



The Society for the Preservation of
HISTORIC THORNHILL

*Established 1974
Incorporated 1980*

**Communication : C7
Committee of the Whole (2)
January 25, 2021
Item # 14**

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**Re: Restoration, addition and new office-residential mixed-use
construction – adaptive reuse of existing heritage structure located at 46
Centre Street, Thornhill Heritage Conservation District**

To the members of the Committee of the Whole;

The Society for the Preservation of Historic Thornhill (SPOHT) were pleased to see that this application included the exterior restoration of the original Martin House at 46 Centre St.

However, SPOHT opposes the proposal to demolish the later-19thC tail wing. The Thornhill-Vaughan Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan calls only for the removal of additions or features that are uncomplimentary or obstructive to the original structure. Our perspective is that the tail wing (excluding the late 20thC addition) is indeed complementary to the original home, and its demolition would only serve to diminish the architectural value of this structure as a whole.

SPOHT also objects to the proposal to remove the second floor structure in the front section of the existing house as well as the stairway within the same section (as observed in the proposed section drawings of the application to Heritage Vaughan). These features are integral to the historical fabric of this house and the understanding of this building's former function as a home. The removal of these integral structural features would negate future opportunities for the adaptive re-use of the historic portions of this structure. Historical value aside, the reduction in usable floor space within a structure would also seem to run counter to the objective of intensification that this area is supposed to support.

We recommend that any proposed addition incorporate the tail wing structure within the final design.

The proposed Building B would appear (from the submitted drawings) to have window openings that are covered by sliding "shutters". From the renderings, the proposed windows would appear to be of a modern design, lacking in divisions or mullions. Given the reasonable expectation that these shutters will remain open during the building's use, the design of the windows behind them should be compliant with window design guidelines of the HCD Plan.

Further to that, the window openings on the north elevation of Building B and the addition to Building A fill the entire wall and are also lacking in mullions. This would be acceptable in an enclosed private yard. However, given that this extension and new construction will face the public road of Park Rd., a window treatment with mullions / divisions. The use of heritage-style window treatments would be consistent with recent additions to both 18 and 24 Centre St., which, similar to 46 Centre St., also have a public exposure to Park Rd. to the north.

Finally, the proposed removal of the majority of the tree coverage in this lot is excessive. Mature tree coverage in this neighbourhood is one of the features that makes it so great. The City should be doing everything possible to promote the retention of healthy tree stock when new development is proposed. New plantings should not be promoted as an equitable alternative to the preservation of existing mature trees..

Sincerely,

Pam Birrell

President,
The Society for the Preservation of Historic Thornhill (SPOHT)
president@thornhillhistoric.org
www.thornhillhistoric.org