

## **Heritage Research Report**



**3060 Seneca Drive**

**July 2014**

## HERITAGE RESEARCH REPORT STATUS SHEET

Street Address:	3060 Seneca Drive
Roll Number:	2401020260083000000
Short Legal Description:	PLAN M11, LOT 64
Heritage Type:	House
Heritage Status:	Listed Heritage Property
Zoning:	RL3-0 sp 93
Land Use:	Residential
Research Report Completion Date:	July 2014
Heritage Committee Meeting Date:	July 29, 2014
Research Report Completed by:	Susan Schappert Heritage Planner
Sources Consulted:	Land Registry Records for Lot 64, Plan M-11 <i>Looking for Old Ontario</i> by Thomas F. McIlwraith Dictionary of Canadian Biography (online) <i>Oakville: A Small Town 1900-1930</i> by Frances Ahern <i>Oakville and the Sixteen</i> by Hazel Chisholm Mathews <i>The Story of Bronte Harbour</i> by Philip Brimacombe <i>Oakville Street Names and Landmarks</i> by David Ashe and Joyce Burnell 1877 Historical Atlas of Halton County Town of Oakville files and mapping <a href="http://www.ancestry.ca">www.ancestry.ca</a> <a href="http://www.ontarioarchitecture.com">www.ontarioarchitecture.com</a>

## **STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST**

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance according to Ontario Regulation 9/06. This Regulation, defined in the *Ontario Heritage Act*, outlines several criteria for determining whether a property is of cultural heritage value or interest. In order for a property to be designated under section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* it must meet one or more of these criteria, which are outlined below. By using these criteria, staff can determine if the property's cultural heritage value or interest merits designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
  - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,  
**The subject house is an example of a modified early 20th century vernacular house.**
  - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit  
**The property does not display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.**
  - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement  
**There are no technical or scientific achievements associated with this property.**
2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
  - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,  
**The subject property is has some general associations with historic Bronte families who owned the property but did not likely occupy the current residence. The house has a more contemporary association with Fred Oliver, a former Police Chief and Town/Regional Councillor.**
  - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or  
**The house contributes somewhat to the understanding of the development of early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Bronte Village.**
  - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.  
**The property is not associated with any significant architect or builder.**
3. The property has contextual value because it,
  - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,  
**The subject house does not define, maintain, or support the character of the area in any significant way.**
  - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings,  
**The subject property is physically linked to its surroundings.**
  - iii. is a landmark.  
**The property is not considered to be a significant landmark.**



## Design and Physical Value

The property at 3060 Seneca Drive contains a 1 ½ storey frame house. MPAC data for the property indicates that the house was constructed c.1910, although historic evidence seems to point at a construction date of 1907. Regardless, both dates would be consistent with the construction materials on the original portion of the building.

The house is an example of a vernacular house with no particular visible influences from any specific architectural style. A 1- ½ storey wing is attached to the house on the south (rear) elevation. There is a contemporary one-storey sun room addition on the west elevation. A small vestibule addition encloses the front entrance to the house. It is estimated that the additions were constructed circa late1960-1970.

The house is currently clad in aluminum siding and has an enclosed hip roofed front porch entrance. The foundation is lake stone in parts, concrete blocks in parts and poured concrete with rubble stone in other parts, illustrating the various periods of alterations. The roof on the front portion of the house is a medium pitch gable roof covered in asphalt shingles, broken by a shed dormer on the front. The roof on the rear wing is slightly lower in pitch, also clad in aluminum shingles.



All visible exterior features of the house have been replaced over the years, including cladding, windows, doors, and trim. Trim and soffits are aluminum and vinyl. The current windows are modern vinyl sash with interior lites.

On the interior, there are some historic doors and trim; however, several of these doors are not likely original to the building and were possibly salvaged and reused. A portion of what could be the original coved Manitoba siding is visible on the interior of the building in the sunroom; however, the siding may also have been salvaged material. The reuse of salvaged material and ad hoc renovation is evident throughout the entire residence.



Interior coved Manitoba siding



Interior historic door, not likely original to house

The primary physical heritage feature that remains is the form of the front portion of the house before the rear wing; side sunroom and front vestibule were added. The house is therefore considered to have very limited cultural heritage value for its physical attributes. The house is an example of a simple, vernacular frame house and there are no significant features in terms of the materials or design remaining on the exterior.

### Historical and Associative Value

The subject property at 3060 Seneca Drive is located on the south side of Seneca Drive, formerly known as Chisholm Street in the village of Bronte. The property has a long history of owners going back to 1839; however, records appear to indicate that the existing residence was not constructed until 1907. This construction date is similar to the MPAC date of 1910. The construction date is considered circa 1907-1910.

Land registry records indicate that the early owners of the subject property owned other large parcels of land in the Bronte area but did not reside in the village. Richard Oliver Duggan, Esquire, owner of the property in 1839, resided in Hamilton and owned considerable acreage in Bronte.

The Honourable George Moffat, who owned the property from 1839 to 1854, was another one of these property owners and did not actually reside in Bronte. George Moffat was an important politician and businessman, a member of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada and then Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada representing the City of Montreal, director of the Bank of Montreal and president of the Montreal Board of Trade.<sup>1</sup> Moffat spent most of his life in Montreal and it is highly unlikely that he ever visited his holdings in the Bronte area. As the house was constructed many years after he sold his landholdings in Bronte, there is very limited significance in his ownership of the lot.



The Honourable George Moffat

The property passed through several owners, from George and William Carpenter to William Sinclair Davis, the Oakville businessman who owned numerous properties throughout Oakville and Bronte. However, in 1907, the chain of title shows a significant increase in the price of lots 23, 24 and 25 on the south side of Chisholm Street (these three lots were sold together from 1906 to 1949), from \$1325 in December 1906 to \$2500 in October 1907. The doubling of the price within 10 months usually indicates an improvement on the lot and construction of a residence is the most likely scenario. However, it is unknown whether the improvement took place on lot 23, 24 or 25.

The purchaser of the subject property (lots 23, 24, 25) in 1907 was Harriet Flumerfelt, the wife of Joseph Sylvester Flumerfelt, the Postmaster for Bronte Village. It is highly unlikely that they occupied the property themselves or used it as an income property, as they only maintained ownership for 3 years and were known to live at the back of the Post Office and general store that they ran on Bronte Road.<sup>2</sup>

In 1910, the Flumerfelts sold the property (lots 23, 24, 25) to William H. Speers, a fruit growing farmer and businessman for \$2000 (it is unknown why the value of the lots had decreased). Interestingly, William H. Speers was the father of Lila M. Speers, who married Allie Flumerfelt (Harriet and J.S. Flumerfelt's son) in 1911. Lila and Allie lived with the Flumerfelts in the back of the Post Office for their first years together and went on to live at 2451 Sovereign Street.

It is also highly unlikely that William H. Speers lived at the subject property, having two homes – the family farm located nearby on Mississauga Street<sup>3</sup> and also a new house described in *Oakville: A Small Town 1900-1930*:

*Halfway between the Eighth Line and Centre Avenue (Balsam Drive) was the property and fine, large home of Mr. W.H. Speers (no. 509), a director of the Oakville Navigation Company, owners of the ill-fated steamship White Star.<sup>4</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of Canadian Biography. George Moffat. [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio.php?id\\_nbr=4602](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio.php?id_nbr=4602) accessed July 7, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Dana Flavelle, article *Bronte Remembered* in the Oakville Journal Record, April 2, 1979.

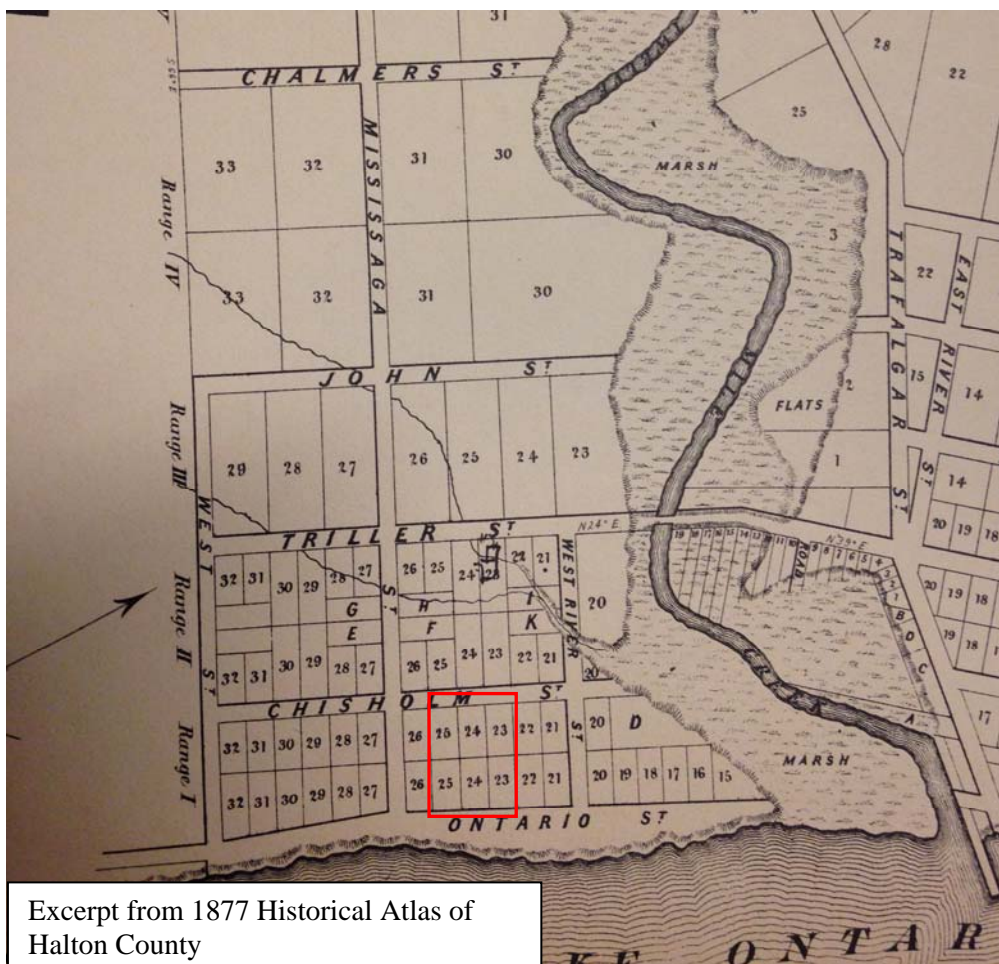
<sup>3</sup> Flavelle, *Bronte Remembered*

<sup>4</sup> Frances Ahern. *Oakville: A Small Town 1900-1930*. The Oakville Historical Society, 1986. p. 107



The Oakville Navigation Company was founded in 1899 by local fruit growers to ensure consistent steamer service to the Oakville area. Their first and only steamer, the White Star, was also used extensively for holiday travel along the Lake Ontario coastline. Unfortunately, the steamer burned while undergoing repairs in 1903 and thus steamer service to Oakville ended.<sup>5</sup>

William H. Speers owned the subject property for 14 years and likely used it as an income property. According to *Oakville Street Names and Landmarks*, the subject property was near the historic Speers family farm on Mississauga Street, which at one time stretched from West River Street to West Street, from Lake Ontario to north of Rebecca Street.<sup>6</sup> However, the 1877 Historical Atlas of Halton County indicates that by 1877 that area had been parceled off and it is interesting to note that the Speers family do not show up in the Land Registry records as owners of the subject property in its earlier, larger versions. However, the Speers family still owned and farmed property in the Bronte area and the subject property may have been used as accommodation for an employee and family.



Speers sold the subject property to Mark Dawson, formerly of Brampton, Ontario in 1924. It appears that Mark Dawson was responsible for severing the land, as the next transfer of the

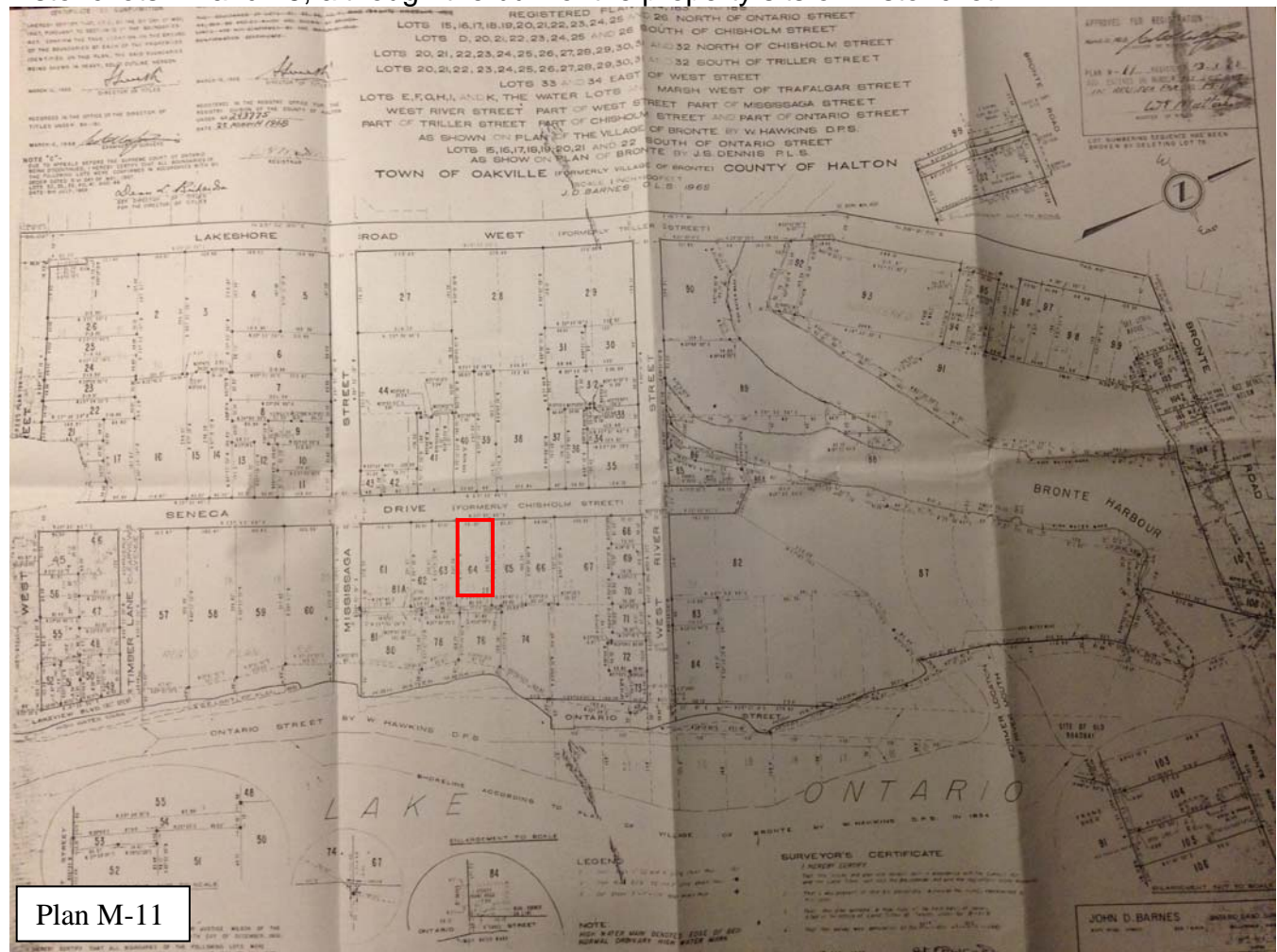
<sup>5</sup> Hazel Chisholm Mathews. *Oakville and the Sixteen*. University of Toronto Press, 1994. p. 383-384.

<sup>6</sup> David Ashe and Joyce Burnell. *Oakville Street Names and Landmarks*. Burnell-Creighton Publishing, 2007. p 67.

property is limited to parts of lots 24 and 25 when he sold the property to Fred and Kathleen Oliver in 1949.

At the time of their purchase of the land, Fred was a constable in Trafalgar Township. Fred Oliver went on to become the Chief Constable in 1962 and also served on Oakville and Regional councils for many years. The Olivers sold the property in 1967 to John and Mary Halliwell.

Plan M-11, the existing legal plan for the area, was registered in 1968. Lot 64 consists of the historic lots 24 and 25, although the bulk of the property sits on historic lot 24.



Below is a summary of the owners of the property from 1839 to the present.

Name of Owner(s)	Years of Ownership
Crown	prior to 1839
Isaac Webster	1839 (break in title)
Richard Duggan	1839
George Moffat	1839 – 1854
George Carpenter	1854 – 1901/5
William Carpenter	1901/5 – 1905



William Sinclair Davis	1905 – 1906
Elizabeth Norton	1906 – 1907
Harriet Flumerfelt	1907 – 1910
William H. Speers	1910 – 1924
Mark Dawson	1924 – 1949
Kathleen and Fred Oliver	1949 – 1967
John and Mary Halliwell	1967 – 2010

Based on the historical research completed, the property is considered to have some cultural heritage value for its historical associations with the Flumerfelt and Speers families, both of whom were well-known names in the Bronte area. However, the connection to the Flumerfelts is not considered especially strong, as they only owned the property for three years and may not have resided at this location. The Speers family connection is also of limited value as they did not reside at this location, having a large house in northeast Oakville.

The more recent association with Fred Oliver, Police Chief and local politician, is not considered to have significant historic value at this time. The changes to the physical structure since his ownership also slightly diminish his connection to the building.

The historic associations with the property are not considered sufficiently significant to warrant designation at this time.

### **Contextual Value**

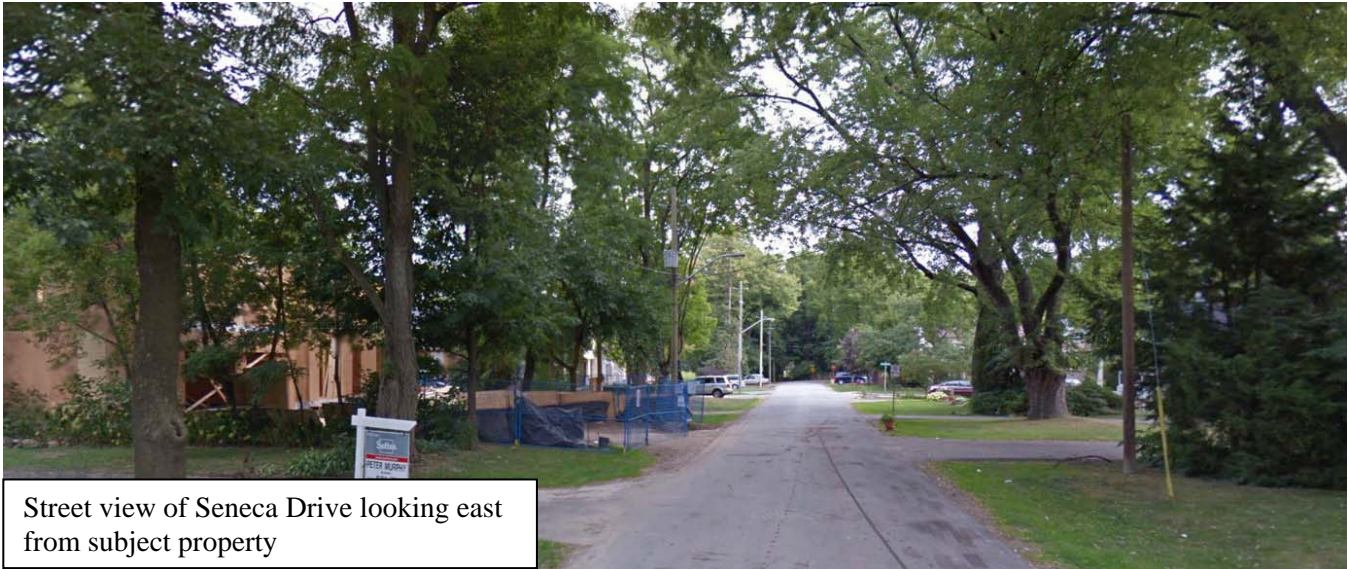
The property at 3060 Seneca Drive is located on the south side of Seneca Drive in between West River Street to the east and Mississauga Street to the west. The area first began to develop with small fisherman's cottages and then small summer cottages when the uses of Bronte Harbour shifted from industry (fishing and shipbuilding) to recreation. Once a street lined with small cottages on large and deep lots, the area has lost most of its historic building stock, although the heritage fabric of the streetscape – large mature trees, curbless road without sidewalks and generous setbacks – has been maintained.

The surrounding residences are almost all modern construction, with the exception of the small cottage at 3065 Seneca Drive on the north side of the road. The neighbouring lots, formerly historic lots 23 and 25, now lots 63 and 65, both contain modern residences.

The contextual value of 3060 Seneca Drive has been greatly diminished with the loss of historic building stock in the area. The historic character of built structures has not been maintained; however, value remains in the streetscapes features described above, which are mainly on the public right of way.



Street view of Seneca Drive looking west  
from the subject property



Street view of Seneca Drive looking east  
from subject property