ApPEAL OF THE CBO’S DECISION

- One First Party Wall Sign
- 615-617 Yonge Street

STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED

Appeal Concerning One First Party Wall Sign at 615-617 Yonge Street

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>June 21, 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ward:</td>
<td>Toronto Centre-Rosedale (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File No.:</td>
<td>FP-15-00203</td>
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<td>IBMS File No.:</td>
<td>15-256782</td>
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SUMMARY

Aird & Berlis LLP has, on behalf of the property owner, Oberon Development Corporation (the "Appellant"), appealed the decision of the Chief Building Official ("CBO") concerning an application for one variance required to permit the erection and display of one non-illuminated wall sign to be painted upon the northerly-facing wall at the third to sixth storeys of the six-storey building located at the premises municipally known as 615-617 Yonge Street (the "Proposed Sign").

The CBO refused to grant the variance required for the erection and display of the Proposed Sign. It is the CBO's opinion that it has not been established that the Proposed Sign meets all of the criteria contained in §694-30A of the Sign By-law. Specifically, the CBO is of the opinion that it has not been established that the Proposed Sign: a) is compatible with the development of the premises and surrounding area, b) supports Official Plan objectives for the subject premises and surrounding area, and c) does not alter the character of the premises or surrounding area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building, recommends that:

1. The Sign Variance Committee **refuse** the variance, with conditions, requested to §694-21D(5)(a) required to allow the issuance of a permit for the erection and display of one first party wall sign described in Attachment 1 to this report.
REQUIRED VARIANCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>PROPOSAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>694-21D(5)(a)</td>
<td>A wall sign is permitted provided the sign is not erected above the second storey.</td>
<td>The Proposed Sign is to be erected above the second storey on portions of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth storey, on condition that the sign is hand-painted.</td>
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</table>

COMMENTS

Sign Attributes

The Proposed Sign is one non-illuminated painted wall sign displaying static copy, located on the third to sixth storey of the northerly facing building elevation. The Proposed Sign contains one sign face with a horizontal measurement of 5.80 metres and vertical measurement of 10.66 metres. The height (or highest point of the sign measured from grade) of the Proposed Sign is to be 20.60 metres.

Signage History

Previously, on July 23, 2014, the CBO received a first party sign variance application seeking two variances to the Sign By-law to permit the erection and display of a similar first party wall sign on the premises (the "Previously Proposed Sign").

The Previously Proposed Sign was a non-illuminated wall sign displaying static copy located on the third to sixth storey, of the northerly elevation of the building, with a horizontal measurement of 5.80 metres and vertical measurement of 12.20 metres with a at a height of 20.60 metres. In addition the Previously Proposed Sign was to display 100 percent (or more than 30 percent of the total area of the sign copy) to advertise, promote, or direct attention to goods available at the premises where the sign is located, requiring a variance to the regulation establishing the maximum amount of such advertising contained in §694-20A.
The CBO, in a September 16, 2014 decision, refused to grant the two requested variances for the Previously Proposed Sign.

The CBO's September 16, 2014 decision was appealed to the Sign Variance Committee, as Item SB1.3, considered at the February 9, 2015 meeting.

Sign Variance Committee decision in Item SB1.3, was to grant the two variances requested on the condition that the Previously Proposed Sign was hand-painted.

The Sign Variance Committee decision in Item SB1.3, to grant the requested variances with conditions did not become final and binding due to an application to consider that was filed by the Ward Councillor in accordance with § 694-30S of the Sign By-law. The Ward Councillor filed an application to consider within 20 days in accordance with § 694-30S, and as a result the matter of the requested variances was considered by City Council.

Toronto and East York Community Council ("TEYCC") at its meeting of May 12, 2015 heard and considered the application for variance as Item TE6.9, for the purpose of making recommendations to Council for final decision in accordance with § 694-30T. The recommendation of TEYCC to City Council was to refuse to grant the two variances requested in relation to the Previously Proposed Sign.

City Council on June 10, 2015, considered Item TE6.9, and decided to adopt the TEYCC recommendation to refuse to grant the variances requested.

On November 25, 2015, the CBO received a first party sign variance application for the similar Proposed Sign which is the subject of this current appeal.

**Site Context and Sign District Designation**

The subject premises, municipally known as 615-617 Yonge Street, is located in Ward 27, Toronto Centre-Rosedale, and is situated on the east side of Yonge Street, between Isabella Street and Gloucester Street. The property is designated as a CR-Commercial Residential sign district, as are other properties north, south and west with frontage on Yonge Street. To the east of the property lands are designated OS-Open Space sign district, with properties further east being designated R-Residential.

**Criteria Established by §694-30A of Chapter 694**

The Sign By-law contains specific criteria to be used in evaluating an application for a variance. Specifically, §694-30A states that an application for variances may only be granted where it is established that all of the signs which are the subject of the variance application meet all nine of the established criteria.
### Applying the Established Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section/Criteria Description</th>
<th>Has Criteria Been Established?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>694-30A(1): The proposed sign belongs to a sign class permitted in the sign district</td>
<td><strong>YES - Staff are of the opinion that this criteria has been established</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale:**

The subject premises is designated as a CR-Commercial Residential sign district. The Proposed Sign is a first party sign; a sign class permitted in a CR-Commercial Residential sign district.

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>694-30A(2): In the case of a third party sign, the proposed sign is of a sign type permitted in the sign district</td>
<td><strong>YES - Staff are of the opinion that this criteria has been established</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale:**

The subject premises is designated as a CR-Commercial Residential sign district. The Proposed Sign is a first party wall sign, as a result the criteria contained in §694-30A(2) is not applicable to the Proposed Sign.

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<tr>
<th>Section/Criteria Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>694-30A(3): The proposed sign is compatible with the development of the premises and surrounding area</td>
<td><strong>NO - Staff are of the opinion, that this criteria has not been established</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale:**

The property at 615-617 Yonge Street has been recognized for its cultural heritage value, and was placed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in May of 2013. In a 2013 staff report, Heritage Preservation Services staff noted that the building is historically and visually related to the enclave of heritage structures anchoring the northeast intersection of Yonge and Gloucester. This building has a number heritage attributes including the scale, form and massing of the structure, the materials used in construction, and the various brick and stone detailing on the building facade.

The subject premises is also located in the Historic Yonge Street Conservation District ("HYHCD"), and is subject to the Historic Yonge Street Heritage Conservation District Plan, as a contributing property. The purpose of the Plan is to conserve, maintain, and enhance the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the area. This includes preventing alterations that diminish the districts cultural heritage assets, and ensuring that any alteration is compatible with HYHCD’s cultural heritage value. With respect to signage, Section 5.15 of the District Plan provides direction on incorporating commercial signage to conserve and not detract from the heritage attributes and cultural heritage value of the HYHCD. Specifically, Subsection 5.15.1 indicates that signage design for contributing properties is to be physically and visually compatible with the heritage attributes and cultural heritage value of HYHCD. Signage should be limited to the first
floor façade of the building, and **should not** extend to upper floors. Signage should also use historical precedents to inform the design of new signage on contributing properties.

Although the proposed signage is located on the north elevation wall which is not specifically listed as a heritage attribute, the heritage value of the subject building should be considered as a whole. The Proposed Sign will not only detract from the heritage attributes of the heritage resource, but also from the cultural heritage value of the surrounding Historic Yonge Conservation District. As such, it is the opinion of staff that it has not been established that the Proposed Sign is compatible with the development of the premises and surrounding area.

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<tr>
<td>§694-30A(4): The proposed sign supports Official Plan objectives for the property and surrounding area</td>
<td>No - Staff are of the opinion that this criteria has not been established</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale:**

The subject premises is designated as a *Mixed Use Area* in Toronto's Official Plan. *Mixed Use Area’s* are made up of a broad range of commercial, residential, and institutional uses, in single use or mixed use buildings, as well as parks and open spaces and utilities. It is the opinion of staff that the Proposed Sign is not contrary to the Official Plan policies as related to *Mixed Use Areas*.

The Official Plan provides regulatory tools to conserve and protect the cultural heritage values and attributes of the City's heritage properties. The subject building at 615-617 Yonge Street has been designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act and is also included, as a contributing building, within the boundaries of the HYHCD. The established regulatory framework works to protect the buildings heritage attributes, and the overall character of the area.

On November 15, 2013, Council adopted By-law 1507-2013, Amendment No. 183 to the Official Plan, respecting the North Downtown Yonge Site and Area Specific Policy Area. The goal of the area specific policy is to guide and shape development and redevelopment within the area, part of which includes protecting and enhancing the heritage context within which this area is situated. Specifically, development in the area should respect and complement the scale, character, form and setting of heritage properties along the street.

The building at 615-617 Yonge Street is also subject to the North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines. Section 5.0 of the Guidelines notes that retail signage on heritage properties shall be reversible without damaging the heritage property, and is to be located within the sign band of the front facade to allow the historic storefront of the buildings along this portion of Yonge Street to remain intact.

It is the opinion of staff that it has not been established that the Proposed Sign supports Official Plan objectives for the subject premises and surrounding area, specifically the preservation and protection of the City's heritage resources.
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>694-30 A(5): The proposed sign <strong>Does Not</strong> adversely affect adjacent premises</td>
<td>Yes - Staff are of the opinion, that this criteria, has been established</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale:**

The Proposed Sign is to be erected on portions of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth storey of the northerly elevation. It is the opinion of staff that it has been established that the Proposed Sign will not adversely affect adjacent premises.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>694-30 A(6): The proposed sign <strong>Does Not</strong> adversely affect public safety</td>
<td>YES - Staff are of the opinion that this criteria has been established</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale:**

The Proposed Sign is appropriately setback from the public right-of-way and should not have an impact on pedestrian or vehicular safety. It is the opinion of staff that it has been established that the proposed sign will not adversely affect public safety.

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<tr>
<td>694-30A(7): The proposed sign <strong>Is Not</strong> a sign prohibited by §694-15B</td>
<td>YES - Staff are of the opinion that this criteria has been established</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale:**

The Proposed Sign is a first party wall sign. First party wall signs are not prohibited by §694-15B.
### Section/Criteria Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has Criteria Been Established?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>694-30A(8): The proposed sign <strong>Does Not</strong> alter the character of the premises or surrounding area</td>
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</table>

**Rationale:**

This portion of Yonge Street is composed of a variety of mixed-use, commercial and residential buildings fronting along Yonge Street that support and define the areas main street character. As a result of the built-form and pedestrian nature of the area, other first party signs on adjacent properties are generally limited to business identification signs at the first and second storey on a wall facing the street.

The existing business at 615-617 Yonge Street currently contains a first storey wall sign used for business identification purposes, a projecting sign on the second storey of the building, as well as a number of window signs advertising services available at the premises. These signs face the street and are consistent in scale and location with other signs in the area, and sufficiently identify the existing business on the premises.

The Proposed Sign is not only significantly larger than other first party wall signs on adjacent buildings, but the location and height of the sign is inconsistent with other first party signs in the area. As such it is the opinion of staff that it has not been established that the Proposed Sign is consistent with the character of signage along this portion of Yonge Street.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has Criteria Been Established?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>694-30 A(9): The proposed sign <strong>Is Not</strong> contrary to the public interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rationale:**

A notice of the application was posted on the premises for 30 days, and staff did not receive any comments or letters of opposition from adjacent property owners. It is the opinion of staff that it has been established that the Proposed Sign is not contrary to the public interest.
CONCLUSION

Based on staff’s assessment of the Proposed Sign, as measured against the established criteria contained at §694-30A of the Sign By-law, the variance sought by the Appellant should not be granted. Although information exists to support that some of the criteria has been established, staff are of the opinion that there is not a sufficient basis to establish that the Proposed Sign is: compatible with current and future development of the subject premises and surrounding area; supports Official Plan objectives for the premises and surrounding area; and, will not alter the character of the premises and surrounding area.

As such, it is recommended that the Sign Variance Committee refuse to grant the variance from the Sign By-law required for the erection and display of the Proposed Sign.

CONTACT

Brody Paul
Sign Building Code Examiner Inspector
Tel: (416) 392-3537
E-mail: bpaul@toronto.ca

Robert Bader
Supervisor, Sign By-law Unit
Tel: (416) 392-4113
E-mail: rbader@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

___________________________
Ted Van Vliet
Manager, Sign By-law

ATTACHMENTS

1. Description of Signs and Required Variance
2. Applicant's Submission Package
ATTACHMENT 1:

**Description of Sign**

One painted wall sign at the premises municipally known as 615-617 Yonge Street, described as follows:

a) Erected on the northerly elevation of the building currently located on the premises, on portions of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth storeys;

b) Containing one sign face having:

   1. A total sign face area of 61.83 square metres;
   2. A vertical measurement of 10.66 metres; and
   3. A horizontal measurement of 5.8 metres;

c) Not illuminated; and

d) Displaying static copy.

**Required Variance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>PROPOSAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>694-21D(4)(b)</td>
<td>A wall sign, other than a sign displaying a logo or corporate symbol permitted by Subsection D(4), provided the sign is not erected above the second storey.</td>
<td>The requirement be varied to allow the Proposed Sign to be erected on portions of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth storey of the building on the condition that the Proposed Sign is hand-painted.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ATTACHMENT 2: Applicant's Submission Package

Application
Sign Variance

Project Information
Street No. 615 & 617
Street Name YORK STREET
Lot No. PT LT 1
Plan No. PL 61

Describe the variance(s) being applied for:
VARIANCE TO ERECT A SIGN ABOVE THE SECOND STOREY (694-21D(6)(A)); AND VARIANCE FOR PROPORTION OF SIGN DEDICATED TO PROMOTING SERVICES AVAILABLE ON PREMISES (694-20A).

If it is an application for a variance required for the modification or restoration of an existing sign, please provide the following:
Existing Sign Dimensions

Please provide the reasons/justification for the request (Attach any supporting documentation or additional pages as required).

Property Owner Information
First Name
Last Name

Company Name (if applicable)
OBERON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Telephone No.
(416) 598-5544

Street No. 872
Street Name RICHMOND STREET WEST
Suite/Unit No. 400

City/Town TORONTO
Province ONTARIO
Postal Code M5V1X8

Fax No.
(416) 598-4626

E-mail Address maria@oberon.ca

Attachment Required
- Sign Variance Data Sheet
- Copies of any supporting documents
- All necessary plans and specifications required to verify the nature of the Sign By-law Variance(s) requested

Continue on next page
Appeal of the CBO's Decision – One First Party Wall Sign – 615-617 Yonge Street

Applicant Information and Declaration

Applicant: MARLA SWITZER

Company Name: OBERON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Street No.: 372

Street Name: RICHMOND STREET WEST

Postal Code: M5V1X6

Fax No.: (416) 508-4926

E-mail Address: marla@oberon.ca

Do hereby declare the following:

- That I am the Property Owner as stated above

- That the plans and specifications submitted are true and made with full knowledge of all relevant matters and of the circumstances connected with this application.

- That the information included in this application and in the documents filed with this application is correct.

Signature: MARLA SWITZER 2015-11-02

Print Name: Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

The personal information on this form is collected under the City of Toronto Act, 2006, s. 13(1) and Chapter 604, Sign, General, of the City of Toronto Municipal Code. The information collected will be used for processing applications, and creating aggregate statistical reports, for enforcement of the City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 604, Sign, General, Chapter 771, Taxation, Third Party Sign Tax, and any other applicable sign bylaw of the City of Toronto, and for contacting permit holder(s) or authorized agent(s). Questions about this collection may be referred to the Manager, Sign By-law Unit, Toronto Building, 100 Queen Street West, Ground Floor, East Tower, Toronto, M5H 2N2 416-392-4224.

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Appeal of the CBO's Decision – One First Party Wall Sign – 615-617 Yonge Street

Data Sheet
Sign Variance

Folder no. Request Date (yyyy-mm-dd)
2015-11-02

This data sheet forms part of an application for a Variance From Chapter 694 of the Toronto Municipal Code, Signs

Project Information
Street No. Street Name Lot No. Plan No.
615 & 617 YONGE STREET PL 61

Site and Building Data
Lot Area Lot Frontage Lot Depth
279.7 10.3 35.9

Building Height(s) No. of Storeys Building(s) Gross Floor Area
23.6 6 STOREYS 1594.2

Site Context
Please describe the land uses, buildings and sign districts surrounding the proposal (use additional pages if necessary)

North 2 STOREY MIXED USE BUILDING

South 5 STOREY MIXED USE BUILDING

East 5 STOREY MIXED USE BUILDING AND SURFACE CAR PARKING

West 2 STOREY MIXED USE BUILDING

Proposal
Please describe in detail what is being proposed (use additional pages if necessary)

THIS PROPOSAL IS FOR A 10.0x2.0m PAINTED MURAL WALL SIGN DISPLAYING STATIC COPY PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL FOR THE COMMERCIAL TENANTS. VARIANCES ARE REQUIRED FOR ERECTING A FIRST PARTY SIGN ABOVE THE SECOND STOREY ON THE SIDEWALL OF THE BUILDING, AND DISPLAYING A FIRST PARTY SIGN WHERE MORE THAN 30 PERCENT OF THE SIGN COPY PROMOTES OR DIRECTS ATTENTION TO GOODS AVAILABLE ON THE PREMISES.

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1-4-0013 2013-07

1 of 2
### Rationale

Decisions for all Sign Variance Applications are evaluated against criteria listed in Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 694-30 A. A Variance may be granted where it is demonstrated that the proposed sign(s):

- Belong to a sign class permitted in the sign district where the premises is located
- In the case of a third party sign, be of a sign type that is permitted in the sign district, where the premises is located
- Be compatible with the development of the premises and surrounding area
- Support the Official Plan objectives for the subject premises and surrounding area
- Not adversely affect adjacent premises
- Not adversely affect public safety
- Not be a sign prohibited by Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 694-15B
- Not alter the character of the premises or surrounding area
- Not be, in the opinion of the decision maker, contrary to the public interest

Please describe in detail how the proposed satisfies each of the criteria listed above. Use additional pages if necessary. SEE MEMO ATTACHED BY ERA ARCHITECTS.
MEMORANDUM RE: 615-617 YONGE STREET SIGNAGE

This memorandum provides heritage rationale for a Sign Variance Application for the properties municipally known as 615 & 617 Yonge Street in the City of Toronto (the “Site”). The Site is a listed heritage building located within the proposed Historic Yonge Street Heritage Conservation District (HCD).

Chapter 694 of the Toronto Municipal Code prohibits third party signs on listed heritage buildings, or within HCDs, unless expressly permitted by the signage by-law (§694-22(c)). There is no such prohibition against first party signs on listed heritage buildings or buildings within HCDs.

In our view, the signage proposed in this resubmission will not have a negative impact on any of the heritage attributes of the building at 615-617 Yonge Street, nor will it have any affect on the proposed Historic Yonge Street HCD. We strongly recommend that permission for the signage described in the application be granted without delay.

Background and Decision History

On July 28, 2014, the applicant requested a First Party Sign Permit and Sign Variance in respect of the Site. As the proposed signage is located on a listed heritage building, Toronto Heritage Preservation Services commented on the application, stating they would not recommend a large-format vinyl banner for the building elevation.

On September 16, 2014, the applicant received a notice of refusal, which was followed by a Staff Report issued on November 14, 2014. The applicant appealed that decision to the Sign Variance Committee, which granted the variances on February 5, 2015 on the condition that the proposed sign be hand-painted (Item §6.1.2).

Councillor Wong-Tam, the Ward Councillor for the area, subsequently filed an Application to Consider, which resulted in the Chief Building Official recommending that City Council refuse to grant the variances requested. A Staff Report was issued on April 24, 2015 providing the reasoning behind this recommendation (the “Staff Report” – Ref: TE35009).

Evaluation of Criteria Established by by §694-30A of Chapter 694

An application for variance from Chapter 234 may be granted where it is established that the proposed sign will meet the Administrative, Design and Impact Criteria established by §694-30A. We have examined each of these categories separately below and are of the opinion that this application meets the criteria.

E R A
(A) Administrative Criteria

None of these provisions were found to be at issue in the previous application and none are contravened by the present application.

694-30A(1) Does the proposal belong to a sign class permitted in the sign district where the premises is located?

Yes. The proposed sign is a first party sign, which is permitted within a CR-Commercial Residential sign district.

694-30A(2) In the case of a third party sign, is the proposal of a sign type that is permitted in the sign district, where the premises is located?

Not applicable. The proposed sign is a first party sign.

694-30A(7) Is the sign a proposal prohibited by 694-15B?

No. The proposed sign is not prohibited by 694-15B.

(B) Design Criteria

694-30A(3) Is the proposal compatible with the development of the premises and surrounding area?

Yes. Blank sidewalks have been utilized for signage for much of Yonge Street’s history. Photographs from the early 20th century show that Yonge Street, within the downtown core, had advertising on both the main facades and side elevations of buildings (Figure 1). Present day signage along this stretch of Yonge Street, including signage on listed heritage buildings within the proposed Historic Yonge Street HCD, exhibits the same eclectic character (Figures 2 and 3).

As we have noted, the building at 615-617 Yonge Street is included in the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties and is located within the proposed Historic Yonge Street HCD. The Reasons for Listing refer to the Site as, “... a fine representative example of Edwardian Classical styling applied to an office building from the World War I era that is historically and visually related to its surroundings...” The Statement of Cultural Heritage Value references the scale, form and massing of the building, the materials used in construction, and the brick and stone detailing on the primary (west) façade.
None of the heritage attributes included in the Reasons for Listing is impacted by the proposed signage. A historic photograph shows the north elevation of the Site had no decorative elements (Figure 4). This suggests the elevation originally had little aesthetic function and was likely designed with the expectation that an adjacent building would eventually conceal it.

The Staff Report states: “The inclusion on the Inventory is a clear statement that the City would like to see the heritage attributes of these properties preserved.” It then concludes: “Given the cultural and historical significance of the building at 615-617 Yonge Street as well as the surrounding area, it is the opinion of staff that the sign is not compatible with [694-304(3)].”

In our view, considering the Reasons for Listing, first party signage painted on this façade does not interfere with the heritage attributes of the Site, nor does it dilute its individual significance or its significance as part of the proposed Historic Yonge Street HCD. We note that the City has grandfathered first party signs on the upper portions of blank sidewalks of designated heritage buildings elsewhere (for example, 299 Queen Street West; Figure 9). These buildings have no less cultural and historical significance than the Site.

694-304(4) Does the proposal support the Official Plan objectives for the property and surrounding area?

Yes. As noted in the Staff Report, the Site is located within a Mixed Use Area. Staff conceded that the proposed sign did not contravene Official Plan policies related to mixed-use areas. Staff was, however, of the opinion that the proposed signage contravened Official Plan objectives regarding conservation and protection of Toronto’s heritage resources.

In our view, the proposed painted signage does not contravene Official Plan intent and objectives to protect heritage resources, particularly those provisions respecting the protection of the historic streetwall of Yonge Street.

Again, in our view, the placement of the proposed signage on the north elevation of the building ensures that none of the heritage attributes of the Site are compromised. The applicant has requested a painted mural sign, which will have minimal impact on the building fabric and has been present on the Site since at least the 1980s.

Regarding the streetwall, in our view, the presence of eclectic forms of signage along Yonge Street is an important part of both the historic and evolving character of the area.
694-30A(8) Does the proposal alter the character of the premises or surrounding area?

No. Again, the placement of the proposed signage on the north elevation of the building ensures that none of its significant heritage attributes are compromised. Moreover, painted signage has minimal impact on heritage fabric.

With respect to the proposal altering the character of the surrounding area, painted first party signage on the secondary elevation of listed buildings has been and is currently quite common on Yonge Street (Figures 2, 5 and 6). Even off the main thoroughfares, historic examples of this type of signage exist. A warehouse from the historic Rawlinson block, which was listed in 1974 and is located just south of the Site on the west side of Yonge Street, includes an example of this technique, at 9 St. Nicholas Street (Figure 7).

(C) Impact Criteria

694-30A(5) Does the proposal adversely affect adjacent premises?

No. The proposal does not adversely affect adjacent premises.

The Staff Report states: “additional signage should be cognizant of the area’s unique character, and should make efforts to avoid any detrimental visual impact on designated historic buildings.” The current proposal does not represent “additional” signage that would impact the character of the area. Rather, painted signage of a similar size, magnitude and orientation has historic precedent on the Site and has formed part of the heritage character of the neighbourhood throughout its history.

The resubmission attempts to avoid detrimental impact by reducing the size of the signage and proposing a painted, rather than vinyl, sign. This is entirely in keeping with the history of signage on this building and seeks to reduce the visual impact of signage on both the Site and adjacent premises.

694-30A(6) Does the proposal adversely affect public safety?

No. The proposal does not affect public safety. This provision was not found to be at issue in the previous application and is not contravened by the present application.

694-30A(9) Is the proposal, in the opinion of the Chief Building Official, contrary to the public interest?

In our view, the proposal does not contravene the public interest. The Staff Report states, on this point, that “the cultural and heritage character of the building located on the subject premises should be protected.” The applicant and ERA are in complete agreement with this statement.
However, for the reasons listed above in respect of 8594-30A[3] – namely that none of the significant cultural heritage attributes of this building are impacted by the present application – we do not agree that the proposed signage interferes with such protection, nor is it contrary to the public interest.
Figure 1: Example of early signage concept of Yonge Street, near Sherbourne Street (Toronto Archives, annotated by ERA).
Appeal of the CBO's Decision – One First Party Wall Sign – 615-617 Yonge Street

Figure 2: Present-day signage context on Yonge Street showing first-party sidewall signage on a listed heritage building. Looking north from Markland Street (GoogleMaps).

Figure 3: Third party sidewalk signage on listed heritage building at 10 St Mary Street. Looking south along Yonge Street (GoogleMaps).
Figure 4: 615-617 Yonge in 1924, showing the north elevation (Toronto Archives, Fonds 1121 Item 202).
Figure 5: First party sidewalk signage on listed building at Yonge south of Aquare, looking north. May 2020. GoogleMaps.

Figure 6: First party sidewalk signage on listed building at Yonge and Aquare, looking south. Present Day. GoogleMaps.
Figure 7: 9 St. Nicholas Street, part of the historic Rawlinson Block. Present Day. (GoogleMaps).
Figure 7: Third party sidewalk painted mural signage on 615-617 Yonge Street (1989-91).
Figure 8: Blank sidewall following removal of mural at 615-617 Yonge Street.
CASE STUDY: 728 YONGE STREET
CASE STUDY: 615 & 617 YONGE STREET

[Image of historical and contemporary photos of 615-617 Yonge Street]
Figure 8: First party sidewall signage on the upper floors of the designated heritage building at 299 Queen Street West, Present Day.
A BRIEF HISTORY OF SIGNAGE ON YONGE STREET

Early 20th-century: A thriving culture of signage, signalling the success of Yonge Street’s commercial culture.

1950s: Subway construction prompts removal of signs and new by-laws.


1980s-1990s: Reactionary focus on small scale signs.

Current Condition: Simplification of the streetscape and loss of cultural heritage. Historic Yonge Street HCD study phase complete, plan phase underway. No signage study completed.
YONGE STREET SIGNAGE TYPOLOGIES

1900s - 1920s
- Side of building (painted or hinged)
- Projecting
- Awning

1940s - 1970s
- Illuminated electronic sign

1980s - 2000s
- Sign board / banner
- Back lit
EARLY 20TH-CENTURY

Yonge Street, 1924
Yonge Street, 1920s-1930s
1950S SUBWAY CONSTRUCTION

They’re Up … … But Coming Down

Toronto Star, 1959
Appeal of the CBO’s Decision – One First Party Wall Sign – 615-617 Yonge Street
PUBLIC NOTICE

OVERHANGING SIGNS

ON PORTIONS OF
YONGE AND FRONT STREETS

The Committee on Works has directed the Commissioner of Buildings to take a poll of all business concerns and shops located on first and second floors of premises facing on

YONGE STREET BETWEEN FRONT STREET AND RAMSDEN PARK

and

FRONT STREET BETWEEN YORK AND YONGE STREETS

to ascertain whether such concerns are in favor or against the erection and maintenance of overhead signs (other than facial signs not projecting more than 18 inches over the street allowance) on these portions of said streets.

BUSINESS CONCERNS AND SHOPS ARE URGED TO SUBMIT REPLIES TO THE POLL NOT LATER THAN FEBRUARY 20, 1950.

INTERESTED ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS OF THE CITY ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT THEIR VIEWS AND ANY REPRESENTATION THEY DESIRE TO MAKE REGARDING THIS QUESTION IN WRITING TO THE CITY CLERK NOT LATER THAN FEBRUARY 22, 1950.

The Committee on Works will hear representatives of firms and persons on this matter at a meeting to be subsequently decided.

February 9, 1950.

GEO. A. WEALE,
City Clerk.
1960S-1970S
CASE STUDY: 728 YONGE STREET
CASE STUDY: 615 & 617 YONGE STREET