

Report to London Advisory Committee on Heritage

To: Chair and Members
London Advisory Committee on Heritage
From: John M. Fleming
Managing Director, Planning and City Planner
Subject: Heritage Alteration Permit Application by E. Snihurowych at
783 Hellmuth Avenue, Bishop Hellmuth Heritage
Conservation District
Meeting on: Wednesday July 10, 2019

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning & City Planner, with the advice of the Heritage Planner, the application under Section 42 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* seeking retroactive approval to alter the porch of the building located at 783 Hellmuth Avenue, within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, **BE PERMITTED**.

Executive Summary

Alterations to the porch located at 783 Hellmuth Avenue, within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, were undertaken without Heritage Alteration Permit approval. The property owner has applied for a Heritage Alteration Permit seeking retroactive approval for the alterations undertaken. Staff have reviewed the alterations using the policies and guidelines of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan* and found the alterations to be compliant. Approval of the completed alterations is recommended.

Analysis

1.0 Site at a Glance

1.1 Location

The property at 783 Hellmuth Avenue is located on the west side of Hellmuth Avenue between St James Street and Oxford Street East (Appendix A).

1.2 Heritage Status

The property at 783 is located within the Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District, which was designated pursuant to Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* on February 7, 2003.

1.3 Description

The building located at 783 Hellmuth Avenue is one-and-a-half storey buff brick structure that was built in circa 1904 (Appendix B). The design and details of the building are influenced by Queen Anne Revival architectural style as it has a decorative front gable, large main floor window with a stained glass transom, and a covered porch with many of its historic details including the brackets and spandrels. The front façade gable was rebuilt in 2004 after a fire on the top floor. The restoration work after the fire included the decorative detail within the gable and the windows on the top floor.

2.0 Legislative/Policy Framework

2.1 Provincial Policy Statement

Heritage conservation is a matter of provincial interest (Section 2.d, *Planning Act*). The *Provincial Policy Statement* (2014) 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.”

2.2 Ontario Heritage Act

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*)

Municipal Council must respond within 90 days after a request for a Heritage Alteration Permit application (Section 42(4), *Ontario Heritage Act*).

2.3 The London Plan

The policies of *The London Plan* found in the Cultural Heritage chapter support the conservation of London's cultural heritage resources. Policy 554_ of *The London Plan* articulates one of the primary initiatives as a municipality to "ensure that new development and public works are undertaken to enhance and be sensitive to our cultural heritage resources." To help ensure that new development is compatible, Policy 594_ (under appeal) of *The London Plan* provides the following direction:

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.*

2.3 Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District

One of the Guiding Principles in the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan* is to "Replicate in Keeping." This guiding principle directs that "when replacing building features, they should be duplicated or be in keeping with the character of the original."

The *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan – Conservation Guidelines*, have specific guidelines to each architectural style found within the Heritage Conservation District. For properties demonstrating the Queen Anne Revival architectural style, the aim is it to:

- Retain the decorative and colourful architectural character;
- Conserve the original finishes;
- If replacing details, such as handrails, match the original;
- Conserve the front verandah, where present, particularly the painted wood floor, ceiling and fascia, columns and handrails; and,
- Use original or period paint colours.

In addition, the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan – Conservation Guidelines* also have specific guidelines for each heritage attribute.

For porches:

- Posts should be carefully selected and designed to suit the architectural style of the building. The four typical post styles are:
 - Solid round turned wood;
 - Solid square wood with applied ornament;
 - Built-up square box columns;
 - Turned hollow columns; and,
 - Handrails and newel posts should match the post style.

For screen doors:

- The traditional and appropriate style is a wood frame door with interchangeable storm and screen inserts. This allows for a design that mirrors the proportions

and hardware of the principle door. Paint colour can also be applied to match the house.

3.0 Heritage Alteration Permit Application

The Heritage Alteration Permit application was submitted by an agent of the property owner and received on May 15, 2019. The property owner has applied for a Heritage Alteration Permit, seeking retroactive approval, to:

- Replace the former aluminum storm door with a custom wood storm door which matches the adjacent storm door;
- Removal of the former guards, stairs, and hand railing/guards, and replacement with the following details:
 - Wood top and bottom rail with square wood 2" x 2" spindles/balusters;
 - 5/4" x 6" wood planks to match the previous porch surface;
 - Wood stairs with four steps, each made from 2" by 12" treads;
 - Custom replication of the porch's posts in wood;
- Painting all exposed wood.

The new guards, stairs, handrails and storm door were install in spring of 2019 without a Heritage Alteration Permit. Because of this, this Heritage Alteration Permit application has met the conditions for referral requiring consultation with the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH) and a decision by Municipal Council.

Per Section 42(4) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, the 90-day timeline for this Heritage Alteration Permit application will expire on August 13, 2019.

4.0 Analysis

In early spring 2019 the contractors began repairing the property located at 783 Hellmuth Avenue. The contractors attempted to repair the guards, handrails, and stairs. However, these elements of the porch were not able to be repaired as many of the spindles were missing or had split due to rot and the stairs and handrails had deteriorated beyond repair. When architectural features cannot be repaired, the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan* directs to "Replicate in Keeping" when replacing building features. The building features should be duplicated or be in keeping with the character of the original.

The hand railing/guards on the porch were replicated; solid square wood spindles in between a top and bottom rail. This style was used to install new hand railings/guards on the steps, replacing non-original and less compatible railings/guards. The overall proportions of the porch have been retained, as its footprint and structural members have remained the same, and the remaining elements of the porch, such as the decorative brackets and spandrels, have been repaired and painted.

An aluminum screen door was also removed and replaced with a painted wood screen door that mimics the existing screen door. The *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District Plan* directs that screen doors should be a wood frame door with interchangeable storm and screen inserts and paint in a colour to match the house.

5.0 Conclusion

The existing guards, handrails, stairs, and storm doors are compliant with the guidelines of the *Bishop Hellmuth Heritage Conservation District* and should be permitted.

This report was prepared with the assistance of Krista Gowan, Heritage Planner.

Appendix A

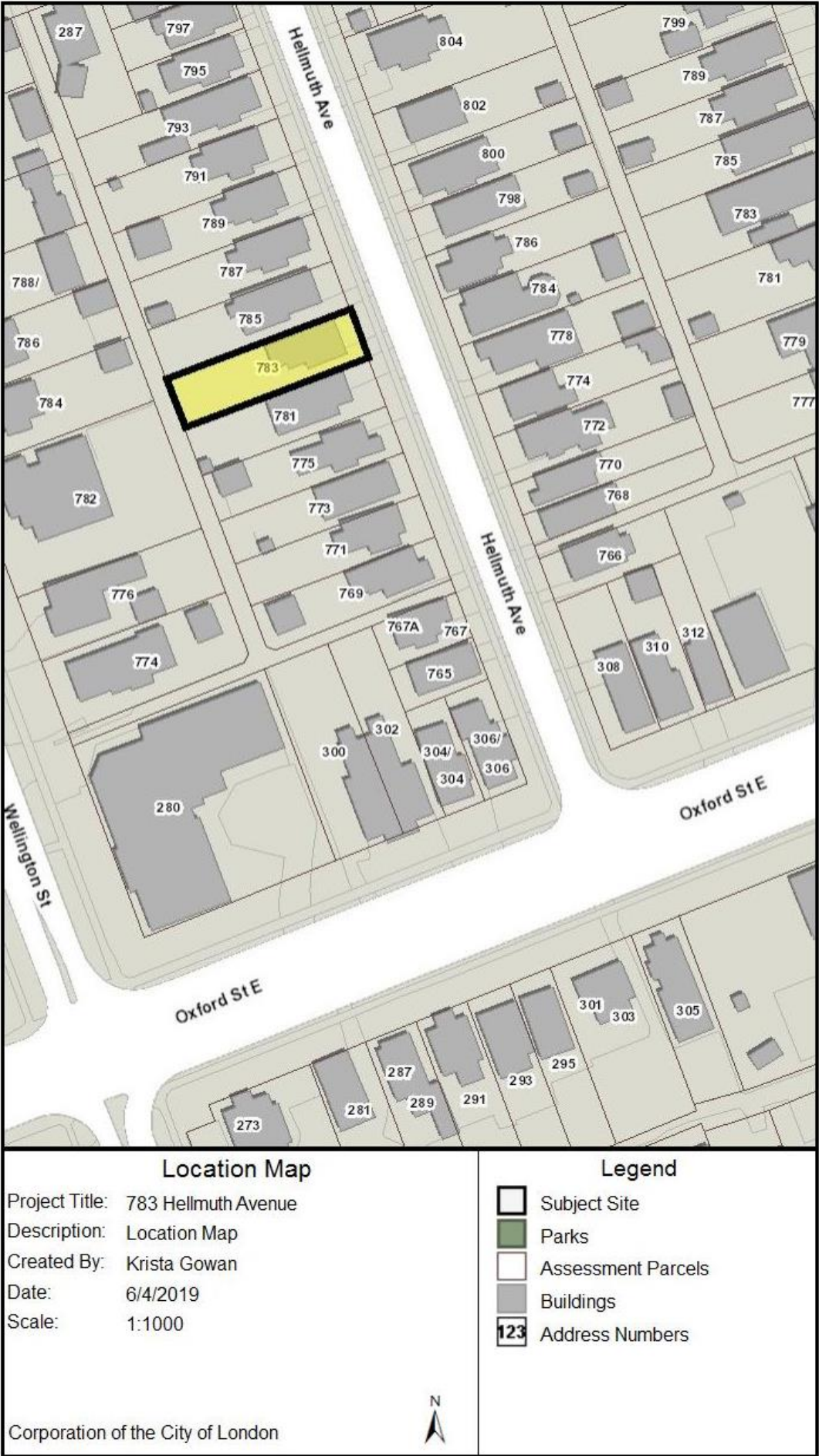


Figure 1: Property location of 783 Hellmuth Avenue.

Appendix B – Images



Image 1: Property at 783 Hellmuth Avenue in September 2018, prior to alterations.



Image 2: Property at 783 Hellmuth Avenue in June 17, 2019 with new guards, handrails, stairs, and storm door.



Image 3: Property at 783 Hellmuth Avenue in September 2018.

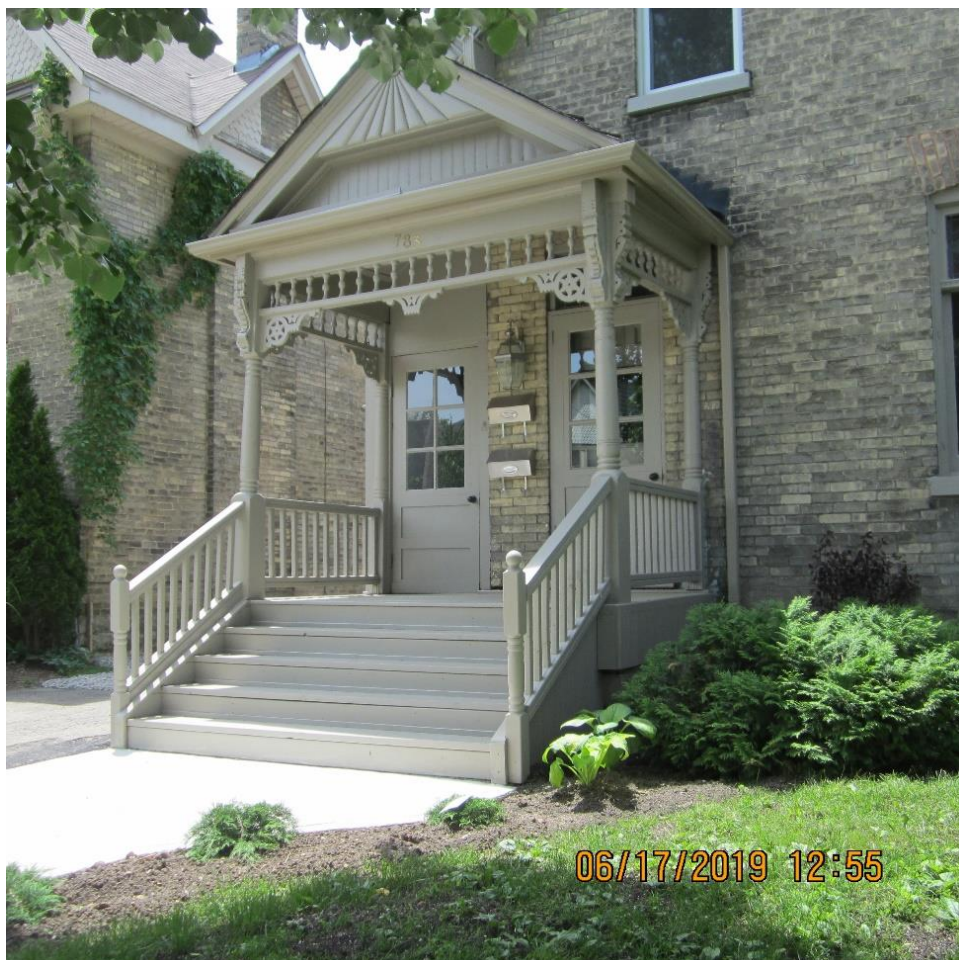


Image 4: Property at 783 Hellmuth Avenue in June 17, 2019 with new guards, handrails, stairs, and storm door.