



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Heritage Markham Committee

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

**DATE:** June 10, 2020

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

### VACANT/THREATENED HERITAGE RESOURCES

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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.

#### **Background:**

- The property owner intends 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 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 of these consultant reports were in support of demolition.

- A Demolition Permit application was submitted to the City by the owner on March 27, 2020. It was reviewed by Heritage Markham on May 13, 2020, and the Development Services Committee of Council on May 25, and approved by Council on May 26, 2020.

**Staff Comment:**

- Heritage Markham's recommendations regarding the demolition permit application were incorporated into the recommendations contained in the staff report prepared for the May 25, 2020 meeting of the Development Services Committee.
- On May 25, 2020 the Development Services Committee approved the following recommendation, after some discussion about the City's issues with vacant heritage buildings. On May 26, 2020 Council confirmed the decision.

**RECOMMENDATION (Approved by Development Services Committee and Council):**

- 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.

**Further Comments about Vacant or Threatened Heritage Buildings:**

- During the May 25, 2020 Development Services Committee meeting, when the demolition permit application for 10536 McCowan Road was under review, there was some discussion about the need to assess the extent of vacant heritage buildings within the City and bring back a report about strategies to address the problem. (see the attached Minutes from May 25<sup>th</sup>). This initiative was not included in the resolution that was adopted, but it was clear from the discussion that took place that Council has an expectation of pursuing this matter.

- Staff has determined that there are currently at least 66 vacant heritage buildings in Markham.
- 19 of these vacant heritage buildings are located within the Rouge National Urban Park. The others are primarily in future development areas or in rural areas being held long-term for future development.

### **Vacant/Threatened Buildings**

- What has been done:
  - In Nov/Dec 2016, staff identified all the vacant/threatened heritage resources and created the top 10 most threatened heritage resources. R. Hutcheson presented a powerpoint summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of a study undertaken a few years ago by consultants on this topic. The genesis of the study was Council's direction to staff to look into the potential of another Markham Heritage Estates subdivision, since the existing heritage subdivision is nearly complete.
  - The consultant team proposed a variety of approaches, some of them potentially applicable to the Markham situation, some of them not applicable given the local development model and land values.
  - G. Duncan provided an overview of vacant heritage buildings in heritage conservation districts, other historic communities, development sites, rural locations and within the Rouge National Urban Park. At the time, the total number is 65 – but there may be more and Committee members were asked to email staff with any that they know of that have not been included on the list.
  - Committee members thought that the topic of threatened heritage buildings requires more discussion and consideration
  - Heritage Markham Recommendation: Use the information contained in the Vacant Heritage Buildings: Priorities 2016 chart, and the Top 10 Threatened Vacant Heritage Buildings November 30, 2016 list to assist in the consideration of proposals to relocate heritage buildings to Markham Heritage Estates or to advise By-law Enforcement staff of priorities for issuing orders.
  - In **November and December 2018**, By-law Enforcement Staff inspected 62 identified heritage properties and put Orders on 10 properties. Compliance date was the end of Jan 2019. All properties were asked to board any holes in the structures to make them weather tight.
  - Two of the threatened buildings were approved for relocation to Markham Heritage Estates (Rev Jenkins House and the Alfred Read House)
  - City also has retained a consultant to provide a strategy on what can be done with the heritage buildings located in the Future Urban Area Employment Lands (study is ongoing).

### **Designation Strategy**

- There was also some discussion of the approach taken by staff and Heritage Markham to bring forward heritage buildings to be recommended for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act. The question was asked: why was 10536 McCowan Road not designated at the time when it was evaluated as a Group 2 heritage building?

- Our current designation strategy:
  - Designation of property can be either as a proactive or re-active practice or a combination of both. In Markham for the last decade, our designation program has been primarily re-active usually initiated when a cultural heritage resource is threatened, or a requirement necessary to receive financial assistance or as a condition of development approval.
- Although designation would not have prevented the demolition by neglect scenario played out in this instance, it does appear prudent for staff and Heritage Markham to report back to Council with an explanation of what are current strategy is and whether pro-actively pursuing the designation of important heritage buildings, vacant or occupied, that are outside of existing heritage conservation districts should be initiated.
- Staff recommends that a sub-committee (or two separate sub-committees) be formed as a discussion group to develop recommended strategies for dealing with vacant heritage buildings and for addressing the issue of designation ( i.e. prioritizing properties for pro-active heritage designation that can be presented to Council).

Staff indicated that a report on these matters could be brought back in the fall.

**Suggested Heritage Markham Recommendation:**

THAT Heritage Markham form a sub-committee (or two separate sub-committees) as a discussion group to develop recommended strategies for dealing with vacant heritage buildings and for addressing the current designation strategy.



Location Map



Building Photograph 2000



Front and rear of building, 2020. TACOMA Engineering Photographs

**7.5 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. 20110958 DP (16.11, 10.13)**

The Committee inquired as to strategies followed to-date to address vacant and neglected heritage buildings in Markham. Staff advised of the list of threatened heritage buildings identified and the actions undertaken by Heritage and By-law Enforcement staff to bring these into compliance with the City's property standards regulations. There was discussion regarding potential strategies for protecting existing heritage buildings from demolition moving forward.

It was requested that staff report back to Development Services Committee in the fall of 2020 with a status update on list of heritage buildings across the City of Markham identified to be in a threatened condition. It was also requested that additional information be provided on the process and considerations applied in determining whether a building of potential cultural heritage value or interest is recommended for heritage designation.

Moved by Councillor Keith Irish

Seconded by Councillor Khalid Usman

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

**Carried**