

To: Bill Kiru, Manager, Central Section, Etobicoke York District Community Planning, 3rd Floor, 2 Civic Centre Court, Attn: Matthew Premru

From: Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, 17th Floor, City Hall, Attn: Georgia Kuich

Re: **2 Station Road**
Zoning By-law Amendment & Site Plan Control, Application Nos. 13 143167 WET 06 OZ and 13143181 WET 06 SA

Date: June 6, 2013

Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) has reviewed the subject application and has the following comments.

Background:

This application affects the listed heritage property at 2 Station Road, adopted by City Council on September 27, 2006 for inclusion on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties.

The Mimico Wesley United Church is a prominent local landmark located on the corner of Station Road and Mimico Avenue. The building was constructed c. 1922 to the designs of the prominent architectural firm of Burke, Horwood & White. A later addition, designed by Eric Horwood c. 1953, extended the front of the building toward Mimico Avenue.

Proposal:

The applicant is proposing to construct additions on the north and south elevations of the heritage building with major alterations to the east and west elevations by creating additional GFA in order to accommodate a 40-unit senior's residence and community and worship space.

Relevant Policies:

Provincial Policy Statement

The Provincial Policy Statement 2.6.1 (PPS) indicates that "Significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscape shall be conserved". Properties included on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties are considered to be "significant" in this context. In the PPS 2005, "conserved" means "the identification, protection, use and/or management of cultural heritage and archaeological resources in such a way that their heritage values, attributes and integrity are retained. This may be addressed through a conservation plan or heritage impact assessment".

City of Toronto Official Plan

In the City's Official Plan, policy 3.1.5.2 states that "heritage resources on properties listed on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties will be conserved".

Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

On March 3 & 4, 2008, Toronto City Council adopted the *Standards and Guidelines* as the official document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto.

Comments:

Staff of HPS has reviewed drawings accompanying the application dated March 28, 2013 prepared by Robert Reimers Architect Ltd. and the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) dated January 2013 prepared by Martindale Planning Services.

Heritage Preservation Services staff has met with the applicant, architect and heritage consultant to discuss the proposal and provide comments on and options for the redevelopment of the site.

In general, the rehabilitation of the historic church building and its conversion to multi-use would be supported by staff as a way to ensure its conservation and long term use. As with any rehabilitation of a heritage building, the proposal must be sensitive to and have minimal impact on the building's heritage attributes.

At present, the level of intervention being proposed for this heritage property is excessive and is not in keeping with the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, the Official Plan, or the Provincial Policy Statement as they relate to the conservation of heritage properties.

Alterations to all four elevations of the building would have a negative impact on the heritage character of the church building by significantly changing its exterior form and obscuring important heritage attributes. Applicable preservation standards and guidelines that mandate treatment of historic properties, as adopted by Toronto City Council, provide that where a building's exterior form and/or heritage attributes have been identified as a character-defining element, interventions should have minimal impact.

Proposed Alterations:

The new GFA that would be created by extending from the ridge of the roof to the outside plane of each of the side aisles from front to back and extending out past the rear elevation of the church would create a rectangular box-shape resulting in the loss of the important church form of the building as defined by its roof and the side aisles. The clerestory windows on both the east and west elevations would be lost. The addition proposed at the south elevation would obscure half of that elevation including the main entrance. The proposed rear addition mimics the form, height, façade patterns, materials and details of the original building, rendering it indistinguishable as a new addition.

The proposal includes numerous other interventions including raising the height of the corner bays and altering and/or moving original window openings. The significant interior space includes a steel frame and suspended floor structure which would be mostly removed in the proposal to allow for the introduction of additional floor levels.

The original form and heritage attributes of the building should be maintained. Any alterations should be minimal and not adversely affect its character-defining elements.

Heritage Impact Assessment:

A Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Martindale Planning Service was submitted with the application. Because the same consultant also prepared the Planning Rationale submitted with the application, staff questions the impartiality of the consultant in the preparation of the HIA. Heritage Impact Assessments are meant to provide an independent analysis of the impact of the proposal on the heritage resource and should inform the proposed development, not be influenced by it.

The consultant's description of the cultural heritage value of the site includes the building's design value as the "only example in Mimico of early Italian Romanesque Revival basilican architecture", its main entrance and doors, roof form, windows, bell tower, materials, architectural details and the interior suspended ceiling design and structural steel girders. The majority of these features would be negatively impacted by the proposal.

The analysis of the impact of the proposal on the heritage attributes acknowledges that there would be impacts to the character-defining elements of the property, but presents them as acceptable, without applying generally accepted heritage conservation standards and principles.

The mitigation strategy does not reference the impacts on the heritage attributes and no options or alternatives are proposed.

Conclusion:

The current proposal demonstrates a level of intervention that cannot be supported by staff. However, there may be opportunities to rehabilitate the building with modifications to the current proposal that would limit the impact on the heritage attributes. Staff is hopeful that these issues can be resolved through further discussion with the applicant in conjunction with a revised proposal that is consistent with generally-accepted heritage conservation standards and principles.

An objective and complete Heritage Impact Assessment should accompany any revisions to the proposal.

Staff will be recommending designation of the property at 2 Station Road under the provisions of Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.



for Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager
Heritage Preservation Service