

November 30, 2020

Chair and Members

Toronto Preservation Board

c/o Ellen Devlin

2nd floor, West Tower, City Hall

100 Queen Street West

Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Via email: teycc@toronto.ca



RE: Items 19.5-12 Multiple Listings of Properties on Toronto Main Streets

Chair and Members Toronto Preservation Board

We are writing to endorse the staff recommendations on the group of multiple listings for Toronto main streets that is before you.

ACO Toronto has a long-established interest in the conservation of Toronto Main Streets. In 2019, we devoted our annual symposium to “Toronto’s Disappearing Main Streets: Buildings and Businesses”, held on April 6, 2019. We included speakers from BIA’s, Heritage Planning, developers, architectural experts and community organizations. We examined questions of development pressure, cultural value, building typologies, the threat of rising property taxes, along with the architectural heritage found in the “high street” building form on predominantly narrow lots.

It is our position that main streets are worthy of conservation, as much for the traditional way of life that the fine-grained property divisions and buildings support, as for their architectural value. Cultural heritage value exists in the way that these buildings support diverse independent small businesses, small scale entrepreneurship, street life, strolling, window shopping. That value, of the collective historic pattern of use, is shared across properties. Looking at these properties together is a significant step forward.

Heritage conservation measures alone cannot fully address conservation of the community value held along our main streets, to this protection must be added changes to the building code that make it more difficult to obtain overnight demolition permits, planning policy that recognizes the full value found here, examination of what is lost when these buildings are reduced to facades, and finally, discussion of appropriate redevelopment patterns that might replace more that is being lost as we intensify.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Zambri,

President, ACO Toronto

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