



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

West Queen West Heritage Conservation District Study Area

Date:	February 7, 2007
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto East York Community Council
From:	Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Davenport, Ward 18
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council identify four blocks of Queen Street West, from Dovercourt Road to the railway underpass west of Dufferin Street, as a Heritage Conservation District Study Area for potential designation under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

To qualify for designation as a Heritage Conservation District an area must display, among other things, a significant concentration of heritage resources. West Queen West is an area with a heritage character that includes both architectural and historical resources. Staff have reviewed the proposed area on a preliminary basis and have determined that it would qualify for study as a Heritage Conservation District.

The local community has initiated this process and is prepared to take it forward, under the supervision of Planning staff. Funds are available to the local residents group to cover the costs of engaging a professional heritage consultant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. City Council identify the area shown in Attachment No. 1 of this report as the West Queen West Heritage Conservation District Study Area; and
2. City Council authorize \$15,000, currently on deposit in deferred revenue account 220096, be provided to the local community group Active 18 to be used for the

- purpose of engaging a professional heritage consultant to assist with the Heritage Conservation District study; and
3. the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Financial Impact

There is no immediate financial impact arising from this report. It must be noted that when the study is completed approximately 40 properties will be added to the Inventory. It is also noted that adding properties to the Inventory by means of Heritage Conservation District (HCD) designations dramatically increases the workload of Heritage Preservation Services, requiring staff to review all building permits, Committee of Adjustment, rezoning and Official Plan amendment applications within legislated timeframes. The continued increase in Heritage Conservation Districts will not be sustainable without additional staff resources.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

West Queen West, and especially the part of it south of Queen Street, is the subject of significant redevelopment pressure. Partly in response to this, planning staff in Heritage Preservation Services was contacted by members of Active 18, a local community group. Active 18 wished to discuss how an HCD could help maintain and enhance the heritage character of the mixed use Main Street development along Queen Street West in Ward 18.

Staff determined that the proposed area does have sufficient heritage resources to justify a study. Staff made two presentations providing information about HCDs to the group. Active 18 indicated that they wished to proceed with the required study and would assume responsibility for it.

COMMENTS

In the initial survey of the Town of York in 1793, Queen Street, or Lot Street as it was then known, was the base line from which a series of one-hundred acre parcels of land – ‘park lots’ – were laid out in strips that extended north to present-day Bloor Street. These properties were given to officials as compensation for having to move to the new capital. Dovercourt Road takes its name from the family estate (named Dover Court) of Colonel Richard Lippincott Denison, owner of park lots 25 and 26. Lot Street was renamed Queen Street, after Queen Victoria, in 1843.

Queen Street served as a main axis for Toronto’s growth. In the 1820s and 1830s people began to settle in the area. In 1833, there was a toll gate at the northwest corner of Dufferin and Queen. In the mid to late 1800s, park lots began to be subdivided into smaller parcels.

In the adjacent area, a small village was established in the 1850s along Dundas Street west of today’s Dufferin Street. The Village of Brockton, bounded by the present day

Bloor Street to the north and Queen Street to the south, became the centre of the area's social and commercial activity for the next 30 years.

Railway lines were introduced to the area in 1853, with the first service between Toronto and Aurora. The railway lines skirted the eastern edge of Parkdale at Dufferin Street and created a division between Parkdale and Brockton. In 1878, the Northern Railway opened a station facing Queen Street east of Dufferin.

By 1884 there was a continuous line of houses, stores, and hotels from the centre of Toronto (Queen and Yonge) all the way to Parkdale. Newly introduced streetcar service allowed people to live further from their work. Brockton was annexed to the City in 1884 and Parkdale in 1889.

There are three properties currently on the Inventory of Heritage Properties in the study area. One of these, the Gladstone Hotel at the north-east corner of Queen Street and Gladstone Avenue, is designated. It marked the eastern entrance to the suburb of Parkdale and was restored in 1988.

The HCD Study will be conducted by Active 18 with the assistance of a heritage professional. Funds for this purpose are available in deferred revenue account 220096 related to a previous Committee of Adjustment application for 48 Fisher Street.

Planning staff will guide the process to ensure proper procedure, an adequate level of research and appropriate content. The resulting District Plan will include guidelines for managing change consistent with good heritage conservation principles, so as to encourage continued maintenance of West Queen West's heritage character.

At least two more public meetings will be held to present and discuss the study's findings as it proceeds. At the conclusion of the study, staff will report to Council and the Toronto Preservation Board on the suitability of the area for designation as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and make recommendations on appropriate guidelines and boundaries.

If City Council ultimately designates the area as a Heritage Conservation District, the study would form the District Plan required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The District Plan would provide guidance to the public, property owners, staff and City Council when considering alterations, demolitions and new construction in the area.

CONTACT

Denise Gendron, Manager
Heritage Preservation Services
Tel: 416-338-1075;
Fax: 416-392-1973,
E-mail: dgendron@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Barbara Leonhardt
Director, Policy and Research

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Map of West Queen West Heritage Conservation District Study Area

Attachment No. 2 – List of Sites on the Inventory of Heritage Properties in the West Queen West Heritage Conservation District Study Area