

North York Community Preservation Panel

Jan. 30, 2019

12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Email: councilmeeting@toronto.ca
Attention: Marilyn Toft, Council Secretariat

Dear Mayor John Tory and Members, City Council

RE: MM2.17 Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act - 901 Lawrence Avenue West

The Panel is pleased to support the Intention to Designate for the Columbus Centre at 901 Lawrence Avenue west.

"The Columbus Event Centre has been producing extraordinary events with distinct Italian flair in the city of Toronto... situated on 4 acres that boasts Mediterranean gardens, water fountains, gazebos and ample parking". (Villa Charities web site)

The Columbus Centre has served as the heart of the Italian Canadian community for two generations. It has hosted events for numerous celebrity visitors to Canada, from the Italian President Alfano in 1996, to the coach of the 1982 World Cup champion Italian soccer team in 1982-83, and several Canadian Prime Ministers including most recently, Trudeau in 2015, and Harper in 2011.

The Columbus Centre's main building and rotunda, unique in many ways, were built between 1978 and 1980 as an extension to the old St Mary's School for Girls which was built in 1949 as a reform school for "fallen girls".

We believe this designation will allow the Columbus Centre to evolve in a way that respects and celebrates the cultural heritage of the site, and past, current, and future users.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Kettel

Geoff Kettel
Chair

c.c. Councillor Mike Colle
Mary MacDonald, Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services
Joe Nanos, Director, Community Planning, North York District