

March 2018



Background Report: Heritage and Culture



Background Report 8 of 9
**Prepared by West Hants Planning
and Development Department with
special thanks to local heritage
groups**

Executive Summary

The Municipality of the District of West Hants (West Hants) has a unique position on the Avon River and has appealed to many settlers, creating a rich history and influencing the concept of “rural atmosphere” that is so often mentioned. In West Hants, heritage and culture is visible in the history of societies and in the Provincial and Municipal heritage properties. It is important to document the historical and culturally significant buildings and areas that may need special consideration when planning the future direction of West Hants.

There are many buildings of historical significance in West Hants that do not have Municipal, Provincial or Federal designation. The Municipality could make enhanced efforts to promote and entice people to apply for heritage designation if it wishes to protect properties of heritage significance.

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1. Ancestors

The position of West Hants on the Avon River has made it appealing to settlers for generations. The Avon River empties into the Minas Basin, an inlet of the Bay of Fundy. The Bay of Fundy is known for the highest tides in the world, which rise and fall 53 ft. (16 m) every day. This tidal cycle allows for a diverse natural ecosystem and rich soil which has shaped the environment, economy and culture of West Hants. The history of West Hants has been created by the people who have settled here, the industries they pursued, and the activities in which they took part (Figure 1).

1.1 Mi'kmaq

Arriving in North America approximately 30 thousand years ago, the Mi'kmaq were the first settlers in the Hants County area. They made their camps along the rivers where they fished, hunted and cultivated crops. They utilized every portion of the animals they hunted, creating clothes out of the skins of the animals and making tools from the bones. Once the Europeans arrived in the area, the Mi'kmaq were exposed to diseases and resources became scarce. Between 1820 and 1848 the British created reserves for the Mi'kmaw tribes. The Glooscap First Nation reserve, outside of the community of Hantsport, now has a population of 304.

1.2 Acadians

In 1685, the French Acadians arrived in the Hants County area. The Acadians were farmers who utilized the marshlands to grow crops and protected their fields from flooding by building dykes and aboiteaux. In 1755 the Acadians were deported by the British, and many of their communities were burnt down. In West Hants, the houses were not burned; they were eventually dismantled and the wood was used by the New England Planters to construct new buildings. Most Acadians were sent on ships to American and French colonies; however, some escaped deportation and were captured and imprisoned at Fort Edward in the present Town of Windsor (Windsor). Today there is a strong Acadian presence in the Province, and approximately 30 km of dykes still protect the land in West Hants and Windsor.

1.3 English

The English came to the Hants County area in 1750. In the same year, Fort Edward was built in present-day Windsor to strengthen the English presence in the area. It included barracks for the soldiers and was positioned on the top of a hill with a view of the surrounding area. Fort Edward is a designated National Historic site.

1.4 New England Planters

The departure of the Acadians left most of Nova Scotia with almost no European inhabitants. The agricultural economy largely disappeared since it had been based on the dyked marshlands farmed by the Acadians. The government set out to repopulate the Province by offering land grants to English speaking protestants. In 1760 the first of these new settlers, called New England Planters, came to Avondale and Newport Landing. The

Planters began developing their new homes, creating villages, and constructing roads and institutional buildings.

Figure 1: Timeline of Historic and Cultural Events in West Hants

Triassic Period (130 million years ago)	The Bay of Fundy was created
Thousands of years ago	Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia
1600s	1685: French (Acadians) arrived
1700s	1750: English arrived 1755: Deportation of Acadians by English 1760-61: New England Planters arrived 1781: Hants County was established 1783-84: American Loyalists arrived
1800s	Early 1800's: Hockey invented in Windsor 1812: War between the British and Americans 1834: Slavery was abolished 1840-90: Ship building was a major industry in Hants County 1859: William Hall received the Victoria Cross 1879: Incorporation of the Municipality of the District of West Hants 1894: The Dominion Atlantic Railway line offered travel from Halifax to Yarmouth
1900s	1924: Fundy Gypsum Company began 1927: Minas Basin Pulp and Power Co. Ltd. created 1933: CKF Inc. founded 1990's: The Dominion Atlantic Railway closed
2000s	2009: Windsor and Hantsport Railway discontinued 2011: Fundy Gypsum Company closed 2012: Minas Basin Pulp and Power Co. Ltd. closed

1.5 American Loyalists

In 1783-84, American Loyalists moved to Nova Scotia to live in British colonies. The loyalists founded King's Collegiate School in Windsor, which combined with a girl's school, Edgehill, in 1976 to become King's-Edgehill private school.

1.6 Africans

For approximately 400 years, people of African descent have been present in the areas surrounding the Bay of Fundy. Many Africans were brought to this area as slaves as the prime location on the Avon River connected this region to the slave trade across the Atlantic Ocean. During the American Revolution and after the war of 1812, free black Loyalists and refugees arrived in the Province with many settling in the Windsor Plains area, now Three Mile Plains. Slavery was finally abolished in the British Empire in 1834. Almost 30 years later, in 1859, William Hall of Hants County was the first African-Canadian and first Nova Scotian to receive the Victoria Cross. A highway connector road in Hantsport has been named in memory of Mr. Hall.

2. Industry

During the 1900's, the former Town of Hantsport was known as "the Town of Industries". Its position on the Avon River and the abundance of timber made it possible for many ship building companies to flourish. Assisted by the ship building and railway, gypsum mining was also a major industry in the area. However several of these industries have experienced a decline in recent years.

2.1 Ship Building

Ship building was the main industry in West Hants from 1840 to 1890, with 165 ships being built in Hants County during this period. During the 1870's the ship building industry began to decline as advancements in steam ships intensified.

2.2 Mining

Gypsum is a soft rock used in plaster products such as wallboard cement. The Acadians were the first to mine gypsum in this area, but the industry did not become prominent until the late 18th century. The Fundy Gypsum Company operated in West Hants from 1924 to 2011, with quarries at Miller's Creek and on Wentworth Road, and a loading facility in the community of Hantsport. The gypsum travelled by train from the quarries to Hantsport where it was then loaded on ships.

There was also barite mining in Walton, East Hants. An interpretive panel at the lighthouse notes: *"The barite mine in Walton was a world class barite, lead, zinc, silver mine that operated from 1941 to 1978. The Walton mine ranks as the largest single deposit of barite in the world and among the highest grade."* Barite is used in a number of paint and plastic applications, but is most familiar in medical applications such as the barium drink used before a CAT scan.

2.3 Pulp and Timber Products

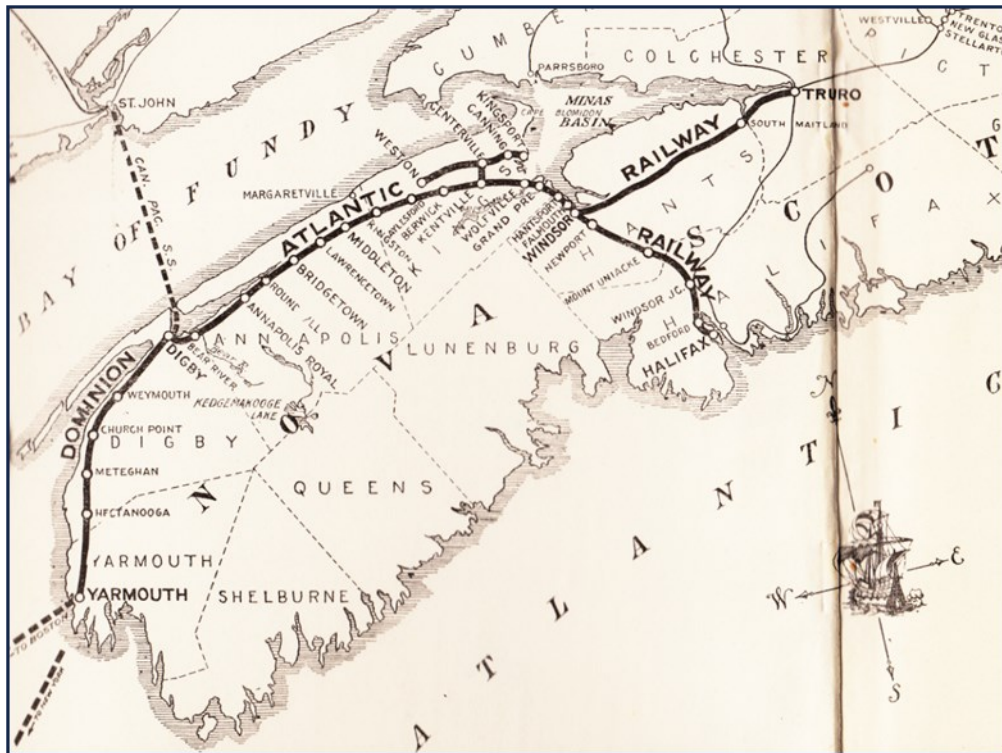
Roy A. Jodrey created Minas Basin Pulp and Power Co. Ltd. in 1927, and founded CKF Inc. in 1933. Minas Basin Pulp and Power created groundwood pulp and paperboard, and by 1991, this mill was known as the first company in Canada to use 100% recycled fibres in the production process. Minas Basin Pulp and Power continues to own the site of a large production facility which closed in 2012 in the former Town of Hantsport. CKF Inc. continues to operate in Hantsport making moulded pulp products.

Logging and milling has been important since the first homes were built in West Hants. A variety of mills began operating, and shipping lumber in the mid-1800s. Both logging and milling continue today throughout West Hants.

2.4 Railway

The Dominion Atlantic Railway (DAR) began in 1894 with a main rail line traveling between Yarmouth and Halifax (Figure 2). This line transported passengers and goods across Nova Scotia. During the 1990's reductions in government funding caused much of the line to cease operating. A short line owned by the Windsor and Hantsport Railway, connecting Windsor and New Minas, operated until 2009. This was the main transporter of gypsum and other industrial products to Hantsport. Although the railway line and Hantsport station remain, they are currently unused and privately-owned.

Figure 2: Dominion Atlantic Railway Line from Yarmouth to Halifax, 1947



3. Local Heritage Societies

Heritage societies are usually created to preserve, protect and educate citizens about the community's past. In West Hants and the surrounding areas there are five (5) heritage or historical societies.

3.1 West Hants Historical Society

The West Hants Historical Society was created in 1973. It manages a seasonal museum and a year-round genealogy department at 281 King Street, Windsor. The Society now has over 1,000 artifacts and 175 members. In 1978, the society assisted with opening the Fort Edward Blockhouse in Windsor to the public. The Blockhouse was built in the 18th-century and has been a National Historic Site since 1921. It is now the oldest surviving structure of its kind in Canada.

3.2 Avon River Heritage Society

The Avon River Heritage Society became a registered charity in 1994 and operates the Avon Heritage Museum, Avon Spirit Shipyard, Planters Sea Chest Gift Shop and the Lydia and Sally Cafe in Newport Landing. The Museum hosts a variety of exhibits including information about the ecology of the Avon River, the Mi'kmaq, Acadian settlers, and the New England Planters, with a strong focus on wooden shipbuilding. The Avon River Arts Society operates the Artists Landing Gallery and hosts many public events in the Museum.

3.3 Hantsport and Area Historical Society

The Hantsport and Area Historical Society was established in 1977 and incorporated in 1979. Objectives of the Society are to collect and preserve historical artifacts and documents related to the history of the former Town of Hantsport and the surrounding area.

The Society has been involved in many projects over the years including:

- operation of the Marine Memorial Room located in the historic Churchill House, on the 18-acre property owned by the Hantsport Memorial Community Centre. The House was built circa 1860 by Mr. Ezra Churchill who was the owner of Hantsport's largest shipbuilding company, E. Churchill and Sons.
- care and maintenance of the William Hall Cairn located on the Baptist Church property (corner Main & Willow Street)
- Riverbank Cemetery – Work on up-righting headstones, and establishment of the Memorial Garden (2017) which is dedicated to the estimated 100 individuals who have no grave markers

The Society's current legacy project is the purchase and establishment of a new Heritage Centre (Dorie & Garnet McDade Heritage Centre), located at 50 Main Street in Hantsport, which holds all of its collections, including Ship Building/Shipping; William Hall/Veterans; Businesses; Churches; Industrialist – R.A. Jodrey; Town of Hantsport (1895-2015); and Hantsport Memorial Community Centre (1948-present). The Society collects anything historical for the community and surrounding areas.

3.4 Windsor Hockey Heritage Society

There are many stories about the origins of hockey: it is said that the students at Kings College School, founded in 1788, adapted the game of Hurley to be played on ice, and it soon became ice hockey. The soldiers at Fort Edward began playing ice hockey which they took to Halifax. The soldiers helped spread the game across Canada when they travelled to Quebec and Ontario. Today, Windsor is known as the “birthplace of hockey”, Canada’s national winter sport.

The Windsor Hockey Heritage Society began in 1993 to help recognize and preserve items of Windsor’s hockey heritage. The Hockey Heritage Museum is located in a section of the Haliburton House Museum on Clifton Street in Windsor.

A new Hockey Heritage Museum and Arena is proposed as a joint project between West Hants and Windsor; discussions are on-going. The proposed arena and museum could increase tourism in West Hants and provide a new recreation facility for residents of the surrounding areas.

3.5 Kings-Hants Heritage Connection

The Kings-Hants Heritage Connection is a voluntary organization comprised of representatives from heritage-related organizations in Kings County and West Hants. The group meets monthly to discuss and collaborate on issues including heritage preservation, education and promotion.

4. Heritage Properties

Heritage properties can be designated at the federal, provincial and municipal level (Figure 3 and 4). The locations of the heritage properties in West Hants can be seen in Figure 5.

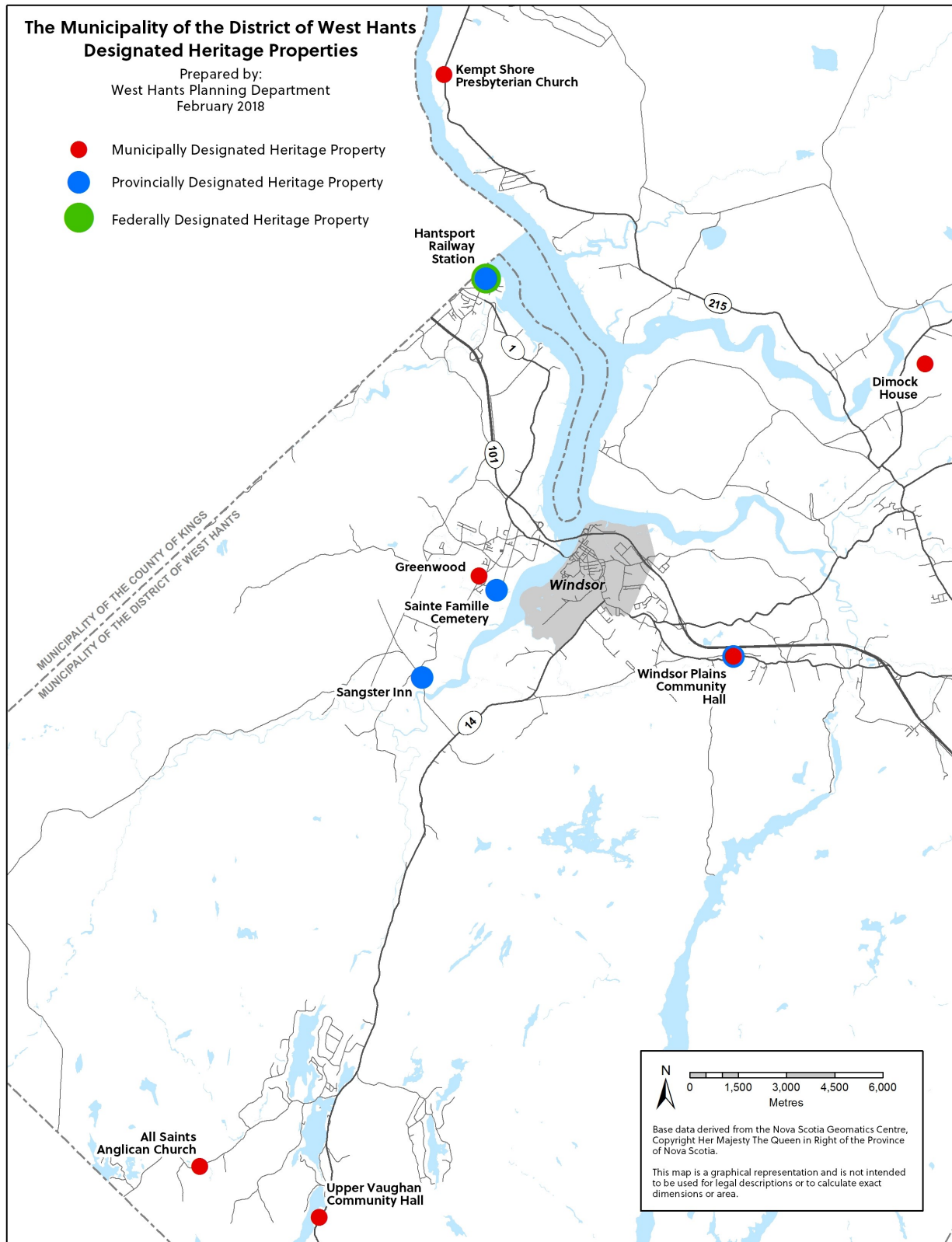
Figure 3: Description of Federal Heritage Designation

Federal Heritage Buildings	Buildings that are believed to be of heritage significance at the federal level
National Historic Sites	Places that reflect the history of Canada and provide learning experience for future generations
Heritage Railway Stations	Railway stations of significance that are owned by a railway company
Heritage Lighthouses	Lighthouses that are believed to be of heritage significance

Figure 4: Descriptions for Municipal or Provincial Heritage Designation

Types of Designation	Provincial	Municipal
Individual Heritage Properties	Buildings that are believed to be of heritage significance at the provincial level	Buildings that are believed to be of heritage significance at the municipal level
Public-building Interior	Government of Nova Scotia publicly-accessible buildings that have interior character-defining elements of heritage value at the provincial level	Publicly-accessible buildings owned by the Municipality that have interior character-defining elements of heritage value at the municipal level
Streetscape	A group of buildings that together have provincial heritage significance and can all be viewed from one point	A group of buildings that together have municipal heritage significance and can all be viewed from one point
Cultural Landscape	A geographical area or property that displays a unique design of nature and human settlers that is deemed to have heritage value at the provincial level	A geographical area or property that displays a unique design of nature and human settlers that is deemed to have heritage value at the municipal level
Conservation District	N/A	A large group of properties that can not be viewed from one point, that has heritage significance at the community or municipal level. All municipally designated conservation districts are created by the specific community and have their own bylaw and plan for administrations

Figure 5: Designated Heritage Properties in West Hants



4.1 Provincial

Provincial Heritage Property Act

The Provincial Heritage Property Act of 1989 allows the Government of Nova Scotia to protect and revive significant heritage buildings throughout the Province. It defines the character-defining elements of heritage properties, establishes the creation of and powers of the Heritage Advisory Committee, and describes specifications for Provincial and Municipal heritage designations.

Provincial Heritage Property Registration

The Heritage Property Act protects all properties listed in the Provincial Registry of Heritage Property. Heritage significance could include building style, material, builder, or association with an important person, group, institution, or event in Nova Scotia's history.

Nova Scotia Heritage Property Program

The Nova Scotia Heritage Property Program is a result of the Heritage Property Act. Program staff assist with Provincial heritage registration, Provincial grants for owners, and administration of the Heritage Property Act.

Applications to register as a Provincial heritage property must be completed and submitted to the Nova Scotia Heritage Property Program. Once the application is received, it is evaluated by staff for historical and architectural significance. It is then reviewed by the Advisory Council on Heritage Property. If the property meets the evaluation criteria, a recommendation is forwarded to the Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage. The Minister makes the final decision on registered heritage properties.

In West Hants, there are four (4) Provincially designated heritage properties (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Provincial Heritage Properties



Source: Parks Canada.

The Sangster Inn, located in Falmouth, was recognized as having Provincial heritage significance in 1991. The house was used as accommodations for people travelling between Halifax and Annapolis Royal. In 1802, the Sangster Bridge was the first bridge built over the Avon River, making the Sangster Inn a prominent destination on the route. The Inn has particular character-defining elements which support a late 18th century date of construction.



Source: Parks Canada.

The Hantsport Railway Station is located at 15 Station Road. The original station was built mid - 1890's with the current building replacing it in 1944. It was recognized as a Provincial Heritage Property in 1995, as a reminder of Nova Scotia's railway history. The Station is also recognized by the Federal Government as a Designated Heritage Railway Station.



Source: West Hants.

Originally known as the Five Mile Plains School, the Windsor Plains Community Hall is located at the intersection of Pellow Road and Highway 1 in Three Mile Plains. The original date of construction is unknown, however the building was used as a segregated school for black children until 1963. This is one of the last one (1) room segregated school houses remaining in Nova Scotia. It is currently owned by the West Hants African Advisory Association and used as a community hall. It is designated at both the Provincial and Municipal level.



Source: Ancestry.com

The Sainte-Famille Cemetery in Falmouth was designated a Provincial heritage property in September 2017. The cemetery of approximately 300 graves was uncovered during an archaeological dig in 1996 by the Nova Scotia Museum. The cemetery was used from 1698 until the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755, and is one of the only pre-deportation Acadian cemeteries in Nova Scotia.

Windsor has five (5) Provincial heritage properties. These are the Clockmaker's Inn, Convocation Hall, Clifton House / Haliburton House, Richmond Hill Farm, and St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church. Fort Edward in Windsor is designated a National Historic site, and the Shand House is part of the Nova Scotia Museum group.

4.2 Municipal

Municipal Heritage Property By-law

West Hants has a Municipal Heritage Property By-law which was adopted in December 1992 and is being updated in 2018. The purpose of the By-law is to provide for identification, preservation and protection of heritage buildings, streetscapes, public-building interiors, conservation districts, cultural landscapes and areas of historic and cultural value. The By-law identifies the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) as the committee which advises *Council on matters related to Municipal heritage properties*.

Municipal Heritage Property Registration

Properties can be registered in the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties if they have local or community level heritage value. The emphasis is on evaluating the degree of heritage significance of a property's association with persons, events, or activities of importance in the history and culture of the municipality. Properties can be registered on both the Municipal and Provincial registries. Registration is permanently attached to the title of the property and transfers from owner to owner, unless the property is deregistered.

To register a property as a Municipal Heritage Property in West Hants, an application is submitted to the Municipal Planning Department. Staff review, evaluate and create a recommendation report for the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC). A Statement of Significance is also created. Once the HAC reviews and provides recommendation to Council, notice of the recommendation is sent to the owners and the Land Registry Office. Council considers the recommendation and the property owners are given the opportunity to be heard. Once Council's decision is made, notice of registration is sent to the owners and filed in the Land Registry Office. A plaque is ordered and a ceremony is held.

Once the property is registered as a Municipal Heritage Property the property cannot be substantially altered on the exterior or demolished without approval of Council. A substantial alteration is defined as any change that alters in an important way the exterior appearance of a the property. Interior alterations are not regulated. Despite rumours to the contrary, the colour of buildings is not controlled!

Municipal Heritage Properties in West Hants

West Hants has six (6) designated municipal heritage properties (Figure 7). So far, there are no municipally designated heritage public-building interiors, streetscapes, conservation districts, or cultural landscapes in West Hants.

Figure 7: Municipal Heritage Properties



Source: Parks Canada.

All Saints Anglican Church is located on New Ross Road in Leminster. The church was built in 1871 and is remembered as a focal point of the community. The building is a simple wood frame construction with wood shingles. It has Gothic Revival style architecture with slim windows. The bell tower is not symmetrical, which is dissimilar to other churches of the same period in Hants County. It also has an open belfry which is more common among Lunenburg County Churches.



Source: West Hants.

Dimock House was constructed between 1800-1835, and is located on Highway 236 in Scotch Village. The Dimock family were among the first settlers from New England, originally arriving in 1759. The Dimock House has Cape Cod style architecture, with some Greek Revival exterior details. It is a simple one and one-half (1 ½) storey wood construction with wood shingles. It has a central front door with side lights and two (2) Italianate style bay windows on the front elevation. The land is also included in the Municipal designation.



Source: West Hants.

Greenwood was built in 1830 and is located on Falmouth Dyke Road. It is built on one of the original Falmouth Township land grants for Planter colonists who settled on lands vacated by the 1755 expulsion of the Acadians. This 29 room home is of New England Colonial style architecture. It has five (5) dormers, and a wide verandah covering the front entry doors.



Source: West Hants.

The Kempt Shore Presbyterian Church was built in 1865 and is located on Highway 215 in Kempt Shore. The church was erected for the congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. It closed in 1967 for regular services however is still used for weddings and funerals. It is a simple wood frame construction with wood shingles and a steep shingled steeple. It has Gothic Revival windows, and a cemetery surrounding the church. The building, cemetery and land are included in the municipal designation.



Source: West Hants.

Originally known as the South Waterville School, the Upper Vaughan Community Hall was constructed in 1868 as a one (1) room schoolhouse. This building was constructed to replace the original log schoolhouse in Upper Vaughan. In 1964, the school closed and the building is now used as a community hall.



The Windsor Plains Community Hall is on both the municipal and provincial registry.

There are many historic properties in West Hants that do not have a Municipal or Provincial heritage designation. Most churches in West Hants were built prior to the 20th century and congregations are now decreasing in size, causing the church buildings to be demolished or sold. The Municipality could enhance advertising efforts to entice people to apply for heritage designation and protect properties of heritage significance.

Heritage Conservation Work Funding

West Hants has a funding program available to private owners of Municipal heritage properties to help with maintenance and preservation. Funding is considered for exterior work such as painting, cladding, and roof and window replacement and repair. Projects must use traditional materials and designs for items that are of heritage significance. The program, which is established annually by Council, in 2018 includes incentives on a 50% cost-sharing basis to a maximum of \$5,000 per property. Incentives per property are limited to one (1) per year and two (2) per five (5) year period.

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