



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Alteration of a Designated Heritage Property – 2384 Yonge Street (Postal Station K)

Date:	June 26, 2014
To:	Toronto Preservation Board North York Community Council
From:	Director, Urban Design, City Planning Division
Wards:	Ward 16 - Eglinton-Lawrence
Reference Number:	P:\2014\Cluster B\PLN\NYCC\NY14065

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council endorse the conservation strategy generally described in this report for the former Postal Station K building at 2384 Yonge Street (entrance address for 2388 Yonge Street) which is located north of Helendale Avenue. Postal Station K was listed on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties on February 6, 1974 and will be subject to a Notice of Intention to Designate under Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act should City Council approve recommendations contained in an August 21, 2013 report from the Acting Director, Urban Design which will be considered at the July 8-9, 2014 Council meeting.

The property is the subject of an Official Plan Amendment and a Zoning By-law Amendment that proposes the full retention of the two-storey Postal Station K building and the construction of a 27-storey tower. The long term protection of Postal Station K will be secured through the registration of a heritage easement agreement on the title of the property.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council approve the alteration of the heritage property at 2384 Yonge Street in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act to allow for the construction of a 27-storey residential tower and the adaptive re-use of the former Postal Station K building for commercial/retail use, provided that 2384 Yonge

Street is designated and subject to a Heritage Easement Agreement with the city, with such alterations to the property to be substantially in accordance with the Heritage Impact Assessment, prepared by ERA Architects dated June 2, 2014 and the drawings prepared by RAW Design, dated May 21, 2014 and on file with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, all subject to and in accordance with a Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and subject to the following conditions:

- a. That the related Zoning By-law Amendment giving rise to the proposed alterations have been enacted by the City Council and have come into full force and effect in a form and with content acceptable to the City Council, as determined by the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning in consultation with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
- b. That prior to the introduction of bills for the Zoning By-law Amendment by City Council, the owner shall have:
 - i. Entered into a Heritage Easement Agreement for the property at 2384 Yonge Street in accordance with the Heritage Impact Assessment, prepared by ERA Architects dated June 2, 2014 to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services including registration of such agreement to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.
 - ii. Completed and registered a Section 37 Agreement (pursuant to the Planning Act) to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor, the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
- c. That prior to Site Plan Approval for the property at 2384 Yonge Street the owner shall have:
 - i. Provided a Conservation Plan, prepared by a qualified heritage consultant that is consistent with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Statement for 2384 Yonge Street prepared by ERA Architects, dated June 2, 2014 and all to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
 - ii. Completed all heritage-related pre-approval conditions contained in a Notice of Approval Conditions for Site Plan Control to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
 - iii. Provided Final Site Plan drawings including drawings related to the approved Conservation Plan to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

- d. That prior to the issuance of any permit for the property at 2384 Yonge Street, including a heritage permit or a building permit, but excluding permits for repairs and maintenance of the existing heritage building the owner shall:
 - i. Obtain final approval for the necessary by-law amendment required for the alterations to the property at 2384 Yonge Street, such amendments to have been enacted by City Council and to have come into full force and effect in a form and with content acceptable to City Council as determined by the Chief Planner, and Executive Director, City Planning in consultation with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
 - ii. Have obtained Final Site Plan approval for such property, issued by the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning.
 - iii. Provide full building permit drawings, including notes and specifications for the conservation and protective measures keyed to the approved Conservation Plan, including a description of materials and finishes to be prepared by the project architect and a qualified heritage consultant, all to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
 - iv. Provide a Lighting Plan that describes how Postal Station K will be sensitively illuminated to enhance its heritage character, to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
 - v. Provide an Interpretation Plan for Postal Station K, to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
 - vi. Provide a Letter of Credit, including provision for upwards indexing, in a form and amount and from a bank satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services to secure all work included in the approved Conservation Plan and the approved Interpretation Plan;

- e. That prior to the release of the Letter of Credit the owner shall:
 - i. Provide a letter of substantial completion prepared and signed by a qualified heritage consultant confirming that the conservation work and the interpretive work have been completed in accordance with the approved Conservation Plan and the approved Interpretation Plan, and that an appropriate standard of conservation has been maintained, all to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
 - ii. Provide replacement Heritage Easement Agreement photographs to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

Financial Impact

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

DECISION HISTORY

The property located at 2384 Yonge Street was listed on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties on February 6, 1974.

The property was considered for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act by North York Community Council on June 17, 2014

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.NY33.8>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The property at 2384 Yonge Street, which is located on the west side of Yonge Street, north of Eglinton Avenue, contains Postal Station K. The proposal for the building involves the retention of interior features, the reinstatement of exterior features, the removal of a one-storey rear portion of the building (not included in the reasons for designation) and the addition of a 27-storey building to the rear of the heritage building. The proposal is subject to an Official Plan Amendment and a Zoning Bylaw Amendment (13 127993).

The Conservation Strategy is being developed with reference to the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places, the Ministry of Culture's Ontario Heritage Toolkit and the Burra Charter.

BACKGROUND

Policy Framework

Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement 2014

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 the 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 significant 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 2014, "conserved" is defined as "the identification, protection, use and/or management of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act."

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." The policy also states that "Development adjacent to properties on the City's Inventory will respect the scale, character and form of the heritage buildings and landscapes."

At its meeting of April 3, and 4, 2013, Toronto City Council adopted amendments to the Official Plan heritage policies. By-law 468-2013 enacting these policies has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. While the amendments are not yet in force, Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) has also considered the proposal within the context of these amended policies. Policy 28 specifically addresses the relocation of heritage buildings and/or structures.

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

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 of Toronto.

Proposal and Conservation Strategy

The alteration of Postal Station K involves the retention of the two-storey portion of the heritage building that faces on to Yonge Street and the introduction of new commercial and residential uses to the site. The removal of the rear one-storey portion of the post office building will allow a new 27-storey building to be located to the west of the existing heritage building. Two rooftop glass elevators will be added to the heritage building (set back from the parapet) to allow for rooftop terrace access and a glazed guardrail set back from the parapet will also be required. The heritage building will be adaptively re-used in its entirety.

Immediately behind Postal Station K, the new building is set back to provide three-dimensional integrity to the heritage building. The 27-storey tower cantilevers 1.5 metres over the heritage building approximately three-storeys above the heritage building to reduce wind load from the new building. Vertical fins will connect to the overhang. The new and existing structures will be connected by glass along the west perimeter wall of the existing two-storey heritage building. The new building consists of townhouses and retail at grade, with residential above.

Alterations will occur to the front façade to allow for barrier free access and the appearance of the original stairs will be restored. Additionally, the original window designs and sconces will be reinstated based on the original architectural drawings by Murray Brown, dated 1935. Original interior features including the coloured terrazzo

floor and banisters located at the north and south stair wells will be maintained within the conserved building. The interior renovations will aim to expose the original simplicity of the tall ceilings and dropped beams.

The stone cladding of the retained building will be cleaned and repaired and new steel windows and doors based on the original designs will be thermal upgrades. Select limestone panels at the rear portion to be demolished are to be salvaged for replacement repair material. The original door details will be restored in modern laminated and etched glass to suit new use requirements. Drawings of the original front entrance doors show an elaborate geometric detail pattern. The proposed new retail use would benefit from a welcoming, transparent appearance at grade. New laminated and etched glass doors, based on the original detail drawings, are proposed for this location. The flagpole that serves to commemorate the Battle of Montgomery's tavern, which occurred at this location, will be relocated on the site and the base will be reconstructed.

No excavation will be done below the retained portion of the existing building, and servicing will occur on the west side of the development from a newly created laneway. A permanent, publically owned civic space is being developed by the applicant on the forecourt. It is to be known as Montgomery Square.

COMMENTS

The proposed rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of Postal Station K is in keeping with heritage preservation guidelines and represents exemplary conservation. Staff concur with the consultant's conclusion that the removal of the rear one-storey portion of the post office building will allow for a design that corresponds to the surrounding context and respects the existing two-storey portion of heritage building and open space adjacent to Yonge Street. The creation of a new civic forecourt in front of the former post office is of special benefit to the heritage building and provides a permanent place for public appreciation of the historic significance of the site as a whole.

The connection between new development and the heritage building is sympathetic to the heritage character of original post office and provides for a glazed transition that provides visual separation. The full retention of the heritage building via the setback at grade and the cantilever over a small portion of the building will ensure that the quality and character of the building will be retained. The new building will not block or alter existing views of the heritage building or the nearby heritage buildings on Montgomery Avenue and Yonge Street and the proposed materials establish a complimentary but distinguishable contrast between old and new.

On the rooftop terrace, two new elevators will be set back from the parapet, clad in glass, and will not be visible from the street. Staff will work with the owner on a rooftop patio design that results in minimal visibility from all elevations. Exterior rehabilitation and restoration will restore lost features based on documentary evidence and will also provide materially sensitive upgrades. The use of salvaged material within the restoration is very

desirable and the retention of important interior features will maintain a sense of authenticity throughout the building.

CONCLUSION

The owner of this property, Montgomery Square Inc. led by Rockport Group, has kept the heritage value of the property at the centre of its planning process and a number of key decisions have been made that will enhance, mitigate and facilitate the sensitive incorporation of the former Postal Station K building into the proposed development. The applicant is proposing to make a substantial and high quality investment in the rehabilitation and partial restoration of a locally, provincially and federally significant heritage resource. The proposed civic square and the surrounding public realm improvements will also serve to highlight this landmark building on Yonge Street. The project team is to be commended for its collaborative and open approach to working with City Planning staff and for the conservation integrity of the project design.

The proposed development will result in the designation of a significant heritage property under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, and will secure its long term protection with a heritage easement agreement registered on title. It will also result in a permanent civic space in Midtown Toronto that commemorates and celebrates an important place in the city's history, from the early nineteenth century to the present.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
Attachment No. 2 – Photographs
Attachment No. 3 – Photographs
Attachment No. 4 – Proposed Site Plan
Attachment No. 5 – Proposed Elevations
Attachment No. 6 – Proposed Elevations
Attachment No. 7 – Proposed Rendering

