

Bob Maton, PhD
02.08.22

Dear Planning Committee members:

Re: 327-329 and 335 Wilson Street

This has been a confusing situation with short timelines to gain clarity.

335 Wilson Street East was initially placed on the Municipal Heritage Register along with 327-329 Wilson East and a number of other heritage buildings in the Ancaster Village after the Brandon House was demolished in April, 2020. But subsequently 335 was removed from both the Inventory List and the Municipal Heritage Register, and was deemed inactive by the city. The application before Planning Committee today seeks to demolish the building at 335 Wilson and replace it with a building that, commendably, will reflect the heritage context of the Village on Wilson Street.

In the staff report for this development application, 227-229 Wilson East was recorded as being on the Inventory List but not on the Municipal Register, which it should have been. This will be corrected, I understand.

At the same time, some of the other heritage buildings on Wilson Street are duplexes, with two address numbers similar to 227-229 Wilson East in this application, i.e., having one main entrance at the front but perhaps two separate dwellings or businesses inside. Because of the design of 335, with one main central door at the front and a bay window on either side of the door, and an aged appearance, it seemed possible that 335 was one of these heritage duplexes; if so it would have had another address number, and if so the other number would have been 333 Wilson East.

335 Wilson was removed from the Inventory List and Municipal Register for the following reason, which I've copied from the staff report at the time:

The property [335 Wilson East] was initially included on the City's Inventory as it was associated with a property identified as part of an early Canadian Inventory of Historic Buildings (CIHB), conducted by the Research Division of the National Historic Parks and Sites Branch of Parks Canada. This CIHB noted a

heritage resource dating to c.1860 located at 333 Wilson Street East. As part of ongoing inventory work by the City, the heritage resource identified by the CIHB was found to no longer exist, so the status was deemed to be inactive.

Considering the inaccuracy of the staff report about 227-229, the removal of 335 from the Inventory and Municipal Heritage Register - after being included - and in the absence of any information about when 335 was actually built, it seemed possible that a further inaccuracy had occurred with 335, and that its address was 333-335, built in 1860. And so I was considering asking for a deferral from Planning Committee to investigate this before the application was approved and 335 was demolished.

However, a former owner of 335 came forward and clarified that 335 was built in the 1950s of breezeblock, and accordingly a deferral is not indicated.

The height of this plan is problematic, since the AWSSP prescribes 9 meters or 2.5 storeys as the staff report states, and the zoning and UHOP amendments for this site to allow 3 storeys and 12 meters reflect that non-conformity to the bylaw. However, the 5-meter setback of the height from the front of the building on the 3rd storey, which reduces its imposition on Wilson Street; the dark coloration of the 3rd storey which further reduces its visual impact; and the fact that there will be 5 dwelling units created on the 2nd and 3rd floors and two commercial units on the ground floor - along with the preservation of 327-329 Wilson East where a number of tenants have been living - are certainly important factors in considering this application.

This landowner clearly wants to preserve the heritage context of the Village with the new building, while deserving commendation for preserving the heritage building beside it and hopefully the living quarters of those who currently live there.

Best wishes and thanks, Bob