

## **Alterations to a Property Designated Under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act - 32 Rowanwood Avenue**

**Date:** September 4, 2020

**To:** Toronto Preservation Board

Toronto & East York Community Council

**From:** Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

**Wards:** Ward 11 - University - Rosedale

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council approve the proposed alterations to the heritage building, known as the Rosecourt Apartments, at 32 Rowanwood Avenue under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act. This building was constructed in 1912-1913 and is designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act as part of the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (SRHCD). It is noted as a Category "C" building within SRHCD Study. Category "C" buildings have "contextual significance, which contribute to the heritage character of South Rosedale..." Prior to refurbishment works commencing on site this building contained nine rental apartment units.

The proposal involves extensive alterations and a roof addition to increase the usable floor space within the building and add five new rental residential units. The alterations include: a fourth-storey addition; replacement of windows to match original windows; alterations to some original openings; introduction of new openings facing Rowanwood Avenue and the replacement of existing balconies and railings facing Rowanwood Avenue.

Heritage Planning has worked with the applicant to ensure that the proposed alterations meet the general intent of the SRHCD Study's guidelines and will not have a negative impact on the existing heritage building and existing context within the SRHCD. The applicant still needs to apply for approval under the Planning Act (minor variance and site plan approval) and therefore this application relates solely to the approval that is required under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act. Future planning applications will be assessed against approvals under the Act and conditions will be secured as appropriate.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council approve the alterations to the heritage property at 32 Rowanwood Avenue, in accordance with Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act, with such alterations substantially in accordance with plans and drawings prepared by Cusimano Architect, dated August 11, 2020 and filed with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning and the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), dated May 3, 2019 and revised on August 14, 2020, prepared by ERA Architects Inc., and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, all subject to and in accordance with a Conservation Plan satisfactory to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, and subject to the following additional conditions:

a. That prior to the final Site Plan Approval for the property at 32 Rowanwood Avenue, the owner shall:

1. Provide a detailed Conservation Plan prepared by a qualified heritage consultant, that is consistent with the conservation strategy set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment dated May 3, 2019 and revised on August 14, 2020, prepared by ERA Architects Inc., to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

2. Provide final site drawings substantially in accordance with the approved Conservation Plan required in Recommendation 1.a.1 to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

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 Planning to secure all work included in the approved Conservation Plan.

b. That prior to the issuance of any permit for all or any part of the property at 32 Rowanwood Avenue, including a heritage permit or a building permit, but excluding permits for repairs and maintenance and usual and minor works for the existing heritage building as are acceptable to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, the owner shall:

1. 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.1. 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 Planning.

c. That prior to the release of the Letter of Credit, as required in recommendation 1.a.3 the owner shall:

1. Provide a letter of substantial completion prepared and signed by a qualified heritage consultant confirming that the required conservation work has been completed in accordance with the Conservation Plan standard of conservation has been maintained, all to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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On February 4, 5 and 6, 2003 Toronto City Council adopted the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District under Part V, Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act, enacted by Council on February 7, 2003 under By-Law 115-2003.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/2003/law0115.pdf>

## **BACKGROUND**

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### **Heritage Policy 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 Plans are intended to be read in their entirety and relevant policies are to be applied to each situation. The policies of the Plans represent minimum standards. Council may go beyond these minimum standards to address matters of local importance, unless doing so would conflict with any policies of the Plans.

All decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the PPS and shall conform with Provincial Plans. All comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also be consistent with the PPS and conform with Provincial Plans

The 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**

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS and provides more specific land use planning policies to address issues facing the GGH region. The policies of the Growth Plan (2020) take precedence over the policies of the PPS to the extent of any conflict, except where the relevant legislation provides otherwise.

In accordance with Section 3 of the Planning Act all decisions of Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall conform to the Growth Plan. Comments, submissions or advice affecting a planning matter that are provided by Council shall also conform to the Growth Plan.

Policy 4.2.7.1 of the Growth Plan states that "Cultural Heritage Resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas."

## **City of Toronto Official Plan**

This application has been reviewed against the policies of the City of Toronto Official Plan. The Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policies apply to the proposed alterations:

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 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.

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.

3.1.5.32. Impacts of site alterations, developments, municipal improvements, and/or public works within or adjacent to Heritage Conservation Districts will be assessed to ensure that the integrity of the districts' heritage values, attributes, and character are conserved. This assessment will be achieved through a Heritage Impact Assessment, consistent with Schedule 3 of the Official Plan, to the satisfaction of the City

3.1.5.33. Heritage Conservation Districts should be managed and conserved by approving only those alterations, additions, new development, demolitions, removals and public works in accordance with respective Heritage Conservation District plans.

### **South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (SRHCD)**

The SRHCD section 5.3.2. Guidelines for Alterations and Additions at Heritage Buildings, include the following direction:

A. Alterations and additions to heritage buildings should maintain or enhance rather than detract from the existing architectural style and character of the building and those surrounding it. To this end:

- Reasonable effort should be taken to repair rather than replace significant architectural elements.
- The building should be examined carefully, together with buildings of similar architectural style, to determine what changes have already occurred before commencing an alteration or addition. If architectural elements have been removed from the building, it may be attractive and feasible, although not necessary, to re-introduce these missing elements as part of a proposed alteration. Porches, original doors and window sashes are examples of these elements.
- Using heritage buildings in the district and the building concerned as a guide, alterations and additions should be consistent with their size, scale, proportion and level of detail.

- No alteration or addition should visually overwhelm the building in question or neighbouring buildings.
- Alterations and additions should, to the extent reasonable, maximize the use of materials that predominate in the building concerned or in buildings of similar architectural style in the area.
- Existing wall to window ratio and proportion should, in general, not be materially altered
- Windows, doors and details should relate in scale and proportion to those of the existing building.
- The height of an addition generally should not exceed the height of the ridge of an existing sloping roof or the height of the existing roof or parapet.

B. The principles and guidelines in paragraph A need not apply to alterations and additions that do not have a significant visual impact when viewed from the street.

The SRHCD section 4.2.2. Streetscape Heritage Character notes that some properties have "legalized front-yard parking and/or extensive hard surfacing that tends to detract from the beauty of the architecture" and that "the tall and understorey trees and shrubs create the park-like quality that helps blend South Rosedale's varied architectural styles and landscape treatments. On the other hand, hedges, shrubberies, foundation plantings, front gardens, lawns, and plant-filled containers increase the visual interest of each street and each property. Whether traditional or contemporary in design, the majority of the private landscapes throughout the area are either completely open to the street or only partially screened from it... In general, those private landscapes that appear to blend with or complement the streetscape as a whole make the greatest contribution to the serenity and park-like quality of the neighbourhood."

### **The Standards and Guidelines**

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Standards and Guidelines) is the official document guiding planning, stewardship and the conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto. The General Standards (1-9), the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12), and the Standards for Restoration (13-14) apply to this project.

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s+g-eng-web2.pdf>

## **BACKGROUND**

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### **Area Context**

The subject property at 32 Rowanwood Avenue is located at the north side of Rowanwood Avenue on a predominantly residential street within an area designated as Neighbourhoods as per Toronto's Official Plan. Two and three storey detached houses with pitched roofs predominate this part of the north side of Rowanwood Avenue. Opposite, on the south side of this part of Rowanwood Avenue, are the rear of the

Chestnut Park properties, many of which have their rear one-storey garages fronting onto Rowanwood Avenue.

The subject property contains a three-storey walk-up apartment building known as the Rosecourt Apartments. It was constructed in 1912-1913. A Building Permit and permission under the Ontario Heritage Act were granted in 2017 for internal alterations including a new staircase and elevator shaft.

Permission under the Planning Act (a minor variance and site plan approval) is still required for the proposed alterations to be undertaken.

### **Adjacent Heritage Properties**

The adjacent property to the east at 30 Rowanwood Avenue features a two-and-a-half-storey detached house and is evaluated as Category "C" building within the SRHCD.

The adjacent property to the west at 34 Rowanwood Avenue features a multi-unit residential building and is also noted as a Category "C" building within the SRHCD. A Zoning Amendment application in 2005 permitted a fourth-storey addition with a flat roof (04 168755 STE 27 OZ). A subsequent minor variance approval in 2012 increased the permitted building height to 12.5 metres (A0032/12TEY). The fourth-storey addition was built in 2016.

## **COMMENTS**

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A Building Permit and permission under the Ontario Heritage Act was granted for internal alterations the construction of a new internal staircase and a new elevator shaft (17 162413 BLD 00 BA) at 32 Rowanwood Avenue in 2017. These works are under construction.

The current proposal for 32 Rowanwood Avenue involves external alterations and a new fourth-storey flat-roofed addition that would increase the height of this building to 11.77 metres (with the elevator shaft rising slightly above this). In addition changes are proposed to the fenestration and balconies at the front of the building in connection with its conversion into a nine-unit rental apartment building. Permission is still required under the Planning Act for these works and this report relates solely to the approval required under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act for the proposed physical alterations to the building. Future planning applications will be assessed against approvals under the Act and conditions will be secured as appropriate.

The SRHCD Study states that "the height of an addition generally should not exceed the height of the ridge of an existing sloping roof or the height of the existing roof or parapet" (5.3.2.A). The proposed fourth storey addition is above the existing roof and so does not comply with this provision but it is set back 3.08 metres from the existing parapet wall. The fourth floor step back is 0.71 metres greater than the roof addition on the adjacent property at 34 Rowanwood Avenue.

The prominent castellated parapet at 32 Rowanwood Avenue will lessen the visual prominence of the addition within the streetscape and the proposed addition will be less visible from the public realm than the addition constructed on the adjacent property. A dark brown Hardie board cladding is proposed for the addition similar to other roofing colours at nearby heritage houses on Rowanwood Avenue. The proposed fenestration pattern for the addition, while not repeating that of the original building, would not be easily visible from the public realm. Though this addition would also feature a flat roof, the proposed wood cladding, colours, and setback behind the existing parapet would help mitigate its visual impact upon the existing building and adjacent heritage buildings. As such the proposed roof addition complies with the overall requirement of the SRHCD that additions maintain "rather than detract from the architectural style and character of the building and those surrounding it."

The building permit that was approved in 2017 did not include any permission for external alterations, apart from those connected with the elevator shaft and staircase. As part of this approval all interior building components, including the floor structure, have been removed, but original exterior brick masonry walls remain mostly intact. The submitted architectural drawings and Heritage Impact Assessment note that proposed new windows would match the existing ones; however, the original wood windows were removed without prior approval under the Ontario Heritage Act. Details of the proposed new windows (which will be wood double hung sliding sash windows that match the style and profile of the original windows) will be included as part of the Conservation Plan.

The second and third floor balcony railings were also removed without prior approval under the Ontario Heritage Act. It is unclear whether the large solid balcony guards were original however the squared wood posts may have been. The SRHCD Study states that alterations should "be consistent with" the "size, scale, proportion and level of detail" with the existing building or other heritage buildings within the district. The applicant has submitted details for new contemporary metal railings that they say would "interpret the building's character". These railings do not match the originals or those on any of the surrounding heritage buildings and as such do not comply with the guidelines in the HCD Study. In line with good conservation practise, Heritage Planning will be seeking revisions to the balcony railing design as part of the Conservation Plan. The new railings should replicate those that were originally on the building based on documentary evidence. If there is insufficient documentary evidence the railing design should be based on the age and character of the existing building and should include squared posts to match those that were removed. Staff have no objection to the proposed new railing design for use inside the parapet at fourth floor level, at the rear of the building or for the balconies in the recessed wing as these would not have a significant visual impact as viewed from the street.

Additional balcony door openings are proposed at the second and third floor level to match the existing. A large ground floor opening that was created at the front of the building between the two doorways without approval under the Ontario Heritage Act will be infilled with matching bricks and two door openings will be reinstated to match the originals. Details of the infill, openings and new wood doors will be included in the required Conservation Plan. The new doors should match the originals based on



documentary evidence or the age and character of the existing building in line with good conservation practise.

The proposal also involves changing the original recessed front entrance into a window and changing the fenestration within this side wing in order to accommodate the floor level changes within the building. The original entrance door will be re-configured as a window that will maintain the profile and proportions of the original door opening and it will retain the existing transom, sidelights, and canopy. Alterations at this recessed location will not have a significant visual impact when viewed from the public realm. The new entrance to the building is proposed to be located along its east side wall. It is not clear whether or not the "Rosecourt" sign currently featured at the existing south entrance is proposed to remain in place or if it will be transferred to the new entrance. This detail also will be included as part of the required Conservation Plan.

An existing front driveway is proposed to be partially removed to allow for additional soft landscaping. This change is supported by the policies of the SRNCD study and Heritage Planning.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Heritage Planning staff has reviewed the proposed alteration of the heritage property at 32 Rowanwood Avenue and is satisfied that the proposed alterations maintain rather than detract from the architectural style and character of the building adjacent heritage properties. As such staff supports the proposal and the associated scope of conservation work as it will conserve the overall integrity of the subject property and of this part of the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District. The associated Conservation Plan will be submitted as part of Site Plan Approval, to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Mary MacDonald, MA, CAHP  
Senior Manager, Heritage Planning  
Urban Design, City Planning

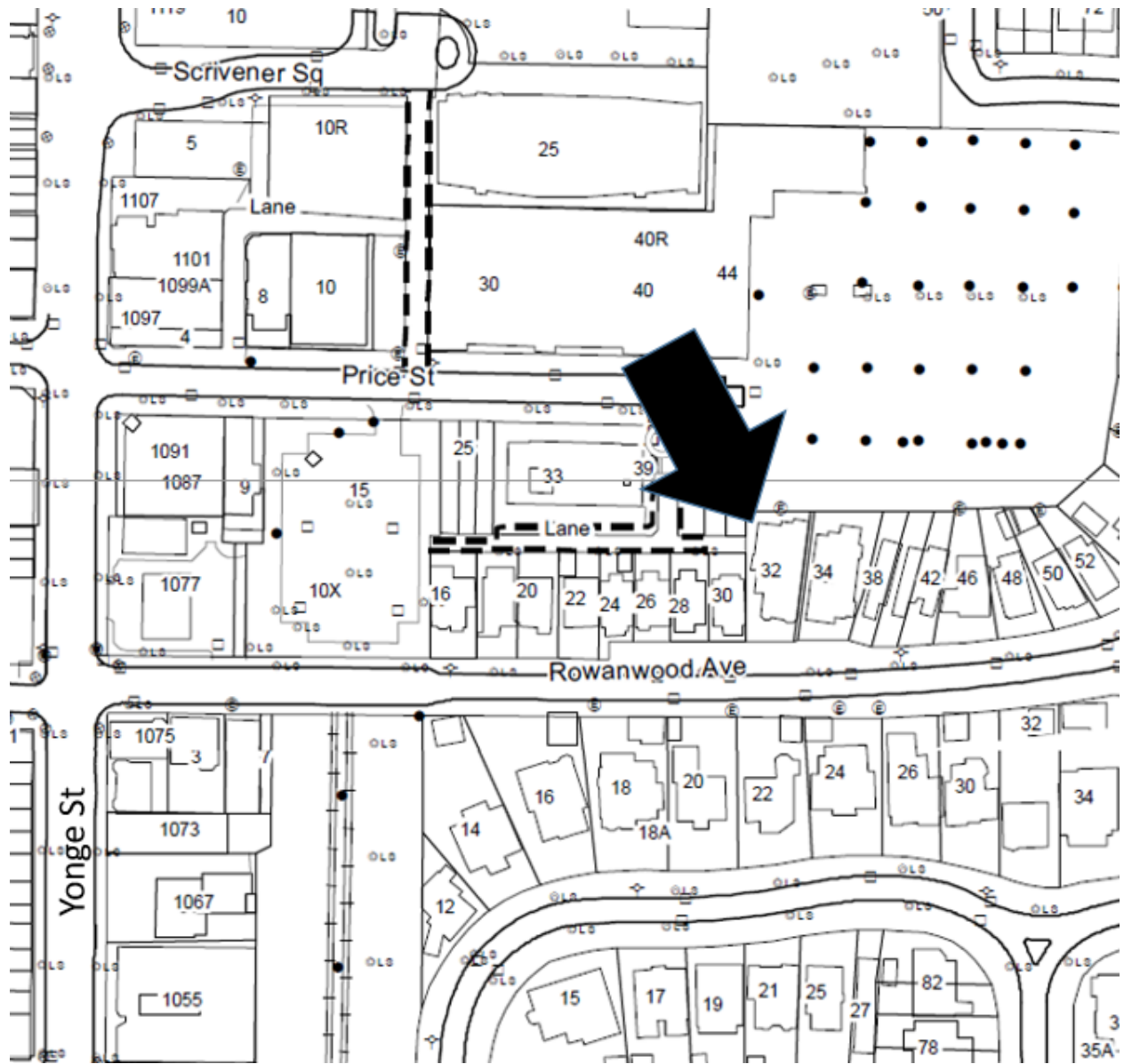
## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Location Map

Attachment 2: Photographs of existing house

Attachment 3: Drawings of proposed alteration



This location map is for information purposes only and is oriented with North at the top. The exact boundaries of the property are not shown.



View of the Rosecourt Apartments building at 32 Rowanwood Avenue in 2014 from the south-east.



View of the Rosecourt Apartments building at 32 Rowanwood Avenue in 2019, under construction for extensive renovations. The adjacent property at 34 Rowanwood Avenue to the east now features a contemporary fourth-storey addition, built in 2016.

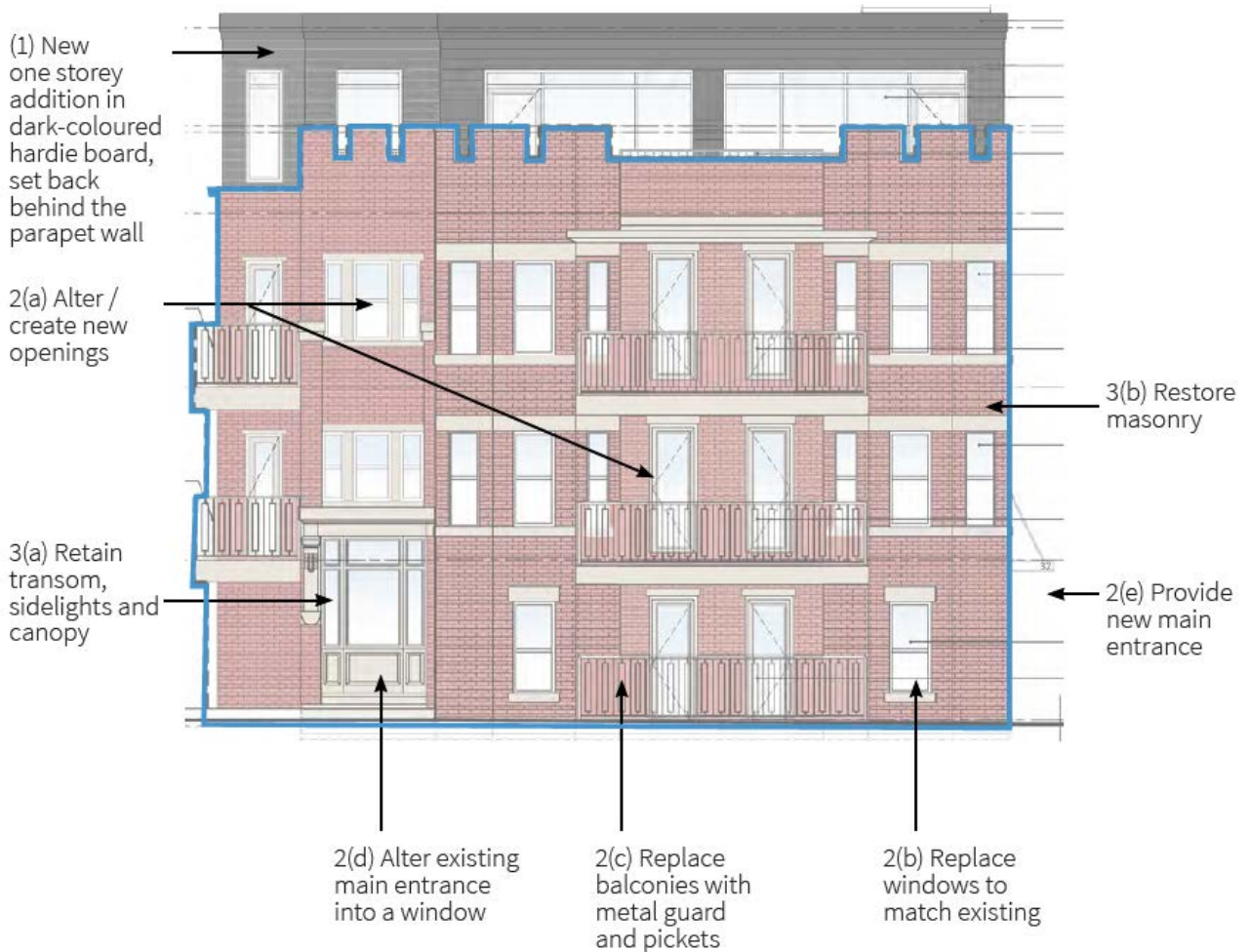


Proposed rendered view of the Rosecourt Apartments building at 32 Rowanwood Avenue from the south, showing the fourth floor addition from pedestrian level along Rowanwood Avenue



Proposed rendered views of the Rosecourt Apartments building at 32 Rowanwood Avenue from pedestrian level along the north sidewalk on Rowanwood Avenue from the east (left) and from the west (right)

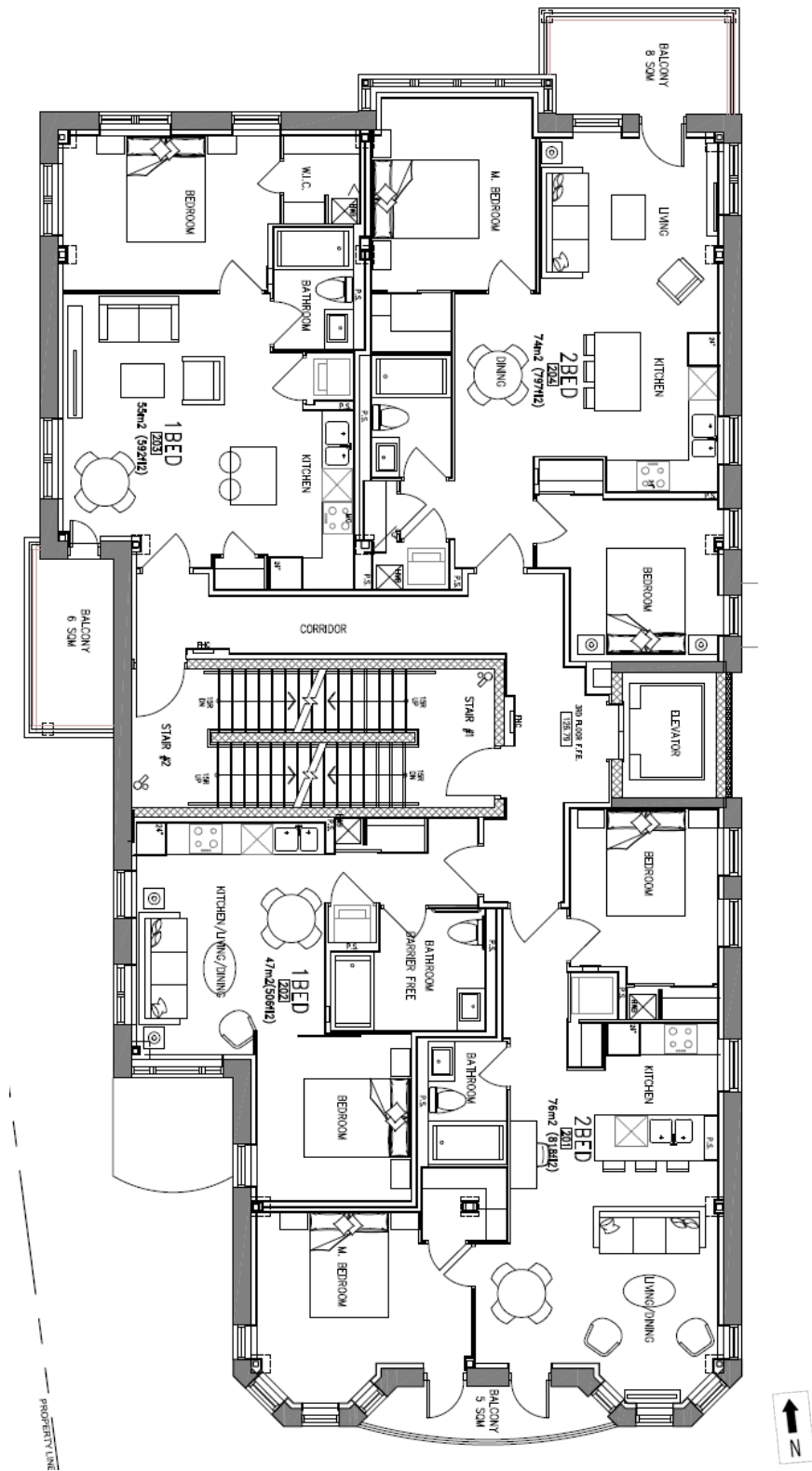
# PROPOSED ALTERATION - 32 ROWANWOOD AVENUE



Annotated south elevation drawing prepared by ERA Architects showing the main alterations proposed at the building at 32 Rowanwood Avenue



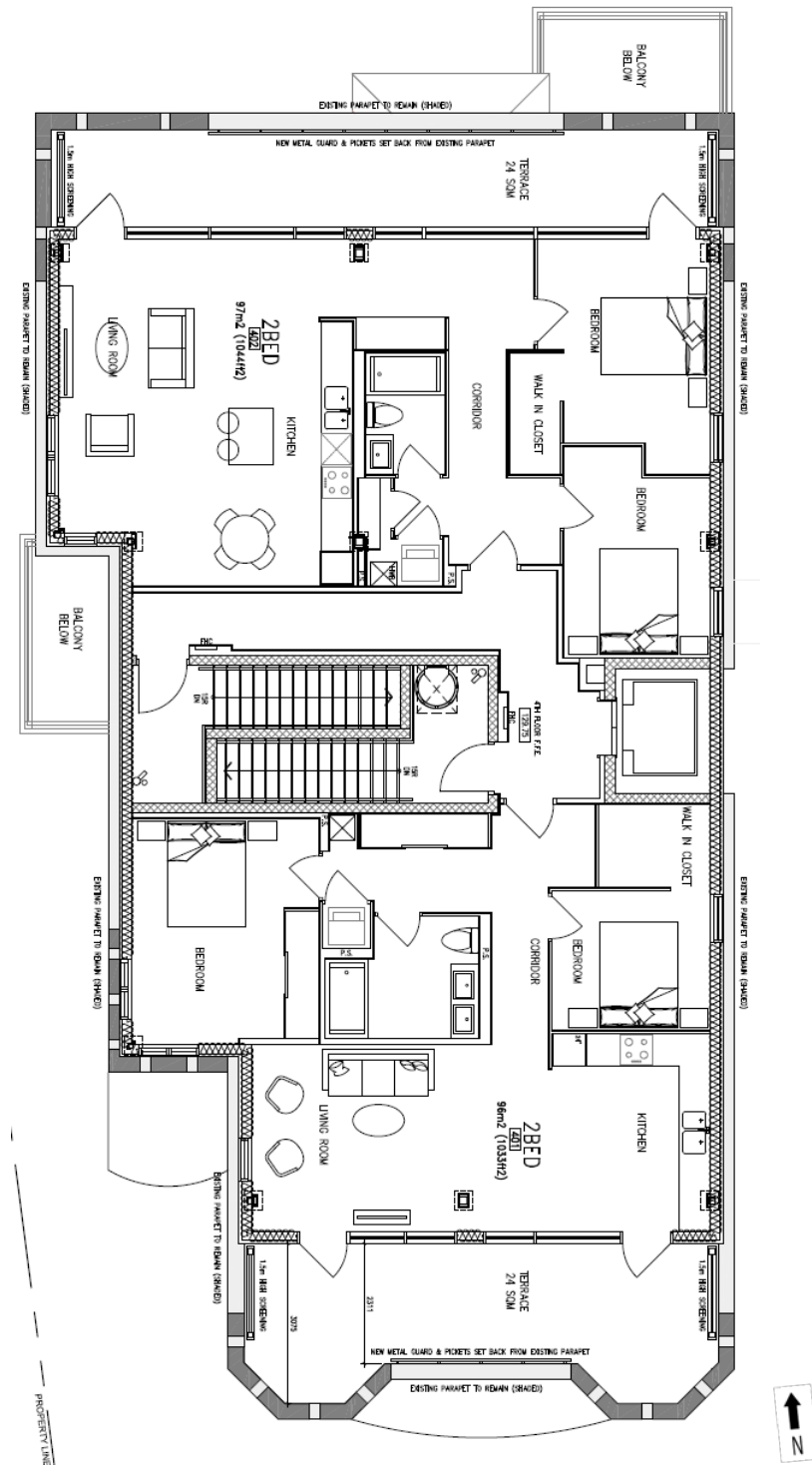
PROPOSED ALTERATION - 32 ROWANWOOD AVENUE



Proposed third-storey floor plan showing the new balcony doors' at the south side of the building at 32 Rowanwood Avenue

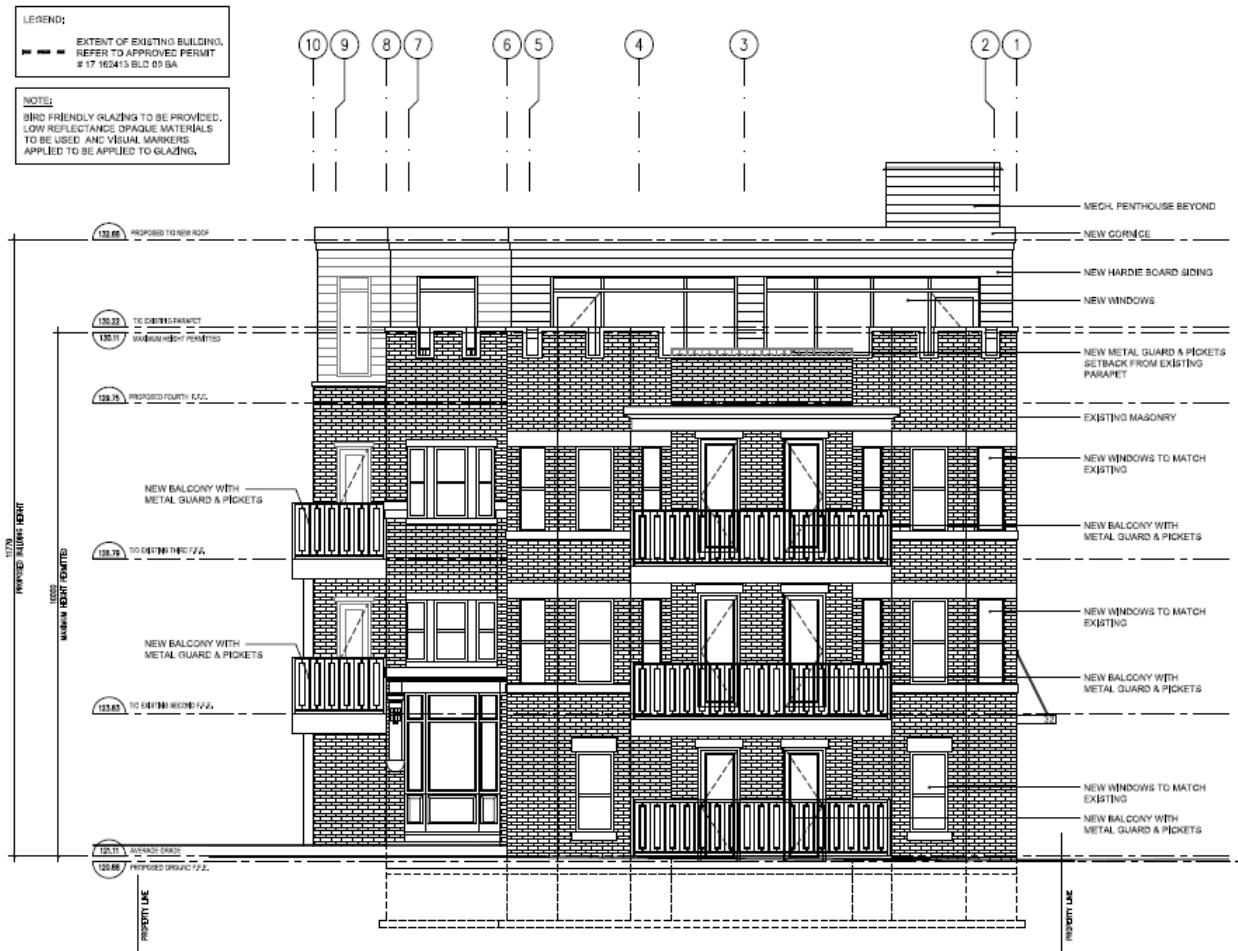


# PROPOSED ALTERATION - 32 ROWANWOOD AVENUE



Proposed fourth-storey floor plan showing the proposed fourth storey addition at 32 Rowanwood Avenue set behind the existing parapet.

# PROPOSED ALTERATION - 32 ROWANWOOD AVENUE



Proposed south elevation drawing showing the proposed fourth storey addition at 32 Rowanwood Avenue set behind the existing parapet.



