

Delegation Request

This request and any written submissions or background information for consideration by either Council or Committees of Council is being submitted to Legislative Services.

Council or Committee (Choose One) *

Heritage Advisory Committee

Council or Committee Meeting Date * ?

2024-4-8



Subject *

Proposal for heritage enhancements to 9 Wellington St. E - Knowles Butcher Shop

Full Name of Spokesperson and Name of Group or Person(s) being Represented (if applicable) *

Christopher Watts, The Aurora Heritage authority

Brief Summary of Issue or Purpose of Delegation *

Provide context missing from the April 25th, 2022 Heritage Property Evaluation Sheet, and present proposal to increase rating and advance the property's status to designation. Accompanying powerpoint presentation is prepared.

Have you been in contact with a Town staff or Council member regarding your matter of interest? *



Yes



No

I acknowledge that the Procedure By-law permits five (5) minutes for Delegations. *



Agree

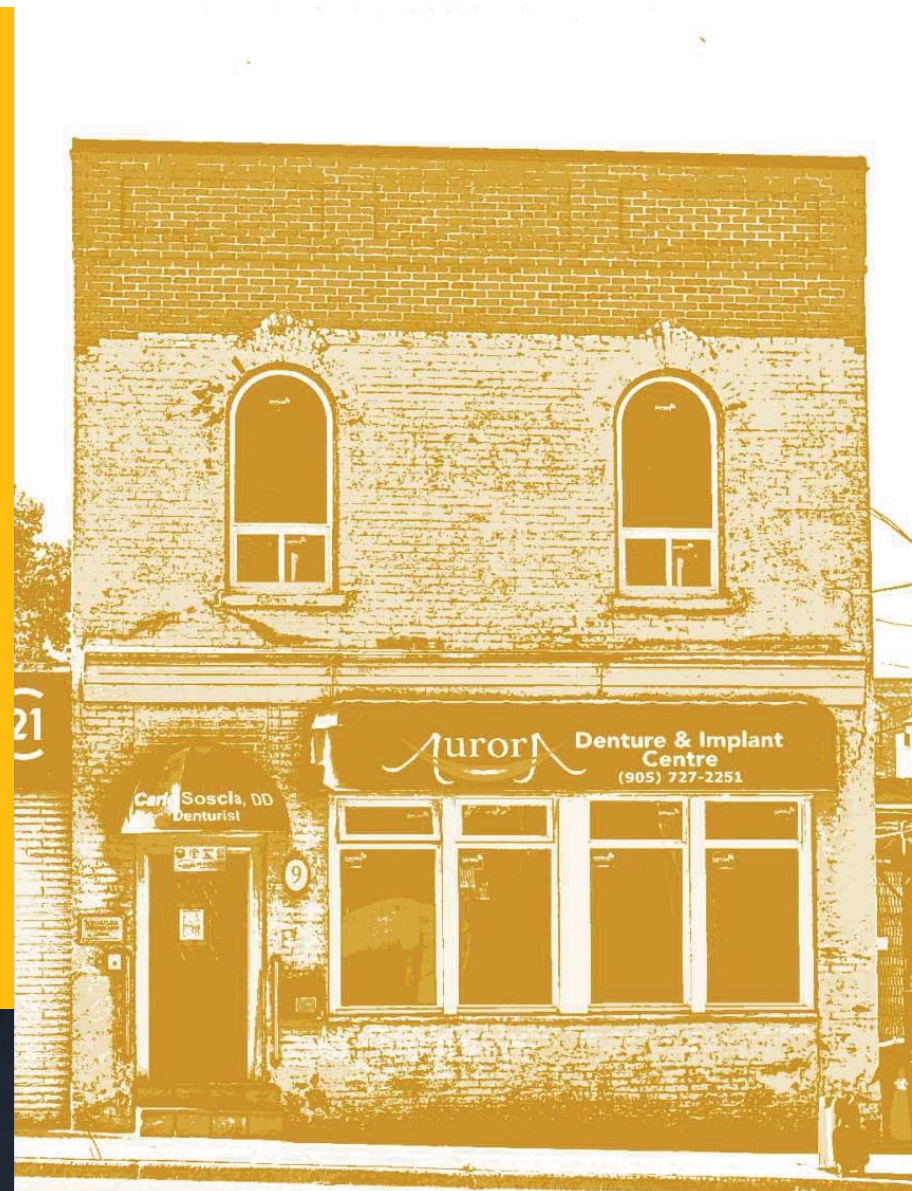
a **SIGN** of the times

ENHANCING HERITAGE CHARACTERISTICS
at 9 WELLINGTON ST. E

A proposal to the Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee by



Photograph by **Peter Cameron**

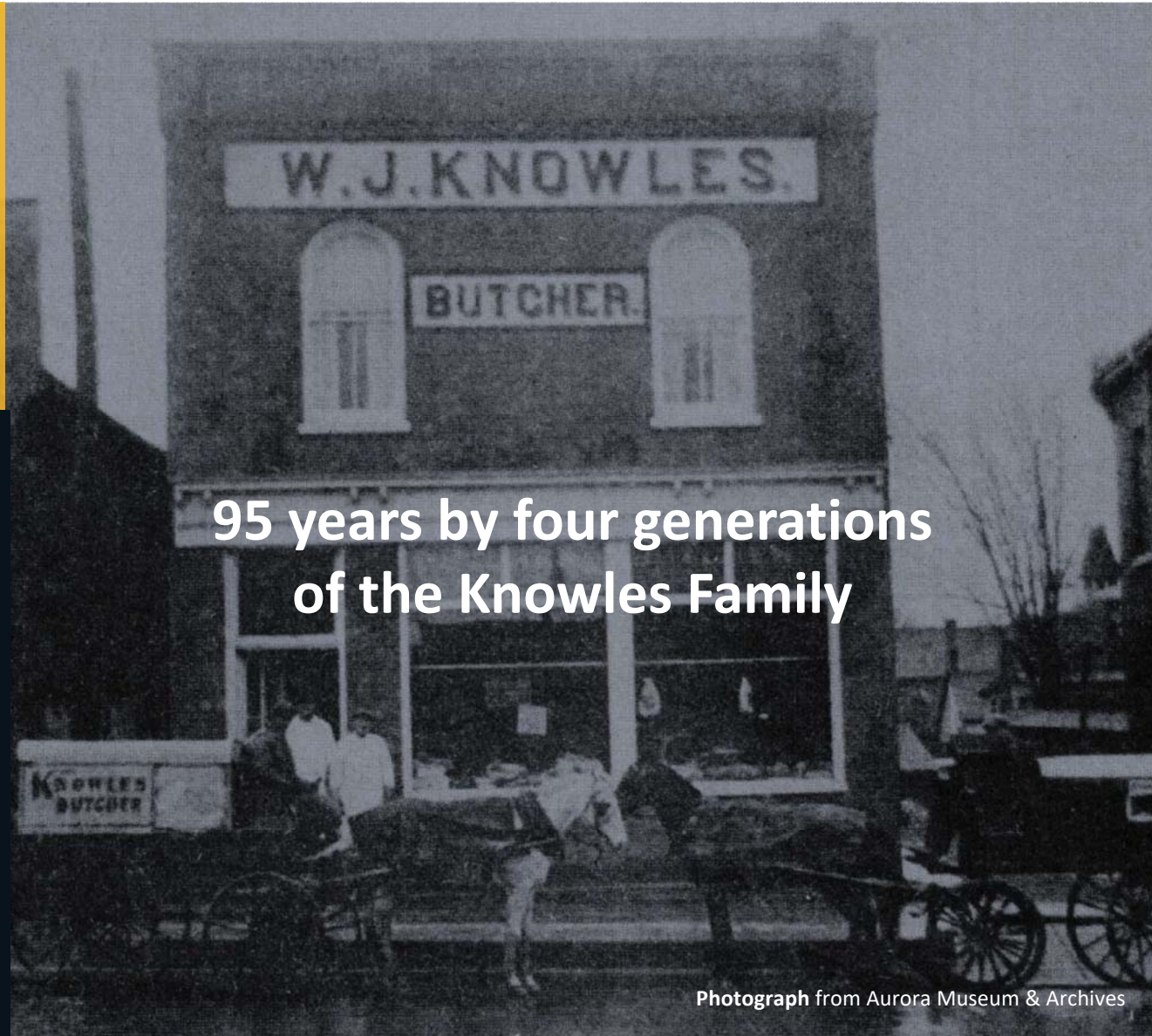


For **117 continuous years**
9 Wellington St. East
operated as an area butcher

Knowles

BUTCHER SHOP

**95 years by four generations
of the Knowles Family**

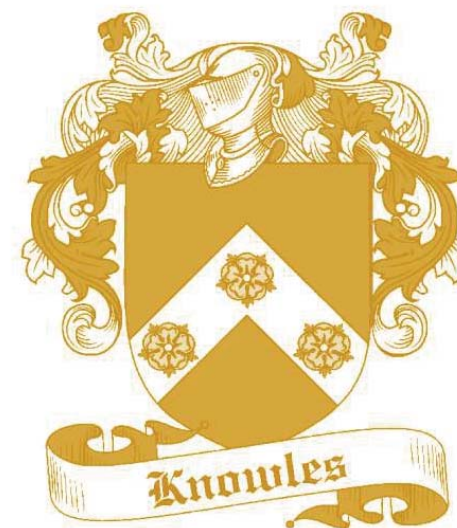


Photograph from Aurora Museum & Archives



Photograph by **Knowles Family**

George & Sarah Knowles, & Family



the first cut



Photograph supplied by **Bob McRoberts**

William John Knowles moved his butcher shop from a location on Yonge st. to 9 **Wellington St. E** in **1885**



5. **William John KNOWLES** was born on 23 Feb 1860 in Aurora, York, Ontario. He died on 29 Mar 1944 in Aurora. He was a founder of Butcher Shop, Aurora, 1885. He was buried in Aurora. Mayor of Aurora, Reeve, Member York Pioneers, 1918
Founder Knowles Butcher Shop, 9 Wellington St., Aurora
1901 Census shows Emma Kendall (b 30 Aug 1873) Domestic Servant

a family build

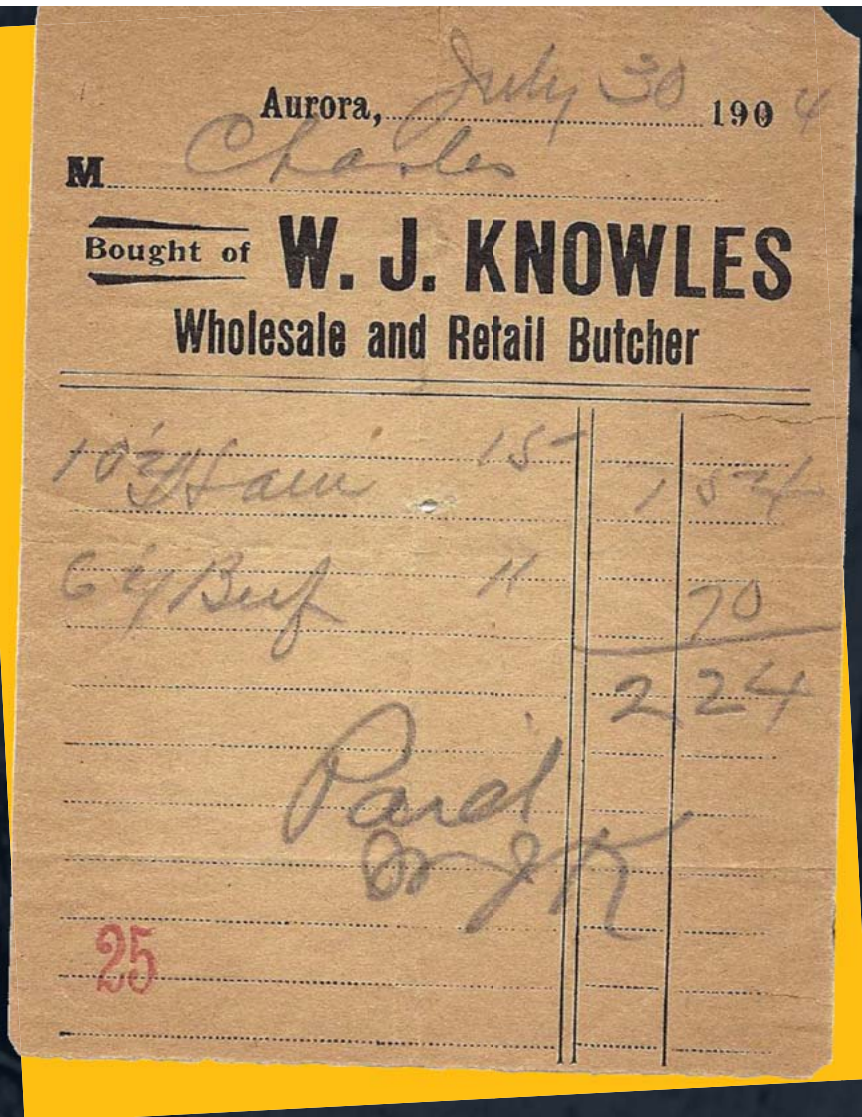
Construction of the Butcher Shop involved his father
George Knowles who ran a 4.5 acre brickyard
Located at 72 Kennedy Street West (*L1, Plan 38*)



8. James(Jim) Albert KNOWLES was born on 27 Sep 1867 in Aurora, York, Ontario.¹⁰ He died on 22 Apr 1949 in Aurora, York, Ontario. He was a Builder. He was buried in Aurora. Uncle "Jim" Builder, Clockmaker, Woodworker
?10 Catherine Street, Aurora?
obit. Aurora Banner april, 1949

He was married to Annie MCKINNON on 27 Nov 1888 in Aurora.

As well as his Brother **James Albert Knowles** who became an established mason/builder of many houses of the period in Aurora



Original receipt from Aurora Museum & Archives

getting down to business

There were reportedly **7 butchers** operating in the area.

What gave Knowles Butcher Shop a competitive advantage was being **the first in town to acquire a freezer** in the 1920s, as well as **the first to equip their delivery carts with rubber wheels.**

Knowles Butcher Shop made deliveries of meat and dairy through **Holland Landing, Schomberg, Pottageville, Lake Wilcox** and down into **Toronto.**

customer service

community service

Town of Aurora

Municipal Councils 1863-2026

Term	Mayor / Reeve / Deputy Reeve	Councillors
1896	Herbert W. Fleury, Mayor George S. Baldwin, Reeve D. E. Rogers, Deputy Reeve	J. Anderson R. M. Coulter W. A. Hutt W. J. Knowles Robert Newbury
1897	Herbert W. Fleury, Mayor George S. Baldwin, Reeve D. E. Rogers, Deputy Reeve	R. M. Coulter William Hastings W. A. Hutt W. J. Knowles Robert Newbury
1898	Herbert W. Fleury, Mayor Francis T. Daville, Reeve Albert E. Taylor, Deputy Reeve	P. T. Bond Joseph J. Davis William Hastings R. M. Hillary W. A. Hutt
1899	Herbert W. Fleury, Mayor	Francis T. Daville Joseph J. Davis W. J. Knowles
1900	Francis T. Daville, Mayor	J. Anderson W. J. Knowles T. H. Lennox
1901	Francis T. Daville, Mayor	Joseph J. Davis W. A. Hutt W. J. Knowles

*Died November 1901.
**Resigned May 1901 to represent Town in suit brought by Markham.
These Councillors were replaced by W. Brooksbank and G. A. Pollock in November 1901.

1902 Francis T. Daville, Mayor

Town of Aurora

Municipal Councils 1863-2026

Term	Mayor / Reeve / Deputy Reeve	Councillors
1904	Francis T. Daville, Mayor	W. J. Bassett William Brooksbank Thomas T. Caster
1905	Francis T. Daville, Mayor	W. J. Bassett William J. Knowles D. E. Rogers
1906	Francis T. Daville, Mayor*	W. J. Bassett J. J. M. Butler Thomas T. Caster
*Resigned July 16, 1906; replaced by W. J. Knowles; R. B. Dennis (elected) replaced Knowles as Councillor.		
1907	Herbert W. Fleury, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. J. Baldwin John Bond G. T. Browning
1908	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. J. Bassett John Bond G. T. Browning
1909	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. J. Bassett John Bond G. T. Browning
1910	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. J. Bassett Alex W. Brodie Archie Murray
1911	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. J. Bassett John Bond Archie Murray
1912	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. J. Bassett Fred Browning A. A. Conover
1913	William J. Baldwin, Mayor	W. T. Andrews

Town of Aurora

Municipal Councils 1863-2026

Term	Mayor / Reeve / Deputy Reeve	Councillors
1915	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. T. Andrews W. J. Bassett James Crockett
1916	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. T. Andrews John Ausman W. J. Bassett
1917	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. J. Bassett Fred Browning E. G. Reeves
1918	William J. Baldwin, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. J. Bassett Fred Browning E. G. Reeves
1919	William J. Bassett, Mayor William J. Knowles, Reeve	W. T. Andrews Fred Browning James Hill
1920	William J. Bassett, Mayor Thomas Scrivener, Reeve	Fred Browning Fred C. Davis

Town of Aurora

Municipal Councils 1863-2026

Term	Mayor / Reeve / Deputy Reeve	Councillors
1890	Horace D. Lundy, Mayor Herbert W. Fleury, Reeve*	G. S. Baldwin W. C. Cliff W. J. Knowles W. G. Lloyd H. H. Read
*Resigned January 1890; replaced by C. C. Robinson, who resigned June 1890 and was replaced by William Ough.		
1891	Horace D. Lundy, Mayor William Ough, Reeve J. W. Lloyd, Deputy Reeve	G. S. Baldwin W. C. Cliff J. B. Clubine J. S. Flumerfelt W. J. Knowles
1892	Herbert W. Fleury, Mayor Andrew Yule, Reeve J. H. Ross, Deputy Reeve	J. Anderson G. S. Baldwin Thomas Browning R. M. Coulter H. Danbrook
1893	Herbert W. Fleury, Mayor Andrew Yule, Reeve J. H. Ross, Deputy Reeve	J. Anderson G. S. Baldwin R. M. Coulter H. Danbrook David Johnston
1894	Herbert W. Fleury, Mayor Andrew Yule, Reeve J. H. Ross, Deputy Reeve	J. Anderson G. S. Baldwin R. M. Coulter H. Danbrook David Johnston

a job well done

William John Knowles served the public
as a butcher for over 60 years.

Still working on his 84th birthday
Knowles was celebrated as Aurora's
oldest business man.

W. J. Knowles Spends 84th Birthday At Work

Aurora's oldest business man, W. J. Knowles, celebrated his 84th birthday on Wednesday. A large number of friends and relatives called at his residence to extend greetings. Mr. Knowles was on the job as usual on Wednesday morning.

Born at Thornhill, Mr. Knowles has resided in Aurora for 83 years and for 83 years has been in the meat business. He now assists his son, Reg.

A veteran in municipal politics, Mr. Knowles was warden of York county during 1916 and served the municipality as councillor, reeve, and briefly as mayor in 1908. In all he spent well over a quarter of a century giving faithful service to the town.

He is a member of Aurora United church and a life member of the Masonic order. He has grandchildren in all three branches of the armed forces and in the American army as well. His four children are Reg., Aurora, Bert, Toronto, Mrs. Joseph Baines (Ada), Roche's Point, and Charles, Providence, R.I.

News clipping from Aurora Banner

KNOW YOUR MERCHANTS

J. R. Knowles

"Open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Wellington Street Meat Market. W. J. Knowles, proprietor. I have now got comfortably located in my new premises on Wellington St., first door east of Whimster's store, where I will keep constantly on hand all kinds of fresh and salted meats. Orders left at the shop will be delivered to all parts of the town. W. J. Knowles."

Sixty-six years ago come July 24, the foregoing announcement appeared in the Aurora Borealis, Aurora's most lively weekly newspaper of that period. It concerned the removal from Yonge St. on the site where the municipal buildings now stand, of the business which has become an institution in Aurora.

We found the present owner of the business, J. R. Knowles, more ready to talk about his late father than about his own long association with his native town. The late W. J. Knowles, who died on March 29, 1944, in his 83rd year, was at that time Aurora's oldest businessman. He had played a long and effective part in Aurora's civic affairs, having established an unbroken record of over 30 years as councillor, reeve, mayor and warden.

The late W. J. Knowles was the last representative from Aurora serving as warden of York county. This was in the year 1916. It was his proud record that for over 30 years he had never suffered defeat in any municipal contest. In his business life, he had served the public for over 64 years.

An Aurora Institution
The Knowles' association with Aurora reaches back to grandfather Knowles, who came here from Thornhill to operate a brick manufacturing business. Of English origin, grandfather Knowles emigrated from Yorkshire to Thornhill about a century ago, adding another to the English families who pioneered that district. Incidentally, what is now the town of Aurora was founded rather more than 100 years ago by English settlers.

J. R. Knowles, who since the year 1940 has owned the present business, was born on the premises on Wellington St. 65 years ago; a business begun by his father in the year 1881. Through all those years the Wellington St. store has served the citizens of Aurora; and the present proprietor is proud of the fact that large numbers of his customers are counted among his personal friends.

The Knowles store is one of Aurora's business institutions in which four generations of the Knowles family have taken their part. At this present time three

generations are in the business. J. R. Knowles, his two sons, Douglas and W. J. (Bill), and grandson, Bobby, son of Douglas.

A Business Life

Although Mr. Knowles' father and his brother, Bert, were actively associated with Aurora's municipal affairs, brother Bert was a member of council and also reeve of Aurora—"J. R." has not himself taken any active part in town business, although he is, naturally enough, deeply interested in it.

Like his father before him, who was a life member of Rising Sun Lodge, A.F. and A.M., Mr. Knowles is a Freemason, and has been a member of the ancient fraternity for the long period of 33 years. The late W. J. Knowles received a 50 years' medal, the first to be awarded by the Aurora Lodge. He told the writer that the claims of the business has denied him the time for much recreation, but when opportunities allow he is very fond of fishing.

Above all, however, he is fond of motoring in company with his wife. This is not to be wondered at, since they have spent 44 years of a happy life together. A charming woman, Mrs. Knowles was the former Jessie Proctor, St. Raphael's, Glen-garry, Ontario, and she is proud of her English ancestry.

We are glad to have had the opportunity of including the Knowles family as the second in our long panel of Aurora merchants, serving our citizens through the years. Besides Douglas and Bill, another son, Allen, is resident in the United States.

AURORA NEWS offers its sincere good wishes to the Knowles family.

NEVER BEFORE
But We Will
May 19th

Mercury - Lincoln Dealers

Stout Motors Ltd.

AURORA PHONE 154

next generations

William John Knowles passed the business
to his son **John Reginald Knowles**

John Reginald Knowles passed the business to his son
George Douglas Knowles in 1946.



News clippings from Aurora Banner



George went by his middle name Douglas and served as a Flight Sgt. With the RCAF during WWII.
After 30 years **George Douglas Knowles** retired in 1976

a changing face

Donald & Ruth Caldwell



Dave Taylor & Bob Wilson

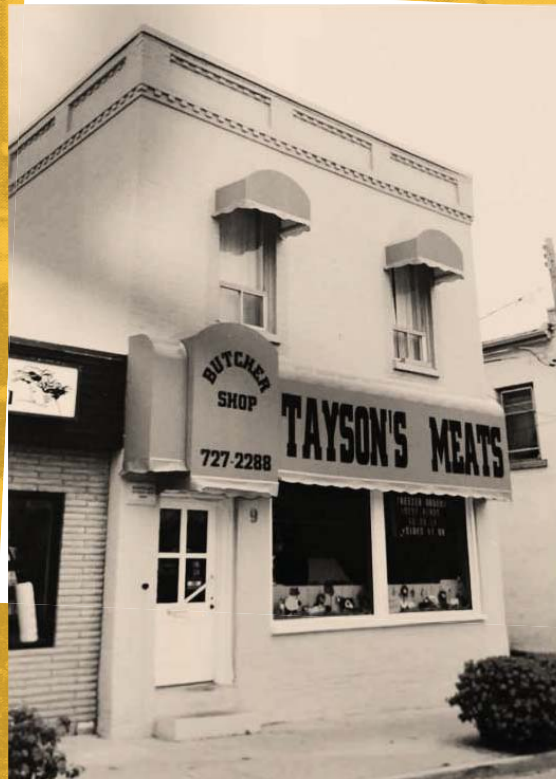


Photo supplied by Anna Lozyk Romeo

Shugart & Associates





fire

June 25th 2021

'Another sad day for heritage': Mayor Tom Mrakas hopes Aurora's Knowles Butcher Shop can be repaired after fire

Knowles Butcher Shop building has stood in downtown Aurora since 1885

Photograph by [Anna Lozyk Romeo](#)

repaired

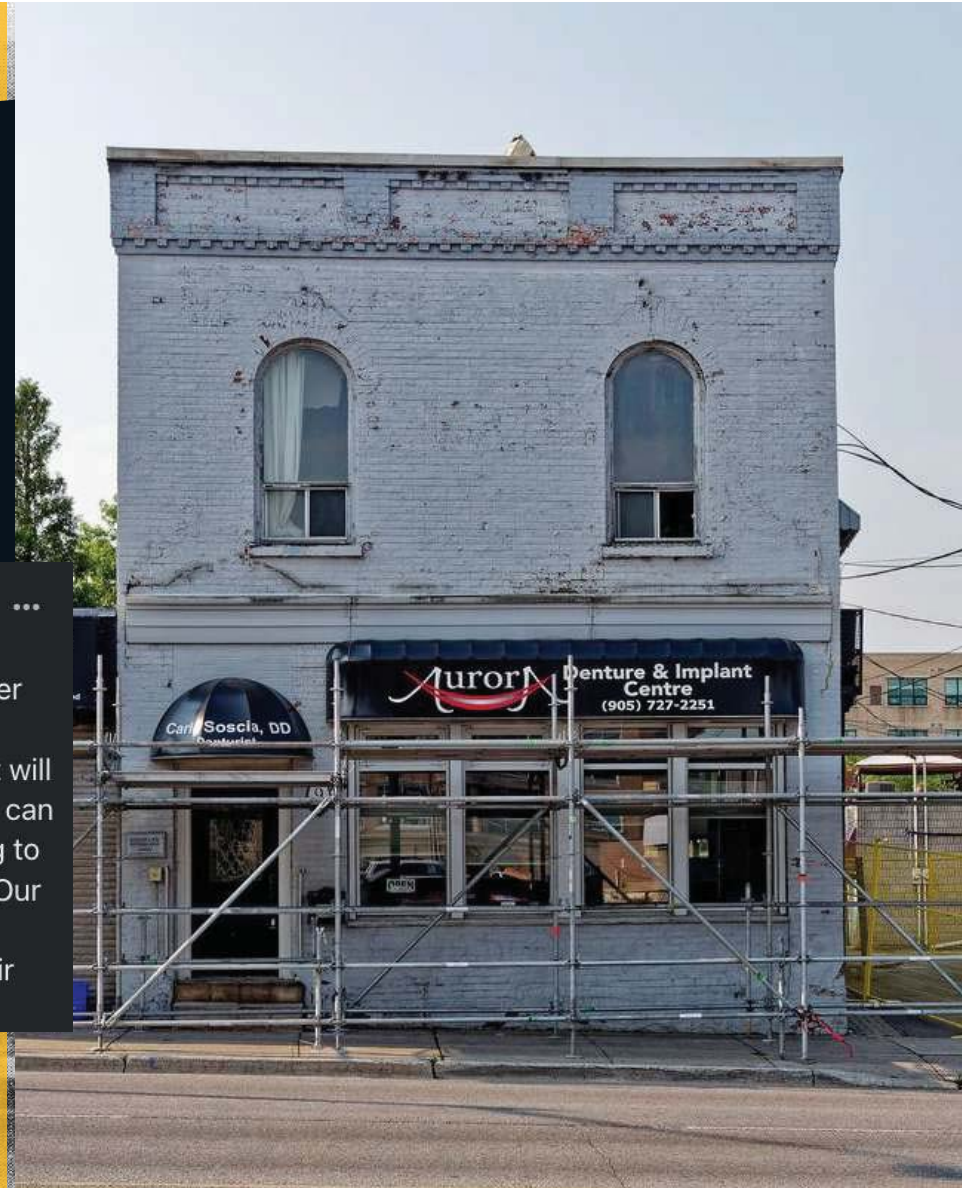


Mayor Tom Mrakas ✓

June 25, 2021 · 🌐

Another sad day for heritage in our downtown core as the Knowles Butcher Shop building has most likely been irreparably damaged due to fire. This building has stood in downtown Aurora since 1885 and I am hoping that it will be able to be repaired. This will be a significant loss to our downtown, if it can not be repaired... I do want to thank [Central York Fire Services](#) for working to put the fire out quickly & ensuring that residents in the area remain safe. Our firefighters continue to work hard to make sure that the entire fire is extinguished. I ask that you please avoid the area to allow CYFS to do their job.

Photograph by **Peter Cameron**



evaluation

Condition: **Poor**

Historical/Associative Value: **Moderate**

Significant Organization: **No**

Contributes to the Understanding
of the Community/Culture: **No**

Reflects Work/Ideas of a person
significant to the Community: **No**

Contextual Value: **Moderate**

Maintains the Character of the area: **No**

Is Important in its Physical Link to
its Surroundings: **No**

Is Important in its Historical Link to
its Surroundings: **No**

AURORA HERITAGE REGISTER REVIEW PROPERTY EVALUATION SHEET - DRAFT



General Information

Address: 9 Wellington Street East
Property Number (PIN):
Current Owner:
Legal Description: Lot 145 Plan 246

Heritage Status: Listed
Designation By-law:
Wood Plaque: Yes

Map



Property Description

Heritage Attributes: Commercial Building
Heritage Attributes Notes: Brick Victorian building with parapet wall. Dentil brick mouldings along roofline that wraps along the east and west elevation. Cornicing dividing lower storefront from upper storey. Semi-circular arched voussiors are located on the upper window openings.

Date Identified/Listed: 1986
Date/Era Constructed: c.1885
Architectural Style/Influence: Late Victorian
Mature Tree(s): No
Risk: Yes
Integrity: Fair
Risk Notes: Within the Aurora Promenade Secondary Plan Area

Condition: Poor
Condition Notes: The integrity remains, however, the building appears to have been ill-maintained over the years causing spalling bricks and cracks in mortar which would require repair. Brick has been painted which is deteriorating in areas. Windows and doors have been replaced (i.e. original shop-front windows and door)

Ontario Regulation 9/06 Assessment

Design/Physical Value: Moderate
Rare: No
Unique: No
High Degree of Craftsmanship/Artistic Merit: No
High Degree of Technical/Scientific Achievement: No
Design/Physical Value Description: Commercial Victorian building with front facade parapet wall and dentil brick mouldings along roofline. Semi-circular arched voussiors remain on upper window openings. Cornicing dividing store front and upper level. Note: building roof severely damaged by fire in June 2021 (parapet)
Historical/Associative Value: Moderate
Significant Organization/Institution: No
Significant Event: No
Significant Activity: No
Significant Person: Yes
Contributes to the Understanding of the Community/Culture: No
Reflects Work/Ideas of a Person Significant to the Community: No
Significant Theme: Yes
Significant Theme Description: Associated with theme of commercial development in the downtown Commercial core of Aurora and buildings constructed in the mid. to late 19th century.

Photo Documentation



Historical/Associative Value Description: The building had been used as butcher shop for a century. The Knowles Family in particular owned the building for over 90 years. Butcher shop owners include: Knowles, Perkins, Caldwell and Tayson. Building constructed by W. J. Knowles for his business W. J. Knowles & Son Fresh and Salt Meats which was established in 1881. W. J. Knowles served as a Councillor for the Town from 1890-1897, 1899-1903, 1905-1906 and Reeve between 1907-1919 and mayor.

Contextual Value: Moderate
Neighbourhood Group: Downtown Aurora (Yonge Street)
Defines the Character of the Area: No
Is a Landmark: No
Maintains the Character of the Area: No
Supports the Character of the Area: Yes
Is Important in its Physical Link to its Surroundings: No
Is Important in its Functional Link to its Surroundings: No
Is Important in its Visual Link to its Surroundings: No
Is Important in its Historical Link to its Surroundings: No
Contextual Value Description:

Recommendation

*Moderate Value - Remain on the Register,
Meets the Criteria*

Date: April 25, 2022



Painting by **Jianming Chen**

Photograph by **David Heard**



Aurora, Ontario / Heritage & Tourism · [Join](#)

Dave Heard · September 20, 2023 · 🌐

It was a visually rewarding day to watch artist Jianming Chen capture a piece of our town.

A neighbour from Newmarket who has created quite a following for his work.

The white building on the right is the former Knowles Butcher Shop.

I am so glad I stopped to watch and say hello.

It's amazing the gifts you can receive from just sharing a pleasant greeting.

Thank you for allowing me to share the before and after Mr Chen.

respected



Photograph by Anna Lozyk Romeo

ghost sign

the upper storey modern glazing with a sliding opening had already, in an earlier modernization, replaced the old sash windows. Perhaps above and between these windows, under the several layers of paint on the brickwork, are remnants of the old painted signs, “W.J. Knowles” and “Butcher.”



Copyright Anna Lozyk Romeo



proposed enhancement

The town approach the current owner for consent to commit to a paint refresh on the second story returning the “W.J. Knowles” and “Butcher” signs to the 139 year old building without issue of interference with the current business signage on the main floor.

local experts

Reaching out to professionals that work to restore high-impact ghost signs have provided a sub \$10K ballpark costing for this effort

MURALFORM

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128 STERLING RD – SCYTHES & COMPANY LIMITED SIGN RESTORATION – 2015

Warehouse space for loft and office use

[128 Sterling Rd, Toronto ON M6P 0A1](#)

We were contacted by a construction company to bid on the restoration of some old signs/ghost signs that were painted about 30 -50 years ago and maybe even longer. The landlord was renovating and updating the space for a new life of rentals for warehouse and office space. It was the wish of the landlord to pay respect to the history of the building. Ghost signs have a unique history to buildings their preservation is a benefit to the whole community.

Schedule:	SP3
Reserve Fund Category:	Special Purposes
Reserve Fund Name:	Heritage

The Heritage Reserve Fund (the "Fund") is hereby established to receive and hold proceeds of agreements or donations in connection with the demolition or preservation of heritage structures, facilities or sites.

Balances in the Fund shall be used to help the Heritage Advisory Committee achieve their duties and functions as outlined in the Committee's Terms of Reference, as approved by Council from time to time, and to help facilitate any special programs, projects, or initiatives of the Committee which have been given Council approval.

Balances in the Fund will be planned for specific projects recommended to or by Council during the annual budget process, or other times throughout the year, having consulted with the Heritage Advisory Committee.

Due to its nature, there is no target balance for this Fund.

In the event of the dissolution of the Committee by Council, or any time following such, acting in the best interests of the Town, Council may direct that some or all balances in the Fund be transferred to other reserve funds, or used for other purposes.

The Fund is established by transfer of the current balance in the Town's Heritage Reserve Fund account.

funding source

The Heritage Reserve Fund shall be used to
**facilitate special programs, projects,
or initiatives of the Committee.**


Balances in the Fund will be planned
for **specific projects recommended to
Council having consulted with
the Heritage Advisory Committee.**

the writing on the wall



do nothing

vs.



Pay much needed respect to Aurora's unique built heritage for the benefit of the entire community

Work to protect and designate a vulnerable business landmark in Aurora's downtown core

Contribute to downtown revitalization efforts including a more welcoming streetscape