

Archbishop's Residence Now a Winnipeg Heritage Building

The City of Winnipeg's Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development has added the Archbishop's Residence to its List of Historical Resources at its February 4th meeting.

The new listing will protect the façade of the three-storey building from any modifications that would alter its historical features. The West façade which faces the Red River, known for its wooden porch built in 1864, as well as the mansard roof with dormer windows built in 1899 were some of the exterior features noted by the Committee.

Interior features also to be preserved are the original 1864 fireplace and the main entrance finishes.



The Archbishop's Residence in the 19th century.

Albert LeGatt, the Archbishop of St. Boniface notes that “in its particular way, the City of Winnipeg is acknowledging the participation of the Church in Manitoba’s history, in Western Canada’s history”.

“That’s good news. Because the listing will no doubt be mentioned in travel brochures, tourism guides and on various web sites. We can no doubt expect an influx of visitors who’ll stroll through the St. Boniface Heritage Garden while they appreciate the beauty of the Residence. Visitors will read the many historical plaques and learn about Manitoba history and the many contributions of the Church. And on days when we organize an open house event, they’ll be able to come inside too.

“We’ll be able to meet people, welcome them and share what the Church is doing now, in the 21st century. For many, this will be a chance to reconnect with the Church. For others, it will be a first encounter. It’s a wonderful opportunity to share the Gospel.”



For Diocesan financial administrator Richard Fréchette, the heritage listing “emphasizes the importance of preserving our past”.

“The City wants to protect the many beautiful historical buildings in Winnipeg. The University of St. Boniface was also listed on February 4th, which is also encouraging.

“We’re very proud of the Bishop’s Residence. It’s one of our treasures. When we had to replace the mansard roof in 2013, we installed wooden shingles identical to those used in 1899. There was no question of doing otherwise. Maintaining the historical character of the building has always been a priority.”

If the new listing hasn’t changed the diocese’s approach to maintaining the building, Richard Fréchette welcomes the new listing, noting that various organizations, like the Winnipeg Foundation, give grants to help repair and restore historical buildings.

“Provided they’ve been listed as heritage buildings by the City of Winnipeg. The day may come when we may get some financial assistance for some future work on the Residence.”

In fact, work is underway to reinforce the south-east foundation of the newer section of the Bishop’s Residence, which nearly collapsed in late October, 2018, when the ground underneath subsided. Since November 5th, 2018, Subterranean Manitoba Ltd, a company specializing in foundation repair, has been installing new piles that will stabilize the original 1899 foundation.

Once that work is complete, experts in historical building restoration will repair the mortar and reinstall the original foundation stones.

To read a brief history of the Archbishop's Residence, [click here](#).