

APPENDIX 'C': Letter of Objection



October 31, 2024

Evan Manning
Senior Heritage Planner
Planning and Urban Design Department
City of Markham

Re: 7530 Ninth Line, Markham

Dear Evan,

NOTICE OF OBJECTION TO NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE (NOID) 7530 NINTH LINE,
MARKHAM, ON (ABRAM AND MARGARET RAYMER HOUSE) UNDER PART IV, SECTION 29 OF
THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT

7530 Ninth Line, Markham (the “Subject Property”) is owned by Mr. William Bassels. On September 25, 2024 Markham Council adopted a resolution “to state its intention to designate 7530 Ninth Line under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (the “Act”) in recognition of its cultural significance”. On October 1, 2004 Mr. Bassels was served with this Notice and it was published on the City website on October 7, 2004. The Act allows Mr. Bassels thirty days following this publication to serve notice of his intention to appeal this decision to the Ontario Lands Tribunal (the “OLT”). This letter is this notice.

Rick Mateljan (the “Consultant”) was retained by Mr. Bassels on September 12, 2024, to assist him with issues regarding the proposed Designation of the Subject Property.

The City has indicated in their Recommendation Report that they believe the Subject Property to have Design Value & Physical Value for the following reasons:

The Abram and Margaret Raymer House has design and physical value as a good representative example of a brick dwelling rendered in the vernacular Queen Anne Revival style. The Queen Anne Revival style was popular in late nineteenth century Markham, particularly in the eastern portion of the former Township for frame and brick houses in both villages and in rural areas. It was the most eclectic style of domestic architecture in the nineteenth century. The American version of Queen Anne Revival influenced domestic architecture in Canada. This example combines the L-shaped form and steep centre gable typical of vernacular Gothic Revival with elements of the High Victorian Queen Anne Revival style in the treatment of the front projecting gable with its two-storey canted bay window and fretwork ornamentation. The front veranda with its distinctive decorative detailing and enclosed vestibule is an extant element dating from the building’s late 1880s period of construction.

Mr. Bassels objects to these characterizations of Design Value & Physical Value for the following reasons:

Examination of the Subject Property reveals that the building was virtually certainly built at two different times (and with many later additions and alterations). This is visible through examination of the building foundation and main floor framing, both of which are markedly different when the southern and northern parts of the building are compared. The Recommendation Report refers to “steep centre gable typical of vernacular Gothic Revival” and the “elements of the High Victorian Queen Anne Revival style in the treatment of the front projecting gable” as parts of an “eclectic style” but in fact they are most likely evidence not of intentional eclecticism but of differing construction periods and materials. The description in the Recommendation Report of “elements” of the Queen Anne Revival style in the building is itself an admission that the building is not a notable example of this style. Further, the “enclosed vestibule” that is part of the front veranda is not an “extant element dating from the building’s late 1880’s period of construction” but an obviously more recent addition and the “distinct decorative detailing” of the front verandah appears not to exist. The verandah has obviously been rebuilt at some time in the recent past and any detailing that was once extant has been removed. The Report also does not note the various many new windows, additions and other elements that are extant on the sides and rear of the building that are obviously not part of the original construction and are only minimally sympathetic to it.

Mr. Bassels therefore believes that the extent to which the building exhibits Design Value & Physical Value is minimal and does not meet the standards for Part IV designation under the Act.

The City has indicated in their Recommendation Report that they believe the Subject Property to have Historical Value & Associative Value for the following reasons:

The Abram and Margaret Raymer House has historical value for its association with the early cultural and religious diversity of Markham Township, namely Markham’s Pennsylvania German Mennonite community, and more specifically for its association with Abram Raymer. He was a member of a locally important early Pennsylvania German Mennonite family that are considered the founders of Mount Joy which is located immediately north of Markham Village. This ornate brick dwelling was constructed c.1889 on a 25-acre parcel of Markham Township Lot 3, Concession 8 that was purchased by Abraham Raymer in two parts (1854 and 1868). Abraham Raymer lived on an adjacent property to the north where he farmed and owned a sawmill. This property was the home of his son Abram Raymer and his wife, Margaret (Legeer) Raymer, who married in 1889. In addition to farming, Abram Raymer contributed to a religious revival in the Box Grove community by leading Bible study groups and prayer meetings at the old Stone Jug hotel after the business closed. The property remained in the ownership of the Raymer family until 1939.

Mr. Bassels objects to these characterizations of Historical Value & Associative Value for the following reasons:

The Recommendation Report commingles two individuals, Abraham Raymer (the father) and Abram Raymer (the son and owner of the Subject Property) and two early communities (Mount

Joy and Box Grove) and infers a connection between them that does not really exist. Abraham Raymer was an individual who appears to have some importance both as a founder of Mount Joy and as an early religious evangelist, however the only connection that he has to the Subject Property is that one of his children lived here (Abraham Raymer had six children). Abraham Raymer is known to have lived in Mount Joy his entire life and died in 1891, two years after the purported construction date of the Subject Property¹. The assertion that he lived on a property just north of the Subject Property is therefore questionable, but even if true his death date makes his association with his son's house only minimally significant. The Recommendation Report indicates that Abram Raymer led "Bible study groups and prayer meetings" but this would represent much less important Historical Value or Associative Value than the father's contribution. Religious observation was very popular in Canada at this time and virtually everyone participated in some capacity. Notably, the Recommendation Report does not consider any of Abraham Raymer's other five children and consider whether their homes are surviving or worthy of designation under the *Act*.

Mr. Bassels believes that the Recommendation Report does not establish a Historical Value or Associative Value for Abram Raymer beyond what would be typically expected for an early community settler and this does not meet the standard for Part IV designation under the *Act*.

The City has indicated in their Recommendation Report that they believe the Subject Property to have Contextual Value for the following reasons:

The Abram and Margaret Raymer House is of contextual value as one of several nineteenth century dwellings that remain in the vicinity of the historic crossroads community of Box Grove, and because it is physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to the site where it has stood since c.1889.

Mr. Bassels objects to these characterizations of Contextual Value for the following reasons:

The City of Markham has actively tried to retain the memory of the community of Box Grove through various naming initiatives of new buildings, etc. and the report is correct that several nineteenth century dwellings remain in the "vicinity of the historic crossroads", by which they refer to Ninth Line and 14th Avenue. The subject property is located 0.7km south of the "historic crossroads", a distance which corresponds to a moderate ten-minute walk. The intervening distance has been the subject of much new residential development featuring very large single family homes and a large residential subdivision development on the east side of Ninth Line. The lands surrounding the Subject Property have changed completely in the past several decades and none of these changes has given any consideration to any purported heritage value of the Subject Property. The extent to which the Subject Property can be considered to be within the context of the "historic crossroads" is highly questionable. There is also the fact that Ninth Line, formerly a significant north-south artery, now dead ends south of

¹ [Abraham Ramer \(1814-1891\) | WikiTree FREE Family Tree](#)

the Subject Property so the nature of this as a “crossroads” community is itself called into question.

Mr. Bassels believes that for all of these reasons the idea that the Subject Property is “physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to the site where it has stood since c.1889” is not proven and as such the Recommendation Report does not establish a Contextual Value sufficient to meet the standard for Part IV designation under the *Act*.

Part IV, Section 29 of the Act requires that the Subject Property meet two of the above noted criteria to be eligible for Designation. Mr. Bassels believes that none of the required criteria are met and intends to argue this before the Ontario Lands Tribunal.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Mateljan', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Rick Mateljan B.A. CAHP

Copy:

City of Markham Clerk
Ontario Heritage Trust