

111 to 125 River St - Zoning Amendment and Rental Housing Demolition Applications - Supplementary Report

Date: June 2, 2021

To: City Council

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

Wards: 13- Toronto Centre

Planning Application Numbers: 19 231689 STE 13 OZ and 19 248623 STE 13 RH

SUMMARY

On May 19, 2021 the Toronto and East York Community Council directed that the Chief Planner, Executive Director of City Planning review the communications submitted in association with Item TE25.3 for the purpose of assessing the heritage value of the development site and affected properties in consultation with Heritage Planning and to report the findings and any staff recommendations directly to the June 8 and 9, 2021 City Council meeting.

Staff have reviewed the communications associated with TE25.3 and independently researched and evaluated the subject properties on the development site in accordance with Ontario Regulation 9/06 (the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation that the City also applies to properties being assessed for the Heritage Register). As such, staff have determined that they do not have sufficient cultural heritage value to merit inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register.

The properties at 111-119 River Street, comprised of five, adjoining three-storey brick Bay and Gable-type houses were constructed in 1909. While the properties at 111-119 River Street are examples of the Bay and Gable building type, they post-date its period of popularity, which was predominantly during the 1880s in Toronto. Additionally, the principal (west) elevations at 117 and 119 River Street were significantly altered when storefront additions were added in 1970, which compromise their integrity.

While the Queen-River Secondary Plan study included a "windshield" heritage survey of the study area ten years ago, and the survey included consideration of the subject properties, the survey methodology was preliminary in nature and did not capture the contextual value of properties, including social and community value. Given that the heritage survey that was undertaken in association with the Queen-River Secondary Plan is not in keeping with current cultural heritage resources assessments practice for

planning studies, staff recommend that an updated review of properties within the Queen River Plan area be undertaken and that staff report back to the Toronto Preservation Board and Council should properties merit inclusion on the City's Heritage Register.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to review and update the windshield survey undertaken in association with the Queen-River Secondary Plan and to report back to the Toronto Preservation Board on any recommendations with respect to the inclusion of specific properties on the City's Heritage Register.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

The Final Report from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District (April 29, 2021) considered by Toronto and East York Community Council and forwarded without Recommendations to City Council may be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-166341.pdf>

The Final Report on the Queen-River Secondary Plan dated December 14, 2014, provides a detailed description of the Queen-River area and surrounding uses, transportation elements, built form, heritage, natural heritage, ravine and natural feature protection, parks and community facilities. The Final Report is available at:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2015/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-74409.pdf>

2019.TE7.19 - Queen-River Secondary Plan - Request for Direction

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.TE7.19>

The LPAT approved the Queen River Secondary Plan (Official Plan Amendment 287) in a Decision and Order dated February 10, 2020. By-law 261-2020 containing the final version of the Secondary Plan can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/2020/law0261.pdf>

COMMENTS

The subject properties at 111-125 River Street reflect the pattern of residential development that characterized the former Cabbagetown neighbourhood prior to the 111 to 125 River St - Zoning Amendment and Rental Housing Demolition Applications - Supplementary Report

area's extensive clearance that led to the creation of Regent Park. The properties at 123 and 125 River Street were erected in 1925 and they were originally constructed as a pair with 127 and 129 River Street, which have since been demolished. Additionally the porches at the principal (west) elevations of 123 and 125 were reconfigured after Dundas Street East was realigned at River Street. Despite the area's strong association with the brewing industry and the associated industrial history, upon examination of Assessment Rolls, Building Records, and Toronto City Directories, it has been determined that the properties at 111-125 River Street are not associated with the history of the Reinhardt Salvador Brewery.

The subject properties are not included on the City's Heritage Register nor are they adjacent to any properties currently included on the Register. HIAs are required as part of a rezoning application when a property is included on the City's Heritage Register and may be required if the development site is adjacent to a property included on the Heritage Register. When a planning application was filed that included the subject properties, staff did not raise any heritage concerns and heritage was not raised as an issue at the community consultation meeting. The Queen-River Secondary Plan was under appeal to the LPAT when the application was submitted and heritage staff did not participate in the review of this application.

Queen-River Secondary Plan - Heritage Component

On February 10, and 11, 2015, Toronto City Council adopted the Queen-River Secondary Plan (OPA 287). The goal of the Secondary Plan was to provide a planning policy framework for new development that recognizes the need to attract new investment to the area while ensuring new development is compatible with the existing and planned context, addressing the interface between residential and non-residential uses, improving the public realm, and promoting a complete community.

Heritage Planning staff were members of the original Planning study team and in 2011 staff undertook a windshield survey of the study area in order to identify properties that might have heritage potential. This survey focused on the potential for properties to hold design or physical value, but did not consider historical and associative value, or contextual value as is current practice.

The subject properties were among several that were identified for further examination at that time but, given their lack of design merit and their diminished physical integrity, staff did not pursue them for further research and evaluation. Therefore, the subject properties at 111 to 125 River Street were not identified as having heritage potential within the Queen-River Secondary Plan (OPA 287) planning study. No properties within the study area were recommended for listing based on this approach.

In the ten years since the Queen-River Secondary Plan "windshield survey" was undertaken, the practice of identifying cultural heritage resources has advanced as a component of planning studies. Current practice includes the development of a historic context statement to provide an understanding of the themes and periods of development within a study area. These statements also relate properties to one another in order to inform the identification of buildings and landscapes that may have cultural heritage value. This approach allows staff to assess not only design or physical

value, but also historical and associative value, and contextual value, as is consistent with provincial criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest of a property.

Given that the heritage survey that was undertaken in association with the Queen-River Secondary Plan is not in keeping with current cultural heritage resources assessments practice for planning studies, staff recommend that an updated review of properties within the Queen River Plan area be undertaken and that staff report back to the Toronto Preservation Board and Council should properties merit inclusion on the City's Heritage Register.

Meanwhile any current and future planning applications submitted within the Queen-River Secondary Plan will be assessed for their heritage potential on a site by site base until the area review is completed.

111 to 125 River Street

Staff have reviewed the communications submitted to Toronto and East York Community Council with respect to TE25.3 on May 19, 2021 and expedited research and evaluation of the properties located on the development site as directed.

On May 20, 2021, staff requested records from the City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Building records. Both facilities are closed to the public. City Planning would like to thank the staff of the City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Building for prioritizing and accessing their records within one day to provide the historical documents to Heritage Planning.

The subject properties are located within the Regent Park neighbourhood, which generally includes the area bound by Parliament Street, Gerrard Street East, the Don River, and Shuter Street (Figure 1). Prior to the area's extensive re-development as part of the city's urban renewal program in the post war period (1947-1960) it was commonly referred to as Cabbagetown, a name that has subsequently been applied to the primarily residential late-19th and early-20th century neighbourhoods to the north of Gerrard and west of Parliament (Figure 2).

The properties fronting on River Street reflect the pattern and type of development characteristic of the Cabbagetown neighbourhood prior to its demolition: primarily brick and clapboard housing consisting of workers housing, bay and gable and terrace houses. The area was largely built-out between 1880 and 1910, and housed a culturally diverse community reflecting waves of immigration to the city through the first half of the 20th century. While the majority of the houses, shops and institutions associated with this neighbourhood were demolished as part of the city's urban renewal project, a collection of buildings remain, including a number of house form buildings along the peripheral streets, and places of worship (St George's Macedonian Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church, 17 Regent Street; St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church, 509 Dundas Street East; Serbian Orthodox Church St. Sava, 203 River Street).

The lands to the east of the subject properties predominantly housed various industries strategically situated alongside the Don River, including the sprawling Thomas Davies Brewing and Malting Company (the Don Brewery); the Salvador Brewing Company; and

the Kemp Manufacturing Company. Blocks of housing were built between these industries and along River Street, consistent with the pattern of development within the larger neighbourhood which was largely unplanned and speculative. Although none of the larger industrial and manufacturing complexes remain, a few smaller buildings do, including the Adam Beck Cigar Box Manufacturing Company Building (736 Dundas Street East) and the Queen City Vinegar Company Building (19 River Street).

The properties at 111-119 River Street were constructed in 1906 (Figures 3 and 4). They are comprised of five, adjoining three-storey brick Bay and Gable-type houses that are located at the western edge of Lot 11 fronting River Street, north of Mark Street (formerly Blevins Avenue), and south of Dundas Street East (formerly Wilton Avenue). The properties at 123 and 125 River Street were erected in 1925 (Figure 5). They are located at the western edge of Lot 12 fronting River Street, and they were originally constructed as a pair with 127 and 129 River Street, which have since been demolished (Figure 6). The property at 121 River Street was constructed in 1929. 121-125 River Street are comprised of two-storeys and are fashioned in the Craftsman architectural style.

While the properties at 111-119 River Street are examples of the Bay and Gable building type, they post-date its period of popularity, which was predominantly during the 1880s in Toronto. Additionally, the principal (west) elevations at 117 and 119 River Street were significantly altered when storefront additions were added in 1970, which compromises their integrity.

Similarly, while the properties at 121-125 River Street are examples of the Craftsman architectural style, they have also been extensively altered. The porches at the principal (west) elevations of 123 and 125 were reconfigured after Dundas Street East was realigned at River Street in c.1954 and the roof and second-storey window opening at 125 River Street have been altered (Figures 7-9). Historic photographs also illustrate that sometime after 1952, the principal (west) elevation of 121 River Street was significantly altered when the porch was bricked shut and the second-storey window opening was altered (Figure 10). These modifications also compromise the integrity of the subject properties. As a result, the properties at 111-125 River Street are not representative of the Bay and Gable building type and the Craftsman architectural style, nor do they display a high degree of craftsmanship, artistic merit, or scientific or technical achievement.

Upon examination of Assessment Rolls, Building Records, and Toronto City Directories, it has been determined that the properties at 111-125 River Street are not associated with the history of the Reinhardt Salvador Brewery. Although a brewery had been continuously operating at the eastern portion of Lot 11 since 1862, and the "ghost sign" in the side (south) elevation at 111 River Street may have been related to the Reinhardt Salvador Brewery, there is no indication that there was any association between its owner, Lothar Reinhardt, and the subject properties fronting River Street. As a result, the properties at 111-125 River Street do not have direct associations with a person or organization that is significant to the community.

The subject properties at 111-125 River Street reflect the pattern of residential development that characterized the former Cabbagetown neighbourhood prior to the

area's extensive clearance as part of the City's urban renewal project that led to the creation of Regent Park. Other examples of this pattern of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century residential development exist along River Street, Shuter Street, Gerrard Street East and Parliament Street, as well as within the adjacent neighbourhoods of Trefann Court, Corktown, Cabbagetown South and Cabbagetown. The subject properties no longer maintain or support the character of the area, and they are not physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to their surroundings, which is defined by buildings relating to the period of urban renewal and more recent redevelopment of Regent Park.

CONCLUSION

Staff have undertaken research and evaluation for the properties at 111-125 River Street and determined that the properties do not meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, which the City also uses when assessing properties for its Heritage Register.

Given that the heritage survey that was undertaken in association with the Queen-River Secondary Plan was undertaken ten years ago and is not in keeping with current cultural heritage resources assessments practice for planning studies, Heritage Planning staff recommend an updated review of potential heritage resources within the area that was originally subject to windshield survey and that a report be prepared for the Toronto Preservation Board and Council should any properties merit inclusion on the City's Heritage Register.

CONTACT

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

SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Maps and Photographs



Figure 1. Property map, annotated to show the location of 111-125 River Street (City of Toronto, iView)

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: 111-125 RIVER STREET

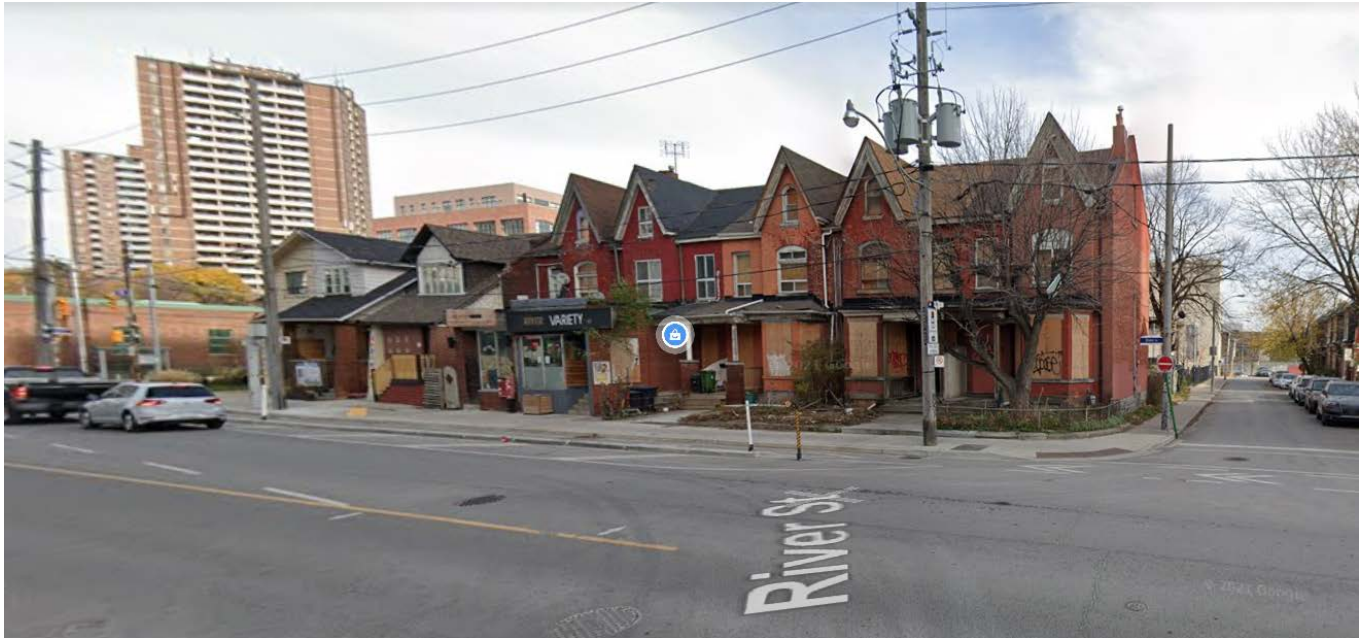


Figure 2. View of 111-125 River Street (Google Streetview, 2020)



Figure 3. 111-119 River Street (Heritage Planning, 2021)

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: 111-125 RIVER STREET

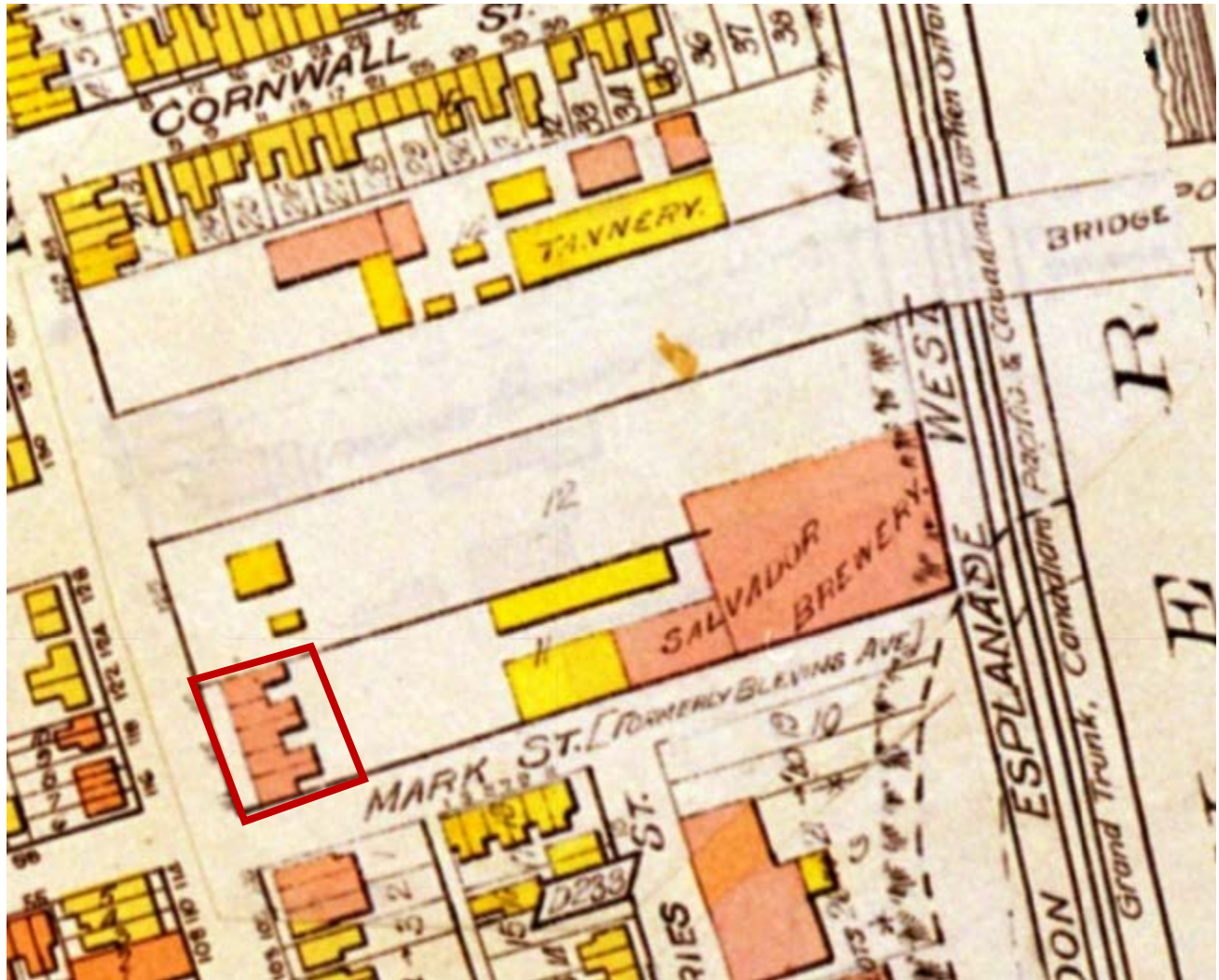


Figure 4. 1913 Road's Atlas Map showing the location of the subject properties at 111-119 River Street. 121-125 River Street not yet been built (Toronto Historic Maps)

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: 111-125 RIVER STREET



Figure 5. 121-125 River Street (right to left) (Heritage Planning, 2021)

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: 111-125 RIVER STREET



City of Toronto Archives, Series 372, s0372_ss0033b_it0288

Figure 6. 1951 Historic photo of 127 & 129 River Street, which were originally located to the north of 123 & 125 River St and were later demolished when Dundas Street East was realigned (City of Toronto Archives)



Figure 7. 1952 Historic photo showing 123 & 125 River Street prior to alterations (City of Toronto Archives)

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: 111-125 RIVER STREET



Figure 8. 1939 aerial photo showing the subject properties at 111-125 River Street, with an arrow denoting 127 & 129 River St prior to being demolished (City of Toronto)



Figure 9. 1954 aerial photo showing the southeast corner of Dundas Street East and River Street after Dundas Street East was realigned. This resulted in the demolition of 127 and 129 River Street and alterations to 123 and 125 River Street (City of Toronto)

MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS: 111-125 RIVER STREET



Figure 10. 1952 historic photo of 121 River St (left) and partial view of 119 River St (right) showing both properties prior to alterations (City of Toronto Archives)