



MEMORANDUM

TO: Heritage Markham Committee

FROM: Peter Wokral, Senior Heritage Planner

DATE: June 9, 2021

SUBJECT: Notice of Intention to Demolish
32 Joseph Street, Markham Village Heritage Conservation District

Property/Building Description: 1 ½ storey, single detached dwelling constructed in 1949

Use: Residential

Heritage Status: Designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act and identified as a Type 'B' building or non-heritage building considered to be complementary to neighbouring heritage buildings in terms of their scale, forms, massing and materials which support and help define the heritage character of the District

Application/Proposal

- The owner of the property has indicated their intention to demolish the existing 1 ½ storey, detached dwelling in order to permit the construction of a new dwelling. The design of a new dwelling would be expected to be in accordance with the policies and guidelines for new buildings contained in the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District Plan.

Background

- Once an owner provides their written intention to demolish a structure that is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act (Part IV or Part V), the municipality has 90 days from the date the notice of receipt is served to the applicant to either:
 - Approve the demolition;
 - Refuse the demolition; or
 - Approve the demolition with conditions
- The property had recently been up for sale and Heritage Planning staff received numerous inquiries as to whether the existing house can be demolished to permit the construction of a new house;

- The City has received a letter from the owner requesting demolition. The initial 90 day period expired on June 2, but was extended by the owner until September 30th 2021. However, since there are no meetings of the Development Services Committee and Council prior to this deadline and following the Council’s Summer recess, Staff have scheduled the matter to be before Development Services Committee on June 21, 2021;
- The Markham Village Heritage Conservation District Plan contains the following policies regarding Type ‘B’ dwellings:
 - “Generally there will be an opposition to the demolition of B-Type buildings, particularly if the building is deemed to be relatively significant in terms of adding to the overall heritage character of the district” and;
 - “B Type buildings help contribute to the ambience of the heritage district and are therefore considered as an integral and valuable part of the area. The historical and/or architectural value may not be outstanding, however, the conservation of these buildings should be encouraged, with renovation as necessary. The intent is therefor to either conserve Type B building or encourage renovations in a manner complementary to adjacent properties. This will ensure maintenance of the visual attractiveness and ambience of the streetscape”.
- However, in the past, Council has approved the demolition of some Type ‘B’ buildings in the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District on the understanding that any replacement building designed in accordance with the policies and guidelines contained in the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District Plan will also be complementary to the heritage character of the District;
- At the April 14th meeting of Heritage Markham, the Committee deferred making a decision regarding the proposed demolition until they could review preliminary plans for the replacement home proposed for the property;
- The matter was on the May agenda but a further deferral was requested to allow the submission of preliminary plans.
- As of the date this item was prepared for the June agenda, no preliminary plans have been submitted.

Staff Comment

- Each B-Type property is usually evaluated on its own merits and its compatibility with the overall character of the District. The key determinant should be whether the building contributes and supports the reason why the District is a cultural heritage resource.
- Although complementary to surrounding heritage buildings in terms of its scale, forms and materials, the existing dwelling at 32 Joseph Street is not known to have any special historical significance, nor can it be said to be relatively significant in terms of adding to the overall heritage character of the district, which is derived from buildings predominantly constructed in the latter half of the 19th century. According to MPAC records, the existing house and detached garage were constructed in 1949;
- Staff is also of the opinion that the design of the proposed new house for the property should have no bearing on whether demolition of the existing house can be supported or not, as the decision should ideally be based on the relative merits of the existing dwelling;

- Given past decisions regarding the demolition of Type 'B' buildings by Council, providing timely and useful feedback to people interested in purchasing Type 'B' buildings and the potential for demolition has been problematic for Heritage Section staff and a source of understandable frustration for prospective purchasers who require certainty when contemplating such a major purchase;
- When the Markham Village Heritage Plan is updated, staff propose to develop a policy regarding the demolition of 'complementary buildings' that will provide a greater level of clarity for prospective purchasers, and eliminate uncertainty. Many municipalities are moving to a value based system where buildings are considered 'contributing' or 'non-contributing' based on a historic context statement or neighbourhood heritage statement. This allows municipalities to protect more of the fabric buildings in a heritage conservation district because it views them as contributing to the overall value...the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Suggested Recommendation for Heritage Markham

THAT notwithstanding the existing policies regarding the demolition of Type 'B' buildings contained in the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District Plan, Heritage Markham has no objection to the demolition of the existing detached dwelling and garage at 32 Joseph Street, subject to the owner obtaining Site Plan Approval for a new dwelling, as the existing building does not significantly contribute to the heritage character of the District;

AND THAT the future updating of the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District Plan provide greater clarity regarding the demolition of complementary buildings to provide greater certainty to the potential purchasers of these properties.

Or

THAT Heritage Markham in accordance with the policies contained in the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District Plan regarding the demolition of Type 'B' buildings does not support the demolition of the existing detached dwelling at 29 Joseph Street because it is relatively significant in contributing to the overall heritage character of the district and encourages the owner to design a compatible addition, but has no objection to the demolition of the existing detached garage;

AND THAT the future updating of the Markham Village Heritage Conservation District Plan provide greater clarity regarding the demolition of non-heritage complementary buildings to provide greater certainty to the potential purchasers of these properties.

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Streetscape

