

1196-1204 and 1206-1210 Yonge Street - Proposed Designation By-Law under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act – Consideration of Objection

Date: September 12, 2022

To: City Council

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

Wards: Ward 12 - Toronto-St. Paul's

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council affirm its decision of July 19, 20, 21, and 22, 2022 (CC47.39) stating its intention to designate the properties at 1196-1204 and 1206-1210 Yonge Street (the subject properties) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act (the Act). The City has received an objection to the notice of intention to designate on behalf of Woodcliffe Landmark Properties Limited within the statutory timeline.

The subject properties are located on the west side of Yonge Street directly north of Birch Avenue within the Summerhill neighbourhood and adjacent to the Deer Park, Ramsden Park and South Rosedale neighbourhoods.

Staff have reviewed the objections raised on behalf of Woodcliffe Landmark Properties Limited and remain of the opinion that these properties hold cultural heritage value or interest.

The properties meet 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 and physical, historical and associative, and contextual values. As the properties have cultural heritage value or interest and meet the prescribed criteria pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, staff are of the opinion that these properties should be designated. Designation enables City Council to review proposed alterations for the properties, enforce heritage property standards and maintenance, and refuse demolition.

In June 2019, the More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108) received Royal Assent. Schedule 11 of this Act included amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act which included amendments to the listing and designation processes. City Council has until November 23, 2022, 90 days from the date of the end of the objection period, to make a decision on this objection as per the timeline under the Act. Additionally, on August 26, 2022 the City of Toronto received applications to demolish the properties at 1196-1204 and 1206-1210 Yonge Street under Section 34 of the Act. These applications are

currently under review by staff to determine if they are complete applications in accordance with the Act and the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 103 - Heritage. Staff will consult with the Toronto Preservation Board and report to Council with recommendations on this application under the cover of a separate report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council affirm its decision to state its intention to designate the properties at 1196 (including entrance addresses at 1198 Yonge Street and 2 Birch Avenue), 1202 and 1204 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as set out in City Council Decision Item CC47.39 on July 19, 20, 21 and 22, 2022;
2. City Council affirm its decision to state its intention to designate the properties at 1206, 1208 and 1210 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as set out in City Council Decision Item CC47.39 on July 19, 20, 21 and 22, 2022;
3. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary bills in City Council designating the properties at 1196-1204 and 1206-1210 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

On July 19, 20, 21 and 22, 2022, City Council adopted CC47.39 and stated its intention to designate the properties at 1196 (including entrance addresses at 1198 Yonge Street and 2 Birch Avenue), 1202 and 1204 Yonge Street and 1206-1210 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.CC47.39>

BACKGROUND

City Council has stated its intention to designate the subject properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. A notice of intention to designate was served on the property owners and the Ontario Heritage Trust, and was published in accordance with the Act. The objection period ended on August 25, 2022.

The City Clerk received a notice of objection on behalf of Woodcliffe Landmark Properties Limited within the required timeframe set out in the Act. The Act requires that

City Council consider and make a decision on an objection within 90 days from the end of the objection period. City Council may decide to withdraw, amend, or affirm its intention to designate. City Council has until November 23, 2022 to make a decision on the objection.

On August 26, 2022 the City of Toronto received applications to demolish the properties at 1196-1204 and 1206-1210 Yonge Street under Section 34 of the Act. These applications are currently under review by staff to determine if they are complete applications in accordance with the Act and the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 103 - Heritage. Should City staff determine that the demolition applications are complete Council has 90 days from the date a notice of a complete application is served on the applicant to consult with the Toronto Preservation Board and to make a decision on the application. Staff will consult with the Toronto Preservation Board and report to Council with recommendations on this application under the cover of a separate report.

COMMENTS

Staff have reviewed the notice of objection dated August 22, 2022 and prepared by Aird Berlis LLP. A copy of the notice of objection is included as Attachment 1 to this report. The objector objects to the Reasons for Designation for the subject properties. Specifically, the objector disputes that the properties yield information related to certain historical periods including the City Beautiful Movement or the introduction of the CPR overpass. Furthermore the objector is of the opinion that the Statements of Significance rely upon and reference other area properties which are physically disconnected from the site and that the site is not part of a historical precinct as is suggested by City staff but rather is physically and historically distinct from the elements south of the rail tracks.

Staff have re-examined the Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation) for the properties at 1196 – 1210 Yonge Street and remain of the opinion that the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and the Heritage Attributes accurately describe the cultural heritage value or interest of these properties as it relates to the criteria prescribed by Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Act. This includes references to the City Beautiful Movement and to the surrounding heritage properties. Staff do not recommend revisions to the extent of this statement.

The subject properties are included in a Zoning By-law Amendment application (21 239174 STE 12 OZ) currently under consideration by the City. The existing properties that are the subject of this report at 1196-1204 and 1206-1210 Yonge Street are proposed for demolition.

Should Council affirm its intention to designate, the City Solicitor will introduce a designating by-law to Council under Section 29 of the Act. Once Council has passed a designating by-law, notice has been provided, and the by-law has been published in accordance with the Act, an appeal may be made to the Ontario Land Tribunal in accordance with the Act. The Ontario Land Tribunal Decision is binding.

It should be noted that there was a typographical error in the original Statement of Significance for 1196-1204 Yonge Street. The word corner was misspelled as "coroner" under Heritage Attributes for Contextual Value and has now been corrected.

CONCLUSION

The properties at 1196 – 1210 Yonge Street meet 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/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values. As such, despite the notice of objection, these properties should be designated.

CONTACT

Mary L. MacDonald, MA, CAHP
Senior Manager, Heritage Planning
Urban Design, City Planning
Tel: 416-338-1079; fax: 416-392-1973
E-mail: Mary.MacDonald@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Letter of Objection – 1196-1210 Yonge Street
Attachment 2 - Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation) – 1196-1204 Yonge Street
Attachment 3 - Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation) – 1206-1210 Yonge Street

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)**

The properties at 1196 (including entrance addresses at 1198 Yonge Street and 2 Birch Avenue), 1202 and 1204 Yonge Street are worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for their cultural heritage value, and meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the categories of design and physical, historical and associative, and contextual value.

Description

The Main Street Commercial Block building at 1196-1204 Yonge Street is located at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Birch Avenue – a historic transit hub in the City's north end where a busy Yonge Street thoroughfare intersected at grade with the CPR rail line and its train station south of the tracks, as well as the proposed southern terminus of the Toronto and York Radial Company streetcar line whose tracks and terminals were planned and partially executed just west of Yonge Street from Farnham to Birch Avenue in 1911-1912 before the project was reversed by order of Privy Council in the following year.

The City's regrading of this portion of Yonge Street to increase pedestrian and vehicular safety through grade separation between the street and the CPR tracks in 1914-1916 transformed this unique Main Street Commercial Block building originally completed as a three-storey structure in 1889. Over a series of alterations and excavation on the east and south elevations of the subject building in response to this major infrastructural project the basement level was exposed, increasing the building height by one-storey and requiring relocation of the original storefronts to this newly defined street level. The creatively adaptive four-storey conversion resulting from this unique situation is prominently situated directly north of the CPR rail line that necessitated the vehicular underpass/rail overpass where it crosses Yonge Street at the edge of the city's Summerhill neighbourhood. The subject building, together with the abutting Main Street Commercial Row at 1206, 1208 and 1210 Yonge Street (1907-1908), anchor the northwest quadrant of this historically significant intersection of Yonge Street and the railway crossing and stands as a remnant portion of the area's streetscape condition prior to the early-20th century projects culminating in the current configuration of transportation infrastructure at this location.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**Physical and Design Value**

The existing four-storey, brick, Main Street Commercial Block-type building at 1196-1204 Yonge Street is valued as a significant representative example of the commercial and residential main street row buildings constructed in Toronto during the Late-Victorian era that, in this case, is also unique for its creative adaptation of an existing late-19th century building to the regrading of this portion of Yonge Street (1914-1916) to

accommodate a new vehicular underpass/railway overpass across Yonge for the intersecting CPR rail line. The architectural response to the new topography of the site required excavation and exposure of the basement level for relocation of the original storefronts to align with and permit pedestrian access at the newly lowered and sloped street grade. This physical adaptation and evolution of the building is valued as an enhancement to the original design rather than a detractor.

The east elevation of the red brick Main Street block maintains its overall 1889 design, style and detailing including its five-bay vertical arrangement delineated by brick pilasters, a regular rhythm of largely symmetrically-arranged window openings at the upper two storeys with continuous brick string-coursing and drip-mouldings, and detailed cornice woodwork with carved scroll brackets surmounted by distinctive "birdhouse"-shaped capitals that wrapped around the corner of the building at the east end of the south elevation.

Alterations to the 1889 building are evident in the addition of an exposed basement level during the regrading of Yonge Street followed soon after by the relocation of the original storefronts down to this lower level, and the new second storey (former first storey) refitted for additional residential units in keeping with the original two upper storeys. Though a bay-by-bay approach to reconfiguration of the new second storey spaces eschewed plans for a unified design for their east elevations, the bricking in of the large original storefront openings and their replacement with smaller, punched sash windows in vertical alignment with the two upper storeys clearly indicates the intention to transform this level functionally, formally and visually from retail to residential use in keeping with the two storeys above.

Historical and Associative Value

The building at 1196-1204 Yonge Street is valued for its association with the widening and regrading of this portion of Yonge Street in 1914-1916, a contentious and highly publicized infrastructural project involving the City of Toronto, the Toronto and York Radial Company and Canadian Pacific Railway Company. The resulting 2.5 degree slope of Yonge Street to produce an 18ft height clearance below a new rail overpass is physically manifested in the adapted and enhanced form of the subject property from a three- to four-storey building by excavating and exposing the original building's basement level as retail space to align with the new street grade. The 1889 wooden cornice stretching across the top of the current second storey on the east and (part of the south) elevations, survives as a reminder of the location of the 1889 storefronts and the original grade of the street, as does a floating door on the Birch Avenue (south) elevation.

All of these elements contribute to an understanding of the building's physical and design evolution while maintaining many of its original features that yield an understanding of the earlier, historic condition of this portion of Yonge Street where it crossed the railway tracks at grade. The building is also valued for the information it yields about the turbulent political situation created by the ensuing civic transportation infrastructure project involving all levels of government including the Privy Council of Canada, as well as the City Beautiful movement during which it was undertaken – an early urban planning effort promoting civic beauty through architectural and urban

design, of which the heritage-designated Beaux-Arts style North Toronto Rail Station designed by Darling & Pearson in 1916 on the southeast quadrant of this intersection stands as the crown jewel following its own adaptations to the concurrent infrastructure activity on site.

Contextual Value

Contextually, the property has cultural heritage value as it maintains and supports the historic character of this portion of Yonge Street. Situated at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Birch Avenue, it is an important contributor as it maintains the late-19th to early-20th century main street commercial built form evolution of the area. Here, a historic precinct is formed at three of four points where Yonge Street intersects with the CPR overpass, anchored by the landmark CPR North Toronto Station (1916) with the adjoining late-19th century commercial buildings at 1095-1099, 1101 and 1105 Yonge and, on the west side of Yonge south of the tracks, the collection of ten late-19th to early-20th century properties at 1148-1176 Yonge Street as well as the former Pierce Arrow Showroom (1930) at 1140 Yonge. All of the latter sites are recognized on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register for their cultural heritage value.

The Main Street Commercial Block building at 1196-1204 Yonge Street is historically, visually, functionally and physically linked to its surroundings where it anchors the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Birch Avenue as a significant example of its type with its massing and stylistic details characteristic of the late-19th century and typically located along the city's main commercial thoroughfares. The early-20th century conversion of the subject building at 1196-1204 Yonge Street from three- to four storeys speaks to the inextricable historical, visual, functional and physical linkages of the property's evolved form to contemporary civic infrastructural changes required by the adjacent and pre-existing CPR rail line.

Heritage Attributes

Design or Physical Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the Main Street Commercial Block building at 1196-1204 Yonge Street being a significant and unique representative example of the type with Late-Victorian era styling:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building on its lot at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Birch Avenue
- The existing four-storey scale, form and massing on a rectangular plan with a flat roof
- The materials, with the red brick cladding (currently painted) and the brick, wood and stone detailing
- The corbelled brick parapet along the roofline on the east elevation (currently missing on the three southern-most bays of the building corresponding to 1196-1200 Yonge Street)
- The east elevation of the building, which is organized vertically into five symmetrical bays, each with sloped commercial storefront space at street level

- The existing arrangement of the segmental-arched window openings with their stone sills at upper two storeys on the east elevation
- The continuous string-coursing and drip moulding between and above the window openings on the upper two storeys of the east elevation and third storey of the south elevation
- At the second-storey level, the existing arrangement of the bricked in elevations with punched window openings, which indicates the early-20th century affinity of this original storefront level with the upper residential levels rather than the new storefront level below
- The south elevation of this corner lot building (comprising 1196 Yonge Street plus its three-storey tail with entrance address at 2 Birch Avenue), including the return openings at the southeast corner of the first and second storeys that continue on the east elevation and the wooden cornice and window surrounds with decorative wooden scroll bracket surmounted by a "birdhouse" capital between the first and second storeys at all five bays (currently missing on the south elevation)

Historical or Associative Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the subject building for its association with the 1914-1916 regrading of this portion of Yonge Street:

- The current first storey of the building with its sloped grading and storefronts, as adaptively relocated
- The projecting wooden cornice line and window surrounds spanning the east elevation and wrapping around to the east end of the south elevation at the current second storey residential level that originally defined the location of the 1889 storefronts
- The "floating" door opening near the west end of the second-storey on the south elevation

Contextual Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the Main Street Commercial Block building at 1196-1204 Yonge Street as defining, supporting and maintain the historic character of the area and being historically, visually, functionally and physically linked to its setting:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the corner building on its lot on the west side of Yonge Street and north side of Birch Avenue

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)**

The properties at 1206, 1208 and 1210 Yonge Street are worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for their cultural heritage value, and meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the categories of design and physical, historical and associative, and contextual value.

Description

Built in 1907-1908, the set of three Main Street Commercial Row buildings at 1206-1210 Yonge Street is located on the west side of Yonge Street just north of Birch Avenue – a historic transit hub in the City's north end where a busy Yonge Street thoroughfare intersected at grade with the CPR rail line and its train station south of the tracks, as well as the proposed southern terminus of the Toronto and York Radial Company streetcar line whose tracks and terminals were planned and partially executed just west of Yonge Street from Farnham to Birch Avenue in 1911-1912 before the project was reversed by order of Privy Council in the following year.

The City's regrading of this portion of Yonge Street to increase pedestrian and vehicular safety through grade separation between the street and the CPR tracks in 1914-1916 resulted in partial excavation of the basement level and the addition of raised and recessed entry stairs to the main storefront entrances at 1206 and 1208 Yonge Street to align with this newly defined street level. The subject buildings, together with the abutting Main Street Commercial Block at 1196-1204 Yonge Street (1889), anchor the northwest quadrant of this historically significant intersection of Yonge Street the CPR rail line that necessitated the vehicular underpass/rail overpass where it crosses Yonge Street at the edge of the city's Summerhill neighbourhood, standing as a remnant portion of the area's streetscape condition prior to the early-20th century projects culminating in the current configuration of transportation infrastructure at this location.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**Physical and Design Value**

The collection of three, 2-storey, brick Main Street Commercial Row-type buildings at 1206-1210 Yonge Street is valued as a significant representative example of the commercial and residential main street row buildings constructed in Toronto during the Edwardian era. The principal (east) elevations fronting onto Yonge Street maintains much of its 1907-1908 design, style and detailing including the floor-to-ceiling storefront window openings with off-set entrances at street level with wooden cornice above, centred bay window with brick header at the second storey, and all surmounted by a decorative brickwork cornice at the roofline at 1206 and 1210.

Archival photos indicate that the middle property at 1208 Yonge Street originally contained a semi-circular parapet wall that has since been removed.

The architectural response to the newly lowered and sloped street grade along this portion of Yonge Street required the addition of raised and recessed stairs up to the main entrances on the principal (east) elevations to permit pedestrian access. The properties at 1206-1208 include a short flight of entrance steps that lead up to a recessed ground floor entrance while the stairs at 1210 Yonge are internal to the entrance. This physical adaptation and evolution of the entry stairs is valued as an enhancement to the original design rather than a detractor.

Historical and Associative Value

The row of mixed-use buildings at 1206-1210 Yonge Street, along with the adjacent corner property at 1196-1204 Yonge is valued for its association with the widening and regrading of this portion of Yonge Street in 1914-1916, a contentious and highly publicized infrastructural project involving the City of Toronto, the Toronto and York Radial Company and Canadian Pacific Railway Company. The resulting 2.5 degree slope of Yonge Street to produce an 18ft height clearance below a new rail overpass is physically manifested in the adapted entries of the subject properties by partially excavating and exposing the original basement to align with the new street grade.

All of these elements contribute to an understanding of the collection's physical and design evolution while maintaining many of the original features that yield an understanding of the earlier, historic condition of this portion of Yonge Street where it crossed the railway tracks at grade. The properties are also valued for the information they yield about the turbulent political situation created by the ensuing civic transportation infrastructure project involving all levels of government including the Privy Council of Canada, as well as the City Beautiful movement during which it was undertaken – an early urban planning effort promoting civic beauty through architectural and urban design, of which the heritage-designated Beaux-Arts style North Toronto Rail Station designed by Darling & Pearson in 1916 on the southeast quadrant of this intersection stands as the crown jewel following its own adaptations to the concurrent infrastructure activity on site.

Contextual Value

Contextually, the set of three Main Street Commercial Row buildings have cultural heritage value for maintaining and supporting the historic character of this portion of Yonge Street. Situated together on the west side of Yonge Street between Birch Avenue and Alcorn Avenue, along with the adjacent Main Street Commercial Block building at 1196-1204 Yonge, the properties survive as important contributors in maintaining the late-19th to early-20th century main street commercial built form evolution of the area. Here, a broader historic precinct is formed at three of four points where Yonge Street intersects with the CPR overpass, anchored by the landmark CPR North Toronto Station (1916), with the adjoining late-19th century commercial buildings at 1095-1099, 1101 and 1105 Yonge and, on the west side of Yonge south of the tracks, the collection of ten late-19th to early-20th century properties at 1148-1176 Yonge Street as well as the former Pierce Arrow Showroom (1930) at 1140 Yonge. All of the latter sites are recognized on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register for their cultural heritage value.

The Main Street Commercial Row at 1206-1210 Yonge Street is historically, visually, functionally and physically linked to its surroundings where it stands on the west side of Yonge Street north of Birch Avenue as a significant example of its type with its massing and stylistic details characteristic of the early-20th century and typically located along the city's main commercial thoroughfares. The conversion of the subject buildings following their lowering in 1914-1916 to incorporate raised and recessed entry stairs speaks to the inextricable historical, visual, functional and physical linkages of their evolved form to contemporary civic infrastructural changes required by the adjacent and pre-existing CPR rail line.

Heritage Attributes

Design or Physical Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the Main Street Commercial Row at 1206-1210 Yonge Street being a significant representative example of the type with Edwardian era styling:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the properties on their adjacent mid-block lots on the west side of Yonge Street between Birch Avenue and Alcorn Avenue
- The 2-storey scale, form and massing of the properties on a rectangular plan with a flat roof
- The materials, with the red brick cladding (currently painted) and the brick and wood detailing
- The corbelled brick cornice along the roofline at 1206 and 1210 Yonge Street on the east elevation
- The semi-circular parapet wall along the roofline at 1208 Yonge Street (currently missing)
- The east elevation of the three properties, each with commercial storefront space at street level and residential bay window above (bay currently missing at 1206 Yonge Street)
- The continuous wooden cornice above the first storey that spans the east elevation of all three properties
- At the second-storey level, the decorative brick headers above the centred window openings

Historical or Associative Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the subject buildings for their association with the 1914-1916 regrading of this portion of Yonge Street:

- The raised and recessed main entrances on the east elevations, including the internal main entrance stair alteration at 1210 Yonge Street

Contextual Value

Attributes that contribute to the value of the Main Street Commercial Row buildings at 1206-1210 Yonge Street as defining, supporting and maintain the historic character of the area and being historically, visually, functionally and physically linked to their setting:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the properties on their adjacent mid-block lots on the west side of Yonge Street between Birch Avenue and Alcorn Avenue