



March 21, 2023

This letter will confirm that the property located at 36 Gough Avenue in Toronto qualifies for a laneway house build in the rear portion of the lot, under Toronto's "Changing Lanes" program.

I visited the property on March 21, 2023 and confirmed zoning, siting, emergency access and other appropriate qualifications to certify its eligibility.

With the existing house in place with no changes, the maximum size of a permitted as of right build appears to be approximately 342 square feet (over two floors - main and upper).

A basement is also possible here, adding to the square footage above, but in most cases the floor plate of the basement will be significantly smaller than the ground floor and upper floors, the space cannot usually contain bedrooms or a bathroom or a kitchen, and the cost of basement construction can be significant.

An alternate configuration is also possible here, where the laneway house is sunk into the grade approximately 6.56 feet, where it attains a total square footage of approximately 696 square feet. In this configuration a level entry is not possible, nor is interior car parking (the interior would be all living space).

For a sophisticated proponent considering a substantial renovation of the existing house, or the demolition of the existing house and a new build, it's important to note that inclusion of a laneway house does not affect the Floor Space Index (FSI) for the maximum build on any property. That is, one can build a new house, or renovate the existing house to the maximum allowable size on the lot, and still add a laneway house with little to no impact on the main house dimensions, as long as the massing is concentrated towards the front of the lot and upwards, rather than massing it towards the rear of the lot. Under the conditions described above, the maximum size for the laneway house on this lot is approximately 1,388 square feet total over two floors, main plus upper, and more with optional basement. A laneway house at or near this size can accommodate internal car parking for one, or for two, or for zero cars (all living space).

The emergency access path to a laneway house here is achieved solely through the laneways, and no pathway is required for this from the front yard to the back.

The relatively new (2018) Changing Lanes program from the City of Toronto allows qualifying property owners to construct a laneway house “as of right” on their property, with simple building permit application and no political approval or committee of adjustment approval required. No variances are required and no appeals or “neighbour vetoes” are permitted. The city also waives development cost charges.

Should you have any questions about 36 Gough Avenue in particular, or the Changing Lanes program in general, please feel free to contact me any time, or visit our website.

Martin Steele

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