



The Annex Residents' Association

April 17, 2017

Lourdes Bettencourt
Committee Secretary
Toronto Preservation Board
Delivered by email: teycc@toronto.ca

Re: 70 Lowther Avenue, item 8, Toronto Preservation Board meeting April 20, 2017

Dear Ms Bettencourt and members of the Toronto Preservation Board,

I am writing on behalf of the Annex Residents' Association (ARA) in support of the staff report to designate 70 Lowther Avenue. We were shocked to receive notice of the owner's intention not only to demolish this classic Annex heritage house, but also to sever the lot into three smaller properties in order to build three homes. We were also disappointed to learn that, unlike many other new property owners of heritage houses in the Annex, the new owner of 70 Lowther did not contact the City or the Councillor's office for information on best practices for such properties.

The Annex is a showcase of some of the best and most innovative architecture of the late 19th and early 20th century, designed by prestigious architects of the period. This house, built in 1901, and designed by well-known architect Charles Gibson, is a local landmark, which through its style, massing and setback, is part of the pristine, tree-lined Lowther streetscape, which continues west from the designated block in the East Annex Heritage Conservation District.

The social history of the house is also typical of the Annex as it was built by a prominent brewer, later occupied by a member of the prestigious Christie family, and in the post second world war period, divided into flats. At the time of its recent purchase, the building housed flats with modern amenities that preserved some of the historic interior details as well as the historic exterior.

Through the initiative of the Annex Residents' Association in partnership with City staff, The Annex, west of Bedford, was approved for a heritage conservation district study by City Council. While Madison Avenue was designated in 2015 as phase one of the West Annex Heritage Conservation District Study, timing is still to be determined for the other streets.

Residents of The Annex are passionate about the unique character of their neighbourhood, which was established in the late 1880s as the City expanded into the farmland north of Bloor Street.

The loss of some heritage stock in the late 1960s and early 1970s was staunchly opposed by the introduction of heritage protection legislation. As many heritage properties as possible were listed in the heritage registry. The East Annex Heritage Conservation District came into effect in the early 1990s. For more than a century, our heritage properties have adapted to the needs of our diverse community—single family and multi-unit homes, community housing, social service agencies, schools, and businesses.

That is why we support the staff report to designate 70 Lowther. We also hope that the owner will work with Heritage Preservation Services to adapt this century-old treasure in a way that will satisfy his residential needs.

Yours sincerely,



David Harrison, Chair,
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