



MEMORANDUM

TO: Heritage Markham Committee

FROM: Evan Manning, Senior Heritage Planner

DATE: January 11, 2023

SUBJECT: Minor Heritage Permit Application
145 John Street, Thornhill
Front Yard Landscape Alterations

Property/Building Description: Two-storey dwelling with attached garage constructed in 1969 as per MPAC records.

Use: Residential

Heritage Status: 145 John Street is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as part of the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District (HCD).

Application/Proposal

- The City has received a Minor Heritage Permit application for the partial paving of the front yard at 145 John Street (the “subject property”). Note that the applicant has indicated that they were unaware of the requirement for a heritage permit prior to commencing work, and the driveway as well as substantial portions of the front and side yards have been covered with interlock pavers;
- These pavers replaced sodded areas that formerly existed adjacent to the driveway, and along the side yard adjacent the eastern property line. The previous driveway was also composed of interlock;
- Posts for driveway gates also appear to have been installed.

Background

- The subject property is located on the south side of John Street between Henderson Avenue to the east, and Johnson Street to the west, and contains a two-storey brick dwelling;
- Similar building typologies predominate in the immediate area and are characterized by relatively generous front lawns with mature trees.

Heritage Policy

- Thornhill HCD Plan (“District Plan”):
 - The subject property is categorized as ‘Class C – Other Buildings/Properties within the District’. As described in Section 2.2.2 (‘Building/Property Classification’) of the THCD Plan, Class C properties possess the following qualities:
 - *They are building/properties primarily constructed post-1939*
 - *They include buildings/properties that are sympathetic to the District by virtue of their scale or design qualities;*
 - *They include buildings/properties not sympathetic to historic character of the District.*
 - Section 8.3.1 – The Heritage Permit –is used when no other municipal approvals are required and would include the hard surfacing of the front yard.
 - Section 4.5.1 – Landscape Treatment provides the following policy direction – ***“Existing historical landscapes will be conserved. The introduction of complementary landscapes to the heritage environment will be encouraged”***
 - Section 4.5.4 – Driveways (Residential) provides the following policy direction ***“Driveways are to be kept to a narrow width in order to preserve the expanse of the front yard.”*** and ***“Driveway entrances will not be gated.”***
 - Section 9.6.1 – Heritage Landscape Treatment states – ***“The landscape treatment on private property visible from the street can do a great deal to help express the character of a heritage area”*** and ***“All property owners are encouraged to introduce a heritage landscape treatment to further enhance the character of the District”***.
 - While the District Plan does not provide guidelines for properties constructed post-1900, there is considerable guidance on appropriate landscape treatment for nineteenth century properties that are important in maintaining the overall landscape character of the Thornhill HCD. Given the length of these guidelines, they have not been reproduced here but can be reviewed in Section 9.6.1 of the District Plan.

Staff Comments

- While Heritage Section staff have no objection to the chosen pavers for the driveway, the installation of driveway gate posts and the paving of the front and side yards are not supported;
- Heritage Markham did support a Minor Heritage Permit application for a driveway gate at 146 John Street as it extended the existing white picket treatment across the driveway. Notwithstanding guidance in the THCD Plan prohibiting the installation of driveway gates, Heritage Section staff did not consider the proposal to be visually obtrusive or

incompatible with the heritage character of the property, or the THCD more broadly. Further, the gate increased safety for the applicant's young children;

- Staff do note that a landscape buffer has been retained between the newly hard-surfaced front yard and the John Street right-of-way.
- Staff could support the creation of a walkway leading from the driveway to the front entrance of the house in a paving material different from what has been installed for the driveway, but the current extent of paved surface is not in keeping with the landscape character of the Thornhill HCD which is typified by mature plantings and lawn. As such, it is in the opinion of Staff that the alterations do not comply with the policies and guidelines of the District Plan.

Suggested Recommendation for Heritage Markham

THAT Heritage Markham does not support the front yard landscape alterations and masonry gate posts and recommends that the Minor Heritage Permit Application seeking approval of the unauthorized alterations be denied, and that the interlock pavers be removed from the former sodded areas.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix 'A'	Location Map
Appendix 'B'	Images of the Subject Property

Appendix 'A'

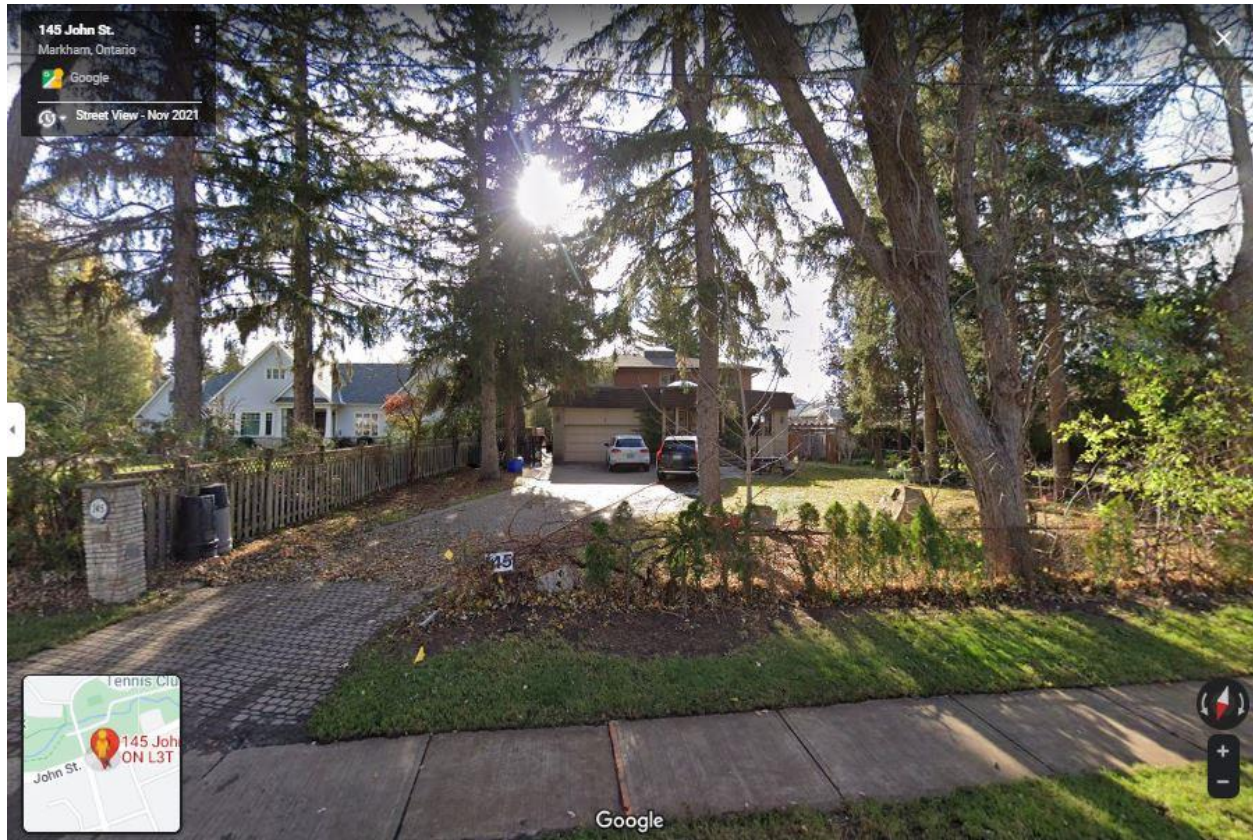
Location Map



Property map showing the location of the subject property [outlined in yellow] (Source: City of Markham)

Appendix 'B'

Images of the Subject Property



The front yard of the subject property as it appeared in November 2021 prior to the recent alterations (Source: Google)



Images of the subject property post-alteration showing the paving of the former lawn (above) and grading work in preparation for the new driveway (Source: City of Markham)



Image of the recently paved side yard (Source: City of Markham)

Images submitted by Applicant as part of the Heritage Permit
Application
(January 3, 2023)



Looking South



Looking West, showing basketball net/court delineation



Looking North towards John Street from front yard



Looking North towards buffer between new paving area and John St right-of-way