

RE: 34-38 Hazelton Avenue

Chairman Saunders, members of the Preservation Board, thank you for this opportunity to speak.

In the 1960s Abba Bayefsky sent us out to draw old buildings, and one of the destinations was Yorkville. My freezing fingers and pen came to know and love Cumberland and Yorkville Avenues intimately. I hung around to hear Al Purdy and others read their poetry in second floor rooms.

Later, in the 70s, my dealer, Gadaczy Gallery, was located on a second floor just east of Hazelton on Yorkville Avenue and my relationship with the area continued. The Pollock Gallery migrated under the wrecking ball of progress from the old Gerard St. Village to eventually settle on Scollard. Along the way Jack founded the Outdoor Art Show at City Hall.

The Heritage features of Yorkville and Cumberland were decimated, then destroyed, just as was the old Gerard St. Village. In the sixties much of Hazelton was inhabited by artists, including Albee Franks and Flory Vale, at number 90. He, with love, painted his portraits of old Toronto houses, serving as an inspiration for the understanding of aging beauty.

In 1975, when I joined the Toronto Heliconian Club, the Hall its self was one of the reasons. In 1989 Dorothy Hoover and Marion MacRea asked me to chair the Restoration Committee and I had the great pleasure, with a very enthusiastic Councillor Bossons, of shepherding the designation of the Heliconian Hall through Council.

As a former Public School Trustee for 14 years, I have a strong liking for good school architecture and St. Basil's is most certainly that. When you open an interior door the ratio of window to floor space and ceiling height make even the recalcitrant burst into the space that is the classroom. Light and air are the essence of a good learning environment! At the same time, the scale of the building is small enough that it comfortably relates to the individual, in a shell of elegance.

What I have just described is a treasure for reuse, and a beautiful foil across the road from the rare nineteenth century original board and batten gothic Olivet Church – now the Heliconian Hall with its National designation. These buildings compliment each other and nestle in the streetscape of Hazelton Heritage District. – The District is an asset to the City to be preserved and exploited for the charming Community that it is, not destroyed with the death of a thousand cuts, until there is nothing left for people that is worthy of preservation.

I wish to express my unreserved support of Preservation Services staff, their statements and recommendations regarding both the listed building and the District.

Thank you for your kind attention,
Madeleine McDowell