were in the middle between rural communities, where limited population growth and density made the provision of schooling challenging, and urban communities where many schools had already developed in this period and, for these mid-sized communities, schools needed to grow and develop very rapidly to serve a growing urban population.

The first known common school in Lindsay opened in about 1841 in the Methodist meeting house on Wellington Street. Provisions for education in the community since its informal establishment at the end of the 1820s are not fully known but it is likely that in Lindsay, as elsewhere, classes were held informally in private homes and in association with religious instruction through Sunday schools. This first structure was acknowledged as a temporary location; while classes were taught there during the week, the Methodists continued to hold their meetings in the building on Sundays. By 1852, however, Lindsay had grown substantially and it was decided that a purpose built school was now required, particularly given the ability of local government to tax to fund education. This was a frame school and there is little known about what it looked like, but it was located at the corner of Kent Street West and Albert Street North.

The 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s in Lindsay were a time of massive growth. The arrival of the railway in 1857, as well as the establishment of Victoria County with Lindsay as its administrative centre, attracted new businesses and residents to the community throughout these decades and the population boomed, making the need for new schools with space for more children imperative. Lindsay was quickly becoming a much more urban centre with a concentrated main street along Kent Street West, rebuilt in 1861 after a fire that destroyed much of the older building stock, and industrial establishment including lumber, shingle and grist mills as well as a tannery, foundry, carriage and wagon manufacturers and a brewery. By 1871, the population of the town had reached just over 4 000 residents, in just over forty years of settlement, and continued to grow into the early twentieth century.

In 1863, a new school was constructed at the site on Kent Street, known as the Lindsay Union School as it combined both common and grammar school streams into a single building; this included secondary instruction to reflect Lindsay's growing stature as the county seat and the demands of its citizens for good and comprehensive education for their children. This was a substantial structure and housed all of the grades in a range of classrooms. A new multi-roomed school certainly marked Lindsay out as an urban centre

compared to the communities in the surrounding rural areas where one-roomed school houses still predominated. At the same time, schooling provisions were being made for Lindsay's growing suburban areas with the erection of new ward schools, both due to population increases and new development as well as the introduction of compulsory school attendance across the province in 1871. In 1865, a new school was opened on John Street for the East Ward School, serving the area east of the Scugog River, with a school for the south ward following in 1871. The first school for this area of Lindsay, by this time known as the North Ward was erected in 1876. At the same time, the local school board were in the process of establishing a dedicated secondary school for older students and, in 1889, Lindsay Collegiate Institute opened at the corner of Kent Street West and Adelaide Street North, adjacent to the Union School.

The new North Ward School was intended to serve the growing suburban area in the north end of Lindsay. Early neighbourhoods in Lindsay had formed near Kent Street West and in the area near the Scugog River, but by the second half of the nineteenth century, had spread north to the area where the school is located. This was an area that was primarily occupied by residential structures; with the exception of the County Courthouse, now Kawartha Lakes City Hall, the County Gaol, and, in the late nineteenth century, a Methodist Church, now Cambridge Street United Church, and a Presbyterian Church, which was replaced by St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on William Street North between 1886 and 1887. The 1875 Bird's Eye View Map, published a year prior to the construction of the new school, shows a growing suburban area. Although not as densely populated as other residential areas of the community, there were increasing number of new homes being constructed in this areas and school aged children who required accommodation. The new school opened in 1876, with four classrooms over two storeys and was quickly at capacity. By 1886, just ten years after it was built, the school was at capacity and the school board made the decision to open an overflow school in the Presbyterian church on Francis Street as the congregation there was in the process of erecting a new structure.

By the turn of the century, Lindsay was well-served by four public elementary and one secondary school, along with the overflow school on Francis Street, in addition to facilities for Catholic students at St. Dominic's School and the convent school run by the Sister of St. Joseph on Russell Street East. The provision of good quality, free public education was an important concern at this time both in Lindsay and throughout Ontario for its role in shaping children into the morally-upstanding and hardworking citizens of tomorrow; not only was school seen as providing important technical skills, it was also viewed as a central social pillar within a community and having good schools for children to attend and learn was a substantial focus for leaders at the local

and provincial level. However, the population of the community continued to increase as Lindsay had grown into both a regional railway hub and industrial centre. In particular, the closing decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth saw the beginnings of a substantial rural exodus in many areas of the province, including much of Kawartha Lakes as the children of farmers decided to seek jobs in town and the lumber industry, which had driven the rural economy in many part of the region, collapsed, leading to more people seeking jobs in urban communities. At the same time, attendance at schools in urban centres was relatively high and continued to grow in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as more parents obeyed with the requirement to send their children to school full time. Once again, Lindsay and its school trustees needed to face the reality of needing to provide more space for its growing student population.

At the same time, changes were happening in Ontario across the province. In particular, while local school boards still retained substantial control over operations, the province continued to regularize and standardize educational provisions. Some of these changes were curricular. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw a broadening and diversification of the curriculum through the introduction of additional studies in areas such as art, science, and physical education and health, particularly for older students; some of these subjects required dedicated and specialized spaces, or at minimum, space of some variety to undertake these activities. Kindergarten was also introduced during this time; the first public kindergarten was opened in Toronto in 1883 and gradually spread throughout urban areas of the province by 1900, although it was by no means universal until the second half of the twentieth century. The education of teachers was also regularized to ensure that teachers had a basic level of professional qualification before entering into the classroom and to normalize standard pedagogical methods and subject matter. More specifically related to the physical plant of schooling, the turn-of-the-century saw also increased requirements at a provincial level for specific building standards, particularly with regard to health and safety issues such as ventilation, lighting, heating and exits and egress, to ensure that students were attending safe and healthy schools that were conducive to learning. More mundane things were also required, such as storage space for the increasing number of textbooks and other learning resources required for schooling.

In Lindsay, several of the older schools, including the North Ward School, were falling into a state of poor repair and were in desperate need of upgrades or replacement; they were also not suitable for the needs of students, teachers and the local school board to delivery the evolving school program. Concerns about the safety of the central, north and south ward schools had been raised as early as 1902 and reconstruction was discussed as early as that date as the preferred option. This was not an uncommon problem across Ontario where

many Victorian schools were not sufficient for the modernization of education occurring at this period and also had substantial physical issues, whether due to poor initial construction or the increasing cost of repairs.

The North Ward school was identified as having a number of substantial problems, both with regard to its construction and its size. The building quality was poor, and is believed to have been since its initial construction, and by the early twentieth century was falling apart. Similarly, both the main school and its outpost in the Presbyterian church on Francis Street were overcrowded to the extent that they were unsafe. By 1902, a design for a new school was drawn up by Toronto-area architect J.F. Brown and presented to Council, along with a deputation from the Board for funds noting that both buildings were too small, unsafe, and extremely difficult to heat and that it would be both better and more economical to tear them down and replace them with a single larger building that could accommodate all of the North Ward's children than to continually make costly repairs. Ultimately, funds were not allocated for this purpose and Brown's design never erected, but, by 1909, the issue has arisen again when architect N.R. Darrach of St. Thomas was commissioned by the Board to prepare a report of four of Lindsay's five public schools; this did not include the East Ward School which had already been replaced in 1893 with a larger structure. Like Brown, Darrach concluded that the North Ward School and the Francis Street building should be torn down and replaced with a modern structure. By 1910, the Council and local voters agreed, with a favourable vote for building – and funding – new school construction, both for the new North Ward School, as well as a replacement for the Union School on Kent Street.

Building began in 1910 and continued into 1911 with the new school finally opening in spring 1911. It was named after Queen Alexandra, the wife and consort of King Edward II. The overflow school on Francis Street was closed and all of the North Ward students moved into the new building. From this time, the school served the elementary population of the area and continues to do so, although, in 1955, it was converted into a kindergarten to grade 6 school with the conversion of Central Public School into a senior school where all Lindsay's grade 7 and 8 students attended. In this capacity, then, as now, the structure was and remains a central community space and important educational facility in the historic north end of Lindsay.

In addition to its historical value in the history of education in Lindsay, the school is also reflective of the educational architecture of Toronto-area architect James Ellis whose architectural practice specialized in school architecture. Ellis was born in Grey County in 1856 and began his architectural career in the Meaford area before moving to Toronto in the 1880s where he lived for the majority of his career. Throughout several partnerships between 1890 and 1927, he was a prolific designer and developed in an acknowledged

and recognized expert in educational design. While Ellis was based in Toronto, and executed a large number of commissions in the City particularly in the Junction, his practice was not fully concentrated in one area because of his specialization in school design. Ellis was commissioned by school boards across the country to design both elementary and high schools and his designs can be found across southern and central Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Ellis is believed to be the architect of this building. He has been confirmed as the architect of Central Senior Public School in Lindsay, which was constructed at the same time as the subject property. The tender for both schools appeared in the *Canadian Contract Record* on May 4, 1910 and lists the architectural firm for the project as Ellis and Connery, Ellis' firm with his partner William Connery. It appears that the two schools were tendered, designed and constructed as a single project and it can be assumed that Ellis designed both. Further, an article in the *Lindsay Post* in 1911 regarding the two new schools alludes to Ellis being the architect of both.

Between 1890 and 1927, Ellis designed approximately 40 schools, an astonishing number for a relatively small architectural practice, as well as numerous additions and auxiliary structures for other school buildings. Although his early schools show a variety of form, by about 1910 he had fully embraced the Beaux-Arts style and a consistent use of formal symmetry and Classical architectural elements can be seen across his school commissions. The majority of these commissions were executed in urban areas and followed a similar design, usually with two storeys and multiple classrooms organized around a central hall. Particularly in the twentieth, Ellis' designs were generally very similar to each other with shared architectural elements and Alexandra Public School is typical of his designs.

To illustrate these similarities, it helps to compare the subject properties to other commissions executed by Ellis in his Beaux-Arts period. The closest commission of Ellis', geographically, to the subject property is Central Senior Public School which was built concurrently with the subject property. Both schools integrate the formal symmetry that is characteristic of Ellis' work along with exaggerated Classical elements and structural polychromy. Many of Ellis' commissions included dramatic Classical entrances and the Lindsay schools are no exception with Central Senior exhibiting moulded entrance surrounds and Alexandra including oversized Corinthian columns and large oriel window above the double doors. They include similar coursing and entablatures and, like effectively all Beaux-Arts schools, large banks of windows on both storeys. Interestingly, Alexandra Public School is the more unique of the two Lindsay schools within Ellis' portfolio, as Ellis designed a number of schools nearly identical to Central Public School around this period. Other commissions, however, do have similar elements as executed at the subject property,

notably the highly ornate Oshawa High School (1909-1910) which included similar Corinthian pilasters surmounted on a rusticated brick foundation.

Contextual Value

65 Sussex Street North has cultural heritage value as part of the historic landscape of Lindsay's historic North Ward which includes a substantial collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture. The area is primarily residential and the school contributes to its suburban character as the neighbourhood school which was constructed at around the same time as a substantial portion of the surrounding houses. The property is also a local landmark as a long-standing public school in Lindsay and one of the primary institutional structures in the town's historic north end.

Lindsay initially developed around Kent Street and the area near the Scugog River and the original mill site in that area but, by the second half of the nineteenth century, was rapidly expanding northwards. Unlike the commercial and industrial areas that developed in conjunction with residential areas in the older part of the town, this area was primarily residential. Grid pattern blocks were established north of Kent Street in the mid-century and houses began to be constructed in this area. In particular, the area became to attract moneyed inhabitants of Lindsay who established large homes on Bond Street, then Waverly Avenue, and its surrounding streets. Smaller houses were constructed as well, evolving a diverse suburban landscape to the north of downtown Lindsay. Development continued in the early decades of the twentieth century with new homes in the Edwardian and Revival styles erected throughout this area, giving it a well-established and mature suburban character.

A number of institutional structures were also erected in the northern part of the town. Foremost among these was the Victoria County Courthouse and Gaol, constructed in 1863 on Francis Street to the west of the subject properties. Two churches were also built in this area: a Methodist church on Cambridge Street North in 1871 and a Presbyterian Church on Francis Street in 1863. A school, the predecessor of the current structure, was erected in 1876. At present, the Presbyterian church has been demolished and the original school replaced with the subject building but the other institutional structures remain in situ, although the courthouse and gaol have been converted to Kawartha Lakes City Hall and a community museum, respectively.

In this context, the subject property is one of the key institutional buildings of this area and supports and maintains its suburban character. Schools such as this one were constructed in neighbourhoods across the province to serve local children and provided a nucleus of the suburban community. Similarly, the school is historically linked to its surroundings as part of the development of this area of Lindsay between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when the community expanded northwards into this area. It is surrounded by

homes of a slightly older and similar vintage and is consistent in age and style to its contemporary properties.

The property is also a local landmark as the school serving Lindsay's historic north ward. The school has been in continuous operation since 1911 and is prominently placed in a suburban neighbourhood where the vast majority of the surrounding structures are residential. Despite its visual coherence with the surrounding residential area, its size and function set it apart from its neighbours. It can be seen from three of the surrounding streets – Colborne Street West, Sussex Street North and Francis Street – and is a major point of visual interest in the community. The building was recognized at the time of its construction as a key institutional structure in the community and is widely recognized as such to the present day.

Summary of Reasons for Designation

The short statement of reasons for designation and the description of the heritage attributes of the property, along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Brief, constitute the Reasons for Designation required under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Short Statement of Reasons for Designation

Design and Physical Value

65 Sussex Street North has cultural heritage value as a representative example of Beaux-Arts educational architecture in Lindsay. The building, which was constructed between 1910 and 1911 as a replacement for the older north ward public school, demonstrates the key characteristics of Beaux-Arts educational design as executed in urban areas, including symmetrical massing with a central hall, large banks of windows on upper and lower storeys, heavy cornices and Classical design elements. The school is particularly notable for its Classical entrance surround with oversized Corinthian columns and highly formalized symmetry which is unique amongst early twentieth century schools in Lindsay. The school is also demonstrative of trends in educational architecture which developed and matured in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century emphasizing new ideas regarding hygiene, ventilation, and safety incorporated into school design.

Historical and Associative Value

65 Sussex Street North has historical and associative value in its role as a local public school. Opening in 1911, the school was constructed as part of a general upgrade of educational facilities in Lindsay in the early twentieth century as part of an expansion of the education system and growth in public school pupils. It yields information regarding the development of education in Lindsay throughout the twentieth century. The building is also believed to reflect the work of Toronto-area architect James Ellis who designed and executed a substantial number of educational facilities in the Beaux-Arts throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including in central and eastern Ontario.

Contextual Value

65 Sussex Street North has cultural heritage value as part of the historic landscape of the northern part of Lindsay which includes a substantial collection of architecture dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The majority of the architecture in this area is residential and the school is the primary institutional feature in the area, supporting its character as a residential area of the community. The property is also a local landmark as a longstanding public school in the north ward of Lindsay.

Summary of Heritage Attributes to be Designated

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes and apply to all elevations, unless otherwise specified, and the roof including: all façades, entrances, windows, chimneys, and trim, together with construction materials of wood, brick, stone, stucco, concrete, plaster parging, metal, glazing, their related building techniques and landscape features.

Design and Physical Attributes

The design and physical attributes support the value of the property as an representative example of an early twentieth century Beaux-Arts school in Lindsay.

- Two-storey red brick construction
- T-shaped plan
- Symmetrical massing
- Projecting front bay including:
 - Central entrance with double doors
 - Rounded transom
 - Oriel window
 - Corinthian columns
 - Raised brickwork
 - Quoins
- Flat roof
- Chimney
- Parapet
- Cornice and entablature
- Coursing
- Rusticated foundation
- Quoins
- Fenestration including:
 - Banks of classroom windows
 - Rounded windows
 - Basement windows
 - Radiating polychromatic voussoirs
 - Lintels
 - Lugsills
- Entrances including:
 - Double doors
 - Rounded tansoms
 - Overhangs
 - Brackets
- Polychromatic decorative elements

Historical and Associative Attributes

The historical and associative attributes support the historical value of the property as a local public school which has remained in operation since the early twentieth century.

- Association with the history of education in Lindsay

Contextual Attributes

The contextual attributes of the property support the value of the property as a local landmark and contributing feature to the historic suburban landscape of Lindsay's historic North Ward.

- Location on Sussex Street North between Colborne Street West and Francis Street
- Orientation towards Sussex Street North
- Views of the property from Sussex Street North, Colborne Street West and Francis Street
- Views of the surrounding historic properties from the school and grounds

Images



Historic Postcard



Alexandra Public School, c. 1940







Bibliography

Axelrod, Paul. *The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800-1914*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

Canadian Contract Record. 1890-1933.

Capon, Alan. *Historic Lindsay*. Belleville: Mika Publishing, 1974.

Danylewycz, Marta and Alison Prentice. "Teachers' Work: Changing Patterns and Perceptions in the Emerging School Systems of Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Central Canada." *Labour/Le Travailleur* 17 (1986): 59-82.

Gidney, R.D. *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Henry, Neil. *Complete Storey of the Collinwood School Disaster and How Such Horrors Can Be Prevented*. Cleveland: N.G. Hamilton Publishing, 1908.

Hodgins, J. George. *Hints and Suggestions on School Architecture and Hygiene*. Toronto: Ontario Department of Education, 1886.

Houston, Susan E. and Alison Prentice. *Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth-Century Ontario*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.

Kirkconnell, Watson. *County of Victoria: Centennial History*. 2nd edition. Lindsay: County of Victoria Council, 1967.

Johnson, Dana. *Going to School in Ontario: The Urban Primary School, 1850-1930* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1983).

Lindsay Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee. *"Bless These Walls": Lindsay's Heritage*. Lindsay: Blewett Printing, 1999.

Lindsay Post. 1908-1914.

Lindsay Watchman-Warder. 1899-1915.

O'Connor, Vern. *Lindsay's Roots: Past and Present*. Lindsay: 1985.

Prentice, Alison. *The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada*. University of Toronto Press, 1977.

Robinson, Ralph. *Educating Victoria County: A Local History of Public Education*. Lindsay: Tri-M Publishing, 1987.

Stamp, Robert. *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982.

Valverde, Mariana. *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.