

REPORT

Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: July 26, 2022

FROM: Planning Services Department

DATE: July 19, 2022

SUBJECT: Review of development application – 23 George Street

LOCATION: 23 George Street

WARD: Ward 3

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RECOMMENDATION:

That the report “Review of development application – 23 George Street”, dated July 19, 2022 from Planning Services, be received.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The property at 23 George Street is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as part of the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District (HCD).
- The owners are proposing to demolish the existing house and replace it with a new two-storey house. This proposal requires site plan approval.
- The purpose of this report is to present the site plan application to the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee for consideration and comments.

BACKGROUND:

The property at 23 George Street is located on the northeast corner of Front Street and George Street and contains a two-storey house with an attached garage. A location map for the property is attached as Appendix A. The owners are proposing to replace the existing house with a new two-storey house with attached garage. Drawings of the proposed house are attached as Appendix B. Photos of the existing house and block analysis maps from the District Plan are attached as Appendix C.

The property is located within 50 metres of Lake Ontario and therefore requires site plan approval. Staff is seeking comments on the subject site plan application from the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee related to the impacts of the development on the heritage attributes of the surrounding heritage conservation district.

The property is located within the Old Oakville HCD but the existing house is not considered to be of significant heritage value. A portion of the existing house does have a similar footprint to a house that existed on the property between 1910 and 1949 (according to fire insurance plans), but according to building permit records, this house was heavily altered and added to in 1971.

Changes from the work in 1971 included: the addition of a second storey over the rear wing of the house, the replacement of the entire roof structure with a new mansard roof, the removal of the original front portico, the addition of an attached garage and the addition of a rear porch and balcony. The property was not included in the inventory of heritage properties in the Old Oakville District Plan when the plan was developed, likely because of these significant changes.

Staff therefore does not consider the subject property to be of cultural heritage value and support the demolition of the existing house. However, the property does include a historic wrought iron fence with stone pillars. These should be retained and restored as part of any redevelopment of the property.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

The official plan designation for the property is Low-Density Residential and the property is zoned RL3: sp11 which permits a detached dwelling. The owners are proposing to construct a new two-storey detached dwelling with a one-storey garage connected to the house through a one-storey breezeway. The two-storey portion of the house would be located to the south of the existing house, in what is currently the front yard. The garage portion would be located in the northwest corner, with vehicular access from George Street. The front door would also face George Street.

The proposed house is a contemporary frame home with simple gable rooflines and shed dormers on the south elevation. The two-storey portion and the garage are proposed to be clad in white brick while the breezeway would have wood siding. The house has been designed with numerous multi-paned windows, accented in some places by wood panelling. The front door on George Street and a larger set of sliding doors on the south elevation are proposed to be finished in a stone door surround. Two second-storey balconies are proposed on the south elevation.

The proposed house would require four minor variances:

- 1) Lot coverage
Whereas the zoning by-law permits a maximum lot coverage of 25%, the applicants are proposing a lot coverage of 27.95%.
- 2) Floor area to lot area

Whereas the zoning by-law requires a maximum floor area to lot area ratio of 30%, the applicants are proposing a ratio of 33.16%.

3) Rear yard setback

Whereas the zoning by-law requires a minimum rear yard setback of 3.5m, the applicants are proposing a rear yard setback of 3.04m (if Front Street is considered the frontage) or 3.00m (if George Street is considered the Frontage). Technically, either the George Street or Front Street frontage can be considered the front yard and this decision has not yet been finalized.

4) Window well

Whereas the zoning by-law requires a window well to not encroach more than 0.6m into a required yard, the proposed window well on the east elevation encroaches 1.10m into the side yard.

The proposed house has a height of 8.76 metres which is below the maximum permitted at 10.5 metres. This is measured from grade to the midpoint of the roof. There are no variances required for height.

When evaluating the changes to the subject property, the district plan for the Old Oakville HCD is the primary policy document to use. In addition to these documents, Heritage Planning staff reviews the proposed application with consideration of the town's Livable Oakville Plan and its cultural heritage policies which support the conservation and enhancement of the town's heritage conservation districts.

The Old Oakville HCD Plan includes the following guidelines as they relate to new construction within the district:

- *Scale in height and mass be compatible with surrounding buildings to ensure visual connectedness and existing sense of scale;*
- *Construction materials should be visually sympathetic with existing buildings and streetscape yet appropriate given the design of the new structure;*
- *Lot line setbacks be permitted to vary with consideration given to neighbouring setbacks and frontages;*
- *The distinguishing original qualities or character of a structure, or environment, shall not be destroyed. The alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural feature should be avoided when possible;*
- *Density to be in conformity with the Official Plan;*
- *Design, style, materials and colour for new construction to be considered on an individual basis on the premise that contemporary styles can be more appropriate in certain cases than emulating turn of the century designs;*
- *Fences, walls, gates, pathways, plantings, light standards, and signs, because of their historic and aesthetic value, should be encouraged to reflect the history, scale and character of the area;*

- *Visual paths, edges, vignettes and vistas which have defined the scale and character of the study area should not be obstructed or eliminated by detrimental visual intrusions.*

The Block Analysis for Block 3 in the District Plan provides a description of the context and guidelines for change within the block. The block maps have been included in Appendix C.

- Block Analysis:
 - This area forms the southern end of a deep gully which runs through the Old Oakville residential district from north to south
 - The central feature of this area is the house at 212 Front Street; it is a focal point in the block which defines the street edge as well as visually separating the street from the lake
- Recommendation
 - This area should become an integral part of a walkway system which would traverse the length of the lake shore in the Old Oakville area
- Block analysis in block map:
 - Deep setback of houses (*including 23 George Street*) gives emphasis to presence of lake

Staff is looking for the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee's comments on the proposal specifically as it relates to its impact on the cultural heritage value of the surrounding Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District, in accordance with the district plan guidelines.

The site plan application for the property will continue to be processed by Planning Services staff, with consideration of comments related to heritage matters from both Heritage Oakville and Heritage Planning staff. If a site plan application is supported by the town, the applicants would then require approval of the minor variances and approval of a heritage permit. The heritage permit application would be circulated to Heritage Oakville for comment, with a final decision being made by Council.

Staff recommend that this report be received by the Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC
None

(B) FINANCIAL
None

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Comments from Heritage Oakville members on this item will be considered as part of the overall review and assessment of the development application.

(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to:

- enhance our cultural environment
- be the most livable town in Canada

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

A Climate Emergency was declared by Council in June 2019 for the purposes of strengthening the Oakville community commitment in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This report supports the town's climate action by conserving the cultural heritage resources of the Old Oakville Heritage Conservation District.

APPENDICES:

- Appendix A – Location map
- Appendix B – Drawings of proposed development
- Appendix C – Photos and site context

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