



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act – 720 Yonge Street

<b>Date:</b>	March 31, 2015
<b>To:</b>	Toronto Preservation Board
<b>From:</b>	Director, Urban Design, City Planning
<b>Wards:</b>	Toronto Centre-Rosedale – Ward 27
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2015\Cluster B\PLN\HPS\TPB\TPB15048

#### SUMMARY

---

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 720 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Located on the southwest corner of Yonge Street and Charles Street West, the property contains a three-storey commercial building constructed in two phases (1889 and 1902) for the grocery store of Robert Barron.

The property at 720 Yonge Street was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now known as the Heritage Register) in 1974. The site is the subject of a development application that proposes to retain the Robert Barron Building and construct a new three-storey commercial infill building to the south and west. The property owner has agreed to the designation of the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

---

**The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 720 Yonge Street (Robert Barron Building) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, in accordance with the Statement of Significance: 720 Yonge Street (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment No. 3 to the report (March 31, 2015) from the Director, Urban Design, City Planning Division.

2. If there are no objections to the designation in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the bill in Council designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.
3. If there are objections in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council direct the City Clerk to refer the designation to the Conservation Review Board.
4. If the designation is referred to the Conservation Review Board, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate staff to attend any hearing held by the Conservation Review Board in support of Council's decision on the designation of the property.

### **Financial Impact**

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

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The property at 720 Yonge Street is included in the section of Yonge Street south of Bloor Street West that is being considered as a potential Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. On February 11, 2015, City Council approved the Historic Yonge Street Study Area Designation By-law No. 277-2015. The purpose of the heritage conservation district study is to examine the character and appearance of the area to determine if it should be preserved as a heritage conservation district and to consider and make recommendations with regard to the establishment of a district plan to guide changes to properties located within the district. The By-law prohibits for a period of one year and set limitations with respect to the alteration, demolition or removal of buildings or structures within the study area boundaries on Historic Yonge Street between Davenport Road and College Street while the City completes a heritage conservation district study.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/2015/law0277.pdf>

The owners of the property at 720 Yonge Street have submitted a development application for a low-rise commercial development that will retain the Robert Barron Building (1889 and 1902). When Council issues an Intention to Designate the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the approved permits will be released.

### **COMMENTS**

A location map (Attachment No. 1) and Photographs (Attachment No. 2) are attached.

Staff have completed the attached Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report (Attachment No. 4) and determined that the property at 720 Yonge Street meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Anchoring the southwest corner of Yonge Street and Charles Street West, the Robert Barron Building is a well-crafted example of a late 19<sup>th</sup>

century commercial building (1889) with a complementary south extension (1902) reflecting the popular architectural styles of the era.

For nearly a century, the property was occupied by only two enterprises, with Robert Barron's grocery business followed by an inaugural Coles Books location. After Carl and Jack Cole acquired the site in the 1940s, they expanded the iconic retail chain and launched the famous "Coles Notes" series of reference books. Contextually, the Robert Barron Building is historically and visually linked to its setting on Yonge Street where it contributes to the historical character of the thoroughfare as it developed in the late 1800s as Toronto's "main street".

The Statement of Significance (Attachment No. 3) comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate and will be advertised on the City of Toronto's web site in accordance with the City of Toronto Act provisions and served on the property owners and the Ontario Heritage Trust according to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## **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**

---

Harold Madi  
Director, Urban Design  
City Planning Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map  
Attachment No. 2 – Photograph  
Attachment No. 3 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation)  
Attachment No. 4 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report