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By e-mail

April 28, 2003

Toronto East York Community Council,

Dear Members of the Toronto East York Community Council:

Re: 2267 Gerrard Street East: Item 14:

On behalf of the owner, I submit that the property ought not to be listed.

There was an icehouse built in the 1920's on the property. Except for the street façade, all or parts of the present building may have been part of the icehouse which was an industrial building. The reasons for listing the property refer, though, only to the street façade. The façade, which is a commercial rather than an industrial façade, was most likely constructed after the icehouse use ceased. The façade therefore represents a use that is different from the use it is supposed to reflect. The façade commemorates the termination of the very use it is intended to celebrate!

Further, the façade itself has been altered in a major way in recent years.

Accordingly, listing, in these circumstances, is not a bona fide heritage exercise. It makes a joke of heritage preservation. A plaque would do a better job.

I attach a report from David Eckler, heritage architect, from AREA Architects, outlining the background of the matter.

I would request that the recommendations of the Toronto Preservation Board not be adopted.

Yours very truly,

Michael B. Vaughan, Q.C.
MBV/gb

c: Mr. Herman Guse
Mr. David Eckler

1.0 Background to the Report

AREA Architects was retained to provide a Conditions Assessment of the subject property in order to present another point of view with respect to its heritage value. The owner, Herman Guse, and his lawyer, Michael Vaughan, believe that the staff report to the Toronto Preservation Board regarding this property should be balanced by an evaluation based upon a site review. A site review was conducted by David Eckler on February 13, 2003 and identified specific alterations, discussed below, which affect the integrity and heritage significance of the original 1923 Lake Simcoe Ice Company building.

Mr. Eckler reviewed the Culture Division Staff Report dated December 18, 2002 which recommends including this property on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The Reasons for Listing describe the property’s significance as its “cultural heritage value or interest” which is found in its architectural features as follows: red brick cladding, stone trim, piers, round-arched door and window openings, the cornice and parapet (Fig. 1 & 2). In a conversation with the heritage researcher preparing the report, Kathryn Anderson, the archival sources were identified as City Directories, Assessment Rolls and Goad’s Atlas. These research sources, which are based on written documents and maps, cannot precisely correlate the existing architectural features to the historical use of the property. It is the owner’s contention that much of the principal (south) façade which is the focus of the listing report is altered or replaced since the period when the Lake Simcoe Ice Company operated. The historical importance of the property is valid but may not be appropriately commemorated by the existing architecture. The site review conducted for this report attempts to supplement the document-based research with the observed conditions of the existing south elevation in order to assess its heritage integrity.



Figures 1& 2 Principal South Facade

2.0 Alterations to Original Building

2.1 Front (South) Façade

The Reasons for Listing identify the “heritage attributes of the building...on the principal (south) façade.” However, it is not certain when this façade was designed or if it was even associated with the Lake Simcoe Ice Company branch office. The research tools employed for the listing report are written or plan-based and cannot identify the date or building use at the time that the current façade design was built. The current south elevation could conceivably have been added as a brick veneer refacing after the ice house ceased operation. This scenario seems credible if a more retail-oriented business replaced the ice house which would have been considered an industrial use.

In looking at the west building elevation (Fig. 3), the return of the front façade exhibits a distinctly different brick than the side wall beside it. On the interior face of the south front wall (Fig. 4), the head of the apertures are flat with a steel supporting lintel. This wall construction diverges from the “round-arched openings” on the exterior face which are identified in the listing report as heritage attributes. This veneer brick arch treatment lends some credence to the scenario of a facade refacing possibly after the discontinuation of the ice house use. The door and window openings are supported at the top by steel lintels permitting the flat head of the back-up masonry. It is unusual for Edwardian Classicism, as an early 20th century style, and its associated building technology to feature an arch in elevation which is not similarly constructed on the interior wythe.

There are at least 3 types of masonry work on the side wall, distinguished by brick colour and mortar joints, which indicate previous configurations of the building. Judging by the lines of different masonry, an earlier building envelope had a street front set further back from the street (line A, Fig. 3). Further research is required to determine the location of the building front façade at the time of the ice house operation.

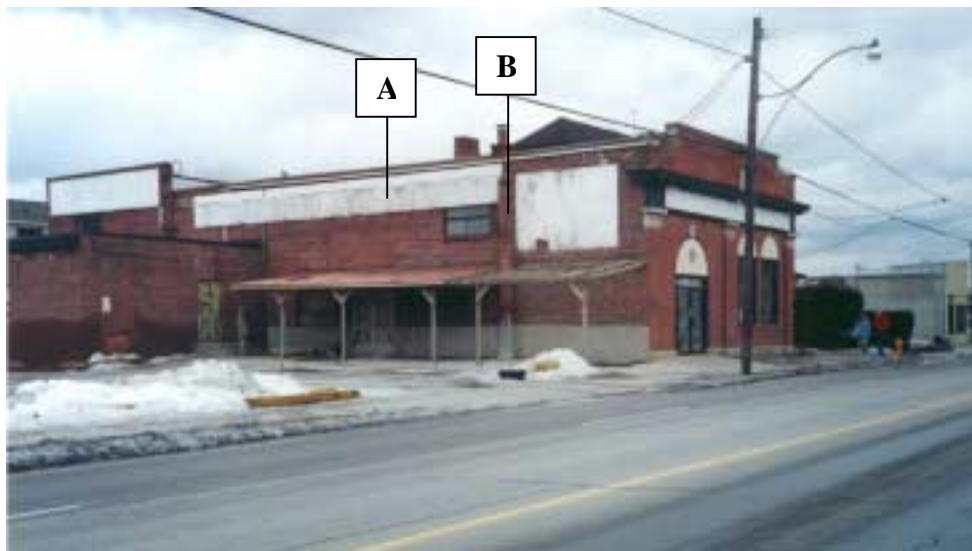


Figure 3 West Side Facade
A – Line of former front wall
B – Line of demolished office wall



Figure 4 Interior face of South Facade

1.1 Former Garage Entrance

The east half of the existing front façade previously accommodated a garage door to access the building. In fact, within the period that he has owned the property, Mr. Guse has made significant alterations to the east bay of the south elevation. The garage entrance existed up until around 1988 when it was replaced with the two window openings identified in the Reasons for Listing.

The change in this bay from the garage door to the windows is clearly visible at the junction between the new and old masonry as follows:

- Where the recessed wall meets the piers adjacent to what was once a garage door opening (line D, Fig. 6 & line E, Fig.7); and
- at the top of the middle pier between the two window openings (line C, Fig. 5).

The brick below the windows and partway up their jambs and the pre-cast concrete sills (Fig. 6 & 7) are all new and relate to the alteration of the former garage opening.

The interior face of the south façade (Fig. 4) provides other evidence of the previous garage door. The brick pier between the windows, as on the exterior, is a different brick than the rest of this south wall. Prior to the insertion of the middle pier, the steel lintel, described in the section above, supported the entire span across the two windows. This construction of the opening suggests that, not only the 1988 windows, but also the round arches over them were not intrinsic to the original façade which contained the garage opening.

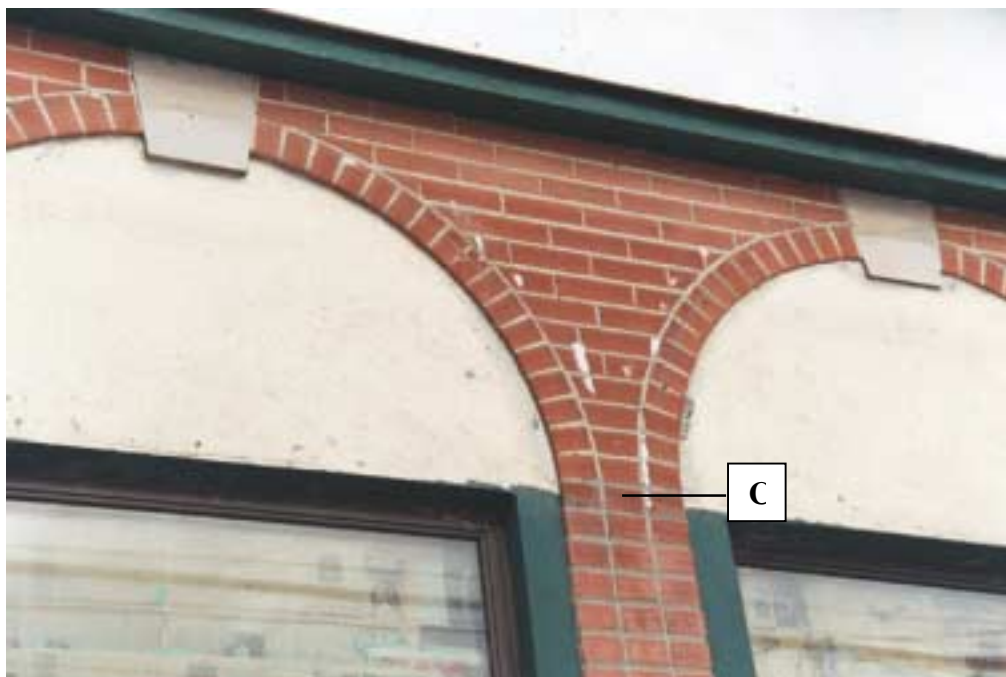


Figure 5 Middle pier between windows
C – Line between new & old masonry

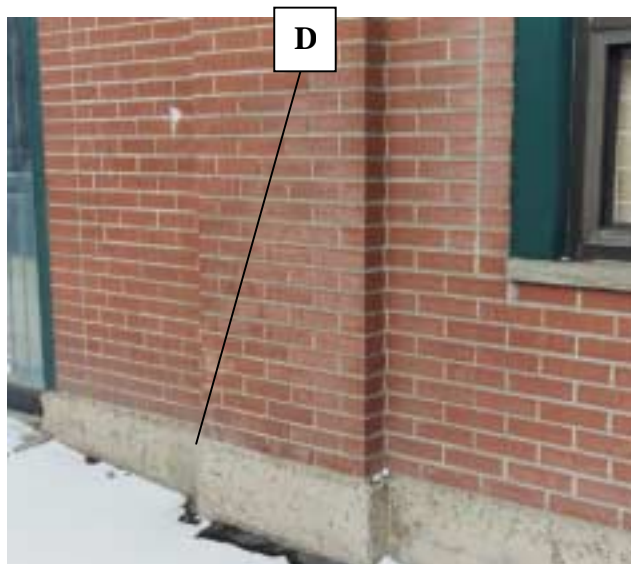


Figure 6 Pier adjacent to former garage opening
D – Line between new & old masonry



Figure 7 Pier adjacent to former garage opening
E – Line between new & old masonry

1.2 Office Wing

The Reasons for Listing describes the structure as an “office building.” The portion of building which remains, in fact, is the ice house proper which stored the ice (F, Fig. 8). The ice house interior, by the owner’s account of when he purchased the building, comprised various equipment, hoists and a pit in the floor, all of which have been removed for tenants. The building, during its operation, was an industrial facility which stored, cut and shipped blocks of ice. This building was, in its early 20th century form, not a “commercial building” but rather a factory with a more industrial façade than what we see today, as mentioned above.

There was a small office component attached to the ice house on the west side, which can be seen in the City Property Data map of 1996 (G, Fig. 8), but has since been torn down. The vestige of the rear wall of this office annex appears like a buttress on the west wall (line B, Fig.3). It is also possible that the rear wing set back from the street and attached to the west wall of the ice house acted as an office to the storehouse in earlier periods (H, Fig.8). In either circumstance, the background research for the listing mistakenly attributes an office use to the existing façade. The office component on this site was always secondary to its primary purpose as a shipping depot for ice. The office headquarters for this company was its first site on the Esplanade. The existing Gerrard Street façade does look more commercial than industrial but that is probably because it was added after the ice house function was abandoned.

The combination of office and industrial uses tends to produce a more appealing street front than an industrial building alone. A nearby example of this type of building can be found further east at 2356 Gerrard Street East which is presently a storage rental business but was originally a glove factory (Fig. 9). This building façade’s scale and design detail--- such as corbelled brick bands, a stone entrance portico, horizontal window mullions and stone capped pilasters--- exhibits the quality of a commercial building which is at least equal to the subject property. The latter façade, however, is original to a mixed commercial-industrial property whereas the subject building was modified after the industrial use ceased.

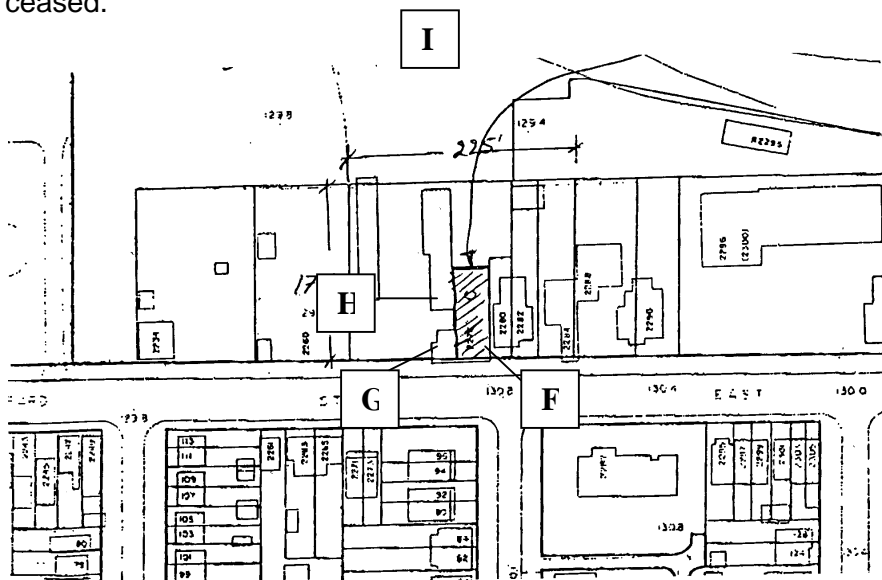


Figure 8 Partial City Property Data Map, 1996
F – Ice House G – Office, demolished H – Possible former office I – Former CNR lands



Figure 9 2356 Gerrard St. E., former glove factory

2.0 Recommended Recognition for the Property

The Conditions Assessment by means of this site review has indicated that the building itself does not necessarily represent the heritage value of the property. The Reasons for Listing describe predominantly architectural features which do not apply to the original industrial use of the building. Other criteria for evaluating the property would establish heritage value with a legitimate correlation to its historical use. Such an alternative criteria for heritage evaluation would be based not on architecture but rather on the historical use of the site. Recognition of this historical use could be accomplished by means of a plaque or landscaping feature on the site. This form of recognition could also refer to the broader history of the Lake Simcoe Ice Company including reference to its other sites in the city and the

**AREA 2276 Gerrard Street East –
Conditions Assessment Report**

predecessor ice house on the site constructed in wood. It is recommended, therefore, that this property not be included on City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties as proposed in the staff listing report. Commemorating the ice house operation with a plaque could convey greater integrity to the property's history than the existing façade does.

This district of East Toronto is presently undergoing a transition in use from a mixed industrial-residential to residential. This property is within an area governed by an Interim Control By-law "to prohibit non-residential development." Gerrard Street East is residential in character to the west and east of the area covered by this by-law (Fig. 10 & 11). The former C.N.R. marshalling yards behind the subject property (I, Fig. 8) is being developed into a residential neighbourhood of 500 homes. This building façade, were it preserved, diverges from both the historic residential streetscape and the proposed future residential use for this stretch of Gerrard Street. It is further recommended, therefore, that any proposed action on this property be deferred until after the period of the Interim Control By-law once a planning policy is established for this area. In the meantime, no development applications may be submitted for this property due to the governing by-law.



Figure 10 & 11 Gerrard Street Residential Streetscape, east of subject property