



# 1337 and 1339 King Street West

## The Tale of Two Victorians

# AGENDA

- 1337/1339 King Street
- Lost Historical Properties
- Value of Heritage
- Who owns Heritage?
- Heritage Preservation(Comparison)
- Open Questions..
- Closing Remarks

# Introduction

- Not contesting income-based affordable housing.
- I'm contesting the destruction of these two Victorians buildings.
- I grew up on Tyndall Ave during 70s and 80s
- I'm passionate about Toronto historical preservation

# 1337 King Street West(Lennox House)

- **Location:** 1337 King Street West(Lennox House)
- **History:** Constructed in 1907- 117 years old
- **Description:** 2.5 story Edwardian Four Square House located on the south side of King Street West
- Home to prominent residents such as Isaac Lennox, who was alderman for Parkdale and served on Toronto City Council.
- Recently acquired by PUCF





# 1339 King Street West(Bascom House)

- **Location:**1339 King Street West (Bascom House)
- **History:** Constructed in 1899. 125 years old
- **Description:** 2.5 story Queen Anne Revival Style House
- Bascom House was designed by 1898 by the architectural firm Simpson & Ellis
- 1988: It serves as an outreach centre: Food Drive, free meals, community kitchen access, refugee services and a sewing coop. In 2006, renovated for 10 units of affordable housing.



# Richardsonian Romanesque Architecture

- 1337 and 1339 King Street West in Toronto are examples of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. This style, named after the architect Henry Hobson Richardson, is characterized by its robust and heavy appearance
  - Round arches over windows and doors
  - Thick stone or brick walls
  - Asymmetrical facades
  - These buildings often convey a sense of grandeur, reflecting the architectural trends of the late 19th century.

**City Heritage Planning was not able to provide heritage protection that is in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act**

**That does NOT mean that these buildings don't have historical or architectural merit**



# Parkdale Methodist Church /Phoenix Place



# Development Proposal

## Replacement Building

- 10 existing units of 1339 King Street (Rents \$700 to \$900)
  - 90 Studios
  - 10 1 Bedroom
  - Income Based or BMR?
- I'm not contesting this affordable development. In fact, I'm fully supportive of it. I think we need more of these. However, NOT at the expense of destroying a heritage building. Once torn, gone forever.

Just because the heritage planning didn't provide a heritage status based on the Ontario Heritage Act - doesn't mean it's not worth saving. The Ontario Heritage Act and the way we approach heritage needs to change.





## Toronto Lost Heritage



# TORONTO LOST HERITAGE BUILDINGS

- Odette House(Wellesley St)
- St. John's Presbyterian Church,(Queen Street East)
- College Street Baptist Church (College and Bathurst)
- Historic Corktown Foundry Buildings:
- United Church (Bloor)
- King & Bathurst(Ontario Line)
- And the list goes on...



# Value of Heritage

- **Scarcity of Architectural Style & Uniqueness**
- **Gateway to the Past**
- **Architecture is Art, Art Drives Culture**

**Heritage Value = Age + Historical Significance + Architectural Value + Cultural Importance + Location + Preservation Condition.**

**What triggers tear-downs? We apply inconsistent rules when heritage is non-partisan.  
How old does it need to be to save? 100, 200, 300 years old?**

**Litmus Test Different?  
Affordable Housing >> Heritage Value?  
Condo High Rise >> Heritage Value?**



# Heritage vs Property Rights?

- Who owns History?
  - Does the property owner?
  - Councillor?
  - City Hall?
  - Developer?
- **History is owned by everyone**
- Just because a property is bought by one person/business - shouldn't dictate whether heritage lives or dies.
- In Toronto - there are no guardrails. NeoLiberal approach to development. 238 cranes, 285K units approved.

# Historic Preservation

**New York City:** The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission leads preservation efforts, designating landmarks like the Empire State Building and neighborhoods such as Greenwich Village. LPC regulations prevent the alteration or demolition of historic structures.

**Boston:** The Boston Landmarks Commission ensures the city's historic character is preserved, with strict rules in areas like Back Bay and Beacon Hill to prevent compromising these buildings by developers.

**San Francisco:** The San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission oversees preservation in districts like Haight-Ashbury. Laws and community activism protect historic buildings from over development. Prevent the development of Victorian-era buildings.

**Paris:** Paris maintains its historic landscape through strict zoning laws and efforts by organizations like Les Amis de Notre-Dame de Paris. Landmarks like the Eiffel Tower and Notre-Dame Cathedral are protected from alterations.

**Edinburgh:** Edinburgh's Old and New Towns, protected by UNESCO, are conserved by the Edinburgh World Heritage organization and strict planning laws, ensuring historical structures like Edinburgh Castle remain intact.

**Amsterdam:** Amsterdam's historic canal houses are preserved through strict building regulations and efforts by organizations such as Vereniging Hendrick de Keyser, supported by the Amsterdam City Council.

**Venice:** Venice's unique heritage is protected by stringent regulations from the Italian government and UNESCO, managing overdevelopment and tourism to preserve historic buildings and canals.

**Barcelona:** Barcelona's preservation movement, focused on Antoni Gaudí's works, is supported by heritage protection laws and organizations like the Catalan Association for the Defense of the Architectural Heritage, regulated by the Barcelona City Council.



Closing Remarks



# Questions

- How do you value heritage? What is the consistent litmus test?
- How many of this type of Victorian(Richardsonian Romanesque) will be left in Toronto? How many have been torn down?
- Are there other locations that we can build affordable housing? Toronto is 243 Square miles.
- If we can tear down these Victorians? Why not St Anne's Church, OSC? OP?
- Provincial Heritage Act - not on par with other states? Maybe additional guardrails?
- What is real heritage protection?
- Property Owner wanted to tear down historical property? Guardrails?
- How does Affordable Housing vs Condo vs Heritage affect decision outcome?

# Conclusion

- **This isn't about contesting income-based affordable housing. It's about contesting the destruction of heritage buildings.**
- **In the rush to build housing, I ask city council to PAUSE" on how it approaches historical buildings.**
- **Once torn, they are lost forever.**
- **History is owned by everyone – not just by owner, developer or city council.**