13-19 Colborne Street, Fenelon Falls (McArthur Block)

Heritage Designation Evaluation

Fenelon Falls

PT LT 4 W/S COLBORNE ST PL 17 FENELON AS IN R338234, S/T & T/W
R338234; KAWARTHA LAKES
PT LT 4 W/S COLBORNE ST PL 17 FENELON AS IN R378242, S/T & T/W
R378242; KAWARTHA LAKES
PT LT 4 W/S COLBORNE ST PL 17 FENELON AS IN R450461, S/T & T/W
R450461, T/W R170129; KAWARTHA LAKES
PT LT 4 W/S COLBORNE ST PL 17 FENELON AS IN R436756, T/W R436756,
R167876;
2023

Kawartha Lakes

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990. A property is eligible for designation if it has physical, historical, associative or contextual value and meets any two of the nine criteria set out under Regulation 9/06 of the Act. A heritage evaluation of the property has determined that 13-19 Colborne Street has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

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

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

13-19 Colborne Street is a representative example of commercial Italianate architecture in downtown Fenelon Falls. This style was the most populate architectural style for urban commercial buildings in the second half of the nineteenth century, both in Fenelon Falls and in communities across Ontario. It demonstrates the key features of this style which include three-storey construction, ornate brick coursing, pilasters and raised brick window hoods.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The property has direct associations with the history and development of downtown Fenelon Falls throughout the 1870s and 1880s. This was a period when the community was growing in prosperity and the subject property speaks directly to this period of growth. Similarly, the property has direct historical associations with local businessman and politician Joseph McArthur, its original owner, who was a prominent member of Fenelon Falls' late nineteenth century business community and is widely regarded as a major player in the development of the village during this time.

ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:
The property yields information regarding the development of Fenelon Falls throughout the 1870s and 1880s and the increasing prosperity and urbanization in the village during this time.

iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to the community:
The designer and builder of this property are not known.

3. The property has contextual value because it:

i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area:
The property is important in maintaining and supporting the historic commercial character of downtown Fenelon as one of a collection of late nineteenth century Italianate buildings that define the commercial core of the community which is primarily located along Colborne Street.

ii. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings:
The property is historically, functionally, physically and visually linked to its surroundings as part of a collection of extant Italianate commercial buildings which form the commercial core of Fenelon Falls. The building forms part of continuous streetwall along the west side of Colborne Street comprised of late nineteenth century Italianate structures.

iii. is a landmark.
The property is not a specific landmark.

Design and Physical Value

13-19 Colborne Street has design and physical value as a representative example of Italianate commercial architecture and the largest extant nineteenth century commercial block in the community. The building, which was constructed in 1886 as a replacement for an older commercial block, demonstrates the key features of this architectural style which was the most popular architecture style for commercial construction in Ontario in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is representative of the execution of this style in Fenelon Falls between about 1870 and 1890 when it was at its height of popularity and the commercial core of the village was developing rapidly from its pioneer beginnings to an established Victorian community.

Commercial architecture in Canada's cities, towns and villages, including Fenelon Falls, underwent a period of significant evolution throughout the nineteenth century. The earliest commercial architecture was purely functional, such as small general stores or blacksmith's shops in nascent communities where the proprietors would build a structure, often in a vernacular style, near or adjacent to their residence. As the century wore on, these structures often took on the stylistic trappings of contemporary architectural styles, but remained relatively basic detached structures on their own lots. A new structural type also developed: a two-storey structure with the commercial establishment on the main floor and the business owner's residence on the upper storey. Architecturally, these buildings still generally resembled residential structures although the ground floor would often have larger window to showcase the store's products. This type of arrangement was, and remained, typical for small hamlets with a few commercial enterprises.

However, with the increasing urbanization of many of the province's communities, commercial architecture was forced to adapt to the rapidly changing conditions of Ontario's towns and cities; this change was not limited to Ontario and is reflective of the condition of commercial structures across North America. One of the most significant changes was the centralization of commercial structures together in downtown areas. Although the concept of formal zoning was just being developed during this period, it was a time when commercial enterprises and work were being moved outside of the home and businesses were beginning to establish their own spaces in communities; as had and was continuing to occur in urban centres in Europe, businesses naturally clustered together for convenience, creating the beginnings of the commercial downtown and the idea of a main street.

As more businesses came together to form a downtown core, their buildings began to get closer together to respond to the increasing density and desire to not waste limited space. By the mid-century, the idea of commercial buildings being linked in a continuous street wall was common in urban areas as commercial structures were built directly adjacent to one another and even

shared dividing walls. This arrangement was a direct mirror of European urban spaces where tightly packed commercial cores necessitated buildings attached to one another, and built directly to the edge of the lot to maximize space. In the early days of this new commercial arrangement, two types of buildings prevailed. The first were two- to three storey buildings similar to a basic Georgian plan, and often with a gable roof divided by a parapet wall, forming a continuous gable along the street; good examples of this type of structure can be seen in Kingston where a substantial portion of the downtown developed during this time. Like their predecessors, these invariably included commercial space on the ground floor with residential space on the second and third storeys; the third storey was often located in the gable and included dormers windows for light. This was a continuation of the two-part commercial block which had developed in the first part of the nineteenth century. The second was the use of false facades to create the look of a much taller building when in fact, a flat rectangular façade was applied to a much small, generally gable roofed structure behind it. These were usually built in wood and located in areas where erecting a large commercial building was not feasible. Examples of this type of commercial architecture are less common because they were often replaced with larger brick buildings, but there are extant examples in Kawartha Lakes, particularly in Bethany where several of these structure are still standing. In both types, the idea of the storefront had developed with large windows and often a recessed entrance to show off products and entice shoppers inside. Whichever form of architecture they used, these mid-century streetscapes were often an eclectic mix of architectural forms but represented the shift towards a highly urbanized downtown with densely packed buildings, a continuous street wall and distinctive commercial architecture separate from purely residential spaces.

By the late 1850s, a new architectural style had evolved to respond to the need for urban commercial space. The Italianate style had become popular in residential architecture integrated elements from Italian and other European Renaissance architecture into eclectic and often exaggerated combinations. Features such as columns and pilasters were common, as well as wide eave with decorative brackets, decorative brick and iron work and arched windows with elaborate hoods and surrounds. Increasing mobility and the growth of pattern books allowed people in North America to see and experience European architecture and it was increasingly something seen as being desirable to imitate and adapt for the North American context.

This style was quickly adapted into commercial architecture where its decorative elements could be easily applied to the facades of downtown structures. With the high density of commercial buildings, and the fact that they now shared walls, the front façade of the structure was the only one that was seen from the street. As a result, builders and architects focussed on this side of the structure as the focal point for decoration and ornamentation. The

space for this type of work on these buildings was substantial: the increasing density of urban downtown necessitated buildings going up, instead of out, and by the 1860s, the majority of commercial buildings in downtown areas were two to four storeys, high enough to create upper storey residential or, by this time, office space, but still short enough to allow a person to comfortably ascend to the top storey by the stairs. This gave architects several storeys, albeit only on one side, of a building to craft ornate and decorative spaces

By the 1860s, a new standard form for downtown commercial buildings had fully emerged. These buildings, which like their predecessors were linked together in a continuous streetwall, were generally two to four storeys in height with commercial space on the ground floor and residential or office space upstairs. The commercial space on the ground floor generally included large plate glass windows and a recessed entrance which allowed for a substantial amount of display area visible from the street. This was not always the case for non-retail establishments such as hotels where the ground floor might have been used as a tavern so required a different orientation and focus and less visibility to the interior. The upper storeys were generally similar to one another with bands of tall sash windows differentiating each floor and the façade often divided into repeating bays by pilasters. These upper storeys also included extensive decorative elements, such as decorative brickwork in a variety of patterns, elaborate window hoods and large and heavy cornices. A flat, or gently sloping, roof was hidden behind the cornice. When placed together as part of a block of these structures, each individual building was distinct, but fit into a wider cohesive whole with consistent styling and massing.

Technological advancements were integral in making this style, and its widespread adoption, possible. Advances in glass manufacturing made the glass storefront possible, with newer larger pieces of plate glass facilitating the substantial expanses of glass necessary for the large uninterrupted windows. The elaborate ornamentation was also made possible by advances in cast iron manufacturing technology which allowed for the creation of prefabricated metalwork that could be ordered and applied to a building's surface and were substantially cheaper than bespoke and handmade decorative features. Most of the elaborate cornices and window hoods were made in this way and prefabrication allowed for consistent decoration to be applied across the façade of a structure. At the same time, increased mechanization in brick manufacturing made large quantities of brick available for use on structures of this size.

The redevelopment of many downtowns across Ontario in this style was not gradual and occurred rapidly between the 1860s and 1880s, although Italianate commercial buildings were still being constructed, although with less regularity, into the 1890s. Many business and property owners were eager to

adopt the new style and it quickly gained popularity as the go-to style for new commercial architecture. The late Victorian era was where architectural style was seen as being imbued with meaning, and Italianate commercial architecture was no exception. Italianate architecture, similar to other Neoclassical forms, was often associated with business and commerce due to its historical connection with ancient Greece and Rome, as well as the commercial centres of Renaissance-era Italy. Therefore, it was seen as an appropriate style for commercial downtown buildings, in a similar way that the Gothic Revival style was seen to be appropriate for ecclesiastical buildings because of its wider historic and conceptual associations with medieval Christianity. Similarly, the style very quickly came to represent a prosperous and economically vibrant community and to create a sense of permanence and confidence in the urban commercial landscape. As a result, business owners wanted to construct these types of buildings to help demonstrate their successes and promote an image of a prosperous community which, by extension, would increase visitation and investment in a community.

While the cost of buildings structures of this type was substantially decreased by the development of prefabricated decorative elements and mass produced bricks, it was still expensive to erect a building of this type. Many business owners were keen to develop blocks of these structures in concert to provide a consistent aesthetic throughout a downtown area, but it represented a substantial financial investment in building stock. Fire often provided the impetus, and the opportunity, for redevelopment and the application of a consistent architectural style and size across an entire connected streetscape. Many early commercial downtowns were built with a substantial number of wooden buildings which made fire a highly destructive and often inevitable occurrence. However, faced with the need to rebuilt from the ground up, business owners were able to consistent apply the Italianate style across their buildings which, while not exactly the same, were built in tandem to create a consistent aesthetic across an entire downtown area. This was what occurred in Fenelon Falls in the 1880s after a substantial fire on the west side of Colborne Street in 1884 and this story was repeated in communities across Ontario. In fact, this process was even recognized by the *Fenelon Falls Gazette* which wrote in 1894 that "great improvements have been made in the village, particularly on the main street, where each of the oft-reoccurring fires was follows by the erection of brick buildings in the place of those destroyed."[1] The Italianate streetscape is representative of a second generation of buildings having evolved from more modest structures in the early and mid-nineteenth century to a fully formed and mature downtown architectural landscape.

13-19 Colborne Street was constructed in this context. It was built in 1886 as a replacement for an older commercial block; it is actually the third generation

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[1] "Of Age," *Fenelon Falls Gazette,* February 23, 1894, 4.

of commercial block on this site. A commercial block was first built here by Joseph McArthur at some point before 1876. Its exact date of construction is not known, but it is known that this original block burnt down in March of 1876 and was quickly replaced by a new two-storey block. Little is known as to what this block looked like, but, it is implied in later discussions about the building that they may have been wooden structures faced in brick or at least had a substantial wooden component. In 1884, it was decided to remove what were referred to as the "old style wooden structures"[2] and rebuilt to the current design.

The new brick block was reported as being 66 by 75 feet, with three storeys and four storefronts. It was constructed with stone on the three side and rear elevations, with brick on the front elevation. Plate glass for the Victorian storefronts was imported from Glasgow which, at the time, was home to several large industrial glassworks producing plate glass that was exported from Scotland around the world. Like its contemporaries in both Fenelon Falls and other Victorian-era communities across Ontario, it was constructed in the pervasive Italianate style of the day and is representative of how the style was executed in small towns across Ontario in the late nineteenth century. The building was erected using buff brick on the front elevation and included a range of decorative elements in executed in brick; although many Italianate buildings at this time made ample use of decorative prefabricated metal elements, this was not the case in Fenelon Falls, or more communities in Kawartha Lakes, where brick was more commonly used for decorative architectural features. The features present in this building include: its ground floor storefronts with large windows and central entrances, since modified to varying degrees; bays divided by pilasters; tall sash windows with decorative hoods including keystones and drip moulds; and decorative brick coursing between each storey and at the cornice line. While the storefronts have been heavily modified since the time of construction, the upper storey remains virtually intact, particularly with regard to its brickwork which remains consistent across all four bays.

In comparison to other extant Italianate buildings constructed in Fenelon Falls in the late nineteenth century, the subject property is similar in its use of buff brick, which was the prevailing building material for commercial buildings in the community, and decorative elements executed in brick, which can be seen throughout the existing structures in the community, many of which include similar decorative coursing, cornices and window hoods. What primarily sets this structure apart from its contemporaries, however, is its size. The subject property is the only extant three storey commercial block in Fenelon Falls where the majority of commercial structures from this period which are still standing are two storey. This was also the case when it was constructed when

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[2] "Fenelon Falls," Canadian Post, September 24, 1886, 6.

there was only one other three-storey commercial block in the village, the adjacent McArthur House Hotel, also owned by Joseph McArthur; the upper storey has been removed from this building and the bottom two storeys heavily modified. The subject property was constructed to its current height to match the adjacent hotel, and to provide additional space for hotel bedrooms and sitting rooms on its third storey.

When viewed in relation to the context in which it was constructed and in relation to other buildings of a similar age and type in downtown Fenelon Falls, 13-19 Colborne Street is a representative, although larger, example of an Italianate commercial building in the community. Responding to the development of the style in the mid-nineteenth century and the evolving nature of urbanized downtown areas across Ontario, the building is demonstrative of commercial buildings constructed during this period through its style, massing and decorative elements.

Historical and Associative Value

13-19 Colborne Street, also known as the McArthur Block, has historical and associative value in its historic relationship to the development of downtown Fenelon Falls throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Throughout this period, the community underwent a period of rapidly increasing prosperity that attracted new businesses, residents and investment into the community. This property is a subject of that period of prosperity and yields information regarding Fenelon Falls' economic growth near the end of the nineteenth century. Similarly, the property also has direct associations with prominent local businessman and politician, Joseph McArthur, the original owner of the building. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, McArthur was a major player in the economic and political development of Fenelon Falls and is an important individual in the nineteenth century history of the community.

Fenelon Falls developed at the juncture of Cameron and Sturgeon Lakes along the short section of water now known as the Fenelon River. Prior to settlement, water flowed out of Cameron Lake over an approximately 7-metre-high falls through a rocky gorge before entering into Sturgeon Lake just under a kilometre away. The drop and current at this site made it an ideal location for a mill site and, in 1841, a grist mill was constructed on the future site of the community by early settlers James Wallis and Robert Jamieson whose land grants, made in the early 1830s, had included large portions of the current village site.

Wallis and Jamieson were the primary business drivers and community developers in what would eventually become Fenelon Falls throughout the 1840s, building store, taverns, and the new Church of England, as well as severing lots for building. The first bridge was built across the river around this

time and corduroy roads gradually built to hamlets and rural settlements in the surrounding area

By 1851, the mill was demolished and replaced with separate grist and saw mills; it was also at this time that the first steamers arrived in Fenelon Falls, with the arrival of the Woodman out of Port Perry in 1851 on her maiden voyage. By this time, the lumber industry was rapidly developing in Kawartha Lakes and Fenelon Falls was well situated to take advantage of its economic benefits, with a prime location on the Fenelon River for transporting timber and mills for processing. New residents and businesses arrived and the community grew steadily throughout the 1850s and 1860s, with its population reaching about 300 people by 1865, and by the early 1870s, three large lumber mills operated in the village, processing millions of feet of pine annually.

The 1870s brought a major change for the community: the arrival of the railway. The Victoria Railway was chartered in 1872 with the intention of joining Lindsay by rail to the northern townships, Haliburton County, and, eventually, the projected Canadian Pacific Railway near Mattawa. Despite early political and financials hurdles, the line began construction in Lindsay in 1874 and soon reached Fenelon Falls. Over the next several years, construction continued north before the line ended at the final terminus in Haliburton village.

As in communities across Ontario, the arrival of the railway was a major economic boon for the community and struck off a period of rapid growth in Fenelon Falls. Not only did the railway make access easier to the community from the wider region, it also allowed for products to be transported in and out of the village and bolstered Fenelon Falls' growing industrial base, particularly with regard to dressed lumber which was overtaking squared timber, usually transported by water, as the preferred wood product and required transport by rail. Fenelon Falls was undoubtedly a lumber town prior to the arrival of the railway, but the new line further solidified the importance of the community in the regional lumber trade. The railway also facilitated the development of Fenelon Falls into an established grain terminal for the surrounding rural region as the railway allowed for bulk shipments of grain south to both Lindsay and the province's growing urban areas. Similarly, the community became a new gateway into the more unsettled areas of northeastern Victoria County and into Haliburton County as the primary rail linkage into Somerville Township and Haliburton.

Transport in and out of Fenelon Falls was further bolstered by the construction of the new lock and canal between 1882 and 1886. Since the development of a navigable waterway through the Kawartha throughout the mid-nineteenth century, Fenelon Falls had long been the upper terminus for navigation because of the falls. However, in 1882, the federal government agreed to open a new lock and canal to connect Sturgeon Lake with the upper lakes beyond.

The new lock and canal were opened in 1886, further increasing access to and from Fenelon Falls.

By 1886, the population had reached its nineteenth and early twentieth century peak of just over 1,300 residents and the village was booming economically. This economic boom allowed for a period of substantial architectural growth in the community, particularly with regard to the downtown. Early images of Fenelon Falls show effectively a frontier community, with scatterings of wooden buildings, both residential and commercial marking out the village from the surrounding rural area. However, the growing prosperity throughout the 1860s, 1870s and 1880s allowed for substantial investment to be put into building stock and it was through this period that downtown Fenelon Falls and the commercial corridor along Colborne Street developed with new two and three storey brick buildings in the latest architectural styles housing shops and services for the growing community.

The McArthur Block was a direct product of this economic growth and yields information about this period of development in Fenelon Falls' history. Earlier commercial buildings had stood on the property from at least the early 1870s. After being destroyed by fire in 1876, a common occurrence in early Ontario towns, they were reconstructed that year and again in 1886, in brick and to a higher quality. This was repeated throughout the commercial core of the village as new commercial blocks were erected throughout this time period, displaying the new wealth and stability of a community which had rapidly evolved from its early days as a lumber town to an incorporated Victorian village, with incorporation coming in 1875.

The McArthur block was used for commercial uses on the ground floor with four commercial units. These were quickly rented out after the completion of the building in the fall of 1886 and provided space for new and existing businesses in Fenelon Falls, helping to create increased vibrancy and economic vitality for the downtown. Most of the second floor was used for apartments, the typical use for upper storey space, and provided additional housing for the community's growing number of residents; the third floor and the balance of the second floor, however, were used as an extension for the adjacent McArthur House Hotel to provide additional bedrooms and sitting rooms for guests. The new building quickly became a sought after business address and played home to a range of local businesses throughout the late nineteenth century to the present.

In addition to its connection to the general development of Fenelon Falls and its late nineteenth century period of prosperity, the subject property has specific historical connections with prominent local politician and businessman Joseph McArthur. McArthur was the original owner of the building, hence its

naming as the McArthur Block, and commissioned the building in 1886 as a replacement for an older structure he owned.

McArthur died from hepatic tuberculosis in December 1892 at the age of 54 and, in his obituary in the *Canadian Post*, it was noted that:

> A prominent citizen passed away last week in the person of Mr. Joseph McArthur at the age of 54 years. Mr. McArthur was for years a member of the county council and held many public positions. Much of the progress of the village is owing to Mr. McArthur's enterprise.[3]

Despite this clear recognition at the time of his passing of his important role in the development of the community, very little is known about his life, in relation to the records usually available about prominent politicians and businessmen in nineteenth century Ontario communities.

McArthur was born around 1839 in Ops Township to John McArthur, who came to Canada from Ireland at some point in the 1830s, and Sarah Sharp. At the age of 24, he married Sarah Hall in Lindsay and, by the end of the 1860s, had moved to Fenelon Falls where he was granted a tavern license in March of 1869 by the Fenelon Township Council. He is not listed in the 1865 Peterborough and Victoria County Directory so appears to have arrived in the village between 1866 and 1869. His tavern appears to have been the Quebec and Ottawa House Hotel which stood on the site where the McArthur House Hotel was later constructed and which burned down in 1874.

Throughout the early 1870s, McArthur gradually built his local business interests through the purchasing of properties and construction of new ventures; some of these he operated directly, while others it appears he leased out to others to run. In many of his ventures, he worked with his brother Alexander in both formal and informal partnerships. By the time of his second marriage to Ellen Kerr of Fenelon Falls in 1872, McArthur was identified on the marriage record as a lumber merchant, hinting at his expanding business interests; between 1873 and 1874, he operated a shingle mill on the Fenelon River. By the 1880s, his interested had primarily turned to grain, as Fenelon Falls had become a major local grain depot at this time due to its rail connections which allowed for the shipment of grain in bulk. He entered into various partnerships with different local businessmen, including with William Webster with whom he built new grain storehouses near the rail line. He also appears to have had interests in various other business ventures, such as his purchase of the Fenelon Falls Tannery in 1886.

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[3] "Fenelon Falls," *Canadian Post* December 16, 1892, 1.

Along with these businesses, McArthur was busy with the construction and leasing of commercial property. He gradually acquired most of the land on which the Quebec and Ottawa House Hotel was located and built rows of commercial buildings for lease next door. These buildings, in their various forms throughout the 1870s and 1880s were known as the McArthur block and, after several reconstructions, would eventually become the subject property. The first iteration of these structures were constructed prior to 1876, as they burned down in that year, but little is known about them. He also dealt in industrial property. For example, he owned the property on Francis Street West where the sash and door factory operated between 1878 and 1880 and which he later leased to William McKeown who operated a furniture factory there. His growing stature in the business community can be seen in the 1881 census where he occupation is listed as a gentleman.

McArthur was also actively involved in local politics. He was first elected to the inaugural Fenelon Falls village council in 1875 and continued to serve on the council for many years. By the early 1882, he had been elected reeve and also served on the county council. He also appears to have been active in the local agricultural society, and was a mason.

McArthur's impact on the community was substantial. Not only did he help shape local policy and direction through his political life, he also made substantial investments in the business and industrial life of the community which helped build its local economy. McArthur appears to have been very much in the background in most of his business ventures. Most of his properties were operated by other people while he put his time and energy into purchasing properties, constructing buildings, and leasing them to various other businessmen, even selling land to the federal government to facilitate the construction of the locks in the community. His rise to fortune and prominence in the community was rapid, from his arrival in the 1860s to his purchasing and operating of commercial properties throughout the 1870s and 1880s before his early death in 1892.

Contextual Value

13-19 Colborne Street has contextual value as a contributing feature to the historic commercial streetscape of downtown Fenelon Falls. The property, which is historically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings as part of the continuous commercial streetwall along the west side of Colborne Street, maintains and supports the historic commercial character of the village's downtown area which is characterized by its collection of Italianate commercial architecture dating primarily from the 1870s and 1880s. The downtown area includes a variety of late nineteenth century Italianate property executed in a similar style, size and massing to the subject property which, taken together, form a cohesive downtown landscape of which 13-19 Colborne Street is a contributing feature.

The majority of downtown Fenelon Falls, as it current exists, was developed in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Increased prosperity during this period, as well as the 1884 fire which destroyed a number of buildings along the west side of Colborne Street, meant that new commercial buildings were erected quickly throughout the late 1870s and 1880s along Colborne Street which had grown throughout the nineteenth century into the commercial core of the community. Images of Colborne Street from the turn of the century show the commercial area of the community at its most complete historic iteration, with a continuous streetwall of two and three-storey brick buildings executed in the Italianate style along the west side of the street, older false façade commercial buildings along the east side along with a number of other Italianate structures near the intersection of Colborne Street and Francis Street.

Downtown Fenelon Falls has undergone a number of substantial changes since the turn of the twentieth century, but the majority of its Italianate commercial buildings along Colborne Street remain, although some have undergone significant modifications, including the adjacent McArthur House Hotel which was cut from three storeys to two in the twentieth century. Taken together, these Italianate structures, including the subject property, form a cohesive grouping that defines the downtown area of Fenelon Falls as a historic commercial downtown. The majority have retained their size and massing, as well as many decorative elements, similar to the subject property and define the streetscape through their construction directly to the sidewalk and their adjacent properties which help to form a cohesive streetwall along Colborne Street.

The continuous historic streetwall that is characteristic of many historic Ontario downtowns, has, in particular, been maintained along the block where the subject property is located. The subject property is located on the west side of Colborne Street between Oak Street and Francis Street and is one commercial block along this section of street. The streetwall along this block is maintained for the entirety of the block, with the exception of the former post office constructed at the end of the block in 1935. The subject property is located within this streetwall, with two-storey commercial block located on either side. Similarly, the property itself is made up of four commercial units which each work together to create a unified whole and are historically and physically linked together as part of the same original development. Through this continuous streetwall, the subject property remains physically linked to its surroundings, alongside its visual and historical links as part of the development of the late nineteenth century downtown streetscape.

Summary of Reasons for Designation

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

Short Statement of Reasons for Designation

Design and Physical Value

13-19 Colborne Street has design and physical value as a representative example of Italianate commercial architecture and the largest extant nineteenth century commercial block in the community. The building, which was constructed in 1886 as a replacement for an older commercial block, demonstrates the key features of this architectural style which was the most popular architecture style for commercial construction in Ontario in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is representative of the execution of this style in Fenelon Falls between about 1870 and 1890 when it was at its height of popularity and the commercial core of the village was developing rapidly from its pioneer beginnings to an established Victorian community.

Historical and Associative Attributes

13-19 Colborne Street, also known as the McArthur Block, has historical and associative value in its historic relationship to the development of downtown Fenelon Falls throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Throughout this period, the community underwent a period of rapidly increasing prosperity that attracted new businesses, residents and investment into the community. This property is a result of that period of prosperity and yields information regarding Fenelon Falls' economic growth near the end of the nineteenth century. Similarly, the property also has direct associations with prominent local businessman and politician, Joseph McArthur, the original owner of the building. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, McArthur was a major player in the economic and political development of Fenelon Falls and is an important individual in the nineteenth century history of the community.

Contextual Value

13-19 Colborne Street has contextual value as a contributing feature to the historic commercial streetscape of downtown Fenelon Falls. The property, which is historically, visually and historically linked to its surroundings as part of the continuous commercial streetwall along the west side of Colborne Street, maintains and supports the historic commercial character of the village's downtown area which is characterized by its collection of Italianate commercial architecture dating primarily from the 1870s and 1880s. The downtown area includes a variety of late nineteenth century Italianate property executed in a similar style, size and massing to the subject property

which, taken together, form a cohesive downtown landscape of which 13-19 Colborne Street is a contributing feature.

Summary of Heritage Attributes to be Designated

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

Design and Physical Attributes

The design and physical attributes support the value of the property as a representative example of late nineteenth century Italianate commercial architecture.

- Three storey stone and brick construction
- Buff brick front elevation
- Flat roof
- Ground floor storefronts
- Division of front elevation into bays
- Pilasters
- Fenestration including:
  - Sash windows
  - Picture storefront windows
- Decorative brickwork including:
  - Window hoods with key stones and drop moulds
  - Coursing and cornice
  - Dog tooth coursing

Historical and Associative Attributes

The historical and associative attributes support the value of the property in its association with the late nineteenth century development of Fenelon Falls and connection with local businessman Joseph McArthur.

- Association with the late nineteenth century of Fenelon Falls
- Association with Joseph McArthur
- Naming as the "McArthur Block"

Contextual Attributes

The contextual attributes support the value of the property as a contributing feature to the historic downtown commercial streetscape of Colborne Street.
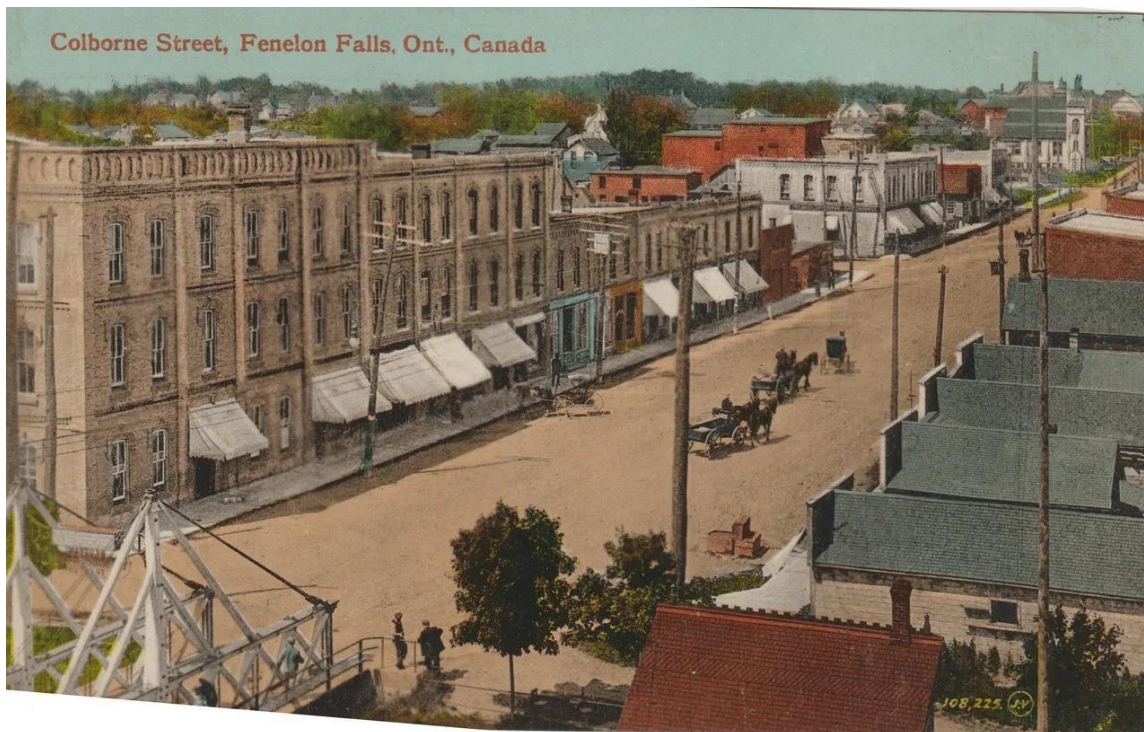
- Orientation towards Colborne Street
- Construction to the lot line on the front and side elevations
- Continuous streetwall along Colborne Street

- Views of the property down Colborne Street
- Views of Colborne Street from the property

Images

Downtown Fenelon Falls, c. 1905

West side of Colborne Street, c. 1910

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