



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Cabbagetown West Heritage Conservation District Study Area

Date:	February 7, 2007
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto East York Community Council
From:	Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Toronto Centre-Rosedale, Ward 28
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to identify a part of the Cabbagetown neighbourhood as a study area for potential designation as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act

To qualify for designation as a Heritage Conservation District an area must display, among other things, a significant concentration of heritage resources. Cabbagetown is an area with a heritage character that includes both architectural and historical resources. Staff have reviewed the proposed area on a preliminary basis and have determined that it would qualify for study as a heritage conservation district. Staff support the local initiative to undertake a Heritage Conservation District study of Cabbagetown and recommend Council identify the area shown in Attachment 1 as the Cabbagetown West Heritage Conservation District Study Area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council identify the area shown in Attachment No. 1 of this report as the Cabbagetown West Heritage Conservation District Study Area; and
2. the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Financial Impact

There is no immediate financial impact arising from this report. It must be noted that when the study is completed approximately 185 properties will be added to the Inventory. It is also noted that adding properties to the Inventory by means of Heritage Conservation District designations dramatically increases the workload of Heritage Preservation Services, requiring staff to review all building permits, Committee of Adjustment, rezoning and Official Plan amendment applications within legislated timeframes. The continued increase in Heritage Conservation Districts will not be sustainable without additional staff resources.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Council has previously designated all of Cabbagetown east of Parliament Street from Gerrard Street East to St. James Cemetery as a Heritage Conservation District. This was done in three phases starting in 2001 and was an initiative of area residents.

The Cabbagetown Preservation Association is now undertaking a study of a part of Cabbagetown west of Parliament Street to Bleeker Street, from Wellesley Street East south to Carlton Street (Attachment 1). The properties fronting on Parliament Street are not included in the study but those fronting both sides of Carlton Street are included.

COMMENTS

The history of Cabbagetown dates back to 1796 when a road was cut from the lake up to Castle Frank, providing access to Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe's summer home (Castle Frank) that overlooked the Don River. Located at the foot of this road were Upper Canada's first Parliament Buildings, hence the name Parliament Street. The area's first subdivision was surveyed in 1844, and by the mid-1800s waves of Irish immigrants were settling in the workers' cottages east of Parliament Street. They had moved here to escape the severe potato famine which devastated Ireland in the 1840s. Many of the new settlers grew vegetables on their small plots, and the presence of so many cabbages in the gardens prompted the name Cabbagetown.

Much of Cabbagetown was developed by 1910. Most residential streets displayed a mix of Victorian styles that included labourers' cottages, row houses of 2 ½ storey "gingerbreaded" homes and some that were Georgian and Romanesque in style. The area was marked by its many lanes, trees, and small streets. Swimming in the Don River and enjoying Riverdale Park (opened in 1880) were common pastimes. During the Depression many of the homes fell into disrepair, and after World War II were subsequently divided into small apartments to accommodate new immigrants.

Cabbagetown experienced a renewal in the 1970s and 1980s as residents recognized its unique architectural character and good location. Prime examples of area architecture include the Wellesley Cottages, which are an intact row of labourers' cottages built in

1886-1887; 314 Wellesley Street East, built in the Queen Anne style and featuring uniquely shaped windows and carved stone details; and 288 Carlton Street, a good example of a second Empire home built of solid brick.

Within the Cabbagetown West Study area 61 properties are included on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties (59 listed, 2 designated) (Attachment 2). The area displays a significant concentration of heritage resources.

The Olde Cabbagetown BIA has been consulted regarding the inclusion of the Carlton Street properties in the Heritage Conservation District Study area, as many of its members are located there. A presentation to the Annual General Meeting on the subject met with an enthusiastic response. At least two public meetings for all the residents and property owners in the study area will be held. These meetings will assist in evaluating the level of support in the area for the expanded Heritage Conservation District.

The Study will include guidelines for managing change consistent with good heritage conservation principles so as to encourage continued maintenance of the Cabbagetown West heritage character. At the conclusion of the study, staff will report on the suitability of the area for designation as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (the Act) and make recommendations on appropriate guidelines and boundaries.

If City Council ultimately designates the area as a Heritage Conservation District, the study would form the District Plan required by the Act. The District Plan would provide guidance to the public, property owners, staff and City Council when considering alterations, demolitions and new construction in the area.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Map of Cabbagetown West Heritage Conservation District Study Area

Attachment No. 2 – List of Heritage Properties in the Cabbagetown West Heritage Conservation District Study Area