MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

HERITAGE DESIGNATION

Address: 19-23 Walton Street

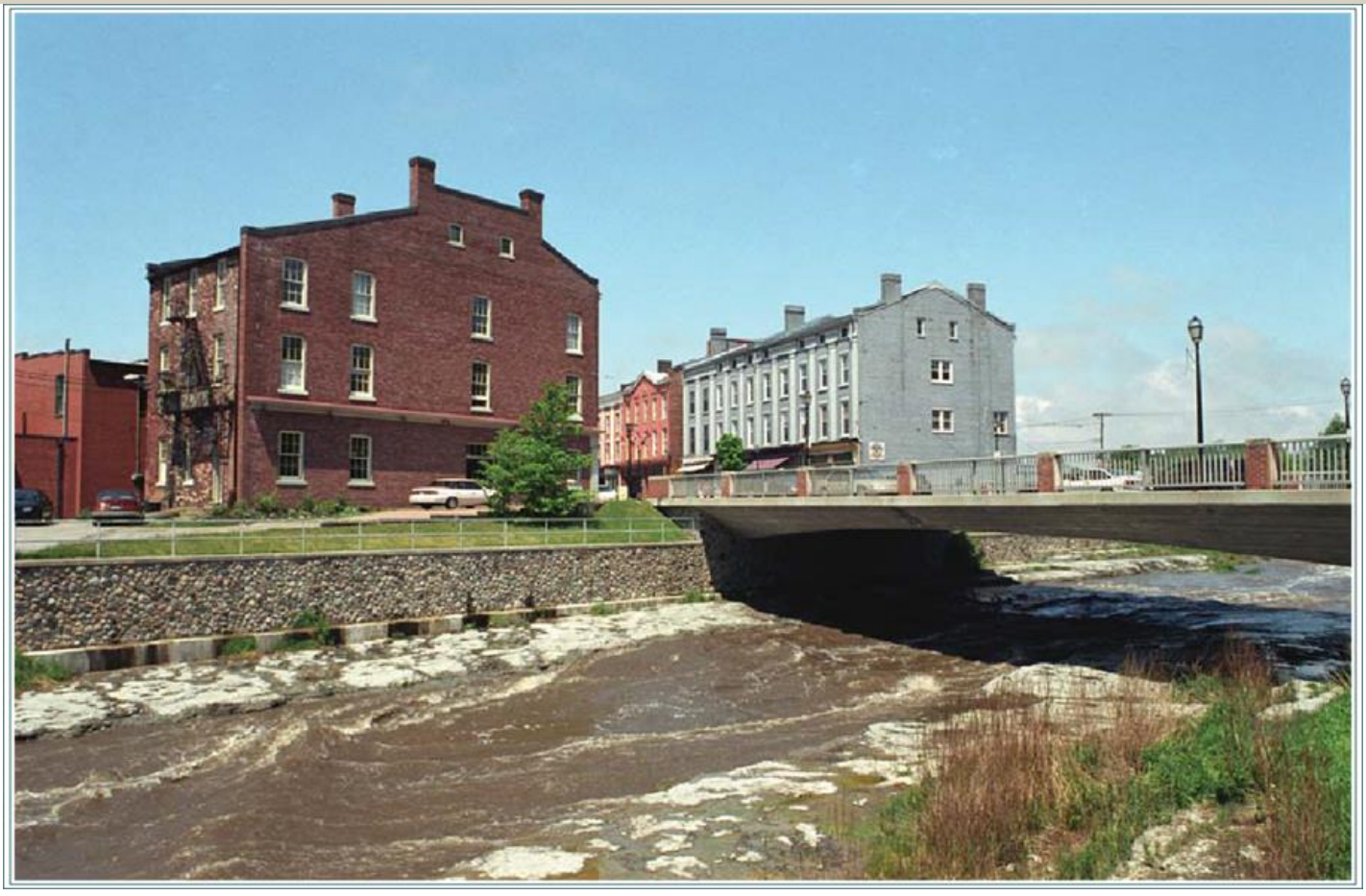
Known as: Old Firehall

Architectural Style: Walton Street Heritage District

Date Built: Circa 1871

Date Designated: February 18, 1980 to By -Law No. 9/80, SCHEDULE B-1

Lot Description: LOT 2



Architectural Description

1871 Old Fire Hall, brick public building with residential space No. 19-23 and public assembly room above, three storeys in a single unit, owned by the Town of Port Hope. This building, although a later front to Walton Street, was of considerable importance to the continuity of the streetscape. Its detail except for the ground storey arches built for the fire engines and arched entry to the upper floors, was rather plain with labels to segmental window heads rendered in a smooth stucco, band or sill courses and brackets to a wooden cornice at the eaves. The building had a gable roof parallel to the street with end parapets and chimneys. Later the eastern engine opening was widened and a folding door inserted for more modern equipment. Original sash survived in the third floor and at the stair hall, or west side of the second floor. Other windows on the second floor had been mutilated in renovations, possibly to accommodate lowered ceilings in thepartment conversion. The hose-drying tower was apparently added about 1879 and was characteristic of such facilities, with battered walls and mansard top.

Again the description is left for the record. Tragically, this building, undergoing reinforcement and remedial work at the time of the 1980 flood, was damaged and it was decided to remove the remaining structure and widen the floodway.

Local contractors Wallace, Carveth and Fogarty erected the Fire Hall in 1871. William Carveth Junior and J.W. Wallace were responsible for the masonry and carpentry while the Fogarty name was associated with painting in Port Hope for over two decades.

Prior to establishment of this central fire station, fire fighting was a challenge. After the incorporation of the town of Port Hope (1834) three fire wardens were appointed. Their duties included inspecting all buildings for safe conditions, and providing buckets and ladders to householders. Several fire engines were acquired during the 1850's after a series of devastating fires destroyed many of the two storey wooden blocks in the downtown core. The engines pumped water from stream or well but were hand pumped. Hook and Ladder and Bucket companies worked in conjunction with these engines. An extinguisher hose company was formed when the town waterworks was introduced.





The Central Fire Station (photo from East Durham Historical Society)