



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Heritage Markham Committee

**FROM:** George Duncan, Senior Heritage Planner

**DATE:** May 13, 2020

**SUBJECT:** DEMOLITION PERMIT APPLICATION 20 110958 DP  
Summerfeldt-Stickley House  
10536 McCowan Road  
Cashel Community

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### **Property/Building Description:**

- Summerfeldt-Stickley House, a one and a half storey frame farmhouse, a vernacular dwelling designed with the influence of the Gothic Revival style, c.1860, possibly enlarged with an addition to the north in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Use:**

- An abandoned rural dwelling.

### **Heritage Status:**

- Listed on the Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. Researched and evaluated as a Group 2 cultural heritage resource. A research report prepared by staff is attached.

### **Application/Proposal:**

- The property owner has contacted and met with City staff regarding their intention to demolish the vacant building due to its advanced state of disrepair. According to the owner, the rural dwelling has been vacant for a number of years and has been subject to trespassing.
- This is one of a group of vacant heritage properties that has been visited by By-law Enforcement officers pursuant to the new provisions for the protection of vacant heritage buildings in the amended Property Standards By-Law and Keep Markham Beautiful By-Law.
- The owner has engaged the services of MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture Consultants to examine the building and make recommendations. The owner

has also engaged TACOMA Engineers Inc. to assess the structural condition of the building. Both reports are attached.

- A Demolition Permit application was submitted to the City by the owner on March 27, 2020. The request for demolition was considered accepted under the provisions of the *Ontario Heritage Act* on April 1, 2020.

### **Background:**

- This property is being held for future development by Beechgrove Estates Inc. There are currently no development applications.
- Vacant heritage properties in a state of limbo pending future development represent a significant issue of concern for the City's heritage conservation program. There are about 60 buildings throughout Markham in this state. These properties are often subject to vandalism and receive minimal maintenance by their owners.
- Ideally, if the requirements of the Property Standards By-Law and Keep Markham Beautiful By-Law are enforced immediately or soon after a heritage building becomes vacant, there is a much better chance that serious issues with building condition will not occur.
- In this case, By-Law Enforcement officers, upon visiting this property about a year ago, observed that the rear wing of the vacant dwelling had partially collapsed and that there were three large holes in the roof, on its rear slope. None of these issues are visible from street view, therefore prior to this inspection, the grievous state of the building was not apparent to City staff.
- Based on their observations on site, By-Law Enforcement officers were of the opinion that it would be impractical to attempt to enforce the By-Law requirements with respect to repairing the damage and re-instating heat and electricity.
- The report by MHBC, titled "Scoped Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report for 10536 McCowan Road, The John Stickley House" indicates, in the consultant's opinion, there is minimal cultural heritage value in terms of Ontario Regulation 9/06 - Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, the test to examine if a property warrants designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. The consultant report also covers the condition of the building and concludes that due to its poor condition very little of its heritage integrity remains, in addition to concerns with its structural integrity.
- The report by TACOMA engineering consultants, reviews an earlier report by Zaretsky Consulting Engineers Inc., and concludes that the building is beyond the point of restoration due to structural issues and would be unsafe for workers to enter to undertake either shoring or repairs. The report states that the level of replacement of existing material would be such that little would remain of the original heritage building if restoration was to be undertaken.

### **Staff Comment:**

- Staff's findings with respect to the cultural heritage value or interest of this property do not completely agree with the conclusions of MHBC with respect to **associative** or **historical value** because the building represents the important theme of agriculture in Markham Township and the historic development of the community by families with Berczy settler and Pennsylvania-German cultural backgrounds.

- Notwithstanding the cultural heritage value or interest of the Summerfeldt-Stickley House and its Group 2 heritage building evaluation, its advanced state of deterioration is a significant factor to consider in reaching a recommendation with respect to the proposed demolition of the building.
- With no development applications in progress, and the unlikely prospect of repair and restoration to a habitable condition, staff do not recommend that the property be considered for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. Designation, if approved, would not prevent the owner from continuing to seek demolition and based on the TACOMA report, if this matter was referred to LPAT in the event of Council denying the demolition permit, it is anticipated that the result would be an order to issue the permit.
- In view of the circumstances concerning the condition of the Summerfeldt-Stickey House, staff recommends that Heritage Markham not oppose the owner's application to demolish.
- Staff recommends that as a condition of demolition approval, that a commemorative "Markham Remembered" plaque be installed at the expense of the owner near the front of the property.
- Staff also recommends that as a condition of demolition approval, that the owner be required to advertise in a local newspaper the availability of the building for salvage of heritage materials to be used elsewhere.
- As per the *Ontario Heritage Act*, for a Listed property, Council has 60 days to make a decision from the date the application was accepted as a demolition request under the Act. The 60 days expires May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- The demolition permit application will be considered by the Development Services Committee on May 25, with a staff report that will include Heritage Markham's comments and recommendations. The matter will be considered by Council on May 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Suggested Heritage Markham Recommendation:**

THAT in view of the advanced deteriorated condition of the Summerfeldt-Stickley House at 10536 McCowan Road, Heritage Markham recommends that Council not oppose the demolition permit application;

AND THAT as a condition of the demolition permit, Council require the owner to undertake the following:

- to install a commemorative plaque in the Markham Remembered series at their expense, near the front of the property, to the satisfaction of the Manager of Heritage Planning; and
- to advertise in a local newspaper the availability of the building for the salvage of heritage materials.

File:

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Location Map



Building Photograph 2000



Front and rear of building, 2020. TACOMA Engineering Photographs

# **RESEARCH REPORT**

## **Summerfeldt-Stickley House East Half Lot 24, Concession 6 10536 McCowan Road c.1860**

### **Historical Background:**

This vacant farmhouse is located on the east half of Markham Township Lot 24, Concession 6, south-east of the historic crossroads community of Cashel. In 1804, the entire 200 acres of this lot were leased by Frederick U. E. Westphalen, a member of the Berczy settler group. In 1846, Jacob Pingle Jr. received the Crown patent for the west 100 acres. In 1847, Joseph Tomlinson received the Crown patent for the east 100 acres. The property was initially occupied by tenants.

George Henry Summerfeldt Sr. (known as Henry Summerfeldt) purchased the east half of Lot 24, Concession 6 from Joseph Tomlinson in 1850. This property was located immediately north of the Summerfeldt homestead on Lot 23, Concession 6. The Summerfeldt family was another of the Berczy settlers. George Henry Summerfeldt sold the property on Lot 24 to one of his sons, Asa Henry Summerfeldt, in 1856. By the time of the 1861 census, Asa H. Summerfeldt, farmer, was residing on this property in a two storey frame dwelling. This dwelling is believed to form the earliest phase of construction of the existing farmhouse at 10536 McCowan Road.

By the mid-1860s, Asa H. Summerfeldt had pursued a different career. According to a Township directory of 1866, he was an inn-keeper at Cashel. The hotel building, built in 1858, still stands at 4510 Elgin Mills Road East. His tenure there was not long. By the time of a Township directory of 1871, there was a new inn-keeper at the crossroads.

In 1874, Asa Summerfeldt sold the farm property to John Stickley, a member of a Pennsylvania-German family. John and Mary (Smith) Stickley lived across the road on a farm on the west half of Lot 24, Concession 7. Their stone farmhouse still stands at 10535 McCowan Road. John Stickley died in 1875, leaving the former Summerfeldt property to his sons John and William Stickley. Both were children at the time and therefore too young to occupy their inherited property on their own. At the time of the 1881 census, John was 17 years old, and his brother William, 15. They both lived with their widowed mother on the family farm on Lot 24, Concession 7.

In the 1891 census, John Stickley, his wife, Sarah (Cober) Stickley and their infant son, Peter were living on the property in a two storey frame house containing 7 rooms. The Stickleys may have enlarged the original Summerfeldt farmhouse during their ownership, perhaps adding the portion to the north. By 1894, John Stickley had full ownership of the east 100 acres of Lot 24, Concession 6. Peter Stickley later took over the farm operation and his parents relocated to Stouffville. The farm remained in the ownership of Peter and Ella Stickley until 1951.

### **Architectural Description and Stylistic Analysis:**

The Summerfeldt-Stickley House is a vernacular L-Plan farmhouse characterized by its clean, simple lines that reference the Gothic Revival style in general form, but does not have the decorative elements usually associated with that style. A wing (possibly the kitchen wing) extends from the rear wall, but is not visible from the street. The southern portion has the form of a classic Ontario, centre-gabled

farmhouse, a type emblematic of rural Ontario. It may have formed the first phase of construction of this frame, one-and-a-half storey dwelling. The building has a medium-pitched gable roof, vertical tongue and groove siding, and an ordered arrangement of window openings. Windows are typically flat-headed with a 2 over 2 glazing configuration. Houses of this form often have a veranda in the ell. In this case, the veranda is absent; either it was never built or it was removed many years ago and has not left any obvious traces.

**Context:**

The Summerfeldt-Stickley House is located in a rural setting, positioned well back from the road. To the south-west of the farmhouse there is a concrete silo that was once associated with a barn that has been removed. This rural dwelling is one of a number of nineteenth century farmhouses in the vicinity that represent the long-established agricultural community in Markham.

G. Duncan, April 2018, with historical research by Su Murdoch Historical Consulting.