



MEMORANDUM

TO: Heritage Markham Committee

FROM: Regan Hutcheson, Manager-Heritage Planning

DATE: July 12, 2023

SUBJECT: Request for Feedback
Proposed Demolitions – 2023
Rouge National Urban Park

Property/Building Description: Various properties

Use: Vacant, formerly Residential

Heritage Status: Listed or Designated on Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Application/Proposal

- To provide a brief update on 1) the cultural heritage activities in the Rouge National Urban Park; and 2) review of proposed demolitions 2023.
- The 8 properties of cultural heritage value proposed for demolition are identified in Appendix 'A' (please note that the first two properties on the chart are not of cultural heritage value or interest)

Background

- *Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP)*
 - There are approximately 80 cultural heritage resources in the RNUP as identified by the City of Markham.
 - A signed draft Memorandum of Understanding related to RNUP cultural heritage resources is attached as Appendix "A". A number of the houses and other buildings within the Park boundaries in east Markham have heritage value and preserving and celebrating this heritage is a mutual goal of Parks Canada, Markham and York.
- *Ownership*
 - The majority of lands now in the Markham component of RNUP were previously owned by Transport Canada as part of land holdings associated with a potential airport in Pickering.
 -
- *Historical Information*
 - Historical summaries on the identified properties are attached

- *Protection*
 - The 8 properties are currently on the **Markham Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest** as LISTED or DESIGNATED.
 - Five are designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and three are Listed
 - See the section on Federal Jurisdiction. The designation and listing signify that these properties are considered valuable from a municipal perspective.
- *Maintenance and Structural Issues*
 - The identified properties have been vacant and neglected for many years.
 - Although boarded, there has been no maintenance undertaken on the properties.
 - Almost all the frame buildings are covered in vinyl siding and in most cases, original window are gone and replaced with vinyl windows.
 - As directed by Parks Canada, a structural assessment was completed by WSP on each property confirming the state of the building. Building were given the following classification (D1, D2 or D3 as all are abandoned):

The general building condition rating is classified as follows:

A = Good Condition (systems are functional with minimal capital renewal anticipated in the near term)

B = Fair Condition (systems are functional but require major capital renewal in the near term)

C = Poor Condition (systems are problematic and require major capital renewal in the near term)

D = Abandoned and not habitable

- **D1:** Very poor condition and uninhabitable. The building structure and envelope are generally intact, however the overall condition requires major capital repairs to return the building to habitable standards.

- **D2:** Structurally Compromised. The building structure is compromised and the envelope is severely deteriorated, posing health and safety risks upon entry. With appropriate safety precautions, immediate abatement activities can be completed, before recommended deconstruction.

- **D3:** Structurally Unsafe. The building is partially collapsed and unfit to enter. It poses an imminent health and safety risk upon entry and within the immediate surrounding. Entry for investigation, rehabilitation or abatement is not feasible in its current condition. Demolition is recommended.

- Of the 8 properties, five were rated D2 and three are D3
 - Staff are still reviewing the summaries of the assessments and will provide additional information at the meeting.
- *Federal Jurisdiction*
 - City staff have been meeting with Parks Canada staff to initiate a cooperative working relationship regarding the protection and conservation of cultural heritage resources in the RNUP including how potential demolitions can be addressed, as well as how other resources can be maintained, re-tenanted and adaptively re-used for other purposes.
 - Parks Canada is voluntarily participating in the Markham heritage review/ demolition process, notwithstanding the fact that as a federal department, they are not bound by municipal/provincial requirements. They are working with the City in good faith and of their own volition in order to receive feedback notwithstanding it is non-binding advice. It is important to understand what the City can and cannot influence/achieve given the property's federal status.
- *Cultural Heritage Resource Initiatives*
 - Parks Canada has been investing in other cultural heritage resources in the RNUP.

- Last year, Parks Canada indicated that in 2023, they were planning to make investments to support re-occupancy or upkeep for 91% of the in-park homes located in the Markham area of Rouge National Urban Park.
- Heritage Section staff recently visited 7774 Sixteenth Avenue to review the investment in the heritage dwelling (interior and exterior) by Parks Canada. The property is being marketed as a potential adaptive re-use.
- *Marketing of the Properties for Private Investment*
 - Parks Canada issued a Request for Information and advertised at their Realty Office that they have vacant residences or farmhouses available for rent. They did not specifically identify the location of the vacant houses (to avoid unauthorized visits/safety issues). When contacted by interested parties, Parks Canada attempted to match the investment interest and objectives of the private party with available properties in their vacant portfolio.
 - In some cases, they received interest for sizeable investments on vacant houses with ‘good bones’ such as 10531 Reesor Road (stone house) and 9619 Reesor Road (Stucco house), 10233 Ninth Line and 7134 Major Mackenzie (stone house). These cultural resources are proposed to be preserved with the goal of re-occupancy in the coming years.
 - As a strategy to encourage investment in preservation/restoration, Parks Canada is willing to enter into lease agreements where the tenant would redirect the equivalent of rent payments into house investments. (For example, no rent payment for 4 years in exchange for investments into the house to return it to a habitable state and preserved on the landscape).
 - Parks Canada notes that they continue to provide required maintenance and capital investment on the cultural resources in the park that are tenanted or being prepared for occupancy, which includes the vast majority of those in the Markham region of the park.

Staff Comment

- Site Visits to the Properties
 - Heritage Section staff visited each property with Parks Canada staff on July 4, 2023, but did not enter the buildings due to their condition/access issues (boarding, overgrown landscape). See photographs in Appendix “C”.
- Cultural Heritage Value
 - Summaries are provide in this report. See Appendix ‘D’.
- Building Condition Assessment
 - Materials received on July 5, 2023 are being reviewed by staff and will be discussed at the meeting.
- Feedback Options to be discussed
 - Heritage Markham could request that one or more of the properties be retained/restored and that demolition is not supported
 - Heritage Markham could advise Parks Canada that due to the advance state of decay and deterioration of one or more of the buildings that has occurred over many years as a result of a lack of maintenance, poor stewardship, vacancy and abandonment, regrettably, the demolition of the building appears to be the most reasonable course of action. In this case, Heritage Markham may wish to suggest:

- the advertising of the building for relocation elsewhere.
 - the proposed salvage of any heritage attributes from the buildings (if demolition is pursued).
 - the introduction by Parks Canada of heritage interpretive panels to celebrate and inform visitors of the former buildings (could be similar to a Markham Remembered interpretive panel if Parks Canada wishes to utilize the City's plaque format).
- Staff will review each property at the Heritage Markham Committee meeting to assist the committee in developing feedback for Markham Council and Parks Canada

Suggested Recommendation for Heritage Markham

THAT the Heritage Markham Committee provides the following feedback on the proposed demolitions:

To be determined at meeting

Q:\Development\Heritage\SUBJECT\Rouge National Park\Proposed Demolitions 2023\HM July 12 2023 Proposed Demolitions.doc

Attachments

Appendix 'A' – Proposed Demolitions
Appendix 'B' – Draft Memorandum of Understanding
Appendix 'C' – Photographs
Appendix 'D' – Cultural Heritage Value Summaries

Appendix A – Proposed Demolitions

Condition Rating	Municipality	Address	Image	Site Aerial	Municipal Heritage
D2 - Structurally Failing Rated Houses	Markham	7262 Reesor Rd			None
D2 - Structurally Failing Rated Houses	Markham	7284 Reesor Rd			None
D2 - Structurally Failing Rated Houses	Markham	10295 Ninth Line			Designated Part IV
D2 - Structurally Failing Rated Houses	Markham	7933 14th Ave			Designated Part IV
D2 - Structurally Failing Rated Houses	Markham	10676 Reesor			Designated Part IV
D2 - Structurally Failing Rated Houses	Markham	8331 14th Avenue			Listed
D2 - Structurally Failing Rated Houses	Markham	8200 York Durham T/L			Listed
D3 - Structurally Collapsed Rated Houses	Markham	11122 Reesor Rd			Designated Part IV
D3 - Structurally Collapsed Rated Houses	Markham	11190 York Durham T/L			Designated Part IV
D3 - Structurally Collapsed Rated Houses	Markham	11223 Reesor			Listed

Note that 11223 Reesor Road is designated

Appendix B – Draft MOU

An excerpt from the signed draft-version of the Memorandum of Understanding between Parks Canada, Markham and York as it relates to this engagement process for homes in the Markham area of Rouge National Urban Park

MOU

The houses and other buildings in Rouge National Urban Park are recognized as important features in maintaining a cultural landscape and sense of community and the Parties believe that maintaining and enhancing community is a shared priority.

A number of the houses and other buildings within the Park boundaries in east Markham have heritage value and preserving and celebrating this heritage is a mutual goal of the Parties.

10.01 Parks Canada and Markham recognize that there will be a need to work collaboratively regarding the houses and other buildings to contribute to the future needs of the residents, the community and the Park.

10.03 Parks Canada and Markham recognize the collaborative work done to date to evaluate cultural heritage of houses and other buildings within the Park and the Parties will continue to work together on preserving the cultural landscapes and views. Although it is understood that the future plan for the houses and other buildings may require limited building decommissioning for safety purposes, the priority will be to find a sustainable future for as many of the assets as possible.

10.04 Parks Canada and Markham will engage each other on plans for structures which are listed on Markham's Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest, and on any potential additions to the list.

10.05 The Parties understand that Parks Canada's Cultural Resource Management Policy and Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada will guide the management of the Park's cultural resources, with reference to Heritage Markham and Markham's Property Standards and Bylaws.

10.06 The Parties recognize that oversight of the houses and other buildings will be done in such a way that is consistent with responsible management of public funds.

10.08 The Parties support the continued development of working relationships with the Markham Museum, Heritage Markham, archives and other organizations related to the houses and other buildings in east Markham.

10.09 The Parties will work together to celebrate cultural heritage in the Park and elsewhere in east Markham through the exploration of opportunities that showcase the cultural built heritage in ways that inspire discovery and facilitate a sense of personal connection to the Park.