



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Heritage Markham Committee

**FROM:** Peter Wokral, Senior Heritage Planner

**DATE:** March 13, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Demolition Permit Application  
10855 Kennedy Road  
The William Mergen House  
DP 24 168243

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**Property/Building Descriptions:** The William Mergen House detached 2 storey vernacular dwelling constructed c. 1863

**Use:** Vacant/ Residential

**Heritage Status:** Individually Designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act

### **Application Proposal**

- The City's Building Department has received a Demolition Permit application proposing to demolish the William Mergen House as well as an agricultural accessory building.

### **Background**

- The property has been vacant since 2003 and was Individually designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in 2016 (see Attachment C- Designation By-law).
- The current property owner purchased the property in 2019 fully aware of the heritage status of the property.
- The owner has provided a Heritage Building Condition Assessment prepared by Peng Engineering in 2020 recommending that the building should be demolished as soon as possible for safety reasons (see Attachment D -Heritage Building Condition Assessment).

### **Staff Comment**

- The accessory building proposed for demolition is not listed as a heritage attribute of the property so there is no objection to its demolition.
- The condition of the Mergen House based on the Building Condition Assessment prepared by Peng Engineering appears to be comparable to the condition of homes relocated to Heritage Estates and successfully restored.

## **Suggested Recommendation for Heritage Markham**

THAT Heritage Markham has no objection to the proposed demolition of the accessory building at 10855 Kennedy Road as it is not identified as a heritage attribute of the property in the Designation By-law.

THAT Heritage Markham does not support the proposed demolition of the William Mergen House.

AND THAT the owner undertake necessary repairs to the William Mergen House to return it to habitable condition.

### Attachments

Attachment A- Location Map

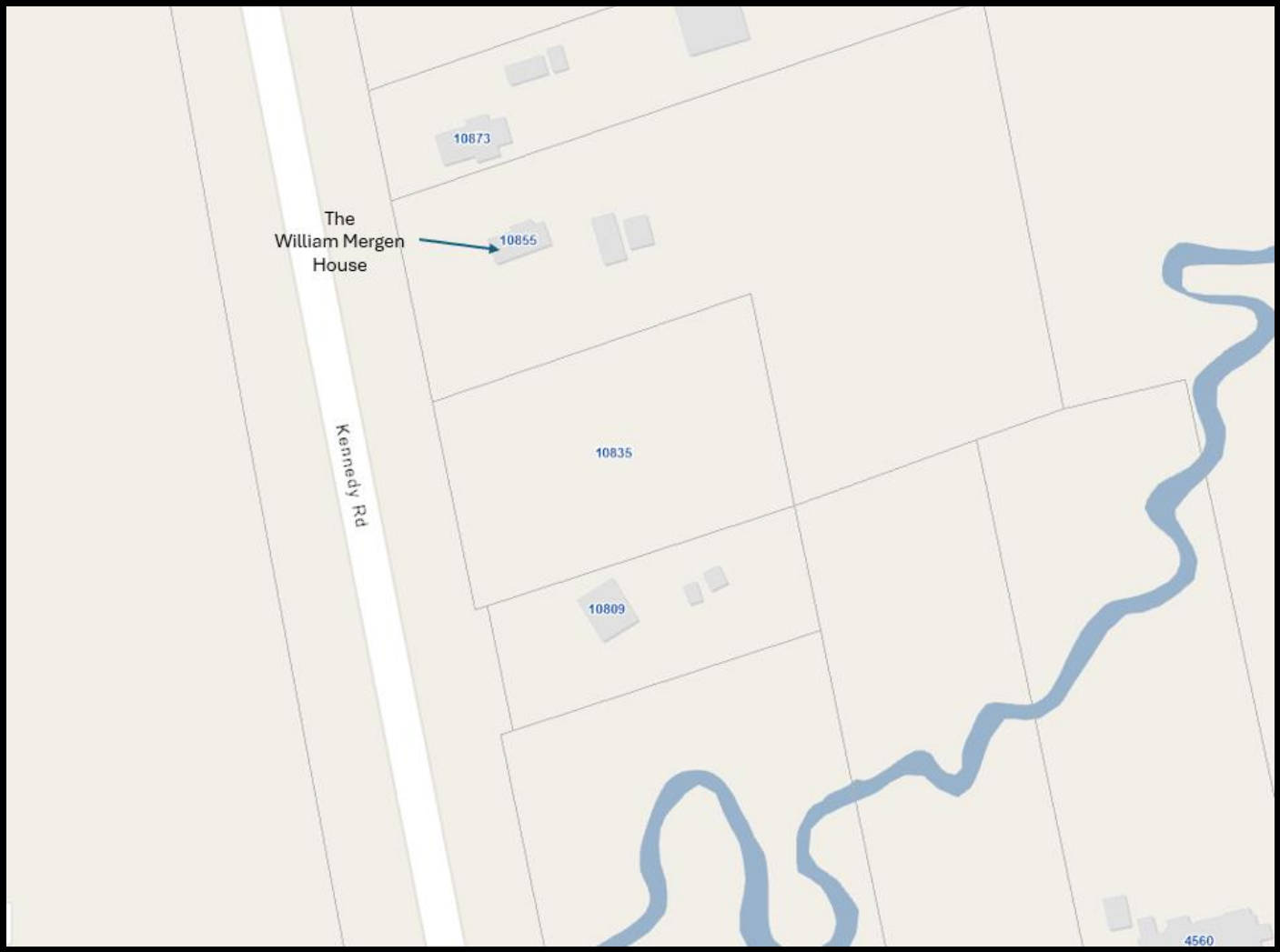
Attachment B- Photograph of the William Mergen House

Attachment C- Designation By-law

Attachment D- Heritage Building Condition Assessment

File: 10855 Kennedy Rd.

Attachment A- Location Map



Appendix B- Photograph of the William Mergen House



Google Street view June 2023



## By-law 2016-56

A by-law to designate a property as being of  
Cultural Heritage Value or Interest  
William Mergen House

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WHEREAS Pursuant to Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, the Council of a Municipality is authorized to enact by-laws to designate a real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the City of Markham has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises at:

Marion J. Dent  
c/o Ms. Jennifer Russell-Dent  
and Chris Dent  
4160 Doane Road  
Sharon, ON L0G 1V0

and upon the Ontario Heritage Trust, notice of intention to designate the William Mergen House, 10855 Kennedy Road, and has caused such notice of intention to be published once in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "B" attached hereto and forming part of this by-law;

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF MARKHAM HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT the following real property, more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto and forming part of this by-law is hereby designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest:

William Mergen House  
10855 Kennedy Road  
City of Markham  
The Regional Municipality of York

2. THAT the City Solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the properties described in Schedule "A" attached hereto in the property Land Registry Office.

Read a first, second, and third time and passed on May 31, 2016.

Martha Pettit  
Deputy City Clerk

Frank Scarpitti  
Mayor

**SCHEDULE 'A' TO  
BY-LAW 2016-56**

In the City of Markham in the Regional Municipality of York, property descriptions  
as follows:

PT LT 26 CON 6 MARKHAM as in MA70199; MARKHAM

CITY OF MARKHAM  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

## **SCHEDULE 'B TO BY-LAW 2016-56**

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

#### **William Mergen House 10855 Kennedy Road c.1863**

The William Mergen House is recommended for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, as described in the following Statement of Significance.

#### **Description of Property**

The William Mergen House is a two storey frame building located on the east side of Kennedy Road, next to the historic Cashel Cemetery, a short distance north of Elgin Mills Road East.

#### **Historical or Associative Value**

The William Mergen House is of historical or associative value as the c.1863 home of Prussian immigrants William and Mary Catherine Mergen, who came to Markham some time between the 1851 census and 1861 census and settled in the crossroads hamlet of Cashel. William Mergen was primarily a labourer but in the mid 1860s he was a broom and basket maker. The family owned the property until 1939.

#### **Design or Physical Value**

The William Mergen House is of design or physical value as a representative example of a modest dwelling of a labourer and his family within a hamlet setting. It is a simple vernacular building displaying the symmetry of the Georgian architectural tradition in the placement of the entrance door and windows on the front façade, but without decorative embellishments such as a door surround that would typically be seen in a more upscale building. Originally a one storey dwelling, it was raised to two storeys in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Contextual Value**

The William Mergen House is of contextual value as one of a cluster of cultural heritage features that form what remains of the historic hamlet of Cashel. Immediately next door to the south is the former site of St. Helen's Presbyterian Church that stood here between circa 1827 and 1865-66, and the small cemetery associated with it.

#### **Significant Architectural Attributes**

Exterior character-defining attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of the William Mergen House include:

- Overall form of the building, including the main two storey rectangular block, one storey kitchen wing and lean-to;
- Masonry foundation;
- Frame wall construction and underlying historic cladding, if present;
- Gable roof with projecting eaves;
- Existing rectangular door and window openings.



**Project Number:** 2020039  
**Project Title:** Heritage Building Condition Assessment at 10855 Kennedy Road Markham ON  
**Client:** Newcastle Block Inc.  
**Date:** Mar 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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## Heritage Building Condition Assessment at 10855 Kennedy Road Markham ON

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

**RE: the condition of the heritage building at 10855 Kennedy Road Markham ON**

### **Purpose / Objective:**

The property at 10855 Kennedy Road Markham ON contains a building that registers as a property of cultural heritage and the subject property is located within the Greenbelt Plan and T.R.C.A. area.

However, this building is in very severe condition and has been empty for a long time. The current owner Mr. Lin Zhao retained Peng Engineering Inc. to conduct a site visit for the heritage building condition assessment.

### **Observation / Findings:**

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Mr. Peter Peng (Peng Engineering Inc.) conducted a site visit to assess the condition of the heritage building.

#### **A. Outside**

The building was observed to be in poor condition from the outside. All of the windows and doors were blocked with plywood – Figure 1. Some gutters were observed to have fallen off – Figure 2.





**Figure 1 – Exterior view of the heritage building**



**Figure 2 – Detached gutter**

## **B. Inside**

The entrance floor woods were badly rotten with holes – Figure 3. The floor was observed to be wet and filled with trash – Figure 4. The ceiling was observed with missing wood pieces, while the remaining wood pieces were wet and mouldy – Figure 5.



Figure 3 – Entrance floor



Figure 4 – The inside floor



Figure 5 – The ceiling

### C. Utility and furnaces

No utility and furnaces were observed to be functional in the Kitchen and bathrooms – Figure 6 & Figure 7.



Figure 6 – Kitchen area



Figure 7 – Bath room area

### D. Foundation

The foundation beam was observed to be cracked – Figure 8. The foundation was observed to be obviously tilted – Figure 9 & Figure 10.



Figure 8 – foundation Beam



Figure 9 – Foundation wall



Figure 10 – Foundation wall

## Opinions/Recommendation:

Based on the site visit and observation, Peng Engineering Inc.'s opinion is: the whole building's structural integrity is, in general, severely unsafe. The building is in a condition that could be hazardous to the health and/or safety of persons in the normal use of the building. Being within close proximity to the building and accessing the building's interior should be reasonably prevented.

Peng Engineering Inc.'s recommendations are:

1. The building should not be in normal use.
2. An interim barricade should be erected around the perimeter of the building.
3. Even though this is a heritage building that was built in 1683, there is no benefit to retrofit and should be torn down ASAP for safety reasons.

## Limitations:

This report is based on data and information collected from the job site and client. The engineer is not responsible for, or obligated to identify, mistakes or insufficiencies in the information obtained from the various sources, or to verify the accuracy of the information.

This report is prepared for the exclusive use of the client. The work reflects the engineer's best judgment in light of the information reviewed by the engineer at the time of preparation. No portion of this report may be used as a separate entity; it is written to be read in its entirety.

If you have any questions or unclear, please do not hesitate to contact us any time.

Sincerely,

Peter Peng, P. Eng



Peng Engineering Inc.

