

POLICY ON WINDOW RENOVATIONS IN HERITAGE BUILDINGS

Approved by City Council December 18, 2012

Purpose:

The City of Kingston recognizes that Period Windows are an integral component of heritage buildings and their conservation is of great importance to the character of the City. Both original and appropriate replacement windows help define a building's character, integrity and cultural heritage value.

This policy:

- affirms the contributions that Period Windows make to a building's aesthetics and authenticity;
- ensures that inappropriate or unnecessary alterations to Period Windows on Protected Heritage Properties within the City are minimal; and
- provides guidance with regards to renovations and changes to Period Windows in older and heritage buildings within the City of Kingston.

Glossary:

"Heritage Attribute" refers to the listed features of cultural heritage value or interest of a Protected Heritage Property, as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*, in the respective Part IV or V designation By-law or heritage easement under Parts II or IV; sometimes referred to as a Character Defining Elements or Features.

"Period Window(s)" refers to (an) original window(s) or those replacement windows that are historically and architecturally appropriate to the cultural heritage value of the building and property.

"Protected Heritage Property" is real property designated under Parts IV, V or VI of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; heritage conservation easement property under Parts II or IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; a National Historic Site; or a property that is the subject of a covenant or agreement between the owner of a property and a conservation body or level of government, registered on title and executed with the primary purpose of preserving, conserving and maintaining a cultural heritage feature or resource, or preventing its destruction, demolition or loss.

"Window(s)" includes any window on any storey, or portion of a floor, and refers to not only the glass (stained or otherwise), glazing pattern, frame and sash but also includes but is not limited to the window openings (sills and lintels), all mouldings, casings, muntin bars, joinery, and all hardware and other components.

Policy for Period Windows which are Heritage Attributes:

Original windows are typically well made tangible examples of the craftsmanship of the era in which they were made. Existing original windows have survived for decades, typically in their original location, and they must be conserved.

The City recognizes that a building may no longer have all of the components of its original windows but instead has older windows that relate to a particular period in its history. This may be caused, for example, when the windows have been replaced after a fire or when the building underwent a major expansion or renovation.

Period Windows may have cultural heritage value meriting retention and protection even though they are not original to the building, particularly if they are constructed of a similar material and with similar methods to the original. **Where the windows are identified as a Heritage Attribute, the City of Kingston requires the retention of Period Windows and recommends they be repaired in accordance with this policy.**

When the repair of a Period Window is necessary or if the replacement of the window is justified, as described below, all window mouldings, sill, jambs, head and brick mould and casings, etc., must be retained as far as possible. The design of all replacement components should, as closely as possible, replicate the Period Window, as supported by photographs or historic plans, so that character defining features such as the material, glazing pattern, glass, rail and stile dimensions, moulding profiles, muntin bar sizes and the joinery are retained. The use of dark or reflective glass as part of a Period Window is not appropriate.

Most Period Windows can be repaired and therefore should only be replaced as a last option. Replacement of a Period Window on a Protected Heritage Property will only be considered when the Period Window is so deteriorated that even if it was repaired very little original material would remain.

Guideline for Windows which are not Heritage Attributes on Protected Heritage Properties:

Where a window is not a Period Window on a Protected Heritage Property and is an inappropriate replacement unit that is not in keeping with the character of the building and has little or no cultural heritage value, its replacement should be considered. The replacement window should be designed to replicate a Period Window as closely as possible. The use of metal clad windows (wooden windows with metal covering) can also be considered in this situation.

Guideline for Period Windows on Non-Protected Heritage Properties:

If the Period Window is not on a Protected Heritage Property, the City of Kingston encourages owners to retain Period Windows and suggests that they be repaired in

accordance with the above-noted policy, but this cannot be required by the municipality under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Improving Thermal Efficiency in Period Windows:

Thermal efficiency of windows is an important part of improving the energy use of a building. With the use of weather stripping, caulking, storm windows, shutters and proper window maintenance, older windows can be upgraded to improve their thermal efficiency. Older windows can be upgraded to acceptable performance standards that are comparable to most modern windows, while maintaining the heritage character of the building.