



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: May 25, 2020

SUBJECT: **Recommendation Report**
Demolition Permit Application for a Building Listed on the
Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or
Interest,
Summerfeldt-Stickley House
10536 McCowan Road, Ward 6
File No. 20 110958 DP

PREPARED BY: George Duncan, CAHP, Senior Heritage Planner, ext. 2296

REVIEWED BY: Regan Hutcheson, MCIP, RPP, CAHP
Manager of Heritage Planning, ext. 2080

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report titled “Recommendation Report, Demolition Permit Application for a Building Listed on the Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, Summerfeldt-Stickley House, 10536 McCowan Road, Ward 6”, File No. 20 110958 DP, dated May 25, 2020, be received;
- 2) That Council approve the demolition of the vacant listed heritage building known as the Summerfeldt-Stickley House on the basis of its advanced state of disrepair and the unlikely possibility of repairs being undertaken based on the applicant’s structural review by a qualified engineering consultant;
- 3) That as conditions of demolition approval, the owner be required to provide at their sole cost a Markham Remembered commemorative plaque to interpret the history of the property, and place it in near the front of the property, and the owner be required to advertise in a local newspaper the availability of the building for potential salvage of materials that could be used elsewhere, both to the satisfaction of the Manager of Heritage Planning;
- 4) And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution

PURPOSE:

To recommend the demolition of the vacant heritage building at 10536 McCowan Road, known as the Summerfeldt-Stickley House.

BACKGROUND:

The Summerfeldt-Stickley House is listed on the Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The subject property, owned by Beechgrove Estates Inc., is located on the west side of McCowan Road, just outside of the Robinson Glen Secondary Plan area of the North

Markham Planning District. It is zoned A1 – Agricultural under By-law 304-87, as amended, and designated Countryside and Greenway in the Official Plan 2014.

The property is listed on the Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The building on the property is the Summerfeldt-Stickley House, c.1860. It is a one and a half storey frame vernacular dwelling designed with the influence of the Gothic Revival style, set well back on the property from the street frontage.

The building was researched and evaluated in 2018

The building was evaluated by Heritage Markham and staff using the City's Heritage Building Evaluation System. The Summerfeldt-Stickley House was evaluated as a Group 2 Heritage building as part of a program of research and evaluation conducted in 2018 in association with properties within the Future Urban Area/North Markham Planning District. Group 2 buildings are those buildings of significance and worthy of preservation. Group 2 buildings are also considered to be potentially worthy of designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The building is vacant pending future development

The Summerfeldt-Stickley House has been vacant for several years on a rural property held by Beechgrove Estates Inc. for future development. There are currently no development applications for this property. The owner has had difficulty with trespassers on the property and is concerned about the risks that the advanced state of disrepair of the building present.

A demolition permit application has been submitted for the vacant heritage dwelling

A demolition permit application was submitted by the owner on March 27, 2020, accompanied by a Scoped Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report prepared by MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture Consultants and a Structural Condition Report prepared by TACOMA Engineers.

In 2019, By-law Enforcement conducted a series of inspections on properties with vacant heritage buildings. This action was initiated after Council passed amendments to the Property Standards By-Law and Keep Markham Beautiful By-Law with special provisions regarding the treatment of heritage buildings. This property was inspected and it was found that the frame rear wing of the heritage building was in a state of collapse, and that there were several large holes on the rear slope of the main roof. Since none of these issues were visible from street view, there were no readily-seen condition concerns with the vacant building prior to this inspection.

The property owner does not intend to repair the building and proposes to demolish it due to trespassing and condition concerns

Based on their observations, the By-law Officers were of the opinion that it was unlikely that the property owner would undertake repairs to the building based on its condition. The owner was advised to obtain a structural assessment by a qualified engineer if they decided to pursue a demolition permit application at a future date.

TACOMA Engineers are of the opinion that the building is in an unsafe condition

The report by TACOMA Engineers, which reviewed an earlier report by Zaretsky Consulting Engineers Inc., 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.

MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture Consultants are of the opinion that the building's condition has compromised its cultural heritage value

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.

Heritage Markham reviewed the demolition permit application on May 13, 2020

Heritage Markham Committee reviewed the demolition permit application at its meeting of May 13, 2020 and did not oppose the approval of the demolition permit application based on the findings of the consultant reports provided by the applicant. The recommendations of Heritage Markham have been included in the recommendations of this staff report.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**Vacant heritage properties present a challenge to the municipality**

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. Ideally, if an owner undertakes the proper steps to maintain and protect a heritage building soon after it becomes vacant, there is a much better chance that serious concerns with condition will not occur.

In parts of Markham north of the existing developed urban area, there are heritage buildings located on properties being held for future development that have been abandoned for years, with electrical service disconnected and therefore no heat. With these vacant dwellings often in locations on rural properties where they are distant from the road, maintenance problems are not always observed by City staff and problems such as a deteriorated roof can go unnoticed and develop into more serious condition problems.

The condition of the heritage building at 10536 McCowan Road appears to have reached a point where repair is unlikely to occur

When By-law Enforcement has encountered vacant buildings that appear to have gone past the point of reasonable repair, owners have responded by submitting demolition permit applications. Based on their observations on site at 10536 McCowan Road, 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 electricity and heat.

Discussion of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The subject building still possesses historical associative and physical/design value according to the findings of Heritage Section staff. However, notwithstanding the cultural heritage value or interest of the Summerfeldt-Stickley House and its evaluation as a Group 2 heritage building, its advanced state of deterioration is a significant factor to consider in reaching a recommendation with respect to the proposed demolition of the building.

Staff do not recommend that the property be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, but recommend that it should be commemorated

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. In order to recognize the cultural heritage value of the Summerfeldt-Stickley House, staff recommends that a commemorative “Markham Remembered” plaque be installed at the expense of the owner, to be placed near the front of the property, to the satisfaction of the Manager of Heritage Planning.

Staff also recommends that the owner be required to advertise in the local newspaper the availability of the building for the potential salvage of materials that could be used elsewhere. This action could help divert some building materials from landfill sites.

The Ontario Heritage Act requires Council to consider demolition applications for listed heritage properties within a specified timeframe

For properties listed on the *Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest* that are not designated individually or within a designated heritage conservation district, or where Council has not passed a resolution indicating an intention to designate, the procedure outlined in Section 27(3) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* must be followed. As a listed property, the demolition request must be reviewed by Heritage Markham and its recommendation addressed by Markham Council within 60 days of the date a notice of receipt letter is issued to the applicant.

Staff recommends that the demolition permit application be approved based on the circumstances involving this property

Based on the specific circumstances concerning the condition of this vacant heritage building, staff recommends that the demolition permit application be approved with the conditions to require a Markham Remembered plaque, and the advertising of the building for potential salvage of materials.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)

None

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not Applicable

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Not Applicable

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The demolition request was reviewed by Heritage Markham, Council's advisory committee on heritage matters.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Director, Planning & Urban Design

Arvin Prasad, MPA, RPP, MCIP
Commissioner, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1: Applicant & Location Map

Figure 2: Building Photographs 2000 and 2020

FILE PATH:

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FIGURE 1

APPLICANT NAME & LOCATION MAP

APPLICANT/OWNERS: Beechgrove Estates Inc. (Clay Leibel).

LOCATION MAP:



FIGURE 2
BUILDING PHOTOGRAPHS



Summerfeldt-Stickley House in 2000 and 2020



TACOMA Engineering Photograph

BUILDING PHOTOGRAPHS Continued



Rear of Summerfeldt-Stickley House, 2020

TACOMA Engineers Photograph