

Statement of Significance

10239 Yonge Street – Hart House

The Hart House at 10239 Yonge Street 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 Hart House at 10239 Yonge Street is a two-storey timber frame structure with a rectangular building footprint and a side gable roof. The property is located on the east side of Yonge Street, south of Dunlop Street, in Richmond Hill's historic village core.

Design and Physical Value

Built circa 1853, the Hart House at 10239 Yonge Street has design and physical value because it is a rare and early example of Georgian architecture in Richmond Hill, and because it is an early remaining example of residential development along Yonge Street. The Hart House is a two-storey, timber frame structure with rectangular plan, three bays at grade, and two bays on the second floor. Historical architectural features that contribute to the rare and early representation of Georgian architecture include its timber frame construction, medium-sloped side-gable roof with eave return, the asymmetrical, yet balanced, composition of the front (west) façade, and flat-headed windows and door on the front (west) facade. Historical architectural features that contribute to the early representation of development along Yonge Street include its orientation and placement flush with Yonge Street.

Historical and Associative Value

The Hart House has historical and associative value for its direct association with John Hart, a prosperous early Richmond Hill farmer, shoemaker, and village resident whose family lived on the property from 1862 to 1912. Hart was a successful businessman, acquiring 271 acres of land, four dwelling houses, and one village lot, and retired to the subject building at 10239 Yonge Street at the relatively young age of 48. Hart Street in Richmond Hill has been named in commemoration of John Hart.

Contextual Value

The Hart House has contextual value because its scale, form, and Georgian architectural style are important in defining and maintaining the predominantly 19th and early 20th century main street character along Yonge Street. The property also contributes to the historic character of Richmond Hill's village core more broadly, which is typified by fine-grained residential, commercial, and institutional built form concentrated to Yonge Street, and fine-grained residential built form located on side streets east and west of Yonge Street.

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The Hart House also has contextual value because it is visually and historically linked to its surroundings on the east side of Yonge Street in Richmond Hill's historic village core. The structure is visually linked to its surroundings because it has a similar scale, massing, material, and character to other 19th century structures still standing on Yonge Street. As one of the earliest structures remaining on Yonge Street in the village core, it is historically linked to the early wave of development that arose to accommodate the village's growing population in the early- to mid-19th century.

Heritage Attributes

Design and Physical Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property as a rare and early example of Georgian architecture in Richmond Hill are:

- The scale, form, and massing of the two-storey structure with a side hall plan;
- The medium-pitched side-gable roof with return eaves;
- The timber frame construction;
- The asymmetrical, yet balanced, composition of the front (west) façade, with three bays at grade and two bays at the second storey;
- Flat-headed window and door openings on the front (west) façade;

The heritage attribute that contributes to the value of the property as a rare early example of development on Yonge Street is:

- The building's scale, siting, and orientation along Yonge Street.

Historical and Associative Value

The heritage attribute that contributes to the value of the property for its direct association with John Hart is:

- The building's scale, siting, and orientation on the east side of Yonge Street; and
- The building's Georgian architectural style and material palette.

Contextual Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property for defining and maintaining the fine-grained 19th and early-20th century main street character of Yonge Street, and for visual and historical links to its surroundings are:

- The building's scale, siting, and orientation on the east side of Yonge Street; and
- The building's Georgian architectural style and material palette.

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Note: the building's circa 1960s rear (east) addition is not considered to possess significant heritage attributes.