



Old Meets New: Infill, Adaptive Reuse and the Management of Historic Districts

Managing Change in Heritage Conservation
Districts

Lesley Collins MCIP RPP

Heritage Planner, City of Ottawa

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Outline

- Why do we designate districts?
- After designation- managing change, working with the community
- Responding to development pressures- evaluating new construction in a historic context
- What about politics and civic process?

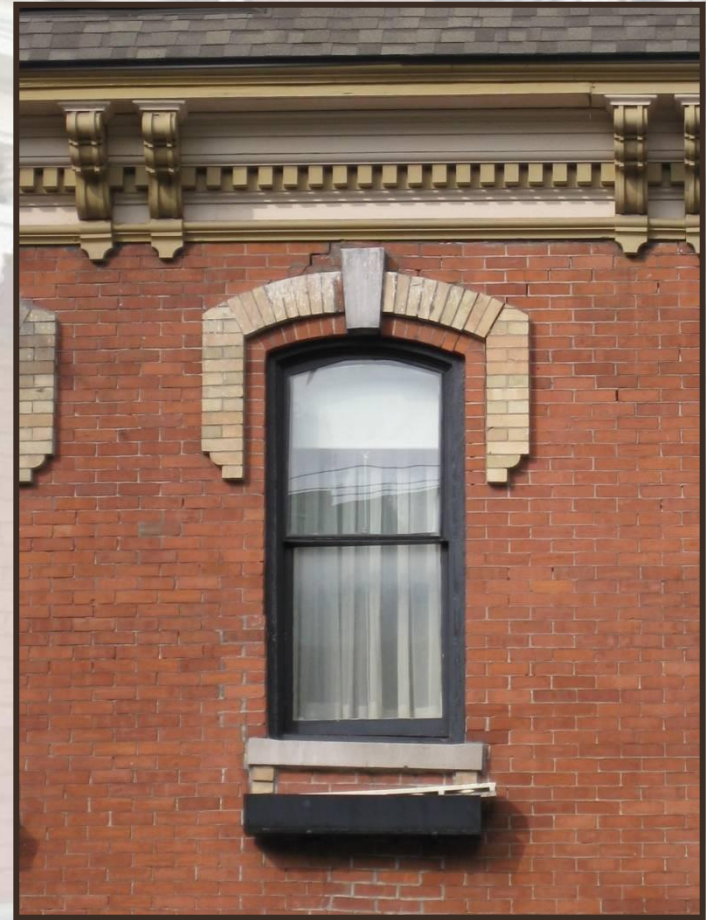
Why designate heritage districts?



- The district tells an important story about the history and development of a place
- All of the buildings may not be old, but a district designation provides the tools to manage change in the future
- Ottawa has 16 designation heritage districts and one proposed district

Benefits of Designation

- Allows for demolition control
- Provides for design review of alterations and new construction
- Can be the basis for economic revitalization
- Grant assistance for property owners



Challenges with HCDs

- Designation is often sought for wrong reasons (ie. to stop development)
- Difficult to ensure that all owners are aware of district and the implications
- Can lead to gentrification, traditional residents can no longer afford to live there
- Become victims of own success, traditional and unique reasons for designation are lost



Developing a Toolkit to Manage HCDs

- Should be developed at the local level but general elements could include:
 - Strong guidelines to direct new development
 - Standards and Guidelines ,municipal and provincial policy
 - Working group of city staff, architect/developer, neighbourhood association, heritage groups and politicians
 - Public education program regarding heritage districts and designation

Working with Community Groups

- The most important voice in the community-differ depending on local context
- Represents the community interest
- Many neighbourhoods with HCDs in Ottawa have a special heritage review committee
- Important for planner, developer and politicians to be involved with these groups as they are the most directly affected

Ottawa Specific Tools and Challenges

- Heritage Overlay zoning
 - In place since 1974 and is applied to HCDs, forms an overlay in the Zoning Bylaw
 - Regulates new construction as well as additions in HCDs
- Ottawa Architectural Conservation Awards
- Ownership of designated buildings by the federal government and foreign missions

Case Study- ByWard Market HCD



- HCD was designated in 1990
- Area represents a 19th century mixed use area with a strong commercial core
- Since designation, the HCD has been largely built out with generally compatible construction

Case Study- ByWard Market HCD



- Constructed in 1914 but heavily damaged in the 1960s after a fire
- Category 4 building in the HCD along a key commercial corridor
- Proposal to demolish the building to construct a new building on the site.

Case Study- ByWard Market HCD

Evaluating New Construction in Heritage Districts

- Is the building significant? Does it contribute to the heritage district? Should demolition be approved?
- Does the proposed development meet the design guidelines? Does it meet other municipal policy?
- Has the community been consulted?

The Key Players

- **Developer:** Goal is to construct a new building, to be profitable
- **Heritage Planner:** Role is to protect the heritage attributes of the district, act as a liaison for all parties and to ensure appropriate planning analysis using policy framework
- **Community Assoc./Individual Owners:** Goal is to protect the interests/heritage of neighbourhood and individual properties and property value

The Key Players ctd.

- **Heritage Advocacy Groups:** Role is to advocate for the protection of heritage
- **Municipal Heritage Committee:** Role is to protect built heritage and advise City Council on heritage issues
- **City Council:** Role is to represent the citizenry and make decisions on heritage and planning issues
- **Appeal Board:** Role is to resolve planning/heritage disputes

How to Achieve a Solution

- Pre-consultation by heritage planner with the developer/architect to refine the design
- Consultation with all parties prior to bringing the application forward for approval
- Create the best solution for the most people
- Work within the guidelines, but recognize the need for negotiation and compromise to ensure that the project is successful

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Case Study: Wilbrod/Laurier HCD

Evaluating Alterations in a Historic Context



- HCD was designated in 1982 as one of five small HCDs in the Sandy Hill neighbourhood.
- No guidelines in place
- Neighbourhood is primarily residential with a mix of housing types along with the University of Ottawa at the west end.

Case Study-Wilbrod/Laurier HCD



- Two late 19th C Queen Anne Revival houses on Laurier Ave, across from Strathcona Park
- Both houses purchased by a development group
- Application under the Ontario Heritage Act to construct an addition at the rear, joining the two buildings and creating eight additional condo units

Considerations

- Does the proposed alteration respect the defined heritage character/attributes of the district? The streetscape?
- Does the proposed addition meet the Standards and Guidelines?
- Does the community support the development?
- Is the development supported by other planning policy?

Case Study- Laurier



Case Study- Wilbrod/Laurier HCD



- Use of brick
- Height and setback of new construction
- Replication of missing elements based on photographs
- Window patterns and entrance

Typical Challenges

- Goals of the developer and the community may conflict
- Subjectivity of design
- Considerations of heritage value of an individual building over the whole district

What about politics and civic process?

- Timelines- requirement in Ontario to complete applications within 90 days
- Even without staff support applicant can come forward for approval from City Council- better to have worked extensively with an applicant on a less than ideal application
- Important to recognize that City Council is the decision maker- staff role is advisory
- Appeal process

A photograph of a two-story red brick house with a white-painted porch. The porch features decorative white railings with a repeating pattern of arched cutouts and a balustrade with turned balusters. The porch roof is supported by white columns and has decorative brackets under the eaves. A large window is visible on the left side of the porch, and a door is on the right. The house is set against a clear blue sky.

Thank You

