



MEMORANDUM


TO: Mayor and Members of Development Services Committee

FROM: Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services

PREPARED BY: Regan Hutcheson, Manager-Heritage Planning

DATE: September 13, 2011

SUBJECT: Request by Ebenezer United Church for Heritage Property Grant
5000 Steeles Ave. East



Representatives of Ebenezer United Church have contacted the Town regarding gaining access to grant assistance to undertake roof repairs and brick repair/restoration on their church building. See attached written submission. The church building is individually designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Staff informed the church that the Town does have a **Designated Heritage Property Grant Program** that can offer up to \$5,000 in matching funds for heritage restoration work, but that the grant allocation for 2011 was approved in June. Council approved grants totalling \$28,630 of the \$30,000 allocated for this year. The next opportunity for grant applications is the Spring of 2012. Church officials are aware of this fact, but wish to see if Council would be willing to provide financial support at this time to address the significant deterioration on the building.

Options available to Council could include:

- a) request the owners to apply for 2012 grant assistance in the Spring of 2012 and have their request evaluated against other applications for assistance.
- b) support a grant to the church in principle subject to staff confirming the amount of un-used grant money available from the 2010 grant program (i.e. grants that were approved in 2010, but did not meet the applicable criteria), as well as any funds not allocated in 2010 and 2011. Staff would have to report back on what funding may be available.

Ebenezer United Church

Ebenezer United Church was built in 1878 and was considered one of the finest rural churches in the area at the time. It has served the communities of Markham, Milliken, and Scarborough since then and is designated as a Heritage property (Part IV) by the Town of Markham. Currently, several congregations worship at Ebenezer and the building is used to provide a community daycare facility and English-as-a-second-language classes to local immigrants new to the area. Ebenezer continues to be a visible reminder of the community's heritage as well as a centre for neighbourhood outreach.

Recently, the church has experienced significant deterioration. The roof is in need of replacement and the original exterior brickwork needs repair/restoration. Attached are photos of some of the damaged areas. The congregation is committed to maintaining this historical landmark, but is experiencing financial challenges at the present time. Deterioration has reached a critical point and repairs are urgently required. To ensure the heritage value of the building is protected, we have contacted Markham Heritage Section staff for advice and guidance on how best to proceed. We understand that Designated Heritage Property Grant Program funds have been allocated for the current year. We are very concerned about the continued deterioration that will occur unless action is taken immediately and therefore, wish to solicit financial support from the Town of Markham to assist in making the repairs. We would appreciate an opportunity to present a deputation in support of this request.



