

Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property - 378 Yonge Street

Date:	May 10, 2013
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Planning and Growth Management Committee
From:	Chief Planner & Executive Director, City Planning Division
Wards:	Ward 27 - Toronto Centre-Rosedale
Reference Number:	P:\2013\Cluster B\PLN\PGMC\PG13044

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the proposed alterations to the designated heritage property located at 378 Yonge Street which consists of the addition of new large format signage construction on the roof.

The subject proposal has been prepared by Kramer Design Associates, dated April 1, 2013 and submitted as "Yonge & Gerrard Media Display".

The application to erect an assembly of three large third party signs is supported by the document entitled Bright Lights – Big City: A Signage Vision for the Downtown Yonge Strip (Signage Vision), which provides guidelines for large format signage design along the section of Yonge Street south of Gerrard Street to Queen Street. While roof signs are generally prohibited under Chapter 694, Signs, General, of the Toronto Municipal Code and third party signs are prohibited on all heritage properties within the City, the subject property is located within the section of Yonge Street intended for special consideration, to be guided by the Signage Vision document.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

City Council approve the proposed signage application for the heritage property at 378 Yonge Street under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act substantially in accordance with the drawings submitted by Kramer Design Associates, dated April 1, 2013, and the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by E.R.A. Architects, dated May 9, 2013 on file with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, subject to the following conditions:

- a. Prior to the issuance of a sign permit for roof-top signs on the heritage property located at 378 Yonge Street, including a permit for the demolition/removal of existing signs and erection of new signs, the owner shall provide the following to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services:
 - i. sign permit construction drawings;
 - ii. final signage plan, heritage interpretation plan and lighting plan for the exterior of the heritage building;
 - iii. heritage conservation drawings and specifications for heritage conservation work to implement the conservation plan referenced in the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by E.R.A. Architects dated May 9, 2013, to be prepared by a qualified heritage consultant;
 - iv. Letter of Credit, in a form and an amount satisfactory to the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, to secure all conservation work included in the Heritage Impact Assessment referenced above;
- b. Prior to the release of the Letter of Credit, the owner shall provide the following to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services:
 - i. a notice of substantial completion for the heritage conservation work, signed by the Heritage Consultant;
 - ii. implementation of the heritage interpretation plan and heritage lighting plan.

Financial Impact

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

DECISION HISTORY

City Council on November 30, December 1, 2, 4 and 7, 2009, approved Chapter 694, Signs, General, Toronto Municipal Code which reflected the principles of the Signage Vision document and established two special sign districts to reflect the special character and issues of the area.

http://www.toronto.ca/planning/pdf/downtownyonge_signagevision_april09.pdf

A staff report went to the April 27, 2012 meeting of the Toronto Preservation Board recommending the refusal of a previously proposed rooftop sign on this property. The owner subsequently withdrew their application.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.PB11.1>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

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. The 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 and they include 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," and development adjacent to properties on the City's *Inventory of Heritage Properties*, will respect the scale, character and form of the heritage buildings and landscapes.

Sign By-Law and Yonge Street Signage Vision

The subject property is located in the northernmost extent of the Signage Vision boundary along Yonge Street. The rooftop of this two storey building provides unique and extraordinary sightlines along Yonge Street and Gerrard Streets.

Roof signs are generally prohibited under Chapter 694, Signs, General, however, the subject property is located within the Yonge-Dundas Special Sign District, where Chapter 694 permits the erection and display of certain roof signs. Roof signs and third party signs are otherwise prohibited on all heritage properties across the City.

The Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (DYBIA) commissioned a report regarding large format signage in a section of their BIA in 2006. The report, titled "A Signage Vision for the Downtown Yonge Strip, March 2009" (Signage Vision), was finalized in 2009. City Council approved the adoption, in principle, of the Signage Vision, and requested the Chief Building Official in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director to develop provisions for signage in the Downtown Yonge Strip as part of what was adopted as Chapter 694, Signs, General, Toronto Municipal Code.

The Signage Vision contains guidelines for the minimization of adverse effects for heritage buildings in the Yonge-Dundas Special Sign District. These include ensuring heritage elements or materials are not obstructed; ensuring installation is not damaging to heritage elements; differentiating between new and historic components; addressing the architectural elements of the façade and allowing a visual break between the sign and the host building.

Heritage Value

The Dominion Bank Building at 378 Yonge Street was built in 1930 from the modern classical design of John Lyle. The property was included on the first Toronto City Council Inventory of Heritage Properties on June 20, 1973. The property was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by City Council under By-law 85-76 on March 17, 1976.

The building is designated on architectural grounds as a very fine example, with well preserved interiors, of the work of John M. Lyle, a Toronto architect of great importance. The building, designed in a simplified classical style, shows Lyle's distinctive detailing that is based on forms of flowers and animals native to Canada and on Canadian history

and industry. The location of the building at the south end of the widened portion of Yonge Street, from College Street to Gerrard Street, gives it great importance in the streetscape. The building was renovated in 1999 and has been converted from its function as a bank to operate as a restaurant (Attachment Nos. 2, 3, 4).

CURRENT PROPOSAL

The proposal is to install a roof top volume defined by sign faces to the north, east and west measuring approximately 4 1/2 metres high and 8 metres wide or 15 feet by 25 feet (Attachment Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10).

The proposed signage replaces the existing three sign faces with three new sign faces as part of an assembly that creates a slightly higher volume accented with colour changing LED light columns at the three corners. These light columns are the dominant design feature of the otherwise relatively clean simple display surfaces. The light column or spire in the middle is taller providing a punctuating feature to the design as is permitted for slender architectural features" in the Signage Vision document (Attachment Nos. 5, 6).

The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) prepared by ERA Architects submitted in support of the proposal provides a condition report, conservation plan, impact assessment, suggested signage improvements, and recommendations for heritage interpretation of the property.

COMMENTS

Scale, Form and Massing

The Yonge Street elevation of the sign corresponds to the width of the building minus a two foot setback on either. The overall cube form is set off from the building by a two foot horizontal recess and maintain a sign to building face proportion that allows the elevation to remain architecturally dominant.

A horizontal light feature highlights the top of the cornice and serves to further distinguish the transition between the volume of the building and the sign on top.

Gateway Opportunities

The Vision document identifies gateway signage opportunities to be designed as much as possible to twin with adjacent gateway signage in scale and architectural quality, without necessarily being identical. The proposal does not explore the potential of the relationship between the two sides of the street to establish a special gateway condition. This is one of only two gateway conditions identified which provide for this opportunity. These gateway locations hold the potential to mark the north and south entry points into the special character of the Signage Vision Strip.

However, the spire serves to accent this corner as a gateway location on Yonge Street. The spire and light columns are important features of the design as they are fundamental to breaking up what would otherwise be a continuous overwhelming horizontal sign surface. Staff is continuing to work with the applicant to establish the precise height of the spire to ensure it is appropriate to the scale of the heritage building.

Display

The proposed sign will have a static display. The potential for a full motion display was discussed but it was concluded that it would overwhelm the heritage building as viewed from the street.

Heritage Impact Assessment

The project will trigger a \$135,000 investment to restore the 378 Yonge Street building. The restoration will include installing historically appropriate windows; extensive masonry restoration; improved night time lighting of the heritage features of the building and enhanced heritage interpretation.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed new signage is legible through its distinctly contemporary design that allows its volume to read separately from the mass of the heritage building. Staff has worked with the applicant to ensure the scale and detailing of this large format sign is consistent with the intent of the Signage Vision and appropriate to the heritage value and visual prominence of this building.

CONTACT

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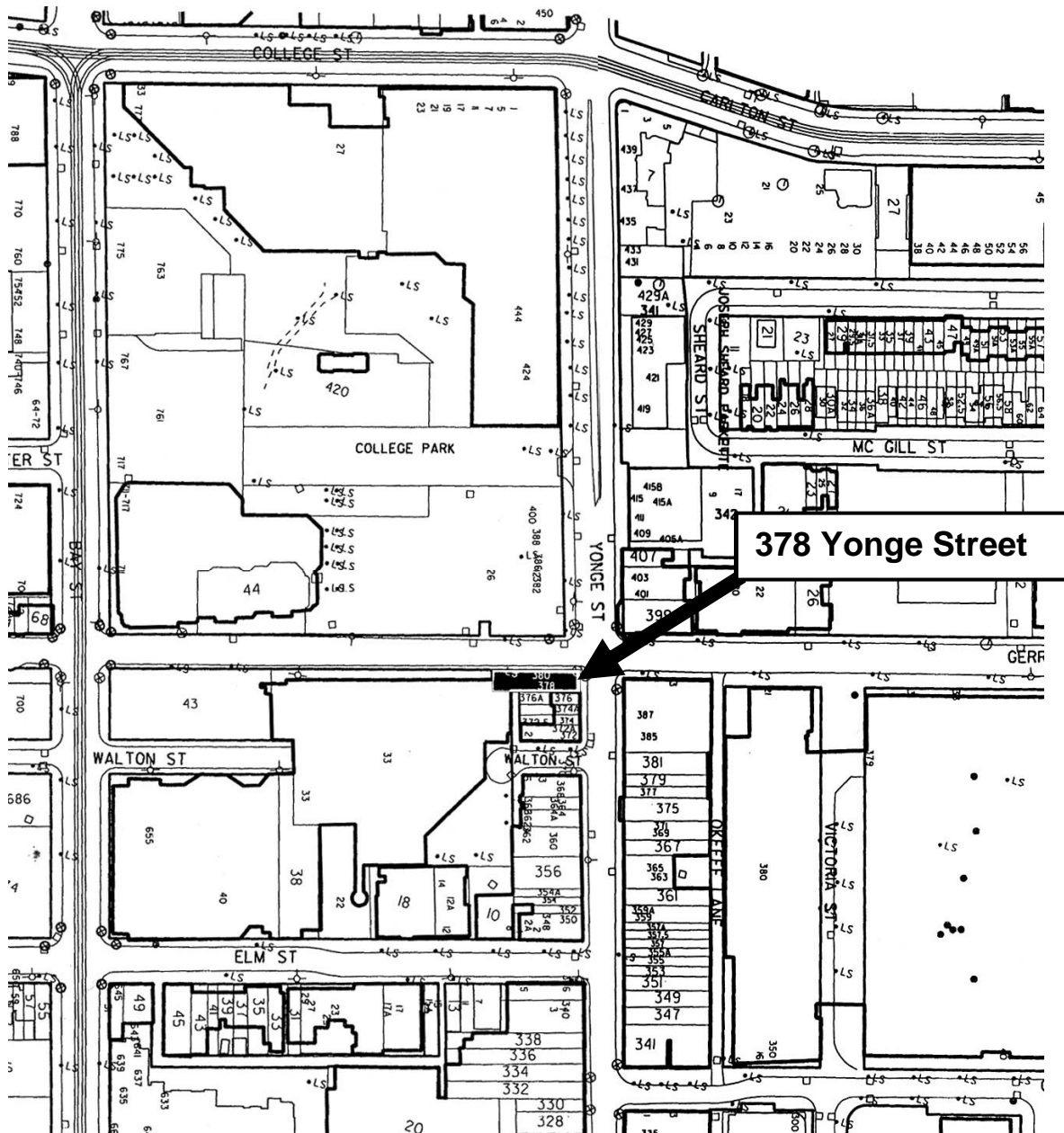
SIGNATURE

Jennifer Keesmaat, MES, MCIP, RPP
Chief Planner and Executive Director
City Planning Division

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
- Attachment No. 2 – Context Photos
- Attachment No. 3 – Context Photos
- Attachment No. 4 – Archival Image and Existing Elevations
- Attachment No. 5 – Signage Vision Document Excerpt (text page 28)
- Attachment No. 6 – Signage Vision Document Excerpt (boundaries page 28)
- Attachment No. 7 – Proposal Drawings
- Attachment No. 8 – Proposal Drawings
- Attachment No. 9 – Photo Matched Proposal Rendering
- Attachment No. 10 – Photo Matched Proposal Rendering

LOCATION MAP: 378 YONGE STREET

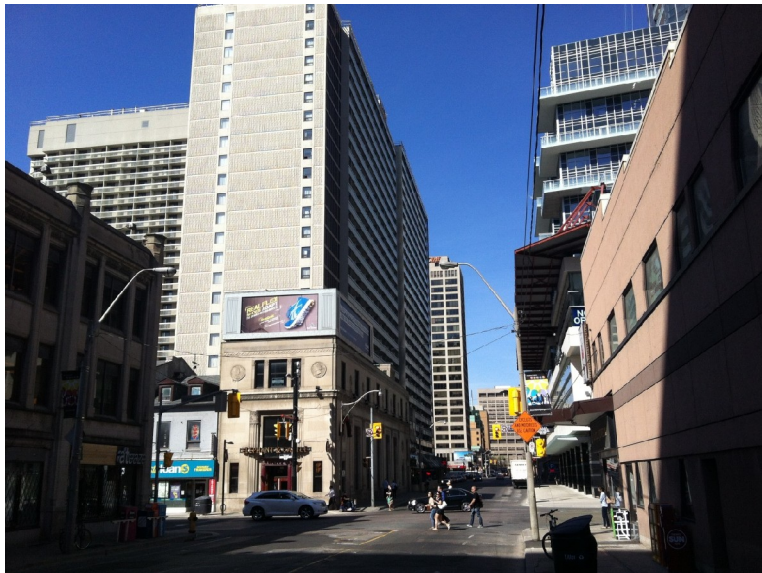


This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown.

CONTEXT PHOTOS: 378 YONGE STREET



View Looking South West at Intersection of Yonge & Gerrard



View west towards Gerrard and Yonge

CONTEXT PHOTOS: 378 YONGE STREET

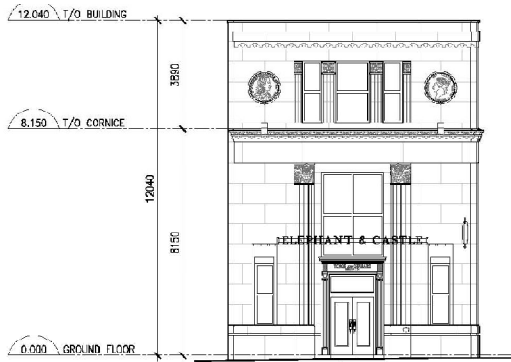


Looking South on Yonge Street towards intersection of Yonge and Gerrard



View south towards Gerrard and Yonge

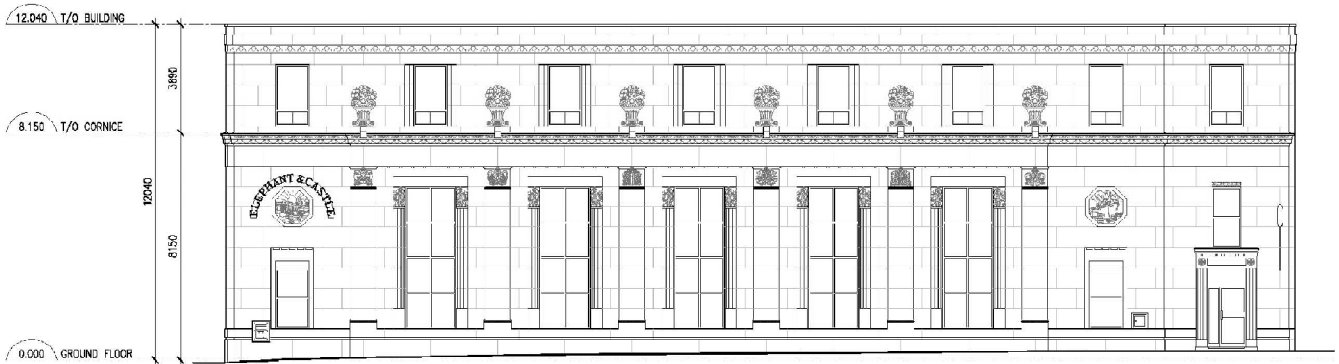
ARCHIVAL IMAGE AND EXISTING ELEVATIONS: 378 YONGE STREET



East Elevation



Archival Image (1929)



North Elevation

(Shown with new building signage but without existing or proposed rooftop signage)

SIGNAGE VISION: 378 YONGE STREET

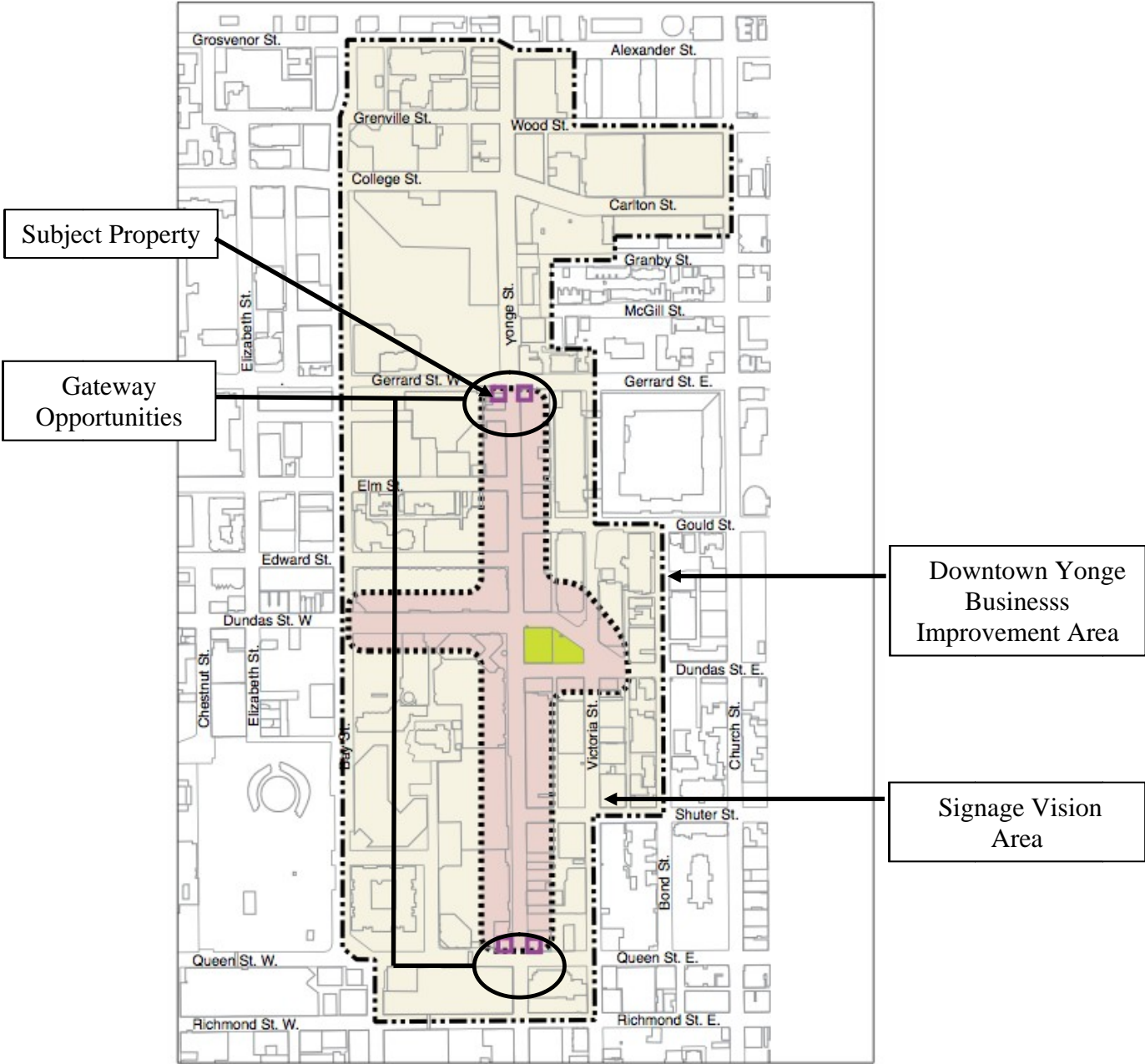
Key Visual Sites: Gateway Signage

To accentuate key entry and egress points of the precinct, signage that perform as Gateway markers are permitted. Design principles include:

- *To be constrained to the corners locations of the property*
- *To accentuate the gateway treatment, signage at the corner is permitted to be taller than the allowable street wall height, but not to exceed the maximum permitted zoning height*
- *Slender architectural features excluding signage may extend beyond the permitted zoning height*
- *Should be designed as much as possible to twin with adjacent gateway signage in scale and architectural quality, without necessarily being identical*
- *These sites oblige the highest possible quality in architectural design, lighting and framing*
- *All four of the gateway sites are heritage buildings and must be considered appropriately; refer to the heritage inventory map on page 31 and the full list in Appendix A.*
- *Where signage wraps onto a cross-street to the 'Yonge Strip', signage may have no more than 15 metres of frontage from the corner.*

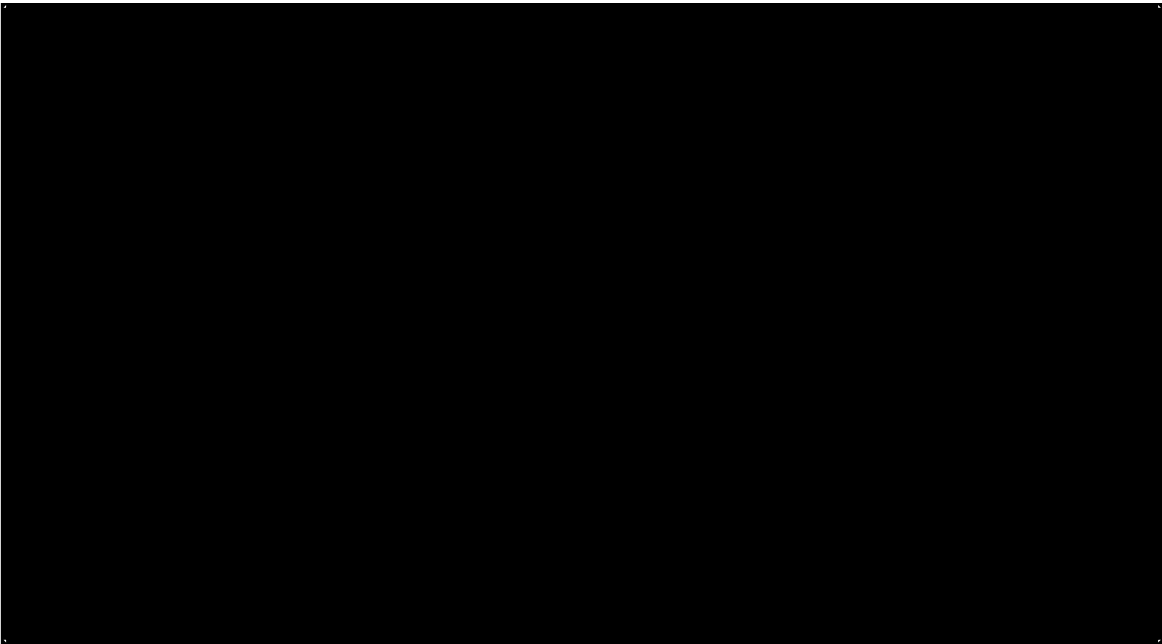
Significant residential development is anticipated at the north-west corner of Yonge and Gerrard Streets. The proximity of dwellings facing this gateway will constrain the amount and intensity of illumination at this location.

SIGNAGE VISION: 378 YONGE STREET

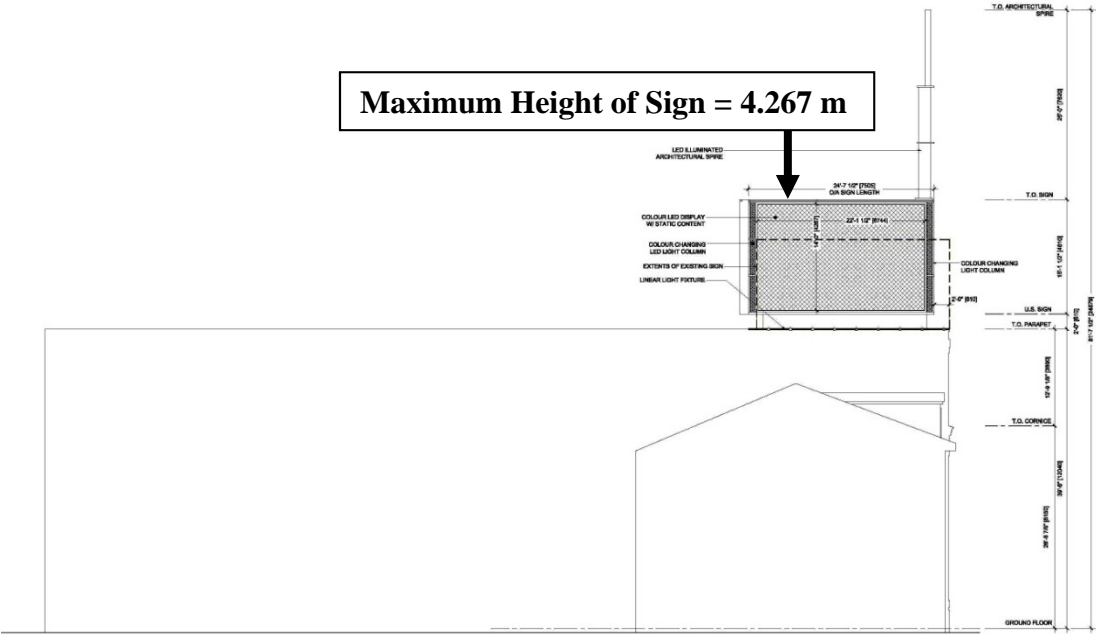


28 A Signage Vision for the Downtown Yonge Street Strip

PROPOSAL DRAWINGS: 378 YONGE STREET

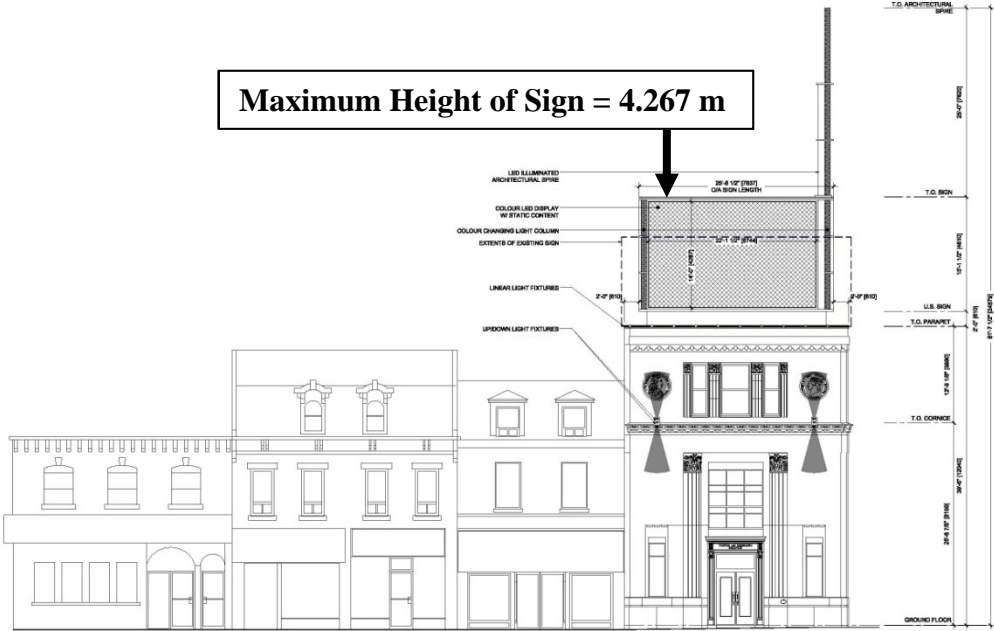


Site Plan

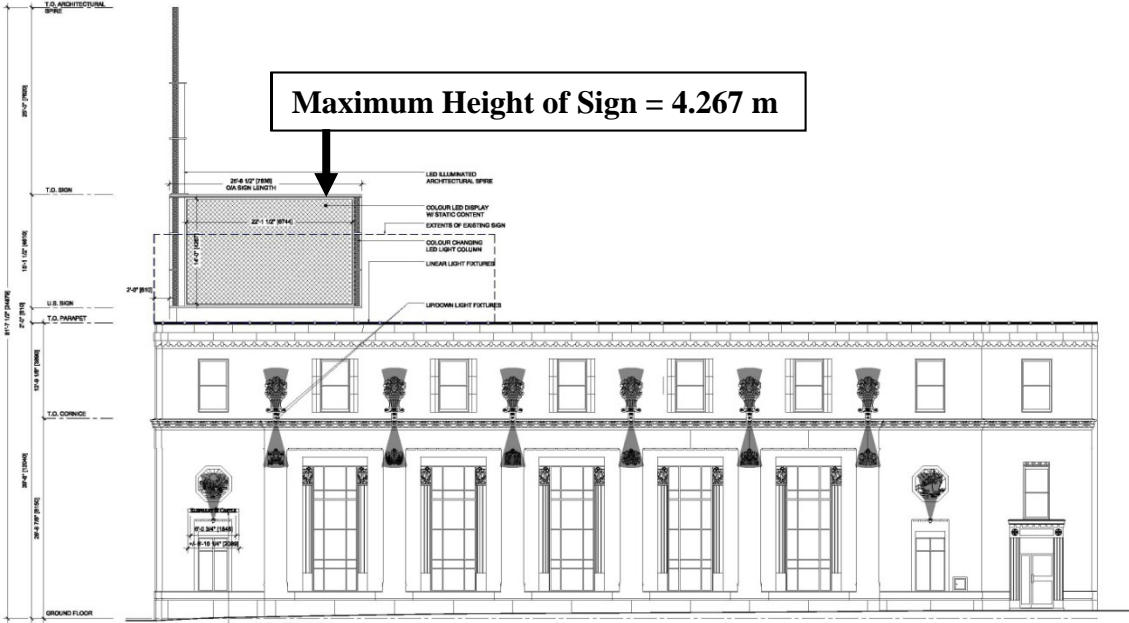


South Elevation

PROPOSAL DRAWINGS: 378 YONGE STREET



East Elevation



North Elevation

COMPUTER RENDERING IN CONTEXT PHOTO : 378 YONGE STREET



Looking South on Yonge Street toward Intersection of Gerrard and Yonge

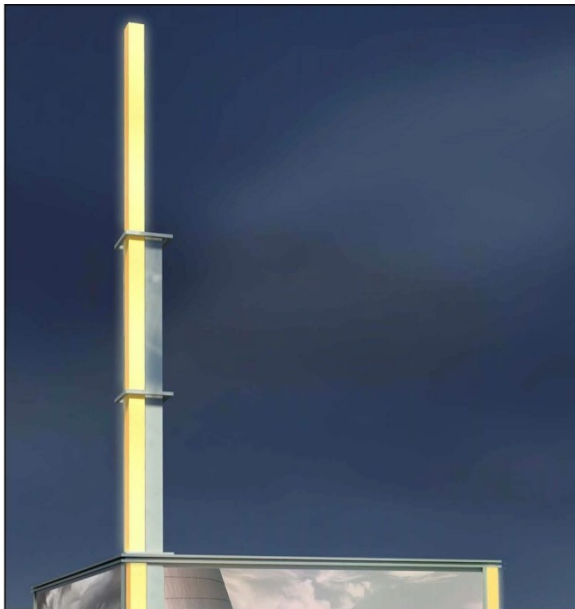


View Looking South-West at Intersection of Yonge and Gerrard

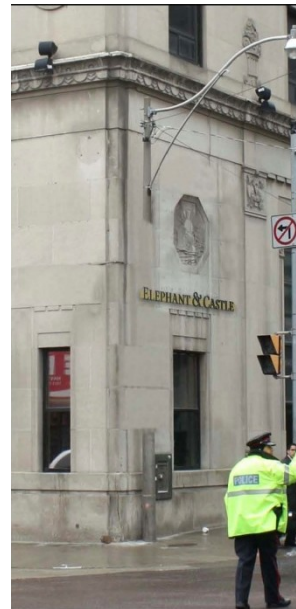
PROPOSAL DRAWINGS: 378 YONGE STREET



View Looking North on Yonge Street to Intersection of Gerrard and Yonge



Spire Detail



Proposed Signage Revision