



Teresa Lubinski
TRUSTEE, WARD 4
ETOBICOKE-LAKESHORE & PARKDALE-HIGH PARK

teresa.lubinski@tcdsb.org
Tel. 416 512 - 3404



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Toronto City Council
100 Queen St.
Toronto, M5H 2N2

Re: MM10.5 – Request to Consider Heritage Designation at 3100 Weston Road – by Councillor Anthony Perruzza, seconded by Councillor James Pasternak

First of all, thank you to Councillor Antony Perruzza and Councillor James Pasternak for putting a motion forward at City Hall to request Heritage Designation at [3100 Weston Road](#).

This motion proposes full protection of *Rivermede*, the Gardiner family's former country estate, the Marian Shrine of Gratitude, the Carmine Stefano Community Centre, a parking lot and a few soccer fields that are all located at 3100 Weston Road, steps away from the banks of the Humber River.

The Gardiners Family opened their home, *Rivermede*, to various charities and organizations, such as the Cradle Creche of York Township, the Red Cross and Group Number 3 of the Women's Auxiliary of the St. Clair YMCA.

The First Nations of North America used a trail on the property as part of the trade route that connected northern and western Canada with the Gulf of Mexico.

In 1958, the Ukrainian Basilian Fathers purchased *Rivermede* to use as a monastery and later filled in the outdoor swimming pool. This area evolved into a prayer garden, named The Marian Shrine of Gratitude, where the public was welcome. Fr. Basil Cymbalysty created the Marian Shrine of Gratitude, and after he passed away in 2018, the Shrine remained public. People from Toronto, all over Ontario and various parts of the world have have visited the Shrine.

My family and I have been going to the Marian Shrine of Gratitude for about a decade. I know the spiritual value of the place as do the people from different cultures that have visited.

I was fortunate to see the house's interior; the well-maintained original and historical structure is magnificent. It's important for the City of Toronto to acknowledge the historical and cultural significance of *Rivermede* - the architectural value of the home, the significance of the Gardiner Family in Toronto's history and the evolution of the Marian Shrine of Gratitude as a prayer garden loved by

thousands of people from various cultures. It uniquely merges old and new values. The City needs to recognize its historic sites through the eyes of new Canadians and immigrants and Rivermede offers that opportunity.

Because of my long connection to the Marian Shrine of Gratitude, I began working with my colleagues on the Toronto Catholic District School Board last month in hopes of protecting the property at [3100 Weston Road](#). Together, we formed a motion that passed unanimously requesting that both the City of Toronto and the Government of Ontario designate the former Gardiner Family Summer Resort (Basilian Fathers House), including the Marian Shrine of Gratitude located at [3100 Weston Road](#) in Toronto, as a heritage site protected by the Ontario Heritage Act.

In this "forgotten north-west corner" of Toronto, there is no property standing with this wealth of heritage value.

As an elected official, I am entrusted to protect people's needs, and I am here to represent a substantial number of my constituents from Etobicoke-Lakeshore and Parkdale-High Park.

I hope the City of Toronto Council will pass the motion regarding the Request to Consider Heritage Designation at 3100 Weston Road.

Thank you.



Teresa Lubinski
Trustee,
Etobicoke-Lakeshore & Parkdale-High Park
Chair, Corporate Services, Strategic Planning & Property Committee