Minutes - Executive Policy Committee - July 15, 2009

Minute No. 354
Report - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - July 13, 2009

Item No. 1 Grain Exchange Building Annex - 153 Lombard Avenue (Point Douglas Ward) eFile 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 Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee and submits the following to Council:

1. That the Grain Exchange Building Annex at 153 Lombard Avenue not be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III listing.

2. That no demolition permits be issued for 153 Lombard Avenue prior to the issuance of building permits.

3. That the construction of the proposed development shall be in conformance with the renderings submitted to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development.

4. 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 15, 2009

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Fielding,

That Rule 10(3) of The Procedure By-law No. 50/2007 be suspended in order that the following item, which was received less than 96 hours preceding the committee meeting, be considered by Committee.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Fielding,

That the recommendations of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development and the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

Councillor Wyatt asked to be recorded as having voted against the above motion, in accordance with Rule 47(7) of The Procedure By-law No. 50/2007.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 13, 2009, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development concurred in the recommendation of the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee with the following amendments, namely:

- Add the following recommendations:

    2. That no demolition permits be issued for 153 Lombard Avenue prior to the issuance of building permits.

    3. That the construction of the proposed development shall be in conformance with the renderings submitted to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development,

and forwarded to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

On July 13, 2009, Ray Wan, Ray Wan Architects Inc. submitted two computer generated images of the proposed development, which are on file at the City Clerks Department.

On June 30, 2009, in accordance with Rule 51(11) of The Procedure By-law No. 50/2007, the matter was rescheduled to July 13, 2009 at 2:30 p.m. in the Council Building, City Hall, 510 Main Street, due to a lack of quorum.

Report - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - July 13, 2009

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 19, 2009, 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 Grain Exchange Building Annex at 153 Lombard Avenue not be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III listing.

On February 10, 2009, the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community Committee laid over the matter to its meeting on May 19, 2009.

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 16, 2009, the Historical Buildings Committee recommended that the Grain Exchange Building Annex, 153 Lombard Avenue, be placed on the Buildings Conservation List as a Grade III with the following character-defining elements:

Exterior:

- The south-facing office building located on Lombard Avenue, adjoining its parent Grain Exchange Building to the west via a second floor bridge
- Simple, elongated rectangular plan
- South (front) elevation with smoothly-dressed limestone base with buff brick walls above; a centrally-located entrance framed by smoothly-dressed limestone accenting; symmetrical and grid-like arrangement of windows on all floors with limestone sills on the second floor and continuous sills on the third floor; an ornamental cornice and capped brick parapet
- Ample and grid-like arrangement of fenestration on the east façade
- West, east and north elevations with simple clay brick and modest detailing.

Submission from Ray Wan, Ray Wan Architects Inc.





6234

Winnipeg

January 19, 2009

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: Grain Exchange Building Annex

Address: 153 Lombard Avenue

Recommendation: Grade III with the following character-defining elements:

Exterior:

- The south-facing office building located on Lombard Avenue, adjoining its parent Grain Exchange Building to the west via a second floor bridge
- Simple, elongated rectangular plan
- South (front) elevation with smoothly-dressed limestone base with buff brick walls above; a centrally-located entrance framed by smoothly-dressed limestone accenting; symmetrical and grid-like arrangement of windows on all floors with limestone sills on the second floor and continuous sills on the third floor; an ornamental cornice and capped brick parapet
- Ample and grid-like arrangement of fenestration on the east façade
- West, east and north elevations with simple clay brick and modest detailing

The above recommendation was confirmed by the Committee on January 16, 2009.

HERITAGE PLANNER'S REPORT

The Historical Buildings Committee originally evaluated this vacant office building on January 17, 2008 at the request of the owner (letter attached) who asked that the Grain Exchange Annex Building be removed from the Inventory in order to facilitate the redevelopment of an adjacent site. The item was considered by the Lord Selkirk- West Kildonan Community Committee and the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, both recommended it as a Grade III listing to City Council. The request to demolish the property was subsequently withdrawn and the item was removed from City Council's agenda.

On January 12, 2009 the owners notified the Planning, Property and Development Department that they have a parkade proposal for the annex site and wish to reapply for a demolition permit.

The owners of the Grain Exchange Building have advised that they need to provide parking for the various tenants in the Grain Exchange Building in order to ensure that the building remains viable for many more years. They suggest that the proposed parkade will contribute to the ongoing vitality of the Exchange District National Historic Site and will contribute in a positive manner to the streetscape by replacing a large parking lot.

In 1992 the main Grain Exchange Building, 167 Lombard Avenue, was placed on the Buildings Conservation List, as a Grade II property, at the request of the building owners who wished to have it designated historic in order to be eligible for a number of grants and tax credit programs. They have received a grant and credit on their property taxes for work to upgrade the building.

Under the terms of the Historical Building Bylaw No. 1474/77 (as amended), the footprint of a building is designated that includes all later additions. The Annex is connected to the main building by means of a small overpass. In preliminary discussions with the owners, the Public Service advised that no part of a Grade II could be demolished. Demolitions of Grade III buildings could be allowed if the owners proved that it was necessary. Thus, the owners originally asked that the Grade be changed.

Subsequently, the owners agreed that the Annex would be placed on the Inventory of Buildings and evaluated as a separate property rather than change the grade of the very significant main Grain Exchange Building.

The Historical Buildings Committee evaluated the Grain Exchange Annex and recommended that the building be placed on the Buildings Conservation List for the following reasons:

1. The designation of the Exchange District by the Government of Canada as a National Historic Site in 1997 places a serious responsibility on the City of Winnipeg to make every effort to keep all significant and contributing structures protected and intact for all Canadians.

2. The building is an integral part of a significant streetscape on Lombard Avenue that provides continuity and character to the Exchange District.

3. The three-storey Annex was designed to architecturally match the main building in a reduced form and is an excellent example of the impact of new approaches for design in the 1920s.

4. This building serves as an excellent example of the variety of smaller tenants that were situated adjacent to the larger grain businesses in Winnipeg, initially a variety of grain companies and airlines and in time horse racing associations. During WW II the Canadian government occupied the whole building, later it was home to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In 2000, all three levels of government signed the Exchange District National Historic Site of Canada Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS). It is a planning document that is to be considered when reviewing proposals within the District. The CIS suggests that decisions and actions concerning individual buildings and streetscapes respect historic and architectural values, as well as their contribution to the streetscape.

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC RESEARCH

This small, three-storey office building set beside and attached to a towering structure to its west, is an important building as a tangible reminder of the expansion of Winnipeg's important grain and commodities trading role during and after World War I, a rare downtown example of 1920s architecture and, as the 20th century progressed and needs within the grain sector changed, the building adapted to other uses and tenants.

In 1906-07, the colossal Grain Exchange Building (167 Lombard Avenue), on the northeast corner of Rorie Street was completed – at the time one of the British Empire's largest office buildings. The new tower's modern offices were filled with grain dealers, elevator and seed companies, farmers' co-operatives, government officials and other agriculture-related businesses. On the sixth floor was the large trading room, separated into two pits for the buying and selling of wheat and other grains on the futures market and on a cash basis.

British demand for Canadian wheat during World War I caused prairie farmers to boost production to new higher levels, while the Canadian government regulated prices through a temporary Wheat Board. During the 1920s, grain production continued to increase along with Canada's reputation as a major exporting nation. The 1920s were the most exciting at the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. The expansion of the business carried on by the Exchange was mirrored in the expansion of its building – major additions were built in 1913, 1914, 1916, 1922 and 1928 to bring the Grain Exchange Building to its present height and dimensions.

In 1920, the Annex was constructed to the east of the main building, connected by a second storey overhead bridge. It was intended to give additional office space for grain-related businesses and it quickly filled with companies such as Great West Grain, Erie Grain Company, Gillespie Terminal Grain, Canadian Government Elevators, Northwest Grain Dealers Association and the executive offices of the Board Grain Commissioners.

Architecturally, the Annex is an important transitional design – a modern translation of the historic architectural language of the neighbouring Grain Exchange Building. The use of classically-based ornamentation – the stone base, centrally-located entrance with stone accenting and flat roofline embellished with a modest cornice and capped brick parapet – is part of the early 20th century architectural styles. The cleaner lines, minimalized front façade and the grid-like arrangement of the plain rectangular windows on all four elevations is based in the more modern approach to architecture that would gain in popularity worldwide after 1930. The Annex is a perfect blend of old and new and is one of the few remaining structures of this type in Winnipeg.

Tenancy in the building began to slowly change in the 1930s, several horse racing related groups, including the Winnipeg and Manitoba Jockey clubs and the Prairie Thoroughbred Breeders Racing Association, occupied space in the building. During World War II, the federal government took space in several downtown office buildings as part of the war effort; the Annex was headquarters for the Veterans Land Act and the Department of Veterans Affairs. By the 1960s, grain companies were again in the building, although it was not as concentrated as before – credit unions, chartered accountants and other professionals were renting space – part of the consolidation of grain companies and the evolution of the grain sector away from individuals and the subsequent reduction in amount of office space required.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor J. Gerbasi
Chairperson, Historical Buildings Committee

cc: Mr. G. Laubenstein, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. P. Sheegl, Deputy CAO
Mr. D. Joshi Director, Planning, Property & Development Department

CITY OF WINNIPEG

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

BUILDING EVALUATION FORM

Location: 153 Lombard Avenue

Name: Current - Grain Exchange Building Annex
Original - Grain Exchange Building Annex

Owner: Artis REIT
c/o Marwest Management Canada Ltd.
300-360 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 3Z3

Present Use: Vacant

BUILDING GRADE III

Evaluation Date: January 17, 2008

Recommendation: To list as Grade III with the following character-defining elements:

Exterior:

- The south-facing office building located on Lombard Avenue, adjoining its parent Grain Exchange Building to the west via a second floor bridge
- Simple, elongated rectangular plan
- South (front) elevation with smoothly-dressed limestone base with buff brick walls above; a centrally-located entrance framed by smoothly-dressed limestone accenting; symmetrical and grid-like arrangement of windows on all floors with limestone sills on the second floor and continuous sills on the third floor; an ornamental cornice and capped brick parapet
- Ample and grid-like arrangement of fenestration on the east façade
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6240

Richard Kachur
City Clerk
City Hall
510 Main Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 1B9

December 30, 2007

Demolition of the Grain Exchange Annex

Dear Richard;

Giles Bugailiskis has suggested we write you to request a change in designation of the Grain Exchange building such that the owners can demolish the free standing Annex.

This is a formal request to change the designation of the Grain Exchange building from a Grade Two to Grade Three.

The Annex has been vacant, without services, since 2004. The Annex blocks the access to the Grain Exchange Building and does not allow any redevelopment of this valuable downtown property.

The owners of the Grain Exchange building have been encouraged by both the Winnipeg Parking Authority and the Forks North Portage Partnership to construct a parking structure to meet the demands on downtown parking created by the growth of Waterfront Drive and the pending Canadian Humanities Museum. The structure, if constructed on the site of the Annex, could access the skywalk system through the Grain Exchange Building.

Please consider this request and contact me at 230-6951 (mobile) or 221-0772 to discuss.

We have applied for a demolition permit.

Yours very truly;

Syd Storey