

Subject: Application to alter Somerset House, 352 Somerset Street West, a property designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and located in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District

File Number: ACS2023-PRE-RHU-0029

**Report to Built Heritage Committee on 12 September 2023
and Planning and Housing Committee on 20 September 2023
and Council 27 September 2023**

Submitted on August 18, 2023 by Court Curry, Manager, Right of Way, Heritage and Urban Design Services, Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development Department

Contact Person: Anne Fitzpatrick, Planner III, Heritage Planning Branch

613-580-2424,25651, Anne.Fitzpatrick@ottawa.ca

Ward: Somerset (14)

Objet: Demande de modification de la maison Somerset située au 352, rue Somerset Ouest, bien désigné aux termes de la partie V de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario* et faisant partie du district de conservation du patrimoine du centre-ville

Dossier : ACS2023-PRE-RHU-0029

**Rapport au Comité du patrimoine bâti le 12 septembre 2023,
au Comité de la planification et du logement le 20 septembre 2023,
et au Conseil le 27 septembre 2023**

Soumis le 18 août 2023 par Court Curry, Gestionnaire, Services des emprises, du patrimoine et du design urbain, Direction générale de la planification, de l'immobilier et du développement économique

Personne ressource: Anne Fitzpatrick, Urbaniste III, Planification du Patrimoine

613-580-2424,25651, Anne.Fitzpatrick@ottawa.ca

Quartier: Somerset (14)

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Built Heritage Committee and the Planning and Housing Committee recommend that Council:

- 1. Approve the application to alter 352 Somerset Street West according to plans prepared by Chmiel Architects, dated June 9, 2023 conditional upon:

 - a. The implementation of the conservation measures identified in the Heritage Impact Assessment and as illustrated in the Conservation Elevations attached as Documents 8 and 9;**
 - b. The applicant submitting reports monitoring the condition of the historic structure from a professional engineer with heritage experience, to the satisfaction of Heritage Planning and Building Code Services;**
 - c. The applicant providing material samples for any new material to be used on the historic building and exterior materials for the addition to Heritage staff's satisfaction; and**
 - d. The submission of a construction schedule to the satisfaction of staff in Heritage Planning and Building Code Services.****
- 2. Delegate the authority for minor design changes to the General Manager, Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development Department;**
- 3. Approve the issuance of the heritage permit with a two-year expiry date from the date of issuance unless otherwise extended by Council.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité du patrimoine bâti et le Comité de la planification et du logement recommandent au Conseil :

- 1. d'approuver la demande visant à modifier le 352, rue Somerset Ouest selon les plans préparés par Chmiel Architects en date du 9 juin 2023 sous réserve des conditions suivantes :**
 - a. que soient mises en place les mesures de conservation désignées dans l'Évaluation des répercussions sur le patrimoine et illustrées dans les dessins en élévation ci-joints en tant que documents 8 et 9;**
 - b. que le requérant soumette des rapports de surveillance de l'état de la structure historique rédigés par un ingénieur ayant de l'expérience en**

matière de patrimoine, à la satisfaction de la Direction de la planification du patrimoine et des Services du Code du bâtiment;

- c. que le requérant fournisse des échantillons de tout nouveau matériau devant être utilisé sur le bâtiment historique ou l'enveloppe de l'annexe, à la satisfaction du personnel chargé du patrimoine; et**
- d. que soit soumis un calendrier des travaux de construction à la satisfaction du personnel de la Direction de la planification du patrimoine et des Services du Code du bâtiment;**

- 2. de déléguer au directeur général de la Direction générale de la planification, de l'immobilier et du développement économique le pouvoir d'apporter des modifications mineures de conception;**
- 3. d'approuver la délivrance d'un permis patrimonial d'une durée de deux ans à compter de la date de délivrance, sauf prolongation accordée par le Conseil municipal.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The department recommends approval of the application to alter the building at 352 Somerset Street West, known as Somerset House, which is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as part of the Centretown Heritage Conservation District. The proposed development includes the restoration and stabilization of the historic building and the construction of a three-storey addition at the back (east) of the existing building. The proposed development is a mixed-use building with two commercial units and 14 residential units. This report has been prepared as applications for alteration under the *Ontario Heritage Act* require City Council approval. The proposal meets the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and the Centretown and Minto Park Heritage Conservation District Plan.

The building is prominently located at the intersection at Bank Street and Somerset Street West and has been vacant and in a deteriorated condition since 2007. It has been subject to multiple *Building Code Act* orders, By-law and Regulatory Services Notices of Violation and Property Standards orders. The property is listed on the City's Heritage Watch List and is monitored regularly by City staff.

RÉSUMÉ

La Direction générale recommande d'approuver la demande de modification du bâtiment situé au 352, rue Somerset Ouest, soit la maison Somerset, bien désigné aux termes de la partie V de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario* et faisant partie du district de conservation du patrimoine

du centre-ville. Font partie du projet la restauration et la stabilisation du bâtiment historique ainsi que la construction d'une annexe de trois étages à l'arrière est du bâtiment. Le but est d'en faire un bâtiment à polyvalent comprenant deux locaux commerciaux et 14 logements. Le présent rapport a été élaboré, car les demandes de modification faites en vertu de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario* requièrent une approbation du Conseil municipal. La proposition est conforme aux Normes et lignes directrices pour la conservation des lieux patrimoniaux au Canada et au Plan des districts de conservation du patrimoine du centre-ville et du parc Minto.

Le bâtiment est situé bien en vue à l'intersection des rues Bank et Somerset Ouest. Il est inoccupé depuis 2007 et se trouve dans un état de détérioration avancé. Il a fait l'objet de plusieurs ordonnances en vertu de la *Loi sur le code du bâtiment*, avis d'infraction des Services des règlements municipaux et ordonnances concernant les normes de biens-fonds. Le bien est inscrit sur la liste de surveillance des biens à valeur patrimoniale de la Ville et fait l'objet d'un suivi par le personnel.

BACKGROUND

The building at 352 Somerset Street West, known as Somerset House, is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Somerset and Bank Streets, shown in Document 1, in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District, which is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA). The cultural heritage value of the Centretown HCD lies in its role as an early residential neighbourhood, featuring a mix of housing types including large architect-designed houses, high style and vernacular detached dwellings, row houses, apartment buildings, and small dwellings. Further cultural heritage value is derived from its associated commercial corridors and institutions. For a complete description of the HCD's cultural heritage value, please refer to Document 2 – Statement of Cultural Heritage Value.

Constructed in 1896, Somerset House originally served as a department store for the Crosby, Carruthers Company. It is a three-storey red brick building in the Queen Anne Revival style with decorative features including brick corbelling, bay windows, and a large sheet metal turret that originally existed at the corner of the building, as shown in Document 3.

In 2007, as part of a renovation project, the building partially collapsed and has remained vacant and in deteriorated condition ever since. Since 2007, 19 Orders have been issued under the *Building Code Act* for this property and since 2012 there have been 31 requests for service about this property through By-law and Regulatory Services resulting in 11 Notices of Violation and six Property Standards orders. The property is listed on the City's Heritage Watch List and is monitored regularly by City staff.

Since the initial collapse, several heritage applications have been submitted by the owner and approved by the City. Except for the demolition of the most easterly wing of the building in 2016, no action has been taken on these applications. In 2019, the property owner submitted engineering and brick condition reports that recommended that the building be demolished. The

City had these documents peer reviewed by a structural engineer with expertise in heritage buildings and a historic masonry expert. These reviews concluded that the building was not in danger of collapse and could be repaired. Staff advised the owner that they did not support demolition of the building and that it would require the approval of City Council under the OHA. No application to demolish was submitted.

Since 2019, Heritage Planning and Planning Services staff have worked with the property owner and his agents towards an acceptable proposal to redevelop this site while conserving the heritage value of this important building. Meetings and correspondence to discuss options for this site have been held many times over the past several years.

In June 2022, Heritage Staff brought forward a report (ACS2022-PIE-RHU-0024) to Built Heritage Sub-Committee and Council to provide an update on Somerset House. The report included Conservation Guidelines prepared by Robertson Martin Architects, which were commissioned by the City to provide a high level scope of work and cost estimate for the building. The City encouraged the owner to move towards compliance with the orders and the rehabilitation of the building. It also noted that if the owner did not take the steps required to undertake the physical stabilization of the building, the City would escalate its enforcement action and undertake the urgently required work.

The City has not undertaken any of the work outlined in the June 2022 report, as the most critical work was not found to be immediately necessary and the owner has been working towards compliance with the other requirements noted in the Orders.

Over the course of the past year, work was completed on the building, including the installation of additional lateral braces in the basement, repointing of an interior brick masonry wall and pier elements, infilling of floor openings, and removing debris from the building. A building permit, heritage permits and municipal consent have been issued for exterior alterations to the foundation and brick repairs.

This report has been prepared because alterations to a property in a heritage conservation district designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* require the approval of City Council.

DISCUSSION

Project Description

The proposed development includes the restoration and stabilization of the historic building and the construction of a three-storey addition at the back, to the east of the existing building. The development is a three-storey mixed-use building with two commercial units at the ground and basement levels and 14 residential units on the second and third storeys. There are no parking spaces proposed. The site plan, elevations, and renderings are attached as Documents 4, 5, 6.

The proposed addition is delineated from the historic façade by a contemporary glass curtain wall. It is a flat-roof structure, clad in a mix of red-brick and glazing, which features regularly spaced rectangular windows with precast stone lintels. There are secondary cornices that wrap around the north and east façade. The north façade of the addition maintains the three-bay form of the historic building and features three storeys of red brick with a raised glass mezzanine on the top storey. The east (rear) façade of the addition is clad in brick, with simple rectangular window openings and a glass curtain wall band to the south and at the top storey, forming a contemporary 'L shape'. The south façade will be a plain, undecorated brick wall.

The application requires Site Plan Control and a Minor Zoning By-law Amendment. The Zoning By-law Amendment seeks to obtain relief from height provisions, minimum required setbacks, heritage overlay and parking provisions. It is staff's intent that the OHA report and Zoning By-Law Amendment report will proceed to council concurrently.

Structural Approach and Monitoring

As part of the heritage permit application, the applicant submitted a Design Intent Report by Art Engineering Inc., attached as Document 7, which details the approach to structural rehabilitation and seismic upgrades. This report also contains results of the brick testing that was completed by Keller Engineering in 2023. The work for the existing masonry outlined in this report includes raking out and repointing deteriorated mortar joints and replacing damaged brick units where necessary. Additional measures include consolidating walls by installing helical ties or other anchors where necessary and installing structural steel braced frames on the north, west and east side of the building. The report also indicates that the three-storey addition will be structurally separated from the historic building using an expansion joint.

This report has been shared with and reviewed by staff in Building Code Services. The application is subject to a building permit application and the complete engineering review will take place at that time. Building Code Services has required the submission of monthly monitoring reports on the structure and will continue to do so. Building Code Services will have increased inspections on the site throughout the construction process at the discretion of the Chief Building Official.

Rehabilitation

The proposal includes the restoration and rehabilitation of the existing building. The proposed conservation approach for the historic building is outlined in the Heritage Impact Assessment, which includes detailed conservation elevations which are attached as Document 8 and 9. Rehabilitation measures proposed include:

- Restoring and repainting the existing metal cornice and metal corner turret, and reconstructing the missing top portion of the turret

- Cleaning and restoring the cast iron columns on the ground floor, which includes the cast-iron trademark that reads 'Baldwin Ironworks Ottawa'
- Replacing existing windows on the second and third storey with aluminum windows
- Restoring and repainting decorative terracotta lintels
- Removing masonry brick infill on the north side and replacing it with new windows
- Replacing arched windows on the ground level with new aluminum windows and restoring the masonry surrounds
- Restoring and repainting the ground floor metal cornice and reconstructing where necessary
- Restoring and repainting the stone columns on Bank Street

Two notable rehabilitations to the current façade facing Somerset Street include:

- The restoration of the original commercial storefront of the property, based on historic evidence. This will include the reinstatement of the large glass windows and the installation of elements such as the cornice and signboards where they have been removed and replaced
- The reinstatement of the bay windows on the second and third storey of the Bank Street façade based on historic evidence

Recommendation 1: Approve the application to alter the building

Centretown and Minto Park HCD Plan

The Centretown and Minto Park HCD plan identifies the property at 352 Somerset Street West as a Significant Resource and applications for alterations in the Centretown HCD are reviewed for consistency with the Plan's Statement of Objectives, Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and identified heritage attributes. All proposed alterations must comply with the policies and guidelines established by the plan. The following sections of the HCD plan set out guidelines and policies specifically relevant to the subject proposal:

- Section 6.6 Commercial and Mixed Use: Storefronts
- Section 8.0 – Additions

The proposal includes restoration and rehabilitation of the existing building and the proposed alterations conserve the cultural heritage value of both the building itself and the HCD. The proposed addition meets the guidelines and policies in the HCD Plan. It is compatible with the

existing building in its scale, form, massing and proportions. The design relates to the existing building through its materials such as red brick cladding and pre-cast lintels and the continuation of the three-bay façade form. The addition incorporates architectural elements from the historic building such as cornices, brick detailing and the rectangular window pattern. The addition is distinct from the historic building through a contemporary design expression and use of glazing. The addition is located generally within the original footprint of the historic building and maintains the mixed-use and residential streetscape character of Somerset Street.

The proposal restores the original commercial storefront of the property. The ground floor incorporates large plate glass windows set into the restored storefront façades. The galvanized metal cornice and other original detailing including the metal and limestone pillars separating storefronts are conserved. Storefront elements, including the cornice and signboards, are being reinstated where they have been removed and replaced.

Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

City Council adopted Parks Canada's Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Standards and Guidelines) in 2008 to be used as guidance in evaluating applications under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and in the development of new HCD policies and guidelines. The principles of the Standards and Guidelines have been incorporated into the City's new HCD Plans, including the Centretown and Minto Park HCD Plan.

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada establishes a consistent set of conservation principles and guidelines for projects involving heritage resources. Heritage Planning staff have reviewed this proposal against this document and are satisfied that the project meets the relevant Standards and Guidelines.

The overall conservation approach for the project is rehabilitation, which according to Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines "involves the sensitive adaptation of an historic place or individual component for a continuing or compatible contemporary use, while protecting its heritage value."

The following Standards are applicable to this proposal:

- Standard 1: Conserve the heritage value of the historic place.
- Standard 10: Repair rather than replace character-defining elements.
- Standard 11: Conserve the heritage value and character-defining elements when creating any new additions to an historic place or any related new construction. Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.

- Standard 13: Repair rather than replace character-defining elements from the restoration period. Where character-defining elements are too severely deteriorated to repair, replace in-kind
- Standard 14: Replace missing features from the restoration period with new features whose forms, materials and detailing based on sufficient documentary evidence.

The proposal conserves the cultural heritage value of Somerset House through the rehabilitation of its heritage attributes, which includes its three-storey massing, red brick cladding and unique architectural elements. Original material is retained and restored wherever possible or is generally replaced in kind. The reintroduction of the commercial storefront and bay windows on the west façade will be based on historic evidence.

The design of the new building is physically compatible to the historic building through its form, massing and location and is visually compatible through the use of sympathetic materials, and the incorporation of elements such as cornices, window pattern and the three-bay form. The addition is subordinate and distinct from the historic building through the subtle use of architectural detailing and contemporary material and design. The proposal conserves the cultural heritage value of the Centretown Heritage Conservation District through the restoration and adaptive reuse of a building that helps to define its character.

Heritage Impact Assessment

Section 4.5.2 of the City of Ottawa Official Plan requires that a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) be submitted where a proposed development has the potential to adversely affect the heritage resource. A HIA was prepared for this proposal by Commonwealth Historic Resource Management and is attached as Document 8. Heritage Planning staff have reviewed the document and have determined that it meets the requirements of the city's guidelines for HIAs.

Heritage Planning staff generally support the findings of the HIA which concludes that;

The Architect has produced a design in keeping with the character of the overall neighbourhood and in line with the Centertown Heritage Conservation Study. The exterior appearance and scale of the building from both Somerset and Bank Streets will be maintained; with the interior spaces reconfigured for integration as residential units on upper floors and retail activity at the ground level. The new section carries the materiality and linear forms of the restored portion throughout the new construction with the use of similar red brick and glazing proportions.

The conservation approach in the HIA will be implemented as part of the conditions in this report. The HIA refers to the Conservation Guidelines (2022) produced by Robertson Martin Architects and it is included as an Appendix within the report.

Conditions

In order to ensure the conservation of the historic building a number of conditions are recommended:

a) Implementation of the Conservation Plan

Staff recommend that the conservation measures described in the Heritage Impact Assessment and illustrated on the Conservation Elevations be implemented as part of this project (Document 8 and Document 9). These documents provide conservation direction on elements such as the masonry, windows, metal cornices and decorative elements.

b) Structural Monitoring Reports

Staff recommend engineering reports monitoring the condition of the historic structure be submitted by a professional engineer with heritage experience. The frequency and duration of the reports will be determined in consultation with Heritage Planning and Building Code Services. This condition has been included to ensure that the building and its important attributes will be protected and conserved during the construction process.

c) Material Samples

Staff have included a condition of approval to provide final material samples for heritage staff's approval, prior to the issuance of the building permit. As some of the materials have not yet been finalized, this condition will ensure that the final chosen products will be consistent with the HCD.

d) Construction Schedule

Staff have requested a construction schedule be submitted that identifies the anticipated timing of key milestones of the project. This construction schedule will be used by Heritage Planning and Building Code Services to assist with the monitoring and inspections associated with the building.

Conclusion

Staff have reviewed the application to alter 352 Somerset Street West in accordance with the objectives, policies and guidelines of the Centertown and Minto Park HCD Plan and the Standards and Guidelines and recommend approval of the application to alter the building subject to the conditions outlined above. The proposed addition is physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the original building. The restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic structure, which has been vacant and in a deteriorated condition will conserve the value of the historic building and enhance the cultural heritage value of the Centertown HCD at this prominent location.

Recommendation 2: Delegate authority for minor design changes

Delegate authority for minor design changes to the General Manager, Planning Real Estate and Economic Development Department.

Minor design changes may emerge during the working drawing phase of a project. This recommendation is included to allow Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development Department to approve these changes should they arise.

Recommendation 3: Permit Expiry

Issue the heritage permit with a two-year expiry date from the date of issuance.

The *Ontario Heritage Act* does not provide any timelines for the expiry of heritage permits. A two-year expiry date is recommended to ensure that the project is completed in a timely fashion.

Provincial Policy Statement

Staff have reviewed this proposal and have determined that is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

The plans were posted on the City's Development Application website on July 28, 2023.

Heritage Ottawa and Ward Councillor Troster were notified of this application and offered the opportunity to provide comments.

The Centretown Community Association was notified of the application on July 28, 2023 and provided comments, attached as Document 10.

Neighbours within 30 metres of the property were notified of this application and offered an opportunity to comment at the Built Heritage Committee meeting.

A public meeting hosted by the Ward Councillor for the Planning Application was held on July 26, 2023. Heritage and Planning staff attended the meeting.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

Ward Councillor Troster provided the following comment:

It's been an extremely long road to arrive at this point. I appreciate Chmiel Architect's work on this design, and the sensitive approach it demonstrates to both the heritage context and the history of the building itself. I also want to commend heritage staff's work on this file – both in the form of this application, and the work over the past 17 years.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with implementing the report recommendations.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct asset management implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility implications associated with this report.

APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE STATUS

The statutory 90-day timeline for consideration of this application under the *Ontario Heritage Act* will expire on October 25, 2023.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Document 1 Location Map
- Document 2 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value, Centretown HCD
- Document 3 Photos
- Document 4 Elevations
- Document 5 Site Plan
- Document 6 Architectural Package
- Document 7 Design Intent Report, Art Engineering
- Document 8 Heritage Impact Assessment

Document 9 Conservation Elevations

Document 10 Comments from the Centretown Community Association

DISPOSITION

Office of the City Clerk, Council and Committee Services, to notify the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust, 10 Adelaide Street East, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 1J3) of Council's decision.

Document 1 – Location Map



LOCATION MAP / PLAN DE LOCALISATION
HERITAGE / PATRIMOINE

D09-01-SOME352

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REVISION / RÉVISION - 2023 / 07 / 25



352 rue Somerset St. W.



NOT TO SCALE

Document 3 – Photos





Document 10 – Comments from the Centretown Community Association

210 Gloucester Street, Suite 101
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 2K4

August 14, 2023

Ashley Kotarba
Heritage Planner
Ashley.Kotarba@ottawa.ca

RE: Application D09-04-23-0030 352 Somerset Street, 2023-06-14

Dear Ashley,

I am writing on behalf of the Centretown Community Association to say that we are not opposed to the current application of 352 Somerset St., a.k.a. Somerset House.

However, we do have concerns regarding the developer's tardiness in proceeding with the improvements to the property. Additionally, we would like to emphasize our support for the city's efforts in advocating for the preservation of this historic property and its significance to our community.

Firstly, we have reviewed the heritage impact statement for 352 Somerset House and are pleased to inform you that we support the application. The statement highlights the proposed development's positive impact on the heritage value of the property, ensuring its preservation for future generations. We believe that the proposed plans align with the historical context of the area and will contribute to the overall character and charm of our community.

However, we would like to express our disappointment with the developer's delays in proceeding with the improvements to the property. As an association dedicated to the betterment of our community, we have been eagerly anticipating the restoration and

enhancement of 352 Somerset House. Our CCA members and the Centretown community are frustrated by the delays in revitalizing this significant heritage site.

We kindly request that you convey our concerns to the developer and urge them to expedite the necessary improvements to the property. It is crucial that they fulfill their commitments and take immediate action to restore and preserve this historic gem in our community.

Furthermore, we would like to extend our support to the city in advocating for enforcing preservation measures for 352 Somerset House. This property holds immense historical significance and serves as a tangible link to our past. Its preservation is not only crucial for the present generation but also for the generations to come. We believe that the city's efforts in safeguarding our heritage should be commended and strengthened.

In conclusion, we express our support of the application for 352 Somerset House and request your assistance in addressing the developer's delays in proceeding with the improvements. We also stand firmly behind the city's advocacy for the preservation of this historic property and its importance to our community. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely,

Mary Huang
President
Centretown Community Association
of Ottawa

Mike McCormick
Co-Chair, Planning Committee
Centretown Community Association
of Ottawa

c.c. Ariel Troster, Ottawa City Councillor, Somerset Ward 14

Lesley Collins, Program Manager, Heritage Planning, City of Ottawa