



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

38A & B Boswell Avenue, Demolition and Replacement of a Structure within the East Annex Heritage Conservation District

Date:	January 28, 2009
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Trinity-Spadina – Ward 20
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report recommends approval of the demolition permit of the two storey building at 38A & B Boswell Avenue (which collapsed during renovation) and the approval of the replacement structure based on the submitted elevation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that

1. City Council approve the issuance of a demolition permit for the designated “C” rated buildings at 38A & B Boswell Avenue.
2. City Council approve the proposed replacement building for the property at 38A & B Boswell Avenue, substantially in accordance with the plans and drawings prepared by Richard Wengle Architect Inc, dated December 11, 2008.

Financial Impact

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

DECISION HISTORY

The property at 38A & B Boswell is within the East Annex Heritage Conservation District. The East Annex Heritage Conservation District was approved by City Council in 1994 under by-law 520-94.

The subject property is located in the middle of the block defined by Boswell Avenue, Bedford Road, Tranby Avenue and Avenue Road. (Attachment No.1) The property is accessed by a lane that runs north from Boswell Avenue between #40 and 38 Boswell Avenue (Attachment No. 2).

The initial proposal for the renovation of the building was to merge the two semi-detached buildings into a single unit. The original two-storey semi-detached buildings contained two separate entries at the main east façade. The initial proposed design incorporated a new single entrance while maintaining the transom windows as markers of the original dual occupancy. In sum, this design scheme retained the original façade. A building permit was issued for this alteration in 2007.

After issuance of the permit and during construction, a concern was raised by the contractor regarding the out of plumb condition of the brick veneer façade wall and the nature of the tie backs (if present).

A combination of the deteriorated condition of the grade level foundation brick and the instability of the brick veneer prompted the applicant to consider demolition of the building's front façade element.

The potential delay inherent in the approval process to allow a complete demolition prompted the applicant to continue with the previously approved project (stabilize and incorporate the original façade).

In the course of the ensuing work, the brick façade veneer collapsed. Subsequent investigation of the foundation revealed that the key structural timber support had undergone torsional movement and contributed to the instability of the brick veneer.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The original building was classified as a "C" rated structure which are defined as properties which retain much of their original character and are vital reminders of a community's past. The subject structure is located mid-block and is not located upon a public right of way.

COMMENTS

The "C" rated mid-block heritage structure has inadvertently collapsed during the above described construction project. Therefore, the applicant requests that demolition of the structure be approved.

A new replacement structure is proposed that occupies a similar built envelope to the original structure.

Section 0.3 A of the East Annex HCD Plan sets out the guidelines for new buildings. These standards include the following: (1) design new buildings in character with the neighbouring buildings, including consideration of height, depth, setback, and entry level, and in keeping with the character of the particular avenue or road as described in this report, (2) Use the roof type and profile of neighbouring buildings as a guide, employing similar massing, proportion and level of detail; and, (3) keep composition of elements simple. Use few rather than many vernacular features. Use modest moulding profiles and details.

It is staff's opinion that the proposed replacement building complies with the guidelines for new buildings contained within section 0.3 A of the EAHCD Plan:

- The replacement structure is within the mid-block and cannot be easily seen by the public from surrounding public right of ways and therefore does not impact public views within the district
- The design, style and exterior materials are consistent with the heritage character of the EAHCD
- The footprint, height and scale of the replacement structure are consistent with that of the original demolished structure
- The design of the replacement building is a contemporary variant of the Second Empire style cottage that was demolished
- Per applicable Conservation Standards and Guidelines, the composition of the building will be simple with contemporary elements integrally incorporated into the design

OTHER ISSUES

The loss of the original brick façade at 38A & B underlines the need for further consideration of more stringent analysis of construction procedure associated with significant intervention involving residential brick constructions. HPS will continue to develop internal processes to address instances where alterations endanger original fabric.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No.1 – Location Map
Attachment No.2 – Photographs
Attachment No.3 – Proposed Project: Site Plan
Attachment No.4 – Proposed Project: Elevations
Attachment No.5 – Proposed Project: Elevations
Attachment No.6 – Proposed Project: Floor Plans
Attachment No.7 – Proposed Project: Photo Simulation (from the right of way)
Attachment No.8 – Proposed Project: Computer Rendering