



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Heritage Markham Committee

**FROM:** Regan Hutcheson, Manager-Heritage Planning

**DATE:** June 14, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Passing of former Heritage Markham Member  
Elizabeth Phashkes

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Former Heritage Markham member, Elizabeth Phashkes, passed away on June 2, 2023

### **Background:**

#### **Heritage Markham Committee**

- Elizabeth was a member of the Heritage Markham Committee for **3 years** (1989 to 1991), serving as Vice Chair in 1991.
- Elizabeth returned to Heritage Markham for **4 years** (2003 to 2006).
- During her second term, she was Heritage Markham's rep on the Main Street Markham Committee and the Committee's rep on Doors Open. She also was on the Heritage Awards Sub-Committee



#### **Other Heritage Related Volunteer Work/Awards**

- **1995** - Elizabeth helped revitalize Markham Village Festival, working to reimagine, rebrand and expand it.
- **1998** - Founding member of the **Markham Village Conservancy**, an organization focused on advancing the preservation of the Markham Village Train Station.
- **2000** - Elizabeth led fundraising efforts to save the **Markham Village Train Station** from demolition, and restore it to its 1910 appearance.
- **2003** - Elizabeth was the founding Chair of **Doors Open Markham**. She had heard about Doors Open in a news item about its beginnings in France in the 1980s.



- **2004- Ontario Heritage Trust – Heritage Recognition Awards** - Elizabeth was awarded the Ontario Heritage Trust's Heritage Community Recognition Award in 2004 for her outstanding volunteer work in preserving Built Heritage in Markham
- **2006 – Heritage Markham Awards of Excellence** - Elizabeth received a Heritage Markham Award of Excellence for her "Noteworthy contributions to heritage conservation initiatives in the Town of Markham, particularly in Markham Village.
- **2010 – Protecting Stiver Mill** - Bob Stiver and Jan Kerr Hornell were instrumental in beginning the Stiver Mill Farmers Market to draw attention to the importance of this historical site. **Bob and Jan together with Elizabeth Plashkes and others in the community created the Unionville Village Conservancy with the express purpose of restoring the Stiver Mill.** They needed seed money and the MVC forwarded that \$5,000 “Lucky Money” to the UVC. This start up money was even more successful in that the UVC and the City of Markham raised \$1.9 million, including a contribution from the Government of Canada for the restoration project.
- **2012 – Recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal** – for extensive community work in the arts, culture and heritage conservation.

Elizabeth was a community builder – full of fun and laughter, and very much committed to the promotion of Markham’s culture and supporting our heritage program. She will be missed.



*Elizabeth at the Heritage Markham 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Heintzman House in 2015*

## Suggested Recommendation for Heritage Markham

THAT the Heritage Markham Committee extends its sincere condolences to the family of Elizabeth Plashkes and expresses its appreciation and gratitude for her extensive past accomplishments as both a member of the Heritage Markham Committee for seven years and for the promotion, protection and preservation of Markham's cultural heritage resources, including her work on conserving the Markham Village Train Station and Unionville's Stiver Mill.

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*Elizabeth receiving the Heritage Markham Award of Excellence in 2006 from Mayor Cousens for her conservation work*



*A cold Heritage Markham Site Visit at an abandoned resource  
– Elizabeth (far right in blue)*