



NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

493 Ridge Road West

TAKE NOTICE that Grimsby Town Council, on February 23rd, 2026, resolved to issue a Notice of Intention to Designate PT LT 18 CON 3, North Grimsby, as in RO689622; GRIMSBY as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The Reason for the Notice of Intention to Designate is to recognize the physical, associative, and contextual value that **493 Ridge Road West** contributes towards the Town of Grimsby's inclusive heritage.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

493 Ridge Road West is a rare example of a multi-coloured stone-built Gothic Revival house with classical elements within the Town of Grimsby. The walls of the original stone structure are built from local Grimsby sandstone, quarried for Dr. James Alway from the northern edge of the Alway farm parcel that abutted the escarpment. After the material was quarried, it was used to construct the dwelling. The edges of the facades and windows feature stepped stone quoins. The roof features a wide overhang, covering a bullseye window in the structure's north-facing gable. The walls are made of ashlar-cut Grimsby sandstone, a significant local material associated with Grimsby's early development.

The subject structure displays a high degree of craftsmanship. The ashlar cut stone walls of the house, built of Grimsby sandstone, demonstrate a high degree of skill in both cutting and laying of the stone, a talent that is often beyond the skills of most masons. Ashlar style masonry is considered the highest quality of cut stone and is achieved by cutting the stone at a uniform angle, allowing for thin, even mortar joints.

The ashlar stone construction of the walls is further complemented with decorative stepped quoins used to accent the edge of each facade and around the window/door openings, providing both a high degree of structural stability and serving as a sign of prominence and wealth. The bullseye window is another strong indication of highly skilled craftsmanship.

493 Ridge Road West was built for Doctor James William Alway. Doctor Alway studied medicine at Victoria College, Toronto, and arrived in Grimsby by 1872, settling at the subject property on Ridge Road and immediately becoming Grimsby's only doctor on the escarpment, rendering invaluable local medical care, including surgery, to residents south of the Village of Grimsby.

The Alway House was a home for members of the Alway family for 4 generations, from 1872-1939. While members of the Alway family recurrently migrated to the United States, many returned, and management of the property was overseen by at least 4 members of the family from 3 generations.

The subject property is also associated with a long history of farming, including that of apples, cherries, and grapes. 493 Ridge Road West was part of the farmland operated by the Randall family on Concession 3 Lot 18 and was then farmed by the Alway family from 1872-1917. It was

used again for fruit growing under the ownership of Malcolm & Helene Nelles from 1944-1952, and then by Harold Jeffries from 1952-1968.

The subject property is closely associated with Malcolm Sumner Nelles, a Councilman & Reeve for North Grimsby township and a fruit farmer. During Malcolm's ownership, the subject property was used as a reception center for Dutch immigrants and as a home for the Rintjema family, the first Dutch family to arrive in Grimsby through the Canada-Netherlands Settlement Scheme.

493 Ridge Road West is also associated with industrialist and agricultural entrepreneur Harold Jeffries, who incorporated the subject property and its associated farmland into his Grimsby Ridge Farms operations in 1952. Jeffries, who first found success in manufacturing in Toronto, earned an Order of the British Empire for his wartime manufacturing contributions before establishing Grimsby Ridge Farms in 1946. Grimsby Ridge Farms grew in conjuncture with Jeffries' other fruit growing ventures as well as the settlement of Dutch migrants along the escarpment, which Jeffries helped to sponsor. He expanded his involvement in Grimsby and Niagara fruit agriculture by helping to establish organizations such as Niagara Fruit Orchards Ltd., the Ontario Grape Growers Cooperative, Canadian Concord Ltd., and Canadian Vineyards Ltd.

493 Ridge Road West also acted as a reception center for Dutch migrants arriving in Grimsby between 1948 and 1952. Many of those who arrived signed work contracts with Grimsby farmers such as Malcolm Nelles & Harold Jeffries. Facilitated by the Canada-Netherlands Settlement Scheme and private organizations such as the Christian Reformed Church, at least 22 Dutch migrant families arrived in Grimsby between 1948-1963, turning the subject property & Ridge Road West into an early focal point of Grimsby's Dutch community. They were also the reason Queen Juliana of the Netherlands visited the subject property in 1952.

The subject structure served as 1 of 9 polling stations in Grimsby for the 1942 national plebiscite on conscription during World War 2.

The Alway family were also the namesake of the Alway School, SS No.4, which predated their arrival but carried their name until its closure, located less than 100 yards from the subject property. As the influx of Dutch migrant families overpopulated the old school building, Alway House was also used as a classroom during the 1954-55 academic year.

493 Ridge Road West has the potential to yield information about Doctor James Alway and the escarpment's first medical office. It also has potential to yield information for fruit farmer and North Grimsby Reeve Malcolm Nelles and for the manufacturer and agricultural entrepreneur Harold Jeffries, as well as for the history of Grimsby's Dutch community. The subject structure also provides a greater understanding of the local schoolhouses and their capacity to accommodate the growing community.

493 Ridge Road West is a character-defining element of Ridge Road's agricultural and residential landscapes. Alway House remained associated with the Alway family name well after the departure of the Alway family and was treated as a local landmark. Its distinctive appearance and short setbacks from Ridge Road West and Alway Road make it a visually prominent example of 19th-century agricultural architecture.

The property serves as a strong example of the types of agricultural parcels that populated Ridge Road West. This is an early example of an agricultural parcel within the immediate area along Ridge Road, with the farmhouse serving as a tangible link the parcels long standing use for farming. The parcel was farmed for several decades.

The house is physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings.

The Gothic Revival structure served as a farmhouse for the large agricultural parcel. Its scale, mass, form, setback and orientation to Alway & Ridge roads serve as tangible links to the site's long use as a farm and the structure's use as an original farmhouse. Alway Road was named after the Alway family, which continues to ran along the old Alway farmland. Fruit farming was instrumental in establishing Grimsby as a prosperous township, both the Always, Malcolm Nelles and Harold Jefferies' Grimsby Ridge farms used the subject property as a site for fruit farming during the 19th and 20th centuries and contributed directly to the prosperity of Grimsby.

493 Ridge Road West is also an early and central location for Dutch migration to Grimsby after World War 2. Serving as a reception center for Dutch migrants from 1948-1952, Alway House is physically a part of an important area of Dutch settlement along this stretch of Ridge Road West. The Always house served as tenant housing for Dutch immigrants that arrived in Grimsby through the settlement scheme.

Harold Jeffries' Grimsby Ridge Farms' operation was a well-known large agricultural enterprise with little recorded history, making 493 Ridge Road West an important tangible like to this large operation along Grimsby's escarpment.

The subject structure was constructed from local Grimsby sandstone, quarried for Dr. James Alway from the northern edge of the Alway farm parcel that abutted the escarpment. This sandstone material serves as a visual indication that the building forms part of Grimsby's early development.

Historically the building was known as the Alway stone house and served as an important center for the local community as the escarpment doctors office, local school space and as reception center for the Dutch immigrants. The buildings setback from Ridge Road, the stone material and its massing provided easy visual accessibility for patients travelling to visit Dr. James Alway.

HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES TO BE DESIGNATED

The Heritage Attributes to be designated at 493 Ridge Road West include:

- Gothic Revival Style Details
- Ashlar Cut stone and thin lime mortar
- Original stone sills and stone quoins
- Original hipped roof with dentil moulding, wide eaves and banding
- Original north-facing gable
- Original bullseye window, surrounding voussoirs and keystone under north-facing gable
- Original door & window openings
- Original foundation

- Portico over main entrance
- Setback from Ridge Road West & Always Road
- Views to and from the house along Ridge Road West

OBJECTIONS

Any objection to this designation must be filed no later than 30 days after the date of publication of the notice of intention in a newspaper. Objections should be directed to Victoria Steele, Town Clerk, Town Clerk, 160 Livingston Avenue, Grimsby ON, L3M 0J53.

MORE INFORMATION

Any inquiries may be directed to Bianca Verrecchia, Heritage Planner at 905-945-9634 ext. 2122 or by email bverrecchia@grimsby.ca

Last date to file Notice of Objection: July 4th, 2026