

HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT



CHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
958 Broadview Avenue
Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services
City Planning Division
City of Toronto

August 10, 2016

1. DESCRIPTION



Above: Chester Public School, now known as Estonian House, with the 1975 addition facing Broadview Avenue. The original south-facing gable roof and tower, can still be seen from Broadview Avenue. (*Heritage Preservation Services 2015*)

Cover: Chester Public School, south and east elevations, as seen from Broadview Avenue (then known as Don Mills Road), 1905 (*Toronto Public Library, TEC409, Baldwin Collection B13-16*)

Address and Name of Property	
ADDRESS	958 Broadview Avenue
WARD	29 (Toronto-Danforth)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	CON 2 FB WDS PT 12
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Broadview
HISTORICAL NAME	Chester Public School
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1890-1891
ORIGINAL OWNER	Trustees of the Chester Public School
ORIGINAL USE	School
CURRENT USE*	Community Centre * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Gordon & Helliwell Architects
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION	Original: brick cladding Later additions: brick with stucco cladding
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Original structure: Richardsonian Romanesque and Queen Anne
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	1962-3 – single-storey addition 1975 – four-storey addition 1995 – two-storey elevator addition
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Associative and Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	n/a
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Marybeth McTeague
REPORT DATE	10 August 2016

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 958 Broadview Avenue, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
Pre-settlement	The road, now known as Broadview Avenue, is a route forming part of a system of trails established by Aboriginal people along the rivers, shorelines and escarpments of the area that would be the future City of Toronto.
1793	Lot 12 (the future site of Chester Public School), the second 200-acre lot north of the Second Concession (now Danforth Avenue) stretching east from the Don River to Leslie Street, is granted to Ely Playter Lot 11, to the south, is granted to Ely's brother, James Playter Lot 13, to the north, is promised to the Skinner Brothers, Isaiah and Aaron, on the condition they establish a mill and complete the road (today's Broadview Avenue) from the town of York to the mill
1795	The Skinner brothers establish the saw mill, originally known as the Don Mills, and acquire ownership of Lot 13
1799	By this date "Mill Road" is opened by the Skinner family and extends from the east side of the bridge crossing the Don River at the Kingston Road (now Queen Street East), northwards to the Second Concession and then following an existing trail to what is now known as Pottery Road
1821	The Helliwell and Eastwood families join the Skinner family on Lots 13 and 14 and establish a brewery, malt house and distillery as well as flour and paper mills. The village which has grown at Lot 13 is renamed Todmorden after their home town in England
1847	The Todmorden Mills are devastated by fire. The families disperse except for Joseph Helliwell who rebuilds the flour mill.
1856	School Section No. 7 Trustees buy part of an acre to building a one room school house at the corner of today's O'Connor Drive and Donlands Avenue
1850s	Lot 11 and Lot 13 (then owned by the Taylor family) are sub-divided with small villa lots. Todmorden continues to develop on Lot 13, and on Lot 11, the village of Chester emerges at the intersection of today's Broadview Avenue and Pretoria Avenue.
1860	While Lots 11 and 13 develop as villages, Lot 12 remains as farm land with a single owner, Thomas Helliwell Jr.
1884	With the annexation of Don Mount, the area east of the Don, south of Danforth Avenue, Mill Road is renamed Broadview Avenue and north of the Danforth, the road is known as Don Mills Road
1889	The Toronto Street Railway Company introduces street car service from the Danforth south along Broadview Avenue. The proximity of transport increases the population in the Village of Chester
1889	With increased populations in the area, the York Township Council passes a by-law to create School Section No. 27 which will serve children living in Lots 11-15 in the Second Concession.

1890	In July, Bylaw 1250 is passed to raise \$15,000 to purchase a property and build a new school and on August 25, Gordon & Helliwell, architects, call for tenders for a six-room school house. On October 10, School Trustees for S.S. No. 27 purchase part of an acre on Lot 12 from the Helliwell Estate to build the new school
1891	In September, Chester Public School opens
1909	Chester village is annexed to the City of Toronto
1917-1919	Construction of the Bloor Viaduct (later the Prince Edward Viaduct) increases the population and development of Danforth Avenue neighbourhoods
1919	South of the Chester School, Chester Hill Road subdivision plan is registered
1953	By this date the pyramidal roof of the school tower has been removed
1959	The Chester school building is closed due to overcrowding and the school reopens in a new building on Gowan Avenue
1960	The Chester School property is sold to Estonian House
1962-3	A rear addition including a new foyer and large hall is built to the designs of architect Michael Bach
1975	A four-storey addition is built on the principal, east elevation, to the design of Guido E. Laikve, architect
1982	The property is added to the East York Inventory of Heritage Buildings
1995	An elevator is added on the north elevation by Parkin Architects Ltd.
2016	The former Chester Public School is the oldest surviving school building of the former municipality of East York ¹

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Broadview Avenue and the Chester and Todmorden Villages Neighbourhood

The property at 958 Broadview Avenue is located on the west side, north of Chester Hill Road and south of Pottery Road in the neighbourhood identified as Broadview. (*Image 1*) The property was originally part of Lot 12, one of the parcels of land granted by John Graves Simcoe to individuals as well as the military and the clergy, after the founding of the Town of York in 1793. Lot 12, a 200 hundred acre parcel, was granted to Ely Playter, one of three sons of George Playter an American loyalist whose dedication to the British cause resulted in the grant of approximately 900 acres of land to the Playter family. The lots were located north of, and ran parallel to, the Second Concession (now Bloor Street-Danforth Avenue), on either side of the Don River. (*Image 2*)

The Don Mills

Lot 12 sits on the east side of the Don River and is part of a cluster of four lots, Lots 11-14, which sat north of the Second Concession and were framed on the west and north by the Don River and Don Valley terrain. (*Image 3*) An existing Aboriginal trail ran on a diagonal across it. In 1793, Lieutenant Governor Simcoe promised ownership of Lot 13 to the Skinner brothers, Aaron and Isaiah, on the condition that they establish a saw mill on the Don and create a road between the mills and the town of York. By 1795, the Skinners had established the Don Mills. The first names of the road, Mill Street and Don

¹ Inventory of Historic Buildings in East York, 1982, p. 34

Mill Road reflect the significance of its important connecting function. Ultimately, the mill road would be named Broadview Avenue and extended from the Kingston Road (the First Concession, later known as Queen Street East) just east of the bridge over the Don River, joined the existing trail to Pottery Road and continued its mill road route north and then eastwards following the course of the Don River (today's O'Connor Drive) and beyond to the Third Concession (today's St. Clair Avenue).

Todmorden

The location of the mills resulted in the development of a small village along the Mill Road on Lot 13 at the junction with the road which leads down the valley to the mill sites (now known as Pottery Road). *(Image 4)* In 1821, the Skinners were joined by the Eastwood and Helliwell families, English immigrants who named the village after their English home village, Todmorden. The families purchased land and to the Skinner's saw and flour mill, they added a paper mill, brewery, malt house and distillery. Thomas Helliwell Sr. purchased 10 acres of Lot 14. Thomas Helliwell Jr. (1795-1862) his eldest son, opened a business on Market Square in York, and by 1860 was the owner Lot 12. In 1847, a fire destroyed most of the mills. Brothers John and William Helliwell moved away leaving Joseph to rebuild the mills acquiring the Eastwood family's interests. By 1855, Joseph's family sold their mill property to the Taylor brothers who would eventually own several mills and other properties along the Don River.

Chester

To the south, Lot 11 remained in the Playter family. Its ownership passed from James Playter to his brother John and in 1855, John's heirs had the land adjacent to the Mill Road surveyed for a small subdivision which would be known as Playter's Corner and included the streets currently known as Pretoria, Cambridge and Ellerbeck Avenues. By 1859, it had been re-named Chester, after the old Roman city in the English County of Cheshire. *(Image 4, as above)* In 1869, a post office, serving Chester and Todmorden was opened and named Doncaster. This name also had English Roman origins and through the 1870s and 1880s was often used as the name for the village of Chester. *(Image 5)*

In 1884, the annexation of the area known as Don Mount south of Danforth Avenue to the City of Toronto had two consequences for Chester. Mill Road was renamed; south of Danforth it was called Broadview Avenue and north of Danforth, Don Mills Road. The introduction of street car service along Broadview and Danforth avenues by the Toronto Street Railway Company in 1889 made Chester more accessible and attractive spurring on its development and increasing its population.

Between the Villages of Chester and Todmorden, Lot 12 remained a contrasting, undeveloped expansion of farmland. In 1860, Tremaine's map indicates a single building with an orchard in the ownership of Thomas Helliwell. *(Image 4, as above)* By 1878, as the villages to the north and south grew, only a few buildings were indicated fronting Don Mills Road are shown on Lot 12, the Helliwell Estate. *(Image 5, as above)*

Chester Public School

Between 1850 and 1851 the Township of York accepted responsibility for the provision of public school education dividing the borough into a series of school sections. Chester and Todmorden were part of York and in 1856, the township identified the area as School Section No. 7.² Three trustees were appointed and they purchased part of an acre of land on Lot 15 from the Taylor Brothers for the construction of the first school, a one-roomed school house with a small belfry on the north-west corner of what is today O'Connor Drive and Pape Avenue. (*Image 5, as above*)

With the growth of Todmorden and Chester between 1856 and 1889, it was soon evident that a second school was required. On April 15, 1889, York Township formed School Section No. 27.³ In July 1890, the township passed By-Law 1250 to raise \$15,000 to purchase land and build a new school.⁴ The architects Gordon & Helliwell placed a call for tenders for a six-room school house on the Don Mills Road on August 25, 1890.⁵ On October 10, School Section No. 27 Trustees, M. N. Whyte, Joshua Ingham and Henry R. Frankland purchased less than an acre of Lot 12 from the Helliwell estate on the west side of Don Mills Road.⁶

Chester Public School opened in September 1891. The school had two separate entries and vestibules, with 3 large classrooms on the ground floor, a large assembly room that could be converted to a further three classrooms and a "high basement" which contained mechanical functions as well as playrooms which could be used for inclement weather.⁷ The school also featured a tall tower, which like the 1856 School Section No. 7 school house, had a bell as it was customary to alert students to the beginning of the academic day.

When the school opened, only two classrooms were occupied, but by 1906, the assembly hall had been converted to three classrooms and the school was overcrowded. The school continued to be occupied until 1959, when it was closed and a new Chester Elementary School opened at 115 Gowan Avenue.

The school was recorded as vacant in the City Directory for 1960⁸, but by August that year, the East York Board of Education had sold the property to Estonian House.⁹ The City Directory for 1961 indicates the former school is now occupied by the Estonian Publishing Company, Estonian Credit Union, Estonian Relief Committee in Canada and Linda Travel Service. By 1967 it was also occupied by the Estonian Revolver and Rifle

²Jackes, School Section No. 7 included Lots No. 6-15 in the Second Concession from the Bay as well as Lots 6-8 and half lots of 9-11 in the Third Concession from the Bay

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada*: entry for Gordon: *Toronto Telegram*, 25 August 1890, p. 2, tender calls.

⁶ *Inventory of Historic Buildings in East York*, p. 32.

⁷ *Deer Park Recorder*, 30 July 1891.

⁸ City of Toronto Directory, 1960.

⁹ East York Assessment Rolls, 1960, EY714-1668, 1961, EY71-023.

Association.¹⁰ Estonian House, or *Eesti Maja* as it is also known, also accommodates a cafeteria, lending library, five classrooms, an archives, a doctor's office, a souvenir shop, and three banquet halls (available for rent by the wider community), a large youth room for the girl guides and boy scouts and a rifle range.¹¹ Since its beginnings it has been home to the Estonian Consulate, the Estonian Credit Union, the Toronto Estonian School, the Estonian Central Council of Canada, folk dancing groups, the Pensioners' Club, as well as a weekly newspaper and bookshop. It has been a popular facility which has been available for the use of the wider Broadview-Danforth community.

In 1962-3, the school building was extended on the rear west side with a hall big enough to seat 600 people, basement classrooms and cafeteria to the designs of the architect Michael Bach.¹² In 1975, Guido E. Laikve, architect, designed a four-storey addition on the front of the building facing Broadview Avenue.¹³ Finally in 1995, Parkin Architects Ltd. added an entrance with an elevator on the north side to improve accessibility to the complex.¹⁴

Architects: Gordon & Helliwell

Henry Bauld Gordon (1854-1951) had interned with Henry Langley and then opened his own practise in 1877.¹⁵ Grant Helliwell (1855-1953) joined the firm as partner in 1879. Helliwell was a second generation member of the Helliwell family that in 1821 had settled at and expanded the Don Mills. The son of Joseph Helliwell (1802-1888), the family member who stayed to rebuild the family's mills after the 1847 fire, Grant was born in Todmorden in 1855.

Gordon & Helliwell both lived long lives and practised together for over 50 years. They designed more than 200 institutional, commercial and residential buildings together with commissions as far away as Manitoba and British Columbia.¹⁶ Among their more prestigious work was the winning entry for the first round in the competition for the Ontario Legislature Building in 1880-81. Gordon was elected president of the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) twice, in 1896 and 1908, and was a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. Helliwell was a "tireless advocate and spokesman for the architectural profession in Ontario,"¹⁷ a founding member of the Toronto Architectural Guild in 1887, and the OAA in 1889. Helliwell served as President in 1891.

¹⁰ East York Building Permit 4730, 22 March 1967.

¹¹ Myrvold, 2015, p. 42.

¹² Building Permit No. 3126, November 7, 1962.

¹³ Building Permit No. 1334, 23 May 1975.

¹⁴ Building Permit No. 95B19354, 1 June 1995.

¹⁵ *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950*, entry for Gordon.

¹⁶ *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950*, entry for Helliwell.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The former Chester Public School, located on the west side of Broadview Avenue just north of Chester Hill Park Road and south of Pottery Road, was completed in 1891. In its design and details the school combines two late 19th century styles, the American Richardsonian Romanesque and the English Queen Anne Style.

Richardsonian Romanesque owes its origins to the American architect, Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886). The style is derived from the monasteries and cathedrals of French Romanesque architecture of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Its chief characteristics are its sense of mass and solidity, irregular massing on a square plan with steeply pitched hipped roofs and asymmetry created in elements such as towers and prominent chimneys to create a picturesque silhouette. Large round, arched openings are often combined with clusters of much smaller ones creating a variety of rhythms and scales. The style was popular in Toronto in the 1880s and 1890s, achieving prominence as it coincided with a period of public building commissions such as Toronto City Hall and the Ontario Legislature, institutional and university buildings such as Victoria College at the University of Toronto and numerous residential buildings in the Annex, Cabbagetown and Rosedale. Toronto's version was typically built in red brick and red sandstone as seen at Dingman's Hall, (later known as the Broadview Hotel and Jilly's) at the southern end of Broadview Avenue where it intersects with Queen Street East.

The Queen Anne style named for the British monarch, the last of the Stuarts, Anne (b. 1665) who reigned from 1702-1714, is the British parallel to the Richardsonian Romanesque style but was produced by a more complex set of cultural forces than one man's synthesis of a particular period and architecture. Largely associated with the work of the architect Sir Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912), the name Queen Anne references the rejection of the mid-nineteenth century dominance of the Gothic style, its moralistic and religious fervour, and subsequent commercialisation in favour of late 17th and early 18th century English architecture, summarized as "Wren and red brick"¹⁸ This aesthetic was combined with a renewed appreciation of English vernacular architecture. Influencing every facet of the creative arts the Queen Anne style found its promotion of craftsmanship rooted in the Arts and Crafts Style and its aesthetic taste in the Aesthetic Movement. These combined sensibilities in late 19th century England both underpinned and were parodied in the works of Oscar Wilde and Gilbert & Sullivan.

Architecturally the Queen Anne style was manifested as being primarily based on a reinterpretation of mid-late 17th century and early 18th century English architecture, with Wren's influence being evident in the red brick, with classical elements and white painted casement or double-hung windows with multiple small panes. However, the style was not rigidly devoted to this period and as Walter Pater proclaimed "all periods, types, schools of taste are in themselves equal"¹⁹ which meant that Tudor elements, such as

¹⁸ Girouard, p. 10 referencing the prolific architect Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723)

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

mullioned windows and half timbering, and vernacular elements such as tile hanging, pargetting, barge boards and weather boarding were featured along with a renewal of the craft of moulded and rubbed brickwork. These elements emphasized the craftsmanship and vernacular quality, as well as the essential sensibility of the style as "a down to earth gentleman's alternative to the palazzo style of the Whig grandees on one hand and the Gothic of the religious or the romantic on the other."²⁰

The Queen Anne style was featured in other commissions by Gordon & Helliwell including the H. H. Fudger House, 10 Maple Avenue, 1888; the YMCA, (now the Great Hall), 1889; 1087 Queen Street West, 1889; Gordon's own house at 105 Woodlawn Avenue West, 1890; and the Captain Samuel Crangle House, 35 Rosedale Road, 1891. Richardsonian Romanesque was featured in their YWCA, (now the Elmwood Club), 18 Elm Street, 1891.

In the design of the Chester Public School, Gordon & Helliwell combined Richardsonian Romanesque and Queen Anne styles. (*Images 8-10*) The composition of the building remains faithful to the complex forms and picturesque silhouettes associated with both styles. Apart from the tower at the south-west corner, the cubic massing of the school is further broken up by projecting bays on the left hand side of the north, west and south elevations which rise up a half storey higher with gable roofs. The principal east elevation had a central projecting bay flanked by two adjacent recessed bays with the three-storey bell tower on the south-east corner and a corresponding single storey corner bay on the north-east corner. (*Images 9, as above and 11*) These corner elements provided the customary two school entries. Tall chimneys on the north-east and south west corners add to the overall complexity of forms.

The Richardsonian Romanesque is also evident in the hipped roof, the asymmetrical tower with a steeply pitched pyramidal roof, the large round arched openings and the combination of red sandstone and red brick. The decorative band of checkerboard brick and the triplet of arched windows in the gables are further typical Richardsonian Romanesque elements. (*Images 12-14*)

The Queen Anne style is present in the classical proportion of the pediments on the gable roofs, recalling Wren's 17th century classicism, in the regular, symmetrical disposition of the double-hung windows with arched or straight heads and in the moulded brick details below the sills. The overall proportions, arrangements of windows, rhythms and generally finer surface texture indicate an affinity with the Queen Anne style.

Alterations and Additions

There have been several alterations and additions, but the integrity of the original school building remains. Alterations have included the removal of the pyramidal roof on the bell tower and the bricking up of the arched opening in the bell tower. (*Images 11-12*) Other alterations have included replacement of the original double-hung sash windows

²⁰ Ibid., p.10

and the filling in of the arched portion of the window openings as well as the introduction of new window openings such as that in the tower. *(Image 14)*

Following the sale of the school to the Estonian House in 1960, a single storey addition was built to the west, rear side of the school in 1962-3 to the designs of the architect Michael Bach. *(Images 15-17)* The addition, built in a complementary red brick, included a new entry way linking the existing school building to the new 600-seat hall on the first floor level with basement classrooms, meeting rooms and a cafeteria. This new addition incorporated the existing school structure into the new building without significant alterations and with careful junctions which retained existing material and details, such as projecting stone foundations and string courses. *(Image 18)*

In 1975 the second addition was constructed; a four storey addition on the east, front elevation facing Broadview Avenue to the design of the architect Guido E. Laikve. *(Images 19-21)* This addition combined red brick which matched the original school and white panels. The original walls and windows of the school's east elevation was retained within the addition and concealed behind concrete block and dry wall. *(Images 22-27)* Most of the original layout of the original school interior has been retained, as well as stair handrails, doors and door casings. *(Image 28)*

The third addition to the school, a new accessible entry with an elevator was designed by Parkin Architects Ltd., in 1995. *(Images 29-32)* Parkin's addition was sensitive to the original school building completed more than a century earlier. The addition featured a split-face concrete block base to correspond with the original rusticated base of the school. The cladding was EIFS, distinct from the original brick, but in a complimentary colour. Further decorative bands and linear relief of the surface continued the decorative stone and brick string courses of the original building. The roof of the elevator tower was a gable whose proportions and detailing of the pediment corresponded carefully with that of the original school.

iv. CONTEXT

The property at 958 Broadview Avenue, originally known as Chester Public School and since 1960 as Estonian House, is located on the west side of Broadview Avenue in the block north of Chester Hill Road and south of Pottery Road. When completed in 1891, the school sat in almost complete isolation, a significant landmark on the 200-acre Lot 12. The influence of the pattern of the land grants of 1793 was still present 100 years after their allocation as Lot 12 remained primarily as a rural farm in contrast to the villages of Chester (Lot 11), to the south, and Todmorden Mills (Lot 13), to the north. *(Image 7, as above)* The other quality of the site was the topography, for the school was built near the top edge of the valley whose form followed the course of the Don River and reflected the rivers flow as it headed south and then turned sharply west resulting in an L-shaped piece of land framed, as of 1919, by Broadview Avenue and Chester Hill Road. The school site was located in the L's junction.

Following construction of the Chester public school in 1891, the area around the school continued to develop. The string of building lots to the north on the west side of Broadview Avenue were developed and occupied by laundries, dairies and poultry breeders and sellers. With the annexation of Chester in 1909 and completion of the Bloor-Danforth Viaduct in 1917-19, the accessibility of the Broadview neighbourhood was dramatically increased spurring on local development. In 1919, the subdivision plan for the Chester Hill Road neighbourhood to the south of the school was registered. With 121 new building lots the subdivision formed a compact neighbourhood of single-family houses extending this characteristic of the earlier Chester Village. *(Image 33)* In contrast to the adjacent properties, the school had been set further back from Broadview Avenue and retained a deep lawn with two pathways to the separate entrances and a tree. *(Image 34)*

Over the next decades, the area to the south of the school continued to intensify. Along Broadview Avenue, three-five storey apartment buildings were constructed between the 1920s and 1950s in the blocks just north of the Danforth. Following the completion of the Bloor Danforth subway in 1966, apartment towers replaced the dairies, laundries and chicken breeders to the north of the school between 1967 and 1973. *(Image 35)* Their heights, from 18 to 23 storeys, and their set-backs, with large areas of ground surrounding them following the tower-in-the-park model, provided a contrasting sense of scale and urbanity to the previously existing context of low-rise buildings, in close proximity to each other and to the street edge. *(Image 36)*

Since construction was complete in 1891, Chester School/Estonian House has been an important transitional point, linking the two villages of Chester and Todmorden. As a public building with a distinctive set back, landscaped forecourt and a prominent tower, it served as a physical and social landmark within the developing community. The property continues to provide a transition in scale between the 'towers in the park' to the north and the closely knit, dense scale of the predominantly single-family housing to the south, as well as being the centre for a variety of community activities.

3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked “N/A” if the criterion is “not applicable” to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

Design or Physical Value	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	X
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	X
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

The former Chester School is a representative example of a late 19th century village school combining the American Richardsonian Romanesque and British Queen Anne styles. The elements of the Richardsonian Romanesque style are evident in the overall square massing with a complex silhouette created by a variety of roofs, projecting bays, a tower and two prominent chimneys, the use of red brick with rough-hewn red stone and with large arched openings. The Queen Anne style is present in the classicizing presence evident in the proportions of the pediments of the gable roofs, the regular symmetrical disposition of the windows, and in the rubbed and moulded brick elements seen in the tower. The school building displays a high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit in its massing and composition as well as in its combination of details and the originality expressed in the hybrid of the two popular late 19th century architectural styles.

Historical or Associative Value	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	X
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	N/A
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	X

Chester School/Estonian House is the oldest surviving school of the former municipality of East York and is valued for its 135 year association with the historic villages of Chester and Todmorden, East York and the current Broadview-Danforth neighbourhood. It is associated with the earliest development of the late 18th century mills on the Don River, the development of Broadview Avenue from an Aboriginal trail and the growth of the surrounding community. The historic school is also valued for its association with the Helliwell family who gave Todmorden its name, farmed the land on which the school was built and whose descendent Grant Helliwell, one of the two architects of the school, was born in Todmorden. Since 1960, under the ownership of Estonian House (in Toronto), the property has been associated with the Estonian community, housing the Estonian Consul, the Estonian Credit Union and providing for a variety of cultural, institutional and local community activities.

Contextual Value	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	X
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	X
iii. landmark	X

Chester Public School/Estonian House has contextual value as it is a community landmark on Broadview Avenue and is functionally and historically linked to its surroundings. It provides a transitional point between the divergent scales of the single family houses to its south and the towers in the park to the north. Situated on the top edge of the ravine on a narrow wedge of property determined by the course of the Don River, it is part of the unique historical relationship between the 220 year old community and the Don River and Valley.

4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 958 Broadview Avenue has design, associative and contextual values. As the oldest surviving East York school, the former Chester Public School/Estonian House is valued for its historical associations with the Chester and Todmorden Villages, the Estonian community and the Toronto architects, Gordon & Helliwell. Its design values are evident in the form, materials and details of the building which make it a fine representative of a hybrid of the American Richardsonian Romanesque and British Queen Anne styles. Located on the west side of Broadview Avenue, it has been a longstanding community landmark and an integral part of the Broadview neighbourhood whose history and development has been determined by its unique location, on the edge of the Don River Valley.

The school closed in 1959 and was purchased by Estonian House who adaptively re-used the building for a variety of community functions, undertaking a series of additions in 1962-63, 1975 and 1995. The original school building retains its integrity and the original exterior east elevation of the school is partially concealed and contained within the 1975 addition facing Broadview Avenue. The later additions, are not identified as heritage attributes.

5. SOURCES

Archival Sources

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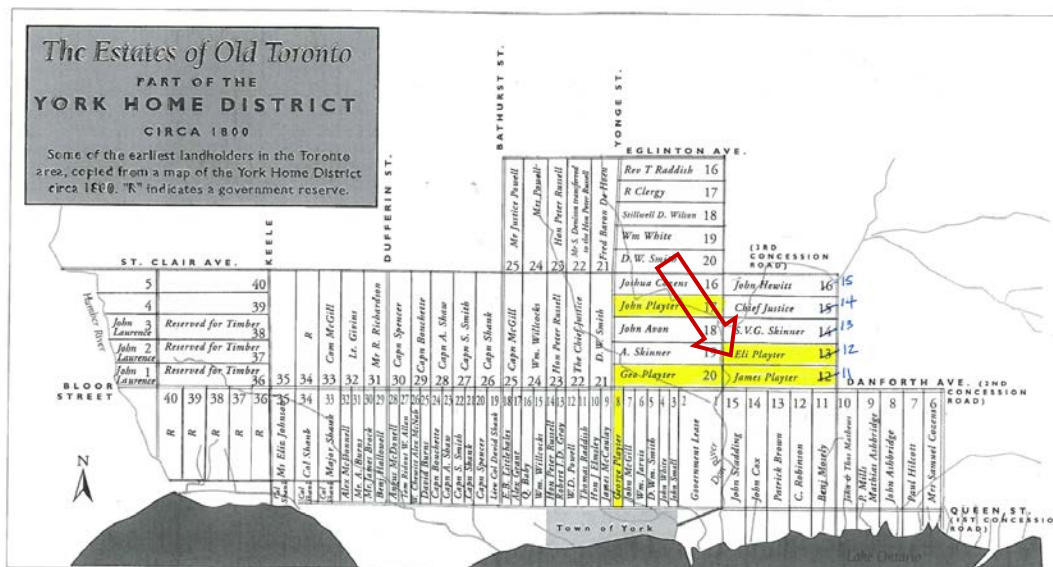
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- _____, further research on Riverdale, for the as yet unpublished "Riverdale in Pictures." 2015.

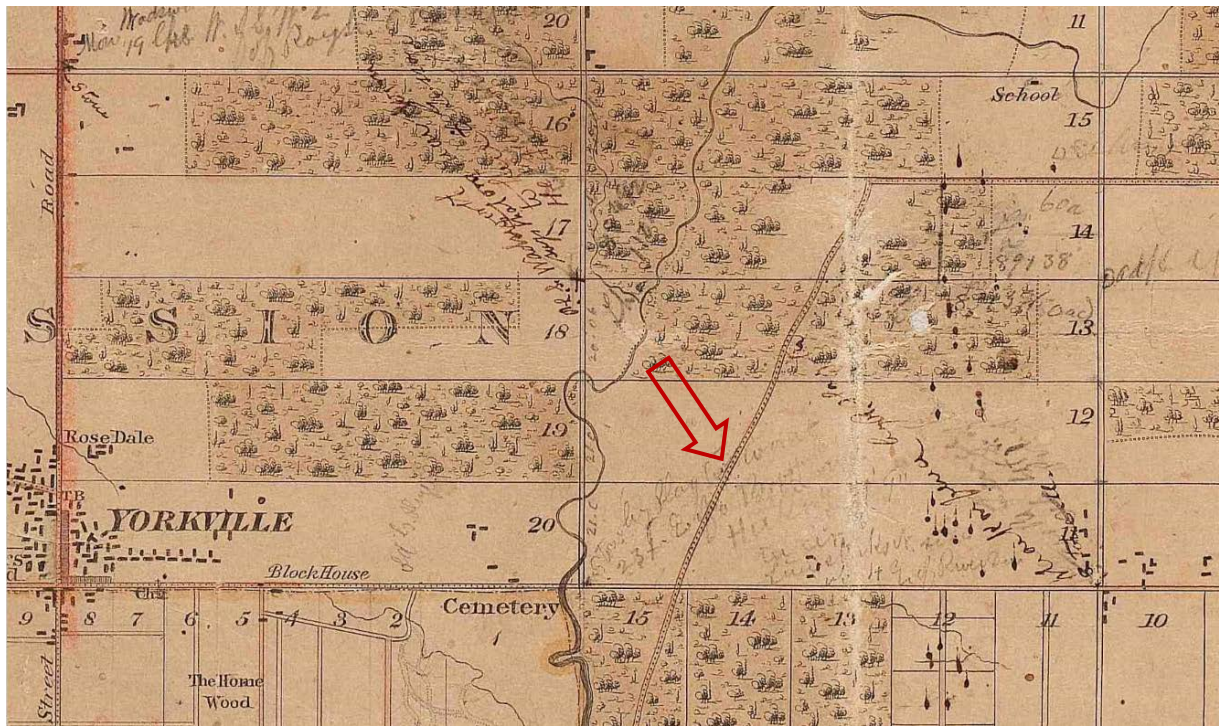
6. IMAGES: the **arrows** mark the location of the subject property
Please note: unless otherwise indicated, all maps are oriented with north at the top



1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the subject property on the east side of Dewhurst Boulevard north of Danforth Avenue



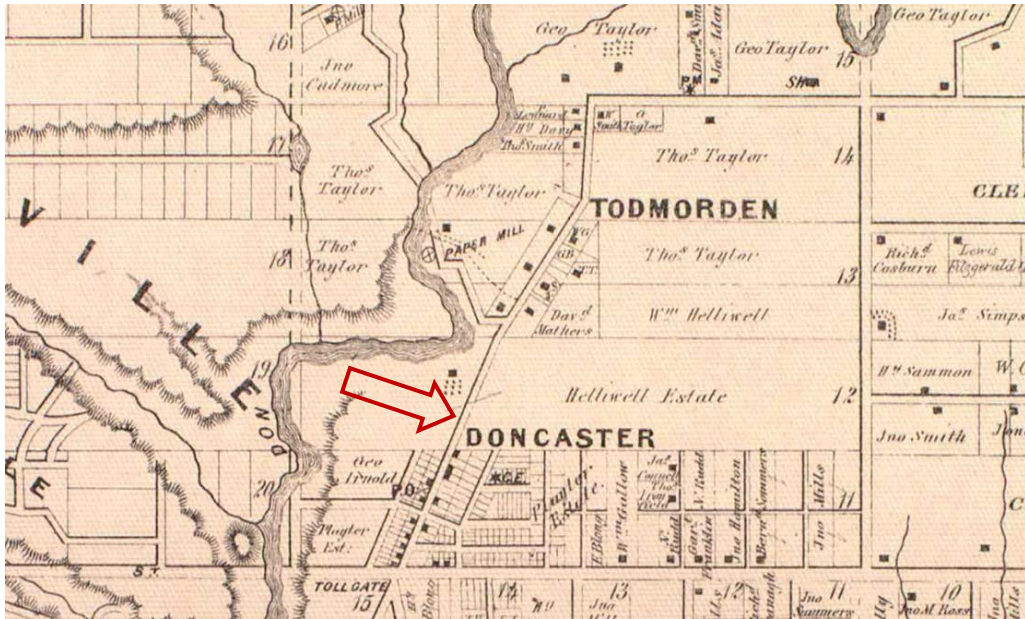
2. The Estates of Old Toronto, c 1800: showing the survey of Lots and Concessions with the earliest landholders. The highlighted areas show the Playter family holdings. The Lot numbers have been corrected to avoid the duplication of '16' and include '11' (Lundell, p. 10)



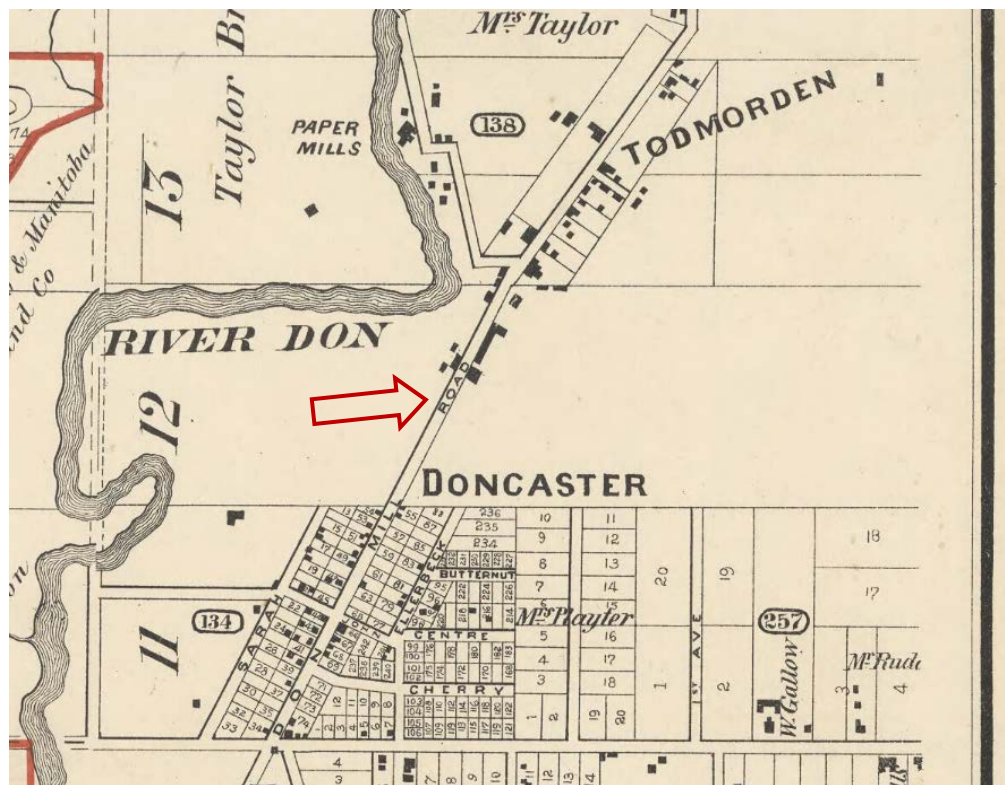
3. J. O. Browne, *Map of the Township of York, 1851*: showing Lot 12 on the north side of the Second Concession (Danforth Avenue) stretching from the east side of the Don River to Leslie Street. Today's Broadview Avenue, then known as the Mill Road is represented by the diagonal road which turns to head east along the boundary between Lots 14 and 15. (Ng.)



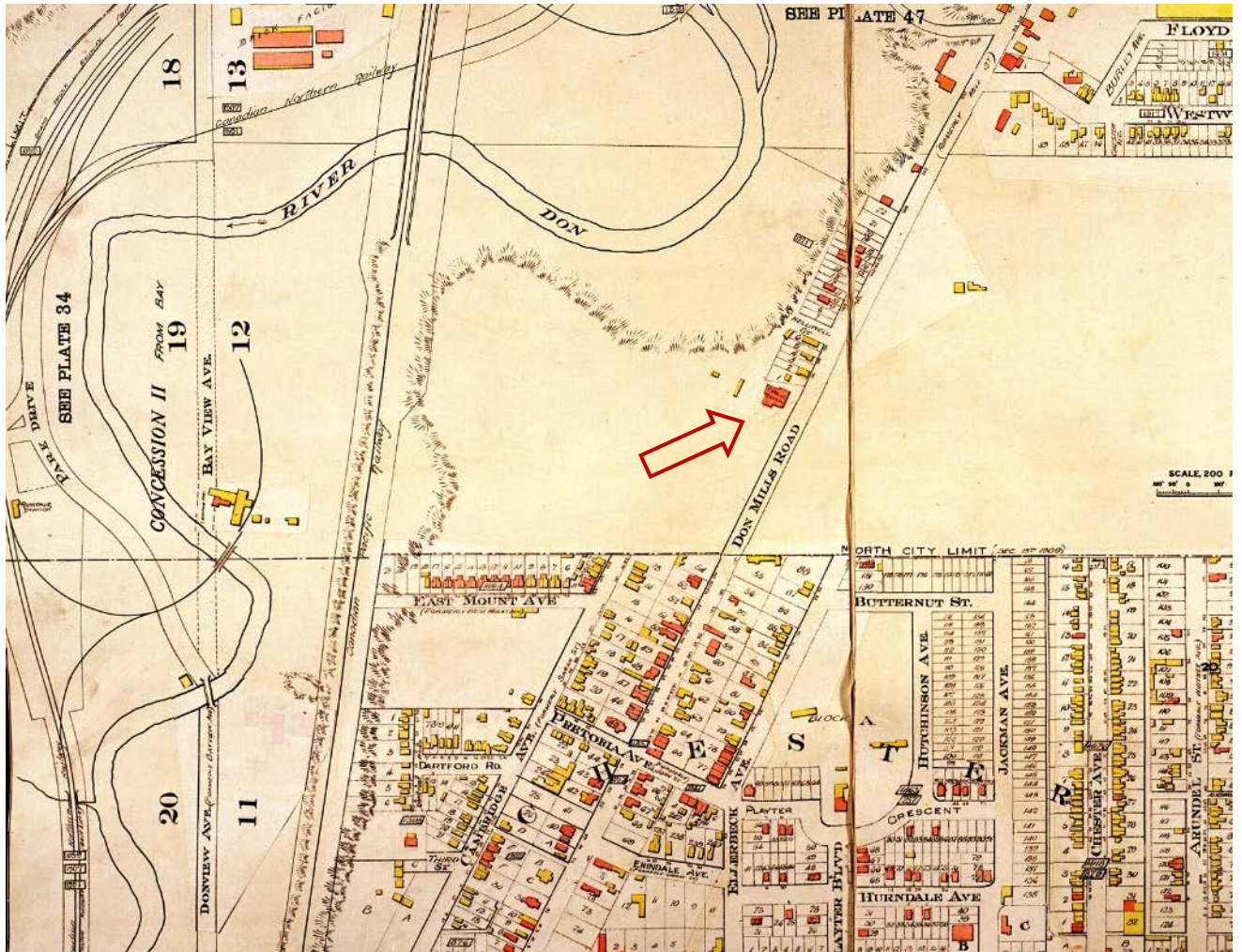
4. George R. Tremaine, *Map of the County of York, Canada West*, 1860: showing Lot 12, owned by Thomas Helliwell, in contrast with Lot 11 where the Playter Estate has been surveyed with new roads and lots, and Lot 13 to the north, where the village of Todmorden has developed around the mills. Note the road south of the Second Concession: then the Don and Danforth Plank Road, to the east of the "Industrial Farm" which is the original Mill Road built by the Skinner brothers connecting Queen Streey and the town of York with the Don Mills. (Ng)



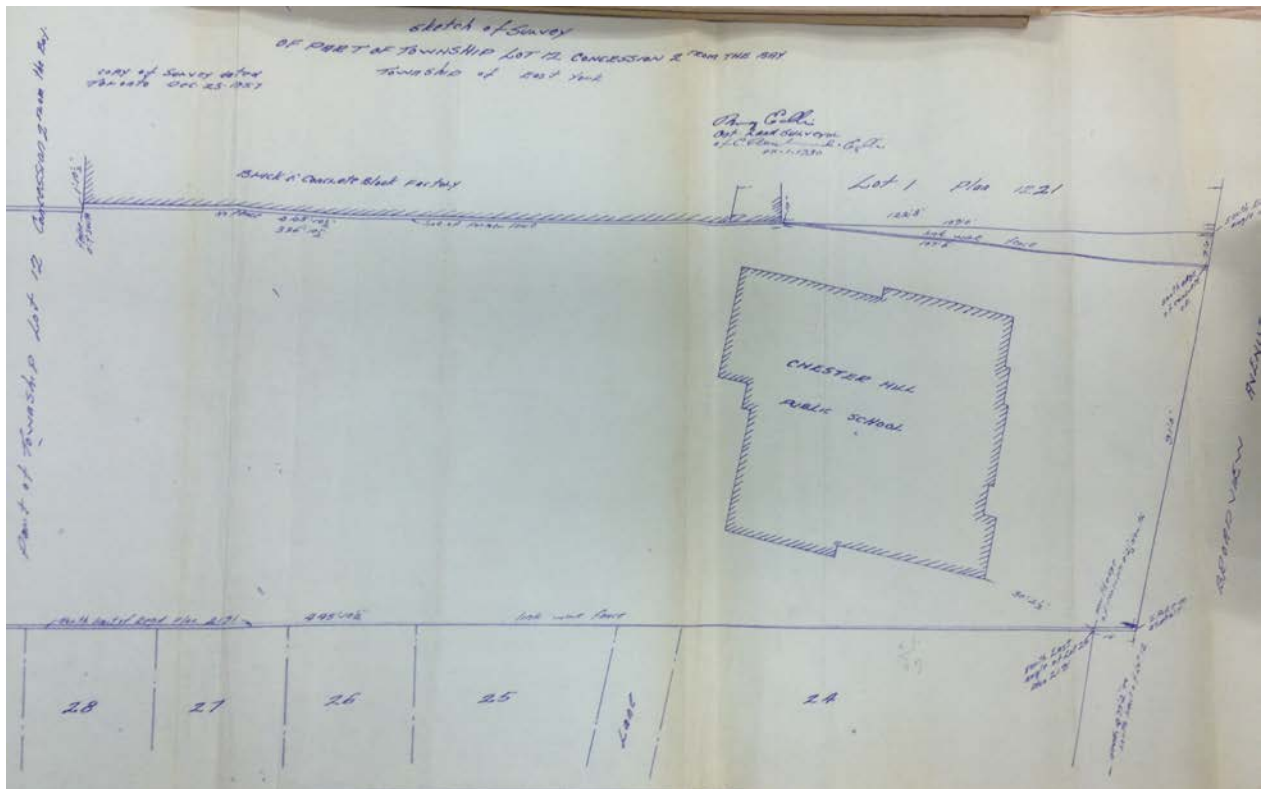
5. Miles & Co. Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of York, 1878: showing Lot 12 with a farm house and orchard on the east side of Broadview Avenue and the development of Chester village, here identified and also known as, Doncaster village, (as the post office was known). Note on Lot 15, the building marked "SH" indicating the location of the 1856, School Section No. 7 school house. (Ng)



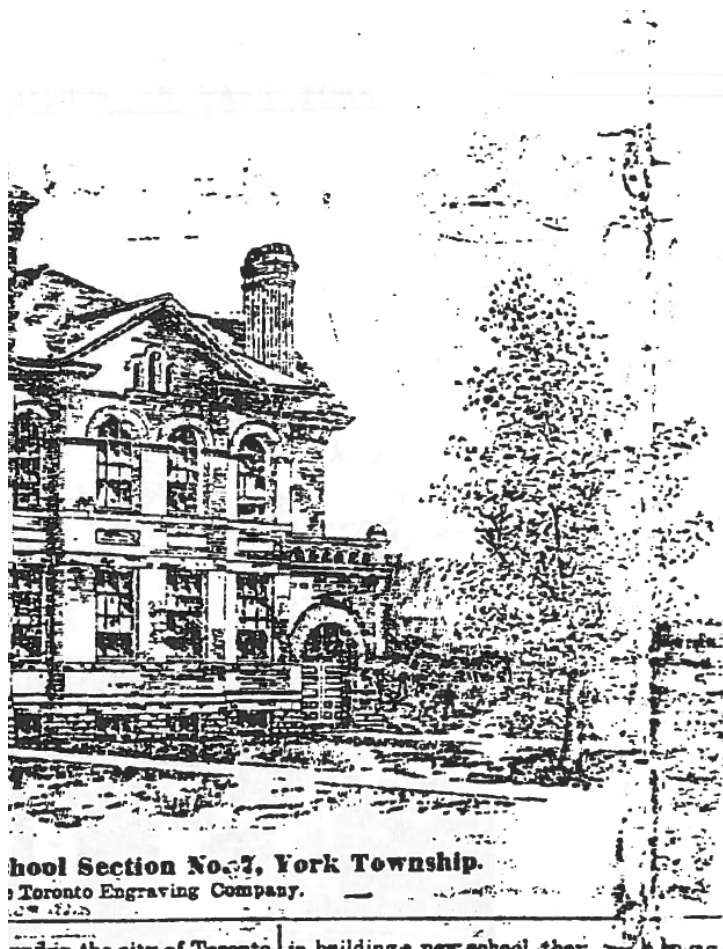
6. Goad's Atlas, 1884: showing the development of Chester/Doncaster on Lot 11 and the few buildings on either side of Don Mill Road on Lot 12 (City of Toronto Archives)



7. Goad's Atlas, 1913: showing the Chester Public School for the first time, located on the former Helliwell farm mid-way between Todmorden and Chester Village, just beyond the North City Limit (as of 1909). (*City of Toronto Archives*)



8. Sketch of Survey of Part of Township Lot 12, Concession 2 from the Bay, Township of East York, 1957: showing the foot print of the school building as a square plan with projecting bays at the left hand side of each elevation except for the principal east elevation which has a central bay flanked by two recessed bays with a tower on the left hand side and a one-storey entry porch on the right hand. (City of Toronto, Building Records)



9. Photo-engraved drawing of a drawing by P. C. Patin, draughtsman with Gordon & Helliwell Architects: showing the proposed new Chester Public School building, in an article in the *Deer Park Recorder*, 30 July, 1891. This illustration shows the detailing of the doors and base as well as the single-storey block that forms the north-east entrance, contrasting with the south-east entrance set in the tower. Although the caption says School Section No. 7, Chester School was in the newly created School Section No. 27, this is likely a typographical error, as the article references the Trustees of School Section 27, and mentions its location on the Don Mills Road. (*Inventory of Historic Buildings in East York*, p 36)



10. Chester Public School, Broadview Avenue, west side between Chester Hill Road and Helliwell St., 1905: showing the south and east elevations.
(TEC409, Baldwin Collection B13-16, Toronto Public Library)



11. Chester Public School, Broadview Avenue, west side, between Chester Hill Road and Helliwell Street, 1953: showing the east and north elevations after the removal of the pyramidal tower roof (James Victor Salmon (1911-58), Baldwin Room, S1-1236, TPL)



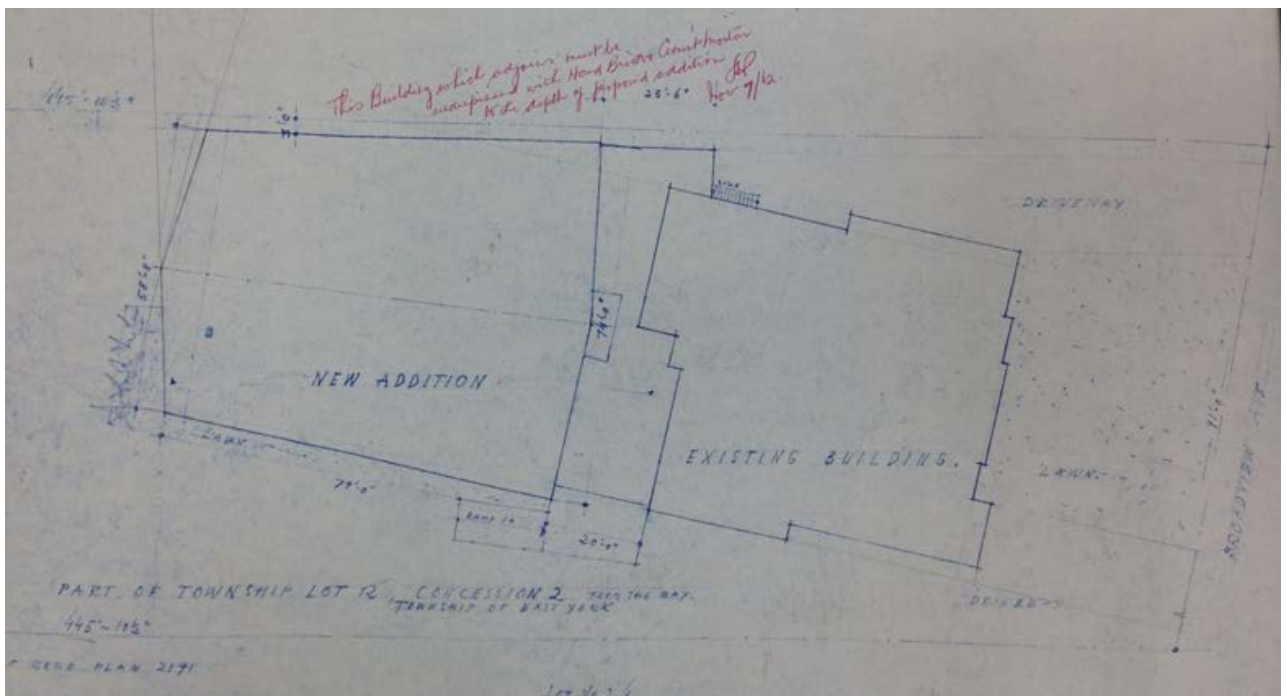
12. South Elevation: showing the tower and projecting bay with the triple arched windows in the gable end and the tower. Note also the stone and brick string courses. The 1962-3 addition and its entry is shown at the left of the photo (HPS)



13. South Elevation, detail: showing the basement and first floor walls with stone rusticated stone foundation, lintels, sills and string courses and the decorative brick string courses (HPS)



14. Tower detail, south elevation: showing the Romanesque brick checkerboard pattern, rustic stone coursing and colonettes and the Queen Anne decorative brick detail beneath the rustic stone coursing detail as well as the alterations including the bricking in of the bell tower opening and the insertion of a new window below (HPS)



15. Site Plan, 1962: showing the addition with the entry link between the existing school building and the new hall (BP No. 3126, 7 November 1962)



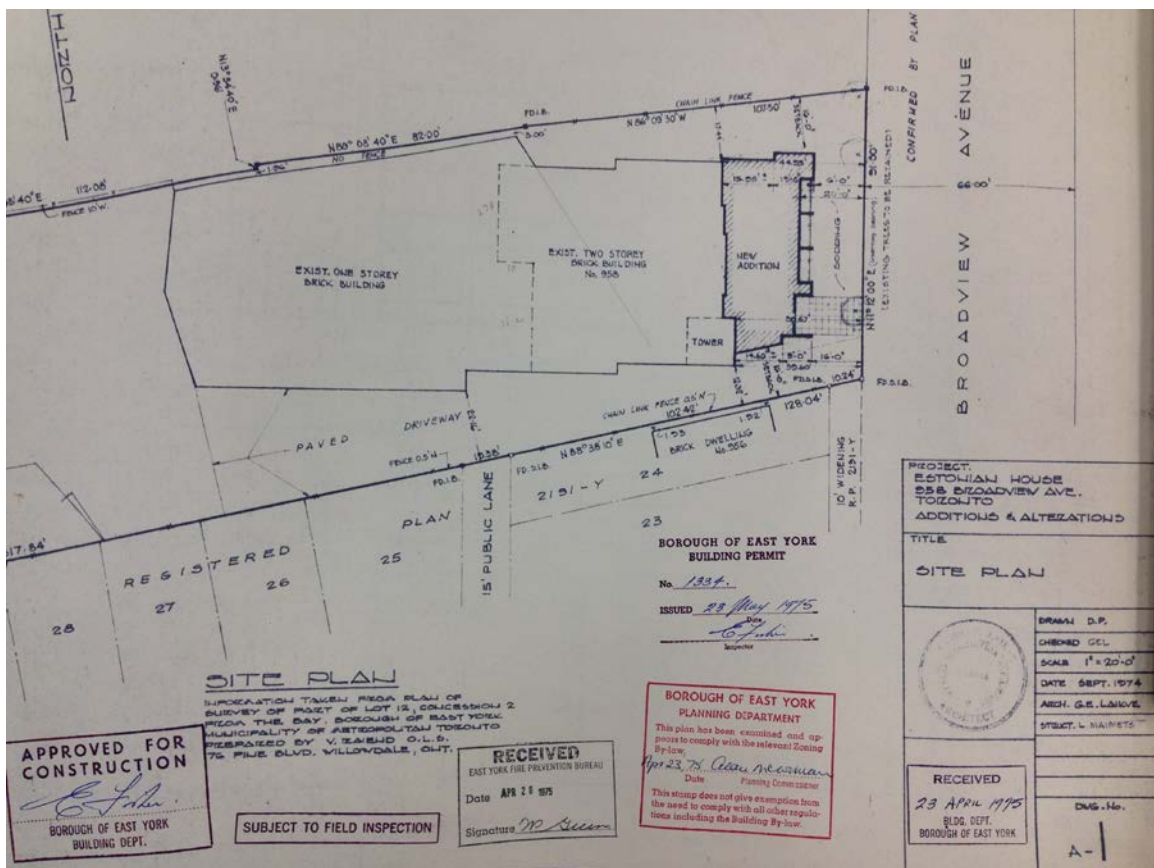
16. Estonian House addition, 1962-3: showing the entry and south elevation of the addition at the juncture with the original school building (*HPS*)



17. Estonian House addition, 1962-3: showing the west and south elevations of the addition and the original school building (*HPS*)



18. Junction of the Estonian House addition (left) to the Chester School (right). (HPS)



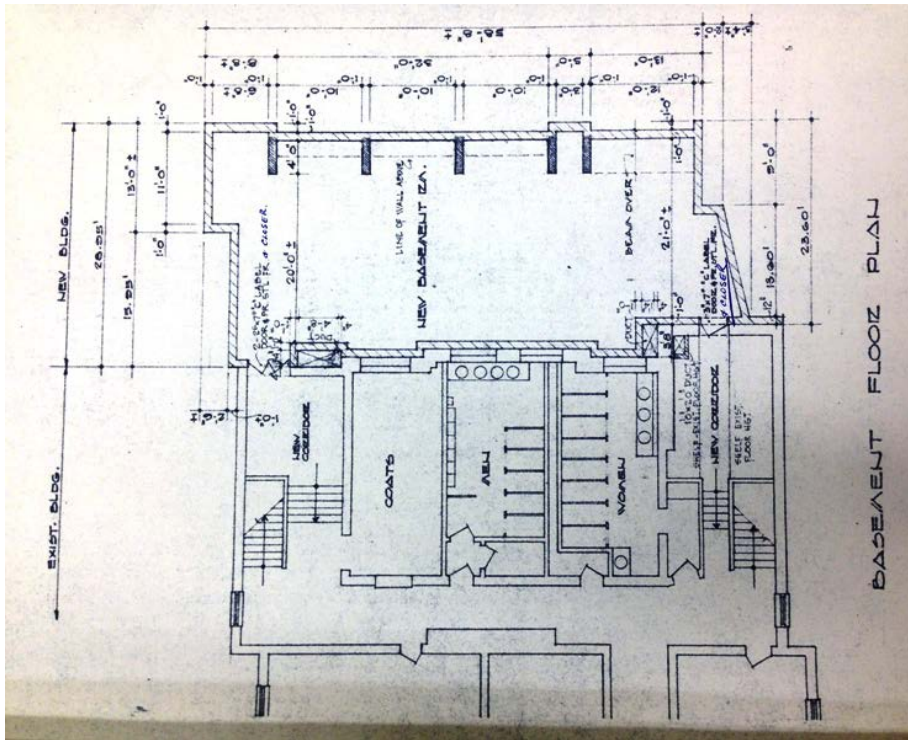
19. Site Plan, Guido E. Laikve architect, 1974: showing the addition (in bold lines) to the east elevation of the Chester School (BP1334, 23 May 1975)



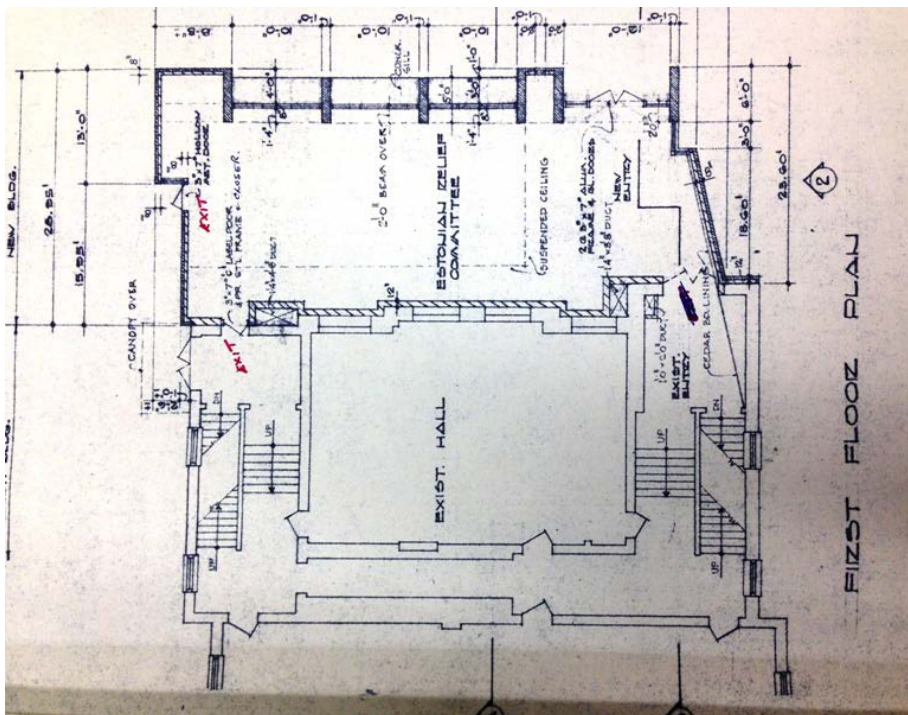
20. Chester School with Estonian House Addition, 1975: showing the addition from the south east facing Broadview Avenue (HPS)



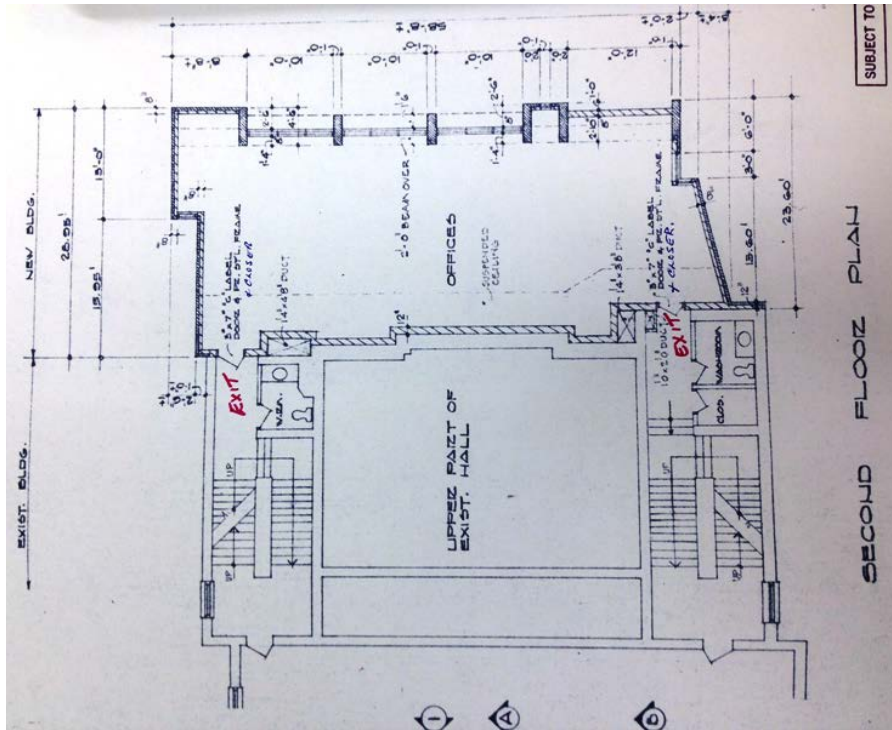
21. Chester School with Estonian House Additions, 1975 and 1995: showing the addition from the north east. Note the original gable roof of the school. The single storey addition with the gable roofed addition in front of the school was completed in 1995 with the installation of an elevator (HPS)



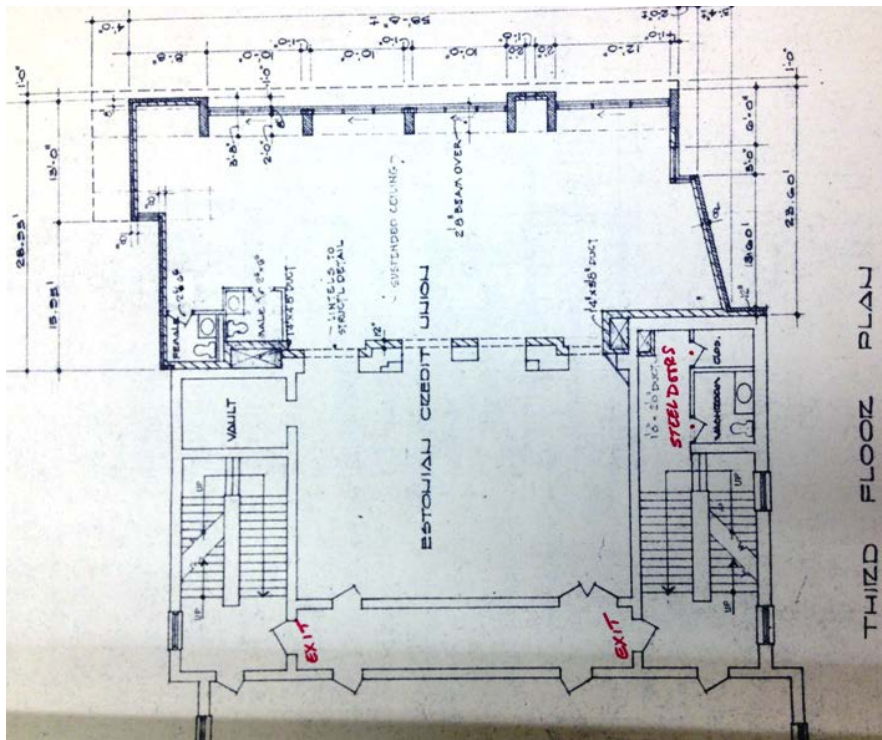
22. Basement Addition Plan, 1974 Guido E. Laikve: showing the addition in front of the east elevation of the school and the retention of the existing walls and windows behind a concrete block wall. (BP1334, 23 May 1975)



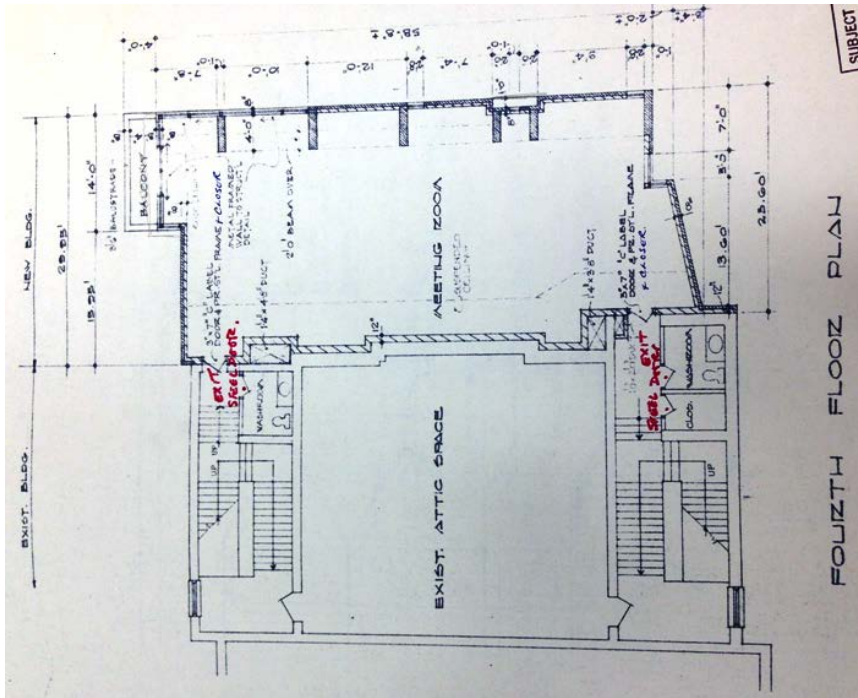
23. First Floor Addition Plan, 1974, Guido E. Laikve: showing the addition in front of the east elevation of the school and the retention of the existing walls and windows behind a concrete block wall. (BP1334, 23 May 1975)



24. Second Floor Addition Plan, 1974, Guido E. Laikve: showing the addition on the east elevation of the school and the retention of the existing walls behind a concrete block wall. (BP1334, 23 May 1975)



25. Third Floor Addition Plan, 1974, Guido E. Laikve: showing the addition on the east front of the school and the retention of portions of the existing walls of the school's east façade with four new openings corresponding to the original window openings. (BP1334, 23 May 1975)



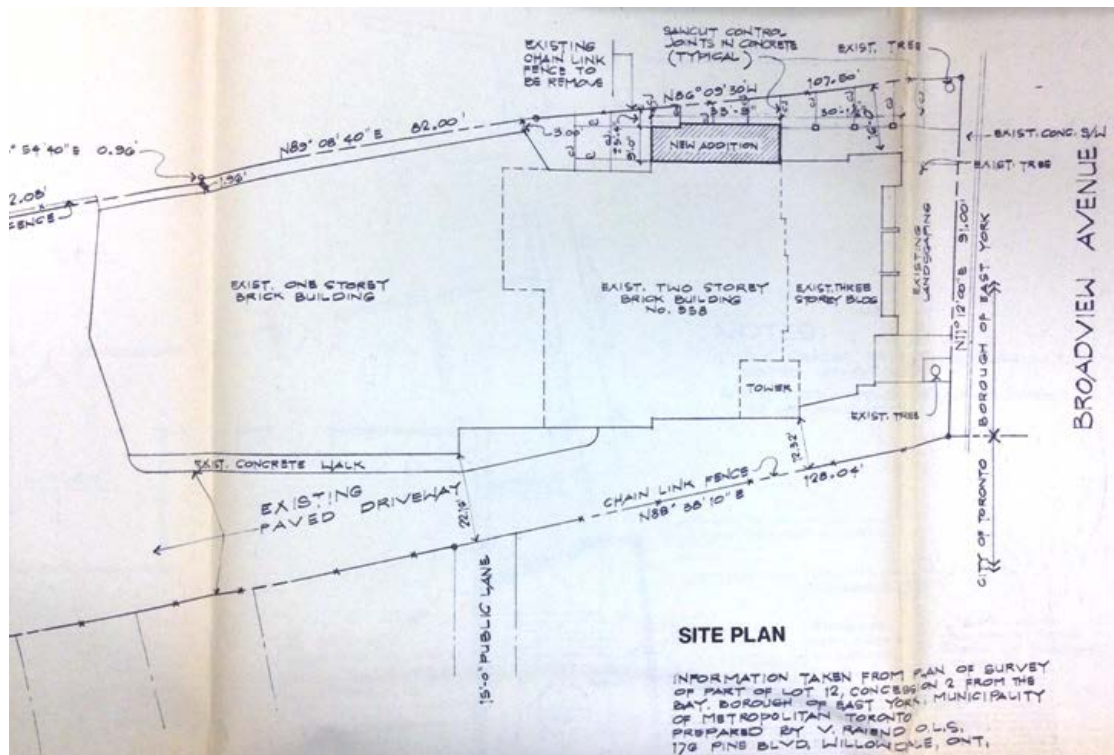
26. Fourth Floor Addition Plan, 1974, Guido E. Laikve: showing the addition on the east front of the school and the retention the existing walls of the east façade behind the new concrete block walls.
(BP1334, 23 May 1975)



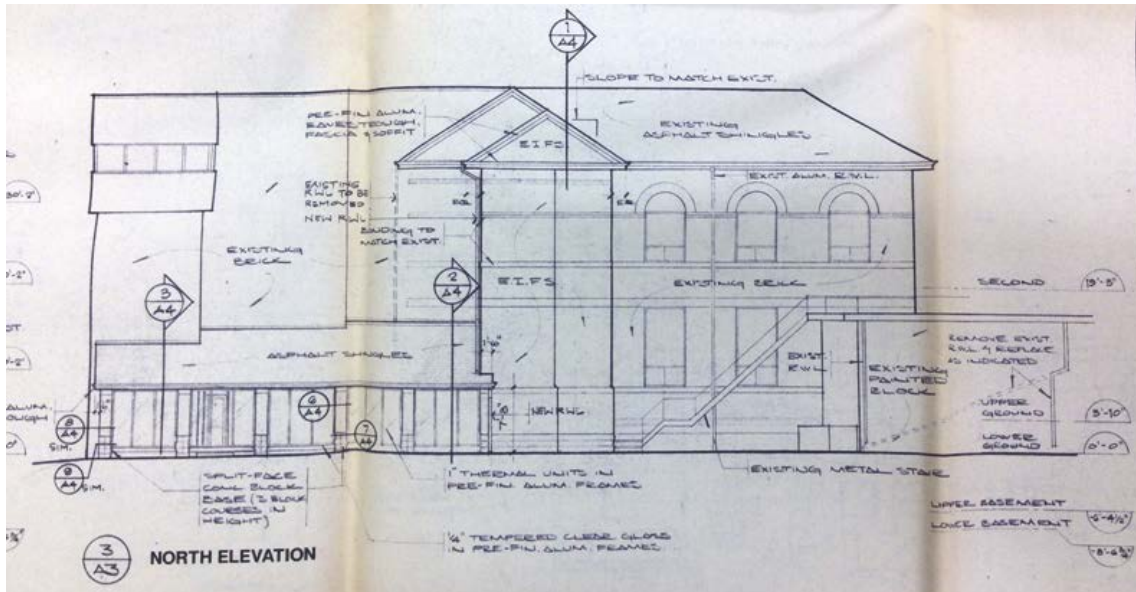
27. Fourth Floor Interior of 1975 Addition: showing the concrete block wall which follows the plan of the original east elevation of the school building with the projecting central bay (centre left) and recessed side bays (centre right). (HPS)



28. North Corridor: showing original stair with exposed newel post with stair handrail contained within new wall enclosure. Note also the original door case on the opposite wall. (HPS)



29. Site Plan, Parkin Architects, Ltd. 1995: showing the new addition of the entry and elevator on the north side of the original school building with the other additions from 1962-3 and 1975. (BP 95B19354, 1 June 1995)



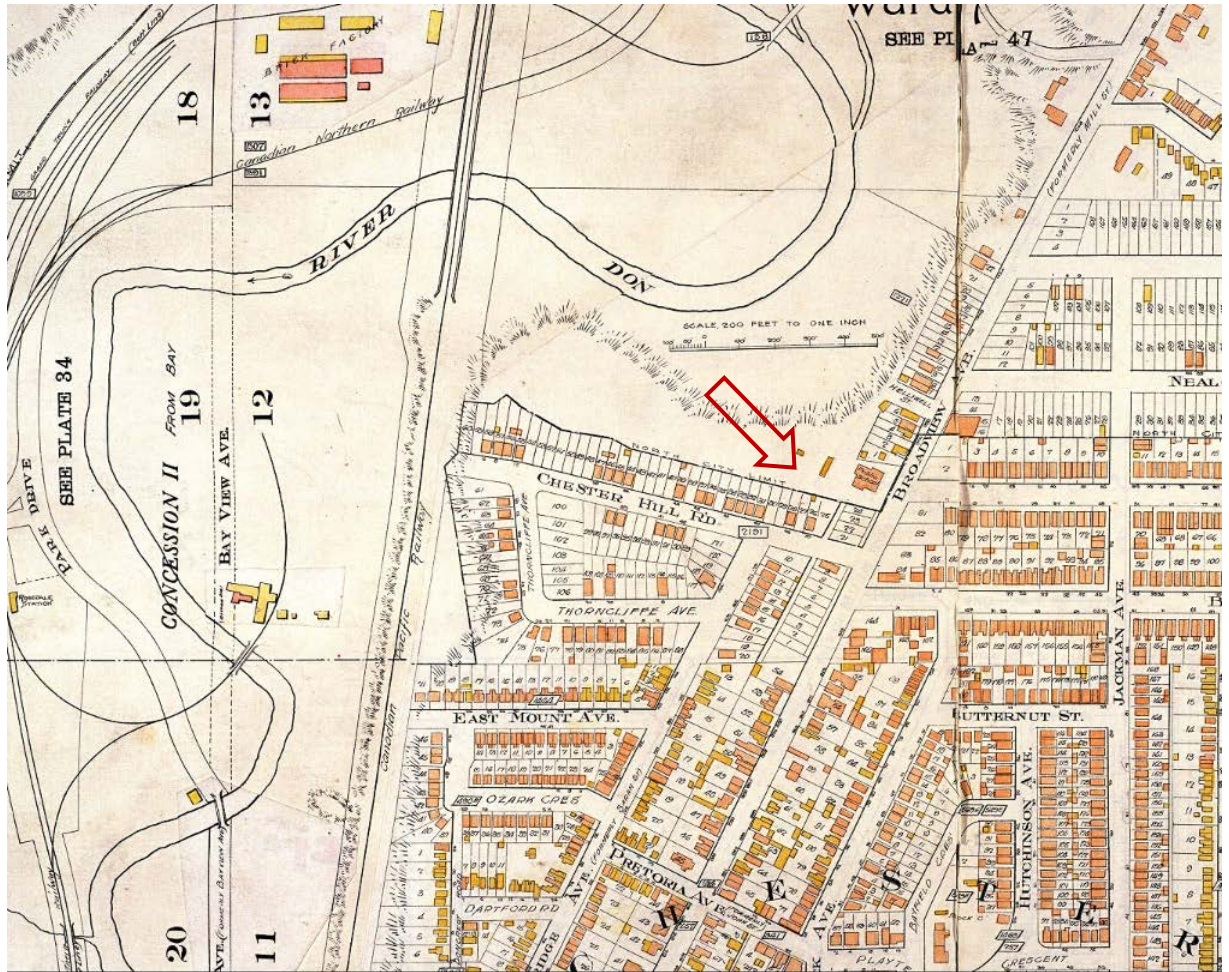
30. North Elevation Drawing, Parkin Architects Ltd.: showing the one-storey entry addition with the new tower for the elevator. Note that the pediment of the new tower corresponds to the proportions of the pediment of the original school building behind and decorative coursing ties in with that of the school. (BP 95B19354, 1 June 1995)



31. North Elevation: showing the one storey entry addition with the new tower for the elevator. The material of the addition, EIFS, is distinct from the brick but in a complementary colour. The decorative coursing bands further integrate the new with the old while maintaining a distinction between the two. The 1975 addition can be seen at the far left and the original school at the left and right of the tower. (HPS)



32. North and West Elevations: showing from left to right the additions dating from 1975 and 1995, the original school and the 1962-3 hall addition. (HPS)



33. Goad's Atlas, 1924: showing the school within its context with the development of the village of Chester to the south and east, a small sub-division including the short Helliwell Street on the north side of Broadview Avenue (formerly Mill Road) and the topography of the L-shaped ridge above the Don Valley with the school located at its corner. Beyond to the north and west in the valley are the sites of the earliest Don Mills/Todmorden Mills, the Don River, and now the CPR, Bayview Avenue and other transportation routes. (City of Toronto Archives)



34. Don Valley Parkway at Todmorden Mills and Brickworks, looking south-west, 1964-72. Showing the Chester School with the addition behind (pale roof) and its context. Note the set-back from the street, the tree and dual paths to the original two entrances. (CTA)



35. Aerial View of the property, 1983: showing the school's 1962-3 extension to the west (rear) and the 1975 east (front) addition and the development of the area to the north with the apartment towers, the low-rise consistent pattern of low-rise neighbourhood to the south and east and the topography of the land to the west as it descends to the Don Valley. (Series 12, *Aerial Photographs of Metropolitan Area, Sheet 52J, CTA*)



36. Broadview Avenue, West Side, North of Chester Hill Road: showing the context on either side of Chester School/Estonian House with the low-rise houses completed before 1945 and the high-rise towers completed between 1967 and 1973. (HPS)