

By-Law 2023-XXX

Description of Property

The W.C. Edwards and Company building at 290 City Centre Avenue is a one-and-a-half storey, red-brick commercial building located on the west side of City Centre Avenue, east of the light rail tracks. The building is located at the southeast corner of the property. Its main entrance faces Somerset Street West and is situated below the Somerset railway overpass.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Constructed circa 1925, the W.C. Edwards and Company building is a representative example of a vernacular interpretation of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The architectural features of the building which are characteristic of this style include its wooden door with sidelites and semi-circular transom, its decorative gabled dormer with a curvilinear parapet above the central entrance, and its steeply pitched hipped roof with exposed wooden rafter tails. The Spanish Colonial Revival style was most common in Canada from the 1910s to the 1940s and was often used for institutional and commercial buildings. Vernacular examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style in Ottawa include the Rideau Street Library, 377 Rideau Street (1933), Champagne Bath, 321 King Edward Avenue (1924), and the Ottawa South Community Centre, 260 Sunnyside Avenue (1921).

The building at 290 City Centre Avenue has direct associations with W.C. Edwards and Company, one of the largest early lumber establishments in eastern Ontario. The company was established in 1868 in Rockland, Ontario, and expanded into Ottawa in 1894 with the purchase of the sawmill at the Rideau Falls from the estate of James MacLaren. In 1912, the company established the Somerset Street sawmill on the land surrounding 290 City Centre Avenue. In 1920, the company's holdings were acquired by the Riordon Pulp and Paper Company, except for the Somerset Street sawmill, which continued operation as a wholesale branch. The W.C. Edwards and Company building was purpose built as the company's administrative offices in 1925 and remained in use until the sawmill's closure in 1962. The company's namesake, William Cameron Edwards, was appointed to the Senate of Canada in 1903 by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and became one of the founding directors of the Canadian Forestry Association.

The building has historical associations with the industrialization of this area of West Centretown, which grew with establishment of the Ottawa, Arnprior, and Parry Sound Railway and the presence of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Built in 1891, the Ottawa, Arnprior, and Parry Sound Railway was built by J.R. Booth to support his lumber operations and was a catalyst for the growth of railway dependent industries such as sawmills, lumberyards, and railway yards in the area.

The W.C. Edwards and Company building is important in supporting the area's historic character that flourished as railway dependent industries and their associated

residential neighborhoods were established in the early twentieth century. The building, as the administrative office for the industrial operations of W.C. Edwards and Company, is physically and visually linked to the railway, and historically linked to the area's industrial uses. As one of the only remaining structures in West Centretown associated with the industrial rail era, the building is a landmark in the vicinity.

Heritage Attributes

Key attributes that contribute to the cultural heritage value of 290 City Centre Avenue as a representative example of a vernacular interpretation of the Spanish Colonial Revival style include its:

- Symmetrical plan with a raised central entrance on the south elevation
- Wooden entrance door, sidelites, and semi-circular transom window on south elevation accentuated by decorative curvilinear brickwork, stone voussoirs, and a keystone
- The interior vestibule, with a wooden door, sidelites, and semi-circular transom window that match the exterior entrance units
- Central entrance steps, flanked by stone capped brick knee walls
- Decorative gabled dormer with a curvilinear parapet above the central entrance
- Steeply pitched hipped roof with exposed wooden rafter tails at eaves
- Semi-circular, at-grade doorway with stone surround adjacent to the central entrance.
- Rectangular window openings with decorative stone sills and keystones
- Stone stringcourse above the foundation along the south, east, and west elevations
- Red brick cladding

Key attributes that demonstrate its associative value as the administrative offices for an industrial company include:

- The large J&J Taylor fireproof safe, built into the rear interior of the building's first storey

Key attributes that demonstrate its contextual value include:

- Its general proximity to the light rail tracks, which historically contributed to the industrialization of the area as the Canadian Pacific Railway line, highlighting the building's connection to the area's industrial heritage.