



**Barrington Street
Heritage Conservation
District Revitalization Plan**

**THIS COPY IS A
REPRINT OF THE
BARRINGTON STREET HERITAGE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT REVITALIZATION
PLAN WITH AMENDMENTS TO
NOVEMBER 29, 2014**

**BARRINGTON STREET
HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REVITALIZATION PLAN**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that this is a true copy of the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan which was passed by a majority vote of the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality at a duly called meeting held on the 16th day of June, 2009, and which was approved with amendments by the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on the 16th day of September, 2009 and by the Minister Responsible for the Heritage Property Act on the 6th day of October, 2009, and is in effect as of the 24th day of October, 2009, which includes all amendments thereto which have been adopted by the Halifax Regional Municipality and are in effect as of the 29th day of November, 2014.

GIVEN UNDER THE HAND of the Municipal Clerk and under the Corporate Seal of the Halifax Regional Municipality this ____ day of _____, 201__.

Cathy Mellett
Municipal Clerk

“I have never visited a downtown with a successful record of economic revitalization where historic preservation wasn’t a key element of the strategy.”

Donovan Rypkema

*The Economics of Heritage Preservation, National Trust for Historic
Preservation, Washington, D.C., 1994 / 2005*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

-i-

	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Purpose and Statutory Context	1
1.2 Structure of Plan and By-law	1
1.3 Overall Objectives	1
1.4 Planning Process	2
1.4.1 Background Studies	2
1.4.2 Steering Committee & Public Input	2
1.4.3 Integration with HRMbyDesign	3
1.5 Rationale for Conservation and Revitalization Measures	3
2. ESTABLISHING THE DISTRICT	
2.1 Establishment of District by adoption of Plan & By-law	4
2.2 General Description of Heritage Conservation District	4
2.3 Rationale for Heritage Conservation District Boundary	4
2.4 Relationship with Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy Downtown Precincts	5
Map 1: Heritage Conservation District Boundary Map	6
3. HERITAGE VALUE AND CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS	
3.1 Heritage Value of the District	7
3.2 Character Defining Elements	8
3.3 Architectural Styles	9
3.4 Heritage Value and Character-Defining Elements of Individual Buildings	9
4. CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT POLICIES	
4.1 Protection and Conservation of Architectural Character	10
4.2 Conservation Standards	10
4.3 Design Guidelines	11
4.4 Demolition	11
4.5 Alternate Building Code Compliance Methods and Performance Based Equivalencies	13
5. FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR RESTORATION AND REVITALIZATION	
5.1 Existing Financial Incentives	14
5.1.1 HRM Incentives	14
5.1.2 Provincial Grants for Conservation Advice	14
5.2 New Financial Incentives for the District	14
6. PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS	
6.1 Capital District Streetscape Plan	16
6.2 Pedestrian Amenity Areas	16
7. MARKETING & RETAIL RECRUITMENT	18

TABLE OF CONTENTS

-ii-

	PAGE
8. IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES	
8.1 General	19
8.2 Amendments.....	20
8.3 Transition to this Plan.....	21
APPENDIX 1: Catalogue of Buildings.....	23

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND STATUTORY CONTEXT

The purpose of this Heritage Conservation District Plan and its accompanying Heritage Conservation District By-law is to encourage conservation, restoration and commercial revitalization of Barrington Street's historic buildings, streetscapes, and public spaces.

The Plan and By-law are adopted under the *Heritage Property Act*, 1989 R.S.N.S., c.199, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") which enables Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) to both protect buildings and provide financial assistance for their conservation and restoration.

The Plan and By-law are integrated with the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (DHSMPs) and Land Use By-law (LUB), which is adopted under the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*.

1.2 STRUCTURE OF PLAN & BY-LAW

This Plan expresses the policies of Halifax Regional Council regarding conservation of heritage character and economic revitalization of Barrington Street and is structured around four pillars, as follows:

- (a) **Development policies and demolition controls** to ensure conservation of the street's historic architectural character.
- (b) **Financial and regulatory incentives** to encourage property owners to invest in restoration, rehabilitation and enhancement of their buildings.
- (c) **Public realm improvements** to enhance the aesthetic and functional quality of the street and sidewalks within the public right-of-way.
- (d) **Marketing initiatives** to promote the district and attract new business.

These pillars are considered to be interdependent and all are necessary for successful implementation of the Plan.

The By-law is an accompanying document containing the administrative procedures, and regulations through which the policies of the plan are implemented.

1.3 OVERALL OBJECTIVES

- (a) To revitalize Barrington Street as a focus of retail, commercial, and cultural activity.
- (b) To encourage restoration of heritage buildings and storefronts.
- (c) To attract upmarket specialty retail, cultural, and entertainment uses at street level.
- (d) To fill vacant space on upper floors and encourage conversion to residential use.
- (e) To improve the pedestrian environment in the public realm.
- (f) To improve HRM's image & marketing potential.
- (g) To restore investor confidence and trigger private investment.

1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

1.4.1 Background Studies

The need for the district was discussed in two background studies: *Downtown Barrington: A Strategy for the Rejuvenation of Barrington Street* (David Garrett Architects, 1998) and *Barrington Street Heritage District* (Ekistics Planning & Design, 2003).¹

The 1998 study documented the historical evolution of Barrington Street and analyzed the factors that contributed to its economic decline in the late 20th century. It provided an integrated set of recommendations regarding improved pedestrian amenity, traffic calming, urban design, and retail use and marketing, and advocated the need for incentives and special district designation to build investor confidence and trigger revitalization activity. It also included a complete inventory of heritage buildings and a synopsis of prior studies.

The 2003 study discussed special district options, compared the heritage planning tools available through the *Municipal Government Act* and the *Heritage Property Act*, discussed the economic advantages of heritage district designation, and provided examples from other cities. It also included recommendations regarding conservation techniques, architectural design guidelines, sign guidelines, streetscape improvements, and marketing.

1.4.2 Steering Committee & Public Input

Following direction from Regional Council in 2003, a Steering Committee was formed to develop a heritage conservation and revitalization plan for the district. With representation from Barrington Street property and business owners, the Downtown Halifax Business Commission (DHBC), Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, the Heritage Advisory Committee, and the general public, the committee met bi-weekly during 2004 and 2005.

A preliminary planning framework, which included proposals for strengthened protection of heritage buildings, financial incentives for restoration, design guidelines for new development, and public realm improvements was presented to property owners at a public meeting in January 2005. Most participants supported the designation of the district. Some wanted assurance that the municipality will do its part by making the needed improvements in the public realm. A second public meeting was held in June 2005 and an opinion poll carried out by the DHBC in August 2005 again confirmed property owner support.

The Steering Committee completed the draft plan and by-law in December 2005 and presented it to Regional Council in January 2006. Council accepted the document in principle subject to a detailed staff review of certain key issues including the cost and implications of the proposed financial incentives and public realm improvements and aspects of the proposed demolition policy

¹ *Downtown Barrington: A Strategy for the Rejuvenation of Barrington Street* (David Garrett Architects in association with Maurice Lloyd, Transportation Planner, Bill Plaskett, Heritage Planner, and Urban Marketing Collaborative, 1998) and *Barrington Street Heritage District* (Ekistics Planning & Design, in association with John W. Zuck & Associates, Peter Klynstra Land Planners, and Glenfinnan Heritage Resource Management, 2003), both prepared for Halifax Regional Municipality.

1.4.3 Integration with HRMbyDesign

In early 2006, HRMbyDesign - the Regional Centre Urban Design Strategy - was initiated and it became clear that the draft plan and by-law would need to be revised because its regulatory context was based on existing Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) policies for the Central Business District, whereas HRMbyDesign would result in a comprehensive restructuring of those policies and preparation of a new Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law.

A series of public forums and stakeholder workshops on HRMbyDesign were held between 2006-08, through which a new vision was developed for downtown growth and development balanced by strengthened heritage protection and, in particular, the establishment of heritage conservation districts, of which Barrington Street would be the first. The final draft of the plan and by-law, integrated with the new Downtown Halifax Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law, was completed in February 2009.

1.5 RATIONALE FOR CONSERVATION AND REVITALIZATION MEASURES

The rationale for conservation and revitalization measures for Barrington Street was expressed in the 1998 Background Study as follows, and is as pertinent today as it was then:

Barrington Street is an identifiable district within the downtown. It is well-recognized in the public consciousness as Halifax's historic main street. Its many Victorian, Edwardian and Early Modern commercial buildings give it a unique heritage character which is quite different from that of adjacent streets. Barrington Street is also recognized as the street which has suffered most from contemporary change in the downtown retail market, and the effects of traffic and transit. Once the bustling heart of the city, it is now economically and visually diminished. There is widespread public concern about its economic health and a widely acknowledged recognition of the need for its revitalization.

There is a pressing need to re-establish private sector confidence in the street and create an environment which encourages private investment. There is a need to enhance its heritage character and physical attractiveness through building facade, storefront, and signage improvements, public realm developments, and sympathetic new buildings. There is also a need to expand commercial activity and to promote and market the street as a commercial destination.

While some of these needs and challenges might be met spontaneously through individual initiatives, the wide range of actions necessary to successfully revitalize the street on a broad scale will demand coordinated, focussed effort by both the private and public sectors. The most effective way of doing this is through designation of the street as a Special District where actions and incentives are implemented in a co-ordinated fashion.

Since 1998 there have been some improvements on the street through the efforts of a few individual building owners but there is still a prevailing uncertainty about the future. As such, a concerted effort is needed on the part of the municipality, property and business owners, and the Downtown Halifax Business Commission to bring about significant revitalization. This Plan and related by-law represent HRM's commitment to this partnership.

2. ESTABLISHING THE DISTRICT

2.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICT BY ADOPTION OF PLAN & BY-LAW

Under the *Heritage Property Act*, a heritage conservation district is established through concurrent adoption of a heritage conservation district plan and by-law by Regional Council and its approval by the Minister responsible for the Act.

Policy 1 Establishment of District by Adoption of Plan & By-law

HRM hereby establishes the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District (the “District”) by concurrently adopting this heritage conservation district plan and the accompanying Heritage Conservation District By-law, HRM By-law H-500.

Policy 2 Heritage Conservation District Boundary

HRM hereby establishes the boundary of the District as shown on Map 1.

2.2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The heritage conservation district extends along Barrington Street from Duke to Bishop and includes the public right of way and all buildings and sites fronting on the street, except for the three modern hi-rise office towers. Within this area there are 26 registered heritage buildings and 16 other old commercial buildings (pre-1940) that are not registered but which by virtue of their age, architecture or historical association contribute strongly to the street’s historic character. Two buildings from the 1950s-1960s add an element of early modern heritage to the mix, and two from the 1970s -1990s add a more modern flavour. There are also two sites - the former Birk’s site (vacant since demolition in the late 1980s) and the former NFB site (partially vacant since a fire in 1991) that have potential for new development that could significantly enhance the district if designed in a compatible manner. Historic government buildings, churches, and open spaces (the Grand Parade and the Old Burying Ground) frame the district at its north and south ends.

Details on the history and architecture of buildings in the district are included in Appendix 1.

2.3 RATIONALE FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOUNDARY

The purpose of establishing the district is to implement a program of incentives and actions to encourage commercial revitalization and restoration of Barrington Street buildings. Accordingly, the boundary is drawn tightly around properties that front on Barrington to focus the effect of these programs on Barrington alone. Where properties extend through to Argyle, Granville, Grafton, and Hollis Streets, the boundary extends to those streets except in the six cases described below.

(a) Old City Club & Neptune Theatre: Site 16

This is an “L” shaped, registered heritage property that includes the former City Club (now the Neptune Theatre School) which fronts on Barrington, and the modern Neptune Theatre, which fronts on Argyle and Sackville. The rear portion of the City Club was demolished in the late 1980s. The heritage registration originally applied only to the City Club but came to include the Neptune when the two properties were consolidated in the mid-1990s to facilitate construction of the new theatre and its connection to the remaining, intact front portion of the City Club. The heritage district boundary includes the intact front portion of

the City Club but excludes the modern theatre behind it except for the small portion that faces Barrington.

(b) Former NFB & Argyle Bar & Grill: Site 17

This is a registered heritage property that extends through from Barrington to Argyle but which includes two separate structures. Facing Barrington is the shell of the former NFB building which was destroyed by fire in 1991. Facing Argyle is the modern Argyle Bar & Grill, which was partially rebuilt after the fire. The heritage district boundary includes the old NFB facade and the vacant site behind, but excludes the Argyle Bar & Grill.

(c) Farquhar Building: Site 19

The Farquhar building, at the corner of Barrington and Blowers, is situated on the same registered heritage property as the Opa Tavern which fronts on Argyle and an atrium style addition between the two, fronting on Blowers. Originally, only the Farquhar building was registered but the other two became registered through a lot consolidation undertaken to facilitate construction of the atrium style addition. The heritage district boundary includes the Farquhar building alone.

(d) Old Paramount Theatre: Site 40

The boundary includes the entrance to the former Paramount Theatre, which fronts on Barrington, but excludes the main part of the former theatre which fronts on Granville and Blowers and which was redeveloped for occupancy by Mountain Equipment Co-op in 1999.

(e) One Government Place: Site 28

Similarly, the boundary includes the entrance to One Government Place but not the main part of the modern building which fronts on Granville Street.

(f) Birk's Site: Site 23

The boundary includes the portion of this site fronting on Barrington but excludes the portion fronting on Granville.

2.4 RELATIONSHIP WITH DOWNTOWN HALIFAX SECONDARY MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY PRECINCT DESIGNATIONS

The Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District as designated under this Plan corresponds with the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation Precinct (Precinct 5) identified in the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy.

MAP 1

BARRINGTON STREET HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOUNDARY



<u>Historic Name (Year Built)</u>	<u>Street Level Business</u>
1. City Hall (1888)	
2. Grand Parade (1749)	
3. St. Paul's Hill	
4. St. Paul's Church (1749)	
5. St. Paul's Building (1897)	JWD Bookstore
6. Forrester Building (1820s)	Ideal Bikes / Just Us Coffee
7. Wright/Marble Building (1896)	Captain Sub
8. NS Furnishings Building (1895)	Telus/Manpower
9. Ungar's Laundry (1893)	Granite Brewery
10. Old Acadian Insurance (1919)	Sam the Record Man (vacated)
11. Harrison Building (1893)	Sam the Record Man (vacated)
12. Canada Permanent Trust (1950)	Tim Horton's
13. Tramway Building (1916)	Frozen Ocean / Venus Envy
14. Former Tip Top Tailors (1915)	CD Plus
15. C of E Institute (1888)	Khyber Arts / Heritage Trust
16. Old City Club (1821/91)	Neptune Theatre School
17. St. Mary's Young Men's	
18. Benevolent Society Hall (1891)	Former NFB facade & vacant site
19. Brander Morris Building (1907)	Attica
20. Farquhar Building (1897)	Venus Pizza
21. Barrington Gate (1996)	Creative Market Place/ Youth Business
22. St. Mary's Basilica & Glebe (1891)	
23. Old Burying Ground (1749)	
24. Old Birk's Site	
25. Crowe Building (1912)	Hilltribe
26. Cabot Building (1890)	Elephant's Eye
27. Kaiser Building (1895)	Freak Lunch Box
28. G.M.Smith Building (1893)	Peep Show
29. One Government Place (1980s)	Entrance lobby
30. Cleverdon Building (1870s)	Robert's Jewellers
31. Foreign Affair (1870s/1950s)	Foreign Affair
32. Old Photographic Studio (1860s)	Extreme Pita
33. Former Eaton's (1928)	Provincial Government Offices
34. Colwell building (1871)	Certainly Cinnamon/Momoya
35. Buckley's Building (1897)	United Bookstore
36. Johnson Building (1890)	Little Mysteries
37. Roy Building (1897/1919/1928)	Vacant
38. D'Allaird building (1950s)	Vogue Optical
39. Old Zeller's (1930)	Discovery Centre
40. Keith / Green Lantern Bldng. (1896)	Travel Cuts / Pogue Fado
41. Old Paramount entrance (1930s)	Random Play
42. Sievert's Tobacco Store (1890s)	Sievert's Tobacco Store
43. Mediterraneo Restaurant (1920)	Star Anise Restaurant
44. Mary MacAlpine (1890s)	Fireworks Jewellers
45. Carsand Mosher (1950s)	Carsand Mosher
46. W.M.Brown Bldng. (1910)	Renaissance
47. Pacific Building (1911)	Mud Room / Chives
48. Freemason's Hall (1924)	Vacant/ Halifax Estate Jewellery
49. St. Matthew's Church (1858)	
Government House (1800)	

3. HERITAGE VALUE & CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

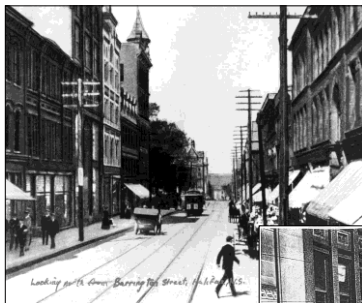
3.1 HERITAGE VALUE OF THE DISTRICT

The heritage value of Barrington Street lies in the historic and architectural significance of its buildings and civic open spaces and its evolution as Halifax's principal downtown commercial street over the 250 years from settlement to the present day.

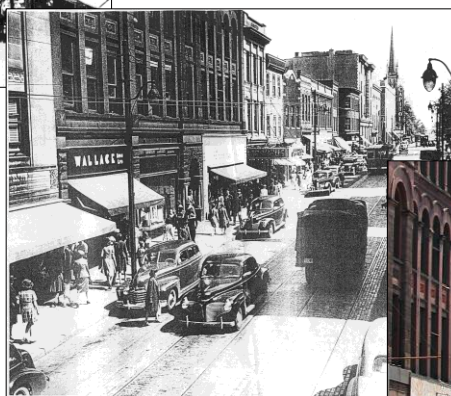
The open spaces, churches, and historic government buildings at the northern and southern ends of the district provide tangible reminders of the former City of Halifax's social, civic, and religious development in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and the continuation of these functions in the present day.

The buildings which occupy the four blocks between the Grand Parade and the Old Burying Ground reflect the evolution of Barrington Street as the City's centre of commerce, from its early 19th century beginnings, to its blossoming in the late 19th and early-mid 20th century, its decline in the late 20th century and, currently, its potential for revitalization as the symbolic heart of the downtown.

The Barrington Street Heritage District is easily recognizable due to its central position half way down the hill between the Citadel and the Harbour, its intersection with the Grand Parade and the historic George Street axis, its continuing function as the main arterial street through the centre of the downtown, and its historic architecture which provides a clear contrast with the modern hi-rise towers at each end of the district.



c 1912



c1950



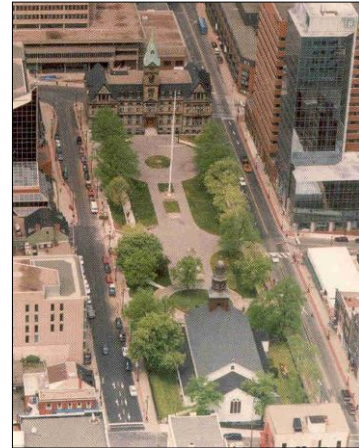
The present day

3.2 CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

Within the district there are three distinct character areas.

(a) Grand Parade Area (Sites 1-4 on Map 1)

The Grand Parade is HRM's most historic civic open space and public gathering place. It is framed by St. Paul's Church at one end and City Hall at the other, with the Cenotaph in the centre. The grounds are landscaped with formalized paths, hard surfaces, grassed areas, perimeter trees, perimeter stone walls and iron railings.



Grand Parade

(b) Historic Commercial Blocks (Sites 5-20, 23-47)

- Buildings are built out to the front and side lot lines, creating a continuous streetwall.
- Buildings of varying heights between two and six storeys create a varied streetwall profile.
- Tops of buildings are articulated by a variety of cornice and parapet treatments.
- Upper facades are articulated by vertically proportioned windows organized symmetrically between structural bays defined by pilasters, columns, etc.
- Rhythm of recessed entrances and storefronts create interest at street level.
- Exterior materials are predominantly masonry - brick, stone, terra cotta, cement, stucco - with a wide variety of ornamentation.

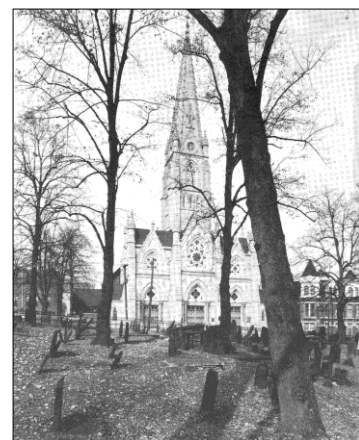


Historic Commercial Blocks

(c) Old Burying Ground Area (Sites 21, 22, 48 & 49)

The Old Burying Ground is an oasis of treed open space at one of the busiest intersections in Downtown Halifax. The cemetery is bordered by a stone wall and wrought iron fence, the entrance is clearly defined by an historic monument, and paths wind among the gravestones.

St. Mary's Basilica & Glebe House face the Burying Ground from across Spring Garden Road, and St. Matthew's Church and Government House face across Barrington Street. Both churches are built to the street edge and their classic building forms, front facades and tall spires are prominent landscape features. The Basilica is surrounded by driveways and a parking area, whereas St. Matthew's has soft landscaping on either side, and Government House is set back from the street in spacious, landscaped grounds.



Old Burying Ground Area

3.3 ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

In terms of architectural style, the district includes an eclectic mix of Georgian, Italianate, Victorian Gothic, Neo-Gothic, Chicago Style, Romanesque Revival, Art Deco, Arts & Crafts, Beaux Arts, Vernacular and modern influences.



Georgian
Government House



Italianate
Colwell Building



Victorian Gothic
The Khyber



Chicago Style
Wright/Marble Building



Victorian Gothic/Art
Nouveau
G.M Smith Building



Romanesque Revival
Keith Building



Neo-Gothic
Tramway building



Art Deco
Former Zellers/Discovery
Centre



Arts & Crafts / Rustic
Gothic
Kaizer Building



Beaux Arts
Acadia Insurance Building.



Victorian Traditional
Commercial Buckley's
Building

3.4 HERITAGE VALUE AND CHARACTER-DEFINING ELEMENTS OF BUILDINGS

Details on the history and architecture of all buildings in the district are included in Appendix 1, based on the “*Catalogue of Buildings*” from the 1998 *Downtown Barrington* background study.

4. CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

4.1 PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Under the *Heritage Property Act*, the means by which architectural character is protected and conserved in a heritage conservation district is through the requirement for a “Certificate of Appropriateness” for any type of development over which Council chooses to exercise control. This may include new buildings; demolition or alteration of existing buildings, including additions, facade alterations, signs, and alteration of exterior colour; as well as utility structures, fences, exterior stairs, landscaping, and substantial alterations of grade.

Prior to the establishment of the District, only registered heritage properties were protected from alteration or demolition. By establishing the District, it is Council’s intention to strengthen the protection of municipal heritage properties and provide new protection to non-registered properties. In general, the purpose of district-wide architectural regulation and demolition control is to provide a secure environment for heritage-based investment and ensure that all development will support the objectives of the revitalization plan.

Policy 3 Certificate of Appropriateness Required

HRM shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following types of development within the District:

- (a) Exterior alteration of buildings and structures, including but not limited to additions, facades, roofs, windows, doors, storefronts, signs, awnings, exterior materials, exterior steps and stairs, and alteration of exterior paint colour;
- (b) Demolition or removal of buildings and structures;
- (c) Construction of new buildings.

Policy 3A Certificate of Appropriateness Exemptions

Notwithstanding Policy 3, a Certificate of Appropriateness shall not be required for development or demolition necessary to implement an approved development agreement. (RC-Aug 17/10;E-Feb 12/11)

4.2 CONSERVATION STANDARDS (RC-Jun 25/14;E-Nov 29/14)

In 2014, as part of the revised Regional Plan, HRM adopted the Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd Edition in place of its earlier Heritage Building Conservation Standards.

Policy 4 Conservation Standards for Issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness

The Standards for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd Edition shall be included in the Conservation By-law, shall apply to all properties in the District, and shall be used to evaluate any proposed alteration to any property within the district. The Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd Edition shall be used to interpret and apply these Standards. (RC-Jun 25/14;E-Nov 29/14)

4.3 DESIGN GUIDELINES

This Plan and its accompanying By-law are integrated with the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (DHSMPs) and Land Use By-law (LUB). The DHSMPs is structured around nine distinct precincts, each with its own character and functional identity. The objective of defining these precincts is to focus and direct land uses, define appropriate character for development, protect heritage, and direct public investment. The Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District is a precinct in its own right within this structure.

The DHSMPs is implemented through the LUB which includes requirements for maximum height and massing of new development within each precinct. This includes provisions for maximum building height, streetwall height, step back of upper storeys above the streetwall, and stepback of rooftop additions on existing buildings. Maximum heights for the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District established under the LUB ensure that new development respects the existing scale and form of the district while allowing for modest additional development capacity.

The LUB includes a Design Manual which provides general design guidelines for all new development in the downtown and more specific guidelines for development in heritage contexts. The heritage design guidelines include provisions relating to infill and additions, new development integrated with heritage buildings on the same site, and new development abutting heritage properties, as well as facade alterations and signs. The Design Manual also includes design guidelines for public open spaces which, within the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District, include the Grand Parade and the Old Burying Ground area.

Design Review is implemented through the site plan approval process and referral to the Design Review Committee. Where development involves a registered heritage property or a property located in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District, the application is referred to the Heritage Advisory Committee for review under the Heritage Property By-law or Heritage Conservation District Plan and By-law, as applicable. In such cases, the applicable sections of the Design Manual will be used in parallel with the Conservation Standards to guide decision making with respect to the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness.

Policy 5 Design Guidelines Supplement Conservation Standards

The applicable sections of the Land Use By-law Design Manual shall supplement the Conservation Standards and shall provide a parallel frame of reference by which applications for Certificates of Appropriateness shall be evaluated.

4.4 DEMOLITION

Prior to the establishment of the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District, the 26 registered municipal heritage properties in the District were protected from demolition for up to one year, through the provisions of Section 18 of the *Heritage Property Act*. The District also contains four provincially registered heritage properties (St. Paul's Church, St. Mary's Basilica, the Old Burying Ground and Government House). Section 11 of the *Heritage Property Act* defines the required process for Governor in Council to consider an application to demolish a provincially registered heritage property.

In establishing the District, it is the intention of HRM to strengthen the protection of registered municipal heritage properties and to extend some protection from demolition to all other properties

in the District. The purpose of demolition control is to ensure that significant changes to the character of the District cannot occur without consideration of their impact on the heritage value and character of the District (see also Section 8, Policy 20).

Policy 6 Preference for Retention of Heritage Buildings

HRM shall make every effort to seek the retention, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of buildings, streetscapes, features, spaces and areas with heritage value in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District consonant with the municipality's general policy stance on heritage conservation detailed in the Municipal Planning Strategy, particularly City-Wide (Section II) Policy 6.1.

Policy 7 Demolition Rationale and Concept Plan for Replacement Building Required

No application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or removal of a building in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District shall be considered complete unless it includes:

- (a) an explanation of the reasons for the proposed demolition or removal and the alternatives to demolition or removal that may be available.
- (b) a concept plan for a replacement building.

Policy 8 Public Hearing Required - Criteria for Review of Application

Where application is made for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or removal of any building in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District, the application shall be considered at a public hearing. In determining whether to grant or refuse permission, Council shall consider:

- (a) the heritage value of the building as articulated in section 3 and Appendix 1 of this Plan.
- (b) the structural condition of the building.
- (c) the potential for repair and continued use of the building.
- (d) the merits of the proposal for a replacement building.
- (e) the written advice of Heritage Staff and the Heritage Advisory Committee.

Policy 9 Demolition of Registered Municipal Heritage Properties

Where Council approves an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or removal of a registered municipal heritage building, the certificate shall not be issued until the applicable provisions of the *Heritage Property Act* respecting appeal are met.

Policy 10 Demolition of Non-Registered Properties

- (a) Where Council approves an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or removal of a non-registered building, the certificate shall not be issued until the applicable provisions of the *Heritage Property Act* respecting appeal are met.
- (b) Where Council denies an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition or removal of a non-registered building, a demolition permit (under the *Building Code Act*) shall not be granted until **three years have** elapsed from the date of the application. **(RC-Jun 25/14;E-Nov 29/14)**

- (c) During the **three**-year period mentioned in (b) above, HRM may negotiate with the owner to find ways and means to retain and rehabilitate the building, which may involve financial or other incentives from HRM, other levels of government, and other organizations with an interest in heritage preservation. **(RC-Jun 25/14;E-Nov 29/14)**

Policy 11 Conditions on Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition or Removal

A Certificate of Appropriateness granted for the demolition or removal of any building in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District may include conditions respecting:

- (a) the photographic or other documentation of the building prior to its demolition or removal, at the expense of the applicant, for deposit in the HRM Registry of Heritage Property;
- (b) suitable restoration of the site following demolition or removal of the building;
- (c) the architectural character of any replacement building;
- (d) any other matter pursuant to section 14 of the provincial Heritage Conservation Districts Regulations 138/92.

Policy 12 Irreversible Structural Damage

Nothing in this Plan and its accompanying By-law restricts the authority of HRM, pursuant to the Fire Prevention By-law or the Dangerous and Unightly Premises provisions of the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* to demolish a building where there is irreversible structural damage.

4.5 ALTERNATE BUILDING CODE COMPLIANCE METHODS & PERFORMANCE BASED EQUIVALENCIES

The establishment of the Heritage Conservation District enables the Alternate Compliance Methods and Performance Based Equivalencies of the *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* to be used on all buildings in the district, where previously they were only applicable to individually registered heritage buildings. Under the *Regulations* a property owner may request that the Alternate Compliance provisions be used. The Alternate Compliance provisions make it easier for old buildings to meet code requirements for fire safety, fire escapes, spatial separations, height and area of rooms, window areas, washroom facilities, etc., and can make a great difference in the economic viability of heritage buildings. They are particularly useful when a building is undergoing change of occupancy, such as conversion of upper floors to residential use. A number of buildings in the district have this potential and could benefit from use of Alternate Compliance Methods.

Policy 13 Alternate Building Code Compliance Methods & Equivalencies

When requested by a property owner, HRM shall apply the Alternate Building Code Compliance Methods and Performance Based Equivalencies of the *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District in order to facilitate functional upgrading of buildings within the district.

5. FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR RESTORATION AND REVITALIZATION

Financial incentives for restoration, improvement and enhancement of buildings in the Heritage District are an essential component of the revitalization plan. The goal of incentives is to have as many buildings as possible restored, improved, enhanced and revitalized.

5.1 EXISTING FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

5.1.1 HRM Incentives

HRM has a number of programs that support heritage properties in the District in a variety of ways. These include:

- (a) **Heritage Incentives Program** - this program provides 50% cost-sharing for exterior improvement of residential and commercial heritage properties throughout HRM. This program has a limited budget that cannot support the extensive restoration work needed for Barrington Street (see next section).
- (b) **Community Grants Program** - this program provides assistance to non-profit community groups, and includes grants for building improvements.
- (c) **HRM By-law T:200: Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations** - this by-law provides full or partial tax exemption for buildings owned by non-profit organizations and listed in the by-law.
- (d) **HRM Heritage and Culture Reserve** - the HRM Heritage and Culture Reserve, funded from a percentage of the proceeds of sale of surplus HRM property, is allocated for improvements to HRM-owned heritage properties, public monuments, public art, etc.

5.1.2 Provincial Grants for Conservation Advice

This program provides 50% cost sharing for professional architectural advice and preparation of building conservation plans. It applies to registered heritage properties and properties in municipal heritage districts.

5.2 NEW FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR THE DISTRICT

Approximately one half of the buildings in the Heritage Conservation District are in need of improvement to storefronts and signs. Restoration of storefronts and signs to a better aesthetic condition is vitally important for the image of the district and the success of the revitalization plan. Additionally, almost all buildings could accommodate new awnings, the addition of which could have a dramatic effect on the image and attractiveness of the street.

A number of buildings are also in critical need of upper facade repair and restoration, which can be expensive, particularly on larger buildings. Similarly, there are a number of buildings which have potential for significant interior upgrading to meet Building Code requirements and to facilitate refurbishment and conversion, either to residential use or higher quality commercial or office use. Often, both exterior and interior improvements are needed to make a building more economically viable.

In late 2007, a consultant study was undertaken to clarify the high level estimated total cost of needed restoration and improvement work on all buildings in the district. An on-line survey of all building owners was conducted and a representative sample of owners were interviewed in detail regarding the estimated costs of their pending or potential improvement projects. The study also evaluated the degree of interest of property owners in participating in an incentives program combining grants and property tax rebates over the next 5-10 years and, conversely, the extent to which an incentives program would encourage them to invest.

The study was based on the assumption that the incentives program would be structured roughly as follows:

- (a) Incentive funding would support exterior structural and restoration work and improvements to public interior circulation areas, lobbies, etc., where there is tangible benefit to the public.
- (b) The first \$200,000 of any eligible project cost would be supported by a matching grant program (50% cost sharing up to \$100,000 max).
- (c) Costs beyond the first \$200,000 would be cost shared through a tax credit based on the percentage of additional costs attributable to exterior restoration and eligible interior improvements.
- (d) The incentive program would run for five years with the possibility of renewal for a further period, depending on take-up and effectiveness.

The study showed that the likely participation rate among property owners is 72%, with these owners representing thirty buildings with estimated renovation project costs ranging from \$60,000 to \$7.5 million and totalling about \$14 - \$18 million of likely investment within the next 5-10 years if an incentives program were to come into effect.

Policy 14 Proposed Financial Incentive Program

HRM shall implement a Financial Incentives program for the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District for a five-year period following the adoption of this Plan, consisting of the following components:

- (a) Grants and Property Tax Credits subject to annual budget allocations.
- (b) Waiver of permit application fees for building permits and sign permits, except where an application involves demolition of a building in the Heritage Conservation District.

6. PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

6.1 CAPITAL DISTRICT STREETScape PLAN

In 2004 Regional Council approved a major program of streetscape improvements for the commercial corridors in the Capital District. The foundation for the program at that time was a conceptual plan for streetscape improvements on a street by street basis, prepared by Gordon Ratcliffe, Landscape Architects.² The Streetscape Plan for Barrington Street included:

- (a) Sidewalk repair and replacement
- (b) New street trees
- (c) New street furnishings (benches, bike racks, litter containers, etc.)
- (d) New pedestrian level lighting
- (e) New wayfinding and interpretive signage
- (f) Grand Parade landscaping and amenity improvements
- (g) Transit Terminal improvements at Scotia Square

Implementation began in 2005 and 2006 with improvements to the Scotia Square Transit Terminal. In 2006, preliminary design and traffic studies were undertaken to examine the feasibility of establishing mid-block pedestrian amenity areas combined with transit stops. Also in 2006 the *Grand Parade Province House Joint Public Lands Plan*³ was completed with a comprehensive vision and accompanying design concepts and cost estimates for the transformation of the Grand Parade into a multi-functional gathering place.

6.2 PEDESTRIAN AMENITY AREAS

In 2007, the proposal for mid block pedestrian areas and transit stops was examined in greater detail by a multi-departmental review team representing Metro Transit, Public Works, Transportation Planning, Traffic, Urban Forestry, and the Streetscape Program. This resulted in the development of a draft Functional Design that would satisfy the many technical interests involved and result in the following improvements to the street:

- (a) Broad sidewalk amenity areas combined with improved transit stops.
- (b) A slightly serpentine re-alignment of the street travelled way.
- (c) Re-location of commercial loading to designated spaces.
- (d) Elimination of the seven existing on-street parking stalls.
- (e) Maintenance of all but one of the existing transit stops.
- (f) Maintenance of existing accessible parking stalls.
- (g) Integration of street trees and new street furnishings, with increased opportunities for sidewalk cafes.

The Functional Design lays the foundation for a more detailed Schematic Design Study which will involve consultation with key stakeholders, including property owners and businesses, detailed cost estimates, and a detailed phasing plan. The detailed Schematic Design will be implemented as

²Capital District Streetscape Design Guidelines, Gordon Ratcliffe Landscape Architects, for Halifax Regional Municipality, 2004.

³ Grand Parade Province House Area Joint Public Lands Plan, CBCL Ltd., for Halifax Regional Municipality, 2006.

part of the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy in accordance with HRM's authority under the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*.

7. MARKETING & RETAIL RECRUITMENT

Official establishment of the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District will raise the public profile of Barrington Street, enhance its image, and enable it to be marketed as a unique destination and attraction within Downtown Halifax. This will benefit individual businesses and the Downtown as a whole.

The lead agency for marketing the District will be the Downtown Halifax Business Commission (DHBC) in collaboration with Destination Halifax, and the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP). These agencies already work individually and together to promote the Downtown and its various historic, cultural, entertainment, business, and retail attractions. DHBC initiatives have a retail focus and are targeted principally towards the local population. Destination Halifax targets the tourist market. The GHP targets the non-retail, business and office market. The creation of the Heritage Conservation District will add another dimension to these efforts. The DHBC will spearhead development of a marketing and promotional campaign focussed specifically on the Heritage Conservation District. This will include:

- (a) **Marketing** - Formation of a marketing group, including representatives from businesses on the street, to oversee and co-ordinate image development and marketing for the District.
- (b) **Logo** - Development of a unique graphic design image, logo, and identity for the Heritage Conservation District, to be used in all communication and promotional initiatives.
- (c) **Media Exposure** - Ensuring that the Heritage Conservation District is featured in all relevant publications, such as the Greater Halifax Visitors Guide, the Provincial Doers and Dreamers Guide, etc.
- (d) **Brochure** - Development of a brochure highlighting the district's attractions.
- (e) **Web Page** - Development of a web page linked with the DHBC, HRM, GHP and other websites.
- (f) **Special Promotions** - Working with businesses to establish co-ordinated hours of opening, special Barrington Street promotions, and special promotions linked with neighbouring Spring Garden Road, etc.
- (g) **Retail Recruitment** - This will involve linking specific buildings with specific businesses, re-shaping the retail/business mix to appeal to both residents and tourists; monitoring up-coming vacancies to ensure that street level space is fully occupied, and developing strategic retail anchors and clusters.

8. IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

8.1 GENERAL

Policy 15 Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan

- (a) The Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Plan complements the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy in providing the principal framework to guide decision-making with respect to heritage conservation within the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District.
- (b) This Plan shall be adopted through the powers of Halifax Regional Municipal Council under the Nova Scotia *Heritage Property Act*, the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, and such other statutes as may apply.

Policy 16 Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District By-law

- (a) Pursuant to the authority of Section 19A of the *Heritage Property Act*, HRM shall adopt the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District By-law to further the objectives and policies of this Plan.
- (b) The By-law shall include standards respecting conservation of buildings and properties within the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District.

Policy 17 Heritage Officer

In accordance with Section 19G(1) of the *Heritage Property Act*, Regional Council shall designate a person or persons employed by the Municipality as the Heritage Officer who shall be responsible for the administration of the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan and By-law and the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness.

Policy 18 Strengthened Protection from Demolition for Registered Municipal Heritage Properties (RC-Jun 25/14;E-Nov 29/14)

The HRM Heritage Property By-law (H-200) shall continue to apply to existing registered municipal heritage properties situated within the Heritage Conservation District, as shown on Map 1, except that the provisions of paragraph 2 of Form B of the by-law, which allow for substantial alteration or demolition of the registered property after **three** years following a refusal of an application, shall not apply. Instead, municipal heritage properties in the Heritage Conservation District shall be subject to the strengthened demolition policies for the District specified in this plan, as permitted under the *Heritage Property Act*.

Policy 19 Provincial Heritage Properties

It shall be the intention of Council to include within the Heritage Conservation District St. Paul's Church, St. Mary's Basilica, the Old Burying Ground and Government House, all of which are provincially registered heritage properties, while acknowledging that, pursuant to section 19A(7) of the *Heritage Property Act*, the extent to which the requirements of the Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan and By-law may apply to these properties shall be determined

by the Minister responsible for the *Heritage Property Act*. Any future provincial registrations shall be subject to the same provision.

Policy 20 Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy & Land Use By-law Apply

The Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law shall be the principal authority respecting land use and new development, including building height and massing and building design in the District. In parallel, the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan and By-law shall be the principal authority respecting heritage conservation in the District.

8.2 AMENDMENTS

In the process of implementing this plan, there may be a need for amendments to address emerging heritage conservation and regulatory issues. HRM will establish a process to enable the public, community groups, adjacent municipalities, boards, commissions, other government agencies, and others to propose changes to this plan and its implementing by-laws. This process provides for continuous and systematic review of this plan and associated regulations in response to changing conditions and circumstances impacting growth and development throughout HRM.

The amendment process includes an Annual Review and a Five-Year Review. The Annual Review generally is limited to those amendments resulting in non-substantive technical changes. The Five-Year Review is designed to address amendments which propose substantive changes. This amendment process, based on a defined cycle, provides sufficient time to measure the effects of new initiatives, and provides predictability to determine when initiatives may be introduced. The Five-Year Review shall include the monitoring of the Financial Incentives Program referenced in Policy 16 of this Plan. With the Annual Review, the amendment process also has sufficient flexibility to accommodate technical adjustments or minor amendments which do not affect the overall intent of this plan. The process requires early and continuous public involvement and public dialogue.

Policy 21 HRM shall adopt an amendment process that provides for review and evaluation of the policies contained in this plan and development regulations.

Policy 22 Further to Policy 21, it shall be the intention of HRM to conduct an Annual Review to consider proposed amendments that do not require substantive changes to this plan and development regulations.

Policy 23 Further to Policy 21, it shall be the intention of HRM to conduct a Five-Year Review to consider amendments:

- (a) that could be considered in the Annual Review as well as those outside the scope of the Annual Review; and
- (b) relating to substantive changes to this plan and corresponding development regulations.

- Policy 24** HRM shall establish public participation programs for amendments to this plan which describe opportunities for public input based upon the scope and intent of the amendment.

8.3 TRANSITION TO THIS PLAN

During the course of preparation of this Plan, development continued to occur in the Plan area according to previous municipal planning strategy policies and land use by-law requirements. At the time of Plan adoption, development agreement applications in various stages of review and approval remained in progress. In consideration of the fact that these projects were designed within the parameters of the previous policies of the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy, the substantial investment made in the preparation of such applications and that they were submitted in advance of this Plan being given first reading by Council, it is reasonable that they be exempt from the requirements of By-law H-500 [Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law] and that provision be made to allow Council to consider them after the effective date of this Plan under the previous policies of the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy. Similarly, non-substantive amendments to approved development agreements should also be exempt from the requirements of By-law H-500 [Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law].

It is not, however, appropriate that development that is not in conformance with this Plan be afforded longstanding rights relative to time frames for project approval and completion. Developments that are not constructed and completed within a reasonable time period after Plan adoption should be required to comply with the requirements of By-law H-500 [Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law].

- Policy 25** Applications for development agreements on file on or before March 31, 2009 and which are within the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District area shall be considered under the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy policies in effect at the time the complete application was received and shall be exempt from the requirements of By-law H-500 [Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law]. Where any such application is withdrawn, significantly altered, or rejected by Council, any new development proposal shall be subject to all applicable requirements of By-law H-500 [Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law].

- Policy 26** Applications pursuant to Policy 25 that have not proceeded to a public hearing within 90 days of the effective date of this policy shall be subject to all applicable requirements of By-law H-500 [Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law].

- Policy 27** Applications for non-substantive amendments to approved development agreements shall be exempt from all applicable requirements of By-law H-500 [Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law].

(RC-Aug 17/10; E-Feb 12/11)

In 2014, as part of the revised Regional Plan, HRM adopted the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd Edition in place of its earlier Heritage Building Conservation Standards. References to these Standards and Guidelines were incorporated into Section 4.2 and Policy 4 of this Plan by amendment in parallel with the adoption of the new Regional Plan. Similar amendments were made at the same time to By-law H-500 [Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law], By-law H-200 [Heritage Property By-law] and the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy. (RC-Jun 25/14;E-Nov 29/14)

During the course of preparation of the new Regional Plan and the accompanying amendments to this Plan, applications for substantial alteration of properties in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District continued to be made and considered object to the previous Heritage Building Conservation Standards. In consideration of the fact that these projects were designed within the parameters of the previous Heritage Building Conservation Standards, the investment made in the preparation of such applications and that they were submitted in advance of the amendments to this Plan being given first reading by Council, provision will be made to allow Council to consider them after the effective date of this Plan under the previous Heritage Building Conservation Standards. (RC-Jun 25/14;E-Nov 29/14)

Policy 28 Complete applications to substantially alter a property in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District which were on file on or before the date of first publication of the notice of intention to adopt this policy shall be considered subject to the Heritage Building Conservation Standards that were in effect at the time the complete application was received. Where any complete application is withdrawn, significantly altered, or refused by Council after the date of first publication of the notice of intention to adopt this policy, any new or significantly altered application shall be subject to the Standards for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd Edition. (RC-Jun 25/14;E-Nov 29/14)

APPENDIX 1

BARRINGTON STREET HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CATALOGUE OF BUILDINGS

Based on:

Catalogue of Buildings, Downtown Barrington Study, David Garrett Architects, 1998 (photographs and text)

HRM research files contributed by Elizabeth Pacey & Maud Rozinski, 1977/1978

Georgian Halifax, Elizabeth Pacey, Hounslow Press, Willowdale, Ontario, 1987

Historic Halifax, Elizabeth Pacey, Hounslow Press, Willowdale, Ontario, 1988

Architects of Nova Scotia, Maud Rozinski, Province of Nova Scotia, 1994

Notes from Gary Shutlack, Archivist, Nova Scotia Archives & Records Management

Building & site index numbers correspond with index numbers shown on Map 1, Heritage Conservation District Boundary (Page 6) and Heritage Conservation District By-law Schedule “A” (page 85).

01 Old City Hall

Barrington Street & 1841 Argyle Street

Built: 1888/90
Style: Victorian Classical
Architect: Edward Elliott
Owner: Halifax Regional Municipality
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property
National Historic Site



City Hall stands at the north end of the Grand Parade, the symbolic centre of Halifax, and has been the seat of municipal government for over one hundred years. This fitting location was only agreed to, however, after considerable controversy.

The site was formerly occupied by Dalhousie College, and negotiations for its acquisition hinged on the City providing Dalhousie with sufficient funds and land to build elsewhere. Agreement was only reached after twelve years of negotiation and after a benefactor, William Young, agreed to supplement the City's final offer out of his own pocket.

The architectural competition was won by Edward Elliott (who also designed 1650 and 1668 Barrington) and the builder was Rhodes, Curry and Co.

The sub-basement of the building is the original foundation of the old Dalhousie College.

Built of freestone, the hall is Classical in design and decorative detail. On the front facade, it has a central clock tower and two end pavilions which accentuate the symmetrical composition. Strong belt courses define the first and second storeys, and the second storey windows are accented by semi-circular fanlights.

Small, gabled dormers on the main body of the roof, and large pedimented dormers on the end pavilions combine with the central tower to give the building a "spirited lightness" that is unusual for government buildings of the period.

Combined with the Grand Parade and St. Paul's Church, City Hall gives strong definition to the northern edge of the Barrington Street heritage area. It ties in with both the historic, civic function of the Grand Parade and the late 19th century architecture of the nearby older commercial blocks. It does this in much the same way that Government House relates to the Old Burying Ground at the southern end of the district, providing a strong beginning and ending to the downtown core heritage area.

02 Grand Parade

Barrington Street

Built: 1749
Style: N/A
Architect: N/A
Owner: Halifax Regional Municipality
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



The Grand Parade is Halifax’s oldest area of public open space, having been laid out and reserved at the time of settlement in 1749.

With St. Paul’s Church (1750) at one end, City Hall (1888) at the other, and the Cenotaph (1929) in the centre, it has long been the city’s symbolic centre for public assembly.

The Grand Parade is strategically located at the intersection of Barrington Street, the city’s major north south street, and George Street, the historic “Georgian Axis”, which leads from Citadel Hill and the Town Clock down to the harbour and the ferry wharf.

The Grand Parade is the symbolic heart of the city.

03 St. Paul's Hill

Barrington Street

St. Paul's Hill refers to a street that once ran between Barrington and Argyle in front of St. Paul's Church. This street was closed in the early 1980s and incorporated into the Grand Parade when the landscaping at the Grand Parade was re-worked. The hill remains identified as a separate piece of property in the HRM mapping system.



St. Paul's Church after more than two hundred years
Sketch by L.B. Jensen after Joseph Partridge

04 St. Paul's Anglican Church

1749 Barrington Street

Built: 1750
Style: Georgian
Architect: Unknown, after James Gibbs
Owner: St. Paul's
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property
Provincial Heritage Property
National Historic Site



As described by Elizabeth Pacey in *Historic Halifax*, St. Paul's Church is "a landmark of both the city's and the nation's architectural heritage. Constructed in ... 1750 ... it was the first public building in the newly- founded garrison town of Halifax ... and is recognized as the oldest Protestant church in Canada ... the structure is a masterly combination of early building techniques of the New World and refined classical design of the Old Country. St. Paul's was modelled on James Gibbs' drawings of Marylebone Chapel in London ... and ... is the very essence of ... Gibbs' style - the pure classical symmetry of the main structure and the contrasting decorative flourish of a three-tiered baroque steeple".

In *Thy Dwellings Fair* (by Allan Duffus, Elizabeth Pacey, Ed MacFarlane, and George Rogers), it is noted that the "exterior detailing of St. Paul's is in the classical tradition, inspired by the work of the celebrated British architect, Sir Christopher Wren, and his protégée, James Gibbs. The Palladian window, pilasters, pediments, and intricate three-tiered steeple all exemplify British classicism. However, the floor plan of the church, the simple rectangular auditorium with galleries on three sides of the interior, represents, distinctly, the style of the New England meeting house. The north end of the church was extended by an additional window bay in 1812, and the belfry rebuilt. It was again enlarged in 1858 with the addition of side wings. The chancel at the south end was added in 1872".

In the context of Barrington Street, St. Paul's hearkens back to the very earliest period of development of the city in the 1750s when the street was newly surveyed and but a trail leading south to the cemetery (the Old Burying Ground) and out to Point Pleasant.

The church also provides a visual clue to the character of the street in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when it was a fashionable residential address with a mixture of wood frame houses, garden lots and mansions mostly built in the same neo-classical tradition as St. Paul's.

In the latter part of the 19th century, most wooden houses on the street were replaced by brick and stone structures, both as a result of fire prevention by-laws prohibiting wooden construction, and as a result of the quickening pressure for commercial redevelopment.

With further change and modern development in the 20th century, the church now stands almost as the sole reminder of the wooden architecture that typified Barrington Street in earlier times.

05 St. Paul's Building

1684 Barrington Street

Built: 1897
Style: Chicago School
Architect: J.C. Dumaesq
Owner: Franz Geisel, Heinz Dettmer,
The Estate of Ernst Buhner
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



Like the so-called Marble building just down the street (1672 Barrington), this building was built for Halifax entrepreneur George Wright and designed by architect, J.C. Dumaesq. The builder was Samuel Marshall. In its day it has been home to Buckley's Drug Store (from 1897 to 1935, see also 1667 Barrington), the Belgian, Argentinian, Italian, and Chilean Consulates, the Continental Bank, Lloyd's Bank, and a variety of professional offices.

Architecturally, it stands as a completion of the late 19th century streetscape of which it is a part, and as a fine example in its own right of the Chicago Style influence that prevailed at the time of its construction.

Situated at the corner of Barrington and Prince Streets, the building overlooks St. Paul's Church and the Grand Parade and is, hence, at one of the most prominent and publicly visible locations in the city. This fact was undoubtedly in architect Dumaesq's mind when he designed the building and chose to work in the "wrap around corner" mode. He may also have been influenced by the similar design of the Farquhar building which was under construction at the corner of Barrington and Blowers Street in the same year.

Like the Farquhar building, the St. Paul's building is designed as a series of layered arcades set on top of a sturdy ground floor section built into the hillside. The four storeys above the first are subtly differentiated by the use of segmental arched windows on the second and fourth storeys and semi-circular arched windows on the third and fifth storeys. As on many other arcaded buildings in the district, the top-most windows are smaller and narrower, creating a kind of architectural quickening at the top storey.

The storeys are firmly defined by corbelled cornices which both accentuate the height of the building and relate it to human scale.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the building is its varied use of yellow and red brickwork and terra cotta to accentuate the cornices, string courses and window heads. These materials give the building a unique appearance and warm texture that, in many respects, sets the tone for the lively streetscape of which the building is a part.

Although it has undergone some change from the original (e.g., the removal of a mansard roof and a corner tower), the building is substantially intact and stands today as an excellent representative of Barrington Street's commercial hey-day.

06 Forrester Building

Other Names

Phinney's Building

1678 Barrington Street

Built: 1820's (1916 Addition)
Style: Georgian with Victorian and Edwardian alterations
Architect: J.C.Dumaresq (1918 Addition)
Owner: Peter Kleronomos
Designation: None



This is the oldest commercial building on Barrington Street, dating back to the 1820s when it was established as the home of Thomas Forrester's dry goods business.

Built of ironstone and sandstone, the building was originally a three storey structure designed in classic Georgian style with a six-bay front, a pitched roof and small dormers.

By 1858, it was occupied by William Fraser and Sons, manufacturers and dealers in pianos, organs and melodeons.

In the late 1800s, the pitched roof was changed to a mansard roof with five dormers overlooking the street.

In 1912, Phinney's Musical Instruments occupied the ground floor. Phinney's remained at this location until the early 1990s. In 1916, the building was known as the Bond building and underwent alterations to accommodate the "Tally Ho Restaurant". This was when the central windows in the second floor were combined into the wide window openings that we see today.

Further alterations occurred when the mansard roof was replaced by a full fourth storey under a flat roof. Originally, the windows in this more contemporary addition matched the windows below, but some have more recently been blocked up and reduced to half size, square windows (although the original openings and sills still remain).

Although the Forrester/Phinney's building has undergone change over its lifetime, it has somehow still managed to retain its original Georgian spirit. This perhaps has something to do with retention of the refined, classical window trim on the second and third storeys, and perhaps something to do with the stone exterior, which endure as a reminder of the architectural technology of the Georgian period.

Restoration of the storefront and unblocking of the fourth storey windows could go a long way towards helping the building regain its Georgian symmetry, a strong contributing element in the streetscape.

It is interesting to note that the third floor window trim is of masonry, while the second floor window trim is of wood. The latter may date from the 1916 renovations.

07 Wright Building

Other Names

Marble Building

1672/74 Barrington Street

Built: 1896
Style: Chicago Style
Architect: J.C. Dumaresq
Owner: Churchill Steel & Timber Ltd.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building has heritage value for its architecture, its historical association, and its overall contribution to the street. It was built in 1896 for George Wright, a successful entrepreneur and developer, who made his fortune compiling and publishing catalogues and guidebooks, including “Wright’s World Directory”, which was distributed world-wide. Wright travelled extensively on business and to promote his personal crusade against social evils. He is of historical note in Halifax for having been lost in the sinking of the Titanic and for having bequeathed his home, which still stands at the corner of Young Avenue and Inglis Street, to the local chapter of the Canadian National Council of Women.

Wright’s architect was J.C. Dumaresq, who was responsible for many other Barrington Street buildings. For this building, Dumaresq worked in the Chicago style, no doubt as a symbol of Wright’s success, but also to complement the Chicago style Nova Scotia Furnishings building which was built next door the previous year.

As described by Elizabeth Pacey in *Historic Halifax*, the building “is constructed of grey brick with red brick and terra cotta accents. The feeling of height is achieved by the acceleration of detail towards the top of the structure - the arched windows and the high rooftop parapet. The window pairs are divided by costly red marble colonnettes which account for the nickname “marble building”.

Like the adjacent Nova Scotia Furnishings building and the St. Paul’s building two doors away, the Wright building stands both as a testament to the historical evolution of Barrington Street as Halifax’s main commercial street in the latter part of the 19th century, and as a contemporary example of successful historic building revitalization.

Its facade and original decorative features are intact. The name of its original owner is cast in stone at the top of the rooftop parapet. Its avant-garde (for its day) style has attracted avant-garde tenants such as Marconi, the inventor of wireless technology, who operated an experimental broadcasting station in the building for four years. In more recent years, it has housed architects offices and art gallery workspace on its upper floors and café/restaurants at street level.

(See also 1684 Barrington, which was built for George Wright with J.C. Dumaresq as architect).

08 Nova Scotia Furnishing Building

1668/70 Barrington Street

Built: 1895
Style: Chicago Style
Architect: Edward Elliott
Owner: 778938 Ontario Ltd.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This is one of several buildings on Barrington Street that exemplify the early Chicago Style of architecture. As Elizabeth Pacey explains in *Historic Halifax*, the Chicago style embodied “revolutionary changes in ... construction technology ... (where) ...the development of steel beam construction meant that exterior walls were no longer load-bearing ... a steel frame could support a much higher structure than heavy masonry walls ... (and) ... windows could be larger ... (because) ... the ratio of glass to brick or stone was no longer critical for structural stability.” The six-storey, Nova Scotia Furnishings building embodies all of these features with “a vast expanse of glass under

broad Romanesque arches and a ... flurry of small arched windows and cornice brackets ... (raising) ... the architectural tempo as the eye ... (travels) ... upward”.

The steel frame technology is readily apparent in the first two storeys, where it is exposed and used to great effect in the tall, recessed storefront.

The building was designed by architect Edward Elliott, who had earlier designed Halifax City Hall (1890) and the nearby Harrison building (1893 - see 1650 Barrington). Originally from Dartmouth, Elliott trained in Boston and spent the early years of his practice there. He returned to Halifax in 1878 and became one of the most highly regarded architects in the city. In 1895, he joined in partnership with Charles Hopson, an English architect who had also worked extensively in the United States. Their partnership was a vigorous one and, during the last years of the century, they became known for introducing not only the latest American styles but also the “Yankee spirit of enterprise” into the Nova Scotian architectural scene.

The Nova Scotia Furnishings building exemplifies this spirit, and stands today as a model of successful historic building revitalization.

From its beginnings in 1895, when the local press described it as the “handsomest and most imposing mercantile building in the city” to its restoration in the 1980s the building has always been a symbol of commercial enterprise on Barrington Street.

Its current diversified use, incorporates ground floor retail (communication equipment and services), a second floor hair salon, a restaurant (fronting on Argyle Street), third floor offices for the Downtown Halifax Business Commission and a graphic design firm, and upper floor offices for a software development company.

09 Ungar's Steam Laundry

Other Names

Granite Brewery

1662 Barrington Street

Built: 1893
Style: Victorian Classical
Architect: J.C. Dumaresq
Owner: Granite Brewery Ltd.
Designation: None



According to research in HRM heritage files, this building was built about 1892 by Max Cohn amidst a complex series of financial arrangements, and rented in that year to Ungar's Steam Laundry. Max Ungar purchased the property shortly thereafter, in 1895.

Ungar's Laundry stayed in the premises until 1940, when they merged with Cousin's Laundry and moved to West Street. Other occupants during this period included hairdressers, crockery retailers, clothiers, stationers, a lending library, and dry goods retailers.

From 1945 to 1960 the store was occupied by Hudson's Ready-to-Wear.

The architect is not known, but HRM evaluation notes suggest that it may have been J.C. Dumaresq, based on the style of brickwork used on the building, particularly the serrated brickwork on the second storey.

The building is a three storey building of eight bays. Brick pilasters define a four-window central section balanced by two-window end sections framed by end pilasters. Heavy brackets surmount the pilasters to support a substantial roof overhang. The second storey window heads and third storey window sills are accented by continuous stone courses which add a light touch to the composition. The third storey windows are arched, with keystones, and there is a subtle, decorative brickwork frieze just below the cornice.

The present-day storefront is not original but is designed in a manner that perfectly suits the architecture of the building. Its vertical divisions match those on the upper stories; it has a traditional panelled base; and it has a well proportioned signband set beneath a simple, bracketed cornice.

Like its neighbours, the building makes its own unique contribution to the streetscape and supports the overall, late 19th century ambience of the block.

10 Acadia Insurance Building

Other Names

Sam The Record Man

1656 Barrington Street

Built: 1919
Style: Beaux Arts
Architect: Andrew Cobb
Owner: STRM Inc.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building was built as the first office of the Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation and Canada Permanent Trust Company in Nova Scotia, opening in 1920 and continuing to 1963. From 1963 to 1978 it was owned and occupied by Phoenix Insurance Company, which incorporated the famed Nova Scotian firm “Acadia Fire Insurance Company”, one of the country’s oldest insurance companies.

It was designed by architect Andrew Cobb, who also designed the Tramway building and many other buildings in the city (see 1598 Barrington). Cobb maintained his office here from 1920 to 1938.

The building is designed in the Beaux Arts style, which emphasized interpretation of classical design principles, and used classical trim as ornament.

On this building, classical principles are embodied in the symmetry of the facade, but the facade design itself is not strictly classical. The window arrangement is quite unusual, focussing the eye on ornamented triple windows in the centre of the facade, with the surrounding windows left plain.

The ground level has the greatest ornamentation, with a heavy ashlar stone base, and a combination of classical pilasters and engaged columns framing the window and door openings.

The building’s front facade is clad entirely in granite, a material which imparts a very solid appearance befitting the financial institutions which have occupied the building for most of its lifetime. The solidity of the exterior material also perhaps explains why the exterior of the building has remained virtually unchanged since it was built.

Like its immediate neighbours, it is an important component of the streetscape on this part of Barrington, contributing strongly to the containment of the street while being low enough in height to allow penetration of afternoon sun.

11 Harrison Building

Other Names

Sam The Record Man

1650/54 Barrington Street

Built: 1893
Style: Victorian Classical
Architect: Edward Elliot
Owner: STRM Inc.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building belongs to the era of commercial redevelopment of Barrington Street in the late 19th century and is part of a remarkable ensemble of buildings which survive from the same period.

It was built for Harrison Brothers, painters and decorators in 1893, and was designed by architect Edward Elliott, who also designed Halifax City Hall, the Nova Scotia Furniture Company building (just down the street at 1668 Barrington), the Point Pleasant Park gates, the Dartmouth Post Office, and the Truro Agricultural College, among many other buildings.

Elliott was regarded as one of the best architects of his day in Halifax, and was known for the clarity of his designs. In her book *Architects of Nova Scotia*, Maud Rozinski notes that Elliott “assimilated the styles of his day in a generally controlled and classical manner, departing from the Italianate mannerisms of some of his predecessors”.

This is certainly the case in this building, which has simple yet assured lines and little ornamentation on the upper storeys except for a central arched window and bracketed parapet which provide a visual focus for the highly symmetrical composition.

From 1895 until his death in 1901, Elliott was in partnership with Charles Hopson, with whom he maintained an office in this building.

Harrison Brothers owned and occupied the building until 1919 or later, along with various other business and professional offices. Bond’s Clothing Store operated there in the 1950s.

On the ground floor, the building has undergone some alteration from the original, with storefront entrances having been removed and replaced by continuous display windows. The result is reasonably compatible with the spirit of the building, however, because it has maintained the storefront tradition of panelled base, main window and transom, and because it fits in with the overall symmetry of the facade.

In terms of its relationship with its surroundings, the building contributes positively to the streetscape as part of a trio of buildings of similar scale, proportion and fenestration. This particular grouping is environmentally significant in the context of Barrington as a north-south street because it is tall enough to provide a solid, well proportioned wall of enclosure, yet low enough in height (three storeys) to allow the afternoon sun to penetrate.

12 Canada Permanent Trust Building

1646 Barrington Street

Built: 1950
Style: International
Architect: C.A. Fowler & Co.
(now Fowler Bauld Mitchell)
Owner: Nasco Consultants
Designation: None



Built in 1950, this is one of the downtown's earliest modern office towers and a typical example of the international style in its formative years.

Its seven storey height, lightweight, steel frame, curtain wall construction, and busy, grid exterior of aluminum and glass panels are notably out of scale and character with the late 19th century streetscape which occupies the rest of the block.

13 Tramway Building

1598 Barrington Street

Built: 1916
Style: Early 20th century Neo- Gothic
Architect: Andrew R. Cobb
Owner: Morris Strug
Designation: None



This building is notable both for its historical associations and its architecture. It was built in 1916 for the Halifax Electric Tramway Company which had operated the Halifax electric tram system (the Halifax Street Railway or the “Birneys”) since 1895. In 1916/1917, the company was reorganized under the title of the Nova Scotia Tramways and Power Company, and the move into this building probably coincided with that reorganization. The company continued in operation until 1949, when the rail-based trams were replaced by more modern electric trolleys.

The building had, and still has, two storefronts, one of which was the home of Tip Top Tailors from 1921 -1941 (see 1592 Barrington) and the other of which housed Chas. Brown Furriers from 1942-1983.

Its architect was Andrew Cobb, one of the city’s most well-known early 20th century architects. Originally from New York, Cobb studied at Acadia University, M.I.T., and the Ecole des Beaux Arts, in Paris. He set up practice in Halifax about 1909, at first in partnership with S.P. Dumaresq, but later on his own.

Cobb designed many buildings in Halifax, including the Acadia Insurance building (1656 Barrington), the old Casino Theatre (now demolished), many buildings at Dalhousie University, and many houses designed in the English Arts and Crafts style. He also collaborated on the highly regarded Bank of Nova Scotia building and the Provincial building, which both face Province House.

Cobb maintained his office in the Tramway building for the first year after its construction and also from 1938 until his accidental death in 1943.

The Tramway building itself is notable as Halifax’s only example of the Modern Neo-Gothic style and as the first building on Barrington Street to use concrete extensively in its construction. Octagonal pillars articulate the facades and culminate in a series of pointed turrets that punctuate the roofline and give the building its castellated, neo Gothic look. The smooth, concrete finish of the pillars accentuates the simplicity of the forms and creates a definite “modern” look that was perhaps, in 1916, ahead of its time.

HRM evaluation notes suggest that the building relates well to the Gothic character of the nearby Church of England Institute (Khyber), and provides a visual anchor to the block in a scale compatible to many buildings in the immediate surroundings

14 Former Tip Top Tailors

1592 Barrington Street

Built: 1915
Style: Renovated Cubist
Architect: Unknown
Owner: 3000405 Nova Scotia Ltd.
Designation: None



In 1915, a fire destroyed the buildings between the Church of England Institute (Khyber) and the corner of Barrington and Blowers Streets. Along with the adjacent Tramway building, this building was constructed in the following year.

Research notes in HRM heritage files suggest that, initially, the building may have been used as a rear entrance for Reardon's store, which fronted on Argyle Street. By 1935, it was occupied by Dressner's Ladies Wear. Then, in 1942, Tip Top Tailors moved in.

Tip Top Tailors was a Canada-wide household name in mass produced men's clothing from the 1920s to the early 1980s. The company started in Halifax in 1921, locating at first in the storefront of the adjacent Tramway building. In 1942 they moved into this building, presumably after it was renovated (see below) and remained here until 1980. There have been a number of other commercial tenants since then, but the name "Tip Top Tailors" is still set in the sidewalk in front of the building in coloured ceramic tile.

Architecturally, the building gives no exterior clue about its 1915 appearance, and is assumed to have been extensively renovated in 1940/1941 prior to its occupancy by Tip Top Tailors. HRM research notes refer to it as the only example of "cubist massing" in the city and as an "excellent example of a small scale attached commercial building in international style." The building is certainly like no other on the street, and may, at least, be said to have heritage value as one of the earliest examples of Post War Modernist renovation on Barrington. At the same time, however, the building is out of character with its neighbours.

15 Church of England Institute

Other Names

Khyber Building

1588 Barrington Street

Built: 1888
Style: Victorian Gothic
Architect: Henry F. Busch
Owner: Halifax Regional Municipality
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



Built for the Church of England Institute in 1888, this building is one of the trio of free-standing, 19th century, institutional buildings that contribute strongly to the late Victorian architectural ambience of this part of the Historic District.

It was designed by architect Henry F. Busch, who also designed many other buildings in Halifax including the Halifax Academy and the Public Gardens Bandstand. Busch was known as the province's best exponent of the Second Empire style but here, on the Church of England Institute, he chose to work in a highly decorated Gothic mode, retaining only the Second Empire's trademark mansard roof.

Built of brick, the building's most prominent feature is an ornate corner oriel window connected to a single engaged column below and a turreted spire above.

Windows are designed in a variety of arched forms and trimmed with elaborate sandstone caps with prominent keystones.

The entrance is set in a slightly projecting centre bay that rises up through the eaves and culminates in a steeply pitched Gothic dormer. Other dormers accent the roofline both on the front and on the south side.

Horizontal articulation is provided by a solid sandstone foundation, a dentiled string course at first floor height, and a prominent, bracketed cornice at the eaves.

The old institute is one of the more intact historic buildings on Barrington Street, having suffered little if any alteration to its exterior.

It is owned by Halifax Regional Municipality and has recently undergone a major roof strengthening to accommodate increased snow loads resulting from the adjacent Neptune expansion, as well as a major interior re-fit to meet fire codes and building standards for public use. It is currently leased to the Khyber Arts Society, a community arts group. It also houses the office of the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia.

16 City Club

Other Names

Neptune Theatre School

1580 Barrington Street

Built: 1821/renovated in 1891
Style: Second Empire
Architect: J.C. Dumaresq
Owner: Neptune Theatre
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building is one of the oldest buildings on downtown Barrington Street, dating back to 1821, when it was constructed as a Georgian mansion for the Honourable Simon Bradstreet Robie, who held several high offices including Solicitor General and Member of the Legislative Council.

The City Club, a fashionable retreat for young men from the city's upper classes, took the mansion over in 1858.

In 1888, the northern part of the Robie Estate was sold to the Church England for construction of the Church of England Institute (1588 Barrington) and, in 1891, the southern portion was sold for construction of the St. Mary's Young Men's Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society building (1572 Barrington). In the same year, 1891, the facade of the old Robie/City Club mansion was transformed into the building we see today.

Designed by architect J.C. Dumaresq, the building is comparable in style to the St. Mary's Glebe House (1508 Barrington), which he also designed in the same year.

Constructed of brick and sandstone, it has a mansard roof and two prominent projecting bays that rise to connect with large roof dormers. The entrance is set between the bays, under a sturdy porch.

Windows are arched and set in the facade in pairs under sandstone hoods with prominent keystones.

The facade is lavishly ornamented with fancy brickwork belt courses and elaborate stone window hoods and window sills.

Like those on the St. Mary's Glebe House, the dormers are of painted wood, which provides an interesting contrast with the darker brick surfaces of the main walls.

The City Club was acquired by the City of Halifax in the early 1990s, following the fire which heavily damaged the adjacent NFB building. In 1996, it was incorporated into the expanded Neptune Theatre, to which it is now connected, and is now enjoying new life as the home of the Neptune Theatre School.

**17 St. Mary's Young Men's Total Abstinence &
Benevolent Society Hall**

Other Names

Former NFB Building

1572 Barrington Street

Built: 1891
Style: Second Empire
Architect: J.C. Dumaresq
Owner: B&G Innkeepers Ltd.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This is the facade of the St. Mary's Young Men's Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society building, one of several church related institutional buildings built on this part of Barrington Street in the late 1880s/early 1890s (i.e., the City Club and Church of England Institute buildings next door, and the St. Mary's Glebe a block away).

The architect was J.C. Dumaresq, who also designed the City Club and the St. Mary's Glebe in the same year.

In 1907 (at the same time that the adjacent Brander Morris building was constructed), the Benevolent Society building became the Nickle Theatre, Halifax's first permanent movie house. It continued to be a movie theatre, changing hands several times (the Imperial Theatre, 1941 and, later, the Family Theatre) until it was occupied by the National Film Board.

The building was heavily damaged by fire in the early 1990s, leaving only the shell.

At present, the property is the subject of an agreement between the property owner and HRM whereby the municipality has contributed funds to stabilize the facade and the owner has forfeited the right to demolish or alter it. The future use of the facade and the site, however, is an open question.

18 Brander Morris Building

1566 Barrington Street

Built: 1907
Style: Arts & Crafts (Rustic Gothic)
Architect: Harris & Horton
Owner: 778938 Ontario Ltd.
Designation: None



This site has a long historical association with the furniture trade, going back to 1888, when Brander's upholstery business occupied the first house in from the corner of Blowers Street, and earlier to 1863, when McEwan and Co., upholsterers and cabinetmakers occupied the second house in from the corner.

By 1898, Brander's upholstery had become Brander Morris & Co., upholsterers and cabinetmakers, for whom this new building was constructed in 1907. After Brander and Morris ceased operation in 1927, the building was subsequently occupied by Gordon and Keith Furniture (1928), Western Furniture (1958) and Antique Furniture (1981).

The building has a number of very interesting and unusual features that warrant conservation. HRM heritage file material describes it as a "typical commercial building of the era, where the frame ... is expressed and the infill panels are generally window area ... this style or expression ... (being) ... no doubt, a result of economics but ... (also) ... to some degree a result of the broader architectural movement of the day sometimes referred to as the "Chicago style."

The facade is divided into two "halves", roughly in a 4-3 proportion which reflects the underlying property configuration and which may reflect the way that adjoining properties were brought together in the Brander Morris partnership. Each "half" is symmetrically designed within itself with a visually balanced window arrangement framed by protruding triangular pilasters, a strong cornice, and centred, triangular pediments. These features give the building a quasi-classical look. Perhaps the most unusual feature, however, is the fact that the facade is made from concrete blocks rusticated to resemble rough stone. There are also some surprising, idiosyncratic details, including beach stones incorporated as decoration in the ovolo moulding of the cornice and as a facing material in the tympanum of the pediment.

The building was restored in 2001 by 778938 Ontario Ltd.

19 Farquhar Building

1558 Barrington Street

Built: 1897
Style: Chicago Style
Architect: Harris S. Tremaine
Owner: 3000425 Nova Scotia
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building was built for James and Robert Farquhar, plumbers, tinsmiths, gas fitters and sheet iron workers, who maintained a store at street level and three floors of workshops upstairs. The firm dealt in electrical supplies, repairs, stoves and kitchen furnishings at this location until 1935. James and Robert were related to James Augustus Farquhar, a sea captain and commission merchant who operated a wharf off Lower Water Street.

The brick building was designed by architect Harris Tremaine, who also designed the Roy building in the same year.

Using a stylized Italianate motif, Tremaine created three tiers of arches above the Barrington Street level, with each tier accentuated by strong horizontal cornices of sandstone and corbelled brick. The arches are arranged in ascending order, with single arches on the second storey, double arches on the third storey, and triple arches on the fourth storey. This theme is carried around the corner in a smooth, wrap-around curve, and is repeated, with variations, on the Blowers Street facade. The whole composition is topped by a prominent dentiled cornice.

When constructed, this building made a strong architectural statement at the Barrington and Blowers street corner, and one can imagine Tremaine envisioning that the Italianate motif might be continued into new buildings on either side.

This did not happen but, across the street some thirteen years later, in 1910, the W.M. Brown building (see 1551 Barrington) would be built with a curved corner that echoed Tremaine's design.

If the Farquhar building's street level storefront were refurbished, either closely following the original, or in a sympathetic contemporary treatment that respects the original, the building could once again shine as an outstanding example of Barrington Street's Victorian commercial architectural heritage.

20 Barrington Gate
1546 Barrington Street

Built: 1996
Style: Contemporary Infill/Replacement
Architect: Noel Fowler
Owner: Barrington Street
Historical Development Ltd.



Barrington Gate is a contemporary infill replacement structure of six storeys, built in 1996 on the site of the former St. Mary's Infirmary, a four-storey structure, which burned down in 1995.

The design of the building was approved under a development agreement.

21 St. Mary's Glebe
1508 Barrington Street

Built: 1891
Style: Second Empire
Architect: J.C. Dumaresq
Owner: Roman Catholic Episcopal Corp.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



A substantial part of the block bounded by Barrington Street, Spring Garden Road, Grafton Street and Blowers Street has been the heart of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Halifax for over two hundred years. It was on the northern section of the block, just below Blowers, that the first Catholic church, a small wooden structure (St. Peter's), was built in 1794.

St. Mary's Basilica (originally known as St. Peter's) was begun in 1820 under Bishop Edmund Burke, lengthened in the 1860s, and finished with an ornate granite facade and a soaring steeple in 1874 under Archbishop Thomas Connolly.

The Glebe was built in 1891 on the site of an earlier dwelling owned by Lawrence O'Connor, the first Roman Catholic lawyer to be admitted to the Nova Scotia Bar. The Glebe is believed to have been designed by J.C. Dumaresq, a noted late-nineteenth century architect, who designed many other buildings nearby on Barrington Street and throughout the downtown.

Constructed of brick, the building has numerous projecting bays, a mansard roof, and varied gabled and tower dormers of cream-painted wood. The facades are accented with sandstone string courses which define the stories and articulate the window heads and sills. Ornamental brickwork on the second storey and at the eaves further enlivens the facade. Corner buttresses, a broad pointed arch portico at the Barrington Street entrance, and pointed arch windows in the dormers reinforce the Gothic mood of the building.

The perimeter of the property at the street corner is defined by a granite knee wall capped by ornamental ironwork. On the Barrington Street side, the perimeter wall flows into the Glebe's main entrance steps in a graceful curve, drawing the eye into the centre of the main facade.

The Glebe contributes strongly to the historic ambience of the Old Burying Ground precinct, and its ongoing use for its original purpose adds to the historical continuity of the area.

The Glebe also provides a strong historical and architectural link with several other late Victorian institutional buildings which still stand just to the north on Barrington Street - the St. Mary's Young Men's Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society building (the former NFB, now standing as a shell only), the former City Club (now Neptune Theatre School), both designed by Dumaresq, and the former Church of England Institute (now Khyber Arts Society), which are brick structures built in the 1888-1891 period.

22 The Old Burying Ground

1460 Barrington Street

Built: 1749
Style: N/A
Architect: N/A
Owner: St Paul's Cemetery
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property
National Historic Site



This cemetery was set apart in 1749, the year that Halifax was founded, as a common burial ground for the inhabitants. Many of the city's first citizens, their descendants, and men of the British Army and the Royal Navy who were stationed in Halifax are buried here. The cemetery remained in use for almost one hundred years, until 1844. During that period, over 12,000 men, women and children were buried here; fewer than 10% of their graves are marked. St. Paul's Church became owner of the graveyard in the 1790s, and has maintained it ever since.

A monument to two heroes of the Crimean War - the Welsford and Parker Monument - was erected in the cemetery in 1855. Constructed of sandstone, the monument is in the form of a triumphal Roman arch surmounted by a carved lion. The carving is attributed to George Laing, a Scottish stonemason who, in the eight years that he lived in Halifax, was involved in the construction of many of the city's finest mid-Victorian buildings.

By the 1980s, frost and vandalism had taken their toll on the gravestones, and the cemetery needed extensive repair. Public and private funds were sought by the Old Burying Ground Foundation to carry out the necessary work. In 1984, a complete record was made of the site. In 1990/91, a landscape plan was implemented, and tilted stones reset. The Welsford and Parker Monument was also restored at that time. The Old Burying Ground fulfils an important role in the cultural heritage of Halifax. It is a reminder of the very earliest days of the settlement, both in terms of the people who lived and died here, and in terms of the original geography of the city - it is situated just outside the original town plot and palisades. The presence of significant institutional buildings in the immediate vicinity, including St Mary's Basilica and Glebe, Government House and the Old Court House, re-inforces the historic ambience of the site.

With its old stone walls, wrought iron railings and many trees, the cemetery functions as a softening element in the urban landscape, providing a quiet place a stone's throw away from the busyness of the Barrington Street - Spring Garden Road intersection. If Barrington Street is viewed as a heritage axis in the downtown, the Old Burying Ground also functions as a counterpoint to the Grand Parade, both through its historic open space function and its two centuries-old connection with St. Paul's Church.

23 Old Birk's Site (Vacant)

Barrington & George Street

Built: N/A
Style: N/A
Architects: N/A
Owner: Halifax Regional Municipality



Prior to 1912, this site was occupied by a number of buildings dating back into the 19th century. These were destroyed by fire in 1912 and replaced by four new buildings, including the Birk's building (three storeys high at mid block) and the Cragg building (seven storeys high at the corner of Barrington and George, and, at the time, the tallest building in Halifax and the Maritimes). These buildings were demolished in the late 1980s, and the site has been vacant ever since, except for a brief period during the 1996 G7 conference when it was decked over and used as an outdoor pavilion and beer garden. An early 1990s proposal to develop a new commercial building on the site never materialized.

Although the buildings are gone and the site has been turned into a parking lot, it retains heritage value potential from a number of perspectives.

The old foundations may still exist and have archaeological and heritage value as a potential "dig". A dig should certainly be undertaken before any permanent redevelopment takes place.

The demolition of the buildings has also exposed the back of the adjacent Dennis Building to full public view from the Grand Parade, revealing the ghost forms of earlier buildings embedded in its structure. These ghost forms hold interpretive value, particularly when considered in combination with the archaeological potential of the site.

24 Crowe Building

1729 Barrington Street

Built: 1915
Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial
Architect: George W. Thompson
Owner: Hilltribe Designs Inc.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



William Crowe first established his “Raymond Sewing Machine” business at this site in 1884, later expanding into the fabric trade. In 1912, a fire destroyed his building, along with other buildings on the northern half of this block, the fire wall on the adjacent Cabot building (constructed in 1890) being credited with having prevented the fire from spreading further south.

Crowe built this new building in 1915, and continued his business here until his death in 1919. In subsequent years, the building was used by a succession of clothiers including A. Webber Millinery (1921), Paradise Millinery (1922-30), Arcade Ladies Shop (1932-1972) and Fit-Rite Clothiers (1975). The present occupant (Karavan) continues this tradition.

The tall, narrow building is faced with green glazed brick and is, perhaps, the only building in the province so treated.

Granite is used as an accent material on the continuous window sills, on the string courses between the windows, the keystones at the head of the arched windows, and the string course above the third storey windows. White brick is used as an accent in the triple-diamond design at the top of the facade.

The roofline cornice is made of copper. The storefront retains its look from renovations c1950.

Contextually, the building fits well with its neighbours on the southern half of the block, illustrating the commercial life of the street in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It also supports the setting of the Grand Parade, contributing to the human-scaled containment of that important and historic public open space.

25 Cabot Building

1725/27 Barrington Street

Built: 1890
Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial
Architect: J.C. Dumaresq
Owner: Kenneth Evong
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building was constructed for William Cabot, a dry goods merchant, who occupied the premises for almost fifty years until 1937. Leeds Ladies Wear was at this location through the 1940s, and the building has since housed a series of retail ventures, with professional and business offices upstairs.

The building is of red, rock-faced sandstone.

Triple windows on the second storey are rectangular and joined by a continuous lintel. The central window is of bulls eye glass block.

Windows on the third storey are segmentally arched, with decorative keystones at their heads.

The facade is topped by a cornice and sandstone parapet.

At street level, the storefront has been renovated in a contemporary, heritage panelling style. However, a faithful restoration of the original storefront (or a well-designed variation on it) would work best to bring the building back to its full heritage character and maximize its contribution to the heritage streetscape and setting of the Grand Parade.

26 Kaizer Building

1721 Barrington Street

Built: 1895
Style: Arts & Crafts (Rustic Gothic)
Architect: William C. Harris
Owner: Aytar Singh
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building has a long association with the development and practice of dentistry in Halifax in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

It was built for Edmund P. Ennis, who practised here until the 1920s, by which time the building was known as the “Maritime Dental Parlour”. Ennis was succeeded by dentist Harry Tolson into the 1940s.

The building is faced in a combination of rusticated grey granite, white granite, and yellow glazed bricks, resulting in a highly variegated wall surface.

In style, the building emanates a certain castellated Gothic character through the incorporation of bartizan-like protuberances and a pointed parapet in the design.

The name “Kaizer” is set into the upper storey, just below the parapet; however, research material on file does not explain the origin of this.

Contextually, the Kaizer building relates well to its neighbours, particularly the adjacent G.M. Smith building, and contributes very positively to the historic setting of the Grand Parade. Like its neighbour to the south, however, it could benefit from surface cleaning and restoration of the storefront cornice.

27 G.M. Smith Building

1715 Barrington Street

Built: 1893
Style: Victorian Gothic/ Art Nouveau
Architects: J.C. Dumaresq and H.H. Mott
Owner: 778938 Ontario Ltd.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This four-storey building was constructed for George M. Smith, a well established dry goods merchant, whose firm occupied it for thirty five years until 1928, after which it was put to use as a showroom for the Nova Scotia Light & Power Company.

From the 1940s to the 1970s it was a clothing store. A major fire occurred in 1950, when it was occupied by Kay's Department Store.

The building was renovated in 1977 by architects Fowler, Bauld & Mitchell and has since been occupied by various commercial tenants (on the ground floor) and professional offices (on the upper floors).

Designed by architects J.C. Dumaresq and H.H. Mott, this building was one of the last commercial building on Barrington Street to be built of stone. Its unusual design has been described variously as Victorian with Art Nouveau influences and Gothic.

The design is based on a vertical division of the facade into three bays, each two windows-wide, with a large window to wall area ratio.

The centre bay is carried up beyond the roofline, culminating in a gabled parapet, and the verticals which divide the bays also culminate in square finials. These features do give the building a certain "Gothic" character.

The second floor windows are arched, while those on the third and fourth floors are rectangular. The central window on the second storey has the date "1893" carved on its lintel. The centre windows on the upper floors are oriel windows, and have delicate engaged columns set into their mullions.

The exterior stonework combines rusticated and smooth elements which give the wall surface great variety. The exterior stonework was cleaned in 2002 and this building now glows as the centrepiece of a very interesting group of buildings facing the Grand Parade.

28 Government Place Entrance

1713 Barrington Street

Built: 1980's
Style: Post-Modern
Architect: Lyndon & Lynch
Owner: NS Transportation & Public Works
Designation: None



This arched entry replaced a one storey masonry building constructed in the 1950s which, in turn, replaced an earlier 19th century structure of three storeys.

It leaves the sides of the adjacent buildings significantly exposed and is the only single storey structure on the block.

29 Cleverdon Building

Other Names

Roberts Jewellers

1709/11 Barrington Street

Built: 1870's

Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial

Architect: Unknown

Owner: G. & F. Roberts

Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This registered heritage property is one of the most intact, small scale, mid-Victorian commercial buildings on Barrington Street.

Available records indicate that it was occupied by Alexander's millinery in the early 1870s, then by William Cleverdon, watchmaker until about 1903. In the 1910s and 20s it was a dry goods store, then a shoe store but, in the 1930s returned to jewellery and watchmaker use with occupancy by Tully Bros and H. Bergman.

Beginning in the 1930s, the upstairs was used as a photographic studio by the famous Nova Scotian marine photographer Wallace McAskill, a use which was continued by Mr. McAskill's widow until 1964.

Following a period of occupancy by Nelson's Eye Antiques, the property came to its present owners, G & F. Roberts in the mid-1960s, returning it to use in the jewellery trade.

Architecturally, the building is thoroughly intact, and its storefront, bracketed first storey cornice, Italianate fenestration, ornamental brickwork, and bracketed roofline cornice stand as exemplars of mid 19th century design. The brickwork ornamentation in particular is outstanding.

30 Foreign Affair

1705 Barrington Street

Built: Mid 19th Cent., modernized 1950's
Style: 1950's Modern
Architect: Unknown
Owner: Crafts International Ltd.
Designation: None



The origins of this building have not been researched, but it is most probably contemporaneous with or older than the 1870s buildings on either side.

The building is shown on a late 19th century photograph with a traditional storefront, vertically proportioned upstairs windows, a pitched roof, and small dormers facing Barrington (see HRM file material for 1709 Barrington).

A set of streetscape drawings and property histories for this block was published in *The Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin* in 1980. In that article, the building is described as having been a boarding house, toy store and milliners in 1875; a dressmaker's in 1879; J. Roy & Co Sewing Machines in 1880; and a "double house" and clothing store from 1893-1910. The article also refers to an 1853 daguerreotype which shows the building with its two dormers existing at that time.

The building was modernized in the 1950s into its present form, with the pitched roof removed, the upstairs windows opened up into a bank of mullioned windows, and the storefront modified in 1950s fashion.

Although modernized and altered from the original, the present-day building has a certain 1950s design integrity which makes it fit well with its neighbours and its surroundings in a quiet and supportive way.

The storefront design remains rooted in tradition, with a recessed entrance, separate door to the upstairs, and a stylized, simplified cornice aligned with that on the adjacent Roberts jewellers building.

The second floor windows, although very much a 1950s creation, retain traditional vertical proportions within the overall horizontally proportioned window opening, and are centred in the facade.

The flat roofline, although not original, and of somewhat lower height than its neighbours, does fit within the overall rhythm of roof heights and building proportions on the block.

31 Old Photographic Studio

1701 Barrington Street

Built: 1860's
Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial
Architect: Unknown
Owner: 2091451 Nova Scotia Ltd
Designation: None



For many years after it was built, this elegantly proportioned building located at the corner of Barrington and Prince Streets was home to a series of retail stores on its ground floor and a series of photographers' studios on upper floors.

Stores included a milliner (1860s), Evans Dry Goods (1870s), Stimpson's Grocery (1880s), Drake's Grocery (1890s), Jacques Clothiers (1900s), Stephens Clothiers (1910s), Condon's Men's Wear (1910s - 1950s), and Neima's Jewellery (1950s - 1970s).

Photographers included Millman & Ray (1880s), D. Ferguson (1880s), Beaumont Moss (1890s), C.H. Climo (1900s), L.G. Cox (to 1930s), and J.D. Gallant (to 1947). Some of these, particularly Moss and Climo, were well known for their portraits, examples of which are preserved at P.A.N.S.

In more recent decades, the ground floor has been occupied by fast-food restaurants and the upper floors by personal service uses and apartments.

Architecturally, the building speaks both of its mid-Victorian origins and of its adaptation to changing commercial uses. The upper floors retain their original arched windows and stone sills, and the exterior is finished in pink stucco.

The ground floor, however, is highly altered, with a combination of split block cladding in mixed colours, horizontally proportioned windows, out-of-character signage, and an exposed, bare metal exhaust vent running up the Prince Street side of the building. A traditional roofline cornice has been replaced in modern times by bare aluminum flashing. These alterations do not enhance the look of the building and they diminish the quality of the streetscape on this most significant corner, opposite St. Paul's Church.

The building should be restored. References for restoration (showing what the building once looked like) include streetscape drawings from the 1982 Barrington Street Revitalization Study, a late 19th century photograph published in *Trams & Tracks*, a history of the Halifax streetcar system by Russ Lownds, 1990, and photo collections at the NS Museum and NS Archives.

One vestige of the original storefront still exists in the form of an engaged column at the corner of the building.

32 Former Eatons Store

Other Names

Johnston Building

Centre For Craft & Design

1683 Barrington Street

Built: 1928
Style: Beaux Arts
Architect: S.P. Dumaesq (upper floors)
Owner: NS Dept. of Supply & Services
Designation: None



Built for Eaton's in 1928, this building is significant in that it was the first location of a Central Canadian department store in Halifax and Nova Scotia and was the consecration of Barrington Street as the major shopping street in the city. At the time, it was the largest retail store in the city centre.

HRM research notes (from 1982) indicate that it is not clear how many floors the building originally had or if any were added later. The first two floors on Barrington and the first three on Granville are designed in the typical Eaton's manner used in other Canadian cities. The top floors are assumed to have been designed independently by S.P. Dumaesq, the local architect who worked on the project, as the brickwork is similar to his other work at this time (the Maritime Command building and the Halifax Infirmary on Queen Street).

Stylistically, the building can be placed in the early 20th century Beaux Arts school, where classical motifs were used as decorative elements on otherwise modern buildings.

The first floor is of stone, with large display windows fronting both on Barrington Street and Prince Street (where they are stepped down the hill). The second floor features a series of roundheaded windows, grouped in threes and arranged as a rhythmic arcade above the storefronts. Classical emphasis is given to the arcades through the use of engaged columns dividing the windows one from the other, and through the use of a simplified, dentiled cornice at the top of the second floor.

These features give the building a solid visual base, relating it well to the human scale at street level.

The upper floors are designed in a more modern fashion, with rectangular windows and a somewhat harder-edged, rectilinear articulation of the facade.

Contextually, the building relates well to its neighbours and to the street. The arched windows echo those on the adjacent Colwell building and the St. Paul's building directly across the street, and the second storey cornice helps to reduce the apparent scale of the building in relation to its immediate three-storey neighbours. Eaton's moved out of the building in the 1960s, relocating to a suburban shopping mall. It was occupied subsequently by Woods department store, until the late 1970s, when it was purchased by the Provincial Government for use as offices. This re-use of the building has been beneficial in that it has involved no substantial change to the architecture, has kept people working downtown, and has given the NS Centre for Craft and Design a strong exposure on the street.

33 Colwell Building

1673 Barrington Street

Built: circa 1871
Style: Mid-Victorian Italianate
Architect: Unknown
Owner: Andscott Holdings
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This handsome stuccoed brick building was built about 1871 and has remained substantially intact into the present day.

In the 1890s, the double storefronts were occupied by Bon Marché Milliners on one side and Reynolds Gentlemen's Furnishing on the other, while the Halifax Commercial College occupied the upper floors.

Colwell Brothers luxury clothing store moved in 1901 and occupied the building until the late 1970s.

Architecturally, the building is an excellent example of the mid-Victorian, Italianate style. Round-headed windows are placed rhythmically in the facade and joined by continuous brick mouldings that give the impression of an elegant arcade.

At the roofline, the original dentiled and bracketed cornice remains intact, although it needs repair and restoration. For many years the name "Colwell Building" was affixed to the centre of this cornice but this has been removed for safety reasons within the past five years.

At street level, the two storefronts are also substantially intact, retaining their recessed entrances, dentiled cornice and traditional narrow signband.

Overall, the Colwell building is an important element of the commercial heritage of Barrington Street and, with its excellent state of architectural integrity, sets an exemplary tone for the street.

34 Buckley's Building

Other Names

United Bookstore

1667/69 Barrington Street

Built: 1897/1919/1928
Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial
Architect: Unknown
Owner: United Bookstores Ltd.
Designation: None



This building is associated with the celebrated firm of druggists, Buckley Bros., which, through family ties, goes back to the “Medical Hall” of Dr. Avery and his Maritimes-wide operation of wholesale drugs manufacturing, importing and distributing in 1824. Buckley Bros., may be most well-renowned for their “Buckley’s Cough Mixture” product.

After moving into this building about 1890, the firm also opened a store across the street, at 1684 Barrington in what is now known as the “St. Paul’s Building” after that new building was constructed in 1897.

Both stores continued in operation on Barrington Street well into the 20th century, and the firm still has premises on Jubilee Road.

Architecturally, the building relates well with the adjacent Colwell and Johnson buildings and other similarly scaled buildings across the street.

Its storefront has substantially retained its original character, with a deeply recessed entrance, base panelling below the display windows, and narrow signboard and fascia above.

The upper storeys also appear substantially intact. The second floor windows could be enlargements of the original window openings (compare the third storey) but are still in keeping with the original, by virtue of their vertical proportions and rhythmic placement. The third storey windows are intact, as is the prominent cornice at the roofline.

The name “Buckley’s” still remains affixed at the top of the building.

35 Johnson Building

Other Names

Little Mysteries

1663 Barrington Street

Built: 1890
Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial
Architect: Unknown
Owner: Singh Enterprises Ltd
Designation: None



This three storey brick building is known as the Johnson building because of its association with Thomas Johnson, a jeweller whose firm operated on Barrington Street for over one hundred years, from 1871 to 1980.

The Johnson premises were originally located further down the street, between George and Duke Streets. They moved into this building some thirty years after its construction, in about 1920.

The building fits well in its mid-block setting as part of a trio of adjacent, similarly scaled, late 19th century buildings (the old Buckley's and Colwell Brothers buildings) although, of the three, it is the one which has been most altered from the original.

As is common along the street, the upper floors give the clue to original character.

On the third storey, the building is substantially intact, and retains its original roofline cornice and three, evenly spaced, arched windows.

The second storey also originally had three arched windows connected by a decorative belt course joining the window heads across the width of the building. This design feature has been undone, however, by the insertion of a picture window cut into the belt course.

Streetscape drawings from the 1982 Barrington Street Revitalization Study show that the ground floor facade was originally divided into a traditional storefront, with the entrance recessed between two display windows, and a side door leading to the upstairs apartment much the same as the adjacent United Bookstore storefront. The original storefront cornice and narrow signband was also still in place, providing continuity with the signage on the United Bookstore and Colwell's buildings.

Since 1982, the storefront has been significantly re-modelled, however, with the central door relocated to the side; new and larger display windows installed; and the cornice and signband removed and replaced with a larger sign occupying the entire wall space between the store windows and the second floor window sills.

The heritage character of the streetscape would be enhanced if, at the very least, the storefront cornice and signband were reconstructed, and the overall scale of the sign reduced, to restore continuity.

36 Roy Building

1657/61 Barrington Street

Built: 1897/1919/1928
Style: Restrained Classical
Architect: Harris S. Tremaine
Owner: Landmark Development Corporation
Designation: None



James E. Roy had a prosperous piano and organ manufacturing business in Halifax at the end of the 19th century and was also active in real estate. He built not only the Roy building, but the Tramway building as well (1598 Barrington) and was financially involved in other properties on the street.

In her book *Architects of Nova Scotia*, Maud Rosinski notes that “in 1896, entrepreneur J.E. Roy took (architect Harris S. Tremaine) ... on an extensive trip to gather ideas for an immense building with four stores on the ground floor, five storeys of offices on Barrington Street and six storeys on Granville Street.” (Harris Tremaine also designed the Farquhar building at 1558 Barrington in the same year).

The first phase of the building, two storeys high, was constructed in 1897. After a fire in 1918, the building was rebuilt in 1919 with an additional two storeys under the guidance of architect Andrew Cobb (see also 1598 Barrington, the Tramway building). Two further storeys, for a total of six, were added in 1928.

While the six storey building presents a fairly massive face to Barrington Street, there are small scale elements of its facade design which moderate its massiveness and add visual interest.

The facade is divided vertically into three broad bays, with rhythmic 4-(3-1-3)-4 fenestration on the upper levels. The end bays (four windows wide) are defined by a slight forward projection of the wall surface.

The entrance is centrally located in a tall arch that rises to the second storey, the lines of which are carried upward to a curved parapet at the roofline. This parapet proclaims the dates of construction (1897, 1919, 1928) in carved lettering. A corbelled brick cornice at the roofline echoes the original second storey cornice line four floors below.

As in many other buildings on Barrington, the original storefronts on the Roy building have been altered in ways which do not enhance its heritage character. There have also been alterations to the main entrance (window infilling) that have diminished its architectural effect. If the original storefronts and entrance were restored, the building would look very much better, and could considerably improve the overall appearance of this section of the street.

37 D'Allaird Building

Other Name

Vogue Optical

1645 Barrington Street

Built: circa 1950's

Style: Late Art Deco

Architect: Luke & Luke

Owner: Belvedere Holding Corp. (Charlottetown, PEI)

Designation: None



There is no readily available information in HRM files about the history of this building.

It consist of two distinct parts - a three storey lower section, of sandstone, and a two storey upper section, of concrete block.

A photograph taken in 1945 shows an earlier three-storey building (D'Allaird) which stood on this site. The evolution of the present building has not been researched but the building appears to be a renovation of the D'Allaird building.

The lower section of the present building has stylistic elements which echo those of the earlier Art Deco Zellers store directly across Sackville Street and suggest a deliberate attempt on the part of the architect to fit the renovated building in with its neighbour. Similarities include window clusters accentuated by simple pilasters, and stylized “swag” ornamentation above the windows and at the third storey roofline. The use of herringbone brickwork between the storeys is a more modern decorative touch, however.

The upper section of the building is of concrete block, has different fenestration than the lower section, and appears to have been added at a later date (1960s?).

38 Zellers Building

Other Names

Discovery Centre

1593/95 Barrington Street

Built: Opened 1939
Style: Art Deco
Architect: Gratton D. Thompson
Owner: 1595 Visitors Centre Ltd.
Designation: None



One of the interesting features of Barrington Street is that its buildings span a variety of eras and styles, from the late 19th century to the present day. One such style is the Art Deco style, which was current in the 1920s and 1930s.

According to the American National Trust for Historic Preservation publication *What Style Is It?*, Art Deco was a style that “strove for modernity and artistic expression to complement the machine age” and its ornamentation consisted largely of “low relief geometric designs, often in the form of parallel straight lines, zigzags, chevrons and stylized floral motifs this ornament could be rich, varied and handcrafted or reduced to the merest suggestion for efficient machine production ... concrete, smooth-faced stone and metal were characteristic exterior architectural coverings, with accents in terra cotta, glass and coloured mirrors forms were simplified and streamlined, and a futuristic effect was often sought.”

The former Zellers building is the best example of the Art Deco style in HRM.

Three storeys high and constructed of sandstone, the building occupies the western end of the block bounded by Barrington, Sackville and Granville Streets. Its Barrington Street facade is divided into a 2-5-2 window arrangement, which is subtly accented on the upper storeys by stylized pilasters and a slightly projecting roofline parapet. A decorative band of parallel lines and floral motifs divides the ground floor from the upper floors, and there are similar geometric motifs above the second storey windows and in a continuous band at the roof line.

Streetscape drawings from the 1982 Barrington Street revitalization Study indicate that, when Zellers occupied the building, it had a wide, recessed entrance set in the centre bay, with flanking display windows on both sides. This arrangement has been altered over time, however, as the building has gone through a number of use changes.

The former Zellers store makes a considerable contribution to the character of the downtown Barrington streetscape. In the Halifax context, it is a rare example of the Art Deco style and warrants consideration for individual heritage property designation in its own right.

39 Keith Building

Other Names

Green Lantern Building

1581/89 Barrington Street

Built: 1896
Style: Chicago Style
Architect: William Tuff Whiteway
Owner: Twentieth Century Developments
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



The Keith building is one of several magnificent Romanesque Revival, early Chicago Style buildings built on Barrington Street in the late 1890s.

Commissioned by the firm of Gordon and Keith, dealers in house furniture, carpets, pianos and organs, the building was designed by architect William Tuff Whiteway, who had practised previously in Vancouver's Gastown and in St. John's Newfoundland.

Whiteway's design features a highly articulated facade comprised of a series of tall Romanesque arches reaching to the third storey, a profusion of small, flat-headed windows at the fourth storey, and a wide frieze of decorative brickwork at the roofline.

The composition is divided asymmetrically into two bays, three arches wide and one bay, five arches wide, separated by an entrance bay of slightly taller arches that reach up to the top storey.

The vertical divisions of the facade are emphasized by sandstone pilasters, and the horizontal divisions by a series of decorative, terra cotta panels at third floor level, the rhythmic repetition of arches across the width of the building at fourth floor level, and the strong horizontal line of the frieze at the roofline.

The upper levels of the facade are intact, and retain all of their original decorative and textural details. The street level, however, has been highly altered by storefront renovations.

If the storefronts were restored, the building would regain its full heritage value and maximize its potential to contribute to the renaissance of the street.

The Keith Building was extensively damaged by Hurricane Juan in 2003 and, in late 2005, the upper floors remain vacant. The building is in serious need of restoration and rehabilitation.

40 Old Paramount Theatre Entrance

1577 Barrington Street

Built: 1948 - 1949
Style: Mid-20th Century
Architect: Kaplan & Sprachman, Toronto
Owner: Racla Property Development
Designation: None



Part of the heritage value of the Old Paramount Theatre Entrance lies in the fact that it is the one remaining movie theatre space still in existence in the downtown. Others such as the Capitol, have long since been demolished.

The main body of the old theatre occupied the south-eastern half of this block, abutting Granville and Sackville Streets and was converted into retail space for Mountain Equipment Co-op in 1999.

The theatre entrance opened onto Barrington Street through this narrow frontage between Sievert's Cigar Store and the Green Lantern Building.

The old theatre entrance is now occupied by the Random Play CD store and, in 2005, the upper floors were converted for use by the Nova Scotia Community College, with access from the rear entrance abutting Granvill Street. Although these are active uses occupying the building, its exterior remains in a very run down condition and is need of restoration.

41 Sievert's Cigar Store
1573 Barrington Street

Built: Before 1907
Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial
Architect: Unknown
Owner: Craig E. Sievert
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building is home to the longest running business on old Barrington Street and is further distinguished by the fact that it is the only remaining wooden building facade on the street.

L.E Sievert moved into the building as a tenant in 1907. His son bought the premises in the 1950s and the store is now operated by Craig Sievert, the grandson of the original owner.

The prior history of the building has not been researched but, from its appearance, it seems likely that the building was constructed in the early part of the 19th century.

The store is a period piece inside and out. On the interior it retains its original pressed tin ceilings, wooden tongue and groove wall panelling, and period counters and display cases. The exterior is also substantially intact, although it has likely undergone some simplification and reduction of detailing in its lifetime.

In traditional Maritime Vernacular fashion, the building has wood shingle cladding and wide, wooden cornerboards. Windows are plainly trimmed. The upper facade is finished with a bracketed cornice and large, carved consoles, framing what appears to be either a wide signband or the remains of a more elaborate cornice, now covered in asphalt shingles.

The storefront, however, is intact. Framed in wood, it has a recessed entrance for the store and a separate entrance for the upstairs apartments. The store windows are set over panelled baseboards, and are divided in, traditional fashion, into large display windows and upper transoms. The doors are of wood and also have transom windows above. The storefront composition is framed by wide wooden pilasters, a simple, moulded cornice, and large wooden brackets. There is also a pull-out awning, one of the few traditional awnings remaining on the street.

Overall, Sievert's is a remarkable vestige of an earlier time, and its existence in the heart of the city, only a block or two from multi-million dollar office towers on the same street, is something that gives Barrington Street a unique flavour.

42 Star Anise Restaurant

1571 Barrington Street

Built: 1920

Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial

Architect: Unknown

Owner: Giannoulis Stavros

Designation: None



This brick building fits in with its older neighbours, Fireworks Gallery to the south and Sievert's Cigar Store to the north.

Its upper storey is relatively intact, with three, evenly spaced windows and a simple, gabled parapet at the centre of the facade. The brickwork is plain, but there are three soldier courses and some corbelling above the windows which add texture to the wall surface. The coping at the top of the wall is deteriorated, but could easily be re-instated.

Streetscape drawings from the 1982 Barrington Street Revitalization Study indicate that, when the building was occupied by the Canadiana Restaurant, it had a traditional storefront with a recessed commercial entrance and a separate entrance to the upstairs. Modern renovations have combined the two entrances into one and obscured the original storefront.

The opportunity exists to restore the recessed storefront along the original lines and to clean the second storey brickwork to more fully reveal its decorative value. If this were done, the building would considerably enhance the heritage character of this part of the street.

43 Fireworks Gallery

Other Names

Mary McAlpine Building

1569 Barrington Street

Built: 1907
Style: Victorian Traditional Commercial
Architect: Harris & Horton
Owner: Judith Anderson-Little
Designation: None



The history of this building has not been researched. An old photo hanging in the store, and probably taken in the late 19th century, shows a three-storey building with a bell-cast mansard roof and window arrangement very similar to the present. This may or may not be the same building.

Built of brick, the building is plain and unassuming in its overall scale and style, but nevertheless contains some interesting decorative elements.

Its storefront surround has quasi-classical components, including side pilasters with stylized capitals, the suggestion of an entablature formed by a moulded wooden hood over the storefront windows, and a dentiled brickwork frieze separating the first and second storeys. The storefront has a traditional recessed entrance, wood-framed display windows and stained glass transoms, and the door is of wood with a full, three-quarter length glass panel.

The second storey has three windows with chambered stone sills and slightly arched heads set beneath flared brick lintels; the centre window is slightly wider than the flanking windows, and matches the width of the entrance immediately below. The brickwork on the second storey is laid in wide courses resembling stone. These features are all accentuated by a paint scheme which distinguishes the ornamental features from the main wall surface.

Although it is relatively humble compared with some of Barrington Street's more distinctive architectural constructions, this building is of equal interest when viewed from the point of view of the overall commercial heritage of the street.

Historically, it represents the small scale, owner-occupied enterprises in which downtown Barrington Street had its beginnings and of which there are now only a few remaining examples.

In terms of its contribution to urban character, the building relates well to the human scale, presents a warm and intimate face to the street, and provides contextual support for the more elaborate buildings located nearby. Its signage is particularly attractive and effective, and serves as an excellent model for the successful integration of commercial signage and historic architecture.

According to the manager of Fireworks Gallery, this site was home to Cooley's Jewellery Store in the 1890s. Fireworks has been here since 1980.

44 Carsand Mosher
1565 Barrington Street

Built: 1961
Style: 20th Century Modern
Architect: C.D. Davison
Owner: Carsand Mosher Photographic Ltd.
Designation: None



This building is an example of mid 20th century, low-rise commercial architecture.

While its horizontal design emphasis and predominantly aluminum and glass exterior contrast with the vertical design emphasis and masonry exteriors of its older neighbours, it is of similar building height, has recessed storefronts that reflect the tradition on the street, and is a typical representative of its particular style.

45 W. M. Brown

Other Names

Gabriels/Hudsons/Renaissance

1551 Barrington Street

Built: 1910/11
Style: Edwardian Commercial
Architect: R.A. Johnson
Owner: Alshebri Realty Ltd.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



This building, now under single ownership, was originally two separate properties. The section next to the old YMCA was built for John Taylor MacDonald, a druggist; the corner section was built for W.M Brown, an old established manufacturer of confectionery.

MacDonald ran his store until 1913, when it was taken over by McGillivray's Pharmacy. Fry's Drug Store moved in 1925, followed by Basil Winters Mens Wear in 1940. Clyde Eisnor's Men's Wear took over in 1952. Clyde Eisnor was also president of the Capitol Theatre, which stood on the next block to the south, on the site of the present MTT office tower.

Brown occupied the corner building until 1919, followed by other confectioners until 1930, when it was taken over by John Gabriel & Sons, watchmakers & jewellers.

Both buildings were designed by architect R.A. Johnson, who was active in Halifax from 1902 - 1949.

The three-storey brick building fits well on its corner location, and was deliberately designed with a rounded corner to reflect the architecture of the Farquhar Building which stood (and still stands) diagonally opposite on the corner of Barrington and Blowers Streets (see 1558 Barrington).

The building is architecturally intact on its upper storeys, which feature a rhythmic arrangement of windows, stone window sills, brick quoins, and a corbelled frieze and bracketed cornice.

The street level storefronts have been altered from the original over the course of their history but, following renovations made in 1997, now have an interesting contemporary "heritage" look that is reasonably complementary to the architectural style of the building.

46 Pacific Building

Other Name

Former YMCA

1537 Barrington Street

Built: 1911
Style: Neo-Classical
Architect: Jackson & Rosencrans (NY)
Harris & Horton (Local)
Owner: 3056938 Nova Scotia Ltd.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



Constructed in 1911 for the YMCA, this brick building was designed by architects Jackson & Rosencrans of New York, who also designed YMCAs in Ottawa, Winnipeg and Montreal.

Although the building exterior has been significantly altered on the ground floor, the essence of the original architectural design can still be seen by looking up to the second, third and fourth storeys.

One of the interesting features of the building is that its main facade is finished in white glazed terra cotta. The facade is divided into three, vertically proportioned bays, with the centre bay recessed behind a low balustrade at first floor level. Corners are strongly articulated by coursed terra cotta quoins.

The second storey windows are roundheaded, and the vertical arrangement of windows in each bay is subtly framed and emphasized by surface panelling.

Originally, there was a prominent storefront cornice spanning the width of the building at the first floor level above tall display windows, the main entrance was recessed and framed by paired classical columns (which may still exist under the veneer of modern alterations), and there was a prominent dentiled cornice at the roof line.

The old YMCA is an important link with the mixed institutional/commercial history of this part of Barrington Street, and is an excellent expression of the architectural styles that were in vogue for institutional buildings in the early 20th century. Restoration of the original entrance, display windows and storefront cornice would considerably enhance the appearance of the building and the visual amenity of the street, and could be the keystone for completion of the visual upgrading of the immediate neighbourhood.

47 Freemasons Hall
1533 Barrington Street

Built: 1924
Style: Beaux Arts
Architect: S.P. Dumaesq
Owner: Freemasons Hall Ltd.
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



The Freemason's Brotherhood in Halifax has roots which go back to the earliest days of the settlement, the first lodge having been established in 1750 by Governor Edward Cornwallis and others. Various lodge buildings were established over the years, including one which stood on this site from 1875 until it was demolished in 1914. The present building was constructed in 1924.

Designed by architect S. P. Dumaesq, the building is a remarkable early 20th-century interpretation of traditional classical elements combined with modern effects. Constructed of brick, with ornamentation on the front facade executed in sandstone, the building occupies the entire end of the block bounded by Barrington, Salter and Granville Streets.

The front facade has a strong classical composition. Six sandstone pilasters surmounted by a frieze and entablature divide the facade into five bays, creating a classical temple effect. The central bay is accentuated by double pilasters.

At ground level, the visual focus is a central entrance framed by massive pillars and columns which support an entablature and balustrade. The second floor windows are tall and roundheaded and trimmed with plain sandstone surrounds and central keystones. The central window on the second floor is deeply recessed and more ornately trimmed, adding to the compositional effect of the central bay above the entrance. The third level has no windows but is defined by five medallions symbolizing the Masonic Order. It is interesting to note that the third floor continues above cornice height to accommodate the high ceilings in the meeting rooms while retaining proper classical proportions for the facade. The well-ordered fenestration is continued around the side of the building along with a less elaborate version of the frieze and cornice, providing visual interest on the slightly less public face.

The Freemason's Hall fits well with the adjacent Pacific (former YMCA) Building, which was built some fifteen years earlier, and echoes some of its design elements, including round-headed windows on the second floor, and a recessed bay above the entrance. The two buildings together form a solid architectural unit which gives considerable architectural interest to the southern end of the Barrington St. commercial area.

48 St. Matthews United Church

1471 Barrington Street

Built: 1858
Style: Mid-Victorian Gothic
Architect: Cyrus Thomas
Owner: St. Matthew's Church
Designation: Municipal Heritage Property



St. Matthews is the site of the first dissenting Protestant church in Canada. The congregation is the oldest in the United Church of Canada. After fire consumed an earlier pioneer meeting house in 1857 on a different site (Mathers Meeting House, corner of Prince & Hollis), the St. Matthew's congregation commissioned a new church on this site. The competition was won by the firm of William Thomas & Sons.

William Thomas came to Canada from England as an experienced architect in the 1840s. He first settled in Toronto and, along with his sons William and Cyrus, designed many churches in Ontario. The design for St. Matthews was undertaken by Cyrus, who also designed the Spring Garden Road Courthouse and several buildings on Granville Street at about the same time.

The church is built in Victorian Gothic style with a steeply pitched roof, a buttressed nave, and a tall, buttressed steeple. The windows are archetypal Gothic compositions featuring graceful pointed arches and intricate foil and cusp designs in stained glass. The Gothic composition of the front elevation facing Barrington Street is re-enforced by tall, upward-thrusting finials at the building corners and by finials and crenellations atop the tower.

The church is constructed of brick with a stuccoed exterior. The church has numerous local historical associations, having been attended by many notable Haligonians, including various Lieutenant Governors who lived just next door at Government House.

St. Matthews is an important element in the ensemble of institutional buildings and open spaces situated near the intersection of Barrington Street and Spring Garden Road. Along with Government House, St. Mary's Basilica, St. Mary's Glebe, the Old Courthouse and the more modern buildings of Dal Tech (formerly T.U.N.S.), it faces and overlooks the Old Burying Ground and contributes strongly to the heritage character and visual beauty of the area.

Also, the St. Matthews steeple provides an important visual punctuation to the southward view along Barrington Street from within the commercial district, and counters the overwhelming mass of the adjacent Maritime Centre office tower.

49 Government House

1451 Barrington Street

Built: 1800

Style: Georgian

Architect: Isaac Hildrith

Owner: NS Transportation & Public Works

Designation: Municipal Heritage Property
Provincial Heritage Property
National Historic Site



This was the third Government House to be built in Halifax, and was begun in 1800 at the urging of Governor Sir John Wentworth, who maintained that the residence in which he was living (situated where Province House now stands) was “in danger of falling into the cellar.”

Sir John had come to Nova Scotia as a Loyalist and was a member of a wealthy and influential New England family with connections to the landed gentry in Yorkshire, England. Historians have surmised that, when choosing plans for the new building, he most probably took design ideas from contemporary architectural publications such as *A Series of Designs for Country Seats* and from country houses designed by John Carr, the architect for the family estates in Yorkshire. To supervise the construction he appointed Isaac Hildrith, a well-respected, Yorkshire-born master builder and surveyor who was known for his previous work on the Shelburne Anglican church and the Shubenacadie Canal survey.

Government House is built of Nova Scotia freestone and other local materials, along with bricks imported from England and slate from Scotland.

In style, the hip-roofed dwelling adheres to neo-classical, Palladian ideals and consists of a well-proportioned central form of three-stories, flanked by smaller two-storey wings. On the lower storey, the stonework is rusticated, in contrast with the smooth masonry of the upper storeys. The front and rear facades are divided symmetrically into five bays with evenly spaced windows. The ground floor windows are set in blind arches, while the upper windows are rectangular. Distinction between the second and third stories is created by the use of smaller, square windows on the top floor. The east facade faces Hollis Street across a broad lawn and is ornamented with classical pilasters rising above the first storey. A neo-classical portico with paired columns and a curved staircase gives visual focus to the central doorway. On the west facade, the lateral wings are extended and bowed toward Barrington Street. A semicircular driveway draws the eye to the entrance, which is now used as the main entrance and which is emphasized by a graceful, neo-classical porch. The entire site is contained within stone walls.

In her book *Georgian Halifax*, Elizabeth Pacey describes Government House as “Canada’s oldest government executive mansion and a fine and pure example of Georgian style ... (which) ... combines the dignity of history and the value of a priceless architectural treasure.”

**BARRINGTON STREET HERITAGE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT REVITALIZATION
PLAN AMENDMENTS**

<u>Amendment Number</u>	<u>Policies/Maps</u>	<u>Case No.</u>	<u>Council Adoption</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
1	Add Policy 3A : Certificate of Appropriateness Exemptions; Add 8.3 Transition To This Plan.	Case No. 15815	C - August 17, 2010	E - February 12, 2011
2	Amend Section 4.2; Policy 4, Section 4.4; 8.1; Subsection 8.3; Add Policy 28.	RP+5	RC – June 25/14	E – November 29/14