Minutes - Executive Policy Committee – July 20, 2005

Minute No. 481
Report - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - July 5, 2005

Item No. 1 Historical Buildings By-law No. 1474/77 -
440-442 Assiniboine Avenue - Chelsea Court Apartments
File G-3.1.1

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development (who did not concur in the recommendation of the City Centre Community Committee and the Historical Buildings Committee), and submits the following to Council:

1. That the Chelsea Court Apartments, 440-442 Assiniboine Avenue, not be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Minutes - Executive Policy Committee – July 20, 2005

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development – July 5, 2005

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor De Smedt,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development be concurred in, and the recommendation of the City Centre Community Committee and the Historical Buildings Committee not be concurred in, and forwarded to Council.

Carried

Councillor Thomas asked to be recorded as having voted against the above motion, in accordance with Rule 50.7 of the Procedure By-law.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 5, 2005, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development did not concur in the recommendations of the City Centre Community Committee and the Historical Buildings Committee and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

On July 5, 2005, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development received from Lewis Rosenberg, Apex Realty, a report prepared by Crosier Kilgour and Partners Ltd., Consulting Engineers, a Chart detailing the cost of Historical Renovation and New Construction and Renderings of the proposed new development.

On July 5, 2005, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development received from Stan Rowbotham a presentation and a petition in support of the recommendations of the City Centre Community Committee and the Historical Buildings Committee that the Chelsea Court Apartments be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 7, 2005, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development laid over consideration of the matter to the meeting of the Committee scheduled for July 5, 2005, at 9:00 a.m. in the West Committee Room, Council Building, 510 Main Street.

On May 18, 2005, Terry Cristall, FRAIC, Principal, Number Ten Architectural Group, on behalf of Composite Holdings Ltd., requested a postponement of consideration of the listing of the Chelsea Court Apartments on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building.

Report - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - July 5, 2005

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

On April 5, 2005, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development laid over consideration of the matter to the meeting of the Committee scheduled for June 7, 2005, at 9:00 a.m. in the West Committee Room, Council Building, 510 Main Street.

Further, the Committee requested that in the interim the owner of the property obtain and provide the City with an Engineer's Report detailing an estimate and the feasibility of repairs which would be required, and, in consultation with the Historical Buildings Division of the Urban and Neighbourhood Planning Branch, Planning and Land Use Division, Planning, Property and Development Department, investigate grants which could be applied for to offset the cost of renovations.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 1, 2005, the City Centre Community Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Historical Buildings Committee and recommended to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development that the Chelsea Court Apartments, 440-442 Assiniboine Avenue, be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building.

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 20, 2005, the Historical Buildings Committee recommended that the Chelsea Court Apartments, 440-442 Assiniboine Avenue, be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building.

numberTEN
architectural group

RECEIVED
CITY CLERKS
WINNIPEG

5 MAY 19 P1:55

May 18, 2005

City of Winnipeg
City Clerk's Department
510 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1B9

Attention: ***Ms. Carol R. Freeman***

Re: ***Listing of Chelsea Court Apartments***
440 – 442 Assiniboine Avenue
Winnipeg, MB

On behalf of our Client, Composite Holdings Ltd., we are hereby requesting postponement of the meeting, June 7th, 2005 with respect to the above listing.

The design and property management consultants have been working diligently to determine the appropriate options for this property. We have been attempting to utilize the National Standards and Guidelines for Historic Buildings in this exercise. Unfortunately, it has become apparent that the assignment is complex than earlier appreciated. We need more time to properly assess practical solutions and costs.

A delay in our presentation will permit more comprehensive analysis and useful dialogue.

Sincerely.

Number TEN Architectural Group

Terry Cristall. FRAIC
Principal

/cr
cc Composite Holdings Ltd.
Apex Realty

Terry Cristall architect inc
Robert A. Eastwood architect inc
Barrie J. Ottenbreit architect inc.
Doug Hanna architect inc
Barry Cosgrove architect inc
Dave Lalama architect inc
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Julie A. Iralon interior designer

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number 10

architecture + interior design + graphic design

January 20, 2005

TO: CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS
STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON
PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS
CITY CENTRE COMMUNITY
COMMITTEE

RE: HISTORICAL BUILDINGS BY-LAW
NO. 1474/77 AS AMENDED

The Historical Buildings Committee recommends that the following building be placed on the Buildings Conservation List:

Name	Address	Grade Recommendation
Chelsea Court Apartments	440-442 Assiniboine Avenue	Grade III

The above recommendation was made by the Committee at its meeting on January 20, 2005.

HERITAGE PLANNER'S REPORT

The Historical Buildings Committee reviewed the history and condition of this property at its meeting on January 20, 2005 because of a demolition request by the owners. These 8 buildings, which make up the complex, have been vacant since August 2004 and have slowly had exterior detailing and interior elements removed. Under the terms of the Vacant and Derelict Buildings By-law 35/2004 the property has been secured and boarded up. Because these buildings are on the "Inventory of Buildings" under the terms of the Historical Buildings By-law 1474/77 (as amended), the demolition permit is delayed until the Committee has an opportunity to evaluate the structures for historical and architectural significance and make a recommendation to Council if the buildings are to be declared historic or, to simply allow a demolition permit application to proceed.

The Committee reviewed the building complex to determine if there are special architectural and historical qualities that merit recognition as a heritage site. They recommend that Council consider designating this property historic for the following reasons:

1. Built in 1914, the Chelsea Court Apartments are Winnipeg's only example of a "Maisonette" building type. Popular in the United Kingdom and Europe, the "Maisonette" is a self-contained apartment, usually on two floors, in a larger building and with its own entrance from the outside.

   When the units were first built the apartments featured a library, games room, and large open fireplaces. Located within a short distance of the Legislative grounds, these accommodations would have been considered the most luxurious in the city at the time.

2. The complex contributes to the historical continuity and character of the neighbourhood. The residential district between Broadway and Assiniboine Avenue was Winnipeg's elite neighbourhood from the early 1890s. Winnipeg's commercial and political upper classes, including James Ashdown, Hugh John Macdonald, built large homes in the area. When Crescentwood and Tuxedo neighbourhoods developed in the early 20th Century, these homes were sold and the elite gradually moved on. The Chelsea Court Apartments contribute to the legacy of the City's grand Victorian residential enclave and also recalls a unique building type that warrants conservation.

The Committee evaluated these buildings as Grade III structures, that is, of local, neighbourhood significance. A much higher rating would have been achieved if exterior and interior detailing had not been removed in the six months prior to the demolition application.

The Committee wishes to advise that they also evaluated two other buildings in the downtown, the former Maw House, now Dubrovnik Restaurant, 390 Assiniboine Avenue, and the Windsor Hotel, 187 Garry Street, and have removed these properties from the Inventory due to minimal heritage significance.

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC RESEARCH

The need for residential space in Winnipeg after 1900 led to the creation of not only single-family dwellings but also double dwellings, duplexes and terraces. The city's frantic population boom saw its population balloon from approximately 42,000 in 1900 to over 210,000 in 15 years. One building type that was not extensively used in Winnipeg was the *maisonette*, a large two-storey building containing two suites that was popular in Europe. Located at the south end of Kennedy Street on riverbank property on the south side of Assiniboine Avenue, the Chelsea Court Apartments appear to be the only *maisonette* style apartments ever built in Winnipeg.

The Chelsea Court Apartments contains elements of the Tudor Revival style, used extensively in Canada's more affluent residential neighbourhoods. Instead of the usual half-timbering,

architect Paul C. Samwel utilized dark brick bands, geometric shapes and projecting verandas. Samwel, who began his local practice in 1910, designed a number of medium and large apartment blocks in the city. He also was the owner of the complex until his move to Florida in 1921.

The complex consists of eight, 2 ½-storey buildings on concrete and brick foundations with brick and stucco clad walls above. Ample green space between buildings ensured privacy for tenants and was another of its unique features. The buildings are rectangular in plan with a double entrance atop a small brick and stone staircase. The total cost of construction was $80,000 and the exteriors of the buildings have not changed significantly since they were completed. Heating, originally accomplished by boilers in the basements of each building, was converted to a central plant located in a converted automobile garage (built in 1915) in 1928.

Originally, each building held two very spacious and well-appointed suites. Tenants had the choice of either the main floor with basement space or the second floor with attic. The basement suites featured a library, billiards room, lounge, and bedroom with a connected bathroom. An interior staircase off the lounge connected to the ground floor with its large bedroom, boudoir, bathroom, kitchen with pantry, dining room, and large living room with fireplace and access to a veranda. The upper suite possessed the same basic features. Both suites also featured maple floors, nine-foot ceilings, built-in storage and decorative woodwork. With these attractive interior elements, the Chelsea Court Apartments were considered among the most luxurious in Winnipeg when completed.

Between 1930 and the 1960s, changes on individual buildings were made. Most dramatic was the conversion of theses buildings into four-suite units, which entailed the construction of basement entrance doors and the extension of the rear staircase to the attic. Another significant alteration was the closure of several fireplaces.

During the next several decades, the tenancy of the complex, because of the high numbers of artists, garnered it a “bohemian reputation” and it became known as a “magnet for musicians, writers, artists and, especially, young architects.” Musicians Lenny Breau and Fred Penner were but two of the well-known renters.

Over the years, the exterior condition of the complex has declined and its recent closure and the resulting vandalism have led to further deterioration. The current owner has recently removed much of the original woodwork (moulding and flooring), kitchen and bathroom fixtures and radiators, although some of the original features, including doors, windows, fireplaces and coved ceilings can be found in various locations throughout individual buildings. The complex continues to stand as an integral part of a small section of Assiniboine Avenue that features an uninterrupted group of pre-World War I homes and multi-family dwellings, a rarity in Winnipeg.

Attach.
cc: Ms. A. Stenning, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. B. Gray, Manager, EPC Secretariat
Mr. H. Finnigan, Director, Planning, Property & Development Department

CITY OF WINNIPEG

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

BUILDING EVALUATION FORM

Location: 440-442 Assiniboine Avenue

Name: Current - Chelsea Court Apartments
Original -

Owner: Composite Holdings Ltd., 238 Princess Street, R3B 1L8,
att: Allan Werier

Present Use: vacant

Building Grade **I** **II** **III**
I* **II*** **III***

EVALUATION DATE: January 20, 2005

Recommendation: To list as Grade III



6009



6010





6012