

Friday, December 12th, 2014

The Hon. John Baird, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister Responsible for the NCC
Foreign Affairs
125 Sussex Drive,
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G2

Dear Minister Baird,

The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA) would like to express the extreme concern of our members with the November 3rd, 2014 announcement that 60 acres of the Central Experimental Farm (CEF) lands would be developed to support the expansion of the Civic hospital and vehicle support (parking). **The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA) respectfully requests that landscape architects be involved in any proposed Ottawa Hospital development on the Central Experimental Farm lands.**

Landscape architects today are engaged in the design, planning and management of urban, rural and natural environments in all Canadian provinces and territories and in many countries worldwide. Canadian landscape architects are well-regarded for their vision, creativity, sensitivity and practicality in all aspects of professional practice, creating unique functional outdoor spaces for our citizens, as well as protecting and enhancing the environment. The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA) is the organization which gives landscape architects a national voice and, through its provincial component associations, regulates the profession of landscape architecture through licensing or certification of its members. As such, since 1999, a representative of the CSLA has been involved in the CEF's Advisory Committee (CEFAC).

The CEFAC was established to ensure public participation in the CEF's management. The CEFAC's members solicit opinions and advice from the organizations they represent and provide advice and recommendations to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) on the future of the Farm. Unfortunately, the CEFAC was not consulted about the transfer of 60 acres of the CEF to the Ottawa Hospital via the media and without opportunity to comment prior to this commitment. This is a missed opportunity, as CEFAC serves as an important means of assisting the federal government in its stewardship of this nationally significant site.

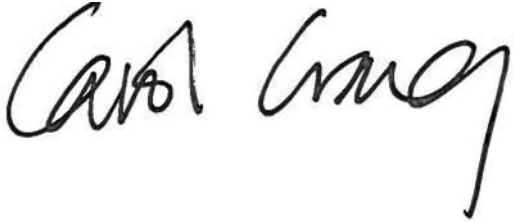
Ottawa is the only national capital *in the world* to have a working agricultural research centre located in the heart of the city. Founded in 1886, the CEF is an important designed research landscape as well as being a prominent public greenspace for Ottawa residents and visitors. In recognition of this importance the CEF was designated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada as a National Historic Site of Canada in 1998. The CEF's prominent research landscapes – shaped and cultivated over the past 125 years – should be celebrated with pride and seen as an opportunity to showcase Canada's world-class leadership in scientific research. Once this portion of the land is developed it is feared that it will be impossible to regain the land for agricultural research purposes and open space ever again.

As stewards of National Historic Sites and of Canadian landscapes, the CSLA strongly urges you to recognize the vital role of landscape architects as critical to any project such as the one contemplated here: planning, environmental assessments and meaningful consultations are a hallmark of the landscape architect's involvement as is the amelioration of the impact of intense development on a site that is currently core to the fabric of the open space in Ottawa.

We trust that the presence of a landscape architect can be assured in all work related to the development of a Ottawa Civic Hospital campus on Central Experimental Lands, should that work actually progress.

We look forward to a response on this urgent and serious matter at your earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,



Carol Craig, AALA, FCSLA
President, CSLA

cc. The Hon. Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Dr. Jack Kitts, President and CEO, Ottawa Hospital
Dr. Mark Kristmanson, CEO, National Capital Commission
Russell Mills, Chair, National Capital Commission
The Hon. Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Environment
Paul Dewar, Ottawa Centre and Foreign Affairs and NCC Critic, NDP
Marc Garneau, Foreign Affairs and NCC Critic, Liberal
The Hon. Stéphane Dion, Heritage Critic, Liberal
The Hon. Pierre Nantel, Heritage Critic, NDP
Alan Latourelle, CEO, Parks Canada Agency
Friends of the Central Experimental Farm
Ontario Association of Architects
Canadian Institute of Planners
Chris Wiebe, Chair, Central Experimental Farm Advisory Committee
Leslie Maitland, President, Heritage Ottawa