



476 POWERS STREET

MORRIS DINER HOUSE

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – DECEMBER 2009



476 POWERS STREET MORRIS DINER HOUSE

Date of Construction: 1913

Building Permit: 522/1913

Architect: Lang, William (owner)

Contractor: Lang, William (owner)

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This single-family dwelling, along with its similarly designed and built neighbour to the north are considerably more ornamented structures than most of the other homes in the neighbourhood.

The front (east) façade features a raised foundation wall and an offset and recessed entrance located atop a short flight of stairs. The stucco cladding of the main building (completed in 1986)¹ is varied around window and door openings to mimic brick. An unusual arched window is located in the front-facing gable end and there is open space underneath the front part of the house. A tower with conical roof graces the south side of the building and is finished with ornamental shingling and metal cresting (as is the peak of the roof). The rear (west) and north roof slopes include dormer windows.



Front (east) and south façades, 2009

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. The stuccoing of the exterior has had a negative affect on its appearance, as has the replacement of the arched window on the top floor of the front elevation.

Nothing is known at present about William Lang, listed as the owner, architect and contractor of the building, who also designed and built the neighbouring building, #480 Powers Street, also in 1913.

The structure is an example of the Queen Anne style which borrowed heavily from English architecture of the 15th century, blending classical and medieval motifs into a picturesque form.² The desired asymmetry was achieved through a number of combinations of porches, bay windows, projecting wings, balconies and other devices. Roofs were usually irregular and complex, with dormers, gables and ornamental chimneys. Variations in materials and colours were also used to animate the façades. Given this freedom of design, however, accomplished designers were still able to create balance in the structures, offsetting busy surfaces by placing calmer elements nearby.³

The popularity of the style in Canada began in the 1880s and lasted until World War I. On the prairies, pre-1900 examples of the style were not numerous because large-scale development occurred after the turn of the century. Post-1900, it was quickly adopted for use in the growing residential districts, especially the more affluent neighbourhoods where its showy qualities were greatly admired.



Front (east) and north façades, 2009

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Morris Diner, according to City of Winnipeg records, was the original owner of this house. Diner only remained in the building for a few years, selling the property to Susan J. Rolph of Vancouver, B.C. Merchant George Black is the listed owner/resident in 1925 and J.A. Peterson, carpenter is the owner from 1929-1938, although he moved to Prince Albert, SA in 1931. Other owners included J.F. (decorator) and Annie F. Matheson (1939-1941) and Roman (welder) and Pamela J. Gereta (1969-1984).⁴



Rear (west) and south façades, 2009

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

Under the Historical Buildings By-law, this building meets a number of important criteria:

- its historical importance- an example of a modest single-family dwelling with a number of unique ornamental features built just prior to World War I in Winnipeg's North End;
- its associations- N/A;
- its design- an example of the Queen Anne style;
- its architect- W. Lang is the named architect and contractor;
- its location- contributes, along with its similarly designed neighbour, greatly to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.



Front (east) façade, 1998

ENDNOTES:

- 1 City of Winnipeg Assessment Record, Roll No. 433660-12-3.
- 2 Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB: Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1991), p. 17; and L. Maitland et al., A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1992), p. 102.
- 3 L. Maitland et al., *op. cit.*, p. 98.
- 4 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 14043366000, 1920-1990; and Henderson's Directory, 1920-1990.