



Heritage Ottawa to Built Heritage Sub-Committee 11 July 2013, and 5 September 2013, re:

110-116 Sparks Street

Observations:

The decision to retain the façade of this building as a surface ornamentation of a modern structure is reminiscent of the similar decision made for the Ogilvy Building, wherein a structure languished so long that virtually nothing but some of its surface features could be retained.

Clearly this building has suffered a facadectomy.

Retention of surface features alone is not recommended by the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* endorsed by the City of Ottawa (Standard 12: “Not Recommended ...demolishing the building structure and retaining only the street façade(s)”). Nevertheless, the OHA designates properties not buildings, per se, so a remnant can still be protected by the OHA.

Heritage Ottawa sincerely hopes that, with a vigorous demolition by neglect by-law tailored to heritage properties, we won’t be seeing too many more of these.

As for the proposed new façade at 106 Sparks Street, it is sympathetic to the historic façade of 110-116, in its roofline and fenestration, while being a clearly modern design, and in line with the design guidelines developed for Sparks Street. The Queen Street tower appears to be set far enough back as not to impinge upon sight lines on Sparks Street.

Recommendations:

Heritage Ottawa supports these recommendations in the Cultural Heritage Impact Statement:

Façade: If the design is to be reconsidered to address its historic appearance in a more systematic manner, further historical research is recommended to establish its appearance at various times in its history and to determine whether some elements could be recovered or

interpreted in the design. Of particular interest would be the integration of new signage to reinforce the façade's original purpose as the front of a theatre.

Interpretation: Historical research using archival records from the City of Ottawa and the Ontario Archives could be used to produce an interpretive display inside the development.

Heritage Ottawa further recommends:

- That the façade be restored by the means deemed most likely to ensure the survival of its remaining heritage features.
- That although the south side of Sparks Street has largely succumbed to facadism, the BHSC encourage the preservation of the many fine heritage buildings on the north side *in toto*

Thank you,

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President, Heritage Ottawa