

## **The Corporation of the Town of Essex**

### **By-Law Number 2353**

Being a By-Law to designate the Grace Baptist Church located at 120 Talbot Street North in Essex, more particularly described as PLAN 206 LOT 3 LOT 4, as being of cultural heritage value or interest under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18.

**WHEREAS** Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O., Chapter O.18, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact By-Laws to designate real property within the municipality, including all buildings and structures thereof, to be of cultural heritage value or interest;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Essex deems it desirable to designate the Grace Baptist Church located at 120 Talbot Street North, Essex, more particularly described as PLAN 206 LOT 3 LOT 4, as being of cultural heritage value and interest;

**AND WHEREAS** Notice of Intention to Designate the Grace Baptist Church has been served on the owner of the property and on the Ontario Heritage Trust and such notice was published in the Essex Free Press and Harrow News, newspapers having general circulation in the municipality;

**AND WHEREAS** the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule 'B' attached to and forming part of this By-Law;

**AND WHEREAS** no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the Clerk of the Municipality.

**NOW THEREFORE** be it resolved that the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Essex hereby enacts as follows:

1. **That** the real property known as the Grace Baptist Church located at 120 Talbot Street North, Essex, more particularly described as PLAN 206 LOT 3 LOT 4, is hereby designated as being of cultural heritage value and interest.
2. **That** the Clerk is hereby authorized and instructed to register a copy of this By-Law against the property described in Schedule 'A', attached hereto, in the local Land Registry Office.
3. **That** the Clerk/or his/her designate, is hereby authorized to cause a copy of the By-Law to be served on the owner of the aforesaid property and on the Ontario Heritage Trust and to cause Notice of this By-law to be published in the Essex Free Press and in the Harrow News.
4. **That** the effective date of this By-Law shall be the date of final passage thereof.

**Read a first, a second and a third time and finally passed on August 12, 2024.**

---

Mayor

---

Clerk

**SCHEDULE 'A' TO BY-LAW 2353**

**Grace Baptist Church  
120 Talbot Street North, Essex, Ontario**

**Legal Description**

PLAN 206 LOT 3 LOT 4

## SCHEDULE 'B' TO BY-LAW 2353

### Reasons for Designation Under the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18

#### Grace Baptist Church

##### General Description of Property

120 Talbot Street North is located on the west side of Talbot Street within Essex Centre.

It is comprised of the Grace Baptist Church: a red brick church that was built in 1875 on Medora Avenue and moved to the current property following the 1907 Essex Rail Explosion.

##### Description of Property that has Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The area of the property that demonstrates cultural heritage value or interest is the area that includes the Grace Baptist Church building built in 1875.

##### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

###### *Historical/Associative Value*

*The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.*

120 Talbot Street North retains significant historical or associative value because it has direct associations with beliefs, organizations, and institutions that are significant to the community. The church was built on the southern side of Medora Ave. in 1875 and was a pillar within the community, aiding in the development of religion, education, and community within Essex Center. The church housed some of the earliest congregations in Essex Center, such as the Methodist Episcopal Church congregation from 1875 until 1884 and the First Baptist Church starting in 1888.

The church was built in 1875, primarily through the efforts of George Wilson, a local businessman and property developer who worked closely with Alexander Cameron, Edwin C. Lewis, and James Robinson, and was dedicated on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1875. It served as the Methodist Episcopal Church until 1884 when the church amalgamated with another Methodist Church in the community, the Grace Methodist Church located on the corner of Fox and Gordon Street. After its closure, the building would become an educational pillar within the community. Church trustees would rent out the building temporarily to the local school board and serve as the 1st public high school in Essex Center from 1884 until 1885, with the original Essex High School opening.

In 1888, the church was sold to a local Baptist Congregation for \$1,000 and would become the First Baptist Church of Essex. In 1907, the church was severely damaged following the 1907 Essex Rail Explosion, with only the church's frame being salvageable. The congregation opted to move the church frame to its current location on Talbot Street following the incident and worked to restore the building to its former glory. Each member of the congregation could pledge 10 cents to purchase bricks for the exterior and fund the rebuilding effort.

The church would remain open until 1969, when the expanding congregation would move into a larger building on Maidstone Ave. A new congregation would take over the building soon after and rename it the Grace Baptist Church of Essex.

###### *Contextual Value*

*The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.*

120 Talbot Street North retains contextual value because it is both functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. It is historically linked to its surroundings due to its

relocation to the property following the 1907 Essex Rail Explosion, as a means for the congregation to preserve their beloved church. This allowed the church to remain a part of the community and help shape the look of Talbot Street North.

It is functionally linked to its surroundings as there is still an active congregation within the building and it continues to serve as an important religious and communal space within the Town of Essex.

### **Description of Heritage Attributes**

The key heritage attributes that contribute to the historical/associative value of 120 Talbot Street North includes:

- The location of the church on the western side of Talbot Street North within Essex Centre,
- The mass, form, and style of the church building,
- The red brick cladding on all levels of the building,
- All existing window openings and stained-glass window pieces with brick voussoirs and underscored by brick sills,
- Inset engraved stone,
- The roof lines and peaks.

Key Exterior attributes that contribute to the contextual value of 120 Talbot Street North, Include its:

- The location of the Church on the western side of Talbot Street North within Essex Centre.