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**SUBJECT:** RECOMMENDATION REPORT, Revisions to the Statement of Significance within the Designation By-law for 6472 Steeles Avenue East (“George and Nellie Freeman House”) (Ward 7)

**PREPARED BY:** Evan Manning, Senior Heritage Planner, ext. 2296

**REVIEWED BY:** Stephen Lue, Senior Development Manager, ext. 2520

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) THAT the Staff report, dated July 16, 2024, titled, “RECOMMENDATION REPORT, Revisions to the Statement of Significance within the Designation By-law for 6472 Steeles Avenue East (“George and Nellie Freeman House”) (Ward 7)”, be received;
- 2) THAT the Statement of Significance as contained within Schedule ‘B’ of By-law 2024-98 be amended to refine the list of heritage attributes in response to information provided by the Property owner;
- 3) AND THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

This report recommends Council amend By-law 2024-98 (the “Designation By-law”), to refine the list of heritage attributes contained in the Statement of Significance for 6472 Steeles Avenue East following receipt of new information provided by the property owner. This information concerns the elements of the building (heritage attributes) which contribute to its cultural heritage significance.

**BACKGROUND:**

*The Designation By-law needs to be amended to refine the list of heritage attributes as contained in the Statement of Significance*

A designation by-law for 6472 Steeles Avenue East (the “Subject Property” or the “Property”) was adopted by Council on May 29, 2024. As per Section 29 (8) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (the “Act”), notice was provided to the Property owner, which included a copy of the Designation By-law. The Property owner requested that the Statement of Significance, as it appears in Schedule ‘B’ of the Designation By-law, be amended to accurately reflect the elements of the building (heritage attributes) that contribute to its cultural heritage significance.

Refinements include clarification of building height, a note that the eastern portion of the dwelling was remodeled in the past, and removal of the single-stack external brick chimney on the west elevation as an identified heritage attribute.

***Municipalities can use the Act’s minor amendment process to revise designation by-laws***

Municipal councils may update different parts of an existing heritage designation by-law for several reasons, including a need to:

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- a) Clarify or correct the statement explaining the property's cultural heritage value or interest or the description of the property's heritage attributes;
  - b) Correct the legal description of a property;
  - c) Otherwise revise the by-law to make it consistent with the requirements of the Act as amended in 2021.

Section 30.1 of the Act permits an amendment process to, where required, address the above-noted issues. Under this Section, the municipality is obliged to:

- a) inform the owner of the amendment and their right to object thereto; and
- b) consult with the municipal heritage committee prior to giving notice of the proposed amendment to the owner.

Upon receipt of notice of the amendment, an owner has 30 days to file a notice of objection to the amendment with the municipality. Should a notice of objection not be received by the municipality within the 30-day timeline, the council of the municipality may pass the proposed amending by-law.

#### **OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

##### ***Heritage Staff support the amendments to the Statement of Significance***

In accordance with the statutory requirements as described above, Heritage Section staff prepared a revised Statement of Significance for inclusion in a forthcoming amending by-law and on July 10, 2024, the Heritage Markham will consider the proposed amendments. It is expected that the Committee will adopt Staff recommendations in support of amending the by-law. Should Heritage Markham not support Staff recommendations, a revised Staff report will be prepared for Council consideration (note that this report was written in advance of the Committee meeting). The Property owner has also been notified and confirmed that they are in support of the revised Statement of Significance.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not Applicable

#### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The protection of cultural heritage resources through the designation by-law process is a component of Growth Management. This helps achieve a quality community by ensuring that the City of Markham's cultural heritage resources remain part of the fabric of the city, strengthening a sense of community.

#### **BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Heritage Markham was consulted. The Heritage Section will work with the Clerks Department to amend the Designation By-law. Legal Services Department will be required to register the approved by-law amendment on the affected property.

#### **RECOMMENDED BY:**

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Giulio Cescato, RPP, MCIP  
Director, Planning and Urban Design

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Arvin Prasad, MPA, RPP, MCIP  
Commissioner of Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix 'A': Images of the Subject Property

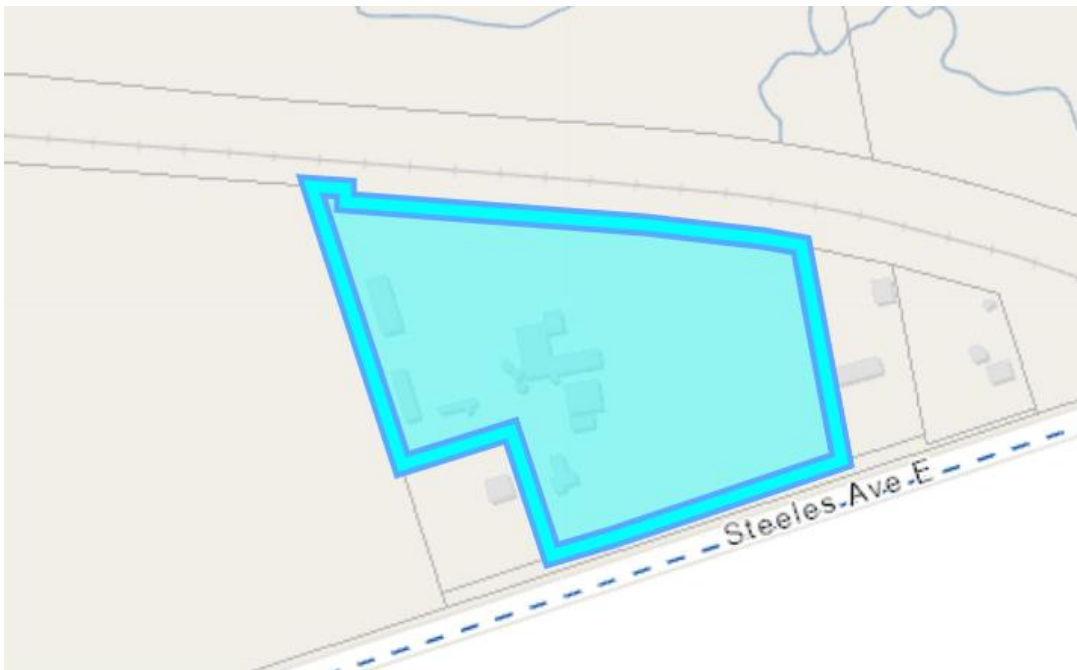
Appendix 'B': Amended Statement of Significance for 6472 Steeles Avenue East

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## APPENDIX 'A': Images of the Subject Property

### **6742 Steeles Avenue East (Ward 7): "Isaac and Emma Reesor House"**

#### *Primary Elevation and Property Map*



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**APPENDIX ‘B’: Amended Statement of Significance for 6472 Steeles Avenue East****STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE****George and Nellie Freeman House****6472 Steeles Avenue East****c.1901**

The George and Nellie Freeman House is recommended for designation under Part IV, Section 29 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 George and Nellie Freeman House is a one-and-a-half storey brick and frame dwelling, located on the north side of Steeles Avenue East, in the historic community of Cedar Grove. The house faces south

**Design Value and Physical Value**

The George and Nellie Freeman House has design and physical value as a unique expression of vernacular domestic architecture, combining an older frame dwelling with a Queen Anne Revival style addition to create a farm residence with a distinctive architectural “split personality.” It is an unusual vernacular dwelling because of the visual disconnect between its eastern and western portions. The design of the western brick veneered portion reflects the ornate and eclectic High Victorian Queen Anne Revival style, and is the most prominent aspect of the house. The eastern portion is a simple gable-roofed rural dwelling of an earlier time period, albeit altered from its original appearance. It is curious that the older portion of the house was not brick veneered to match the newer western portion when it was added in 1901.

**Historical Value and Associative Value**

The George and Nellie Freeman House has historical value for its long-time association with the Milne-Freeman family whose members played significant roles in the economic and political history of York County during the nineteenth century, and for its association with Markham Township’s important agricultural community. The property upon which this house stands, the west half of Markham Township Lot 1, Concession 9, was purchased by Peter Milne Jr. in 1834. Peter Milne Jr. was the son of Alexander Milne, the owner of Milneford Mills in East York. He was a store-keeper, sawmill owner, and the first postmaster in the hamlet of Milnesville. Peter Milne Jr. did not reside on the property but was an important landowner and sawmill owner in the area. In addition to this property, he acquired considerable acreage on the east parts of Lots 1, 2 and 3 in the Eighth Concession. Peter Milne Jr., a noted Reformer and supporter of William Lyon McKenzie, was an active participant in the Upper Canadian Rebellion of 1837. The west half of Lot 1, Concession 9 was willed to his daughter Helen. Helen Milne married Joseph Gage Freeman in 1858. About 1885 an impressive new farmhouse in the vernacular Italianate architectural style was built against a portion of an earlier frame dwelling on the property. In 1901 the frame dwelling was relocated eastwards on the same property and enlarged with a

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two-storey brick addition to its western end to become the home of their son, George Milne Freeman, and his wife Nellie Ann Dimma. As of 2023, a portion of the Milne-Freeman property was still farmed by a descendant of Peter Milne Jr.

### **Contextual Value**

The George and Nellie Freeman House has contextual value as one of a number of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that define the character and extent of the historic community of Cedar Grove. It also has contextual value as a remnant of Cedar Grove's agricultural community and because it is historically linked to the Joseph and Helen Freeman House at 6470 Steeles Avenue East.

### **Heritage Attributes**

Character-defining attributes that embody the cultural heritage value of the George and Nellie Freeman House are organized by their respective Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria, as amended, below:

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's design and physical value as a unique expression of vernacular domestic architecture:*

- Fieldstone foundation;
- Two and one-and-a-half storey height and L-shaped plan;
- Red brick veneer with shallow frontispiece on the front gable end, raised plinth and circular motif in the front gable;
- Steeply-pitched gable roof of the western portion of the dwelling with projecting open eaves and ornate wooden gable ornament and eave brackets;
- Medium-pitched gable roof of the remodeled eastern portion of the dwelling;
- Front window with stone or concrete lugsill, semi-elliptical arched transom light, and radiating brick arch with a raised border;
- Tall, narrow, flat-headed window openings on the second storey of the primary (south) elevation, and on the west elevation, with splayed brick arches and stone or concrete lugsills.

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's historical value for its long-time association with the Milne-Freeman family, and for representing the locally significant theme of agriculture, particularly the creation of secondary residences on farms for the use of family members:*

- The dwelling is a tangible reminder of the Milne-Freeman family, multi-generational, long-time property owners.

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's contextual value as a building that is important in defining, maintaining and supporting the character and extent of the historic community of Cedar Grove:*

- The location of the building on the north side of Steeles Avenue East, within the historic community of Cedar Grove.

*Heritage attributes that convey the property's contextual value as being physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings:*

- The building has stood on this site since the 1901, and is historically linked to the Joseph and Helen Freeman House next door at 6470 Steeles Avenue East.

*Attributes of the property that are not considered to be of cultural heritage value, or are otherwise not included in the Statement of Significance:*

- Modern windows;
- Chimney;
- Horizontal siding;
- Shed-roofed enclosed porch with its door and window;
- Shed-roofed front dormer;
- Rear wing;
- Agricultural buildings including main barn and sheds.