SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the proposed alterations to the designated heritage property located at 80 Bell Estate Road (formerly 679 Warden Avenue), the Bell Estate, and that City Council authorize the amendment of the existing Heritage Easement Agreement registered on title for this property to allow for the alterations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council approve the proposed alterations to the heritage building at 80 Bell Estate Road substantially in accordance with the Heritage Impact Statement prepared by the Ventin Group (Toronto) Limited Architects and dated February 7, 2011 and revised August 17, 2011; drawings prepared by Peter A. Gabor, Architect dated July 19, 2010 and revised August 3, 2011; Landscape Plan prepared by Mep Design Inc., dated June 4, 2010 and revised August 4, 2011, and on file with the Manager of Heritage Preservation Services subject to the following conditions:
a. prior to the passing of Bills by Council the owner shall amend the Heritage Easement Agreement registered on title for the subject property to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services to allow for the proposed modifications;

b. Prior to final Site Plan approval the owner shall provide the following to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services:

i. a detailed Conservation Plan, for the conservation work described in the HIA prepared by a qualified heritage consultant, detailing recommended interventions and conservation work including but not restricted to: conservation of the original exterior fabric of the Bell Estate; the restoration of the windows, doors, and shutters; a comprehensive assessment of the proposed approach for the oven and fireplace to ensure their long term preservation and to ensure that the process of encasing them into the wall will be reversible; a schedule of short and long term maintenance requirements; and estimated costs for all conservation work;

ii. a final landscape plan that enhances the heritage character of the Bell Estate to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

c. Prior to the issuance of any heritage permit for the proposal, including a heritage permit related to demolition, shoring, excavation and rebuilding of any building or structure on the subject property the owner shall provide the following:

i. 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 detailed Conservation Plan.

ii. building permit drawings, including specifications for heritage conservation work prepared by the Heritage Consultant to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

d. Prior to the release of the Letter of Credit, the owner shall:

i. complete the heritage conservation work to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;

ii. provide a Letter of Substantial Completion for the heritage conservation work signed by the project architect and Heritage Consultant to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services;
iii. submit final as-built replacement Heritage Easement Agreement photographs of the heritage building at 80 Bell Estate Road to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

2. Prior to the introduction of the Bill in Council for the zoning amendment, the owner shall enter into an agreement with the City to amend the existing Heritage Easement Agreement for 80 Bell Estate Road, to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and the City Solicitor, with the amended agreement to be registered on title to the lands in a manner satisfactory to the City Solicitor to reflect the changes as described in this report.

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

DECISION HISTORY
In 1990 the former City of Scarborough stated its intention to designate the Bell Estate under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. On October 13, 2004, as a condition of a minor variance application to sever the property, the property owners entered into a Heritage Easement Agreement with the City of Toronto to ensure the long term protection of the Bell Estate.


The property was formally designated by the City of Toronto under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage on September 27, 2007 by By-law 1029-2007.


ISSUE BACKGROUND
The subject property is located northeast of Warden Avenue and Danforth Road on the north side of 80 Bell Estate Road (formerly 679 Warden Avenue) adjacent to a long term care facility, single family homes, and a townhouse development. The property owners have submitted applications under the Planning Act for rezoning, draft plan of condominium, and site plan control. As a designated property, the alterations proposed require Council approval under the Ontario Heritage Act.

COMMENTS

Background
The Bell Estate is historically significant as an early farmhouse in former Scarborough Township. Archival research indicates that portions of the building date to the mid-19th century when it was constructed for members of the Thornbeck family. In the late
1800s, William Bell acquired the site and, following a fire, added a second storey. Bell’s descendants occupied the property for a century. Architecturally, the house is an important early example of Georgian styling that was updated with Gothic Revival features. In recent years the house has functioned as a local community centre. It is currently vacant.

**Proposal**

The applicant is proposing to construct eleven townhouse condominium units along the eastern portion of the property. Vehicular access to the site will be accommodated through a driveway at the western edge of the property. A fifteen space parking lot will be constructed behind the heritage house and two additional parking spaces will be located in front of the house.

Proposed alterations to the heritage house include the following:

- The 1½-storey wood frame addition at the northwest corner of the house will be demolished
- A new addition will be constructed at the rear of the house
- The interior of the house will be substantially modified to allow for its conversion from a single family home to two independent condominium units
- The exterior features of the house including the windows, shutter and doors will be restored
- The interior basement fireplace and bake oven will be preserved in place and walled over.

**Staff Comments**

In 2008, Toronto City Council adopted the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* as the official document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City. A product of an ongoing collaboration between the Federal Government, Provinces, and Territories, this document has been adopted as a national benchmark by jurisdictions across the country. Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) has reviewed the proposed alterations within the context of the *Standards and Guidelines*.

The proposed development is largely in keeping with the *Standards and Guidelines* and appropriate for this heritage property. The 1½-storey wood frame addition is not included in the Reasons for Designation. For this reason HPS does not have a concern with its demolition. As part of the Site Plan approval process the applicant is required
to submit a Conservation Plan that will detail the exterior conservation work for the property including how the portion of the exterior wall currently covered by the addition will be appropriately restored. This Plan must be prepared to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

The proposed new addition is sensitive to the historic place. It will be both subordinate to and distinct from the existing house as it will be added to the rear of the house, and it will start below the existing ridgeline. The proposed materials will be both compatible with the existing materials (wood siding), yet distinguishable as new construction. In an effort to minimize the negative impact on the north wall of the house (included in the existing Heritage Easement Agreement and Reasons for Designation), only existing window openings will be modified to allow for access into the new addition. The majority of the north wall will remain intact within the house. This approach minimizes the alterations to the historic fabric and increases the reversibility of the alterations in keeping with the Standards and Guidelines.

The only interior attributes included in the Reasons for Designation are the basement fireplace and bake oven. The applicant is not proposing to incorporate these features into the layout of the new condominium unit as they conflict with the proposed floor plan. Instead these features will be preserved in place and walled over. As this approach will be reversible, and as these features will be located within the basement of a private residence, it is an appropriate conservation strategy. If the use of this property changes at some point in the future, the wall can be reopened and the features restored. In the event that the proposed floor plan is revised, staff would ask that reconsideration be given to retaining these unique features as visual elements within the floor plan.

The conversion of the house from a single family home into two condominium units calls for the introduction of a second primary entrance to the house. The existing southernmost door on the west elevation is proposed as the primary entrance to the second unit. This door will be accessed through a new exterior porch. The design of this proposed porch will need to be refined in order to bring it into conformity with the Standards and Guidelines. Specifically, attention must be taken to ensure the porch is distinguishable as a new alteration, and remain subordinate and compatible to the house. HPS staff will review the detailed plans for this intervention prior to issuing a Heritage Permit for the work.

Currently there is a treed landscape space between the house and Bell Estate Road. While the planting has become somewhat overgrown in recent years, this landscaped area provides an important setting for the heritage house. Several of the proposed interventions will have a negative impact on this landscaped setting. The Landscape Plan calls for the introduction of two parking spaces between the house and the road. It is recommended that these parking spaces be consolidated with the other parking behind the house at the north end of the property. Parking in the landscaped area will significantly diminish the setting. Other proposed interventions in this landscape include new pedestrian walkways, a communal mailbox, and a concrete pad for garbage and recycling pickup.
These interventions should be consolidated in one location to the greatest extent possible in order to minimize the impact on the setting. As these are important heritage concerns, prior to site plan approval, the applicant will be required to submit a landscape plan to the satisfaction of the Manager Heritage Preservation Services.

CONTACT
Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager
Heritage Preservation Services
Tel: 416-338-1079
Fax: 416-392-1973
E-mail: mmacdon7@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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Kerri A. Voumvakis, Acting Director
Policy and Research
City Planning Division

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
Attachment No. 2 – Images
Attachment No. 3 – Proposal
Attachment No. 4 – Reasons for Designation
The arrow marks the location of the site.

This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.
South Elevation

West Elevation. The wood frame addition, proposed to be demolished, is visible at the far left of the photograph.
80 Bell Estate Road, proposed site plan
PROPOSAL: 80 BELL ESTATE ROAD

ATTACHMENT NO. 3

80 Bell Estate Road, proposed elevations
PROPOSAL: 80 BELL ESTATE ROAD

ATTACHMENT NO. 3

80 Bell Estate Road, proposed elevations
80 Bell Estate Road, floor plan
PROPOSAL: 80 BELL ESTATE ROAD

ATTACHMENT NO. 3

80 Bell Estate Road, elevations of the proposed townhouses
Reasons for Designation

80 Bell Estate Road, (Formerly 679 Warden Avenue): Bell Estate (Thornbeck-Bell House)

Description

The property at 80 Bell Estate Road is worthy of designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value or interest, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, historical and contextual value. Setback on the east side of Warden Avenue, south of St. Clair Avenue East in Scarborough, the property historically known as the Bell Estate contains a two-storey house form building (circa 1840s with later additions). The property is listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties, and City Council granted authority to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement in 2004.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Bell Estate is historically significant as an early farmhouse in former Scarborough Township. Archival research indicates that portions of the building date to the mid-19th century when it was constructed for members of the Thornbeck family. In the late 1800s, William Bell acquired the site and, following a fire, added a second storey. Bell’s descendants occupied the property for a century. Architecturally, the house is an important early example of Georgian styling that was updated with Gothic Revival features.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the Bell Estate (Thornbeck-Bell House) related to its cultural heritage value as an early 19th century Scarborough farmhouse with features of Georgian and Gothic Revival styling are found on the exterior walls, roof, west addition, and interior as described below, consisting of:

- The two-storey rectangular plan above a raised base with window openings in the basement level on the north and south sides
- The gable roof with end chimneys (not original) and, on the south slope, a central gable with decorative wood bargeboard
- The fieldstone cladding, which is laid in regular courses on the south façade and randomly placed on the remaining walls
- The window openings that feature stone lintels and sills (some granite and others limestone) and louvered wood shutters
- The principal (south) façade, which is organized into five bays with symmetrical openings
• The main entrance, raised and centred on the south façade, where a panelled wood door is flanked by three-quarter-length sidelights and surmounted by a three-part transom
• The pairs of flat-headed window openings with six-over-six double hung sash windows flanking the entrance
• In the upper storey of the south façade, the single opening positioned in the upper storey beneath the gable
• On the east elevation, the pair of flat-headed window openings symmetrically placed at the second floor level
• The west elevation, where window openings similar to those on the east wall are found in the upper floor
• Concealing the lower part of the west wall of the house, the single-storey stone-clad addition with a shed roof and a dormer
• The rear (north) wall with flat-headed window openings, two of which are irregularly sized and placed
• On the interior, the basement fireplace and adjoining bake oven

A 1½-storey wood frame addition that was attached to the north side of the west addition was not identified in the Heritage Easement Agreement and is not included in the Reasons for Designation.