



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Demolition of a Designated Heritage Property – 17 Dundonald Street (Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada Building)

Date:	August 9, 2013
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Acting Director, Urban Design, City Planning Division
Wards:	Ward 27 – Toronto Centre - Rosedale
Reference Number:	P:\2013\Cluster B\PLN\HPS\TEYCC\September 10 2013\teHPS28

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council refuse the proposed demolition of the designated heritage property at 17 Dundonald Street (Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada Building).

The designated property is the subject of a rezoning application that proposes an 18 storey residential building with 115 dwelling units and 3 levels of below grade parking. The development will provide a secondary public entrance to the Wellesley Street subway station from the Dundonald Street frontage of the project. The applicant is proposing to dismantle the entire heritage building on the property, and to rebuild in a location closer to Dundonald Street and further west, the front (north) elevation, part of one structural bay of the east elevation and five structural bays of the west elevation. The integrity of this reconstruction in replicating the original is unclear. The applicant has advised that a limited amount of original material will be used. The rebuilt structure will form the base or podium of the new tower. Staff considers the extent of intervention proposed to the heritage resource by this redevelopment project to be excessive, diminishing the integrity and heritage value of the resource beyond what can reasonably be defined as conservation in order to accommodate the development proposed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council refuse the request to demolish the heritage property at 17 Dundonald Street under Section 34 of the Ontario Heritage Act as proposed in the rezoning Application No. 12 154762 STE 27 OZ in accordance with plans and drawings prepared by RAW Design dated March 30, 2012 with final revisions dated April 26, 2013, date stamped received by the City Planning Division on May 8, 2013.
2. If the owner appeals City Council's decision to refuse the request to demolish the heritage property at 17 Dundonald Street under Section 34 of the Ontario Heritage Act, Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate City staff to attend the Ontario Municipal Board hearing in opposition to the appeal.

Financial Impact

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

DECISION HISTORY

In 2010 Councillor Kyle Rae requested Heritage Preservation Services staff, in a letter dated January 29, 2010, to assess the heritage merits of the building at 17 Dundonald Street as a "fantastic example of mid-century modernism" (Attachment No. 2). Staff undertook detailed research of the property and determined that it met the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design and contextual value.

A staff report (April 1, 2010) from the Acting Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division, 17 Dundonald Street – Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, was considered by the Toronto Preservation Board at its meeting on April 30, 2010, by Toronto East York Community Council at its meeting on May 25, 2010 and approved without amendment by Toronto City Council at its meeting June 8 and 9, 2010. By-law 490-2012 designating the property at 17 Dundonald Street as being of cultural heritage value or interest under the Ontario Heritage Act was enacted by City Council on April 11, 2012.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2010.TE34.11>

In response to a rezoning application submitted to the City Planning Division on April 16, 2012 for the subject property, a preliminary planning report (May 14, 2012) from the Director of Community Planning, Toronto and East York District was considered by Toronto and East York Community Council at its meeting on June 13, 2013.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.TE17.52>

While no formal application has yet been received by Heritage Preservation Services for the demolition of the designated property at 17 Dundonald Street, the applicant is seeking planning approvals for the subject development that is premised on the demolition of the

existing heritage resource. A report on the rezoning application from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District will be considered at the September 10, 2013 meeting of Toronto East York Community Council.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Cultural Heritage Value

The property at 17 Dundonald Street is located in the area northeast of Yonge Street and Wellesley Street East (Attachment No. 1). Constructed in 1956 to the designs of the Toronto architectural firm of Weir, Cripps and Associates, the 2 1/2 storey office building is an early and representative example of a small-scaled and well-designed office building that displays Modern styling from the period after World War II when the Modern Movement in architecture was gaining popularity in Toronto. Contextually, the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada Building was carefully designed to respect the scale and integrity of Dundonald Street at the time, a street that still retains much of its early 20th century appearance as a residential subdivision.

The building follows a near-square plan under a flat roof with cladding in concrete, turquoise-hued glazed brick, travertine, aluminium and glass. On the principle north elevation four bays are defined by concrete piers dividing tiers of strip windows with travertine spandrels and panels (Attachment No. 3). The east and west side elevations are divided into five bays with the outer bays filled with glazed brick and the centre bays repeating the fenestration on the north façade. The building sits on Dundonald Street with a small landscaped forecourt separating it from the street. Schedule "A" of Designation By-law 490-2012 includes a list of the heritage attributes of the designated property (Attachment No. 4).

Development Proposal

The subject property is rectangular in shape and approximately 1,080 m² in size with a frontage of 27 metres on Dundonald Street and a depth of 40 metres. The applicant proposes to redevelop the site at 17 Dundonald Street with an 18-storey (56.8 metres, including mechanical) residential building with 115 residential units and 3 levels of below grade parking. The parking will be accessed from a 6.0 metre driveway located at the eastern property line with entry from Dundonald Street.

The application proposes to completely dismantle the heritage resource with possible reuse of some of the original materials (brick and travertine materials may be salvaged and reused), to reconstruct the north façade, five structural bays of the west façade and the partial reconstruction of one structural bay of the east façade. The facades are proposed to be reconstructed in a location 3.5 metres forward and 1.5 metres west of the building's location to accommodate the proposed tower. Community Planning staff have serious concerns with the application and consider the proposed tower over-development of the site.

Heritage Impact Assessment

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) dated April 16, 2012 prepared by ERA Architects Inc. was submitted to the City as part of the development application for the subject property. In response to staff comments the HIA was subsequently revised and reissued May 3, 2013.

The HIA explores three options for the heritage resource: retention *in situ* of the principle elevation with one bay of the east and west elevations; relocation of the front elevation with one bay of the east and west elevations; and dismantle and rebuild in a relocated position. The HIA recommends the dismantle and rebuild option as the preferred strategy as it will be similar "in effect" to the other options, it reduces the cost of conservation work allowing resources to be used to support other community benefits accruing from the development; and it provides the flexibility to allow a better functional fit between the heritage elements and the internal structure of the proposed new use. It should be noted that none of these conclusions relate to heritage integrity of the proposed conservation strategy.

The report concludes that dismantling and rebuilding the wall system of the heritage resource is a rehabilitation strategy that is suitable for this site and is consistent with the definition of rehabilitation found in Parks Canada's *Standards and Guidelines* for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

Policy Framework

Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. Key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and, protecting public health and safety. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The *Planning Act* and associated *Provincial Policy Statement* guide development in the Province including provincial interests regarding heritage resources as described in the Provincial Policy Statement issued under the authority of Section 3 of the *Planning Act*. The *Planning Act* requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters "shall be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement. The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and promotes the provincial policy-led planning system.

Provincial Policy Statement 2.6.1 directs that "Significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved". Properties included on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties are considered to be significant in this context.

In the PPS 2005, "conserved" is defined as "the identification, protection, use and/or management of cultural heritage and archaeological resources in such a way that their

heritage values, attributes and integrity are retained. This may be addressed through a conservation plan or heritage impact assessment."

Official Plan

Policy 3.1.5.2 of the Official Plan states that "Heritage resources on properties listed on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties will be conserved". Policy 3.1.5.7 states that: "The reuse of buildings with architectural or historic importance will be considered when selecting buildings to accommodate public functions".

Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

The Parks Canada document, *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Standards and Guidelines)* adopted by City Council, is the document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The Standards include the following:

- Conserve the *heritage value* of a historic place. Do not remove, replace, or substantially alter its intact or repairable *character-defining elements*. Do not move a part of a *historic place* if its current location is a *character-defining element*
- Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach calling for minimal intervention
- Find a use for an historic place that requires minimal or no change to its character-defining elements
- Evaluate the existing condition of character-defining elements to determine the appropriate intervention needed. Use the gentlest means possible for any intervention. Respect heritage value when undertaking an intervention.
- Maintain *character-defining elements* on an ongoing basis. Repair *character-defining elements* by reinforcing their materials using recognized conservation methods. Replace in kind any extensively deteriorated or missing parts of *character-defining elements*, where there are surviving prototypes
- Make any intervention needed to preserve character-defining elements physically and visually compatible with the historic place and identifiable on close inspection. Document any intervention for future reference
- Repair rather than replace *character-defining elements*. Where character-defining elements are too severely deteriorated to repair, and where sufficient physical evidence exists, replace them with new elements that match the forms, materials and detailing of sound versions of the same elements

The *Standards and Guidelines* also include several key definitions. Central to these is the definition of Conservation:

Conservation: all actions or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the character-defining elements of an historic place so as to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life.

COMMENTS

Staff has reviewed the HIA in the context of Council approved heritage policy and cannot accept or support this proposal as a conservation (rehabilitation) strategy for this heritage property. Rehabilitation is only a conservation action if the heritage value of the resource is protected. The heritage value of an historic place is embodied in its character-defining materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings. The Statement of Cultural Heritage Value for 17 Dundonald Street clearly identifies the heritage value of this resource as embodied in its physical design and materials as characteristic of early Modern architecture.

This proposal shows no clear commitment to retain any of the original material of the building (the HIA indicates travertine panel and masonry wall components may be salvaged and reused). The HIA is vague, both in discussing the ability to repair original character-defining elements, and the degree to which character-defining elements that have deteriorated will be replaced in kind. Further, the HIA suggests that TTC requirements may necessitate further revision to the proposed "rehabilitation" strategy in order to meet TTC standards for accessibility and access, maintenance requirements, anti-vandalism and building durability and to ensure the heritage elements are structurally suitable for the new purpose within the development site. The extent of these revisions was unknown by the heritage consultant at the time the HIA was submitted pending consultation with the TTC to clarify their design standards.

In accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines* the proposed strategy is not one of minimal intervention. In order to minimize the impact of the proposal staff encouraged the applicant to consider retaining the primary elevation *in situ*, taking advantage of the existing setback of the heritage resource to create a generous public open space adjacent to the new subway entrance. The applicant was not prepared to consider this alternative because of the impact it would have on below grade parking and the location and size of the tower footprint.

CONCLUSIONS

Staff acknowledge the public benefit of this development in providing a new secondary public entrance to the Wellesley Street subway station. However, heritage staff is not convinced that the demolition of the heritage resource at 17 Dundonald Street is a necessary requirement for this development. In accordance with Official Plan policy, the conservation of 17 Dundonald Street should be viewed as a project requirement and an opportunity to adaptively reuse a designated heritage property with architectural and contextual importance to accommodate this new public function.

Further, staff strongly disagree that the proposed demolition, relocation and reconstruction (with the precise nature of the reconstruction unknown) of a portion of the designated heritage property at 17 Dundonald Street is a legitimate conservation strategy and one envisaged by the Parks Canada *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* adopted by City Council. For these reasons, this report is recommending that Council refuse the demolition of the designated heritage property at 17 Dundonald Street as proposed by this development application.

CONTACT

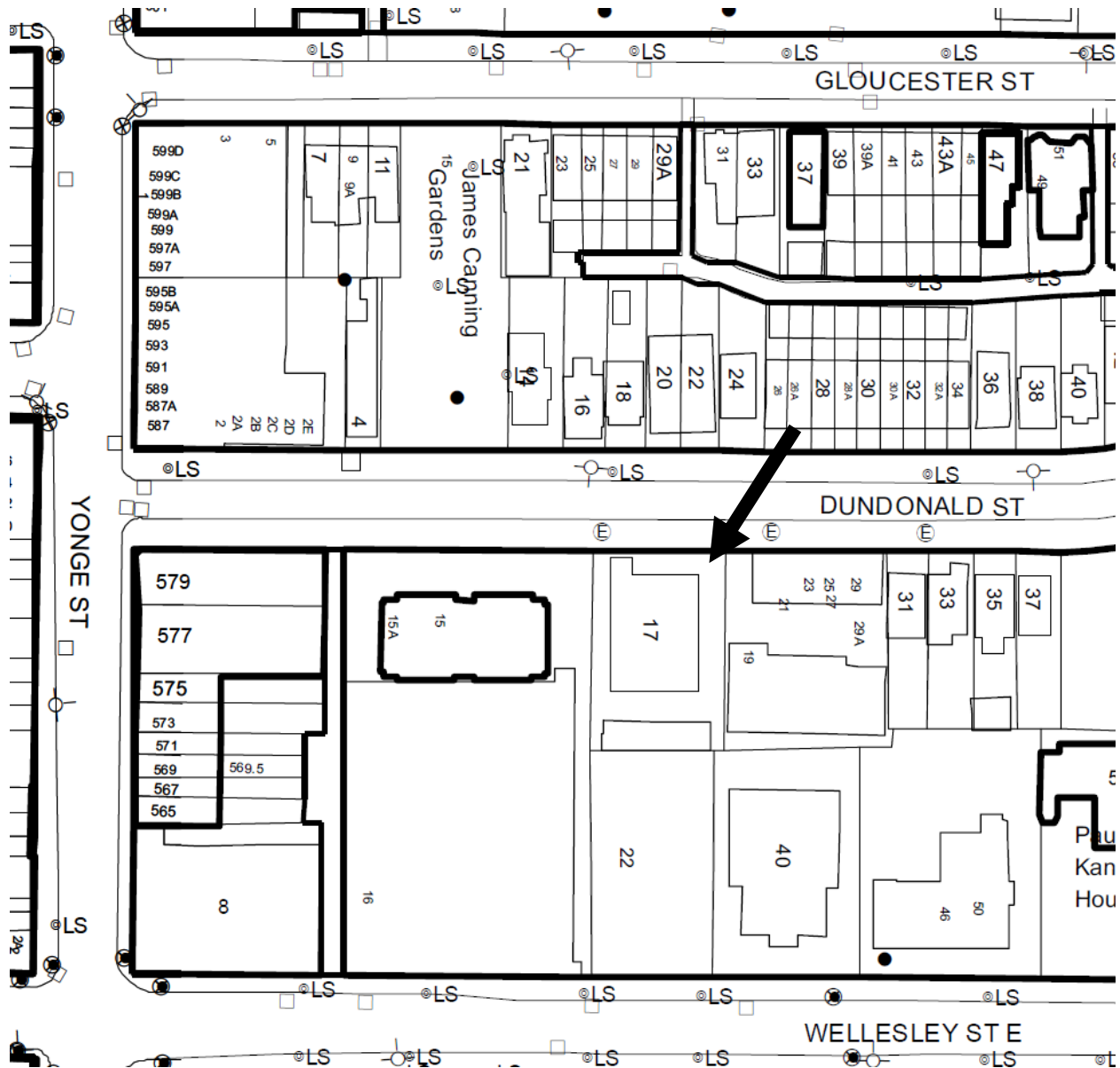
Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager
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SIGNATURE

James Parakh
Acting Director, Urban Design
City Planning Division

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 - Location Map
Attachment No. 2 - Letter from Councillor Kyle Rae, January 29, 2010
Attachment No. 3 - Photographs, 17 Dundonald Street
Attachment No. 4 - Reasons for Designation, Schedule "A"
Attachment No. 5 - Site Plan
Attachment No. 6 - North Elevation
Attachment No. 7 - Artist Rendering



The arrow marks the property at 17 Dundonald Street. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

 **TORONTO** Ward 27
Kyle Rae, Councillor

City Hall, 2nd Floor
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Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

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January 29, 2010

RECEIVED
FEB 02 2010

Scott Barrett
Senior Preservation Co-ordinator
Heritage Preservation Services
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON
M5H 2N2

Dear Scott,

Re: 17 Dundonald St.

I am writing to request that Heritage Preservation Services assess the heritage merits of the building located at 17 Dundonald St. The building is reflective of when modernism arrived in culturally conservative Toronto in the 1950s and 60s. With its detailed geometry, lack of ornament, and glass-and-concrete facade, the structure is a fantastic example of mid-century modernism.

As such, I would like HPS to determine whether the building merits being listed on the City's heritage inventory.

I also request that the assessment be completed prior to the May meeting of the Heritage Preservation Board.

I remain,



Kyle Rae
City Councillor



East Elevation (left) and North Elevation (right)



North Elevation

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: 17 Dundonald Street ATTACHMENT NO. 4
(STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE)

Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada Building

Description

The property at 17 Dundonald Street is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design and contextual value. The Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada Building (1956) is a 2½-storey office building that was designed by the Toronto architectural firm of Weir, Cripps and Associates.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

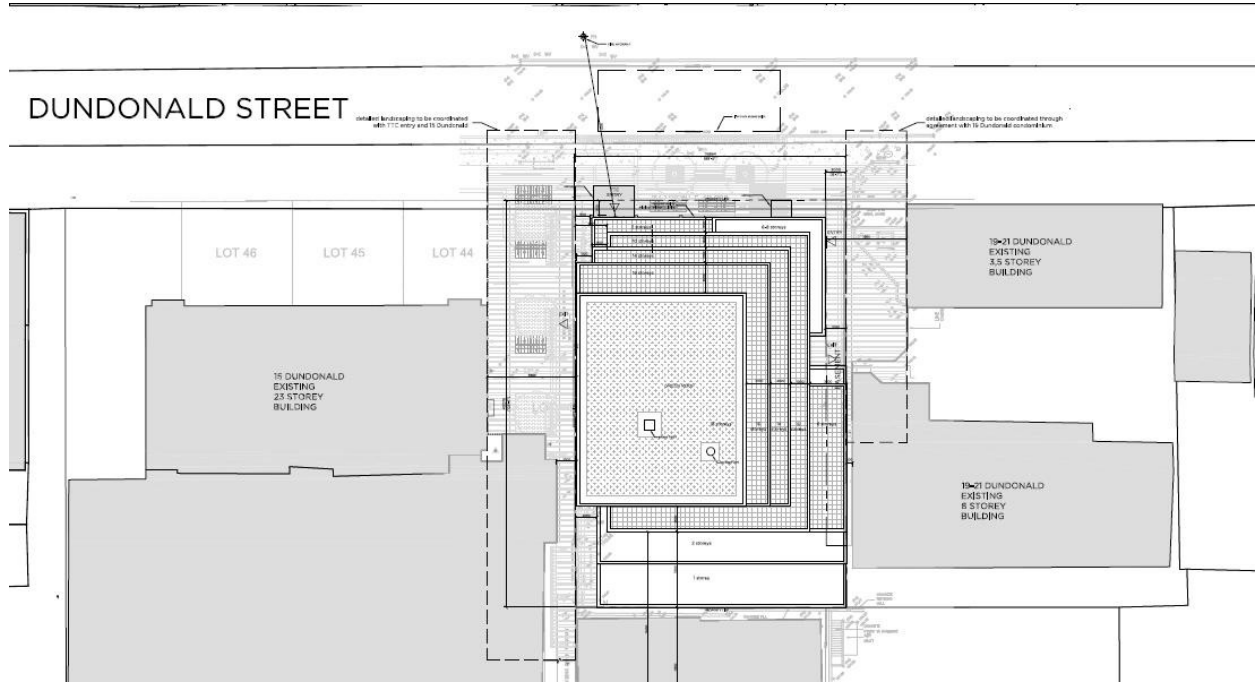
The Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada Building is an early and representative example of a small-scaled and well-designed office building that displays Modern styling from the period after World War II when the Modern Movement in architecture was gaining popularity in Toronto. Its design is distinguished by the grid-like pattern of solids and voids where the application of concrete, glazed brick, aluminum, travertine with expanses of glass are characteristic of early Modern architecture.

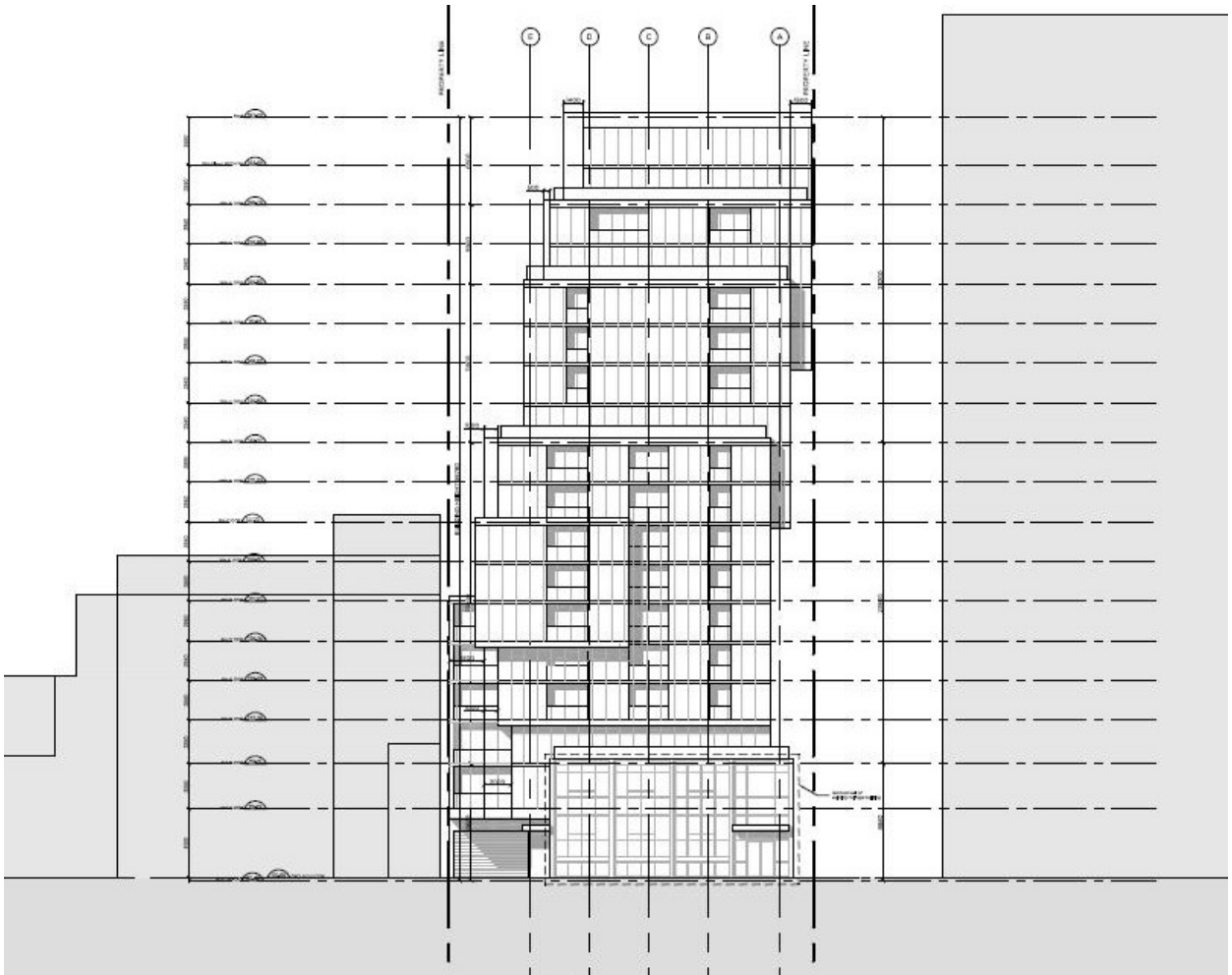
Contextually, the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada Building through its scale supports and maintains the dominant character of Dundonald Street where low-rise buildings make up the balance of the streetscape. The Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada Building was carefully-designed to respect the scale and integrity of Dundonald Street, which retains much of its early 20th century appearance as a residential subdivision northeast of Yonge and Wellesley streets.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 17 Dundonald Street are:

- The 2½-storey office building
- The scale, form and massing
- The near-square plan under a flat roof, where the basement half-storey is set back on the east, north and west sides
- The cladding, employing concrete, turquoise-hued glazed brick, travertine, aluminium and glass
- On the principal (north) façade, the organization of the wall into four bays where concrete piers divide tiers of strip windows with travertine spandrels and panels
- The placement of the main entrance on the north façade in the recessed and glazed west (right) bay, where double doors are protected by a projecting and angled canopy
- The side elevations (east and west), which are divided into five bays, with the outer bays filled with glazed brick and the centre bays repeating the fenestration from the north façade
- The rear (south) wall, where one of the four bays is brick-clad, and a secondary entrance is found
- The placement of the building on the south side of Dundonald Street where a small landscaped forecourt separates it from the street





North Elevation

