



Annex Residents' Association

February 18, 2015

Janette Gerrard
Toronto Preservation Board
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Dear Ms. Gerrard and Members of the Toronto Preservation Board:

Re: Agenda Item 2.7 Heritage Conservation District Prioritization

On behalf of the Annex Residents Association, I am writing to you regarding the Heritage Conservation District Prioritization Report. We are very concerned by yet another delay for the West Annex study.

- The Annex was the first planned urban suburb of the City of Toronto, and next to Rosedale, has the largest collection of architecture by important architects of the period. It provides a mainly intact cultural heritage of a period in Toronto's growth representing original architectural styles, and a demographic of University, political and business leaders, which has continued to this day.
- The Annex received **Section 37 funding in 2006** to complete a Madison Avenue Heritage Conservation District study, which had started in 2004 funded by the community, and to study the West Annex so that in combination with the existing East Annex HCD, the whole area of what is considered The Annex—Avenue Road to Bathurst, and Bloor to the railway tracks, would be studied and appropriate areas designated.
- **The allocations were \$15,000 for Madison and \$200,000 for the West Annex. The \$15,000 has been spent. The \$200,000 is being held in trust by the Annex Residents Association in a dedicated bank account.**
- The Section 37 money was part of a settlement associated with the One Bedford mixed residential/commercial tower. It was correctly assumed that One Bedford would be the first of many development applications that could negatively impact the adjacent established heritage areas.
- The HCD studies and resulting Heritage Conservation District would have complemented the City-approved Bloor Street Vision Study to promote smart development in this area of the city.
- **The Madison Avenue study, which covers merely three blocks on a single street, was near completion in 2009.** Through delays caused by a moratorium on studies during the recent policy changes required to address the revised Ontario Heritage Act, and the associated changes to the report to address the new policies, the revised Madison study is still awaiting final approval and a third public meeting is also still required. The changes have nearly doubled the cost of the study, even with some work covered by the City. It is one of the seven studies mentioned in the report.

- The ARA received final approval to issue an RFP for the West Annex in 2009. The work that was expected of local residents before the study could start became overwhelming and in hindsight issuing an RFP in 2009, risked the same situation albeit on a much larger scale that has faced the Madison study. **The West Annex comprises at least 1000 buildings.**
- The West Annex Heritage Conservation District Study was grandfathered to be on the priority list, for which we are grateful. However, the need for the study is even greater now than it was in 2006. **We feel that the development pressures on the Annex have been greatly underestimated by Heritage Preservation Services.** Two development proposals for Bloor Street at the foot of Madison and Huron are not only well outside the guidelines of the Bloor Street Vision Study both architecturally and culturally, but could have a serious negative impact on the heritage area of The Annex (as well as the heritage areas south of Bloor) and set a very negative precedent. Proposals have been submitted for Dupont as well, at the same time that a City-led planning study for the area is taking place. The Planning Department is most concerned about these proposals and has cited the impact on the established heritage areas as one of their reasons. Given the priority that heritage designation now has under the OHA, the area could have been protected. Instead it is more vulnerable than ever.

According to the prioritization report, the earliest we could expect the study to begin is 2017, 11 years after funds were provided. Can we not move forward more quickly on a grandfathered study proposal that the City would outsource?

Yours sincerely,



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cc: Gregg Lintern
Councillor Cressy