

## Statement of Significance

### 18 Arnold Crescent – William Pugsley House

The William Pugsley House at 18 Arnold Crescent is recommended for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, as described in the following Statement of Significance.

#### Description of Property:

The William Pugsley House at 18 Arnold Crescent is a 2 ½-storey red brick building with a rectangular plan and side-gabled roof located on the south side of Arnold Crescent, west of Yonge Street. The property is located within the historic village of Richmond Hill.

#### Design and Physical Value:

Dating to 1914, the William Pugsley House at 18 Arnold Crescent is a representative example of Edwardian Classicism residential architecture in Richmond Hill. The building has retained many of its original architectural details that are representative of the Edwardian Classicism style, including its simple rectangular form and balanced composition, side-gabled roof with pent eaves inset with wooden shingles, and restrained classical detailing including its red-brick cladding and stone window sills and lintels, front porch supported on grouped square columns, and the inscription reading “Elmwood A.D. 1914” located on the lintel of a basement window.

#### Historical and Associative Value:

The William Pugsley House has historical value for its direct association with William H. Pugsley, who built the subject building as his home in 1914 and resided there until his death in 1933. Pugsley was a butcher and cattle dealer in the village who also became a prominent figure in Richmond Hill and York Region politics and was deeply involved in local municipal affairs from the 1880s to the 1920s. He served as a village councilor from 1880 to 1883 and 1924 to 1925, and Reeve from 1885 to 1896, and 1907 to 1918. He also served as Warden of York County in 1891. Pugsley also held leadership positions in numerous organizations, including serving as a chief sponsor for the Metropolitan Radial, presiding over the Ontario Good Roads Association, participating in the Toronto and York Roads Commission, supporting the Children’s Aid Society, and holding director positions in associations like the Ontario Plowmen’s Association and the Richmond Hill Agricultural Society. In February of 1918, while Reeve of Richmond Hill, Pugsley also spearheaded the idea of erecting a memorial to honour the Richmond Hill men killed in the First World War, resulting in the erection of the Richmond Hill War Memorial Cenotaph in 1923.

The William Pugsley House also has historical value because it reflects the work of prolific Richmond Hill builder William Graham during a period of rapid growth in the village as a result of the booming flower industry during the 1910s and 1920s. Graham, whose career was cut short by his early death at age 42 in 1924, constructed many public buildings, as well as around 30 homes in the village. As a whole, Graham’s buildings reflect the restrained Edwardian Classicism architectural style popular in the

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early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and have made an enduring impact on the built form character of Richmond Hill village, particularly on streets that were largely built out in the 1910s and 1920s, including Centre Street East, Church Street South, Roseview Avenue, and the south side of Arnold Crescent.

### **Contextual Value:**

The William Pugsley House at 18 Arnold Crescent has contextual value because its scale, form, and Edwardian Classicism architectural style are important in defining and maintaining the predominantly fine-grained late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century residential character of the surrounding streetscape to the west on Arnold Crescent, and the historical character of Richmond Hill's village core more broadly.

The subject building also has contextual value for being physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings near the southwest corner of Yonge Street and Arnold Crescent. William Pugsley owned the Palmer House Hotel (later Hotel Richmond) at the southwest corner of Yonge and Arnold from 1912 to 1929, and constructed his home immediately west of the hotel in 1914. While the Palmer House Hotel was demolished in 1995, the historical and functional link between the subject property and the hotel property is still expressed in the house's location on the south side of Arnold Crescent, immediately west of Yonge Street.

The subject property also has contextual value for its visual and historical links to the M.L. McConaghy Public School (now a senior's centre) directly to the south. Both buildings were built of the same brick by prolific Richmond Hill builder William Graham in 1914, and express similar classical revival architectural styles.

### **Heritage Attributes:**

#### **Design and Physical Value**

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property as a representative example of Edwardian Classicism residential architecture in Richmond Hill are:

- The scale, form and massing of the 2 ½-storey building with a rectangular plan;
- The medium-pitched side-gabled roof with pent eaves and a front dormer window, with gable-ends and dormer inset with wooden shingles;
- The plain cornice below the roof;
- The building's exterior materials, including the concrete foundation, red-brick cladding in running bond, and stone window sills and lintels;
- The balanced three-bay composition of the building's front (north) elevation;
- The windows, including:
  - Flat-headed basement and first-storey windows, with stone sills and lintels;
  - First-storey wooden casement windows with transoms on the building's north elevation;

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- Segmental-arched second-storey sash windows with stone sills and brick voussoirs, including the two flanking windows on the north elevation inset with paired wood units;
- Flat-headed attic windows with wood surrounds, including the attic window inset with paired wood units within the east gable;
- The raised principal entrance with a stone lintel on the building's north elevation, sheltered by the gable-roofed wooden porch with pent eaves, supported on grouped square columns;
- The eastern basement window lintel on the house's north elevation, inscribed with "Elmwood A.D. 1914."

### Historical and Associative Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property for its associations with William Pugsley are:

- The house's scale, siting, and orientation on the south side of Arnold Crescent, in close proximity to the hotel owned by Pugsley at the time (now demolished);
- The house's Edwardian Classicism architectural style and material palette, popular at the time Pugsley erected the subject dwelling as his home in 1914.

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property for its associations with builder William Graham are:

- The house's Edwardian Classicism architectural style and material palette, which reflect the work of builder William Graham.

### Contextual Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the contextual value of the property as part of a fine-grained late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century residential streetscape on Arnold Crescent are:

- The house's scale, siting, and orientation on the south side of Arnold Crescent; and
- The house's material palette and architectural detailing in the Edwardian Classicism style, which contribute to the historical character of Arnold Crescent and Richmond Hill's Village Core more broadly.

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property for its physical, functional, visual, and historical links to its surroundings are:

- The house's scale, siting, and orientation on the south side of Arnold Crescent immediately west of the former Palmer House Hotel (now demolished) on Yonge Street; and
- The house's red brick cladding and Edwardian Classicism style, which visually and historically link it to the M.L. McConaghy Public School to the south.

Note: the house's later rear (south) addition is not considered to possess heritage attributes.