

**Commemoration and Interpretation Plan
1 Rosetta Street
Part of Lots 18 and 19, Concession 9
Town of Halton Hills
Geographic Township of Esquesing
Regional Municipality of Halton**

Prepared for
1 Rosetta Inc.
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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARA – Archaeological Research Associates Ltd.
AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
CHVI – Cultural Heritage Value or Interest
HIA – Heritage Impact Assessment

PERSONNEL

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1.0 PROJECT CONTEXT

In 2021, Archaeological Research Associates Ltd. (ARA) carried out an Evaluation and subsequent Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in advance of the proposed redevelopment of 1 Rosetta Street in Georgetown, Town of Halton Hills, Ontario.

The proposed development includes the removal of all buildings associated with 1 Rosetta Street and the construction of an 8-storey and 12-storey residential building. Heritage Halton Hills had considered the proposed removal of 1 Rosetta Street and noted that they do not object to the principle of demolition of 1 Rosetta, “provided its heritage value in connection with the Georgetown paper industry is commemorated appropriately on site” and further that “Heritage Halton Hills be consulted with respect to the form, design and location of the commemoration which should include some of the concrete blocks from the existing former paper mill building” (Recommendation No. HERTIAGE- 2018-0011).

Symbolic conservation through a Commemoration and Interpretation Plan allows the historical value of a property proposed for removal to be expressed and communicated to the public. The retention of components of a building for reuse prior to its demolition, or selective removal of identified architectural or landscape elements preserves portions or features of buildings and structures that possess historical, architectural or cultural value.

The objective of the 1 Rosetta Street Commemoration and Interpretation Plan is to convey information about the property’s cultural heritage value or interest (CHVI) and include the integration of some of the concrete blocks from the existing former paper mill building. This report outlines a high-level Commemoration and Interpretive Plan accepted as a component of the mitigation strategies outlined in the HIA and required by Heritage Halton Hills.

A detailed design and fabrication strategy is outside the scope of this plan.

2.0 COMMEMORATION AND INTERPRETATION PLAN OVERVIEW

This Commemoration and Interpretation Plan outlines symbolic conservation methods through the use of interpretive panels and the integration of original materials and elements. The strategic development of two interpretive panels serves to communicate and celebrate the property’s CHVI, including 1 Rosetta Street’s historic architecture, connection with the Georgetown paper industry, and significant relationships with 2 Rosetta Street, 11 Caroline Street, and the rail line as documented in ARA’s evaluation of the property (ARA 2021a). By placing these commemorative elements within the proposed development, this history is conveyed in an accessible manner to residents and broader community members.

The interpretive panels may be considered a set with each conveying a different aspect of the history. The primary title of each is *Paper Town*, with a secondary title dependant on the individual narratives: *The Barber Family and One Rosetta*, and *An Industrial Community at Work*. Additional suggestions for commemorative and interpretive elements are detailed in Appendix A.

Recommendations provided in this plan align with professional standards promoted by the Canadian Museum Association, Ontario Museum Association, and Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property.

3.0 PAPER TOWN: THE BARBER FAMILY AND 1 ROSETTA STREET

The focus of this panel is to celebrate the property's cultural heritage value, including 1 Rosetta Street's establishment, evolution, and connection with the Barber family and their significant contribution to the Georgetown paper industry.

3.1 Heritage Materials and Attributes to Salvage

The Evaluation Report (ARA 2021a) distinguishes two significant heritage attributes of the 1905 and 1947 portions of the 1 Rosetta Street complex: The gabled roof and cast concrete blocks with a medium rock-face texture. Additional elements that enhance the historic and industrial character of the building include the hand-hewn beams and wood plank flooring, chimney stack, and the variety of steel tracks, braces and trusses.

At a minimum, interpretive panel design and fabrication should incorporate cast concrete blocks from the 1905 and 1947 portions of the building. An adaptation of a low-profile interpretive panel form could be created using several courses of the blocks to create a low wall, in which the interpretive panel could be set at a 45-degree angle.

Further incorporation of materials and/or elements emulating features of 1 Rosetta Street could include:

- Use of new or salvaged steel framing for the panels to recreate the industrial character of the tracks and trusses. Specifically, new or salvaged steel elements should have a dark patina or finish and visible rivets emulating the aesthetic of the original tracks, braces, and trusses. These materials could also be used to create a feature emulating the gable roof of the 1905 building.
- Hand-hewn beams and/or wood planks may be utilized as a mantel for the panel to sit in, positioned in a manner emulating the gabled roof, or used upright to create a sign-post style structure for an interpretive panel.

3.2 Placement

Proposed placement of this panel parallels the narrative focusing specifically on the history surrounding the 1 Rosetta Street property. By positioning this interpretive element within the proposed parkette or at the Caroline Street entrance to the parkette, the audience is comprised of individuals more closely connected to the property – residents.

3.3 Text

The intention of the following proposed interpretive panel text is to commemorate the history of the property and communicate this story using an appropriate language, tone, length, and structure to ensure the message is accessible to a wide audience with a range of learning styles, levels, and abilities.

The Barber family brought the paper industry to Georgetown in 1854 with the establishment of The Barber Paper Mill at 99 River Drive by brothers James and John. This mill eventually became the largest industry in Halton County, producing paper shipped across Canada, and leading to the nickname *Paper Town*.

John Roaf Barber, second son of James Barber, assumed operation of the paper mills in 1880 following the death of his father. In 1888, John commissioned “Barber’s Dynamo”, a hydroelectric generator manufactured in Chicago, IL, to power the mills. His use of hydroelectric power in the late 19th century is considered the earliest such use for manufacturing in North America.

The property at 1 Rosetta Street was purchased by John Roaf Barber in 1904 for the construction of the Canada Coated Paper Mill. Several years later, the successful paper mills and coating companies were merged under one brand, the Barber Paper and Coating Mills. Despite a long-standing good reputation in the community, this consolidation prompted a round of improvements which drew fresh admiration:

The coating mill is the largest in Canada, being equipped with most modern coating machines.

- The Georgetown Herald, December 17, 1913

The Barber Paper and Coating Mill at 1 Rosetta Street experienced at least five periods of construction. The original 1905 factory was T-shaped with a connected one storey building and large chimney stack. This building featured the use of textured cast concrete blocks, a widespread and economical substitute for natural stone that was particularly popular in the early 20th century. Continuous additions through the century reflect the prosperity of the company.

The Barber Paper and Coating Mill became Provincial Paper Mills Company in 1916 and remained as such until 1982 when it was sold to Abitibi-Price. Shortly after, the mill ceased operations.

3.4 Visual Aids

It is suggested that one or both of the following visual aids be incorporated into the interpretive panel (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).



**Figure 1: Canada Coated Paper Mill, ca. 1905
(EHS 1905)**



**Figure 2: 1 Rosetta Street, 1947
(Georgetown Vault 1947)**

4.0 PAPER TOWN: AN INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITY AT WORK

The theme of this panel centres around the foundation, growth and decline of the 1 and 2 Rosetta Street industries and situates the paper milling and coating industry within the landscape and community.

4.1 Heritage Materials and Attributes to Salvage

Materials salvaged for incorporation into this commemorative element should focus on the shared industrial aspects of the paper coating industry and buildings. In particular, the use of concrete construction methods (cast concrete blocks at 1 Rosetta Street, and reinforced concrete at 2 Rosetta Street), and the variety of steel tracks, braces and trusses utilized by the industries.

Cast concrete blocks salvaged from the 1 Rosetta Street 1951 addition with a smooth wave texture may be used to construct a base or platform. New or salvaged steel components may be utilized to recreate the industrial character of the tracks or trusses. Specifically, new or salvaged steel elements should have a dark patina or finish and visible rivets emulating the aesthetic of the original tracks, braces, and trusses.

4.2 Placement

Placement reinforces the community narrative by positioning this interpretive element towards the Georgetown GO, Halton Hills station, parking and railway line to the south and west of the property. The semi-public placement is a way to convey the history of the neighbourhood to a broader audience of community members and orient them to the interconnectivity of their surroundings.

4.3 Text

The intention of the following proposed interpretive panel text is to commemorate the history of the property and communicate this story using an appropriate language, tone, length, and structure to ensure the message is accessible to a wide audience with a range of learning styles, levels, and abilities.

In Ontario, paper milling began in the 19th century as a cottage industry relying on cotton, silk or hemp rags for pulp. Around the mid-19th century, many paper manufacturers adopted the process of producing paper from wood pulp. Canada soon became a major producer of newsprint and, as the industry continued to grow through the 20th century, many smaller paper milling operations were consolidated into larger enterprises.

The paper milling industry came to Georgetown in the mid-19th century, with the establishment of a rag-paper mill along the banks of the Credit River by brothers John and James Barber. The ruins of this mill can be found today at 99 River Drive.

John Roaf Barber, son of James Barber, continued his family's trade and purchased the property at 1 Rosetta Street in 1904 to build the Canada Coated Paper Mill, later renamed the Barber Paper and Coating Mills.

In 1910, a second paper coating company, The Georgetown Coated Paper Mill, opened for business at the adjacent 2 Rosetta Street property.

Both companies were able to take advantage of the nearby railway for receiving uncoated paper and shipping finished products. These industries also employed many locals – such as John Mason, an employee of the Canada Coated Paper Company who resided at nearby 11 Caroline Street.

The quality of the products, scale of production, and powerful modern machinery used brought pride to the community, as a writer for the *Georgetown Herald* remarked:

“Georgetown Coated Paper Mills shows what a fine home this young industry has.”

- *The Georgetown Herald*, December 17, 1913

The establishment of these two paper coating complexes in addition to the original Barber mill helped earn Georgetown the nickname *Paper Town* in the early 20th century.

By the last quarter of the 20th century, after several changes to name and ownership, both buildings ceased production of paper coated products.

4.4 Visual Aids

It is suggested that one or both of the following visual aids be incorporated into the interpretive panel (see Figure 3 and Figure 4).



**Figure 3: Georgetown Coated Paper Mills (2 Rosetta Street), ca.,1920
(EHS ca 1920)**



**Figure 4: Interior of Coated Paper Mill, 1920 (Tracks visible)
(EHS 1920)**

5.0 DESIGN AND FABRICATION CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Materials and Form

There are two standard forms for outdoor panels: low profile and upright. Low profile panels are waist-height, with the panel orientated at a 45-degree angle. They are typically used to direct the viewer's attention to a specific landscape or feature highlighted in the panel (see Figure 5). Upright panels do not direct the viewer's attention to a specific landscape or feature, instead they are typically used to orient the viewer and convey general information (see Figure 6).

There are a number of factors to consider when choosing fabrication and panel materials, including: budget, compatibility of different materials, structural integrity, and longevity (i.e., the ability to withstand weathering and acts of vandalism).

Aluminum and fiberglass are examples of materials commonly used for outdoor interpretive panels, each with a use expectancy of more than 10 years. Aluminum and aluminum composites achieve a high-level of text and graphic clarity through direct printing, are versatile and able to adapt to project-specific forms, have a high resistance to water and weathering, and require little ongoing maintenance. Fiberglass panels with embedded ink maintain a good level of text and graphic clarity, have a hard, seal-free surface that is resistant to water and weathering, and require little ongoing maintenance (NPS 2019).

Specific fonts, formats, colours, and concepts that align with the branding of the new development should be considered when designing the panels and/or considering reuse of heritage attributes. This ensures continuity between the aesthetic of commemorative elements and the proposed landscape and buildings.



36 x24 in-ground mount, Dayton Aviation Heritage NHP

Figure 5: Example of a Low-Profile Panel
(NPS 2009:11)



36 x 48 upright orientation
bulletin case, and brochure
dispenser, City of Rocks
National Reserve

Figure 6: Example of an Upright Panel
(NPS 2009:19)

5.2 Accessibility and Placement

As part of the planning process, up to date Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards should be reviewed. Considerations pertaining to the text, format, and layout of panels include:

- Keeping the panel flow and layout simple by breaking text into smaller sections and/or sidebars, and avoiding cluttering the panel with too many graphics;
- Using appropriate language and tone to ensure content is accessible to a wide audience with a range of learning styles, levels, and abilities; and
- Using appropriate typography (font, size, style, leading), with a clear contrast between text and background.

Canada's Museum of Science and Innovation, Ingenium, has established a set of guidelines for creating accessible interpretive panel text and graphics that may be useful to consult when finalizing the text and design of the interpretive panels. A link to *Ingenium Accessibility Standards for Exhibitions* can be found in the bibliography.

Interpretive elements should be placed in an easily accessible, visible area that will not disrupt the flow of foot traffic or present a hazard to visitors. The topography of the area will affect both accessibility and preservation, as an area with poor drainage and/or standing water will lead to more rapid deterioration and also discourage viewers from approaching. If the panel location is obscured by vegetation, or confined to a secluded space, vandalism may be encouraged. Glare from the sun, shadows, and viewing distance should also be taken into account when determining the final position and orientation.

5.3 Preservation

An examination of salvaged materials chosen for incorporation will need to be conducted to determine an appropriate method of preparation and fabrication before use. For example, concrete blocks may have residual coatings that require the use of a gentle cleaner and/or abrasive method to remove, salvaged steel may require the removal of active corrosion, and historic finishes and/or modern fire-resistant coatings applied to wooden beams and planks may require refinishing or removal.

Additional coatings may be considered to mitigate the effects of deteriorating agents, promoting preservation, or to alter the aesthetic to ensure continuity in the design of the new development. A detailed preservation strategy for materials should be incorporated into the final design and fabrication plan and can include consultation with a conservator on the preparation of materials and fabrication methodology. This strategy would include a policy for regular inspection, appropriate cleaning, and maintenance of salvaged materials and interpretive elements to increase their longevity.

5.4 Visual Aids and Copyright

Proper permissions to reproduce visual content must be obtained prior to panel design and fabrication. Use-right forms, documents, and receipts should be kept and maintained through the use life of the interpretive panels. High resolution copies of selected visual aids are required. Specific technical standards will be dependent on the design and size of the panel.

6.0 SUMMARY

This Commemoration and Interpretation Plan outlines an appropriate strategy for the symbolic conservation of the 1 Rosetta Street property. This is achieved through the development and installation of two interpretive panels with text, images, and salvaged materials used to communicate the CHVI of the property, including historic architecture, connection with the Georgetown paper industry, and significant relationships with 2 Rosetta Street, 11 Caroline Street, and the rail line as documented in ARA's evaluation of the property (ARA 2021a).

Recommended next steps are to explore and consult with companies specializing in custom interpretive panel and/or exhibit design, choose a panel material, identify and locate the specific materials to be salvaged, and consult a conservator on appropriate methods of extracting and preparing the specified salvaged materials to increase their preservation before finalizing a detailed design and fabrication plan.

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Appendix A: Additional Commemoration and Interpretation Suggestions

Beyond the strategy outlined above, there are some additional commemoration and interpretation suggestions to be considered by the property owner during the detailed design and construction of the proposed development at 1 Rosetta Street.

Heritage attributes and materials could be utilized as landscaping features including:

- Cast concrete blocks to form retaining walls and/or dividers for gardens;
- Hand hewn beams and cast concrete blocks used to form small benches or sitting areas;
- Hand hewn beams and/or metal trusses utilized to form a small pavilion, trellis, arbour, or similar structure.

Heritage attributes and materials could be integrated into the design of the new structures including:

- Metal tracks encased in the floor (i.e., in lobby or hallways);
- Wood plank flooring could be utilized as a feature wall (i.e., in lobby or amenity area);
- Concrete blocks could be integrated into a portion of the exterior wall; and
- Hand hewn beams and/or metal trusses could be used to form a small pavilion or patio.

Heritage attributes and materials could be redesigned into an art installation that emulates key elements of the historic structure.

- Opportunity to collaborate with a local artist specializing in the recycling of architectural and/or industrial materials.

Incorporation of a digital element:

- Opportunity to connect viewers via link or QR code with further information, such as a section of text from a 1913 *Georgetown Herald* article describing the paper coating process.