October 28, 2020

Attn: Toronto Preservation Board
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
17th floor, East Tower
Toronto ON M5H 2N2
Re: 33 – 49 Avenue Road and 136 – 150 Yorkville Avenue - Support for Heritage Demolition

To the Preservation Board Members:

We are writing to express our support for the recent proposal by First Capital and Greybrook Realty Partners to redevelop the northeast corner of Avenue Road and Yorkville Avenue. Specifically, we wish to express support for the demolition of the existing designated heritage buildings on-site.

We have been actively engaged in collaborative discussions with both developers for over one year. In our opinion, the current proposal represents a great improvement to the 2017 OMB-approved Empire Communities development which maintained the heritage buildings in question. In particular, the overall increase in accessible public realm is 40% and the increase to the "new" York Square is fully 64%. Accordingly, this development embodies a rare opportunity to introduce a well-designed and high-quality building with exceptional public realm enhancements.

While we appreciate that the demolition of the heritage buildings will be controversial to some, we believe that removing these buildings is an appropriate and proportionate trade-off to the benefits to the public space our residents' association has negotiated for the neighbourhood. This is also an opinion shared by the square's 'original' architect, Jack Diamond. We would also like to stress that what you are being asked to defend would represent the fourth modification to the original buildings.

In our view, the quality of the landscape and architectural treatments being applied to the public realm, represent world-class design excellence and will offset the perceived loss of the existing 'heritage' building.

Sincerely,

John Caliendo- ABCRA Co-Chair
Ian Carmichael – ABCRA Co-Chair

CC: Oren Tamir, City of Toronto, Community Planning
     David Driedger, City of Toronto, Community Planning
     Councillor Mike Layton

ABCRA, P.O. Box 83519, 87 Avenue Road, Toronto ON, Canada, M5R 3T6