

# **How not to conserve:**

A cautionary tale

by

Dawn Ling

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Dawn Ling

## **Abstract**

Are conservation principles reflected in conservation projects?

The field of conservation is complex and constantly evolving, but the core principle has always been the same: to protect heritage values. We rely on regulations to provide guidance on best conservation practices, but meeting policy is not the same as meeting conservation intent. Descriptions of ‘good conservation’ are wrought with subjective and contradicting terminology, which can be misinterpreted, or worse, manipulated to fit the goals of its user. Furthermore, heritage must compete with urban planning and development initiatives, which can conflict with the protection of heritage values.

Dissecting the current state of conservation practice in Ottawa, we set out to explore how (and if) conservation projects reflect the contemporary context of heritage. An existing adaptive reuse project in Ottawa will be analyzed, paired with a series of interviews with conservation experts, in search of more responsive ways to protect Canada’s heritage.

## Acknowledgements

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And to my advisor – Mariana, my fiancé, my friends and my family:

Thank you for being my cheerleader.

Without all your endless support and encouragement, I would not have had the courage to be as bold and critical with my work to say what needs to be said about conservation.

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## Prologue

My journey to conservation advocacy did not begin with my education, as I did not specialize in the field during my undergraduate studies. Rather, my sudden interest on the topic sparked from a townhome development I worked on years ago. A designated home lay right in the middle of the property, and to my horror, our solution was to simply build around it. I worked on those site plans day after day, disturbed by the awkward island that the untouchable home sat on. At the time, I did not understand the value of this home; it was abandoned, dilapidated, and as far as I was concerned, had no redeeming qualities. Its sad state was compounded by its isolation from the rest of the development, an insignificant site made even smaller by its uber modern counterpart. This enraged me. As a burgeoning architect, I believe that we have a responsibility to do more than the bare minimum. What was designed to accommodate the home was foolish, and if the planners knew this, they may not have insisted on keeping the heritage home. From this experience, I started to notice a number of disrespectful heritage adaptations across my hometown of Toronto and during my university years in Ottawa: factories gutted for

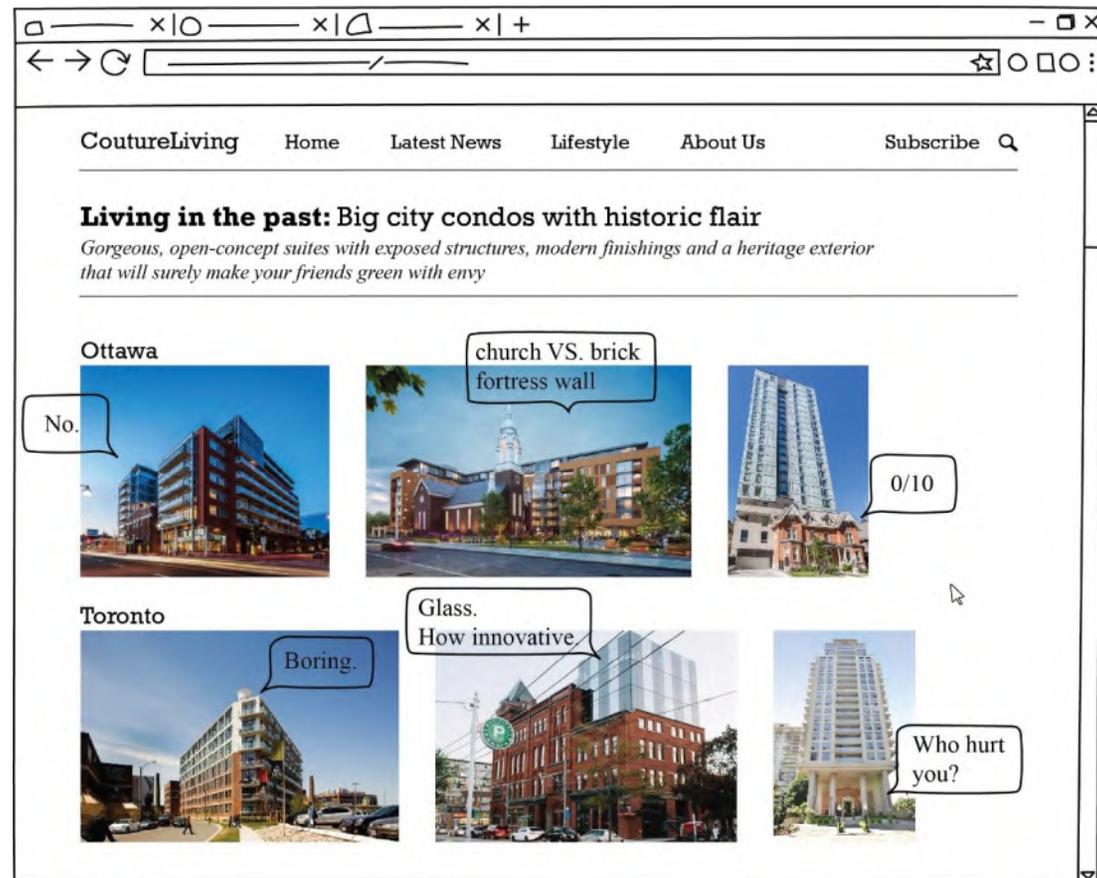
luxury lofts whose interiors bear no relationship to its heritage, stone churches wedged into contemporary condos, and historic facades reduced to a mere postage stamp on the side of an apartment complex. From here, I found myself wondering, why are there so many housing adaptations of heritage buildings and *why do so many of these designs appear to disregard, even reduce the heritage qualities of the old building?*

I realized that I could not remain a passive bystander to the atrocities I witnessed in heritage conservation. Understanding the need for profit and the need to protect heritage, I hope to change our perspective on conservation. Conservationists can afford to be less rigid in their ruling, and non-conservationists need to see conservation as more than another obstacle to overcome.

We need more *thoughtful conservation*.

# Introduction

*Excuse my passion, but...*



## A Cautionary Tale of Modern Conservation

To unravel the complexities of conservation in practice, we begin at the end of what could be described as a failed adaptive reuse project: Central 1 Condominium. What first appears as a simple case of neglected conservation principles quickly develops into a clashing of heritage value, legislative ruling and redevelopment potential. The difficulty to protect heritage is exacerbated by its infinitesimal share in a multimillion-dollar construction industry, what could be described as “statistically insignificant”.<sup>1</sup> This is a warning to all conservationists and non-conservationists of what our future cities will look like if we continue to view conservation separately from its context, community, sustainability, economics...

Because heritage is not just a heritage issue; it is an everything issue.

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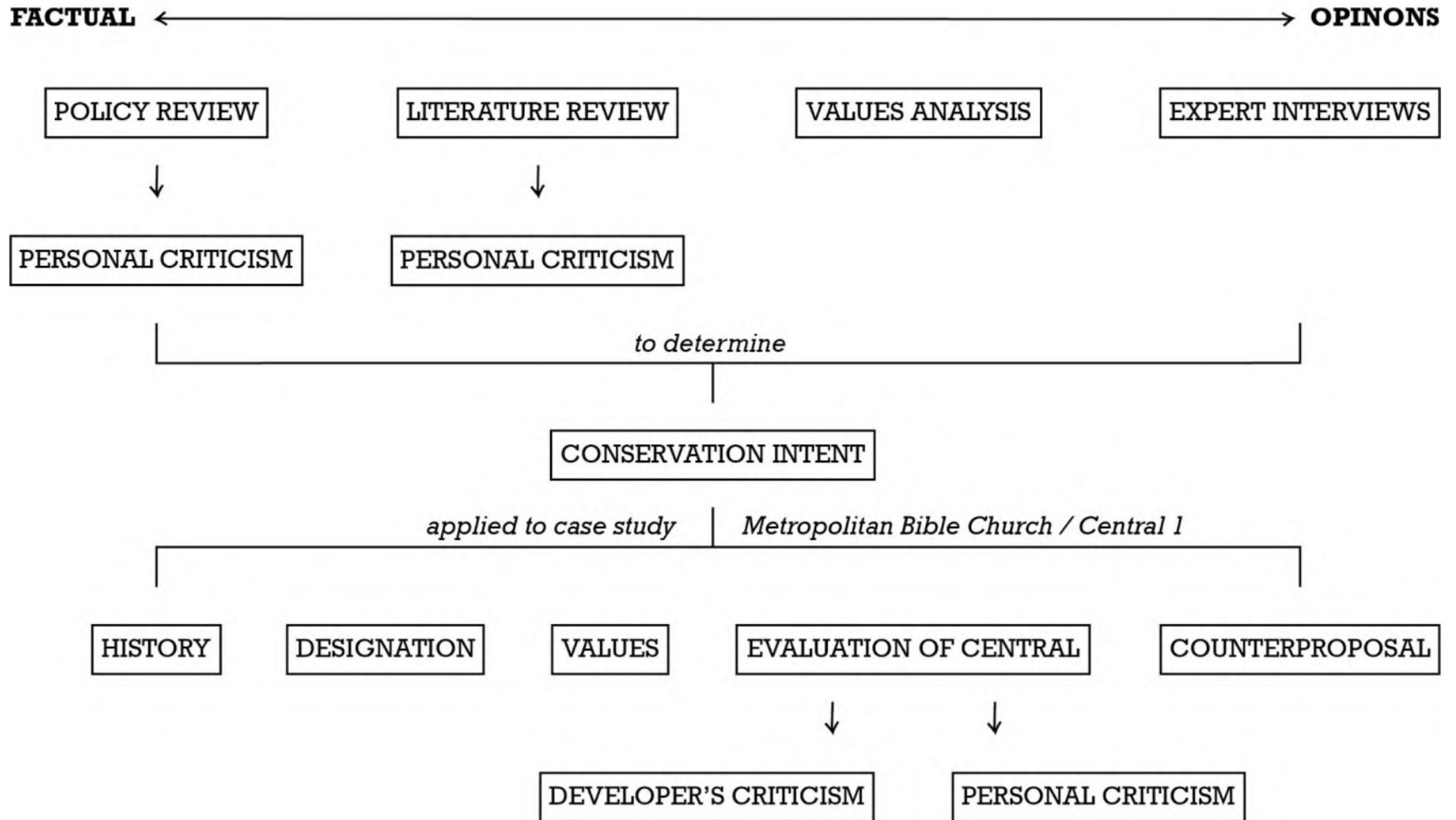
<sup>1</sup> Marc Denhez, Interview by author, December 15, 2020.

## Methodology

To solve the problem of poor conservation practice, one must first understand the problem. This thesis is designed to supplement the conservation discourse, to understand the intent of conservation and how this interacts with heritage policy and the conservation practice. It can accompany literature or seminars on heritage stewardship to deepen understanding of how to 'read' heritage context, or it can be read as a stand-alone text.

Research on conservation discourse and legislation was performed alongside research on a selected case study that was determined to be a poor conservation project. The purpose of this was to illustrate how conservation principles and policy translate into a real project. It was also important to study an existing adaptive reuse project to understand how and why heritage policy does (and does not) work. Research was done in the form of policy review, literature review, values analysis and conducted interviews to establish the scope of available information, ranging from facts to opinions. Understanding current conservation discourse and legislation, a personal criticism of this research was

performed with the support of expert opinions from interview and critical analysis. This series of evaluation helped establish and clarify the intent of conservation, which became the basis of a counterproposal for the case study if conservation intent was prioritized the decision-making process.



\* Attempts were made to contact other disciplines, including the architect and developer of the case study, as well as the Met, but no response was received.

Key to the critique of the conservation practice were the interviews with conservation experts. Seven professionals were interviewed, all of which are Canadian and have worked in Ottawa, the location of the case study. The range of experience in the field ranges from around five to forty years. There are participants who work (or previously worked) on the federal, provincial and municipal level of conservation. Occupations also vary, including city planner, conservation architect and lawyer.\* For a brief profile of each interviewee, see Appendix A. Experts were asked of their opinions on conservation and economics, heritage regulation, how they view the field overall and their view on the case study (the Met, now Central 1). The goal was to use their comments to support my criticisms of the conservation practice as well as illustrate the spectrum of opinions on how heritage policy and practice functions. These findings are summarized in a chart on Page 112. Note that interview questions were determined early in the research process, and as more knowledge was obtained regarding the role and effectiveness of heritage policy, some questions became less relevant to this thesis. For full interview responses, see Appendix B. The following is the list of six questions presented to each interviewee:

1. How do economics play into heritage preservation? Is economic value important to heritage? Economic value is often put against socio-cultural value; are these points necessarily opposites of each other?
2. In the Ontario Heritage Act, 29(16), under "Dismissal without hearing of appeal", what qualifies as claims that are without grounds? What is "reasonable" and "unreasonable" grounds?
3. For a privately owned property, are the costs of "prescribed minimum standards of maintenance" the responsibility of the owner? Are there government subsidies that help with the costs of repairs? Are repairs or maintenance overseen by a professional knowledgeable of preservation practices? Is there a professional or government official that checks on properties to ensure proper maintenance is being carried out?
4. Since Standards and Guidelines are not law, how are conservation standards upheld? Who is responsible to ensure that proper procedure is followed in preservation heritage? And what (if any) are the consequences of disregarding these guidelines?
5. Since the creation of the S&G, has there been improvement in heritage preservation (such as adaptive reuse, additions to heritage buildings, etc.)?

6. I am currently studying the condo at 354 Gladstone Avenue in Ottawa, which used to be the Metropolitan Bible Church. Now, all that remains of the church is the front facade that faces Bank Street. There are many instances of churches turned housing I have found in Toronto and Ottawa, and many of them are successfully marketed as luxury condos with heritage value. I have also found many instances of churches turned into a community-driven activity, such as a community centre, or a library. What are your thoughts on converting churches into housing versus a community-driven function?

## Part I: The Metropolitan Bible Church

*It is a crisp, Saturday morning. The sun is shining, the sky is a bright, creamy blue, like you see in cartoons or the pictures that kids draw. Strolling down Bank Street, I think to myself, today is filled with opportunity, with possibility w—is that vomit?*

*I have stepped in vomit.*



## Central 1



Image of debris during the Met's demolition. A window cap can be seen in the foreground.

Standing on the sidewalk, looking at an empty brick wall, the Metropolitan Bible Church is a fraction of what it used to be, quite literally. The former evangelical church is now home to Central 1 Condominium, designed by CORE Architects. All that is left of the church is the front façade; the 1960s addition was demolished and most of the main church building was removed. The façade they *did* keep was lifted off site and put back in place, a traumatic process that posed significant risk to its integrity. During construction, the metal lunettes above the third storey windows were removed and the glass in the doors and windows replaced with spandrel – inoperable, unusable. Adding insult to injury, its signature marquee was stripped bare, now a metal shell with no signage, not even offering shade from the sun. The deep door sills are now a haven for squatters and the sidewalk is littered with coffee cups, plastic bags and the occasional puddle of vomit from a weekend club-goer fumbling for their keys as a concerned, but equally inebriated friend calls for a taxi.

## Metropolitan Bible Church

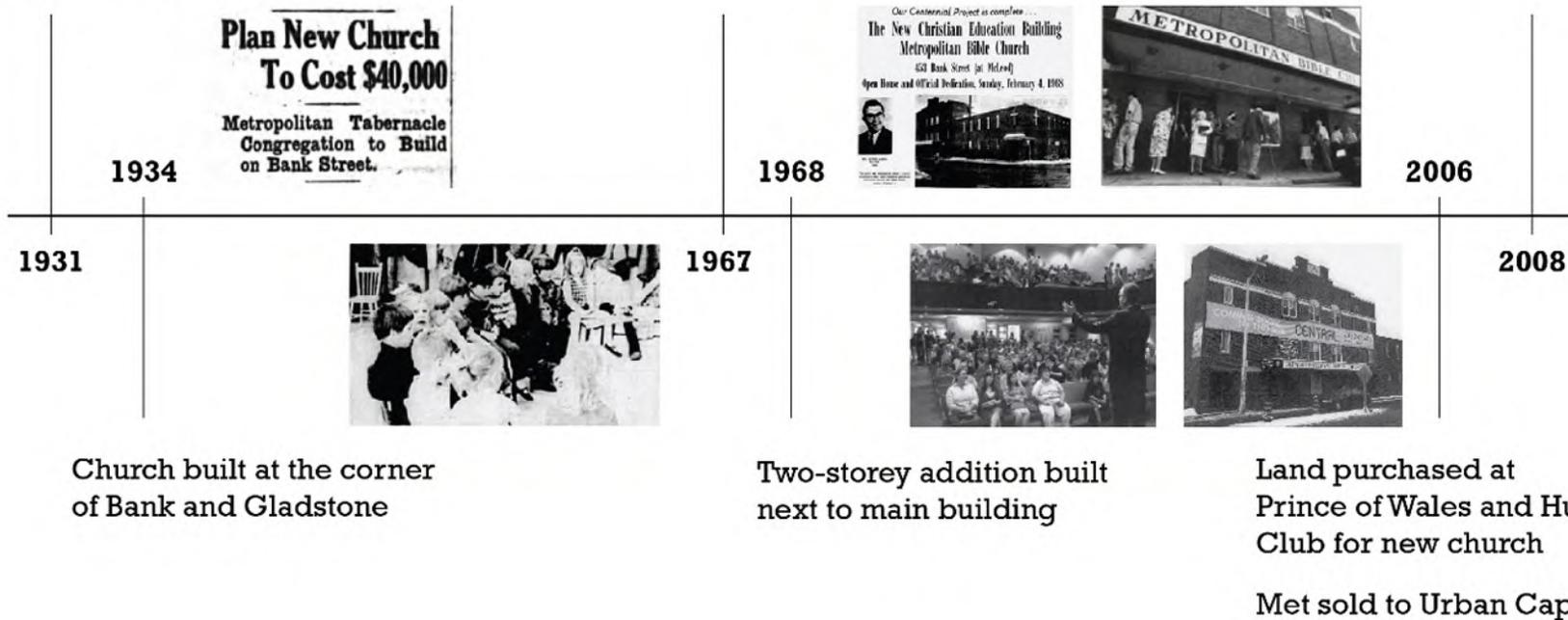
The Metropolitan Bible Church (or “The Met”) was originally the Metropolitan Tabernacle and held services in Huckell’s Hall, a small room above Higgerty’s Shoe Store on Bank Street (now Fauna). As attendance grew, services moved to the Imperial Theatre (now Barrymore’s Music Hall), until they built their own church in 1934 at the corner of Bank Street and Gladstone Avenue. The bank loaned the money for its construction on the condition that it was designed like a theatre in case the church failed. However, it turned out to be quite successful and even outgrew their location, prompting a proposed two-storey addition next to the main building off McLeod Street. The new education building celebrated its completion in 1968 with a newspaper announcement and an open house. The congregation continued to flourish, growing in attendance and Sunday School enrolment. By the early 2000s, they once again outgrew their location and began hosting services at Carleton University’s Alumni Theatre. Soon, they were looking for a new location to build a bigger church for their growing attendance. In 2006, eight acres of land were purchased at Prince of Wales Drive and Hunt Club Drive for the new

Met. As for the Met on Bank Street, it was sold to Urban Capital Property Group, with plans to build a condominium on the site. The Met held its final service on July 27, 2008.

Metropolitan Tabernacle holds first service in Huckell's Hall on Bank

Church renamed Metropolitan Bible Church

Last service held at the Met



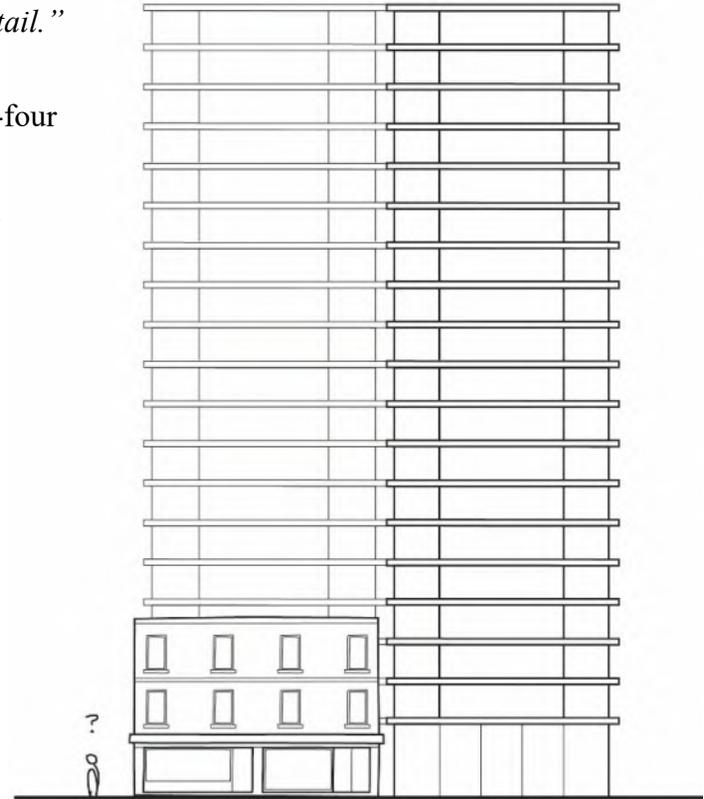
Timeline of the Met's history. Images from the Ottawa Citizen.

## Part II: Heritage Protections

*From the Centretown HCD study: “Only in more recent years has there been a disturbing trend of out-of-scale high rise buildings, large lot developments, and buildings of unsympathetic materials and detail.”*

*This document was written twenty-four years ago, yet it feels very familiar.*

*Disturbing indeed.*



\* This section will give general critique on the Act, where case studies, opinions and statistics will be based on Ottawa, unless otherwise noted.

The Met is designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA), which is a district designation. As part of the Centretown Heritage Conservation District (HCD), what are the protections that designation offers? The OHA and *Standards & Guidelines* will be discussed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of heritage policy and how they translate to real projects.\*

### **The Ontario Heritage Act**

\* Bill 108, the “More Homes, More Choice Act”, received Royal Assent on June 6, 2019.

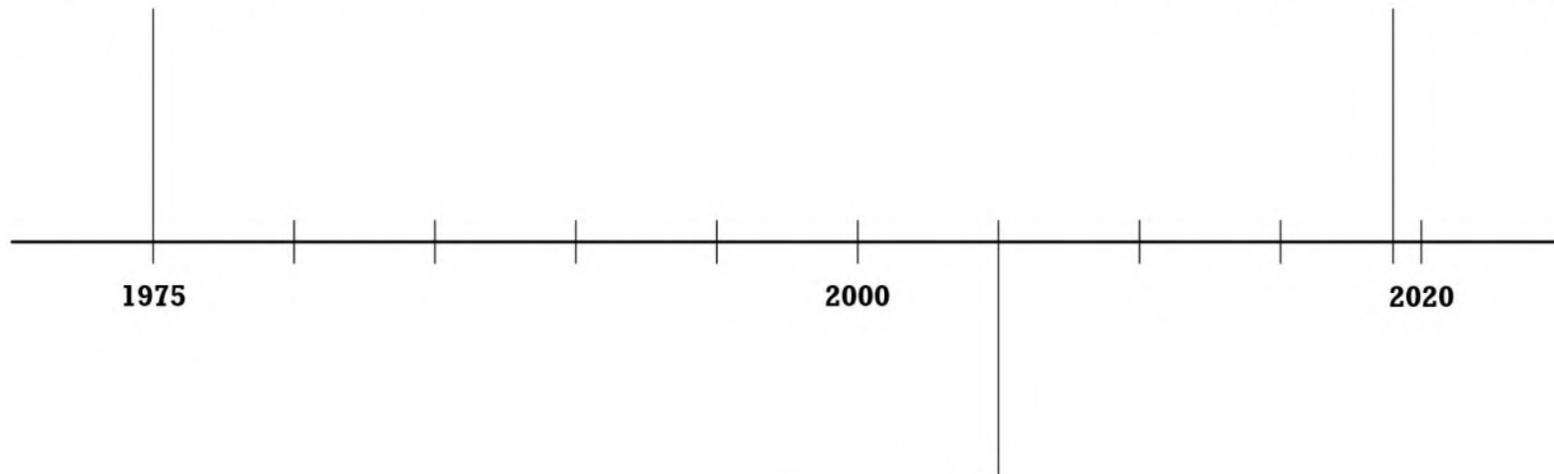
The OHA was established in 1975 to designate properties and districts for their heritage value and protect provincial and municipal heritage. Changes made to the act in 2005 and 2019\* were heavily criticized by conservationists and property owners alike for their impact on the decision-making process of interventions to heritage properties. These three defining moments in the lifespan of the OHA will narrate the changing and often confusing attitudes of heritage policy.

**1975 OHA established**

- majority of decisions by CRB
- establishment of LACACs
- **suggestive, bottom-up** approach

**2019 Bill 108**

- majority of decisions by LPAT
- decision-making regarding designation mostly given to LPAT
- **prescriptive, top-down** approach



**2005 amendment**

- increased demolition control
- new Part V HCDP requirements
- some decision-making power transferred from CRB to LPAT
- overall **increased legislation**, less input from local groups

Timeline of OHA amendments.

The act began as a more community-driven endeavour. Former Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committees (LACAC), now referred to as municipal heritage committees (MHC), advised on proposed designations and alterations to represent community interests. If there were objections or disputes, the council would refer to the Conservation Review Board (CRB), which would review the case and advise the council. Since the 2005 amendment, decision-making has moved away from community-oriented groups towards legal bodies of “experts”.<sup>2</sup> This change took place in the form of the Local Planning Act Tribunal (LPAT), which can make *legally binding decisions*, a contrast to the previous advisory role of the CRB. Bill 108 further shifts authority to the LPAT concerning appeals, where previously, most disputes could be resolved with the CRB without going to a hearing.<sup>3</sup> As the decision-making process became increasingly litigious, the ability to incite change became increasingly difficult and expensive, but more importantly, the voice of the community began to diminish.

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<sup>2</sup> Julian Smith, Interview by author, November 3, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Dan Schneider, “What to Make of Bill 108.” University of Waterloo: Heritage Resources Centre (blog), July 3, 2019, <https://uwaterloo.ca/heritage-resources-centre/blog/post/what-make-bill-108>.

\* Owners can appeal to the LPAT, but if a permit is denied, there are no other options.

Attempts to strengthen heritage regulation, however well intended, frustrated owners and did little to encourage heritage stewardship. Prior to 2005, demolition was permitted after 180 days had passed from the date of the council's refusal of application. To stop the demolition of heritage resources altogether, the 2005 amendment prohibited demolition in all cases unless there was an approved application by council.\* Some may argue the amendment provided more clarity surrounding the treatment of heritage buildings.<sup>4</sup> Others criticized the change for controlling properties of private ownership. However, there is a loophole: if a building is left to deteriorate, life safety issues become a concern that can force a demolition to occur. This is otherwise known as demolition by neglect.

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Shipley, Steve Utz, and Michael Parsons, "Does Adaptive Reuse Pay? A Study of the Business of Building Renovation in Ontario, Canada," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 12, no. 6 (November 2006): 505–520.



**Pre-2005**

“I want to demolish”

“NO.”

\*180 days later\*



Substantial completion of  
new building within two years

**Post-2005**

“I want to demolish”

“NO.”

\*Just keep waiting...\*



“Well, this is a hazard.”

Force demolition

Demolition pre- and post-2005 amendment.

\* The Heritage Inventory Project in Ottawa ran from 2016 to 2019, resulting in the listing of 3,402 properties on the register.

\* Refer to O. Reg. 9/06, “Criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest”.

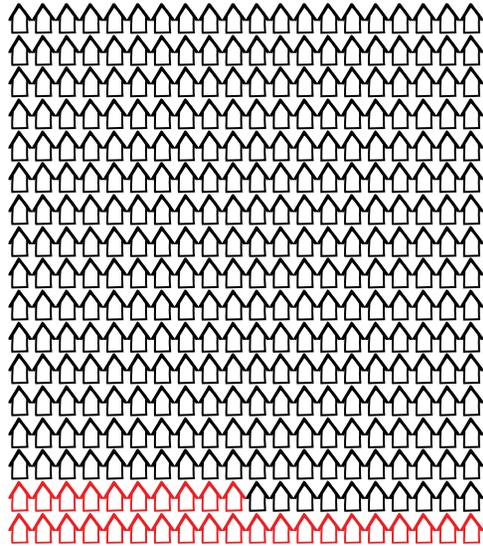
The same concerns about control were raised when the 2005 amendment allowed for registers to include properties “that the...municipality believes to be of **cultural heritage value or interest**”.<sup>5</sup> (emphasis added) Again, the aim was to provide transparency to the public (and property owners) of what properties were of heritage interest to the city.\* On paper, the only difference was that listed properties must notify the city of planned demolition within sixty days. However, owners were convinced that properties on the register, designated or not, would negatively impact their land value.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the same terminology (cultural heritage value or interest)\* is used to evaluate designated and listed properties.<sup>7</sup> It is hard to argue that inclusion in the register could not lead to eventual designation – and further restrictions.

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<sup>5</sup> *Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O. 2005*. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18#BK47>.

<sup>6</sup> Jon Willing, “Landowners Don’t Buy City’s Sell Job on Heritage Registry,” *Ottawa Citizen*, July 13, 2017, <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/landowners-dont-buy-citys-sell-job-on-heritage-registry>.

<sup>7</sup> Dan Schneider, “Listing — Designation Lite?” University of Waterloo: Heritage Resources Centre (blog), October 30, 2017, <https://uwaterloo.ca/heritage-resources-centre/blog/post/listing-designation-lite>.



In Ottawa, if every property received \$10,000 in matching grants, only **30** out of 340 designated properties would be covered.

\* For a map of all HCDs in Ottawa, see Appendix E.

× Statistics from City of Ottawa website.

The Built Heritage Funding Program includes a heritage grant to support owners of designated heritage buildings in restoration work. This encompasses restoration of character-defining elements as described in the Statement of Significance for individually designated buildings and restoration of Category 1, 2 and 3 properties within designated districts. In 2019, Ottawa City Council passed an increase to the program, matching \$10,000 for residential buildings and \$25,000 for commercial, institutional and large-scale residential buildings, with a total budget increase to \$300,000 per year. This is the first budget increase *in over twenty years*, where the previous yearly budget was only \$150,000. To put this in perspective, Ottawa has twenty Heritage Conservation Districts (HCD)\*, 340 individually designated buildings and 3,800 listed on the register.× With little incentive to maintain heritage properties and a complicated application process for intervention, “heritage can be seen as antagonistic towards development.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Smith, Interview by author.

## Heritage Conservation District Plans

\* Commentary from the 2003 LACAC report by Stuart Lazear, then Coordinator of Heritage Services: “Give the Conservation Review Board real authority and have it replace the Ontario Municipal Board as the approval body for the establishment of Heritage Conservation Districts and the appeal of City Council decisions regarding interventions (alterations, demolitions etc.) within districts. Why have two bodies?”

\* Confirmed by City of Ottawa heritage planner, Ashley Kotarba.

+ In this document, the ‘Centretown HCDP’ refers to the 1996-97 study conducted by Julian Smith & Associates.

Returning to the Met, the church is also subject to the convoluted policies that plague the conservation practice. In the 2005 OHA amendment, major changes were made to the Part V designation. First, appeals to HCD by-laws were transferred from the CRB to the LPAT, which was criticized in a 2003 report regarding changes to the OHA prior to its enactment.\* Second, there was a new requirement for Heritage Conservation District Plans (HCDP) to be reviewed by public meeting and the MHC before being adopted as by-law. In the case of Centretown, the city has adopted the 1996-97 study as the official HCDP until the new one is published (projected completion in 2021).\*

Unlike the Statement of Significance for individual properties, HCDPs cover the character of neighbourhoods in broad strokes. The following section will analyze the language and intent of the guidelines for infill from the Centretown HCDP.+

\* These select regulatory documents are common references used regarding conservation work. A more general search conducted for the definition of “sympathetic contemporary design” yielded no definitive, published results.

Chapter VII.5.5 opens with the importance of infill “to the long-term success of the heritage commercial corridors within the District”.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, “infill must respect the existing heritage character by providing **sympathetic contemporary design.**”<sup>10</sup>

(emphasis added) There is no definition of this term in the HCDP, *Standards & Guidelines*, Ottawa’s Official Plan or Provincial Policy Statement\*. How do we understand *sympathetic* and *contemporary* in a conservation context? Consider the following definitions:

sympathetic (adjective):

1. existing or operating through an affinity, interdependence, or mutual association
2. appropriate to one's mood, inclinations, or disposition<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latrenouille, Faught, Ironside, and Deevey, “Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study,” Ottawa, 1996-1997.

<sup>10</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latrenouille, Faught, Ironside, and Deevey, “Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study,” 140.

<sup>11</sup> “Sympathetic,” In *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary*, accessed March 8, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sympathetic>.

The terms ‘affinity’, ‘interdependence’ and ‘inclination’ could translate to the dialogue between the existing condition and the intervention in sympathetic design. Using similar architectural language could contribute to a visually sympathetic response. However, heritage character, as described in the HCDP, encompasses the physical and nonphysical, the tangible and intangible. To avoid fragmentation of a heritage place (tangible from intangible value), intervention must be more than an aesthetic exercise. When considering adaptive reuse, notable RISD professor Liliane Wong suggests that we must acknowledge past significance and engage it in a new context.<sup>12</sup> Wong’s method asks for a dialogue with history and context in design, something much harder to achieve than using similar materials and continuing existing datum lines. Adding to the complex question of appropriate heritage infill, how does *sympathetic* design interact with *contemporary* design?

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<sup>12</sup> Liliane Wong, *Adaptive Reuse: Extending the Lives of Buildings*. Basel, Switzerland: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2016.

contemporary (adjective):

1. marked by characteristics of the present period: modern, current
2. happening, existing, living, or coming into being during the same period of time<sup>13</sup>



SoBa Condos, constructed in 2019, located at Bank Street and Catherine Street.



Image of low-rise commercial buildings on Bank Street, Centretown.

Contemporary design is not defined by any single style, but refers to the styles of current architecture. 21<sup>st</sup> century architecture may suggest sculptural qualities, formal elements, technology-driven designs and materials such as concrete and glass. Contemporary design in Centretown are typically monolithic glass towers, characterized by concrete construction and minimal ornamentation. This contrasts with the heritage character of Centretown, especially Bank Street, which comprises of low to mid-rise masonry structures with wood or metal trims and cornices. In addition, recommendations for commercial infill on Bank Street call for lighting to be “vibrant but discreet”<sup>14</sup>, another confusing and contradicting description.

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<sup>13</sup> “Contemporary,” In *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary*, accessed March 8, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/contemporary>.

<sup>14</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latreouille, Faught, Ironside, and Deevey, “Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study,” 141.

How can infill be *sympathetic* to Centretown’s character (mid-rise, masonry, details), yet *contemporary* (high-rise, concrete, minimal) in design? Given this contradiction, the HCDP is sorely lacking in definitions and examples of designs that meet this criterion.

**Commercial and Mixed Use Infill (VII.5.5)**

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sympathetic	contemporary
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**Recommendations: Bank Street Corridor**

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transparent and three-dimensional

discreet	vibrant
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Table comparing terminology in Chapter VII.5.5 of HCDP.

Guidelines for residential infill in Centretown is similarly described and equally difficult to interpret. It asks for design to reflect the character of existing buildings and encourages use of similar materials and detailing.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, not only should design be *contemporary*, but *distinguishable* from the existing buildings, as to “enhance these

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<sup>15</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latrenouille, Faight, Ironside, and Deevey, “Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study,” 143.

existing properties rather than calling attention to itself”.<sup>16</sup> The guideline itself notes a trend of out-of-scale, unsympathetic development. But a *contemporary* design, specifically a *distinguishable* design, inherently stands out. Subsequent confusion or misinterpretation of these guidelines is warranted when it is not clear what *sympathetic*, *contemporary* and *distinguishable* design means.

**Residential Infill (VII.5.6)**

maintain texture, variety	trend of out-of-scale, large developments, unsympathetic materials
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**Recommendations**

sympathetic	contemporary, distinguishable
match existing character	
3-4 storeys	
matching massing and setbacks	

Table comparing terminology in Chapter VII.5.6 of HCDP.

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<sup>16</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latrenouille, Faught, Ironside, and Deevey, “Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study,” 142.

## Standards and Guidelines

The *Standards & Guidelines* are a national guideline for the conservation of heritage places that has been adopted by many municipalities, including Ottawa. It aims to provide “result-oriented guidance”<sup>17</sup>, emphasizing the subjectivity of conservation and evaluation on a case-by-case basis. The document uses a demonstrative approach to *show* (not *tell*) how to conserve. This differs from the prescriptive nature of legislation, such as the OHA, which necessitates clearly defined rules of action as a legislative document. Where *Standards & Guidelines* are not laws, but guidelines, it provides recommendations of action and suggests best practices of conservation in broad strokes. The document allows both conservationists and non-professionals to understand what constitutes as good conservation practice.<sup>18</sup> From Standard 11 on additions to historic places, once again we encounter the vague terms: *compatible*, *subordinate* and *distinguishable*.

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<sup>17</sup> Parks Canada, *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada: A Federal, Provincial and Territorial Collaboration*, Ottawa: Parks Canada, 2010, <https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item?id=R62-343-2010-eng&op=pdf&app=Library>.

<sup>18</sup> Smith, Interview by author.

## **Standards & Guidelines**

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results-oriented guidance

a tool to understand best conservation practices

values-based context (aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social, spiritual)

singular/multiple, subject/overlapping, can mean different things to different groups, can change over time

## **Standard 11**

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Visually compatible  
Subordinate

Distinguishable

Phrases taken from *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

To reiterate, the *Standards & Guidelines* is not a definitive rulebook for the conservation practice; it is, as stated in its title, a guideline. As several interviewed conservation experts have noted, the *Standards & Guidelines* is a high-level document and cannot be expected to meet the values and expectations of every stakeholder. As such, its contents on value, character-defining elements and other key principles should be understood conceptually, then applied to a specific site or project. Even in its introduction, the document notes the fluidity of heritage value, influenced by tangible and intangible

factors, meaning different things to different people and sensitive to changing (current and future) social values. If its instruction is taken literally, the resulting project would not be fruitful and it would entirely miss the intent of conservation.

Comparing the language in the *Standards & Guidelines* to the HCDP guidelines, a similar issue of ambiguity arises, where vague descriptions give opportunity for misunderstanding or even manipulation of the document's intent. Standard 11 states:

*“Make the new work physically and visually **compatible** with, **subordinate** to, and **distinguishable** from the historic place.”<sup>19</sup> (emphasis added)*

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<sup>19</sup> Parks Canada, *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, 34.

Compatible.

Subordinate.

Distinguishable.

What do these words mean? Compatibility is not as simple as using similar materials, nor does it mean that a contemporary addition with contemporary materials is necessarily inappropriate. Finding the middle ground between compatibility and distinguishability speaks to the challenge of meeting conservation principles in a contemporary design.

*Unfortunately, all too many building sites testify to the designer's unwillingness to engage with the existing situation: the building is reduced to its shell or outside walls and what results is then invariably more visual effect than a well-designed and constructive solution...Ill-defined terminology compounds the problem and it is no surprise that it leads to Babylonian confusion.<sup>20</sup>*

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<sup>20</sup> Johannes Cramer and Stefan Breitling, *Architecture in Existing Fabric: Planning, Design, Building*. Basel, Switzerland: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2007.

To further dissect the terms *compatible*, *distinguishable* and *subordinate*, the following examines three pairs of church-to-housing projects. Consider each proposal's approach to the existing condition and their different interpretations of the guidelines.

### **Southminster United Church vs. St. Matthew's Anglican Church**

**Is this compatible?**



Southminster United Church. J. Albert Ewart. 1931. Ottawa.



Bird's-eye view of Southminster approved proposal in 2017. Render by Hobin Architecture.

The Southminster United Church is in Old Ottawa South, overlooking the Rideau Canal. Constructed in 1931, it is a consolidation of the first Methodist and Presbyterian congregation and has been a valuable religious space and social space for its community.

The church is in the Gothic Revival style, designed by Ottawa architect, J. Albert Ewart, who was also resident of Old Ottawa South. The church features Nepean sandstone cladding, which was used for the Ottawa Public Library on Sunnyside Avenue also designed by Ewart. Characteristic of the church is the symmetrical design, horizontality, pointed arches and stone exterior. In 1955, an addition was constructed on the West side, named Memorial Hall, to accommodate offices and other church activities.

The church has long been involved in community outreach. Beyond weekly Sunday worship and a children's Sunday school program, the church also hosts weekly concerts and arts events. Since 1998, the church has been hosting the event, "Out of the Cold" to serve food and provide a social space for low-income individuals.<sup>21</sup> Other organizations that the church is involved in are the Centretown Social Action Committee, Centretown

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<sup>21</sup> Southminster United Church, "Southminster - Then and Now," Accessed March 15, 2021, <https://www.southminsterunitedchurch.com/history>.

Emergency Food Centre, the Ottawa Multifaith Housing initiative and the Amnesty International Write-A-Thon, which supports the rights of Indigenous peoples.<sup>22</sup>

*\* "A long, residential condominium that is higher than the church doesn't have that same visual cultural heritage value. It does not represent our community."*

- Laura Urrechaga, member of Development Watch Southminster. Statement from interview for CBC news article.

In September 2017, amidst Southminster's struggle to maintain its operational costs, the church sold Memorial Hall to Windmill Developments, whose plan was to demolish the building and construct a six-storey condo and four townhomes. The church hoped that by selling a portion of the church, it would allow them to perform overdue repairs and continue to provide community services to the public. However, the community did not express the same sentiments. The Development Watch Southminster group was formed by community members who were against Windmill's proposal. They felt that a nineteen-metre condo taller than the church did not respect its heritage value. Although Southminster is not a designated structure, its community felt strongly about its cultural and historical (heritage) presence.\* Furthermore, the proposed condo obscured views to and from the Rideau Canal, which is a UNESCO site. Both the NCC and Parks Canada

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<sup>22</sup> Southminster United Church, "Southminster - Then and Now."

voiced their concerns and stated that the height should be kept below the tree canopy because the greenery is a character-defining element of the Canal.<sup>23</sup> Ultimately, the community wanted the top floor of the condo to be removed, bringing it below the height of the original church and the treeline.



View from the Rideau Canal of the Southminster gable (left) next to the proposed condo (right) above the tree line.

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<sup>23</sup> Laura Osman, “Church’s Condo Plan Could Mar Canal Views, Neighbours Fear,” Newspaper, CBC, November 28, 2017, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-planning-committee-church-condo-proposal-1.4422827>.

\* " *Spot rezoning should not, and is never supposed to be used as a precedent, and yet over and over across the city, it is used successfully by project developers.* ""

- David Chernushenko, ward councillor.  
Statement from city staff report expressing his opposition to the proposed development.

However, the solution is not as simple as removing the top floor. Rod Wilts, a partner at Windmill stated: "the project's current density was the minimum required for it to be viable."<sup>24</sup> The development opportunity is crucial to the survival of the church and according to congregation member Andrew Brewin, it would be difficult otherwise to find the funds to keep the church running. Since the design exceeds the height limit of fifteen metres, a rezoning application would have to be submitted. Ward councillor, David Chernushenko, felt that a zoning amendment would set a precedent for future surrounding developments to exceed the fifteen-metre limit, altering the character of the neighbourhood.\* Following a redesign, council approved the application for redevelopment of Southminster in 2017, with the condo's height now 0.1 metres *below* the parapet of the existing church.

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<sup>24</sup> Matthew Kupfer, "Old Ottawa South Church Seeking Financial Salvation from Condo Faces Concerns," Newspaper, CBC, September 12, 2017, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/southminster-united-church-condo-old-ottawa-south-1.4284577>.



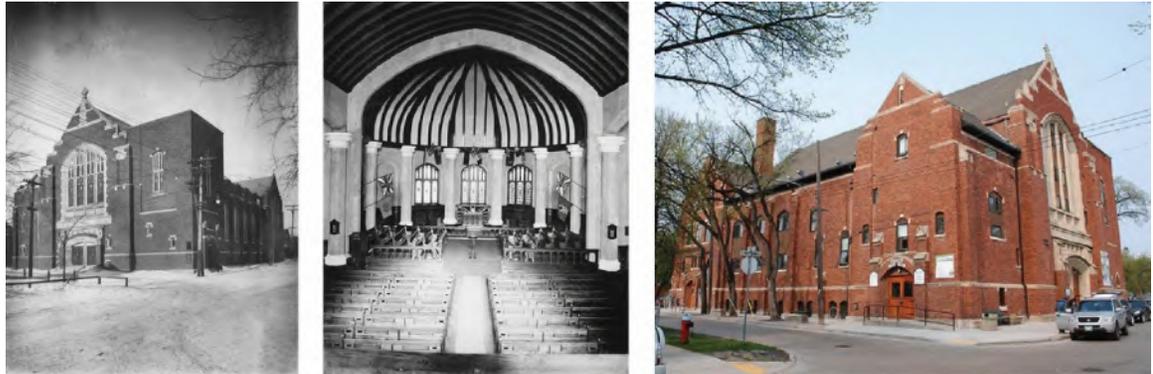
West elevation of Southminster proposal in 2017.  
Render by Hobin Architecture.



West elevation of Southminster proposal in 2020.  
Render by Hobin Architecture.

Standard 11 asks for additions to be physically and visually compatible, but how is a bulky, rectangular mass compatible with the Southminster? And how is the change of use from religious space to luxury condos compatible with a church's social purpose?

Looking at the approved design in 2017, the community's initial concern for the size and bulk of the condo largely remains unaddressed. Its form is still a solid, rectangular base with setback balconies. Of greater concern is the changes made from the 2017 to the 2020 render: the façade shows less stone, the balconies show less articulation and the arched door and rose window have been removed. Oversimplification of the façade has left the condo looking even more massive and boxier than it did before.



St. Matthew's Anglican Church. John Nelson Semmens. 1913. Left to right: Historical image of exterior; Historical church of interior; Image of church today, showing entrance to new housing units.

The St. Matthew's Anglican Church in Winnipeg was constructed in 1947, designed by John Nelson Semmens. However, the parish's roots go back to 1896, where it began as a house church. The parish moved to its current location in 1913, but in 1944, the church was destroyed by a fire and replaced by the building we see today. As the number of parishioners declined throughout the 1950s and 1960s, St. Matthew's partnered with Maryland United Church to form an outreach ministry named the St. Matthew-Maryland Community Ministry to continue serving its community. By the late 1900s, the building was in desperate need of repairs. Committed to continue servicing the community, the church partnered with the Grain of Wheat Church Community to create the St. Matthew's

Non-Profit Housing Inc. (SMNPH). From this partnership, the WestEnd Commons was developed to provide subsidized housing for low to medium income families.



WestEnd Commons. SMNPH. 2014. Left to right: Unit with exposed roof structure; Balcony view of converted church space; Children's playground in new 'atrium'.

The adaptive reuse of St. Matthew's transformed the church's sanctuary into twenty-six housing units. The lower level also houses a resource centre for the community which existed prior to the development of WestEnd. A smaller sanctuary is provided for the continued religious functions of the church. Since its inception, the parish's devotion to their community was evident and its conversion to social housing reflects their mission. St. Matthew's received enormous support from private donors and all levels of government funding and grants; clearly, the church's passionate dedication to their community was reciprocated. Although the interior fit-up is not the most eloquent, with

white partition walls cropped below arched roof structures, residents and visitors alike can still experience parts of the original church. More importantly, the programmatic compatibility of serving the community through affordable housing is invaluable to the church's social role, continuing its century-long legacy of serving the public.

The adaptive reuse of the Southminster and St. Matthew's had very different approaches. Both churches have a long history of community service and suffered from dwindling active church members and funds to maintain the church. Where both communities strongly supported their local church, St. Matthew's had the benefit of immense funding from the public and private sector to develop a non-profit organization for social housing. The Southminster resorted to selling part of their church to a developer for the church to survive. The public funding and support for the rehabilitation of St. Matthew's afforded the church flexibility in its programmatic design and execution; Southminster did not share the same benefits as its economic viability was critical. However, economic obligation is not what drives conservation and is not an excuse to neglect heritage values.

The Southminster’s compatibility is focused on materiality, but the addition does not speak to the church’s sociocultural value, whether through program or design, undermining the social significance of places of worship in a community. The interior renovation of St. Matthew’s may not be as elaborate or contemporary, but it speaks to community service and the neighbourhood’s needs, resulting in a long-term, sustainable solution to an underused church building.

**Evaluation of being compatible**

values	Southminster United Church	St. Matthew's Anglican Church
minimal intervention	• partial demolition	• interior fit-up
physical value	• similar materiality	<b>VS</b>
social/functional value	• luxury condo and townhomes	• social housing

Table comparing the compatibility of the adaptive reuse of the Southminster and St. Matthew’s.

## St. Charles Church vs. Alhambra United Church

Is this subordinate?



St. Charles Church. Charles Brodeur. 1908. Vanier.

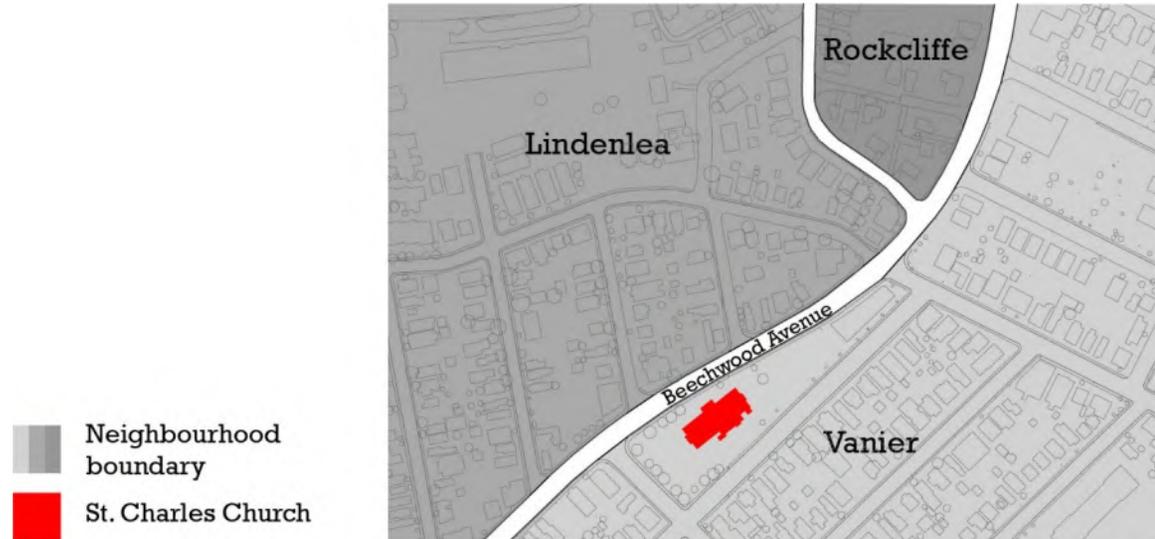


St. Charles proposed addition. Render. ModBox (developer) and Linebox Studio (architect). Vanier.

St. Charles Church was constructed in 1908 by Quebec architect, Charles Brodeur. For many years, it was an important religious space and social hub for the Francophone community in Vanier. It also founded the “Order of Jacques-Cartier” in 1926, a secret society that promoted the interests of French Catholics in Canada. At the height of its run, the order had over 11,000 members and 500 local groups across Canada. Due to declining attendance, St. Charles was deconsecrated in 2013 and sold to ModBox in 2014 with the

intent to rezone the lot for a condo and townhome development with the firm Linebox. Since then, the church has been referred to as 'St. Charles Market' and used as an event space for the community, including farmers' markets, social events and parties.

St. Charles is an example of the Quebec Neoclassical style. Some of its features include a symmetrical composition, cruciform plan, central entrance tower and belfry and tall rounded windows. Of great importance is its contextual value, given its religious and sociocultural contribution to the French-speaking community of Vanier. It also serves as a landmark on a highly visible location on Beechwood Avenue. Situated at the intersection of neighbourhoods Vanier, Lindenlea and Rockcliffe, the significance of St. Charles' location cannot be overlooked. After it was sold in 2013, the North, West and South façade of the church were designated under OHA Part IV.



Context map of neighbourhoods surrounding the St. Charles.

Currently under construction is a seven-storey development with fifty-six units, wrapped around the North and East side of the church. The location and mass of the development was meant to maintain accessibility of the designated facades, but the tall, opaque massing, particularly on the North and East side, completely obscures views to the church. The flat, vertical facades physically separate the church from its context, which contributes to its heritage value. The proximity of the addition to the church's East façade disrupts its symmetry. Although the development respects the height of the bell tower,

“[s]ubordination is not a question of size; a small, ill-conceived addition could adversely affect an historic place more than a large, well-designed addition.”<sup>25</sup> St. Charles is uniquely situated on a plot of land with no other buildings around it, a rather rural aesthetic in an urban context. But its street presence is muddled by a heavy, asymmetric addition, altering the views from adjacent streets and on one’s arrival to Vanier.

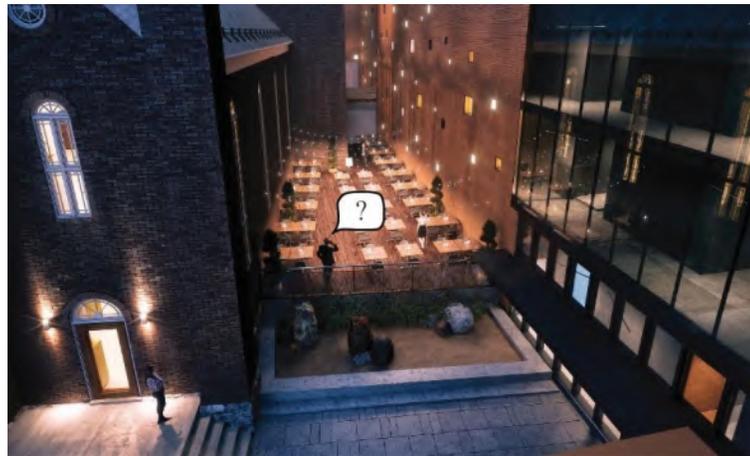


St. Charles proposed addition, render looking East.

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<sup>25</sup> Parks Canada, Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 34.

A design feature meant to create a dialogue between the church and the condo is the “starry night wall”, a wall with “seemingly random” windows meant as a backdrop to the church.<sup>26</sup> The scattered windows have no relationship to the size, shape or placement of the church’s arched windows. Arguably, they draw attention away from the church façade because of its odd patterning and backlit panes. The supposed strategic placement of windows reads as a stand-alone feature, not a complimentary backdrop to the church.



“Starry night wall” between St. Charles and condo.

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<sup>26</sup> St Charles Market, “Design concept,” Accessed March 15, 2021, <https://stcharlesmarket.ca/ottawa-new-home-condos-design/>.



Evolution of the Alhambra United Church. Left to right: Original wood church in 1885; Brick church with Sunday School addition from 1887-1907; Current structure constructed in 1907 to present.

The Alhambra United Church has over a century-long history of transformation. The original wooden church was constructed in 1885 with the financial support of the Old Davenport Methodist Church. When the congregation outgrew this location, they purchased new land to build a larger brick church in 1887, where the Alhambra is today. An addition of a transept was built in 1889, then the original portion of the church was demolished in 1924 to build a larger Sunday School. The final iteration of the church was designed by architects Horwood, Burke and White.



Alhambra United Church. Horwood, Burke and White. 1907. Toronto.



The Church Lofts. Render. Medallion Capital Group (developer) and Turner Fleischer Architects (architect). Projected completion 2021. Toronto.

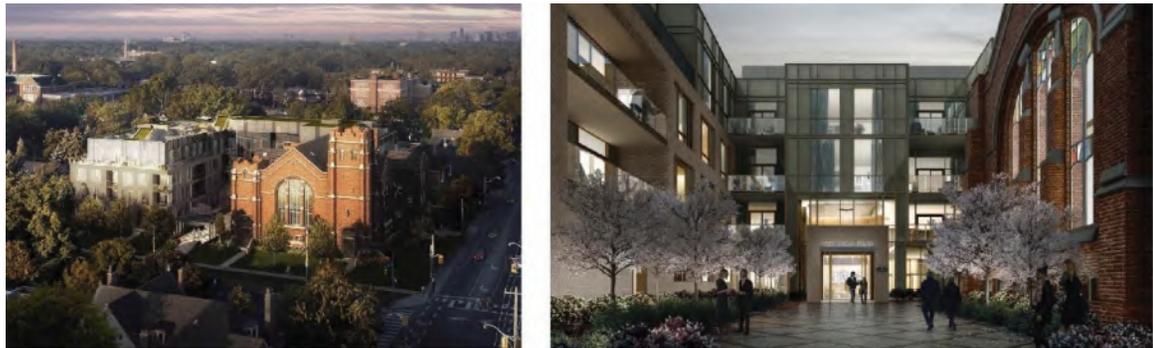
The Alhambra was listed on the City of Toronto Heritage Register on November 13, 1990. Its design is of the Gothic Revival-Collegiate Gothic style, constructed of red brick and limestone.<sup>27</sup> Physical attributes include the prominent bell tower (which serves as an entrance), the gables on the North, East and South façade and the stained glass windows.<sup>28</sup> Throughout its lifetime, the Alhambra has been involved with its community, including making gifts for children at local hospitals, assisting the elderly and hosting

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<sup>27</sup> ERA Architects Inc., “Heritage Impact Assessment: High Park Alhambra Church – Redevelopment for Residential Uses,” February 10, 2016, <https://medcapassets.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/296-High-Park-heritage-Impact-Assessment.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> ERA Architects Inc., “Heritage Impact Assessment: High Park Alhambra Church,” 34-35.

social events.<sup>29</sup> The Alhambra is one of four churches on Annette Avenue, contributing to its institutional character. Located on a prominent corner lot in the High Park neighbourhood, the Alhambra is a visual, historical and cultural landmark of Toronto.



Left to right: Aerial view of proposal; Interior courtyard between church and condo addition.

Faced with a shrinking congregation and limited funds, the vacant church was sold to Medallion in 2015 for residential units. The design includes the restoration and retention of the main church building, repurposing the church for luxury lofts and developing a four-storey condo attached to the church by a shared courtyard. The addition's low-scale is respectful of the church's height. Its exterior design takes cues from the original

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<sup>29</sup> ERA Architects Inc., "Heritage Impact Assessment: High Park Alhambra Church," 26-27.

*\* "It offers a real sense of place, especially for pedestrians. But we wanted also to set it and the new building back so they wouldn't compete with the existing building. And so it would allow for gracious view corridors."*

- Raza Mehdi, Turner Fleischer lead architect. Statement from interview for National Post news article.

materials, using a neutral brick tones on the lower levels and glass on the top, set back from the street. The design is contemporary, but the proportions and articulation harken to the verticality of the arched windows and bell tower, as well as the horizontal banding on the church. The unique interior conditions are used to create multi-level lofts, featuring the original stained glass windows and double-height spaces.<sup>30</sup> Outdoor space is identified as an important aspect of the design, notably the courtyard between the old church and the new condo, which also forms a dialogue with the community.\*

Where the Alhambra's rehabilitation succeeds is its sensibility to the many values of the church: aesthetically, as a landmark and to the community. Although one could be critical of the use of housing in a religious space, the lofts are designed to compliment the existing features, rather than the generic, contemporary finishes in the St. Charles addition. The L-shaped massing of the St. Charles addition is disproportionate to the

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<sup>30</sup>Alex Newman, "Icon Transformed," National Post, May 15, 2019, <https://nationalpost.com/life/homes/a-neighbourhood-icon-becomes-home>.

original church, which serves as a distraction. The Alhambra addition is of similar height to the original church, but its U-shape relates to the order and symmetry of the church. Also contributing to its success of being *subordinate* is the intentional use of similar materials and rhythms, interpreted in a contemporary fashion. This contrasts with the solid brick extrusion of the St. Charles addition which does not relate to the church's proportions or details. The adaptive reuse of the Alhambra is an example of using existing rhythms and proportions to balance a *distinct*, but *subordinate* design.

<b>Evaluation of being <i>subordinate</i></b>		
<b>values</b>	<b>St. Charles Church</b>	<b>Alhambra United Church</b>
minimal intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• partial demolition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• partial demolition, interior fit-up and addition</li> </ul>
physical value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contemporary design no relationship to church's aesthetic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• restored and retained interior and exterior features</li> </ul>
proportions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• condo disrupts symmetry of church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• similar proportions, but in modern materials</li> </ul>
site significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L-shape condo alters and obscures views to church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U-shape condo compliments massing of church and neighbourhood</li> </ul>

Table comparing the subordinate design of the adaptive reuse of the St. Charles and Alhambra.

## Cathedral Hill vs. Deer Park United Church

Is this distinguishable?



Left to right: Cathedral Hill Condo. Cathedral Hill; Cathedral Hill Condo; View of condo from Christ Church Cathedral. Windmill Developments (developer) and Broccolini (architect). 2012. Ottawa.

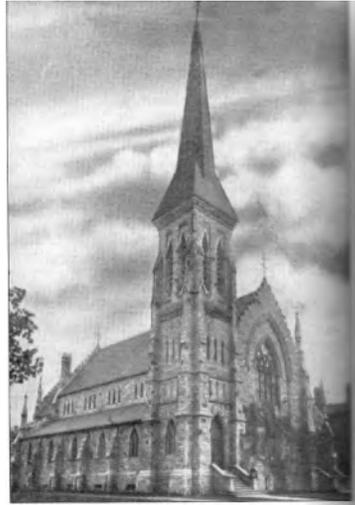
The Cathedral Hill condo is part of a larger development plan in the Cathedral Hill HCD by Windmill Developments. The tower is adjacent to the Christ Cathedral Church, which was designated under OHA Part IV in 1977. The church owns the West half of the block between Sparks Street and Queen Street. Unable to keep up with accumulating maintenance costs, the church leased part of their land to Windmill, who planned to construct a twenty-one-storey condo tower and twelve-storey office building.

Christ Church Cathedral is an example of a Gothic Revival church, rich in architectural details and a landmark of the district. It is also noted for its association with Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. Character-defining elements include its location on a cliff facing the Ottawa River, its Nepean sandstone walls, stepped roofline and decorative windows.<sup>31</sup> The Cathedral Hill HCD is defined by its collection of nineteenth century housing and its association with the development of Upper Town.<sup>32</sup> Buildings are generally low-scale, surrounding the Christ Church Cathedral and the Roper House which are seated atop the limestone escarpment.

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<sup>31</sup> BRAY Heritage, “Christ Church Cathedral Revitalization: Cultural Heritage Impact Statement,” November 18, 2010, <https://app06.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/pec/2011/05-10/02-%20ACS2011-ICS-PGM-0089%20Background%20Research,%20Report1.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> BRAY Heritage, “Christ Church Cathedral Revitalization: Cultural Heritage Impact Statement,” 10.



Christ Church Cathedral, King  
Arnoldi, 1873.



Image of Roper House in 2010. Spire of Christ Church seen in top left  
of image.

Today, the Cathedral Hill HCD is surrounded by high-rise apartment buildings, mostly constructed in the 1960s and 1970s. The church can no longer be seen from the West side of the property, facing the Roper House. In fact, Windmill's proposed condo, constructed in 2012, was inserted between the Roper House, Christ Church Cathedral and two other nineteenth-century homes. The tower soars into the sky, comically out-of-scale on what used to be a low-rise, residential street. It may be distinguishable, but frankly, it does not meet any other criteria for conservation.



Deer Park United Church. 1912. Toronto.



Proposed condo addition. Projected completion 2021. Camrost-Felcorp (developer) and Diamond Schmitt Architects (architect).

Deer Park United Church is another church that suffered from a declining congregation and insufficient funding. The church was constructed in 1912 in the Neo-Gothic style, featuring Credit Valley stone and Indiana limestone. Heritage attributes include the pitched gable roof, the square tower, the arched windows and details such as the stone mullions and mouldings.<sup>33</sup> Deer Park United played a significant social role in its neighbourhood. The congregation was involved in outreach and employment programs in

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<sup>33</sup> City Planning Division, “129 St. Clair Avenue West – Amendment to Reasons for Designation and Passage of Designating By-Law,” Toronto, October 26, 2009.

the 1930s, provided English classes in the 1950s and 1960s and sponsored Vietnamese refugees in the 1970s.<sup>34</sup> Increasing maintenance costs became unmanageable and in 2008, the church was closed and left to deteriorate until it was purchased by developers Camrost-Felcorp. In 2008, the church was also designated under Part IV.



Images of proposed courtyard. Render. Diamond Schmitt Architect.

Currently underway is a partial demolition and addition of a twenty-eight-storey condo designed by Diamond Schmitt Architects. The team worked with heritage consults from

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<sup>34</sup> City Planning Division, “129 St. Clair Avenue West – Amendment to Reasons for Designation and Passage of Designating By-Law,” 8.

\* *"[Julian Smith] believes it represents the shift from an old paradigm—of historical properties as static objects—to new standards (ones he worked on with UNESCO) that recognize the importance of related cultural, economic, and social impacts on the surrounding community."*

- Statement from section of Torontoist news article interviewing Julian Smith on the courtyard addition.

ERA and Heritage Toronto in an effort to maintain the values of the church that was treasured landmark of the community. The height of the condo and the partial removal of the sanctuary roof for a publicly accessible courtyard was criticized by the community and local heritage advocates.<sup>35</sup> However, heritage consultant, Julian Smith, argued that the courtyard was a good example of a contemporary interpretation of the church's value as a place for contemplation and a sanctuary.<sup>36</sup> The idea that there is opportunity for heritage places to serve new purpose in a contemporary context is important to conservation in an urban environment.\*

Both the Cathedral Hill and Deer Park United developments are distinguishable for the wrong reasons: they are both out-of-scale and overshadow the heritage asset. Although neither project satisfies this quality, the development at Deer Park United deserves merit for continuing the church's function via the open courtyard as a quiet, meditative space.

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<sup>35</sup> Jamie Bradburn, "The Curious Case of 129 St. Clair Avenue West," Torontoist, February 16, 2012, <https://torontoist.com/2012/02/the-curious-case-of-129-st-clair-avenue-west/>.

<sup>36</sup> Jamie Bradburn, "The Curious Case of 129 St. Clair Avenue West."

The use of the church and its value to the community form part of its history and intangible values. Although its construction requires a partial demolition of the structure, the space being provided will allow the legacy of Deer Park United to continue in a contemporary setting. The insertion of Cathedral Hill condos behind heritage façades does not preserve existing values or create new ones. The high-rise development of Deer Park United may not be of sympathetic scale, but it is worth praising their efforts to renew the church’s social and functional value.

<b>Evaluation of being distinguishable</b>		
<b>values</b>	<b>Cathedral Hill</b>	<b>Deer Park United Church</b>
social/functional value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• condo bears no relationship to the church or its surroundings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides public courtyard as a place for contemplation in the footprint of the church</li> </ul>
site significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high-rise condo disproportionate to height of adjacent church and single-family homes, but is backdropped by existing high-rise apartments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high-rise condo disproportionate to height of church, but has a wide setback from the church; existing high-rise towers are adjacent to the church</li> </ul>

**VS**

Table comparing the distinguishability of the adaptive reuse of Cathedral Hill and Deer Park United.

## The Met/Central 1

Is this conservation?



Met façade being removed while new foundation is poured.



Central 1 render by CORE Architects.

The City of Ottawa only requested Urban Capital to retain the façade of the Met as a condition of their approval for the proposed condo development. It was strongly recommended that the façade be retained in situ, in accordance with conservation principles. However, the façade was ultimately removed to pour the new foundations, then put back in place. This goes against the principle of minimal intervention and of

\* From structural report submitted in July 2009 by consulting engineers, John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd. See Appendix C.

preserving heritage assets in situ. The structural report submitted to the council included an option to keep the façade in place, but it would have required an unconventional structural solution that would be costly and pose a high risk of damaging the wall.\*

Although this is a fair argument for removing the façade, why were the doors and windows removed and replaced with inoperable spandrel panels? What difference is there between a removable façade and a billboard? If the context of heritage is ignored and a building is treated as nothing more than an object in space, we are at serious risk of deteriorating our urban fabric and cultural identity.

Heritage regulation has made great progress with the addition of Regulation 9/06 in 2005 to define heritage value and inclusion of cultural landscapes to the *Standards & Guidelines* in 2010. The intent of the guidelines is to protect values and promote good conservation practice. Looking at the rehabilitation of the Southminster, St. Charles, Cathedral Hill and the Met, each project may have received council approval and demonstrated compliance with guidelines, but do they meet the intent of conservation?

## Part III: Policy vs. Principle

*Conservation: It's not about checking all the boxes. We're preserving our history, our community, our identity.*



## Checking the boxes

In heritage policy, there is a gap between language intent and interpretation. Without understanding the intent of policy, poor conservation will continue to happen. Returning to the development of Central 1, this project's interpretation of *compatible*, *distinguishable* and *subordinate* is drastically different from an evaluation of the development based on heritage values. This analysis of Central is based on the Cultural Heritage Impact Statement (CHIS) submitted to council by Urban Capital\* and quickly reveals that meeting policy does not necessarily mean meeting conservation principles.×

\* CHIS submitted November 28, 2007.

× Note that reports referring to the Met's property address is 453 Bank Street, whereas the address of development Central 1 is 354 Gladstone Avenue.

The CHIS is an evaluation requested by the city of a proposed intervention on or near a heritage resource which may adversely impact its value. The evaluation is carried out by a third party to provide an impartial report on the proposal. However, the evaluator is hired by the owner, so it begs to question just how "impartial" these reports can be.<sup>+</sup> The following statements on the proposed development are taken from the CHIS.

<sup>+</sup> Impartiality of CHIS was questioned by Marc Denhez and Laurie Smith in interview. See Appendix B.

\* From CHIS report: “The Bank and Gladstone intersection has historic value as a transition point between the more homogenous commercial and residential patterns north of Gladstone and the varied landscape south of Gladstone...”

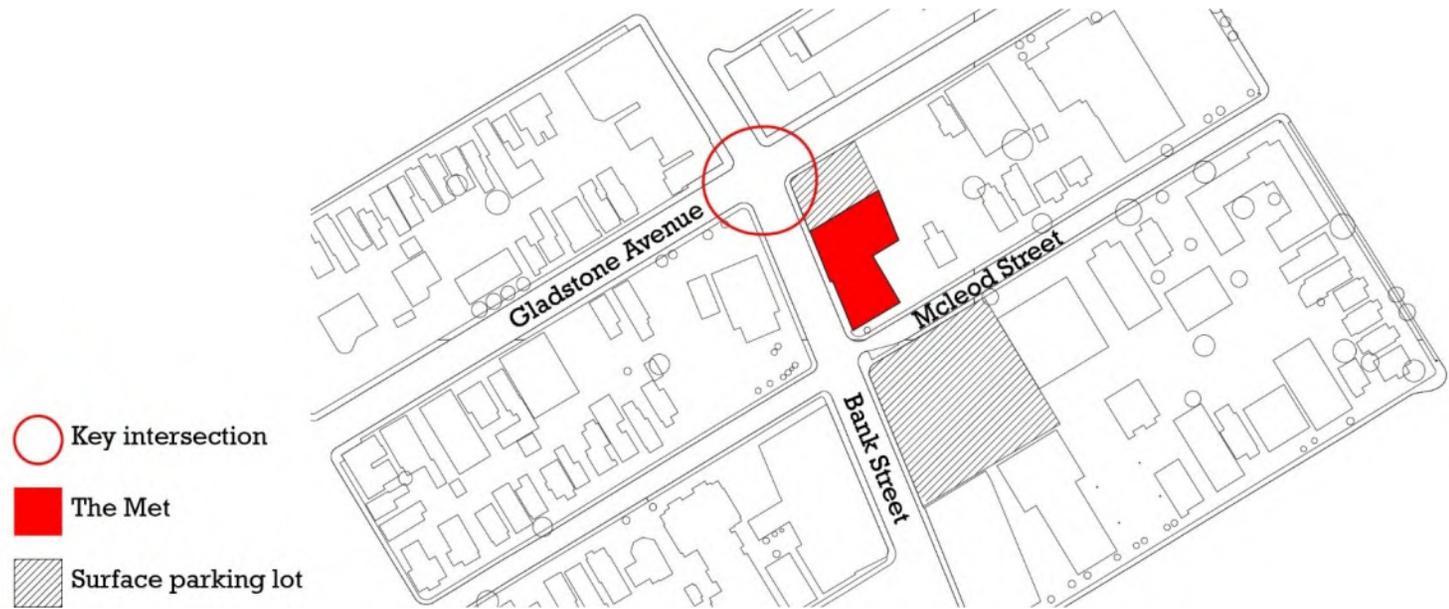
The Met is located at the intersection of Bank Street and Gladstone Avenue, noted in the report as a highly visible and important intersection.\* It then criticizes the corner (then occupied by a surface parking lot) as being ”under-utilized and visually unappealing”.<sup>37</sup> Developing the block would fill in the gap created by the existing parking lot and create continuity in the Bank Street profile. The architect also expressed their intention to create a glass “light box” at the corner of Bank and Gladstone as part of their design to emphasize the intersection’s significance.<sup>38</sup> Although the proposed height would not “strictly meet guidelines”<sup>39</sup>, the report cites the location’s prominence and municipal policy on densification to justify the deviation from heritage guidelines.

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<sup>37</sup> Julie Harris and Mark Brandt, “Cultural Heritage Impact Statement,” November 28, 2007, [https://app06.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/a-lacac/2008/02-28/CHIS%20MetroBC.453Bank.%2028%20Nov.07.Final%20\(JH%20%20MB\).htm](https://app06.ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/a-lacac/2008/02-28/CHIS%20MetroBC.453Bank.%2028%20Nov.07.Final%20(JH%20%20MB).htm).

<sup>38</sup> Harris and Brandt, “Cultural Heritage Impact Statement.”

<sup>39</sup> Harris and Brandt, “Cultural Heritage Impact Statement.”



Context plan identifying key adjacencies.

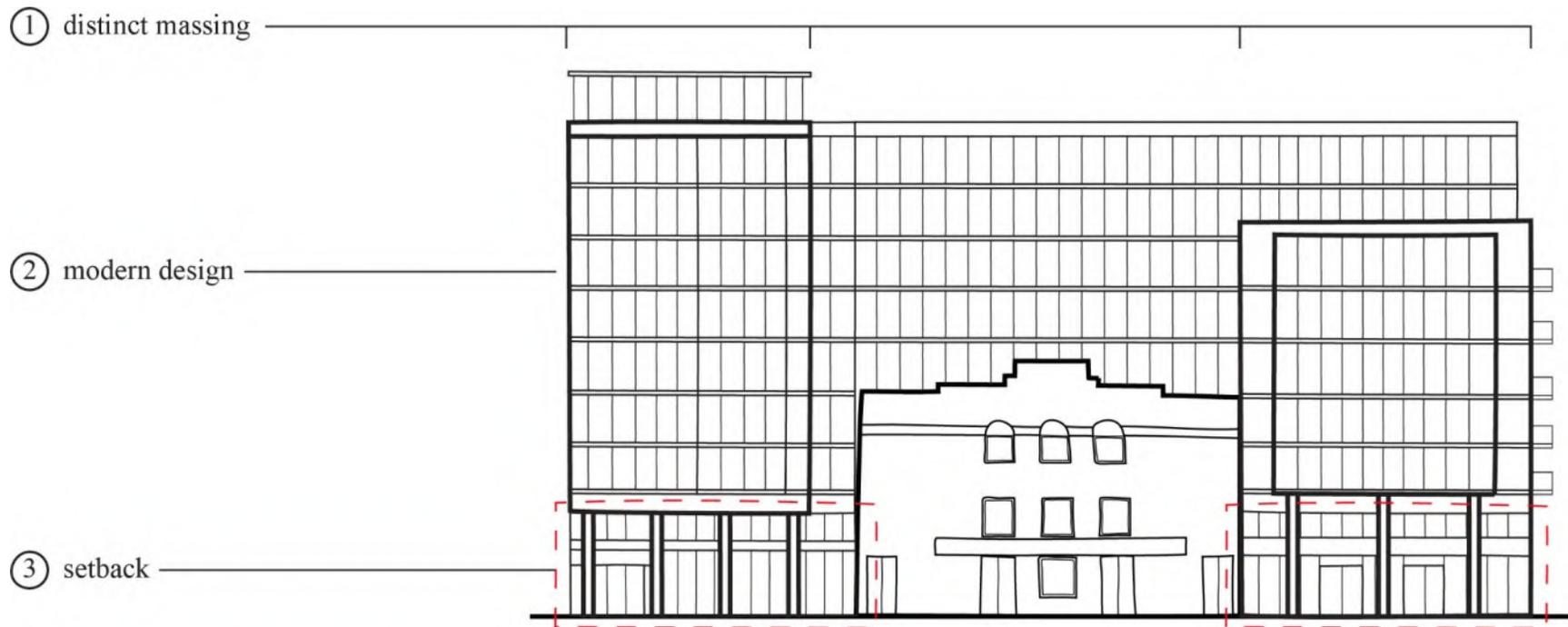
Varied massing and setbacks were the main strategy used to meet district guidelines. The distinct blocks along Bank Street – the nine-storey tower along Gladstone Avenue, the set back eight-storey “core section” behind the church, the three-storey Met façade and the six-storey portion along McLeod Street – is stated to be “...suited to the goals of the District in its emphasis on maintaining a clear reading of lot divisions”.<sup>40</sup> The sections

<sup>40</sup> Harris and Brandt, “Cultural Heritage Impact Statement.”

adjacent to the church facade are set back, with the ground level further set back behind a series of concrete columns. The deep recess behind the façade is meant as a visual reference to the original church’s footprint (a rather subtle reference that arguably does not effectively commemorate the church) and “allow it to ‘read’ as an important element in the composition”.<sup>41</sup> The modern design and materials of glass, brick and aluminum were chosen to contrast with the façade. Based on these decisions, the evaluator felt that the proposal met the requirement to be contemporary and distinct, as well as subordinate to the heritage asset.

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<sup>41</sup> Harris and Brandt, “Cultural Heritage Impact Statement.”



- ① "...suited to the goals of the District in its emphasis on maintaining a clear reading of lot divisions."
- ② "In contrast to the 1930s façade, the new parts of the development are modern in design, with an aesthetic emphasis on forms and on a limited palette of textures ...rather than on ornamentation."
- ③ "...give the façade "surrounding visual space", allowing it to "read" as an important element in the composition, simultaneously visually assisting the proposed Bank streetscape's traditional lot divisioning pattern discussed above"

Illustration describing proposed development, based on CHIS.

\* From February 20, 2008, Application to demolish a portion of 453 Bank Street and alter 453 Bank Street: The policies applicable to Traditional Mainstreets generally call for buildings to be four to six stories, however, it also clearly provides for higher buildings to be considered under defined circumstances. The subject property satisfies the locational parameters for having a higher building developed which in turn allows for a more intensified development program to be achieved so as to advance the City's Growth Management objectives.

Although the proposal exceeds the district height limits, the report finds the development to revitalize an underused portion of Bank Street and is supported by municipal policy encouraging development in the city's core.\* It also references nearby developments that recently gained approval for nine-storeys and argues that given its prominent location, "the guideline calling for two to four storeys on Bank Street is very restrictive".<sup>42</sup> The report recognizes the character of Bank Street and Centretown on a larger scale, but is selective in what it chooses to respond to. Rather than designing with the intent of protecting heritage values, the guidelines are reframed to appear anti-development. While management of conflicting values is a reality of heritage development, the priority of conservation is to identify and protect heritage values; pitting values against each other only increases divisive discourse. The social and cultural values of the Met should have been integral to the evaluation of the proposed development, yet the report's evaluation of the church is flippant at best.

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<sup>42</sup> Harris and Brandt, "Cultural Heritage Impact Statement."

The Met is colourfully described as having “limited architectural aesthetic appeal in its form, decoration and materials”, but the report recognizes its social role in the development of Centretown.<sup>43</sup> Unique features of the church are identified, such as the lunettes above the third-storey windows, the marquee and the stepped roofline, but they were either excluded from the design plan or removed altogether. The only conservation that happened was Urban Capital’s compliance with the City’s request to retain the façade. Generally, the proposal does not address the character-defining elements of the Met, nor does it acknowledge the sociocultural value of a church as a public gathering space. In fact, where the guidelines call for transparency and articulation on the ground floor façade, the report uses the Met façade’s lack of transparency as a case for the city to provide more flexibility in the guidelines.

The report provides recommendations for future opportunities to enhance the design to better reflect HCDP guidelines, including balconies to break up the façade, more

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<sup>43</sup> Harris and Brandt, “Cultural Heritage Impact Statement.”

definition between the ground floor commercial and residential tower above and adding signage to the marquee.<sup>44</sup> These changes would animate the street frontage and bring attention to the Met's heritage value, but as of 2021, the condo remains a nondescript, flat surface and the marquee is still empty. In addition to the façade's preservation for its contribution to Centretown's history and development, it was recommended to be retained in situ according to heritage conservation principles.<sup>45</sup> As we now know, this never happened because the structural report submitted in 2009 after the proposal's approval stated that preservation in situ would put the façade's integrity at high risk. After the demolition of the rear of the main building, the façade was stabilized, the top floor and metal details removed and a crane lifted the wall off site.

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<sup>44</sup> Harris and Brandt, "Cultural Heritage Impact Statement."

<sup>45</sup> Harris and Brandt, "Cultural Heritage Impact Statement."

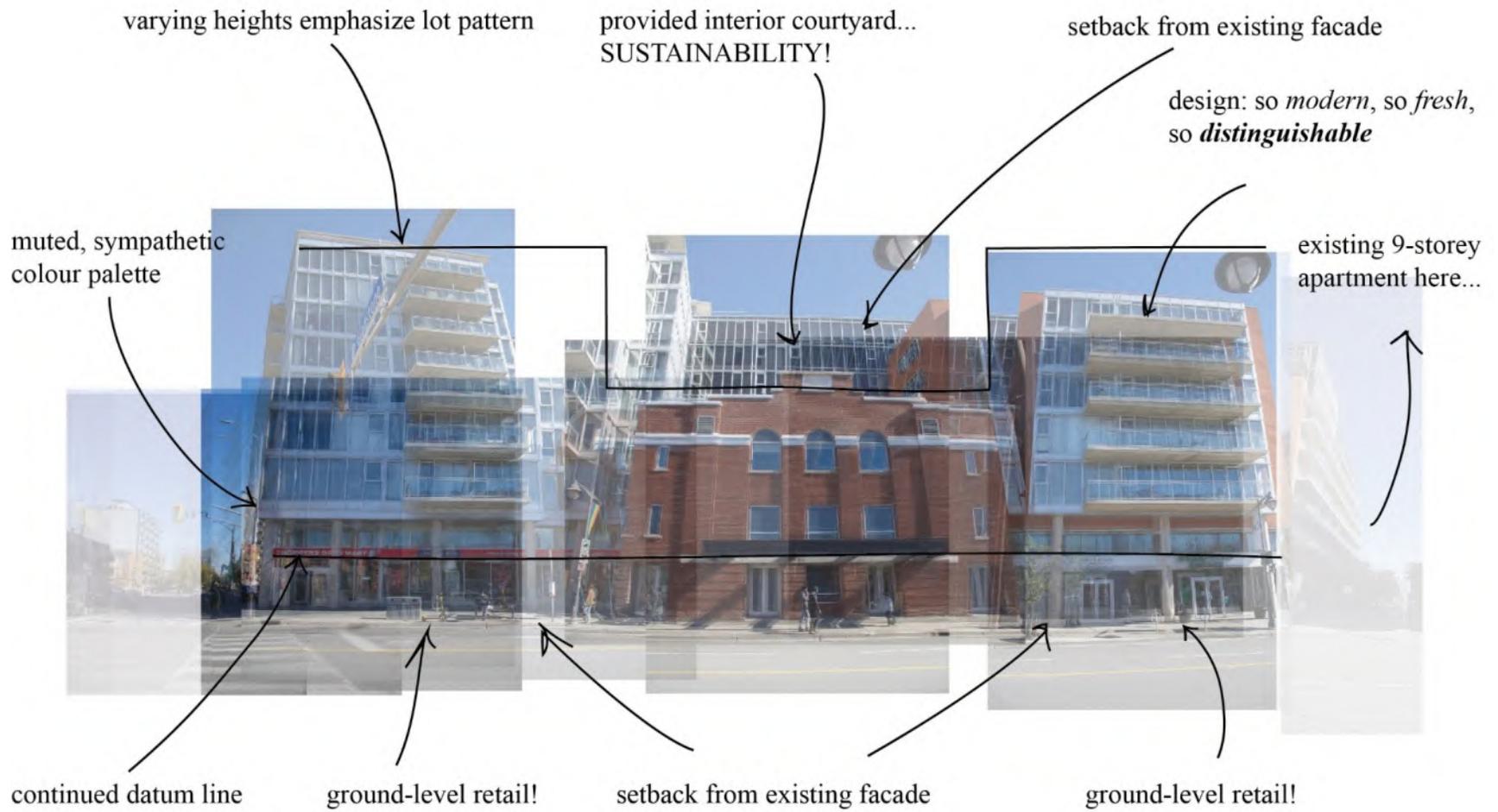


Images of process of stabilization and removal of the Met's façade.

On paper, this development has met the ‘heritage requirements’: the façade would be retained, the commercial ground floor follows the Bank Street character, the design is distinctly modern and the massing is setback to respect the original church façade. Providing a mixed-use development also aligns with the city’s interest in densifying the city’s urban core. This report may suggest that policies and guidelines have been met, but has the *intent* of conservation been met? Were cultural heritage values being protected?



Collage of Bank Street showing Central 1 and subsequently constructed, Central 2. Note nearby existing low to mid-rise apartments on Gladstone Avenue and McLeod Street.



A developer's evaluation of Central 1, based on the CHIS submitted in 2007.

## Understanding heritage value

To better appreciate the meaning of heritage today, it is worthwhile to first understand the etymology of the word *heritage*. The dictionary definition is as follows:

heritage (noun):

1. property that descends to an heir
2. something transmitted by or acquired from a predecessor: legacy, inheritance<sup>46</sup>

The origins of *heritage* come from Anglo-French, *heriter*, meaning to inherit or make an heir, formed from Latin roots, *hērēditāre*, meaning to leave as an inheritance, inherit or make an heir.<sup>47</sup> However, non-physical assets, such as tradition, can also be inherited.

The intersection of culture and heritage is where conservation lies.

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<sup>46</sup> “Heritage,” In *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary*, accessed October 22, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/heritage>.

<sup>47</sup> “Heritage,” In *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary*.

*Cultural* heritage as defined by theorist David Throsby has anthropological and sociological implications.<sup>48</sup> The addition of *cultural* to the term *heritage* signifies a cultural significance and emotional connection to the thing inherited. These attachments are the intangible values of heritage that form part of the intent of conservation.

*Conservation* or *to conserve* has layers of meanings. The physical treatment of a property is just one form of conservation. In a broader context, conservation is the discourse of heritage preservation.<sup>49</sup> The process of conserving heritage involves different groups of professionals and stakeholders to determine *what, why* and *how* to conserve. Cultural heritage is also understood through its context.\* For many years, the focus of conservation has been on materials and in 1997, the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) launched the Agora initiative to study the social, political and economic impacts of

\* Recognizing “the need to understand... conservation as a process (rather than a set of objects and place)”, from Marta de la Torre’s report on values-based conservation.

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<sup>48</sup> C. David Throsby, “2006 – Paying for the Past: Economics, Cultural Heritage, and Public Policy,” In *Australia’s Economy in Its International Context*, edited by Kym Anderson, 527–40, The Joseph Fisher Lectures, Volume 2: 1956-2012, University of Adelaide Press, 2012.

<sup>49</sup> Erica Avrami, Marta de la Torre, and Randal Mason, eds, “Values and Heritage Conservation,” 2000, 1–70. <https://doi.org/10.1179/2159032X13Z.00000000011>.

heritage.<sup>50</sup> Discussions began with the understanding that heritage value is ascribed by certain stakeholders, therefore subject to their changing opinions. In other words, heritage only has value because society places value on it. The multidisciplinary nature of conservation is not a new concept. The challenge is to identify and preserve heritage values in the context of changing social conditions.

The World Heritage Convention defines cultural heritage as monuments, groups of buildings or sites with Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).<sup>51</sup> OUV is determined by having exceptional, worldwide cultural and/or natural significance.<sup>52</sup> These criteria are used to determine world heritage sites, but they are also a tool to understand and evaluate cultural heritage in general. Regardless, a common goal in conservation is the transcendence (or inheritance) of meaning for humanity. As stated by UNESCO:

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<sup>50</sup> Marta de la Torre, “Values in Heritage Conservation: A Project of The Getty Conservation Institute,” *APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology* 45, no. 2/3 (2014): 19–24.

<sup>51</sup> UNESCO, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention,” UNESCO World Heritage Centre, July 10, 2019, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>.

<sup>52</sup> UNESCO, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.”

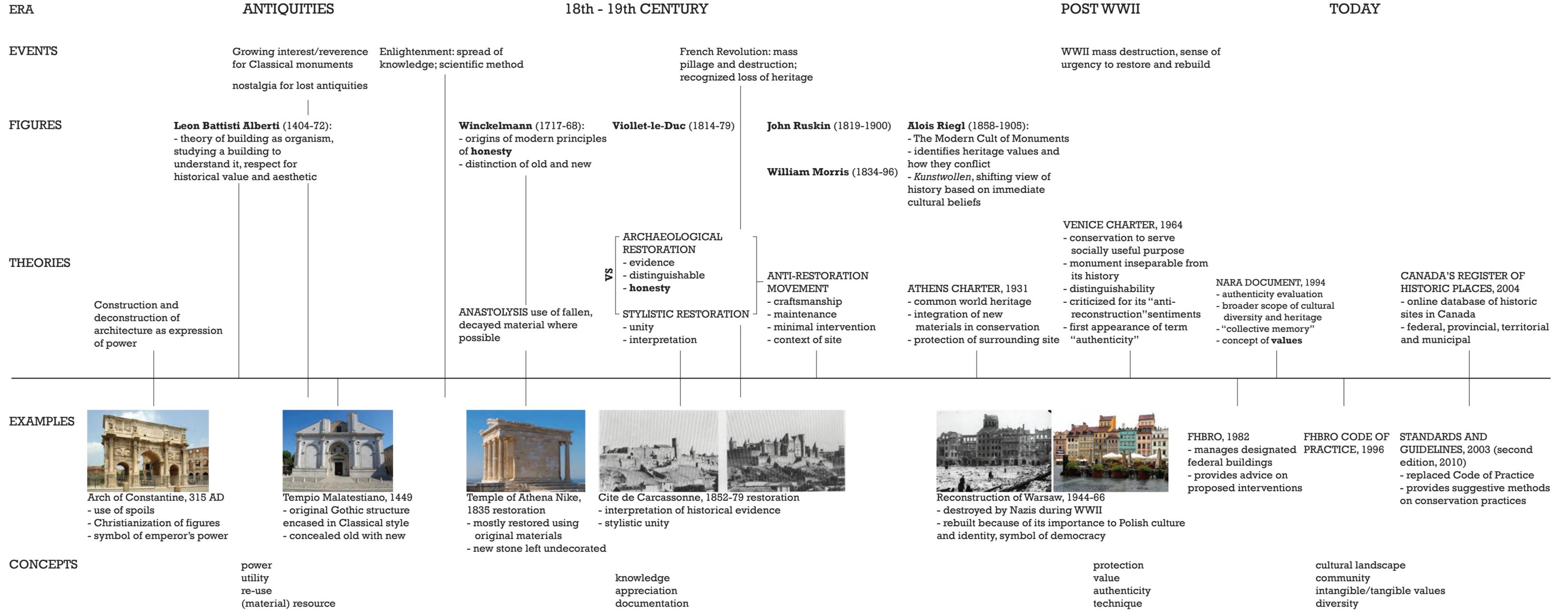
“[h]eritage encompasses tangible and intangible, natural and cultural, movable and immovable and documentary assets inherited from the past and transmitted to future generations by virtue of their irreplaceable value.”<sup>53</sup> Heritage plays a crucial role in defining our past, present and future that must be protected. As expressed by noted historian David Lowenthal, we not only inherit, but should feel an ownership towards heritage (past legacies)”.<sup>54</sup>

Since the Antiquities, the meaning of heritage and conservation have changed drastically. Once a common practice, the use of spoils in new buildings would now be heresy in the field of conservation. The construction and destruction of monuments that once empowered emperors and Popes now empower communities. As knowledge and appreciation of heritage grew over time, so did the definition of heritage expand to include monuments of all cultures and eras, both tangible and intangible.

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<sup>53</sup> UNESCO, “Preserving Our Heritage,” September 17, 2012, <https://en.unesco.org/content/preserving-our-heritage>.

<sup>54</sup> David Lowenthal, “Fabricating Heritage,” *History and Memory* 10, no. 1 (1998): 5–24.



Evolution of heritage throughout time.

In an interview with conservation professional, Laurie Smith, she stresses that conservation is about values and establishing a consensus within the community.<sup>55</sup> If the intent of conservation is to protect heritage values, then these values must be identified and brought to the proverbial table to be discussed. This is not limited to physical aspects and certainly not by what is outlined in heritage guidelines. A report on heritage values by the GCI indicates that although the resources for many disciplines involved are available, little effort has been made to integrate their different values in heritage conservation: “In fact, the greater part of *all* conservation research still focuses on the challenges of physical condition – namely, the deterioration of materials and possible interventions – concentrating on the objects as opposed to their contexts.”<sup>56</sup>

Heritage regulation is supplementary to heritage evaluation, not to be read passively because “[c]onservation is not a scientific decision, but a sociopolitical decision”.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Laurie Smith, Interview by author, January 12, 2021.

<sup>56</sup> Avrami, de la Torre, and Mason, eds, “Values and Heritage Conservation,” 2000, 5.

<sup>57</sup> Laurie Smith, Interview by author.

Looking at Central 1 today, it is not clear how the project enhanced its heritage values or what the values were to begin with. The first step to better conservation is to identify the values we are trying to protect.

## Values of the Met

The Met is situated in Centretown, which was established in the 1870s and 1880s. Much of Centretown's heritage value is attributed to its involvement in the growth of Ottawa during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. The district's historic value comes from its relationship with Parliament Hill, serving as the home, service and entertainment district for government employees. Centretown is also unique in its development of a separate residential neighbourhood adjacent to the downtown core; suburbs were more commonly situated away from the urban core or residential units were built above or next to commercial buildings.<sup>58</sup> Government officials working in Parliament Hill would live in nearby neighbourhoods, such as Centretown, within walking distance of their offices. Generally, Centretown is residential in character, with a few exceptions such as Bank Street, which is the main commercial corridor of the district.

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<sup>58</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latrenouille, Faight, Ironside, and Deevey, "Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study," 25.



Map defining Centretown boundary and Centretown HCD boundary.



Example of a modest, double residence in Centretown. The typical home was set back with a 'tidy' front lawn.



Example of a typical apartment building in Centretown.

Character-defining elements of Centretown include the grid plan, building scale and material use. Common materials include Rideau red clay, sandstone, limestone, wood, wrought iron and pressed metal, some of which are featured on the Met. As previously mentioned, Centretown is predominantly residential, with most development being low to mid-rise. Single family homes are of the Queen Anne style, featuring wood verandas and elaborate trims.<sup>59</sup> Low to mid-rise apartments became popular as an affordable option for housing and for short-term occupants, eventually replacing some single-family homes.<sup>60</sup> Apartments were similarly detailed, featuring flat roofs and horizontal detailing.

Alongside the booming housing industry for the growing number of civil servants, politicians and other professionals who wanted to live close to work, many social clubs

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<sup>59</sup> Canada's Historic Places, "Centretown Heritage Conservation District," Accessed November 9, 2020, <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8439>.

<sup>60</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latrenouille, Faught, Ironside, and Deevey, "Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study," 26.

and services emerged in Centretown.<sup>61</sup> These spaces served as meeting places for government officials<sup>62</sup>, solidifying the importance of the neighbourhood's development in the history of Canadian politics. For many years, Centretown has facilitated the bulk of Ottawa's transportation and is a main thoroughfare between neighbourhoods, specifically to Parliament Hill. As such, Centretown played a major role in the development of Ottawa as the nation's capital.

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<sup>61</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latrenouille, Faught, Ironside, and Deevey, "Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study," 29.

<sup>62</sup> Canada's Historic Places, "Centretown Heritage Conservation District."

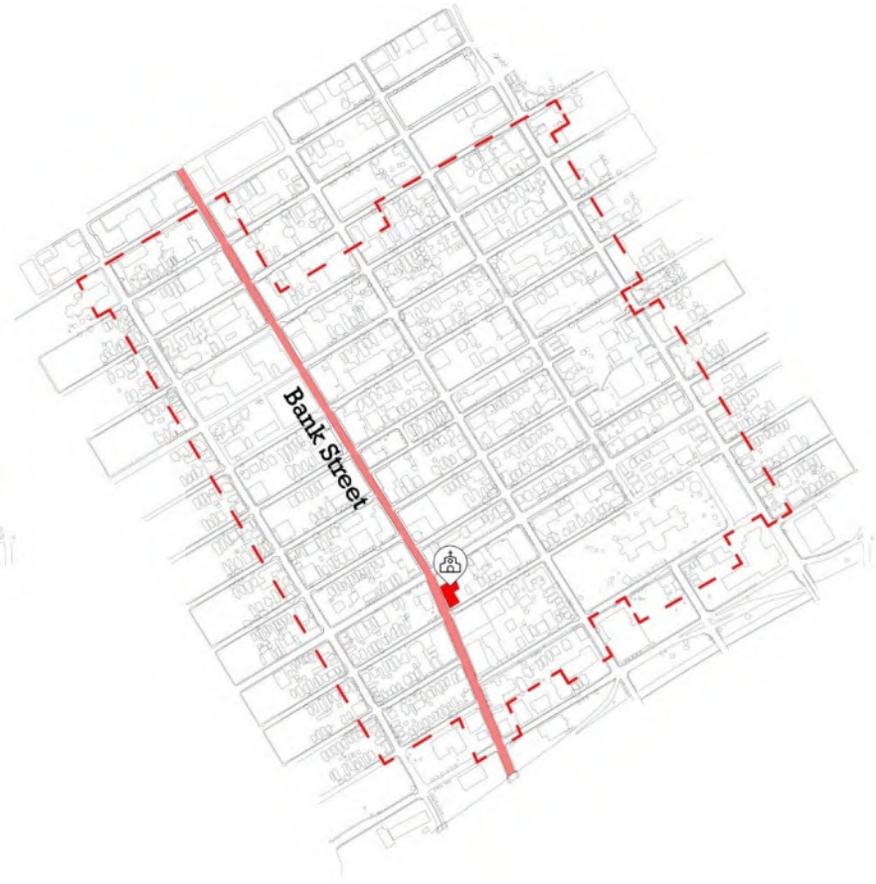


Left: Map defining relationship between Centretown and Parliament Hill. Right: Map outlining downtown core versus residential neighbourhoods of Centretown.

Although there were not many institutional buildings, churches did provide many social services to the public and helped bring together a community of people with many different backgrounds and origins.<sup>63</sup> Religious buildings may not be a defining architectural type of Centretown, but they provided the up-and-coming district a space to feel welcomed. Distinct from Centretown's residential character is Bank Street, the commercial street home to the district's restaurants, entertainment services, community services and other business. Buildings are typically of low-rise construction between one and four storeys and is pedestrian oriented. Lot widths are between 18 and 50 feet wide, with little to no space between buildings and no setbacks. Residential and commercial architecture are characterized by horizontal division of the façade, trim details, and in apartment and commercial buildings, flat roofs.

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<sup>63</sup> Julian Smith & Associates, Carter, Latrenouille, Faight, Ironside, and Deevey, "Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study," 29.



- Centretown HCD
- Bank Street
- The Met
- Churches

Left: Map identifying existing religious spaces in Centretown. Right: Map identifying Bank Street and subject property.

The Met shares many of the values and characteristics described. It follows the low-rise character of Bank Street and has no setback from the lot frontage. Elements such as red brick and pressed metal details are also found on the church's façade. Other architectural elements unique to the Met is the stepped roofline and marquee above the main entrance.

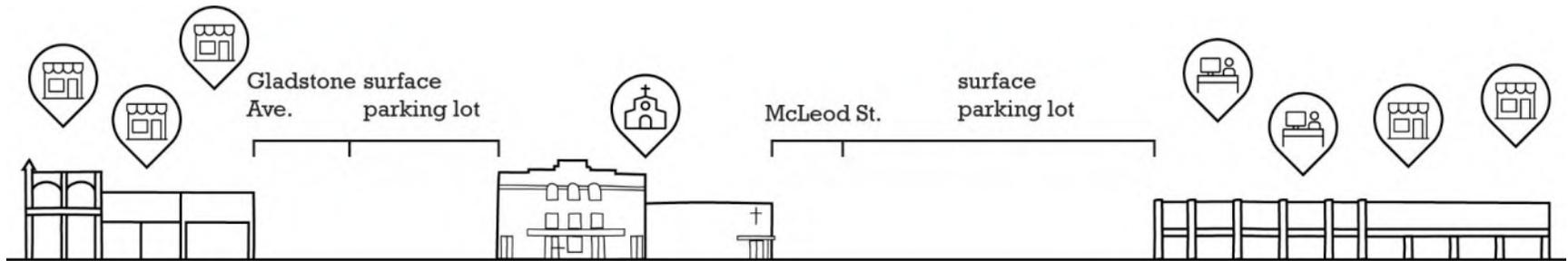
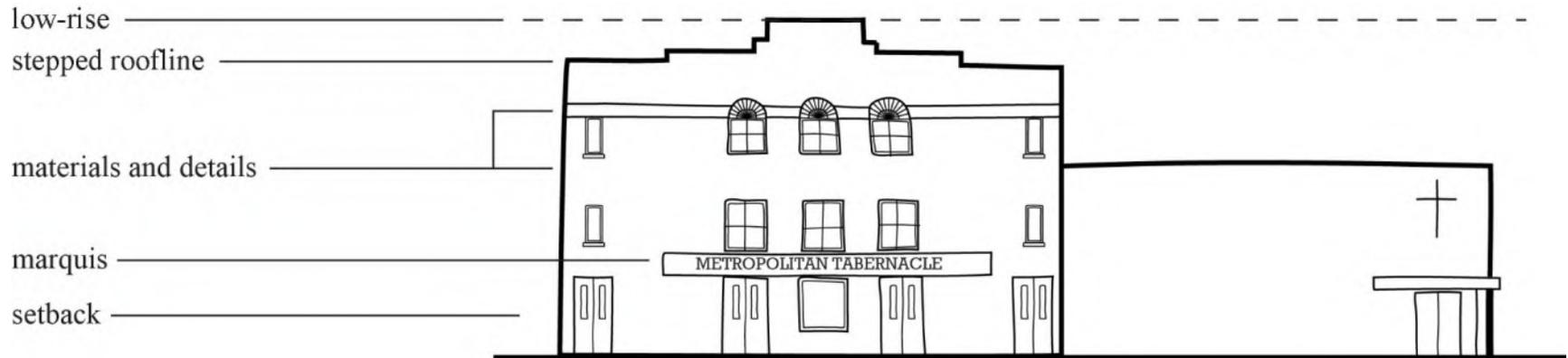


Illustration of Bank Street profile. Program consists of retail and office buildings.



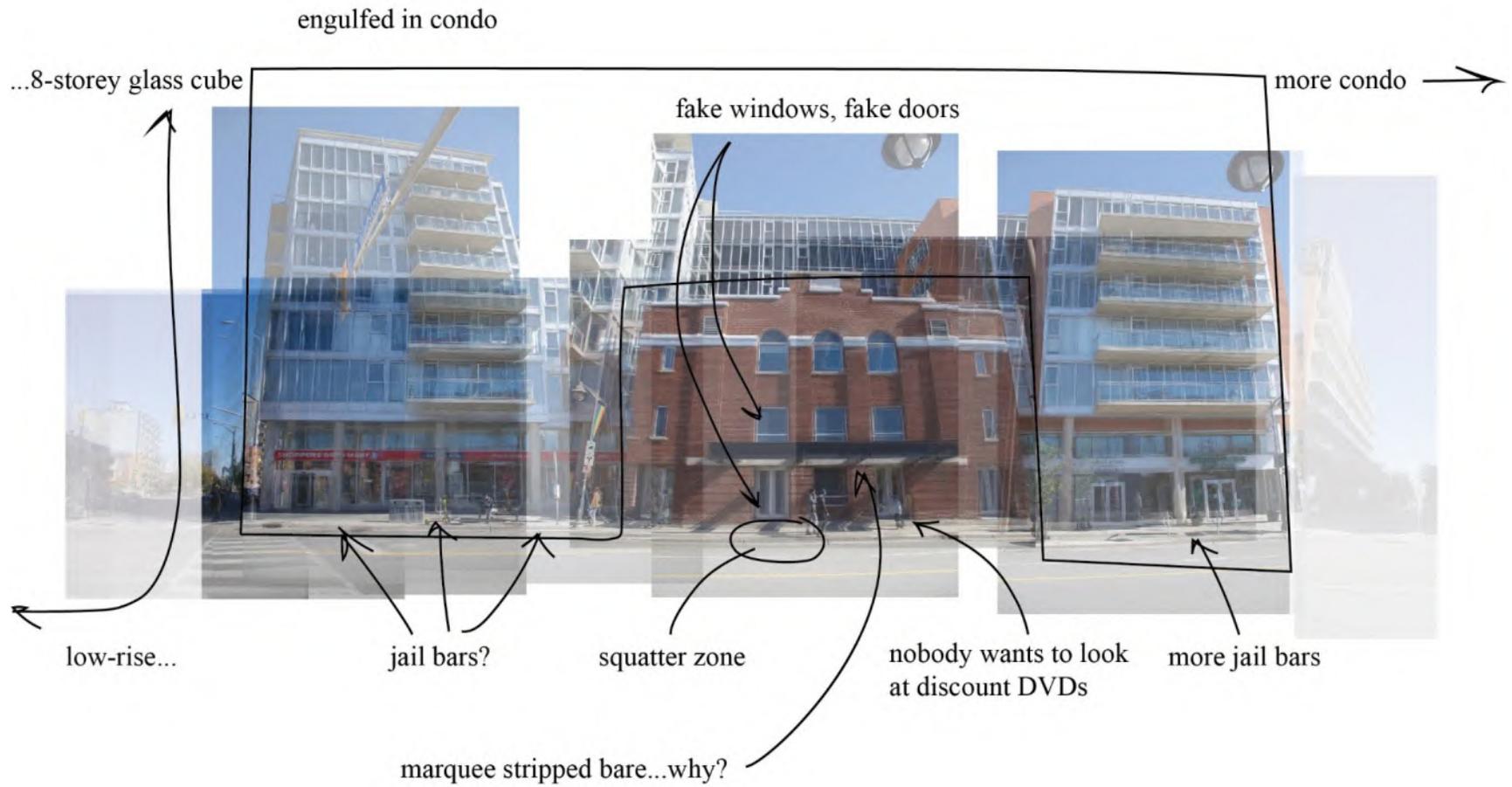
Character-defining elements of the Met façade.

Having re-examined the values of Centretown and the Met, does the proposed development protect heritage values and character-defining elements? The façade may have been retained, but it went through a traumatic removal process that went against council recommendation. Damage to the façade's materials was assessed and appropriate repairs or replacements were made to match the original form and colour, but the original doors and windows were either replaced with spandrel or made into fire exits. What once was the main entrance to the church is now an inaccessible wall with no signage on the marquee. Although the proposal is *distinguishable* from the church, this is achieved with the wrong sentiment. The setbacks do little to signify the heritage value of the Met, as the dominating glass tower overpowers the façade and is out of scale compared to adjacent buildings on Bank Street and to the church. The architectural language of the church façade is of a solid wall with punched out windows, but the proposal is a solid block of glazing that does not speak to the character of the façade nor the spacing between openings. Its overpowering height and mass, the extensive use of glass and the decommissioning of the church façade as an entrance did not make this addition subordinate to the original architecture.

The proposed modern glass condo could have been built anywhere, with or without the church façade, highlighting the design's lack of consideration for its context or heritage value. The disjointed nature of the development likens to RISD professor Liliane Wong's notion of the "Frankenstein Syndrome", in which different types of architecture are stitched together, each part unique to itself, creating an incompatible whole.<sup>64</sup> This negligence of context and heritage value results in a nondescript and confused architecture that can devalue heritage assets. Stripped of its character and functionality, The Met's frontage has become dead space. One could walk past the façade without ever noticing its existence.

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<sup>64</sup> Liliane Wong, *Adaptive Reuse: Extending the Lives of Buildings*, 34.

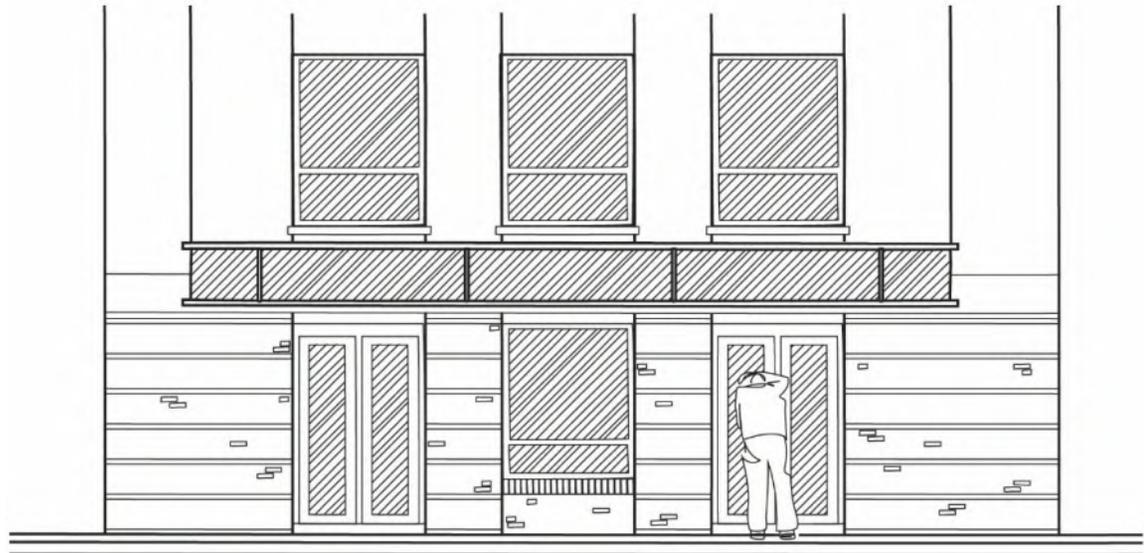


My evaluation of Central 1, based on cultural heritage values.

## Part IV: Central 1 & Beyond

*I awkwardly shuffle towards the door sill to scrape the vomit off my shoe and sigh.*

*Peering through the former glass door to the Met, I see a pile of DVDs in a bin and an old printer. What a shame that the once lively, inviting face of a church is now a boarded up afterthought to yet another boxy condominium.*



## **An erasure of identity**

The shortcomings of Central 1 indicate that an evaluation of an adaptive reuse project based on heritage policy alone is not a good indicator of a project's success in understanding and applying conservation principles. The most important principle is to protect heritage values, whether they are aesthetic, historic or any combination of tangible and intangible assets, and these values will always be specific to the place and its context. If there is an intent to conserve, by legal obligation or not, then there is a responsibility to identify and prioritize the values of a place. Anything less would be a disservice to the conservation practice and the associated community. The following will review the current condition of the Met's remaining façade and how Central's design came very close (but failed) to integrating the church into the development. I ask that we return to the core principles of conservation – why do we conserve? Using a 'values first' approach, a reimagined development will be proposed for the Met, one that prioritizes the heritage of the Met, that is not drastically different from what exists today, but illustrates how intentional conservation design can yield significantly improved results.

The 'heritage' is missing from this heritage development. What little is left of the Met is seated uncomfortably between two overwhelming glass towers, looking out of place in its own home. It is no longer a symbol of community and religious gathering; it is only an empty screen in front of a condo development. The façade and marquee could have been used as an entrance to the condo or to the new commercial space. Instead, it sits passively and unengaged on one of the most prominent street frontages along Bank Street.

Central 1 is a case of missed opportunity. Even though most of the church was demolished, many elements of the façade could have been used in the condo's design. For example, the party room's Western wall corresponds with the three arched windows of the Met on the third floor. From the outside, these windows appear solid; in fact, they are partially covered by opaque panelling and the arch has been covered with dry wall. The interior finishes and structural columns bear no relationship with the façade either. If

the heritage character of the Met was not apparent from the exterior, they are equally obscured from the interior.



Original façade of the Met today. Location of party room highlighted.



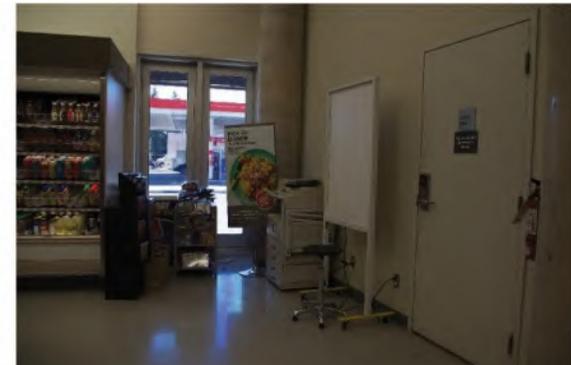
Image of party room and original openings (now partially covered by panelling).

All the original wooden doors were replaced with aluminum framed spandrel and function as fire exits, except for one set of doors. Unfortunately, not only are these doors inaccessible, but it looks into the back corner of the new pharmacy, which extends from the corner of Bank Street and Gladstone Avenue to the other end of the Met's façade. What little transparency is left of the Met's façade on Bank Street is a window into a bin of discount DVDs and the back of an old sign. Similar to the third-storey windows, the

interiors of the pharmacy were not designed with consideration of the existing openings. The lack of care and treatment of the façade only serves to devalue its heritage presence.



Original façade of the Met today. Only door with transparent glass on ground floor highlighted.



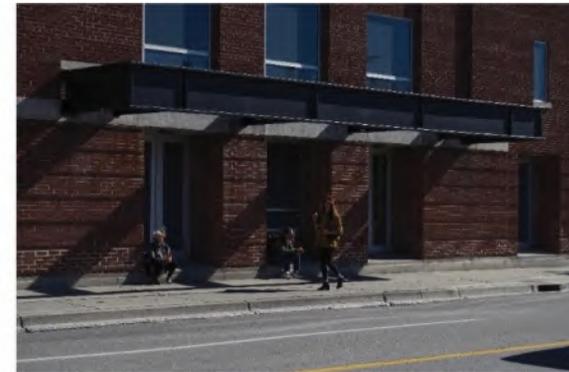
View from interior side of door. “Junk corner” of a pharmacy. Behind the wall on the right is the staff room, which continues behind the facade.

What used to be the main entrance to the Met is now a blank and uninviting brick wall. A once lively place for community gathering now attracts litter and the occasional squatter. What value is there in preserving a façade stripped bare of its character and functionality? In the *Standards and Guidelines*, nine out of twelve standards are about conserving heritage value and character-defining elements. In this development, character-defining

elements have been obscured, removed or decontextualized. If conservation is about protecting heritage values, then this is *not* conservation.



Metropolitan Bible Church circa 1955.



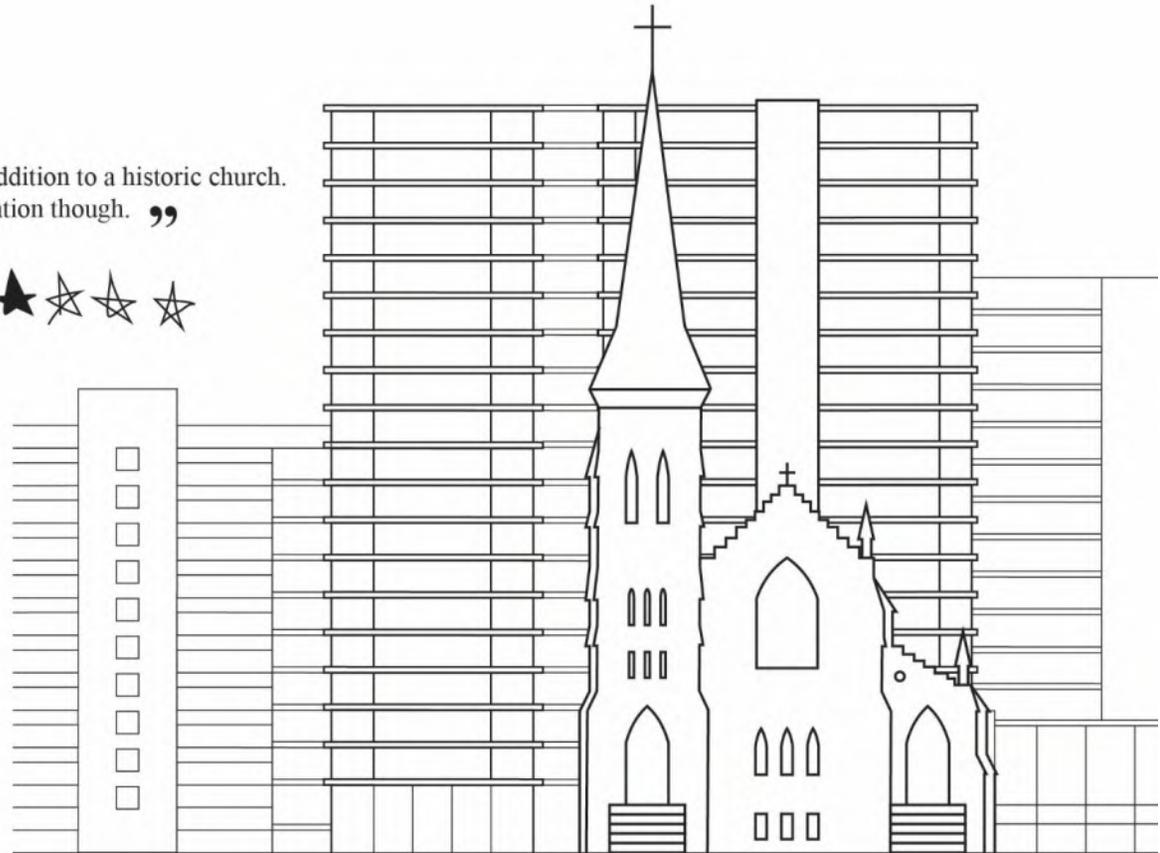
Entrance of the Met today. People often found squatting on the doorsill.

We may be tempted to point fingers at the policies, the developer, the community, even the unyielding conservationists, but this is not a matter that can be resolved by assigning blame nor resolved by any immediate measure. If projects like Central 1 can be proposed, approved and constructed without the slightest semblance of acknowledgement or respect to heritage value, then we, as a field, *have lost sight of what is heritage conservation.*

## A precedence

Is this the future of conservation? Heritage postage stamps on the side of high-rise towers? One may argue that the Met is an older project, that things have changed, but the reality is that these projects are very real and they are still happening today.

“ Terrible addition to a historic church.  
Great location though. ”



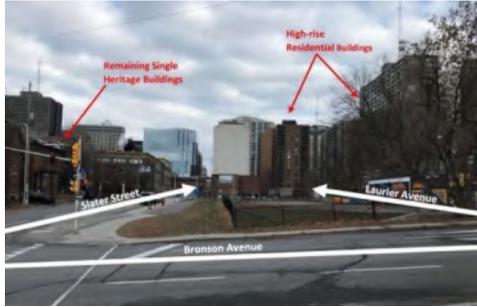


Alexander Fleck House. Constructed 1902. Render. 2020. Novatech and Project1 Studio. Ottawa.



Proposal from Slater Street looking South on Bronson Ave. Render. 2020. Novatech and Project1 Studio. Ottawa.

The Alexander Fleck House is a multi-unit residential building designated under Part IV. In November 2020, Novatech submitted an application for the addition of a nine-storey condo. The Fleck House would continue to serve as a multi-unit residential building, with an L-shaped glass tower wrapped around its North and West façade. In addition, the applicant asked for a reduction of setbacks and parking requirements to accommodate the massing, the rationale being that it “will allow the building to wrap around the heritage



\* Image of character of neighbourhood from Fleck House CHIS submitted by RMA on November 19, 2020. Many high-rise residential buildings are noted.

\* From the Revised Planning Rationale submitted by Novatech, written by James Ireland and Murray Chown on August 11, 2020: “The planned function of the area is intensively urban in that it has the oldest and highest concentration of high-rise buildings in Ottawa”

+ Recommendation of the Built Heritage Sub-Committee to Council regarding application to alter 593 Laurier Avenue West (Alexander Fleck House) on January 20, 2021.

building and provide better animation at street level”.<sup>65</sup> This proposal’s strategy is similar to the St. Charles proposal in Vanier and fails to protect heritage values in similar ways. The nine-storey tower projects above the adjacent low-rise buildings and draws attention to itself as one approaches the Fleck House from Bronson Avenue. Its height and proximity to the home also detracts from the home’s street presence. The abrupt change from warm-toned brick to cool-toned glass and metal finishings, while distinguishable from the existing home, creates a harsh visual break. The commitment to preserve the house itself and its original use is great for conservation. However, the only conservation strategy implemented in the condo addition’s design is cladding the lower levels with brick and setting back the tower behind the podium. Perhaps this relatively modest glass tower is a small victory, given that both the CHIS and Planning Rationale cite adjacent high-rise apartments ranging from three to twenty-four-storeys.\*\* Despite a lack of dialogue between the two structures, the proposal for Fleck House has received support from the Built Heritage Sub-committee (BHSC).<sup>+</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Ireland, James, and Murray Chown. “Revised Planning Rationale in Support of Site Plan Control and Zoning By-Law Amendment Applications.” Planning Rationale. Ottawa, August 2020. 1-30.



Proposal for 100 Argyle Street by RLA Architects (architect). The 2½ storey stone building was constructed around 1955, the façade thought to have been redesigned by James Strutt.

Similarly, this massive, ten-storey addition to the office building at 100 Argyle Street has received approval from the BHSC in January 2020. The property is across from the Museum of Nature and falls under the Centretown HCD. Like the Met, the front portion of the building will be removed, to be reconstructed and relocated East of its original location as part of the design. In this example, like materials and setbacks were used to compliment the existing stone building. However, the relocation of the façade and massive scale of the addition once again fails to acknowledge heritage contexts.



Hypothetical intervention of Christ Church cathedral as a condo.



Hypothetical intervention of First Baptist Church as a condo.

If projects like the Fleck House are still being approved today, what will the future of conservation look like? If nearby, existing high-rises can be used as precedence for exceeding zoning allowances, what is stopping a nine-storey exception from becoming fifteen, twenty or thirty? According to the National Trust for Canada, it is estimated that 9,000 places of worship will close across Canada by 2025. With declining church attendance and growing maintenance fees, could Ottawa's churches, especially those in high density neighbourhoods, become vessels for high-rise condos or office towers?

Jasmine Frolick, a Registered Professional Planner from ERA Architects who focuses on the adaptive reuse of churches in Toronto, thinks that turning churches into condos is not a socially sustainable solution:

*‘[C]ommunity readiness’ is not just about preparing for climate change or economic down turns (although those are very big issues), it’s also about preparing for and meeting social change. If all church buildings are turned into private condos in large cities or are being demolished altogether in smaller ones due to financial impossibilities, the neighbourly connections built by the locals over many years are destroyed, the common good services disappear, and the future of the community becomes fragile.<sup>66</sup>*

If the ‘high-rise faced with a heritage billboard’ typology is not conservation, then we must seriously reconsider our values.

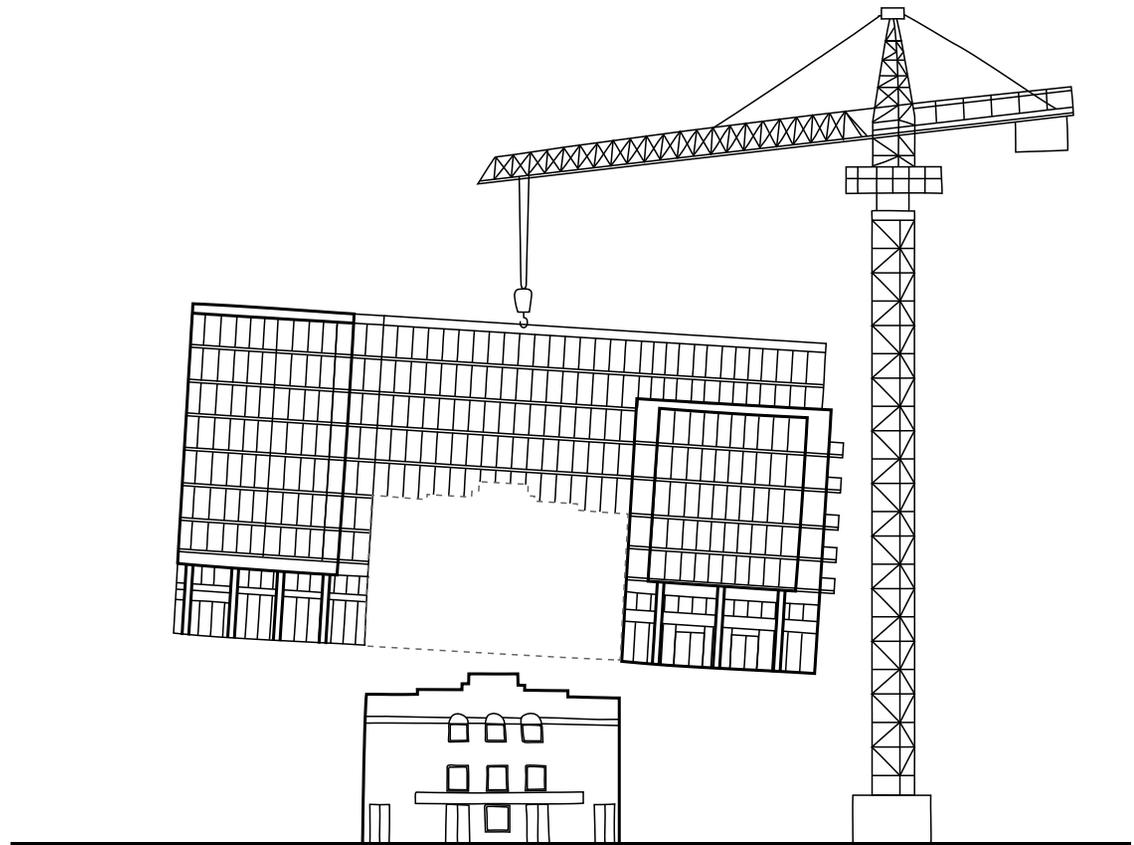
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<sup>66</sup> Ontario Professional Planners Institute. “The Revitalization of Church Buildings: How New Life & Purpose Can Be Brought to These Historical Resources,” November 2018. <https://ontarioplanners.ca/inspiring-knowledge/case-studies/case-studies/the-revitalization-of-church-buildings-how-new-life-purpose-can-be-brought-to-these-historical-re>.

## Part IV (retake): What if...

*Let's rewind to 2007, before this whole mess happened. Let's revisit values.*

*Let's design better.*



## Revisiting values

*Every architect today needs to decide, independently from the assessment of the landmark preservation authorities, what value to attach to an existing building for the purposes at hand—because the criteria of the landmark authorities considers the value of a building as historical evidence, but not all the possibilities it offers when considered from the perspective of an open-minded observer.<sup>67</sup>*

What constitutes as good conservation practice? How do we balance sociocultural values, economic values, heritage guidelines and planning policy? Decision-making based on values-consensus is heavily emphasized in the conservation field, yet the current OHA requires “experts” to determine whether a site has value, “even if the community shows strong support”.<sup>68</sup> Experts Denhez, Lazear and Smith brought up the conflict between the pursuit of conservation heritage and real estate value when dealing with private property.\* The principle of ‘highest and best use’ often means going beyond what the

\* See interview answers to Question 1 from Appendix B.

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<sup>67</sup> Frank Peter Jäger, *Old and New: Design Manual for Revitalizing Existing Buildings*, Basel, Switzerland: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2010.

<sup>68</sup> Smith, Interview by author.

land is zoned for. On this topic, Lazear notes that in an urban core where redevelopment potential is high, retention of a façade is almost always the only option.<sup>69</sup> Even if a heritage development must resort to facadism, like the Met, the façade could have been made functional and active, rather than a passive historic skin. Expert or not, the *intent* of conservation has always been clear: to protect heritage values. Regardless of what experts claim or how regulations change, the adaptive reuse of the past twenty years shows a lack of understanding and engagement with heritage.

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<sup>69</sup> Lazear, Interview by author.

## Why conserve?

Heritage is not only relevant to conservationists; it is relevant to all fields. This is the mindset that will yield the most successful projects. Support for sociocultural values is readily available in heritage discourse, but these intangible values are difficult to describe and subjective by nature. The same issues of ambiguity and lack of precedence arise in heritage conservation as it relates to environmental and economic sustainability.

Intangible, sociocultural value is also pitted against tangible, economic value. When these conflicting values are not addressed, it is easy to choose short-term economic gain over long-term investment in heritage protection. The multi-faceted quality of heritage demands that we look for values beyond what designation and policy currently offers. Community, history, economics and sustainability are parts of a whole in defining the complex role of heritage preservation in society.

### **Sociocultural value**

The value of heritage is not intrinsic; it is a social construct that symbolizes the collective values of a community. Heritage is a source of identity and creates a sense of belonging.

It contributes to the character of a city and adds texture to the built fabric. From Article 1 of the Venice Charter:

*The concept of a historic monument embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting...This applies not only to great works of art but also to more **modest works of the past** which have **acquired cultural significance** with the passing of time.<sup>70</sup> (emphasis added)*

The charter extends the definition of the monument to encompass setting (or context), both physically and as it contributes to the history and development of its community. Jane Jacobs also speaks to the character developed in the mundane, everyday corner shops that cultivate socialization and familiarity in a city, differentiating a community from “a mere dormitory”.<sup>71</sup> As buildings age and social contexts change, layers of history and meaning are formed that represents a rich tapestry of intergenerational human culture

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<sup>70</sup> ICOMOS, *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter 1964)*, 1964, <https://www.icomos.org/en/resources/charters-and-texts>.

<sup>71</sup> Jane Jacobs, *Vital Little Plans: The Short Works of Jane Jacobs*, Edited by Samuel Zipp and Nathan Storrington, Canada: Random House Canada, 2016.

\* Steward Brand suggests the valuation of old buildings by their “intergenerational equity” in *How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They’re Built*”.

and value.\* Returning to the concept of cultural inheritance and heritage stewardship by Lowenthal, there must be a sense of responsibility to protect the tangible and intangible values of heritage as a source of our cultural identity. The contributions of heritage to the spirit of a community are irreplaceable and must be preserved. From UNESCO: “As a source of identity, heritage is a valuable factor for empowering local communities and enabling vulnerable groups to participate fully in social and cultural life.”<sup>72</sup>

### **Economic value**

At the local level, land value becomes key in the decision-making process. Not only are we dealing with a heritage property; we are dealing with *private* property. In a study on the effects of designation and property values by Robert Shipley, he notes that North Americans are highly protective of their property and generally dislike property regulations.<sup>73</sup> Unfortunately, this attitude creates an antagonistic relationship between owners and conservation before any work has begun. Heritage must also compete with

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<sup>72</sup> UNESCO, “Preserving Our Heritage.”

<sup>73</sup> Robert Shipley, “Heritage Designation and Property Values: Is There an Effect?” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 6, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 83–100, <https://doi.org/10.1080/135272500363760>.

\* For more details, refer to Stuart Lazear's interview responses in Appendix B.

the value of redevelopment, especially at the urban level. In an interview, Lazear outlines four methods of evaluating real estate in Ottawa:

- a. Assessed value determined by MPAC based on real estate transactions, similar properties nearby and other factors.
- b. Current market value – what a buyer is willing to pay for a property.
- c. Redevelopment value based on what someone believes they can replace a building with based on zoning.
- d. Speculative redevelopment value based on what someone believes they can replace a building with if they request a variance or rezoning.\*

Conflict occurs where C and D clashes with the retention of heritage places.<sup>74</sup> In the CHIS for the Met's redevelopment, this exact argument was used to criticize the restrictive nature of heritage guidelines. Denhez remarks that highest and best use is not what buildings are zoned for; developers are not just paying for the explicit land value,

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<sup>74</sup> Lazear, Interview by author.

but the redevelopment value as well.<sup>75</sup> In the developer's perspective, building according to regulation (such as zoning by-law and heritage regulation) would bankrupt them.<sup>76</sup> If heritage regulation had more bearing on the conservation of heritage assets in development, perhaps developers would not be able to ignore or work around guidelines. With the introduction of Bill 108 to the OHA, it is now *easier* for owners to appeal council decisions\*, which benefits property owners, but does little to promote heritage stewardship. Shipley also notes that it is rare for a building to be designated without the owner's consent.<sup>77</sup> How do we change the narrative of conservation being an obstacle to urban growth?

\* Also noted by Stuart Lazear during interview.

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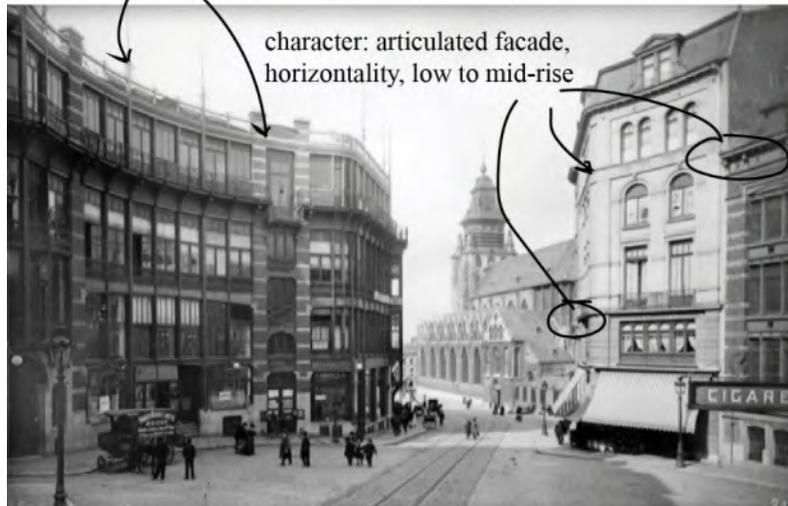
<sup>75</sup> Denhez, Interview by author.

<sup>76</sup> Denhez, Interview by author.

<sup>77</sup> Shipley, "Heritage Designation and Property Values: Is There an Effect?," 84.

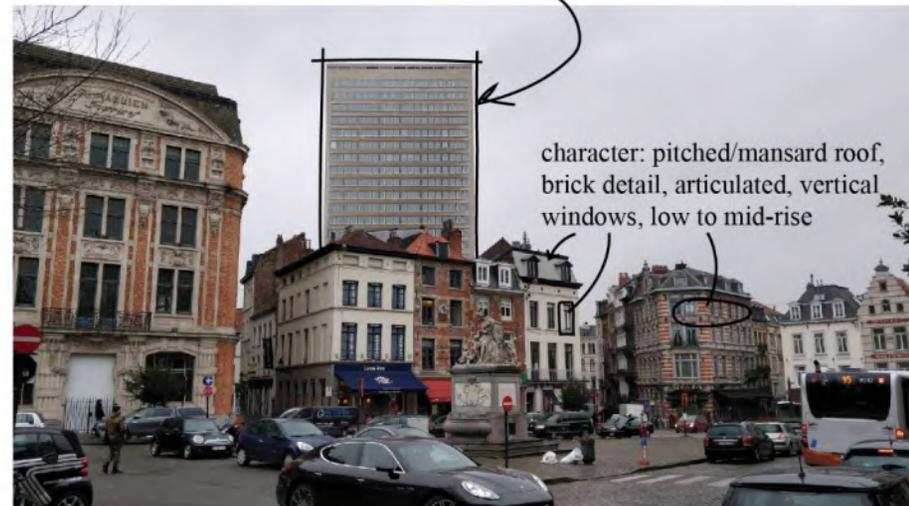
character: exterior cast iron detail, articulated facade, combining brick, steel and glass

**BEFORE**



character: articulated facade, horizontality, low to mid-rise

**AFTER**



character: rectangle

character: pitched/mansard roof, brick detail, articulated, vertical windows, low to mid-rise

Maison du Peuple, Victor Horta. Constructed 1899, demolished 1965.

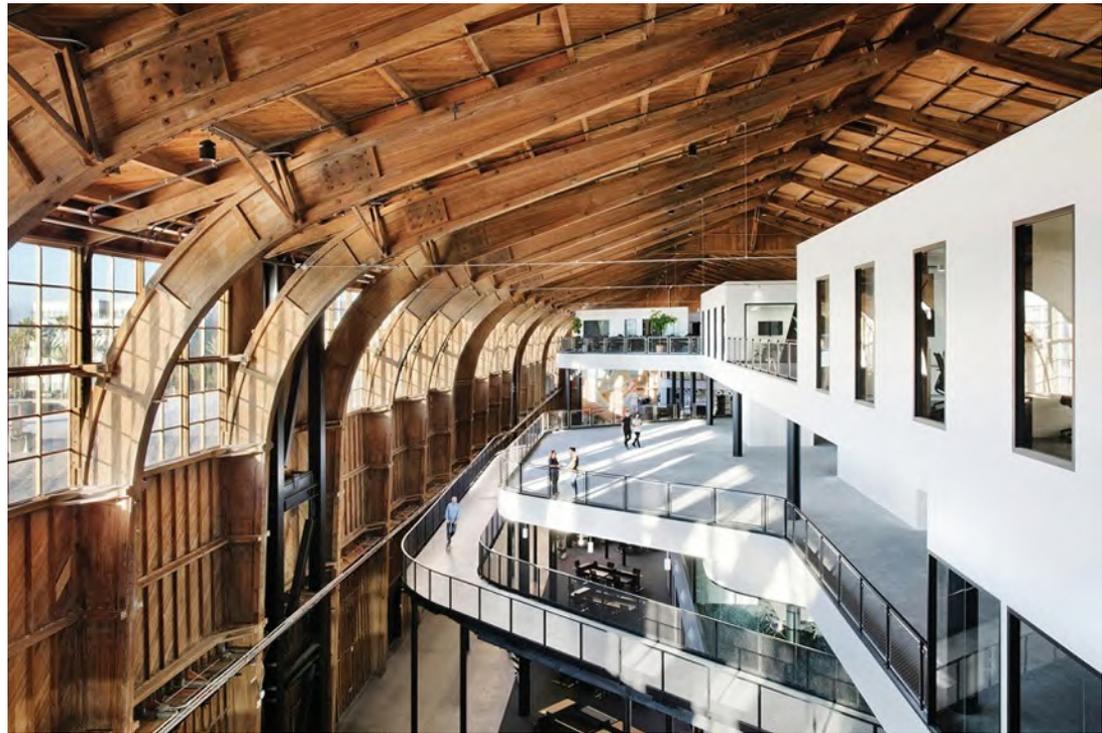
Blaton tower, 1968. Skyscraper built on the site of Maison du Peuple. Example of “Brusselization”, characterizing the uncontrolled development of Brussels in the 1960s and 1970s.

The pursuit of financial gain does not have to be at the expense of lost cultural identity. Smith explains that in highest and best use, tearing down a building and replacing it with the largest possible structure may be very profitable in the short-term, but it does not consider the long-term social impacts of such a decision.<sup>78</sup> For example, between

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<sup>78</sup> Smith, Interview by author.

Google's newly built office in Palo Alto versus the rehabilitated airplane hanger in L.A., employees preferred the retrofit office over the contemporary office.<sup>79</sup> Heritage buildings not only have historic and aesthetic appeal; they are often situated in heritage neighbourhoods, offering a quality of life that is difficult to capture in new development.



Former airplane hangar converted to Google office building in Los Angeles. ZGF Architects. 2018.

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<sup>79</sup> Smith, Interview by author.

Decisions about heritage can have positive sociocultural impact, but also measurable, economic implications. Unfortunately, the sociocultural value of heritage is often positioned against economic gain. Smith explains that there is a misunderstanding between developers and heritage advocates, where developers assume heritage advocates do not care about a project's economic viability, while conservationists assume developers are only interested in financial gain.<sup>80</sup> This negative dialogue is not conducive to good conservation and is an oversimplification of the relationship between conservation and development. In many ways, heritage is intertwined with economic value, where heritage can stimulate economic growth and appropriate financial planning can create profitable, sustainable use of heritage. The following section will consider cultural economist David Throsby's theory on economics and cultural heritage as model for evaluating heritage through the lens of economics.\*

\* Based on *Paying for the past: Economics, cultural heritage, and public policy*, by David Throsby.

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<sup>80</sup> Smith, Interview by author.

At first glance, it is difficult to compare the economic and cultural value of heritage because they use different systems of evaluation. Cultural values (such as tradition and identity) are *qualitative* assets, while economic value (such as profit and land value) are *quantitative* assets. Conflict occurs when quantitative measures (such as monetary or market value) are used to evaluate qualitative, or *intangible*, values.

How can a price be assigned to the value of culture? Simply trying to quantify cultural heritage is problematic because societal benefits cannot be ‘translated’ into a market price.<sup>81</sup> Throsby cites spiritual and emotional links to the value of cultural heritage, neither of which directly relate to economics. Benefits to the experience of a city and its community cannot be articulated in monetary terms. According to economists Susana Mourato and Massimiliano Mazzanti, cultural resources are external to the market or “market failures”.<sup>82</sup> If the traditional marketplace does not account for cultural heritage

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<sup>81</sup> Susana Mourato and Massimiliano Mazzanti, “Economic Valuation of Cultural Heritage: Evidence and Prospects” in “Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage: Research Report,” ed. By Marta de la Torre, 2002, 3-118.

<sup>82</sup> Mourato and Mazzanti, “Economic Valuation of Cultural Heritage: Evidence and Prospects,” 51.

value, this can result in the underfunding and neglect of heritage assets, potentially leading to deterioration or demolition of heritage places.

To bridge the gap between cultural and economic value, there needs to be a compatible language used to define both intangible and tangible values. *Cultural capital* is a concept used to understand heritage value in the context of economics. *Capital* is an economic term pertaining to an asset yielding long-term benefits.<sup>83</sup> In the case of a heritage site, *cultural capital* combines cultural significance (such as previously mentioned values of history, community or tradition) with potential economic value. This namely comes from tourism and adaptive reuse. Throsby explains that framing heritage in terms of capital connects the goals of heritage preservation to those of economic policy. Additionally, understanding cultural capital as a long-term benefit requiring long-term, incremental investment should not be sacrificed for the sake of short-term economic gain\*.

\* "The certainty of not having enough money to run things automatically rules out wide ranges of potential recreation in cities, and many forms of potential beauty – not so much because of what these cost to develop but because they take more than routine care."

– Jane Jacobs, *Vital Little Plans*

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<sup>83</sup> David C. Throsby, "2006 – Paying for the Past: Economics, Cultural Heritage, and Public Policy," 530.

Since the intangible values of heritage cannot be directly related to economic value, specific methods of evaluation can be employed to better represent heritage in the market.

<b>Sociocultural Value</b>	<b>Economic Values</b>
Historical	Use (market) value
Cultural/symbolic	Nonuse (nonmarket) value
Social	Existence
Spiritual/religious	Option
Aesthetic	Bequest

Table adapted from “Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage: Research Report” by the GCI.

The GCI categorizes values into two components: sociocultural value and economic value. Economic value is subcategorized into use (market) value and nonuse (nonmarket) value, referring to their ability to be traded in the marketplace. Many of the sociocultural benefits of heritage fall under nonuse values. For example, we can appreciate a piece of art or landscape without paying for it, which can result in a devaluing of cultural heritage in the market. Heritage planning expert Robert Shipley warns that if heritage is defined

purely in economic terms, and someone can present a more profitable project, heritage will always lose.<sup>84</sup> Alternative methods of economic measurement must be used to determine the quantifiable benefit of cultural value. For instance, determining a community's willingness-to-pay (WTP) to preserve a cultural asset can predict consumer revenue (such as money coming from heritage tourism) and influence public budgets for heritage preservation. This provides a broader representation of heritage value in the market, both intangible and tangible. The ability to obtain measurable information on intangible assets can inform appropriate conservation intervention based on community desire *and* economic means.

Investing in heritage preservation creates cascading benefits for sustainable social and economic growth. At the 2001 Heritage Canada Foundation Conference, Dr. Rob Pickard urged for the integration of development in conservation and rehabilitation goals, as

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<sup>84</sup> Vaillancourt, Veronica, ed, "Preservation Pays: The Economics of Heritage Conservation," 11–37, Toronto, ON: The Heritage Canada Foundation, 2001.

\* Based on Dr. Robert Pickard's presentation from the 2001 Heritage Canada Foundation Conference, *Preservation Pays*.

heritage can be a vehicle for diverse social and economic use.<sup>85</sup> Pickard uses Germany's funding program, *Städtebaulicher Denkmalschutz*, as a case study for integration of preservation in the context of town planning.\* With an initial investment equivalent to two billion Canadian dollars, some 4,750 buildings were conserved, 7,000 buildings were renovated and 835 roads and public spaces were repaired in the span of six years. The initial investment triggered improved town planning and additional public and private investments, which was managed by private architectural planning firms to achieve faster results. Consequently, cost-to-value ratios of 1:11 and 1:12 were found through maintenance and renovation, while ratios of 1:4 and 1:5 were found in external repairs. The high levels of return acted as incentive for further investment in heritage, and the program resulted in seven times more cases of modernizing and repairing existing buildings over new development. Not only did heritage repairs and rehabilitation yield dramatic returns, but it also created thousands of jobs that renewed in the following years. Investment also strengthened heritage value and cultural identity of historic cities and

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<sup>85</sup> Vaillancourt, Veronica, ed, "Preservation Pays: The Economics of Heritage Conservation," 14.

towns, building value increased and urban life and tourism increased. This example illustrates the legitimacy of investment in cultural heritage to support economic growth in a sustainable manner.

### **Making conservation sustainable**

\* From Charbonneau's interview, he sees the role of heritage and sustainability as both a matter of energy use *and* sustainable urban development.

The practice of heritage conservation is inherently sustainable, not just in the material sense, but also for long-term sustainable development.\* Understanding how sociocultural and economic needs can be met through conservation can inspire more practical and sustainable heritage development. Returning to Jacobs' writings, building stock is not simply a matter of supply and demand; they can carry meaning and build relationships with the community and contribute to the sustainable growth of a neighbourhood.<sup>86</sup>

Alterations to the existing built fabric have broader implications to the health and identity of existing communities that cannot be overlooked. Adaptive reuse is an opportunity to make use of existing built forms to preserve existing values and create new value by recontextualizing a heritage place in a contemporary setting. Successful adaptive reuse

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<sup>86</sup> Jane Jacobs, *Vital Little Plans*, 70.

will consider a new use specific to the building's assets and context, as well as support the building's long-term financial sustainability.

\* Not all forms of destruction are bad.

Stakeholders must perform their due diligence to weigh the cost and benefit of conservation methods before proposing destructive measures to heritage sites. It is however prudent to have a maintenance plan early on in a project to avoid costly repairs, or worse yet, demolition, which would be financially and environmentally detrimental.

In contrast, demolition destroys cultural value and disregards the potential value of existing buildings as a resource.\* Gutting or demolishing a building to construct a new building costs energy and creates waste. The embodied energy of the existing building is also lost. Before construction has even begun on the new building, there is already a “preexisting energy debt”.<sup>87</sup> Working with an existing building may require more innovation, but it comes with the added benefit of reducing waste and preserving the character of the neighbourhood. Charbonneau states that the combined embodied energy spent and lost in demolition and new construction is comparable to the cost of conserving

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<sup>87</sup> Kathryn Rogers Merlino, *Building Reuse: Sustainability, Preservation, and the Value of Design*. Sustainable Design Solutions From the Pacific Northwest, Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 2018.

an existing building. The belief that building new is simpler and more cost-effective oversimplifies the cost and benefit of preservation.



33% of this church  
is significant

“minor alteration”

The most important  
33% has been retained

a subtle, compatible,  
30-storey addition

James Street Baptist Church. 1878. Joseph Connolly. Hamilton. 60% of the church was demolished in 2014 for a new condo.

Render of proposal, Connolly Condos. 2019. Hue Developments (developer) and mcCallumSather (architect). Hamilton.

A more sustainable approach over demolition would be *deconstruction*. Just as adaptive reuse can use heritage resources as opportunities for growth, the constructed materials of heritage buildings are also resources for new construction. *Waste* is determined to be the absence of value or something to be discarded. However, deconstruction valorizes waste, renewing the value of planks of wood or blocks of stone that would otherwise be in a

\* From NSERC webinar on *Heritage and Waste: Values, Circular Economy and Deconstruction*.

landfill. In fact, the reuse of materials from deconstruction parallels the use of spoils in the Antiquities.\* Aside from its representation of power, the salvage and reuse of spoils came from a perspective of utility and availability. Modern conservation does not value material salvage or alteration as much as it does the preservation of heritage buildings in its entirety. Not recognizing this as a form of conservation is a lost opportunity, as deconstruction is a sustainable alternative to demolition. It also gives private owners and developers some flexibility to what and how they can contribute to conservation, while still allowing for new development.



The Met during demolition. Only the first foot of the church was preserved.



The Met/Central 1 looking North on Bank Street. The Met façade is barely recognizable.

Given all the published journals, research and discussions on the benefits of conservation, why do adaptive reuse projects still look the way they do today? Perhaps it is a combination of confusing legislation and restrictions that have diluted the value of conservation in the urban context. Some argue it is an issue of education: "... most architecture schools do not typically teach renovation, adaptive reuse, or preservation".<sup>88</sup> Conservation programs and courses are available in schools, but it is not required learning. Considering between 70-80% of the built environment in 2030 already exists<sup>89</sup>, it seems odd that conservation (or even just adaptive reuse) is not a requirement within the architectural curriculum. Conservation expert and architect, Lyette Fortin, states that in her experience, a client or developer who is educated in the benefits of conservation are usually willing to work with conservationists to protect heritage values.<sup>90</sup> The same could be said of public education. If the public better understands heritage designation, they can be more involved in their community's development: "what people don't know

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<sup>88</sup> Kathryn Rogers Merlino, *Building Reuse*, 10-11.

<sup>89</sup> Johannes Cramer and Stefan Breitling, *Architecture in Existing Fabric: Planning, Design, Building*, 26.

<sup>90</sup> Lyette Fortin, Interview by Author, December 1, 2020.

about they can't save".<sup>91</sup> Heritage policy can also afford to be more educational and less prescriptive. Rather than *telling* people what to do, it should *show* people what to do. The *interdisciplinary* approach to conservation is best described as follows:

*It is essential to breach the walls that divide academe from active life. Effective stewardship demands engagement in the hurly-burly of everyday life, general familiarity with all the processes that make and shape us. Only so armed can we wisely accept or reject, control, and dispose of what we inherit.*<sup>92</sup>

Good conservation requires an ecological approach, recognizing the values of each stakeholder to come to a resolution. Interviews conducted with experts have shown how varied the approaches and opinions are to heritage development. Even within the same field, interviewees were found to have a range of opinions about the effectiveness of regulation and the role of conservation in a broader, urban context. The following chart

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<sup>91</sup> Veronica Vaillancourt, ed. "Preservation Pays," 35.

<sup>92</sup> Avrami, de la Torre, and Mason, eds, "Values and Heritage Conservation," 2000, 23.

summarizes each expert's views on the conservation practice based on their answers to interview questions. Community and heritage values formed the basis of many experts' opinions on the subject with some deviation. For example, Denhez, a heritage lawyer, and Lazear, former coordinator of heritage planning, felt that land valuation impacted decision-making, whereas Smith, consultant and involved with NSERC and CIMS, believes economics is entirely separate from heritage (where values come first and economic considerations follow). Both answers are valid; as previously discussed, land value has great impact on how owners choose to develop their property. At the same time, in a heritage context, economics should not overshadow sociocultural values, where heritage is a placemaking asset that forms part of our identity. Overall, experts were proponents of values consensus-building and of educating rather than regulating owners on what they should or should not do. If there is an intent to conserve a heritage place, then heritage values must be at the forefront of decision-making, not a requirement to be checked off a list of demands.

This, of course, is easier said than done.

	<b>Ashley Kotarba</b> - City of Ottawa Heritage Planner	<b>Claude Charbonneau</b> - former Parks Canada Senior Advisor	<b>Julian Smith</b> - conservation architect, educator, Parks Canada, NCC	<b>Laurie Smith</b> - coordinator at NSERC, manager at CIMS, heritage consultant	<b>Lyette Fortin</b> - educator, conservation architect, heritage consultant	<b>Marc Denhez</b> - heritage lawyer, adjudicator, author, educator	<b>Stuart Lazear</b> - former coordinator of heritage planning, Heritage Ottawa
<b>OHA</b>	more concerned about values, less about proposed addition		from bottom-up to top-down; focused on physical	most issues resolved without going to LPAT			rarely resorts to hearings (pre-consultation, mediation)
<b>Standards &amp; Guidelines</b>	high-level, don't have a lot of "teeth"	reference document, not legally binding; recent increased understanding of (intangible) value	not prescriptive, allow non-professionals to understand good conservation	helps standardize evaluation	helped conservation gain momentum in architecture field	because there is room for interpretation, consultants could be paid to defend any project	high-level; cannot encompass all values of all stakeholders; considered in decision-making, followed when convenient
<b>regulation</b>	multiple interpretations, cannot all agree on one (subjective)		"stick approach" creates animosity; should educate, not reprimand	makes conservation more predictable	education, not regulation	show, not tell	policy is inconsistent because the elected body changes; legislation is prescriptive, wording is what lawyer argue
<b>conservation</b>	creative solutions, sensitive to context	community, long-term sustainability, environment	ecological approach, cultural landscapes	values consensus	educate; not prescriptive, but finding a balance of values	show, not tell; architectural conservation is different than other forms because it requires work, where conserving nature is to do nothing	
<b>economics</b>		long-term benefits, tourism; conservation not necessarily more expensive than demolition	highest and best use VS long-term benefits	separate from heritage	minimal intervention more economical; marketing heritage	heritage is a marginalized market, difficult to incentivize, removed from mainstream economic activity	local level dealing with real estate and land value; (speculative) redevelopment value
<b>The Met/ Central 1</b>	windows should have remained functional, church entrance reused	facadism is not conservation; should find use without large impact on cde	church morphology, community; use and value	depends on how community feels, values assessment	depends on role of church in community, values; add layers of meaning	highest and best use not what buildings are zoned for; building according to law would end in bankruptcy	in an urban core with high development potential, facadism almost always the only option - today Central could have been even taller; suggest reinstating windows and metal details

Expert opinions on conservation practice based on interviews conducted by author.

## A counterproposal

Considering all previous discussion on heritage values and sustainable development, it is fair to say that Central 1 does not represent conservation principles. The following counterproposal attempts to capture the spirit and character of the historic church and commercial street, while fulfilling the need for affordable housing in the neighbourhood.

A Nara Grid was used to identify the key values of the church and the context of Bank Street in Centretown.\* The Nara Grid is an evaluation scheme developed from the Nara Document of Authenticity in 1994. The document addresses expanding cultural and heritage diversity and considers authenticity in conservation practice. It reiterates that values are at the centre of conservation and its determination varies between different cultures. Prioritization of values based on the Nara Grid guided the design of the commercial and residential components of this alternate development.

\* Scientific value is not relevant to the Met and was omitted from the Nara Grid.

## NARA GRID

<b>Dimensions of the heritage of the Met</b>			
<b>Aspects of the sources related to documentation</b>	<b>Artistic</b>	<b>Historic</b>	<b>Social</b>
<b>Form and design</b>	Neoclassical/Art Deco reference, 'urban' interpretation of church, typology of brick wall with 'punched-out' windows, tiered seating likens to theatre layout	Built during Depression to double as a theatre (marquee and tiered seats) in case the church failed, design of façade and minimal setback aligns with historic Bank Street character	Community gathering
<b>Materials and substance</b>	Red brick, pressed metal details	Common materials used in Centretown construction	
<b>Use and function</b>	Built as a theatre but used as a church	Built during Depression to double as a theatre in case the church failed	Community gathering
<b>Tradition, techniques, and workmanship</b>	Craftsmanship of lunettes, marquee over main entrance	Pressed metal details common in Centretown construction	
<b>Location and setting</b>	Located on Bank Street commercial corridor, one of few churches on Bank in Centretown	Role of Bank Street as commercial centre, social role of church for community	Gathering space and social service for community
<b>Spirit and feeling</b>	Unique construction/scenario of a church built in the form of a theatre, large (and growing) congregation	Only façade remains, but is a symbol of the original church that started the Met	Important space for congregation that used to attend services at this location

Nara Grid for the Met with key values highlighted in red.

Highlighted in red from the Nara Grid are recurring values deemed most important to the heritage value of the Met. Common ‘themes’ found are its unique composition as a church in an urban environment and its theatrical qualities, being built to double as a theatre. The church also played an important social role for the community as a gathering space. Key physical attributes include the red brick façade and metal details characteristic of historical Bank Street construction. Finally, the marquee is especially important as a unique physical feature of the Met and as a historical reference to the church’s construction as a theatre.

\* Although it would be ideal to preserve some of the interiors, it was determined based on available research and photography, that there was no significant value to the interiors. Moreover, this counterproposal serves as an interesting counterpoint to Central 1, with a similar scale of demolition and reuse, but an entirely different design strategy.

Most of the church’s value lies in the main building, so the 1968 addition was still chosen to be removed. Since limited information and photography could be found of the original interiors, the design assumes that the interiors will be demolished, but the footprint will remain.\* Metal details, such as the horizontal trims and lunettes, should be repaired. Because of the marquee’s significance to the church’s identity, it should be repaired and continue to be used as signage for the new commercial space within.

The proposed development is defined by two stages, beginning with two low-rise commercial buildings on either side of the Met. The concept is to develop from the ground up, taking careful consideration of the Bank Street character and imagining how the entire block would grow over time. The typical Bank Street typology of storefront windows and signage is used, following the datum line created by the marquee on the Met. Locations and frequency of openings are influenced by the pattern of solid walls with punched out windows seen on other structures on Bank Street. Groups of two to three windows with Juliet balconies breaks up the façade to provide visual interest.



Bank Street inspiration for the counterproposal, taking cues from the materials, textures and rhythms.

The next stage is housing. The goal was to design a contemporary expression of Centretown residential architecture, using contemporary materials to express similar rhythms and typologies. Architectural cues were taken from existing mid to high-rise residential buildings to create continuity in the streetscape. The orthogonal division of the façade, the spacing of openings and the projection of balconies were of particular interest.



Examples of multi-unit residential buildings near the Met. From left to right: The Opus, Ashcroft Homes, 2007; The Edwardian Apartments, 1960s; 366 Frank Street, 1960s.

In the design of the housing addition, three towers are set back from Bank Street, matching the lot widths of the Met and the new commercial buildings. Although this is a fully glazed tower, the mullions will follow the datum lines of the windows below. The spaces between the ground level units will be setback, creating a reveal between the church, the new commercial low-rise and the new condo tower above. A simple trim detail wrapping around the parapet recalls the metal and wood trims common in commercial buildings on Bank Street. Similarly, the adjacent development (the lot on the South side of McLeod Street, on the right of the Met in the following diagram) will use horizontal delineations and vertical columns to create visual interest. The lower levels visible to pedestrians consist of continuous windows with balconies, while the upper, setback levels are glazed curtain walls, broken up by vertical structural elements. Richer details in the lower levels and less in the upper levels maintains a visually stimulating pedestrian experience, while the condo tower exists quietly behind it.

**Existing condition**



**Phase 1: Low-rise commercial**



**Phase 2: Set back housing components**



Phased development of The Met and its neighbouring lots on Bank Street.



Properties adjacent to Central 1 on South side of Gladstone Avenue.



Parking lot on North side of Gladstone Avenue across from Central 1.

When considering the Gladstone (North) elevation, the adjacent properties are quite sparse. More mid-rise buildings can be found along Gladstone, but much of the street is lined with surface parking lots. In fact, the subject property faces the backs of several apartment buildings and a private parking lot. A similar rhythm of windows and articulation are continued from the Bank Street façade to reinforce the character of historical Centretown buildings. A simpler approach to the horizontal and vertical divisions of the façade is incorporated to reflect the simpler character of residential and commercial buildings along Gladstone Avenue. By introducing new commercial spaces with an aesthetic character akin to Bank Street, the goal is to animate the dull streetscape along Gladstone Avenue.



Gladstone elevation. Left to right: Existing commercial properties, Central development, Bank Street, gas station.

Paying homage to the social service provided by the Met, the main church building will continue to function as a rentable community space. An interior courtyard is shared between residence and all members of the community. The main entrance to the Met will continue to function as an entrance to the new community space, with the marquee drawing in the community to explore the renovated space from Bank Street.

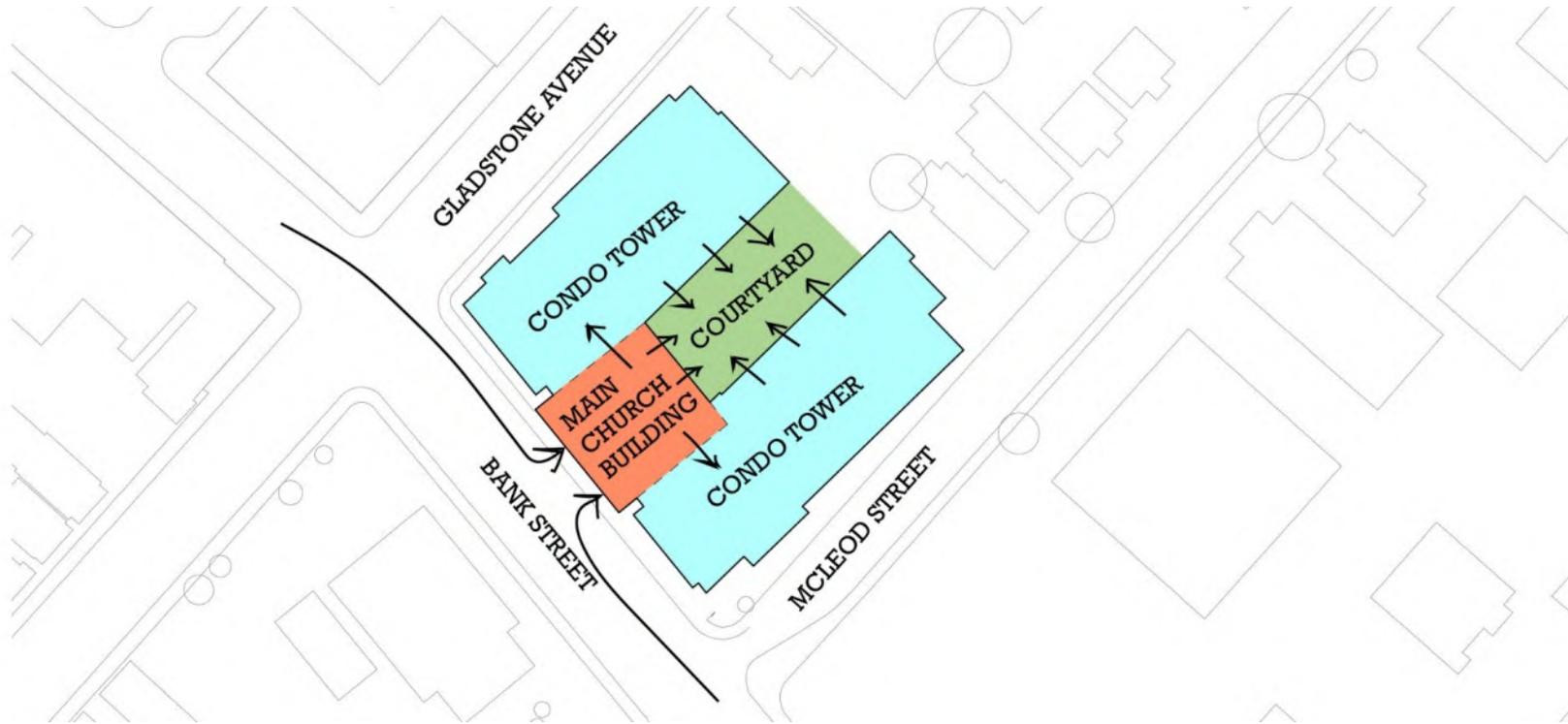


Diagram showing access to the Met, the residential towers and the public courtyard.

The concept is to have a rentable, publicly accessible space to encourage community gathering. There are possibilities for the space to be used as a marketplace, wedding venue, artist showcase or weekly movie nights. There could also be collaboration with Carleton University's arts, film or music programs to display student work and workshops. The church was an important stage in the life of the Met and for creating a community within Centretown. As one of the key historical and social values identified in the Nara Grid, it is crucial that the new program to occupy the church should continue to service the community. Whatever the space is used for, its materiality, its transparency and its openness convey a sense of welcome and the spirit of community.



Street view of The Met and Bank Street development.



Public courtyard accessible through the Met building for the public and condo buildings for residents.

As of 2021, there are two developments under construction on Bank Street near Central 1: Tamarack Flora and James House Condominium (formerly James Street Pub). Both are mid-rise developments of monolithic character and contemporary design. Perhaps projects like Central 1 have set a precedence for taller buildings along Bank Street and Centretown overall. Evidently, the Centretown from 100 years ago or even 50 years ago is quite different from today. As the city grows and populations rise, this counterproposal strives to balance the need for densification *and* the need to protect cultural identity and heritage value. Because a place to live is not just a place for shelter; it is a place to grow, to connect, to enjoy, and eventually, to become part of a community.

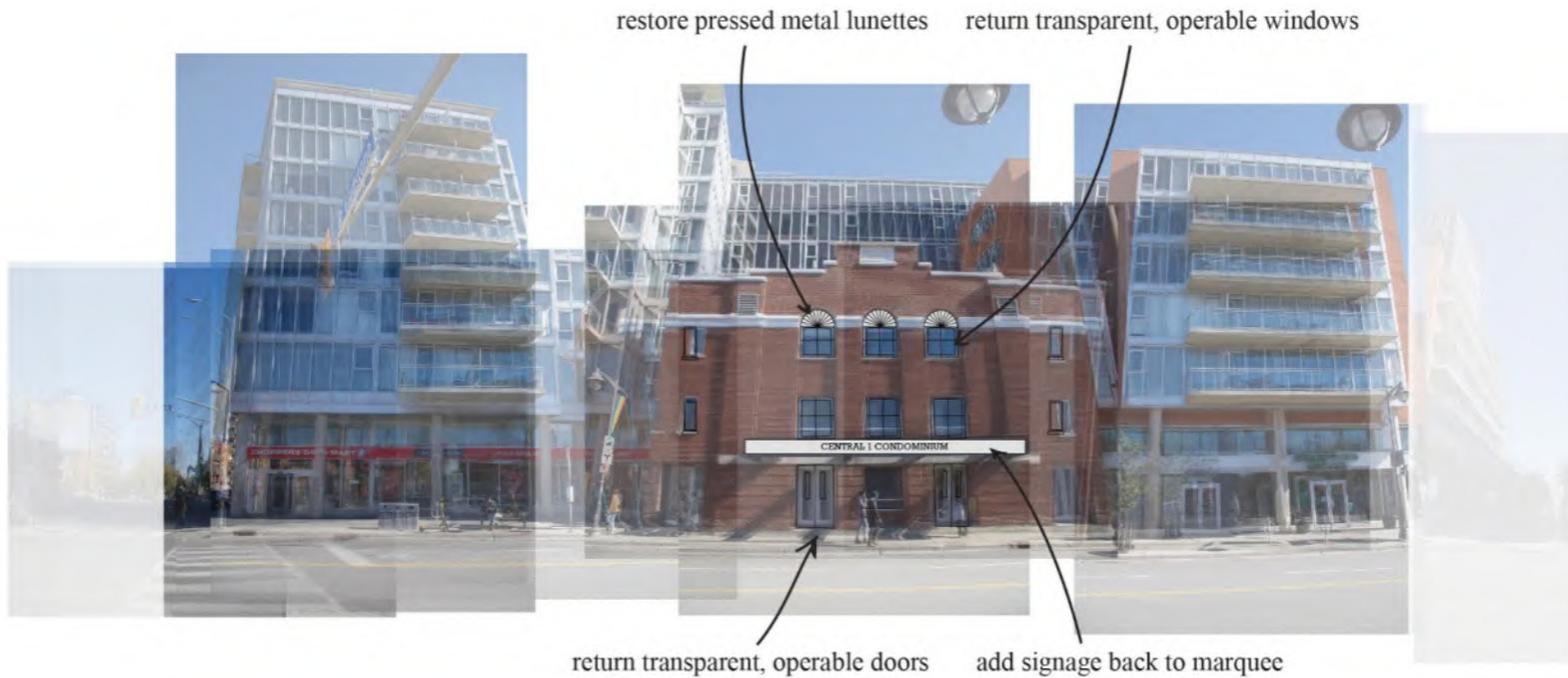


Examples of condos in Centretown built after Central 1. From left to right: Centropolis, Tega Homes and David Blakely Architect, 2012; Tamarack Flora, Tamarack Homes and Rod Lahey Architects, projected occupancy 2021; James House, Urban Capital and RAW Design, projected occupancy 2023.



Map of multi-unit residential buildings constructed before and after Central Phases 1-3 near the subject property.

There was a myriad of ways that Central 1 could have contributed to the Centretown community. Whether it was a misunderstanding of conservation intent or an unwillingness to work with existing conditions, there are still actions that can be taken today to help revitalize the church façade. The metal lunettes above the third-storey windows can be restored, transparent, operable windows and doors can be returned and signage can be added back to the marquee. These simple additions can reactivate the once lively façade and heighten its presence on Bank Street.

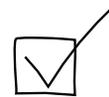


Physical attributes that can be reinstated on the Met's façade to bring back some of its character-defining elements.

## Conclusion

*Unless someone like you  
cares a whole awful lot,  
nothing is going to get better.  
It's not.*

**POLICY:**



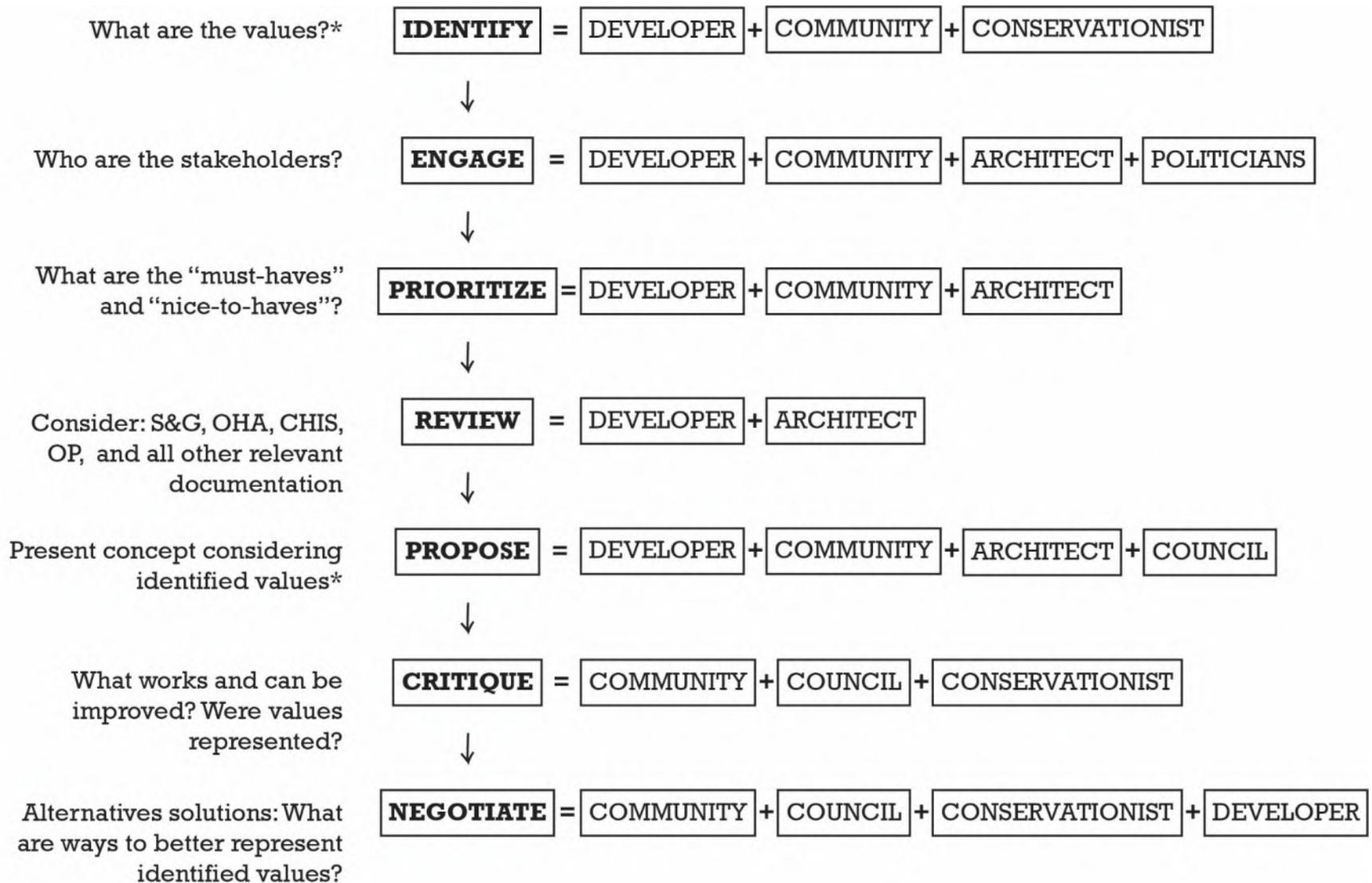
**INTENT:**



**POLICY  $\neq$  INTENT**

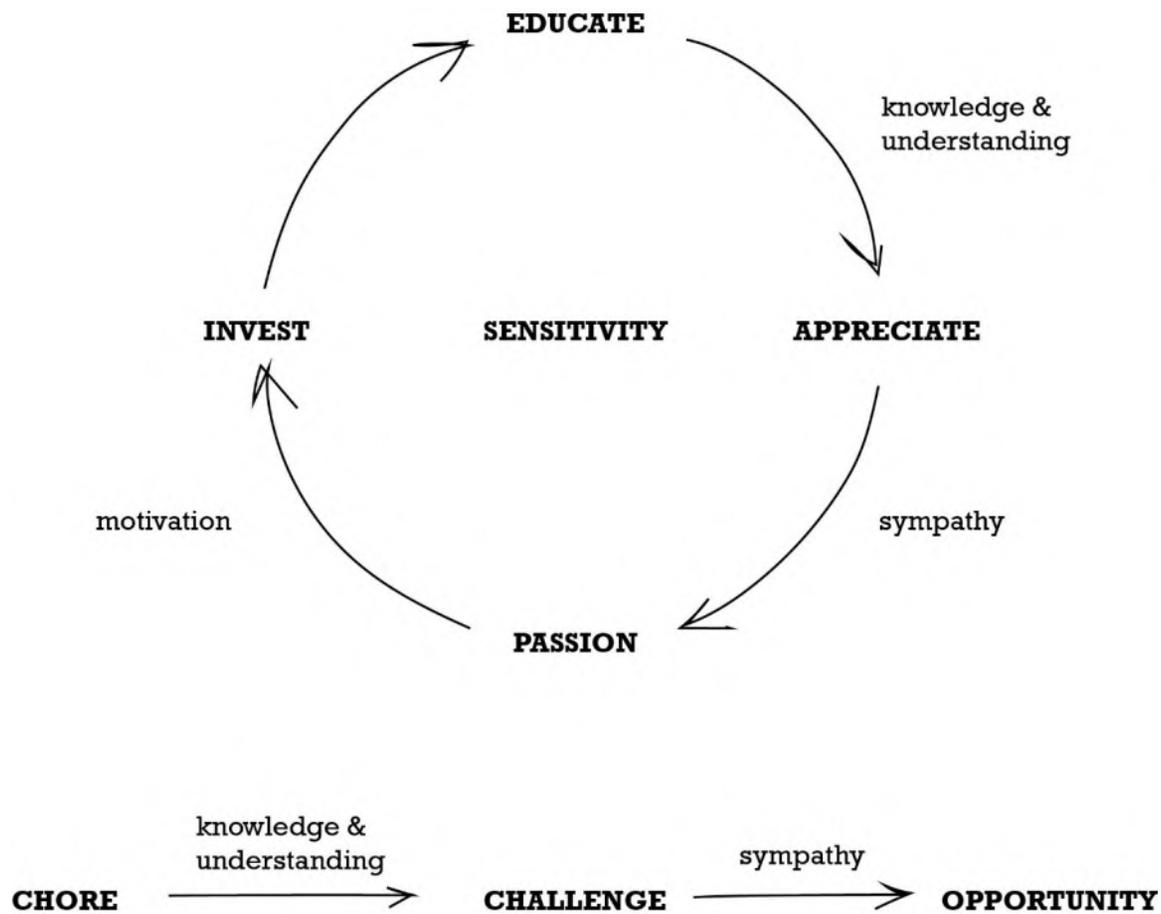
– Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*, 1971.

At present, many conservation projects meet the letter of heritage policy, but not the spirit of heritage conservation. Efforts to protect heritage value are often trumped by development potential or economic goals, as in the case of the Met. But developers are not the sole source of blame; how can we expect conservation principles to be followed when heritage guidelines are fraught with vague explanations and impossible standards? To be contemporary, but not *too* distinct, to be complementary, but not *too* similar. Even within interviewed conservation experts, there were varying opinions on what was wrong (or right) with regulation. As we delve deeper into the meaning of heritage values, the systems that govern the practice and the conflict of ownership and land value, we only begin to understand the intricacies of the conservation practice. There is no one solution to this multifaceted challenge. Instead, we need to reconsider the decision-making process to prioritize values, engage the community and encourage participation and negotiation between *all* stakeholders. The right questions need to be asked – not *how does this meet policy*, but *how does this align with values?*



Conservation decision-making flowchart.

Policy *facilitates* good conservation, whereas values *make* good conservation. Heritage conservation is more than a list of requirements, it demands active engagement with stakeholders and consensus-building to achieve sustainable development. Not every value can be accounted for in each project, especially when many stakeholders are involved and conflict can arise. Therefore, prioritization of values is crucial – what is most important to the value of the place and what is most important to the community that the place belongs to? This evaluation will not be found in policy because values are case-specific and neither should we rely solely on policy to guide our decisions. In responsible heritage stewardship, values analysis should form part of the owner or developer’s due diligence. Policy is a tool to support values, not a measure of success. Outside of heritage development, we must educate professionals and non-professionals on heritage stewardship and the values of heritage conservation. Education is an important step towards more sensitive conservation because we cannot care for something we do not understand. To understand is to appreciate and hopefully encourage investment in heritage conservation. The goal is to change the opinion of conservation as a chore to an opportunity for creative solutions that benefit all parties involved.



If we can agree that the rehabilitation projects of the past twenty years do not represent conservation, then changes must be made. Faced with an existing condition, it is important to remember how a place, a street or a neighbourhood can shape our identity and how we interact with our community. Conservation is a sensitive and complex topic, further complicated when economics is introduced. The fate of heritage cannot be left to the whims of ever-evolving heritage policies and loose interpretations of guidelines. To conserve a heritage place means to *intentionally* and *actively* design with stakeholders and heritage values in mind. Simply put, forget about the politics and the regulations and focus on the conservation.

Let this sampling of conservation in Ottawa act as a cautionary tale, for a future much like our present, of what will happen to our cities if we continue to build *without* intent.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Interviewee Profiles

<b>Ashley Kotarba</b>	<b>Claude Charbonneau</b>	<b>Julian Smith</b>	<b>Laurie Smith</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 years as City of Ottawa Heritage Planner</li> <li>• Previously worked for museums in Ottawa</li> <li>• B.A. in History of Theory and Architecture from Carleton University</li> <li>• Graduate degree from England</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Former Senior Advisor, Historic Places Standards, Parks Canada</li> <li>• Contributed to second edition of <i>Standards and Guidelines</i> as chair of the Standards and Guidelines Standing Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation architect</li> <li>• Involved in international restoration projects, including the Vimy Monument in France</li> <li>• Director of Willowbank School of Restoration Arts</li> <li>• Former Canadian delegate to UNESCO</li> <li>• Former chief restoration architect of the National Historic Sites (NHS) program</li> <li>• Former member of the Advisory Committee to the Minister of Canadian Heritage</li> <li>• Educator and founder of Carleton University’s graduate program on heritage conservation</li> <li>• Recipient of Governor General medal for outstanding achievement in conservation and education in conservation</li> <li>• M.A. from MIT</li> <li>• Certificate in preservation planning from Cornell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinator at NSERC</li> <li>• Manager of Research Operation at CIMS</li> <li>• Heritage consultant from 2000-2017</li> <li>• Member then vice-chair of CRB (Ottawa) from 2014-2019</li> <li>• B.A. from McMaster</li> <li>• M.A. from Ottawa University</li> <li>• LL.B. from Queen’s University</li> </ul>

**Lyette Fortin**

- Heritage consultant
- Conservation architect for NHS managing renovation and rehabilitation projects
- Project Manager with NCC managing Canada's Official Residences
- Director of Architectural Strategic Planning for House of Commons in Canada
- Co-editor of the Code of Practice developed for FHBRO
- Adjunct professor at Carleton University
- Member of assembled team disseminating knowledge on good conservation practice, training and educating professionals about FHBRO policy and the *Standards and Guidelines* across Canada
- B.A. from Carleton
- Diploma of Conservation of Historic Structures from King's Manor, England
- Diploma of Architectural Conservation, ICCROM, Italy

**Marc Denhez**

- Heritage lawyer
- Author of eight books on built and natural heritage
- Adjunct Research Professor at Carleton University
- Chaired government task force on the future of Canada's residential renovation industry
- One of two lawyers involved in Chateau Laurier proposal
- B. Civ. Law from McGill
- B.A. from University of Montreal
- Law Society of Upper Canada

**Stuart Lazear**

- Former Coordinator of Heritage Planning (Ottawa) from 1989-2012
- Experienced at local level and municipal heritage planning
- Heritage planner of Regina for 3.5 years
- Volunteer with Heritage Ottawa since 1970s
- MCIP, RPP

## Appendix B: Questionnaires with conservation experts

Responses by Julian Smith, November 3, 2020.

### **1. How do economics play into heritage preservation? Is economic value important to heritage? Economic value is often put against socio-cultural value; are these points necessarily opposites of each other?**

Economics plays a really important role, but unfortunately the relationship between heritage and economics is complex and not well understood, at least in Ontario. Instead, there has been an oversimplification – basically, developers assume that heritage advocates just don't care whether a property is economically viable or not, while heritage advocates assume that developers are only interested in making as much money as possible with no regard to the impact on the heritage property or the neighbourhood.

There is a basic development principle – 'highest and best use' – which is often simplified to mean tearing down whatever is there and building the largest possible building on the site – even going beyond what is allowed by zoning by going to the city and the OMB and getting exemptions. And sometimes that is enormously profitable. But the long-term economics of development are much more complex. Highest and best use sometimes means attracting buyers or tenants who appreciate a property that fits into the existing character of the neighbourhood, or that combines heritage buildings with compatible contemporary additions. An abandoned industrial building that is converted into modern office space, with exposed brick walls and timber framing, may turn out to be more profitable than a basic modern office building, even though the cost is the same.

As an example, Google is a company that has enough money to build office buildings for its employees that have absolutely every amenity and perk you can imagine. So this is what they did at their main research campus in Palo Alto. It was a brand new building. And then about ten years ago they bought a huge old office complex in New York City, and converted the heritage building into contemporary offices. It turns out the research scientists prefer the old building in New York to the new building in Palo Alto. But this in part has to do with the fact that heritage buildings are often in heritage neighbourhoods, and these neighbourhoods have a quality of life that turns out to be very complex and very difficult to achieve in brand new development. This is why I tend to look at heritage through a cultural landscape lens, basically an ecological approach. What is the role of a particular heritage building in its larger urban context - not just physically, but socially, culturally, economically. How can this value be enhanced?

In Europe, cultural and social value is so important that economic challenge is dealt with by government. Grants are given to homeowners and commercial building owners. (Look into programs in England, France and Italy.) The government supports work to maintain and keep up historical buildings. For example, in Belgium, there are vans that go around to do general maintenance such as re-slating of roofs, repointing masonry – as a public service.

In the US, the government is less interested in managing heritage (compared to Europe), so it is dealt with through tax incentive. Designation in the US is not as onerous on what to do and what not to do. The tax act benefits historical building owners, specifically commercial projects that will generate profit. Owners also do not pay full real estate taxes and are phased in during the

period of time when the building has no occupancy. Therefore, there is economic advantage, socio-cultural advantage and community advantage to preserve heritage properties.

In Canada, there is little to no government support nor financial incentive. There have been attempts to create a similar tax act to the states by the HPI, so far unsuccessful. In Vancouver, there are incentives of “bonus density” given to developers who preserve historic buildings. In Alberta, owners are compensated for designating properties as an incentive.

When the OHA came into force in 1975, it was entirely community based. Decisions made were up to each municipality, which each set up a LACAC (made up of volunteers). In 2005, the OHA changed from a community driven, bottom-up approach to a top down, expert driven exercise. You could designate a building and prevent its demolition, regardless of its value or condition. There was no incentive to protect heritage and socio-cultural value was largely placed above all other values. Additionally, the OHA says nothing about cultural landscapes, sustainability and other topical considerations. The act is focussed on physical heritage.

The inevitable consequence of the “stick approach” pits economics and development against heritage. Heritage experts often see their role as being opposed to economic self-interest of owners and must uphold cultural value of places to protect them from economic interest of property owners. Ecological impacts of heritage are not represented. For example, interest groups have been trying to designate Kensington Market in Toronto, which residents have opposed, as its value was in its development as an unregulated space. Designation of Kensington could change the fabric of the community.

- 1. In the Ontario Heritage Act, 29(16), under "Dismissal without hearing of appeal", what qualifies as claims that are without grounds? What is "reasonable" and "unreasonable" grounds?**

Appeals can keep delaying actions. Heritage can be seen as antagonistic to development. Demolition by neglect has become more common and more of a concern after the 2005 amendment to the OHA; previously you could demolish buildings. This is a symptom of an adversarial relationship. The current OHA requires experts to say something has cultural value, even if the community shows strong support.

- 2. For a privately owned property, are the costs of "prescribed minimum standards of maintenance" the responsibility of the owner? Are there government subsidies that help with the costs of repairs? Are repairs or maintenance overseen by a professional knowledgeable of preservation practices? Is there a professional or government official that checks on properties to ensure proper maintenance is being carried out?**
- 3. Since Standards and Guidelines are not law, how are conservation standards upheld? Who is responsibility is it to ensure that proper procedure is followed in preservation heritage? And what (if any) are the consequences of disregarding these guidelines?**

Standards such as the Venice Charter and Appleton Charter are referenced. In the US, they have policy that is more direct and less philosophical. The S&G are not prescriptive (like the original OHA) and more people dispute the OHA than the S&G. In the US, when you apply for designation on the National Register, there is the question, "what is the significant period of this building?" This is

an unfair question because we have come to understand that a building may have acquired several layers or periods of significance through alterations and additions (prescriptive VS philosophical).

In the second edition of the S&G, there is the inclusion of cultural landscapes, which is of special interest to Indigenous people. The S&G has been adopted by every province except Ontario. The concept of cultural landscapes would potentially allow Indigenous people to claim more rights over their landscapes, a concern allegedly held by Ontario.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required to be completed under the new OHA and usually the S&G is referenced to determine whether the HIA has validity. However, the OMB does not necessarily know what the S&G is, yet they make the decisions regarding heritage designation.

Look into legislation in BC, they have healthy community goals and programs to meet sustainability objectives and economic objectives. Departments work together to meet common goals versus the separation of decision-making by departments in Toronto.

Another example is Pearl District in Portland Oregon, that integrates urban development with heritage and sustainability. Jerry McCue is the UBC campus architect and incorporates adaptive reuse, sustainable architecture on campus and interconnected, “healthy-living” approaches. Another heritage expert from BC to look into is Alistair Kerr and BC’s “healthy living plan”. Overall, the goals of OHA and heritage legislation should aim to educate, not reprimand and prevent work from being done.

**4. Since the creation of the S&G, has there been improvement in heritage preservation (such as adaptive reuse, additions to heritage buildings, etc.)?**

Heritage has begun to move away from a utopian concept to understanding incremental growth and change. The S&G allows designers that are not professionals to understand what constitutes good conservation practices. However, descriptions such as “subordinate” (from S&G) are not necessarily what contemporary additions should be. Stakeholders should be taught how to “read” and evaluate heritage property.

- 5. I am currently studying the condo at 354 Gladstone Avenue in Ottawa, which used to be the Metropolitan Bible Church. Now, all that remains of the church is the front facade that faces Bank Street. There are many instances of churches turned housing I have found in Toronto and Ottawa, and many of them are successfully marketed as luxury condos with heritage value. I have also found many instances of churches turned into a community-driven activity, such as a community centre, or a library. What are your thoughts on converting churches into housing versus a community-driven function?**

Again, designers need to learn to read environment. A church is separate building of urban morphology; it is a 3D object, not 2D commercial façade. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a colouring system was used to identify use and material: red – brick (commercial), blue – stone (institutional), yellow – wood (residential). Therefore, a structure’s materiality had context and meaning. It is problematic to ignore a structure’s original use and value (such as a church as a place of religious gathering and community). An example to consider is Deer Park United Church in Toronto. Designers proposed to take off the roof to make a public courtyard which was met with some contempt. In reference to Nolli’s maps of Rome, he used solidity (poche) to represent blocks and buildings and left public spaces open. In his depiction of churches in plan, these spaces were left open, as church interiors were considered part of the public space or public realm. Religious structures have community significance and the transformation to a public courtyard at Deer Park would make

sense in this context. If a church was built on a separate piece of land and never meant to be in a densely packed setting, then its adaption should respect its context as such. For instance, in the case of Honest Ed's in Toronto, its demolition and subsequent proposed development has completely destabilized the character of Yonge Street because of the proposed high-rise and small setbacks.

Responses by Claude Charbonneau, November 16, 2020.

**1. How do economics play into heritage preservation? Is economic value important to heritage? Economic value is often put against socio-cultural value; are these points necessarily opposites of each other?**

Conservation may cost more (under 25%) than demolishing and constructing a new building. From an economical standpoint, we must look further than the up-front cost. For example, people often travel to cities that have history, beautiful architecture, public art and museums; the conservation of historic main streets attracts tourism. The experience of being enveloped in culture is very different from the often “slick and cold” association with brand new buildings. Cost of the work is one thing, but look at long-term benefits of heritage conservation, and its value from a tourism (economic) standpoint. Medium and long-term benefits are proven in the conserved heritage street and downtown that attracts visitors. The sense of belonging is crucial the character and quality of a city, along with cohesive urban planning creating a community via use of space and architecture.

On the federal level, properties fall under two categories: being owned by the federal government or under the jurisdiction of the government. This includes the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act (not federally owned, but under its jurisdiction and given status) and national historic sites. There is a cost-share program for the owners of properties of national historic sites, but successful application to the program does not guarantee funds. After its approval, owners still have to apply for the financial aid. Funds available are also limited; this year, Parks Canada was allotted a one-million-dollar budget for the entire year.

- 2. In the Ontario Heritage Act, 29(16), under "Dismissal without hearing of appeal", what qualifies as claims that are without grounds? What is "reasonable" and "unreasonable" grounds?**
  
- 3. For a privately owned property, are the costs of "prescribed minimum standards of maintenance" the responsibility of the owner? Are there government subsidies that help with the costs of repairs? Are repairs or maintenance overseen by a professional knowledgeable of preservation practices? Is there a professional or government official that checks on properties to ensure proper maintenance is being carried out?**
  
- 4. Since Standards and Guidelines are not law, how are conservation standards upheld? Who is responsibility is it to ensure that proper procedure is followed in preservation heritage? And what (if any) are the consequences of disregarding these guidelines?**

A difference between the first edition and second edition of S&G is that in the first edition, the charts outline action “not recommended” were a repetition of what was “recommended”, in a negative form. The second addition enriched the descriptions of what was “not recommended” to be more specific. S&G can be thought of like the National Code: it’s a reference document that has no legal implications or powers *unless* it is officially adopted by a jurisdiction. An example would be a grant program for heritage restoration where qualifying applicants must follow S&G. Provinces can adopt the National Code and make changes to it (such as the OBC) or they can use it as written. Recently, discussion about heritage *value* has increased, understanding that *value* is intangible.

This expanded the view of heritage in the conservation field to include minor architecture. 50 years ago, we would never consider company towns (worker's houses) as something heritage because it wasn't rich or grand. Heritage is now attached to value, and not just the physical thing, expanding the notions of heritage. If heritage is to last, it must be functioning or occupied.

**5. Since the creation of the S&G, has there been improvement in heritage preservation (such as adaptive reuse, additions to heritage buildings, etc.)?**

In my experience, S&G is used quite often, even if it is suggestive and not legally binding. Again, there were many improvements made in 2<sup>nd</sup> edition:

- Each standard is explained with images
- Each material described has an introduction, and each subchapter has introduction
  - More explanation is available with more visuals and captions that tell a story
- Each of the guidelines for rehabilitation talks about **sustainability, accessibility and security** (where rehabilitation looks to the future)

People tend to use the terms “conservation”, “preservation”, “rehabilitation” and “restoration” interchangeably. What really struck a chord with people is that “conservation” is umbrella term in Canada, so regardless of what method was used (preservation, rehabilitation, restoration), using the term conservation would be accurate. However, in the US, they use “preservation” as their umbrella term.

About 75-80% of what we do is rehabilitation, 20% preservation (repointing, repainting, repairing, cleaning, etc.) and very little work is restoration. In the 2000s, people were not interested in heritage anymore, heritage wasn't trendy. However, sustainability was. Making links from heritage conservation to sustainability could earn a lot of merit: not tearing down a building, making use of existing building resources, etc. Demolishing a building has embodied energy, and all that energy (materials) is taken to a dumpsite and lost. Then, a new building is constructed, which increases the energy cost, and the materials used may not be local materials either. Adding up the embodied energy (designing, building, materials, fabrication, shipping) spent and lost in demolition and new construction, restoring a building is comparable in cost. Many would dismiss this, thinking it's simpler to tear down and build a new structure. However, in 25 years, these newer buildings may have to do a major renovation. Compare this to tearing down a building that was 200 years old, built from local stones coming from a local quarry. It makes more sense to keep existing buildings, whether or not they're heritage, and to improve or update them to meet current standards.

- 6. I am currently studying the condo at 354 Gladstone Avenue in Ottawa, which used to be the Metropolitan Bible Church. Now, all that remains of the church is the front facade that faces Bank Street. There are many instances of churches turned housing I have found in Toronto and Ottawa, and many of them are successfully marketed as luxury condos with heritage value. I have also found many instances of churches turned into a community-driven activity, such as a community centre, or a library. What are your thoughts on converting churches into housing versus a community-driven function?**

Facadism is not conservation and moving buildings not conservation (its location is part of its character defining elements). For example, moving a train station away from its tracks (like what happened in Montebello), or moving a lock keepers house away from

the canal, the object loses its *raison d'être*. When a church is turned into a condo, a concrete slab has to be poured into the nave to create a floor and windows have to be punched out to accommodate the new use. Some unique solutions that match new use with existing building include the church turned climbing centre in Hull or the church turned circus school in Quebec City. Both projects take advantage of a church's height for its new program. In the case of a building without designation, such as the Met, it would have to rely on its district's designation and guidelines.

When choosing a new use for adaptive reuse, one must think about the community and the long-term sustainability of that use. It is not just the embodied energy, but finding a use that will create a situation where the building will sustain itself in the long run.

Transforming a house in a house museum may be fairly straight forward, but it is not sustainable in the long run. The revenue from admission fees alone is not enough to maintain the building. At the same time, the new use should not have large impacts on the site's character defining elements. Standard 3 of the S&G discusses minimal intervention as having the least impact on heritage value and CDE.

Quebec is an example of a rich and thriving culture in Canada and its communities greatly value its culture and identity. Both the government and locals have greatly invested in the protection of heritage. This is especially for the many churches in Quebec that serve as landmarks of a town or city. With declining religious practice, many churches need the support of government funding to maintain them, as Quebec relates its cultural heritage and identity with churches.

Responses by Lyette Fortine, December 1, 2020.

**1. How do economics play into heritage preservation? Is economic value important to heritage? Economic value is often put against socio-cultural value; are these points necessarily opposites of each other?**

Economic plays great importance in projects, especially developers. It has been demonstrated that using minimal intervention is more economically feasible than a full-scale major intervention. Some developers saw benefit in minimal intervention, by saving money and seeing this (using a heritage property) as way of marketing their project. Otherwise, education is important in promoting the economic benefits of preservation. Intervention often involves structural assessment. There is a professional responsibility to ensure the building is structurally sound. This involves looking at the past performance of structure and demonstrating that the building can behave and perform in a satisfactory way. Over-designing, especially in seismic upgrades, can be detrimental. For example, the Vancouver train station was surrounded by shear walls to provide for structural stability, but it compromised the views and blocked windows. It is the designer's job to speak with conservationists and developers about their needs and goals, and how to achieve them appropriately.

An example of this dilemma is the development across from war memorial in Ottawa, where the NCC now located. There are three heritage buildings, and the proposal was to build high-rises behind it. At first, they only wanted to keep the façade, as they believed it was too costly to maintain the buildings. A meeting was had with the developer and their opinions changed when they saw how minimal intervention could be used to enrich the design by keeping the heritage buildings. In the end, two buildings were kept (one at Sparks and Elgin, the other at Elgin and Queen). Conservation is always based on values; the third building in the middle did not have

much value as the interior was gutted and changed many times; the only contribution of that building was to the streetscape as the many changes to the interior rendered it invaluable. The other two buildings had heritage value because of their architecture, layouts, character-defining elements on the interior and exterior. The developer saw to maintain those values, which now houses some of the most prominent offices.

Conservation is not prescriptive, but it is about having a conversation, finding a balance and helping all parties see the benefits of conservation as well as understand what the “other side” (conservation) wants out of the project. Another project and developer to research is the developer responsible for the new civic hospital in Ottawa. With the collaboration of all fields, positive results can be had on all sides – developer, conservation and the public.

**2. In the Ontario Heritage Act, 29(16), under "Dismissal without hearing of appeal", what qualifies as claims that are without grounds? What is "reasonable" and "unreasonable" grounds?**

As I worked with the federal government, I can answer these questions more at the federal level. FHBRO is an advisory body, not a legal body. Canada only G7 country that does not have legislation for the protection of its designated properties; however, there is legislation for railway stations. For example, the Chateau Laurier is a National Historic Site and falls under the OHA. NCC and Parks Canada are not dealing with it because the city is dealing with it, as it is privately owned. It becomes a public responsibility, and groups like Heritage Ottawa, to defend our heritage. It is expensive to hire lawyers and to go to court. It comes down to sustainability; if it becomes more of an issue, it may see grants. In Quebec, you can receive a grant if you restore building without damaging the

character of building. The push in Canada will be incentive – sustainability, tax deduction and incentive for renovation and rehabilitation.

- 3. For a privately owned property, are the costs of "prescribed minimum standards of maintenance" the responsibility of the owner? Are there government subsidies that help with the costs of repairs? Are repairs or maintenance overseen by a professional knowledgeable of preservation practices? Is there a professional or government official that checks on properties to ensure proper maintenance is being carried out?**

As far as I know, I don't think there is anyone responsible for ensuring maintenance. It comes to the number of staff and resources available.

- 4. Since Standards and Guidelines are not law, how are conservation standards upheld? Who is responsibility is it to ensure that proper procedure is followed in preservation heritage? And what (if any) are the consequences of disregarding these guidelines?**

Again, as far as I know, nobody "follows up" on procedures. The federal government has responsibility to follow best practices and government agencies do follow S&G. In terms of policies and guidelines, I am in favour of education. I was part of the team that travelled across the country to hold sessions to the public, architects and custodian to explain the benefits of conservation from all perspectives. The objective of FHBRO for S&G is to become part of our "behaviour" so that the office (FHBRO) doesn't have to exist anymore.

**5. Since the creation of the S&G, has there been improvement in heritage preservation (such as adaptive reuse, additions to heritage buildings, etc.)?**

Since S&G, there has been great improvements. Before, it was rare to have firms that ever spoke of conservation. It is becoming a discipline that is part of our professionals and in all projects we will see. Firms will advertise their “expertise in conservation” and that they have done conservation projects. There is no law for the protection of heritage, but it’s a question of education, which is better than forcing people to do something. In the case of the Chateau Laurier, the owner realized he was getting a lot of negative press on the building and he wanted to find a solution. He spoke with Heritage Ottawa to find a solution that was acceptable. To create something unacceptable by the public was not a proper way to contribute to the national capital on such a prominent site.

**6. I am currently studying the condo at 354 Gladstone Avenue in Ottawa, which used to be the Metropolitan Bible Church. Now, all that remains of the church is the front facade that faces Bank Street. There are many instances of churches turned housing I have found in Toronto and Ottawa, and many of them are successfully marketed as luxury condos with heritage value. I have also found many instances of churches turned into a community-driven activity, such as a community centre, or a library. What are your thoughts on converting churches into housing versus a community-driven function?**

This depends on the role of church in the community, and how the community feels about preserving that place. Type of intervention is often driven by the will of the community. I personally do not advocate for facadism for purpose of condo development. We should go back to what was valuable about that church. The church always had community purpose – how do you make it work economically? It is not always feasible and oftentimes, developers see an opportunity to exploit the site. Unless the only thing that

contributes to the streetscape is the façade, I am against facadism. The church had a function on the street and an entrance from the street that was “removed”. This project was a missed opportunity. The building is there to address the community and the developer could have seized the opportunity to make it something that had a dialogue with street and community, make it an entrance or more service oriented. People often don’t understand how to build on what’s there, to add a layer that contributes to the people’s understanding of how this place was before, how it continues to play a role in a different way. Even projects that are not designated still play a role and it is up to the developer to understand this and have it continue to speak with the community as it evolves. If the church can be used for community-oriented program, as an integral part of the community and be economically feasible, it would be ideal. If it can be used for a residential project, it should have dialogue with street and the community, so it’s not just an empty shell on the face of a building.

Responses by Stuart Lazear, December 12, 2020.

**1. How do economics play into heritage preservation? Is economic value important to heritage? Economic value is often put against socio-cultural value; are these points necessarily opposites of each other?**

It depends on who does the preserving. If we look at heritage preservation at the local level, then it is an absolutely critical factor because we are dealing with preservation in the context of real estate and land value. This is of less concern when you are dealing with provincial, federal (and crown) levels where preservation is dealing with assets the government owns. The S&G guidelines can also be implemented more fully on properties you own/control. Economics are not as critical a consideration at the federal level. At the local level, we are dealing with urban land economics – value of land interfaces with other values at local level. How do we deal with the value of land that is owned by private owner? Economics are critical in consideration of heritage resources at the local level, not as significant at the federal level. Municipalities are bound by other values and limitations. Incentives – is it ever enough? Depends on the value of the land.

So how is the value of real estate determined in Ottawa?

1. There is the assessed value determined by an independent provincial agency (MPAC) based on real estate transactions on similar properties in the vicinity as well as other factors. This is done every four years.
2. There is the current market value which is essentially the amount a willing buyer is willing to pay for the property and changes more quickly than A.

3. There is the redevelopment value based on what someone thinks they can replace the building with under existing zoning.
4. There is the speculative redevelopment value based on what someone thinks they can replace the building with if they request a zoning variance or rezoning.

Heritage preservation intersects with economics/land value where C and D conflict with the retention of the existing built heritage. In an urban core where the potential for redevelopment is high, retention of a building exterior, substantial portion of the exterior or facade is almost always the only option. In addition, there is little or no public/community constituency to lobby for more preservation apart from groups such as Heritage Ottawa. This is different in historic neighbourhoods such as Rockcliffe, Sandy Hill, the Glebe where you have residents who lobby for the retention of their neighbourhood character and thus reflect their community, aesthetic, social and even economic (as in property) values.

**2. In the Ontario Heritage Act, 29(16), under "Dismissal without hearing of appeal", what qualifies as claims that are without grounds? What is "reasonable" and "unreasonable" grounds?**

Regarding Bill 108, the LPAT was assigned responsibilities previously held by the CRB associated with appeals under the OHA. It gives property owners more scope and opportunity to appeal. The LPAT, and the OMG before it, always had responsibilities under Part V of the OHA because that section dealt with heritage conservation districts (HCDs) and larger area/planning issues, rather than site-specific designation. In 25 years of working as a heritage planner, there were relatively few CRB or OMB (now LPAT) hearings because the OMG had the opportunity (as does the LPAT now) to do many things (pre-consultation, mediation) before a full-scale

hearing. In regard to the power of LPAT to dismiss, it is up to the tribunal to decide whether or not a claim is made for the purpose of delay. The appellant must submit evidence of why they're appealing and the LPAT can ask for many things. In the end, the appeal of final municipal decisions will now go to the LPAT.

- 3. For a privately owned property, are the costs of "prescribed minimum standards of maintenance" the responsibility of the owner? Are there government subsidies that help with the costs of repairs? Are repairs or maintenance overseen by a professional knowledgeable of preservation practices? Is there a professional or government official that checks on properties to ensure proper maintenance is being carried out?**

Somewhat, yes. Refer to the City's website regarding heritage grant assistance for details and elaboration. You can also talk to Ashley Kotarba from the City.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/heritage-conservation/built-heritage-funding-programs>

- 4. Since Standards and Guidelines are not law, how are conservation standards upheld? Who is responsibility is it to ensure that proper procedure is followed in preservation heritage? And what (if any) are the consequences of disregarding these guidelines?**

Legislation is prescriptive, wording is what lawyers argue about. Legislation cannot be "wishy-washy" about what is to be done – wording has to be extremely specific. The OHA gives authorities to municipalities to do things (i.e. incentivize, etc. if they want to). Legislation doesn't say how much assistance you should give, grants, tax incentives, upzoning, etc. The City of Ottawa has been

developing incentives itself, such as grant programs, tax-related programs and rebate programs that provides incentive for rehabilitation of properties. There are also zoning considerations (Planning Act) and opportunities for up-zoning or bonus zoning in exchange for land use considerations and amenities.

The S&G is high level, a document used across the country, that tries to encompass a lot of things for lot of people. Policy for protection by all levels of government can't be all things to all people. Where does the S&G talk about things at the local level? There are only a couple of sections dealing with resources at local level, primarily related to additions – Standard 11. It is most impactful at assessing changes and additions to designated heritage resources and where it ties in with municipal heritage planning. The S&G does not contain a lot in terms of municipal heritage. It is not the key document that governs, impacts or influences municipal decisions.

At the local level, designers are not “bound” by S&G. The quantity of cultural heritage resources goes to local level. Ottawa has 20 HCDs, around 5000 properties protected under Part V, over 300 individually designated buildings, 3400 non-designated on the register; around 10,000 buildings influenced in some way by heritage identification. There are 13,000 buildings on the federal register Ottawa. The local level is the level that controls most or deals with most of the identified and protected cultural heritage resources because there are no controls of National Historic Sites. The federal government cannot regulate National Historic Sites that they do not own them.

- 5. Since the creation of the S&G, has there been improvement in heritage preservation (such as adaptive reuse, additions to heritage buildings, etc.)?**

S&G has infiltrated a lot of decision-making. They are mentioned in passing (reports, referenced to meeting). Looking at grants and tax incentives, S&G are mentioned. However, it is one thing to mention, another to adopt – *S&G is followed when convenient*. There are a lot of resources in the document regarding nature, archaeology, interiors, etc. Whether there was a fundamental shift in anything is not necessarily the case. Its introduction was not as impactful on the municipal level as it has in a neighbourhood plan or district plan.

- 6. I am currently studying the condo at 354 Gladstone Avenue in Ottawa, which used to be the Metropolitan Bible Church. Now, all that remains of the church is the front facade that faces Bank Street. There are many instances of churches turned housing I have found in Toronto and Ottawa, and many of them are successfully marketed as luxury condos with heritage value. I have also found many instances of churches turned into a community-driven activity, such as a community centre, or a library. What are your thoughts on converting churches into housing versus a community-driven function?**

The heritage overlay specifies that if the building is demolished, only a new development of the same footprint and height of the existing is permitted. This can create a dis-incentive for demolishing an existing heritage resources depending on the underlying economic factors previously mentioned. There are many pressures from the “speculative value”. It is difficult to create dis-incentives in downtown urban situations because of these pressures. On Page 132 of the S&G, listed as “not recommended” is selecting a use that dramatically alters the form. Consider the interplay with economics in an urban, downtown core, where there is high development potential (value). On the other hand, neighbourhoods such as Rockcliffe have the political and financial clout to protect their heritage.

Owners can afford to pay for a cultural heritage impact statement; Someone had to be paid to make that report and someone else may not be able to afford to do so. The “elites” are property owners in residential neighbourhoods who want to preserve the status quo (Rockcliffe, Glebe) and apply pressure to have areas protected. They have the political clout and the city councillors to support them.

In reference to the Toronto Star article, “The Saturday Debate: Are urban planners making cities unlivable?”,

"Urbanism has become an increasingly fraught discourse and professional practice. Most urban planners, even those deeply committed to community, operate within a politicized system that hems them in with antiquated bylaws and critical paths that advance projects faster than the speed of trust. As a result, much of what manifests in the built environment is a consequence of rigid hierarchies that silence planners. To compound these issues, elected officials often ignore their expert recommendations, and instead bend to the whims of elite municipal voters. "

The elites are also developers, who have the ear of council and have money to pay for lawyers and planning consultants and heritage consultants to write reports favourable to their proposal for rezoning.

Trying to get the façade retained, in the context of the Met, was a compromise, but a hard-won compromise. Development potential was increased, but the façade was essentially palletized and we wanted the façade to be retained in-situ. The municipality tries to plan rationally with neighbourhood/community plans, secondary plans, official plans, zoning by-laws etc., but these take time and they follow rather than lead the market and speculative forces that determine land value. (This practical reality is somewhat reflected in the Toronto Star article I sent you earlier). So after several years of community consultation, you may end up with a zoning by-law that

says you can build up to 4 or 5 storeys on Bank Street or Rideau Street. A developer asks for 12 storeys, the city agrees to 10 or the LPAT mandates 10 after a hearing or mediation and the process starts again...and again...and again. In established residential neighbourhoods the change happens more incrementally through zoning variances to permit higher/larger buildings that eventually change the character of the street/neighbourhood. So this is essentially and theoretically how you have the Met facade with the infill behind. Today, the infill would likely be two or three times larger.

What would I do differently? The treatment of the windows and canopy. I think the original (metal?) infill pattern over the second storey rounded windows could be reinstated easily. The window sash could be enhanced/thickened and the canopy could be jazzed up (lights, color, action). What happened to the Met was as good as we could expect.

A similar case study is the federally owned land on Spark St (NCC) at the corner of Metcalfe, where a new condo was built. The original façade of the theatre was supposed to be retained and restored in situ. The developer obtained a rezoning to develop the property with that understanding. The property would be leases for 100 years from the federal government and a condo tower would be built. The developer later had provided studies to show how they could not retain the façade and NCC agreed. As a result, the façade was reconstructed. It was not the original fabric, although some elements were incorporated.

Retaining façades in downtown is not a bad thing, but there are different ways to go about it. In the case of the Met, there was an objective to retain more than just a slice of the front of the Met, but rather a three-dimensional volume. As a result, the brick side

elevations were set back from the street to transition from the new addition and a larger setback was created above for the same purpose. A less desirable result would have had the new construction butt right up to the façade with no transition.

Standard 11 of the S&G is very difficult to achieve. Looking at the Chateau Laurier, it took architects a year of lobbying to accept one proposal (out of seven). With individually designated buildings, there is more concern with the heritage attributes of the individual building. With HCDs (look at the furniture store to the North of the Met, at the Staples), streetscape aesthetics are critical. Why Ottawa and Toronto have emphasized HCDs over individual designation is because you can get more into an HCD, such as protection of ambiance and character of a district. Another case study is St. Paul's in Sandy Hill, which was decommissioned to be used as a shelter. The building will be retained and has an open interior and assembly area, like the Met. In the case of the Met, land value would not permit retention of the church as a whole. Since then, speculative value (point D from above) has resulted in many high-rises along Bank and Catherine. If we tried to retain façade of Met today, it would be difficult. Policy is inconsistent on all levels – wherever you have publicly elected body, policy will change with that body. With Bill 108 will make appeals more accessible and faster. The federal government has been supportive of heritage on properties that they own. The federal government could have done a lot more with incentives of all levels of heritage (federal, provincial, municipal). In the US, there are tax incentives to encourage rehabilitation, which has developers asking for heritage protection.

Responses by Marc Denhez, December 15, 2020.

**1. How do economics play into heritage preservation? Is economic value important to heritage? Economic value is often put against socio-cultural value; are these points necessarily opposites of each other?**

Theorists are bad at practice and the practice is bad at theory. The largest change in the next decade, aside from climate change initiatives, is that the Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes proposed a new part of National Building Code (new chapter) pertaining specifically to alterations of existing buildings (AEB) – which is immensely controversial (This is still a proposal: it is still being debated). Tentatively, permits will be given for alterations, if they are obligatory, such as building damage. If there are discretionary add-ons, not related to keeping the building from falling down and not compensated by insurance, these are called “triggers”. Triggering an add-on such as meeting accessibility requirements, energy retrofits, etc. could potentially make the project much more expensive. This may drive consumers to look for lesser professionals, perhaps even illegal alterations.

There is a common misconception that there is no policy on protection of conservation. There are overt tax incentives for demolition, no tax incentives for renovation.

Existing residential housing stock was estimated in 2017 at 4.1 trillion dollars, and residential renovation of building stock for over 70 billion dollars a year. The amount of designated heritage buildings in Canada accounts for 0.5% of building stock, one-two-

hundredth of the building stock; federally designated building accounts for one-one-fifteen-thousandth of the building stock. These categories can be accurately defined as “statistically insignificant”.

Most of the heritage places in Canada are not recognized as heritage until they have been “fixed up” (such as Old Montreal or Gastown). They were classified as “slums”, still standing because they were not worth redeveloping. Heritage is often only recognized retroactively.

In the 1990s, there was the substantial renovation tax rebate – a rebate if you were completing a substantial renovation on a building, on the condition that *at least 90% of non-structural elements were removed*. Canada is one of the only countries that disqualifies developers from an incentive if they did not demolish enough and the industry was opposed to this.

Heritage property is within a broader context, removed from mainstream economic activity. There are three pillars to conservation programs in Canada:

- Triage: identify, segregate
- Produce legislation/regulate – prescriptive
  - (these measures have tended to tell people what they can’t do, but not to show them what they should do)
- Incentivize: but what are we incentivizing against? Is this a level playing field or is it skewed? Sceptics counter: Don’t introduce incentive just to counter-act other incentive.

Regarding incentives, every time the term “incentive” is introduced and budgets are being discussed, it almost always gets cut. Trying to incentivize an already marginal category with money is difficult. The Ministry of Environment cannot propose tax incentives, which will get denied or objected; it can only come from the Prime Minister or other finance officials.

- 2. In the Ontario Heritage Act, 29(16), under "Dismissal without hearing of appeal", what qualifies as claims that are without grounds? What is "reasonable" and "unreasonable" grounds?**
  
- 3. For a privately owned property, are the costs of "prescribed minimum standards of maintenance" the responsibility of the owner? Are there government subsidies that help with the costs of repairs? Are repairs or maintenance overseen by a professional knowledgeable of preservation practices? Is there a professional or government official that checks on properties to ensure proper maintenance is being carried out?**
  
- 4. Since Standards and Guidelines are not law, how are conservation standards upheld? Who is responsibility is it to ensure that proper procedure is followed in preservation heritage? And what (if any) are the consequences of disregarding these guidelines?**

Documents like the S&G are not law, nor are the ICOMOS charters. The municipality is the front-line of applications of OHA, designations, by-laws and the OP (which sometimes incorporates the S&G). An example of successful local community action can be found in St. John's, which introduced a collection of heritage districts and a list of 2400 buildings to set up a fund. The community also set up an advisory committee – if someone made an inappropriate proposal, the committee was responsible for coming up with a counterproposal and the fund would cover the difference in cost. The fund was abolished after a few years because nothing was spent. Every project that came in, they were able to come up with a counterproposal that was same price or less.

**5. Since the creation of the S&G, has there been improvement in heritage preservation (such as adaptive reuse, additions to heritage buildings, etc.)?**

Debatable – often because there is room for “interpretation”, and (for the right money) “expert” consultants can always be found to defend even the most questionable projects.

**6. I am currently studying the condo at 354 Gladstone Avenue in Ottawa, which used to be the Metropolitan Bible Church. Now, all that remains of the church is the front facade that faces Bank Street. There are many instances of churches turned housing I have found in Toronto and Ottawa, and many of them are successfully marketed as luxury condos with heritage value. I have also found many instances of churches turned into a community-driven activity, such as a community centre, or a library. What are your thoughts on converting churches into housing versus a community-driven function?**

Highest and best use of land is not what buildings are designated for in the official plan and not what they are zoned for.

Developers are not only paying for land, but what speculators expect to be able to up-zone the land by. If you build according to the “system” or policy, will go out of business. In Toronto, over 75% of construction involves rezoning or OP amendment.

Construction is the biggest industry in Canada, but renovation is its biggest part (which people don’t realize). The AEB industry is the largest component of Canada’s largest industry. Of the century home category, only 2% designated heritage. Conservation in the architectural setting is not the same as other settings; architectural conservation must do work. Conserving nature is to “do nothing”.

Responses by Laurie Smith, January 12, 2021.

- 1. How do economics play into heritage preservation? Is economic value important to heritage? Economic value is often put against socio-cultural value; are these points necessarily opposites of each other?**

It's about values and trying to establish a consensus on values. Most decisions are made by consensus; there isn't one way to do things, we do what we agree on as a community. Conservation is not a scientific decision, but a socio-political decision. As well, commemoration is a big part of heritage; we are currently more focused on physical assets. Rules have been put in place trying to make conservation more predictable. For a long time, decisions were made without any criteria in place (the period between the enactment of the OHA and the passage of Regulation 9/06).

Economics are not part of heritage value but a separate thing. When deciding on whether a property has value, economics is not part of it. It comes into play later on in the decision-making process. Economics will always be there, but the aim is to give heritage "a place at the table". We first look at non-economic criteria when evaluating a property's heritage value. Once this is decided, then we move onto the management decisions regarding the property, including economic considerations. For example, budget for repairs or replacements will be considered. It's also important to consider accessibility and fire safety.

- 2. In the Ontario Heritage Act, 29(16), under "Dismissal without hearing of appeal", what qualifies as claims that are without grounds? What is "reasonable" and "unreasonable" grounds?**

- 3. For a privately owned property, are the costs of "prescribed minimum standards of maintenance" the responsibility of the owner? Are there government subsidies that help with the costs of repairs? Are repairs or maintenance overseen by a professional knowledgeable of preservation practices? Is there a professional or government official that checks on properties to ensure proper maintenance is being carried out?**

Ontario has passed legislation that gives municipalities the power to provide municipal tax rebates and grants (see [http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage\\_tax\\_relief.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage_tax_relief.shtml)). This funding helps incentivize owners to maintain their heritage properties. There are also tools by municipality providing for “demolition by neglect”, not only with heritage buildings, but any building. The municipality can pass a property standards by-law which will provide a process and penalties to address properties that are abandoned or neglected. The municipality can include express provisions in the property standards by-law to address heritage properties. It is up to the municipality to enforce these measures. Furthermore, there is a process in the OHA that allows property owners of designated properties to apply to the municipality for repeal of the designation. If the repeal is denied, the property owner can object and have their case heard by the CRB. If the municipality decides to repeal the designation, anyone in the community can object and have their case heard by the CRB. Some property owners who would like their designation repealed argue that the costs of repairing a designated property to the standards required by the municipality, are too high.

- 4. Since Standards and Guidelines are not law, how are conservation standards upheld? Who is responsibility is it to ensure that proper procedure is followed in preservation heritage? And what (if any) are the consequences of disregarding these guidelines?**

The Standards and Guidelines was part of an effort to try and make a “level playing field”; rules could not continue to be made up for every case. Creation of the Canadian Register also helped identify what properties were designated. Many municipalities have voluntarily adopted the Standards and Guidelines and have made compliance with the Standards and Guidelines a necessary requirement in order to obtain a heritage permit. Appeals from denial of heritage permit are rare, because the owner and the city are often able to come to a negotiated settlement.

- 5. Since the creation of the S&G, has there been improvement in heritage preservation (such as adaptive reuse, additions to heritage buildings, etc.)?**

- 6. I am currently studying the condo at 354 Gladstone Avenue in Ottawa, which used to be the Metropolitan Bible Church. Now, all that remains of the church is the front facade that faces Bank Street. There are many instances of churches turned housing I have found in Toronto and Ottawa, and many of them are successfully marketed as luxury condos with heritage value. I have also found many instances of churches turned into a community-driven activity,**

**such as a community centre, or a library. What are your thoughts on converting churches into housing versus a community-driven function?**

It depends on how the community feels about the building, as a group, and how it is attached to places. Again, it is about values and the values of the district. Regardless, all buildings must be maintained. Conservation techniques can be applied to any existing building. Preserving existing buildings is a positive thing for many reasons, including sustainability and climate change. It requires the same skills to maintain a building, heritage or not.

Facadism is a commemoration of what was once there, the preserving of a ruin. There are some good examples of facadism, such as the mounted Tin House façade in Byward Market. This is a good example of facadism, where the façade sits as a sculptural element.

It is important to have all values at the table together. Just because the Met was not individually designated (but designated as part of the Centretown HCD, under OHA Part V), had anybody looked at value of the building? This would normally happen in the Heritage Impact Assessment and be considered by the Heritage Advisory Committee and city staff.

Consider the issues with the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). Some would say that having the developer's consultant prepare the Heritage Impact Assessment presents an inherent conflict of interest. Each municipality has control of how they want the assessment to be set up: What are they asking for? How much community input is mandated to go in? Additionally, a property does not have to be a designated place for the city to request an HIA. Many municipalities, including Ottawa, provide

written guidelines on what a Heritage Impact Assessment must address. There is no legislation/regulation at the provincial level as to what a HIA must address, although the HIA is discussed in the Ontario Heritage Toolkit. The content and requirements of an HIA will vary from municipality to municipality.

Responses by Ashley Kotarba, February 2, 2021.

- 7. How do economics play into heritage preservation? Is economic value important to heritage? Economic value is often put against socio-cultural value; are these points necessarily opposites of each other?**

In Ottawa, staff are working to come up with better plans and policies regarding heritage preservation. For example, there is the Heritage Community Improvement Plan to encourage adaptive reuse and restoration with financial incentives. We are looking for people to be creative with the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, including additions, developments behind heritage buildings that are sensitive to its context. (This program is effective as of January 2020). In Sandy Hill, there is a church turned student living apartment near the University of Ottawa (87 Mann Street) that took advantage of this new community improvement plan.

- 8. In the Ontario Heritage Act, 29(16), under "Dismissal without hearing of appeal", what qualifies as claims that are without grounds? What is "reasonable" and "unreasonable" grounds?**
- 9. For a privately owned property, are the costs of "prescribed minimum standards of maintenance" the responsibility of the owner? Are there government subsidies that help with the costs of repairs? Are repairs or maintenance overseen by a professional knowledgeable of preservation practices? Is there a professional or government official that checks on properties to ensure proper maintenance is being carried out?**

**10. Since Standards and Guidelines are not law, how are conservation standards upheld? Who is responsibility is it to ensure that proper procedure is followed in preservation heritage? And what (if any) are the consequences of disregarding these guidelines?**

Council can recommend approval of a project with conditions. Regardless, everyone has different interpretations of Guidelines, zoning and other regulations. And we will never be able to come to an agreement on what each regulation means. It is difficult to remove the subjectivity from the topic, as it is the nature of the field.

There is the CHIS to consider, which provides another reference for evaluation, but city staff don't necessarily agree with the report's findings all the time. Whether the report could be biased (because they are submitted by a heritage professional hired by the applicant), in Ottawa, we have never asked for a peer review or second CHIS report.

**11. Since the creation of the S&G, has there been improvement in heritage preservation (such as adaptive reuse, additions to heritage buildings, etc.)?**

City council has adopted the Standards & Guidelines as best practice and an evaluation tool. However, the guidelines are high-level and don't have a lot of "teeth" to regulate heritage interventions.

**12. I am currently studying the condo at 354 Gladstone Avenue in Ottawa, which used to be the Metropolitan Bible Church.**

**Now, all that remains of the church is the front facade that faces Bank Street. There are many instances of churches turned housing I have found in Toronto and Ottawa, and many of them are successfully marketed as luxury condos with heritage value. I have also found many instances of churches turned into a community-driven activity, such as a community centre, or a library. What are your thoughts on converting churches into housing versus a community-driven function?**

The main objective is to ensure heritage values are protected, with less emphasis on what the proposed addition or reuse will be. However, if the intent is to build a condo, there are a lot of structural considerations: How can underground parking be provided? How can the heritage building be stabilized with the structure falling? There is also the consideration of floor heights, locations of windows and floor plates, as well as accessibility standards.

For the Met, there was no reason for the windows to be blind, they should have remained functional. The entrance of the church building could have been used as an entrance for the condo. They also could have used the cornices as datum lines for the addition.

### Section 3.0 Existing Building Façade Conservation Options

#### Section 3.1 Dismantling and reconstruction (Option A)

This option involves the complete dismantling of the masonry walls, after first recording all aspects of the construction using photographs, measurements, recording and detailing of features. The masonry, where feasible, would be salvaged. All concrete blocks and portions of brick masonry would have to be replaced with compatible material, leaving little heritage significance other than a replica of the façade.

The wall would be reconstructed following the construction of the new building. Mortars similar to the original mortars would be used. Replacement historic brick would be used on the upper portion of the wall and at the door recesses at ground level. It would be difficult to match the existing brick in size, colour and finish.

This option would allow for conventional shoring and foundation construction. It would also allow to fully incorporating the façade into the new building, including seismic upgrade into the wall. Furthermore, this option would minimize sidewalk closure and street interference.

#### Section 3.2 Underpinning of Building Façade (Option B)

This option involves keeping the façade in place. It conforms to the historic guidelines for minimum intervention. Full conservation of the façade, both interior and exterior would be required. The dismantling and reconstruction of the upper façade as described in section 2.1 would still be required. Full repointing of both faces of the masonry and repairing of any damage on the concrete block masonry would be required.

A permanent steel frame to provide lateral support to the wall in its finished location would be installed. This will strengthen the wall during demolition and reconstruction of the new building.

It would be necessary to erect a very complicated shoring system to support the wall on both sides, with a steel framing tower on the street side, to support the wall during demolition and reconstruction. The process will be complicated due to the prior foundation condition in this area, and the need for deep piling to support the shoring structure. This option would require unconventional shoring wall to support the weight of the façade and maintain earth stability under Bank Street. The shoring construction and dismantling must be closely coordinated with the excavation of the foundations for the new building. Also, a concrete pile shoring wall would have to be constructed on the street side of the wall prior to erecting the shoring and proceeding with excavation on the interior of the site. This will be an extremely expensive operation, and the risk of damage to the wall is high. This option would also require closure of the sidewalk and part of the street for an extended period of time.

#### Section 3.2.1 Conceptual Drawings

This section includes conceptual drawings of this option.

# Appendix D: Metropolitan Bible Church Heritage Survey and Evaluation Form

CITY OF OTTAWA  
 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
 COMMUNITY PLANNING BRANCH

HERITAGE SURVEY  
 AND  
 EVALUATION FORM

BUILDING FILE NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
 HERITAGE DISTRICT FILE NO.  
 ONE 1305-0200

Municipal Address: 453 Bank St.  
 Building Name: Metropolitan Bible Church

Legal Description:  
 Date of Construction: 1923-48  
 Original Use: Public  
 Present Use: Public  
 Present Zoning: R0-X (2,0) \*5\*  
 Planning Area: Centretown

Lot: Lots 2 and 3 Bank E Block: 469 (F.I.P.) Plan: 30  
 Additions: 1957-94  
 Original Owner:  
 Present Owner: Metropolitan Bible Church Ottawa

### PHASE ONE SURVEY

Potential Significance	Considerable	Some	Limited	None
History (Pre- 1870 - 1915) ( 1915 to 1940 ) ( 1940 to 1965 ) ( 1965 to present)				
(Date of Construction)	3	2	1	0
Architecture	3	2	1	0
Environment	3	2	1	0
(Landmark or Design compatibility)				

Phase One Survey Score /9 Prepared By: \_\_\_\_\_

Potential Heritage Building Yes/No  
 Potential Heritage District Yes/No

### PHASE TWO EVALUATION RESULTS (Summarized from Page 4)

Category 1 2 3 4  
 Part V Definite Yes/No  
 Part IV Potential Yes/No

If PART IV, By-Law/Date:  
 If PART V:

HERITAGE DISTRICT NAME:  
 Centretown

BY-LAW/DATE:  
 COMMENTS:



PHOTO DATE: May 1995  
 VFM: E  
 SOURCE: K. Beevey  
 NEGATIVE NUMBER: CA 28

**HISTORY**

PREPARED BY: M. Carter      DATE: Fall 1995

**Date of Construction:**

Factual/Estimated

**Sources:**

**Trends:**

**Events:**

**Persons/Institutions:**

**Summary/Comments On Historical Significance:**

**Historical Sources (Coded):**

\*\*\*\*\*  
**ARCHITECTURE**      \*\*\*\*\*  
PREPARED BY: J. Smith      DATE: Winter 1996

**Architectural Design (Plan, Storeys, Roof, Windows, Materials, Details, Etc.):** 3 storey flat-roofed religious institution. Brick veneer; plain metal trim, painted.

**Architectural Style:** Moderne

**Designer/Builder/Architect:**

**Architectural Integrity (Alterations):** good. 2-storey addition on the south side

**Other (Structure, Interior, Building Type, Etc.):**

**Summary/Comments On Architectural Significance:** moderate example of early 20th century religious institutional design.

**ENVIRONMENT**

PREPARED BY: J. Smith      DATE: Winter 1996

**Planning Area:** Centretown

**Heritage Conservation District Name:** Centretown

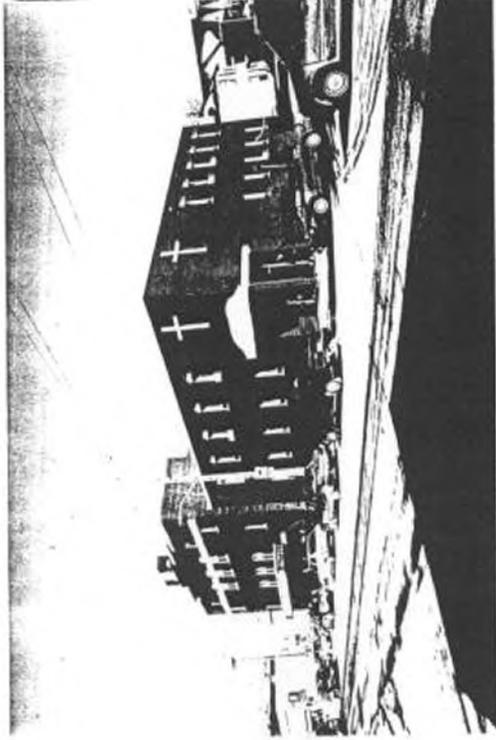


PHOTO DATE: Winter 1996  
VIEW: EN  
SOURCE: JFC  
NEGATIVE NUMBER: A-32

**Compatibility With Heritage Environ:** compatible with heritage commercial/institutional environment

**Community Context/Landmark Status:**

**Summary/Comments On Environmental Significance:** contributes to heritage commercial/institutional character of Bank Street corridor

## Appendix E: Map of Ottawa's Heritage Conservation Districts

- ① Besserer/Wurtemberg
- ② Briarcliffe
- ③ Byward Market
- ④ Cathedral Hill
- ⑤ Bank Street
- ⑥ Centretown
- ⑦ Clemow Estate East
- ⑧ Clemow-Monkland Driveway
- ⑨ Daly Avenue
- ⑩ King Edward Avenue
- ⑪ Laurier/Wilbrod
- ⑫ Lorne Avenue
- ⑬ Lowertown West
- ⑭ Minto Park
- ⑮ New Edinburgh
- ⑯ Russel Avenue/Range Road
- ⑰ Rockcliffe Park
- ⑱ Sandy Hill West
- ⑲ Sparks Street
- ⑳ Stewart/Wilbrod
- ㉑ Sweetland Avenue



## Definitions

### Standards and Guidelines

**Heritage Value:** the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present and future generations. The heritage value of an historic place is embodied in its character-defining materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings.

**Historic Place:** a structure, building, group of buildings, district, landscape, archaeological site or other place in Canada that has been formally recognized for its heritage value.

**Character-defining Element:** the materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to the heritage value of an historic place, which must be retained to preserve its heritage value.