

350 Bloor Street East- Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property

Date: October 16, 2023

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 alterations proposed for the designated heritage property at 350 Bloor Street East under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act in connection with the development of the subject property.

The building at 350 Bloor Street East was built into the upper portion of the Rosedale Valley Ravine's south embankment in 1968-1970 to the designs of renowned Modernist architect, John C. Parkin. It features an identical expression on its principal (south), west and north elevations with a flat roof and precast concrete cladding that creates wedge-shaped columns and deep inset window openings above a recessed, transparent base. The property is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act and the precast concrete cladding panels are identified as heritage attributes of the building in the designation by-law 799-2023.

City Planning staff are currently reviewing development applications to permit a 63-storey mixed-use building, containing 806 dwelling units and 600 square metres of non-residential gross floor area at this property. This proposal includes reinstating the existing pre-cast concrete cladding as part of a six-storey podium for the new building. To determine the feasibility of this proposal, the developer proposes to temporarily remove three panels from the north façade, which faces the Rosedale Valley.

The application that is the subject of this report is for approval under the Ontario Heritage Act for the temporary removal of these panels to allow for testing the feasibility of re-using the cladding within the base design of the current development applications. The areas where the panels are removed would be temporarily infilled with timber framing and plywood, and the original panels would be reinstalled by the end of August 2024.

Heritage Planning staff support the proposal but are asking that conditions be attached to the approval under the Ontario Heritage Act that will allow City Council to require the

reinstatement of the panels within a reasonable time frame and to an appropriate conservation standard.

Approvals for the replated development application will be reported to the Toronto Preservation Board and Council on at a future date.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council approve the alterations to the heritage property at 350 Bloor Street East, in accordance with Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act, to allow for temporary removal of two precast concrete panels along the north facade of the existing building, with such testing in accordance with a Heritage Memorandum by ERA Architects Inc. dated October 13, 2023 and a Letter from the Facet Group Inc. dated September 25, 2023 prepared by ERA Architects Inc., and on file with the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, subject to the following conditions:

a. That the owners shall reinstate concrete panels with either the existing panels or new concrete panels that match the colour, texture, size and finished appearance of the existing original panels to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning by August 31, 2024 or by such time as agreed in writing by the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

b. That the heritage permit for the panel removal is withheld until owner has:

1. Provided 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 related to the reinstallation of the precast concrete panels.

c. That prior to the release of the Letter of Credit required in Recommendation 1.b.1, the owner shall:

1. Provide a letter of substantial completion prepared and signed by a qualified heritage consultant confirming that the removal and reinstatement of the precast concrete panels have been completed in accordance with the Heritage Memorandum by ERA Architects Inc. dated October 13, 2023 and a Letter from the Facet Group Inc. dated September 25, 2023 prepared by ERA Architects Inc., to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

On August 30, 2022, the City received Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment application related to the proposed redevelopment of the subject property (File No. 22 172660 STE 11 OZ). The proposal seeks to permit a 63-storey mixed-use building on the subject site that incorporates the south, west and north elevations of the existing building as façade panels..

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/application-details/?id=5130324&pid=274274&title=350-BLOOR-ST-E>

On July 19, 2023, City Council stated its Intention to Designate the property at 350 Bloor Street East under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.CC8.30>

BACKGROUND

Heritage Property

Located at the northeast corner of Bloor Street East and the access ramp to Mount Pleasant Road, the property at 350 Bloor Street East contains a six-storey building and exposed basement level. The Modernist building is built into the upper portion of the Rosedale Valley Ravine's south embankment. It features an identical expression on its principal (south), west and north elevations with a flat roof and precast concrete cladding that creates wedge-shaped columns and deep inset window openings hovering above a recessed, transparent base.

The building was constructed from 1968-1970 to the designs of renowned Modernist Canadian architect, John C. Parkin.

The property was designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act on July 19, 2023, by Designation By-law 799-2023.

Reasons for the Investigation Proposal

The proposal is to investigate the condition of some of the precast concrete panels on the north façade that faces the Rosedale Valley. This investigative work is being carried out to determine the feasibility of removing and reinstating the panels as part of the current development applications for this property. One spandrel panel, one soffit panel and one sill panel that were originally installed almost 50 years ago are proposed to be temporarily removed, to compare this assembly with archival drawings and to determine fastening and condition of the panels. Once removed the areas left would be temporarily

infilled with timber framing and plywood. The original panels are required to be reinstalled by the end of August 2024.

Heritage Planning Policy Framework

City of Toronto Official Plan

The Official Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. Relevant policies include the following:

3.1.6.4 - 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.

3.1.6.5 - 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.

3.1.6.26 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.

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (the "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) the Standards for Rehabilitation (10-12), and the Standards for Restoration (13-14) apply to this project.

The Standards and Guidelines can be accessed here:

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

COMMENTS

Investigation Strategy

The proposal is to temporarily remove some of the precast concrete panels on the north façade of this designated building in order to investigate the feasibility of removing and reinstating the panels as part of base cladding for the construction of a mixed use

building on the subject lands. The panels that are proposed to be removed are at the rear of the building rather than along the more visually prominent street facing facades. They would, however, still be visible from the Rosedale Valley and when travelling north along Mount Pleasant Road, particularly in the winter when the trees provide less screening.

The applicant has proposed to reinstate the panels by the end of August 2024. Heritage Planning staff have no objections to the temporary removal of these panels to allow for investigative work to take place. However, staff want to ensure that conditions are included as part of any approval that will require the reinstatement of the panels (or matching concrete panels if the existing cannot be reused) within a reasonable time frame, to approved standard, and that a letter of credit be held by the City to support these conditions.

CONCLUSION

Staff are of the opinion that the application under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act is consistent with the policies outlined in the Official Plan and The Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, provided that the precast concrete panels are reinstated once the exploratory work is complete.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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Urban Design, City Planning

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Location Map

Attachment 2 - Aerial Photograph

Attachment 3 - Photographs

Attachment 4 - Selected Drawings

LOCATION MAP
350 Bloor Street East

ATTACHMENT 1

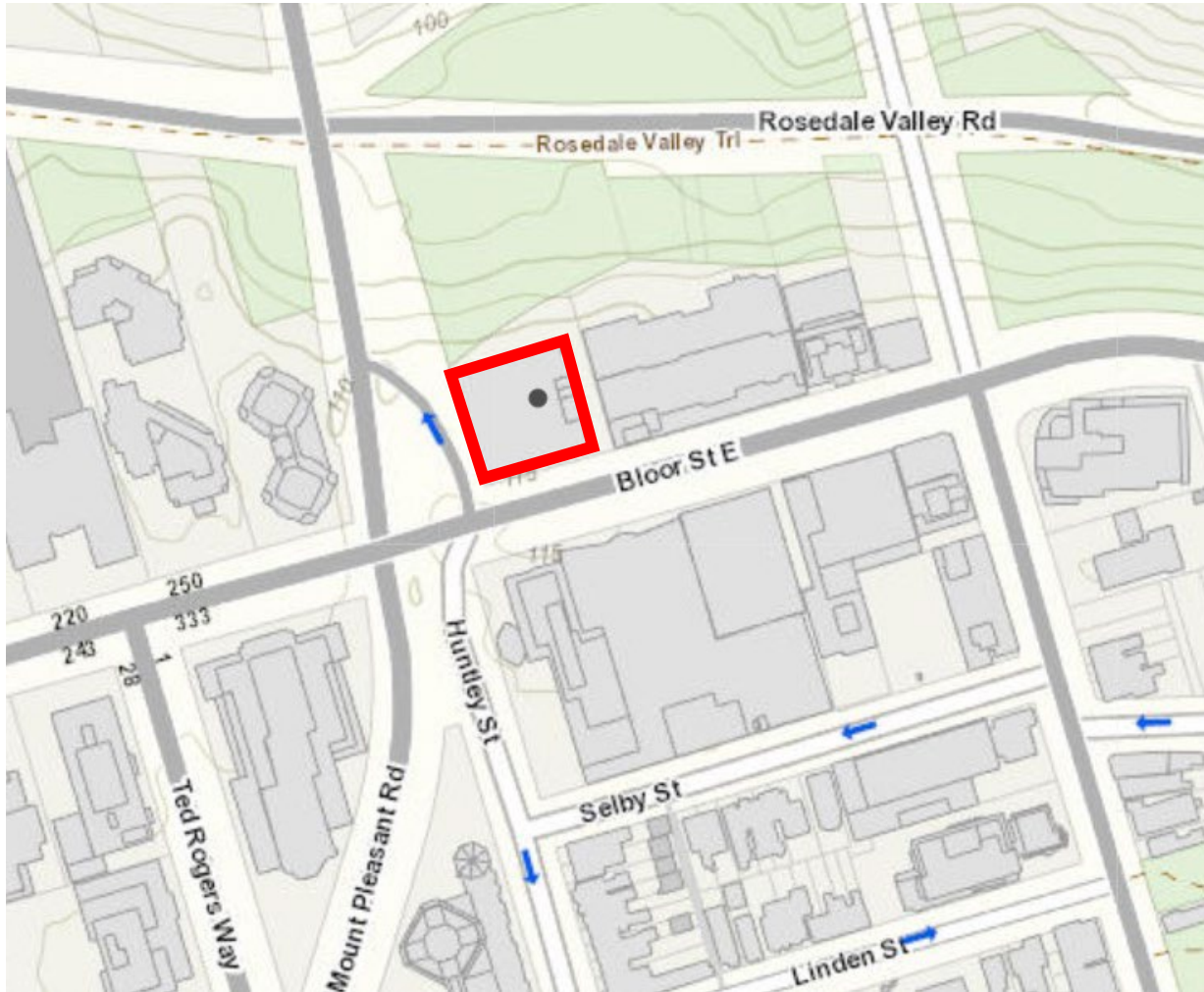


Figure 1. Location Map showing the property at 350 Bloor Street East. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown (City of Toronto Mapping).

350 Bloor Street East

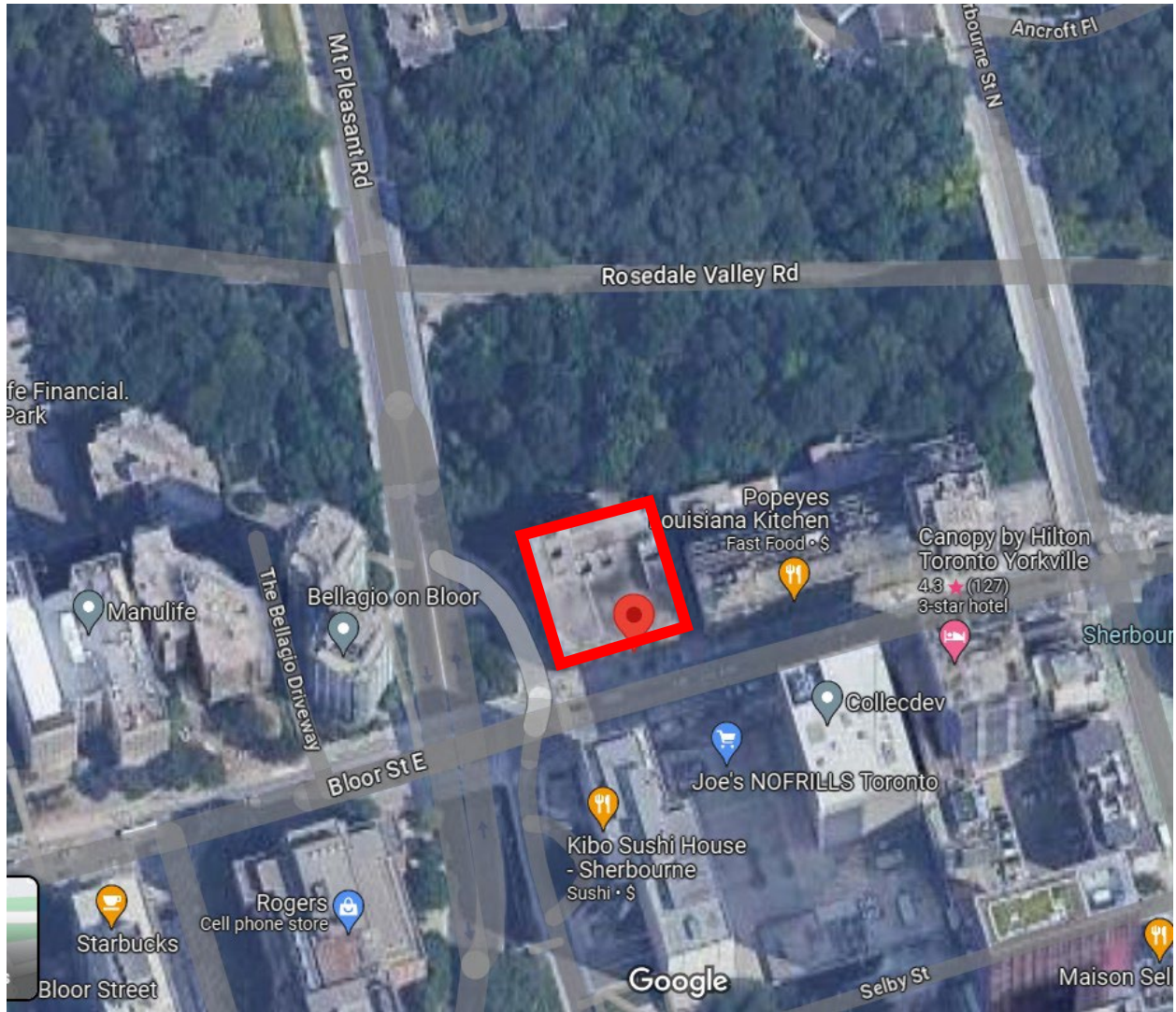


Figure 2. Aerial photograph showing the location of 350 Bloor Street East outlined in red, located on the north side of Bloor Street east of Mt. Pleasant Road and West of Sherbourne Street North. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown (Google Maps 2023).

350 Bloor Street East



View looking northeast from Bloor Street East and showing the south and west elevations of 350 Bloor Street East (Heritage Planning, 2023)

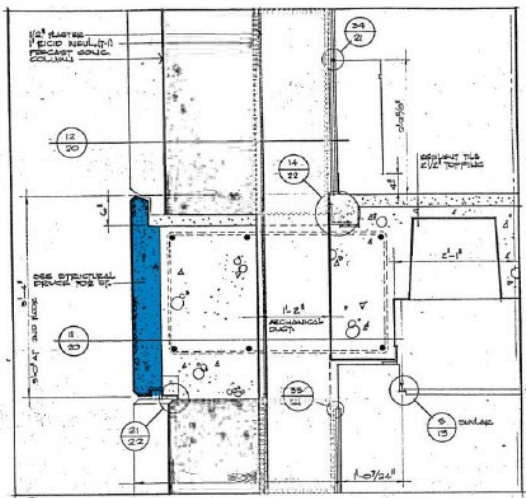


View showing the north elevation with the colonnaded pedestrian terrace and exposed lower level containing the entrance to the second lower level parking garage. (Heritage Planning, 2023)

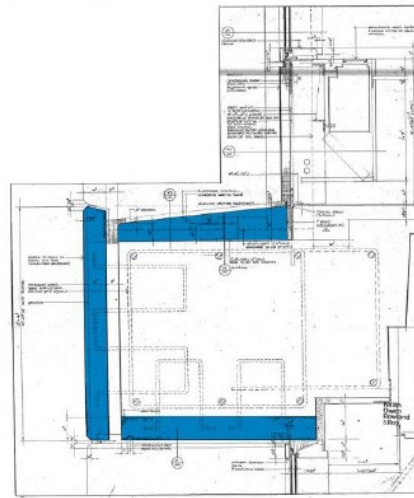
SELECTED DRAWINGS

ATTACHMENT 4

350 Bloor Street East



Section at spandrel panels (edge of slab)



Section at spandrel panels (window sill)

Archival drawings of the spandrel panels (CHER, ERA Architects Inc.)



North Elevation – Archival Drawing



North Elevation – Site Photo

Images showing archival drawing and site photo of the North Elevation of 350 Bloor Street East and location of one of the precast concrete panels to be removed and re-installed.