

Appendix A – Report IPGPL25-052

Heritage Designation Brief



359 Hunter Street West

Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee

2025

Heritage Designation Status Sheet

Street Address:	359 Hunter Street West
Roll Number:	030070026000000
Short Legal Description:	PT LT 18 S OF HUNTER ST & W OF GEORGE ST PL 1 PETERBOROUGH PT 1 45R4050 ; PETERBOROUGH
PACAC Review Date:	September 9, 2025
Heritage Type:	Built Structure
Designation Type:	Ontario Heritage Act – Part IV
Designation Brief Completed Date:	August 2025
Designation Brief Completed by:	Emily Hamilton
Comments:	

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

The subject property has been researched and evaluated to determine its cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 1990 (the Act). 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. Staff have determined that 359 Hunter Street West meets criteria and has cultural heritage value or interest and merits designation under the Act.

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

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

The property is a rare intact residential example of the Second Empire style in Peterborough. The coach house, located behind the main house, is a unique blend of the Ontario Cottage style and mid-century modern architecture.

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

359 Hunter Street West displays a high degree of craftsmanship in its exterior details which are executed to a high standard of quality. Notable elements of merit include the decorative brickwork, the mansard roof and the highly decorated cornice lines. The coach house also displays a high degree of craftsmanship with a centre gable, a rounded second floor window and a large expanse of glass above the main entrance.

c. 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 value or associative value because it:

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

359 Hunter Street West has direct association with several prominent people in Peterborough. Built for David Pentland, a prominent dentist, later prominent residents include banker J. H. Roper, the Gough family and merchant Robert Neill. In the twentieth century, 359 Hunter Street West

was the home of MPP James F. Strickland and his wife Amy, who leased the carriage house to prominent architect Eberhard Zeidler.

b. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture:

This property yields information that contributes to an understanding of the business and political leaders of nineteenth and twentieth century Peterborough through its association with its owners.

c. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to the community:

Though the architect of the house is unknown, the carriage house was later altered by prominent modern architect Eberhard Zeidler. Zeidler designed several buildings in Peterborough including Thomas A. Stewart Secondary School and Beth Israel Synagogue. He later went on to achieve international acclaim for projects such as the Toronto Eaton Centre and Ontario Place. The coach house represents his early work in Peterborough before he became a partner in the longstanding Peterborough firm of Blackwell and Craig.

3. The property has contextual value because it:

a. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of the area:

The property maintains and supports the character of the Old West End, comprised primarily of nineteenth and early twentieth century residential properties constructed for upper and upper middle-class families. The house helps to define a pattern of stately homes constructed in fashionable architectural styles with wide lawns, mature trees and significant setbacks.

b. is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings:

This property is physically, functionally and historically linked to its surroundings as a cornerstone of the West End neighbourhood landscape and as an example of an affluent residence well designed in the prevalent architectural styles of the day. It would soon be followed by 350 Hunter

Street West in grandeur and style, a home which lost its distinctive Second Empire features in the 1930s.

c. is a landmark:

This property is a landmark as a well-designed residence on a large corner lot on Hunter Street West which defines the edge of both the downtown core and the Old West End residential neighbourhood.

Design and Physical Value

359 Hunter Street West has design and physical value as a unique, surviving example as a residential property in the Second Empire style in Peterborough. The coach house, located at the back of the property is a unique mix of Ontario Gothic Cottage and Mid-Century Modern architectural styles.

The main house was built circa 1876 in the Second Empire style. The style originated in France and follows the tastes of Emperor Napoleon III who reigned from 1852 to 1870. Napoleon III wanted to revolutionize France after years of instability from previous governments. With the Emperor's stamp of approval, public support for this new style grew quickly. It was heavily utilized in Georges-Eugène Haussmann's largescale rebuilding of Paris in the 1850s and 1860s. This increased its popularity across France. Despite the French Second Empire falling in 1870 in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, its eponymous architectural style was just gaining traction in North America. This lavish and grand style was favoured for public buildings and remained popular until the end of the Victorian era. Notable residential examples in Canada include Glanmore House National Historic Site in Belleville, Ontario, and the George Brown House National Historic Site in Toronto.

The main features of the Second Empire style are a mansard roof, dormers, elaborate ornamentation, and symmetrical facades. Several of these can be found on 359 Hunter Street West. Most notably the mansard roof, the main defining feature of the style. The mansard roof on this house is a concave mansard roof, but they can also be straight, straight with flare, convex, and S-shaped. 359 Hunter Street West also has dormers which allow light into the attic space, which the mansard roof allows to serve as a third floor. In addition, 359 Hunter Street West has strong cornice lines, brackets and is of buff brick construction which is indicative of a Second Empire style building.

It is one of the finest surviving residential examples of the style in Peterborough. 350 Hunter Street West, now the Bishop's Palace, was also designed in the Second Empire style by architect Thomas C. Hanley, but a fire in the 1930s destroyed its mansard roof and other decorative elements were subsequently removed. Many other examples of

the style in Peterborough and beyond were demolished or scaled back in grandeur over the course of the twentieth century.

The coach house at 359 Hunter Street West blends two, in some cases opposing architectural styles; the Ontario Gothic Cottage style and Modernist architecture. The Ontario Gothic Cottage style was first popularized by a magazine called *The Canada Farmer*. This magazine was affordable as it could be delivered to post offices for the price of one dollar per year. The magazine in 1864, produced several farmhouse styles with architect James A. Smith writing an article on rural architecture in several editions. The addition of Smith's article was seen as a simple way to reach the farming community with new building designs that are within their budget. The idea was to provide opportunities for the farming and labourer community to have access to stylistic properties at a cheap price. Each design could be altered by size, and ornamentation to meet the needs of the purchaser. The materials used in each design were decided by the purchaser making the houses accessible for every budget. One of these designs was called "A Cheap Farmhouse," which is characterized by a one and a half storey building with a steeply pitched centre gable and a simple square plan.

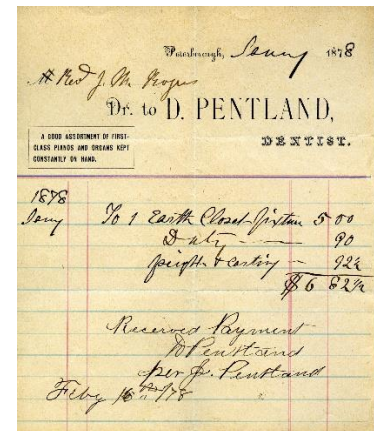
Thanks to alterations in the 1950s by Eberhard Zeidler, who was a tenant, the coach house has elements of mid-century modern architecture. Modernist architecture first gained prominence in Europe following World War I. The style first emerged from the Bauhaus school in Germany, founded by Walter Gropius in 1919. The Bauhaus' focus was to revolutionize design in all its forms, from fine art to architecture. This revitalization resulted in architecture paving a new way as it distanced itself from previous architectural styles in favor of being open with construction methods and materials. The Bauhaus movement actively discouraged the use of ornaments because they saw them concealing the structure or use of a building. They believed that a building should be celebrated for how it was made and the materials that were used to create it, making buildings their own canvas for innovation. So, architects began to develop new ways of building such as using a steel structure to support the building materials. This school of thought gave rise to the main characteristics of modern architecture that we see today: angular edges, plain surfaces, large expanses of glass.

359 Hunter Street West seamlessly blends three architectural styles of Second Empire, Ontario Gothic Cottage and Modernist. The Second Empire is shown in the characteristics of the main house, mainly being the mansard roof. The Ontario Cottage Gothic is seen in the coach house with the centre gable and simple square design. Modernist is also seen in the coach house with a large expanse of glass being above the entrance. Although all three of these styles come from different schools of thinking, the styles blend in a way where each can be represented equally.

Historical and Associative Value

359 Hunter Street West has historical and associative value as the residence of a number of prominent figures in the business and political history of Peterborough. Notable residents include merchant Alex Gough, sometimes MPP James Fordyce Strickland and architect Eberhard Zeidler.

David Pentland, the first owner of the house, was a dentist active in Peterborough in the late nineteenth century. He was born in Kingston in 1831 and came to Peterborough after completing his education. He opened a practice on the corner of George and Simcoe Streets, where Peterborough Square stands today. In 1868, he married Eleanor Martha Johnson. Around 1876, he had 359 Hunter Street West built for his growing family. By 1883, Pentland had left Canada for the United States settling in Arizona. He died in California in 1911.

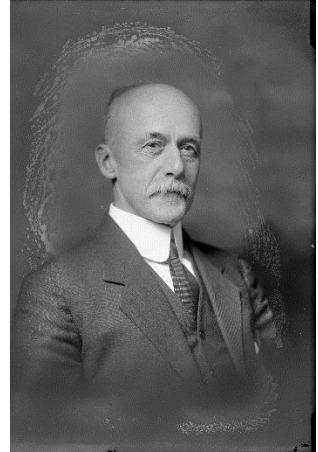


While in Peterborough, Pentland worked as a dental surgeon and a merchant specializing in pianos and sheet music. He was a founding member of the Young Men's Christian Association in Peterborough in 1868 and sat on the board of education. In 1871, he was elected president of the Ontario Dental Society.

After Pentland left for the United States, J. H. Roper moved into 359 Hunter Street West in 1888. Roper was manager of the Peterborough branch of the Bank of Toronto. He was also president of the Peterborough Horticultural Society from 1878 to 1892. In 1885, under Roper's presidency, the society approached both County and Town Councils about beautifying Court House Park (now Victoria Park). Up until this point Court House Park was one of only two parks in Peterborough and it was left in a derelict state. Both bodies agreed to fund the project, and the result was the expansive greenspace and landscaping still enjoyed today. Roper had moved out of 359 Hunter Street West by 1894.

In 1894, members of the Gough family began to live at 359 Hunter Street West, most notably Alex Gough. Alex and his brother Richard opened the Gough Brothers department store in downtown Peterborough. It was Peterborough's first ready-to-wear menswear store. In 1887, the Gough brothers started the 'cutest baby contest' at the Peterborough Exhibition. The first winner was given a silver cup, blankets for the mother and a suit for the father. Subsequent prizes were far less extravagant, such as \$5 for the baby and \$10 worth of clothing for the parents. Despite the decrease in the prize value, the contest remained popular until the 1920s.

The second prominent merchant to live at 359 Hunter Street West was Robert Neill and his family. Robert Neill operated Neill Boots and Shoes at 350-354 Geroge Street North. Neill Boots and Shoes was started by Neill's father, Robert Neill Sr., with the first store opening in Barrie. Other stores opened as his children entered the business. When his father died, Neill took over the family business and made Peterborough the headquarters. Neill served on town councillor in 1897. He died on March 25, 1920, after a long illness. He left behind, his wife, three daughters and two sons. His wife and the daughters continued to live in 359 Hunter Street West until 1929.



Outside of business, Neill was chairman of the board of health in 1904. While Neill was chairman, it was decided that an isolation hospital (which would later be called the Queen Mary Isolation Hospital) would be built to treat those with infectious diseases away from those with non-infectious ailments, thus hoping to reduce the number of cases. The hospital opened on March 1, 1911, for public inspection. Shortly after the public inspection, it was reported that scarlet fever was back on the rise in the Central School which gave the Isolation Hospital its first patients. The Isolation Hospital closed in 1950 as the development of vaccines and antibiotics made the hospital unnecessary and was demolished in 1958.



In 1930, 359 Hunter Street West became the home of prominent lawyer James Fordyce Strickland and his family. Born in 1893 in Fordyce Corners, Quebec, Strickland had served as a lieutenant in World War I. He married Amy Agnes Hill in March 1917 and came to Peterborough after the war. He set up his practice in 1919 and was elected as the Member of Provincial Parliament for Peterborough City in 1929. He was appointed a King's Counsel in 1930.

Strickland's tenure as MPP saw the Great Depression cause mass unemployment across the province. The government established a controversial unemployment relief program. Single men would be given board, three meals and ten cents a day to do manual labour. One of these projects was Highway 7 expanded eastwards beyond Peterborough to Perth. Strickland oversaw the enrollment of local men in this project.

Strickland died suddenly on March 25, 1947, at the age of 53, leaving behind his wife and four daughters. On the death of her husband, Amy Strickland continued to live at

359 Hunter Street West until her death in 1969. By the 1950s the house was divided into apartments, which Mrs. Strickland rented out. One of Mrs. Strickland's most notable tenants was Eberhard Zeidler.

Zeidler was born in 1926 in Braunsdorf, Germany. After being conscripted into the German Navy in World War II, he enrolled in the Bauhaus school. While studying at Bauhaus, Zeidler was forced to flee East Germany and completed his training at the Technical University in Karlsruhe. Zeidler immigrated to Canada in 1951, accepting a job in Peterborough in the well-established local architectural firm of Blackwell & Craig.



By the mid-1950s, Zeidler was chief designer with Craig. He had also completed several projects including Grace United Church and St. Giles Presbyterian Church. He was also employed as an architecture professor at the University of Toronto, travelling between Peterborough and Toronto. In 1954, he designed the Hamilton House at 640 Walkerfield Avenue, which earned him his first Massey Medal for Architecture. He designed many other prominent buildings in Peterborough including the Peterborough Memorial Centre and Adam Scott Collegiate Vocational Institute. Although Zeidler left Peterborough for Toronto in 1962, he returned to Peterborough to complete projects such as, Thoams A. Stewart Secondary School, Crestwood Secondary School, and the Beth Israel Synagogue. He went on to achieve international acclaim for his projects such as Ontario Place and the Toronto Eaton Centre. He received a multitude of awards and honours for his work including the Order of Canada and Order of Ontario. He died on January 7, 2022, at the age of 95.

Zeidler resided in the coach house at the back of the property. Mrs. Strickland allowed him to redesign the building to suit his needs. He added his signature mid-century modern twist to this Victorian structure. The Strickland's son-in-law Roger made the alterations to Zeidler's specifications. Zeidler remained in the coach house after his marriage to Jane Abbott in 1957. Soon afterwards, the Zeidlers bought a derelict stone farmhouse in Smith Township and undertook a similar restoration.

Contextual Value

359 Hunter Street West is visually linked to its surroundings as a large home with significant setbacks in the residential area west of the downtown core. Situated on a prominent corner lot, it has a grand and imposing presence. It stands out as a landmark as one of the largest homes in the area. It is functionally and historically linked to other homes of prominent businesspeople in the neighbourhood.

"The short statement of reason for designation, including a description of the heritage attributes along with all other components of the Heritage Designation Brief constitute the "Reasons for the Designation" required under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Heritage Designation Brief is available for viewing in the City Clerk's office during regular business hours."

SHORT STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

359 Hunter Street West is of cultural heritage value as a landmark building on the cusp of the Old West End residential neighbourhood in Peterborough. It is a rare intact example of the Second Empire style, popular for prominent residences in the Victorian era but with few surviving examples in Peterborough. The coach house is a unique blend of the Ontario Cottage and mid-century modern architectural styles. The property has longstanding associations with notable figures such as merchant Robert Neill, lawyer and politician James Fordyce Strickland, and architect Eberhard Zeidler. Its prominent location on a corner lot, with its grand scale, make it a landmark in a neighbourhood of well-designed homes.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES TO BE DESIGNATED

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

Exterior Elements:

Main house

- Two-story buff brick construction
- Mansard roof
- Dormer windows
- Chimneys
- Decorative brackets
- Coursing
- Rounded upper story windows
- Fenestration
- Projecting bays
- Stone foundation

Coach house

- One and a half story buff brick construction
- Central gable
- Rounded upper floor windows
- Stained glass on upper floor windows
- Expanse of glass above current main entrance
- Gothic decorative elements
- Cornice along roof line