



Forest Hill Village Urban Design Guidelines

Spadina Road from Montclair Ave. to Strathearn Blvd.

City of Toronto

Forest Hill Village Urban Design Study - Urban Design Guidelines - June 2015

The City of Toronto City Planning Division would like to thank all those who participated in the community consultation process. This document has been enhanced by your knowledgeable and helpful feedback.

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Mandate

On February 19, 2014, City Council adopted a motion which asked Planning staff to study Forest Hill Village along Spadina Road between Montclair Avenue and Thelma Avenue. As part of this item, City Planning was requested to prepare urban design guidelines for Forest Hill Village to protect the small town feeling of this distinctive district.

Responding to this Council Motion, this guideline document provides appropriate design guidelines to maintain the small town character of the area by determining the appropriate **urban character, materials** and **building rhythm and articulation** to be used on future developments and/or renovations within the study area.

The Urban Design Guidelines in this document support high quality, appropriately scaled, and context-sensitive development in the study area. This includes proposed additions and renovations to buildings. The guidelines implement Official Plan policies, explain how development will respect and reinforce local character, identify architectural patterns of interest, and promote an animated public realm.

The Official Plan provides a long-term vision for the City that is intended to be supported by implementation plans, strategies and guidelines. These supporting documents, including the subject Urban Design Guidelines, provide detailed implementation guidance and respond to changing circumstances and priorities.



1. Introduction

Forest Hill Village is a unique retail area in Midtown Toronto. It is one of the few commercial shopping enclaves in the City that is wholly contained within a residential area. This unique character made Tourism Toronto name Forest Hill Village one of the few neighbourhoods in Toronto that is important for tourism due to its "small town feel".

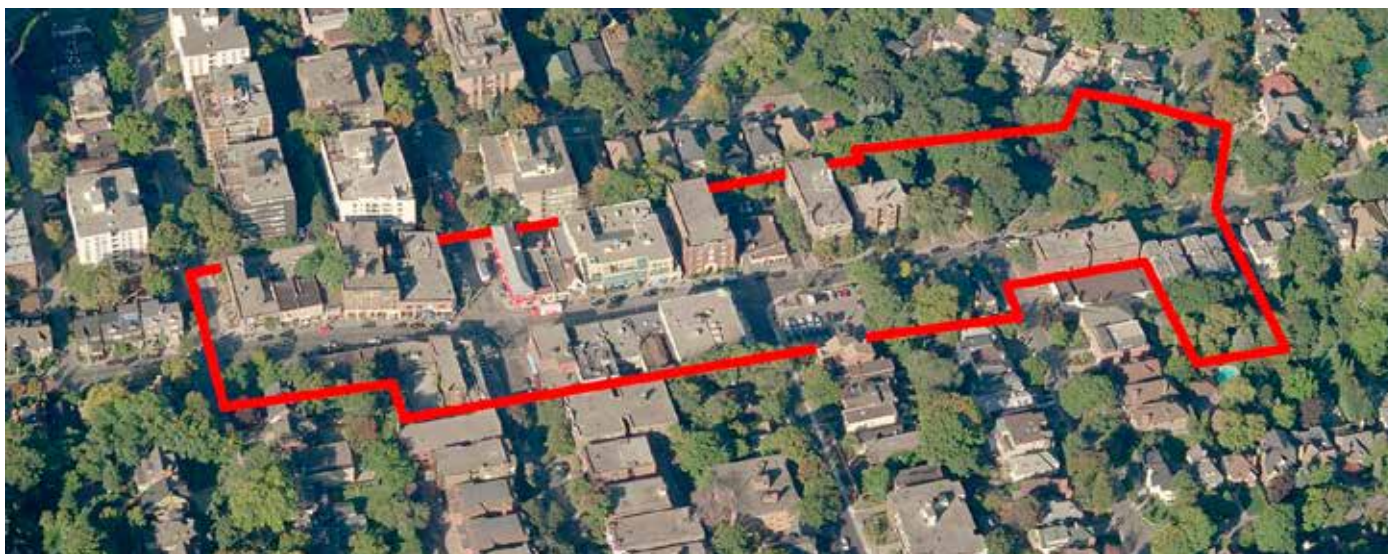
As in other areas of the City, however, Forest Hill Village is experiencing changes. If developments and renovations within the Village are not designed carefully, these changes might threaten the character and aesthetic that makes the Village unique. The guidelines will help to maintain the small town character of Forest Hill Village while allowing the Village to continue to evolve as a vibrant community.

1.1 STUDY AREA

The Council Motion initially defined the study area as the properties with frontage on Spadina Road between Montclair Avenue and Thelma Avenue, as well as adjacent buildings fronting onto Lonsdale Avenue.

Upon careful consideration, properties along Spadina Road up to Strathearn Boulevard were also included. The expanded study

area includes Suydam Park. The objective of the study area expansion is only to provide recommendations on public realm improvements. This study does not propose changes to the existing residential fabric or built form within the expanded area.



Bird Eye's View of the Study Area



Map of the Study Area

1.2 HISTORY

The Village of Forest Hill was incorporated in 1923 and remained a separate municipality until it was amalgamated with the City of Toronto in 1967.

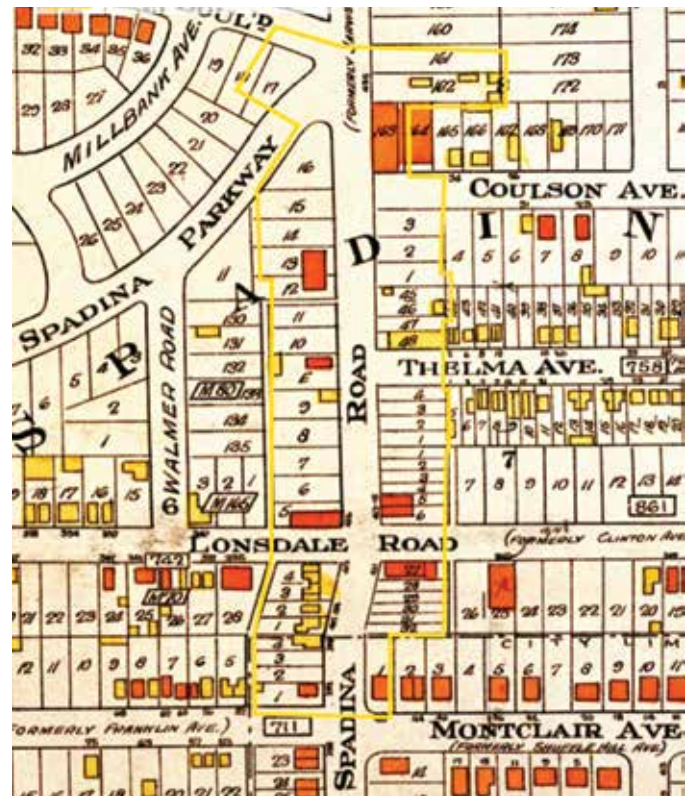
This Village was established as a bedroom community for the "fashionable society" wanting to escape the crowded and bustling City of Toronto in the 1920s. Its original limits were based on a historic school district boundary, defined by a community that wanted to maintain and control the quality of their local public schools. Forest Hill is unlike other historic villages in Ontario that typically grew out of industrial activity. The establishment and growth of Forest Hill was driven by high quality education, upscale residential development, low taxes and a local citizenry which actively put limits to industrial uses in the village. The study area in particular, is characterized by a concentration of commercial uses around the four corners of Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue, providing convenient goods and services to the residents of the Village of Forest Hill.

Development in the Village of Forest Hill was firmly rooted in rational urban planning. Strict by-laws were enforced that limited industrial uses and controlled the quality and appearance of new homes, requiring minimum costs to house construction and that the front elevation of all houses to be designed by an architect. The Village even established a Board of Architects to review applications for new residential construction.

Apartment buildings were strategically encouraged in order to keep taxes low for residents. The first apartment buildings in the village concentrated near the commercial intersection of Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue in the late 1920s. Apartment buildings developed along the northern portion of the study area provided a transition to the primarily single-detached character of Spadina Road. The apartment building at 404 Spadina Road was unique in its time as an apartment building with retail uses at grade. 404 Spadina Road was integrated with the commercial four corners at Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue.

The majority of buildings within the study area were constructed by the 1940s, with the exception of the Canadian Bank of Commerce building constructed at 462 Spadina Road in 1959, which introduced concrete modernist architecture to the early 20th century streetscape.

Forest Hill resisted amalgamation with the City of Toronto until 1967. Forest Hill intentionally remained a village to maintain the distinctive character of the area. Even after amalgamation with the City of Toronto, the study area remained relatively stable until two large commercial block buildings at 446 and 439 Spadina Road were built in the 1980s, replacing gas stations that were on each side of Spadina Road. These buildings extended the commercial street wall further north along Spadina Road.



Goald's Fire Insurance Plan 1924: indicating developments at corner of Spadina and Lonsdale after the Village was incorporated in 1923



Looking north on Spadina Road from Lonsdale Avenue, 1955 (Toronto Public Library)

1.3 PLANNING CONTEXT

Zoning

The southern section of the study area, mainly from Montclair Avenue to a few lots north of Thelma Avenue, is zoned CR2.5 C2.0 R2.0 (Commercial Residential) under City-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013. This zoning permits a wide range of commercial and residential uses. The maximum permitted density is 2.5 times the area of the lot. However, non-residential uses are limited to 2.0 times the area of the lot and residential uses are limited to 2.0 times the area of the lot. The maximum permitted height in the CR zone is 12m (approximately four-storeys).





Two properties are exempt from Zoning By-law 569-2013 and are subject to former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86. The

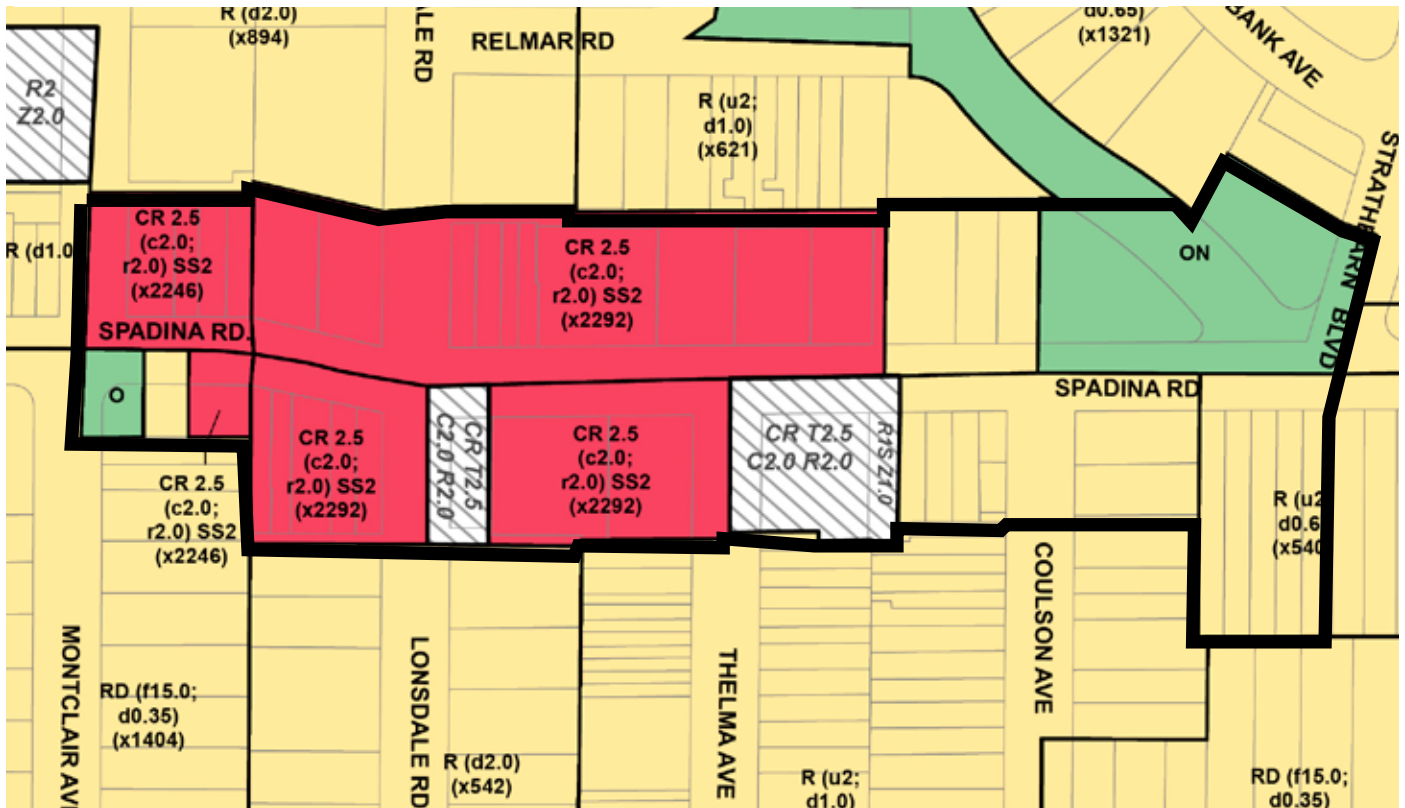
zoning permissions are consistent with those outlined in the current Zoning By-law.

The rest of the area is zoned O (Open Space), ON (Open Space Natural) and R u2 d1.0 (Residential). The Residential zoning permits a range of residential uses, with a maximum number of 2 dwelling units on a lot and a maximum density of 1.0 times the area of the lot. The maximum permitted height in the Residential zone is 11m.

No enclosed building is permitted on areas zoned Open Space or Open Space Natural.

Zoning By-law 569-2013

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Residential (R Residential; RD Residential Detached) |  See Former City of Toronto Bylaw No. 438-86 |
|  Commercial (CR Commercial Residential) | CR Mixed-Use District |
|  Open Space (O Open Space; ON Open Space Natural) | R1S Residential District |
| | R2 Residential District |



Existing and As-of-right Heights

Existing buildings in the study area are predominantly of low-rise character, mostly 2-3 storeys. The tallest buildings within the Study Area are 4 storeys high, which is approximately 11-12 metres.

The as-of-right heights, i.e. maximum heights permitted in the zoning by-law, generally correspond to the permitted land use: 12 metres for the Commercial Residential Zone, and 11 metres for the Residential Zone.

The as-of-right heights are distributed within the study area in the following manner:

- On the West side, the zoned height is 12 metres from Montclair Avenue to two lots north of Thelma Avenue, and 11 metres up to Suydam Park.
- On the East side, the zoned height is 11 metres on the lot immediately north of the Montclair Avenue Parkette and lots between Thelma Avenue to approximately Strathearn Boulevard; and 12 metres for the remainder of this street segment.

No buildings within the study area exceed the zoning permissions.



Existing building height in number of storeys



As-of-right height vs. existing building height

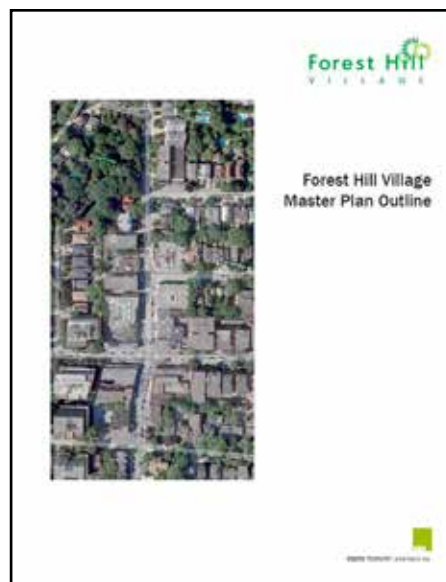
1.4 OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Forest Hill Village BIA Master Plan

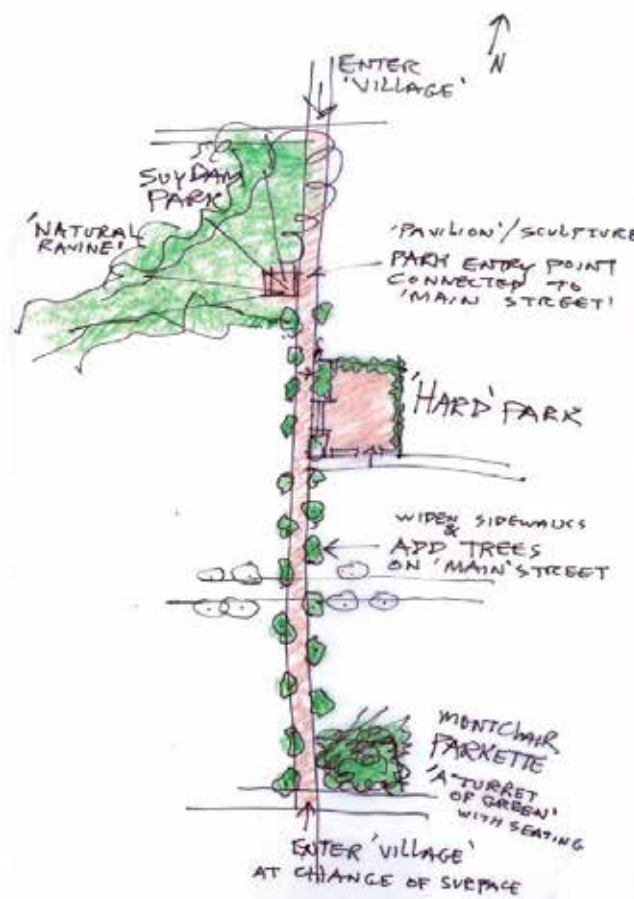
In 2012, the Forest Hill Village Business Improvement Area released an updated Forest Hill Village Master Plan Outline, intended to "create a framework to both foster and shepherd growth and change in a manageable way which can be flexible and responsive to market conditions."

The Forest Hill Village BIA Master Plan recommended strategies to promote and encourage more life on the street and provided guidance on the design of landscaping, open spaces, signage, parking and street widths.

The Forest Hill Village BIA Master Plan complements the Urban Design Guidelines in this document as the BIA Master Plan's main focus is the design of the public realm and streetscape enhancements.



The Forest Hill Village Master Plan prepared by the Forest Hill Village BIA



Forest Hill Village Master Plan Strategy sketch

1.5 CHARACTER ZONES

Based on Forest Hill Village's historic evolution, existing conditions and planning context, these Urban Design Guidelines identify two distinct character zones within the study area:

- Character Zone A** is characterized by a concentration of commercial uses and mixed-use developments from Montclair Avenue to a few lots north of Thelma Avenue. This section has a Main Street feel and encompasses the historic commercial intersection at Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue, which was the origin of the "Village".
- Character Zone B** is occupied by a combination of walk-up apartment buildings, single-detached houses and semi-detached houses in the north end of the study area. This is a stable residential area adjacent to a public park.

These Urban Design Guidelines anticipate redevelopment, renovations and infill development in the commercial character zone (Character Zone A). In contrast, the Guidelines do not anticipate major change in the residential character zone (Character Zone B).



Map showing Character Zone A and Character Zone B

2. Existing Character

The small town character of Forest Hill Village will be determined by the existing urban character, materials and building rhythm and articulation. Defining these elements will guide the identification of appropriate design guidelines for Forest Hill Village.



2.1 URBAN CHARACTER

Main Street Character and Scale

This area displays character elements typically found in a Main Street that is not an Avenue. Some of these elements are:

- Appropriate street enclosure that creates a sense of comfort to the pedestrian
- Bustling sidewalks with meeting places for local neighbours and the wider community
- Human scale, with features that reduce perceived building mass at the first or second floors to reinforce the base, such as awnings, recessed entrances, overhangs, etc.



Sidewalks with meeting places for the community



Architectural elements that reinforce the human scale at a pedestrian level

Access to Sky View

The low-rise scale of the study area creates an urban landscape that displays a generous proportion of sky view when viewed from the pedestrian level walking along the opposite sidewalk. This character is experienced along Spadina Road with buildings framing the street edge but still allowing a significant amount of sky view and sunlight on the streets.



Two views of Spadina Road looking North



Ground Floor Treatment

In the commercial zone (Character Zone A) of the study area, retail uses at grade have a strong presence, with floors above exhibiting a different architectural expression. Windows and doors at the ground floor also provide a higher level of transparency than found on the upper floors. Other building features such as awnings, overhangs, cornices, signage, change of materials, etc. also visually separate the ground level from the floors above. All these factors combined create a strong datum line that emphasizes the ground floor portion of the building.

Retail units at-grade are also characterized by small storefronts with individual entrances, creating visual diversity along the street. This diversity contrasts with the more symmetrical façades of upper floors.



Retail units along Spadina Road

2.2 Materials

Façade Material

The use of traditional materials such as brick and stone is dominant within the study area. The colour palette of these façade materials is displayed below. The range of colours exhibited within Forest Hill Village can be described as earthy-tones ranging from neutral to reddish-brown. Accents in façades are mostly provided through the lighter end of the colour palette.



Colour Palette



Sample of building facades and details within the study area

Glazing

Windows and doors at the ground floor provide a high level of transparency for storefront display. By contrast, upper levels are characterized by "punched-windows" against solid walls, lower levels of transparency, and mostly symmetrical openings.



Building facades along Spadina Road

2.3 Building Rhythm and Articulation

Vertical and Horizontal Articulations

In the commercial zone, upper floors are architecturally differentiated from the ground floor by elements that horizontally articulate the floor, lintel, or sill levels. Although there is a variety of building widths within the study area, buildings that are taller than two storeys display pronounced vertical articulations - mostly change of planes - to break the building mass.



Sample of building facades and details within the Study Area

Architectural Detailing

In both the commercial and residential zones, there is a prominent use of bay windows and oriel windows (an oriel window is a bay window that does not reach to the ground) to create breaks in a building's massing. This contributes to the fine grain architectural character of the Village as these elements break up the apparent length of the building into smaller façade sections.



Oriel windows on a commercial building



Bay windows on a residential building



Oriel windows on a mixed-use building

2.3 Building Rhythm and Articulation (cont'd)

Corner Treatment

At prominent corners, such as the intersection of Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue, the historical pattern of built form is characterized by chamfered corners facing the intersection. This is where main entrances have traditionally been located. If a corner entrance has been removed, the space created by the chamfered corner is utilized as a seating area. This reinforces the character of intersections as social spaces where people congregate and meet.



Buildings with chamfered corners

Recessed Entrances

Storefronts in Forest Hill Village typically have recessed entrances creating deep display windows that enliven the street. These types of entrances also help provide weather protection, a human-scale feel, and an uninterrupted sidewalk zone for pedestrians as the door swing will not encroach into the sidewalks.

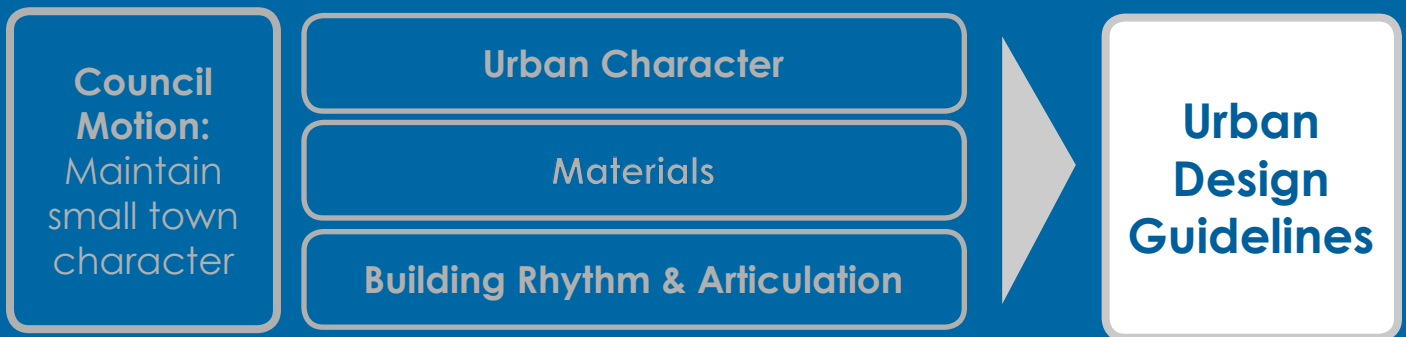


Newer buildings with recessed store entrances



Older buildings with recessed store entrances

3. Forest Hill Village Urban Design Guidelines

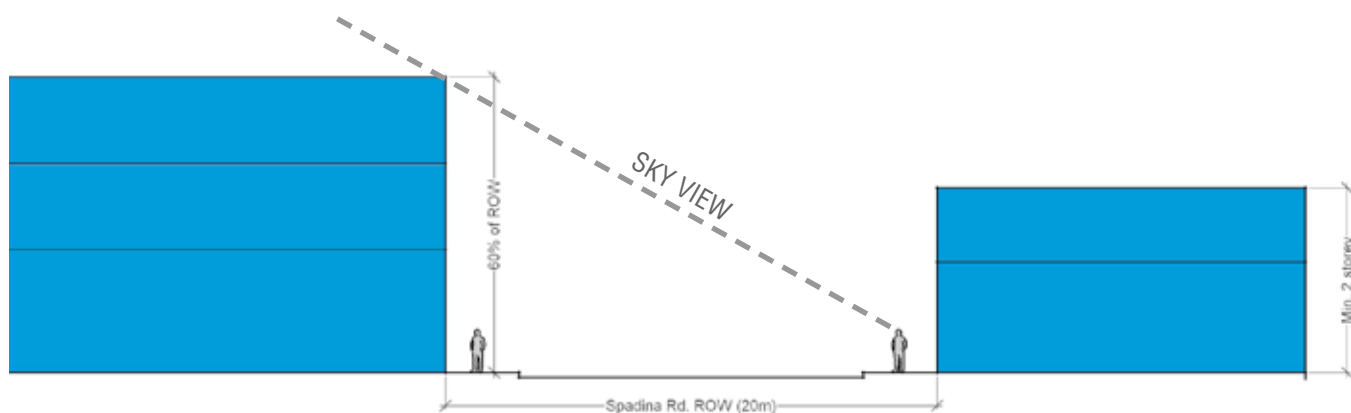


3.1 URBAN CHARACTER GUIDELINES

Guideline 3.1.1 Street Enclosure

An appropriate street enclosure in Forest Hill Village is a maximum of 60% of the street ROW (12m) and a minimum of 2 storeys (7.5m).

The maximum height of 12m relates to the existing permitted as-of-right height, which maintains the human scale of Forest Hill Village. Restricting the minimum height to two storeys will help reinforce the street edge along Spadina Road by avoiding gaps created by one-storey buildings.



Appropriate street enclosure on Spadina Road



3.1 URBAN CHARACTER GUIDELINES (cont'd)

Guideline 3.1.2 Sky View

Access to sky view from the opposite side of the sidewalk should be maintained.

Maintaining access to adequate levels of sky view when viewed from the street level helps to enhance the pedestrian experience along Spadina Road. It also helps to maintain the character of the area and sunlight on the sidewalks, which makes sidewalks more attractive and encourages pedestrian activities on the street.



View from opposite sidewalk



Existing sky view with as-of-right development



Loss of sky view due to increased height

Guideline 3.1.3 Front Setbacks

The front setbacks of new developments should generally match the front setbacks of adjacent buildings.

Façades are to be aligned to frame the street edge and the continuous feel of enclosure on Spadina Road. Some exceptions are permitted to allow facade articulations that help break the massing of the building, such as overhangs and small setbacks on upper levels. The depth of these articulations should not exceed 0.6 m.



Streetwall along Spadina Road



Guideline 3.1.4 Side Yard Setbacks

New developments in Character Zone A should be built to the side property line (zero side yard setback). Character Zone B remains unchanged.

Building to the side yard property line will create a continuous built form that frames Spadina Road in a suitable manner. This helps to reinforce the continuity of the street wall along Spadina Road and the strong commercial character at-grade.



West side of Spadina Road, from Lonsdale Avenue to approximately Thelma Avenue



East side of Spadina Road, from Montclair Avenue to Lonsdale Avenue

Guideline 3.1.5 Signage

A variety of signage will be encouraged. In general, back lit box signage is discouraged, individual lettering or cloth awnings are preferred.

The variety of individual store signage helps to add a dynamic character to the Village. Back-lit box signage and oversized lettering detract from the character of the buildings. In overall, signage should complement, but not overpower the building façade. The sign by-law governs signage in the study area.



Individual lettering preferred



Back lit box signage discouraged

3.2 MATERIALS GUIDELINES

Guideline 3.2.1 Façade Material

Use brick and stone as main building materials, with a colour palette that complements existing context.

Buildings along Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue should be clad in high quality materials that reflect the character of the street such as brick and stone. Colour and patterns associated with a particular corporate brand should be designed as highlights and not as the defining colour of the building.

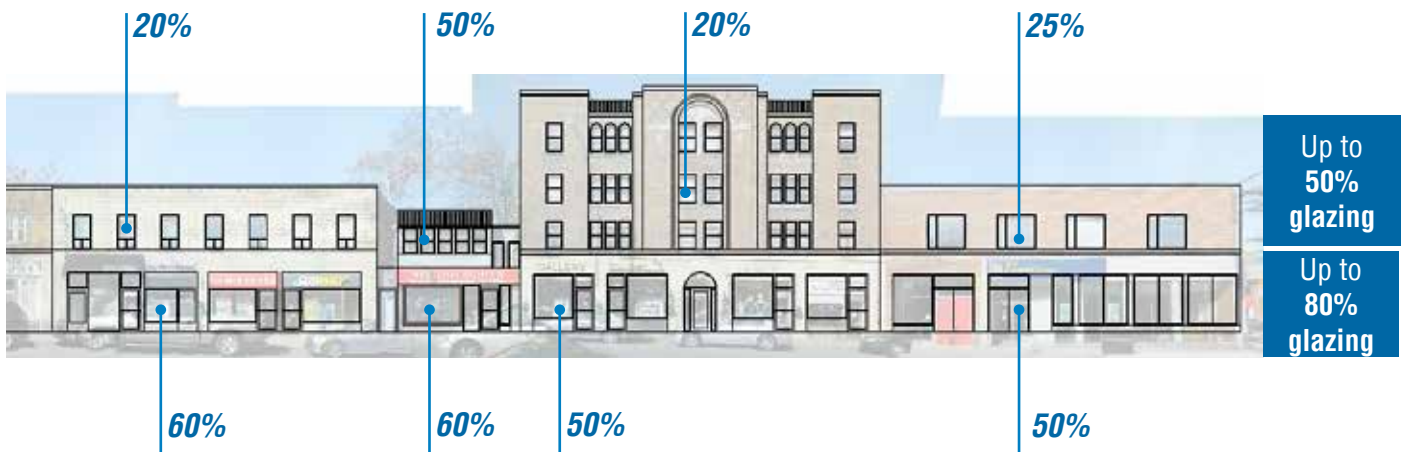


Colour palette of buildings on Spadina Road

Guideline 3.2.2 Glazing

Glazing in new developments should be limited to a maximum of 80% at ground level and 50% on upper floors.

The percentage of transparency in Forest Hill Village's older buildings is an average of 20%-50% in the upper levels and 50%-60% at ground level. Recognizing the need for larger displays and greater access to sunlight in newer developments, the recommended maximum percentage of glazing is 50% in upper floors and 80% at ground level. Continuous floor to ceiling glass is discouraged, and the use of thicker mullions is preferred as a way to articulate larger surfaces of glazing.



Guideline 3.2.3 Ground Floor

Changes of materials at the ground level are encouraged in order to emphasize the retail at-grade.

A horizontal rhythm and visual transition between the ground floor and the floors above in Forest Hill Village is articulated in façade designs through a change in materials and a shift in the proportion of glazing. Creating such articulation helps to reinforce the strong retail presence of the ground floor.



Retail units exhibiting a change of materials at ground level



3.3 BUILDING RHYTHM & ARTICULATION GUIDELINES

Guideline 3.3.1 Vertical Articulation

On buildings taller than two storeys, there should be vertical articulations at a rhythm of every 8m maximum.

Vertical articulation helps break a building's massing and create a finer grained façade that complements the existing character of Forest Hill Village. This can be achieved through architectural detailing that provides a three-dimensional texture which creates a play of light and shadows on façades.



Guideline 3.3.2 Storefront Width

At-grade retail should be articulated to look as individual store fronts of between 5m to 8m.

Ground floor retail in Forest Hill Village currently has more articulation than the upper levels of buildings, with individual entrances and display windows that are interrupted at a certain rhythm. This helps to create the vibrancy and diversity that characterizes the Village. Regardless of the size of the retail unit, storefronts should be articulated to reflect the fine-grain rhythm along Spadina Road.



Guideline 3.3.3 Retail Height

Follow the retail datum line of adjacent buildings through architectural articulations.

Existing retail units on Spadina Road create a clearly defined ground level due to a shift of architectural language and façade materials that continues along the street. New developments should match this strong datum line regardless of interior ceiling height, with weather protection or decorative features such as cornices, canopies, or retractable awnings.



3.3 BUILDING RHYTHM & ARTICULATION GUIDELINES (cont'd)

Guideline 3.3.4 Bay Windows

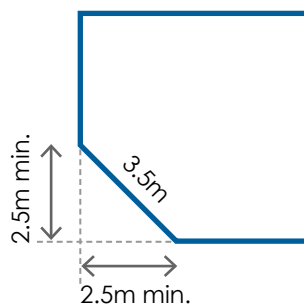
Where appropriate, incorporate bay or oriel windows to emphasize vertical articulation.

The use of bay and oriel windows is a recurrent theme in old and new buildings within Forest Hill Village. Incorporating these features encourages an architectural pattern that is part of the character of the study area and helps reinforce vertical articulations in a building façade.



Guideline 3.3.5 Corners

On important street corners, chamfer building corners at 45 degrees with a minimum distance of 2.5m to allow for main entrances or seating areas.



In prominent corners, such as the intersection of Spadina Road with Lonsdale Avenue, chamfered corners are key to creating breathing room on the sidewalks and a building entrance of greater importance. Buildings at these intersections are also made prominent by addressing all sides of the street. In less prominent corners, such as the intersection of Spadina Road and Thelma Avenue, chamfered corners can enhance the public realm and provide community meeting places through the design of seating areas.



Guideline 3.3.6 Recessed Entrances

Where the lot width allows, retail entrances should be recessed by a minimum of 1.2m.

A characteristic of the existing buildings along Spadina Road is their recessed store entrances. New developments should continue this characteristic, which contributes to a wider pedestrian clearway and ensures that door swings do not interrupt the sidewalk right-of-way.



Recessed entrance in a newer building



Recessed entrance in a newer building



Recessed entrance in an older building

3.4 PUBLIC REALM GUIDELINES

Two open spaces punctuate both entries to Forest Hill Village: Montclair Avenue Parkette and Suydam Park. Additional street embellishments such as coordinated street furniture, enhanced paving, and planting will be encouraged to make these soft street edges interesting and appealing. Open space improvements will be analyzed in consultation with Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff.

Additional recommendations on streetscape and open space improvements can be found in the Forest Hill Village BIA Master Plan, which provides guidance on the design of landscaping, open spaces, signage, parking and street widths.

For more information on the Forest Hill Village BIA Master Plan, please visit foresthillvillage.ca.



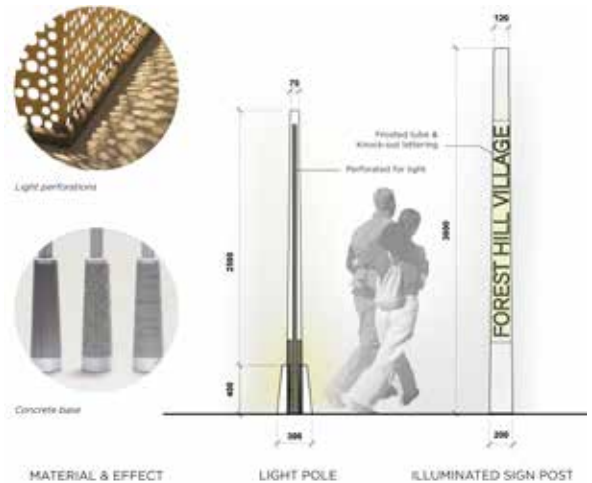
Montclair Avenue Parkette



Suydam Park



Images from the Forest Hill Village BIA Master Plan



Appendices

Appendix A

Demonstration of the Design Guidelines: Example 1

Below is an illustration demonstrating how the proposed Urban Design Guidelines can guide a new development by complementing the existing character of Forest Hill Village:

- 1 **Urban Character Guideline:** Individual lettering signage
- 2 **Materials Guideline:** 40% glazing on upper levels and 80% at grade
- 3 **Materials Guideline:** Brick colour that complements existing palette
- 4 **Materials Guideline:** Change in materials at ground level
- 5 **Building Rhythm & Articulation Guideline:** Recessed entrance
- 6 **Building Rhythm & Articulation Guideline:** Vertical rhythm emphasized through window design



Intersection of Spadina Road and Lonsdale Road, looking North



Appendix A

Demonstration of the Design Guidelines: Example 2

Below is an illustration demonstrating how the proposed Urban Design Guidelines can guide a new development by complementing the existing character of Forest Hill Village:

- 1 **Urban Character Guideline:** Awnings as weather protection and decorative feature to strengthen at-grade retail
- 2 **Materials Guideline:** 40% glazing on upper levels and 80% at grade
- 3 **Materials Guideline:** Brick colour that complements existing palette
- 4 **Materials Guideline:** Change in materials at ground level
- 5 **Building Rhythm & Articulation Guideline:** Recessed entrance
- 6 **Building Rhythm & Articulation Guideline:** Use of bay windows to emphasize vertical rhythm



Intersection of Spadina Road and Lonsdale Road, looking North



Appendix B

Spadina Road Streetscapes

WEST SIDE



Montclair Avenue to Lonsdale Avenue



Lonsdale Avenue to approximately Thelma Avenue



Approximately Thelma Avenue to Suydam Park



Suydam Park

EAST SIDE



Montclair Avenue to Lonsdale Avenue



Lonsdale Avenue to Thelma Avenue



Thelma Avenue to Coulson Avenue



Coulson Avenue to approximately Strathearn Blvd.

Appendix C

Heritage Overview

1.0 Evolution of Built Form in the Village Forest Hill

This section provides a historical overview of the development of the study area, located within the historic Village of Forest Hill (see Figure 1), in order to describe the evolution of its built form. The Village of Forest Hill was incorporated in 1923 and remained a separate municipality until it was amalgamated with the City of Toronto in 1967.

The Village of Forest Hill was established as a bedroom community for the "fashionable society" wanting to escape the crowded and bustling City of Toronto in the 1920s (Lundell, 55). Its original limits are based on a historic school district boundary, defined by a community that wanted to maintain and control the quality of their local public schools. Forest Hill is unlike other historic villages in Ontario that typically grew out of industrial activity. Rather, the establishment and growth of Forest Hill was driven by high quality education, upscale residential development, low taxes and a local citizenry which actively put limits to industrial uses in the village (French, 76). The study area, located along Spadina Road between Strathearn Boulevard and Montclair Avenue, is characterized by a concentration of commercial uses around the four corners of Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue, providing convenient goods and services to the residents of the Village of Forest Hill.

This analysis informs the identification of properties recommended for study to determine potential heritage value in section 1.6.



Figure 1: Study area within the historic Village of Forest Hill (City of Toronto Archives)



Figure 2: Spadina Road looking north from Heath Street, 1948 (City of Toronto Archives)

1.1 Early Development – Early Land Owners (1800 – 1860)

Early in Toronto's history, the study area and its surroundings were established as park lots, outside of the early city (then called the Town of York), where government officials and British landed gentry often built their summer homes. In 1860, early settler John Wickson built his summer home called "Forest Hill" at the corner of Eglinton Avenue and Old Forest Hill Road, which provided the name for the future village (Dunkelman, 63).

The study area remained largely undeveloped throughout the 19th century. The study area is part of a park lot (24, 3rd concession road), which was initially granted to the Powell family (c1800) and eventually passed to the estate of Samuel Peter Jarvis (likely through the marriage of Mary Boyles Powell, daughter of William Dummer Powell). Samuel Peter Jarvis did not build on this plot of land, preferring to build his home, the Hazelburn estate, closer to the city where he also owned land (park lot 6, 1st concession road).

A map of the area from 1860 indicates that this land belonged the "daughters of late Samuel Jarvis" (see Figure 3).

The land adjacent to the study area, south of the Jarvis' property was owned by the Baldwin family, who laid out Spadina Avenue as a grand procession from the lake shore to their summer home, "Spadina House" just north of Davenport.¹

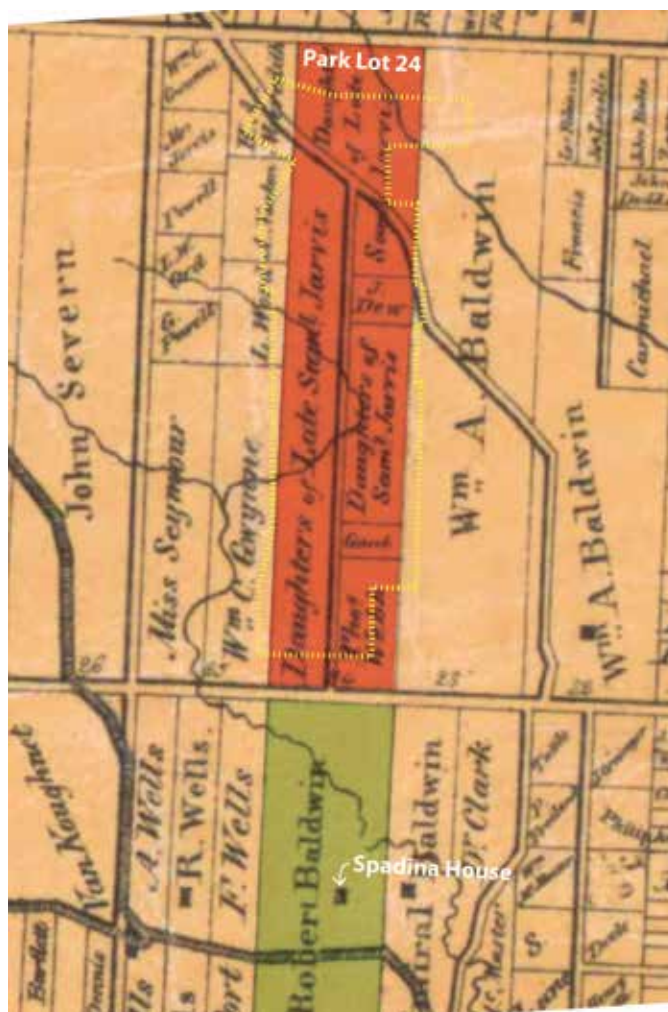


Figure 3: Tremaine's Map of the County of York, Canada West, 1860: showing the study area as part of historic park lot 24, 3rd concession road. The Baldwin family owned the adjacent park lot immediately south of the study area where Spadina House was constructed.

¹ Spadina Avenue was laid out in 1836 by Dr. William Warren Baldwin. He named the street after his house on top of the hill, "espadinong," meaning hill (Gould and Wise, 208).

1.2 Early Development – Street Layout (1860 – 1900)

The study area is located along a portion of Spadina Road that was formerly called Jarvis Street. This portion of Spadina Road, running north-south between St. Clair Avenue and the intersection of Old Forest Road, was initially called "Jarvis", after the family that owned this park lot (24, 3rd concession road). Old Forest Hill Road is one of the earliest roads in the city and follows an aboriginal trail along the historic Forest Hill stream, tributary to the Castle Frank brook (www.lostrivers.ca). Currently buried underground in storm sewers, the natural topography of Cedervale Ravine serves as a reminder of these historic streams. Suydam Park at Stratheam Boulevard, at the north-western edge of the study area has long served as an access to the Cedervale Ravine for the area's earliest residents.

In 1886, James Austin purchased Spadina House and surrounding lands from the Baldwin family, directly south of the study area. In 1889, James Austin subdivided the western half of his property, extending Spadina Road through his property and connecting to the study area (see Figure 4). At this time, Jarvis Street was renamed Spadina Road. Samuel Peter Jarvis likely preferred to use his namesake for the grander Jarvis Street we know in Toronto today, which he had hired prominent Toronto architect John Howard to design in 1846 (Lundell, 55).

Similar to James Austin, land owners in the study area speculatively subdivided their lands between 1884 and 1890 in response to the booming and quickly expanding city to the south. Nevertheless, the area remained largely undeveloped to the end of the 19th century.

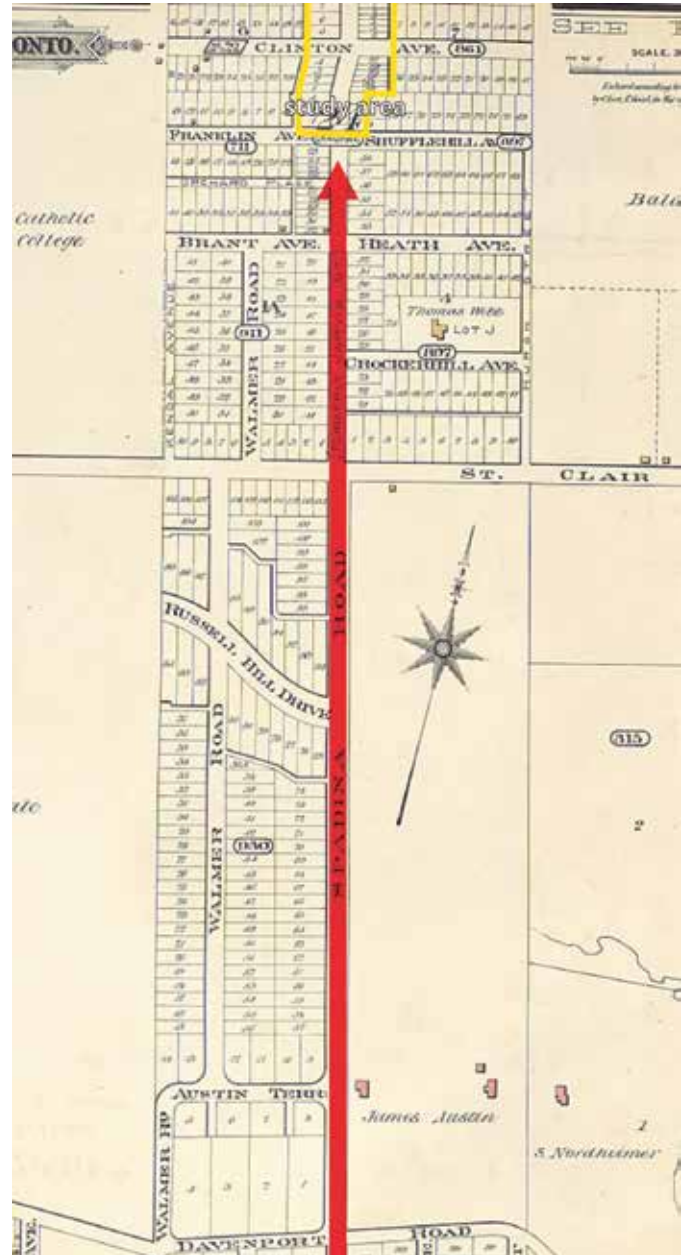


Figure 4: Goad's Fire Insurance Plan, 1890: showing Spadina Road extending north beyond St. Clair to "formerly Jarvis Street" (City of Toronto Archives)

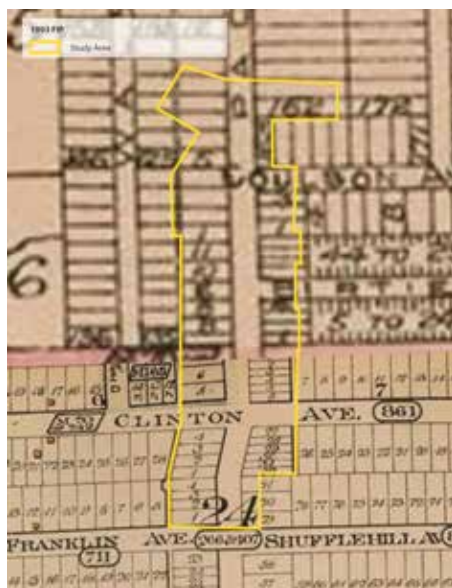
1.3 Early Development - Spadina Heights (1900 - 1923)

The origin of the Village of Forest Hill as an autonomous community outside of Toronto, within York Township begins in the 20th century, with the establishment of Spadina Heights. Spadina Heights is the precursor to the Village of Forest Hill and was defined by the boundaries of York Township School District. School District 30 was established in 1910 when local residents petitioned York Township council for their own school. School District 30 provided the basis for the boundaries of the Village of Forest Hill when it was incorporated in 1923.

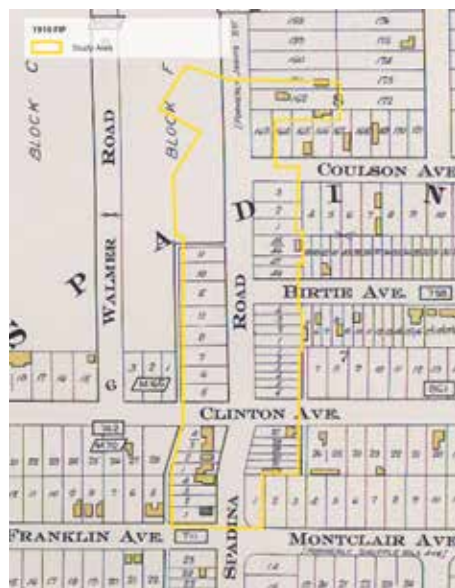
The study area experienced its first wave of development between 1900 and 1924. Fire insurance plans from 1903 and 1910

provide evidence of the burgeoning community illustrating early development around Spadina and Lonsdale (see Figures 5-6). Spadina and Lonsdale (formerly Clinton Street) would become the main intersection of the Spadina Heights community.

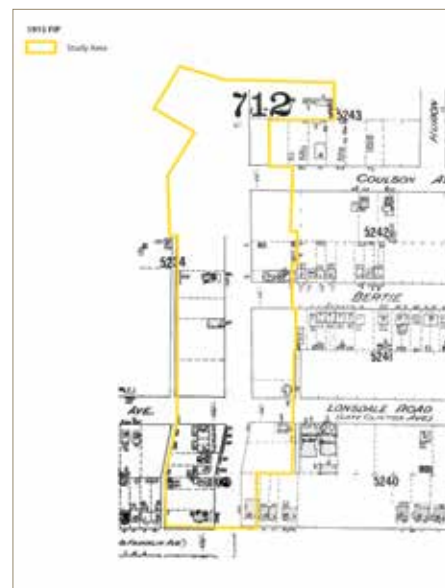
Prior to incorporation as a village, the study area consisted of a row of grocers along the south west corner of Spadina and Lonsdale, and a church building at the north east corner of Spadina and Thelma (currently a surface parking lot). 398 Spadina Road was built during this period and was one of the original grocery stores in the study area (see Figure 7).



Figures 5: Goad's Fire Insurance Plans 1903



Figures 6: Goad's Fire Insurance Plans 1910



Figures 7: Goad's Fire Insurance Plans 1915 (indicating grocers located at Spadina and Lonsdale and a church at Bertie Ave (now Thelma Ave))

1.4 Village of Forest Hill (1924-1967)

In response to what local residents observed as poor public services provided by York Township and the booming, unplanned development of Toronto to the south, the Spadina Heights community petitioned the Province for secession in 1923. They hoped to maintain lower taxes while controlling the high quality of education and residential development that characterized the area (French, 8). Forest Hill was incorporated as a village later that year (see Figure 8).

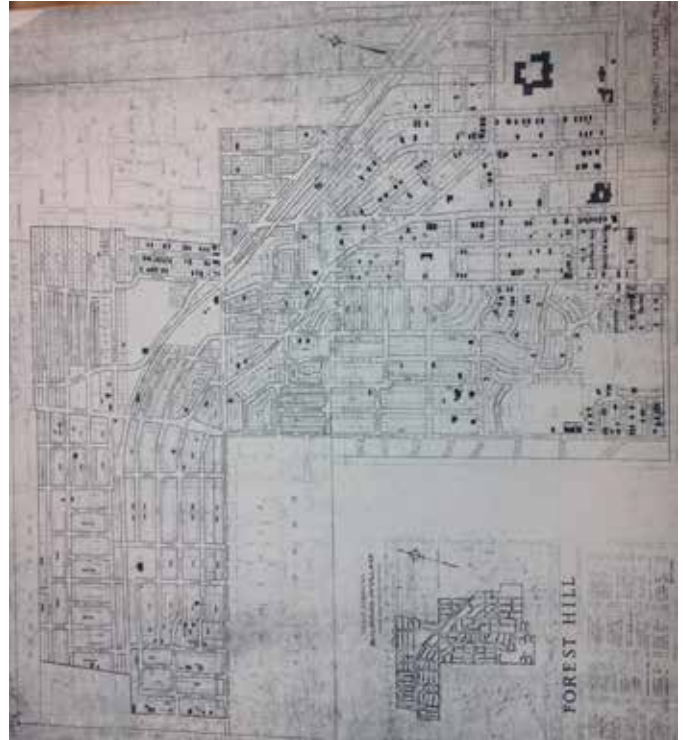
By the time of incorporation, the four corners of Spadina and Lonsdale had been reinforced as the community's central intersection with commercial buildings providing convenience goods to the local community. The intersection of Spadina Road and Montclair Avenue at the southern end of the study area was outside the village limits of Forest Hill.



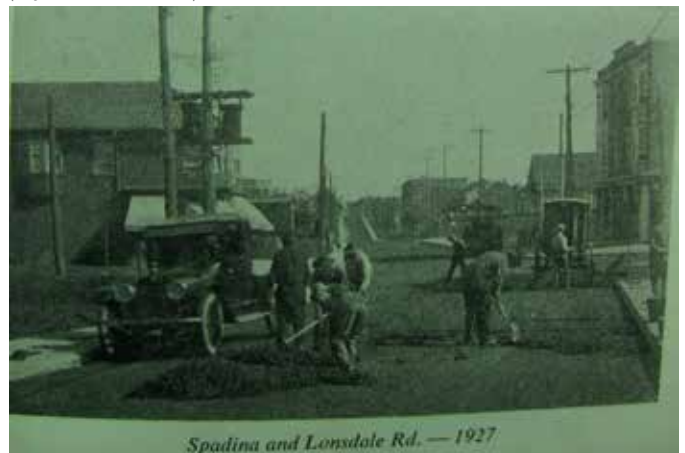
Figures 10: View of northeast corner of Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue today



Figures 11: Northwest corner of Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue 1967 (in "Historic walk: Village of Forest Hill")



Figures 8: Map of the Village of Forest Hill at year of incorporation, 1923. The Village of Forest Hill boundaries are based on the boundaries of School District 30 in York Township (City of Toronto Archives).



Figures 9: Looking north on Spadina Road at Lonsdale Avenue intersection in 1927 in "A Most Unlikely Village"

When the Village of Forest Hill first formed as a municipality, the administrative offices were rented above the store at 417 Spadina Road at the northeast corner of the Spadina and Lonsdale intersection. In 1930, the municipal offices were moved to the bank building at 410 Spadina Road at the southwest corner of the Spadina and Lonsdale intersection. The municipal offices moved to the first purpose built municipal building and library complex at 700 Eglinton Avenue in 1962 (French, 23).

A large proportion of the study area was developed within the first ten years of the village's incorporation between 1924 and 1934 (see figure 13: Periods of Construction map). Commercial uses, concentrated around the four corners of Spadina and Lonsdale spilled north and south along Spadina Road, establishing the character of the study area. An article from the *Globe and Mail* in 1982 states:

...the heart of the truly historic part of the [Village of Forest Hill] lies to the south, in a two-block area north of St. Clair on Spadina Road. Here, the tiny cluster of stores are reminiscent of small-town Ontario at the turn of the century. The buildings are mostly two-story, the storefronts modestly set in wooden frames, with little or no chrome or garish signs in evidence, and certainly none of the olde shoppe nonsense often to be found in new shopping malls.

Kathleen Rex, Globe and Mail, January 13, 1982 SB17.



Figures 12: The Village of Forest Hill municipal offices were located above the bank at 410 Spadina Road



Figure 13: Periods of Construction Map

Urban Planning and Design Review in the Village of Forest Hill

Development in the Village of Forest Hill was firmly rooted in rational urban planning. Strict by-laws were enforced that limited industrial uses and controlled the quality and appearance of new homes, requiring minimum costs to house construction and that the front elevation of all houses to be designed by an architect. The Village even established a Board of Architects to review applications for new residential construction. On the other hand, there were no restrictions on who could purchase property in the village. The high quality of education, active citizenry and lack of racial discrimination drew many Jewish residents from the crowded central section of Toronto to Forest Hill, beginning in the late 1930s (French, 55). By 1961, Jewish residents comprised almost half of the Forest Hill population, the highest proportion in any Canadian municipality at the time.

Apartment buildings were strategically encouraged in the development of the Village of Forest Hill, predominantly along Eglinton Avenue in the mid 1930s, in order to keep taxes low for residents (French, 55). The first apartment buildings in the village concentrated near the Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue intersection in the late 1920s. Apartment buildings developed

along the northern portion of the study area provided a transition to the primarily single-detached character of Spadina Road, moving away from the commercial four corners at Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue. The apartment building at 404 Spadina Road is distinguished as an apartment building with retail uses at grade, integrating with the commercial four corners at Spadina Road and Lonsdale Avenue.

The Forest Hill Manor Apartments at 404 Spadina Road was designed in 1930 by Pittsburgh-born architect, Herbert George Duerr (www.dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org). Duerr designed several movie theatres in Toronto and other municipalities across Ontario. 404 Spadina Road is currently listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register.

The majority of buildings within the study area were constructed by the 1940s, with the exception of the Canadian Bank of Commerce building constructed at 462 Spadina Road in 1959. The bank building at 462 Spadina Road introduced concrete modernist architecture to the early 20th century streetscape.



Figure 14: Municipality of Forest Hill, By-law map, 1939 (City of Toronto Archives)



Figures 15: Forest Hill Manor Apartments at 404 Spadina Road, constructed in 1930, designed by architect Herbert George Duerr



Figures 16: Looking north on Spadina Road from Lonsdale Avenue, 1955 (Toronto Public Library)

1.5 Amalgamation with the City of Toronto (1967 – Present)

Forest Hill resisted amalgamation with the City of Toronto until 1967. Forest Hill intentionally remained a village to maintain the "distinction" that had come to characterize the area. As stated in a 1930s report on the operational and financial position of the village:

To become a town would eliminate the distinction which the term village has assumed in connection with Forest Hill, which has had no small psychological effect in attracting the present type of development and in retaining the affection and loyalty of its residents... The loss of the word village might possibly be felt insofar as future development is concerned. It is difficult to estimate any such loss in dollars and cents."

French, 49

Even after amalgamation with the City of Toronto, the study area remained relatively stable until two large commercial block buildings at 446 and 439 Spadina Road were built in the 1980s, replacing gas stations that had been on each side of Spadina Road. These buildings extended the commercial street wall further north along Spadina Road.

1.6 Properties Recommended for Study to Determine Potential Heritage Value

West Side of Spadina Road

Street Number	Description	Date	Interest
398	Two storey wood-frame building with storefront at grade, residential above. Indicated as grocer on 1915 fire insurance plan.	1903-1910	Building predates incorporation of Forest Hill as a village in 1923.
404	Four storey brick apartment building with storefronts at grade. Forest Hill Manor Apartments. Designed by Herbert George Duerr.	1930	Listed on City of Toronto's heritage register
414	Two storey brick, commercial building. Flat roof. Village of Forest Hill municipal offices were located in this building, above the bank.	1924-1934	Original "four corners" building. Village municipal offices located above the bank.
416	Two storey brick mixed-use building with hipped roof and bay windows. Storefront is altered. Indicated as "Hilton's store" in "Historic Walk: Village of Forest Hill"..	1913-1924	Original "four corners" building.
418	One storey commercial building with hipped roof. Decorative parapet.	1934-1947	Early building associated with the Village of Forest Hill
448	Four storey brick apartment building	1924-1934	Early apartment building with fine architectural details.
462	One storey concrete modernist bank building	1959	Modernist architecture
464	Four storey brick apartment building	1924-1934	Early apartment building with fine architectural details.
466	Three storey brick apartment building	1913-1924	Early apartment building with fine architectural details.
468	Two and a half storey brick building	1924-1934	Early building associated with the Village of Forest Hill
470	Two and a half storey brick building	1924-1934	Early building associated with the Village of Forest Hill

East Side of Spadina Road

Street Number	Description	Date	Interest
387-385	Two storey commercial building with cornice and parapet details.	1924-1934	Early commercial building with fine architectural details.
389	Two storey buff brick commercial building with parapet. Indicated as groceria in 1934 fire insurance plan.	1924-1934	Early commercial building and storefront
393	Three storey buff brick commercial building with Spanish Colonial style detailing.	1924-1934	Early commercial building
327	Two storey red brick building with parapet	1913-1924	Original "four corners" building.
417	Three storey commercial red building with bay windows with 10 over 1 sash windows and overhanging cornice over storefront. Municipal offices located above storefront before moving to 414 Spadina Road.	1913-1924	Original "four corners" building.
467-469	Four storey brick apartment building	1913-1924	Early apartment building with some original materials



Figure 14: Properties Recommended for Study to Determine Potential Heritage Value

Bibliography

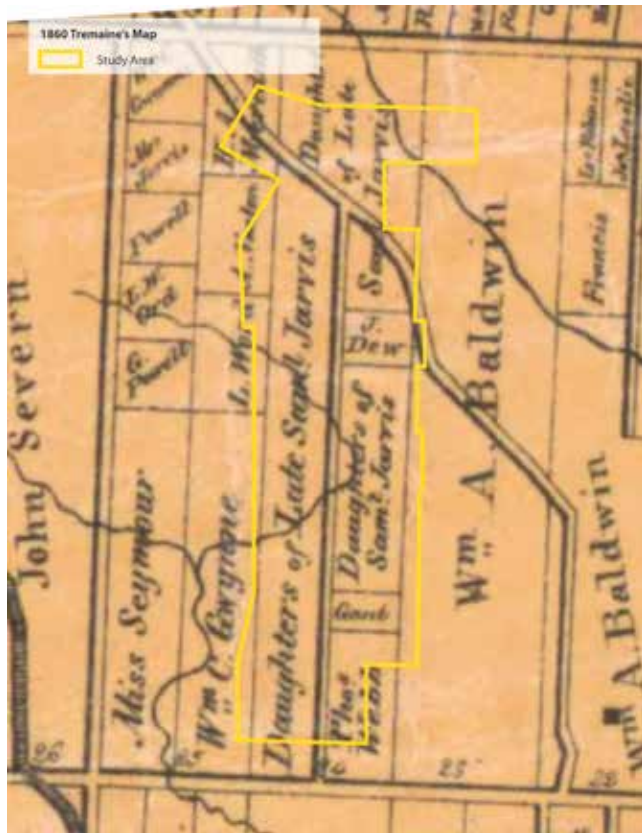
French, William. *A Most Unlikely Village: an Informal History of the Village of Forest Hill*. Toronto: Corporation of the Village of Forest Hill, c1964.

Gould, Allan and Leonard Wise. *Toronto Street Names: An Illustrated Guide to Their Origins*. Richmond Hill: Firefly Books Ltd, 2011.

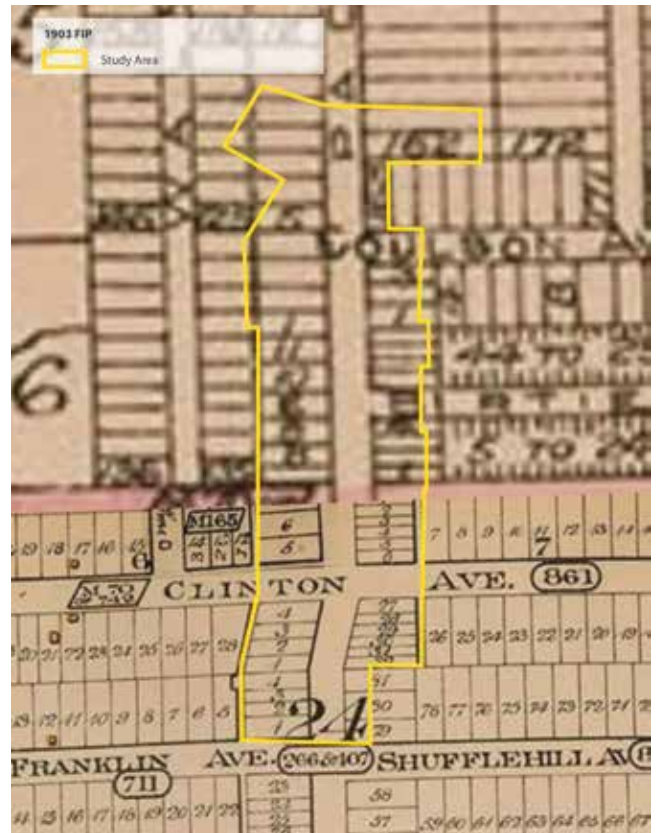
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Historical Maps



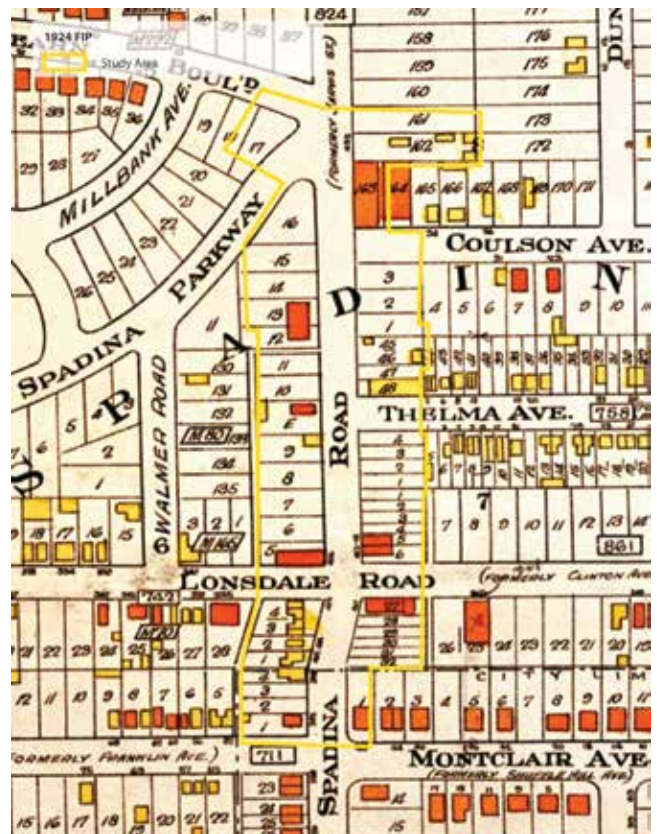
1860 Tremaine's Map



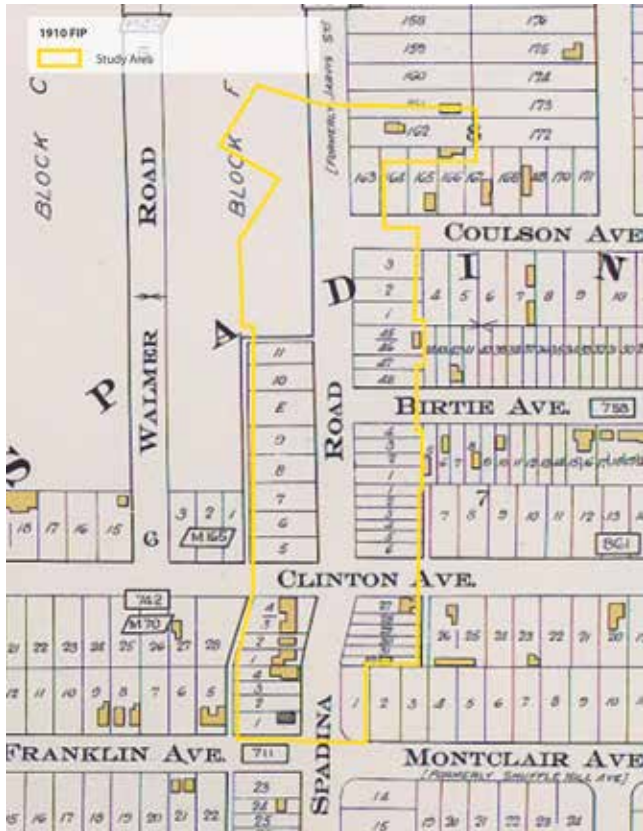
1903 Goad's Fire Insurance Plan



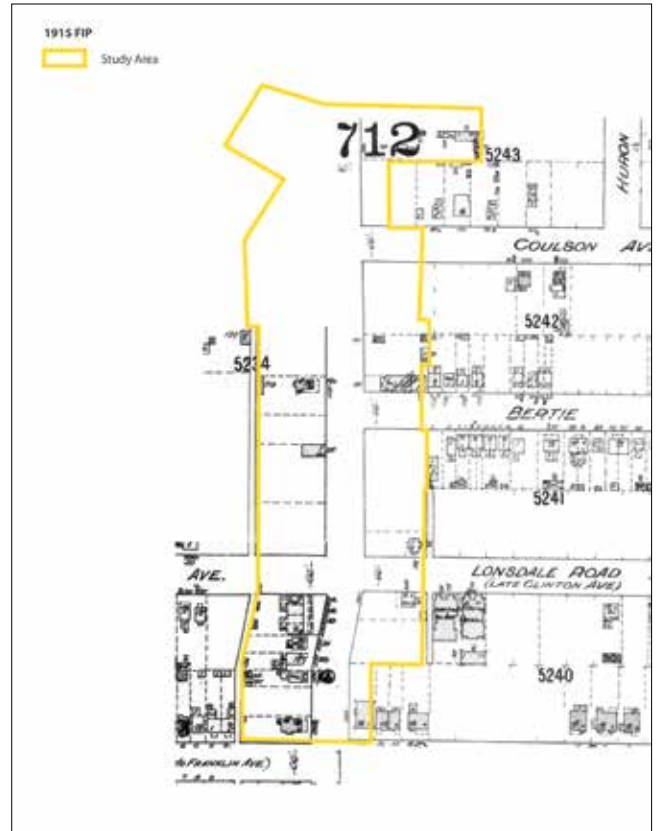
1923 Map of Forest Hill on year of incorporation



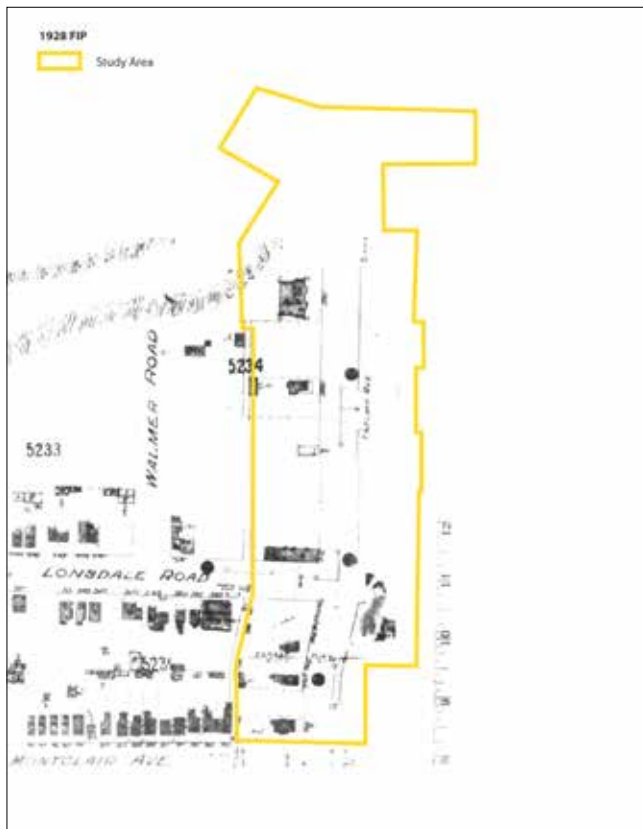
1924 Goad's Fire Insurance Plan



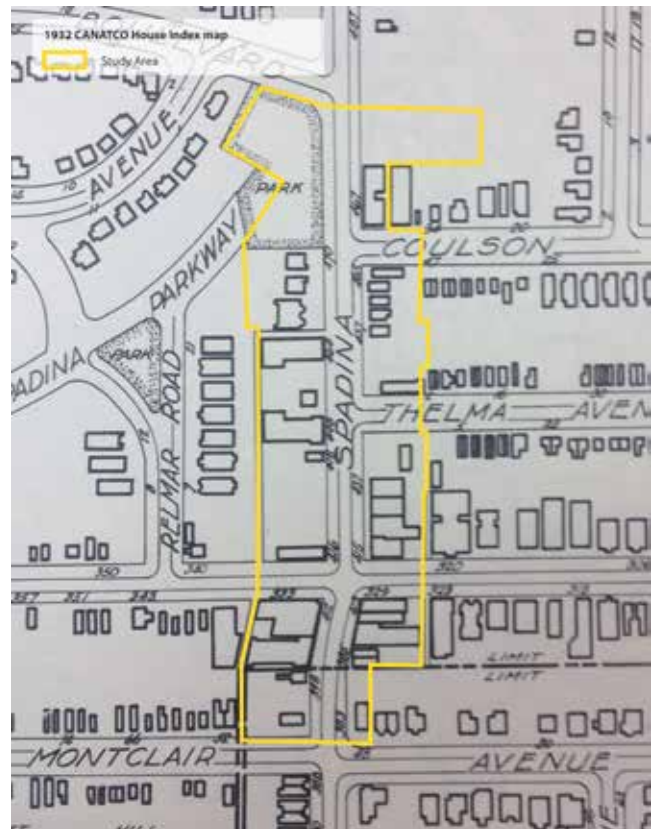
1910 Goad's Fire Insurance Plan



1915 Goad's Fire Insurance Plans

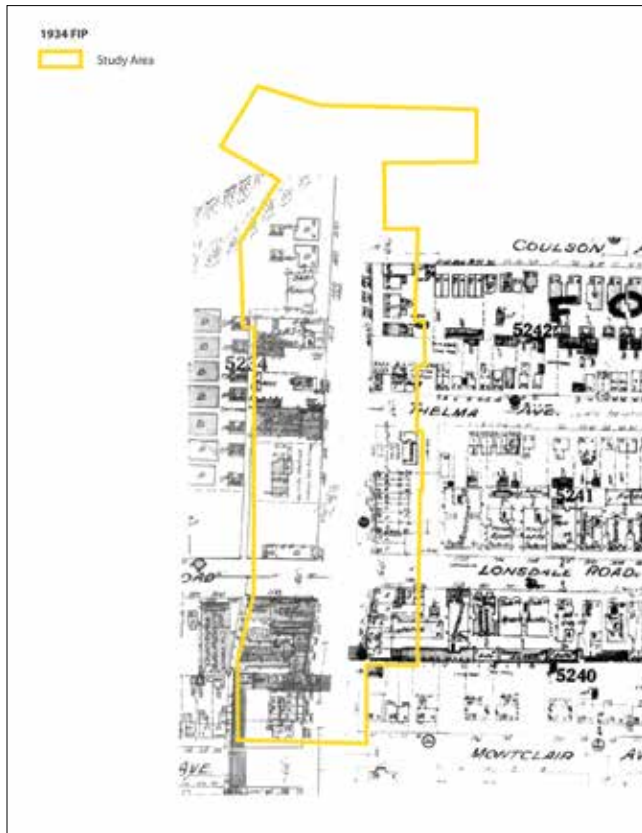


1928 Goad's Fire Insurance Plan



1932 CANATCO House Index Map

Historical Maps



1934 Goad's Fire Insurance Plan



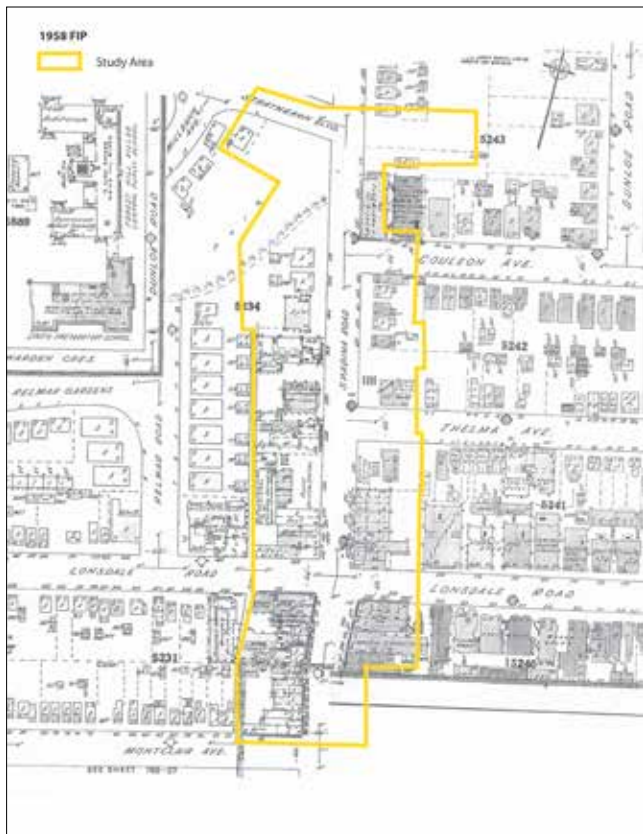
1947 Aerial Photograph



1971 Aerial Photograph



1983 Aerial Photograph



1958 Goad's Fire Insurance Plan



1962 Aerial Photograph



1992 Aerial Photograph

Forest Hill Village
Urban Design Guidelines

June 2015