

9 Drumsnab Road - Alterations to a Designated Heritage Property in the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District - Refusal

Date: January 20, 2026

To: Toronto Preservation Board

Toronto East York Community Council

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

Wards: Ward 11 - University - Rosedale

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council refuse the alteration to the designated heritage property at 9 Drumsnab Road under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The subject site is a "B-rated" property located in the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (HCD). The applicant proposes to remove the existing original windows and to enlarge certain features of the entryway assembly, including the sidelights, transom window, and door opening. These alterations do not comply with the South Rosedale HCD Plan, the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, and the Official Plan. As such, staff are recommending that this application be refused.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council refuse the alterations to the designated heritage property at 9 Drumsnab Road, in accordance with Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act, for alterations including the replacement of windows and alteration to the entryway assembly as outlined in the Applicants' Submission Report by Boldera Architects on November 14, 2025.
2. If the owner appeals City Council's decision to refuse the issuance of an alteration permit under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act for the heritage property at 9

Drumsnab, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and the necessary City staff to attend the Ontario Land Tribunal hearing in opposition to the appeal.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

City Planning confirms there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

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

DECISION HISTORY

Council adopted the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (SRHCD) on February 4, 5 and 6, 2003 (By-law 115-2003), enacted on February 7, 2003:

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

There have been no previous reports to Council regarding the property at 9 Drumsnab Road.

BACKGROUND

The property at 9 Drumsnab Road is located within the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District (SRHCD). It is situated on the north side of Drumsnab Road, an enclave on the southeast edge of the SRHCD overlooking the Don River ravine lands.

9 Drumsnab Road is a Georgian Revival residence built in 1925-26 to the designs of the noted architectural firm Eden Smith & Son, Architects. It is classified as a B-rated property in the SRHCD Plan, which means that it is noteworthy for its overall quality and has citywide significance.

Permission is required under Section 42(1)1 of the Ontario Heritage Act to alter any part of a property other than the interior of any structure or building on the property within a heritage conservation district.

The proposed alterations include the installation of new windows to replace the existing original windows that have been identified as being repairable by a qualified engineer. Also included in the proposed alterations is the expansion of the entryway assembly which impacts the sidelights, transom window, and door opening.

Application History

In October 2023, Heritage Planning received an application for several alterations to the property at 9 Drumsnab Road. Notably, the application included a proposal to lower the interior floor level which would require a significant expansion of the window openings

by lowering the sills and reconfiguring the main entrance on the primary elevation to replace the entryway details. Heritage Planning staff expressed their concerns with this proposal and the permit was not pursued further by the applicant.

In April of 2024, Heritage Planning reviewed a permit submitted by the owner for structural underpinnings. The drawings included in this application showed floor levels that were consistent with the previously proposed lowering. Because this application did not include any exterior alterations, Heritage Planning staff signed off on the application and included a note that any exterior alterations resulting from the alterations to the interior would require a Heritage Permit.

In February of 2025 Heritage Planning received a permit application seeking to replace the existing, original windows citing their poor condition as documented in a Conditions Assessment completed by Boldera Architecture Inc. that was included with the permit application. In June of 2025 the owner was advised that the application was incomplete based on errors in the conditions assessment and incomplete information on the form.

In August of 2025 Heritage Planning received an updated draft of the conservation strategy, which included a statement of opinion from Clifford Restoration regarding the condition of the original windows. The report indicated that the overall condition of the windows was moderate to poor but that they remained 'substantially intact' and that the windows were not beyond repair. The proposed window replacement was, in part, based on the owner's desire to increase the rebates on the rails, stiles and muntins so that laminated, tempered insulated glass units could be integrated into the window assembly for added security. The consultant's report concluded that the introduction of security glass in the original frames might not be possible because of the increased weight load on the sash assembly. The report also proposed alterations to the front entry that enlarged the entry assembly and replaced the sidelights, transom and front door. This suite of proposed works was not accompanied by a revised permit application.

In January of 2026 Heritage Planning received an updated heritage permit application and a revised version of the conditions assessment which included a proposal for the alteration of the front entry assembly. This work would include the replacement of the original front door, the original transom and the existing, non-original sidelights. The purpose of the alteration is to lengthen the door and sidelights to provide a level entry into the house because the ground floor had been lowered by approximately 45 centimetres to increase ceiling height in the principle first floor rooms.

Heritage Policy Framework

Official Plan

The City of Toronto Official Plan provides the policy framework for heritage conservation in the City. The following Official Plan policies apply to heritage conservation districts and properties on the Heritage Register:

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 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.

3.1.6.33: 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.

Standards and Guidelines for the 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. These Standards and Guidelines state:

- Conserve the heritage value of an historic place. Do not remove, replace or substantially alter its intact or repairable character defining elements. Do not move a part of an historic place if its current location is a character-defining element. (Standard 1)
- Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach calling for minimal intervention. (Standard 3)
- Recognize each historic place as a physical record of its time, place and use. Do not create a false sense of historical development by adding elements from other historic places or other properties, or by combining features of the same property that never coexisted. (Standard 4)
- Evaluate the existing condition of character-defining elements to determine the appropriate intervention needed. Use the gentlest means possible for any intervention. Respect heritage value when undertaking an intervention. (Standard 7)
- Make any intervention needed to preserve character-defining elements physically and visually compatible with the historic place and identifiable on close inspection. Document any intervention for future reference. (Standard 9)
- Repair rather than replace character-defining elements. Where character-defining elements are too severely deteriorated to repair, and where sufficient physical evidence exists, replace them with new elements that match the forms, materials and detailing of sound versions of the same elements. Where there is insufficient physical evidence, make the form, material and detailing of the new elements compatible with the character of the historic place. (Standard 10)
- Repair rather than replace character-defining elements from the restoration period. Where character-defining elements are too severely deteriorated to repair and where sufficient physical evidence exists, replace them with new elements that match the forms, materials and detailing of sound versions of the same elements. (Standard 13)

South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District Plan

Section 5.2.3 states, "When a Heritage Permit application does not, in view of City staff, comply with the district design guidelines... City Council will decide on the application. In making its decision, Council will be provided with the advice of City staff".

Section 5.3.2 of the SRHCD Plan contains the following guidelines which are applicable to this application:

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.

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.

Windows, doors and details should relate in scale and proportion to those of the existing building.

COMMENTS

Heritage Planning staff have reviewed the alterations to the heritage property at 9 Drumsnab Road which include new windows to replace original repairable windows and the reconstruction of the front entry, including the loss of original features, to account for interior floor changes. It is the opinion of staff that the proposal to replace the original windows is not consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and not in keeping with the design guidelines of the SRHCD Plan, which discourage the replacement of attributes, such as windows, that are demonstrably repairable. The 2023 Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by ERA prior to the interior renovations of the home and submitted by the applicant notes the condition of the windows as "fair". In the condition assessment prepared by Clifford Restoration in 2025, the windows were found to be "not beyond repair and that they could be restored to proper function".

The proposed alterations to the entryway assembly result in a nearly half meter drop in the interior floor level. Therefore, the components of the entryway are effectively being stretched to accommodate the interior. An important feature of the Georgian-revival style of the home is the careful consideration to the proportions of the building's attributes and details in relation to each other and the structure as a whole. While there is indication that the front portico was previously changed, there is not sufficient evidence that shows that the transom window or the door opening and sidelight

openings have been altered. It is Heritage Planning's opinion that the elongation of the centrally featured entryway skews the proportions of the detailing on the front elevation of the residence. It is recommended that the owner explore an interior solution instead.

Heritage Planning staff are therefore of the opinion that the alterations to the designated heritage property at 9 Drumsnab Road do not comply with the policies and guidelines in the SRHCD Plan, the Standards and Guidelines for the conservation of Historic Places in Canada and the Official Plan. As such it is recommended that permission under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act be refused.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

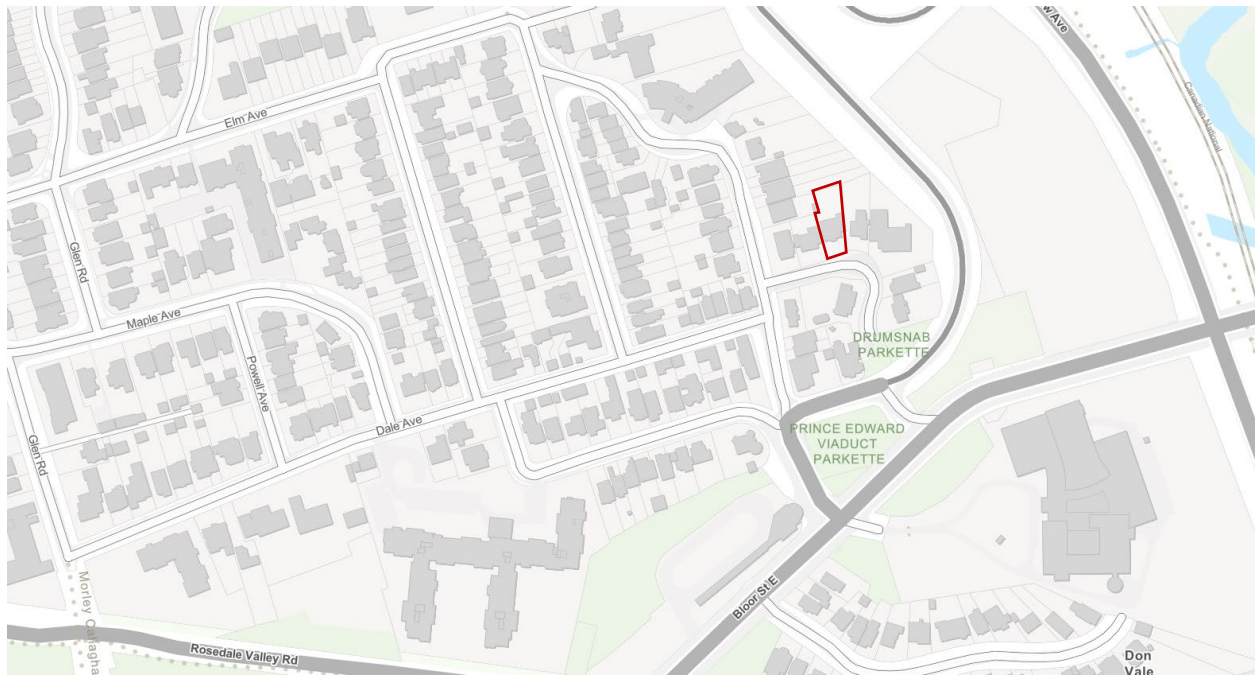
Mary L. MacDonald, MA,CAHP
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Location Map
Attachment 2 - Photographs
Attachment 3 - Drawings

LOCATION MAP
9 Drumsnab Road

ATTACHMENT 1



Map showing the subject property's location outlined in red at 9 Drumsnab Road. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown (City of Toronto Mapping).



Photograph showing the existing condition of the dwelling (Clifford Restoration Limited).



Contextual photo of the existing original windows on the western side of the south elevation.



Contextual photo of the existing original windows on the eastern side of the south elevation.



Detail photograph of typical window.



Architectural drawing showing existing front elevation (Boldera Architects).



Architectural drawing showing proposed front elevation (Boldera Architects).



Rendering of proposed front elevation (Boldera Architects).