

Somerville Planning



Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

19 Aubrey Avenue, Richmond Hill

Prepared for:

Yi Min Huang



Prepared By:

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Executive Summary

The owners of 19 Aubrey Avenue have retained the services of Somerville Planning to undertake a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) for this listed heritage property.

The City of Richmond Hill requires that a CHIA be provided for consideration by staff, the Heritage Advisory Committee and Council if a planning application may affect a property that is either listed on the City of Richmond Hill Heritage Register, or any Part IV or V designated property (See Appendix "A"). The subject property is registered under Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act (See Appendix "B").

The owners of the property are proposing to remove the c.1924 one storey, wood-frame house in order to permit the construction of a new, yet to be designed house.

In preparation for this report the consultant has been in contact with City of Richmond Hill Staff to access the municipal heritage files relating to the property, reviewed the property records at the Ontario Land Registry and undertook online research regarding the property. Unfortunately, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the consultant was unable to access the Richmond Hill Public Library as it is currently closed. However, the consultant does have knowledge of the history of Oak Ridges and was able to access additional mapping resources through the Region of York. On June 25 2020, the consultant conducted a physical and visual survey of the property.

Based on the information gathered from the archival information and site visits, this report finds that the property does not merit designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and that the proposed removal should be permitted.

Introduction to the Development Site

Mongobuild Renovation Ltd. has retained the services of Somerville Planning to undertake a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) for their property located at 19 Aubrey Avenue.

The property is included in the City of Richmond Hill Inventory of Cultural Heritage Resources (See Appendix “B”), which exists under Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Section 27(3) of the Act requires that an owner of a building included on the heritage register must provide the council of the municipality at least 60 days notice in writing of the owners intention to demolish or remove the building. This report is part of the owner’s notification package as required by the City of Richmond Hill Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) Terms (Appendix “A”).

A CHIA is required anytime a change is proposed that may affect a property that is included in the City of Richmond Hill Inventory of Cultural Heritage Resources.

Site Location and Description

The subject property is located on the south side of Aubrey Avenue and is approximately 250m west of Yonge Street in the community of Oak Ridges, which is a part of the City of Richmond Hill.

The property contains one structure; a c.1924; 1 storey, rectangular plan, gable roof house with an enclosed gable-roofed porch. The house includes a 1 storey rear addition with multiple gables.

Current Owner:

Mr. Yi Min Huang

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



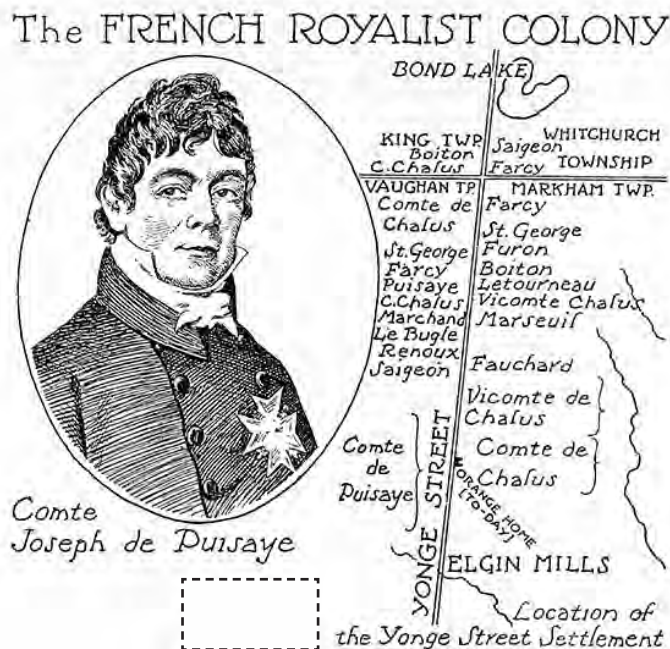
Context Image of 19 Aubrey Avenue, Highlighted in Red (Google Earth)

Background Research and Analysis

Contextual History

The community around Oak Ridges began with the establishment of the De Puisaye Settlement which was located south of the subject property, near the intersection of Yonge Street and Jefferson Sideroad. Joseph-Grenviève de Puisaye (1754-1827) founded the settlement which consisted of French nobility and their servants who fled the revolution in France. The land for the settlement was provided by the British Government, which had the added benefit of providing a buffer of protection from a potential American invasion down Yonge Street.

The De Puisaye settlement of Windham spread along the Yonge Street corridor but consisted primarily of settler log cabins and subsistence farms. Given the noble background of the inhabitants the work of clearing and building the land proved too much for many of the settlers. By 1806 Windham was abandoned, but it laid the groundwork for the future settlement of Oak Ridges which was to begin growing in the following years.



Location of the French Royalist Colony

Source: The Picture Gallery of Canadian History Vol. II

Lot 66-1 includes much of the area contained by Oak Ridges, including the subject property. In 1795 James Pitney settled on the lot and procured the Crown grant for the property in 1797. In 1799 William Willcocks purchased the land and upon his death his daughter Susanna Maria Willcocks inherited it. Susanna bequeathed the land to her sister Margaret, who married William Warren Baldwin who named the property Larchmere. An 1860s map of York Region locates the Larchmere house near the current intersection of Ashfield Drive and Marylebone Crescent on the east side of Yonge Street. William Warren Baldwin (1775-1844) was a significant Upper Canadian lawyer who pushed for responsible government reforms that led to the abolition of the Family Compact that controlled much of life in Upper Canada. Mr. Baldwin was primarily based at his residence in Toronto (Spadina House), so the Larchmere estate (since demolished) likely provided a retreat from the city during the summer months.



William Warren Baldwin (1775-1844)



Location of Lot 66-1
(Source: Historical County Map of York County, Tremain Map, 1860)



Location of Lot 66-1 - Thomas Legge Ownership
(Source: York County Map, 1880)

The lure of the Oak Ridges area as a place for relaxation and escape from the noise and dirt of the city only grew throughout the 19th and 20th century. Lake Wilcox to the east of Yonge Street was the centre of this development which included a hotel and amusement grounds as well as numerous cottages. The growth of development led to an increase in transportation connections to nearby areas. In 1899 the Metropolitan Street Railway Company which ran along Yonge Street extended service of its electric trains north from Toronto to Oak Ridges, Aurora and Newmarket. This service was complemented by the development Schomberg and Aurora Railway (1902-1927), the terminus of which was located in the heart Oak Ridges at King Road and Yonge Street).

The creation of these improved transportation links along Yonge Street increased development pressure along the corridor. By 1914 a number of Plans of Subdivision had been approved along the west side of Yonge Street. These developments were much more suburban in design than the earlier cottage developments around Lake Wilcox. However, it wasn't until after the first World



Summer on Lake Wilcox
(Source: Early Days in Richmond Hill)



Metropolitan Street Railway
(Source: Early Days in Richmond Hill)

War with its ensuing housing crisis that the developments began to take shape.

Driven in part by a lack of affordable housing in Toronto and veteran housing policies that encouraged the development of the countryside the development of the subject property was part of this surge of new development along the Yonge Street corridor. This particular Plan of Subdivision (Plan 202 King Township) was created by a company called Investment Securities Ltd. who sold the property to a Ms. Edna Philips on April 3, 1924 for \$8500.



1970s Photo of 19 Aubrey Avenue
(Source: Richmond Hill LACAC Heritage Files)

Property Description

The subject property consists of a c.1924, one-storey, vernacular designed house completed in wooden Dutch-style lapboard and includes an enclosed front porch with a one-storey gabled rear addition. The house is of a simple design and was originally intended to provide economical accommodation in an efficient layout. In keeping with the economical design intent there is no basement or extraneous design elements.



North Elevation - 19 Aubrey Avenue
(Source: Richmond Hill LACAC Heritage Files, 1982)

From the Aubrey Avenue elevation the house presents a simple rectangular form with an enclosed front entry porch asymmetrically located at the centre of the house. From the rear of the house the design presents three south facing gables with an asymmetrically located rear door in the middle. It is likely that the rear of the house was altered at a later date, however no information could be found that would specify a date. Both the original house and later addition are completed in white Dutch-style lapboard. Overall, the structure is unremarkable as an example of Ontario vernacular cottage design as the structure does not exhibit any reference to common styles such as the Craftsman style or contain a high degree of craftsmanship.



South Elevation - 19 Aubrey Avenue
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)

The interior of the house is similarly modest. Originally, the house was likely a one-bedroom residence with a combined kitchen and living area. This was later extended to provide a

larger bathroom, second bedroom and larger kitchen. The consultant undertook a site visit on June 25, 2020 which included a review of the interior condition (See Appendix “C”). The review found no interior design elements of value or interest.



Dutch-style Lapboard
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)

Statement of Significance

Under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, in order for a building to be considered of heritage value, it must meet at least one of the criteria defined under *Regulation 9/06* of the *Act*. A council may designate the building under Part IV of the *Act* if one of these criteria is met. The criteria include the following set of three overarching values within which are nine sub-criteria:

1. Architectural/Design Value:

- a. Is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, and material or construction method;
- b. Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit;
or
- c. Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

2. Associative/Historical Value:

- a. Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community;
- b. Yields, or has the potential to yield information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture; or
- c. Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

3. Contextual Value:

- a. Is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area;
- b. Is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surrounding; or
- c. Is a landmark.

Architectural/Design Value

In order for a property to be considered a candidate for architectural/design value, it must be a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type or expression of a particular period. Alternatively, the property must display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit. Lastly, the building may demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

19 Aubrey Avenue contains limited design value. The structure was designed to be a simple, efficient and economical one bedroom house. This design intent is reflected in the overall simplicity of the structure with its basic rectangular plan with gable-roofed front porch and Dutch-style lapboard siding that eschews unnecessary detailing. The white colour of the house was also intended to provide an ease of maintenance as the house could be simply repaired and painted using unskilled craftsman and off-the-shelf products. The overall design provides for basic accommodation, but does not meet the definition of design value under Regulation 9/06 1(a) as it is not a rare example of a style, type or expression. Additionally, the subject structure does not meet definition 1(b) of Regulation 9/06 as it was constructed using common construction techniques and does not contain a high degree of craftsmanship.

After reviewing the structure and considering the design intent the consultant is of the opinion that there is not sufficient merit to designate the structure for architectural/design value as defined under Regulation 9/06.

Associative/Historical Value

In order for a property to be considered a candidate for associative historical value a strong connection must be established between an activity or person of historical significance and the subject property. Alternatively, the property could be considered for designation if a significant event occurred at the site.



Perspective view of 19 Aubrey Avenue
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Front Door of 19 Aubrey Avenue
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)

After reviewing the ownership records the consultant was unable to associate any of the owners with significant members of the community. Furthermore, no significant community events occurred at the property

The consultant is of the opinion that there is not sufficient merit to designate the structure for associative/historical value under Regulation 9/06.

Contextual Value

Contextual value is met if a building is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area. Alternatively, it could be met if it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

From a contextual perspective 19 Aubrey Avenue needs to be considered in relation to the development of the Avenue's overall character. Originally, Aubrey Avenue consisted of a number of cottage properties, which have been removed over the ensuing years. The gradual removal of these structures has eliminated the potential of creating a contextual understanding of the historical identity of Aubrey Avenue and leaves the subject property visually adrift in this new character.

As a result of the streets eroded historical landscape, there is little ability to make a case for contextual value as the area has lost any potential historical cohesion. In addition, it is the consultant's opinion that Regulation 9/06 3(a) is meant to be considered within the context of a broader consistent streetscape or area such as a commercial street or an area containing consistent architectural design, which is lacking in this instance.

After considering the subject property through a historical contextual lens, it is the opinion of the consultant that 19 Aubrey Avenue cannot be considered of significant contextual heritage value.



Street view of 17 Aubrey Avenue
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Street view of 21 Aubrey Avenue
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)

Impact of Development or Site Alteration

The proposed development will result in the removal of the existing structure at 19 Aubrey Avenue. There will be no heritage impact from the removal of the building as the building does not have significant cultural heritage value.

Considered Alternatives and Mitigation Strategies

No mitigation strategies are required to be applied to the subject property as the structure is not of cultural heritage value or significance.

In preparing plans for a replacement building the consultant recommends the owner and their architects refer to the Richmond Hill Urban Design Guidelines, September 2013 - Section 6.3 Low-Rise Residential Buildings for best practice design guidelines.

Proposed Conservation Strategy

Somerville Planning recommends the removal of the existing structure at 19 Aubrey Avenue from the City of Richmond Hill Inventory of Cultural Heritage Resources.

This report is intended to provide both a heritage assessment of the potential cultural heritage value of the subject property and a photographic documentation of the structure prior to demolition.

Bibliography

1. Early Days in Richmond Hill - A History of the Community to 1930, Stamp, Robert M., Richmond Hill Public Library Board, 1991

Appendices

Appendix “A”

City of Richmond Hill Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Terms of Reference



Town of Richmond Hill

Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

Terms of Reference

When is a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Required?

A CHIA is required for the following application types if the application is adjacent to or contains a property that is included on the Town of Richmond Hill's Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Importance:

- Notice of Intent to Demolish – Section 27(3) of the Ontario Heritage Act
- Application to Demolish – Section 34(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act
- Official Plan Amendment;
- Zoning By-law Amendment;
- Plans of Subdivision; and
- Site Plan Control.

A HIA may be required by staff for the following additional application types:

- Consent and/or Minor Variance and Building Permit applications for any property included on the Town of Richmond Hill's Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Importance; and
- Where properties adjacent to a cultural heritage resource are subject to Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Plans of Subdivision, Site Plan Control and/or Consent and/or Minor Variance applications.

Purpose of a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

Heritage conservation involves identifying, protecting and promoting the elements that our society values. A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) is the primary heritage planning vehicle to assess and review the potential cultural heritage significance of a particular resource, consider the impact of any proposed site development or alteration and recommend an overall approach that best conserves any identified cultural heritage resources.

A CHIA forms an integral part of the municipal planning framework. Its rationale emerges from a range of Provincial and Municipal policies including the:

- Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 Section 2.6.3
- Ontario Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Part I, 2(d)
- Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Part IV, Section 29 and Section 34
- Richmond Hill Official Plan, Section 3.4.2

If the property is deemed to contain cultural heritage value, a Cultural Heritage Conservation Plan (CHCP) is required as part of the CHIA. The CHCP shall be informed by established conservation principles and must provide a recommended conservation approach that mitigates negative impacts to the cultural heritage resources in question. The conservation principles contained in the Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada and the Appleton Charter, published by the International Council on Monuments and Sites must be utilized to inform the recommended conservation strategy. The CHCP must also contain recommendations and provide sufficient detail to make informed decisions regarding any proposed changes or impacts to identified cultural heritage resources.

Where there is the potential of impacting archaeological resources an archaeological assessment must be undertaken by a licensed archaeologist as an additional study. Please refer to the Town of Richmond Hill's Archaeological Master Plan and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport for the triggers and stages of an archaeological assessment.

Who Can Prepare a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment?

All CHIAs and other related documents including: CHCP reports, adaptive reuse plans and security plans must be prepared by a qualified heritage professional such as a heritage planner, heritage architect and/or heritage landscape architect with demonstrated knowledge of accepted heritage conservation standards, and who has undertaken historical research and identification/evaluation of cultural heritage value.

All heritage consultants submitting Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments must be members in good standing of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP).

In addition, under Provincial law only a licensed, professional archaeologist may carry out an Archaeological Assessment using specific provincial standards and guidelines.

What Should a CHIA Contain and in What Format?

The CHIA will include, but is not limited to the following information:

(1) Introduction to Development Site

- a. A location plan indicating subject property (Property Data Map and aerial photo);
- b. A concise written and visual description of the property identifying significant features, buildings, landscape and vistas;
- c. A concise written and visual description of the cultural heritage resource(s) contained within the development site identifying significant features, buildings, landscape, vistas and including any heritage recognition of the property (see the Town of Richmond Hill's Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Importance, Ontario Heritage Properties Database, Parks Canada National Historic Sites of Canada, and/or Canadian Register of Historic Places) with existing heritage descriptions as available;
- d. A concise written and visual description of the surrounding context including adjacent heritage properties, their landscapes and any potential undesignated cultural heritage resource(s); and
- e. Present owner contact information.

(2) Background Research and Analysis

- a. Comprehensive written and visual research and analysis related to all potential cultural heritage value or interest of the site (both identified and unidentified) including: physical or design, historical or associative, and contextual values;
- b. A development history of the site including original construction, additions and alterations with substantiated dates of construction; and
- c. Research material to include relevant historic maps and atlases, drawings, photographs, sketches/renderings, permit records, land records, assessment rolls, Town of Richmond Hill directories, etc.

(3) Statement of Significance

- a. A statement of significance identifying the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the cultural heritage resource(s). This statement will be informed by current research and analysis of the site as well as pre-existing heritage descriptions. This statement is to follow the provincial guidelines set out in the Ontario Heritage Tool Kit;

- b. The statement of significance will be written in a way that does not respond to or anticipate any current or proposed interventions. The Town may, at its discretion and upon review, reject or use the statement of significance, in whole or in part, in crafting its own statement of significance (Reasons for Listing or Designation) for the subject property; and
- c. Professional quality record photographs of the cultural heritage resource in its present state.

(4) Assessment of Existing Condition

- a. A comprehensive written description accompanied with high quality color photographic documentation of the cultural heritage resource(s) in its current condition and physical context (location, streetscape, etc).

(5) Description of the Proposed Development or Site Alteration

- a. A written and visual description of the proposed development or site alteration.

(6) Impact of Development or Site Alteration

- a. An assessment identifying any impact(s) the proposed development or site alteration may have on the cultural heritage resource(s). Impacts on a cultural heritage resource(s) as stated in the Ontario Heritage Tool Kit and Appleton Charter include, but are not limited to:
 - b. Removal of any, or part of any, significant heritage attributes or features;
 - c. Alteration that impacts the historic fabric and appearance;
 - d. Shadow impacts that alter the appearance and/or setting of a heritage attribute, or change the viability of an associated natural feature or plantings, such as a garden;
 - e. Isolation of a heritage attribute from its surrounding environment, context or a significant relationship;
 - f. Direct or indirect obstruction of significant views or vistas within, from, or of built and natural features;
 - g. A change in land use (such as rezoning a church to a multi-unit residence) where the change in use negates the property's cultural heritage value;
 - h. Land disturbances such as a change in grade that alters soils, and drainage patterns that adversely affect a cultural heritage resource, including archaeological resources; and

- i. Relocation (to be considered under the conditions described in the Appleton Charter).

(7) Considered Alternatives and Mitigation Strategies

- a. An assessment of alternative options, mitigation measures, and conservation methods that may be considered in order to avoid or limit the negative impact on the cultural heritage resource(s). Methods of minimizing or avoiding a negative impact on a cultural heritage resource(s) as stated in the Ontario Heritage Tool Kit include, but are not limited to:
 - b. Alternative development approaches;
 - c. Isolating development and site alteration from significant built and natural features and vistas;
 - d. Design guidelines that harmonize mass, setback, setting, and materials;
 - e. Limiting height and density;
 - f. Allowing only compatible infill and additions;
 - g. Reversible alterations; and
 - h. Relocation (to be considered under the conditions described in the Appleton Charter).

(8) Conservation Strategy

- a. The preferred strategy based on best-practice conservation principles that protect and enhance the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the cultural heritage resource(s) including, but not limited to:
 - b. A mitigation strategy including the proposed methods;
 - c. A conservation scope of work including the proposed methods;
 - d. An implementation and monitoring plan;
 - e. Recommendations for additional studies/plans related to, but not limited to: conservation, interpretation and/or commemoration.
 - f. If removal of the Cultural Heritage Resource was recommended, the CHIA must provide site specific design guidelines to address: lighting, signage, landscaping, site stabilization/sedimentation, and photographic documentation prior to demolition.
 - g. Referenced conservation principles and precedents.

(9) Appendices

- a. A bibliography listing research materials used and sources consulted in preparing the HIA.

How Many Copies of a CHIA are to be Provided to The Town of Richmond Hill?

Please provide the following to the Town of Richmond Hill Heritage and Urban Design Planner:

- Two (2) bound hard copies; and
- One (1) CD copy in PDF Format.

Links

Local Resources

[Read Richmond Hill's Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Significance](#)

[Read Richmond Hill's Gormley Heritage Conservation District Study](#)

[Read Richmond Hill's Gormley Heritage Conservation District Plan](#)

Provincial Standards and Resources

[Read the Ontario Heritage Toolkit](#)

[Read the Heritage Conservation Principles for Land Use Planning Infosheet](#)

[Read the Eight Guiding Principles in the Conservation of Built Heritage Properties Infosheet](#)

[Visit the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Archaeological Assessment web page](#)

National and International Standards and Resources

[Read Parks Canada's Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada](#)

[Visit the Canadian Register of Historic Places website](#)

[Visit the National Historic Sites of Canada website](#)

[Read the ICOMOS Appleton Charter](#)

Contact Information

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Appendix “B”

Town of Richmond Hill Inventory of Cultural Heritage Resources, Spring 2018

19 Aubrey Avenue **Ward 1**

Frame; drop clapboard; 1 storey;
c1920; rectangular plan; gable roof;
enclosed gable-roofed porch. Frame 1
storey rear addition with multiple
gables.



Appendix “C”

**Somerville Planning
Site Visit of 19 Aubrey Avenue, Richmond Hill
June 25, 2020**



Entrance Porch
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Foyer
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



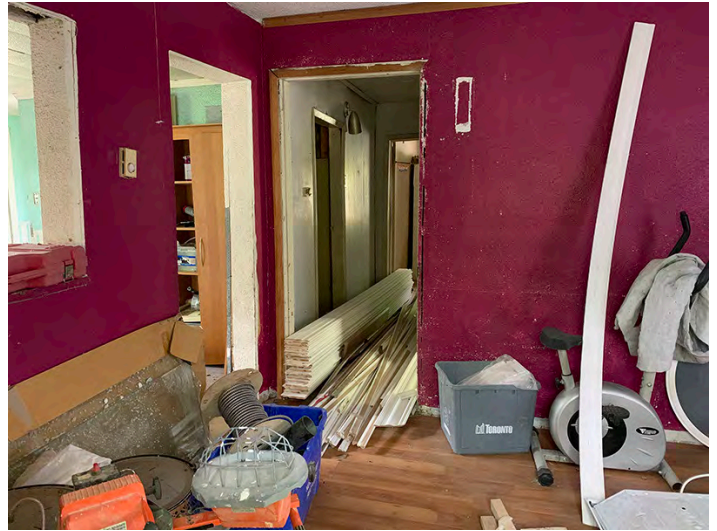
Front Hall Leading to Bedroom
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Bedroom
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Interior Mechanical Room off of Front Hall
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



View of Front Hall from Living Room
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Front Living Room
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Rear Kitchen
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



View between Kitchen and Living Room
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



View between Kitchen and Living Room
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Floor Trim Detail
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Back Hall Leading to Kitchen
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Back Hall Leading to Bathroom
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Bathroom/Laundry Room
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Bathroom/Laundry Room
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)



Rear Door Leading to Back Hall
(Source: Somerville Planning, 2020)

