

Demolition of a Structure within the North Rosedale Heritage Conservation District and Approval of a Replacement Structure - 61 Roxborough Drive

Date: August 12, 2021

To: Toronto Preservation Board
Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: University-Rosedale - Ward 11

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council approve the demolition of an "unrated" building and approve the design of a replacement house located at 61 Roxborough Drive in accordance with Section 42(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act. This property is located within the North Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (NRHCD), designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The NRHCD Plan allows for the demolition of an "unrated" building provided that a replacement building design complies with the NRHCD Plan guidelines for new buildings and the applicable zoning by-laws. The proposed new three-storey house meets the general intent of the NRHCD Plan's guidelines and would not detract from nearby rated heritage buildings in the immediate context.

The subject application also requires approval under the Planning Act (Minor Variance). The recommendations contained within this report relate solely to approvals required under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council approve the demolition of the heritage building at 61 Roxborough Drive, an "unrated" structure in the North Rosedale Heritage Conservation District, in accordance with Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act subject to the following:

a. City Council approve the replacement structure for 61 Roxborough Drive as shown in the plans and elevations submitted by the applicant and prepared by Fairmont Properties Ltd. dated May 18, 2021 and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, and that the replacement structure be constructed substantially in accordance with the submitted plans.

b. That prior to the issuance of any heritage permit for the property at 61 Roxborough Drive including a demolition permit, but excluding permits for interior work, repairs and maintenance and usual and minor works for the existing unrated building as are acceptable to the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, the applicant provide the following to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning:

1. Photo documentation of the existing structure at 61 Roxborough Drive.
2. Final building permit drawings for the replacement structure and a landscape plan consistent with the plans and elevations submitted by the applicant and prepared by Fairmont Properties Ltd. dated May 18, 2021 and with the NRHCD Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

Council adopted the North Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (NRHCD) on September 30, 2004 (By-law 749-2004).

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/2004/law0749.pdf>

There have been no previous reports to Council regarding the property at 61 Roxborough Drive.

Council approved a proposal to demolish an unrated building at the adjacent property at 58 Roxborough Drive on June 7-9, 2016.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.TE16.15>

BACKGROUND

Proposal

The property at 61 Roxborough Drive is located within the North Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (NRHCD). The existing 2-storey detached house-form building at this property is "unrated" as per the NRHCD Plan. The proposal is to demolish the existing house and construct a new 3-storey brick masonry house.

Heritage Policy Framework

The City of Toronto Official Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policy applies to heritage conservation districts and proposed new construction:

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.

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 Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12) apply to this project.

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

North Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (NRHCD) Plan

Council adopted the North Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (NRHCD) under Part V, Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act on September 30, 2004 (By-law 749-2004).

The subject property at 61 Roxborough Drive is located within the "Ravine Lands" character area within the NRHCD Plan. The NRHCD Plan notes that this area is characterised by houses with "above average scale, size and architectural articulation" that are balanced by having asymmetrical and varied details. The detailing includes wood detailing, varied soffits and eaves heights with a variety of rooflines some of which are "highly dramatic or picturesque". The area also has "qualities of heaviness and stolid permanence predominate, due to the abundance of thick brick or stone masonry (red brick predominates) and punctuated windows.

The NRHCD Plan states that "Unrated" buildings are "...not of national, provincial, citywide or contextual heritage significance and do not contribute to the heritage character of North Rosedale or they are buildings which are too recent to be accurately evaluated" for their heritage value. (Section 7.1)

The NRHCD Plan's section 7.3 Guidelines for New Buildings, Alterations and Additions to Unrated Buildings states that:

1. New buildings and alterations and additions to unrated buildings should contribute to and not detract from the heritage character of the District.

2. New buildings and alterations and additions to unrated buildings should be designed to be compatible with the heritage buildings, in terms of scale, massing height, setback, entry level, materials and fenestration.
3. The roof profile and the location of the eaves lines or the roof parapet should be designed so that the apparent height and form of the roof is compatible with that of the streetscape.
4. Integral garages and below grade entrances are strongly discouraged.

The NRHCD Plan's section 7.4 Guidelines for Demolition states:

3. Demolition of an unrated building will generally be permissible if the replacement building, as shown in the building permit application, contributes to the heritage character of the district and is acceptable under these guidelines and the zoning by-law.

Area Context

The subject property at 61 Roxborough Drive is situated at the south side of Roxborough Drive near its intersection with Mount Pleasant Road. It contains an unrated building as per the NRHCD Plan.

Directly adjacent to the subject property on both sides and across the street are unrated buildings (58, 59, 60 and 65 Roxborough Drive). The closest rated properties to the subject property are 62 Roxborough Drive (which is category "C" building on the other side of the street) and 67 Roxborough Drive (which is a category "B" building situated two properties to the west).

A side addition to the unrated house at 65 Roxborough Drive was approved in 2015 and approval was granted to demolish the unrated house at 58 Roxborough Drive and construct a new house in 2016 although it has not yet been constructed.

The buildings in this part of Roxborough Drive vary in height and this variety is accentuated by the sloping topography within the street. A height comparison that was submitted by the applicant is included in Attachment 3.

Proposed Development

The proposal seeks permission under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act to demolish an existing unrated building within the NRHCD and to construct a new building. The proposed new three-storey house is described by the applicants as having a modified Second Empire design with a recessed mansard roof. The new house would be clad with brick at the first and second storeys, and would have a slate tile (or similar material) at the third storey. The window openings would include stone surrounds. An integral garage facing Roxborough Drive is proposed with soft landscaping to the sides of the front walkway and driveway.

As this property backs on to the Park Drive Reservation Lands ravine, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority approval was required and has been granted for this proposed new building.

Minor variances to the applicable zoning by-law is required under the Planning Act.

COMMENTS

Heritage Planning raise no objections to the demolition of the existing house on the subject lands as it is categorised as being "unrated" within the NRHCD plan. The NRHCD Plan says that the "demolition of an unrated building will generally be permissible if the replacement building, as shown in the building permit application, is acceptable under these guidelines and the zoning by-law."

The proposed new house is not considered to detract from the heritage character of the district and its asymmetrical design, simple detailing, quality stone work and brick masonry would accord with the Ravine Lands character area.

The height and roof form of the proposed new house is considered compatible with that of the streetscape within this part of Roxborough Drive given that the shallow pitched hipped roof of the mansard would be largely hidden from view from the public realm and given the height of the other nearby houses, most notably the 3-storey Category "B" house at 67 Roxborough Drive. It is noted that the applicant reduced the size of window openings in the mansard in order to reduce the prominence of the third storey.

The proposed front yard setback of the new house is proposed is similar to the setback of the existing house and those on either side. Although integral garages are discouraged within the North Rosedale HCD there are a considerable number of integral garages within this part of Roxborough Drive and the existing house on the subject lands includes an integral garage. As such the proposal to include an integral garage on the subject property is not considered to harm the heritage character of this part of North Rosedale.

CONCLUSION

Heritage Planning support the application to demolish the existing unrated building and recommends approval of the proposed replacement structure as it is consistent with the guidelines of the NRHCD Plan and will be an appropriate addition to the existing streetscape within this part of Roxborough Drive.

The proposals also require approval under the Planning Act (Minor Variance) and therefore the recommendations in this report relate solely to approvals required under the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

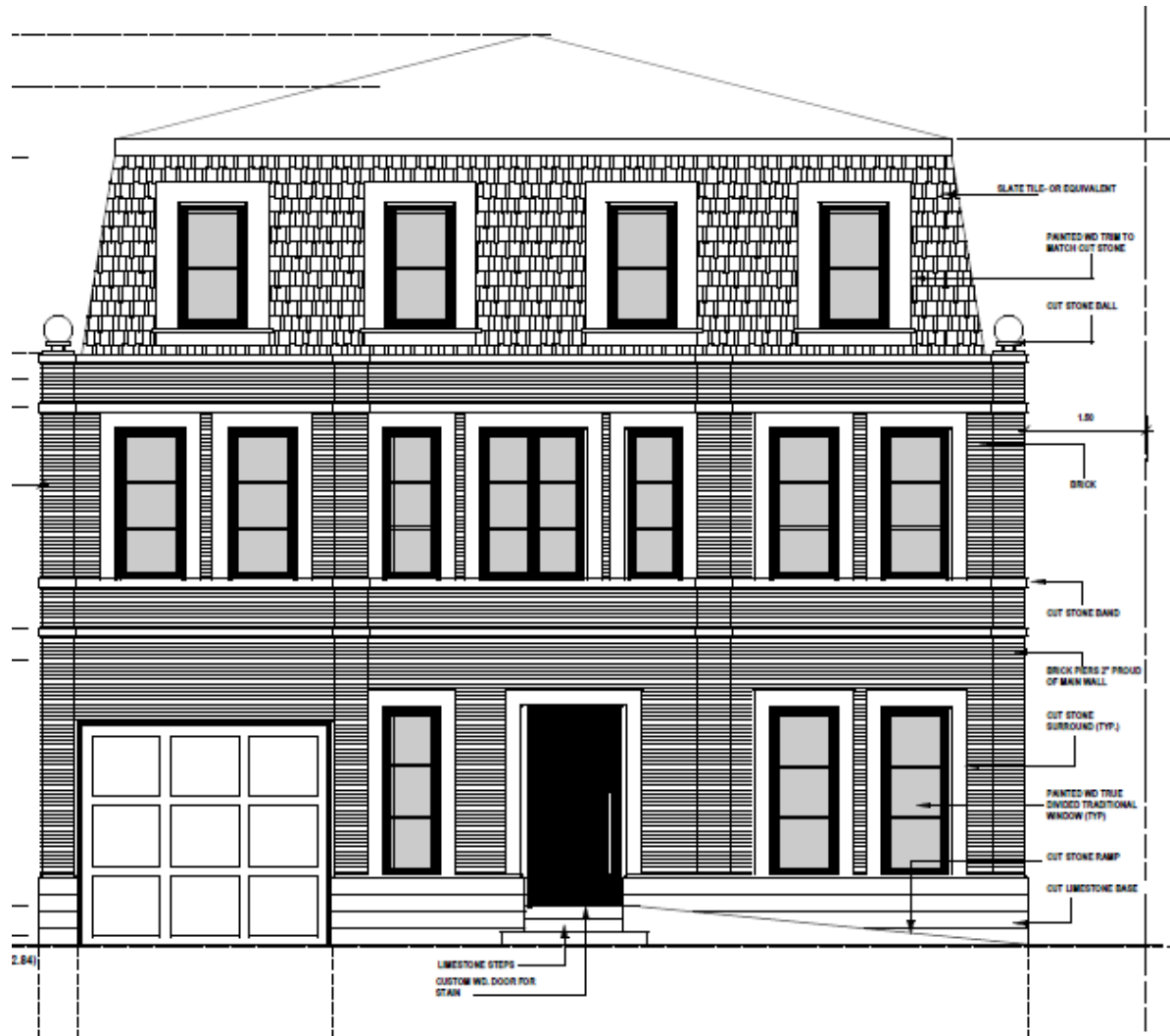
Attachment 1: Location Map
Attachment 2: Photographs of existing house
Attachment 3: Drawings of proposed replacement building



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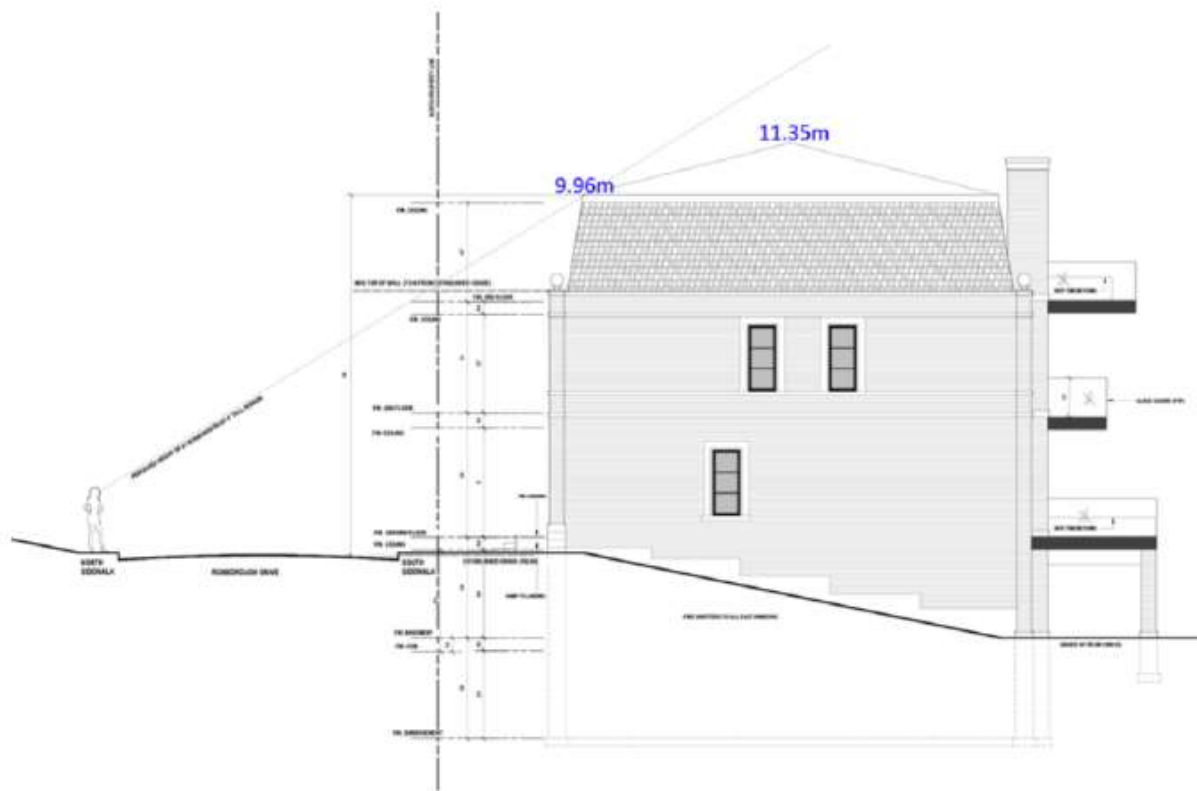


Photograph of the front (north) and west side elevation of the existing house at 61 Roxborough Drive (Source: Architectural Conservancy Ontario).



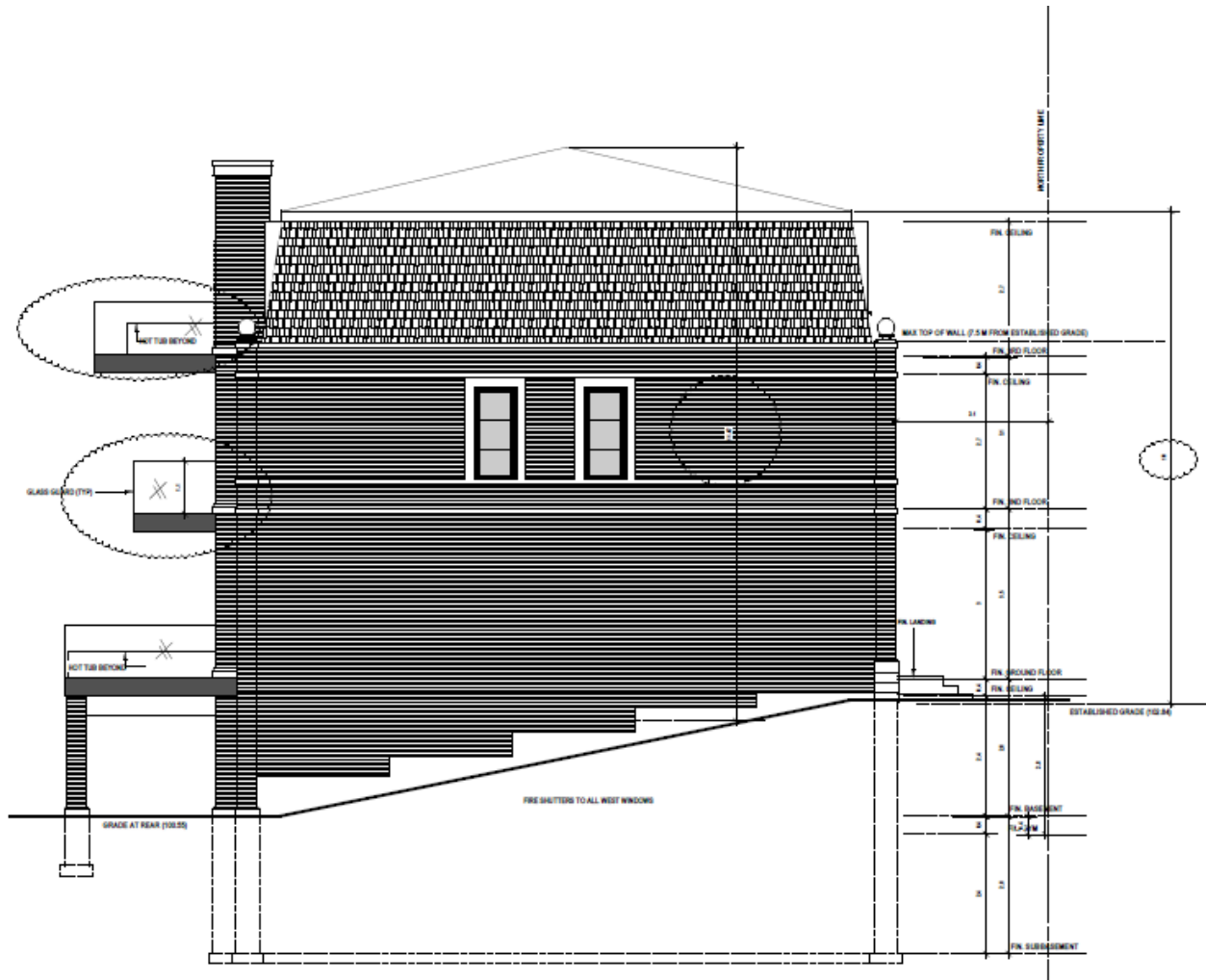
Front (north) elevation drawing of the proposed new house at 61 Roxborough Drive.

DRAWINGS OF PROPOSAL - 61 ROXBOROUGH DRIVE



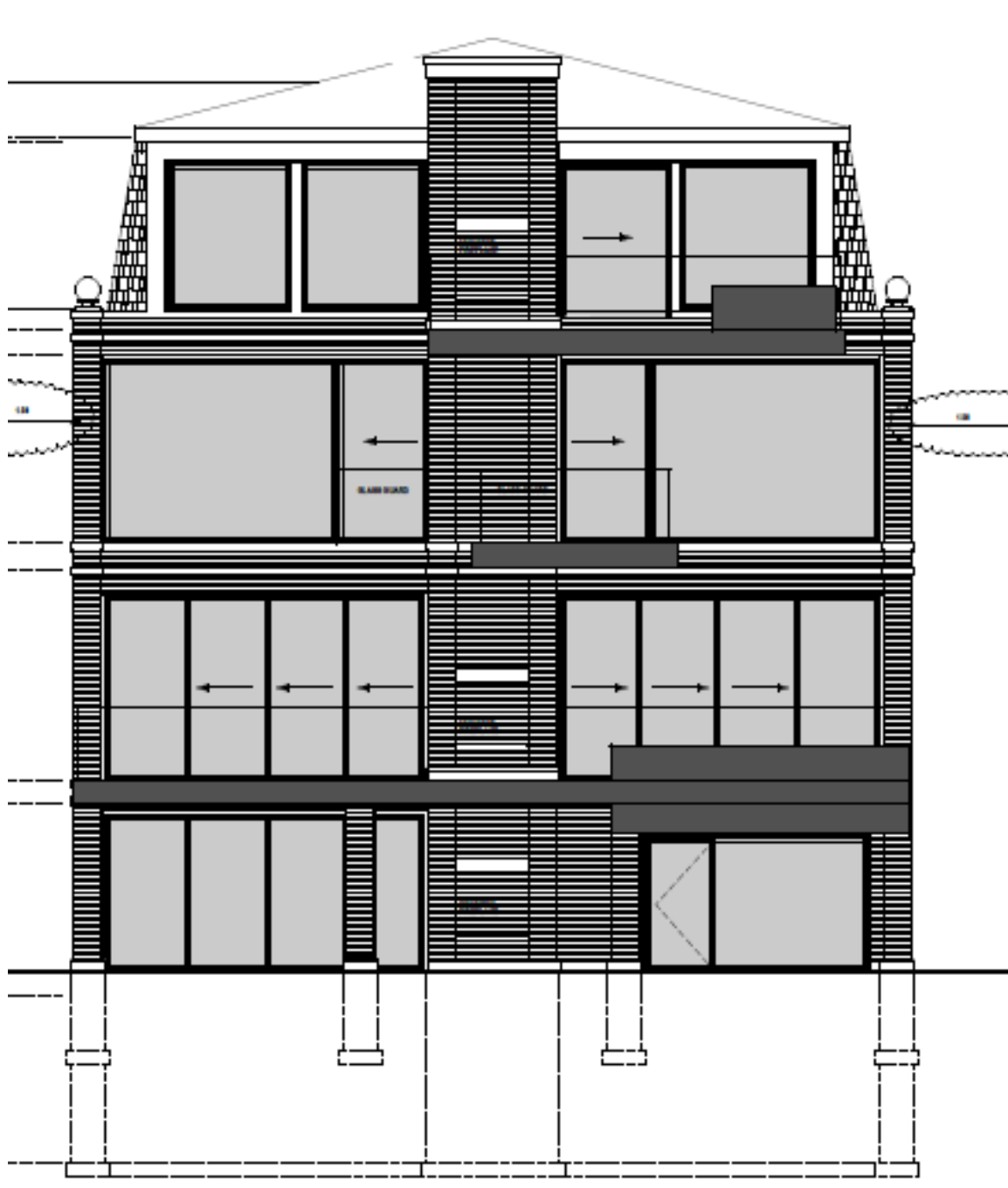
West side sight-line elevation drawing of the proposed new house at 61 Roxborough Drive, showing the "apparent height" of 9.96 metres of the new house as viewed from pedestrian level at the sidewalk across the street.

DRAWINGS OF PROPOSAL - 61 ROXBOROUGH DRIVE



East side elevation drawing of the proposed new house at 61 Roxborough Drive.

DRAWINGS OF PROPOSAL - 61 ROXBOROUGH DRIVE

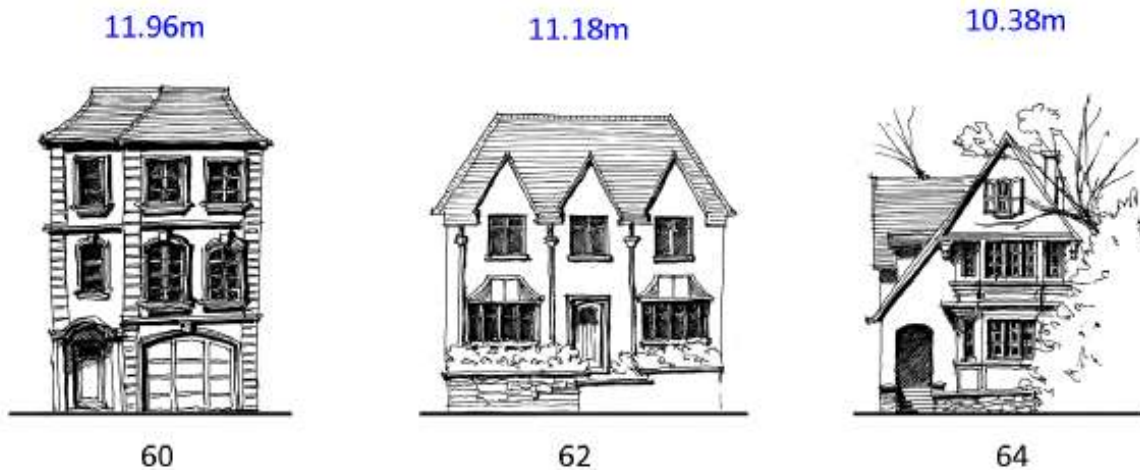


South (rear) elevation drawing of the proposed new house at 61 Roxborough Drive.

DRAWINGS OF PROPOSAL - 61 ROXBOROUGH DRIVE

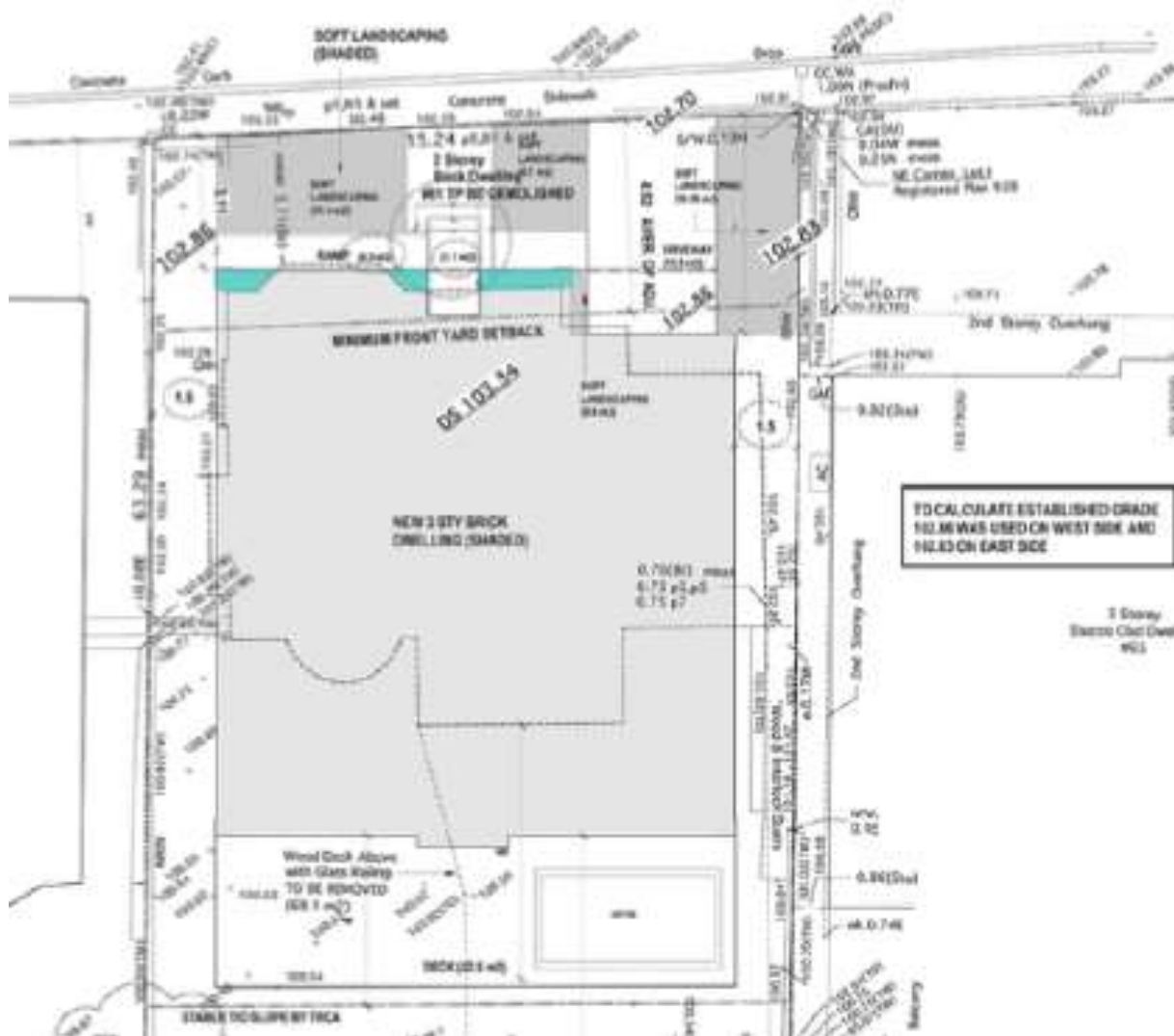


Comparable front (north) elevation drawings of the proposed new house at 61 Roxborough Drive in relation to those of the houses at 59, 65, 67 and 71 Roxborough Drive.



Comparable front (south) elevation drawings of the existing houses at 60, 62, and 64 Drive.

DRAWINGS OF PROPOSAL - 61 ROXBOROUGH DRIVE



Proposed partial site plan of the property at 61 Roxborough Drive, with the new house's front main wall highlighted in blue where it is to be closest to the north property line, in comparison with the front main wall of the existing house.