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E. B. A.
Architects Inc.

February 24, 2014

Councillor Fletcher
City Council City of Toronto
100 Queen Street West, Suite C44
Toronto, On
M5H 2N2
pfletch@toronto.ca

Dear Councillor Fletcher

**Re: the Red Door Shelter - Woodgreen Church and Neighbourhood House - 875-877
Queen Street East**

We are writing with concern that the Red Door Shelter, housed at the Woodgreen Neighbourhood House at 877 Queen Street East is threatened with closure.

A development by Old Stonehenge Developments Corp was to incorporate the Red Door Shelter into their proposed development - and in fact this is still shown on plans available on Old Stonehenge Development's website (attached). But this does not seem to be the current situation and we understand the Red Door Shelter will be forced to leave this location.

An item at Planning and Growth Management Committee (PG29.18 - December 4th, 2013) addressed the concern about the loss of significant institutions throughout the city, including churches, schools and hospitals and the loss of buildings with heritage and cultural significance and the loss of community spaces and hubs. The Red Door Shelter is such an institution, and has a long history within the community. The Committee requested staff to determine enabling legislation and implementing conditions to control demolitions.

With the Woodgreen Church and Woodgreen Neighbourhood House property one implementation methodology is designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The Act outlines criteria for designation that must be met by any proposed designation. There are three areas of value in the criteria and the Act requires that only one of the three areas needs to be met to warrant the designation.

With the Woodgreen Church property and Neighbourhood House, and specifically with the Red Door Shelter, the provincial criteria can be addressed in the following manner:

1. Architectural Value:

1a A rare, unique, representative or early example for a style:

While the community interest in the property may be primarily based on the contributions undertaken by the church as an important social institution in the neighbourhood, it should be recognized that the prominent firm of architects Mathers and Haldenby designed the Woodgreen Church complex. The church and neighbourhood house are a noteworthy project by this very highly regarded architectural firm, designing in the early postwar period. The arcaded courtyard in the middle of the complex is to our knowledge a unique ecclesiastical feature, a cloister-like element that is unusual for church designs of the time.

2. Historical Value:

2a Association with a theme/activity/belief:

The Woodgreen Church and Neighbourhood House complex speaks to the provision of community-based social services in the downtown east end and the role of religious institutions in addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities. The Neighbourhood House was built specifically as a social mission to better the lives of the poor in Toronto's east end.

2b Association with organization/institution:

Woodgreen is a significant organization/institution in the downtown east end and the Church and Community Centre are likely the best surviving properties that illustrate its history. Because of its function and symbolism, the Church could be seen as the more compelling example to commemorate the history of Woodgreen. Constructed in the mid 20th century, the two properties speak to a turning point in Woodgreen's history and the pioneering programs that they developed during the second half of the 20th century.

As an important community institution that grew and evolved to meet the needs of the downtown east end, the Woodgreen Church and Neighbourhood House yield information that contributes to our understanding of Riverdale.

3. Contextual Value:

Contextual value is based on whether a property is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of the area; is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or is a landmark.

Woodgreen Church and Neighbourhood House, housing the Red Door Shelter, has had a very long connection with Riverdale and is physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to its surroundings.

Given the role that the Woodgreen Church has played within the

downtown east end and Riverdale since the late 19th century and the continuous role of the 1958 Woodgreen Church and Neighbourhood House in the provision of shelter and support to disadvantaged citizens, the property is of considerable social value to a wide network of stakeholders and its neighbourhood, and functions as an anchor within its community.

Although the 9/06 criteria for the Ontario Heritage Act do not make explicit reference to social value, it is clear that Woodgreen is a social and cultural landmark within the downtown east end and Riverdale.

Given these criteria we would recommend consideration of this property for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. The historical and contextual heritage value relates both to the religious institution as well as the Red Door Shelter. While it may seem unusual that designation would be considered for an institutional use this not in anyway prohibited by the criteria for designation, and in fact only one of the three criteria relate specifically to built form.

The Red Door Shelter is an important part of Riverdale's ongoing and evolving history and we request that the city consider heritage designation as an appropriate legislative tool to protect this resource.

Yours truly,

!!

Michael McClelland OAA FRAIC CAHP
Principal | E.R.A. Architects Inc.

cc. Cathy Nasmith
Attachments

Appendix i:
Red Door Timeline

Appendix i: The Red Door Legacy

1874

Land fronting Queen St. is purchased from George Leslie to be new home for United congregation currently using old Don River Church.

1875

Woodgreen church is erected on Queen St. site – a solid brick structure that seats about 250. The new temple “radiated influence” across the east end and beyond.

1887

Money is raised and the church is enlarged and renovated. The quality of the space is greatly enhanced, and now seats 700-800.

1930s

Riverdale home to over 100 factories, 60% of residents on city relief and there are no recreational activities.

Mr & Mrs. Frank Colello transfer the deed of their home at 37 Boulton ave to Woodgreen church.

Revered Ray McClearly moves into house and begins to organize extensive services that support the activities of the church – an emphasis is placed on programming for children. Mission is to "serve the whole community from the cradle to the sunset hour of life".

Upon realizing that the bottom floor of the house was full of ‘shivering derelicts’ who seemed to drift off the streets, the reverend is said to have thrown away the key as a gesture of his solidarity and support in providing aid. This probably marks the beginning of establishing programs/shelter for the homeless by the Woodgreen community.

In response to the conditions of the depression - “the very depressed, drab outlook of those rugged days” - the reverend decided that the door of Woodgreen church and the church house at 47 Boulton should be painted red as symbol of hope.

From these initiatives many community service programs began to emerge.

1937

Woodgreen Settlement Trust is created in order to fund and direct future Woodgreen projects.

The trust secured land on Queen St E adjacent the church where the future community centre will be built.

1946

A strong push for post-war expansion results in the construction of a new community centre at 835 Queen E by the architects Mathers & Haldenby. On June, 1946 the cornerstone is laid by WC Harris. Activities from the Church House are expanded and many new social programs are offered.

1950

A master plan is developed that calls for a new church building. Money is raised through private funding and the land around the current church building is slowly accumulated to create a more expansive site.

1958

The cornerstone of the new church, also designed by M&H, is laid.

1960s -

There is increased desire to provide non-denominational services and grow the Woodgreen enterprise in a more a secularized spirit. The community centre offerings continue to grow. Among the range of pioneering programming is Toronto's first legal clinic (now East Toronto Community Legal Services) and first apartment building for seniors (1967).

In the late 1960s Woodgreen community centre officially ended its relationship with the adjacent church. The Queen E site was subsequently renovated and expanded in 1988 by Oleson Worland architects. Woodgreen has now expanded to 32 locations throughout East End + city. In the last few years Woodgreen has moved from this location and the property is for sale.

In **1982** Red Door shelter is opened in the church basement. One of the first family shelters in the city, it remains one of the largest supporting over 500 families each year. The name is homage to the original red door gesture from the past. The shelter's basic operations are funded by the city of Toronto as well as the province. The additional programs are supported through donations and private fundraising.

2004

Congregation vacates church.

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Old Stonehenge development proposal intended for 2016 was to include space for Red Door Family Shelter to continue operations.

Site of church (875 Queen E) is listed in ongoing Leslieville Development Study as possible location for mid-rise development.

The above information was compiled from the following sources:

The WoodGreen story : 1875-1959 : the story of a church in the country on the Don River to the enterprise of an inner-city church in downtown east-end Toronto.

Patricia O'Connor's *The story of WoodGreen Community Centre 1937-1985.*

<http://www.woodgreen.org/AboutUs/OurHistory.aspx>

<https://www.reddoorshelter.ca/about-us>

<http://oldstonehenge.com/portfolio/leslieville-875-877-queen-street-east/>

Appendix ii:
Red Door Images



FIGURE 1 : WOODGREEN UNITED CHURCH BUILT 1875

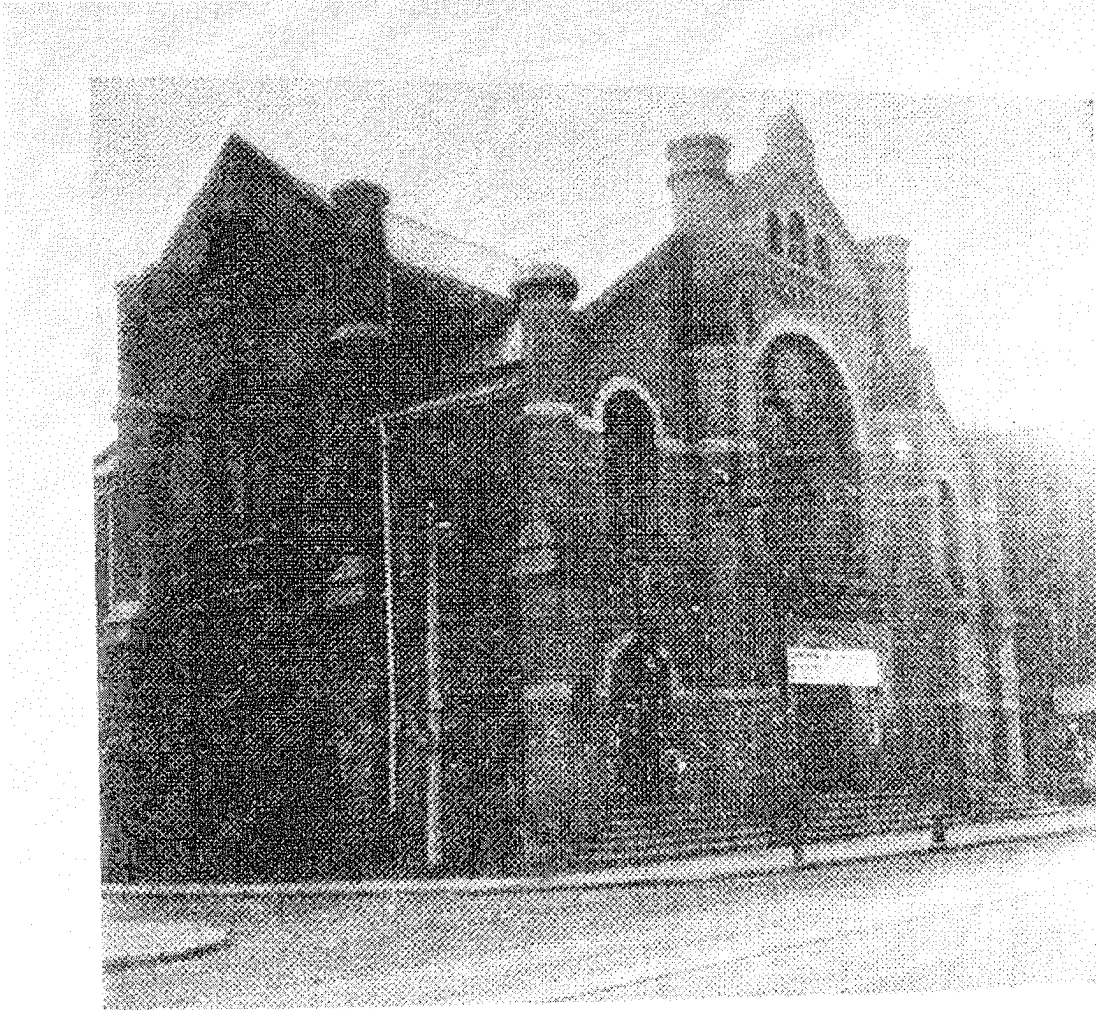


FIGURE 2 : WOODGREEN UNITED CHURCH (RENOVATED 1887)

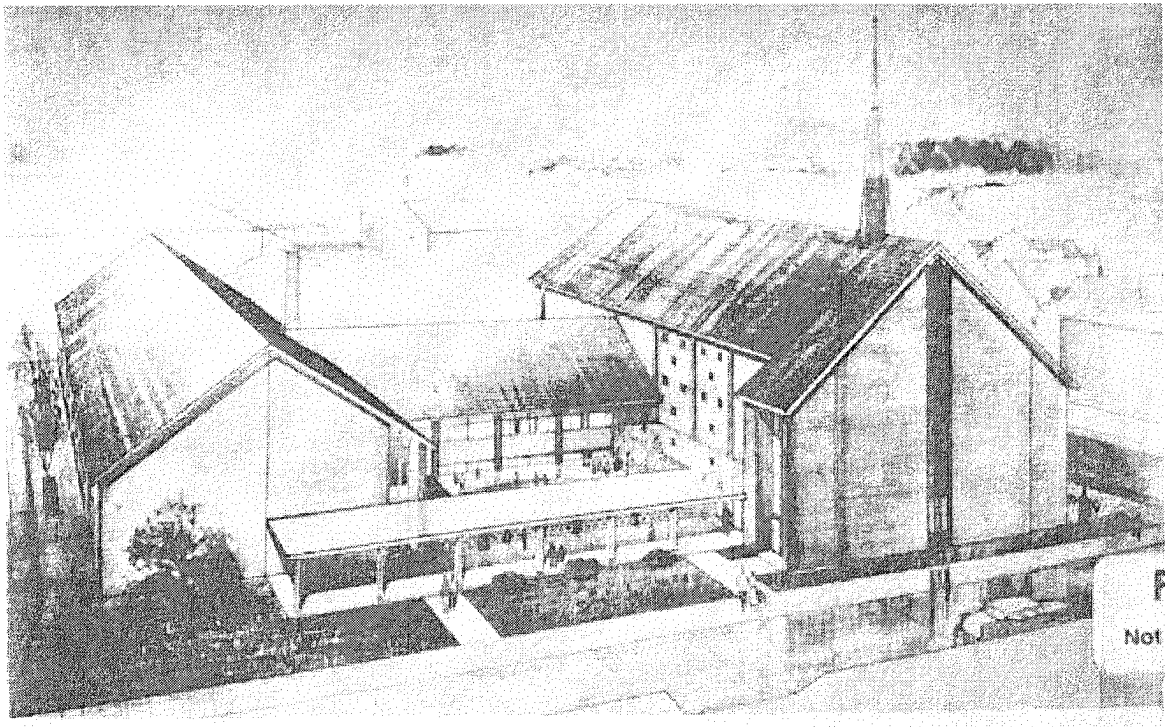
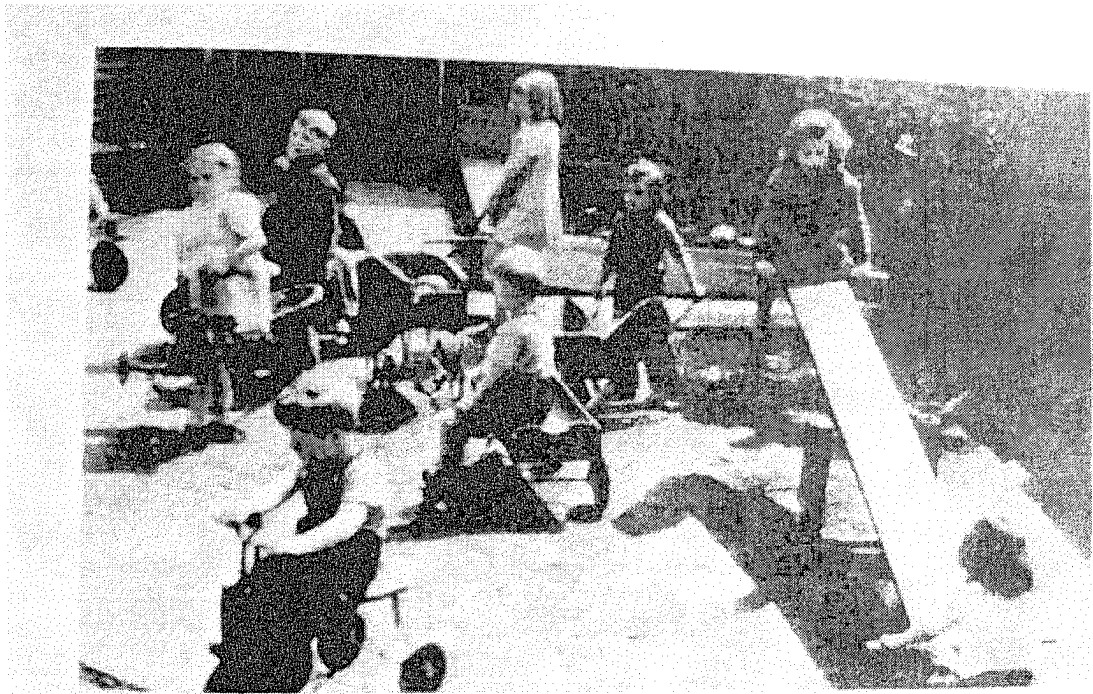


FIGURE 3 : DRAWING OF PROPOSED WOODGREEN UNITED CHURCH
(BUILT 1958)



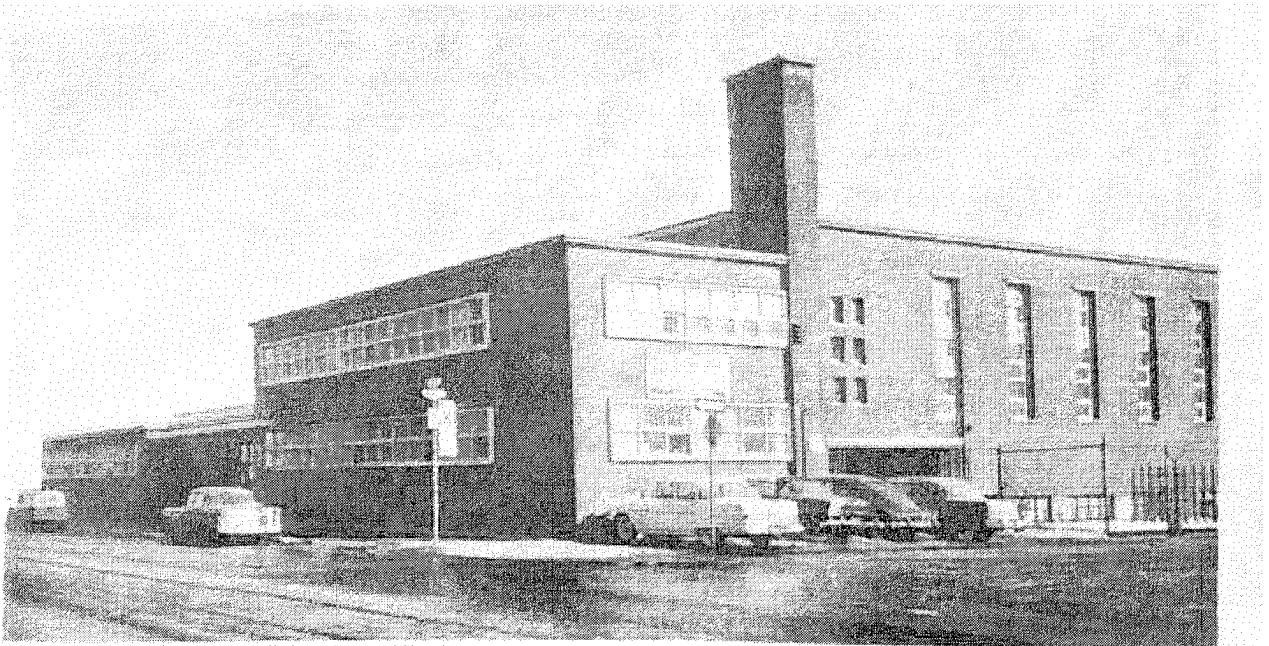
37 BOULTON AVENUE
The House with the Red Doors

FIGURE 4 : 37 BOULTON AVENUE



The Nursery School at 37 Boulton Avenue

FIGURE 4 : 37 BOULTON AVENUE



THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

FIGURE 5: WOODGREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE (BUILT 1946)

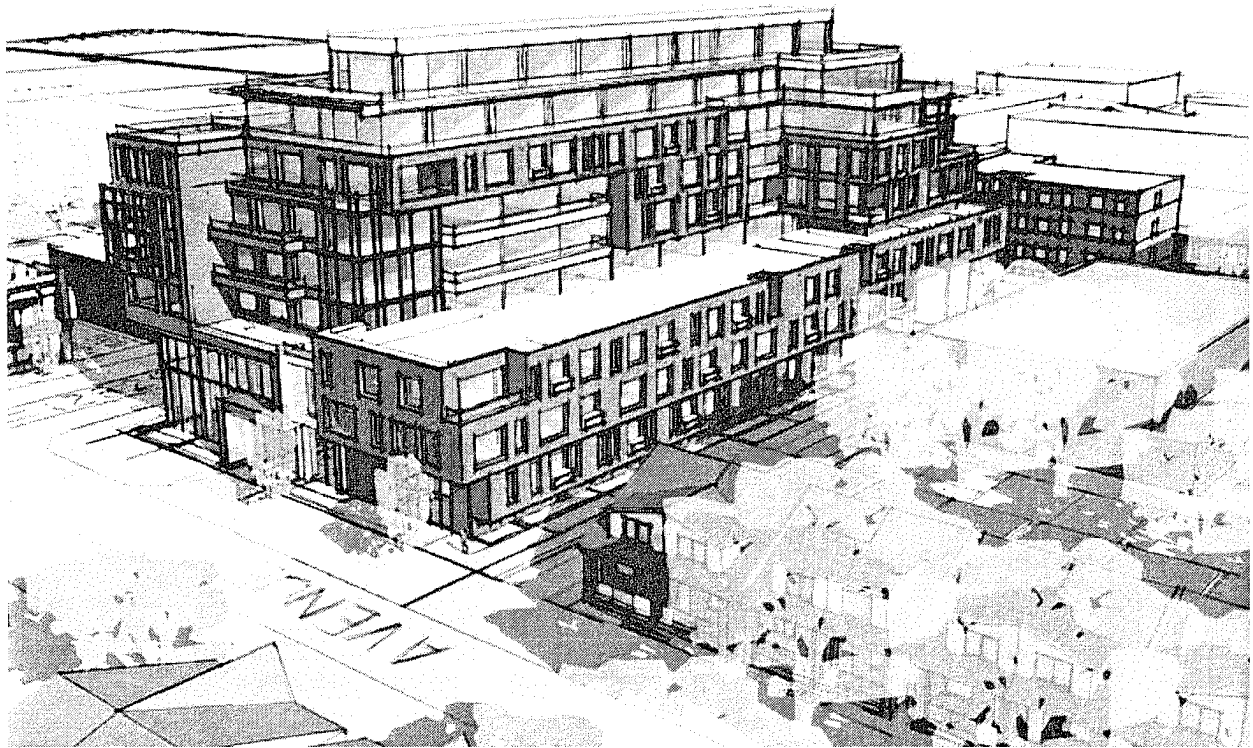
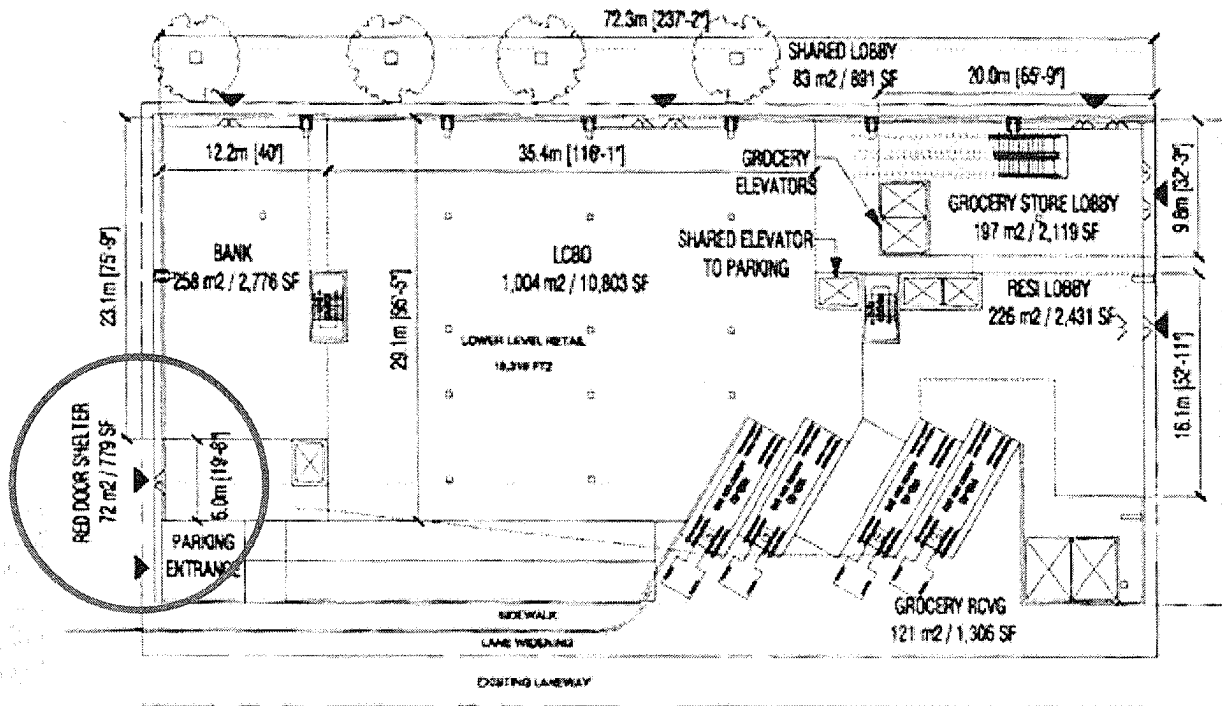
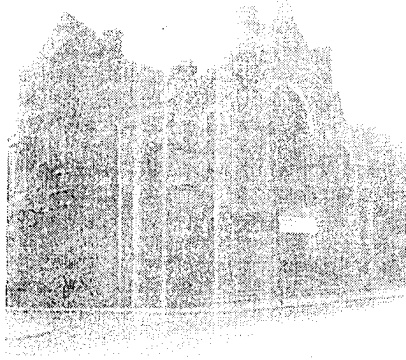


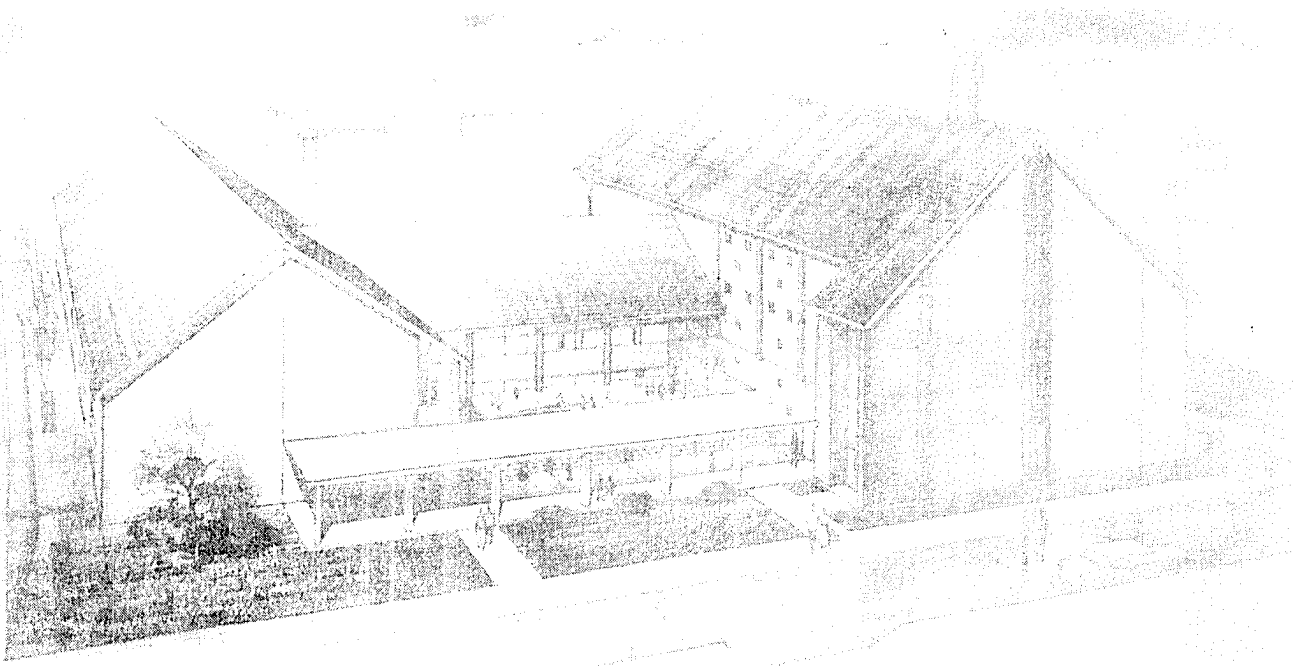
FIGURE 6-7: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOR 875 QUEEN ST EAST

Appendix iii:
Documents



THE OLD

What hallowed memories
these walls recall!



AND THE NEW

Challenging opportunities for Sputnik days
and God's redeeming power!

THE UNITED CHURCH

OBSERVER



**trouble-shooting
pastor**

See page 8

Toronto Star

THE REV. RAY McCLEARY OF WOODGREEN

Women Behind Bars
by Barry Cooke

Big Event for Joe
Photostory by E. L. Homewood

MAY 59
SCARBOROUGH ONT
JANET BLVD
1905

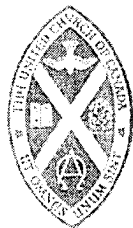
WOOD GREEN
UNITED CHURCH
TORONTO
EIGHTY-THIRD
ANNIVERSARY AND
CORNER STONE
LAYING

Sunday, October 19th, 1958 11.00 A.M. and 12.45 P.M.

Very Reverend George C. Pidgeon, M.A., D.D., LL.D.

Hon. J. Keiller McKay, D.S.O., V.D., Q.C., LL.D.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO



The Ministry

Reverend Ray McCleary, M.B.E., D.D. Reverend W. C. Smith, M.A., D.D.

Miss Marcel A. Clapham, DEACONESS - Mrs. Maud Wellinger, W.M.S.

Mr. W. R. Shewalter, ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER | Jack Lowrey, CHURCH OFFICER

DETAIL FOR CEREMONIAL

October 19, 1958

I. RECORD BOX

S O F T

1. BOYS (4) WILL WALK TO CORNER STONE CHURCH OPENING,
GUIDED BY JIMMIE WELCH.

M U S I C

2. FOLLOWED BY MR. W. H. VAUGHAN

3. MR. LEE GRIFFIN, SUPERINTENDENT OF CONSTRUCTION WILL
ASSIST MR. VAUGHAN PLACE BOX.

II. PRESENTATION OF TROWELS

1. MR. L. J. MCGOWAN

2. MR. ELMORE ADAMS

3. MR. PETER WRIGHT

WILL APPEAR BEFORE THE MIKE ON THE PLATFORM.

4. MR. ELMORE ADAMS WILL RECEIVE THE CHURCH CORNER STONE
TROWEL FROM MR. L. J. MCGOWAN, AND WILL THEN HAND IT TO
DR. GEORGE C. PIDGEON.

5. MR. PETER WRIGHT WILL THEN HAND TROWEL FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSE TO MR. GEORGE C. METCALF, WHO WILL RETAIN SAME UNTIL
USED FOR THE CORNER STONE.

III. HISTORICAL TROWEL

MASTER JOHN C. GRAHAM IV WILL COME TO THE MIKE ON THE
PLATFORM; WILL GIVE 1889 TROWEL TO MR. WM. R. WILSON, III
WHO WILL RECEIVE SAME ON BEHALF OF TRUSTEES AND HAND IT
TO MR. FRED BALMER WHO WILL RETAIN IT FOR THE REST OF
THE SERVICE. MR. BALMER WILL BRING THIS TROWEL TO THE
CORNERSTONE FOR SYMBOLIC USE.

IV. CHURCH CORNER STONE

1. (a) DR. GEORGE C. PIDGEON

(b) DR. RAY McCLEARY

(c) HIS HON. THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

(d) MR. FRED BALMER

WILL ALL PROCEED TO THE CORNER STONE AND, AFTER MR. LES
GRIFFIN, SUPERINTENDENT OF CONSTRUCTION, ASSISTS
DR. PIDGEON WILL TAP AND PLACE MORTAR ON SAME WITH HIS
ASCRPTION IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER ----

*
Stones
Laid
separately

IV. 2. REV. DR. STEPHEN J. MATHERS WILL STAND AT THE MIKE AND ON RETURN OF CORNER STONE PARTY, WILL PRAY.

3. REV. RAY McCLEARY WILL THEN ANNOUNCE THE HYMN - "THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION, VERSES 1, 3, 5.

*Separate Stone **
S O F T

V. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE STONE

DURING THE SINGING OF HYMN "THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION" VERSE 3 -

- 1. MR. GEORGE C. METCALF
- 2. MR. PETER WRIGHT
- 3. RABBI STUART ROSENBERG
- 4. REV. BILL SMITH, ASSOCIATE MINISTER

MUSIC

--WILL PROCEED TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE CORNER STONE.

--HERE MR. METCALF WILL PLACE THE MORTAR ON STONE, AND TAP INTO PLACE THE STONE.

--RABBI STUART ROSENBERG WILL THEN PRONOUNCE THE INVOCATION FROM THE MIKE AT THIS STONE.

--ON COMPLETION OF PRAYER -

MAJOR ARTHUR RAWLINS, SALVATION ARMY
WILL ANNOUNCE THE HYMN, "WHERE CROSS THE
CROWDED WAYS OF LIFE".
THE PARTY WILL THEN RETURN TO THE PLATFORM.

WOODGREEN FACTS AND FIGURES

1. CHURCH

1. 83rd Anniversary. October 1875
Rev. John Carroll D.D., as Don Mount — *www!*
circuit of Leslieville.
2. "Captain Vennell, the well known military man, and organizer
of Riverdale Company of 12 York Rangers."
3. Guard of Honour: Queen's York Rangers
 First American
4. Dr. George C. Pidgeon.
 1. Anniversary Preacher 50th.
 " " 75th.
 " " 80th.
 " " 83rd. October 19th.
 2. Laying the Cornerstone. October 19th, 12.45.
 3. First Moderator of United Church, June 1925.

First

 First A. A. in Church Centre 1947.

First Nursery School in Church Centre, underwritten by Toronto Junior League.

First School for Mentally Retarded Children in Canada.

First Vegetable Farm Community Church centered in the depression.

First Community Centre Created by Church Leadership after the 1939-45
war, in Toronto.

* First Pastoral Clinical Internship created in Canada, in new Neighbourhood House.

First in all Canada for Marriage, Burials and Baptism in 1957.

First 1,000,000 Church built in Inner City in Fifty Years.

First Memorial Window to 4th Field Regiment, R.C.A., 1939 - 45.
Commemoration of the Fallen.

SENIOR CITIZENS AT WOODGREEN (continued)

The total program for seniors is strongly supported by the many organizations within the Church. It has been a very thrilling experience to all of us to see the transformation in the lives of people as they realize that senior years can be vital and satisfying when contacts are maintained with the Church and life can be fulfilled in every phase.

Director of Senior Work

Miss A. Clapham

Deaconess of WoodGreen Church

- C) Many appearances on behalf of youth in city police courts.
A recent visit to Whitby Court on behalf of two lads, came back with 6, employment found for 3.

Present Staff at WoodGreen United Church

Dr. Ray McCleary, M. B. E., B. A., B. D., D. D.

Rev. William C. Smith, M. A., B. D.,

(Miss) → Miss Marvel A. Clapham, Deaconess.

Mrs. Maud Wellinger, W. M. S.

Mr. Lowry.

2. WOODGREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

- * Mr. Adam Zimmerman, President.
created by WoodGreen Minister to serve the entire neighbourhood.
non-denominational, social, recreational and cultural centre.
- * Offers services to the entire family, in crafts, hobbies,
social and recreational facilities.
- * Counselling service to thousands in Employment, Emergency
Relief, Housing Problems, Mental and Physical Referrals.
- * Senior Citizen programme provides club facilities and
friendship to over 300 senior citizens and old age pensioners.
- * In co-operation with the Boys' Home of Toronto, provides a foster
home for boys during domestic crises. Accommodation for 12 boys.

3. WOODGREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

owned by WoodGreen Foundation Inc.
President : Mr. Peter Wright, Q.C., O.B.E.
Sec. Treas. Mr. D. L. Gordon, C.A.

Facility for expanding work at WoodGreen Centre in social service
and counselling work.

Little Theatre - 450

Residence for six internes, in the field of clinical pastoral
care and social work in downtown or inner city demands, created
by urbanization. Inter-faith and denominational.
12 mos. Fellowship. To study Alcoholic Foundation.
Mental Hygiene, Industrial Chaplaincy, Community Work and
Counselling.

Facilities for teen-age groups, girls and boys and senior citizens.

4. OCTOBER 19th

1. WoodGreen 83rd Anniversary.

Very Reverend George Pidgeon, M.A., D.D., LL.D., Preacher.

11.00 a.m. in WoodGreen United Church.

Service Conducted Reverend Ray McCleary, M.B.D., D.D.

Reverend W.C. Smith, M.A., B.D.

**
Committee
have
started out
separately*