

IDENTIFICATION OF CANDIDATE CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPES IN THE TOWNSHIPS OF WELLESLEY AND WOOLWICH



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13. Maryhill Candidate CHL

13.1 Context

The village of Maryhill in the northeast of Woolwich Township is most consistent with UNESCO's definition of an *organically evolved landscape* that continues to have an active role in contemporary society. There are also character defining elements in the candidate site that have been *designed and created intentionally*, especially in relation to the St. Boniface Church and the neighbouring walled cemetery.

The area identified for the purposes of this study is centered on the St. Boniface Church. The church is a significant landmark and was recognized as such by participants in this research. The development pattern of the village is evident in the built form, with the church located atop the hill and the historic taverns, hotels, and shops located around the bottom of the hill. However, most participants identified this candidate site for the views of the church steeple from the surrounding countryside. For that reason, the viewsheds themselves are considered to be part of this site in addition to the village. Further viewshed analysis is a requisite for boundary identification which should consider views from Woolwich-Guelph Town Line, Shantz Station Road, St. Charles Street East, Maryhill Road north of the village, as well as views of the Church from Maryhill Road south and east of the village.

The village of Maryhill is considered to be an excellent example of a Candidate CHL in the Region of Waterloo. The site is an example of the role of the Catholic Church in early settlement. The site is aligned with several of the Region's themes and has been identified by participants in this study as being valuable to an understanding of events, people, and place.

13.2 Inventory

Physiographic Description

The village of Maryhill is located approximately 12 kilometers northeast of the City of Waterloo. Recent development in this study includes two subdivisions and several notable estates. The gentle sloping hills surrounding the town have rich and productive soil used for agriculture. Hopewell Creek transects the southeast quadrant of the site. The St. Boniface Church is perched on the top of a drumlin that rises about 23 metres above the surrounding area (Van Dreil, Karrow & Russell, 2002).



Figure 43. A watercolour of St. Boniface Church by Robert Shipley. Image reproduced with permission.

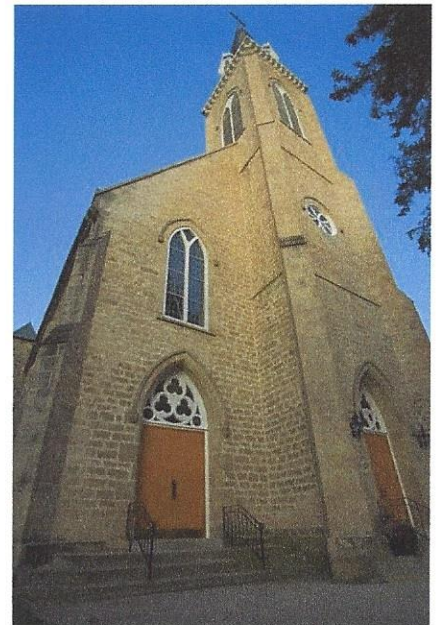


Figure 44. St. Boniface Church.

Selected Historical Context and Processes

Between the years 1827 and 1840, forty-eight pioneers settled in the Maryhill. Thirty-six of those residents were from Alsace, France, and twelve were from Baden, Germany (Maryhill Historical Society, n.d.). While community tradition claims that the settlement was once called “Rattenburg” meaning “rat village” because of the populations of muskrats living the wetlands in the area, it was officially registered as “New Germany” in 1889 (Strickler, 2015). In the year 1940, according to the common understanding, the postal authority in Ottawa recommended that the name be changed because there was a town named New Germany near St. Catharines and letters were being sent to the wrong location. Another interpretation is that the impulse for change came from the village citizens (see Strickler, 2015). In 1941 residents of the village voted on a new name, and decided on Maryhill, which seemed fitting given the role of Mary in Catholicism and the location of the Church on a drumlin.

Although the St. Boniface Roman Catholic parish dates back to 1834, the St. Boniface Church was built in 1877. Several participants to this study identified the church as a powerful landmark in the predominantly rural landscape. As stated by one interview participant: “Well, certainly, we have the church in Maryhill as a landmark. [It] stands up on the hill, so it's a serious landmark, especially for pilots . . . they often use that as a reporting point” (I304). Another participant described the experience of entering the Church: “you go inside, the icons are just beautiful and so, that has always stood out as being sort of a really neat spot” (I345).

Beside the Church is the St. Boniface Cemetery, which is the second oldest Roman Catholic cemetery in the Region of Waterloo (the oldest being located in St. Agatha). The stone wall was erected in 1862-1863, was recapped between 1990 and 1966, and was restored by Maryhill Knights of Columbus in 1988 (Strickler and Stroh, 2008). There was an older cemetery across the road from the existing walled cemetery, the remains of which were reinterred in St. Boniface. The first cemetery was blessed in 1836, and the first burial at the second took place in late 1851 (Strickler, 1991). The unique and character defining elements of the walled cemetery extend beyond the wall itself. Many of the headstones in the older part of the cemetery are ornate iron crosses. Some of the iron crosses were manufactured by a well-known blacksmith from Bridgeport circa 1857 named J.D. Mueller (Strickler and Stroh, 2008).

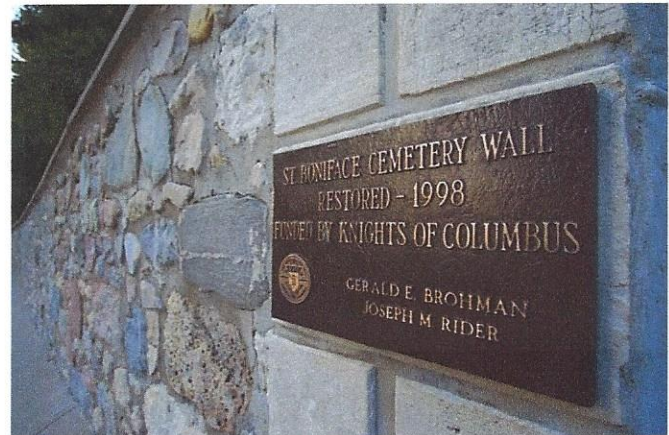


Figure 45. The wall of the St. Boniface Cemetery.

There are several other historic buildings in the village of Maryhill, including the Commercial Hotel (1854), the St. Boniface School (1886), Edward Halter House (circa 1886), and the convent and chapel (1904) (Strickler and Stroh, 2008).

13.3 Selected Elements

Buildings, Streetscapes, Objects and Viewsheds

Streetscape, Maryhill Road

The streetscape on Maryhill Road in the village of Maryhill has numerous buildings of heritage value and interest. The St. Boniface church, neighbouring walled cemetery and rectory, a historic school, and the Halter House are located on this stretch.

Streetscape, St Charles Street

At The intersection of St. Charles Street and Maryhill Road, in the village of Maryhill, three buildings are thought to have heritage interest or value. The Commercial Hotel (established in 1854) occupied the northeast corner, the former Maryhill Mini Mart occupies the southwest corner, and the Maryhill Inn is located on the northwest corner.

St. Boniface Viewshed, St. Charles Street

Travelling on St. Charles Street northeast of Maryhill offers exceptional views of the St. Boniface Church. Further investigation is required to determine the extent of this viewshed.

St. Boniface Viewshed, Maryhill Road

Mayhill Road, north of the village of Maryhill, provides vantages of the St. Boniface Church. Further investigation is required to determine the extent of this viewshed.



Figure 46. Maryhill streetscape. This image is taken facing north from the intersection of St. Charles Street and Maryhill Road. The building on the right is the Commercial Tavern, in the center the St. Boniface Church, and on the left is the Maryhill Inn.



Figure 47. The St. Boniface Church viewed from Maryhill Road facing south.

13.4 Maryhill Evaluation

| HISTORICAL INTEGRITY | CULTURAL VALUE | COMMUNITY VALUE | ASSOCIATION WITH REGIONAL THEMES |
|--|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ LAND USE - CONTINUITY OF USE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ DESIGN VALUE - RARENESS OR UNIQUENESS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COMMUNITY IDENTITY - TELLS A STORY OF THE AREA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ PREHISTORIC HABITATION |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ VEGETATION - ORIGINAL PATTERNS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ DESIGN VALUE - AESTHETIC/SCENIC REASONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ PUBLIC STEWARDSHIP - SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTEERISM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ THE GRAND OR CONESTOGO RIVER |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS - SUPPORTING DESIGNED ELEMENTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ DESIGN VALUE - HIGH DEGREE OF TECHNICAL/SCIENTIFIC INTEREST | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ COMMUNITY IMAGE - IDENTIFIED WITH THE TOWNSHIP'S PROVINCIAL OR NATIONAL REPUTATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ FIRST EXPLORATION ✓ PIONEER SETTLEMENT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ NATURAL FEATURES - PROMINENT NATURAL FEATURES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ HISTORIC VALUE - HISTORIC UNDERSTANDING OF AREA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ TOURISM - PROMOTED AS A TOURIST DESTINATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ MENNONITE SETTLEMENT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ NATURAL RELATIONSHIPS - FEATURES THAT DETERMINE USE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ HISTORIC VALUE - DIRECT ASSOCIATION WITH A THEME EVENT OR A PERSON | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ LANDMARK - RECOGNIZED BY COMMUNITY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ AGRICULTURE ◦ INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE ◦ URBAN DEVELOPMENT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ VIEW THAT REFLECTS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER FROM HISTORIC PHOTO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ HISTORIC VALUE - WORK OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, ARCHITECT OR OTHER DESIGNER | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ COMMEMORATION - SITE USED FOR CELEBRATIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ TRANSPORTATION ✓ LIFEWAYS (RELIGION/ETHNICITY/EDUCATION) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ RUIN - HUMAN MADE REMNANTS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ CONTEXTUAL VALUE - LANDMARK VALUE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ CULTURAL TRADITIONS - USED TO EXPRESS CULTURAL TRADITIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ GOVERNANCE AND EDUCATION |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ DESIGNED LANDSCAPES THAT HAVE RESTORATION POTENTIAL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ CONTEXTUAL VALUE - IMPORTANT IN DEFINING CHARACTER OF AN AREA ◦ CONTEXTUAL VALUE - HISTORICALLY, PHYSICALLY, FUNCTIONALLY OR VISUALLY LINKED TO SURROUNDINGS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ QUALITY OF LIFE - VALUED FOR ITS DAY-TO-DAY IMPACT ON COMMUNITY LIFE ◦ LOCAL HISTORY - CONTRIBUTING TO LOCAL LORE ✓ VISUALLY SIGNIFICANT - PHOTOGRAPHED OFTEN ◦ PLANNING - IDENTIFIED THROUGH OTHER PLANNING INITIATIVES | |

13.5 Summary

The Maryhill Candidate CHL has been identified by participants to this study as valuable for the important contribution it makes to the understanding of people, place, and events. The landscape is intricately connected with the community's identity, which is evidenced by the continued Catholic presence in the village, the continued social function of the Commercial Hotel, and the refurbished Maryhill Mini Mart. There is also considerable local history contributing to a sense of place, which has been enhanced through detailed record keeping at the St. Boniface archives.

Saint Boniface Church (1877) is a widely recognized landmark and a distinctive characteristic in the Township. The layout of buildings in the site is indicative of the role of the church in settlers' lifeways, as it is located atop the largest hill in the site, with residential, commercial, and other uses situated below. Other historic built features in this site include the Commercial Hotel (1854), the St. Boniface School (1886), Edward Halter House (circa 1886), and the convent and chapel (circa. 1904).

The Maryhill Candidate CHL has been identified as important for defining, maintaining and supporting the character of the region. This is especially true with respect to historical buildings and prominent viewsheds of St. Boniface Church, as well as the unique iron crosses and walled cemetery. Further, the site is closely aligned with the Regional theme of "lifeways," especially as related to Catholicism.

The Maryhill Candidate CHL is aligned with UNESCO's definition of an organically evolving landscape. Organically evolving landscapes are those which developed their present form from religious, social, and administrative imperatives. The landscape is a continuing organically evolved landscape as it retains an active social role in contemporary society.



Figure 48. A summer evening view of the village of Maryhill. The photo was taken from St. Charles Street East.