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May 5, 2023

Mr. David Nirenberg, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Institute for Advanced Study
1 Einstein Drive
Princeton, NJ 08540

Dear Dr. Nirenberg:

Docomomo US and Docomomo US / New York Tri-State are writing collectively to share our concern over the proposed alterations to the Historical Studies and Social Sciences Library at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. As the national and regional chapters of Docomomo International, a non-profit organization working in over 70 countries around the world to identify, document and protect buildings, sites, and neighborhoods of the Modern Movement, we are alarmed by the proposal to radically alter and consume the elegant and striking library designed by Wallace K. Harrison for J. Robert Oppenheimer, and completed in 1965.

From an architect noted for his contributions to iconic large-scale complexes such as Rockefeller Center, the United Nations headquarters, and Lincoln Center, Harrison's quiet horizontal design for the Institute for Advanced Study is a joyous and notable departure. The minimalist vocabulary of the interior is striking, and the library's most salient feature is its inventive roof structure, which diffuses a warm and indirect daylight throughout the reading rooms.

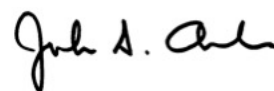
Victoria Newhouse describes the building in her definitive monograph *Wallace K. Harrison, Architect* (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), "The simplicity of the structure itself, the careful detailing of its interior, and the sensitive choice of materials – such as the terrazzo floors with inlaid beige wool carpets – create a serene, low-keyed elegance." She goes on to note, "the Princeton library's most distinctive feature is the roof, where Harrison experiments with combing structure, skylighting, air-conditioning, and artificial lighting in a single overhead system that serves the entire building."

While we understand that the building's unique roof requires repair, the awkward proposed addition would swallow the original building, ruin its most significant attribute, and destroy the building's architectural identity. Furthermore, the proposed project fails to carry forward the level of design excellence that the Institute has achieved in the past with leading architects of their eras such as Harrison, Marcel Breuer and Cesar Pelli. We urge the Institute for Advanced Study to reconsider plans for this important design.

Sincerely,



Liz Waytkus
Executive Director
Docomomo US



John Arbuckle
President
Docomomo US / New York Tri-State