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BRICKS AND MORTAR

Heritage façade

By Amy Lazar

A downtown building that began to fall apart last month is now the discussion of a heritage designation.

The city's preservation board will receive a report at Friday's meeting recommending heritage designation for the red-brick building at the southeast corner of Yonge and Gould streets, 335 Yonge Street, which was originally known as the William Reynolds Block and was built in 1888.

According to the city's tax assessment roll, William Reynolds bought the property in 1847 and his bakery was in the corner unit in 1859. In 1888, Reynolds received a building permit for a three-storey six-unit commercial building and within a year, it was operating as the Empress Hotel.

The exterior of the three-storey commercial building has changed little over the last century, with the exception of its signage. The property changed hands in 1944 and again three years later to Edison Hotel Limited, when archival photos show it operating as the Edison Hotel in the 1950s. The hotel closed in the early 1970s but the property owners retained the site until 1991, according to city directories.

Last month, red bricks started to fall off the façade, landing on the street below. No one was injured but a portion of the building's north wall had to be demolished. Councillor **Kyle Rae** has indicated that he wants the building restored, not demolished.

"The designation of the property would enable city council to control alterations to the site, enforce heritage property standards and maintenance and refuse demolition," the staff report states.

The staff report was requested at the April meeting of the Toronto and East York community council following the incident on April 16.

The building has been on the city's inventory of heritage properties since 1974 but is not designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

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CAMPUS TRANSFORMATION

Michener Institute

Students and faculty have been invited back onto a transformed campus at **The Michener Institute** on St. Patrick Street.

The home for the institute's applied health sciences courses and CAE Healthcare, which has established a healthcare simulation training centre there, has undergone an addition and interior renovations to add study space and improve the connectivity of the campus.

"This facility remedies a fragmented atmosphere for learning in this 15-storey building," said **Donald Schmitt**, principal at the firm hired to design the transformation, **Diamond + Schmitt Architects**.

"We have created flexible, multi-purpose rooms that enhance an interactive and collaborative learning environment."

This is the first phase of the campus transformation and when the new 20,000-square foot centre is fully operational, more than 1,500 students and healthcare professionals will take courses on the two renovated floors in the institute's building every year.

On one floor, students have flexible studio space to create a broad range of mock clinical environments. There are also observation and debriefing rooms to support the studios. On the other floor, there are examination facilities that can accommodate assessments of up to 37 candidates at a time.

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Heritage façade

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Heritage planners believe it meets the criteria under the categories of design and contextual value, since it is a well-crafted example of a late 19th century commercial building with elements of Second Empire and Romanesque Revival styles. It is a distinctive corner tower with a mansard roof and monumental round-arched openings that enhance the presence of the building on prominent Yonge Street.



The building is also the only surviving 19th century commercial building along the east side of Yonge Street in the block between Dundas Street east and Gould Street. **NRU**

- A photo of 335 Yonge Street at Gould Street, originally the Empress Hotel built in the last 1880s and then the Edison Hotel in the 1950s (shown here). A portion of the north wall collapsed last month and as the intention is to fix it, city staff are recommending heritage designation for the property.

Source: Brigidens Limited, Toronto/City of Toronto Archives Series574 file#0018 id49378

Michener

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“This state-of-the-art facility is designed to enhance the student experience by using inter-professional education and integrated simulated learning to better prepare our future healthcare providers to respond to patient care needs,” said The Michener Institute president and CEO **Dr. Paul Gamble**.



↑ Interior renovations and an addition have transformed the campus at The Michener Institute on St. Patrick Street.

Source: Diamond + Schmitt Architects

← Exterior photo of The Michener Institute on St. Patrick Street, where students and faculty have been welcomed back to a transformed campus with an addition and interior renovations designed by Diamond + Schmitt Architects.

Source: Brain Ko

In addition to reconfiguring and adding to existing floor space, architects at Diamond + Schmitt had to address mechanical, health and safety, electrical and environmental upgrades to a few other floors of the building. The entire building will undergo a transformation over a number of years with no set completion date as of yet.

Nearby, the Toronto architecture firm has also designed additions and renovations at **Hospital for Sick Children**, **Women’s College Hospital** and **St. Michael’s Hospital**.

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