

HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Box 68522, 360A Bloor St. W.
Toronto, ON M5S 1X1



Toronto and East York Community Council
Scheduled meeting, June 24, 2021
Item: TE 26.6

June 22, 2021

Dear Councillors:

Harbord Village Residents' Association shares the western border of the University of Toronto St George campus, between College and Bloor. It is also part of the Queen's Park Heritage Precinct Coalition, a group of residents, along with 242 residents' associations not just from the City of Toronto, but also from across the province, residents devoted to ensuring the Queen's Park precinct, both sides of the Crescent flanking the legislature, between College and Bloor, is conserved as a special place for future generations.

As we praise the Victoria University proposal, we are conscious of the need for conservation and protection of this major social, cultural and architectural landscape. It illustrates that changes today impact and potentially constrain our ability to realize a secure vision for a prized ceremonial street.

This rezoning application has drawn only admiration and support. When we saw it, frankly, we breathed a sigh of relief and gratitude.

Victoria understands its role as a curator of marvellous heritage assets, set in parkland, framing a significant garden. You need only read the Brooke McIlroy Master Plan and the ERA report to appreciate Victoria's sense of history and of place. It has embraced change in a respectful, responsible way. It understands the precinct.

Imagine this: 67 per cent of the site is open space.

The replacement building adds just one storey.

It is nested among a group of heritage buildings, Vic, Emmanuel, Birge-Carnegie, Burwash Hall, with E.J. Pratt to be protected. It improves the sightlines to historic Victoria College Building.

An existing building is replaced, it's moved west, which achieves significant separation distances between buildings, allowing the landscape to breathe. And parkland is enhanced.

We are grateful to Victoria University for the restraint, modesty and taste of its proposal, but conscious there is no certainty for the broader precinct ahead.

The resolution of City Council, TEYCC and Preservation Board earlier this year calling for a cultural heritage landscape study is necessary and vital.

There is no time to waste. The Queen's Park Precinct is about to undergo a landscape level change. Arising from Transform TO, the City has before it the proposal for University Park, which would entirely remove traffic from Queen's Park Crescent West from Hoskins to College and restore the shores of Taddle Creek to parkland. The Queen's Park Heritage Precinct Coalition has begun the second phase of its study and hopes to gain the support of Council and staff for this work. The precinct is too valuable to be left to the sense of responsibility of individual property owners to curb their appetites. We ask that priority be given to the study before it is too late.

And, once again, we reach out to Victoria with gratitude for your work. We fully support the proposal.

With thanks,

Sue Dexter,
97 Willcocks St.,
Toronto, M5S1C9
HVRA Board
416-964-5639
416-985-0222