

North York Community Preservation Panel

November 15, 2017

10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N
Attention: Nancy Martins

RE: PG24.9: Don Mills Crossing: Community Building at Don Mills and Eglinton - Phase 2 Report

Dear Councillor Shiner and Members of Planning and Growth Management Committee,

This communication conveys the comments of the North York Community Preservation Panel (NYCPP) regarding the above noted report which concerns Development Application (DA) #2. DA#2 appears to be an improvement in the amount of heritage retention; however the Panel questions whether the plan maintains the fundamental integrity of the two properties, 844 Don Mills Road and 1150 Eglinton Avenue East, which are physically separate and architecturally distinct from each other.

The property at 844 Don Mills Road contains the former IBM head office and factory, designed in Classical style by Clare G. MacLean and completed in 1951 with an extension in 1954. The adjacent property to the west, 1150 Eglinton Avenue East contains the "Modernist" IBM headquarters building designed by John B. Parkin Associates in 1966-67.

At 844 Don Mills Road, DA 2 proposes to disassemble the entrance structures and partially incorporate them into a new structure. At 1150 Eglinton Avenue East, DA 2 proposes to retain the outer shell of the buildings but to allow towers to punch through, in effect to become the podium for high-rise towers.

The IBM building at 844 Don Mills Road represents a milestone in the history of Canadian commerce, and the rapid post war growth of industry and corporate offices in Don Mills and North York. The building, together with its streetscape (double row of trees) form a landmark marking corporate and suburban Don Mills.

The 1150 Eglinton Ave. E. building complex is similarly iconic of Modernist Canadian architecture and a landmark of Don Mills, especially the vista north from Eglinton Avenue. The wooded area with its carefully crafted driveway occupies part of the original Don River West Valley lands. All of the above are critical elements in the Eglinton Cultural Heritage Landscape Corridor that spans from the West to the East Branches of the Don River Valley.

The disassembly of 844 Don Mills Road building and its partial use as an entrance feature will be viewed as a form of "intentional archeology", while the insertion of out of scale blocks at the 1150 Eglinton Avenue complex will utterly change and diminish the vista.

It is the view of the NYCPP that the fundamental integrity of both buildings will be compromised beyond recognition, despite their potential for re-purposing for other uses. For example the 844 Don Mills Road building could very well have served as a major recreational complex.

Regrettably, this situation appears to be the entirely predictable result of the diversion by North York Community Council in January 2017 of the HPS heritage assessment reports for these properties from their intended path to designation.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Kettel

Geoff Kettel
Chair

C.c. Councillor Jon Burnside
Joe Nanos, Director, Community Planning North York District
Mary MacDonald, Senior Manager, HPS
Christian Ventresca, Senior Planner, Strategic Initiatives, City Planning
Architectural Conservancy of Ontario