MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 20-24 Ontario Street

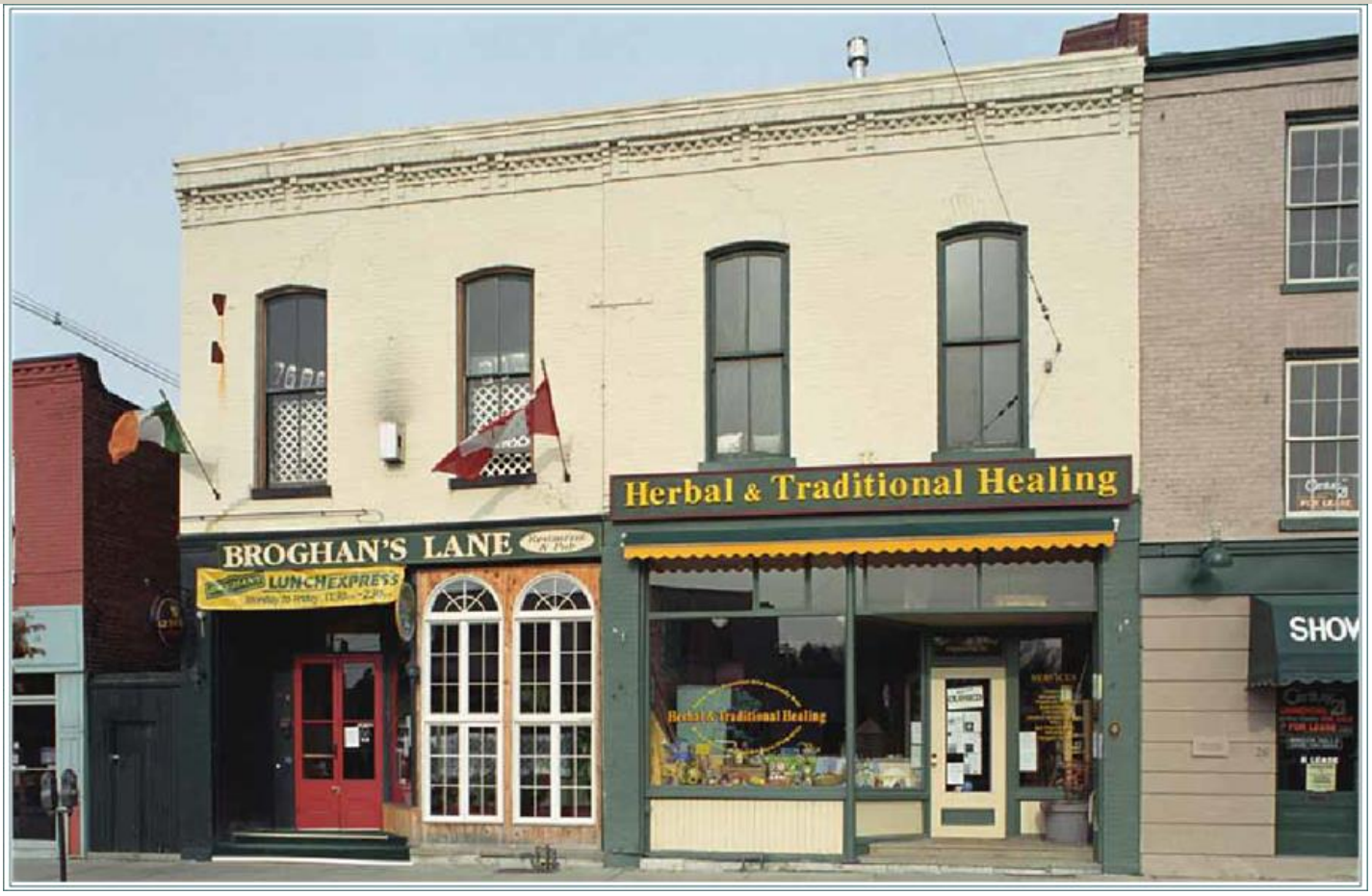
Known as: Cornelius Quinlan Building

Architectural Style: Classic Revival

Date Built: Circa 1870

Date Designated: September 19, 1983 to By-Law No. 51/83, SCHEDULE B-4

Lot Description: PLAN 30 LOTS 1 & 2; PT TOWN PLOT 71



Architectural Description

This two-storey brick building has a shed roof and decorative brick work in the cornice. The windows are long and segmentally arched. The ground floor is divided into two shop fronts, which are mirror images of each other. 24 Ontario Street is a very good example of an 1880's shop front and has recently been painted in historically accurate colours. 20 Ontario Street has a large sign covering the transom area. Both have recessed shop fronts allowing good window display space.

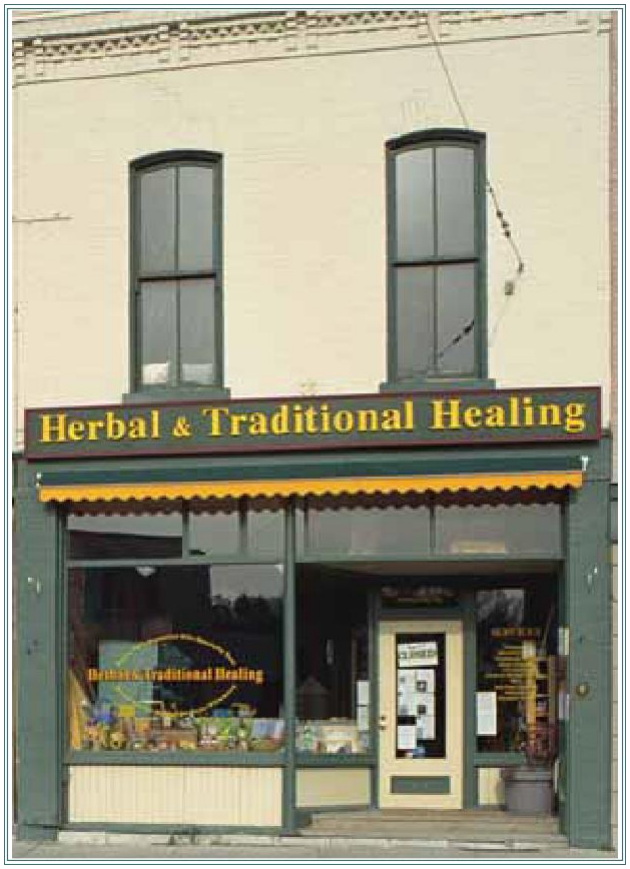
Historical Abstract

Cornelius Quinlan erected this brick commercial building, in the mid-1870's with the northern most unit being constructed first. The neighbouring building, the Walker Building, was constructed by Cornelius Quinlan in the mid 1850's and sold to John Walker in 1865.

Cornelius Quinlan (1822-1883) was a successful tinsmith and merchant whose business enterprise included construction of two blocks on Walton Street (78-92 & 94-96 Walton). Originally from Ireland, he came to Canada and established himself as a dealer in cooking and coal stoves; tin, sheet iron and copperware; and coal oil lamps. In 1861-65, he served as Mayor of Port Hope, and was an active member of the Methodist Church..

In addition to the commercial blocks that he owned, he also owned several houses. Prior to his death in 1883, he transferred ownership of a house on Bruton Street (30 Bruton Street) to his daughter Eliza. He resided at his house called "Roselawn" (78 Pine Street South), but he also owned the Grange (33 South Street). His son, James Walker Quinlan resided at the Grange. Similar to his father, J. W. Quinlan was active in local politics and held the position of Mayor of Port Hope from 1896-1900, and again in 1904. Among his many accomplishments, he also introduced electric lighting to the town establishing the Port Hope Electric Light Company in 1885.

As a supplement to his will, C. Quinlan drew up a carefully measured survey of his holdings in the Walton and Ontario Street area of Port Hope. The land was subdivided into numbered lots and then colour coded. Quinlan then used this numero-chromatic key to refer to the lands that he was bequeathing. The plan is still in the registry office and it is registered as Plan 30.



Architectural Detail

The mid-19th century block with ornamental brickwork to cornice has been altered by later shop fronts but they retain older elements at upper level, especially cast iron vents.