

## **Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property, Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act and Authority to Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement - 771 Yonge Street**

**Date:** December 1, 2017  
**To:** Toronto Preservation Board  
Toronto and East York Community Council  
**From:** Acting Chief Planner and Executive Director  
**Wards:** Ward 27 – Toronto Centre-Rosedale

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council approve the proposed alterations for the heritage property at 771 Yonge Street, in connection with the proposed redevelopment of the site and per the settlement offer submitted to the City by Sherman Brown on July 26, 2017, in conjunction with an appeal to the OMB of the application for Zoning By-law Amendment. This report also recommends that City Council state its intention to designate 771 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act and give authority to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement for this property.

As part of the project scope, the existing property at 771 Yonge Street will be conserved and incorporated into the redevelopment. The tower will be stepped back 10 metres from the Yonge Street property line with a strategy that does not impact the building's three dimensional form through retention of existing wall fabric at all elevations, in-kind reconstruction of the non-heritage roof and restoration of the street facing facades. New retail uses are proposed within the heritage structure with a new floor slab proposed to be reconstructed between the first and second floor levels. Should the alterations to the subject property be approved, staff recommend that the property owner be required to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement to ensure the long-term protection of the heritage property.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Acting Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, recommends that:

1. City Council approve the alterations to the designated heritage property at 771 Yonge Street, in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, for the construction of a new tower and podium with alterations to the designated building at 771 Yonge Street in accordance with the settlement offer from the Applicant comprised of the plans and drawings prepared by Giannone Petricone Associates Inc. Architects, dated November 14, 2017, and the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects, dated November 15, 2017, all on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, all subject to and in accordance with a Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and subject to the following conditions:

a. Prior to issuance of an Ontario Municipal Board Order in connection with the Zoning By-law Amendment appeal for the property at 771 Yonge Street, the owner shall:

1. Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement with the City for the property at 771 Yonge Street substantially in accordance with plans and drawings prepared by Giannone Petricone Associates Inc. Architects dated November 14, 2017, and the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects, dated November 15, 2017 or otherwise revised in accordance with a settlement offer or Board Order, subject to and in accordance with the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.a.2, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services including execution of such agreement to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.

2. Provide a detailed Conservation Plan prepared by a qualified heritage consultant that is substantially in accordance with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment for 771 Yonge Street, prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects, dated November 15, 2017 or otherwise a conservation strategy revised in accordance with a settlement offer or Board Order, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

3. Enter into and register on the property at 771 Yonge Street Avenue one or more agreements with the City pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act, all to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor, the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, and the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services with such facilities, services and matters to be set forth in the related site specific Zoning By-law Amendment giving rise to the proposed alterations, including amongst other matters, securing the preparation and thereafter the implementation of a Heritage Lighting Plan, a Signage Plan, an Interpretation Plan and requiring a letter

of credit to secure all work included in the approved Conservation Plan and approved Interpretation Plan, including provision for upwards indexing, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

b. Prior to Final Site Plan approval in connection with the Zoning By-law Amendment appeal for the property at 771 Yonge Street, the owner shall:

1. Provide final site plan drawings including drawings related to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.a.2 in the report of December 1, 2017 from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

2. Provide an Interpretation Plan for the subject properties, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and thereafter shall implement such Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

3. Provide a Heritage Lighting Plan that describes how the heritage properties will be sensitively illuminated to enhance their heritage character to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and thereafter shall implement such Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager Heritage Preservation Services.

4. Provide a detailed Landscape Plan for the subject property satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

5. Submit a Signage Plan for the proposed development to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

c. That prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the property at 771 Yonge Street, including a heritage permit or a building permit, but excluding permits for repairs and maintenance and usual and minor works for the existing heritage buildings as are acceptable to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, the owner shall:

1. Obtain final approval for the necessary by-law amendments required for the alterations to the properties at 771 Yonge Street, such amendments to have been enacted by City Council in connection with a Ontario Municipal Board Order and to have come into effect in a form and with content acceptable to City Council as determined by the Chief Planner, and the Executive Director, City Planning Division, in consultation with the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

2. Provide building permit drawings, including notes and specifications for the conservation and protective measures keyed to the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.a.2 above including a description of materials and finishes, to be prepared by the project

architect and a qualified heritage consultant to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

3. Provide a Letter of Credit, including provision for upwards indexing in a form and amount and from a bank satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services to secure all work included in the approved Conservation Plan, Heritage Lighting Plan, Landscape Plan, and Interpretation Plan.

4. Provide full documentation of the existing heritage property at 771 Yonge Street, including two (2) printed sets of archival quality 8" x 10" colour photographs with borders in a glossy or semi-gloss finish and one (1) digital set on a CD in tiff format and 600 dpi resolution keyed to a location map, elevations and measured drawings, and copies of all existing interior floor plans and original drawings as may be available, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

d. That prior to the release of the Letter of Credit required in Recommendation 1.c.3. above the owner shall:

1. Provide a letter of substantial completion prepared and signed by a qualified heritage consultant confirming that the required conservation work, required heritage lighting work, and the required interpretive work has been completed in accordance with the Conservation Plan, Lighting Plan, Landscape Plan, and Interpretation Plan and that an appropriate standard of conservation has been maintained, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

2. Provide replacement Heritage Easement Agreement photographs to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

2. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 771 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance: 771 Yonge Street (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 7 to the report (November 21, 2017) from the Acting Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division.

3. If there are no objections to the designation in accordance with Section 29(6) of 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.

4. If there are objections in accordance with Section 29(7) of the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council direct the City Clerk to refer the designation to the Conservation Review Board.

5. 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.

6. City Council authorize the entering into of a Heritage Easement Agreement under Section 37 of the Ontario Heritage Act with the owner of 771 Yonge Street for the property at 771 Yonge Street in a form and with content satisfactory to the City Solicitor and the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division.

7. City Council authorizes the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary bill in Council authorizing the entering into of a Heritage Easement Agreement for the property at 771 Yonge Street.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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The property at 771 Yonge Street was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now known as Heritage Register) by Toronto City Council on March 15, 1974.

In conjunction with this report, the listed property has been evaluated under provincial criteria and is proposed for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

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### **Development Proposal**

On February 19, 2016, the applicant submitted a Zoning Amendment Application for a new 49-storey (161.1 metres including a 7.0 metre mechanical penthouse) mixed-use building with retail uses on the ground floor and residential uses above. The heritage property was proposed to be integrated into the development as discussed in more detail below.

The rezoning application was subsequently appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board on January 19, 2017 due to Council's failure to make a decision within the timeline prescribed by the Planning Act.

On July 26, 2017, in conjunction with an appeal to the OMB of the application for Zoning By-law Amendment, a settlement offer was submitted to the City. The settlement offer revises the Zoning Amendment project scope for the subject properties to allow for the construction of a 25 storey mixed use building that will be located behind the listed three storey brick building at 771 Yonge Street which will be integrated into the project as part of the base of the development. There will be 512 sq. metres of commercial uses in the base buildings fronting on Yonge Street and 135 residential units on the upper floors. Details of the Conservation strategy developed in conjunction with the offer are described below.

## **Heritage Context**

The development parcel includes the listed heritage property at the southeast corner of Yonge Street and Asquith Avenue at 771 Yonge Street that is herein proposed for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Known historically as French's Hotel (1872), the building displays the scale, symmetry and gable roof that link its design to the style and type of commercial building identified with early Toronto. It is historically associated with the development and evolution of Yorkville from an independent municipality to an important city neighbourhood where the property at 771 Yonge contained a hotel for more than four decades. In the 20th century, it was the first location in Toronto of the dance studio of the famed Russian-born dancer, choreographer, director and teacher, Boris Volkoff. Contextually, French's Hotel contributes to the historical character of Yorkville as the setting of late 19th commercial and residential buildings, and it is historically linked to its surroundings on the corner of Yonge Street and Asquith Avenue where, to the northwest, it adjoins the contiguous row of surviving late-19th century storefronts between Cumberland Street and Yorkville Avenue, which are other recognized heritage properties.

This heritage property will be integrated into the development and is discussed in more detail below.

## **Adjacent Heritage Context**

South of the site, 765 Yonge Street is a listed 2-storey heritage building, "Albert Britnell Bookstore", constructed in 1928.

Across Yonge Street at the west side of Yonge Street between Cumberland Street and Yorkville Avenue a series of properties constituting an intact late 19th century block face has been designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. At the south side of the same block, the designated heritage properties at 826-834 Yonge Street (including 2 Cumberland Street) have been incorporated into a high rise mixed use building. The facades of the properties at the Yonge Street frontage will be retained and restored. At the north side of the same block face, another high rise project would similarly conserve the facades of the designated heritage properties at 836-850 Yonge Street and 1-9A Yorkville Avenue.

## **Provincial Framework**

### **Provincial Policy Statement and Planning Act**

The Planning Act and the associated Provincial Policy Statement guide development in the Province. The Act states that municipalities must have regard for matters of provincial interest. Section 2(d) specifically refers to "the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest."

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. Key objectives include: building strong communities;

wise use and management of resources; and protecting public health and safety. The Planning Act requires that City Council's decisions affecting land use planning matters "be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement.

Policy 2.6.1 of the PPS directs that "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved." Properties included on the City's Heritage Register are considered to be significant in this context. "Conserved" is defined in the PPS as "the identification, protection, use and/or management of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act."

Policy 2.6.3 of the PPS directs that "planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved."

## **Growth Plan**

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017) (Growth Plan) provides a strategic framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region including:

Policy 4.2.7(1) of the Growth Plan states that cultural heritage resources, which includes built heritage resources, will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities. Both the PPS and the Growth Plan outline that built heritage resources are generally located on a property that has been designated under Parts IV or V of the Ontario Heritage Act, or included on local, provincial and/or federal registers.

## **City of Toronto Official Plan**

On May 12, 2015 the Ontario Municipal Board approved Official Plan Amendment 199 to the City of Toronto Official Plan Heritage Policies. This Amendment includes 53 heritage policies. Many of these policies are directly relevant to the proposed development. Relevant policies include:

3.1.5.3 Heritage properties of cultural heritage value or interest, including Heritage Conservation Districts and archaeological sites that are publicly known will be protected by being designated under the Ontario Heritage Act and/or included on the Heritage Register.

3.1.5.4 Properties on the Heritage Register will be conserved and maintained consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as revised from time to time and as adopted by Council.

3.1.5.5 Proposed alterations, development, and/or public works on or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will ensure that the integrity of the heritage property's cultural heritage value and attributes will be retained, prior to work commencing on the property and to the satisfaction of the City. Where a Heritage Impact Assessment is

required in Schedule 3 of the Official Plan, it will describe and assess the potential impacts and mitigation strategies for the proposed alteration, development or public work.

3.1.5.6 The adaptive re-use of properties on the Heritage Register is encouraged for new uses permitted in the applicable Official Plan land use designation, consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

3.1.5.26 New construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and to mitigate visual and physical impact on it.

3.1.5.27 Where it is supported by the cultural heritage values and attributes of a property on the Heritage Register, the conservation of whole or substantial portions of buildings, structures and landscapes on those properties is desirable and encouraged. The retention of facades alone is discouraged.

3.1.5.28 The owner of a designated heritage property will be encouraged to enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement where the City considers additional protection beyond designation desirable due to the location, proposed alteration, and/or the nature of that property.

## **Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada**

The Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Standards and Guidelines) is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The General Standards (1-9) and the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12) apply to this project.

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/pages/standards-normes.aspx>

## **COMMENTS**

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### **Assessment of Heritage Impacts**

Heritage staff has reviewed the Heritage Impact Assessment submitted in support of the proposal prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects for conformity with the Planning Act, the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan and the City's Official Plan heritage policies and the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

### **Tower Design and Scale, Form, and Massing**

Though the development's impact upon the scale, form and massing of the heritage properties is greatly reduced by its 10 metre step back from the Yonge Street frontage, and further mitigated by the conservation strategy as outlined in the HIA, the proposed



tower will still have a visual impact on the scale, form, and massing relating to the perception of the heritage building. The HIA describes the strategy that the applicant proposes to employ in an effort to mitigate this impact. The placement of the proposed tower has been stepped back significantly from the Yonge Street frontage which is the primary view of the facades. The Asquith Avenue side wall will also benefit as the above step back from Yonge Street clears the property completely at the Asquith Avenue frontage to allow the heritage buildings to be experienced as three dimensional buildings from the public realm. In addition, the podium of the adjacent base building will reinforce the height and scale of the heritage building. The conservation strategy as outlined below will substantively mitigate further impacts.

The design of the proposed tower is consistent with the City's Heritage Policies 3.1.5.5 and 3.1.5.26 as the location, massing, and design of the tower will mitigate for the visual impact of the proposal.

## **Proposed Conservation Strategy**

### **Exterior Fabric Retention Strategy**

Over time, numerous alterations have removed much of the original fabric of the three storey brick heritage structure. It is estimated that slightly more than one half of the original fabric remains, and only the third storey of the building has original exposed brick on all four elevations. The roof and its structural members are not original and have been replaced following a fire in the early 1980s. The conservation strategy would retain all existing original heritage fabric.

To ensure that the front façade walls are retained during construction, the development will include the installation of a caisson wall for the subsurface parking garage so that it is setback approximately 10 metres from the Yonge Street front lot line and clears the footprint of the entire heritage property. This strategy will allow for substantial whole building conservation.

At the west elevation facing Yonge Street, the storefront level has been completely altered and no original fabric remains. The second and third stories contain original fabric which will be retained in situ and will be integrated into the three storey retail base that fronts on Yonge Street. The storefront and its interior have been heavily altered over time and the conservation strategy proposes that the storefront be restored based on the accepted criteria and standards for restoration work. The proposed restoration of the storefront will be sympathetic to the time period in which the building was conceived and the conservation plan has been prepared following the guidance of catalogues and pattern books from the period as well as precedents in the vicinity including the shop fronts at 836-850 Yonge Street and 1 Yorkville Avenue and also the shop front conservation of 826 - 834 Yonge Street (includes 2 Cumberland Street).

At the north elevation facing Asquith Avenue, the entire façade is intact save for two openings that have been infilled. This elevation will be retained in situ with punched windows that are currently concealed restored at the ground level. The façade will also include a storefront bay where the facade is nearest to the Yonge Street frontage. A corner column will be reinstated to demarcate the corner of the building visually and to

also break the storefront glazing at it turns the corner from Yonge Street to Asquith Avenue.

At the east or rear elevation of the heritage property, only the original third storey elevation walls remain. The first and second storey building walls have been removed previously to accommodate a two storey addition which has no heritage value. This addition extending eastwards along Asquith Avenue from the east elevation of the heritage property will be demolished with the third storey heritage wall being retained in situ. At the east elevation at the Asquith frontage (from the building edge), a 3 metre wall depth will be reconstructed from grade to meet the existing fabric at the third floor elevation. This strategy will provide an enhanced three dimensional perception of the building form as viewed from Asquith Avenue and within the new podium itself where it connects into the heritage property.

At the south elevation of the property, only the third storey elevation is exposed. The lower two floor elevations are remaining party walls between the heritage property and a two storey addition at the Yonge Street frontage. This addition contains no heritage value and will be demolished. A new base building will be constructed at this location just south of the heritage property. It is proposed that the existing third storey elevation will remain in situ while a 3.2 metre wall depth would be retained/and reconstructed from grade (from the building edge at Yonge Street) to meet the existing fabric at the third floor elevation in order to enhance perception of the heritage envelope and its three dimensional appearance both externally and internally viewed.

The roof structure as mentioned is not original. As such, it is proposed that the existing roof will be dismantled and reconstructed with the same form, slope and using high quality asphalt shingles in conformance with the Standards and Guidelines.

Overall, staff supports the proposed retention strategy and feel that it meets the intent of Policy 3.1.5.27 as the scale, form, and massing of the heritage structures will be conserved. This retention strategy is also aligned with Policy 3.1.5.4 and Standard 3 of the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (the Standards and Guidelines) as it minimizes the amount of intervention that the applicant will make to the historic place.

### **Conservation Strategy Details**

The applicant has proposed a comprehensive restoration program as a component of their mitigation strategy for the redevelopment proposal. Through the HIA, the condition of the heritage properties has been assessed, and the proposed restoration work has been identified. Façade restoration will be secured as a part of this proposal. The proposed Conservation Strategy in the HIA, submitted to HPS on November 15, 2017 includes the following work:

The storefront has been heavily altered over time and does not currently retain its architectural design integrity. There will be further investigations to determine if any traces and indications of the original shop front fabric exist. Notwithstanding further investigations, a preliminary shop front restoration scheme has been devised should investigations not furnish any additional information.

The shop front design will be sympathetic to the time period in which the building was constructed. The design illustrates a variety of design elements at the first storey and includes pilasters, brackets and bulkheads/storefront bases that will all utilize painted wood material. An entablature or upper storefront fascia will be installed and serves to differentiate the first level storefront from upper stories of the structure at the Yonge Street frontage and for one bay in depth along the Asquith Avenue frontage. The storefront facade will also include mullions and transom windows at the shop front display windows. The commercial space includes a recessed entrance at the Yonge Street façade.

The shop front design shown in this HIA should be considered preliminary at this stage until further investigations are performed, confirming the presence, or absence of original finishes behind existing non-original shop fronts.

At this stage, the plan will include the following work:

- 1) Facade retention during the construction work: drawings and specifications to be completed by a qualified structural engineer;
- 2) Masonry Cleaning and Restoration: painted brick facades will be have paint removed and cleaned where possible;
- 3) Reconstruct sympathetic roof in terms of form, slope and material while retaining and conserving detail such as corbelled brick and diagonal dentils and band courses present at the roofline during reconstruction of the roof;
- 4) Remove and replace all window units with new multi-lite sympathetic wood window units to match original profiles based on archival images if and where they exist. In absence of archival images/drawings, replacement units to be consistent with those observed on nearby comparable heritage buildings. Destructive investigations and available archival materials to inform the conservation of sill and window surrounds. Further details to be provided in a Conservation Plan.
- 4) Reinstatement two infilled "punched" windows at the Asquith Avenue frontage based upon historic archival information;
- 5) Cornice reinstatement using high quality pressed metal;
- 6) Rebuild chimney(s) based on archival information;
- 7) Dismantle existing storefront construction and reinstate restored storefront system using high quality wood materials and using a traditional colour palette as discussed above. Details of the proposed reinstated storefront, including any necessary changes due to Ontario Building Code requirements, to be included in future Conservation Plan.

### **New Adjacent Base Buildings**

Adjacent to the heritage property, a base building extends both eastward along Asquith Avenue and south along the Yonge Street frontage.

### **Yonge Street Elevation**

On the Yonge Street elevation, a sympathetic connection is proposed between the existing heritage building and the listed property at 765 Yonge Street. The contemporary podium addition uses complimentary materials, scale, massing and punched windows to achieve a sensitive transition between the new podium volume and the heritage property at 771 Yonge Street. Solid brick masonry surrounds are clearly contemporary and distinguishes the new building while relating to the heritage property.

### **Asquith Avenue Elevation**

The base building will extend eastward along Asquith Avenue from the heritage property and will borrow some of the characteristics of the adjacent heritage building such as punched windows, brick masonry, scale and coherent datums. A visual break between the two brick walls of the heritage building and the new podium will be established by a transparent connection which is stepped back from the sidewalk. This strategy distinguishes the separate volumes, enhanced by the third storey step back of the podium to enhance the prominence of the heritage property massing, which is one storey higher.

### **Adjacent Heritage Resources**

There are numerous individual heritage resources adjacent to the subject development site along Yonge Street.

The Heritage Impact Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development will not have a negative impact on these adjacent designated heritage properties. In fact, restoration of the façade at 771 Yonge Street based on archival documents will enhance the heritage fabric at this portion of Yonge Street.

### **Conservation Plan**

Prior to the introduction of the bills for such Zoning By-law Amendment for the proposed development at 771 Yonge Street, staff is recommending that the applicant be required to provide a detailed Conservation Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services that fully describes how the cultural heritage values of the property at 771 Yonge Street will be conserved.

### **Heritage Interpretation Plan**

Heritage interpretation enhances personal experiences, increases respect and understanding, and communicates the importance of our cultural heritage properties.

Prior to final Site Plan approval for the proposed development at 771 Yonge Street, staff is recommending that the applicant be required to provide a detailed Interpretation Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services that fully

describes how the cultural heritage values of the properties at 771 Yonge Street will be interpreted.

### **Heritage Lighting Plan**

Prior to final Site Plan approval for the proposed development, staff is recommending that the applicant be required to submit a Lighting Plan to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services. This plan will provide details of how the heritage property will be lit to enhance its heritage character as viewed from the public realm at night.

### **Landscape Plan**

Should Council approve the proposed conservation strategy, staff is recommending that the applicant be required to provide a final Landscape Plan that enhances the heritage character of the property to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services as a condition of final site plan approval.

### **Signage Plan**

Given the grade related commercial uses proposed for the development site, staff is recommending that the applicant also be required to submit a Signage Plan with sign guidelines for the commercial uses that will occur at the heritage property. This Signage Plan will guide future tenants and residents on the appropriate locations, sizes, and types of signs for the property.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Heritage Preservation Services staff has reviewed the proposed development for the heritage property at 771 Yonge Street and is satisfied the proposal meets the intent of the Planning Act, the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan and the City of Toronto's Official Plan heritage policies in conjunction with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada. Overall, staff supports the proposed retention strategy and feel that it meets the intent of Policy 3.1.5.27 as the scale, form, and massing of the heritage structure will be conserved. This retention strategy is also aligned with Policy 3.1.5.4 and Standard 3 of the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (the Standards and Guidelines) as it minimizes the amount of intervention that the applicant will make to the historic place.

Staff have completed the attached Research and Evaluation Report (Attachment 6) for the property at 771 Yonge Street and determined that it meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act under all three categories of design, associative and contextual values.

The Statement of Significance (Attachment 5) for 771 Yonge Street 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 provision and served on the Ontario Heritage Trust according to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## **CONTACT**

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E-mail: [paul.maka@toronto.ca](mailto:paul.maka@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

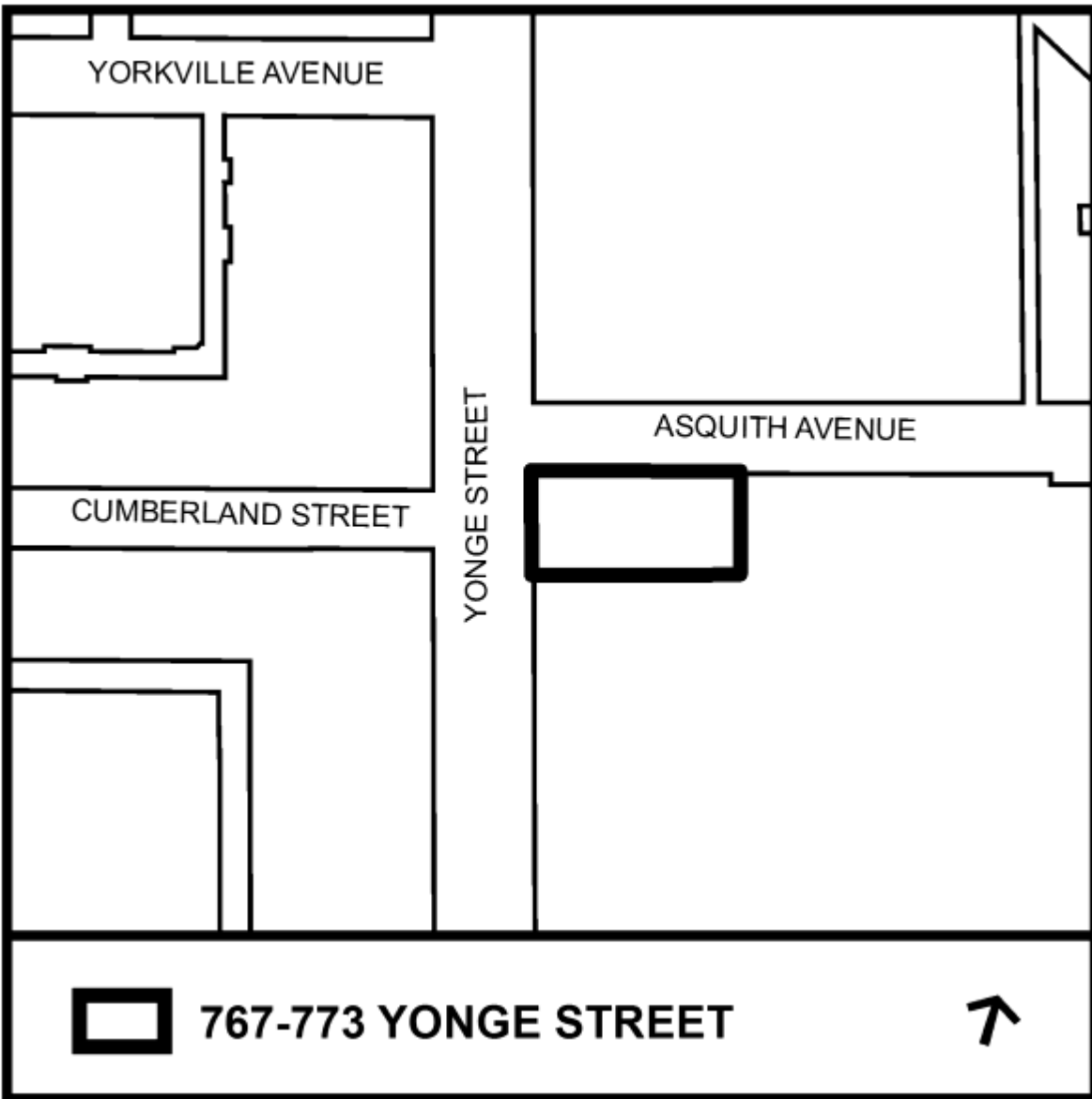
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Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP  
Acting Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 – Location Plan  
Attachment 2 – Photographs  
Attachment 3 – Proposal Drawings  
Attachment 4 – Settlement Offer  
Attachment 5 - Statement of Significance  
Attachment 6 - Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report



Location Map showing the development site at 767 - 773 Yonge Street, includes 771 Yonge Street



Looking southeast towards north elevation at Asquith Avenue and west elevation at Yonge Street



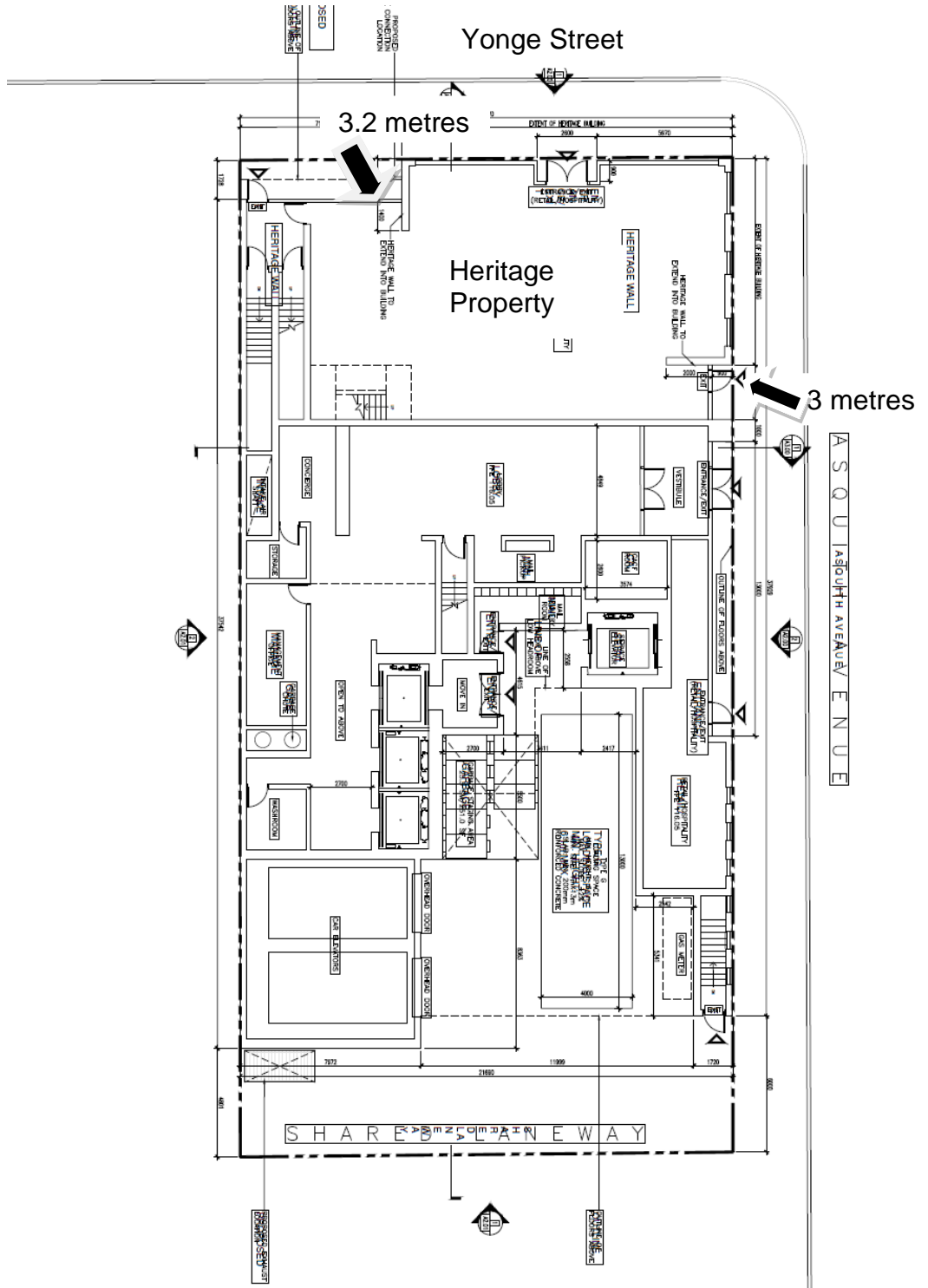
PHOTOS  
771 Yonge Street



South Elevation



East Elevation



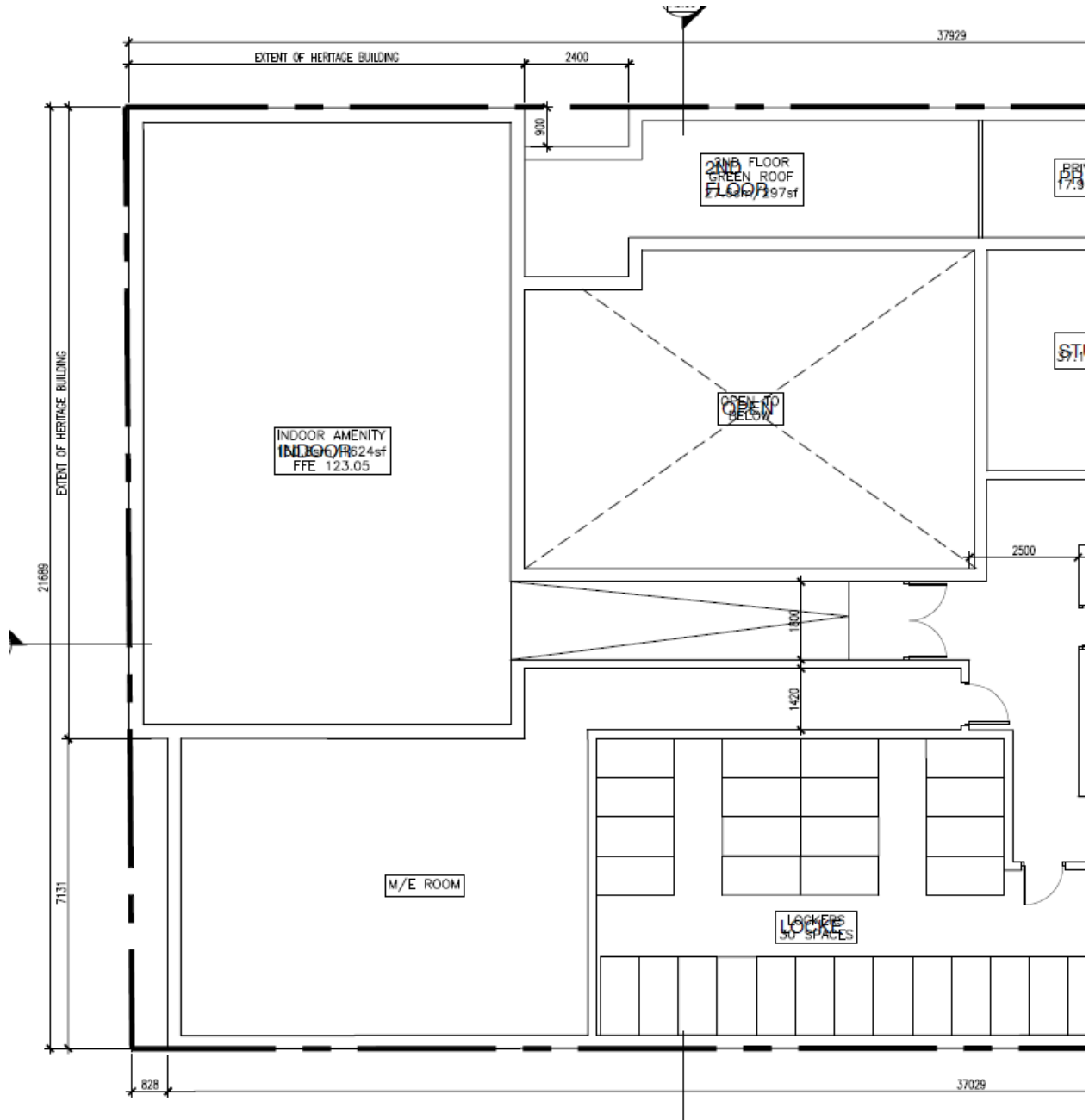
Site Plan/Ground Level Plan

Strategy to retain three dimensional form:

East Elevation: Section of wall rebuilt ~3 metres (from edge of building) in length.

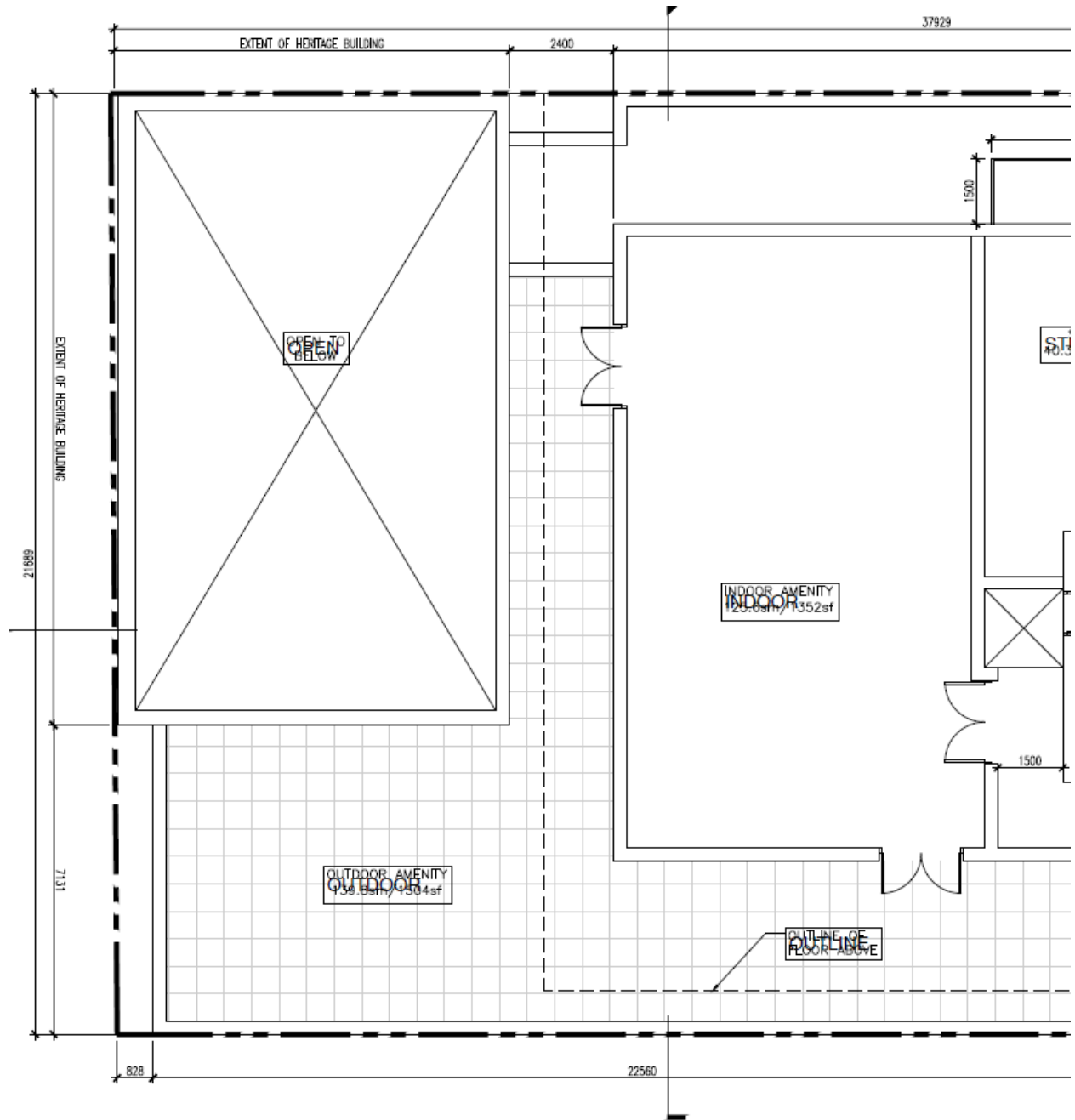
South Elevation: Section of wall retained and rebuilt ~3.2 metres (from building edge) in length

PROPOSAL DRAWINGS  
771 Yonge Street



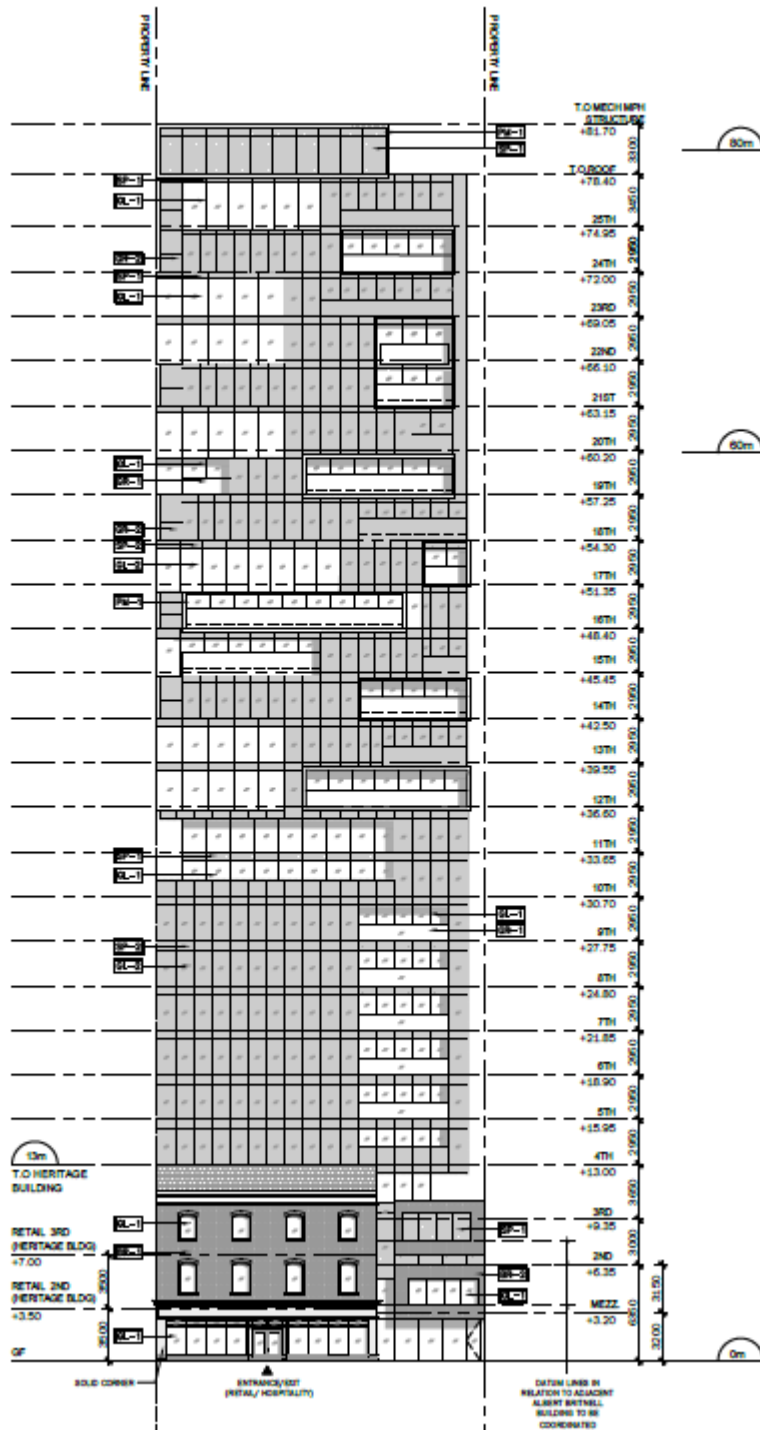
Second Floor Plan - partial (Shows heritage property)

PROPOSAL DRAWINGS  
771 Yonge Street



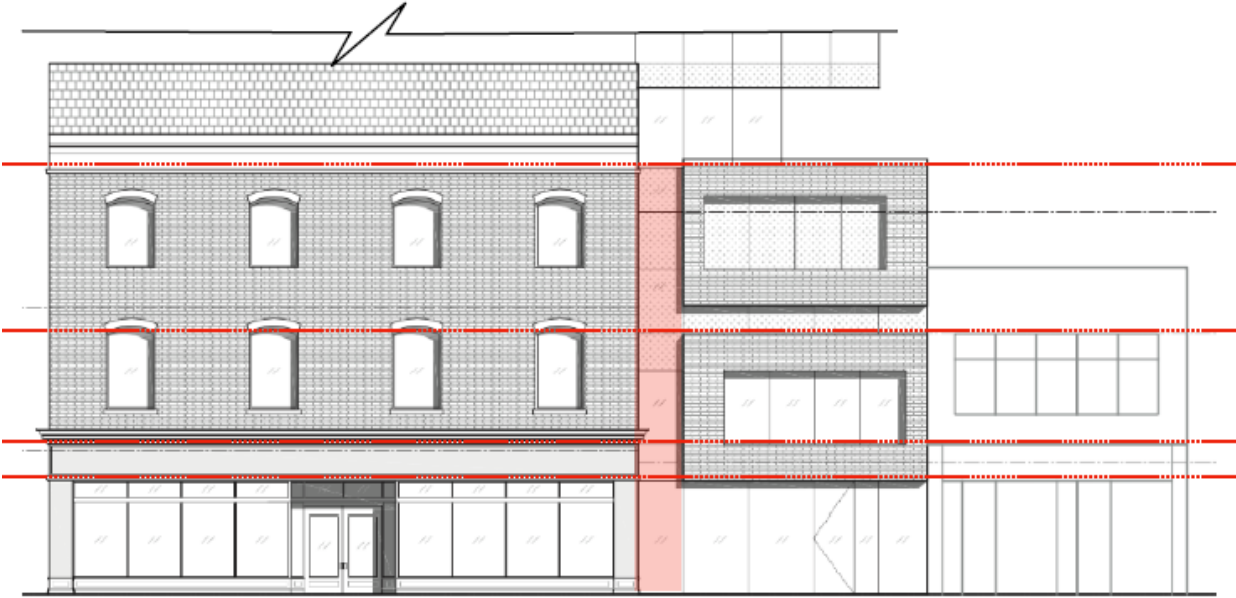
Third Floor Plan - partial (shows heritage property)

PROPOSAL DRAWINGS  
771 Yonge Street



Proposed Yonge Street/West Elevation

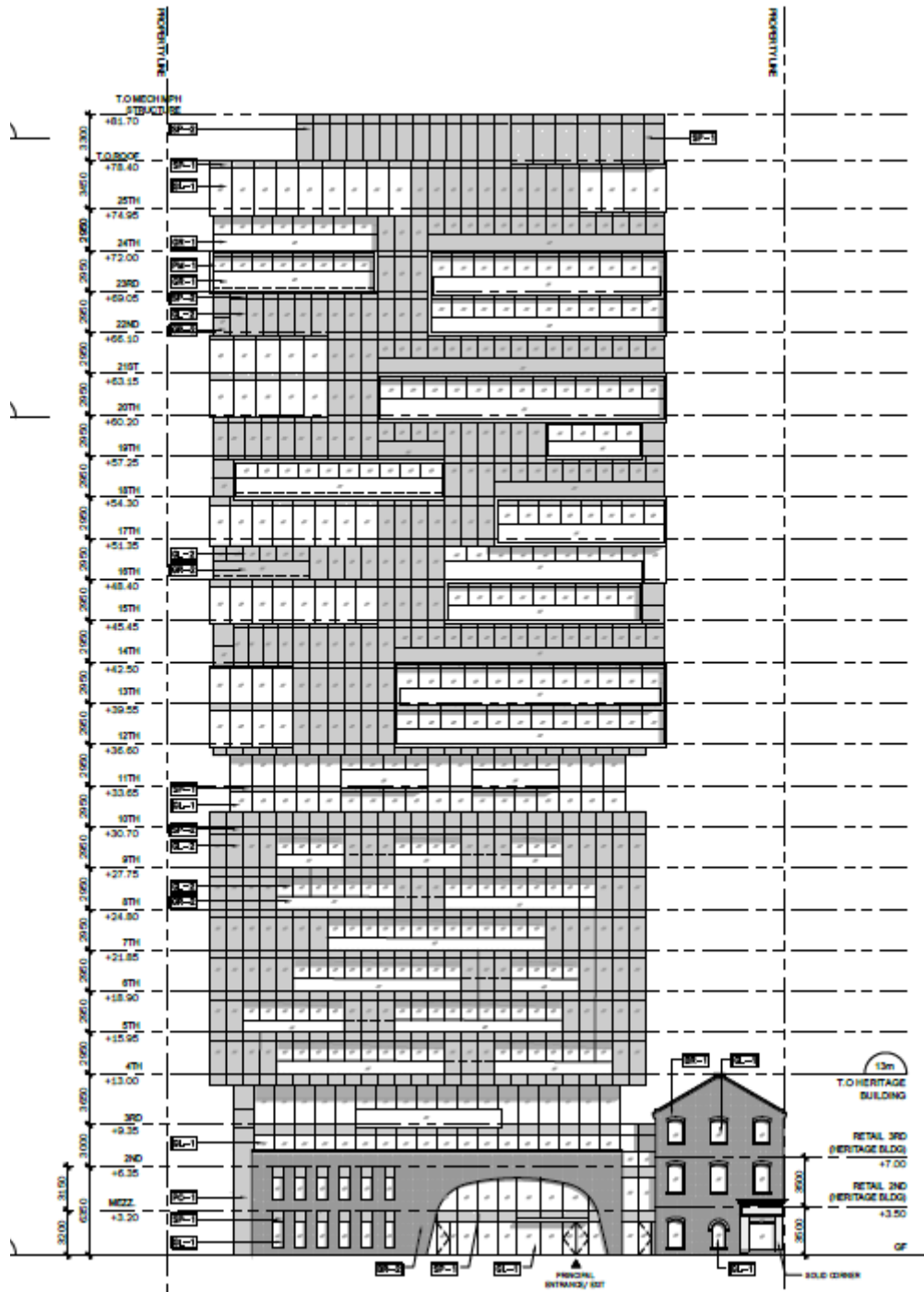
PROPOSAL DRAWINGS  
771 Yonge Street



*OPTION 2A- Yonge Street elevation. The 3 storey mercantile storefront volume is reproduced with the new podium in between the Langston House and the Albert Britnell building.*

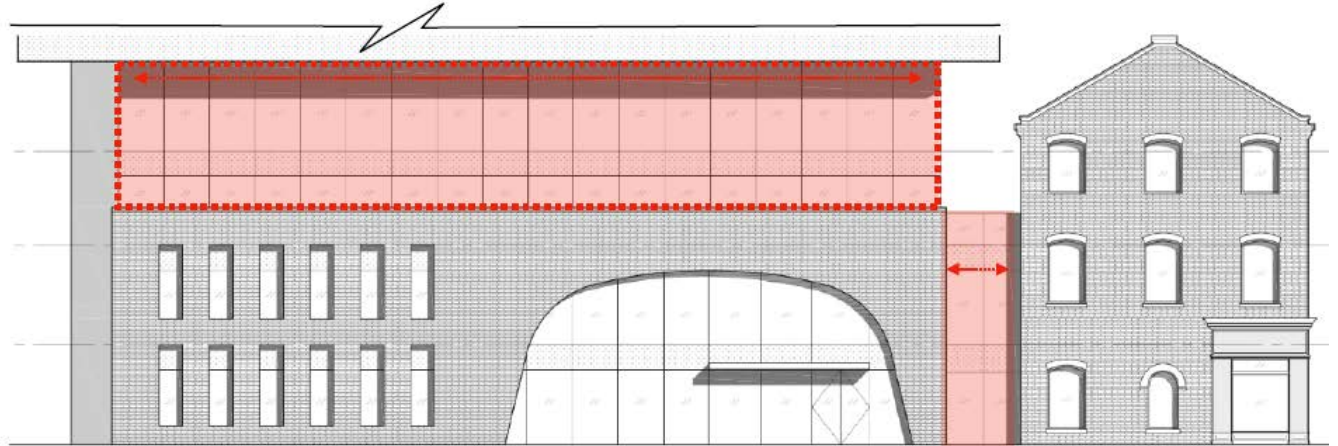
Proposed new base building at Yonge Street frontage

PROPOSAL DRAWINGS  
771 Yonge Street



Proposed Asquith Avenue /North Elevation

PROPOSAL DRAWINGS  
771 Yonge Street



*OPTION 1B- Asquith Avenue Elevation. There is a clear relationship between the new volume on the left, and the heritage building to the right. At the same time, the glazed transitions are setback to allow for both volumes to be distinguished from each other in relation to the street wall which contains various architecture style's from various periods.*

Proposed new base building along Asquith Avenue frontage



PROPOSAL DRAWINGS  
771 Yonge Street



Rendering of proposal

\* note design of adjacent base building on Asquith Avenue has been modified from shown



July 26, 2017

Our File No.: 00-1768

Legal Services, City of Toronto  
Metro Hall  
55 John Street, 26<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto ON, M5V 3C6

**Attention: Ms. Sharon Haniford (City Solicitor)**

Dear Ms. Haniford:

**Re: "WITH PREJUDICE" OFFER TO SETTLE APPEAL of the Application for Zoning By-law Amendment relating to the properties municipally known as 767-773 YONGE STREET (the "Site"), in the City of Toronto**

**City File No.: 16 118667 STE 27 OZ**

As you are aware, we are the solicitors for Menkes Residence Ltd., the beneficial owners of the properties municipally known as 767-773 Yonge Street (the "Site") in the City of Toronto. The Site is within the area of the City of Toronto commonly referred to as "Yonge & Bloor", which Site is more specifically located on the south-east corner of Yonge Street and Asquith Avenue, one block north of Bloor Street East. The Site is currently occupied by two low rise buildings, one of which, the 2-storey building at 767 Yonge Street, is intended to be demolished with the 3-storey building on the northern portion having its façade incorporated into the proposed mixed use development. The Site has frontages of 21.7 metres along Yonge Street and 44 metres along Asquith Avenue, with a total land area of 954.4 m<sup>2</sup>.

In the spirit of continued cooperation, our client has re-examined the Site and retained a new architect who has completely changed the direction of the design, which design is focused on both increasing the size of all units with a built form that in essence, respects the existing "as of right" zoning, with a modest addition above the "as of right" zoning envelope. The revised design not only offers "higher end" large luxury units, it is a design that includes a concept of stacked "villas" in the sky with sculptured elements and "bump outs" along all facades of the reduced built form. Along with the added articulation at all levels, the overall building height has been reduced by 84.35 metres from 48 storeys (166.05 metres) to 26 storeys (81.7 metres). The proposed building setbacks comply with the existing zoning setback requirements in the "as of right" zoning by-law, which "as of right" height is 61 metres. For the modest portion of the building above 61 metres, rising to 78.4 metres (with a 3.3 metre mechanical above), there are additional setbacks for a total of 2.5 metres along the south portion, in excess of the 0

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The individual lawyers named above practice in association with Adam J. Brown Professional Corporation

## SETTLEMENT OFFER 771 Yonge Street

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metre setback permitted for the “as of right” 61 metre height.

Our client is pleased to formally submit this “with prejudice” settlement offer, which proposal we are confident not only fully responds to City Staff’s comments to date, but which is a redesign which demonstrates the creative approach this applicant has taken to introducing a completely new design which addresses any prior concerns about setbacks to adjacent properties.

The following highlights the significant revisions and reductions to the original proposal:

1. The total height of the building including mechanical has decreased by 84.35 metres from the original height of 166.05 metres to 81.7 metres which height is now significantly lower than virtually every new tower approved in the immediate area, and which height is also significantly lower than the 149 metre office building located to the south of the subject site;
2. The change in the design, height and overall gross floor area has resulted in a decrease in the unit count from 257 to 135;
3. The tower setback to the south has been reduced from 4.91 metres to 1 metre up to 57.25 metres in height (in full compliance with existing zoning standards), which tower is then setback 2.5 metres to the south for the remaining 21.15 metres portion with the exception of the mechanical shaft and garbage chute which will continue to be setback 1 metre, which setback again complies with in force zoning for the Site;
4. The 1.5 metres continuous tower setback to the north has been revised in a manner that reflects the articulating façade which now has varied northerly setbacks from 0 to 1.5 metres. The east setback has been reduced from 3.8 to 2.8metres and the west setback has been maintained to respect Heritage Staff’s request for a 10 metres setback from the façade of the existing heritage building at 771 Yonge Street;
5. The amount of indoor residential amenity space per unit decrease from 2.54 m<sup>2</sup> per unit to 2.0 m<sup>2</sup> per unit which complies with in force zoning for the Site;
6. The amount of outdoor residential amenity space has increased from 0.97 m<sup>2</sup> per unit to 1.34 m<sup>2</sup> per unit;
7. The number of parking spaces per unit has increased from 0.15 to 0.27 spaces per unit (including car share);
8. The unique design results in a floorplate that varies in size from 524 to 558.8 m<sup>2</sup>, which floorplate is considerably smaller than the 750 m<sup>2</sup> floorplate commonly requested by City Staff;

SETTLEMENT OFFER  
771 Yonge Street

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9. As a result of the above-noted revisions, the total proposed gross floor area has been reduced from 18,964 m<sup>2</sup> to 13,618 m<sup>2</sup> which is comprised of an increase to the non-residential GFA from 320 m<sup>2</sup> to 512 m<sup>2</sup> and a decrease to the residential GFA from 18,644 m<sup>2</sup> to 13,032 m<sup>2</sup>; and
10. The resulting total combined FSI has decreased from 19.9 to 14.27 essentially removing a quarter of the building mass.

In light of the foregoing, we confirm that our client is committed to proceeding to a settlement hearing in support of the revised architectural plans attached hereto, which settlement proposal is conditional on Council's approval of same at its Council Meeting scheduled to commence October 2, 2017. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned or Mr. Tim Williams, a Planner in our office.

Yours very truly,



Adam J. Brown

Encls.

Cc: Councillor Kristyn Wong Tam (w/o attachments)  
Mr. Oren Tamir, Senior Planner, Community Planner (with 5 copies of all attachments and 1 digital copy)  
Mr. Jude Tersigni, Menkes Residences Ltd. (w/o attachments)  
Mr. Jason Park, Devine Park LLP (with attachments)

The property at 771 Yonge Street is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation, under all three categories of design, associative and contextual value.

#### Description

Located on the southeast corner of Asquith Avenue, the property at 771 Yonge Street contains a three-storey commercial building that, according to archival records, was constructed in 1872 for property owner Elizabeth French and operated as a hotel by her husband, Joseph French. Following his death, a series of hostelries occupied the property, including the Langston House and the CPR Hotel. Among the occupants in the 20th century was Boris Volkoff's first dance studio in Toronto. The property at 771 Yonge Street was included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Property (now known as the Heritage Register) in 1984.

#### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The property at 771 Yonge Street has cultural heritage value for its design as an important surviving example in Yorkville of a late 1800s commercial building with the symmetry and gable roof retained from the Georgian style linked to first-generation commercial edifices in Toronto. Its late-19th century vintage is apparent in the scale and elaborate corbelled brickwork along the Yonge Street elevation.

French's Hotel is valued for its historical association with the Village of Yorkville (1853-1883), which was an independent municipality prior to its annexation by the City of Toronto. The subject building was part of the commercial district along Yonge Street that served the brickyards, breweries and related industries that formed the basis of the community. As a hotel in operation for more than 40 years, French's Hotel was one of a selection of hostelries located near the key intersection of Yonge and Bloor streets where a tollgate once adjoined the boundary between Toronto and Yorkville.

The property at 771 Yonge Street is also valued as the location of the first dance studio in Toronto opened by the famed Russian-born dancer, choreographer, director and teacher, Boris Volkoff (1900-1974), who was revered as the "father of Canadian ballet." With premises at 771 Yonge from 1930 to 1945 and while training innumerable dancers, Volkoff founded the Volkoff Canadian Ballet as the forerunner to a professional ballet company in Canada, and worked on co-productions with the Toronto Opera Company (forerunner of today's Canadian Opera Company).

Contextually, French's Hotel contributes to the character of Yonge Street, north of Bloor Street, where it reflects the evolution of the area in the late 19th century as it evolved from an incorporated village to a city neighbourhood along the important corridor known as Toronto's "Main Street." French's Hotel is also historically, visually and physically linked to its surrounding on Yonge Street where it anchors the southeast corner of Asquith Avenue and, with the contiguous row of late-19th century commercial buildings

on the west side of the street between Cumberland Street and Yorkville Avenue, marks the east entry into the commercial centre of the former Village of Yorkville.

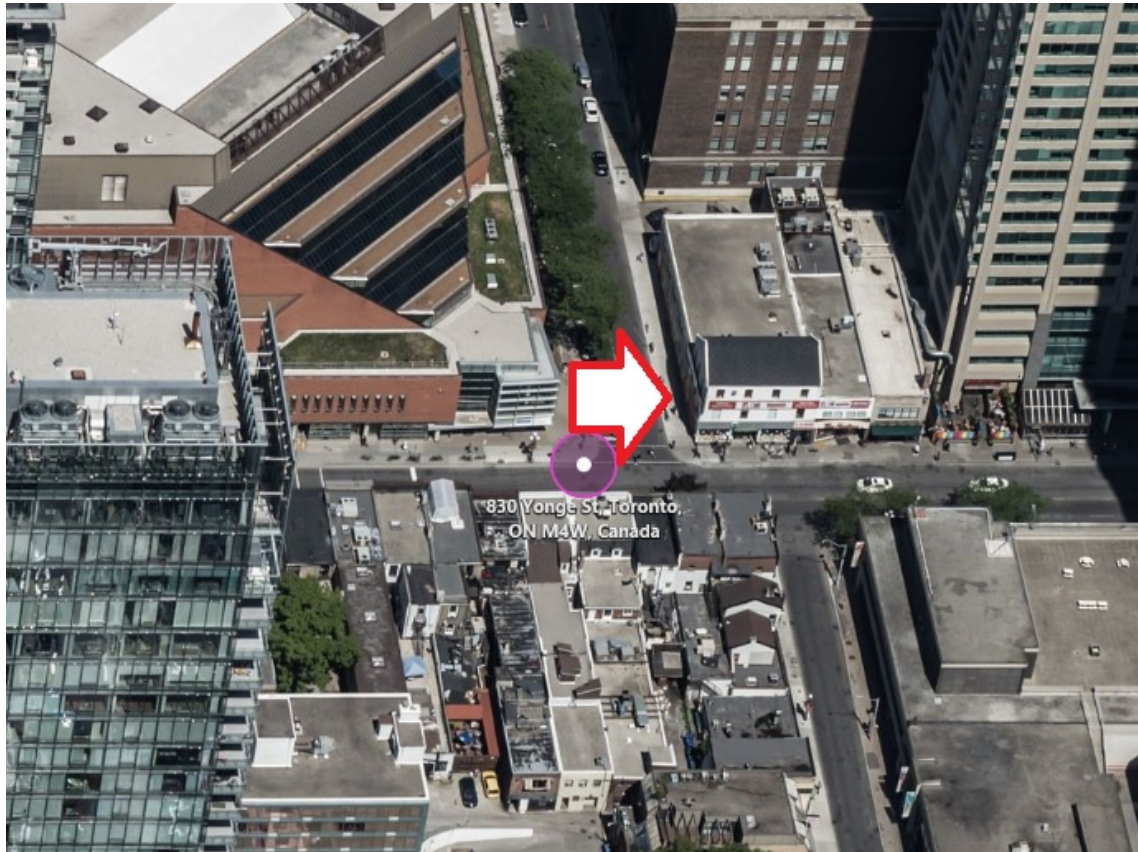
### Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the commercial building at 771 Yonge Street are:

- The placement, setback and orientation of the building on the southeast corner of Yonge Street and Asquith Avenue
- The scale, form and massing of the three-storey building with the rectangular-shaped plan
- The gable roof with the parapets with brackets (north and south) and, along the west end, the corbelled brickwork with the dentils and the band courses (the brick end chimneys have been removed)
- The materials, with the brick cladding and the brick and stone detailing (the red brickwork has been painted)
- The principal (west) elevation where, above the first-floor storefront (which has been altered) the symmetrically-arranged segmental-arched window openings with the stone sills and the brick flat arches
- The north side elevation on Asquith Avenue, with the symmetrically-placed segmental-arched window openings in the upper stories with the brick and stone detailing (on the north and south elevations, the window openings in the attic level have been bricked in)

Note: the south side elevation adjoins the neighbouring building. The rear (east) wall and the two-storey east wings are not identified as heritage attributes.

HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT



FRENCH'S HOTEL  
771 YONGE STREET, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

November 2017

1. DESCRIPTION



Cover: aerial photograph showing the property at 771 Yonge Street, which is aligned with north on the left ([www.bing.com/maps](http://www.bing.com/maps)); above, current photograph, 2017 (Heritage Preservation Services)

771 Yonge Street: French’s Hotel	
ADDRESS	771 Yonge Street (southeast corner of Asquith Avenue)
WARD	Ward 27 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Concession 2 from the Bay, part Lot 20; Plan 331, Part Lots "BD and E"
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Yonge Street
HISTORICAL NAME	French's Hotel
CONSTRUCTION DATE	Ca. 1872
ORIGINAL OWNER	Elizabeth French
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial (hotel)
CURRENT USE*	Commercial * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick cladding with brick and stone detailing
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	See Section 2
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See Section 2
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative and Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Inclusion on City of Toronto's Heritage Register
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	November 2017



## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 771 Yonge Street, 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
1796	Following the founding of York (Toronto) in 1793, George Playter receives the patent for Lot 20 in the Second Concession from the Bay (located on the east side of Yonge Street, north of present-day Bloor Street); Yonge Street is surveyed north of Bloor as the northern route through York County (Image 2a)
1817	Eli Playter is granted the west section of Lot 20, which he begins subdividing and selling the next year
1832	John Severn acquires land in Lot 20, where he opens a brewery that is operated by his sons, Henry and George, in the mid-19th century
1851	Browne's Map of York Township shows the development to date of the future Yorkville community on Yonge Street north of present-day Bloor Street (Image 2b)
1853	The Village of Yorkville is incorporated, with John Severn elected as one of its first councillors (the street pattern of the community is shown on the 1878 York County Atlas comprising Image 2d)
1869 Nov	Henry Severn transfers Lots "BD" and E on the southeast corner of Yonge Street and present-day Asquith Avenue to his sister, Elizabeth Severn, who marries John F. Pannell the following year
1870	Elizabeth Seaborne, an English emigrant and three-time widow, acquires Lot E and marries Joseph French, a Toronto innkeeper, the next year (1871)
1871 June	Joseph French is listed in the Yorkville tax assessment roll as the "owner" of the subject property on Yonge Street, which he rents to a harness maker and blacksmith (with a total assessed value of \$1300)
1872 Oct	Elizabeth French and Elizabeth Pannell register Plan 331 (Image 3a), consisting of Lots "BD" and E on the southeast corner of Yonge and Jarvis (Asquith) streets (following her move to the United States, Pannell sells Lot BD in 1886)
1873 May	According to Yorkville's tax assessment rolls, Joseph French owns and operates a hotel on Yonge Street (the assessed value of French's property rises to \$4400)
1875 to 1882	Joseph French is listed in the City Directories as the proprietor of "French's Hotel" at 30 Yonge Street in Yorkville; during this time, the building is illustrated in a bird's eye view of Toronto (Image 2c)
1883 Feb	The City of Toronto annexes Yorkville, and Elizabeth French, widow, leases Lot E to James Langston, who is recorded as a hotel keeper at 741 Yonge when the tax assessment rolls are compiled for St. Paul's Ward
1884	Goad's Atlas illustrates the subject building at "741 Yonge Street" (Image

	2e)
1890	Elizabeth French leases Lot E to James Scanlon, who operates the CPR Hotel on the corner of present-day Yonge and Asquith until the World War I era according to the City Directories
1890	The update to Goad's Atlas shows the subject building numbered 771 and 773 Yonge (Image 2f)
1921	Elizabeth French's son and executor, Joseph Tye French, sells the subject property to George and Henry Arnold who, as Arnold Brothers Limited, operate a grocery store in this location
1930	Russian dancer and choreographer, Boris Volkoff, opens his first Toronto studio in the subject building where a grocery business continues to occupy the first (ground) floor according to the City Directories (Image 3c)
1944	Abraham Merkur acquires the subject property, which is retained by members of his family until 1992 when it is transferred to a numbered Ontario company <sup>1</sup>
1950s & 1960s	The subject property is occupied by the Bell Telephone Company of Canada, which operates a training centre on the premises; an archival photograph shows the building during this period (Image 3b)
1970s	A branch of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) occupies part of the property at 771-773 Yonge Street (Image 4a)
1984	The property at 771 Yonge Street is listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now known as the Heritage Register) as the "Langston House, ca. 1883" (Image 4b)
1990s	The building is identified as 771-773 Yonge in the City Directories, with a branch of Mark's Work Warehouse on the first floor and the Toronto School of Business in the upper stories (Image 4c)
2016	The property at 771 Yonge Street is included in the Historic Yonge Street Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study Area <sup>2</sup>

## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Yorkville:

The property at 771 Yonge Street is located in Yorkville, which originated as an independent community prior to becoming the first municipality annexed by the City of Toronto in 1883. Nearly a century earlier (1793) when Toronto was founded as the Town of York, the area between present-day Bloor Street and Eglinton Avenue was subdivided into 100-acre farm lots that were accessed along concession lines and side roads. Yonge Street was surveyed in 1796 as the main route from York to the northern hinterland, although portions of the road remained impassible for many years. An inn (the future Red Lion) was established on Yonge, north of the first concession line (Bloor) in the early 19th century and later became a popular hostelry for travellers

<sup>1</sup> This company remains on the tax assessment rolls as the owner in 2017

<sup>2</sup> While the HCD Study Area extended north to Davenport Road (thereby including Yorkville), when the HCD Plan was adopted in 2016, the north boundary of the proposed District was moved south of Bloor Street

passing through a toll gate near the intersection.<sup>3</sup> On the northwest corner of Yonge and Bloor, York's first non-denominational cemetery opened in 1826 as the York General Burying Ground (commonly known as Potter's Field, it was marked on Cane's map of 1842<sup>4</sup>). However, by the 1830s the brick yards and breweries were operating in the ravine and along the watercourse that crossed Yonge Street north of Bloor, including the enterprises headed by Joseph Bloor and John Severn. Bloor and Sheriff William Botsford Jarvis of the "neighbouring Rosedale" estate are credited with acquiring and subdividing the adjacent lands in a village plan to facilitate housing, shops and services.

By the mid-19th century, the steady development of the hamlet on Toronto's northern border was facilitated by an omnibus running directly from the Red Lion to Toronto's St. Lawrence Market (Image 3). Incorporated as the Village of Yorkville in 1853, the community's official boundaries were set at present-day Bloor Street, Sherbourne Street, Walker Avenue and a line near Bedford Road (Image 4).<sup>5</sup> Yorkville's population doubled between 1851 and 1861 and, during the latter year the introduction of the first horse-drawn street railway offered more reliable access. Yorkville boasted 5000 residents in 1881, two years prior to its annexation by the neighbouring City of Toronto.<sup>6</sup>

During the 20th century as a Toronto neighbourhood, Yorkville evolved from a stable residential community to a primary cultural and commercial destination in the city. The widening of Bloor Street east and west of Yonge Street by 1929 necessitated the removal of the residential and commercial buildings along the route and their replacement by large-scale developments occupied by insurance companies and medical practitioners. This activity drew small-scale proprietors into the Yorkville neighbourhood where much of the residential building stock was converted to commercial uses. The decline of the area after World War II made it an affordable enclave for artists. In the 1960s (when the construction of the subway line along Bloor Street resulted in further redevelopment), Yorkville was a beacon for Toronto's music scene and "hippie culture". The following decade witnessed the community's transformation into a high-end shopping destination, supported by the conversion of remaining residential buildings into shops or their replacement by low-scale mixed use developments that included York Square and Hazelton Lanes. In the 1990s, part of Yorkville was designated as one of Toronto's first heritage conservation districts. Additional properties were recognized on the City's heritage register, including Fire Hall No. 10 (1889, and incorporating the tower from the 1876 village fire hall and the coat-of-arms from the 1860 town hall), which was associated with the 19th century Village of Yorkville, as well as the property at 771 Yonge Street on the corner of present-day Asquith Avenue.

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3 Archival records indicate this hotel was located midway between present-day Bloor Street West and Asquith Avenue

4 Not appended, this map is available at <http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.ca/p/index-of-maps.html>

5 As shown on historical maps and atlases, Yorkville's boundaries encompassed parts of today's South Rosedale and the East Annex

6 With Yorkville's annexation as St. Paul's Ward, two streets required new names, with Sydenham becoming Cumberland Street and William renamed Yorkville Avenue. They adjoin the block where the subject property is found and remain primary commercial streets in the Yorkville neighbourhood

The historical maps and atlases and other images found in Section 6 below trace the development of Yorkville and the subject property at 771 Yonge Street.

#### 771 Yonge Street:

The subject property on the southeast corner of Yonge Street and present-day Asquith Avenue is situated on part of Township Lot 20 in Concession 2 from the Bay, which was granted to George Player in 1796. George's son, Eli, received the west portion of this allotment in 1817, which he immediately began subdividing and selling. In 1832, two years after his arrival in York, John Severn (1808-1880) purchased part of Lot 20 where he established a successful brewery on the creek (afterward Severn Creek) that meandered through the Rosedale valley before crossing Yonge Street north of the subject property. Walton's Directory of 1837 records that "Yonge Street Road, from the Toll Gate (at present-day Bloor Street) to Montgomery's Tavern (north of Eglinton)" was populated by approximately 50 "householder inhabitants," among them "John Severin" [sic] and three members of the French family.

Archival sources indicate that, during the 1850s and 1860s, John Severn's business was operated by his sons, Henry and George. In 1869, Henry Severn granted two allotments on the east side of Yonge Street to his sister, Elizabeth, who married John F. Pannell the next year.<sup>7</sup> She sold one of her parcels to English emigrant Elizabeth Seaborne (1831-1890), who married Joseph French (1843-1882) in 1871. At that time, Joseph French was the innkeeper of the York Hotel on the southeast corner of Yonge and Bloor streets, adjoining the City of Toronto's boundary with Yorkville. The tax assessment rolls signed in June 1871 indicate that French's Yorkville property was tenanted to a harness maker and a blacksmith. Elizabeth French and Elizabeth Pannell registered the subdivision of their two lots under Plan 331 in November 1872, with French identified on Lot E on the southeast corner of present-day Yonge Street and Asquith Avenue (Image 3a).<sup>8</sup> According to the next tax assessment roll recorded in May 1873, Joseph French operated an inn on the site, which was afterward identified in the City Directory as "French's Hotel" at 30 Yonge Street in Yorkville.<sup>9</sup> It stood as one of only four hotels on Yonge Street in the community at that time.<sup>10</sup> By the early 1880s, part of French's building contained a butcher shop.

Joseph French remained the innkeeper until his death in December 1882, after which his widow leased the property to George Severn. A year later (1883) when Yorkville was annexed by the City of Toronto, the subject property was listed as 741 Yonge Street where James Langston ran a hotel as the lessee of Elizabeth French. George

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<sup>7</sup> The cross-street now known as Asquith Avenue originated as Jarvis Street and, following the annexation of Yorkville, was changed to Bismarck

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth Pannell's allotment was identified on the Plan as "Lot BD," which she sold to John Scully in 1886 following her relocation to St. Paul, Minnesota. This property was transferred to a series of owners until 1909 when it was acquired by the Dovercourt Land Building and Savings Company, which relinquished it to Abraham Merkur in 1944. It is the location of the two-storey commercial building at 769 Yonge, adjoining the south end of the subject building, which is not part of this report

<sup>9</sup> The family resided in a house at the rear (east) of the property with frontage on Jarvis Street (afterward named Bismarck Street and present-day Asquith Avenue)

<sup>10</sup> In 1875 Thomas Holmes operated a hotel at 16-20 Yonge, south of French's establishment, while John Kemp and Robert Wood's enterprise was at 64-66 Yonge Street to the north

Arnold briefly oversaw this establishment, before James Scanlon operated the CPR Hotel in this location between 1888 and 1915.

In 1921, Joseph Tye French sold his mother's property to George and Henry Arnold, the sons of her former leaseholder, as the location of a grocery store that was afterward known as Arnold Brothers Limited. This business was succeeded in the mid 1930s by Stop and Shop Limited, grocers and butchers, which also owned the neighbouring property to the south with a separate address of 769 Yonge Street.<sup>11</sup> During World War II, the properties at 769 and 771 Yonge were acquired by Abraham Merkur, whose family retained them until 1992.

In 1930, Boris Volkoff (1900-1974), the Russian-born dancer, choreographer, teacher and director, opened his first dance school at 771 Yonge Street. Born Boris Baskakoff, Volkoff trained as a dancer and choreographer with a branch of the Bolshoi Ballet before embarking on international tours that included North America. Volkoff moved to Toronto in 1929 after accepting a contract at the Uptown Theatre to direct and appear in the musical acts between movie showings. The next year, he opened the Boris Volkoff School of Dance at 771 Yonge Street as "the first dance school to teach ballet exclusively to both boys and girls."<sup>12</sup> In this location, Volkoff trained dancers for a special presentation at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin and worked on co-productions with the Toronto Opera Company (forerunner to the Canadian Opera Company). The formation of the Volkoff Canadian Ballet in 1939 was the "first step towards a dream of having a professional ballet company in Canada", and the recitals he presented at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Eaton Auditorium, Massey Hall and other famous venues were designed "to introduce the versatility of the talent including dancers, musicians, costumers and set designers."<sup>13</sup> Volkoff continued to teach thousands of dancers, many of whom turned professional, and opened his studio at 771 Yonge Street to visiting ballet troupes and musical companies until 1945.<sup>14</sup> A Heritage Toronto plaque at 771 Yonge commemorates Boris Volkoff and his contribution to the cultural history of Toronto.

In the late 20th century, the property at 771 Yonge Street was occupied by a Bell Telephone Company training centre, as well as prominent retailers including Mark's Work Warehouse and Grand and Toy. 771 Yonge Street was listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Inventory (now known as the Heritage Register) in 1984. In 2015 the subject property was included in the Historic Yonge Street Heritage Conservation District Study Area.<sup>15</sup>

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11 See Footnote 8

12 Boris Volkoff Collection, Toronto Public Library, Box 1, Biographies

13 Ibid. Volkoff's best-known pupil was Canadian ballerina Melissa Hayden, who spent the majority of her career as a soloist with Balanchine's famed New York City Ballet

14 Relocating to the commercial building at 780 Yonge Street, south of Bloor (which is no longer extant), Volkoff continued his innovative work in Toronto with famed ice-ballets for the Toronto Skating Club's annual carnival, the organization of the Canadian Ballet Festivals, the presentation of the original ballet, "The Red Ear of Corn" (1948), and the provision of studio space for the newly formed National Ballet of Canada (1951)

15 When the HCD Plan was adopted, the north boundary was moved south of Yonge Street, excluding Yorkville and the property at 771 Yonge

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Current photographs of the property at 771 Yonge Street are found on the cover and in Sections 2 and 6 of this report. The site contains a three-storey commercial building that originally served as a hotel. In its design, it resembles the typical commercial and residential buildings associated with Toronto in the early 1800s with the extended symmetrically-organized principal (west) elevation and the gable roof. However, its scale and the detailed corbelled brickwork with dentils and band courses beneath the west roofline belie its construction in the later 19th century. Archival photographs show the oversized cornice supported by classical corner piers that were added to the property, but later removed (Images 3b, 4a and 4b).

Rising three stories with a rectangular-shaped plan, French's Hotel is clad with red brick and trimmed with brick and stone (the brickwork has been painted). The structure is covered by a gable roof with stone-trimmed parapets and brackets at the north and south ends where the brick chimneys (visible in archival photographs) have been removed. Along the west roofline, elaborate corbelled brickwork with dentils surmounts brick band courses. The principal (west) elevation, where the first-floor storefronts have been altered), is symmetrically organized with segmental-arched window openings with brick flat arches and stone sills in the upper stories. The classically-detailed wood piers at either end of this elevation have been removed (but are visible in archival images, including the one attached as Image 4a where their location is marked). The symmetrically-placed segmental-arched window openings with brick and stone detailing continues on the north elevation facing Asquith Avenue. Part of the south elevation is viewed above the neighbouring building. There is evidence on the latter elevations that single openings in the attic level have been bricked in, as well as a ground-floor opening on the north wall adjoining Asquith Avenue. No heritage attributes are found on the visible rear (east) elevation, and the extended two-storey east wings are excluded.

### iv. CONTEXT

Shown on the location map attached as Image 1, the property at 771 Yonge Street is found on the southeast corner of Asquith Avenue, one block north of Bloor Street East. It is adjoined to the south by another low-rise commercial building at 765 Yonge Street, known historically as the Albert Britnell Bookstore (1928), which was listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in 1992. French's Hotel is adjoined to the north by the Toronto Reference Library (1977) at the northeast corner of Yonge and Asquith, and to the west by Cumberland Terrace (1974) at the southwest corner of Yonge and Cumberland streets, which are large-scale late-20th century complexes. Directly northwest, the properties on the west side of Yonge Street between Cumberland Street and Yorkville Avenue contain a contiguous row of commercial buildings dating to the mid to late 1800s, which are designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. With French's Hotel at 771 Yonge Street, they contribute to the historical commercial core of 19th-century Yorkville before its annexation by the City of Toronto.

### 3. EVALUATION

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's Heritage Register. 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 property at 771 Yonge Street has cultural heritage value for its design as an important surviving example in Yorkville of a late 1800s commercial building with the symmetry and gable roof retained from the Georgian style linked to first-generation commercial edifices in Toronto. Its late-19th century vintage is apparent in the scale and elaborate corbelled brickwork along the Yonge Street elevation.

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	X
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

French's Hotel is valued for its historical association with the Village of Yorkville (1853-1883), which was an independent municipality prior to its annexation by the City of Toronto. The subject building was part of the commercial district along Yonge Street that served the brickyards, breweries and related industries that formed the basis of the community. As a hotel in operation for more than 40 years, French's Hotel was one of a selection of hostelries located near the key intersection of Yonge and Bloor streets where a tollgate once adjoined the boundary between Toronto and Yorkville.

The property at 771 Yonge Street is also valued as the location of the first dance studio in Toronto opened by the famed Russian-born dancer, choreographer, director and teacher, Boris Volkoff (1900-1974), who was revered as the "father of Canadian ballet." With premises at 771 Yonge from 1930 to 1945 and while training innumerable dancers, Volkoff founded the Volkoff Canadian Ballet as the forerunner to a professional ballet company in Canada, and worked on co-productions with the Toronto Opera Company (forerunner of today's Canadian Opera Company).

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	N/A

Contextually, French's Hotel contributes to the character of Yonge Street, north of Bloor Street, where it reflects the evolution of the area in the late 19th century as it evolved from an incorporated village to a city neighbourhood along the important corridor known as Toronto's "Main Street." French's Hotel is also historically, visually and physically linked to its surrounding on Yonge Street where it anchors the southeast corner of Asquith Avenue and, with the contiguous row of late-19th century commercial buildings on the west side of the street between Cumberland Street and Yorkville Avenue, marks the east entry into the commercial centre of the former Village of Yorkville.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 771 Yonge Street has cultural heritage value. Located on the southeast corner of Asquith Avenue, French's Hotel (1872) displays the scale, symmetry and gable roof that link its design to the style and type of commercial building identified with early Toronto. It is historically associated with the development and evolution of Yorkville from an independent municipality to an important city neighbourhood where the property at 771 Yonge contained a hotel for more than four decades. In the 20th century, it was the first location of the dance studio of the famed Russian-born dancer, choreographer, director and teacher, Boris Volkoff. Contextually, French's Hotel contributes to the historical character of Yorkville as the setting of late 19th commercial and residential buildings, and it is historically linked to its surroundings on the corner of Yonge Street and Asquith Avenue where, to the northwest, it adjoins the contiguous row of surviving late-19th century storefronts between Cumberland Street and Yorkville Avenue, which are other recognized heritage properties.

#### 5. SOURCES

##### Archival Sources:

- Abstract Indices of Deeds, Concession 2 from the Bay, Part Lot 20, and Plan 331, Lots BD and E
- Archival Maps, 1851-1876, <http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.ca/p/index-of-maps.html>
- Assessment Rolls, Yorkville, 1862-1882
- Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, St. Paul's Ward, Division 1, 1884-1892
- Building Records, City of Toronto, Toronto and East York
- City of Toronto Directories, 1834 ff.
- Goad's Atlases, 1884-1903 and 1912-1923, Volume 1
- Underwriters' Insurance Bureau Atlas, Volume 5, 1921 revised to 1943 and 1965

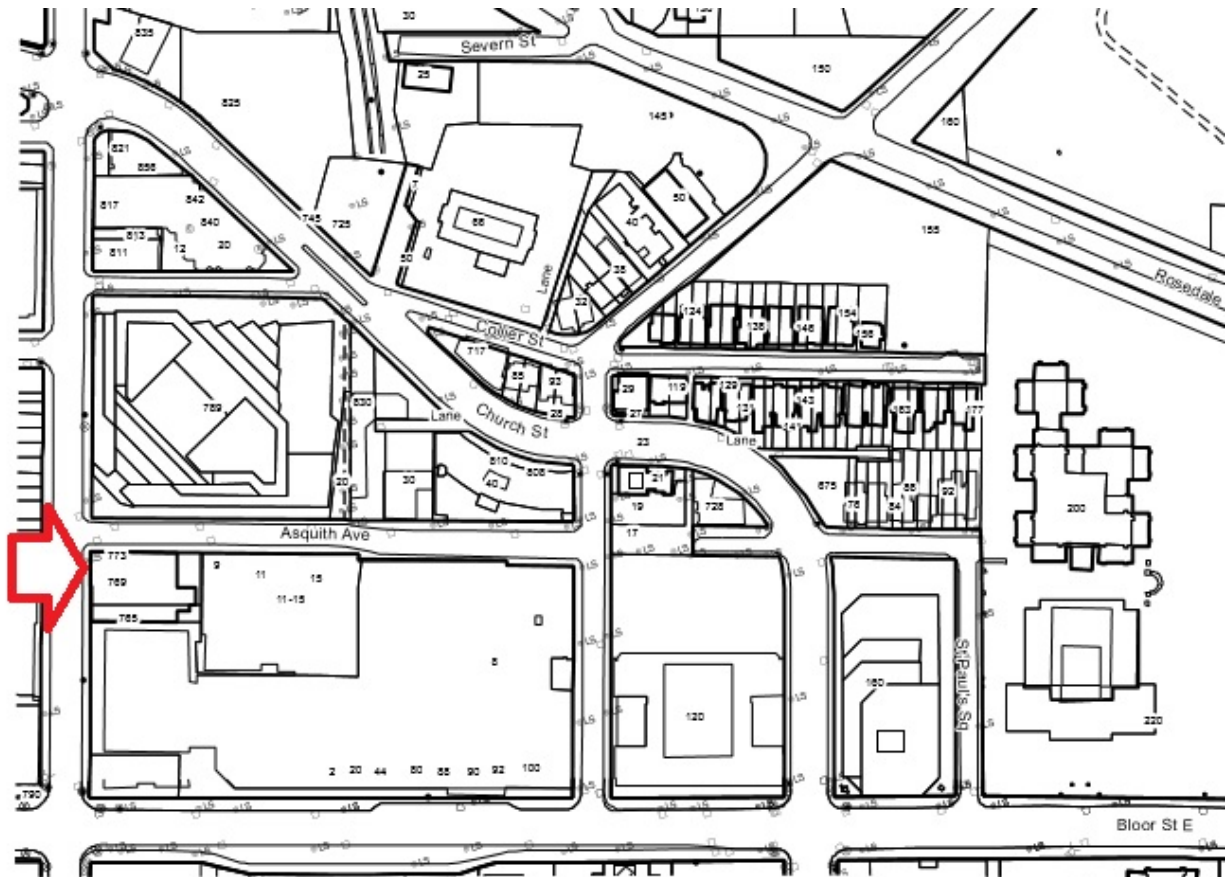
##### Secondary Sources:

- Arthur, Eric, *Toronto. No Mean City*, 3rd ed., revised by Stephen A. Otto, 1986
- Careless, J. M. S., *Toronto to 1918*, 1984
- Family Records, French, Pannell and Severn Families, [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
- Guillet, Edwin C., *Pioneer Inns and Taverns, Vol. 1*, 1954
- Hutchinson, Stephanie, *Yorkville in Pictures 1853-1883*, 1978
- Lundell, Liz, *The Estates of Old Toronto*, 1998



- McHugh, Patricia, *Toronto Architecture: A City Guide*, 2nd ed., 1989
- Mulvany, Charles, *History of Toronto and the County of York*, 1885

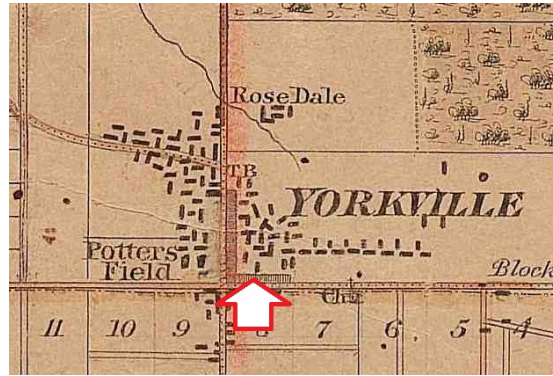
6. IMAGES – maps and atlases are followed by other archival images and current photographs. The arrows mark the location of the subject properties. All images are oriented with north on the top unless indicated in the captions.



1. Location Map, 771 Yonge Street: showing the location of the property on the southeast corner of Asquith Avenue, north of Bloor Street East (City of Toronto Property Data Map).

BATHURST ST.		YONGE ST.	
1	Mr. Justice Powell	16	John Hensley
2	Mr. Justice Powell	17	Chief Justice
3	Mr. Justice Powell	18	S.V.G. Skinner
4	Mr. Justice Powell	19	B.H. Player
5	Mr. Justice Powell	20	John Player
6	Mr. Justice Powell		
7	Mr. Justice Powell		
8	Mr. Justice Powell		
9	Mr. Justice Powell		
10	Mr. Justice Powell		
11	Mr. Justice Powell		
12	Mr. Justice Powell		
13	Mr. Justice Powell		
14	Mr. Justice Powell		
15	Mr. Justice Powell		
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49	Mr. Justice Powell		
50	Mr. Justice Powell		

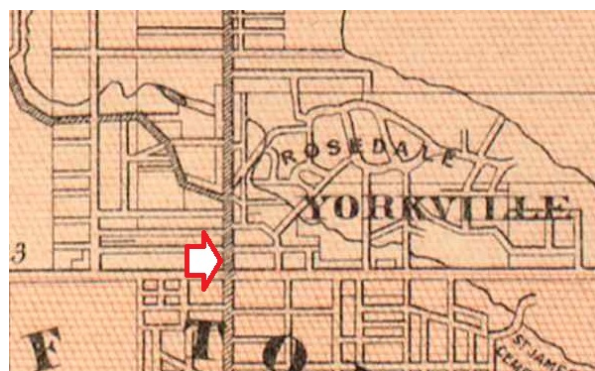
2a. Estates of Old Toronto, Lumsden, 13



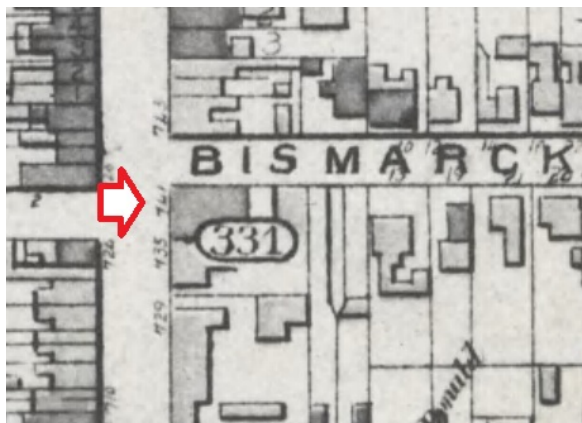
2b. Browne, Topographical Plan, 1851



2d. Gross, Bird's Eye View, 1876



2e. York County Atlas, 1878

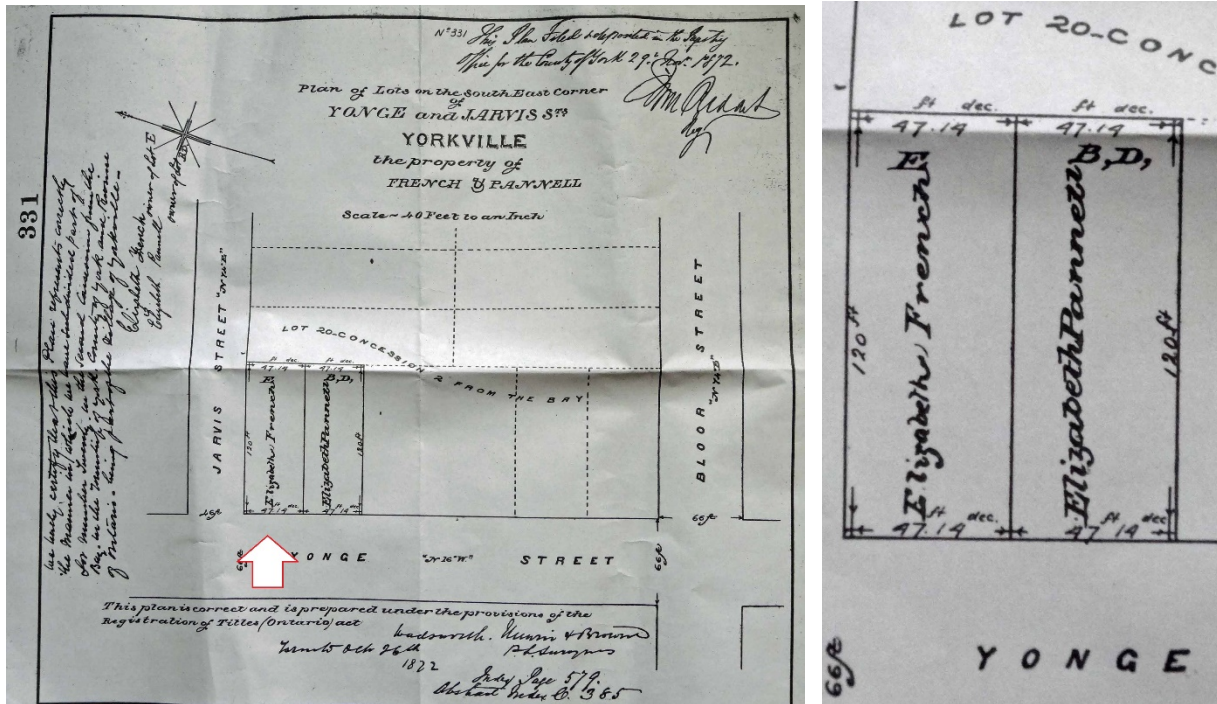


2e. Goad's Atlas, 1884



2f. Goad's Atlas, 1890

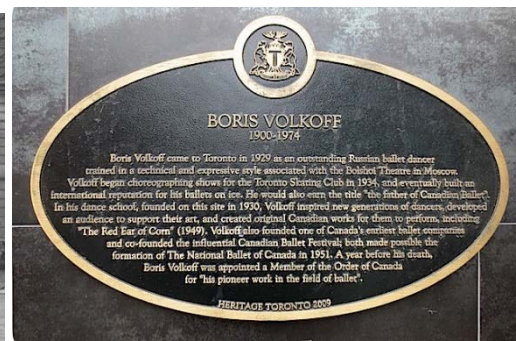
2. Historical Maps and Atlases, 771 Yonge Street:  
<http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.ca/p/index-of-maps.html>



3a. Plan 331 (left), which is oriented with north on the left, with a detailed view of the southeast corner of present-day Yonge Street and Asquith Avenue (right) where the subject property is located on Lot E and labeled "Elizabeth French"



3b. Yonge Street, north of Bloor, 1953



3c. Boris Volkoff Plaque

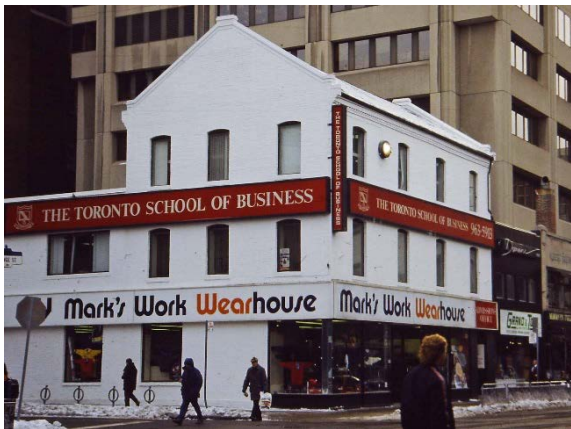
3. Archival Plans and Photographs, 71 Yonge Street: 1872 Plan (Ontario Land Registry Office, Toronto); archival photograph (Toronto Public Library, Item R-1966); plaque (Heritage Toronto, 2009)



4a. 771 Yonge Street, 1974



4b. 771 Yonge Street (left), 1982



4c. 771 Yonge Street, 1991



4d. principal (west) elevation



4e. and 4f. contextual photographs, south (left) and north (right) on Yonge Street

4. Archival and Current Photographs, 771 Yonge Street: Toronto Historical Board, 1974, 1982 and 1991, and Heritage Preservation Services, 2017.