



GRANGE

November 4, 2019

Re: TE10.6 540-544 King Street West

To: The Chair and Councillors of the Toronto and East York Community Council

Given the public health issue raised by ALPHA public school, Council already has sufficient reason to refuse this application. As well, we ask Council to consider the following:

1. **WHAT THIS INVOLVES.** In 1930 a two-storey *detached* brick commercial building at 544-546 King Street West was built. It was set back five metres from the sidewalk for industrial loading. Today the building is listed as a building having cultural heritage value reflecting its era. The new development proposes to take the building's brick and stone front wall apart and move it westward, rebuilding it ahistorically at the property line along the sidewalk, topped and edged by a new 15-storey glass and metal office building. This repositioning and rebuilding runs against the City's own heritage guidelines.
2. **WHAT IS CONSERVED?** The staff report of October 18, 2019 treats the proposal as heritage preservation. We suggest that nothing significant is preserved or conserved. The building at 544 King Street West is actually being *demolished*. What remains will be a mere ghost, wandering unmoored from the actual past.
3. **CITY-WIDE IMPLICATION.** The well-recognized curse of facadism has city-wide implications which, if there is a city-approved precedent here, will endanger real landmark buildings elsewhere in Toronto.
4. **OUTCOME.** Development decision-making involves legal opinions that are understandably confidential. For example, the Legal Division may offer an opinion about whether Council's action as recommended by staff will likely succeed or fail at the LAB, the LPAT or in court – and this in turn will influence Council's actions. In the present case, the "many conversations" undertaken at Council's direction apparently led to an outcome that is, in our opinion, fake heritage. It's unsatisfactory because it puts a piece of an old building where it doesn't belong and the story it tells is fiction.
5. **CLARITY. In the event Community Council recommends to Council that the proposal be accepted and supported by the City at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, we ask that a fully detailed Site Plan Agreement be included as a precondition to Settlement, so that everybody can be clear about what will be built.**

The Grange Community Association Inc is available for discussions. We ask to be kept informed of planning developments on this file.

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