

NORTH YORK COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PANEL

Thursday, June 27, 2024

Toronto City Council  
Attention:

Re: MM19.25 - An Update on Work to Protect the Science Centre and Support Thorncliffe and Flemingdon Park - by Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Jon Burnside

And

Re: Heritage Preservation Approach for Raymond Moriyama's 1969 Centennial Museum of Science and Technology building, currently identified as 'The Ontario Science Centre'  
770 Don Mills Rd., North York, ON M3C 1T3

Dear Councillor Matlow, Councillor Burnside, Chair and Members of Toronto City Council

The North York Community Preservation Panel is in full support of motion MM19.25.

The Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC) estimates that ASTC museum members, around the world (which includes as the OSC) have lost more than \$600 million in revenue due to the COV, and that in March 9[2020], almost overnight, every one of the ASTC's nearly 500 member science and technology centers and museums closed their doors to the public to respond to public health guidance and do their part to keep our communities safe.

In the panel's recent April monthly panel meeting, we received a presentation from Jason Ash, in which he described the past success of the OSC exhibits, and the tremendous visitor revenue potential once the new Eglinton LRT and Ontario lines are completed.

External 2021 data of visits to top 10 global science centres affirms the view of an optimistic future outlook for global science centres. The top 4 sciences centre numbers were as follows: Paris' Citi des Sciences et de l'Industrie: 5,00,000; Shanghai Science and Technology Museum:2,500,000 ; London, UK The Science Museum:2,700,000; and National Science and Technology Museum, Taiwan:2,050,790 ; OSC 2021 visits were at respectable: 1,509,912. (Source:

the issue of feasibility of running a city-run science center

HERITAGE PRESERVATION EFFORTS FOR Moriyama's 1969 Brutalist design  
(Legal Name) Centennial Museum of Science and Technology Modernist building:

Given recent May 2024 announcement that the Ontario Provincial government has now permanently closed the OSC from the public due to an unsafe roof. Therefore the panel would like to urge council to separate and prioritize urgently needed preservation and conservation activities to provide for designation of the Moriyama Modernist structure.

## NORTH YORK COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PANEL

### Designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act

In May 2024, The Panel was been advised by HPB staff that the city is not precluded from designation of the Moriyama building under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, because the Ontario Science Centre lands are not Crown owned lands, they are owned by the TRCA and the City.

However, HPB has advised the panel that there has been a delay from the Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure in forwarding a 2023 CHER which was prepared by SBA Architects, which covers 'the Main and Core Buildings connected by a bridge and the third Valley building connected to the Core building by escalator.'

Recently, the panel has received a copy the 118 page, OSC Heritage Significance Study (HSS), commissioned by the Ontario Realty Corporation, in 2003, prepared by Archaeological Services Inc, 528 Bathurst Street, Toronto. The panel wonders to what extent the 2023 CHER would overlap with the 2003 Heritage Significance Study. Given that the land is owned by the City and TRCA can City Council direct that a more formal request be made to promptly receive the CHER, and could the designation proceed on the basis of the HSS?

### Benefit of a Standards and Guidelines based Conservation Plan:

The panel values the analysis prepared for Infrastructure Ontario, which includes a June 2022 Engineering report from Pinchin (pages 46-66/ 333). Pinchin appears to indicate an estimated remaining life for the 887 Don Mills Road structure of between to only 5 years, without repairs to a maximum of 20 years with repairs (page 58 /333).

The IO document includes a Denton Lease Review Memo (page 39-44/333) . This memo appears to indicate that Section 6 provides for the Tenant to maintain 'good management and care of the Main site and the buildings and structures, and b) Schedule G is a 'separate agreement between the Landlord and the Tenant relating to specific maintenance obligations.'

The panel strongly encourages city council to provide for the preparation of a conservation plan according to The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada which will necessarily consider opportunities for the continued use of Moriyama's Brutalist buildings as a Science Centre Museum, in the context of the critical analysis of the limitations as a modern-day exhibit space. R

The panel notes that that the structural problems of Modernist cement buildings are not unique, and there is a body of global research and study discussing preservation of such structures.

### Opportunity for inclusion in the Park's Canada National Historic Sites:

The panel notes that The Hamilton Museum of Steam & Technology, also known as the "Steam Museum", which is located on the site of the 1859 Hamilton Waterworks complex is included in Park's Canada National Historic Sites, and is recognized as a civil and power engineering landmark.

And, the Canadian Museum of Nature is an educational and scientific institution, a downtown-Ottawa tourist attraction which is housed in a historic castle-like building, The Victoria Memorial Museum Building, and was added to Parks Canada National Historic Sites in 1990.

## NORTH YORK COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PANEL

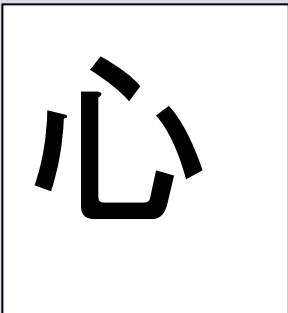
Following this example for other science museum buildings, the panel encourages City Council to take necessary steps to seek a similar inclusion of 887 Don Mills Rd in Park's Canada National Historic Sites.

### Opportunity for International UNESCO

During the decade from 2010-2020, UNESCO has recognized at least 22 Modernist buildings on the list of World Heritage Sites which includes 8 Frank Lloyd Wright buildings and 14 Le Corbusier' works in over 7 countries. As described in Archdaily.com: "The 20th Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright" buildings serve the goal of emphasizing Wright's role in the development of modern architecture throughout the world Among the Le Corbusier's works are a) the 1959, National Museum of Western Art. Tokyo, Japan; This multi-story, reinforced concrete building was completed in March 1959 as a symbol of the resumption of diplomatic ties between Japan and France after World War II; and b) the Maison de la Culture, Firminy, France; This cultural center was installed on an artificial cliff in the former "Razes" quarry; This Modernist structure is composed of 16 sections organized over three levels with a detached roof, featuring an asymmetrical curve that rises 1.3 metres.

Application for UNESCO World Heritage listing is a complicated and time-consuming process; therefore, the panel encourages city council to consider creating a special committee of heritage experts to prepare an application following Part IV OHA designation.

### Moriyama's Peace Symbol:



Finally, our panel encourages city council to initiate Heritage Plaque identification of Moriyama's architectural vision for 887 Don Mills Road. Please view this 2017 ACO video of Raymond Moriyama recollection of being inspired to design the Brutalist structure using the 4 stroke Japanese kanji character 'the heart.'

Sincerely,

Anne-Marie E. Branch

Member, North York Community Preservation Panel

NORTH YORK COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PANEL

Attachments:

<https://www.museumplanner.org/worlds-top-10-science-centers/>

<https://www.cite-sciences.fr/en/home>

<https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/home>

Shanghai Science and Technology Museum: <https://en.sstm.org.cn/activities>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian\\_Museum\\_of\\_Nature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Museum_of_Nature)

<https://www.archdaily.com/930699/architectural-works-that-were-declared-world-heritage-sites-in-the-last-decade>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Museum\\_of\\_Western\\_Art](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Museum_of_Western_Art)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maison\\_de\\_la\\_Culture\\_de\\_Firminy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maison_de_la_Culture_de_Firminy)

<https://www.dezeen.com/2016/07/21/maison-de-la-culture-le-corbusier-unesco-world-heritage-list-firminy-france/>

Raymond Moriyama – Architectural Conservancy Ontario Toronto Office

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NX1YguJWPA4>

Raymond Moriyama on the Ontario Science Centre , ACO Toronto 150+ Video of Raymond Moriyama  
Raymond Moriyama Apr 22nd, 2017 [https://www.acotoronto.ca/show\\_resource.php?id=31](https://www.acotoronto.ca/show_resource.php?id=31)

Redevelopment Feasibility Analysis Ontario Science Centre, June 2022

<https://www.infrastructureontario.ca/48e24d/contentassets/84df22e71b7c40b2aaef94da88c78b5/business-case-final-appendix-a-to-q-unredacted.pdf>

[https://www.toronto.ca/ext/digital\\_comm/pdfs/city-planning/17CH-149-don-mills-crossing-chra-final-part-1.pdf](https://www.toronto.ca/ext/digital_comm/pdfs/city-planning/17CH-149-don-mills-crossing-chra-final-part-1.pdf)

State of Conservation of Concrete Heritage Buildings: A European Screening

<https://www.mdpi.com/2412-3811/6/8/109>

Japanese Heart Kanji <https://jitenon.com/kanji/%E5%BF%83>