



TORONTO STAFF REPORT

March 14, 2005

To: Toronto and East York Community Council
Toronto Preservation Board

From: Joe Halstead, Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

Subject: 130 Bloor Street West (Torno Penthouse) - Inclusion on the City of Toronto
Inventory of Heritage Properties
Toronto Centre-Rosedale - Ward 27

Purpose:

This report recommends that City Council include the property at 130 Bloor Street West (Torno Penthouse) on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

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

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council include the property at 130 Bloor Street West (Torno Penthouse) on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties; and
- (2) The appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

At its meeting on March 3, 2005, the Toronto Preservation Board passed a motion endorsing the inclusion of the property at 130 Bloor Street West on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties and requesting that staff report to the March 30, 2005 meeting of the Toronto and East York Community Council on the inclusion of the property on the Inventory of Heritage Properties.

The property at 130 Bloor Street West contains an office building with a penthouse. The penthouse interiors were designed for Toronto businessman and philanthropist Noah Torno by the acclaimed architect, Philip Johnson. With the recent death of Philip Johnson, there is a renewed interest in his architectural practice. The Torno Penthouse is a rare example in Canada of the work of Philip Johnson that merits inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The inclusion of the property on the Inventory of Heritage Properties would enable staff to monitor any applications affecting the site and encourage the retention of the character defining features.

Comments:

The Reasons for Listing are listed below. A location map (Attachment No. 1) and photograph (Attachment No. 2) are attached.

Reasons for Listing

The property at 130 Bloor Street West is recommended for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties for its cultural resource value or interest. In 1960, Cemp Investments Limited, a company owned by the Bronfman family of Distillers Corporation-Seagrams Limited, financed the construction of the CIL Building at 130 Bloor Street West. The Toronto architectural firm of Bregman and Hamann prepared the plans for the 12-storey office building. The celebrated American architect Philip Johnson is credited with the interior design of the two-storey penthouse. Among the first tenants in the CIL Building was Jordan-Danforth Wines Limited, a company that was created following the merger of two wine producers with the financial assistance of Distillers Corporation-Seagrams Limited. Noah Torno, the president of Jordan-Danforth Wines, occupied the two-storey penthouse suite.

A prominent Toronto businessman and philanthropist, Noah Torno served as a director of numerous wine and spirits producers, including Distillers Corporation-Seagrams Limited, Carling O'Keefe and Hiram Walker. With this wife, Rose Laine Torno, he was a leader in the development of New Mount Sinai Hospital. Torno was active in the governance of both the O'Keefe Centre (now the Hummingbird Centre) and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. As the president of the board of directors of the Royal Ontario Museum, Torno was instrumental in organizing the "Genius of China" exhibit in 1974 following negotiations with the Peoples' Republic of China. He personally commissioned architect Philip Johnson to design his family residence on top of the CIL Building.

The Torno Penthouse is architecturally significant for its association with the internationally recognized American architect, Philip Johnson (1906-2005). Johnson is credited with familiarizing North America with the International Style of architecture through an exhibition he organized at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in the 1930s. In 1949, Johnson introduced one of the icons of Modern architecture with the design of his personal residence, the Glass House, in New Canaan, Connecticut. After promoting the simple lines and contemporary materials of International design for three decades, in the 1960s Johnson began adding historical

references to his commissions, culminating in the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (A T & T) headquarters in New York City in 1984. This venture into Post-Modern architecture introduced a new phase in his career. Practicing alone and in partnership, Johnson had an indelible impact on architecture through six decades. The Torno Penthouse is a rare example of his work in Canada.

The heritage attributes of the property consist of the two-storey penthouse on the roof of the CIL Building and the ground-floor entrance off Cumberland Street. The penthouse suite is accessed from Cumberland Street where the entry is marked by a decorative iron fence and entered through an iron grille. A single-storey covered passageway (that was originally illuminated by a skylight) is placed along the west end of the CIL Building. Clad with travertine and glazed brick, the passageway leads to a private elevator that ascends to the penthouse. Rising two stories, the penthouse features a stepped plan created by two side-by-side rectangles under a flat roof that is extended for the building's mechanicals. The penthouse is set back from the south, east and north ends of the roof of the CIL Building, while its west facade is an extension of the west wall of the office building. The exterior mixes solid sections with brown brick cladding and transparent glass and metal curtain walls. On the interior, the living areas and the staircase between the two stories display stone, glass, metal and wood finishes. On the south, east and north sides, the flat roof of the CIL Building creates an extended terrace for the penthouse, with a Japanese garden placed along the edges.

Conclusions:

It is recommended that City Council include the property at 130 Bloor Street West (Torno Penthouse) on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

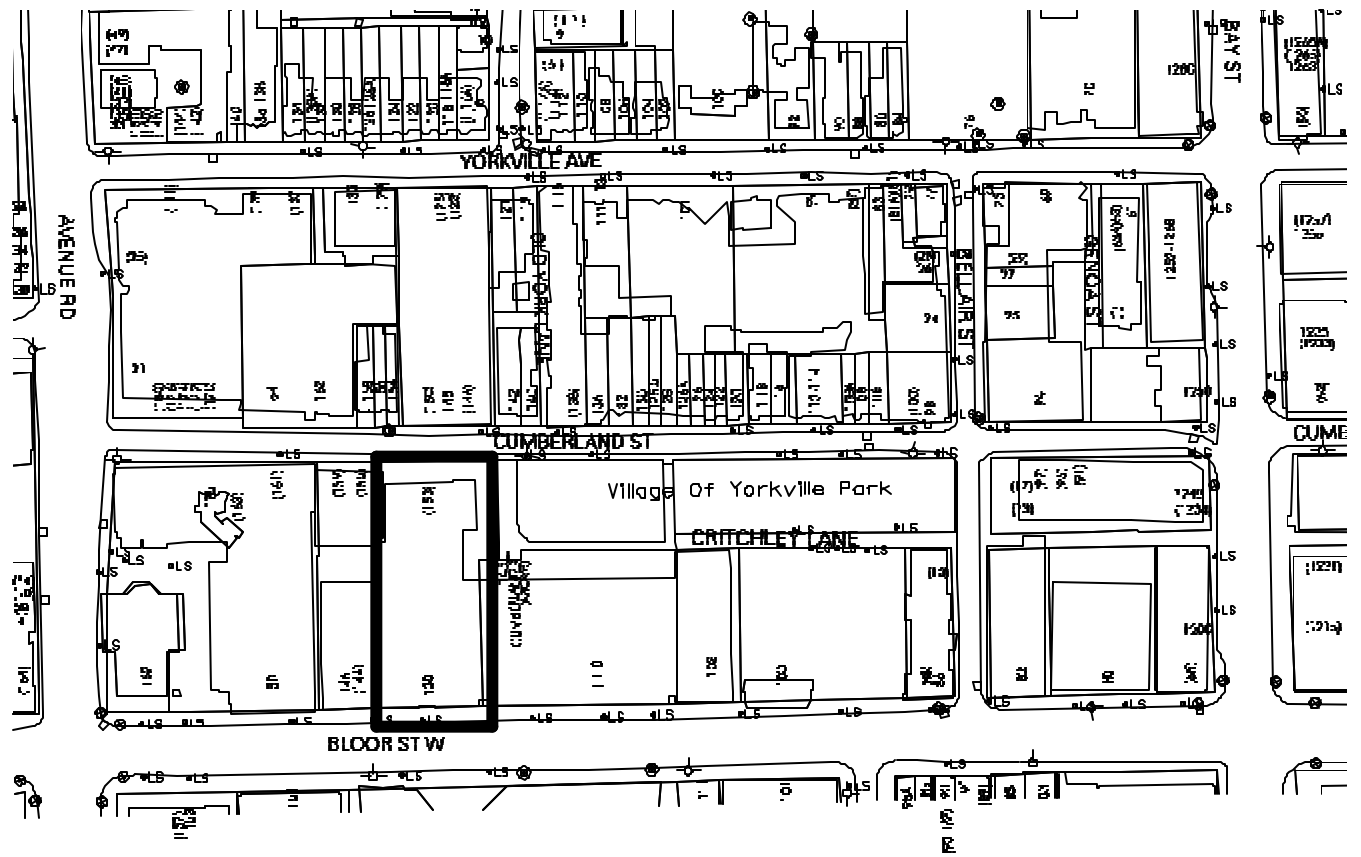
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Joe Halstead
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List of Attachments:

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map (130 Bloor Street West)
Attachment No. 2A-B – Photographs (130 Bloor Street West)





Entrance on Cumberland Street with Fence



Detail of Entrance with Grille



Illustration of CIL Building from Canadian Architect, March 1960



Torno Penthouse
130 Bloor St W



Bloor Street West

