

DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

Title: 27 New Gower Street, Exterior Renovations and Extension

Date Prepared: November 23, 2021

Report To: Committee of the Whole

Councillor and Role: Councillor Maggie Burton, Heritage

Ward: Ward 2

Decision/Direction Required:

To seek approval for exterior renovations at 27 New Gower Street.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

The City initially received an application for exterior renovations at 27 New Gower Street (formerly The Sundance nightclub and restaurant) to remove the exterior cladding to expose the original building. The existing concrete façade has since been restored and painted light grey. This work is part of a larger proposal to restore the mid-century architecture of the building for a Craft Brewery, Lounge and Restaurant. A development application has not been received to date for the extension, however the Discretionary Use of the Craft Brewery has been approved by Council. The applicant will be required to consolidate the building lots at 27 New Gower Street and 11-17 New Gower Street for the proposed development.

The subject property is located within Heritage Area 2, the Commercial District of the St. John's Municipal Plan and is zoned Commercial Downtown Mixed (CDM). The new Heritage By-Law will apply to the development. The By-Law states that:

- Additions must be compatible with the period/architectural style of the streetscape in their design, massing, and location without adversely affecting the character defining elements of the existing building.
- Additions shall respect the rhythm and orientation of façade openings/fenestrations along the same elevation.
- Additions shall meet the Heritage Area Design Standards above. Notwithstanding, modern façade designs may be approved by Council provided the addition is physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the designated building; enhances the visual prominence of the designated building; and does not detract from the character defining elements of the designated building.
- Renovations to existing out of character buildings which do not follow the Heritage Design Standards may be approved at the discretion of the Inspector.

Prior to being the Sundance, the building was home to Adelaide Motors Ltd. and W. Tiller Ltd. car dealerships. The applicant wishes to restore the building to echo the original design. They wish to expose the garage doors along George Street, replace the windows with more industrial looking windows, and restore the façade and garage door along New Gower Street. The

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renovations will also include the development of a multi-level deck between the existing building and the properties at 9 New Gower Street and 16 George Street.

The applicant previously presented at the August 25, 2021, Built Heritage Experts Panel (BHEP) meeting. The Panel and staff appreciate the applicant's vision to restore the building and offered some considerations as the design proceeds. Generally, the Panel suggested adding windows to blank facades, noted there may be opportunities to incorporate curved glass into the design, and stated that the curved window is an important part of the art deco style and that the ramp along New Gower Street should be incorporated into the design. It was also stated that the addition should feel like part of the building and not just an appendage.

At the time there was not enough detail on the proposed extension, so the BHEP recommended the following:

- Approval for the window and door sizes as provided by the applicant, with the caveat that the design shall not deviate from the curved window, and the ramping and railing tie in with the proposed design of the building.
- The Panel requests that plans be submitted showing both 16 George Street and 27 New Gower Street on all elevations to indicate how the two buildings would complement each other. Details on design and material of the addition (Phase 2) to be considered by the Panel in due course, giving full consideration to heritage and the art deco style of the building.

The applicant has now updated their design to include details on the extension including building materials, windows, doors, and decking. The part of the extension attaching to 27 New Gower will be brick on George Street, New Gower Street, and a portion of the façade facing the deck. The extension will then transition back to a concrete façade to match the existing façade. This section will also include black granite tile along New Gower Street to echo the original building. Windows include a mix of glass block, large storefront aluminium windows, and industrial looking aluminium windows with grills. The proposed deck will include a black iron fence and a painted steel pergola (with wood as a secondary material). The side of 16 George Street facing the deck will be brick, with some articulation to break up the blank façade. The applicant has incorporated the BHEP's comments by incorporating windows into the blank facades and incorporating the railing along New Gower Street into the overall design. The applicant noted in the meeting that the location of the rooftop HVAC system has not been finalized but the intention is that they will be centralized and screened.

The BHEP was pleased with the updated designs and recommended the following:

- Approval of the exterior renovations and proposed extension at 27 New Gower Street as presented, subject to confirmation of the pergolas being constructed of steel, confirmation of the black granite, and that proper screening be considered for all rooftop structures.

The Heritage By-Law requires new extensions to be in the character of the streetscape. In this case, the original building is being restored and the addition is in the character of the original building, while also being compatible with the design and massing of the adjacent properties. Following the meeting, staff confirmed with the applicant that the pergolas will be painted steel

and the black tile will be natural black granite stone tile. Staff agree with the BHEP's recommendation and have incorporated conditions on these materials into the recommendation, as they were not shown on the attached drawing. As the application proceeds through the development approval and building permit stages, the design will have to comply with the exterior elevations/renderings approved by Council.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Not applicable.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: Neighbouring residents and property owners; the George Street Association.
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:
St. John's Strategic Plan 2019-2029 - A Sustainable City – Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live
4. Legal or Policy Implications: In line with the St. John's Heritage By-Law and the St. John's Development Regulations.
5. Privacy Implications: Not applicable.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: Not applicable.
7. Human Resource Implications: Not applicable.
8. Procurement Implications: Not applicable.
9. Information Technology Implications: Not applicable.
10. Other Implications: Not applicable.

Recommendation:

That Council approve the proposed renovations and extension at 27 New Gower Street, as proposed on the drawings dated November 15, 2021, subject to the following:

- pergola being painted steel with wood as a secondary material;
- black tile being natural black granite stone tile; and
- requiring screening for any HVAC rooftop equipment.

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