

**Heritage Evaluation of Existing Dwelling  
10555 Islington Avenue, Kleinburg, ON  
In the City of Vaughan**



View of dwelling from the southwest. Nothing visible is original.

**Paul Oberst**  
Heritage Consultant  
With Property Ownership Chronology  
By Diane Harman

August 2023

**Mandate:** By virtue of being within the Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District, the subject property is considered to be a protected heritage resource. The Provincial Policy Statement addresses the situation of 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, 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.

This document is an evaluation of the existing building. The evaluation of proposed new construction will be completed at a later date.

Property Owner: Fortunato Bordin Investments  
 35 Siltan Rd. Woodbridge Ont. L4L7Z8  
[abordinracer@hotmail.com](mailto:abordinracer@hotmail.com)

Heritage Consultant: Paul Oberst  
 31 Province Street South  
 Hamilton ON L8K 2K7  
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 Consultant’s CV

## 1. Executive Summary

The property at 10555 Islington Avenue is designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act, by virtue of its location in the Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District. The property is not included in the City's Listing of Significant Heritage Structures (LSHS). The property includes a 2-storey brick dwelling that appears to be a typical Edwardian house with later additions to the right (south) and rear, and modern replacement windows and doors.

Removal of interior finishes by a previous owner revealed that the brick exterior conceals an earlier 1-½-storey clapboard-faced frame house. Also revealed were some structural deficits that do not support long-term and sustainable residential use of the building.

In my professional opinion, the existing building is compromised in its historic and structural integrity to the extent that it does not merit retention. It does represent an interesting example of adaptive re-use, and it presents a fine learning opportunity. Its careful de-construction should be documented as outlined below.



Figure 1. Front (west) view of the house. Front and south additions are relatively recent.



Figure 2. North east view.

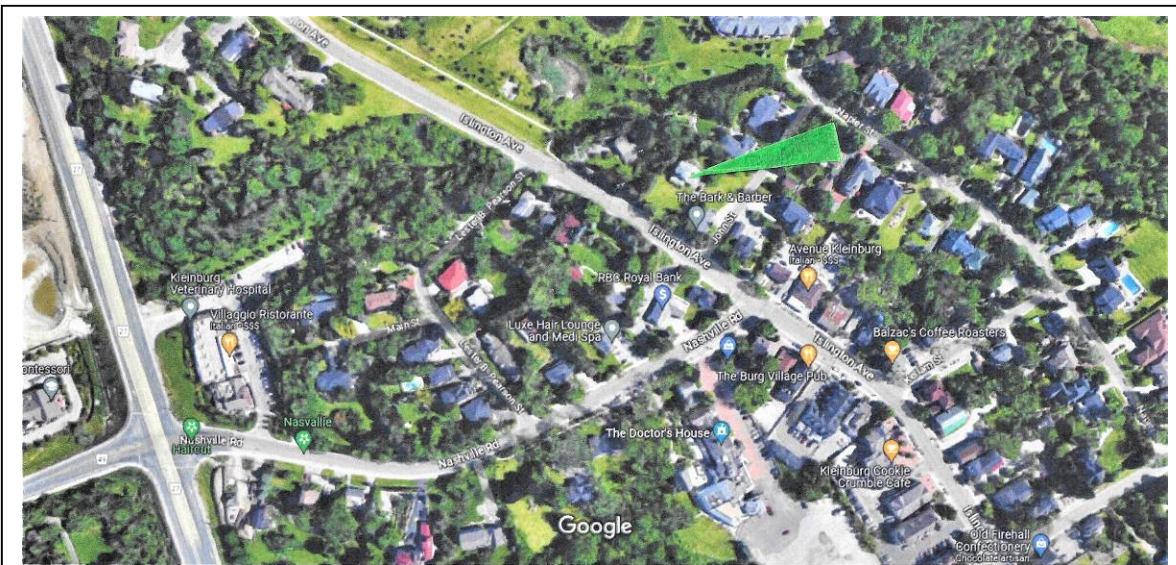


Figure 3. Southeast view.



#### 4. Introduction to the Site

The property is a rectangle, located on the east side of Islington Avenue about 60m north of the Nashville Road intersection. It's the last of the old village on the east side of the road.



Imagery ©2023 Google, Imagery ©2023 Airbus, CNES / Airbus, First Base Solutions, Maxar Technologies, Map data ©2023 50 m

Figure 5. Aerial view of central Kleinburg from Google Maps. Islington Avenue runs from bottom right to top left. The curved road is Nashville Road. The subject site is indicated by the green arrow.

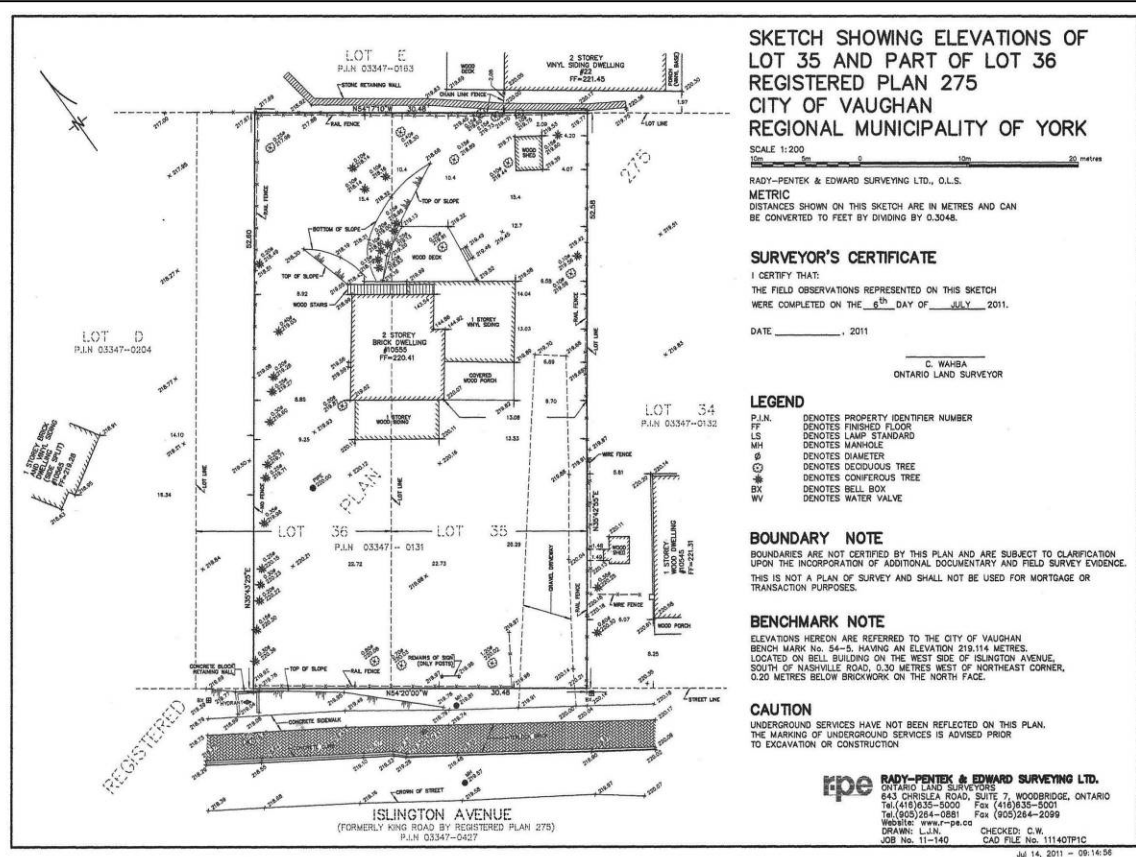


Figure 6. Surveyors sketch of the property, 2011. At almost 27 metres, the front yard setback is much larger than any others in the neighbourhood--the front is behind the back wall of No10545 to the south.

## 4. The Dwelling--Inventory Sheet

Islington Avenue (east)

Kleinburg



### 10555 Islington Avenue

- Two-storey, hipped-roof, red-brick house with central third-floor dormer and with (altered) full-width front verandah and later verandah and addition to south side (c. 1920).
- Ground floor has full-width, hip-roofed sun-room which appears to be enclosed period verandah, now with waney-edged siding at either side of picture windows framing sliding doors. Large dentils visible adjacent soffit suggest older origins of this structure. Soffits are finished in broad boards. Configuration of ground floor front elevation within is not discernable. At second floor, three evenly spaced 6/6 windows are recent, probably replacing similar 1/1, or perhaps more decorative double-hung units. Sills and lintels are in pre-cast concrete, while red, clay-brick masonry throughout is in stretchers only, suggesting brick veneer on wood frame construction. Soffits are finished in plain boards. At third floor, single, central hipped dormer has two 1/1 windows and is clad in waney-edged siding as at front sun-room. Roofs throughout are clad in light-grey asphalt shingles, with gutters and downspouts in aluminum, and a single, rebuilt chimney stack rises at north side of house. South addition comprises low, hipped roof structure with verandah along west (front) side and clapboard walls elsewhere. Verandah posts are very slender, with high-level gingerbread brackets supporting shallow fascia, all suggestive of later work. Windows to RH side are group of four casements, with door (behind modern, gingerbread-type screen door) to left. At south wall of brick house, multiple-pane bow window projects from enlarged opening.
- Comments – House is something of a mixture, especially method of enclosing former front verandah with large, modern glazing. In contrast, recent second floor windows have small multiple panes, reflecting Georgian tradition. Bow window and addition to south are evidently later newer, but more or less in keeping with Kleinburg norms. A more traditional method of enclosing front sun-room, and replacement of rustic waney-edged siding, would be welcome improvements to an attractive house. Similarly, glaring white aluminum flashings over low, pitched roofs might be both smaller, and in a less conspicuous colour, and chimney needs repointing. See the Guidelines for suggestions on how to proceed with these aspects.

Figure 7. From the 2003 Kleinburg-Nashville HCD Inventory, by Nicholas Holman. Nick dated the house to c.1920 because that's what the architectural style suggests. He also sussed that it was brick veneer.

### 6.1 The Dwelling--Overview

On its face, the dwelling at 10555 Islington Avenue is a 2-storey solid brick Edwardian house from about 1920, with some later additions. The addition to the south is not present on a 1972 survey held by the Vaughan Archives, so we know it is younger than that. The house seems to resemble its neighbour at 10499 Islington and several other houses in Kleinburg and Nashville. But examination reveals a different and older story. Previous to the current owner taking possession of the property, the interior finishes were removed, exposing the construction of the building. The brick is a veneer, one wythe thick, installed over un-tapered flat clapboard siding, on a heavy wood frame, with posts and diagonal braces, and infill studding—much like a barn frame. This is an old way of framing a house. The only house I've worked on built this way dates from the 1830s. The framing also shows that the original clapboard house was only 1-½ stories high, with the additional ½ storey added later, presumably at the time the brick veneer was applied. The Chain of Title (see Appendix) shows a \$950 mortgage in 1924, which I will use as a conjectural date for the reconstruction.

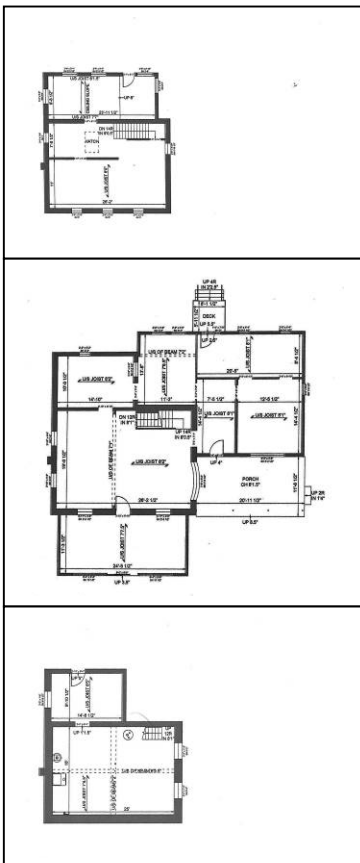


Figure 8. Floor Plans existing house. Top to bottom: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Ground Floor, Basement.



Figure 9. Neighbouring 1921 Edwardian house at 10499 Islington. PO

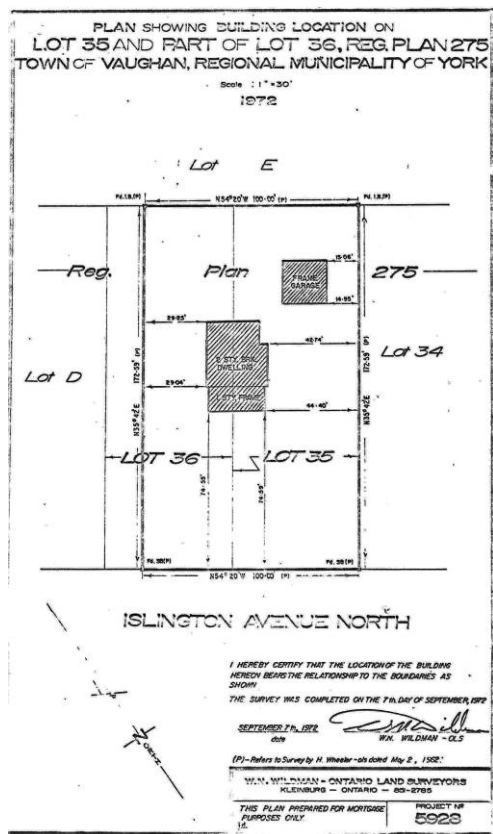


Figure 10. 1972 Survey showing no addition to the south (right) side. From Vaughan Archives.

## 6.2 The Dwelling—Basement and Front Verandah.

I will show basement, additions, and main old house, in that order. These photos are provided by the architect, Studio Architectonic, except as noted. None of the additions have heritage value.



Figure 11. The basement extends under the original house, and additions are unexcavated. This view is from the middle of the main body of the house to the northeast corner. A steel post and timber beam have been installed to support the original heavy timber summer beam, which is also supported by a second steel post.



Figure 12 looking to the southeast corner. Note lower foundation of fieldstone & concrete above.



Figure 13. Looking into foundation of the tail, with the exterior door beyond.



Figure 14. Looking south in the front verandah. Wall construction is relatively recent.



Figure 15. Looking from the verandah into the house.

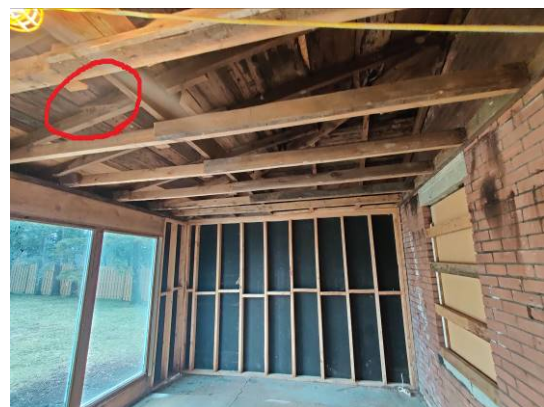


Figure 16. The verandah was at some point enlarged toward the street. Looking north, you can see the ends of the original rafters—circled in red. There's evidence of fire on some of the timber. The verandah does not have heritage value.



### 6.3 The Dwelling—Additions



Figure 17. The south addition is relatively recent and the porch is constructed with dollar store posts and gingerbread. This has no heritage interest.



Figure 18 Near the south end of the south addition, looking north. The brick panel is the southeast corner of the main house.



Figure 19. Standing by the SE corner of the main house looking northeast. B This is all relatively recent construction. Buy beyond the pale brick wall is the kitchen tail of the original house.



Figure 20. Standing in the east room on the second floor, looking north. Because the brick has already been installed on the main house, we know that this room is a later addition.



Figure 21. Same room as Figure 20 but looking south.



Figure 22. Rear (east) side of the house. We know from the foregoing that all of the “clapboard” bits—wood or aluminum—were constructed after the main body of the house.

## 6.4 The Dwelling—Main Body of the House.



Figure 23. Surprise! Underneath the brick veneer is the previous cladding of untapered clapboard—very much old style.



Figure 24. Northwest corner of the ground floor. The diagonally-braced corner post and door post are evident, as is the clapboard siding on both exterior walls.



Figure 25. Northeast corner, with kitchen tail to the right. The mortised bracing of the corner post is very evident here.



Figure 26. Kitchen tail, looking north. Note that walls are of sheathing, not clapboard. There may have been a different exterior finish. Board and batten was a common siding on kitchen tails.

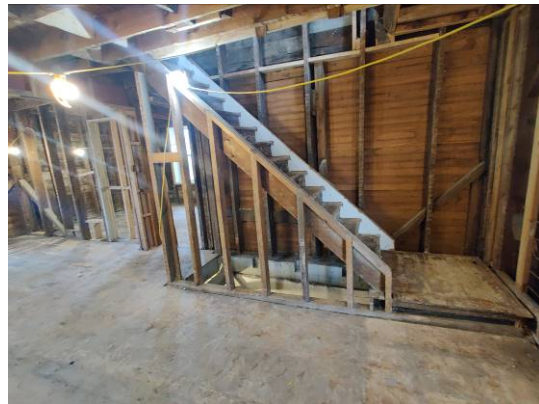


Figure 27. Stair in the southeast corner of the main body of the house. Note the braced corner post and the immense wall header at the second floor level.



Figure 28. Board and batten kitchen tail of the relocated Pendergast Log House, Brampton. The footprint of the log house is almost identical to that of the original house at 10555 Islington Avenue. This house was also covered in brick in the 1920s. Photo by Vic Snow.

## 6.4 The Dwelling—Main Body of the House



Figure 29. Looking to the northwest corner upstairs: another surprise. The house was once a half-storey smaller.



Figure 30. The red line on the left follows the top of the original header beam. It has been cut to fit the windows. The red line to the right follows the line of the original gable header. Everything above these lines was added—most likely at the time of the brick veneer installation.



Figure 31. Original house may have had low 2<sup>nd</sup> floor windows, as in the Pendergast Log House shown here. Photo by Vic Snow.



Figure 32. On the left, you can see filled-in original window in the south gable end. Note that its head is higher than the header beam to the right.



Figure 33. Conjectural sketch of the original house, based on the physical evidence described above.

## 6.5 The Dwelling—Construction Condition

The 1924 reconstruction introduced some elements that have not aged well, and after a century weather and gravity have taken a toll.



Figure 34. Lintels appear to be of homemade concrete castings rather than limestone or factory precast.



Figure 35. Likewise the windowsills.



Figure 36. This sill on the rear wall has almost completely fallen apart. The bottom course of brick is crumbling, for reasons unknown, and the mortar has eroded in the lower right corner.

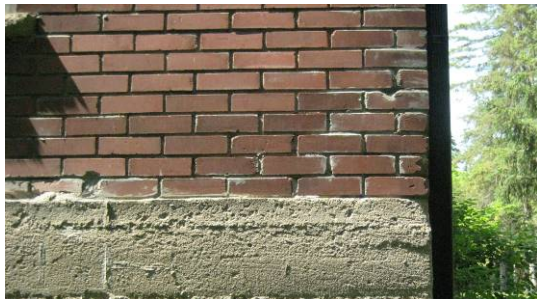


Figure 37. Detail of mortar erosion shown in Figure 36 above..



Figure 38. Mortar erosion on southwest corner of the house.



Figure 39. Settlement cracking at lintels on original ground floor kitchen tail.



Figure 40. Settlement cracking, second floor rear wall.

Figures 34-38 are my own photographs.

## 6.5 The Dwelling—Construction Condition



Figure 41. Settlement cracking second floor rear wall.



Figure 42. At some point a bearing wall on the ground floor was removed and replaced with a steel beam. It rests on a notch in the original framing and this timber salad. In my professional opinion, this is not proper bearing. My photo.



Figure 43. This was once an exterior wall: from left (inside) to right (outside)—stud, clapboard, roofing felt, air gap, brick. There might be some kind of ties between the brick but we haven't found any.



Figure 44. Some of the upper addition studs are not properly seated on the original top plate. My



Figure 45. The ground floor framing, including the summer beam, has required some additional support. Unknown if this is related to the steel beam installed above. .

In my professional opinion, the conditions shown are problematic for the long-term use of the dwelling. Settlement cracking on a brick veneer that may not be well-secured is a prelude to failure of the masonry. Deteriorating lintels would exacerbate this. The failure of the lower brick course near the northeast corner (see Figure 36) is particularly troubling since it is not obvious what caused such a large failure. It may be due to rain penetration of the masonry gathering at the bottom of the air gap, which has no weep holes. If that is the case, insulation of the walls will limit the ability of the building's heat to drive moisture back out through the masonry. The bearing situations of the upper studding and the steel beam on the ground floor are non-ideal but less problematic than the deficits in the building envelope.

## 5. Evaluation of the property under 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 was updated in 2023.

The Regulation states that “A property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the criteria determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest set out in paragraphs 1 to 9 of subsection 1 (2)”. Those criteria are listed below.

1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.
5. The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.
8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.
9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark. O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1.

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

1. The property is without a doubt unique by virtue of being representative of two architectural styles, an older one inside (Georgian Cottage) and the other one outside (Edwardian Classic) masking the the first. However if the interior finishes are reinstated, the older interior house will once again disappear from view, leaving a representative example of a brick Edwardian house. It's a case falling between two stools—not firmly standing on one or the other..
2. The property does not display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The property does not demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. The property does not have direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community. A search for owners' names in the Tweedsmuir History in the Vaughan Archives came up empty
5. The property does not yield, or have the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
6. We have not found any records of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is associated with the property.
7. The property does not define the character of the area. It might be said to support it in scale and materiality only.
8. The property is historically linked to its surroundings: The hidden older house has probably been in place since the early days of Kleinburg.
9. The property is not a landmark.

In my professional opinion the property at 10555 Islington Avenue can be said to have weak design value as a representative example of the Edwardian Classic style, and to have weak contextual value by its scale, materiality, and long life. Based on the criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06 it therefore may be considered for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The third word in the Regulation is “may”—not “must” or even “should”. In this case, the criteria met are weak: the design value is mixed—a case of falling between two stools—and the contextual values are not compelling. In my professional opinion, the building does not rise to the level where Part IV designation is merited.

## 6. Conclusions

In my professional opinion, there is not sufficient heritage value in the dwelling to merit its retention. But it is very interesting to discover the older clapboard cottage behind the existing 1920s brickwork. This was only possible because a previous owner stripped the interior finishes and completely exposed the earlier construction to view from the inside. In my professional opinion, the building presents an opportunity to reveal the exterior form of the original house.

I would propose a step-by-step dismantling of the dwelling, with photographic documentation in concert:

- Remove all the additions, which are without heritage value.
- Remove the brick veneer to expose the original clapboard exterior.
- Remove the roof
- Remove walls above original top plates. What remains is the general form of the original house.
- Supply photographic documentation to Vaughan Archives.
- Advertise original clapboard, timber, and fieldstone for salvage.



Figure 45. Stripping brick veneer from another log house, this one in Stroud. It's fast work for a skilled operator. Photo by Vic Snow.

## 7. Bibliography

### Historic Architecture:

Environment Canada, Parks Service. *The Buildings of Canada*. Ottawa

McRae, Marion and Adamson, Anthony. *The Ancestral Roof: Domestic Architecture of Upper Canada*. Toronto: Clarke Irwin & Company, 1963

Mikel, Robert. *Ontario House Styles*. Toronto: James Lorimer & Company Limited, 2004

### Heritage Conservation:

Fram, Mark. *Well Preserved, The Ontario Heritage Foundation's Manual of Principles and Practice for Architectural Conservation*. Erin, Ontario: The Boston Mills Press, 1988

Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. *Architectural Conservation Notes*.

Parks Canada. *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. Ottawa: Queens Printer,

### Official Documents:

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

Dillon Consulting, et al., *Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District Update*. Vaughan: City of Vaughan, 2021

Ontario. *Ontario Heritage Act, RSO, 1990, chapter o.18, as amended*. Toronto: King's Printer for Ontario, 2023

Ontario, *Ontario Regulation 6/09*, Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2023

Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. *Heritage Property Evaluation*. Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2006



## Appendices:

### **A. Property Ownership Chronology**

by Diane Harman

### **B. Heritage Consultant's CV**

## **Appendix A**

### **CHAIN OF TITLE RE PIN 03347-0131 - 10555 Islington Avenue, Kleinburg**

N.B. Concession abstract has been recopied for Lot. 24 Concession 8 Vaughan and L. Registrar has attempted to add clarity to same after the registrations, but still contains abstracting errors, so best efforts have been used to complete this Chain of Title.

**Patent** - 6 July 1847 Crown to Andrew Mitchell;

11 Plan 27 Feb. 1849 Andrew Mitchell (Mount Vernon);

48870 *Bargain & Sale* 16 Apr. 1853 -Andrew Mitchell to John Gartshore - 11 ¼ acres (Bl A Plan 11) [recopied abstract, so deleted mortgage details not available];

85879 *Grant* 14 Apr. 1863 John Gartshore to John McCallum (Lts. 35 & 36 Plan 275);

275 Plan 7 June 1865 John Gartshore;

4899 *Grant* 25 Oct. 1888 John McCallum to Mathew M. Gowland (both lots);

6089 *Grant* 30 Mar. 1895 Mathew M. Gowland to James Sheardown (both lots);

6090 Mortgage 30 Mar. 1895 James Sheardown to Mathew M. Gowland for \$300 (both lots);

6538? Discharge Mortgage 3 Dec. 1897? Mathew M. Gowland to James Sheardown for \$300 (both lots);

9598 *Grant* 3 Sept. 1912 Estate of James Sheardown to Julia A. Ireland (both lots);

9599 Mortgage 3 Sept. 1912 Julia A. Ireland to Lillie Cherry \$350 (both lots);

11843 *Grant* 23 Oct. 1919 Julia A. Ireland to Samuel G. Ireland (both lots);

11844 Assignment of Mortgage 23 Oct. 1919 Lillie Cherry to Joseph H. Ireland (both lots?);

13596 Discharge Mortgage 11 Feb. 1924 Joseph H. Ireland to Julia A. Ireland (both lots);

13597 Mortgage 11 Feb. 1924 Samuel G. Ireland to Lillie Cherry and Alice Cherry - \$950 (both lots); (possible funding for Edwardian renovation)

16648 *Quit Claim Deed* 30 Nov. 1933 Samuel G. Ireland to Lily Cherry and Alice Cherry (both lots);

17319 Mortgage 22 Aug. 1936 Mabel J. Ireland and Samuel G. Ireland to John P. Austin for \$1000 (both lots);

17339 *Grant* 21 Sept. 1936 Lily Cherry And Alice Cherry to Mabel J. Ireland (both lots);

19293 Ass't of Mortgage 28 May/42 Estate of John P. Austin to Joseph Fewster;

19614 Dis. of mtg. Joseph Fewster to Mabel J. Ireland;

26368 *Grant* 23 Jan. 1957 Mabel J. Ireland to The Director Veterans' Land Act. (both lots); (no mortgages recorded from here to date since not "building mortgages");

48715 *Grant* 29 Mar. 1962 The Director The Veterans' Land Act. to Elmer W. Snider (both lots);

52374 *Grant* 13 Mar. 1964 Elmer W. Snider and Dorothy H. Snider to Elmer W. Snider and Dorothy Snider (lot 36);

54672 *Grant* 1 Apr. 1965 Elmer W. Snider and Dorothy H. Snider to Forest D. Sweet and Barbara J. Sweet (both lots);

260011 1980/10/31 *Transfer* Forest D. Sweet and Barbara J. Sweet to John Clark and Rosalind Clark (both lots);

YR1059582 2007/09/25 *Transfer* John Clark and Rosalind Clark to Andrea Greco, Pasqualino Macario and Jason Monaco (both lots);

YR1440773 2010/02/12 *Transfer* Andrea Greco, Pasqualino Macario and Jason Monaco to Andrew Domenic Bordin (both lots).

## Appendix B

### PAUL OBERST, OAA, B.Arch (hons), 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

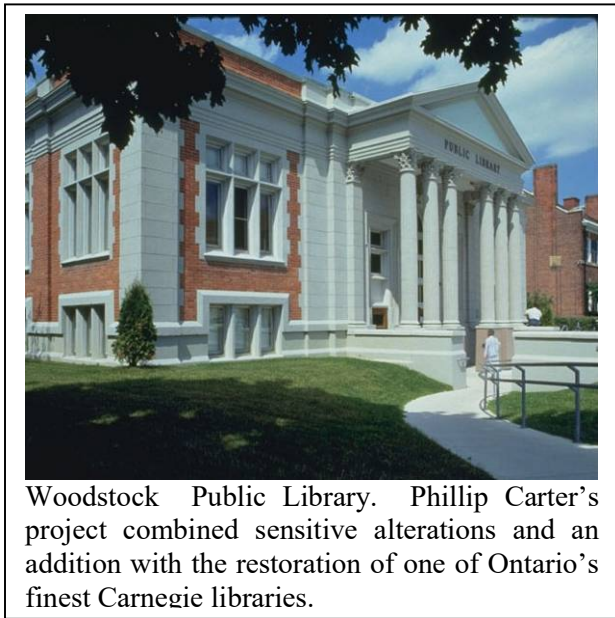
Mr. Oberst assisted in working drawings and field review.

**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.



**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

**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.

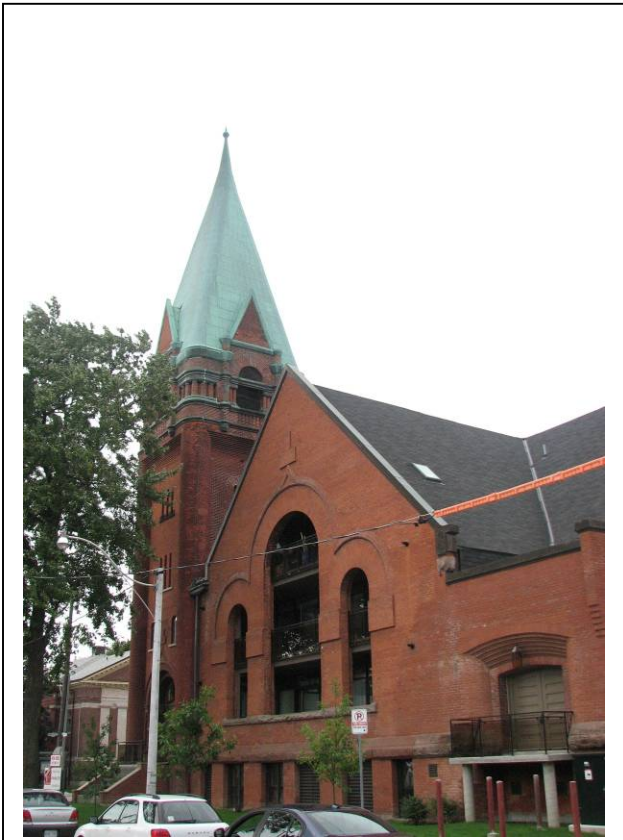
**Medland Lofts**  
2925 Dundas Street W., Toronto

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



## For Paul Oberst Architect

### Victoria Lofts

152 Annette Street, Toronto

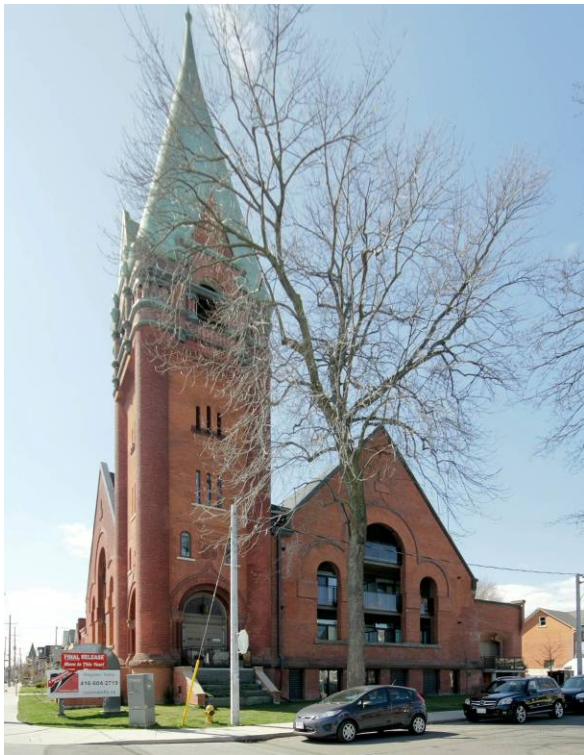
Residential Conversion,  
Occupied 2011

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.



Balconies behind the original arches double

## 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.**

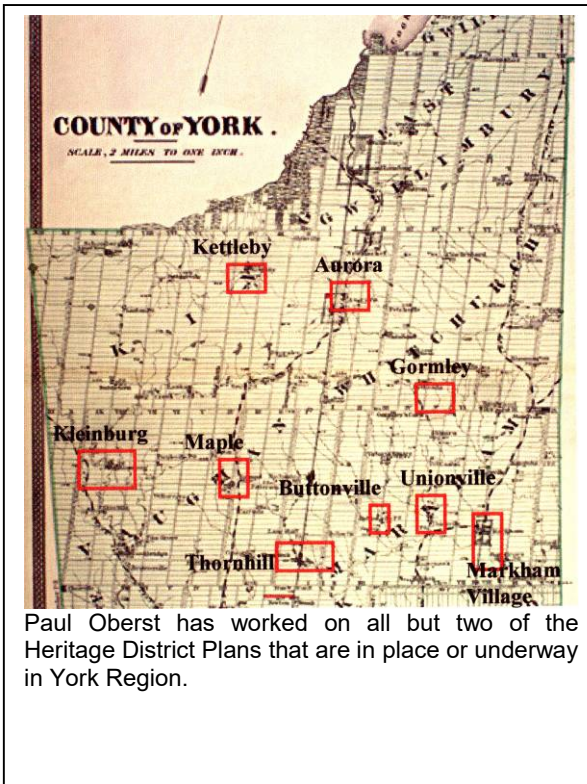
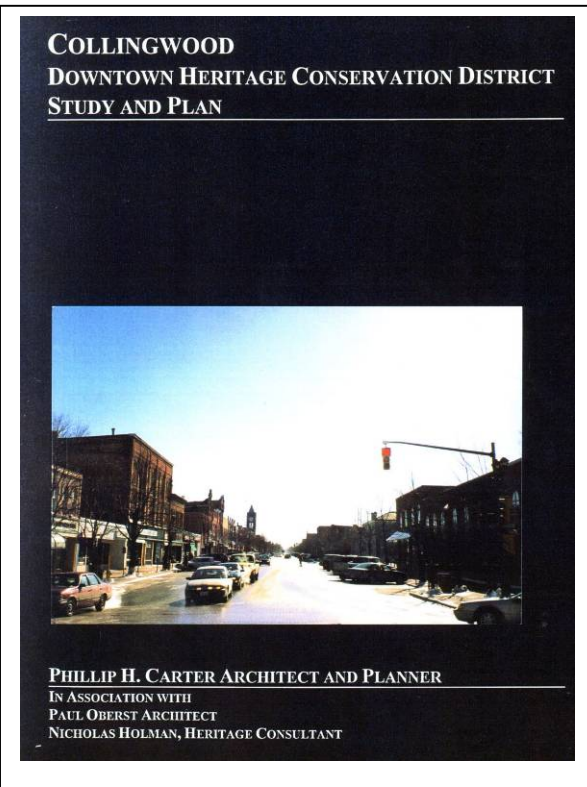
**Buttonville Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan, underway.**

**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

Building adaptation **HONOURABLE MENTION** Jury comments



The community-driven development process for this project is commendable and as such this residential project deserves recognition that goes beyond its spare architectural treatment and physical form. A skillful rehabilitation of a surplus building not only for residential use but also with adjacent spaces that have been adapted to the visual benefit of the neighbourhood.

**Kensington Market Lofts**  
Architect  
Robert E. Barnett Architect and  
Paul Oberst Architect in Joint Venture

The building on the left was originally a 1927 elementary school. The building on the right was the 1952 Provincial Institute of Trades. Although this is not a restoration project, it retained the main aspects of these traditionalist and early-modern buildings. This contrasts with the advice of a City consultant that they be demolished and replaced with an 8-storey

## 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.