



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

129 St. Clair Avenue West – Amendment to Reasons for Designation and Passage of Designating By-law under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

Date:	October 26, 2009
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	St. Paul's – Ward 22
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council amend the Reasons for Designation for the property at 129 St. Clair Avenue West (Deer Park United Church) as adopted by Council at its meeting of October 29 and 30, 2008, and that Council pass the by-law designating the property at 129 St. Clair Avenue West under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Following its meeting of October 2008, City Council served notice of its intention to designate the property at 129 St. Clair Avenue West under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. On December 23, 2008, the legal representative of Deer Park United Church, owner of the subject property, submitted an objection to the notice of intention to designate and the matter was referred to the Conservation Review Board. The owner has now agreed to withdraw its objections subject to minor revisions to the original Reasons for Designation (Attachment No. 3) and their replacement by the revised Reasons for Designation (Attachment No. 4).

Heritage Preservation Services is satisfied that the revised Reasons for Designation will ensure that the property's cultural heritage values and attributes are preserved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that

1. City Council adopt the revised Reasons for Designation as set out in Attachment No. 4 of this report.
2. Upon receipt of the owner's withdrawal of its notice of objection, the City Solicitor be authorized to introduce a bill in Council with the amended Reasons for Designation as set out in Attachment No. 4, designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Financial Impact

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

DECISION HISTORY

The property at 129 St. Clair Avenue West was included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in January 2008. Following the listing of the site, staff were advised that representatives of Deer Park United Church were in the process of selling the property and learned there were concerns in the community about the potential redevelopment of the site.

At its meeting of October 29 and 30, 2008, City Council stated its intention to designate the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Following Council's statement of intention to designate the property at 129 St. Clair Avenue West, the property owners objected to the proposed designation and the matter was referred to the Conservation Review Board. In discussions between the City and the owners' legal representative, it was agreed that minor changes to the Reasons for Designation would address the owners' concerns while preserving the property's cultural heritage values and attributes. With these revisions, the owners have agreed to withdraw their objection, allowing the designating by-law to be passed.

COMMENTS

At the request of the representatives of Deer Park United Church and with the agreement of staff, the Reasons for Designation have undergone two revisions. The original Reasons for Designation (2008) are attached as Attachment No. 3 with the revisions to the text highlighted in bold. The revised Reasons for Designation (2009) for the designating by-law are found in Attachment No. 4.

The changes to the Reasons for Designation consist of two additions to the list of heritage attributes found on pages 2 and 3 of the text. At the bottom of page 2, the description of the stained glass windows has been edited to exclude 13 small panels along the east and west walls of the church and in the west transept, as well as a three-part commemorative

window in the adjoining chapel. On page 3, a bullet point has been added to clarify that the interior of the church does not form part of the Reasons for Designation.

The majority of the stained glass windows, including the larger commemorative windows at the north and south ends of the church and on the transepts, will remain. These changes to the Reasons for Designation follow discussions between the City and representatives of the church, who expressed their desire to remove some of memorial windows that were installed in the 1950s and afterwards by former members of the congregation and reinstate them in other cultural institutions. Staff agreed, provided that the windows be documented prior to their removal, that a qualified professional supervise the removal of the windows, and that the openings be filled with glass to match the materials and dimensions of the windows that existed prior to the insertion of stained glass.

With these revisions to the Reasons for Designation, the property at 129 St. Clair Avenue West still meets Regulation 9/06, the criteria developed by the Province of Ontario for municipal designation. To warrant designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, a property must meet “one or more” of the criteria under any of, but not necessarily all of the categories of Design/Physical Value, Historical/Associative Value, and Contextual Value. The property at 129 St. Clair Avenue West retains its cultural heritage values under all three categories as stated in the revised Reasons for Designation.

A location map (Attachment No. 1) and photographs of the church and the stained glass windows (Attachments Nos. 2A-2C) are attached.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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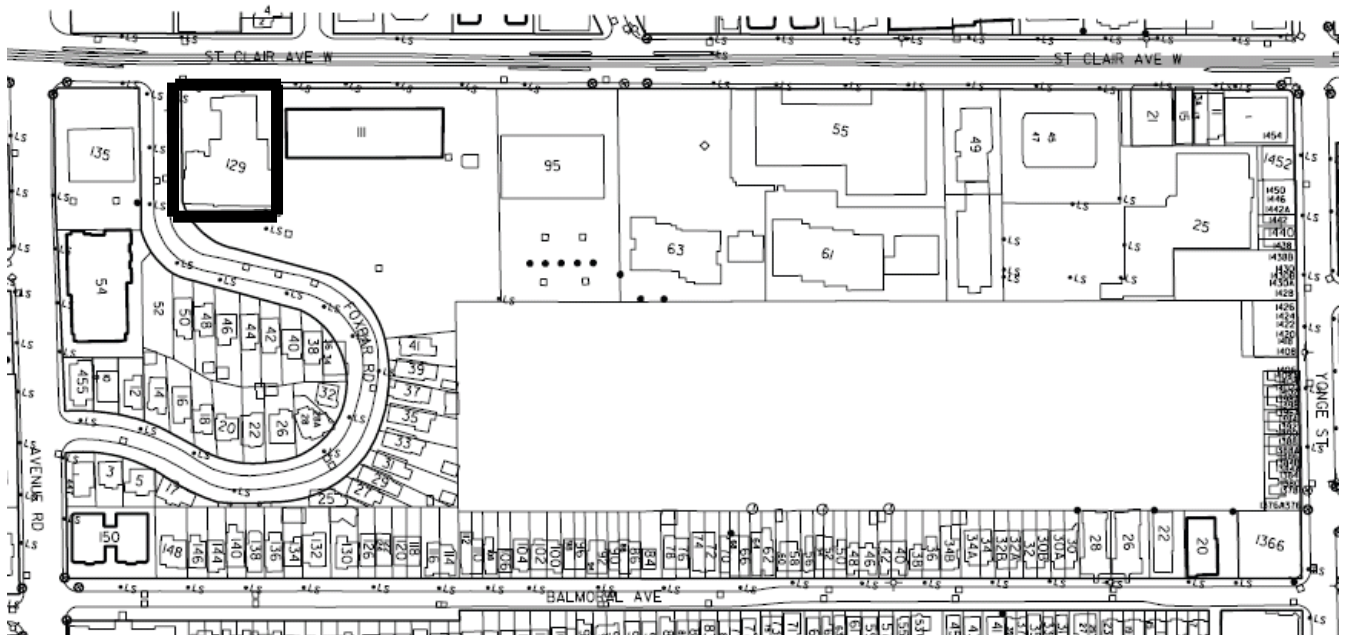
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
Attachment Nos. 2A-2C – Photographs
Attachment No. 3 – Original Reasons for Designation
Attachment No. 4 – Revised Reasons for Designation

LOCATION MAP: 129 ST. CLAIR AVENUE WEST

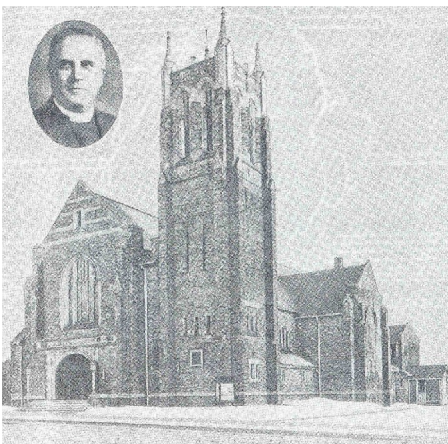
ATTACHMENT NO. 1



This location map is for information purposes only;
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.



View of Deer Park United Church on the southeast corner of St. Clair Avenue West and Foxbar Road.



Archival views showing Deer Park United Church in 1931 (left) and after the addition of the Sunday School wing in 1931 (right).



West Transept, showing three lower windows to be removed, with detail of one of three



Chapel, showing the three-part window on south wall to be removed



East wall of Church, with detail (right) of one of the six windows to be removed from the lower wall



West wall of Church, with detail (right) of one of the four windows to be removed

Deer Park United Church

Description

The property at 129 St. Clair Avenue West is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, associative and contextual value. Located on the southeast corner of St. Clair Avenue West and Foxbar Road, Deer Park United Church was completed in 1912 and extended in 1931 with the completion of the Sunday School wing. The property is listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Deer Park United Church is a significant institution in the Deer Park neighbourhood where it is the oldest surviving church building. The origins of the church date to the late 1800s when a Presbyterian congregation was formed in “Deer Park,” the residential community that developed around the intersection of Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue as the City of Toronto expanded northward. After Deer Park was annexed in 1908, the congregation relocated to a new building on St. Clair Avenue, the main east-west thoroughfare in the neighbourhood. The current church was completed in 1912 and dedicated the following year as Deer Park Presbyterian Church. In 1925, the majority of the congregation elected to join the newly-formed United Church of Canada (an amalgamation of Methodist, Congregational and some Presbyterian churches).

As Deer Park United Church, the congregation continued the mission work, musical interests and social services for which it was known. It provided outreach and employment programs during the Depression of the 1930s, welcomed displaced British women and children during World War II, offered English classes for new immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s, and sponsored Vietnamese refugees in the 1970s. Deer Park United Church was a founding member of “The Churches-on-the Hill,” a group of local churches representing different Christian denominations that serve the community through joint programs, including food banks and affordable housing. Located on St. Clair Avenue West for nearly a century, the congregation of Deer Park United Church celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2006.

Deer Park United Church also has design value as a well-crafted example of the Neo-Gothic style, which was popular in the early decades of the 20th century for ecclesiastical and educational buildings. Displaying a distinctive corner tower and stone facing, the designs for the church were profiled in the September 1911 issue of Construction magazine, and featured at the Toronto Society of Architects’ exhibition in 1912. Alterations to the complex over time, including the expanded Sunday School wing dating to 1931, have respected the original fabric and style of the church.

Contextually, Deer Park United Church is a landmark on St. Clair Avenue West in the Deer Park community. The church anchors the southeast corner of St. Clair Avenue West and Foxbar Road, one block east of Avenue Road, where its iconic architecture is highly visible. The church's location and setting are complemented by the city parks on the northeast and northwest corners of St. Clair Avenue West and Avenue Road, opposite. Amsterdam Square Park, located near the northeast corner of the intersection, features a replica of a fountain from the Peace Palace at The Hague, which dates to 1929 and is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. Glenn Gould Park, near the northwest corner of St. Clair Avenue West and Avenue Road, contains the Peter Pan Statue (1929), which is recognized on the City's heritage inventory. With its placement on the south side of St. Clair Avenue West, Deer Park United Church adjoins the residential neighbourhood where the Foxbar Apartments at 54 Foxbar Road also date to the pre-World War I era and are listed on the City's heritage inventory.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of Deer Park United Church related to its cultural heritage value as a representative example of Neo-Gothic styling associated with a significant institution in the Deer Park neighbourhood where it is a local landmark are:

- The scale, form and massing
- The materials, including Credit Valley stone, Indiana limestone, terra cotta, slate, metal, glass and wood
- The long rectangular plan with shallow transepts and low side aisles on the east and west elevations
- The steeply-pitched cross-gable roof with brick and stone chimneys, and the shed roofs over the side aisles
- At the northwest corner, the square tower with a flat roof, finials and a pinnacle
- The main entrance, which is placed in a shallow porch on the north façade, with pairs of paneled wood doors and multi-paned transoms
- The secondary entrance on the west face of the tower, and the entrance porch at the north end of the east wall, with wood doors with glazed inserts and blind transoms
- The detailing on the entries, with pointed-arched surrounds, mouldings, quoins, carvings and, on the tower, a roundel
- The window openings, with Tudor-arched, pointed-arched, flat-headed, lancet and clerestory windows
- The window detailing, with stone mullions, tracery, labels and continuous sills
- The applied detailing, with smooth band courses, buttresses, coping along the gables and, on the north façade, a niche with quoins
- The cornerstones from the second Deer Park Presbyterian Church (1888) and the current church (1911)

The collection of stained glass windows, including commissions by artists Peter Haworth and Yvonne Williams and memorial windows in the sanctuary, transepts and chapel (**excluding 13 small panels along the east and west side walls and the lower west transept, and the three-part memorial window on the south wall of the chapel**)

- The Sunday School wing at the south end of the church, which complements it with the stone cladding and trim, Neo-Gothic detailing, and combinations of flat-headed and pointed-arched openings
- **The interior is not included in the Reasons for Designation**

Original Reasons for Designation (2008), showing the revisions to the text highlighted in bold, to be replaced by the Revised Reasons for Designation (2009)

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- The Sunday School wing at the south end of the church, which complements it with the stone cladding and trim, Neo-Gothic detailing, and combinations of flat-headed and pointed-arched openings
- The interior is not included in the Reasons for Designation

The Revised Reasons for Designation (2009) are intended to replace the original Reasons for Designation (2008)