



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties - 42-46 Overlea Boulevard

<b>Date:</b>	March 27, 2013
<b>To:</b>	Toronto Preservation Board North York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Urban Design, City Planning Division
<b>Wards:</b>	Don Valley West - Ward 26
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2013\Cluster B\PLN\HPS\CC\April 3 2013/ccHPS01

#### SUMMARY

---

This report recommends that City Council include the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties for its cultural heritage value. The site is located on the north side of Overlea Boulevard east of Thorncliffe Park Drive in Leaside and contains the former Coca-Cola headquarters and bottling plant (built in 1964 and officially opened in 1965).

Heritage staff have been notified by other City Planning Division staff that an application for demolition may be submitted for the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard. This listing report has been prepared in the event that a demolition application is made and a comprehensive review and possible designation can be undertaken.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

---

**The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. City Council include the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

**Financial Impact**

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard contains the former Coca-Cola office building and bottling plant. Staff have been advised that a proposed zoning by-law amendment for the site may involve the demolition of the Coca-Cola Building.

## **COMMENTS**

Staff have completed the attached Research and Evaluation Summary (Attachment No. 4) for the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard. As the result of this assessment, staff have determined that the property meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the Ontario Heritage Act that is also applied by the City when evaluating sites for listing on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The research and evaluation summary concludes that the heritage values of the property are represented by the Coca-Cola office building with the adjacent courtyard and sculpture, and the adjoining bottling plant is not identified as a heritage attribute or identified as demonstrating cultural heritage value.

A location map (Attachment No. 1) and photographs (Attachment No. 2) are attached. The Reasons for Listing are found in Attachment No. 3. The property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard is worthy of inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties for its cultural heritage value and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06 under the three categories of design, historical association and context.

Located on the north side of Overlea Boulevard east of Thorncliffe Park Drive, the Coca-Cola Building (built 1964 and opened 1965) is a fine representative and well-crafted example of a suburban office building designed as part of the post-World War II Modern Movement in architecture by the notable Toronto architectural firm of Mathers and Haldenby with a complementary sculpture by the important Canadian artist Walter Yarwood. The Coca-Cola Building is historically and contextually linked to the development of Thorncliffe Park as a planned community in Toronto.

## **CONTACT**

Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager  
Heritage Preservation Services  
Tel: 416-338-1079; Fax: 416-392-1973  
E-mail: [mmacdon7@toronto.ca](mailto:mmacdon7@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Robert Freedman  
Director, Urban Design  
City Planning Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment No. 1 - Location Map

Attachment No. 2 - Photographs

Attachment No. 3 - Reasons for Listing

Attachment No. 4 - Research and Evaluation Summary



This location map is for information purposes only;  
the exact boundaries of the property are not shown

The **arrow** marks the location of the Coca-Cola Building  
on the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard



Above: principal (south) façade of the Coca-Cola Office Building  
Below: "Coca-Cola" sculpture in the courtyard adjoining the office building (left)  
(Heritage Preservation Services, March 2013)

## REASONS FOR LISTING: 42-46 OVERLEA BOULEVARD ATTACHMENT NO. 2 (STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE)

Coca-Cola Building (built 1964 and opened 1965)

### Description

The property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard is worthy of inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties for its cultural heritage value. Located on the north side of Overlea Boulevard east of Thorncliffe Park Drive, the Coca-Cola Building (constructed in 1964 and officially opened in 1965) is a three-storey office structure.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Coca-Cola Building is a fine representative and well-crafted example of a suburban office building designed as part of the Modern Movement in architecture in Toronto. The structure displays the clean lines, contemporary materials and technologies identified with the Modern Movement in architecture where its curtain wall construction, fenestration balancing expanses of glass with spandrels, and flat roofline are all hallmarks of Modernist design. However, the Coca-Cola Building is further distinguished by the vertical louvers marking parts of the east and west elevations and, on the principal façade facing Overlea Boulevard, the distinctive freestanding columns with polished copper cladding and the projecting wall with black granite facing, geometrical designs and brass logo associated with the Coca-Cola brand.

The design of the Coca-Cola Building is associated with the architectural partnership of Mathers and Haldenby, which was one of the best-known and most successful firms in Toronto throughout most of the 20th century and noted for its range of commissions for residential, institutional, commercial and industrial buildings. As part of its extensive portfolio, Mathers and Haldenby prepared plans for the Coca-Cola Company of Canada's complexes in 17 cities in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia between 1940 and 1963, with the Thorncliffe Park offices and bottling plant marking the culmination of their work for the firm. The adjoining courtyard contains a bronze sculpture named "Coca-Cola" that was designed by the noted Canadian sculptor Walter Yarwood (1917-1996), co-founder of "The Painters Eleven" group of artists who introduced abstract expressionism to this country.

With its long occupancy in Thorncliffe Park, the Coca-Cola Building contributes to an understanding of the development of the planned community where it was constructed as part of a collection of low-rise buildings dating to the early 1960s in the industrial sector along Overlea Boulevard. The Coca-Cola Building is the last of the original industrial complexes on Overlea Boulevard where the first occupants remained nearly half a century later.

Contextually, the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard maintains and supports the historical character of Thorncliffe Park as it developed in the early 1960s as a planned community where the Coca-Cola Building stands as one of the original structures in the industrial sector. It is also visually and historically linked to its surroundings as part of a

streetscape developed with mid-century Modern low-rise commercial and industrial buildings and, with its setback and appearance remains highly visible on Overlea Boulevard where the street curves east of Thorncliffe Boulevard opposite the East York Town Centre (originally Thorncliffe Park Market Plaza).

#### Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard are:

- The Coca-Cola Building
- The scale, form and massing on a three-storey plan above a stone base
- The materials, including stone, metals and glass
- The flat roofline, which projects at the south end where it is supported on three-storey free-standing piers clad with polished copper
- The curtain walls holding glass and white spandrel panels
- On the principal (south) façade and side elevations (east and west), the setback of the lower storey
- The treatment of the south façade, where a projecting section at the west end is faced with black granite and inscribed with geometrical patterns resembling the bottom of coca-cola bottles
- The south entrance
- On the east and west elevations, the vertical louvers on portions of the upper stories
- The placement of the office building near the southwest corner of the property where it is set back from Overlea Boulevard
- Separating the office building from the free-standing single-storey bottling plant to the east (which is not identified as a heritage attribute), the courtyard containing the bronze sculpture named "Coca-Cola"

**RESEARCH AND EVALUATION SUMMARY: 42-46 OVERLEA BOULEVARD**

Principal (south) façade of the Coca-Cola Building  
(Heritage Preservation Services, March 2013)

**HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY**

<b>Key Date</b>	<b>Historical Event</b>
1955	Town of Leaside annexes Thorncliffe Park, comprising nearly 400 acres
1958 Feb	Thorncliffe Park Limited registers Plan M736 for the property southeast of Millwood Road and the CPR railway line
1960	The City Directory for 1961 (with information compiled in 1960) describes Overlea Boulevard as "not built on"
1961 Aug	Underwriters' Insurance Atlas shows the layout of Thorncliffe Park (Image 4)
1962 Oct	In a transaction registered in March 1963, Coca-Cola Limited acquires property on the north side of Overlea Boulevard
1963 July	The tax assessment rolls for the Town of Leaside record Coca-Cola Limited as the owner of an undeveloped 13-acre tract on Overlea Boulevard
1963	Architects Mathers and Haldenby prepare plans for Coca-Cola Limited's office building and bottling plant on Overlea Boulevard
1964 July	Coca-Cola Limited owns an unfinished building at 42 Overlea according to Leaside's tax assessment rolls
1965 July	The "new home office" for Coca-Cola Limited officially opens at Thorncliffe Park (Image 5)
1965 Aug	The Coca-Cola complex with sculpture is illustrated in <u>Canadian Architect</u> magazine (Image 6)
1965 Oct	Coca-Cola Limited is listed on the tax assessment rolls at 42-46 Overlea, with the office building valued at \$93,900 and the bottling plant at \$56,340
1965	Coca-Cola Limited is first recorded in the City Directory for 1966 (with data from the previous year) with the "soft drinks" company at 42 Overlea & the "plant" at 46 Overlea
Post-2000	Coca-Cola closes its bottling facility on Overlea Boulevard
2012 Jan	Coca-Cola announces plans to move its head office to downtown Toronto



The location of the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard is shown on the property data map and aerial photograph below (Images 1 and 7) on the north side of the street east of Thorncliffe Park Drive. The area was first settled by members of the Taylor family (famous for developing mills, factories and a brewery along the Don River) who built a residence named "Thorn Cliff" on the site. Purchasing the acreage in 1888 as the setting for a model farm, Robert Davies retained the name but changed its spelling to "Thorncliffe". In 1920, the Thorncliffe Park Racetrack opened on the property with a one-mile track and extensive facilities for thoroughbred and harness racing (Image 2). The Ontario Jockey Club acquired the racetrack in 1952, but soon transferred the property to Thorncliffe Park Limited, a land development company. The neighbouring Town of Leaside annexed the nearly 400-acre tract in 1954, and the organization of the area into manufacturing and residential sectors mirrored its own development as a planned community. Running east from Millwood Road, Overlea Boulevard was established as the main commercial thoroughfare where Thorncliffe Park Market Plaza (now East York Town Centre) opened as one of the earliest covered shopping malls in Canada. During the 1960s, 30 low- to high-rise residential buildings were constructed in the residential enclave.<sup>1</sup> The Leaside Planning Board supervised the development of Thorncliffe Park until 1967 when the municipality amalgamated with the adjoining township as the Borough of East York.

Overlea Boulevard provided the only access to Thorncliffe Park prior to 1960 when the Charles Hiscott Bridge was completed across the Don Valley to Don Mills Road. In 1961, the build-up of the commercial and manufacturing core of the community began along Overlea, with the first recorded complexes occupied by the American Optical Company of Canada (at 62 Overlea) and the administrative offices of Sayvette Limited (at 50 Overlea).<sup>2</sup> Two years later, Coca-Cola Limited (later the Coca-Cola Company of Canada Limited) acquired a parcel exceeding 13 acres on the north side of Overlea Boulevard. As a subsidiary of the American firm founded in 1886 to manufacture the first of its non-alcoholic beverages, Coca-Cola began operations in Canada in the early 20th century. The company commissioned Toronto architects Mathers and Haldenby to design an office facility and bottling plant that were under construction in Thorncliffe Park in 1964 and formally opened in July 1965 (Image 5). The complex incorporated "Coca-Cola", a bronze sculpture featuring intertwined bottles that was created by Canadian artist Walter Yarwood and placed in the courtyard adjoining the Coca-Cola Building to the east.

The Coca-Cola Building displays the clean lines, contemporary materials and technologies identified with the Modern Movement in architecture that was introduced to Toronto in the decades after World War II. While the curtain wall construction, recessed first storey, fenestration where expanses of glass are interspersed with spandrels, and the flat roofline are all hallmarks of Modernism, the design of the Coca-Cola Building is

---

<sup>1</sup> The tallest apartment towers in the community at 85 and 95 Thorncliffe Park Drive were completed in 1971

<sup>2</sup> According to the City Directory of 1962 (with information from 1961), Sayvette was one of the anchors at the Thorncliffe Park Market Plaza along with Steinberg's grocery store, the Thorncliffe Bowl bowling alley and a community auditorium

further elevated by special features that include the vertical louvers marking parts of the east and west elevations. With their distinctive polished copper cladding, the row of freestanding columns supporting the overhang of the roof on the south facade are highly visible features on the building, along with the projecting section of the same wall that is faced with black granite and decorated with geometrical designs associated with the company brand including a brass logo.<sup>3</sup> The Coca-Cola Building is illustrated in an archival photograph (Image 6), with current photographs of the property attached as Images 8-11.

EVALUATION: Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed by the Province of Ontario for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

<b>Design or Physical Value</b>	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	<b>X</b>
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Historical or Associative Value</b>	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	<b>N/A</b>
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	<b>X</b>
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	<b>X</b>
<b>Contextual Value</b>	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	<b>X</b>
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	<b>X</b>
iii. landmark	<b>N/A</b>

The Coca-Cola Building is a fine representative and well-crafted example of a suburban office building designed as part of the Modern Movement in architecture in Toronto. The structure displays the clean lines, contemporary materials and technologies identified with the Modern Movement in architecture where its curtain wall construction, fenestration balancing expanses of glass with spandrels, and flat roofline are all hallmarks of Modernist design. However, the Coca-Cola Building is further distinguished by the vertical louvers marking parts of the east and west elevations and, on the principal façade facing Overlea Boulevard, the distinctive freestanding columns with polished copper cladding and the projecting wall with black granite facing, geometrical designs and brass logo associated with the Coca-Cola brand.

<sup>3</sup> In his entry for the property on the Toronto Modern blog, architect Robert Moffat describes the use of polished copper as an unusual feature of the design

The design of the Coca-Cola Building is associated with significant designers from the post-World War Two era. The architectural partnership of Mathers and Haldenby was among the best-known and most successful firms in Toronto throughout most of the 20th century and particularly noted for its range of commissions for residential, institutional, commercial and industrial buildings. As part of its extensive portfolio, Mathers and Haldenby prepared plans for the Coca-Cola Company of Canada's complexes in 17 cities in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia between 1940 and 1963, with the Thorncliffe Park offices and bottling plant marking the culmination of their work for the firm.<sup>4</sup> The adjoining courtyard contains a bronze sculpture named "Coca-Cola" that was designed by Walter Yarwood (1917-1996), a noted Canadian sculptor and a co-founder of "The Painters Eleven" group of artists who introduced abstract expressionism to this country. Following the dissolution of the group in 1960, Yarwood focused on sculpture, and his Toronto portfolio included commissions from the Ontario Government, the University of Toronto, and Coca-Cola Limited.

With its long occupancy in Thorncliffe Park, the Coca-Cola Building contributes to an understanding of the development of the planned community where it was constructed as part of a collection of low-rise buildings dating to the early 1960s in the industrial sector along Overlea Boulevard. The Coca-Cola Building is the last of the original industrial complexes on Overlea Boulevard where the first occupants remained nearly half a century later.<sup>5</sup>

Contextually, the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard maintains and supports the historical character of Thorncliffe Park as it developed in the early 1960s as a planned community where the Coca-Cola Building stands as one of the original structures in the industrial sector. It is also visually and historically linked to its surroundings as part of a streetscape developed with mid-century Modern low-rise commercial and industrial buildings and, with its setback and appearance remains highly visible on Overlea Boulevard where the street curves east of Thorncliffe Boulevard opposite the East York Town Centre (originally Thorncliffe Park Market Plaza).

## SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard has design, associative and contextual values. The Coca-Cola Building is a fine representative example of Modernist design applied to a commercial building in Thorncliffe Park according to the plans of the notable

---

<sup>4</sup> Entry in The Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, and Mathers and Haldenby Fonds, Archives of Ontario

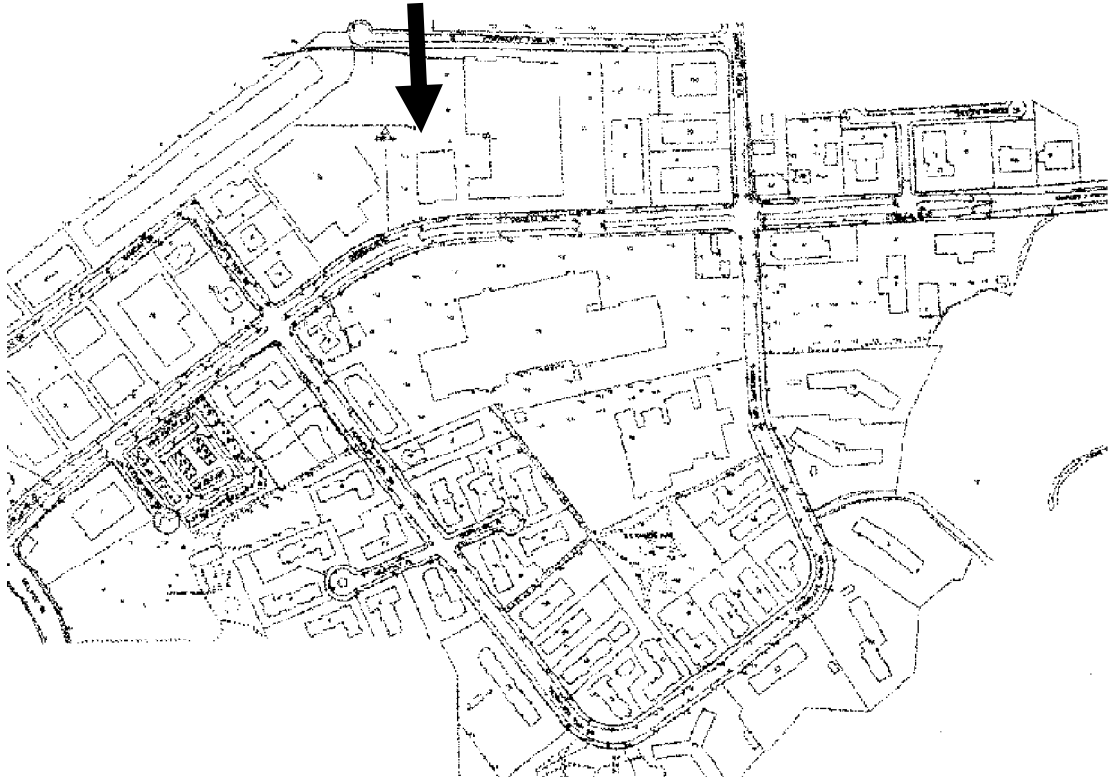
<sup>5</sup> A review of the Directory for East Central Toronto for 2001 (one of the final print volumes) indicates that Coca-Cola was the last of the original tenants in an office and manufacturing complex on Overlea Boulevard (where the Barber-Ellis Building and Crang and Boake's architectural offices at 20 and 86 Overlea, respectively are other surviving first-generation complexes). The Thorncliffe Park Market Plaza (now the East York Town Centre) remains as an original commercial tenant since 1961, while the Macedonian Orthodox Church (later the Macedonian Orthodox Cathedral) was first recorded on Overlea in 1963

architectural partnership of Mathers and Haldenby with a complementary sculpture by Canadian artist Walter Yarwood. As a surviving reminder of the historical development of the planned community of Thorncliffe Park, the Coca-Cola Building maintains and supports the historical character of the neighbourhood where it remains visually and historically linked to its surroundings on Overlea Boulevard.

## SOURCES

- Abstract Index of Deeds, Plan M376, Block A  
Aerial Photograph, 1947, City of Toronto Archives  
"Alfred S. Mathers," entry in The Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, <http://www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org/architects/view/>  
Ardiel, June, Sculpture/Toronto, 1994  
Assessment Rolls, Town of Leaside, 1963-65  
Blumenson, John, Ontario Architecture, 1990  
Bureau of Architecture and Urbanism, Toronto Modern: architecture 1945-1965, 1987  
City of Toronto Directories, 1961 ff.  
"Coca-Cola headquarters still the real thing,"  
<http://robertmoffatt115.wordpress.com/2010/08/25/coca-cola-headquarters-still-the-real-thing>  
"Coke leaving Mad Men-era building to head downtown, Toronto Star, January 4, 2012  
"Fascinating Facts about East York," East York Public Library, 1976,  
<http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/local-history-publications/fascinating-facts.jsp>  
The Golden Years of East York, Borough of East York, 1976  
Kalman, Harold, A History of Canadian Architecture, Vol. 2, 1994  
Maitland, Leslie, Jacqueline Hucker and Shannon Ricketts, A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles, 1992  
Mathers and Haldenby Fonds, Archives of Ontario, C315-1-1 to C315-1-4  
Mathers and Haldenby Partnership Fonds, 1956-1968, Canadian Architectural Archives, University of Calgary, <http://caa.ucalgary.ca/mathers>  
McHugh, Patricia, Toronto Architecture: a city guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1989  
"Money and Markets," Toronto Star, July 22, 1965  
Nolan, Helen, Sculpture in the City, 2003  
"Odds and Ends", Canadian Architect, August 1965, 6  
"Offices have Uncluttered Look," Canadian Interiors, November 1964, 35-38  
Pentergrast, Mark, For God, Country and Coca-Cola, 2nd ed., 2000  
Photograph, Thorncliffe Park Racetrack, City of Toronto Archives, Series 71, Item 5883)  
Pitfield, Jane, ed., Leaside, 2nd ed., 2000  
Property Nomination Forms, 42 and 46 Overlea Boulevard, North York Community Preservation Panel, February 2012  
Underwriters' Survey Bureau, Volume 7, March 1959 revised to August 1964

## IMAGES



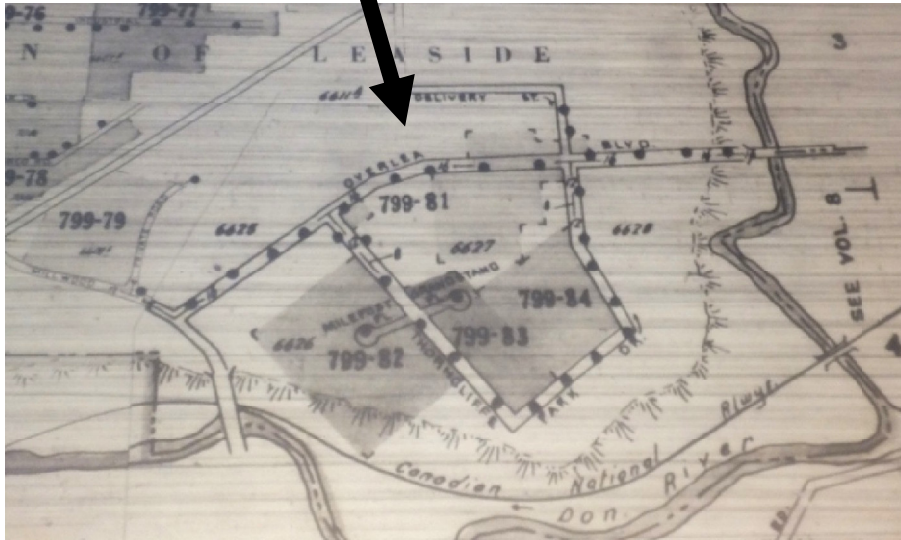
1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: showing the location of the property at 42-46 Overlea Boulevard where the **arrow** marks the site of the Coca-Cola Building



2. Archival Photograph, Thorncliffe Racetrack, 1928: the racetrack occupied the site from 1920-52 and was replaced by the planned industrial and residential community of Thorncliffe Park (City of Toronto Archives, Series 71, Item 5883)



3. Aerial Photograph, 1947: showing the area prior to the development of the Thorncliffe Park community (City of Toronto Archives)



4. Atlas, Underwriters' Survey Bureau, Volume 7, March 1959 updated to August 1961: showing the layout of Thorncliffe Park with Overlea Boulevard as the main east-west corridor

PAGE 25 TORONTO DAILY STAR THURSDAY, JULY 22, 1965

**MONEY & MARKETS**

**Uranium 'find' is a phony**

It could hardly be the weather. Despite the success of William Macfarlane's uranium discovery in Saskatchewan, the uranium market is still in a state of flux. The uranium market is still in a state of flux. The uranium market is still in a state of flux.

**SIDEGLIGHTS**

Uranium market is still in a state of flux. The uranium market is still in a state of flux. The uranium market is still in a state of flux.

**How's Business**

The stock market is still in a state of flux. The stock market is still in a state of flux. The stock market is still in a state of flux.

**ADAMS HURRY! HURRY! SALE ENDS ON SATURDAY!**

**Red Tag Sale**

**Savings to 50% AND MORE**

**ALL ITEMS WITH RED TAGS PRICED TO SELL REGARDLESS OF LOSS OR COST.**

Unfold number of satisfied customers have benefited from our money-saving, value-packed bargains! You, too, can save as they did but you must hurry as the "RED TAG SALE" ends on Saturday. Many, many more bargains left for the last-minute shopper!

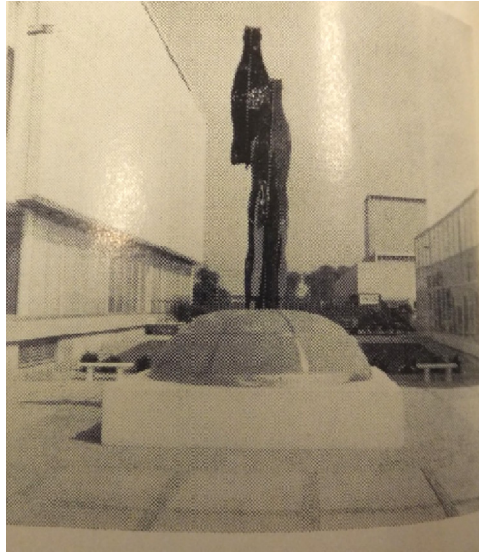
**DOUBLE DRESSER WITH TILTING MIRROR, BOOKCASE BED & CHEST**

**SOFA & MATCHING ARMCHAIR WITH ZIPPERED POLYFOAM CUSHIONS**

**5-PC. CHROME DINETTE WITH NO-MAR EXTENDING TABLE TOP**

**Coca-Cola Ltd. has formally opened its new name office at Thorncliffe Park.**

5. Toronto Star, July 22, 1965, 28: announcing the formal opening of the Coca-Cola Building



6. Archival Photograph: Coca-Cola office building (left) and sculpture (Canadian Architect, August 1965, 6)



7. Aerial Photograph, 2012: showing the industrial (north) and residential (south) components of Thorncliffe Park with the current East York Town Centre (originally the Thorncliffe Park Market Plaza) opposite the Coca-Cola site (<http://www.bing.com>)





8. Contemporary Photographs: showing the west (left) and south (right) elevations (above) with the south (left) and east (right) elevations (below) (Heritage Preservation Services, March 2013)



9. Current Photographs: showing the stone detailing on west end of the south facade (above) with a close-up of the geometrical detailing (below) (Heritage Preservation Services, March 2013)



10. Current Photographs: showing the setback of Coca-Cola Building on north side of Overlea Boulevard (above) and the adjoining courtyard with the "Coca-Cola" sculpture by Walter Yarwood (Heritage Preservation Services, March 2013)



11. Current Photographs: looking west (above) and east (below) on Overlea Boulevard and showing the Coca-Cola Building and the adjoining bottling plant (Heritage Preservation Services, March 2013)