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President and Members of the Toronto Heritage Preservation Board
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Re: Toronto Preservation Board Meeting June 14, 2022, Item PB35.4: Alterations to a Heritage Property and Authority to Enter into a Heritage Easement Agreement - 95 St. Joseph Street

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Toronto Preservation Board:

I strongly urge the city to reject the latest proposed alterations to 95 St Joseph Street, and to defend the exceptional cultural heritage landscape of this distinctive site.

This site and its surroundings are unique and highly significant culturally and symbolically for Toronto, and must be an example to Ontario and Canada. A unique example in Toronto of the work of Ernest Cormier, Canada's foremost architect of the first half of the 20th century, the Basilian Seminary is a key element of the distinguished academic campus. In a brutalising world the loss of integrity of this place of peace and learning would be another nail in the coffin of civilization.

In the recently amended Heritage Impact Statement, the developer states that its latest design conserves the cultural heritage value under Level IV protection. I once again respectfully disagree. The development proposal still ignores vital heritage concerns.

The destruction of so much of Cormier's original building, the demolition of the Newman chapel, and the deplorable height of the proposed development threatens the cohesion with the architectural whole of the campus. The

architectural harmony of this area was upheld by Cormier in his master plan for the campus and has been maintained and existed as such for 140 years.

Facadism that has been proposed for the North wing would be an unacceptable compromise for a building of this significance. The relationship between the interior and exterior would be lost. To conserve the essence of the building, so carefully planned by Ernest Cormier, the depth of the North wing must be retained, in its connection to Cormier's masterful chapel. The Developer's intention to preserve at least one of two chapels has been praised, however to move it away from the North wing only further damages the integrity of Cormier's design.

The demolition of the 1913 Newman Hall Chapel goes against Cormier's master plan in which it was purposefully incorporated. The developer claims that its removal has no impact, having been out of sight to the public for many years. However as confirmed in the Statement of Significance, even though it is not visible from St. Joseph Street, the chapel contributes to defining the character of the property, a link between the original 1856 college and church complex and the 1950-51 seminary.

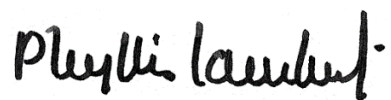
The proposed design does not adequately preserve Cormier's building nor its significant historical value to Toronto and to Canada. Moreover, the high-rise residential tower block does not fit in the context of this site and its relationship with the St Michael's College Campus and Queens Park, rather it destroys them.

The great cities of the world are celebrated in part because they maintain the great architectural environments and the life and values of the neighbourhoods that distinguish them. To be counted among these and for its citizens Toronto must also resolve to maintain, protect, and find reuse for the buildings and landscapes that create the conditions that enhance humane life for its inhabitants the city. The Basilian Seminary has both historical depth and context.

We cannot continue with the developer-oriented city which permits gain for a few and a loss for the many. With the loss of species, increasing environmental

disasters, and brutality born from the degeneracy of a civilizing world, I encourage you to say no to these proposed alterations so that this property can be thoughtfully developed – as I fervently believe it can be – and set the example for a generous and humane environment for the citizens of Toronto.

Sincerely,



Phyllis Lambert, CC, GOQ, CAL, FRAIC
Founding Director Emeritus
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