

## **1834 Ontario Place NW – Porch Alteration**

With regard to the proposed porch alteration, DCOP has offered the following guidance: "The conversion and any associated additions, as viewed from the street, alley, and other public way, shall not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale and pattern of houses along the subject street or alley".

If the intent of restricting porch alterations is to maintain the character, scale and pattern of rowhouses along a subject street, then let us consider the given block more closely. While the scale of rowhouses on the block is relatively consistent, the character and pattern of this block is one of variety and discontinuity. Around the subject property, there is not a consistent facade line or "block wall", nor is there a continuous porch line. Below is a description of the character and pattern, accompanied by photos:

- First, this rowhouse is part of a grouping of 4 identical ones, including 2 with, and 2 without a bay window. The subject rowhouse is one of the 2 without a bay window, the other of which already has its porch floor and roof completely removed, replaced by only a modest stoop. The pattern of these 4 rowhouses is already one of an offbeat cadence.
- Second, the 6 rowhouses immediately to the west do not have porches at all, but rather are characterized by substantial bay windows that are 2.5 stories in height. There is more bay window than recessed facade, so the assemblage of the 6 bay windows creates the appearance of a block wall that projects beyond the block wall of the subject rowhouse and its grouping of 4 identical rowhouses. Further west, the pattern reverts to a grouping of 4 rowhouses with a continuous porch line, followed by a 2-story apartment building that projects beyond the block wall, 3 rowhouses with substantial bay windows, 4 rowhouses with porches, and finally a 5-story apartment building that sits on the property line (projecting significantly beyond the block wall).
- Third, the 3 rowhouses immediately to the east are set back so their porches align with the building face of the subject property. Further east, the 9 remaining rowhouses are set back slightly, and with a lower porch line.

Quite simply, the character and pattern around the subject rowhouse is one of discontinuity, and there is no continuous porch line to maintain.

It also bears noting that the subject property is not designated historic, nor is it located in a historic district. As such, OP does not prohibit the demolition of an existing property in its entirety, and one could build a completely new rowhouse by-right without a porch, and even with a facade that is setback from the neighboring facades. In fact, such an example exists across the street where a modern rowhouse now stands. It is inequitable that OP's guidelines allow someone to completely demolish a property and break from the character and pattern of a block, but restrict someone from simply altering an already discontinuous porch line, if they maintain and renovate the rest of the facade.

Respectfully,  
Steve Fotiu, AIA, NCARB



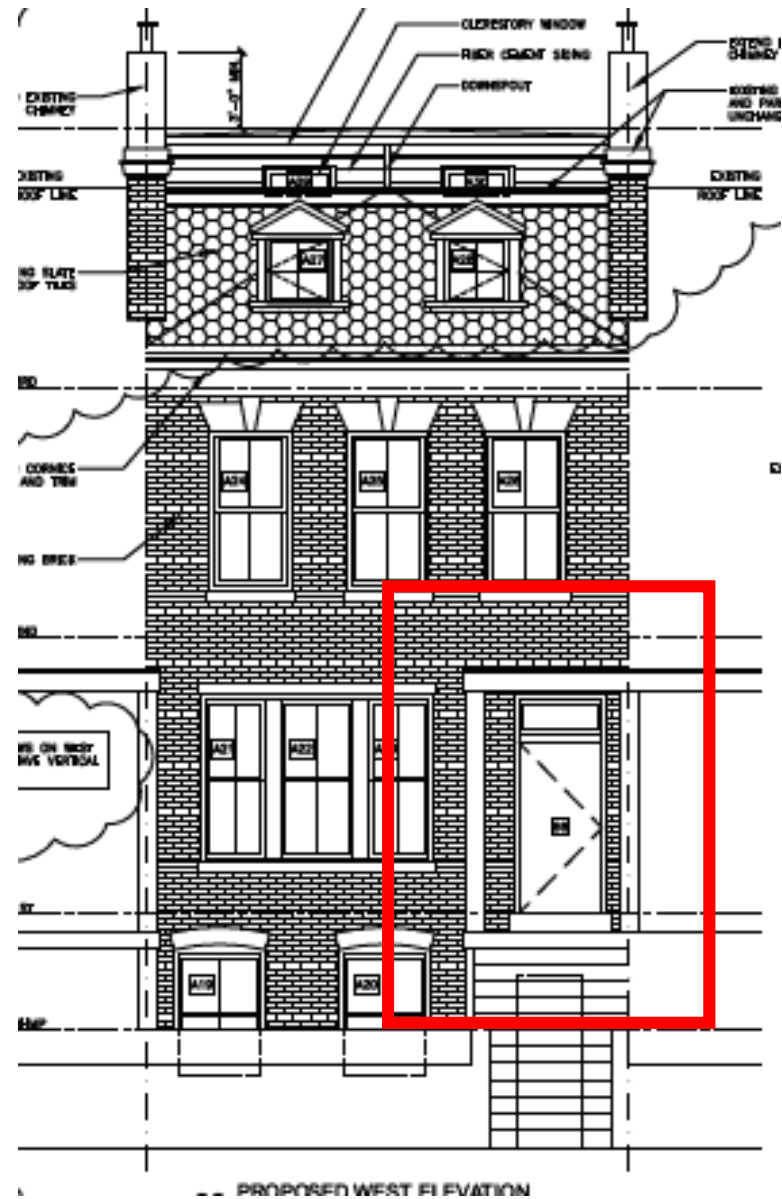


- porch
- ↑ facade vs streetwall
- 1834 Ontario PI NW



Discontinuity of Street









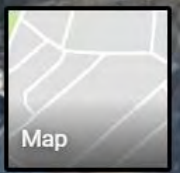
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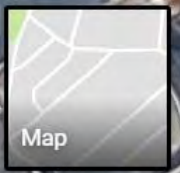


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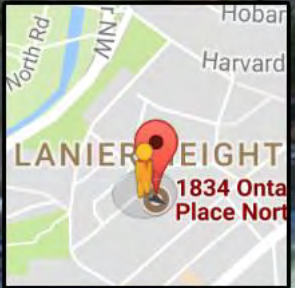
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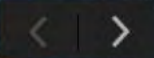
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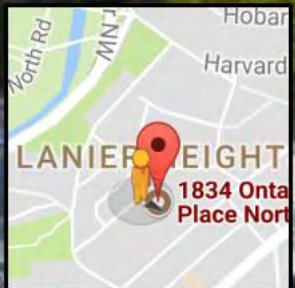
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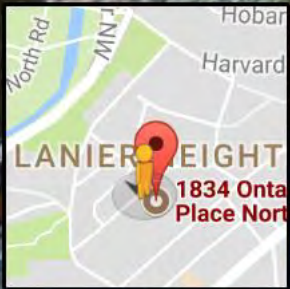
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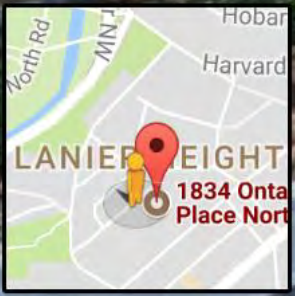
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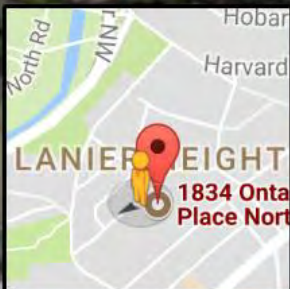
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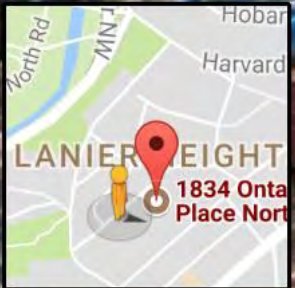
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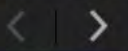
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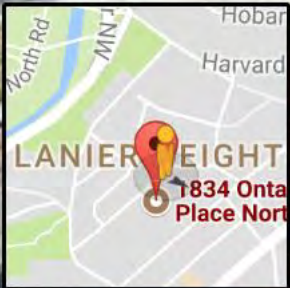
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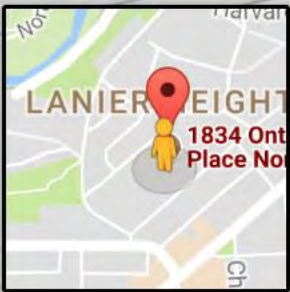




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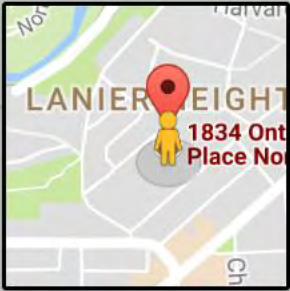




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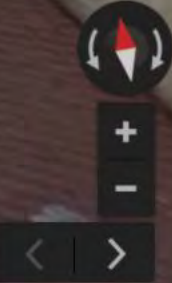
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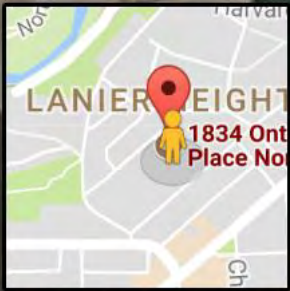




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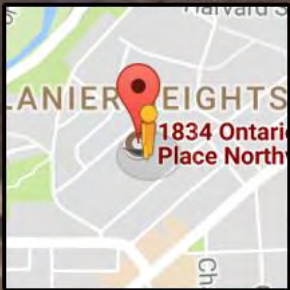


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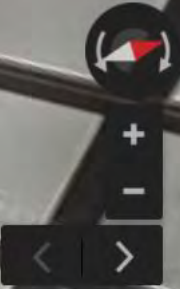
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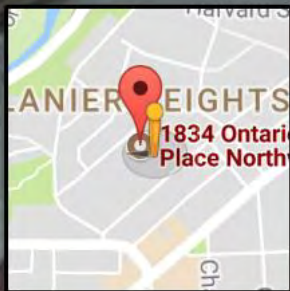




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