

151 AVENUE DE LA CATHÉDRALE – ARCHBISHOP’S RESIDENCE

Unknown, 1846 and 1899



This solid stone building has been an important part of St. Boniface’s history for over 150 years.

The history of the Roman Catholic Church in Western Canada begins in St. Boniface in 1818 with the founding of a mission by Bishop Provencher, named after sainted German missionary St. Boniface (675-754), and the construction of the first church. The arrival of other religious orders added to this ministry. In 1846, in order to provide a modern residence for the Bishop of St. Boniface, the congregation built the present and fourth residence on the site (the earlier structures had been destroyed by fire or flood).

The two-storey building is an excellent and extremely early example in the City of the Georgian architectural style, heavily influenced by the French-Canadian Quebec style. It is identified by its box-like massing, symmetrical layouts and simple roofs with dormers.

The building is T-shaped and set far back from Avenue Taché and Avenue De la Cathédrale, with open greenspace surrounding it. The front portion (the 1846 building) features an open wood porch stretching its entire width and wrapping around and running a short distance along the south façade. The centrally-placed entrance was originally set in an enclosure that was removed in the 1960s. The original gable roof with square cupola and gable dormers was replaced around 1900 by the present gambrel roof.

On the rear of the original residence, a large brick and stone addition was completed in 1899. It rises three storeys and continues the basic design of the original, with gambrel roof and gable dormers. The south façade includes a centrally-placed raised entrance with unfluted columns and hood.

The interior of the residence and its addition have undergone significant alterations and renovations over time, with a major upgrade in the 1960s.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

Site-

- The building set back from Avenue Taché separated from the street by open greenspace.

Exterior-

- Three-storey, T-shaped solid stone building with its main (west) facade facing a large open area and Avenue Taché, its north facade hidden by a neighbouring building, its south facade facing Avenue de la Cathédrale and its rear (east) brick wing facing south (to Avenue de la Cathédrale), north (to parking lot) and east (to another building);
- Symmetrical front (west) facade with its full width open wood porch wrapping around the southwest corner, centrally placed entrance rectilinear window openings, gambrel roof with gable dormer windows and brick chimneys at the north and south ends;
- The south facade with enclosed area at east end of porch, balustraded second storey balcony and arched third floor window opening; and
- The three-storey east wing with brick walls and stone accenting with gambrel roof with gable dormers on its side and rear slopes and a centrally-placed raised entrance with unfluted columns and hood on the south facade.

Interior-

- Original fireplaces; and
- Main entrance finishes.