

Heritage Impact Statement and  
HCD Plan Compliance Statement.  
10477 Islington Avenue, Kleinburg, ON  
In the City of Vaughan  
October 2022



Figure 1. View of shop from the Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District Inventory, 2003.

Paul Oberst  
Heritage Consultant & Architect (retired)

## **Mandate:**

By virtue of its location within the Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District and its inclusion in the City of Vaughan's *Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value*, the subject property at 10477 Islington Avenue in Kleinburg is a protected heritage resource.

The Provincial Policy Statement addresses the development of protected heritage resources in Section 2.6.1.

**2.6.1 Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes** shall be *conserved*.

**Conserved** is defined in the Provincial Policy Statement as follows:

Conserved: means the identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained. This may be achieved by the implementation of recommendations set out in a conservation plan, archaeological assessment and/or **heritage impact assessment** that has been approved, accepted or adopted by the relevant planning authority and/or decision-maker. Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches can be included in these plans and assessments.

This Heritage Impact Statement is prepared in compliance with this requirement in the Provincial Policy Statement, and relies on the guidance provided in the City's *Heritage Impact Assessment Terms of Reference* and discussions with City staff..

Heritage Resource Owner: Albion Holdings Ltd.  
c/o Louie Liberta  
2001 Albion Road, Unit 22,  
Etobicoke ON. M9W 6V6

Heritage Consultant: Paul Oberst, architect and heritage consultant.  
152 Kensington Avenue South,  
Hamilton ON, L8M 3H5  
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## **Appendices:**

A- Heritage Consultant's C.V.

## 1. Historical Overview

In one of the Bindertwine pamphlets, Janet Berton dates the building to 1897. It is firmly associated with the Shaw family, prominent Kleinburg merchants, although I can't establish if they built it.

George Reaman's *A History of Vaughan Township*, writes of them as follows:

Charles Shaw of Scotland came to Canada with the 72<sup>nd</sup> Scottish Infantry and was discharged in 1841. He then went to Burwick (Woodbridge), marrying Jane Calhoun of Ireland. He was a tinsmith and in 1869 moved to Kleinburg, where he opened a tinsmith shop. His son Charlie learned the trade and married Enes Witherspoon. Charlie and Charles extended their business, selling all kinds of hardware. Charles Sr. died in 1903 and Charlie went into the furniture business as well. The family is remembered for their Binder Twine Delivery Night (the result of farmers needing to come buy their Binder Twine at a central location), which began about 1891, and evolved into a fair that lasted until around the 1930's. *Ed. note-The Bindertwine Festival was revived in 1967 as a Centennial project.*

In 1921, Charlie Shaw became an Imperial Oil dealer, continuing in the business until 1931. He was aided by three sons (William, Carl and Earl), who carried on the hardware and furniture business after his death. Earl's son, Frank, joined the business with his father and mother after returning from the war. Earl Shaw died in 1956, and his widow, son and daughter-in law carried on the business. In 1961, they auctioned off the furniture business. They then remodeled the store and rented it to John Perry, who operated a variety store. In 1969, Shaw's held another auction, selling off the hardware business, as the property had been sold to Norm Hall.

During its history it has housed a grocery and variety store with a barber shop in back, a furniture and hardware store, a drug store, an antiques shop, an ice cream parlor (often within one of the other shops) and a rock shop. It currently contains a fitness and rehab centre.



Figure 2. Undated photo of Shaw's Hardware. This building was across the street from 10477, and no longer exists.



Figure 3. Undated hand-coloured post card of Kleinburg. 10744 is on the right.



Figure 4. Looks like an auction. The car is a 56 Pontiac, so I'm guessing it's the 1961 event.



Figure 5. As an ice cream shop in the 1980s.



## 2. Engagement

I was engaged by the owner, Albion Holdings Limited,, to produce a Heritage Impact Assessment for a rear addition to the existing building at 10477 Islington Avenue. I have visited the site, and the owner provided recent photographs to complement those I made while conduction Heritage District Study.

My assessment of the heritage impact relies on my own expertise—I am a recently retired architect and a professional member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals—taking guidance from accepted standards for heritage conservation in Ontario.

## 3. Introduction to the Site

The property is located on the east side of Islington Avenue, about 50 metres south of Kellam Street, in the centre of the Kleinburg Village Commercial Core.



Figure 6. Google aerial view of the Kleinburg village core. The subject property is indicated by the red dot.

When Charlie Shaw held his first Binder Twine Delivery Night, Kleinburg was at its prosperous height. The population topped 350. Half a dozen manufacturing industries produced farm implements, furniture, harnesses, clothes, and carriages. Howland's was the largest mill between Toronto and Barrie. The village's location and road connections put it on the main road to Toronto, and the main street held three hotels to cater to the traffic. The "boomtown" false front design of this building, and the building adjacent to the north, marks a *village* with aspirations to becoming a *town*. That transition never happened, and these two buildings are particularly indicative of the economic history of Kleinburg.



#### 4. Description of the Existing Building



Figure 8. Front (West) side of the building.

Except for the paint colour, the building has remained basically unchanged for decades. It has a simple rectangular footprint, with a plain shed-roof verandah in front supported on four square columns. The ground floor front has a central entry door in an angled, glazed recess, flanked by large shopfront windows. The ground floor siding is vertical wood board and batten. The upper storey has two large fixed-glass windows, symmetrically placed, and the siding is wood clapboard. The siding on each of the other facades is varied: North is board and batten, rear is wood clapboard, and south is corrugated metal. Each of the facades has one door and a mixture of windows of various types and sizes

Refer to Section 5.1, below, for heritage aspects and comments.



Figure 9. North sides of the building.



Figure 10. South side of the building.



Figure 11. Rear of the building.



## 5. Heritage Evaluation of the Property

### 5.1. Heritage Conservation District Inventory.

For reference, the entry for the building in the Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District Inventory is shown here.



#### 10477 Islington Avenue

- 1½ storey, gabled, wood-frame building with ground-floor shopfronts, false parapet and various vernacular cladding materials, including grained, vinyl siding at front (c. 1900).
- Description – Typical, traditional, wood-frame “boomtown” commercial building manifests the various layers of history which make it rich in its diverse authenticity. At ground floor level, lean-to front verandah has four simple, square-section posts built off carpeted, concrete slab. Actual lean-to roof deck is recent, cobbled-together affair consisting, structurally, of thick plywood only. Shopfronts comprise large, plate-glass windows at either side and at recessed central entry, with stall-risers also clad in vinyl siding. Entrance door is modern, fully glazed door, under painted-over transom window having diamond-shaped panes supported by fine wooden astragals. Cladding material at front is fairly closely spaced vinyl siding throughout. At second floor, false front rises to form tall, blank parapet. Two large, symmetrically placed, single-pane windows at this level have simple wooden frames, with profiled mouldings above only. Building façade cantilevers out slightly to sides, just below eaves of pitched roof beyond, hiding same from street view. Side elevations have variety vernacular materials. At south wall, this consists of corrugated metal sheets bolted, presumably, over wood siding. Windows on this side are an assortment, including three small, two-pane windows tucked below the eaves. At north wall, cladding consists of board-and-batten siding, this latter having been recently repaired at base, over rotted mud-sill within. Soffits are finished with v-jointed boards above robust wall-head moulding, and roof is clad in corrugated sheet-metal.
- Comments – This is a remarkable Main Street building, one which, not in spite of but rather because of, the hotch-potch of materials used is particularly valuable. Restoration should in this case generally be discouraged. Upper level windows are conspicuously blank, and there is room for improvement here, and front verandah, when due for replacement, might be superseded by a more carefully built verandah, but it would be unfortunate to see this building purged of the diversity of materials which remain, all in the name of restoration.

Figure 12. Inventory page from Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage District Study, 2003

## 5.2 Ontario Regulation 9/06

*Ontario Regulation 9/06* sets out the criteria for designation, referenced in Section 29(1)(a) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as a requirement for designation under Part IV of the Act.

The Regulation states that “A property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:”

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
  - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
  - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
  - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
  - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
  - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
  - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
3. The property has contextual value because it,
  - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
  - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
  - iii. is a landmark. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (2).

My evaluation of the subject property, on the basis of these criteria follows:

1.
  - i, The existing building is an example of a locally unusual boomtown style shop.
  - ii, The craftsmanship or artistic merit of the building is ordinary.
  - iii, There is no demonstration of technical or scientific achievement in the building.
2.
  - i, There is an association with the Shaw family who were prominent in Kleinburg’s commercial life, and who created the annual Bindertwine celebrations, which remain a popular community event.
  - ii, The building doesn’t particularly yield information about its role in the culture or community.
  - iii, There is no identified architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist.



3. i, The building maintains the heritage character of the east side of Islington Avenue.
- ii, It is linked visually and historically to the mostly intact heritage precinct on the east side of Islington Avenue between Stegman's Mill Road and John Street.
- iii, The building is a minor landmark by virtue of its unusual boomtown style and that of its northern neighbour at 10483 Islington Avenue.

The third word in Ontario Regulation 9/06 is “may”—not “must” or even “should”. In my professional opinion, and based on the criteria in *Ontario Regulation 9/06*, the property at 10477 Islington Avenue, Kleinburg ON, in the City of Vaughan, merits consideration for Part IV designation. However, in my professional opinion, the property is sufficiently protected by its Part V designation as part to the Kleinburg Nashville Heritage Conservation District, and its inclusion in The City of Vaughan's *Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value* such that Part IV designation is redundant.

## 6. The Proposal

The owner proposes to construct a two-storey addition to the existing building in order to house a second tenancy. The bulk of the addition is to the rear, with an extension along the north side of the existing building in order to bring the entry to the new tenancy toward the street. Two versions were examined. In one, the extension was held back from the existing face in order to preserve the form of the existing building. In the other, the extension was brought all the way forward to the existing front wall, and the façade design was extended including an additional second-storey window. The owner and architect, in consultation with me, selected the second option.

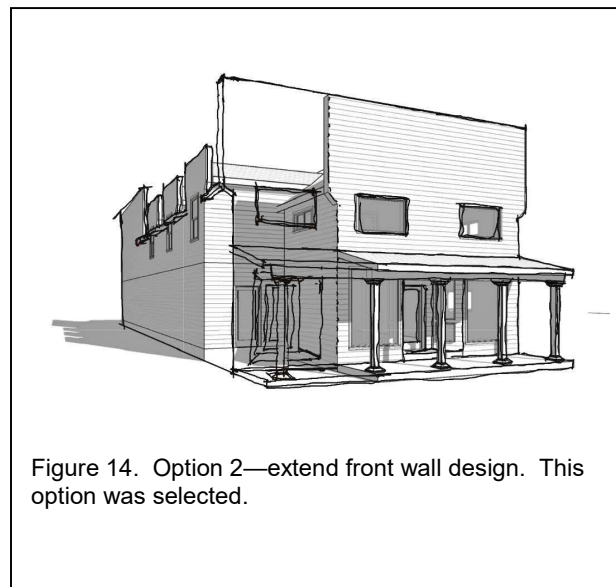
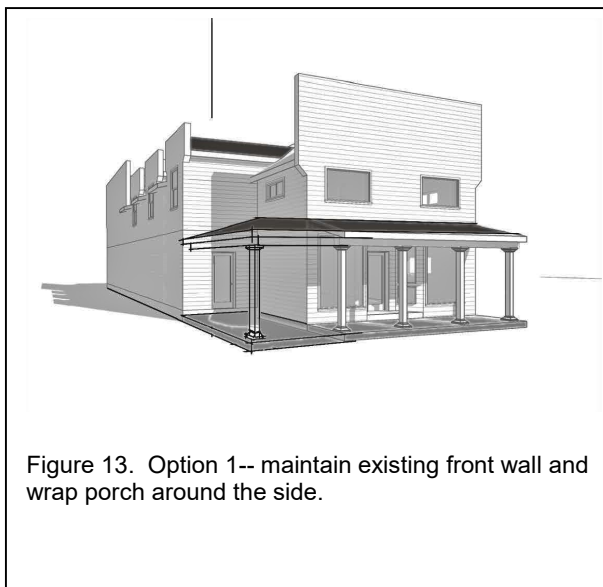
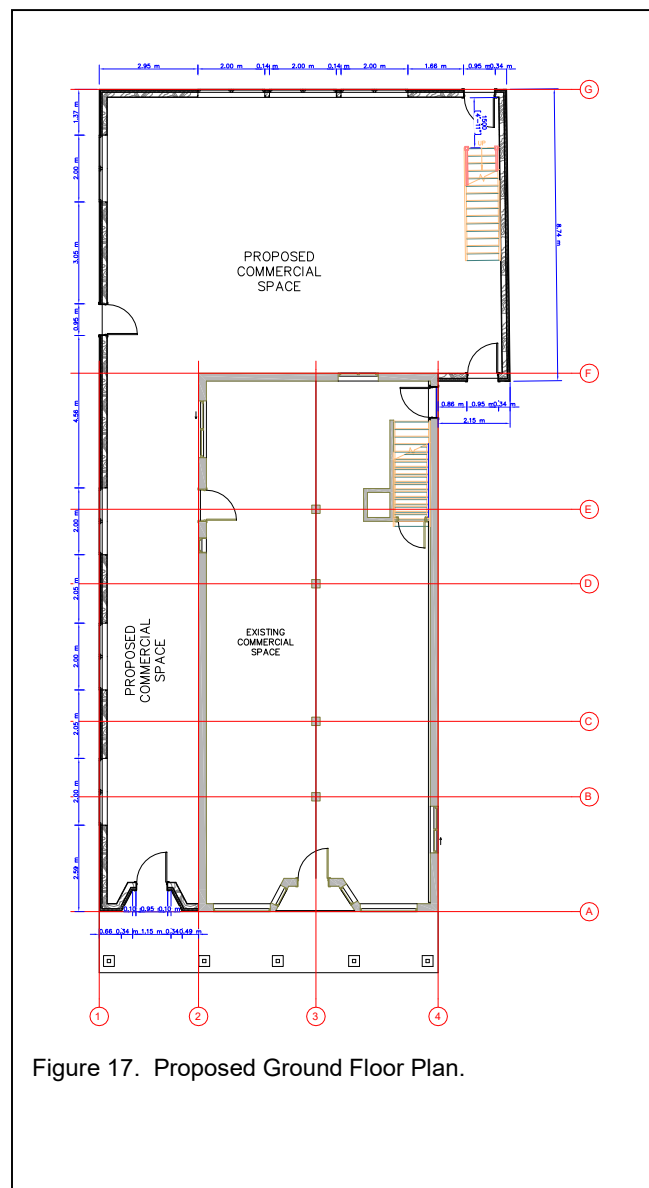
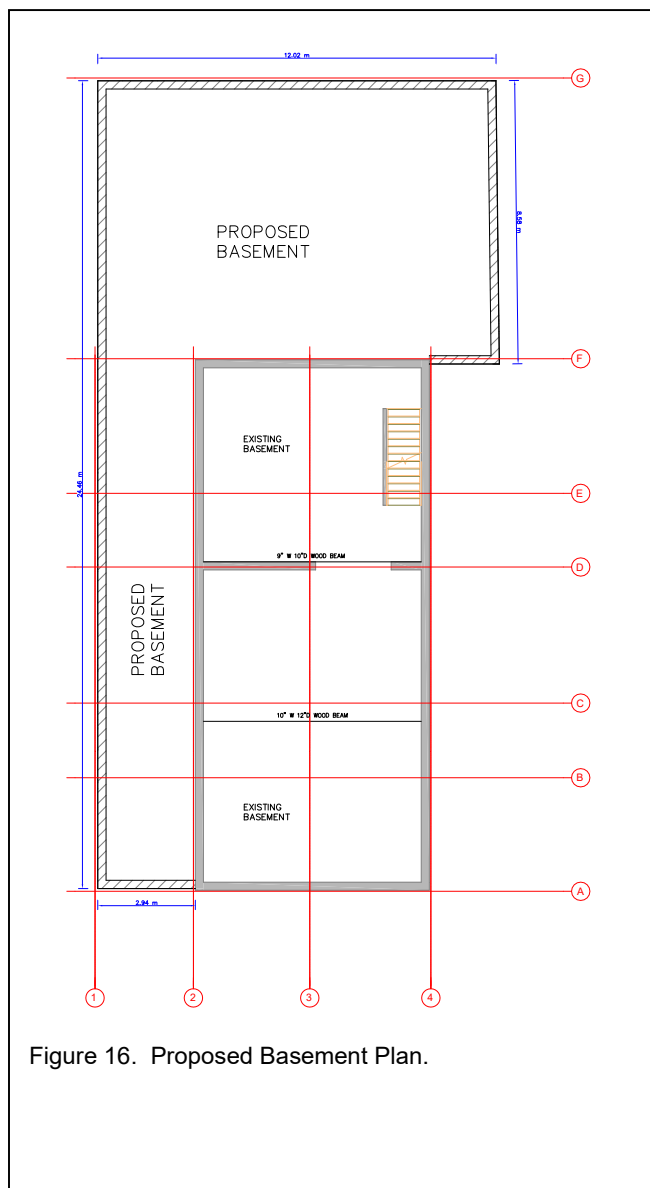


Figure 15. Proposed Site Plan. Red rectangle is the existing building.





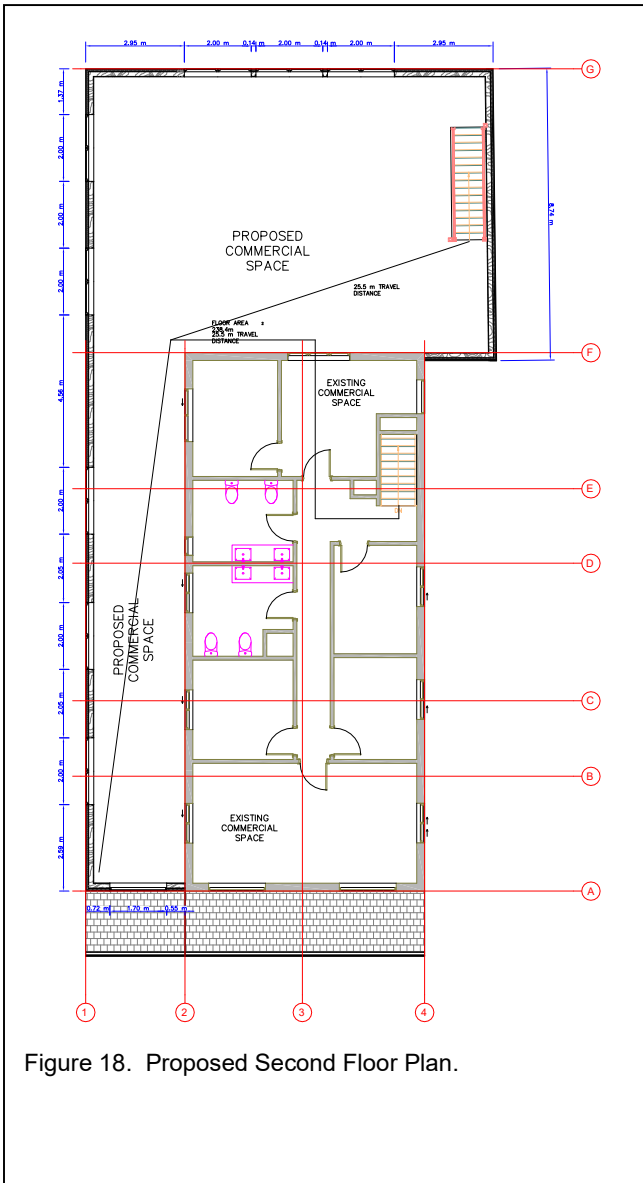
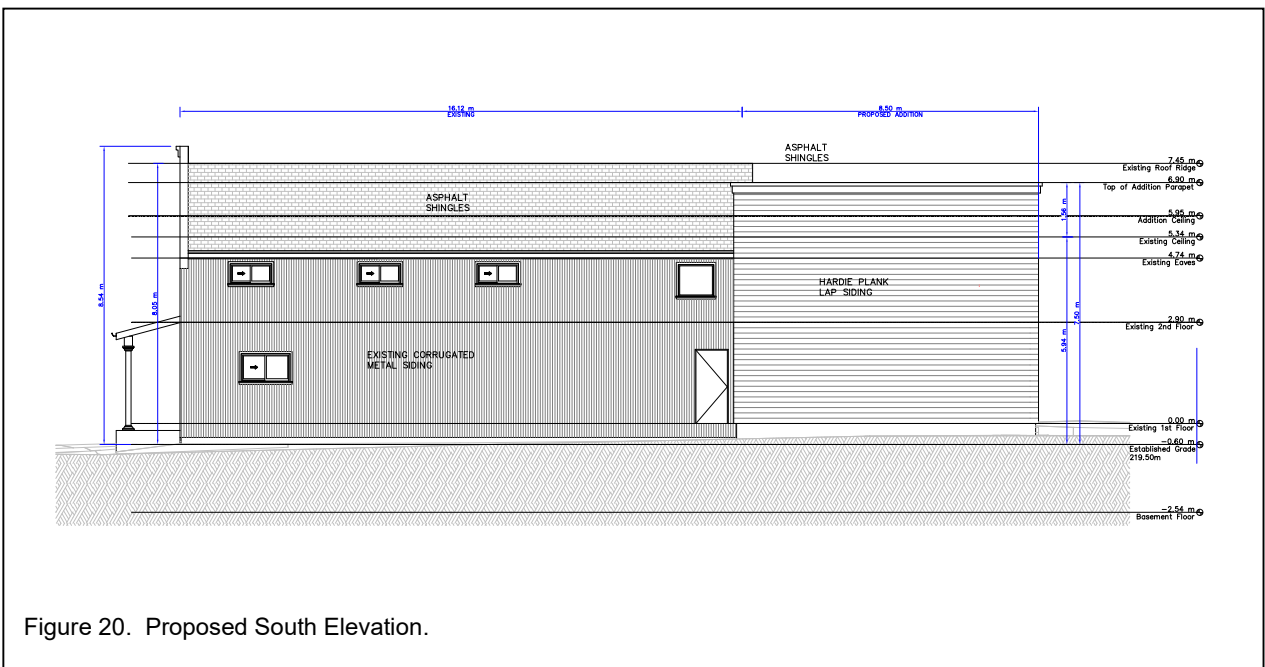
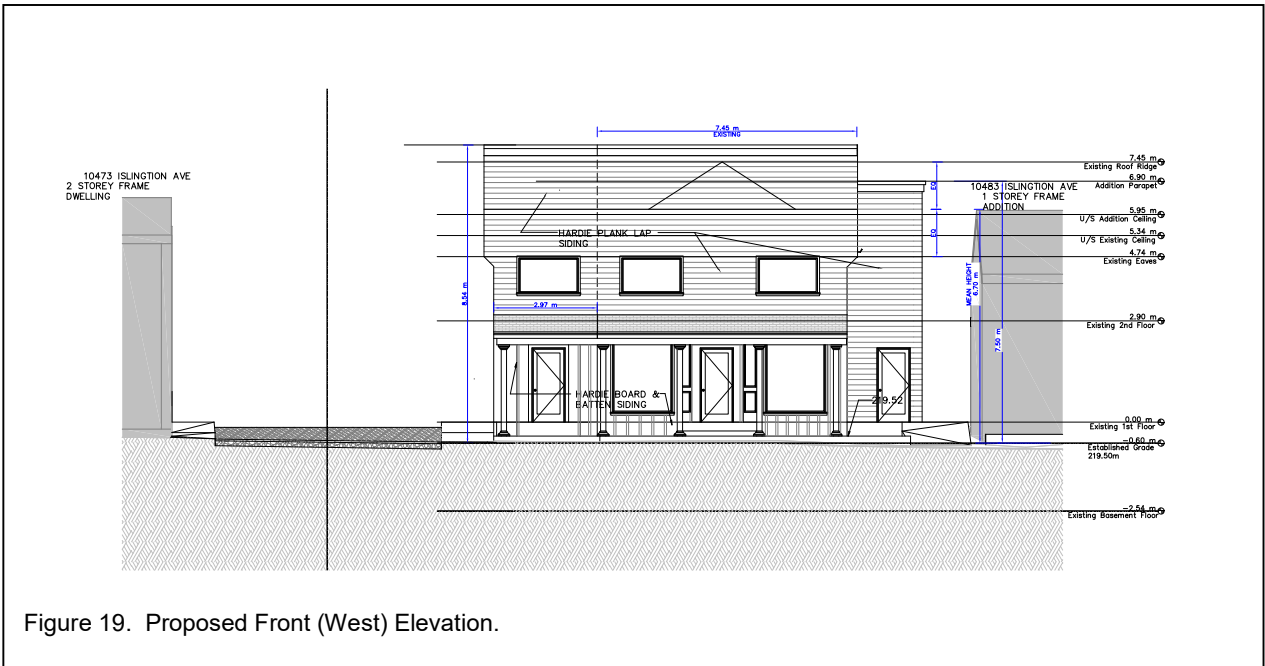


Figure 18. Proposed Second Floor Plan.



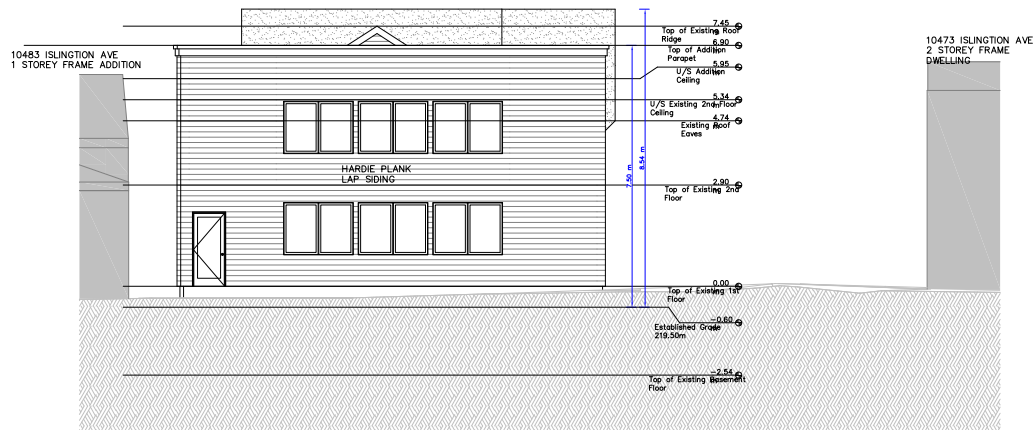


Figure 21. Proposed Rear (East) Elevation.

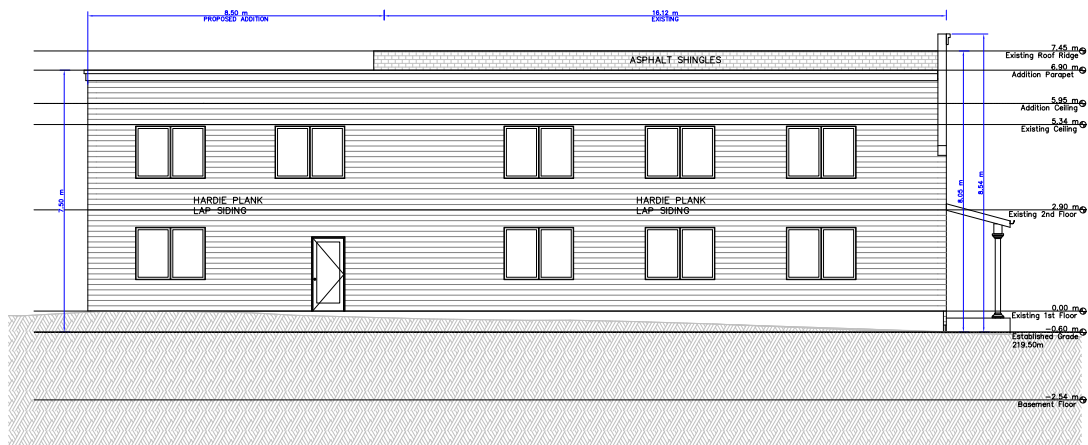


Figure 22. Proposed North Elevation.



## **7. HCD Plan Compliance and Conclusions**

### **7.1 HCD Plan Compliance**

Sections of the HCD Plan that concern the proposal are reproduced below, along with my notes on the project's compliance.

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In my professional opinion the proposed work at 10477 Islington Avenue support the Goals and Objectives quoted below.

## **SECTION 5: DISTRICT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **5.1 THE OVERALL GOAL**

The overall goal of the Heritage District Plan is to ensure the retention of the District's heritage resources and to guide change so that it contributes to and does not detract from the District's architectural, historical, and contextual character.

### **5.2.2. HERITAGE BUILDINGS**

To retain and conserve the buildings identified in the Heritage District Plan as having heritage importance to the District.

To conserve distinguishing original features, qualities, and character of heritage buildings and to avoid the removal or alteration of any such features.

To encourage the corrections of unsympathetic alterations made over the years to heritage buildings.

To encourage restoration of heritage buildings based on historical, archival, and pictorial evidence.

To encourage continuing use and habitation of heritage buildings in order to maintain their economic viability.

To promote retention and reuse of heritage buildings and to take exceptional measures to prevent their demolition.

To encourage interior and exterior maintenance to preserve heritage buildings from damage or destruction from weather or fire.

### **5.2.7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

To maintain the Kleinburg core as an attractive business environment by maintaining the distinctive heritage character of the District while providing for development and supporting uses to meet contemporary needs.

In my professional opinion the proposed work at 10477 Islington Avenue complies with the Policies quoted below. The existing building is retained, the design vocabulary and material qualities are preserved, and the longevity of the building is enhanced.

## **SECTION 6: HERITAGE DISTRICT POLICIES**

### **6.2 POLICIES FOR HERITAGE BUILDINGS**

Conservation of existing heritage buildings in the District requires policies to encourage and promote their economic use, their maintenance and preservation, and the restoration of heritage elements where they have been damaged or removed.

- Loss of heritage through neglect is an avoidable tragedy. Regular inspections for building maintenance and fire prevention should be undertaken and regulations in this regard should be enforced.
- The original construction and detail on heritage buildings should be retained and repaired whenever possible.
- Alterations to heritage buildings should include removal of later unsympathetic work and restoration of original features and detail.
- Work on heritage buildings should be consistent with the Guidelines in Section 9.3.
- Loss of heritage resources through demolition should be discouraged. Policy suggestions for demolition control appear in Section 7.2.9.

In my professional opinion the proposed work at 10477 Islington Avenue complies with the Design Guidelines quoted below. The existing building is retained, the design vocabulary and material qualities are preserved, and the longevity of the building is enhanced.

## **SECTION 9: DESIGN GUIDELINES**

### **9.1 OVERVIEW**

The purpose of these Design Guidelines is to serve as a reference for anyone contemplating alterations or new development within the Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District. They are intended to clarify and illustrate, in a useful way, the recognizable heritage characteristics found in the District. The real guidelines are provided by the existing heritage buildings and the character of their settings. The best test of new work in the District is whether or not it shows “good manners” towards its heritage neighbours and neighbourhood.

The District Plan examines the past but faces the future. It recognizes that change must and will come in a living and evolving District. The objective of these Guidelines is not to prevent change, but to ensure that change is complementary to the heritage character of the District, and enhances, rather than harms it.

Guidelines:

- The intent of the Guidelines is to preserve the heritage character of the District. Heritage permit applications will be evaluated in terms of historical contexts and settings.

- It is recommended that design professionals with experience in heritage design and restoration be retained for work on heritage buildings in the District.
- Installations of exterior modern equipment, such as exterior lighting fixtures, mechanical equipment, antennas, satellite dishes, and service masts and meters should be designed, located and/or screened so as to minimize their visual presence.

### 9.3.7 NEW ADDITIONS TO HERITAGE BUILDINGS

New attached additions to heritage buildings should be designed to complement the design of the original building. Additions should be designed so as not to overwhelm the heritage character of the original building.

#### **Guidelines:**

- Design additions to maintain the original architectural style of the building. See Section 9.2.
- Use authentic detail. See Section 9.2.1.
- Research the architectural style of the original building. See Section 10 for useful research sources.
- Follow the relevant guidelines for new construction in Section 9.5.
- Don't design additions to a greater height or scale than the original building.
- Don't design additions to predominate over the original building.
- Usually, additions should be located at the rear of the original building or, if located to the side, be set back from the street frontage of the original building.
- For garage additions, see Section 9.3.8.
- Use appropriate materials. See Section 9.10.
- Avoid destruction of existing mature trees. See Section 9.9.

## **7.2 Conclusions**

The east side of Islington Avenue, from Stegman's Mill Road to John Street, is the most intact stretch of Kleinburg's Islington Avenue core. The subject property is near the centre of that stretch. The "boomtown" false-front design of the building and its northern neighbour at 10483 records the peak of the village's early economic growth. In light of the foregoing, the subject property is worthy of respect for its heritage credentials. In my professional opinion, the proposed work on the property at 10477 Islington Avenue, within the Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District, enhances, rather than detracts from, the character of the Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District. The proposed addition, by recapitulating the original design vocabulary and its mixed materiality, retains the characteristics of a significant piece of Kleinburg's streetscape and helps to conserve the character of the District. It complies with the relevant sections of the Heritage District Plan: the Goals and Objectives, the Policies, and the Design Guidelines. In addition, the proposal follows the advice given in the Comments in the District Inventory which is part of the District Plan (see Figure 12, above).

I strongly recommend that the proposal be approved.



## **8. Bibliography**

Miles & Co.: Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of York, etc. Toronto  
Obtained from The Canadian County Digital Atlas Project, McGill University

Phillip H. Carter Architect and Planner, et al.: Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, Vaughan: 2003

Ontario: Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O. 18, as amended.

Ontario Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs. Provincial Policy Statement 2020, Toronto: 2020

Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport: Ontario Heritage Toolkit, Heritage Conservation Districts, Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2006.

Parks Canada: Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, second edition. Queen's Printer, 2010

Appendix:  
Heritage Consultant's C.V.

**PAUL OBERST, OAA, B.Arch, CAHP**  
**CURRICULUM VITAE**

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**EDUCATION**

**1970 B. ARCH (WITH DISTINCTION)** University of Michigan

**PROFESSIONAL HISTORY**

1993 – 2020	Paul Oberst Architect, Principal
1995-2020	Consultant to: Phillip H. Carter Architect
1994-1996	Consultant to: R. E. Barnett Architect
1989 - 1993	Designer Gordon Cheney Architect Inc.
1984 - 1989	Paul Oberst Design, Principal
1981-1984	Designer Lloyd Alter Architect
1973-1981	Major Works Building, Principal

**SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE:**

**HERITAGE PROJECTS**



The Beverley Street project preserved a large Victorian row of 16 houses, maintaining their original use as single-family dwellings. It was nominated for an Ontario Renews Award.

**For Lloyd Alter Architect**  
**Contact Lloyd Alter, 416-656-8683**  
**Beverley Street Row, Toronto,**  
Renovation and preservation, 1982

This project was part of the redevelopment of a largely vacant city block. The developer chose to preserve this 16-house Victorian row, an enlightened attitude for the time.

Mr. Oberst worked on several of the houses in the project, with responsibilities including design, construction documents, and field review .

**McCabe Houses, 174-178 St. George Street, Toronto**  
restoration for adaptive re-use, 1982

Mr. Oberst assisted in working drawings and field review.

### **For Lloyd Alter Architect**

**Fulton-Vanderburgh House**, Richmond Hill,  
exterior restoration, 1984

This project was part of a development agreement for farmland south of Richmond Hill. CAPHC member David Fayle was the LACAC liaison.

Mr. Oberst handled the project, having full responsibility for design, construction documents, and field review.



The Fulton-Vanderburgh House in Richmond Hill, after its restoration. Built around 1810, this is the oldest house in York Region



Woodstock Public Library. Phillip Carter's project combined sensitive alterations and an addition with the restoration of one of Ontario's finest Carnegie libraries.

**For Phillip H. Carter Architect and Planner**  
**Contact Phillip Carter, 416-504-6497**  
**Woodstock Public Library,**  
Restoration, addition, and renovations, 1996

Mr. Oberst assisted in the production of working drawings and wrote the specifications.

**Port Hope Public Library**, restoration, addition and renovations, 2000

Mr. Oberst wrote the specifications.





Setting back the third-floor addition allowed the restored bank building to retain its street presence, and maintain the detail significance of the cornice and entry-bay decoration. Preservation Services provided oversight for work under the façade improvement program.

**For Paul Oberst Architect**

### **The Dominion Bank**

2945 Dundas Street W., Toronto

Restoration, addition, and renovation, 2002

This 1915 bank by John M. Lyle Architect was converted to a commercial residential building with a penthouse addition, set back 2.3m from the building line, and following the curve of the façade.

The original structure was restored under a local façade improvement program, including cleaning and installation of replacement 1-over-1 double hung windows on the second floor.

### **Medland Lofts**

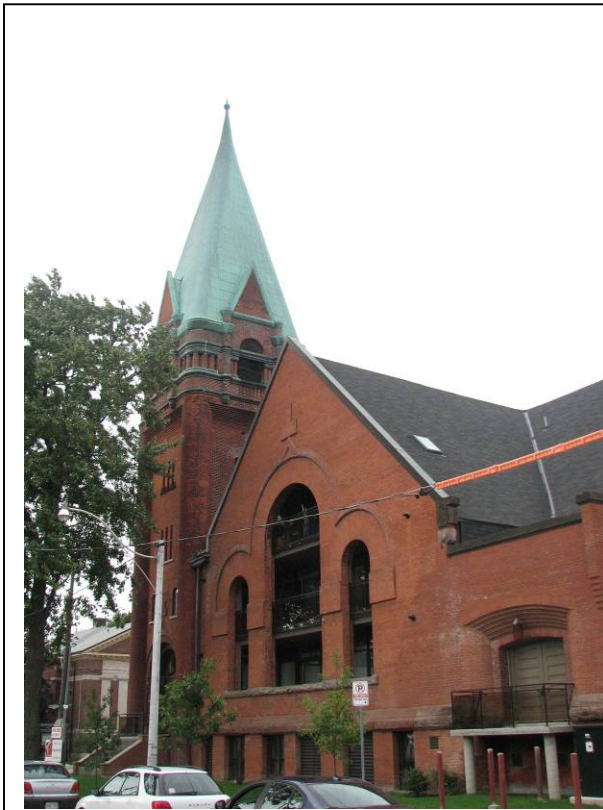
2925 Dundas Street W., Toronto

Restoration, addition, and renovation, 2005

This Art Deco building was in extreme disrepair following an uncompleted renovation. The completed project provided 10 residential and 3 commercial condominium units. It contributes to the revitalization of the Junction commercial area.



This building has a set-back addition similar to the one at the Dominion Bank across the street. In this case the penthouse has a Moderne design, reflecting the Art Deco style of the original building.



Balconies behind the original arches double the window area to meet the requirements of residential use, without cutting new openings in the historic masonry structure.

## For Paul Oberst Architect

### Victora Lofts

152 Annette Street, Toronto

Residential Conversion,  
Occupied 2011

The 1890 Victoria-Royce Presbyterian Church was designed by Knox and Elliot, who were also the architects for the Confederation Life building on Yonge Street. In 2005, the parish ceased operation, no longer having sufficient members to maintain this large and important heritage building.

The project preserves and restore the building envelope and many of the interior features, and will provide 34 residential condominiums.

Significant elements that were not used in the project, like the 1908 Casavant organ, and the enormous stained glass windows have been preserved intact in new homes at other churches.

This project received the William H. Greer Award of Excellence at the Heritage Toronto Awards 2013.



## HERITAGE DISTRICTS

**In association with Phillip H. Carter Architect and Planner**

**Collingwood Downtown Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, 2001-2002**

**Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, 2002-2003**

**Old Burlington Village Heritage Conservation District Study, 2004-2005.** Resulted in our Urban Design Guidelines for the downtown.

**Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, 2005-2006.** Received Honourable Mention (2<sup>nd</sup> place nationally) in the Neighbourhood Plans category—Canadian Institute of Planning, 2007.

**Village of Maple Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, 2006-2007.**

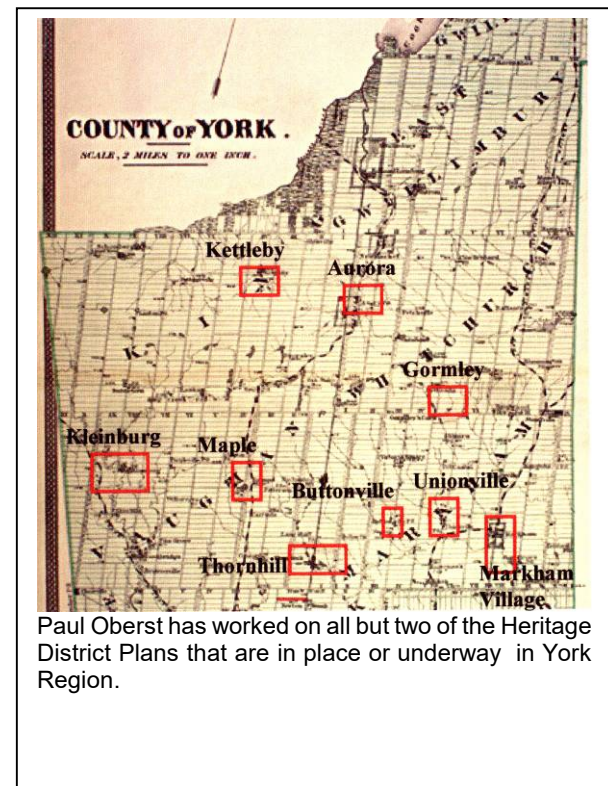
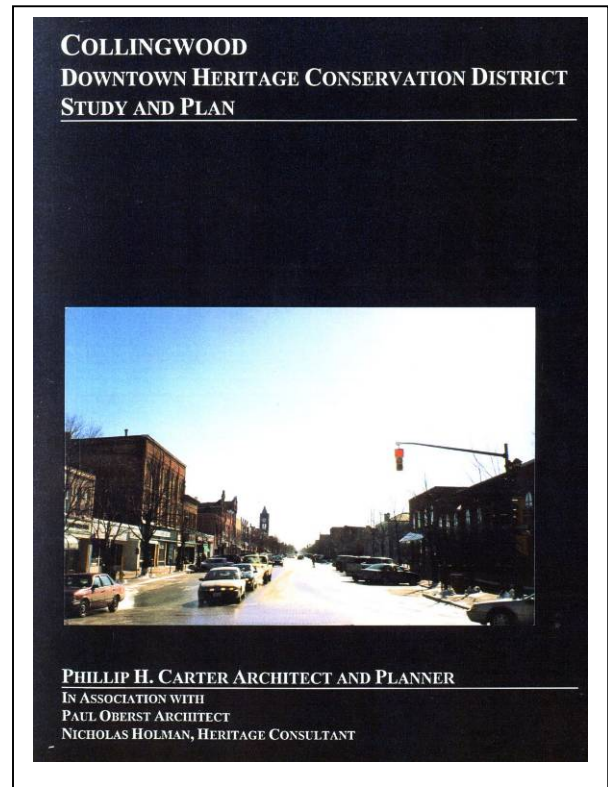
**Buttonville Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, underway.**

**Thornhill Markham Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, 2007.**

**Thornhill Vaughan Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, 2007.**

**Gormley Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, 2008**

**Kettleby Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, suspended by Council.**



Paul Oberst has worked on all but two of the Heritage District Plans that are in place or underway in York Region.

## Talk of preserving heritage a façade

Zoning change to Spadina will raze historic buildings



JOE FIORITO  
City columnist

Walk slowly up Spadina, from Dundas to College; it doesn't take much time. Get yourself some barbecued duck, a bowl of pho, a bag of star fruit and keep walking. Look closely at the buildings as you walk.

Under decades of neglect and

cheap signage you will see a streetscape of handsome bay windows, latticed brick and old stone cornices — the remnants of Victorian Toronto.

Now listen carefully: Hidden in the noise of traffic, there is another, softer sound — landlords rubbing their hands, lawyers drafting agreements, wrecking crews licking their chops.

Final arguments over a zoning change to Spadina Avenue have just been heard by the Ontario Municipal Board; if the change is approved, those old buildings may topple like dominoes.

To boil it down: Certain developers want a change in zoning to allow an increase in the density of the street, which would make the narrow little properties on Spadina more valuable as real estate, which in turn would make it easy for somebody with the cash to bundle up several of the narrow lots into larger parcels for redevelopment — i.e., demolition.

City council has approved the

change, in spite of staff recommendations to the contrary. Perhaps council believes a denser, post-development Spadina will still look like Spadina, only better, healthier, more vibrant; and perhaps one day the fire hydrants will be filled with cherry Kool-Aid.

It could happen, but it ain't likely.

I went to the offices of the OMB last Friday, to listen as the opposition made its case.

I was won over.

Architect and neighbourhood resident Paul Oberst led the arguments by calling a planner for the city, Suzanne Pringle. She explained that if the density along that strip of Spadina were increased, it would make it easy to assemble small lots. However, in order to achieve the proposed density, it would be necessary to demolish what's there and rebuild.

Next, heritage expert Marcia Cuthbert testified that there are a number of architecturally significant buildings along this stretch of Spadina that ought to be considered historic properties. They have not yet been designated as such, partly because the heritage board is overworked, and partly because of delays caused by amalgamation.

See SPADINA on Page A17

## Better safe than sorry?

### SPADINA

Continued from Page A16

Among the more notable buildings are: the Standard, a Yiddish theatre that morphed into the Victory Burlesque which in turn became the Golden Harvest Chinese Theatre, at 285 Spadina; Grossman's Tavern, at 377; the house where Red Emma Goldman lay in state upon her death, at 346; and Broadway Hall, once used by the Women's Christian Temperance Union, at 450 Spadina.

Margie Zeidler, one of the few developers in town who preserves heritage buildings for a living, noted that many of the buildings on this stretch of the street were architecturally outstanding, and in reasonable

shape. She said that the economics of preservation were generally equivalent to the economics of demolition.

Cathy Nasmith, another heritage expert, noted that there were whole blocks of Spadina worth preserving — including one stretch of 11 Victorian buildings in a row. When challenged by a lawyer who said that façades could easily be preserved as a part of redevelopment, she observed succinctly, "If there is a heritage scale, with demolition at one end and renovation at the other, I'd say saving a façade is one step up from demolition." In any case, there's no way to enforce the preservation of façades.

And that is a rather brutal summary of a day's worth of arguments and cross-examinations. A couple of questions:

Why is it that when you knock a building down, what goes up in its place is generally uglier? Why don't we force developers to pay a price for zoning changes that give them profits they don't earn? Why, when it comes to Toronto's irreplaceable architectural heritage, don't we take the position that it's better to be safe than sorry? And why don't we follow the example of certain, um, world-class cities — London, Paris, Edinburgh — and encourage preservation?

I'm not one of those guys who thinks old is intrinsically good; neither am I certain that we should erase, deface, or reface our common heritage for the sake of a few bucks.

It's worth noting that the OMB rarely rules against a decision taken by city council, but it has happened. Yes, and the water in the hydrants could run sweet and red.

National Post

## CITIZEN ADVOCACY

Mr. Oberst was the "Party", before the Ontario Municipal Board, opposing an application for rezoning and Official Plan Amendment on Spadina Avenue in Toronto in 2001. Rezoning threatened 113 heritage properties on one kilometre of street frontage.

He organized and presented the case to the OMB, with the assistance of residents and many heritage activists.

Joe Fiorito's column, to the left, provides a succinct narration.

Mr. Oberst continues to work on heritage issues in the neighbourhood, being involved in the designation of Kensington Market as a National Historic Site, and the preservation of the historic parish of Saint Stephen-in-the-Fields.

### Contact:

Catherine Nasmith  
416-598-4144





## OTHER ARCHITECTURAL WORK

### RESIDENTIAL

#### Kensington Market Lofts

Condominium Conversion, George Brown College Kensington Campus, \$13,000,000

Design partner, in joint venture with R.E. Barnett Architect.

At the Toronto Architecture and Urban Design Awards 2000 the jury created the new category of 'Adaptive Re-use' to recognize this project and the Roundhouse. Since it was a new category, we received an honourable mention rather than an award.

#### St John's Lofts

Condominium Conversion, 1 St. John's Road, Toronto, \$1,000,000

Design partner, in joint venture with R.E. Barnett Architect

## COMMERCIAL

Retail/Apartment Building, 80 Kensington Avenue, Toronto, \$400,000

Designer for Paul Oberst Architect

Kings Tower, 393 King Street West Toronto, 12 Storey mixed use building, \$10M

Designer for Gordon Cheney Architect Inc

Office Building, 2026 Yonge Street Toronto, 3 Storey mixed use building, \$3M

Designer for Lloyd Alter Architect

## THEATRE WORK

Set designer, *A Ride Across Lake Constance*, by Peter Handke

New Theatre, Toronto 1975

Set and Costume designer, *The Curse of the Starving Class*, by Sam Shepard

New Theatre, Toronto, 1979

## COMMUNITY WORK

Kensington Market Working Group

-Board Member

1994-97& 2000-2001.

-Secretary 1994-97.

Kensington Market Action Committee,

-Board Member 2001-2002.

## WRITINGS

Founding Editor of *A.S.*

A student architecture journal

University of Michigan, 1968-70

Founding Co-editor of *FILE Magazine*

Toronto, 1972

Originator and author of

*Rear Elevation* essay series

Toronto Society of Architects Journal, 1994-1996

Author of articles and reviews in:

Globe & Mail,  
NOW magazine  
File magazine

## PUBLICATION OF WORK

Kensington Market Lofts is listed in: *East/West: A Guide to Where People Live In Downtown Toronto*

Edited by Nancy Byrtus, Mark Fram, Michael McClelland. Toronto: Coach House Books, 2000

*Class Acts*, by John Ota, Toronto Star, May 20, 2001, describes a Kensington unit in the old elementary school.

*Urban Arcadia*, By Merike Weiler,

City & Country Home, April 1990

*Customizing your Condo*, by Kathleen M. Smith

Canadian House and Home, October 1989

*A Place of Your Own*, by Charles Oberdorf and Mechtilde Hoppenrath,

Homemaker's Magazine, November 1980

*The Invention of Queen Street West*, by Debra Sharpe

The Globe & Mail *Fanfare* section, January 10, 1980

*Alternatives*, by Charles Oberdorf and Mechtilde Hoppenrath,

Homemaker's Magazine, April 1979

Various accounts, reviews and/or photographs of heritage work, furniture designs, theatre design work, and exhibitions.