

Report to Community Advisory Committee on Planning

To: Chair and Members
Community Advisory Committee on Planning

From: Kyle Gonyou, RPP, MCIP, CAHP
Manager, Heritage and Urban Design

Subject: Heritage Alteration Permit application by G. Keane for 332 St James Street, Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, HAP23-017-L, Ward 6

Date: June 5, 2024

Recommendation

Refusal of the application under Section 42 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* seeking approval for the replacement of the front porch balustrade on the heritage designated property at 332 St James Street, within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District.

Executive Summary

The property at 332 St James Street contributes to the cultural heritage value or interest of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. Front porches/verandahs are an important part of the historic character of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District and their conservation is a high priority.

A Heritage Alteration Permit application was received seeking approval for the removal of the existing painted wood railing and posts, and replacement with a new railing system consisting of prefinished vinyl (plastic) materials. The proposed alterations do not comply with the policies and guidelines of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District* and would negatively impact the property's cultural heritage value. A vinyl (plastic) porch railing is highly visible from the street and anticipated to have a negative impact on the heritage character of this property and the surrounding Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District as it does not duplicate the historic appearance, texture, finish, and construction style of a traditional wood porch balustrade.

In discussions with the property owner, staff have recommended the repair and replacement of wood porch features with materials compliant with the policies and guidelines of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines*. However, the property owner was unwilling to consider repair of the existing railing and balustrade or replacement in kind with painted wood materials and wishes to pursue an application seeking approval for replacement with vinyl (plastic) materials. Staff do not support the application and would be better able to support an application that makes use of traditional painted wood materials in compliance with the policies and guidelines of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines*.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Location

The property located at 332 St James Street is located on the north side of St James Street between Hellmuth Avenue and Waterloo Street (Appendix A).

1.2 Cultural Heritage Status

The property at 332 St James Street is located within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, which was designated pursuant to Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* by By-law No. L.S.P.-3333-305 in 2003.

1.3 Description

Queen Anne Revival is the prominent architectural style of houses in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, including the house on the property at 332 St James Street. At the time of designation of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, the decorative character and styling of these houses had remained largely unchanged since their construction, resulting in strong architectural and streetscape integrity throughout the district. This strong architectural and streetscape integrity, with uniform building heights, materials, setbacks, and massing remains evident today.

The house on the property at 332 St James Street, built circa 1906, is one of three sibling homes of similar design located at 330 St James Street, 332 St James Street, and 334 St James Street (Image 3). While the house 332 St James Street is constructed of red brick, the neighbouring houses are constructed of buff brick, featuring similar setbacks, massing, and front verandahs. A review of the 1912, revised 1915, Fire Insurance Plan confirms that each of the three houses located at 330 St James Street, 332 St James Street, and 334 St James Street appear to have had similar porches spanning the west portion of their front façades.

The house on the property at 332 St James Street is a two-and-a-half-storey red brick residence in Queen Anne Revival architectural style that characterizes the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. These elements include: the asymmetrical massing with the double-storey bay and gable, shingle detailing in the gables, original wood door and transom, and the front porch located on the west side of the front (south) elevation (Image 2).

In 2010, the current porch was approved in a Heritage Alteration Permit. While not original, the current porch followed the Conservation Guidelines for the replacement of porches, particularly in terms of materials and style, in the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan*. See Section 4.2.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Legislative and Policy Framework

Cultural heritage resources are to be conserved and impacts assessed as per the fundamental policies of the *Provincial Policy Statement (2020)*, the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and *The London Plan*.

2.2 Provincial Policy Statement

Heritage Conservation is a matter of provincial interest (Section 2.d, *Planning Act*). The *Provincial Policy Statement (2020)* promotes the wise use and management of cultural heritage resources and directs that “significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved” (Policy 2.6.1, *Provincial Policy Statement 2020*).

“Significant” is defined in the *Provincial Policy Statement (2020)* as, “resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest.” Further, “processes and criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest are established by the Province under the authority of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.”

Additionally, “conserved” means, “the identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained.”

2.3 Ontario Heritage Act

The *Ontario Heritage Act* enables municipalities to protect properties of cultural heritage value or interest. Properties of cultural heritage value can be protected individually, pursuant to Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, or where groups of properties have cultural heritage value together, pursuant to Section 41 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as a Heritage Conservation District (HCD). Designations pursuant to the *Ontario Heritage Act* are based on real property, not just buildings.

2.3.1 Heritage Alteration Permit

Section 42 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* requires that a property owner not alter, or permit the alteration of, the property without obtaining Heritage Alteration Permit approval. The *Ontario Heritage Act* enables Municipal Council to give the applicant of a Heritage Alteration Permit:

- a) The permit applied for;
- b) Notice that the council is refusing the application for the permit; or,
- c) The permit applied for, with terms and conditions attached. (Section 42(4), *Ontario Heritage Act*)

Per Section 42(4.1), *Ontario Heritage Act*, consultation with the Community Advisory Committee on Planning (CACP), the City of London's municipal heritage committee, is required.

Municipal Council must make a decision on the heritage alteration permit application by July 23, 2024, or the request is deemed permitted (Section 42(4), *Ontario Heritage Act*).

2.4 The London Plan

The London Plan is the official plan for the City. The policies of *The London Plan* found in the Key Directions and Cultural Heritage chapter support the conservation of London's cultural heritage resources for future generations. To ensure the conservation of significant cultural heritage resources, including properties located within a Heritage Conservation District, the policies of *The London Plan* provide the following direction:

Policy 594_ Within heritage conservation districts established in conformity with this chapter, the following policies shall apply:

1. *The character of the district shall be maintained by encouraging the retention of existing structures and landscapes that contribute to the character of the district.*
2. *The design of new development, either as infilling, redevelopment, or as additions to existing buildings, should complement the prevailing character of the area.*
3. *Regard shall be had at all times to the guidelines and intent of the heritage conservation district plan.*

Policy 596_ A property owner may apply to alter a property within a heritage conservation district. The City may, pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act, issue a permit to alter the structure. In consultation with the London Advisory Committee on Heritage, the City may delegate approvals for such permits to an authority.

2.5 Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines

The authenticity and integrity of the Queen Anne Revival architectural style of the Bishop Hellmuth area are some of the reasons why it was designated as a Heritage Conservation District pursuant to Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 2003. The quality and consistency of the homes, predominantly built between 1895 and 1910 mainly in the Queen Anne Revival style, is highlighted in the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan*.

Physical goals of the designation of the Bishop Hellmuth area as a Heritage Conservation District, in Section 3 of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan*, are:

- *To encourage the retention and conservation of historic buildings and landscapes;*
- *To guide the design of new work to be compatible with the old;*
- *To enhance the historic character and visual appeal of the area;*
- *To achieve and maintain a cohesive, well designed and identifiable historic area.*

To implement these goals, policies are established to manage change within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. Section 4.2 provides policies for building alterations including the following guiding principles:

- *Identify the architectural style – the architectural style of the building should be identified to ensure the building alterations are in keeping with the style and its characteristics.*
- *Preserve historic architectural features – alterations should preserve important architectural features of the main building.*
- *Conserve rather than replace – original building materials, features and finishes should be repaired and conserved rather than replaced, when possible. The original has greater historical value.*
- *Replicate in keeping – when replacing building features, they should be duplicated or be in keeping with the character of the original.*
- *Record changes – building alterations should be recorded by the owner through “before and after” photographs or drawings for future reference. They should be deposited with the heritage planner.*
- *Save removed architectural features – historic materials and features, such as old windows and trim, when in sound condition should be saved and stored for future use in a dry and safe part of the building.*

The *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines* include policies and guidelines related to alterations to properties located within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. Verandahs (porches) within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District are identified as highlights of the front façades, the conservation of which is a high priority.

The following policies are applicable for verandahs (porches):

80% of the buildings in the heritage district have verandahs, most of which are decorative highlights of the front façade. Together with stained glass windows and decorative gables, the conservation of verandahs is a high priority. Alterations should ensure their conservation, particularly the original posts, handrails and brackets. If parts are to be replaced, they should duplicate the original. Closing in of verandahs is discouraged as not in keeping with the character of the district.

Section 6.1, Work Requiring Approval, clearly identifies verandah (porch) changes as requiring Heritage Alteration Permit approval.

Conservation Principles for porches in the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Guidelines* emphasize the importance of duplicating originals when repairing. It states, “it is important to avoid such incompatible changes and to conserve the original appearance of an historic porch.”

Conservation Guidelines for Queen Anne Revival Houses are as follows:

Aim to:

- *Retain the decorative and colourful architectural character.*
- *Conserve the original finishes, particularly painted wood roofs and soffits and fascias and decorative details.*
- *Resist applying vinyl or metal siding over wood roof soffits and fascias. They lack historic character.*
- *If replacing old doors and windows with new, ensure they are proportioned with the original.*
- *Conserve original painted wood window frames, sash and storms.*
- *Resist vinyl or metal window replacements. They lack historic character.*
- *If replacing details, such as handrails, match the original.*
- *When re-shingling the roof, consider the original finish - cedar shingle or asphalt shingle that looks like cedar.*
- *Conserve the front verandah, where present, particularly the painted wood floor, ceiling and fascias, columns and handrails.*
- *Conserve old chimneys, even when no longer in use. Cap and seal.*

- *Use original or period paint colours.*

Guidelines for porch replacement (Appendix D) include details: style, foundation, floor, steps, skirting, posts, handrail, spindles, and decorative features. In particular:

Handrail – Handrails and newel posts should match the post style. Typically old handrails were 30” high. Today, the OBC requires 36” to 42”, depending on circumstances. This can upset the original proportions of the porch. A partially successful remedy is to build the handrail to the traditional height and add a second higher rail in slender metal pipe that does not clash with the original. This should be discussed with the building inspector.

Spindles – traditionally, spindles were 1&3/4” square and 3&1/2” apart between centres. Frequently new spindles are thinner and further apart. This should be avoided as the rail looks weak and light-weight.

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

None.

4.0 Key Issues and Considerations

Throughout the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines*, the importance of conserving original heritage attributes (features) is emphasized. When replacement is required, duplication of original elements is the recommended approach to “conserve the original appearance of an historic porch” for materials, features, and finishes. With 80% of the buildings in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District featuring a verandah or porch, their conservation is a high priority.

4.1 Heritage Alteration Permit application (HAP24-017-L)

The City received a Heritage Alteration Permit application on April 24, 2024, seeking approval for the replacement of the existing painted wood balustrade with a vinyl (plastic) railing system (“Country Estate 1.5” x 1.5” Vinyl Spindle Railing”), noting deterioration of the existing modern wood railing and posts. In the application, it is noted that the applicant plans to paint the proposed vinyl (plastic) balustrade. Per Section 42(4), *Ontario Heritage Act*, a decision on this Heritage Alteration Permit application is required by July 23, 2024.

4.2 Previous Heritage Alteration Permits

In 2010, a front porch was removed from the front of the house at 332 St James Street (Figure 2) and replaced with a porch more in keeping with the styling of the neighbouring sibling houses to the immediate east and west, and consistent with the guidance of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines*, as approved by Municipal Council in a Heritage Alteration Permit application. The replacement porch features a flat roof supported by round columns set on stone block plinths at its base. The porch features a balustrade composed of turned wood spindles set between a wood top and bottom rail. The porch also features a skirt composed of vertical wood boards. The design plans for the replacement porch approved in a Heritage Alteration Permit application in 2010, which followed the Conservation Guidelines for the replacement of porches of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan*. The fiberglass columns of the current porch are painted, resulting in a finish and overall appearance consistent with that of traditional construction that characterizes the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. The turned wood spindles set between a wood top and bottom rail to form a balustrade in a traditional style that can be seen on porches elsewhere within the area and contribute to the Queen Anne Revival styling of the house and the heritage character of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District.

In 2023, the wood tongue and groove porch decking was replaced with composite (“Trex”) porch decking boards, following Heritage Alteration Permit approval (HAP23-030-D). The Heritage Alteration Permit for this work noted that while the use of plastic or composite materials is discouraged by the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation*

District Plan, this porch decking was particularly prone to deterioration, and the installation of composite porch decking was anticipated to prolong the lifespan of the rest of the porch. A term and condition of this Heritage Alteration Permit approval was that the replacement deck board match the scale and profile of the existing wood boards as closely as possible. The porch decking is one of the least visually prominent aspects of the porch in comparison to balustrades, which are highly visible from the street and contribute significantly to the character and integrity of the property and historic streetscape.

4.3 Similar Heritage Alteration Permit Applications

4.3.1 330 St James Street, Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District

In 2021, a complaint was received regarding the replacement of the front porch on the neighbouring property at 330 St James Street, designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. The front porch of the house was replaced with vinyl (plastic) materials without Heritage Alteration Permit approval, or a Building Permit (Figure 4).

A Heritage Alteration Permit application seeking retroactive approval for the use of vinyl (plastic) was refused by Municipal Council: <https://pub-london.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=82840>. A subsequent Heritage Alteration Permit application presented a compromise that included removal of the new vinyl (plastic) railing and replacement with a painted wood railing in a traditional style in compliance with the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan*, but retention of the existing vinyl (plastic) decking and porch skirt was later presented: <https://pub-london.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=81563>. This approach was supported by staff, the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH), and approved with terms and conditions by Municipal Council. The alterations were completed in 2021 in compliance with the approved Heritage Alteration Permit (Figure 3).

4.3.2 27 Bruce Street, Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District

In 2023, the covered front porch on the property at 27 Bruce Street, a B-ranked property within the Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District, was removed and replaced without obtaining a Building Permit or Heritage Alteration Permit approval (Images 6-11). A Heritage Alteration Permit application was received seeking retroactive approval for removal of the previous front porch, and replacement with a new front porch consisting of pre-finished vinyl (plastic) materials. Plastic materials are not supported within the policies and guidelines of the *Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines*. The alterations that were completed did not suitably conserve the heritage character of the property. Staff did not support the retroactive Heritage Alteration Permit application. The staff recommendation was to remove the vinyl (plastic) materials of the porch in favour of traditional painted wood materials to bring the porch back into compliance with the policies and guidelines of the *Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines*. Notwithstanding the staff recommendation, the Heritage Alteration Permit application seeking retroactive approval for the removal of the previous porch and replacement with a new vinyl (plastic) porch was approved by Municipal Council: <https://pub-london.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=99340>.

4.4 Material

When considering the replacement of building features, the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan* seeks the duplication of the original or replacement in keeping with the character of the original. Painted wood is the traditional or original material for most porch features. Vinyl/plastic porch materials are inauthentic materials that do not sufficiently reproduce the historic appearance, texture, and finish of materials such as painted wood which characterizes the material palette of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District.

The proposed vinyl (plastic) railing and spindles do not replicate the original balustrade in terms of material, features (details), or finish. In the Heritage Alteration Permit application, it is noted that the applicant plans to paint the proposed vinyl balustrade.

Staff undertook additional research to learn more about the proposed vinyl railing system. Staff contacted the manufacturer (Nebraska Plastics Inc.) to obtain more information on the proposed “Country Estate 1.5” x 1.5” Vinyl Spindle Railing” (Figure 3). Regarding the ability to paint the vinyl railing system, the manufacturer replied “[we] do not recommend painting our Vinyl products as we do not know how each individual paint would affect the PVC.” The manufacturer added that painting would void the manufacturer warranty. For these reasons, installation of this product would result in a finish inconsistent with the painted finish of traditional wood porches found throughout the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District.

The use of appropriate repair methods and replacement materials ensures the long-term protection of the cultural heritage value or interest of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. The use of inauthentic or inappropriate materials and construction methods has a negative impact on the cultural heritage value or interest of the individual protected resource (building) as well as an incremental and cumulative negative impact on the heritage character of the surrounding Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. This incremental negative impact caused by inappropriate alterations can result in a loss of historic identity and integrity within the Heritage Conservation District, directly contradicting one of the goals of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan.

4.5 Style

The proposed railing and spindle system does not comply with the policies of Section 4.2 of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan* which seeks replication in keeping with the original where replacement is required. The pre-assembled nature of vinyl (plastic) railing systems does not adequately replicate the traditional construction styles that can be seen on porches elsewhere within the area. While the original porch on the front of the house has long been lost, the porches of the neighbouring sibling houses at 330 St James Street and 334 St James Street influenced the design of the existing porch, including an appropriate balustrade style, constructed of wood, with a painted finish.

The existing porch of the house at 332 St James Street, constructed circa 2010, replicates many of the historic details that characterizes period or original porches in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, including the use of turned spindles and columns with a painted finish, which staff supported in a positive recommendation on a Heritage Alteration Permit application in 2010. As a “system”, the proposed vinyl (plastic) spindles and rails are limited in their flexibility of application and could be difficult to adapt to unique or non-standard lengths or runs. Additionally, the plain, rectangular shaped vinyl (plastic) top and bottom rail being proposed does not appropriately replicate the carved profile of original wood railings traditionally found within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, resulting in a bulky appearance.

As the porch is more than 24” above grade, a Building Permit is required to replace the railing/guard. Building Division has advised that a drawing/detail prepared by a qualified engineer is required for the vinyl/plastic railing, as well as the connection detail to the existing painted fiberglass columns. The required connection detail to attach to the existing painted fiberglass columns has not been clearly articulated in the information submitted as part of the Heritage Alteration Permit application and could have a further, yet unknown, visual and aesthetic impact on the style of the porch’s railing.

Additionally, in previous Heritage Alteration Permit applications, staff have supported the introduction of alternative or composite materials in areas like porch skirts, which can be particularly prone to rot due to their contact with the ground, and in areas not visible from the street (such as a rear addition or a porch deck, in some instances). A vinyl (plastic) porch railing is highly visible from the street and anticipated to have a negative impact on the heritage character of this property and the surrounding Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District.

The Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan directs that if building features are required to be replaced, they should duplicate the original. Vinyl (plastic) balustrade systems do not duplicate the historic appearance, texture, finish, and construction style of a traditional wood porch balustrade. Painted wood remains a historically appropriate material for repairs and alterations to porches in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District.

Conclusion

The property at 332 St James Street is designated as a part of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, pursuant to Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The house on the property at 332 St James Street contributes greatly to the cultural heritage value or interest of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District as it stands prominently within a group of three matching sibling houses with similar front porches along St James Street.

A Heritage Alteration Permit application was received by the City seeking approval to replace the existing wood balustrade with a vinyl (plastic) railing system (“Country Estate 1.5” x 1.5” Vinyl Spindle Railing”). While it was built in 2010, the existing porch on the front of the house contributes greatly to the conservation of the integrity and heritage character of the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District through its application of appropriate materials and style. Vinyl (plastic) balustrade systems do not sufficiently duplicate the historic appearance, texture, finish, and construction style of a traditional wood porch balustrade. The proposed alterations are not consistent with the *Provincial Policy Statement* as they fail to conserve the significant built heritage resource and do not conform to the policies *The London Plan* as they do not conform to the policies and guidelines of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines*. Staff recommend refusal of the Heritage Alteration Permit application for the protected heritage property at 332 St James Street.

Prepared by: Konner Mitchener, M. Arch, Intern CAHP
Heritage Planner

Submitted by: Kyle Gonyou, RPP, MCIP, CAHP
Manager, Heritage and Urban Design

Appendices

Appendix A Property Location
Appendix B Images
Appendix C Drawings
Appendix D Porch Guidelines

Sources

Staff report to the London Advisory Committee on Heritage on February 10, 2021 for previous Heritage Alteration Permit application for 330 St James Street, Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District (HAP21-001-L): <https://pub-london.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=82840> (see Item 4.3.1)

Staff report to the London Advisory Committee on Heritage on June 9, 2021 for previous Heritage Alteration Permit application for 330 St James Street, Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District (HAP21-001-L): <https://pub-london.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=81563> (see Item 4.3.1).

Staff report to the Planning and Environment Committee on May 23, 2023 for previous Heritage Alteration Permit application for 27 Bruce Street, Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District (HAP23-015-L): <https://pub-london.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=99340> (see Item 4.3.2)

Correspondence, April 23-24, 2024. Nebraska Plastics, Inc. re: “Country Estate 1.5” x 1.5” Vinyl Spindle Railing.”

Corporation of the City of London. *2023-2027 Strategic Plan*.

Corporation of the City of London. *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan*. 2003.

Corporation of the City of London. Property file.

Corporation of the City of London. *Register of Cultural Heritage Resources*. 2022.

Corporation of the City of London. *The London Plan*. 2022 (consolidated).

Ontario Heritage Act. 2023, c. 21. Sched. 6.

Appendix A – Property Location

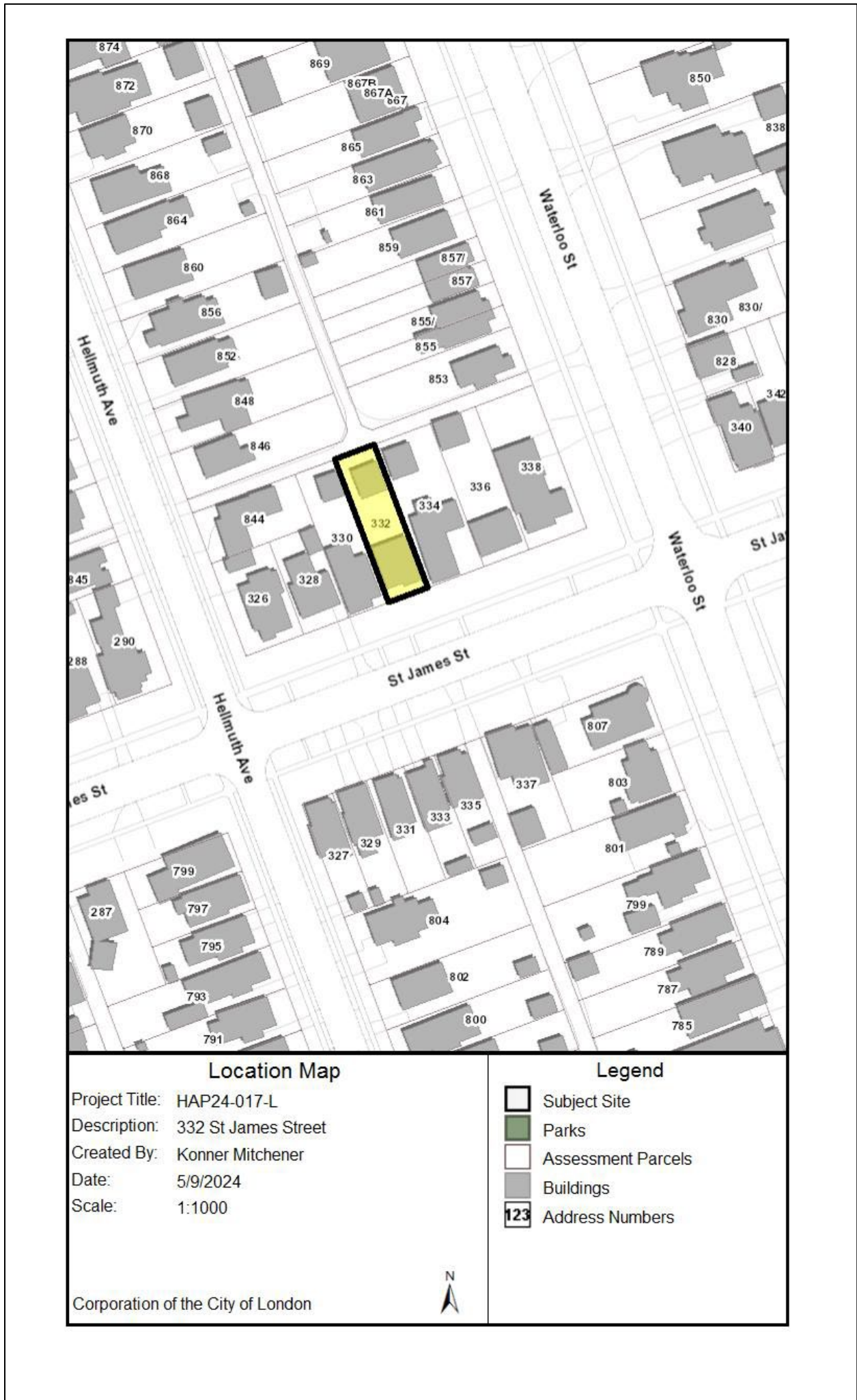


Figure 1: Location Map showing the subject property at 332 St James Street.

Appendix B – Images



Image 1: Photograph showing the house on the property at 332 St James Street with existing wood porch on the front of the house. The porch railing and newel posts consist of wood materials with a painted finish (taken May 13, 2024).



Image 2: Photograph showing the similarly designed houses at 330 St James Street, 332 St James Street, and 334 St James Street (taken May 13, 2024).



Figure 2: Photographs of the house at 332 St James Street, Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District. Top, showing the porch prior to 2010. Bottom, showing the porch following its replacement with a porch approved in a Heritage Alteration Permit application in 2010 (bottom photograph taken May 13, 2024).



Image 3: Photograph submitted with the Heritage Alteration Permit application demonstrating need for repair or replacement of the post on the front porch steps at 332 St James Street.



Image 4: Photograph submitted with the Heritage Alteration Permit application demonstrating need for repair or replacement of the post on the front porch steps at 332 St James Street.



Image 5: Photograph submitted with the Heritage Alteration Permit application showing proposed vinyl (Country Estate 1.5" x 1.5" Vinyl Spindle Railing") replacement railing materials.



1.5" x 1.5" Vinyl Spindle Railing with T-Rail

Figure 3: Image from supplier website showing the installed appearance of the proposed "1.5" x 1.5" Vinyl Spindle Railing" system (<https://countryestatevinyl.com/products/vinyl-railing/>).



Figure 4: Comparison of porch at 330 St James Street in 2017 prior to replacement without Heritage Alteration Permit approval (top), after replacement in 2020 with vinyl (plastic) materials without Heritage Alteration Permit approval (middle), and after replacement with wood materials in 2021 following Municipal Council's approval of the Heritage Alteration Permit application (bottom).



Image 6: Photograph of the house at 27 Bruce Street showing the previous porch prior removal without Heritage Alteration Permit or Building Permit approval. The porch posts and railings consisted of wood materials. The decorative brackets were also removed.



Image 7: Photograph of the house at 27 Bruce Street showing the porch with vinyl-clad (plastic) posts and vinyl railings, with pressure-treated decking.



Image 8: Photograph showing detail of the vinyl (plastic) porch materials used for the replacement of the porch at 27 Bruce Street within the Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District.



Image 9: Photograph showing detail of the vinyl (plastic) porch materials used for the replacement of the porch at 27 Bruce Street within the Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District.



Image 10: Photograph showing detail of the vinyl (plastic) porch materials used for the replacement of the porch at 27 Bruce Street within the Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District.



Image 11: Photograph showing detail of the vinyl (plastic) porch materials used for the replacement of the porch at 27 Bruce Street within the Wortley Village-Old South Heritage Conservation District.

Appendix C – Drawings

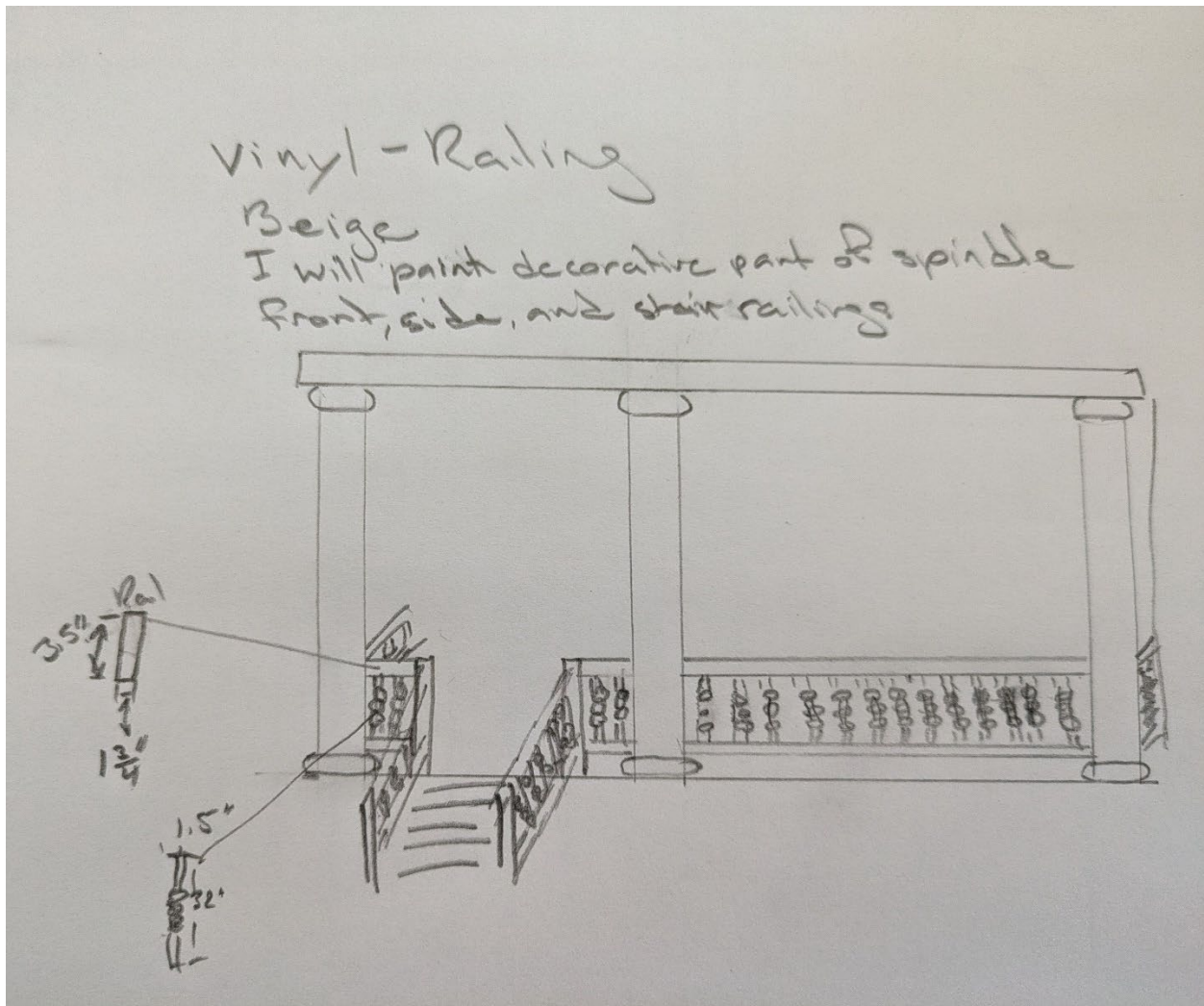


Figure 5: Drawing submitted with the Heritage Alteration Permit application showing proposed change to porch railings.

Appendix D – Porch Guidelines

PORCHES

BUILDING CONSERVATION GUIDELINE

Nicholas Hill Architect . Planner



CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

- Conserve original porches. They are an integral part of the overall architectural appearance of the building.
- When repairing, duplicate the original sizes of column, handrail, skirting and decorative features.
- Avoid closing-in porches. They lose their social value as outside rooms on the street.

Figure 6: Porch Guidelines in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Guidelines (p.43).

INTRODUCTION

Porches are prominent features on many historic homes. Historically, porches were relatively unknown before the 1800's, but by the mid-1800's they became an essential feature of practical and social use. Practically, they provide shelter to the house entrance and outdoor seating. Socially, they are communal places to sit and converse with family, friends and neighbours. Published in 1850, A. J. Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses* described the porch as a "pretty little open porch where in the cooler hours of the day the husband, wife and children may sit and enjoy the fresh breath of morning or evening hours . . ." Porches contribute, therefore, both to the architecture of the building and the quality of life of the neighbourhood. However, porches have had an uneven conservation history. Because they are a high maintenance item, they are prone to removal and replacement, often with a structure that bears little resemblance to the original or historic style of the building. In other cases, the decorative brackets, handrails and columns are removed or the whole verandah is closed in, appearing bulky and out of keeping. It is important to avoid such incompatible changes and to conserve the original appearance of an historic porch.

PORCH MAINTENANCE

More than most parts of an historic building, porches are most prone to deterioration by weather, water, insects and ground settlement. They are exposed features, but if periodically checked and maintained will last indefinitely.

Footings	A frequent problem with porches occurs when the front sinks and is pulled away from the house. This is usually caused by water collecting underneath. To avoid this, slope the ground under the porch away from the house. As an added precaution, install a perforated drainage tile 12" outside the perimeter.
Understructure	Ensure good ventilation and treat wood with a water-repellent preservative to protect against mold and mildew.
Floor Slope	Ensure the floor slopes away from the house a minimum of 1/4" rise for each 2' for good surface drainage.
Floor Support	As piers can move over the seasons, ensure the floor structure is resting evenly on the piers. Remedy by inserting wood shim.
Floor Boards	These are prone to extreme weathering and wear, particularly the outer ends above the headerboard. Replace only those boards, or parts thereof, and fit in to match the original. If the entire floor needs replacement, consider Douglas fir, which is the hardest softwood, with a dense close grain.
Floor Joists	Often porches were under-structured, allowing bounce and deterioration of the floor boards and finish. To remedy, insert additional new joists either mid-spaced between, or bolted onto, existing joists.
Skirtings	Being close to the ground, porch skirtings are susceptible to deterioration. Ensure a minimum clearance to the ground of 3". Keep foundation planting back by 3' for breathing and drying the under-structure.

Figure 7: Porch Guidelines in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Guidelines (p.44).

	Keep foundation planting back by 3' for breathing and drying the under-structure.
Railings	Ensure the top and bottom railings are sloped to drain water off.
Columns	Column bases are highly susceptible to rot due to cracks opening up between the columns and floor, and allowing water to penetrate the open grain of the wood. If rotted, repair only what is deteriorated by splicing in a new section, using a downward sloping miter to prevent moisture trapping.
Matting	A painted wood floor can be slippery, particularly in winter. Consider installing a length of natural sisal matting on the floor and steps.

PORCH REPLACEMENT

When a porch has deteriorated beyond repair, it will require replacement. The following should be considered when designing the new porch.

Style	The porch style should match the architectural style of the building. The four prominent porch styles are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Gothic - pointed and geometric • Queen Anne - exuberant and multi-angled • Classical - elegant and refined • Craftsman - boxy and hand-crafted
Foundation	It is best to pour concrete foundations in circular card sonar tubes to 48" below grade level. Set the top 2" above grade with a metal stirrup to attach the new wood posts of the porch. In this way, no wood is in contact with the ground.
Floor	Porch floors were typically 7/8" deep, 6" wide, tongue-and-grooved planks of Douglas fir. This makes for a sound floor and is preferable to the 3/4" deep planks more commonly manufactured today.
Steps	Porch steps were traditionally constructed with wood stringers, risers and treads. This should be continued. Precast concrete, while requiring less maintenance, do not belong on an historic building and should be avoided. The riser and tread dimensions should comply with the OBC. Risers should not exceed 7/8". A comfortable rise is between 7" and 7&1/2".
Skirting	The porch skirting which closes in the area under the raised floor should be of wood and in the architectural style of the building. Typically, skirts were either wood diagonal or rectangular lattice or vertical wood slats.

Figure 8: Porch Guidelines in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Guidelines (p.45).

Posts	<p>Posts should be carefully selected and designed to suit the architectural style of the building. The four typical post styles are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid round turned wood • Solid square wood with applied ornament • Built-up square box columns • Turned hollow columns <p>Redwood or cedar are preferred woods to use for new posts.</p>
Handrail	<p>Handrails and newel posts should match the post style. Typically, old handrails were 30" high. Today, the OBC requires 36" to 42", depending on circumstances. This can upset the original proportions of the porch. A partially successful remedy is to build the handrail to the traditional height and add a second higher rail in slender metal pipe that does not clash with the original. This should be discussed with the building inspector.</p>
Spindles	<p>Traditionally, spindles were 1 & 3/4" square and 3 & 1/2" apart between centres. Frequently new spindles are thinner and further apart. This should be avoided as the rail looks weak and light-weight.</p>
Decorative Features	<p>It is important to match the style and extent of decorative brackets and fascias with the architectural style of the building. The extent and design of the decorative features are very important to the porch appearing right.</p>

Figure 9: Porch Guidelines in the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Guidelines (p.46).