Minutes - Executive Policy Committee - January 17, 2007

Minute No. 87
Report - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - January 9, 2007

Item No. 1 Historical Buildings By-law No. 1474/77 -
38 - 44 1/2 Albert Street - Business Block
File G-3.1.1

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendations of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development and the Historical Buildings Committee (did not concur in the recommendation of the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee) and submits the following to Council:

1. That the Business Block located at 38 – 44½ Albert Street be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building for the following reasons:

    A. The Exchange District was designated a National Historic Site of Canada by the Government of Canada in 1997.

    B. To provide for the continuity of the streetscape and overall character of the Exchange District.

    C. Listing the property provides an opportunity to properly address and mitigate the concerns of other Exchange District area stakeholders.

    D. Listing the property recognizes that designation is a tool to ensure stewardship and allow for further discussion

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

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Swandel,

That the recommendations of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development and the Historical Buildings Committee (did not concur in the recommendation of the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee) be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 9, 2007, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development concurred in the recommendation of the Historical Buildings Committee, did not concur in the recommendation of the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee, and recommended that the Business Block located at 38 – 44½ Albert Street be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building for the following reasons:

A. The Exchange District was designated a National Historic Site of Canada by the Government of Canada in 1997.

B. To provide for the continuity of the streetscape and overall character of the Exchange District.

C. Listing the property provides an opportunity to properly address and mitigate the concerns of other Exchange District area stakeholders.

D. Listing the property recognizes that designation is a tool to ensure stewardship and allow for further discussion,

and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

Further, on January 9, 2007, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development received the following submissions:

In support of the recommendation that 38 - 44½ Albert Street - Business Block be listed on the Buildings Conservation List with a Grade III designation:

Report - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - January 9, 2007

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

- Mike Petkau submitted a communication dated November 25, 2006
- Councillor Gerbasi, Fort Rouge-East Fort Garry Ward, submitted a copy of her presentation
- Councillor Gerbasi submitted a communication dated January 6, 2007, from Steve Porter, President, Condominium Corporation 463
- Dawn Bronson, Superintendent, Manitoba Field Unit, Parks Canada
- Lisa Holowchuk, Executive Director, Exchange District Business Improvement Zone, submitted a copy of her presentation

In opposition to the recommendation that 38 - 44½ Albert Street - Business Block be listed on the Buildings Conservation List with a Grade III designation:

- Ken Zaifman, titled Impark 44 Albert Street Parking Layout
- Hart Mallin submitted a copy of his presentation

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 21, 2006, the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee did not concur in the recommendation of the Historical Buildings Committee and recommended to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development that the Business Block located at 38 - 44 1/2 Albert Street not be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building.

Further on November 21, 2006, the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee received from Ken Zaifman, on behalf of the St. Charles Hotel, a rendering of the proposed redevelopment of the St. Charles Hotel, including the subject property.

On July 25, 2006, the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee laid over the matter to its meeting on November 21, 2006.

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 15, 2006, the Historical Buildings Committee recommended that the Business Block located at 38 - 44½ Albert Street be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III Historical Building.

June 23, 2006

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

CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS
LORD SELKIRK-WEST
KILDONAN 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
Business Block	38-44 1/2 Albert Street	Grade III

The above recommendation was made by the Committee at its meeting on June 15, 2006

HERITAGE PLANNER'S REPORT

The Historical Buildings Committee evaluated this property on December 15, 2005 at the request of Imperial Parking Ltd. who is acting on behalf of Globe General Agencies who represent the owners. It is the intent of the owners to demolish these structures to establish a surface parking lot with a new curb cut on Albert Street. The owners of the subject property have had discussions with the owners of the St. Charles Hotel on Notre Dame Avenue to facilitate the leasing of additional spaces to assist in the redevelopment of the under-utilized former hotel.

The Historical Buildings Committee recommends that that this property is significant and should not be demolished for the following reasons:

1. This complex includes portions of a residential building that dates back to 1878. This is the second oldest building in downtown Winnipeg after Upper Fort Garry Gate. The brick dwelling was built for John Le Cappellain, owner of a hardware business and former City alderman.
2. This portion of Albert Street was an early residential district in the 1870s and this house is the sole surviving example of this use.

3. The designation of the Exchange District by the Government of Canada as a National Historic Site in 1996 places a responsibility on the City to try to keep all significant and contributing structures protected and intact for all Canadians.

4. This complex is part of a significant streetscape that provides continuity and character to the Exchange District. The demolition of this property for a parking lot would detract from the City's investments in the surrounding properties. The City's aim is to maintain a delightful visual expanse that has been recognized by the international film industry.

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC RESEARCH

This unassuming, mixed-use structure on the west side of Albert Street near Notre Dame Avenue consists of two parts – a house that dates back to a time when Winnipeg was little more than a pioneer village and a commercial addition built in the mid-1920s as the city recovered from World War I and several years of economic depression.

The two-storey, wood frame and brick veneer house, built for $2,000 by local contractor J.J. Johnston in 1877, was established as a rental property by investor-merchant John O. LeCappellain. He operated a wholesale/retail hardware business on Main Street in 1877-78 and also was employed with the Ashdown Hardware Co. He later became a City alderman (1881) and broker (1882).

In March 1882 during a speculative property boom, LeCappellain moved his house several feet to the south to make way for construction of a long, narrow, two-storey business block. He subsequently encountered financial difficulties, however, when collapse of the boom led to recession. In 1885, the Manitoba and North West Loan Co. assumed title to the site.

The house, which once contained a main-floor bay window, continued to accommodate residential tenants until shortly after the turn of the century when it was converted to commercial use by a new owner, agent R.H. Moody. Successive occupants included a weekly French-language newspaper called L'Echo de Manitoba, a messenger service and a tailor.

This conversion occurred during yet another boom in which much of the housing clustered near Main Street was displaced by warehouses, factories and other new business premises. For example, the St. Charles and Royal Albert hotels were developed in 1913 to the south and north of 44 Albert respectively, while across the street Jerry Robinson's department store was expanded (1902, 1905) and the 11-storey Electric Railway Chambers (1912-13) appeared at Albert and Notre Dame.

Although altered by rear additions and various interior changes, 44 Albert managed to survive this and later periods of physical renewal to stand as a rare example of both early brick veneer construction in Winnipeg and the residential phase of the Exchange District's evolution.

In 1924, the house became less visible to passers-by after it was encompassed by a one-storey, solid brick block with a flat roof. Designed and built by local contractor William A. Irish, this $7,000 structure was in the unadorned one-part commercial style attractive to investors because it provided a modest-cost, revenue-generating option for land being held in anticipation of future, higher-density redevelopment.

The addition initially contained four retail outlets occupied by Jimy's Barber Shop, tailor W.H. Drinkwater, Wymie Wiseman's watch shop, and J. and J. Taylor, safe works. The house, renumbered as 44 1/2 Albert, was returned to residential use.

Contractor Irish worked with John A. Saul from about the turn of the century to the late 1910s on projects such as the Galt and Ashdown warehouses, St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church (Elim Chapel), and La Verendrye School. The two also built numerous houses which they then sold or used as rental properties. Both continued in the trade after dissolving their partnership.

Various shops, restaurants and other services leased 38-44 1/2 Albert from the 1920s onward. After ownership was transferred in c.1951 from a United States-based company to local entrepreneurs, the block's façade was altered and the number of retail outlets was reduced to three. At present, the space at 38-40 Albert features large display windows, polished tile above and a stuccoed side wall. The stores at 42-44 Albert are clothed by plain brick and large windows, with an upper panel of raised brick offering the only embellishment.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor J. Gerbasi
Chairperson, Historical Buildings Committee

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: 38-44½ Albert Street

Name: Current - Business Block
Original

Owner: Globe Enterprises Inc.
494 St. James Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 3J4

Present Use: Restaurant/retail

Building Grade III

EVALUATION DATE: June 15, 2006

Recommendation: To list as Grade III


7UP KEN HONG 京香 7UP
RESTAURANT
FOR LEASE