



方卓怡 市議員 **Paula Fletcher**

City Councillor | Ward 14 Toronto-Danforth

April 5, 2022

Toronto Preservation Board
City of Toronto
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Chair and Members,

Re: Chester Public School

Today you have before you a heritage preservation milestone in the report on the Chester Public School at 958 Broadview Avenue.

Chester School, built in 1981, is the oldest surviving school of the former municipality of East York and is valued for its 135 year association with the historic villages of Chester and Todmorden, East York and the current Broadview-Danforth neighbourhood.

The original school building, was a two-and a-half storey, red-brick building with a bell tower on its south-east corner. The roof of the bell tower was removed prior to 1953. The school closed in 1959 and was purchased by Estonian House who undertook a series of additions. In 1963 an addition was added to the back of the school and in the 1970's one was added to the front essentially concealing the heritage building from view.

Fortunately, the original school building retains its integrity and now as part the redevelopment of the Estonian House property at 954-958 Broadview the school house will once again see the light of day.

As an integral part of the redevelopment the Chester School is proposed to be fully restored and brought back into the public realm. This is a wonderful heritage restoration of a community landmark deeply rooted to its surroundings as part of a unique historical relationship between the 220 year old community, the Don River and the Valley.

The placement of the school house creates an unfortunate encumbrance on the site making it impossible to create a large forecourt park between the building and the street. Nonetheless, a smaller forecourt public park is desirable, would elevate the restoration project and would celebrate the importance of heritage preservation. The approval of alterations to the Chester School would facilitate the redevelopment of this site and allow for increased public access to this important and historic community resource.

A well-designed forecourt public park designed in accordance with City design guidelines in front of the proposed redevelopment could serve as an ideal location for a heritage plaque commemorating the oldest surviving school in former East York, and would be an appropriate location for a public art installation. This would assist in highlighting and drawing prominence to the Chester School.

I am hoping that the TPB agrees with what I have set out above and can support my request to:

1) Approve alterations that would ensure the Chester School restoration; and allow for the heritage value of this resource to be highlighted to its fullest extent through the proposed redevelopment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula Fletcher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Paula Fletcher
Ward 14 Toronto Danforth

cc: Interested Parties
Chester Hill Cambridge Thorncliffe Residents Association
Helliwell Place Residents Association