



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

151 Front Street, 20 York Street, 7 Station Street in the Union Station Heritage Conservation District, Requesting Approval of Alterations

Date:	September 24, 2007
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Ward 20
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report recommends approval of alterations to designated heritage buildings in the Union Station Heritage Conservation District (HCD) including; 151 Front Street West, 20 York Street and the Sky Walk.

The proposed alterations are part of a development application for an Official Plan Amendment and Site Plan Approval for 151 Front Street West, 7 Station Street, and 20 York Street. The proposed development includes the construction of a new 36 storey office tower located immediately south of 151 Front Street West. The heritage buildings will have conservation work undertaken as part of the development project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that;

1. The alterations to the heritage buildings 151 Front Street West, the Sky Walk, and 20 York Street be approved substantially in accordance with the plans by Tampold Architects on file with the Manager of Heritage Preservation Services, subject to the owner,
 - a. prior to final site plan approval;

providing a detailed Conservation Plan for the restoration of the heritage buildings located at 20 York Street, and 151 Front Street, satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

providing plans for interpretive panels or other interpretive materials to communicate the development history of the property: the research, design, and location of the interpretive materials will be to the satisfaction of the Manager of Heritage Preservation Services;

providing a landscape plan for the subject property, satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

providing a lighting plan for the subject property, satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
 - b. prior to the issuance of any building permit for the heritage buildings 151 Front Street West, the Sky Walk and 20 York Street, including a permit for the demolition, excavation, and/or shoring of the subject property;

providing a 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 Conservation Plan and plan for interpretive materials;
 - c. prior to release of the Letter of Credit;

completing the heritage conservation work satisfactory to the Manager, Preservation Services;

providing and implementing an Interpretation Program for the heritage buildings 151 Front Street, the Sky Walk and 20 York Street satisfactory to the Manager of Heritage Preservation Services.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications as a result of the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council approved the Union Station Master Plan in December 2004. The boundaries of the urban design study area include Simcoe Street, Wellington Street, Yonge Street and the Gardiner Expressway. The subject property is located in the study area and has an integral role in the PATH system as the Sky Walk passes through the property at 20 York Street and 7 Station Street.

The Canadian National Express Building and York Teamway at 20 York Street was listed as an historic property by City Council on February 1, 2, and 3, 2005.

A Preliminary Report on the current proposal, dated March 14, 2005 was adopted by Toronto and East York Community Council on March 30, 2005.

The Union Station Heritage Conservation District (HCD) was approved by City Council July 27, 2006. The boundaries of the HCD include Wellington Street on the north, Yonge Street on the east, Lake Shore Boulevard/Harbour Street on the south and Simcoe Street to the rail corridor and Rees Street on the west.

Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) provided comments to Community Planning, in September and October 2006. HPS recommended approval of the Official Plan amendment and Zoning amendment with conditions for further HPS review of building plans, landscape plan and lighting plan as well as the provision of heritage interpretation materials, and a Letter of Credit for the cost of interpretive materials.

City Council adopted the final report dated January 27, 2007, and approved the OPA - Zoning application March 5 and 6, 2007, subject to HPS provisions.

A Heritage Impact Statement/Conservation Strategy was completed in September 2007, and includes a description of impacts to heritage attributes, mitigation measures, and conservation work that will be undertaken.

The project is now at Site Plan approval stage and HPS is requesting approval of alterations to heritage properties 151 Front Street and the Sky Walk.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The subject property includes addresses at 20 York Street, 7 Station Street, and 151 Front Street West. The development site is within the Union Station HCD. Buildings identified in the HCD Plan as contributing to the heritage character of the District include 20 York Street, the Skywalk atrium and 151 Front Street West.

The building at 20 York Street is listed on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties. The building is made up of the Canadian National Express Building (1929)

and the York Teamway (1913) and is listed for its historical, architectural and contextual significance.

The Sky Walk passes through 20 York Street at the second storey, and the east interior wall of 20 York Street remains visible on the interior of the Sky Walk. The wall displays a large stone nameplate reading “CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS”.

The Sky Walk opened in 1989 and connects Union Station to the Convention Centre, Roundhouse and Rogers Centre (Skydome). Designed in the Post Modern Style, the Sky Walk is a large glazed passage way/arcade, enclosed by a semi-circular roof reminiscent of the Eaton Centre, early 20th century European pedestrian concourses and railway stations.

The building at 151 Front St West is a red brick office block in the Modern style consistent with industrial and institutional buildings of the late 1950's and early 1960's. Its form is one of the few remaining remnants of the industrial past of the western portion of the financial district. Significant renovations have added two floors and inserted larger glazing units on the front (north) and west facades.

By the time the Union Station HCD was established in 2006, the essential components for the proposed development had been established. The owner is proposing to construct a 36 storey non-residential office/technology building. Early in the development of this project, before the HCD was established, City Planning staff requested that the applicants alter the west façade and north west corner of the front façade of 151 Front Street West to tie visually to the new tower above and to signal to pedestrians that the entrance to the new building is located at the NE corner of 151 Front Street West.

COMMENTS

The new tower will be built south of 151 Front Street, and partially over 151 Front Street, Station Street and the Sky Walk. The proposed development will not have a direct impact on the heritage attributes of the listed building at 20 York Street, however portions of the building attached to 20 York Street will be renovated. The new construction will necessitate the demolition and replacement of a section of the Sky Walk where it passes through the new building. The entrance, west and northwest portions of the facade of 151 Front Street will be altered.

151 Front Street West

The original massing 151 Front Street West will remain with no additions. The north-west corner will serve as the main entrance to the new development behind. A windowed galleria will be added to the main floor interior at the west side. The NW corner of the building and the west facade will have exterior cladding added to help tie the building in visually with the tower behind and will serve to alert pedestrians to the entrance on the NW corner. The aluminized steel cladding will be attached to the heritage façade at the mortar joints and the original brick walls and window openings will remain unaltered beneath the cladding. The cladding application is a “reversible” alteration. There will be a new canopy added to the north façade along Front Street for pedestrians.

Sky Walk

The Sky Walk will be altered where it meets the new building. The ceiling will be lowered at this juncture but will be detailed to reduce the visual impact. On the western portion at the Simcoe Street end, the Sky Walk will incorporate a new lobby and commercial area.

20 York Street

The heritage attributes of this building will not be altered by the development and the applicant proposed to undertake masonry conservation work on the main building and on the longer section that supports the Sky Walk.

Station Street will continue as a private roadway that passes under the new building and exits onto Simcoe Street. The street will be landscaped to enhance the pedestrian areas around 20 York Street and the Sky Walk, at grade level.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1: Location Map
Attachment No. 2: Photos of 20 Station Street and Sky Walk
Attachment No. 3: Photo of 151 Front Street West
Attachment No. 4: Elevations of 151 Front Street West
Attachment No. 5: Rendering of 151 Front Street West