

## **Request for Heritage Evaluation – 19 St. Leonard’s Avenue**

<b>Date:</b>	October 3, 2012
<b>To:</b>	Toronto Preservation Board North York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Urban Design, City Planning Division
<b>Wards:</b>	Don Valley West – Ward 25
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2012\Cluster B\PLN\HPS\NYCC\November 6 2012\nyHPS50

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends the receipt of the heritage evaluation of the property at 19 St. Leonard’s Avenue. The report also concludes that the property should not be included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties or designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act because it does not meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed by the Province of Ontario for municipal designation.

At its meeting of June 13, 2012, the North York Community Council adopted item NY17.11, requesting a staff report on the potential of the property at 19 St. Leonard’s Avenue to be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. Some residents in the Lawrence Park neighbourhood are concerned about the proposed redevelopment of the site, which contains a detached house form building dating to 1921.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. The Heritage Evaluation for 19 St. Leonard's Avenue be received for information.

#### **Financial Impact**

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

#### **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting of April 27, 2012, the Toronto Preservation Board endorsed item PB11.9 "Nomination of Potential Heritage Property at 19 St. Leonard’s Avenue." A Property

Nomination Form was submitted by Geoff Kettel, Chair of the North York Community Preservation Panel. The North York Community Council at its meeting of May 15, 2012 (NY16.29) deferred consideration of the item to the June 13, 2012 meeting and “requested the Acting Manager of Heritage Preservation Services, City Planning, to report back as soon as possible to the North York Community Council on whether the property at 19 St. Leonard’s Avenue should be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.”

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.NY17.11>

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The owner deputed at the April 27, 2012 meeting of the Toronto Preservation Board to object to the nomination of the property. The property nomination form was submitted because of concern in the Lawrence Park neighbourhood about the potential redevelopment of the site.

## **COMMENTS**

A location map (Attachment No. 1) and photograph (Attachment No. 2) are attached. Also appended is the Research and Evaluation Summary for the property at 19 St. Leonard’s Avenue (Attachment No. 3), which provides background information and an analysis of the site. Following research, the site was evaluated according to Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed by the Province of Ontario for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, which the City also applies when assessing properties for potential inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

The property at 19 St. Leonard’s Avenue contains a detached house form building dating to 1921 that does not meet the criteria for individual designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. However, Lawrence Park has been identified as a potential Heritage Conservation District worthy of study to determine whether it should be designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. Such a study would indicate whether the property at 19 St. Leonard’s is a contributing building worthy of protection within a district.

## **CONTACT**

Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager  
Heritage Preservation Services, Tel: 416-338-1079; Fax: 416-392-1973  
E-mail: [mmacdon7@toronto.ca](mailto:mmacdon7@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

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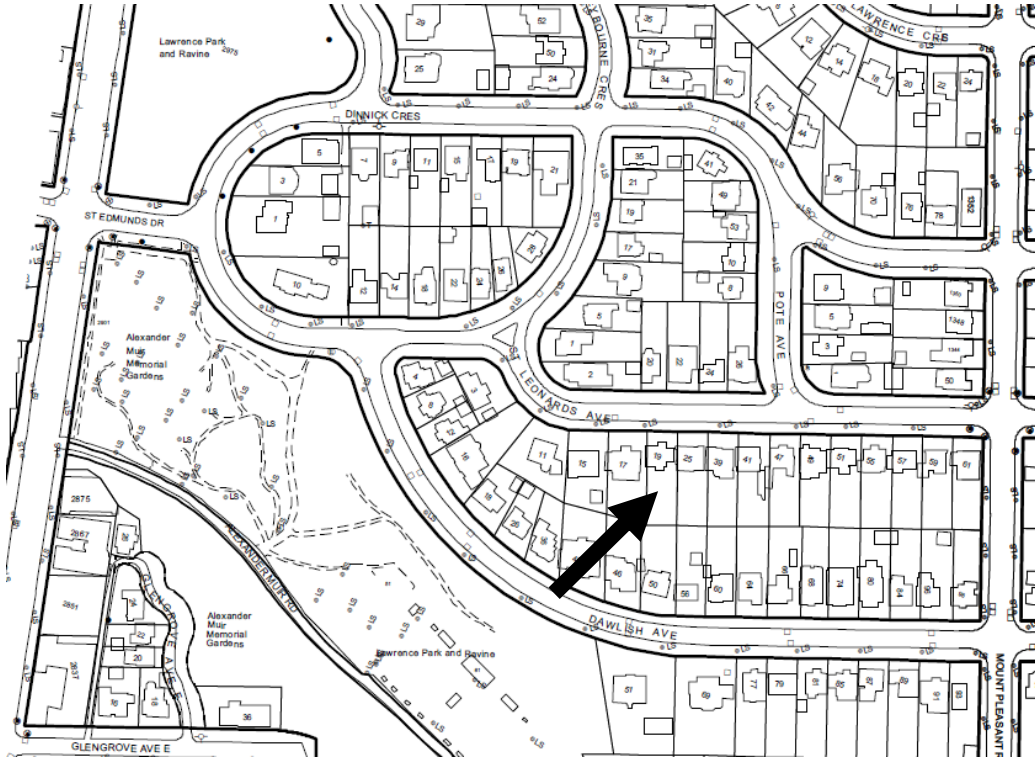
Robert Freedman  
Director, Urban Design  
City Planning Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map

Attachment No. 2 – Photographs

Attachment No. 3 – Research and Evaluation Summary



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

The **arrow** marks the location of the site.



Principal (north) façade of the detached house form building at 19 St. Leonard's Avenue  
(Heritage Preservation Services, September 2012)

## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION SUMMARY



## HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY

Key Date	Historical Event
1910 Jan	Plan 1485 is registered by the Dovercourt Land, Building & Savings Company for the west section of Lawrence Park (Image 2)
1912	Lot 41 (the subject property) remains vacant when Goad's Atlas is updated (Image 3)
1920 July	According to the tax assessment rolls, Lot 41 is still vacant
1920 Sept	Building specifications for a residence for Sydney Hessin are prepared by architect James Mitchell (Image 4)
1921 July	Sales manager Sydney E. Hessin is the owner & occupant of the house at 19 St. Leonard's Avenue as recorded on the tax assessment rolls
1923	19 St. Leonard's is listed as 'vacant' in the City Directory for 1924 (with data from 1923); it remains vacant when the subsequent directory is compiled
1923	The update to Goad's Atlas shows the house form building at 19 St. Leonard's (Image 4)
1928	Alfred P. Brown is named as the occupant of 19 St. Leonard's in the City Directory for 1929 (with statistics dating to 1928)
1982	Toronto architects Armstrong & Molesworth prepare plans for a south extension

The property at 19 St. Leonard's Avenue is located in Lawrence Park, an exclusive residential suburb founded by the Dovercourt Land, Building and Savings Company in 1910. Occupying former farmland overlooking a branch of the Don River near the southeast corner of Yonge Street and Lawrence Avenue East, the site's natural hills and ravines were incorporated into the layout according to the principles of the Garden City Movement.<sup>1</sup> Six houses were constructed as architectural prototypes, with the remaining lots offered for sale and initially subjected to architectural controls over materials, building size and setbacks.<sup>2</sup> Two years after its founding, Lawrence Park became part of the City of Toronto following the annexation of North Toronto. Development of the suburb was delayed by World War I and, after Dovercourt was placed in receivership in 1919, the remaining Lawrence Park lots were auctioned off to the highest bidders.

The subject property remained vacant until 1920 when Sydney E. Hessin, a sales manager with W. J. Gage and Company, publishers, acquired Lot 41. Hessin commissioned architect James Mitchell to prepare the plans for the detached house form building, which was completed before July 1921 when it was assessed for tax purposes. Mitchell was a Scottish-trained architect who worked alone and in partnership with George White during his 30-year career in Canada. He is credited with designing commercial, industrial and residential buildings, including the Art Metropole Building (1913) at 241 Yonge Street.<sup>3</sup> Hessin retained the premises at 19 St. Leonard's for two years.

EVALUATION: Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed by the Province of Ontario for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	<b>N/A</b>
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>N/A</b>
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	<b>N/A</b>

<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>N/A</b>

<sup>1</sup> The Garden City Movement was an approach to land use planning introduced in early 19<sup>th</sup> century England with the founding of Park Villages as the first planned subdivision with large landscaped lots laid out around curving streets. Rosedale and Wychwood Park were the first Toronto examples

<sup>2</sup> The Toronto partnership of Chadwick and Beckett were the official architects for Lawrence Park until World War I, and their projects included the Wilfrid S. Dinnick House (designed for the president of Dovercourt) at 77-79 St. Edmund's Drive, which is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<sup>3</sup> The building is still extant and the property was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1973

iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
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<b>Contextual Value</b>	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	<b>N/A</b>
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>N/A</b>
iii. landmark	<b>N/A</b>

The Sydney Hessin House could be described as a 'representative' example of a house form building from the post-World War era with architectural features derived from Period Revival design, including the asymmetrically placed two-storey bay window on the west elevation. However, its modest design does not display any particular distinguishing features apart from the oversized stone chimney on the principal (north) facade. The entrance porch with the battered piers was not part of the original plans (Image 4), and the attached garage was altered with the addition of an upper storey.

No associative values are identified at the time of the writing of this report. James Mitchell, who designed the house form building, is not regarded as a significant architect in Toronto.

Contextually, the property at 19 St. Leonard's Avenue is part of the collection of early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential buildings comprising Lawrence Park, a neighbourhood recognized in the City of Toronto for its origins as a garden suburb with a designed landscape. Lawrence Park may merit study as a potential heritage conservation district for designation under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that while the property at 19 St. Leonard's Avenue does not meet the criteria for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties or designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as it lacks merit as a stand-alone house form building. However, an analysis of Lawrence Park as a potential heritage conservation district would determine if this property makes a significant contribution to the overall neighbourhood. It is not recommended for individual designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

## SOURCES

- Abstract Index of Deeds, Plan 1485, Lot 41
- Aerial Map, City of Toronto, 1947
- Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, Ward 6, Division 1, 1907 ff.
- Blumenson, John, *Ontario Architecture*, 1990
- Bordessa, Karina, "A Corporate Suburb for Toronto: Lawrence Park, 1905-1930", Typescript, 1980, Local History Collection, Northern District Branch, Toronto Public Library

Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York, Building Applications #34273 (September 1920) and #77770 (March 1982)

City of Toronto Directories, 1915 ff.

Fisher, Ron, "The Development of the Garden Suburb in Toronto," Journal of Garden History, Vol. 3, No. 3 (July-September 1983), 193-207

Goad's Atlases, 1910 revised to 1912 and 1923

Kalman, Harold, A History of Canadian Architecture, Vol. 2, 1994

"James Mitchell", entry in The Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/1843>

Lawrence Park Estates: a formal and artistic grouping of ideal homes, Dovercourt Land, Building and Savings Company Limited, 1910

Maitland, Leslie, Jacqueline Hucker and Shannon Ricketts, A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles, 1992

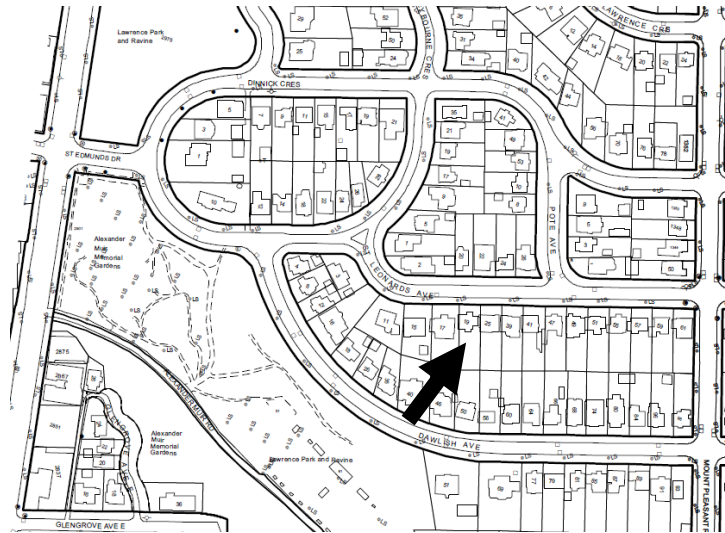
Mollenhauer, Joy, "This was My Park," typescript, no date, Local History Collection, Northern District Branch, Toronto Public Library

Myrvold, Barbara, and Lynda Moon, Historical Walking Tour of Lawrence Park, rev. ed., 2007

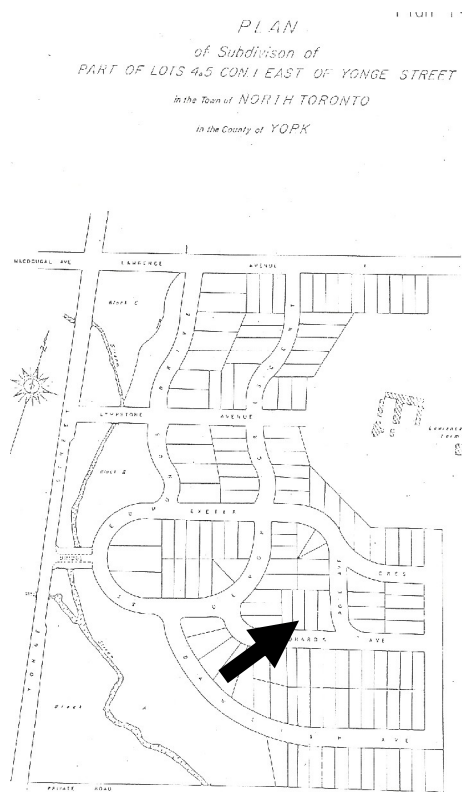
"Property Nomination Form, 19 St. Leonard's Avenue," North York Community Preservation Panel, March 2012

Ritchie, Don, North Toronto, 1992

IMAGES: the **arrows** mark the location of 19 St. Leonard's Avenue



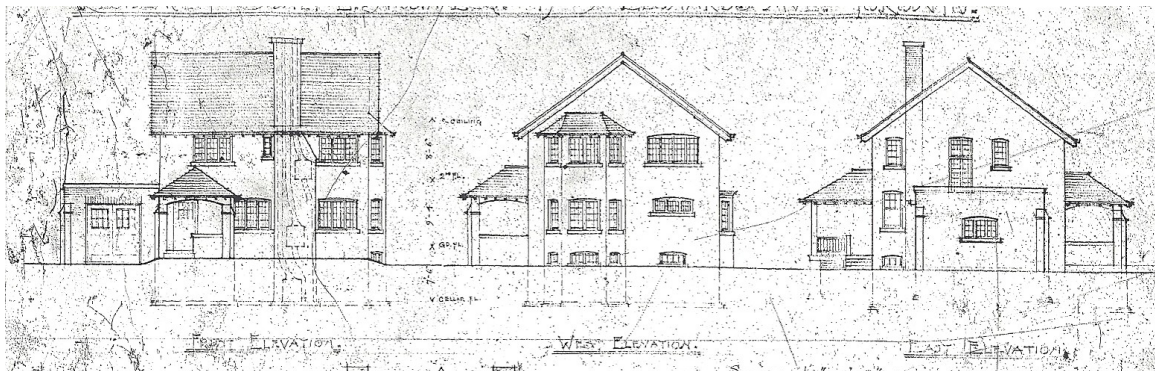
1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the property at 19 St. Leonard's Avenue on the south side of the street between Weybourne Crescent and Pote Avenue



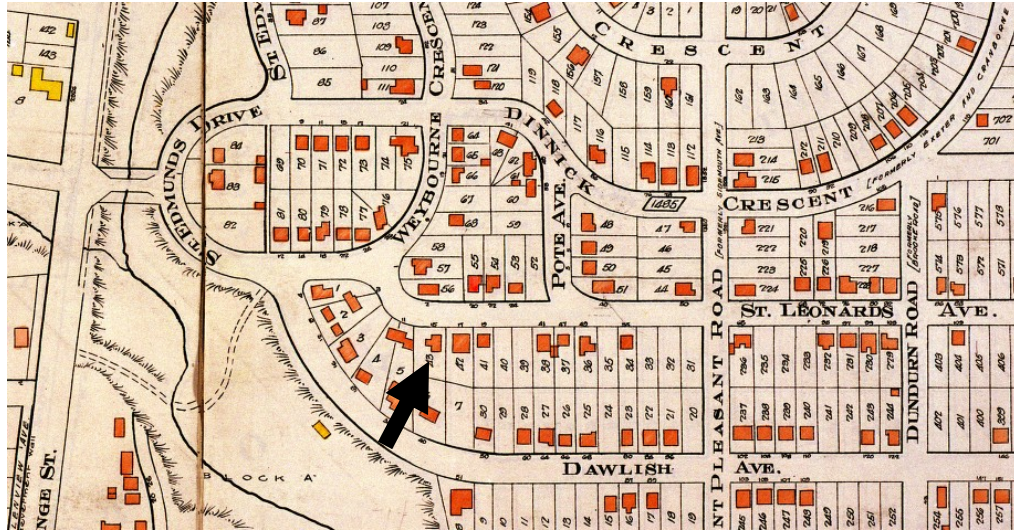
2. Plan 1485: showing the west section of Lawrence Park with Yonge Street on the left



3. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1912: illustrating the sporadic development of Lawrence Park to date where the subject property remained vacant



3. Building Permit Application #34273: the original plans for the Sydney Hessin House, 1920 show the north entrance porch with a hipped roof rather than the current gabled version (City of Toronto Building Records, Toronto & East York)



5. Goad's Atlas, 1910 revised to 1923: the update shows the Sydney Hessin House in place on Lot 21 at 19 St. Leonard's Avenue



6. Aerial Photograph, 1947: showing the west end of Lawrence Park where most of the lots have been developed (City of Toronto Archives)



7. Current Photograph, September 2012: showing the west elevation (right) with the two-storey bay window (Heritage Preservation Services)



8. Current Photograph, September 2012: showing the placement and setback of the property at 19 St. Leonard's Avenue (Heritage Preservation Services)