



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

112 Blythwood Road, Demolition of a Structure Within the Blythwood Heritage Conservation District and Approval of a Replacement Structure

Date:	March 27, 2008
To:	Toronto Preservation Board North York Community Council
From:	Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Don Valley West - Ward 25
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the demolition of an un-rated house in the Blythwood Heritage Conservation District, (BHCD) and approve the design of the replacement structure, with a condition that the owner obtain approval from the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) for the final building permit plans.

The existing house does not contribute to the heritage character of the BHCD and the replacement house is in accordance with the BHCD Study Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council approve the request to demolish the house at 112 Blythwood Road in the Blythwood Heritage Conservation District, in accordance with Section 42 (1) of the Ontario Heritage Act;

2. City Council approve the plans for the replacement buildings, as shown in the plans submitted by the applicant, Sam Spagnuolo, CS&P Architects, Inc. including; Landscape Plan 20F dated Dec. 13/ 07, Plans 2 to 9 dated revised March 28, 2008, all date stamped received by Heritage Preservation Services March 28, 2008, on file with the Manger, Heritage Preservation Services, and that the replacement structure be constructed substantially in accordance with the submitted plans, subject to the owner;
 - a. Prior to the issuance of any building permit for the replacement buildings located at 112 Blythwood Road, including a permit for the demolition, excavation, and/or shoring of the subject property, providing building permit drawings satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

The applicant first consulted with HPS staff regarding demolition of the house and garage at 112 Blythwood Road, and the design of a replacement house in October 2007. The applicant applied to the North York Committee of Adjustment for variances to construct the replacement building and the hearing took place on November 21, 2007. HPS provided recommendations to the North York Committee of Adjustment Application No. A 0675/07NY. The applicant proposed to demolish the existing house, garage, and shed and replace them with a new three-storey detached dwelling with a detached, two-storey two car garage in the rear yard. The applicant requested variances for the new house and garage for relief on GFA, east and west side yard setbacks, dwelling height, driveway width, garage height, and proposed landscaped open space on the front yard of the property.

HPS advised the North York Committee of Adjustment that under the Ontario Heritage Act, the demolition must be approved by City Council, and must comply with the BHCD Guidelines for replacement structures in the District. HPS also indicated that the requested variance for a reduction in the allowed landscaped open space in the front yard would have an adverse impact on the heritage attributes of the BHCD, and the requested height of the new dwelling of 0.67 m. over the 10 m. limit and would not be in-keeping with the BHCD Guidelines.

The applicant revised their submission to the Committee to remove some of the paving in the front yard and reduce the requested height of the house to 10.3 meters. The applicant received approval for the revised variances including the revised height of 10.3 meters in the Notice of Decision Dated November 21, 2007.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The subject property is located at 112 Blythwood Road (Attachment No. 1) and is within the BHCD which was approved by Council (By-Law 12-2004) on December 4, 2003 and upheld by the Ontario Municipal Board January 19, 2005. In designating the BHCD, Council adopted an evaluation of all buildings within the district and endorsed guidelines for managing change. The heritage evaluation classified buildings in the district as “A”, “B”, “C”, or “unrated.”

The existing structure (Attachment No. 2) is classified as “unrated” in the BHCD. Buildings considered “unrated” do not contribute to the heritage character of the district or are too recent to be accurately evaluated for their heritage value. The guidelines permit the demolition of “unrated” buildings provided that the replacement building, as shown in the building permit application, conforms to the BHCD guidelines and the zoning by-law.

Section 42(1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* requires that no owner of a property situated in a heritage conservation district that has been designated by a municipality shall erect, demolish or remove any building or structure on the property or permit the erection, demolition or removal of such a building or structure unless the owner obtains a permit from the municipality. Under Article IV of Section 103-22 of the Municipal Code, Council permission is required for any person to demolish a building within a heritage conservation district.

COMMENTS

The owner is proposing to demolish the existing one storey “unrated” residence and construct a new three-storey residence with a GFA of 6118 sq. ft. (Attachment 2).

HPS staff had some concerns with the height and over-all scale of the replacement house and met with the owners to discuss revisions to their plans. The owners agreed to consult with a professional heritage consultant regarding their design and Rick Coombs of Nexus Architects provided a Heritage Assessment of the project, titled “Heritage Assessment New House Proposal, 112 Blythwood Road, Toronto, Ontario, dated 28 March 2008. The new house is located on one of the larger lots in the District and will be one of the larger homes in the area, however, the owners agreed to bring the height of the house down to 10 meters (which the zoning allows) and reduce the size of the 3rd floor dormers to mitigate the impact of the roof massing.

Although there is some concern that the character of the District would be negatively impacted if this precedent of a much bigger house were to be used to replace a large number of the existing houses on the street, this site is rare in that the existing building is “un-rated” and quite small for the larger lot and few other properties would likely be considered for this type of redevelopment.

The proposed replacement building consists of a three-storey Georgian Style centre-hall plan residence with a carport pass-through on the ground floor. Parking is provided at the rear of the property within a detached garage accessed by a driveway on the west side. The existing circular drive will be removed to increase the soft landscaping on the front yard.

Section 5.2.3. of the BHCD Study sets out the following guidelines for new buildings;

1. New buildings should contribute to and not detract from the variety and heritage character of the district,
2. New buildings should be designed to be compatible with the heritage buildings, in terms of scale, massing, height, setback and entry level;
3. The roof profile and the location of the eaves lines or the roof parapet should be designed so that the apparent height of the building is compatible with that of its neighbours and is not visually overwhelming to neighbouring buildings.

Section 5.2.4 of the BHCD Study sets out the following Landscape/Streetscape Guideline which applies to this project; “Maintain open space character of Blythwood by maintaining spacious setbacks and large frontage gardens. Maintain garden frontages, and limit /prohibit parking area frontages on all streets.”

It is staff’s opinion that the proposed replacement building complies with the guidelines for new buildings contained within section 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 of the BHCD Study. The proposed house is similar to the style and features of a number of other houses in the area, without being an exact copy of any of them so that the District maintains its character in its type and variety of architecture (Attachment 3). The house, while higher than its flanking neighbours, is similar in scale and height to two other large houses on the same side of the same block, at 88 and 98 Blythwood Road (Attachment 6).

The massing of the house features projecting and receding elements to break up the typical flat façade of the Georgian style. The front entrance is protected by an open projecting portico and the doorway is recessed. The flanking brick bay windows project from the plane of the façade. The mansard roof slopes back from the second floor eave line to diminish the mass of the third floor, and is punctuated by three projecting dormer windows that break up the visual impact of the expanse of roof (Attachments 4 & 5).

The proposed materials are in keeping with the BHCD Study including; red brick, cast stone sills, wood trim, and wood portico columns and pediment.

The siting of the new house is appropriate, aligning the new front façade with the front of the existing house to the east and recessed nearly 5 meters from the face of the house to the west. The proposed layout respects the existing pattern of buildings in relation to the street and in relation to each other, maintaining appropriate side yard set-backs to permit light and views between adjacent buildings. The proposed landscape plan (Attachment 4) will preserve the character of the existing landscape treatment of the street and maintain a generous landscaped front yard with soft landscaping and a canopy of shade trees.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Location,
Attachment 2 – Existing building and replacement,
Attachment 3 – Streetscapes, existing and proposed
Attachment 4 – Site plan and front elevation
Attachment 5 – Side elevations
Attachment 6 – Comparable Houses