



THE GARDEN CONSERVANCY

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July 10, 2018

Ms. Sylvia Acevedo, CEO
Girl Scouts of the USA
420 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10018

Dear Ms. Acevedo,

The Garden Conservancy, the nation's leading nonprofit organization dedicated to saving and sharing outstanding American gardens for the education and inspiration of the public, joins a growing number of organizations and individuals expressing serious concern about the proposed renovation of the Juliette Gordon Low House in Savannah, Georgia. We are especially concerned about proposed destruction of the garden designed by Clermont Lee in the 1950s.

Clermont Lee, the first female registered landscape architect in Georgia, is an important American landscape architect with connections to the historic landscapes of Georgia, and of Savannah in particular. Her life and work are a worthy example for young women, consistent with the mission of the Girl Scouts USA. The garden is an example of the increasingly rare colonial revival style and is appropriate to the Gordon Low House.

The Garden Conservancy recognizes gardens as fragile cultural resources. The works of landscape architects are living works of art, worthy of celebration and preservation. From a preservation perspective, it is important to keep house museums and their gardens intact to preserve an accurate historical context and a complete educational experience.

While the Garden Conservancy also recognizes the necessity of dynamic organizations to adapt to changing needs, we strongly urge that alternative solutions be explored, solutions that do not destroy Clermont Lee's garden legacy. It is important for all of us to steward carefully our shared cultural legacy, especially in a prominent location where it can continue to inspire so many young people.

On behalf of the Garden Conservancy and its Preservation Committee of the Board of Directors,

James Brayton Hall
President and CEO

cc: Ms. Lisa Junkin Lopez
Mayor Eddie DeLoach
Mrs. Betty Balentine