



ERA Architects Inc.
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NOTICE OF OBJECTION

Subject: **NOTICE OF OBJECTION: INCLUSION OF 15 GERVAIS DRIVE ON THE CITY OF TORONTO HERITAGE REGISTER**

Issued To: Ellen Devlin
Administrator, Toronto Preservation Board
City Hall, 2nd Floor, West Tower
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Project: **15 Gervais Drive**

Project #: **19-045-01**

Prepared By: MM/JT/OA

Date Issued: November 29, 2019

This notice of objection is being submitted on behalf of Plazacorp Investments Ltd., the owner of the lands municipally known as 15 Gervais Drive (the "Site").

On December 2, 2019, the Toronto Preservation Board will consider Item PB12.3, a Staff Report which recommends that City Council include a number of properties in the Don Mills Crossing Secondary Plan area, including the Site, on the City of Toronto Heritage Register. On behalf of the owner, we are writing to object to the proposed listing. The reasons for the objection are summarized below.

On March 15, 2019, ERA Architects submitted a letter to City Planning (see Appendix A), objecting to the inclusion of the Site as a 'Potential Heritage Resource or Potential Visual Point of Interest' on Map 40-9 in the draft Don Mills Crossing Secondary Plan. It further noted that the property's Statement of Cultural Heritage Value included in the Don Mills Crossing Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment (CHRA) ascribed undue value to the property. On March 20, 2019, City Planning staff indicated via email that the Site had been removed from Map 40-9 in the Secondary Plan. 15 Gervais Drive is not identified as a potential heritage resource in the Secondary Plan, adopted by City Council on April 16, 2019.

ERA has reviewed the Staff Report for the Don Mills Crossing batch listing, which includes the Site. It continues to be ERA's opinion that the Site does not possess significant cultural heritage value, as noted in the March 15, 2019 letter, and as such should not be listed. As a result, we request that 15 Gervais Drive not be considered for inclusion on the City of Toronto Heritage Register.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Michael McClelland'.

Michael McClelland, Principal
E.R.A. Architects Inc.



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APPENDIX A: Letter to City Planning, prepared by ERA Architects Inc., dated March 15, 2019



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15 GERVAIS DRIVE

Subject: HERITAGE MEMO

Issued To: Christian Ventresca - Project Lead
Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis
Christian.Ventresca@toronto.ca

Project: 15 Gervais Drive, Toronto

Project #: 19-045-01

Prepared By: MM/JT/JS

Date Issued: March 15, 2019

Dear Mr. Ventresca,

This Heritage Memo has been prepared by ERA Architects Inc. on behalf of Plazacorp Investments Ltd., the owners of a property known municipally as 15 Gervais Drive, Toronto (the 'Subject Site'). The property was recently identified as a Potential Cultural Heritage Resource in the Don Mills Crossing Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment (DMCCHRA), issued by ASI (for the City of Toronto) on January 24, 2019. Further, the property is identified as a Potential Heritage Resource and a Potential Visual Point of Interest on Map 40-9 (Views and Vistas) of the first draft of the Don Mills Crossing Secondary Plan, despite it being outside of the secondary plan area (see Appendix A for Map 40-9).

We have reviewed the DMCCHRA, and have significant concerns that the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Description of Heritage Attributes for 15 Gervais Drive included in Section 10.2.12 of the report are inaccurate, and ascribe undue value to the property. Section 10.2.12 of the report contains a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Description of Heritage Attributes for the property, and has been included as Appendix B of this Memo. It is our opinion that the property does not possess significant cultural heritage value. As a result, we recommend that 15 Gervais Drive be removed altogether from Map 40-9 (Views and Vistas) of the forthcoming Don Mills Crossing Secondary Plan.

In brief, the property is noted in the DMCCHRA for its design value as a representative example of Modernist design principles, including landscape design, its historical links with both the Don Mills and Flemingdon Park master plans and the labour movements in Ontario and Canada, and its contextual value for its prominent location on Eglinton Avenue East, facing the major intersection of Eglinton Avenue East and Don Mills Road.

While 15 Gervais Drive was also flagged as a potential heritage property in the Eglinton Crosstown Study Heritage Analysis, issued by ERA Architects in October 2013, this document was intended as a preliminary scan of potential heritage resources surrounding the Eglinton corridor, and did not include in-depth research into or evaluation of the property's cultural heritage value. Per O. Reg. 9/06, cultural heritage value and interest can only be determined following a thorough analysis, and the preliminary scan contained in the Eglinton Crosstown Study Heritage Analysis was not intended to pre-judge such analysis. ERA has now reviewed the information contained in the DMCCHRA, completed our own analysis of the property, and concluded that the property possesses insufficient heritage value to satisfy the criteria in O. Reg. 9/06. Please see the following section of this memo for additional details on our heritage evaluation of 15 Gervais Drive.



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Heritage Assessment

After reviewing the background research and heritage evaluation of 15 Gervais Drive contained in the DMCCHRA, it is ERA's opinion that the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value and Description of Heritage Attributes for the Subject Site included in Section 10.2.12 of the report contain inaccurate information, and ascribe undue value to the property. For example, with regards to design value, our assessment of the property finds it to be a relatively unremarkable office tower, which is not a good representative example of either Modernist or Brutalist design. Since being painted in 2017, the building also no longer features extensive use of exposed concrete. Further, we do not find the property's "low-maintenance landscaped setting" to be of significant design value. Regarding historical value, while the building was used as offices for the labour movement, we do not consider the association between the existing building and the labour movement to be of significant cultural heritage value. Further, as most commercial/ industrial buildings in the area share an association with the Flemingdon Park Industrial Estate and Master Plan, we consider this link to be of only modest associative value. Finally, with regards to contextual value, while the property does contribute to the commercial office character of the area, we do not consider this to be unique to the existing property, and this character could be re-established through a sensitive replacement building. Further, the property is located at the northeast corner of Eglinton Avenue East and Gervais Drive, with the building clearly sited and oriented towards Gervais Drive; the building does not intentionally face "the major intersection of Eglinton Avenue East and Don Mills Road" as stated in the DMCCHRA. As Gervais Drive did not originally connect with Eglinton Avenue East, and was only accessible from Wynford Drive until c. 1975, the property also cannot be said to occupy a significant "gateway" position within the area.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is our opinion that 15 Gervais Drive does not possess significant cultural heritage value. As a result, we recommend that 15 Gervais Drive be removed altogether from Map 40-9 (Views and Vistas) of the forthcoming Don Mills Crossing Secondary Plan.

We trust that the contents of this Heritage Memo sufficiently summarize our opinion related to the cultural heritage value of 15 Gervais Drive, and the property's inclusion as a Potential Heritage Property in the forthcoming Don Mills Crossing Secondary Plan. Please feel free to contact the undersigned should there be any further questions regarding the contents of this memo.

Sincerely,

Michael McClelland, Principal
E.R.A. Architects Inc.

cc: Pourya Nazemi
Heritage Planner
Pourya.Nazemi@toronto.ca



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APPENDIX A: Map 40-9 (Views and Vistas) from the first draft of the Don Mills Crossing Secondary Plan (City of Toronto)



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APPENDIX B: Section 10.2.12 of the Don Mills Crossing Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment (ASI, 2019)

- The pedestrian pathway along the north side of the building from the parking lot to the primary entrance and from Wynford Drive to the primary entrance.
- Gracious and prominent entrance on northern elevation and providing access from Wynford Drive and pedestrian circulation routes and vehicular areas.
- The view west along Wynford Drive from 90 Wynford Drive to the building at 39 Wynford Drive showing: curvature of the road in the foreground; landscaped green spaces at lateral edges; and the building at 39 Wynford Drive in the background and clearly expressing modernist design principles such as horizontal banding juxtaposed with vertical elements; glazing; and horizontal floor projections.
- The view east from Gervais Drive to 39 Wynford Drive showing curvature of road and northern and western elevations of the building at 39 Wynford Drive which clearly express modernist design principles as a corporate headquarters with prominent entrance and building characterized by horizontal banding juxtaposed with vertical elements, glazing, and horizontal floor projections.

10.2.12 C.H.R.# 17: 15 Gervais Drive

Description

The property at 15 Gervais Drive is located on the northeast corner of Eglinton Avenue East and Gervais Drive. It contains an eight-storey building set on a rectangular plan with a single storey wing at the southwest corner. Each portion of the building has a flat roof. The building was constructed in 1968.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

15 Gervais Drive has design value as a representative example of modernist design principles. As a building constructed in the late 1960s, the design utilizes a strong horizontal emphasis and a rhythmic series of ribbon windows and spandrels expressing elements of continuing the International Style while incorporating the increasingly used restrained Brutalist sensibilities, such as the greater sense of weight. Also typical of modernist design, it features: deep overhanging eaves on the single storey portion; extensive use of concrete and glazing; and a form which expresses the interior function. The low-maintenance landscaped setting with open grassed lawns, coniferous trees and plantings and amenities is also representative of modernist design principles.

The property is valued for its historical association with the Flemingdon Park Master Plan as it yields information that contributes to an understanding of the established planning and design principles. The property expresses these principles through separated land use and development of open green spaces intended to create a unified and aesthetic quality to the area. Flemingdon Park was recognized as an innovative approach to modern town planning in the City of Toronto in the post-Second World War period. While the original concept for



Flemingdon Park was not completed, the ambitious plan played a key role in the development of the area.

The property's value also lies in its association with the labour movement in Ontario and Canada. The building has been the headquarters for numerous significant labour organizations such as the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Canadian Labour Congress, and the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto.

The property is also associated with urban planner Macklin Hancock, who was a significant urban planner both in the City of Toronto and internationally for his plan for Don Mills. As the first planned community in Canada, Hancock's designs for Don Mills became a prototype for Canada's suburbs, making it one of the most significant post-war developments in Canada and an important development in the history of modernist urban planning. Don Mills was Hancock's first major project and led to his international recognition as a landscape architect and urban planner. The principles applied in Don Mills were carried forward into the designs for Flemingdon Park. Following the success of Don Mills, Hancock became a founding member and President of Project Planning Associates Ltd. which for the first time brought together a multi-disciplinary team of landscape architects, urban designers, planners and architects to work together collaboratively on projects, and his leadership in this firm demonstrates Hancock's significance as an early practitioner of an integrated design approach.

The property has contextual value for its prominent location on Eglinton Avenue East and facing the major intersection of Eglinton Avenue East and Don Mills Road. The prominence of the building gives it a gateway appearance given its position at one of the entrances to the Flemingdon Park Industrial Estate. Furthermore, as a building intended as a headquarters, the property supports the character of the area, where many office headquarters and cultural institutions have been located. The property has contextual value as a modernist headquarters building and landscape constructed within an area set aside as an industrial estate within the planned Flemingdon Park development which developed into a concentration of corporate headquarters interspersed with cultural institutions and clean industry. The property also has contextual value as a building that is visually consistent with the heights of other buildings along nearby Wynford Drive. This property utilizes its low-lying topography to integrate its comparatively taller massing into the Wynford Drive streetscape. The building is also prominently located on Eglinton Avenue East making it one of the few buildings within the Flemingdon Park Industrial Estate that is visible from the main thoroughfare.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key heritage attributes that express the values of the property at 15 Gervais Drive are:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building within the landscaped property.
- The scale, form and massing of the eight-storey, flat-roofed building with a rectangular plan and a one-storey wing at the southeast corner.



- The main entrance with cantilevered canopy and the vehicular and pedestrian approach to the entrance from Gervais Drive with a semi-circular drive and wide L-shaped staircase.
- The extended height and full glazing of the first storey with expressed columns.
- The high proportion of glazing with windows arranged in horizontal ribbons and minimal framing at the second to eighth storeys.
- The flat roofline with a single projecting tower at the centre of the southwest elevation.
- The deep overhanging eaves on the single storey portion.
- The materials used in the design and construction of the building, with exposed concrete structure and glazed windows.
- The low-maintenance landscaped setting with grassed lawns, coniferous trees and plantings.
- The open grassed lawn within the property.
- The open air, below grade amenity at the east side of the building with pedestrian access from the north parking lot.

10.2.13 C.H.R.# 18: 1200 Eglinton Avenue East

Description

The property at 1200 Eglinton Avenue East is located on the north side of Eglinton Avenue to the east of Gervais Drive. It contains a nine-storey building set on a square plan with a flat roof. The building was constructed in 1971.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

1200 Eglinton Avenue has design value as a representative example of modernist design principles. As a building constructed in the early 1970s, the design utilizes a strong horizontal emphasis and a rhythmic series of ribbon windows and spandrels expressing elements of continuing the International Style while incorporating the increasingly used restrained Brutalist sensibilities, such as the greater sense of weight. Also typical of modernist design, it features extensive use of concrete and glazing.

The property is valued for its historical association with the Flemingdon Park Master Plan as it yields information that contributes to an understanding of the established planning and design principles. The property expresses these principles through separated land use and development of open green spaces intended to create a unified and aesthetic quality to the area. Flemingdon Park was recognized as an innovative approach to modern town planning in the City of Toronto in the post-Second World War period. While the original concept for Flemingdon Park was not completed, the ambitious plan played a key role in the development of the area. Additionally, the property is associated with Computer Sciences Canada, an early player in the telecommunications industry.

