

GEORGE ROSS Architect

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Councillor Josh Matlow
Ward 12, Toronto-St. Paul's
City of Toronto

Re: Item PH33.19, Girl Guides Headquarters, 50 Merton Street, Toronto

Dear Councillor Matlow,

I am writing to you in support of the Toronto Preservation Board's recommendation to designate the Girl Guides Headquarters building at 50 Merton Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The case made by Toronto City Planning Division is very detailed, clearly stated and its conclusions irrefutable that this building and its site be saved as a critical place in the history of the City of Toronto.

I know the Corneils' work very well having had Carmen as a teacher and mentor in architecture school at University of Toronto. I have visited and studied many of their buildings in Canada and Norway. I value how their designs embody the belief that the public spaces of buildings can enable positive human interactions. Their robust investment in discovery, invention and articulation to support their philosophical ideas and views is rare in architecture.

In my forty plus years as an architect and planner in Toronto and Philadelphia, I have been focused on the design of cultural institutions especially those of museums. From working on the architecture of the Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery in London and Seattle Art Museum with Robert Venturi to heading Capital Projects at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, I have learned that conserving and protecting artifacts and buildings is essential to understanding and connecting to our culture. As Gabrielle Roy wrote "Could we ever know each other in the slightest without the arts?"

Please help save the Girl Guides Headquarters as a unique place in Toronto.

Regards,



George Ross
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