

P.O. Box 1749 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 8.1

Halifax Regional Council

July 21, 2020

September 22, 2020

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

For Lois Yorke, Chair, Heritage Advisory Committee

DATE: July 6, 2020

SUBJECT: Case H00480: Request to Include 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax in the

Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality

ORIGIN

June 25, 2020 special meeting of the Heritage Advisory Committee, Item 9.1.3.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Heritage Property Act

s. 14(1) A heritage advisory committee may recommend to the municipality that a building, public building interior, streetscape, cultural landscape or area be registered as a municipal heritage property in the municipal registry of heritage property.

HRM By-law No. H-200 - Heritage Property By-law

- 4. The [Heritage Advisory] Committee shall, within the time limits prescribed by Council or the [Heritage Property] Act, advise the Region respecting:
 - (a) the inclusion of buildings, public building interiors, streetscapes, cultural landscapes or areas in the Registry.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. Set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the inclusion of 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax, as shown on Map 1 of the May 11, 2020 staff report, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality; and
- 2. Approve the request to include 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax, as shown on Map 1, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality as a municipal heritage property.

BACKGROUND

At the June 25, 2020 special meeting of the Heritage Advisory Committee, the Committee received a staff recommendation report dated May 11, 2020, and received a staff presentation on Case H00480. Staff noted that should the Committee award the property a total score of fifty (50) points or more for the

identified properties, out of a possible one-hundred (100), than the staff recommendation is that the Committee recommend the property for registration by Halifax Regional Council.

For additional background information on this item, refer to the staff report dated May 11, 2020 (Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION

At the June 25, 2020 special meeting, following the presentation from staff, the Committee evaluated the proposed heritage property using the Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings in HRM. The Committee applied the following scores:

Criterion	Score Awarded
1. Age	9
2B. Important, Unique Architectural Style, or Highly	10
Representative of an Era	
3. Significance of Architect/Builder	0
4A. Architectural Merit: Construction Type	3
4B. Architectural Merit: Style	5
5. Architectural Integrity	13
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10
Total	50

Based on this evaluation, the Committee approved a motion recommending that Halifax Regional Council schedule a heritage hearing for the matter, and to approve the registration to Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality.

For further discussion on the heritage registration evaluation criteria as it relates to this application, refer to the staff report dated May 11, 2020 (Attachment 1) and the Scoring Summary for Heritage Buildings (Attachment 2).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Refer to the staff report dated May 11, 2020.

RISK CONSIDERATION

Refer to the staff report dated May 11, 2020.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Meetings of the Heritage Advisory Committee are open to public attendance and members of the public are permitted to submit correspondence and petitions to be circulated to the Committee. The agenda, reports, and minutes of the Heritage Advisory Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

For further information on Community Engagement as it relates to this item, refer to the staff report dated May 11, 2020.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Refer to the staff report dated May 11, 2020.

July 21, 2020

ALTERNATIVES

The Committee did not discuss alternatives. Refer to the staff report dated May 11, 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Staff Recommendation Report dated May 11, 2020

Attachment 2 – Scoring Summary for Heritage Buildings

If the report is released to the public, a copy can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Simon Ross-Siegel, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk, 902.490.6519



P.O. Box 1749 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3A5 Canada

> Item No. 9.1.3 Heritage Advisory Committee June 25, 2020

TO: Chair and Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee

-Original Signed-

SUBMITTED BY:

Kelly Denty, Director of Planning and Development

-Original Signed-

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 11, 2020

SUBJECT: Case H00480: Request to Include 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax in the Registry

of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality

ORIGIN

Application by the property owners, Bruno Ruffinengo and Karen Schnare

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Heritage Property Act

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend that Regional Council:

- 1. Set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the inclusion of 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax, as shown on Map 1, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality; and
- 2. Approve the request to include 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax, as shown on Map 1, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality as a municipal heritage property.

BACKGROUND

In November 2019, Bruno Ruffinengo and Karen Schnare applied to include their property at 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax (see Map 1) in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. The subject property contains a two-storey dwelling that is emblematic of the working-and-middle-class neighbourhood that formed in North End Halifax near the turn of the twentieth century. While the dwelling's exact construction date is unclear, research suggests it was constructed between 1900 and 1905. The dwelling exhibits several characteristics associated with the Halifax Box style, which is a local variation of Late Victorian Plain architecture.

More recently, the house has become known as the "Open Mic House" and has hosted live music events each week from 2008 to 2016 featuring many well-known Nova Scotian musicians. In 2015 the Coast named the house the best open mic venue in Halifax and it was officially recognized by the Nova Scotia Legislature in 2013 for its contributions to the Halifax cultural sector (see Attachment B).

This application is being considered in accordance with Sections 14 (Recommendation as municipal heritage property) and 15 (Registration as municipal heritage property) of the *Heritage Property Act*.

HRM's Heritage Property Program

The purpose of the HRM Heritage Property Program is to help protect and conserve significant heritage resources including buildings, streetscapes, sites, areas, and conservation districts that reflect the rich heritage found in local communities throughout HRM. One of the principal aims of the Heritage Property Program is to recognize significant heritage resources through the inclusion of properties into the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties.

Under the Heritage Property Program, all registration applications for heritage buildings are evaluated by the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) using "The Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings in Halifax Regional Municipality" (Attachment A).

The Evaluation Criteria for scoring a property and building are broken down into six categories as follows:

Criterion	Highest Possible Score
1. Age	25
2. Historical or Architectural Importance	20
3. Significance of Architect/Builder	10
4. Architectural Merit: Construction type and Style	20
5. Architectural Integrity	15
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10
Total	100

Should the HAC score a property with more than 50 points, a positive recommendation will be forwarded to Regional Council. If the property does not score more than 50 points, then the report will not be forwarded to Regional Council.

Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act

HRM's Heritage Property Program receives its authority from the Heritage Property Act which seeks:

"...to provide for the identification, designation, preservation, conservation, protection and rehabilitation of buildings, public-building interiors, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, in both urban and rural areas, and to encourage their continued use."

Sections 14(2) and 15(1) under the *Heritage Property Act* require that notice of recommendation is given to the property owner at least thirty (30) days prior to any Council decision to include the property in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. The property owner is also given an opportunity to address Council before they make a decision on the registration request. Should a positive recommendation be forwarded to Council, heritage staff will ensure the required notices are sent to the owners and deposited at the Registry of Deeds.

DISCUSSION

Heritage registration applications are evaluated by the HAC relative to six evaluation criteria as outlined previously, and described in greater detail in Attachment A. To assist the HAC in their evaluation and scoring, staff offer the following comments based on a historical research report (Attachment B). The historical research in support of this application has been undertaken by an experienced research consultant.

1. Age:

The exact construction date of the dwelling at 2539 Agricola Street is unclear, though ancillary documentation provides a reliable estimate: in 1902, the parcel was conveyed from Edward Foley to William and Minnie Matheson and the Halifax City Directory from 1905 lists Mr. Oxner (an Intercolonial Railway worker) and Joseph Locke (a labourer) as the property's first occupants. This documentation suggests that the property was likely constructed sometime between 1900 and 1905.



Figure 1: 2539 Agricola Street in 2020

Due to the age of the dwelling, staff recommend a score of 9 points.

2. Historical OR Architectural Importance:

Important/Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

In the late 1800s, unprecedented numbers of homes were needed to meet the city's growing population, particularly those from the middle-and-working classes. At the same time, the Late Victorian Plain architectural style (1880 to 1915) was a popular design framework for residential buildings. These parallel trends led to the emergence of the Halifax Box style, which was built in such large numbers that it helped define the character of many Halifax neighbourhoods. This section of Agricola Street (Map 1) once housed several Halifax Box dwellings, though today, 2539 Agricola Street is the best surviving example.

The dwelling is a good representation of the Halifax Box style of dwelling, as seen from its two-storey box shape with bay window, asymmetrical façade, wood shingles and modest detailing. This architectural style is however, quite prevalent in North End Halifax and there are many other examples on nearby streets.

Due to its representation of the Halifax Box style and Late Victorian Plain architecture, staff recommend a score between 1 and 10 points for architectural importance.

3. Significance of Architect or Builder:

Research was unable to uncover the architect or builder of 2539 Agricola Street. The Halifax Box style was very popular at the turn of the twentieth century, particularly amongst the middle class. Numerous companies advertised themselves as all-in-one architects and builders, and often purchased lots and developed Halifax Box dwellings, both on contract and speculation. It appears likely that a large local construction company built the existing dwelling, though no further details were discovered.

Due to the uncertainty surrounding the dwelling's architect or builder, staff recommend a score of 0 points.

4. Architectural Merit:

Construction type or building technology

The dwelling at 2539 Agricola Street reflects the construction practices associated with the Halifax Box style. The dwelling is two-storeys tall, wood framed and shingled, finished with a flat roof, and minimally decorated. The dwelling also displays a two-storey front bay, a common feature of Halifax Box architecture. Based on photos, staff estimate that this dwelling is likely a reasonably early, yet common, example of wood platform framing in Halifax.¹ Platform framed homes utilize shorter vertical studs that are interrupted by each level of the floor and originated in the late-nineteenth century.

Due to the common nature of the construction method and materials, staff recommend a score between 1 and 3 points for construction type.

Style

The dwelling embodies the qualities of the Halifax Box style, which is a local variant of Late-Victorian Plain architecture. This style is evident due to its box shape, two-storey height, flat (or nearly flat) roof, asymmetrical front façade, and the presence of a two-storey bay window (which can vary in the quality of decoration). The property's character defining elements are derived from the dwelling's architectural elements associated with the Halifax Box style. These include:

- Two-storey, wooden-frame box structure;
- Wooden shingle siding;
- Flat roof;
- Two-storey bay window;
- Uniform, decorative cornice and bracketing integrated into the roofline and bay window; and
- Wooden single-hung windows.

The northern portion of Agricola Street was significantly damaged during the 1917 Halifax Explosion, but the dwelling at 2539 Agricola Street, along with several others, survived. Photographs from this era show that the Halifax Box style was commonplace along Agricola Street, though most of the Box dwellings that survived the explosion have since been demolished.

When looking at the Halifax Box style, there are several prime examples on the surrounding streets that were constructed for working class residents in the early 1900s (see Attachment B; page 8). The unique aspect of the subject property is its placement on Agricola Street which is heightened by style's significant decline on this streetscape and the demolition of neighbouring buildings from that era.

Due to the dwelling's modestly rare style within the streetscape, staff recommend a score between 1 and 6 points.

¹ Staff could not conduct a visual inspection of the property, as this report was prepared during the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussion on style and construction method in this case is based on photographic evidence.

5. Architectural Integrity:

The dwelling at 2539 Agricola Street is in sound condition and maintains much of its original exterior materials and appearance. Records show that a skylight was added to the dwelling in 1907 and a medium sized addition was added between 1914 and 1918 which is partially visible from the public right-of-way (see Figure 2). Since 1918, the only notable change to the property's exterior appearance involves updated windows.

Due to its high degree of integrity, staff recommend a score between 11 and 15 points.

Figure 2: The 1918 Addition in 2020

6. Relationship to Surrounding Area:

Agricola Street is an area in transition; it is one of the city's most vibrant commercial streets, with commercial activity accelerating over the past decade. While the street remains picturesque, the old building stock is disappearing, and Agricola Street currently has no municipally registered heritage properties, though its southern portion is identified as a potential future heritage conservation district.

2539 Agricola Street carries some historic and architectural significance. It provides a valuable connection to Agricola Street's early transformation from greenfield to residential area, pre-Explosion streetscape, and the working-and-middle-class culture that existed in this area for over a century. The existing dwelling reinforces the street's traditional building topology and rooflines, and it complements the street's remaining vernacular dwellings; it also illustrates the Halifax Box style, which is unique to the municipality, and was once prominent along the street.

Due to the property's strong connection to its surrounding area, staff recommend a score between 6 and 10 points.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with advertising and processing this application can be accommodated within the approved 2020/21 operating budget for C340 – Social and Heritage Policy.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this Report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process for a heritage registration is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy. The level of community engagement was information sharing achieved through public access to the required Heritage Advisory Committee meeting. As a provision of the *Heritage Property Act*, no registration of a municipal heritage property shall take place until Regional Council has given the owner of the property an opportunity to be heard.

There are no significant environmental implications associated with the recommendations in this Report.

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ALTERNATIVE

 The Heritage Advisory Committee may choose to reject the application to include 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. In doing so, the application will not proceed to Regional Council for consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

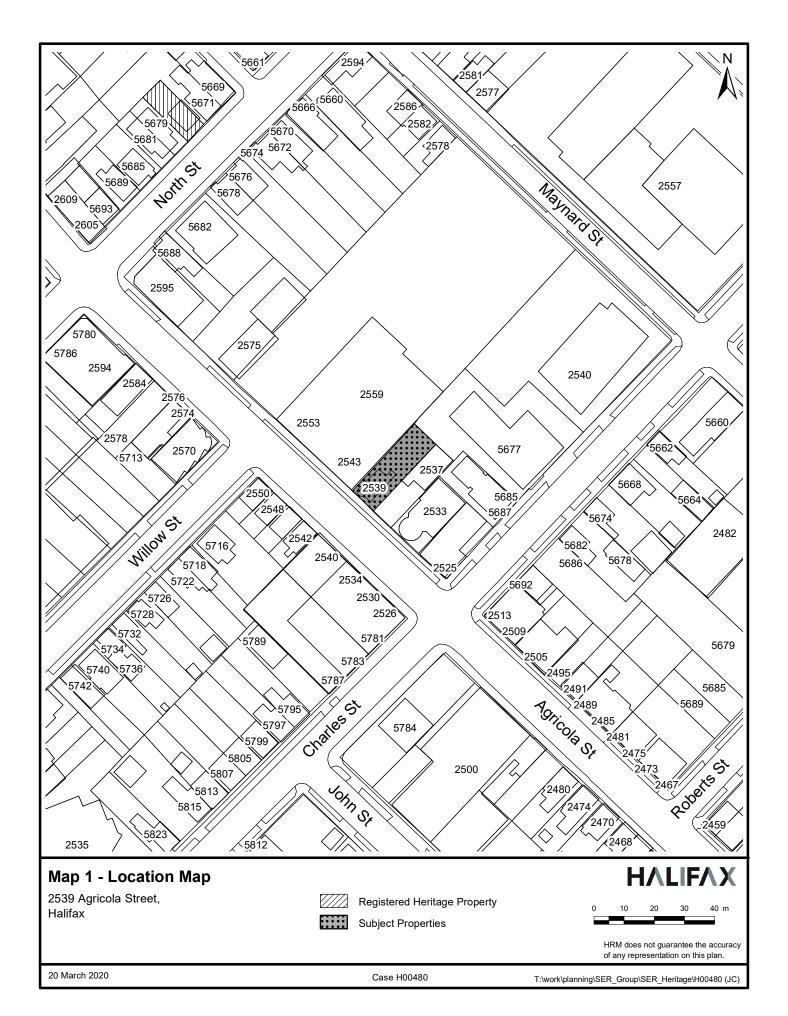
Map 1: Location Map

Attachment A: Evaluation Criteria

Attachment B: Historical Research Report

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Jesse Morton, Planner II, 902.490.4844



Attachment A



HERITAGE PROPERTY PROGRAM

EVALUATION CRITERIA

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION OF <u>HERITAGE BUILDINGS</u> (Revised 2004)

1. AGE

Age is probably the single most important factor in the popular understanding of the heritage value of buildings. The following age categories are based on local, national and international occasions that may be considered to have defined the character of what is how the Halifax Regional Municipality and its architecture.

Date of Construction	Points	Timeline
1749 - 1785	25	Halifax Garrison Town to the Loyalist migration
1786 - 1830	20	Boom period following construction of Shubenacadie Canal
1831 - 1867	16	From Boom to Confederation
1868 – 1899	13	Confederation to the end of the 19 th century
1900 - 1917	9	Turn of the Century to Halifax Harbour Explosion
1918 - 1945	5	The War Years
1945 - Present	3	Post-War

^{*} Maximum score of 25 points in this category

2. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

A building can receive points for:

A) Having specific associations with important occasions, institutions, personages and groups, **OR**

B) For being architecturally important unique/representative of a particular period.

2A) Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups

Nationally	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	16 - 20	
Moderately Related	11 - 15	
Loosely Related	1 - 10	
Provincially	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	11 - 15	
Intimately Related Moderately Related	11 - 15 6 - 10	

Locally	Points	Comments
Intimately Related	11- 15	
Moderately Related	6 - 10	
Loosely Related	1 - 5	
No relationship to important occasions, institutions, personages or groups.	0	

^{*} Maximum score of 20 points in this category, scoring from one of the three categories only

2B) Important/Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

Importance	Points	Comments
Highly important, Unique, or representative of an era	16 - 20	
Moderately important, Unique, or representative of an era	11 - 15	
Somewhat important, or representative of an era	10 - 1	
Not important, Unique, or representative of an era	0	

^{*} Maximum score of 20 points in this category.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF ARCHITECT/BUILDER

Is the structure representative of the work of an architect or builder of local, provincial or national importance?

Status	Points	Comments
Nationally	7 - 10	
Provincially Significant	4 - 6	
Locally Significant	1 - 3	
Not Significant	0	

^{*} Maximum score of 10 points in this category.

4. ARCHITECTURAL MERIT

The assessment of architectural merit is based on two factors:

A) Construction type/building technology: which refers to the method by which the structure was built (early or rare uses of materials), and building techniques;

AND

B) Style: which refers to the form or appearance of the architecture.

Construction Type/Building Technology			
A) Construction type	Points	Comments	
Very rare/ early example	7 - 10		
Moderately rare/ early	4 - 6		
Somewhat rare/ early example	1 - 3		
Not rare/ common example	0		
B) Style	Points	Comments	
Very rare/ early example	7 - 10		
Moderately rare/ early	4 - 6		
Somewhat rare/ early example	1 - 3		
Not rare/ common example	0		

^{*} Maximum score of 10 points for Construction Type, and a maximum score of 10 for Style - a total maximum of 20 points in this category.

5. ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

Architectural Integrity refers to the extent to which the building retains original features/structures/styles, not the state of the building's condition.

Architecture	Consider any additions/ removal/ alterations to windows, doors, porches, dormers, roof lines, foundations, chimneys, and cladding.		
Exterior	Points	Comments	
Largely unchanged	11 - 15		
Modest changes	6 - 10		
Major changes	1 - 5		
Seriously compromised	0		

^{*} Maximum score of 15 points in this category.

6. RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING AREA

Points	Comments
6 - 10	The building is an important architectural asset contributing to the heritage character of the surrounding area.
1 - 5	The Architecture is compatible with the surrounding area and maintains its heritage character.
0	Does not contribute to the character of the surrounding area.

^{*} Maximum score of 10 points in this category.

SCORING SUMMARY

Property	Date Reviewed	Reviewer

Criterion	Highest Possible Score	Score Awarded
1. Age	25	
 2. a) Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups 2. b) Important, Unique Architectural Style, or Highly Representative of an Era 	20	
Significance of Architect or Builder	10	
4. a) Architectural Merit: Construction type/building technology	10	
4. b) Architectural Merit: Style	10	
5. Architectural Integrity	15	
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10	
Total	100	

Designation Recommended?	YES	NO

SCORE NECESSARY FOR DESIGNATION

COMMENTS:	

50

Attachment B

Research Report

2539 Agricola Street, Halifax

Prepared by:

Kajsa Swaffer, Researcher March 2020



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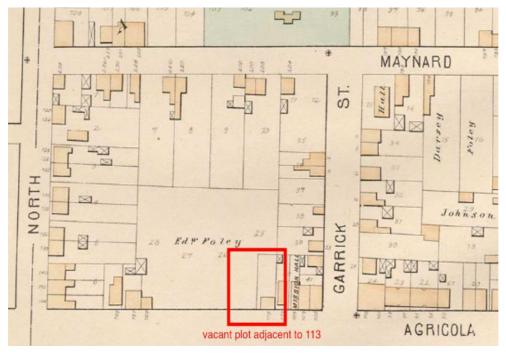
Age

Situated on the block between Charles (formerly Garrick) and North streets, 2539 Agricola Street was known as 115 Agricola Street until 1964 (Halifax Regional Municipality, n.d.; Might's, 1963). Though the exact construction date of 2539 Agricola Street is unclear, ancillary documentation provides a reliable estimate. Published in 1878, the Hopkins City Atlas of Halifax shows vacant land, owned by Edward Foley, from 113 to 129 Agricola Street (Hopkins, 1878).

In 1902 the parcel of land to be known as 115 Agricola Street was conveyed from Edward Foley William and Minnie Matheson. conveyance was carried out by the sheriff, indicating that the sale was likely in exchange for unpaid taxes (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1902). That same year the Mathesons re-conveyed the parcel of land to W. J. Parker and Annie Parker (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1902). The property changed hands again in 1904, conveyed from the Parkers to William and Mary Oxner (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1904). Oxner, employed by the Intercolonial Railway, and Joseph Locke, a labourer, are registered as the property's first occupants (Halifax City Directory, Coupled with the property's absence in the city's fire insurance plans from 1889, 1895 and 1899 (Goad, 1889; Goad, 1895; Goad, 1899), it is safe to assume that 115 Agricola Street was constructed between 1900-1905.



2539 Agricola Street in February 2020.



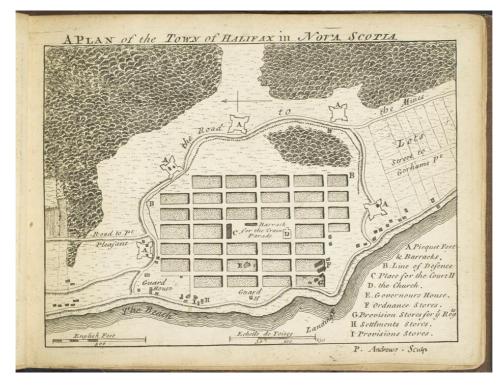
J. W. Hopkins 1878 atlas of Halifax shows 115 Agricola St as part of land owned by Edward Foley (Hopkins, 1878).



Historical or Architectural Importance

Relationship to Important Occasions, Institutions, Personages or Groups

Military strategy was of the utmost importance when the city of Halifax was founded in 1749. The responsibility of laying out a town in what was, according to the British, dense forest in a land where the French enemy and their allied Mi'kmag swayed power fell to chief surveyor Charles Morris. Under Morris Halifax was quickly surrounded by a wooden palisade with five perimeter forts. The northernmost of these, Fort Luttrell and Fort Grenadier, were located at the north-east corner of Citadel Hill and what is now the Cogswell interchange, where the north town gate was also situated. Driven by a need for farmland to produce sustenance for the town, a north suburb was created beyond Fort Grenadier, extending towards what is now North Street (Erickson, 2004, viii-13; Delefes, 2002, 102). Apart from the gradual establishment of the naval dockyard and wharves along the waterfront, these northern suburbs remained uncultivated and uninhabited until the settlement of so-called 'foreign Protestants' in the area. Between 1750 and 1752 approximately 2,500 settlers of Germanic descent arrived in Halifax to assist the colonisation of Nova Scotia. Those settlers who were not relocated to Lunenburg in 1753 settled in these northern suburbs. The Little Dutch Church and place-names such as Gottingen, Brunswick and Lockman (later Barrington) streets are evidence of this process (Erickson, 2004, 10-13).



Plan of Halifax in 1763, depicting the defence palisade with forts as well as the northern suburbs laid out by Charles Morris (Roque, 1763).

By the turn of the nineteenth century large farms dominated the area where 2539 Agricola Street stands today, accessed by country lanes or one of the few north-running roads, such as the road to Windsor. In 1819 Scottish agriculturalist John Young purchased a large tract of farmland previously owned by German settler Philip Folmar in these northern outskirts of the city. Young was appalled by the inefficiency of farming in this area and began anonymously publishing 62 letters over a period of four years in the Acadian Recorder. In these letters, signed 'Agricola', he offered criticism as well as remedies for the improvement of Nova Scotian farming, and by 1818 11 agricultural societies as well as a central agricultural board for the city had been formed (Erickson, 2004, 69; Kitz, 2002, 9). A neighbourhood bordering the Halifax Commons as well as the dockyard, Agricola Street, previously known as Bayer but renamed in honour of John Young, was laid down as the northern suburbs were increasingly populated.





The North Street railway station, opened in 1877 but badly damaged in the 1917 Halifax Explosion (Canadian Illustrated News, 1878).

By the 1870s, rapid industrial development and a burgeoning population witnessed the sale of large tracts of farmland as real estate investments, and Agricola Street now extended as far as Macara Street (Erickson, 2004, 70; MacKenzie, 202, 9). In 1877 North Street Station opened its doors, around the corner from the subject property, and by 1897 a street railway ran down Agricola to Willow Park, John Young's former estate situated between Windsor and Almon streets. Agricola Street was thus firmly incorporated into commerce of the city (Erickson, 2004, 65-70).

Situated within sight of Citadel Hill and blocks of the Halifax Commons, reserved for public and military use as early 1760 and Canada's oldest urban park (Fingard, Sutherland & Guildford, 1999, 17; Tayona, 2010), 115 Agricola Street is part of the development of Halifax into the foremost military-administrative base in British North America (Peterson, 2012). As the nineteenth century progressed, the mansions that were erected in the northern suburbs attest to the peace and affluence enjoyed by Victorian Halifax. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, Halifax's Victorian legacy was also manifest in terms of class divide. Referring to parallel Creighton Street, Lezlie Lowe writes that:

....a very polite line was drawn in the sand; call it North Street. Resident of the grander homes on the north section of Creighton Street weren't exactly tickled to share their addresses with the middle-class residents to the south, and less so as that area entered a social and economic decline in the first half of the twentieth century (Lowe, 2002, 54).

As the larger mansions such as Bel-Air and Bloomfield were replaced with rows of smaller houses lining Ontario to Macara streets, a lower middle-class character was assumed in neighbourhood further north (Cahill. 2002, 94). 115 Agricola was thus built on the cusp of economic decline and straddling upper, middle- and lower-class neighbourhoods all at once.



Collision of a Bren-Gun Carrier and streetcar on Agricola Street in 1941 (Bollinger, 1941).

Both the ownership and residential history of 115 Agricola Street supports this assessment (see Attachment B for deeds). William Oxner, employee of the Intercontinental Railway, his wife Mary and John Locke, labourer, were the first residents of 115 Agricola Street (Halifax City Directory, 1905). From 1907 until 1926 the property was owner- occupied by Scottish immigrants Andrew and Margaret Leitch (Halifax City Directory, 1907-27; Census of Canada, 1901, 1271858). Andrew Leitch was a marine engineer on DGS Stanley, an icebreaker, and CGS Aberdeen, a lighthouse supply ship and buoy vessel (Nauticapedia, 2016; Maginley & Bernard, 2001, 49). While none of his neighbours' salaries exceeded \$500, in 1901 Leitch earned \$1,000 and, based on his specialist line of work, was likely universityeducated (Census of Canada, 1901, 1271858).



DGS Stanley in the Northumberland Straight (Warwick Brothers & Rutter, 1910). Owner of newly-built 115 Agricola Street, Andrew Leitch, was the engineer on this ship.

The property was sold by widowed Margaret Leitch in 1926, and passed into the hands of John and Fanny Paton (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1926). Under the Paton ownership 115 Agricola Street was used as a rental property and assumed a lower working-class character. Until 1928 the property was occupied by Samuel Williams, carpenter at S Cunard & Co. Ltd. (coal merchants); until 1933 by William and Lydia Edwards, William employed as assistant engineer at Nova Scotia Technical College; until 1935 by Richard and Kathleen Skinner and Norman Strickland, Richard and Norman fishermen; and until 1938 by Joseph and Elizabeth Tillman, Joseph an elevator operator and later clerk at Eaton's. As with the Skinners the Tillmans either sub-let or shared the property with a second tenant, in this case widow Mrs Martha Foston, until 1937. Between 1939 and 1941 the house was occupied by Carmen and Mary Keefe, Carmen a fireman at Halifax Fire Department, and from 1942 until 1946 by Abraham and Fanny Greenspan. Abraham was a rabbi at Robie Street Synagogue (Halifax City Directory, 1910-46).

Fanny Greenspan both bought and sold the property in 1946, after which it was owner-occupied by Harold and Mary Patriquin until 1956; Harold was a mechanic for Universal Sales, an auto dealership (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1954; Halifax City Directory, 1946-56). From 1954 part of the property was used as a parking lot for the adjacent Dominion Stores Ltd. In 1956 it was bought by Earl E. Burgess, alderman for Ward 6 of Halifax, and used again as a rental property until 1965 when it was conveyed to Bernadette Shirley and James Joseph Langille. Between 1956 and 1965 the property was occupied by Fabian and Agnes Rudolph and Albert Corbin, Fabian an attendant at Trans-Canada Airways and Albert employed by Maritime Warehousing & Transfer. In 1959 Arthur and Myrtle MacDonald, Arthur a foreman at Nova Scotia Light & Power, moved in, and in 1962 a Foster Westhaver took over tenancy. In 1965, the year following street re-numbering, the property was conveyed to Ervin and Emily E. Lucas (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1965). Ervin was a checker at the National Harbours Board, but passed in 1967, after which Emily remained at the property until 1984 when it was sold to Carlo Auto Service (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1984; Halifax City Directories, 1964-84). Current owners Bruno Ruffinengo and Karen Lynn Schnare have owned the property since 1998 (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1998). Between 2008 and 2016 the property was used as a musical open mic space, recognised by The Coast and The Globe and Mail for its contributions to local music and culture on Agricola Street (Mullen, 2016; Smith, 2013).

Unlike many of the city's heritage-listed properties with histories coloured by prominent owners or significant events, 115 or 2539 Agricola Street paints a picture of the early and rapid growth of Halifax and the development of its vibrant working-and-middle-class community.



In recent years, the property has been a hub for the local arts community. Starting in 2008. 2529 Agricola Street (known locally as the "Open Mic House") hosted a free, all-ages live music event every Monday night. The early years of the open mic were initiated and hosted by well-known and awardwinning local musicians Jacques Mindreau and Ben Caplan, who also lived in the dwelling. In addition to Mindreau and Caplan, many other local artists have performed in the dwelling, including Nick Everett and Willie Stratton. In 2015, The Coast named 2539 Agricola Street as the best open mic venue in Halifax. The Provincial government also presented a letter to the organizers, which noted the Open Mic House's cultural contributions. The property continues to host smaller and informal cultural events (Ruffinengo, 2020).

Important / Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, unprecedented numbers of homes were needed to meet the city's burgeoning population. Two forms, the 'Halifax Big House' its smaller variant, the 'Halifax Box', were remarkably popular. Indeed, architectural historians Steven Archibald and Sheila Stevenson argue that 'Variations of both types were built in such large numbers that they are one reason for the special architectural character of Halifax' (Archibald & Stevenson, 73). 115 Agricola Street is a strong example of a so-called 'Halifax Box', and therefore consequential to the survival of the Halifax's distinctive architectural style on one of its main commercial streets and tourist areas.

Though the 'Halifax Big House' often incorporated Second Empire and Italianate styles, the 'Halifax Box' emerged in the last two decades of the nineteenth century as an example of the Late Victorian Plain style (Archibald & Stevenson, 78; Canada's Historic Places). According to the Canadian Register of Historic Places, 'The Halifax Box House typically has two-storeys, a nearly flat roof and minimal ornamentation suitable for tradespeople and the working classes, with whom the style was popular' (Canada's Historic Places). Archibald and Stevenson add that the façade often includes a one- or two-storey bay window and that:

The quality of decoration can vary from plain to elaborate. The whole repertoire of products available from woodworking - spindlework, brackets, decorative shingles, turned veranda posts, balusters - could be used. In practice, however, the decoration of most of these houses is relatively restrained...just a good solution to the need for a versatile house on a compact urban lot (Archibald & Stevenson, 78).



Much of Agricola Street was damaged by the 1917 Halifax Explosion, and reconstruction of the northernmost section of the street formed part of the efforts of the Halifax Relief Commission (Kitz, 1989; Kitz, 2014). Standing on the southernmost section of Agricola Street, number 115 or 2539 luckily survived. A now rare example of an Agricola Street 'Halifax Box', the subject property is part of pre-explosion Agricola streetscape.

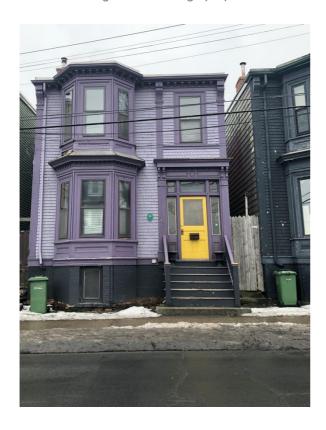
A photographic collection by W.G. MacLaughlan gathered in the immediate aftermath of the explosion of damaged buildings and devastated areas includes photographs of homes almost identical to 115 or 2539 Agricola Street (MacLaughlan, 1917). These homes, previously 353 and 394 Agricola Street, have now been replaced, highlighting the unique survival of number 115 or 2539 on Agricola Street today.

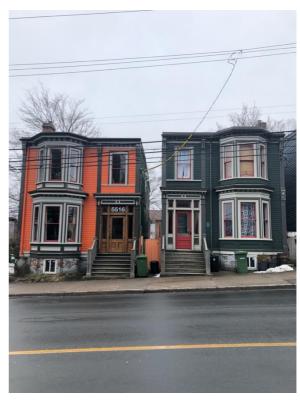






Though 115 or 2539 Agricola Street is a rare example of the 'Halifax Box' on Agricola Street, several houses of the same style grace the surrounding streets. From top left clockwise: older example on Falkland Street, an almost identical example of Fuller Terrace, more ornate versions with glass door surrounds and more detailed woodwork on North and Gottingen Streets. The photographs below include two registered heritage properties of the 'Halifax Box' style.





Significance of Architect / Builder

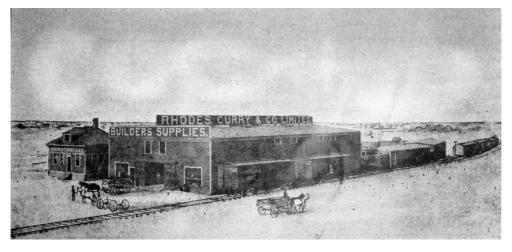
The 'Halifax Box' style was enjoyed great popularity and was erected en masse throughout the city around the turn of the twentieth century. The simplicity of the 'Halifax Box' design allowed construction firms to erect this style of building cheaply and quickly. These large employers of building trades craftsmen, often advertising themselves as a sort of all-in-one architects and builders, began buying lots for property development by contract as well as speculation (Archibald & Stevenson, 78). Though it has not been possible to confirm the builder of 2539 Agricola Street, the simplicity and popularity of its design suggests that a larger, local construction firm would have built the subject property.

One such company, Rhodes, Curry Co., originally of Amherst, was based on Robie and McCully streets (the site where Colonial Honda stands today); builder of many North End homes and just around the corner from the subject property. Though historians have regretfully noted the dearth of the company's surviving records (Latta, 1989, 18) Rhoda, Curry Co. was a significant player in the Maritime construction industry, and entirely likely the builder of the subject property. A surviving letterhead from 1913 advertises the firm as 'Building Contractors and Manufacturers of Doors, Sashes, Blinds, Mouldings, Kiln Dried Lumber, School, Office, Church & House, Furniture and Building Materials Generally'. Rhodes, Curry Co.'s first construction project was Acadian College in Wolfville in 1878, after which the company became famous for major institutional and often stone structures across the Maritimes but also into the United States. In 1901 alone, around the time 2539 Agricola Street was constructed, the firm erected 231 buildings (McKay, 1985, 28).

Much of the Rhodes, Curry Co.'s success can be attributed to its integrated organisation, allowing it to underbid other contractors and architects. The firm supplied its own materials, owning large tracts of timberland, sawmills, quarries and brickyards, had a large, province-wide workforce, and used in-house designs as well as commissioning architects (including J. C. Dumaresq, H.H. Mott, and L. R. Fairn) where needed. For the hundreds of homes constructed by Rhodes, Curry Co. in industrial towns such as New Glasgow and Sydney, only two or three floor plans were relied on (McKay, 1985, 28; Latta, 1989, 18-20).

Headquartered in Amherst and with branches in Halifax, New Glasgow and Sydney, historian Peter Latta argues that 'Rhodes, Curry Co. appear to have become the largest contractor in the Maritimes during the period 1880-1920', adding that:

It is not an exaggeration to state that this company changed the appearance of the Maritimes through the sheer number of buildings it erected and through the construction of some imposing public structures (Latta, 1989, 18-23).



One of the few surviving records of Rhodes, Curry Co. depicts one of its offices and warehousing facilities around the year 1900 (Rhodes, Curry Co., 1900).



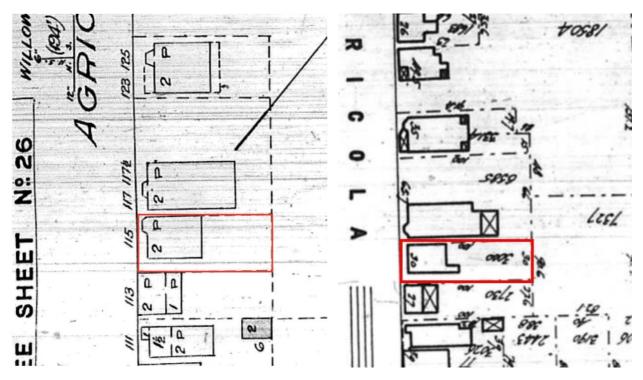
Architectural Integrity

2539 Agricola Street is in in sound condition and within reach of its original appearance with minimal restoration work. Apart from updated windows, no exterior-altering work appears to have taken place since the property was owner-occupied by Andrew and Margaret Leitch. Under Leitch ownership an application made to the Halifax Building Inspector's Office in 1907 requests permission to add a skylight to 2539 Agricola Street (Attachment B) (City of Halifax Works Department & Engineering Department, 1907). Requiring specialist installation technology, this home upgrade is testimony to the comfortable living enjoyed by the Leith family and the middle-class character of this neighbourhood at the time. W.T. Harris & Son, a medium-sized builder based on parallel Maynard Street, was responsible for the installation work. William Harris and the Leitch family were in fact neighbours; Harris is a resident in 117 Agricola Street (Halifax City Directory).



The only major alteration work carried out on the property's exterior was a medium-sized extension added to the rear of the property. This work was carried out at some point between 1914 and 1918, possibly by W.T. Harris & Son, as it features only in city's insurance plan from 1918 (Pickings, 1918).

The rear extension on 2539 Agricola Street is now over one hundred years old. Photographed February 2020.



115 Agricola Street in 1914 (Goad, 1914) and 1918 (Pickings, 1918), note the added rear extension.



Relationship to Surrounding Area

With the development of the North End, Agricola Street quickly evolved into one of Halifax's major commercial streets. All while serving the needs of its local community, Agricola Street has contributed greatly to the unique character of this local neighbourhood. Today, it is one of the city's most vibrant streets with new businesses on and around Agricola Street opening every year. Though stunning building façades make this street one of the city's most picturesque, its atmosphere drawing locals and tourists alike, Agricola Street has no municipally registered heritage properties. Representing pre-Explosion Agricola streetscape, the emergence of vibrant working- and middle-class culture in Halifax, and the development of Halifax vernacular architecture, 2539 Agricola Street carries great historic and architectural importance.

2539 Agricola Street sits right at the heart of Agricola Street's commercial area. This photograph taken from Agricola Street Brasserie shows the subject property taking up the greater part of the view of Agricola Street. (The Coast, n.d.).





Photograph of Dominion Stores in 1970. adjacent to 2539 Agricola Street, where it also leased a parking lot for many years (Halifax Municipal Archives, 1970; Halifax City Directory).



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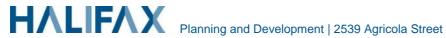
Attachment A

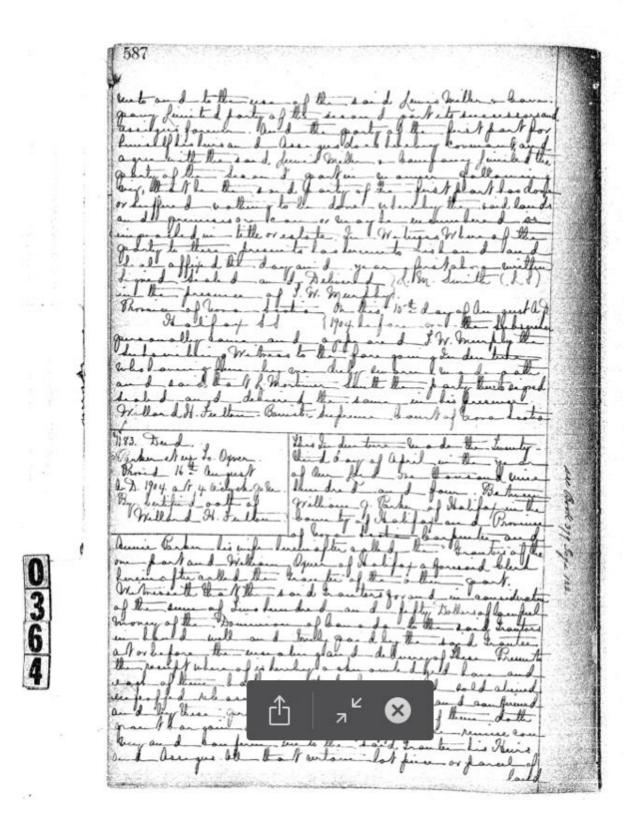
Deed history for 2539 Agricola Street Foley to Matheson (Halifax Register of Deeds, 1902).

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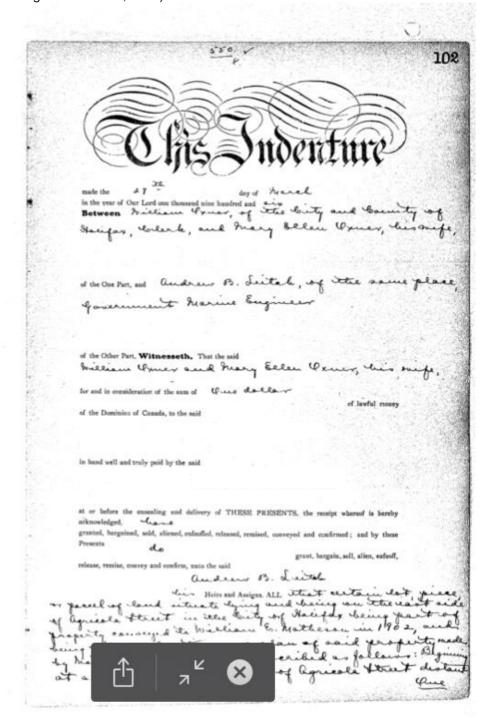


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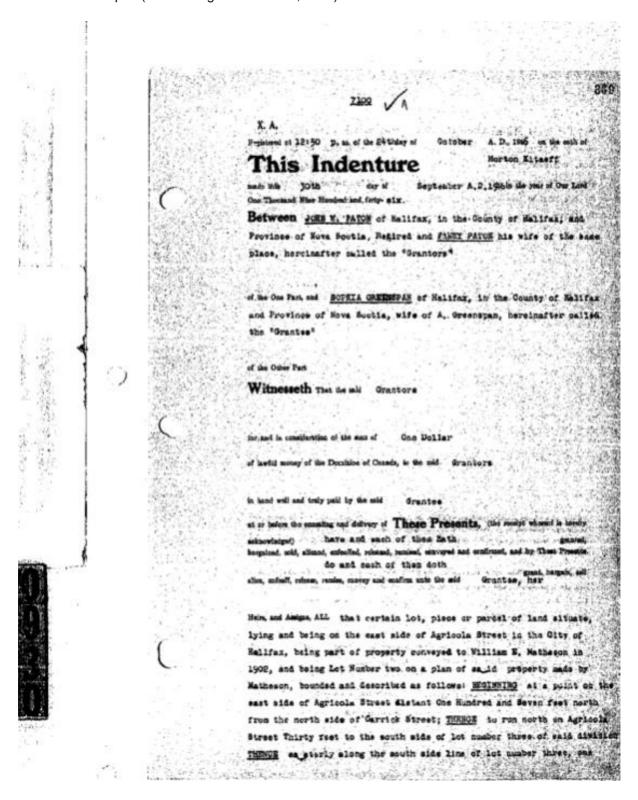




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Between SOPHIE ORSENSFAN of Halifax in the County of Halifax, Province of Nova Scotia, wife of Reverend A. Greenspan, hereinafter

wife of Harold H. Patriquin, mechanic, hereinafter called the

is hend well and truly paid by the said Grantee

at or before the assesting and delivery of These Presents, (the receipt whereit is have

that certain lot, piece or parcel of sand situate, lying and being on the east side of Agricula Street, in the Caty of Halifax, being part of property conveyed to William E. Matheson in 1902 and being lot number 2 on a plan of said property sade by Mathesin,

DESCRIPTING at a point on the east side of Agricola Street, distant 107 feet north from the north eldo of Gerrick Street;

OR to run north on Agricola Street 30 feet to the south side of lot



56862

1201

THIS WARRANTY DEED made this 10th day of October , 1989

BETWEEN

EMILY E. LUCAS, of Halifax, in the County of Halifax, Province of Nova Scotia, being the owner of the lands described in Schedule "A" herein.

hereinafter called the "GRANTOR"

CORNO AUTO SERVICE LIMITED, a body corporate, with Head Office in Halifax, in the County of Halifax, Province of Nova Scotia

hereinafter called the "GRANTEE"

WHEREAS by Deed dated the 23rd day of September, A.D. 1965, Bernadette Shirley Langille, of Halifax, in the County of Halifax, Province of Neva Scotia, married woman, wife of James Joseph Langille, conveyed to Ervin A. Lucas of Halifax aforesaid and Emily E. Lucas, his wife, of the same place, the lot of land described in Schedule "A" attached hereto as Joint Tenants and not as Tenants in Common:

AND WHEREAS Ervin A. Lucas died on or about the 22nd day of September, 1966, leaving as the sole owner of the property described in Schedule "A" aforementioned, his wife, Emily E. Lucas;

NOW THEREFORE THIS INDENTURE WITNESSETH THAT in consideration of One Dollar and other good and valuable consideration;

THE GRANTOR hereby conveys to the GRANTEE the lands described in Schedule "A" to this WARRANTY DEED and hereby consents to this disposition, pursuant to the Matrixonial Property Act of Nova Scotia.

THE GRANTOR covenants with the GRANTEE that the GRANTEE shall have quiet enjoyment of the lands, that the GRANTOR has good title in fee simple to the lands and the right to convey thom as hereby conveyed, that the lands are free from encumbrances, and that the GRANTOR will procure such further assurances as may be reasonably required.

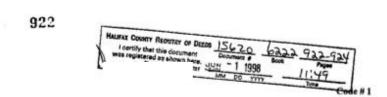
IN THIS WARRANTY DEED the singular includes the plural and the masculine includes the feminine, with the intent that this WARRANTY DEED shall be read with all appropriate changes of number and gender.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the GRANTOR has hereunto set her hand and affixed her seal the day and year first above written.

in the presence of

ENILY E. LUCAS





THIS WARRANTY DEED made this 2 day of May, 1998

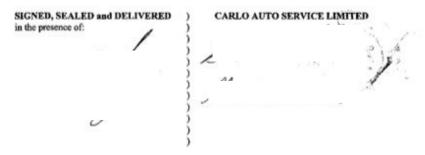
BETWEEN: CARLO AUTO SERVICE LIMITED, a body corporate (hereinafter called the "GRANTOR") Transfer Tax has been paid Transfer Tax is due and payable OF THE ONE PART BRUNO RUFFINENGO and KAREN LYNN SCHNARE, both of Halifax, in the County of Halifax, Province of Nova Scotia, as JOINT TENANTS and not (hereinafter called the "GRANTEE") I hereby ce The Deed 7 No Deed I within desc OF THE OTHER PART

WITNESSETH THAT in consideration of the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00) of lawful money of Canada, the GRANTOR hereby conveys to the GRANTEE as JOINT TENANTS and not as Tenants-in-Common the lands described in the Schedule marked "A" hereto annexed and hereby consents to this disposition, pursuant to the Matrimontal Property Act of Nova Scotia.

THE GRANTOR covenants with the GRANTEE that the GRANTEE shall have quiet enjoyment of the lands, that the GRANTOR has a good title in fee simple to the lands and the right to convey them as hereby conveyed, that they are free from encumbrances and that the GRANTOR will procure such further assurances as may reasonably be required.

IN THIS WARRANTY DEED the singular includes the plural and the masculine includes the feminine, with the intent that this Warranty Deed shall be read with all appropriate changes of number and gender.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the GRANTOR has duly executed this conveyance the day and year first above written.



Attachment B

(City of Halifax Works Department & Engineering Department, 1907).

To the Inspector of Buildings. Halifax, N. S., 27th day of Sept 1907. Six 1—The under-signed hereby applies for a permit to alter and add to a building according to the following specifications and
in secondance with the detailed plans and specifications submitted. Location agricula St. No. 115 Side East between Sharles St. and Morth St. Owner In Oblicitate Architect is agree on Burbler W. J. Harris Ver Berlinsted cost \$20.22 Marginal of all buildings.
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Permission is also applied for, to cuclose that portion of the street in front of the proposed building, extending into the street - fig.
The undersigned hereby agrees that all work on the said building, shall be done in strict accordance with the laws and ordinances
relating to the exection of buildings within the City of Holiday, and with the conditions printed on the lock of the permit. Every obstacle will be removed from the direct or or before the

Attachment 2

Scoring for Case H00480: Request to Include 2539 Agricola Street, Halifax in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality

Criterion	Score Awarded
1. Age	9
2B. Important, Unique Architectural Style, or Highly Representative of an Era	10
3. Significance of Architect/Builder	0
4A. Architectural Merit: Construction Type	3
4B. Architectural Merit: Style	5
5. Architectural Integrity	13
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10
Total	50