

Lachine, Quebec

## **Lachine Lighthouses, front and rear**

### **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The two lighthouses or range lights, front and rear, are located at the western entrance of the Lachine Canal. They were built in 1900 for the Department of Railways and Canals. They are now owned and managed by the Canadian Coast Guard. See FHBRO Report 89-172.

### **Reasons For Designation**

The lighthouses have been designated Recognized because they illustrate an important period of local history and contribute to the maritime character of St. Louis Park. Moreover, they are rare examples of circular metal towers outside Newfoundland.

The presence of the lighthouses recalls the early part of the century, which was characterized by the establishment of major industries in Lachine, attracted by the proximity of maritime and rail transportation corridors. Although the lighthouses no longer serve the main channel, they continue to be used as landmarks by pleasure boaters and Canadian Coast Guard vessels.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage value of the lighthouses derives from their proportions, method of construction and choice of materials.

The towers were built using the metal-working techniques developed in the early part of the century for shipbuilding and boiler-making. The techniques consist in assembling slightly curved steel plates and fastening them with rivets to form a truncated cone. Steel was used because it was resistant and easy to maintain, provided it was properly protected against corrosion. The two lighthouses are bolted to concrete foundations.

The rear tower is the higher and more tapered of the two. Its main body is composed of four cylindrical sections and the gallery is supported by very simple corbels. The appearance of the tower was modified in 1939, when a small equipment platform was erected above the cupola. In addition, the cupola, which was originally copper, is now painted white. Strap hinges were later installed on the lower door. Both the lower door and the door which opened onto the gallery were sliding doors. To enhance the lighthouse, consideration should be given to returning to the original materials and design.

.../2

Lachine, Quebec

### **Lachine Lighthouses, front and rear**

The front tower is shorter and its main body consists of only two sections. It does not appear to have been substantially altered and still has its ingenious sliding-door system. However, the two lateral openings are exposed to the wind and windows similar to the former model are urgently needed.

All metal parts, both interior and exterior, should be treated with an anti-corrosive agent and repainted. Any sign of corrosion should be detected and the situation remedied as quickly as possible. It is important to conserve the existing original parts as they are.

The rear lighthouse is located in a park that is part of the tourist circuit of the City of Lachine, which suggests there is constant maintenance. Being located at the end of a wharf, the front tower has been damaged by ice and its base is severely corroded, particularly where water accumulates between the concrete based and the bolted part. The damaged parts should be repaired or replaced with identical parts. Underground electric cables should be installed to improve the appearance of the lighthouses.

Translation