

July 5, 2016

Dear Councillor Wong-Tam,

I am writing to alert you to a highly controversial issue in the Lawrence Park area that may or may not come to the attention of the Toronto Preservation Board and would be of concern to you if it did. In June 2015 a small self-appointed group in our neighbourhood took a proposal to the city's Heritage Preservation Services Department to have the western half of Lawrence Park (between Yonge and Mt. Pleasant) designated a Heritage District. The Heritage Department began progressing this issue well before the residents of the neighbourhood found out about it. There was a community meeting held on October 28, 2015 which informed the community of the Heritage proposal. There has been quite an uproar as a result and a major movement has been initiated to stop the proposal.

Recently, we circulated a petition to all of our residents urging that this proposal be stopped. Property owners in the area are very concerned the proposal has serious consequences for them and that it has gotten this far without their consent. We already have over 100 residents formally objecting to the proposal and the list is growing. We have also engaged counsel to prepare for a vigorous legal resistance if the Lawrence Park West Heritage study proposal is approved by the Toronto Preservation Board.

I have chosen to write to you now because I know, in your position, you are sensitive to the need for objectivity in these matters and this issue has been lacking in that area. No one wants a protracted legal battle over a proposal from a small splinter group that a majority of residents do not support. Since raising our concerns with Heritage staff, they have been forthcoming with us about the matter, have explained their view – which we do not share, and have kept us reasonably informed on their plans for this issue. They did have the courtesy to tell us the issue might come to the Preservation Board in late August, however they have not said what their recommendation will be. We are most hopeful the issue will be set aside before August – or, if it does come to the Preservation Board, that it will be unconditionally rejected then by the Board.

Thank you very much for your being aware of this potentially volatile issue. I am available any time if you would like further information on our group, on the views of our residents, or on our planned activities. Your consideration is appreciated.

On behalf of the LPW Heritage Opposition Committee.

Todd Edgar