

450 Pape Avenue: Potential for Acquisition for Housing

Date:	June 26, 2010
To:	Executive Committee
From:	Sue Corke, Deputy City Manager
Wards:	30, Toronto - Danforth
Reference Number:	AFS-12571

SUMMARY

This report responds to a request from Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 30, Toronto – Danforth, to the Affordable Housing Committee on June 3, 2010 that the Director, Affordable Housing Office work with the Salvation Army and the non-profit housing sector to determine the support for and economic feasibility of converting the surplus vacant buildings and site at 450 Pape Avenue to affordable non-profit live-work housing for artists and to investigate the possibility of the acquisition of the site by the City.

The property at 450 Pape Avenue, at the north-west corner of Pape and Riverdale Avenue contains a historic house originally built in 1899 and a newer 1960s addition. It has been owned by the Salvation Army since 1930 and over the years has provided space for a number of non-profit uses, most recently as a licensed rooming house to accommodate homeless men who were accommodated during the construction of the new Salvation Army Harbour Light Centre on Jarvis Street.

While the City and the Salvation Army both wish to continue the use of the building and property for charitable or non-profit purposes, this report is not recommending that the City purchase the site. The reasons for this are that given the schedule for the sale of the property it has not been possible to conduct a building assessment and property appraisal. Furthermore there is currently no unallocated available federal/provincial affordable housing program funding to support the purchase and renovation of the property and presently no identified city funding for the acquisition.

However, in recognition of the importance of the property to the community it is being recommended that Council encourage the Salvation Army to sell the property to an organization who would continue the use of the building for charitable or non-profit purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Deputy City Manager responsible for the Affordable Housing Office recommends that Council encourage the Salvation Army to sell its property at 450 Pape Avenue to an organization or individual who would continue the use of the building and property for a charitable or non-profit purpose.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts arising from this report.

Equity Statement

An equity impact analysis is not applicable at the current time.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on June 3, 2010, the Affordable Housing Committee recommended item AH13.10, originating from a letter from Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 30 Toronto – Danforth on the future sale and use of the property at 450 Pape Avenue. The Director, Affordable Housing Office was requested to work with the Salvation Army and the non-profit housing sector to determine the feasibility of converting the surplus vacant buildings at 450 Pape Avenue to affordable non-profit live work housing for artists as well as the possibility of the City to acquire the property. A report was requested for the August 16, 2010 meeting of the Executive Committee.

June 3, 2010 Affordable Housing Committee Decision Document (AH.13.10):

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/ah/decisions/2010-06-03-ah13-dd.htm>

Letter from Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 30 Toronto – Danforth

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/ah/bgrd/backgroundfile-30845.pdf>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

450 Pape Avenue contains a historic home built in 1899 for William Harris along with an addition built in the 1960s for institutional use. The Toronto Preservation Board has recently recommended that Council include the house on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties. The Salvation Army has owned the property since 1930 and has provided a number of services on the site, most recently as a licensed rooming house to accommodate homeless men who were accommodated during the construction of the new Salvation Army Harbour Light Centre on Jarvis Street.

The building at 450 Pape Avenue is presently vacant and the Salvation Army has put the property on the market for sale. The Salvation Army intends to re- invest the proceeds from the sale back into the Harbour Light Centre. After discussions with the Affordable Housing Office and Councillor Fletcher, the Salvation Army agreed to postpone the closing of the public sale of the property until August 2010. This was intended to permit additional time for the City, non-profit groups, charitable agencies and private sector organizations to have an extended opportunity to assemble a viable proposal to purchase the property.

COMMENTS

The Salvation Army is to be commended for their long tradition of charitable work in Toronto, including assisting Toronto's homeless and vulnerable residents.

After having owned the property at 450 Pape Avenue for some 80 years they have now determined that it is surplus to their needs and wish to re-invest the proceeds from the sale into their new Harbour Light building on Jarvis Street.

By postponing the sale process into August 2010 the Salvation Army has now provided the opportunity for other organizations and the City of Toronto to consider the opportunities presented by the property.

While this extension of time was appreciated it was insufficient to permit the City to arrange a building condition survey and a property assessment. However, as the city does not presently have access to unallocated federal/provincial affordable housing program funding and has no identified source of funds to acquire the property there is no basis to support a recommendation in favour of purchasing of the site at this time.

In recognition of the long charitable history of the property it is being recommended that Council encourage the Salvation Army to sell the site at 450 Pape Avenue to an organization or individual who could continue the use of the building and property for charitable or non-profit purposes.

CONTACT

Sean Gadon
Director, Affordable Housing
Phone: 416-338-1143
Fax: 416-392-4219
E-mail: sgadon@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Sue Corke
Deputy City Manager