



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

2 O'Connor Drive - Alteration to a Heritage Property and Intention to Designate, Part IV, Section 29, Ontario Heritage Act and Authority to Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement

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| Date: | November 12, 2009 |
| To: | Toronto Preservation Board Toronto and East York Community Council |
| From: | Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division |
| Wards: | Ward 29 – Toronto-Danforth |
| Reference Number: | |

SUMMARY

This application proposes to develop the site at 2 O'Connor Drive, 2, 6, and 12 Fernwood Gardens with a 4-storey, 65-unit, residential-care and assisted living facility. The John F. Taylor house, a listed heritage property located at 2 O'Connor Drive, will be preserved, partially restored and incorporated into the development proposal. All other buildings are to be demolished, including three buildings containing 36 residential rental units that are not proposed to be replaced. The applicant is applying for Official Plan Amendment, Rezoning and demolition under Municipal Code Chapter 667.

The Community Planning staff report for this application recommended refusal. The key concerns noted in the report included lack of retention or replacement of the affordable rental housing and the fit of the proposal with the planned context of Fernwood Gardens. However the Toronto and East York Community Council (TEYCC) voted to approve the application at their meeting of November 10, 2009 and requested planning staff to prepare a report to come back to the January 12, 2010 meeting of TEYCC with conditions of approval for the application.

Following on the direction from TEYCC, this report provides a review of the applications as they relate to proposed conservation of the property under the Ontario Heritage Act, and recommends that Council designate the property at 2 O'Connor Drive under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value and ensure the preservation of the heritage attributes of the property.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 2 O'Connor Drive under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act;
2. If there are no objections to the designation in accordance with Section 26(6) of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City Solicitor be authorized to introduce the Bills in Council designating the property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act;
3. If there are objections in accordance with Section 29(7) of the Ontario Heritage Act, the Clerk be directed to refer the proposed designation to the Conservation Review Board;
4. City Council approve the alterations to the heritage property at 2 O'Connor Drive, substantially in accordance with the heritage conservation plans and elevations and heritage impact statement, "2 O'Connor Drive, Heritage Impact Statement, dated revised August 20, 2009" all prepared by E.R.A Architects Inc., date stamped received by the City Planning Division August 27, 2009, and on file with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Prior to the passing of Bills in Council the owner shall:

enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement with the City for the protection and long term maintenance of the heritage property at 2 O'Connor Drive, subject to the approved alterations, to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
 - b. Prior to final site plan approval the owner shall:

provide a Detailed Conservation Plan, prepared by a qualified heritage consultant (Heritage Consultant) to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services that includes: as-found record of the existing house including photographs keyed to plans and elevations of all the visible exteriors and interiors; detailed descriptions for the proposed heritage conservation work; description of the reversibility of alterations; schedule of long term conservation and maintenance requirements; and cost estimates for the conservation work;

provide final development plans, a landscape plan that enhances the heritage character and views of the front façade of the heritage building and exterior lighting plan for the heritage building, to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

- c. Prior to the issuance of any building permit for the heritage property located at 2 O'Connor Drive, including a permit for the demolition, excavation, and/or shoring of the subject property, the owner shall provide the following:
 - building permit drawings, including specifications for heritage conservation work prepared by the Heritage Consultant to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
 - Letter of Credit, in a form and an amount satisfactory to the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, to secure all work included in the Detailed Conservation Plan;
- d. Prior to the release of the Letter of Credit, the owner shall:
 - complete the heritage conservation work to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
 - provide a notice of substantial completion for the heritage conservation work prepared by the Heritage Consultant to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
 - submit final as-built photographs of the exterior and significant interiors of the heritage building at 2 O'Connor Drive satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
5. City Council grant authority for the execution of a Heritage Easement Agreement under Section 37 of the Ontario Heritage Act with the owners of 2 O'Connor Drive for the property at 2 O'Connor Drive;
6. The City Solicitor be authorized to introduce the necessary Bill in Council authorizing the entering into of the Heritage Easement Agreement.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report. The public Notice of Intention to Designate will be advertised on the City's web site in accordance with the City of Toronto Act provisions.

DECISION HISTORY

The John F. Taylor House, also known as the “Ina Grafton Gage Home for the Aged” and “Fernwood” was listed on the Corporation of the Borough of East York Inventory of Historical Buildings in 1982. This inventory was approved by Toronto City Council to be added to the City Inventory of Heritage Properties in 2006.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

An application was submitted on December 30, 2008 for an official plan amendment and zoning by-law amendment and included a Heritage Impact Statement prepared by E.R.A. Architects Inc. Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) reviewed the submission and provided preliminary comments in May 2009.

A revised application was received by the City Planning Division on August 27, 2009, including plans for the property and a new building by Shim-Sutcliffe Architects Inc. and a revised Heritage Impact Statement, dated August 20, 2009, and heritage conservation plans and elevations for the heritage house prepared by E.R.A Architects Inc.

Heritage Value:

The house was originally built for John F. Taylor, the eldest son of George Taylor, owner of the Taylor Paper Mill at Todmorden Mills. John F. Taylor was a co-founder of the Don Valley Brick Works. Robert L. Patterson, a manufacturer of print type, purchased the property in 1903 and lived in the house, now called “Fernwood” until 1930 when it was sold to the United Church of Canada for conversion into the Ina Grafton Gage Home for the Aged. The home was established with funds donated by Sir William Gage in memory of his wife Ina Grafton Gage (Attachment No. 3).

The house, built in 1885, was located on a 10 acre parcel at the eastern edge of the Don River Valley. It was located at the northern terminus of Broadview Avenue, a significant route following the east edge of the Don River Valley and a road associated with the early development of East York (Attachment No. 1). The front façade of the house still provides an important view terminus at the north end of Broadview Avenue.

The house was designed by a leading Toronto architect, D.B.Dick (1846-1928). In solo practice, Dick designed many landmark buildings on the University of Toronto’s St. George Campus where he also oversaw the restoration of University College. The house is a well-crafted example of the Queen Anne Revival style applied to a residential building. Popular at the close of the 19th century when the scale and detailing of houses became increasingly exuberant, the style is identified by its asymmetrical shapes, variety of materials, and profusion of decorative elements.

The John F. Taylor House displays a mixture of Queen Anne Revival features, including the distinctive corner tower and the ogee-shaped parapet containing an oversized oriel window with stained glass panels (Attachment No. 2). The ornamental flourishes continue on the interior where the entrance hall and flanking library (southwest) and dining room (southeast) retain their original fireplaces and wood and plaster detailing (Attachment No. 2). Contextually, the John F. Taylor House is a landmark in East York.

The property was converted into the Ina Grafton Gage Home for the Aged in 1930. At that time portions of the west façade including a stepped parapet and circular porch were demolished to add a two storey wing with residences for the aged. The roof was raised on this side to incorporate the new wing. In 1941 a second two storey wing was added to the east façade necessitating the demolition of portions of the wall and the conservatory. A large decorative chimney was replaced with a stepped chimney. Around the same time the rest of the chimney stacks and decorative finials were likely removed and small lantern style windows on the roof replaced with larger dormers. Other alterations included new exit door openings and some blocked up windows. A wrought iron and stone fence and gateposts at the front edge of the property were replaced sometime after 1930. The current fence is in disrepair. The south portion of the property was severed, divided into lots and developed as a low rise (two-storey) walk-up apartment neighbourhood along a new street called Fernwood Gardens running west off of Broadview.

Current Proposal:

The application is for approval to redevelop the property as an assisted living and private hospital facility for the Sisters of St. Joseph. The property includes the former Ina Grafton Gage Home for the Aged which incorporated the original John F. Taylor House at 2 O'Connor Drive and 3 rental apartment buildings at 2, 6, and 12 Fernwood Gardens.

The proposal is to demolish existing wings added to the Taylor house for the Ina Grafton Gage Home and to demolish the three apartment buildings on the north side of Fernwood Gardens in order to construct the new private residence and hospital to be located to the west of the Taylor House. The applicant has not proposed to replace the 36 residential rental units that are contained within three, 2½-storey walk-up apartment buildings.

The new residence/hospital will be linked to the Taylor house with a one storey glass enclosed walkway. The heritage house will be rehabilitated for use as part of the hospital as a guest residence and meeting room space. The new four storey building follows the edge of the valley in an elongated "S" shape with a circular chapel extending out the north side.

The new residence/hospital building is approximately 1.75 metres taller than the roof ridge of the heritage house. The new building also has a taller sun canopy on the roof, however, the entire four storey massing is not directly connected to the Taylor House and should not overshadow the heritage house. There is a small one storey glazed link connecting them only, and the two appear to be separate elements. The new building is contemporary in design and will be finished in brick that is visually compatible with the heritage house.

Within this proposal, the heritage house will be preserved, rehabilitated and partially restored. Missing or demolished elements on the east, west and south façades will be restored based on the original plans (Attachment No. 4) and original materials and finishes on the exterior and interior will be repaired and preserved.

The applicant is proposing to restore missing and altered elements on the exterior (Attachment No. 6). On the west façade a stepped parapet will be reinstated after the existing wing is demolished. On the east façade only the elevator addition will remain when the existing wing is demolished. The elevator wing will be extended by one storey to the third floor to provide barrier-free access to the entire house. This small addition will be finished in brick and metal cladding to be consistent with the materials on the existing house, and will be only partially visible from the street. The existing chimney on the east façade will be reconstructed based on the original design. On the roof, original lantern windows will replace later dormer windows and decorative metal finials will be reproduced. Use of modern materials and careful detailing for restored elements should ensure that the recreations of missing elements can be seen, on close inspection, to be modern recreations rather than original features. This will maintain the legibility of the original heritage attributes. A barrier-free ramp will be removed from the front entrance and the front steps reinstated. The existing fence and gateposts, erected some time after 1930, are in disrepair and will be removed. Minor alterations on the north façade include the link to the new building, a new door opening and a door to window conversion.

Significant interiors, including the vestibule, front hall, library, and dining room with decorative plaster, woodwork, fireplaces, main staircase and stained glass will be preserved. The volume of the former drawing room will be reinstated on the west side for use as a meeting space. The interiors at the rear of the main floor, second and third floors will have minor alteration only and original fabric will be preserved and where removed, will be re-used.

The current landscape plan does not differentiate the area directly in front of the heritage building to reflect its significance as the fronting space and entranceway for the principal façade of the house. The applicant has indicated willingness to revise this section of the landscape plan to enhance the heritage character.

Significant views from the south will be preserved. Views of the east and west façades will be available once again. All of the alterations and conservation work proposed follow the Parks Canada Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

COMMENTS

The Community Planning staff report for this application recommended refusal of the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law revision applications file number 08 232246 STE 29 OZ. The key concerns noted in the report include lack of retention or replacement of the affordable rental housing and the fit of the proposal with the planned context of Fernwood Gardens. However, the Toronto and East York Community Council (TEYCC) voted to approve the application at their meeting of November 10, 2009 and requested planning staff to prepare a report to come back to the January 12, 2010 meeting of TEYCC with conditions of approval for the application.

From the perspective of Heritage Preservation Services staff providing comment on the application as it relates to the Ontario Heritage Act, the proposed rehabilitation of the John F. Taylor House is an acceptable alteration to a heritage building. The proposed alterations would help re-establish its appearance as a single residential estate and result in the preservation and enhancement of its heritage character. The existing heritage attributes require conservation work which would be completed as part of the project. The applicant proposes to reinstate some of the missing and altered original features on the exterior and interior that were removed when the house was converted into an old aged home.

The area directly in front of the house should be carefully landscaped to reference and reinforce elements common to estates of the 1880's. With appropriate landscape design in the area to the front of the John F. Taylor House, public views of the house would be improved and appreciation of the original character enhanced. The landscape plan for this project should ensure that principle views of the house from Broadview Avenue looking north and from O'Connor Drive looking west will be preserved and enhanced. The front entrance should be reinforced with a walkway leading to the street, and plantings should frame the principle, south façade. The landscape plan is currently being revised to reflect the need to preserve heritage views.

Reasons for Designation

The property at 2 O'Connor Drive 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 north side of O'Connor Drive where the street intersects with Broadview Avenue, the John F. Taylor House (1885) is a well-crafted example of Queen Anne Revival design associated with one of the founding families of East York where it stands as a local landmark.

The Reasons for Designation (Attachment No. 3) are intended to be posted on the City of Toronto's web site and served on the property owners and on the Ontario Heritage Trust according to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act. The Reasons for Designation (Statement of Significance) include a statement of the cultural heritage value of the property with a description of its heritage attributes.

CONTACT

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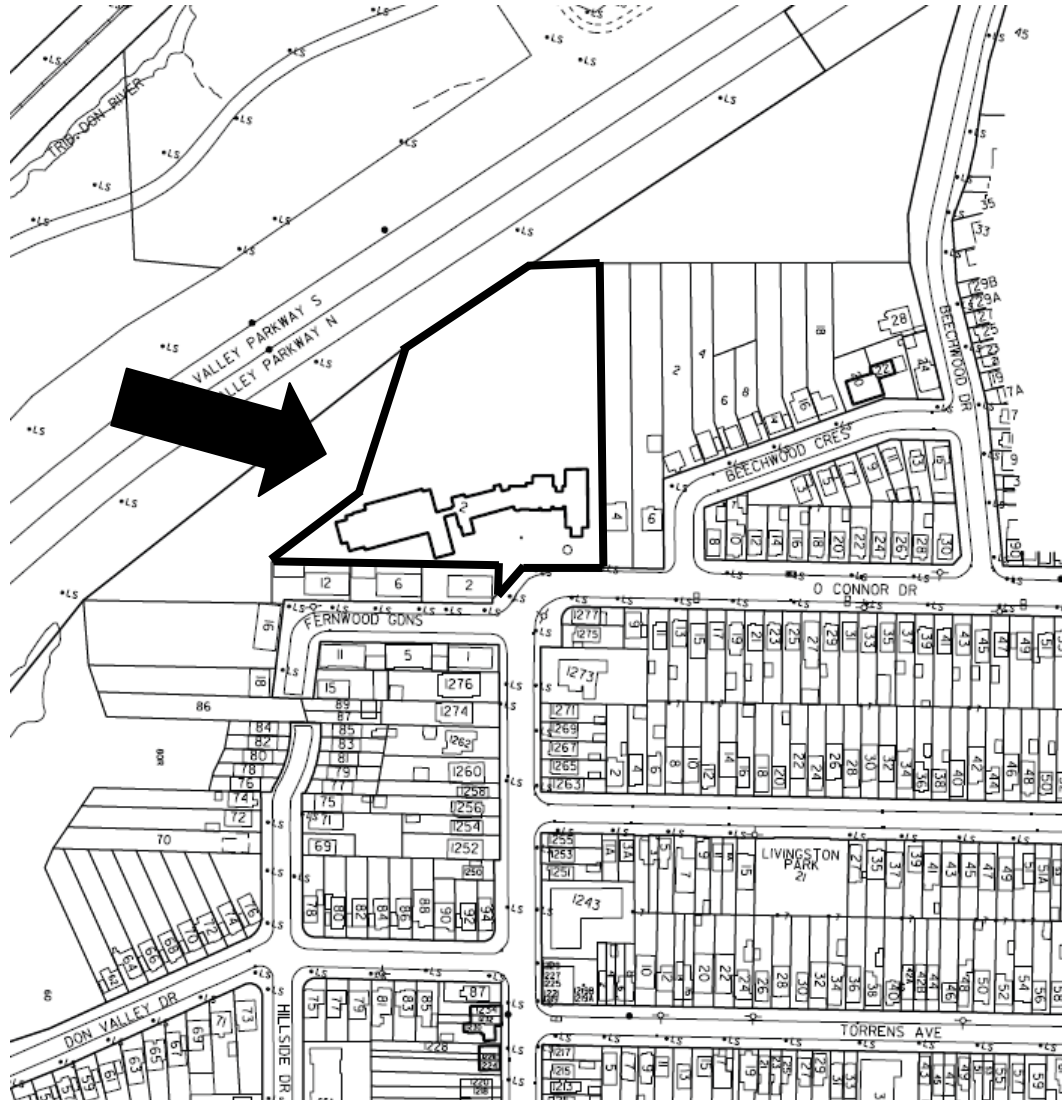
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Barbara Leonhardt
Director, Policy and Research
City Planning Division

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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
- Attachment No. 2 – Photographs
- Attachment No. 3 – Reasons for Designation
- Attachment No. 4 – Original Designs
- Attachment No. 5 – Proposed Site Plan
- Attachment No. 6 – Proposed Elevations



The **arrow** marks the location of the property proposed for designation.

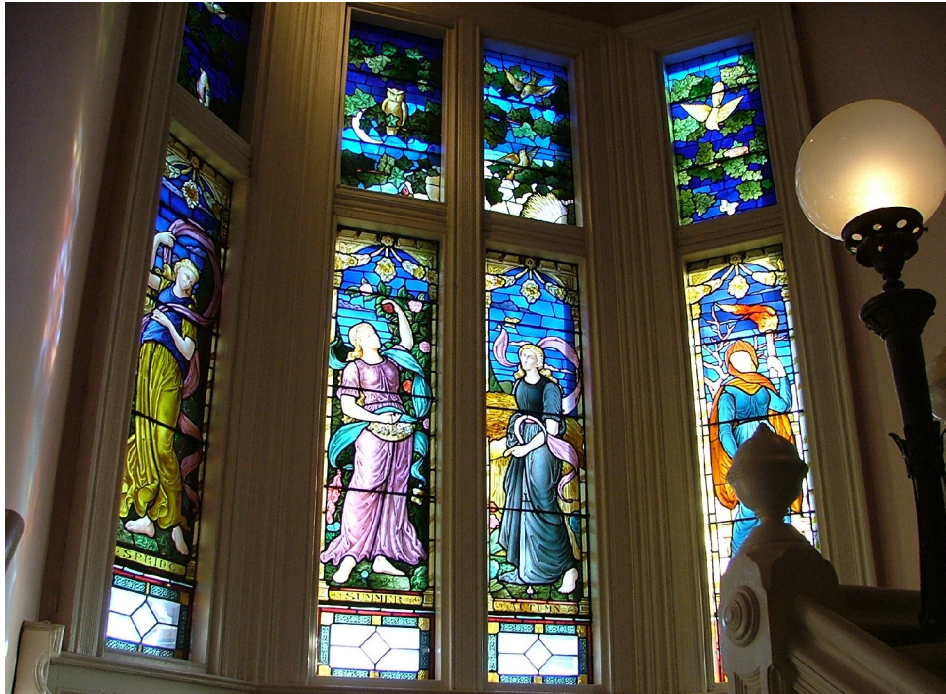
This map is for information purposes only.
The exact boundaries of the property are not shown.



South façade



Main hall



Front stair stained glass



Front hall fireplace

John F. Taylor House

Description

The property at 2 O'Connor Drive is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, 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 north side of O'Connor Drive where the street intersects with Broadview Avenue, the John F. Taylor House (1885) is a 2½-storey house form building. The property is listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

Statement of Significance

The John F. Taylor House is significant for its association with one of East York's founding families. John Fred Taylor belonged to the third generation of the family that established paper mills on the Don River in the early 1800s and went on to acquire other enterprises, including a brewery, in the Don Valley. After John and his brothers inherited the family business in 1885, they founded the Don Valley Pressed Brick Company, which produced building materials that were shipped across North America and also used in the construction of many structures in Toronto (the Don Valley Brick Works complex survives on Bayview Avenue as a recognized heritage site). To coincide with his inheritance, John F. Taylor assembled an irregularly-shaped parcel of land at present-day 2 O'Connor Drive where he commissioned a large residence. It was subsequently occupied for nearly 30 years by Robert L. Patterson (presumably a relative of Taylor's wife, Elizabeth Patterson), who named the estate "Fernwood." Beginning in 1930 and continuing into the 21st century, the property at 2 O'Connor was associated with the Ina Grafton Gage Home for the Aged, a nursing home operated by the United Church of Canada. The institution was named for the wife of Sir William Gage, the noted Toronto businessman and philanthropist whose trust fund financed the acquisition of the site.

Toronto architect D. B. Dick's designs for the John F. Taylor House were executed at the high point of his career during the 1880s. David Brash Dick (1846-1928) was a Scottish-born and trained architect who, following his arrival in Canada in the 1870s, entered into a short partnership with builder Robert Grant. During this period, Dick's major client was the Consumers' Gas Company, and he prepared plans for industrial, commercial and residential buildings for its president, James Austin. In solo practice, Dick designed many landmark buildings on the University of Toronto's St. George Campus, where he also oversaw the restoration of University College. Concurrent with the John F. Taylor House, Dick received residential commissions from other prominent businessmen in Toronto, among them politician Sir William Mulock, financier Sir Edmund Osler, and publisher Sir William Gage.

The John F. Taylor House is a well-crafted example of the Queen Anne Revival style applied to a residential building. Popular at the close of the 19th century when the scale and detailing of houses became increasingly exuberant, the style is identified by its asymmetrical shapes, variety of materials, and profusion of decorative elements. The John F. Taylor House displays a mixture of Queen Anne Revival features, including the distinctive corner tower and the ogee-shaped parapet containing an oriel window with stained glass panels. The ornamental flourishes continue on the interior, where the entrance hall and flanking library (southwest) and dining room (southeast) retain their original fireplaces and wood and plaster detailing.

Contextually, the John F. Taylor House is a landmark in East York. The building is positioned to terminate the vista extending north of Danforth Avenue along Broadview Avenue to O'Connor Drive. It is placed at the edge of a ravine overlooking the Don Valley to the west and north. With the changes in the neighbourhood over time, the John F. Taylor House is an important surviving remnant of the historical appearance of the area as the setting of residential estates.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the John F. Taylor House are:

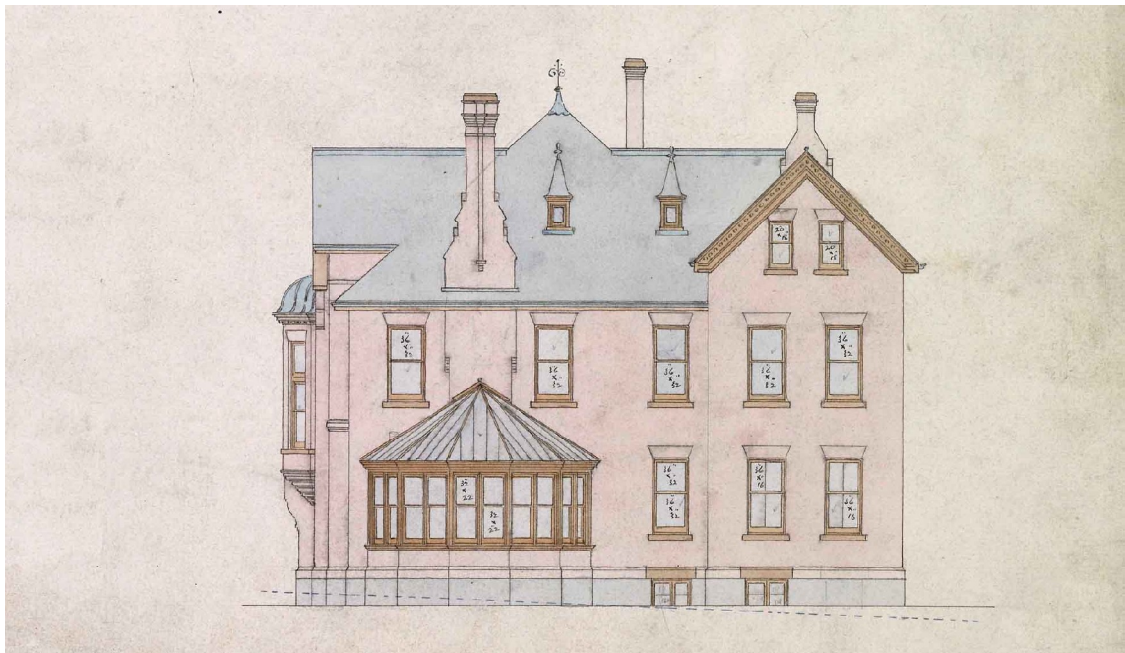
- The scale, form and massing
- Above a sandstone foundation with openings, the 2½-storey asymmetrical plan
- The materials, with brick, stone, wood, metal and glass
- The hipped roof, with gables, bargeboard, finials, dormers and brick chimneys (some of the roof details have been altered or removed)
- The principal (south) façade, with the gable with an ogee-shaped parapet over the entrance bay, the gabled frontispiece to the right (east), and the two-storey rounded corner tower with a domed roof and bellcast eaves on the left (west)
- The west and east elevations, with the gables and fenestration (which have been altered)
- The north wall overlooking the Don Valley, which retains much of its original character
- Located on the principal (south) façade, the main entrance where a round-arched surround contains a pair of paneled wood doors with etched glass inserts and a transom
- The fenestration, with flat-headed and segmental-arched window openings, which contain wood sash windows, with brick and stone trim
- On the south façade, the oversized three-sided oriel window with wood and metal detailing that contains a four-panel stained glass window depicting the four seasons
- The detailing, with decorative brickwork on the south façade, and brick string and belt courses

- On the interior, the layout of the first-floor rooms where the entrance hall is connected to the dining room (southeast) and the library (southwest)
- The detailing on the interior, with the paneled doors with stained glass inserts separating the vestibule and the entrance hall, the wood staircase and three sets of paneled doors with metal grille transoms in the entrance hall and, in the entrance hall, library and dining room, the fireplaces, decorative plasterwork, and wood door and window mouldings
- The setback of the house on the property, with landscaped open space to the south
- The location of the house to terminate the vista extending north along Broadview Avenue from Danforth Avenue to O'Connor Drive, and the views from the house to the south down Broadview Avenue, and to the north and west overlooking the Don Valley

The west and east additions to the John F. Taylor House, completed for the Ina Grafton Gage Home for the Aged in the 1940s through the 1970s, are not included in the Reasons for Designation.



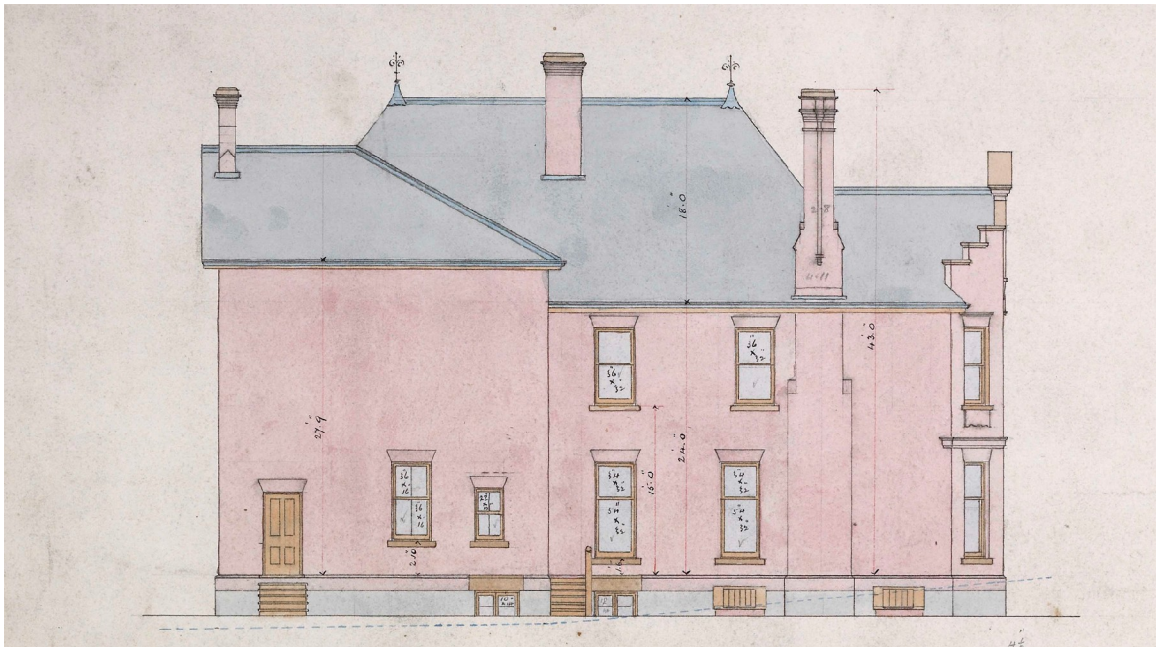
South elevation



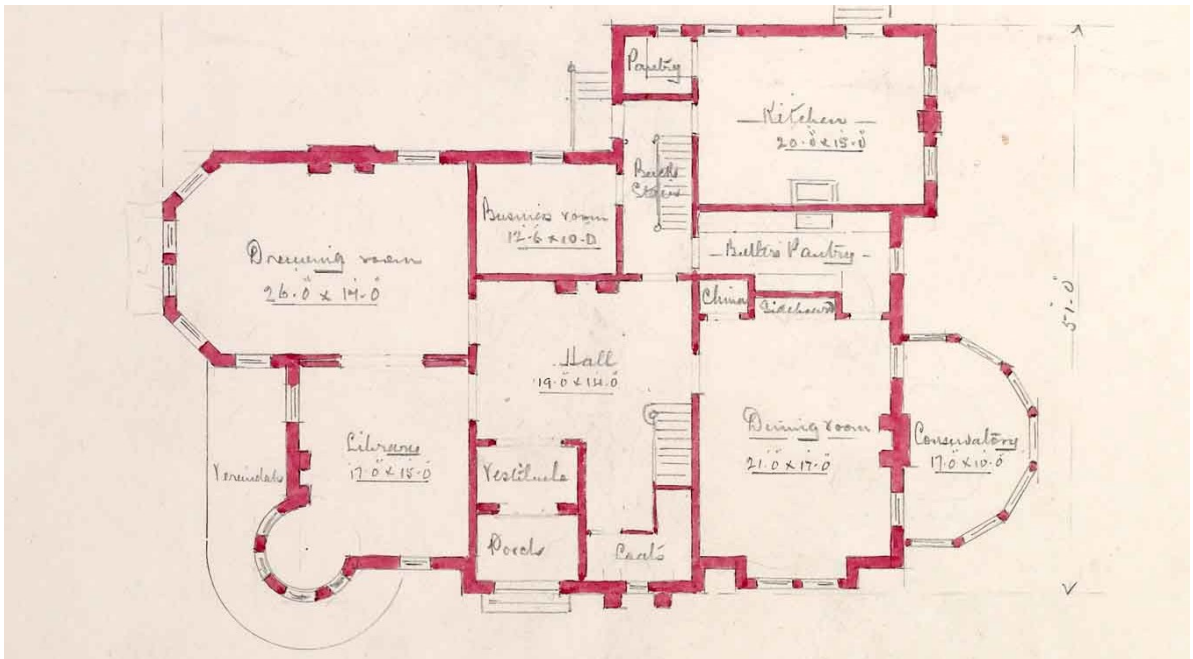
East elevation



West elevation



North elevation



Floor Plan



Site Plan

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

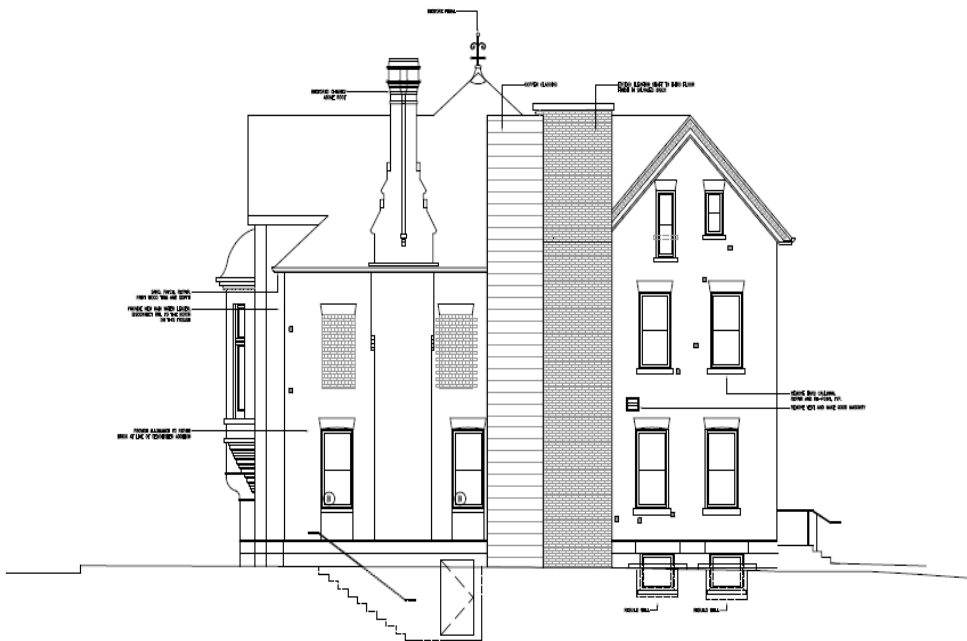
Not to Scale
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**2 O'Connor Drive and
2, 6 & 12 Fernwood Gardens**

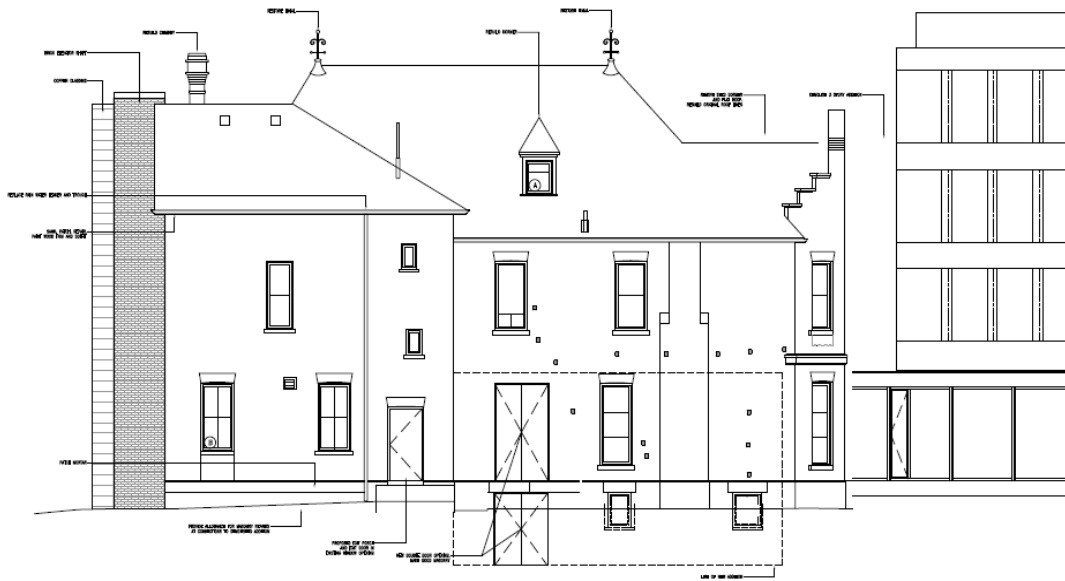
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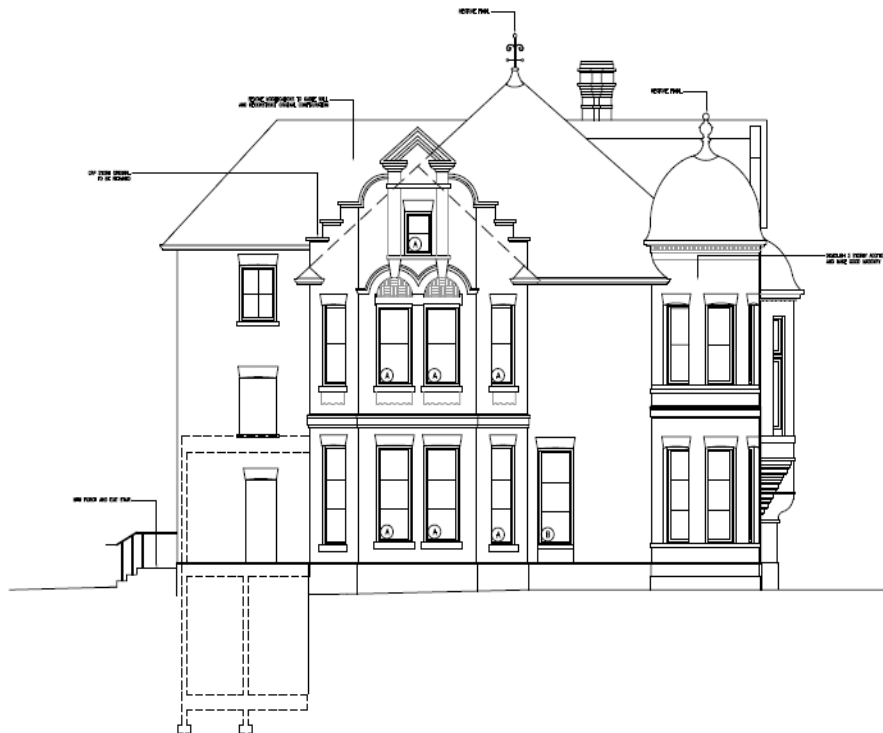
Proposed South Elevation



Proposed East Elevation



Proposed North Elevation



Proposed West Elevation