THE CORPORATION

OF THE

TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

BY-LAW NO. 3983-05

(228 Queen Street, Roll No. 262701000500100)

A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE THE PROPERTY KNOWN MUNICIPALLY AS THE KETCHUM-THOMAS-PHILLIPS HOUSE (PEACE ACRES), 228 QUEEN STREET, IN THE TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, AS BEING OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST.

WHEREAS Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of cultural heritage value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the Lake has caused to be served on the owner of the lands and premises known as the Ketchum-Thomas-Phillips House (Peace Acres) at 228 Queen Street, in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in the Province of Ontario and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust, notice of intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule 'B' hereto;

AND WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the clerk of the municipality.

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake enacts as follows:

1. There is designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest the real property known as the Ketchum-Thomas-Phillips House (Peace Acres) at 228 Queen Street in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in the Province of Ontario, more particularly described in Schedule 'A' hereto.
2. The municipal solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule 'A' hereto.
3. The Clerk is hereby authorized to cause copy of this By-law to be served on the owners of the aforesaid property and on the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of the passing of this By-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND PASSED ON THIS 11TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2005.

LORD MAYOR GARY BURROUGHS **TOWN CLERK HOLLY DOWD**

SCHEDULE "A"

228 QUEEN STREET – HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Lots 73- 74, 95 and Part Lot 96 Township Plan 86 Niagara, being Parts 1, 2 and 3 on 30R-11437 Except 30M-344; S/T Easement over Part 3 on 30R-11492 as in NR65741; Niagara

PIN 46398-0114 (LT)

SCHEDULE 'B'

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION
The Ketchum-Thomas-Phillips House (Peace Acres), c.1876-1904 – Lot 74, Plan 86, Niagara-on-the-Lake

The Ketchum-Thomas-Phillips House (Peace Acres) is recommended for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value or interest.

The building and ground represent a significant example of the type of elegant summer properties constructed by wealthy Americans who spent their summers in Niagara-on-the-Lake during the heyday of the grand summer estates that sprang up in the Town in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The property is associated with a number of prominent early citizens of the Town including William Jarvis, Provincial Secretary and Registrar in Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe's government, William McKean and John McEwen, prominent Niagara merchants and Robert Dickson, son of the Honourable William Dickson.

The property is also associated with a number of wealthy Americans from the Buffalo area including Watts Sherman Lansing whose father, General Henry Lansing, owned Randwood; Edwin Thomas who was a prominent manufacturer of early cars including the Thomas Flyer, which won the New York to Paris race in 1908, and G.F. Phillips, a Buffalo attorney whose family owned and maintained the property as their summer home for 47 years.

Architecturally the building epitomizes the American summer estate residence of the type constructed in Niagara-on-the-Lake during the resort era at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century before the advent of mass automobile travel, when wealthy visitors came to Town for the summer bringing their extended families, friends and servants.

Stylistically, the building is a amalgamation of a number of revival styles including neo-Classical Revival and neo-Greek Revival with generous, light filled reception rooms, spacious bedrooms, screened porches, open loggias of symmetrical arrangement and a multiplicity of fireplaces, columns and trims. Over the years various owners have renovated and added to the house but have always maintained and enhanced the look and character of the house as a fine building constructed to be a summer home.

The landscape setting, including the greenhouse and the specimen trees located throughout the property is an integral defining element of the property marking it as one of the few remaining significant summer estates in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Site

The property is on the southwest corner of Queen and Mississauga Streets. The building is situated on a slight rise in the centre of a relatively flat, elaborately landscaped lot of approximately 1 acre. Originally the property took up almost the entire block but is now surrounded on the Simcoe and Johnson Street sides by a recently approved 7 lot subdivision.

Historical Background

Originally the land bounded by Queen, Mississagua, Johnson and Simcoe Streets was divided into four separate one acre lots. These were granted by the Crown in 1801 to four different landowners; Lot 73 to Samuel Peters Jarvis, lot 74 to James Haddick, lot 95 to William Birdseye Peters and lot 96 to William Jarvis, Provincial Secretary and Registrar in Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe's government. William Jarvis was the father of Samuel Peters Jarvis and the brother-in-law of William Birdseye Peters.

By 1817, the still undeveloped lots were no longer separately owned. In August of that year, William McKean and John McEwen, prominent Niagara merchants who reported heavy losses during the War of 1812-14, mortgaged the 4 acres to Montreal merchants John Forsyth and John Richardson. By 1820, the lots were owned by J.D. McKay and were not subdivided until 1824 when Robert Dickson, son of the Honourable William Dickson, bought ½ acre of lot 96 fronting on Simcoe Street. In 1828 he subdivided his ½ acre and then sold 1/8 acre parcels to each of three Irish craftsmen; Patrick Fagan, stone cutter, John Cleland, carpenter and Michael Morley, mason. The three men built houses along Simcoe Street commencing at the Johnson Street corner. Two of these buildings remain and both are designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. Mr. Phillips Sr. reincorporated the lot owned by Fagan, now known as 229 Simcoe Street, into the estate property in 1956.

Parts of the property, particularly on lots 73 and 74, were severed throughout the nineteenth century. These lots were gradually reabsorbed into the larger property until the entire property comprising lots 73, 74, 95 and 96 was finally reassembled under the ownership of Mary and George Ketchum.

The Ketchums, who were from Buffalo, owned the property from 1876 until 1879. Their purchase of the estate coincided with the beginning of a period of prosperity based on tourism fostered mainly by American summer visitors and residents. It is most probable that the core of the house was built by the Ketchums as indicated by the steady increase in tax assessments between 1876 and 1878 when the house was finished. Records indicate that the Ketchums were unable to pay John Ellison, their contractor, and sold the property to Henry Seton Strathy in order to settle their debts.

There were two owners between 1879 and 1887 when the estate was sold to Watts Sherman Lansing who owned the property until 1894.

Mr. Lansing had spent summers in Niagara since c.1874 when his father, General Henry Lansing, purchased Randwood on John Street. Intending to live permanently in the Town, Watts Lansing sold the property at 228 Queen Street to Andrew Findlay of Kansas City in order to build another grand house on his 4 acre block across Mississagua Street.

The Findlay family owned the estate for 10 years until 1904. Mr. Findlay died in 1899 and Mrs. Findlay, apparently in need of cash after her husband's death, sold off parts of lot 73, 74, 95 and 96 to various people including Alice Garret, wife of Henry A. Garret, who lived in the little house at 229 Simcoe Street. Mrs. Findlay's daughter purchased the house when her mother died in 1902. She in turn sold the land and building to Edwin and Flora Thomas

The Thomas brought a period of stability to the estate. They owned the property for 16 years (1904-1920) and, as a local newspaper article indicates, they had plans for remodelling both the inside and outside of the house. It is possible that many of the neo-Classical Revival and neo-Greek Revival details found on and in the house today can be attributed to them.

Mr. Thomas owned and operated a successful bicycle manufacturing business in Buffalo. In the early 1900's he turned his interest to the manufacture of automobiles. His 1908 Thomas Flyer won the New York to Paris Race. Society pages of the era recorded the annual comings and goings of the family including their arrivals in June and departures in October, the engagement of their daughter and the docking of their yacht, the Butterfly, at Rousseau's wharf in July 1908.

In 1920, the Thomas' daughter, Elizabeth Thomas Ryerson, bought the estate. She and her husband named it Peace Acres and made some improvements to the property. Mrs. Ryerson died suddenly in 1925 and the property was sold to Ve Norma Crown De Graff and Le Grand S. De Graff of Tonawanda who owned the estate for 30 years until it was sold to G.F. Phillips Sr of Buffalo.

The Phillips family owned the property for 47 years until 2002 and during that time were careful stewards of the estate, meticulously attending to both the grounds and the house. Since acquiring the estate in 2002, the new owner has developed a small subdivision on the property facing Simcoe and Johnson Street. The house has been retained on a generous lot of approximately 1.5 acres in keeping with its size, elegance and historical setting as one of the important summer homes built by prominent Americans at the turn of the 20th century.

Architectural Description

The Lansing-Thomas-Phillips House is essentially a two storey, hip roofed, 3 bay building of symmetrical design with a stucco finish, an elaborate centre entrance, a curious Palladian window above and two open loggias supported by Doric columns. Stylistically, the structure is neo-Classical Revival with a strong neo-Greek Revival influence that gives it a distinctly turn of the 20th century appearance.

The structure appears to be wood frame and the external stucco finish, which is smooth and without imitation ashlar jointing, may have replaced an earlier roughcast finish.

It appears that later owners made over and expanded the house beyond recognition in the early twentieth century. The original building may have been the T-shaped structure. It is this area, including the full basement in the wing and part basement and partially excavated crawlspace that is reputed to have been owned and built by Mary and George Ketchum who acquired the property in 1876.

The late 19th and early 20th century owners, including the Lansings, Findlays and the Thomas, who were all Americans, appear to have imported all kinds of historic, and probably authentic, period detail from other historic buildings to incorporate into their new summer home. The entrance doorcase may be one instance. The nine-panelled door reflects the design of the reveals, but the doorcase seems to be forced into an opening made for another traditional composition. Even more remarkable is the curious Palladian window above the entrance with its centre light with a six pane sash with very fine muntins in a Greek Revival proportion surmounted by an odd multi-paned parabolic upper sash with square muntins which more probably dates from c.1895-1905 and is Queen Anne Revival in style. The other example is the entrance from the west loggia which has a highly ornamental doorcase with fanlight, fan-patterned transom shelf and fluted Roman Doric colonettes to the side. It most probably occupied or was intended for a recessed opening at one time or it could have been made for use elsewhere. The pedimented exterior trim, which appears to be a later improvement, attempts to unify this conglomerate of architectural features.

The grand entrance opens into generously proportioned centre hall with staircase flanked by reception rooms on both sides. The one to the east (left) is a smaller room which serves as an intimate panelled library with back-to-back fireplaces. The room on the west runs the full depth of the house and has a beamed ceiling, two graceful arches and two fireplaces including a massive fireplace with built in seating on both sides. The set of French doors under the arch at the front end of the room lead to the west loggia while the front doors lead to the paved terrace that extends across the front of the house.

The room situated behind the library on the east side of the house is also a large room and was most likely used for parties and dances. It is almost entirely glazed with alcoves set off by columns on pedestals and a polished hardwood floor. The fireplace in this room is in the highly ornamented neo-Classical Revival style with strangely proportion colonettes and a centre plaque depicting a classically inspired urn.

The wing tails off into a series of domestic offices and a modern kitchen and family room area with a servants' back stair leading to a passage with small bedrooms above. The second floor of the main house contains a set of generously sized bedrooms with large bathrooms containing some beautiful early twentieth century tile work and early fixtures. The bedrooms in this area all have fireplaces with mantels and surrounds of simple neo-Classical Revival design.

Generally, the detail of the house is elaborate and varied with many mantelpieces of different designs, colonetted and pilastered with moulded surrounds and all of neo-Classical inspiration. The trim is of variable design also. There are even interpretations of a Greek Revival symmetrical pilaster trim with corner blocks. All doors are 4-panel, recessed moulded on both sides with conventional but traditional construction with through tenons.

This building, with its stylistic multiplicity, epitomizes the American summer residence of the type constructed in Niagara-on-the-Lake during the resort era at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century when prosperous families came to Town complete with adults and children and a small contingent of domestic staff and stayed for the entire summer. The house was never intended to be a year round residence, though there might be the occasional holiday excursions at Christmas, New Years or Easter.

Landscape

An important and integral feature of the property is the spacious setting with its mature trees, some of considerable historical significance, and the picturesque greenhouse.

The greenhouse, which is a separate building with an attached glass house, is an attractive addition to the setting. It has a notable bracketed entrance and an expansive glass house of Victorian/Edwardian design and proportions. A round stone well with fanciful wrought iron decoration stands in front of this structure.

The addendum to the Arborist's report, prepared in 2003, makes particular note of a number of significant and, in some cases, rare specimen trees including White Ash, Red Elm, Turkish Filbert, Red Oak and European Beech. In summary, the report states that, "the site contains several notable trees, which in the opinion of the Arborist are worthwhile saving/protecting. The historical significance of some of the larger specimens suggests that great attempts should be made to preserve them, and any development plans should include this fact and specifications for their protection."

The existing iron fence, while it is not particularly old or decorative, is appropriate to the style of the house and the design of the grounds. It permits both the pedestrian and the motorist to catch glimpses of the house through the trees, hedges and vines and adds to the picturesque nature of the property.

In general, the house and grounds are excellent examples of neo- Classical Revival architecture and the Picturesque ideas of landscape design that characterized country estates and summer homes in Canada and the United States in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century.

Designation

This designation applies to the lands, and more particularly to the formal Picturesque landscape, including some of the more significant specimen trees and the greenhouse and well; the entire exterior of the dwelling including the entrance door and Palladian window and the interior trim and fireplaces but excluding the trim, panelling and fireplace in the library, the main interior staircase and the large fireplace in the "billiard room" to the right of the entrance hall.