



Bay Cloverhill Community Association

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Friday, February 19, 2016

TEYCC

Toronto City Hall

100 Queen Street West

Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Re: BCCA Support for Historic Yonge Street HCD Plan and “Designation of the Historic Yonge Street Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act”

Dear Members of the Toronto and East York Community Council:

The BCCA strongly supports the Historic Yonge Street HCD Plan. We urge its immediate adoption by TEYCC.

The HCD Plan details precisely the expectations of exactly what will be preserved in the contributing buildings and also what is expected in re-development sites within the HCD area. All of this is most important for the conservation of any relevant portion of Historic Yonge Street heritage to persist into the future.

Additionally, the BCCA asks that you, the TEYCC, take immediate action on the recommendations outlined in the January 27, 2016 staff report relating to the Historic Yonge HCD Plan. At least 2 of these recommendations are of an urgent nature, as follows:

1. City Council include immediately on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register Recommendations 4 through 44, which list 65 addresses on Yonge Street , all sites with heritage importance. Further, this action needs to be taken as expeditiously as possible because of the on-going extreme development pressures being experienced on Yonge Street in the HCD area.
2. Page 5 Paragraph 2 of Staff Report: “There are differences between the Historic Yonge Heritage Conservation District Plan and both the North Downtown Yonge Official Plan Amendment (OPA 183) and the Council adopted North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines. It is anticipated that these differences may be addressed and reconciled in a future staff "Request for Directions" report on the OPA 183 Ontario Municipal Board appeal.” The BCCA requests that the TEYCC make full and urgent reference to this alignment of policy documents in their recommendations to Toronto City Council.

Residents are concerned that the Heritage Conservation District Plan policies are not harmonized with the North Downtown Yonge Official Plan Amendment (OPA 183) and the North Downtown Yonge Urban Design Guidelines. The documents must be vetted to ensure:

- that they align in all respects;
- where there is conflict, it must be identified with reasons for the differences;
- recognition must be given as to which policy takes precedence.

As to the general tone of the Historic Yonge HCD Plan, the BCCA community was disappointed that the Consultant/Heritage Services Report did not define sufficient ways to encourage creativity in any redevelopment sites, perhaps in suggestions to provide for new contemporary uses and alterations for both the heritage buildings and new buildings to be constructed in the Historic Yonge Street area in times to come.

How best can a balance between heritage and public places be addressed? This is a major concern of the community.

It has been suggested that these goals might be achieved during Site Planning for Re-development sites on Yonge Street. For example, as residents and users of Yonge Street, we want to make use of opportunities to have the Street wall vary to allow for the introduction of areas that could become public meeting places in a situation where a non-conforming building was to be set back more than the present sidewalk width. Such variations create small but important meeting places that serve to animate the sidewalk and work toward a vital neighbourhood street. In our extremely park deficient community, all efforts must be taken to capitalize on such opportunities

The PPS recognizes that local context and character are important. Policies are outcome oriented, and some policies provide flexibility in their implementation provided that provincial interests are upheld. In the example above, Council's planning decisions could be consistent with both the PPS and the wishes of the neighbourhood residents, a true Win-Win arrangement.

Toronto can be justifiably proud of its vibrant, diverse downtown neighbourhoods. Our downtown was never hollowed out. It was and is home to a growing number of residential neighbourhoods alive with ever increasing numbers of people, of all ages. Yonge Street plays a central role in our interwoven fabric of downtown neighbourhoods. Yonge Street is a key connecting link that joins together the different downtown neighbourhoods. And Yonge Street connects Toronto's downtown residents into our city's core.

The BCCA community looks to this HCD Plan as an important tool to rehabilitate and revitalize our landmark portion of Yonge Street which is the neighbourhood in which we live.

Sincerely,

Rick Whitten-Stovall, BCCA President

Cc: Mary MacDonald, Heritage Preservation Services
Tamara Ansen-Cartwright, Heritage Preservation Services
Dialog
David OiKawa, Manager, Community Planning, Downtown Section
Councillor Wong-Tam, Ward 27