



## MEMORANDUM



**TO:** Heritage Markham Committee

**FROM:** Peter Wokral, Senior Heritage Planner

**DATE:** April 9, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Request for Feedback  
2730 Elgin Mills Road East  
Post Fire Engineering Report

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**Property/Building Description:** Christian Heise House, single detached, 1-1/2 storey dwelling constructed c. 1859.

**Use:** Vacant Residential

**Heritage Status:** Individually Designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act

### **Background**

#### *Planning Approvals*

- Council has approved applications for Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) and Plan of Subdivision in support of a development including new townhouse units, a pair of semi-detached dwellings and the relocation and incorporation of both the Levi and Christian Heise Houses with detached garages having additional second floor residential units.
- On February 19<sup>th</sup> 2025, a fire caused significant damage to the Christian Heise House including the loss of most of the roof, partial collapse of the east brick gable wall, heat damage to the west gable wall, partial collapse of the second floor adjacent to the west gable wall as well as water damage from the extinguishing of the fire and from the interior being exposed to the winter elements.
- In response to an Order to Remedy an Unsafe Building issued by the City's Building Department, the architect hired by the owner of the property commissioned a Structural Report by Tacoma Engineers to review the site and report on any temporary measures immediately necessary to preserve the structural integrity and heritage fabric of the damaged portion of the building, as well as the repairs necessary to restore the building and bring it into a safe condition.
- The report is based on a visual assessment and did not include any destructive testing.
- The report outlines the steps and repairs necessary to make the house safe again but concludes that "substantial sections of structure are currently damaged beyond the reasonable limit of repair" and opines that utilizing as much of the salvaged building as possible in a reconstruction of the house at the new location "is the most effective way of ensuring safety while preserving the remaining heritage fabric"

### **Staff Comment**

- Although reconstruction using salvaged material is in the opinion of the engineer the most effective method of balancing safety concerns with preserving remaining heritage fabric, the engineer also provides the stabilization work required to return the building to a safe condition recommending that any preservation work should proceed with caution while prioritizing the safety of workers.
- Heritage staff recommends that the repairs recommended by the engineer to make the building safe proceed with caution while prioritizing the safety of workers rather than using salvaged material to reconstruct the house in its new location for the following reasons:
  - The engineering report states that this work is possible if done with care to protect the safety of workers;
  - The uncertainty of how much heritage building fabric can be successfully salvaged;
  - Concerns regarding the accuracy of any future reconstruction, and whether a reconstruction would comply with the provisions of the Ontario Building Code
  - The reduced heritage value of an inauthentic reconstruction using an undetermined amount of salvaged material
- Therefore, Staff recommends that Heritage Markham recommend the stabilization measures outlined in the engineer's report proceeding with the caution and prioritization of worker safety, so that the Christian Heise House can be stabilized, restored to safe condition, and relocated intact as proposed by the Subdivision application

### **Suggested Recommendation for Heritage Markham**

- THAT from a heritage perspective, Heritage Markham recommends that the owner of the Chrisitan Heise House perform the stabilization measures outlined in the engineer's report, proceeding with the caution and prioritization of worker safety, so that the Christian Heise House can be stabilized, restored to safe condition, and relocated intact as proposed by the Subdivision application.

#### **Attachments:**

Location Map

Google Streetview of the Christian Heise House

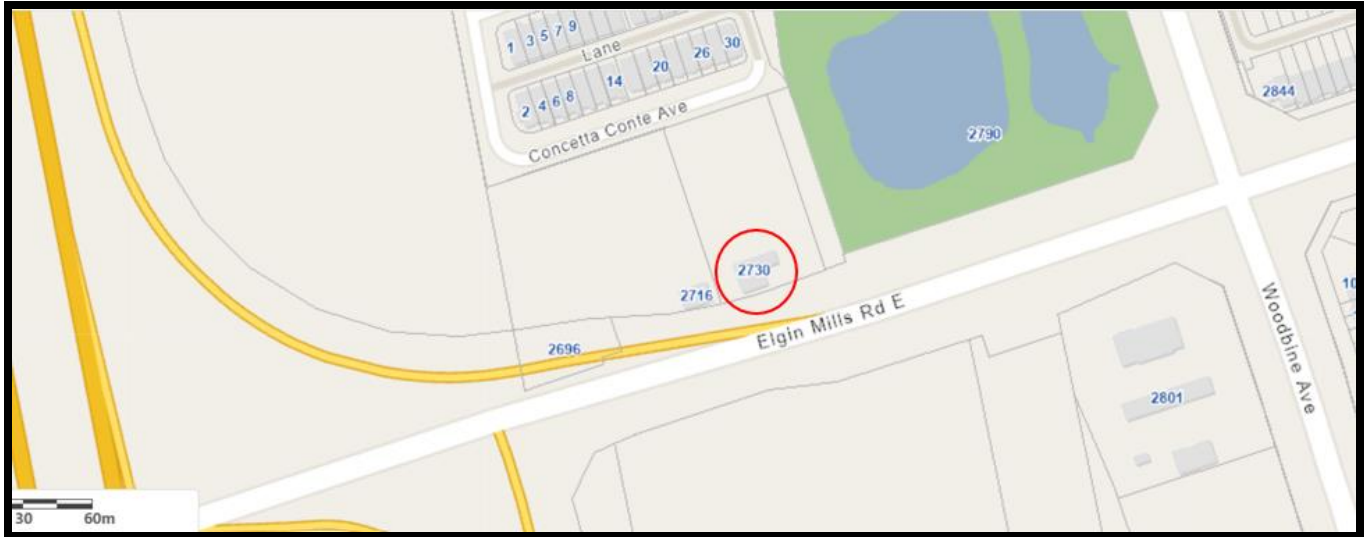
Post Fire Photographs of the Christian Heise House

Tacoma Engineers Structural Report

File: 2730 Elgin Mills Road



## Location Map



## Google Streetview of the Christian Heise House





## Post Fire Photographs of the Christian Heise House





