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Attn: Paul Johnson, Senior Planner

**RE: Rezoning Application No. 19 118245 STE 11 OZ
78-90 Queen's Park
PLAN D178 LOT68 PT LOTS 69 72 PT PARK LOT12
Ward 11- University Rosedale**

We write with comments and to formally oppose the proposed project for the above mentioned address. Our comments address the following:

- a) the Queen's Park Precinct and its context,
- b) the current design as proposed within the proposed University Secondary plan now under review,
- c) the material presented at the June 12, 2019 Community Consultation Meeting,
- d) the public realm
- e) the City's Design Review Panel discussion held June 18, 2019 which also included the University of Toronto Design Review Committee.

The Queen's Park Precinct

The heart of Queen's Park Precinct is its namesake, the parkland that was established in 1829 connecting with the University grounds to form a special precinct in Toronto's early years. In 1860 it was opened in honour of Queen Victoria and became one of Canada's first large-scale public parks. In 1892 the Legislature would bisect the park with the north part behind the Legislature being the focus for our comments about this project. The parkland and the buildings of the two public institutions: the University and the Provincial government are the most defining features of this precinct. The area was further enhanced by the addition of two cultural institutions: the Royal Ontario Museum in 1914 and the Gardiner Museum in 1984. The University of Toronto has 50 heritage designated buildings on its campus and works closely with the City of Toronto Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) on their conservation, including Flavelle House and Falconer Hall. HPS is now considering the addition of the Edward Johnson building and the Planetarium to that number.

The City's TO Core plan describes Queen's Park Precinct and the historic St. George Campus as significant areas of Parkland and Heritage and Cultural Landscape. Clearly the green space and the heritage architecture are the defining features of Queen's Park Precinct. What has not changed since the 19th century is the distinctive character of this precinct and its importance to the city. Every building in the precinct, regardless of its date of design and construction, has taken into consideration the

predominance of the original heritage buildings for size, materials and massing and the parkland/and or green space on their sites.

78-90 Queen's Park is within an area of low to mid-rise historic buildings at the edge of the Campus. It is an area of transition that must be carefully planned, and where, when development occurs must be undertaken with surgical precision. There are excellent examples which properly address the public realm and provide for an appropriate transition. The addition and renovation of the RCM Building, the Gardiner Museum, Goldring Student Centre, and the Faculty of Law Building all have respectfully addressed the important considerations this area demands.

This site is not the place to build a landmark building that will visually compete with the ROM, which should remain as the landmark for this site. Nor should a new building overwhelm Flavelle House and Falconer Hall, the other heritage properties in scale and proximity.

Current Project within the proposed University Secondary Plan (now under review)

There is far too much program planned for this site. The result is an overbearing and disproportional building that towers over Falconer Hall and overwhelms the site. The cantilever should be eliminated. Consideration might also be given to modifications to the rear of Falconer Hall for better integration of the heritage structure with the proposed building.

The University is currently seeking approval of its secondary plan. The plan proposes significant development opportunities throughout the campus. Much of the building program anticipated for 78-90 Queen's Park can easily be accommodated within the other development sites as many University programs follow a distributed model. There is not a cohesive rationale for inclusion of all components on this site, much of which includes office space.

Further to this, the consultants pointed out that some space will be leased out. Clearly, the University does not require all of this space at this location.

Reference is made in the City's planning report to apparent concessions with respect to height. The proposed height is less than initially proposed in an earlier scheme and less than proposed in the University's secondary Plan. The building is still too high and overbearing. We remind City planners that the Plan is not approved.

Community Consultation Meeting, June 12, 2019

Meeting material and response to questions included data that was misleading. A number of queries arose in discussion concerning the height of proposed building in relation to the ROM. The top of the Crystal on Bloor (37.1m) Street, and the top of the mechanical penthouse (28.9 m) over the mid addition were stated as the comparators. Nowhere in the documentation, presentations, or in written material is the actual height of the heritage portion of the ROM stated.

The direct comparison of the adjacent heritage building that will frame the plaza in the new development is 18 m. (An incorrect answer was also given by the consulting architects when asked at the Design Review session).

The views of the proposal were taken from distances that minimize the impact of what is planned. Subsequent to the meeting, at the request of the Community Groups, the consultants did provide additional views taken at eye level which serve to demonstrate the true size and impact of the proposal.

A 3D physical model was also requested to better understand what is being proposed. The model should place the building within a contextual setting and include the university buildings on the east side of Queen's Park and extend to the south side of Bloor Street. The described area forms the ensemble in which this project should be evaluated and which is best done with a physical model.

A broader view of the area, beyond what is described above, an opinion stated in the City's planning report as 'not unreasonable when viewed within its larger context' is wrong. This flawed statement establishes distorted and skewed opinion because of massive buildings constructed outside of the contextual heritage area. The other buildings as cited in the statement should not be used as comparators.

Public Realm

Much is said about the improvements to the public realm. The transfers of ownership of this and adjacent parcels of land, which initially included the ROM and the RCM as part of the University and its varied uses have created serious challenges with service and loading, pedestrian access and their impact on the public realm. An opportunity for a reorganization of this important element exists because of the acquisition of the Planetarium site by the University. The proposal shows a much improved plan, over what exists but more could and should be done.

Existing trees on the Falconer Hall site should be preserved. The green space should be extended northward towards the ROM reducing the area currently designated as hardscape.

The area with café seating should be reduced and made available for public use. It is unlikely that the general public will be able to freely use the terraced seating areas of the café without purchase. The coordinated access for servicing allows the Edward Johnson building, Faculty of Law and the ROM to share a new entrance and exit for loading space between the proposed building and the ROM. This allows the area to be recalibrated to plant additional trees and add green space, completing the alignment on Queen's Park that was eliminated years ago with the construction of the Planetarium and addition to the ROM.

There was no mention of the important entrance to the Museum subway station, other than a brief reference to 'higher order transit' which otherwise seems to be invisible. Not including a partnership with the TTC to enhance and integrate the entrance to the subway is a lost opportunity and must be an integral part of this development proposal.

Joint City/ University Design Review Discussion, June 18, 2019

The process as established by city staff, which included the University of Toronto Design Review Committee was flawed. Minutes of the discussion and results of the vote should be removed from the records of the Design Review Panel. The integrity of the City process is at question and casts a dark shadow over these proceedings.

The University's Design Review Committee had already discussed the project in detail at least twice, suggested revisions and reached consensus on the proposal. Discussion at the joint meeting of panels occurred only after the University panel had reached agreement on their project. Four university members took the lead and spoke ahead of the city panelists setting the tone of discussion.

One member of the City's panel was viewed as conflicted (because of participation in a local resident's association which was taking an interest in the project) and was recused, but two University senior administrative staff were included on the joint panel. Although their jobs are to secure project approvals and implement projects. The senior University administrative staff are applicants and yet they were permitted to provide explanations, express opinions in discussion and also vote. Any discussion should

have properly occurred as part of the earlier portion of the presentation along with city planning staff and consultants, not included as part of the joint panel's deliberations.

To conclude, the University and its consultants have put considerable effort in planning and design development, however, there are several important considerations that require further thought prior to approval and implementation. Resolution of these significant issues will create a legacy project for the University and the City.

Queen's Park Precinct Coalition:

ABC Residents' Association

Annex Residents' Association

East Annex Condominiums Association

Grange Community Association, Inc

Greater Yorkville Residents' Association

Harbord Village Residents' Association

Huron Sussex Residents' Association

C:

Mike Layton, Councillor - Ward 11, City of Toronto

Mary MacDonald, Senior Manager, Heritage Preservation Services, City of Toronto

Scott Mabury, VP Operations and Real Estate Partnerships, University of Toronto