

Preserving heritage while looking to the future



CONDO TRENDS
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It was a busy week for architects as the Ontario Association of Architects held its annual conference and gala awards ceremony in Toronto earlier this month.

A week-long series of educational seminars included a lecture by heritage architect Carlos Ventin about heritage preservation and Toronto's acclaimed architecture critic, Christopher Hume, was on hand to help with the presentation.

"(Ventin) was talking about the need to bring a new sense of urgency to heritage preservation and also about why it's a good thing not just from an environmental and economic point of view but from a cultural point of view," says Hume.

As Toronto's condominium conversions go, Hume says there's both good and bad.

"I think generally speaking, the church conversions

that I've seen are not very convincing, whereas some of the warehouses, the factories, can be very nicely converted either for condos or commercial because a lot of those old buildings have the great virtue of flexibility."

Hume says these clean, wide-open spaces can be used in any number of ways, morphing from one generation of industrial use to the next generation of today's knowledge-based industries.

One example of Toronto heritage restoration of note is the recently completed Police Services Division 11 building, designed by Stantec Architecture, that reclaims the century-old Carleton Village School, west of Toronto's downtown core.

The community expressed a vital interest in preserving the school's iconic presence — a community landmark in the Junction neighbourhood — and was involved in the design process from early on.

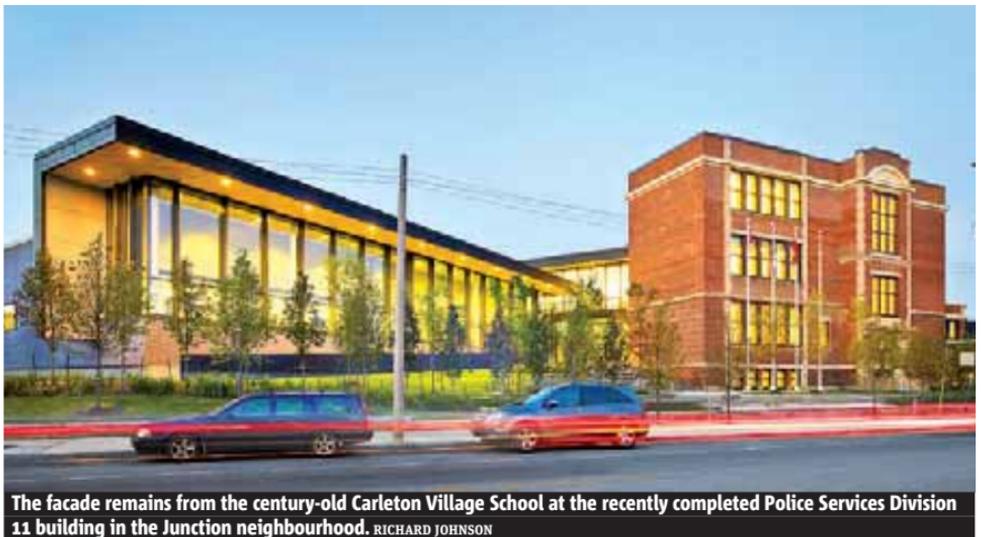
In an interesting mixture of ancient and modern, the original 1913 three-story brick and stone structure has been retained, satisfying the

wishes of the community.

Built behind it is a two-storey contemporary structure accommodating the offices and secure requirements of the police service. The lobby is open and inviting to the community, serving as an exhibit space displaying historical images of the Carleton Village School and the Toronto Police Service in the community.

This year's architectural awards were presented at the OAA Celebration of Excellence Awards and dinner at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre on May 10. The gala was a veritable who's who of the province's top architects, building industry magnates, and those with a passion for architecture. ETalk's Ben Mulroney was the MC for the evening, hosted by OAA president Bill Birdsell.

"Opening the awards to national and international projects reflects the global impact Ontario architects are making. The 2013 award winners exemplify architecture that goes beyond the expected in both design and function," says Birdsell.



The facade remains from the century-old Carleton Village School at the recently completed Police Services Division 11 building in the Junction neighbourhood. RICHARD JOHNSON