



MEMORANDUM



TO: Heritage Markham Committee

FROM: Evan Manning, Senior Heritage Planner

DATE: October 9, 2024

SUBJECT: **Minor Heritage Permit Application**
146 John Street, Thornhill
Unauthorized Installation of a Driveway Arch

FILE: 24 193021 HE

Property/Building Description: Two-storey detached dwelling constructed in c.1998 as per MPAC records

Use: Residential

Heritage Status: 146 John Street is designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as part of the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District (the “THCD”).

Application/Proposal

- The City has received a Minor Heritage Permit (“HE”) application seeking after-the-fact permission for a wooden driveway arch at 146 John Street (the “Subject Property”).
- The applicant provided the following description of the arch as part of the Minor HE submission:
 - “The beam is a 18 feet long wooden plank sitting atop two 16 feet long posts, framing the wooden gates, providing a versatile canvas for seasonal décor. Elegant lights hang from it, casting a warm, inviting glow in the evenings and guiding you to the entrance. Flower baskets featuring seasonal blooms add vibrant color, while vines drape over the entire structure, seamlessly blending with the landscape. The décor changes with each holiday, bringing a festive touch and creating a sense of celebration and warmth year-round. Like all decorative elements visible to the public, our goal is to beautify the space, uplift our spirits, and spread positivity to everyone who passes by”.

Background

Context

- The Subject Property is located on the northeast corner of John Street and Henderson Avenue, bordering Ponoma Creek Park to the north and west, and 148 John Street to the east. Low-rise residential properties are located to the south of the Subject Property;

- Based on a review of MPAC records, the existing dwelling was constructed in 1998 with a detached garage completed in 2016.

Heritage Markham Committee

- The Heritage Markham Committee (the “Committee”) last considered a Heritage Permit application for the Subject Property at its meeting on January 12, 2022. At that meeting, the property owner sought permission for a driveway gate in contravention of guidelines in the THCD Plan;
- The Committee supported Staff recommendations to permit the driveway gate as it was compatible with the heritage character of the Subject Property and offered protection to the applicant’s young children when playing in the front yard.

Policy Context

THCD Plan

- The Subject Property is identified as Class ‘C’ within the THCD Plan. The qualities of this property class are as follows:
 - *They are buildings/properties primarily 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 the historic character of the District.*
- The THCD Plan does not provide policy direction or guidelines concerning driveway arches as this not a typical feature of the District (nor in the remainder of Markham). This is likely due to the absence of support for driveway gates within the Plan (it’s presumed that gates are a prerequisite for archways).

Staff Comment

- Notwithstanding the absence of direction within the THCD Plan, Heritage Section staff (“Staff”) have no objection to the installation of a driveway arch in this instance and note that applications should always be reviewed on a case-by-case basis as to their appropriateness. Staff notes that driveway arches are subject to provisions found in the City’s Driveway By-law and that this arch would have to comply or seek an exemption
- As illustrated in Appendix ‘B’ of this memo, the design and scale of the arch will be a vertical extension of the existing driveway gate, and is not considered to be visually obtrusive or incompatible with the heritage character of the Subject Property, or the THCD more broadly;
- Note that support for this application does not mean that Staff are broadly supportive of driveway arches in the THCD.

Suggested Recommendation for Heritage Markham

THAT Heritage Markham has no objection from a heritage perspective to the existing driveway arch at 146 John Street and that the associated Minor Heritage Permit application should be approved subject to compliance with any other municipal requirements.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix 'A'	Property Map
Appendix 'B'	Photographs of the Subject Property

File Path: Q:\Development\Heritage\PROPERTY\JOHN\146

Appendix 'A'

Property Map



Property map showing the location of 146 John Street outlined in yellow (Source: City of Markham)

Appendix 'B'

Photographs of the Subject Property



Primary (south) elevation of 146 John Street prior to the addition of the driveway arch (Source: Google c.2023)



Primary (south) elevation of 146 John Street showing the recently constructed driveway arch (Source: Applicant c.2024)