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October 9, 2015

Dear Ms. Fancher,

Thank you for your emails of September 11, 13 and 28 on the matter of the library property at 1748 St Clair West. The information that you have provided is consistent with what library staff and the architectural firm of Goldsmith Borgal and Company Architects (GBSA) discovered. Thank you for providing the details of regarding the building permit, issued in 1922 to J. Smith. Library staff contacted City staff in the Toronto Building Department – West District and they were not able to provide information on the original permit although they did think the building was constructed in the 1920's.

Library staff and GBSA staff consulted Goad's Fire Atlas and the City of Toronto Directories and the Assessment Rolls Ward 7, Division 1 while researching the property and also determined that from 1923 on businesses were located at 1746 and 1748 St. Clair Avenue West. We are in agreement with the facts you present on the history of the property.

However we are not in agreement that the current building has an attractive façade that should be preserved. The current façade is not distinct nor does it demonstrate superior craftsmanship, artistry or material choice. The brick façade has been altered and damaged over the years as have the windows and main entrance. The building has limited contextual value. The branch blends into the surrounding streetscape so much that it is challenging for customers to find it. One of the library project goals is to revitalize the streetscape with a library branch that has high visibility. The design concept was presented to the local community at the end of May and design boards were kept on display in the branch for several weeks after the meeting. The design met with positive response and achieves our goal of highlighting the building.

The property condition assessment indicated that the best course of action given the deficiencies to structure, heating and cooling, building efficiency, brick condition with funds available for the project was to completely rebuild the facility in order that we provide a healthy, inviting, flexible, barrier free building that will meet the needs of the community into the future.

We continue to work with the Architect to refine the design. Please contact Susan Martin, Divisional Support Manager, Branch Capital Projects at smartin@torontopubliclibrary.ca or by phone at 416-393-7543 if you have further comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Anne Bailey

Anne Bailey
Director, Branch Libraries

Director, Branch Libraries

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