

Clause embodied in Report No. 1 of the Midtown Community Council, which was before the Council of the City of Toronto at its meeting held on February 13, 14 and 15, 2002.

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**Eglinton Theatre - Designation as
a Heritage Building
(St. Paul's - Ward 22)**

(City Council on February 13, 14 and 15, 2002, struck out and referred this Clause to the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism for further consideration and resubmission to City Council, through the Midtown Community Council, as considered appropriate by the Commissioner and the Managing Director of Culture.)

The Midtown Community Council recommends that Council consider a report from the Commissioner, Economic Development, Culture and Tourism on the feasibility of designating the Eglinton Theatre as a Heritage Property.

The Midtown Community Council reports having requested the Commissioner, Economic Development, Culture and Tourism to submit a report directly to Council on February 13, 2002 with respect to this matter.

The Midtown Community Council submits the following communication (January 24, 2002) from Councillor Michael Walker:

“Recommendation:

- (1) That staff from Heritage Preservation Services report to Toronto City Council on February 13, 14, 15, 2002 on the feasibility of designating the Eglinton Theatre (400 Eglinton Avenue West) as a Heritage Property.

Background:

I have received a number of calls at my office regarding the future of the Eglinton Theatre. Located at 400 Eglinton Avenue West the Eglinton Theatre is a beautiful example of the Art Deco style. The Eglinton Theatre was designed by Toronto architects Kaplan & Sprachman and built in about 1934 or 1935 and seats up to 700 people. It is one of the few remaining single screen theatres playing first-run films in the City of Toronto.

In early December 2001 Famous Players announced that this long-standing community theatre would be closing its doors for good on April 1st, 2002. This decision was announced shortly after the Ontario Human Rights Commission won a Board of Inquiry hearing into making the theatre universally accessible.

Many local residents are protesting the closure of this historical landmark that has been a part of the community for so many years. As this building is a valuable asset to the North Toronto community and to the heritage of Toronto, all measures should be taken to preserve it. Therefore, I am requesting that staff from Heritage Toronto prepare a report for Toronto City Council's meeting of February 13, 14, 15, 2001 to designate 400 Eglinton Avenue West under the Ontario Heritage Act."

(City Council on February 13, 14 and 15, 2002, had before it, during consideration of the foregoing Clause, the following report (February 8, 2002) from the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism:

Purpose:

To report to City Council, as requested by Midtown Community Council, Report 1, Clause 30, on the feasibility of designating the property at 400 Eglinton Avenue West (Eglinton Theatre) under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

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

Recommendations:

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

Background:

At its meeting of January 29, 2002, Midtown Community Council had before it a report recommending that the Culture Division report to City Council on February 13, 14 and 15, 2002 on the feasibility of designating the property at 400 Eglinton Avenue West (Eglinton Theatre) under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Comments:

The Eglinton Theatre is slated to close as a single-screen movie theatre in April 2002. Many citizens have been contacting the City to express their concern about the preservation of the property.

The property at 400 Eglinton Avenue West was included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties by Toronto City Council on September 19, 1983. Inclusion on the Inventory allows the Culture Division to monitor any proposed alterations to the property. However, neither inclusion on the Inventory nor designation under the Ontario Heritage Act can preserve the "use" of a heritage property.

In 1993, the Toronto Historical Board recommended that City Council designate the property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The property owner objected to the proposed

designation. The designation was deferred sine die by the Neighbourhoods Committee when negotiations between the City and the property owner were unsuccessful.

Designation under the Ontario Heritage Act and under the City of Toronto Act prevents the demolition of properties for a maximum of 270 days. Given the limited time period allowing negotiations between the City and the owner of a designated property, it is advisable to delay designation unless the property is threatened with inappropriate alterations or demolition.

The Culture Division will continue to monitor the property. Should inappropriate alterations or demolition be proposed, the Culture Division will, after consultation with the Toronto Preservation Board, prepare a report to City Council recommending the designation of the property.

Conclusions:

The Culture Division recommends that the designation of the property at 400 Eglinton Avenue West (Eglinton Theatre) under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act be deferred and that this report be received for information.

Contact:

*Rita Davies
Managing Director of Culture
Tel: 416-397-5323
Fax: 416-395-0278
E-mail: rdavies@city.toronto.on.ca*

List of Attachments:

*Attachment No. 1 – Location Map – 400 Eglinton Avenue West
Attachment No. 2 – Photograph – 400 Eglinton Avenue West)*

(A copy of Attachments Nos. 1 and 2, which were appended to the foregoing report, is on file in the office of the City Clerk.)