

NECA HERITAGE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

OCTOBER 2022 TO OCTOBER 2023

The mandate of NECA's Heritage & Development Committee is to review and evaluate proposals for the construction of new infill housing or for the alteration of existing homes usually in the form of substantial additions. Proposals are not appraised on the basis of personal preferences of the individual committee members, but using the criteria contained in sections of the City of Ottawa's Official Plan pertaining to infill development in established neighbourhoods, the city's heritage overlay zoning bylaws, and the directives spelled out in New Edinburgh's Heritage Conservation Plan which guides development activity in the historic district.

This has been the second year when the City of Ottawa's heritage planners and our H&D Committee did not receive any proposals for construction projects in the historic district. Instead, the focus has been on tracking (with growing concern and alarm) the potential implications for mature residential neighbourhoods of the Ontario's Premier's Bill 23 "The More Homes Built Faster Act". (For details see page 6 of the December 2022 New Edinburgh News article "Doug Ford's Bill 23 Will Destroy Communities' Abilities to Plan at a Local Level"). Additional bills (#108 and #109) have altered the Ontario Heritage Act and changed the process for the designation and management of heritage resources in Ontario. The result is a highly complex heritage planning process that will require the city to make major adjustments to long-standing procedures and practices in order to continue its critical conservation work. (See article in NEN's October 2023 issue, page 7 - "Heritage in Jeopardy").

On the plus side, heritage conservation received a boost, when in December of 2022 City Council voted to make the Built Heritage Sub-Committee a full committee of Council. This was significant, as previously the sub-committee was under the umbrella of the Planning Committee, which could reverse the recommendations of the BHSC rendering it impotent as a protector of heritage resources. (See article in NEN's February 2023 issue, p.7 "Thanks to Councillor King for Upgrading Built Heritage to Full Committee").

189 Stanley Avenue:

In the Spring of 2023, the construction of two side-by-side 2-storey dwellings - each containing four apartment units was completed and ready to be occupied. These houses replaced a bungalow-style single family home. After rejecting an earlier proposal for the site, NECA endorsed this project as it represented a good example of infill development which seamlessly fitted into the existing streetscape. Alcove Holdings was responsible for the development which received a Heritage Award from the City as a model for "neighbourhood-friendly infill". (See article in NEN's April 2023 issue, p. 16 "New Homes on Stanley Avenue Successful Examples of Infill").

255 MacKay Street:

The ongoing saga of this historic house and property continues. After several unsuccessful attempts by the present owner to substantially enlarge the building to accommodate as many as 28 to 32 apartments (the city's heritage staff and NECA did not endorse these proposals), the owner reconfigured the house's interior creating four rental apartments, two 3-bedroom units, one 2-bedroom and one studio. NECA awaits the next proposed steps with cautious interest. (For details see article in NEN's June 2023 issue, p. 23 "From Manse to Rental Units - the History of 255 MacKay").

Gail McEachern

Chair, Heritage & Development Committee

New Edinburgh Community Alliance