LETTER FROM APPLICANT – 180 UNIVERSITY AVENUE ATTACHEMENT NO. 1

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June 12, 2007.

Mr. Chris Dunn, Preservation Officer
City Hall, 100 Queen Street West
Suite A181
Toronto, Ontario
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Dear Chris,

Re: Toronto Preservation Board, July 12, 2007
Bishop's Block, 180 University Avenue

It is our regret that we can no longer recommend retaining the south and west façades of the Bishop's Block in situ during the construction of the Shangri-La Hotel. We would ask the Toronto Preservation Board to consider our proposal to dismantle the 1830s part of the south and west façade and potentially panelize the 1910s part of the south façade at the board meeting being held on July 12, 2007.

The following is a brief summary of events that had occurred that led to this recommendation. As well, an Appendix including reports provided by the various consultants involved in the investigation is attached to this letter.

In April of 2007, Westbank Developments acquired the property at 180 University that includes the Bishop's Block at the corner of Simcoe Street and Adelaide Street West. Formally acquiring the property allowed for more detail investigation to occur on the Bishop's Block that included probing the exterior masonry walls. In preparation for the future construction of the Shangri-La Hotel, a site investigation was held on April 27, 2007 with the following Consultants:

- Tim Orpwood, Terraprobe Design Ltd.; Geotechnical Consultant
- Bruce Neil, Adjeleian Allen Rubeli Ltd.; Structural Consultant
- Alan Zeegen, Alan Zeegen Associates Ltd.; Structural Consultant
- Sam Trigilia, Clifford Masonry; Heritage Contractor acting as Masonry Consultant
- Sandro Zanini, Young and Wright Architects; Architect of Record
- Edwin Rowse, E.R.A. Architects Inc.; Heritage Consultant
- Veronica Madonna, E.R.A. Architects Inc.

The development of the Shangri-La Hotel is a 66 storey mixed use building containing a hotel, spa, with dwelling and commercial units located east of the remaining Bishop's Block row houses. The building mass of the two remaining row houses will be preserved. There will be 8 levels of underground parking that will encompass the entire site. It was initially proposed that the south and west façades would be retained in situ during the construction period.

During the investigation, the 1830s exterior masonry wall was opened up locally to analyze the condition. The wall is constructed of three wythes of masonry. The first and second wythe of brick was removed by hand during the process and it was observed that a significant amount of differential movement has occurred in the wall. It was also observed that the mortar bonds between the wythes is significantly deteriorated.

In addition, Terraprobe Design Ltd. has documented and analyzed the deformation of the exterior masonry walls, particularly the 1830s part (refer to Appendix). To summarize the analysis, transverse displacement

and distortion has occurred in the walls to an extent that lateral forces and moments in the structure are not appropriately transferred through the wall.

Terraprobe Design had also calculated the vibration caused by the future excavation of the underground parking. The effects that the 1830s façades would experience were reviewed by Terraprobe Design and Alan Zeegen and it was determined that, based on the amount of deformation and the level of deterioration of the masonry bond, the 1830s part of the south and west façade will most likely suffer severe vibration damage during excavation (refer to Appendix) such that rebuilding would be necessary.

It was determined that the 1910s part of the west façade has not suffered that same level of deformation as the 1830s and will likely withstand the vibration of the proposed excavation.

Terraprobe has proceeded with a detail consideration for supporting the 1910s part of the Bishop's Block on the west elevation (refer to Appendix). However, the shoring of the façade is problematic for the following specific site constraints.

The most practical and safest method of shoring is constructing a steel frame loaded onto the sidewalk to support the façade. However, existing infrastructure underneath the sidewalk of Simcoe Street, including a major steam line and a sanitary truck sewer, limits the load that can be transferred. Therefore, there is concern that shoring the 1910s part of the south façade by way of a steel frame structure loaded onto the sidewalk will damage the underground infrastructure.

An alternative shoring method was investigated that included support of the façade on a steel structure loading into the hole of the construction site and supported on the bedrock. Terraprobe Design could not recommend this approach because of the chances of accidental damage to the frame during the construction period would be significant and could result in the loss of the façade and if that were to happen, there is a possibility of serious injury or loss of life for a worker in the excavation below.

As a result, we are currently investigating alternatives to shoring that include panelizing the 1910s façade. This would involve dismantling the façade in sections to be stored off site until reassembly could occur. There is precedence for this in the City and would recommended the most experience contractor in this type of procedure to undertake the work.

We would appreciate the opportunity to present our findings to the Toronto Preservation Board. As well, we would ask the Board to reconsider the previously approved strategy of retaining the south and west façades of the Bishop's Block in situ during construction for very problematic technical reasons. The team is currently investigating all alternative options that we feel are practical. As well, we are aware of the great heritage value of the Bishop's Block and will strive to make the most suitable recommendation.

Yours truly,

Veronica Madonna, *M.Arch*