



HERITAGE THOROLD LACAC  
City of Thorold

***EVALUATING HERITAGE RESOURCES  
IN THE CITY OF THOROLD***

*Revised June 2011*  
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## ***1.0 INTRODUCTION***

It has become increasingly evident that the City of Thorold requires a standard evaluation system to assist in the examination and classification of buildings considered to be of cultural value, architectural and/or historical value. The evaluation of these features either within a defined heritage conservation district/study area or independently, can be an extremely subjective process if it is not standardized through the use of a well defined and clear evaluation system.

A necessary prerequisite to evaluating and classifying the significance of a particular heritage building is the compilation of an initial inventory of all buildings within the municipality which appear to have some heritage value.

In 1978-79 an Architectural Survey of Thorold was undertaken by the students of Prof. Josephine P. Meeker who were enrolled in the Geography Department at Brock University. This was funded by Canada Works Grants 3112SK4 and 3040TK6. This inventory appears on the Web Site: [www: heritagethorold.com](http://www.heritagethorold.com).

Since its formation Heritage Thorold LACAC has used a broad set of criteria for selecting properties of heritage value, and until 2004, a formal evaluation system was never used. In recent years it has become apparent that the inventory required updating and that some form of evaluation should occur to ensure that the buildings listed exhibit a minimum degree of heritage value.

It has also become obvious that there is a growing need to introduce an equitable evaluation system that would assist in the rating and classification of heritage buildings which would not only be useful as the basis for initiating future individual heritage building designations and heritage district designations, but would also assist in reviewing development applications to alter or demolish these properties.

An evaluation system needs to be based upon well-defined criteria to which standards may be set for evaluation. Many systems used around the province have been reviewed and the committee feels that the system used in Markham is extremely good and has been adopted for the City of Thorold.

**It should also be noted that the designation or demolition of a building should not be based solely on the results of this rating and classification exercise. There may be exceptions, for example where a building may possess one specific historical attribute of great significance, but otherwise receives a low rating. While the evaluation criteria and classification system will provide a valid guideline for both staff and Council, the City should retain the options to make exceptions when necessary.**

The building classifications are as follows:

- |       |   |   |
|-------|---|---|
| GROUP | 1 | -those buildings of major significance and importance to the City and worthy of designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. |
| GROUP | 2 | -those buildings of significance and worthy of preservation.  |
| GROUP | 3 | -those buildings considered noteworthy.   |

The general policies and procedures associated with each of the above Group classifications are presented in Section 6.0 of this document.

## **2.0**            ***EVALUATION PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES***

### **2.1**    **EVALUATION PRINCIPLES**

It is possible to limit the subjectivity of the evaluation process by using the standard set of evaluation principles.

To ensure that the evaluation system will aid decision-making for the identification of significant heritage buildings and potential heritage conservation districts/study areas, and to ensure that it will be of assistance when dealing with applications to alter or demolish identified heritage buildings, the evaluations system must:

- be based on a set of **well-defined criteria**;
- establish the **relative significance** of individual heritage buildings and heritage areas;
- be **flexible in order to ensure a fair evaluation** of all structures and areas which contribute to an understanding of the beginnings and growth of the City of Thorold and to ensure that each building is evaluated according to its merit as a heritage resource in the context of its specific surroundings; and
- provide a **means for standardizing judgments** that are based on professional experience and expertise.

### **2.2**    **EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

The following procedure has been developed to evaluate and classify buildings of cultural, architectural and/or historical value. The evaluation procedure consists of four stages:

- |    |                   |                 |
|----|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1) | Building Research | see Section 3.0 |
| 2) | Evaluation        | see Section 4.0 |
| 3) | Scoring           | see Section 5.0 |
| 4) | Classification    | see Section 6.0 |

The first stage involves the collection of historical research on the specific building under consideration. An evaluation of the building using a series of historical, architectural and environmental criteria comprises the second stage. As a third stage, a score is obtained which will vary depending on whether the building is part of a heritage district/study area or whether it is elsewhere in the community. Based upon this score, in stage four, the building can be classified as to its significance to Thorold.

### **3.0            *HISTORICAL RESEARCH PACKAGE***

In order to complete the evaluation process, as much historical information as possible must be collected for the potential heritage building. Where the potential exists for a heritage conservation district designation, data should be collected for all the buildings in the area regardless of whether they were or were not identified as potential heritage buildings.

The purpose of the Historical Research Package is to establish a basis for evaluating and ultimately classifying the heritage structure. The information to be collected for the “Research Package” consists of the following:

- **Property Identification:**
  - present owner and tenants
  - municipal address, legal description
  - assessment role number
  - Inventory code number
  - present use, zoning and O.P. designations
  
- **Photographic Record**
  - a current photograph of the heritage structure
  
- **Cultural Value**
  - description to be added
  
- **Historical Research:**
  - abstract index of deeds for the property
  - title search
  - census information
  - assessment roll
  - cemetery records
  - family history
  - historic photographs
  
- **Architectural Description**
  - Canadian Inventory of Historic Building Survey (modified)
  - documentation of alterations
  - evidence of original features

The forms on which the above information is to be recorded are exhibited in Appendix ‘A’: Heritage building Evaluation Worksheet Package.

## 4.0

# *EVALUATION CRITERIA*

Upon completion of the ‘Research Package’, the heritage buildings can be evaluated according to the City of Thorold’s evaluation criteria. It is recommended that the actual evaluation and scoring should be carried out by more than one person in order to eliminate any individual bias on the part of a single evaluator, providing for a more comprehensive and objective review of each building

The criteria used in evaluating Thorold’s heritage buildings were chosen to describe the qualities that contribute to the heritage significance of that building. The evaluation criteria can be grouped into three main categories:

- Historical
- Architectural
- Environmental (Cultural)

Under the **Historical Value Section**, the rating criteria relate to the age of the building, its association with a notable person or event, and the building’s thematic potential as illustrative of patterns or trends of cultural, social, political, military, industrial or agricultural history. The building’s usefulness for illustrating and/or teaching cultural history and its tourist promotion potential can also be factored in.

Under the **Architectural Value Section**, the rating criteria relate to the stylistic purity or rarity, the quality and/or rarity of design and craftsmanship, the significance of the architect/builder, the structural condition and the building’s state of preservation or integrity.

Under the **Environmental Context Section (Cultural Value)**, the rating criteria relate to how well the building contributes to the identity of the community or landscape.

Bonus criteria for interior elements, historic groupings and archaeological resources are reserved for those buildings which are accorded greater importance due to the presence of a particular attribute. While these attributes can contribute significantly to a building’s importance, their absence does not detract from the rating.

For each of the criteria, buildings are evaluated as excellent, good, fair or poor.

The “Heritage Building Evaluation Worksheet Package” is included as Appendix ‘A’.

## 4.1 *HISTORICAL VALUE CATEGORY*

The standard criteria chosen to define historic significance are as follows:

- a) Dates of construction;
- b) Trends exhibited by the building;
- c) Events associated with the building; and
- d) Persons associated with the building.

Additional criteria may include:

- e) Archaeological Resources
- f) Historic Grouping

### a) Date of Construction

The date of construction is used as an indicator of potential historic significance as it provides a basis for evaluating the amount of history reflected by a particular building. This criterion ensures that a building's age is given some consideration in determining historical significance; and to ensure that older structures, which cannot be linked to a specific trend, or cannot be associated with an event or person, are not completely overlooked with respect to historical significance.

When scoring a building for its construction date, the following should be used as a guide:

Pre 1841	-Bonus	Early Settlement and Immigration
1842 – 1871	-Excellent	Village Growth and Industrial Development
1872 – 1900	-Good	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Welland Canal Era in Thorold
1901 – 1945	-Fair	First –Half 20 <sup>th</sup> Century
1946 – Present	-Poor	Post WW2

### b) Association with Historic Trends/Patterns/Themes

**Association with historic trends, patterns or themes means that the site reflects a particular social, economic, political or cultural pattern characteristic of the City of Thorold's history and/or the history of a potential heritage conservation district/study area.**

This criterion is the most important of the four history criteria and the most heavily weighted. Over and above their associations with people or events, buildings can visually

represent the historic trends of both the town and a local area. The following gradations are the basis for evaluating how a building reflects historical trends:

**Excellent:** The building can be linked to a specific and important trend, pattern or theme associated with Thorold's history, and illustrates the trend extremely well.

**Good:** The building can be linked to a specific trend, pattern or theme important to Thorold's history, but illustrates the trend only fairly well; or the building can be linked to a specific trend that only has significance in the local area.

**Fair:** The building can be linked in the most general way to a broad trend, pattern or theme (usually by date of construction).

**Poor:** The building cannot be linked to any trend, pattern or theme that has historical significance either to the City of Thorold or to a local area.

### c) Association with events

**Association with events means that a building or structure can be directly linked to an event of local, regional or national significance. This criterion is generally applicable to only a limited number of buildings.**

The historical importance of a building that is associated with a noteworthy historical event should not be overlooked in evaluating a building's independent heritage value, or its significance within a heritage conservation district/study area. A distinction should be made between human interest one-time events, and events which have had long-lasting consequence. To account for these distinctions, the evaluation of buildings which may be associated with significant events should be based on the following:

**Excellent:** A single event, possibly related to the building's function, which has had long-term consequences socially, culturally, politically or economically for the village, town, region or nation.

**Good:** A single event which is very newsworthy or is associated with a person of importance, but which has had limited social, political, economic or cultural consequences.

**Fair:** A single event, such as the laying of a cornerstone by a prominent figure, which is somewhat newsworthy; or events which are human interest stories of no real consequence.

**Poor:** If no event has occurred, this is the appropriate grading choice.

## d) Association with a Person or Group

**Association means that the building can be directly linked to a person, group, institution, or corporation that has made a significant contribution to the local community, province or nation.**

As was the case with the Events criterion, this is applicable to a limited number of buildings. However, where a building is associated with a notable person, group, institution or corporation, the added historical significance should not be overlooked.

Evaluating the importance of a building's association with a notable person or entity should be based on the following:

**Excellent:** The person or entity had very strong ties with the building and was extremely important in the history of the town, region or nation. For example, "Maplehurst, the home of the Keefer Family

**Good:** the person or entity was reasonably important and had strong ties with the building but is not exclusively associated with the building. For example, home of the lockmaster for lock 25 in Thorold

**Fair:** The person or entity was reasonably important, with identifiable ties to the building, but is not necessarily significant. For example, a building that was owned by a prominent Thorold businessperson but not necessarily their primary residence or place of business.

**Poor:** The building has no association with a notable person or entity.

## e) Archaeological Resources (Bonus)

**Archaeological resources are known or assumed to exist on the property**

Archaeological resources on the property have yielded or may yield information important to the history of the property or the community.

**Excellent:** A significant archaeological site(s) is known to exist on the property

**Good:** A potentially significant archaeological site(s) or an identified archaeological site of unknown importance is known to exist.

**Fair:** A potential archaeological site of unknown importance is suspected.

**Poor:** Property is of little or no archaeological significance.

## **f) Historic Grouping (Bonus)**

**The building forms a part of a historically associated grouping of older buildings.**

This grouping of buildings could be a number of contiguous structures or a group of related, but not necessarily contiguous structures (eg. Front Street Blocks)

**Excellent:** The grouping strongly or exceptionally illustrates an important trend or pattern in the community.

**Good:** The grouping strongly illustrates a fairly important trend or pattern, or illustrates a major trend reasonably well.

**Fair:** The grouping reasonable illustrates a trend or pattern of some note.

**Poor:** The building is not part of a historic grouping of buildings.

## **4.2 ARCHITECTURAL VALUE CATEGORY**

The architectural value criteria are concerned primarily with the visual aspects and design qualities of heritage buildings. This is not limited to buildings which can be given academic labels as to their particular architectural style, but also includes vernacular buildings –those which represent the ordinary or common building style found in the City of Thorold.

The standard criteria to define architectural value are as follows:

- a) Design;
- b) Style;
- c.) Architectural Integrity;
- d) Physical condition; and
- e) Designer/Builder

An additional criterion may include:

- f) Interior Elements

## a) Design

**The building is particularly significant because of the excellence, artistic merit or uniqueness of its design, composition, craftsmanship or details**

This criterion is intentionally concerned with the design qualities of heritage buildings irrespective of style. Unusual or notable proportions, decoration, colour, texture, and massing, **relative to the local area in which the building is located**, are the prime considerations for evaluating design

Also to be considered in this category are exterior alterations which can impact the original design qualities of Buildings. Integrity should only be considered in evaluating design insofar as the alterations have compromised the original character of the building. For example, minor alterations such as aluminum storm doors, or positive additions that enhance the building's character would not result in a lower evaluation.

**Excellent:** The building relative to its local area is particularly significant as a result of the excellence, artistic merit or uniqueness of its design.

**Good:** The building relative to its local area is generally well-designed and will generally exhibit some unusual or notable design characteristics with respect to proportion, decoration, colour, texture or massing; or the building was particularly attractive or unique, but due to some exterior alterations that have changed the original, can no longer be evaluated as excellent.

**Fair:** The building design relative to its local area is generally not unusual or notable with respect to proportions, decoration, colour, texture or massing. The building may have exhibited design characteristics warranting an excellent or good evaluation, but due to major exterior alterations has lost much of its original character.

**Poor:** The building relative to its local area is not well-designed, unique or notable. This may be a result of numerous unsympathetic exterior alterations; or it may never have been “designed” in the first place.

## b) Building Style

**The building exhibits design features of a particular architectural style, period or method of construction..**

Style is considered separately from “design” as discussed above. Style compares the building to others of its particular architectural style. In most Canadian towns, absolute conformity to a particular architectural style is exceedingly rare. Many of the City of Thorold’s notable heritage buildings contain elements of different styles, or are considered vernacular: characteristic of a local place or period and usually without a known architect. To account for the prominence of vernacular architecture or architecture which does not conform to a particular style, evaluation of this criterion is determined relative to other buildings as are known that exhibit that particular style. The following serves as the basis for evaluating building style:

**Excellent:** If many buildings of the same style survive, the building should be perfect or extremely early example; if few survive the building should be one of the best examples.

**Good:** If many buildings of the same style survive, the building should be an excellent or very early example; if few survive, it should be a good example.

**Fair:** If many buildings of the same style survive, it should be a good example; if few survive, it should be a fair example.

**Poor:** The building is of no particular stylistic interest or difficulty is encountered in identifying an original style.

### **c) Architectural Integrity**

**The important stylistic elements of the building are intact without alterations or additions of an insensitive or irreparable nature.**

This criterion considers the architectural integrity of the building. If alterations are significantly old and complementary, they may be judged on their own merits.

**Excellent:** The building appears to be in superior physical condition

**Good:** The building would appear to require minor structural repair.

**Fair:** The building would appear to require a moderate amount of structural repair.

**Poor:** The building would appear to require extensive structural repair.

## d) Designer/Builder

**The building was designed by an architect, engineer or other design professional, or was constructed by a builder whose work is of local, regional or national importance.**

As noted earlier, most of the building stock in Thorold is of a vernacular style constructed by the owner or local tradespeople.

**Excellent:** the designer or builder was of particular importance to the history of the village, town, city, region, province or nation

**Good:** The designer or builder was of some importance to the history of the village, town, city, region, province or nation.

**Fair:** The designer or builder is known, or can be identified, but is of not particular importance.

**Poor:** The designer or builder cannot be identified or is of no importance locally, regionally or nationally.

### 4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT CATEGORY (CULTURAL VALUE)

The set of criteria developed to evaluate the environmental significance of a building focuses on how well a building fits in with its surroundings; how prominent the building is as a heritage landmark in its environment; and, whether the building has a historical association with its surroundings by being a significant component of community life.

The standard criteria to define the environmental significance are as follows:

- a) Design Compatibility with Streetscape/Environs;
- b) Community Context;
- c) Landmark Status; and
- d) Site

These considerations are important as it is the visual relationship of buildings in an area that contributes to the identity of a heritage conservation district/study area. The building's setting and surrounding landscape features are also to be evaluated as a part of this process.

For buildings not located in a heritage conservation district/study area, the building's environmental significance is considered less important. However, this is not to say that a building not located in a district/study area lacks environmental significance. These buildings may be landmarks or may have strong historical and symbolic associations with the community. Consequently, consideration of environmental significance is still

necessary, even though it is not as important as the historical and architectural categories in determining the heritage value of buildings not located in a heritage district/study area.

### **a) Design Compatibility with Streetscape/Environs.**

**The compatibility of the building, in comparison with surrounding buildings or landscape features, is to be examined.**

In the rural area, a building may be part of a farm setting while in an urban area, the building may be within a historic setting or located next to new development. In the latter case, the evaluation should be according to whether the newer buildings are compatible with the remaining heritage building(s). This ensures that the building's compatibility is evaluated from a heritage perspective.

The degree of compatibility should be evaluated using the following:

**Excellent:** the building, in conjunction with its surrounding landscape features or adjacent buildings, forms a highly distinctive and compatible setting.

**Good:** The building, in conjunction with surrounding landscape features or adjacent buildings, contributes to the area's distinctiveness.

**Fair:** The building cannot be said to be part of a distinctive setting or the building may detract from the compatibility of the setting as a result of incompatible colour and style even though the building's general mass and scale are compatible.

**Poor:** the building, with respect to mass, scale, colour, style and detail is incompatible with and detracts from its setting. This could also apply to drastically altered buildings in a potential heritage district/study area.

### **b) Community Context**

**The building has a strong historical association with its neighborhood, whether in public use or in private use with public associations; and historically was and/or today is, an integral part of community life, and for sentimental or symbolic reasons, has become a significant part of the community's identity.**

This criterion deals with the functional and symbolic role of potential heritage buildings in the life and identity of the community. The community context criterion has limited application but cannot be overlooked since the buildings which were important to life in the community are often unique reflections of the community. Even though these buildings may lack landmark status or design compatibility, they have a distinct

environmental value established by their continued association with community life, or by their former association with community life, which makes them symbolically or sentimentally significant to the community's identity. One such example is "Chestnut Hall"

**Excellent:** The building has strong historical association with the neighborhood as a public use building, and continues to serve and function in the same capacity as an important component of life in the community. As a result, the building, in addition to having actual significance, has become and remains symbolically and sentimentally significant to the community's identity.

**Good:** the building has a strong historical association with the neighborhood as a public use building. However, the building no longer serves or functions in that same capacity as an important component of life in the community. Its significance is consequently sentimental or symbolic to the community's identity.

**Fair:** The building has a limited historical association with the neighborhood, but this association may not be as a result of the building being a public use building. Rather the association may be strictly as a result of age which establishes some limited symbolic significance to the community's identity as a historical residence or commercial establishment. Many potential heritage buildings, since they generally were not or are not public use buildings, might receive this grading.

**Poor:** The building has no historical association with the neighborhood in terms of either age or function.

### c) Landmark Status

**The building serves as a visual, historical or cultural point of reference that has acquired value by the community as a known feature of the streetscape or area.**

**Excellent:** The building is highly visible or is a strong point of reference from several points in the City of Thorold.

**Good:** The building is a strong point of reference from several points in the City of Thorold.

**Fair:** the building is only visible locally and may be used in giving directions within a local area.

**Poor:** The building is difficult to find, or is a landmark without historical association.

## d) Site

<b>The building occupies its original site and illustrates the site's original layout</b>
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**Excellent:** The site is substantially unchanged and the building has not been moved.

**Good:** the site elements may be altered. A building may be on a new foundation, but on its original site.

**Fair:** The building may have been relocated on its original property or the original site elements have been altered substantially.

**Poor:** the building has been relocated to a new site and the contextual value or character of the site is destroyed.

## 5.0 SCORING PROCEDURE

The scoring procedure to be used involves two basic levels. First, the building is scored according to its appropriate level of importance under each of the individual criteria within the three major categories (Historical, Architectural and Environmental/Cultural). The results of each category are totaled for a maximum of 100 points.

Second, each of the three categories is assigned a percentage value that varies depending on whether the building is to be considered an individual entity or an entity within a heritage conservation district/study area. Finally, an overall score out of a possible 100 points is derived and the building can be classified as to its relative significance.

### 5.1 CRITERIA SCORING

The procedure for the criteria scoring process relates to the actual points assigned to each of the gradings (i.e. Excellent, good, fair, poor) under each criterion. In some evaluation systems, these point values change depending on what part of the community is under study (i.e. a rural farmhouse versus a building in a particular city). However, for Thorold, a standard point distribution has been used for each criterion throughout the City as illustrated below:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
<b><i>Historical</i></b>				
Trends/Patterns/Themes	40	27	13	0
Date of Construction	30	20	10	0
Events	15	10	5	0
Persons	15	10	5	0
Archaeological (Bonus)	10	7	3	0

Historic Grouping (Bonus)	10	7	3	0	
HISTORICAL TOTAL					/100

***Architectural***

Style	30	20	10	0	
Design	20	13	7	0	
Architectural Integrity	20	13	7	0	
Physical Condition	20	13	7	0	
Designer/Builder	10	7	3	0	
Interior Elements (Bonus)	10	7	3	0	
ARCHITECTURAL TOTAL					/100

***Environmental/Cultural***

Design Compatibility	40	27	3	0	
Landmark	20	13	7	0	
Community Context	20	13	7	0	
Site	20	13	7	0	
ENVIROMENTAL TOTAL					/100

**CATEGORY SCORING**

As noted earlier, the categories are assigned a percentage weighting that varies dependent or whether the building is being evaluated independently or is located within a heritage district/study area. The percentage value assigned to the category scoring reflects:

- the priorities assigned to environment, architecture and history for buildings within a heritage district/study area.
- the equal importance of history and architecture categories and the limited importance of the environment category in assessing a building not in a district.

**5.2.1. Individual Buildings**

The significance of a building being considered individually is based equally on the building’s historical and architectural significance. To consider one element to be more important than the other could prejudice those buildings which lack significance in one of these categories. The building’s environmental significance is the least important of the three when determining the significance of an individual building not located in a heritage conservation district/study area. Consequently, the heritage significance of buildings to be evaluated on an individual basis is established in this order of priority:

* Architectural Significance	40%
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* Historical Significance	40%
* Environmental Significance	20%
* OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	100%

**5.2.2. Buildings within Heritage Districts**

The significance of a building located within a heritage conservation district/study area is primarily established by the building’s environmental significance—its compatibility with its heritage surroundings, its landmark status, and its community context. Also important is the building’s architectural significance and integrity which reflects the building’s contribution to the area’s heritage character. The historic character of the individual buildings is of lesser importance when a building is evaluated as part of a heritage conservation district/study area. Consequently, the heritage significance of buildings in a heritage conservation district/study area is established in this order or priority:

* Environmental Significance	45%
* Architectural Significance	35%
* Historical Significance	20%
* OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	100%

**5.0 CLASSIFICATION**

The score obtained from the evaluation stage allows a given building to be classified as being a Group ‘1’, Group ‘2’ or Group ‘3’ structure. Buildings can be classified using the following point breakdown:

<u>Points</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Significance</u>
70-100	Group ‘1’	-of major significance and importance, worthy of designation
45-69	Group ‘2’	-significant, worthy of preservation
less than 45	Group ‘3’	-noteworthy, worthy of documentation

It should be understood that the above classification groups are different from the Type ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ classification given to buildings located within a heritage conservation district.

The general policies and procedures associated with each of the Evaluation System’s Group classifications are as follows:

## **Group ‘1’**

The designation of the building pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act will be pursued.

Every attempt must be made to preserve the building on its original site

Any development application affecting such a building must incorporate the identified building.

Appropriate alternative use for the building will be encouraged when necessary to ensure its preservation.

A Letter of Credit will typically be required to ensure the protection and preservation of the building.

## **Group ‘2’**

The designation of the building pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act will be encouraged.

The retention of the structure in its existing location is encouraged.

Any development application affecting such a structure should incorporate the identified building.

Appropriate alternative use for the building will be encouraged when necessary to ensure its preservation.

A Letter of Credit may be required to ensure the protection and preservation of the building.

## **Group ‘3’**

The designation of the building pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act may be supported with an approved restoration plan, but would not be initiated by the City.

Retention of the building on the site is supported.

If the building is to be demolished, a photographic record, measured drawings and/or salvage of significant architectural elements may be required