



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: September 16, 2025

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION REPORT, Amendment to a Designation By-laws to Correct a Legal Description: 5933 14th Avenue (“George Cowie House”), Ward 7

PREPARED BY: Evan Manning, Senior Heritage Planner, ext. 2296

REVIEWD BY: Regan Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning, ext. 2080
Stephen Lue, Senior Development Manager, ext. 2520

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) THAT the report, dated September 16, 2025, titled, “Amendment to a Designation By-laws to Correct a Legal Description: 5933 14th Avenue (“George Cowie House”), Ward 7”, be received;
- 2) THAT the legal description as contained within Council-adopted By-laws 2008-190 & 2021-48 be amended to reflect the legal description as described in the deposited Reference Plan, and that By-laws 2008-190 and 2021-48 be amended to ensure conformance with the Ontario Heritage Act, as amended;
- 3) AND THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

This report recommends a revision to the legal description and Statement of Significance as contained within Council-adopted By-laws 2008-190 and 2021-48 for the property municipally known as 5933 14th Avenue (the “Subject Property”) where the parcel containing the municipally-recognized heritage resource will be modified through division of land.

BACKGROUND:

The Designation By-law requires an amendment to address division of land

The Subject Property is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act (the “Act”) and contains a former dwelling that is currently vacant and secured awaiting future use by a non-profit organization. Concurrent Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, and Site Plan Control applications for the Subject Property and adjacent lands were approved by Council on March 25, 2025. These applications allow for future residential intensification including the construction of affordable housing adjacent to the George Cowie House.

As part of the redevelopment process, the developer, Remington Group, will transfer ownership of a portion of the Subject Property to a non-profit organization to construct affordable rental housing. The affordable housing operator has requested that the lands be transferred without any encumbrances including designation under the Act, necessitating an amendment to the designation by-laws to scope them solely to the portion of a future Reference Plan containing the heritage resource. Staff anticipate bringing forward an amending by-law for Council adoption at its meeting on September 30.

Municipalities can use the Act's minor amendment process to revise the designation by-laws

Municipal councils may update different parts of an existing heritage designation by-law for several reasons, including a need to:

- a) Clarify or correct the statement explaining the property's cultural heritage value or interest or the description of the property's heritage attributes;
- b) Correct the legal description of the property;
- c) Otherwise revise the by-law to make it consistent with the requirements of the Act as amended in 2021.

Section 30.1 of the Act permits an amendment process to, where required, address the above-noted issues. Under this Section, the municipality is obliged to:

- a) inform the owner of the amendment and their right to object thereto; and
- b) consult with the municipal heritage committee prior to giving notice of the proposed amendment to the owner.

Upon receipt of notice of the amendment, an owner has 30 days to file a notice of objection to the amendment with the municipality. Should a notice of objection not be received by the municipality within the 30-day timeline, the council of the municipality may pass the proposed amending by-law.

OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:**The Heritage Markham Committee, Heritage Staff, and the Property Owner support the amendments**

In accordance with the statutory requirements as described above, Heritage Staff will prepare amendments to the designation by-laws including, among others, a revised legal description for the Subject Property and an amended Statement of Significance ("SOS") to ensure conformance with the Act as amended in 2021 (refer to Appendix "C" for a copy of the revised SOS). Heritage Markham Committee considered the proposed amendment request at its meeting on August 13, 2025, and indicated no objection from a heritage perspective. Further, Remington has been made aware of the amendments and has no objections.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

This report has no immediate or direct impact to the Operating Budget or Life Cycle Reserve Study.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not Applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The protection of cultural heritage resources through the designation by-law process is a component of Growth Management. This helps achieve a quality community by ensuring that the City of Markham's cultural heritage resources remain part of the fabric of the city, strengthening a sense of community.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Heritage Markham was consulted. The Heritage Section will work with the Clerks Department to amend the designation by-laws. Legal Services Department will be required to register the approved by-law amendment on the affected property.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Giulio Cescato, RPP, MCIP
Director, Planning and Urban Design

Trinela Cane
Acting Commissioner of Development Services

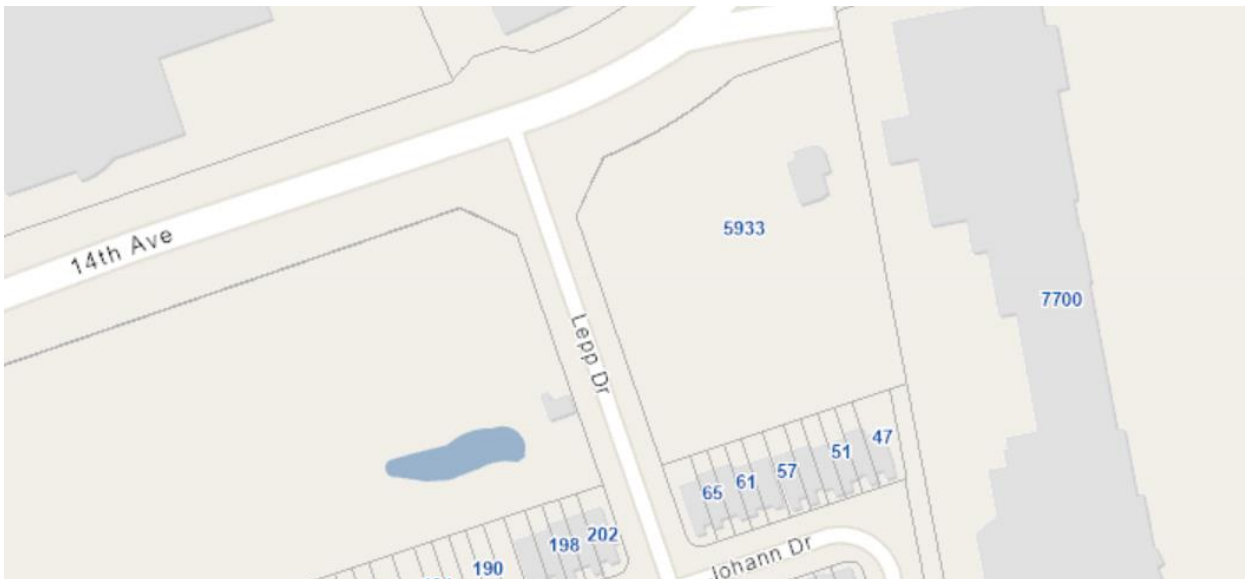
ATTACHMENTS:

- Appendix "A" – Property Maps
- Appendix "B" – Images of the Heritage Resource
- Appendix "C" – Revised Statement of Significance

APPENDIX “A”: Property Maps



The Subject Property, as currently configured, containing the George Cowie House (outlined in yellow) [above] and the location of the George Cowie House within the parcel [below] (Source: City of Markham)



APPENDIX “B”: Images of the Heritage Resource



Primary (north) elevation of the George Cowie House (Source: City of Markham, Jan 2025)



Primary (north) and east elevations of the George Cowie House
(Source: City of Markham, Jan 2025)



West elevation of the George Cowie House (Source: City of Markham, Jan 2025)

APPENDIX "C": Revised Statement of Significance

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

George R. Cowie House

5933 14th Avenue
c.1925

The George R. Cowie House is recommended for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, as described in the following Statement of Significance.

Description of Property

The George R. Cowie House is a two-and-a-half-storey red brick farmhouse located on the south side of Fourteenth Avenue to the west of Markham Road. The property is situated within the Armadale community of Markham.

Design Value and Physical Value

The George R. Cowie House has design and physical value as a representative example of Edwardian Classicism, a popular architectural style from the 1910s through to the 1920s. The former farmhouse was constructed in the form of an American Foursquare. Its functional, basically cubic shape is ornamented with a spacious wrap-around verandah featuring a curved corner and gables centred on its north and east sides. The red pressed brick masonry and two-and-a-half storey form of the house, with a broad hipped roof and gabled attic dormers, are typical of farm residences that were built locally in the early part of the 20th century.

Historical Value and Associative Value

The George R. Cowie House has associative value as a remnant of the area's agricultural community, helping make legible the once-dominant land use and economic activity within the former Markham Township. The farmhouse, c.1925, is located on the eastern half of Township Lot 5, in the 7th Concession. This property was originally a Crown Reserve, transferred to King's College (the forerunner of the University of Toronto) in 1828. In 1913, the property was purchased by George R. Cowie (1880-1944), a farmer. He was a son of John W. Cowie and his wife, Mary Jane (Dolphin) Cowie, who lived on Wellington Street East in Markham Village. Cowie's children owned the property until 1951. It is possible that the present house incorporates an earlier brick house noted in the census records and shown in this approximate location on Township maps of 1860 and 1878. During the early twentieth century, many older farmhouses were remodelled or replaced with more modern structures as the Township's agricultural community prospered with mixed farming and in particular, dairy production. The George R. Cowie House is an excellent example of this trend of farm improvement, and of its early 20th century period of construction.

Contextual Value

The George R. Cowie House has contextual value as one of a small number of extant heritage buildings that are important in defining, maintaining and supporting the character and

extent of the historic community of Armadale. The property is also historically linked to its surroundings as a tangible reminder of the community's past agricultural prosperity.

Heritage Attributes

Character-defining attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of The George R. Cowie House are organized by their respective Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria, as amended, below:

Heritage attributes that convey the property's design value and physical value as a representative example of Edwardian Classicism expressed in the form of an American Foursquare:

- Two-and-a-half storey height;
- Fieldstone foundation;
- Red brick masonry with stone lintels over openings;
- Medium pitched hipped roof with gabled dormers and wide, boxed eaves;
- Curved wrap-around verandah with its closed concrete balustrade, tapered wood columns, wood lintel, and decorative gables;
- Flat-arched one over one wood sash windows with projecting stone sills.

Heritage attributes that convey the property's historical value and associative value as a remnant of the historic community of Armadale, helping make legible the once-dominant land use and economic activity within the former Markham Township:

- The dwelling is a tangible reminder of the prosperous agricultural community found within early twentieth century Markham Township, and of the trend whereby farmhouses were improved and expanded in response to improving economic conditions.

Heritage attributes that convey the property's contextual value as a building that is important in defining, maintaining and supporting the character and extent of the historic hamlet of Armadale:

- The location of the building on its historic parcel, facing north, within the former hamlet of Almira, where it has stood since c.1915. Its continued presence helps maintain legibility of the historic community.

Attributes of the property that are not considered to be of cultural heritage value, or are otherwise not included in the Statement of Significance:

- One-storey rear addition.