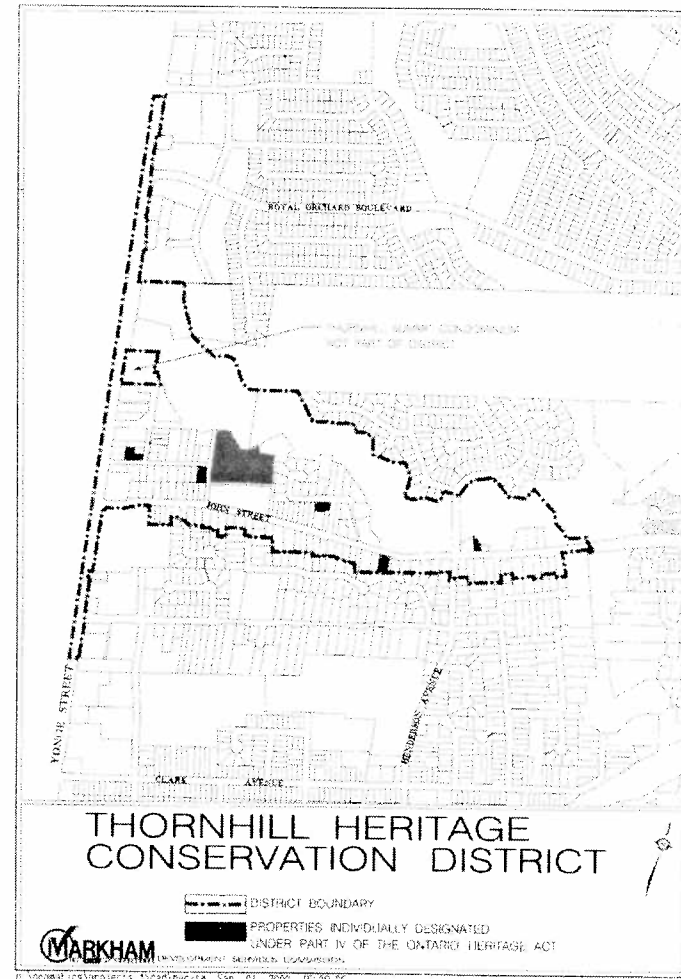


**Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Plan Review**  
**Development Services Committee**  
**June 20, 2006 – Part A**

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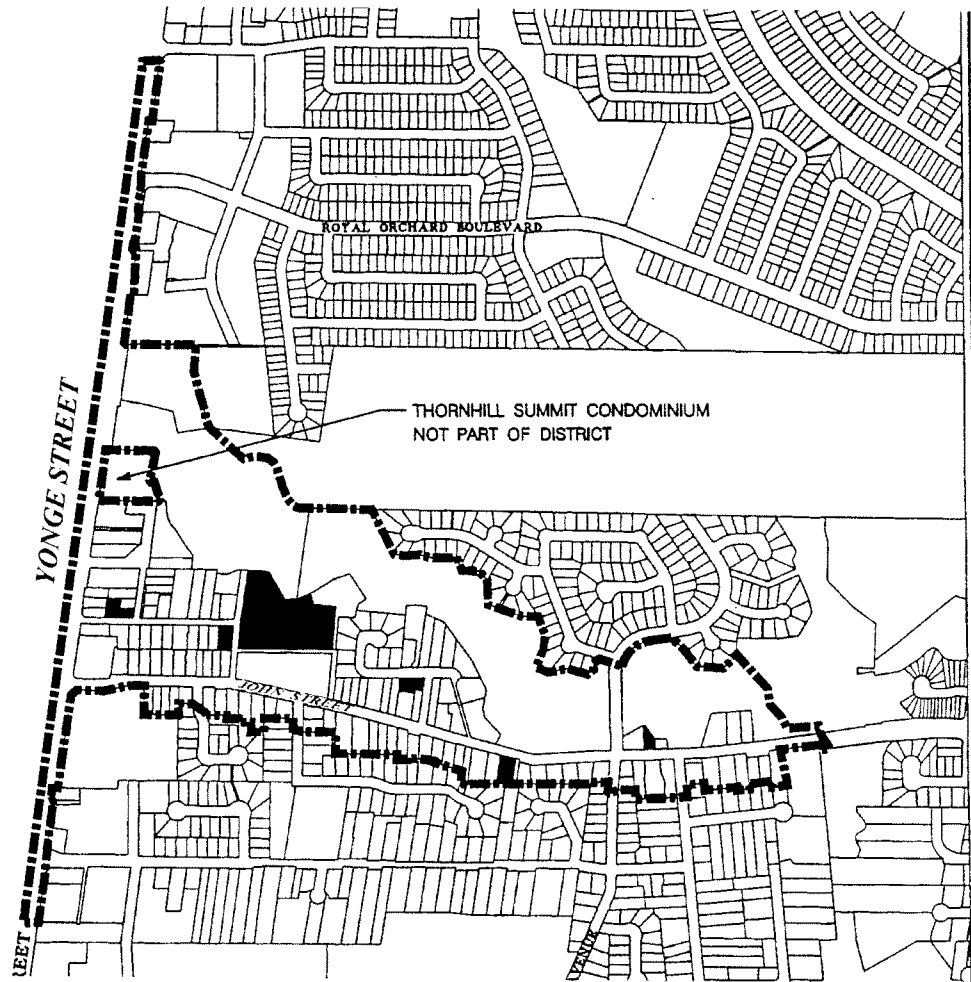
# Thornhill Heritage District



# Thornhill Markham Heritage Conservation District

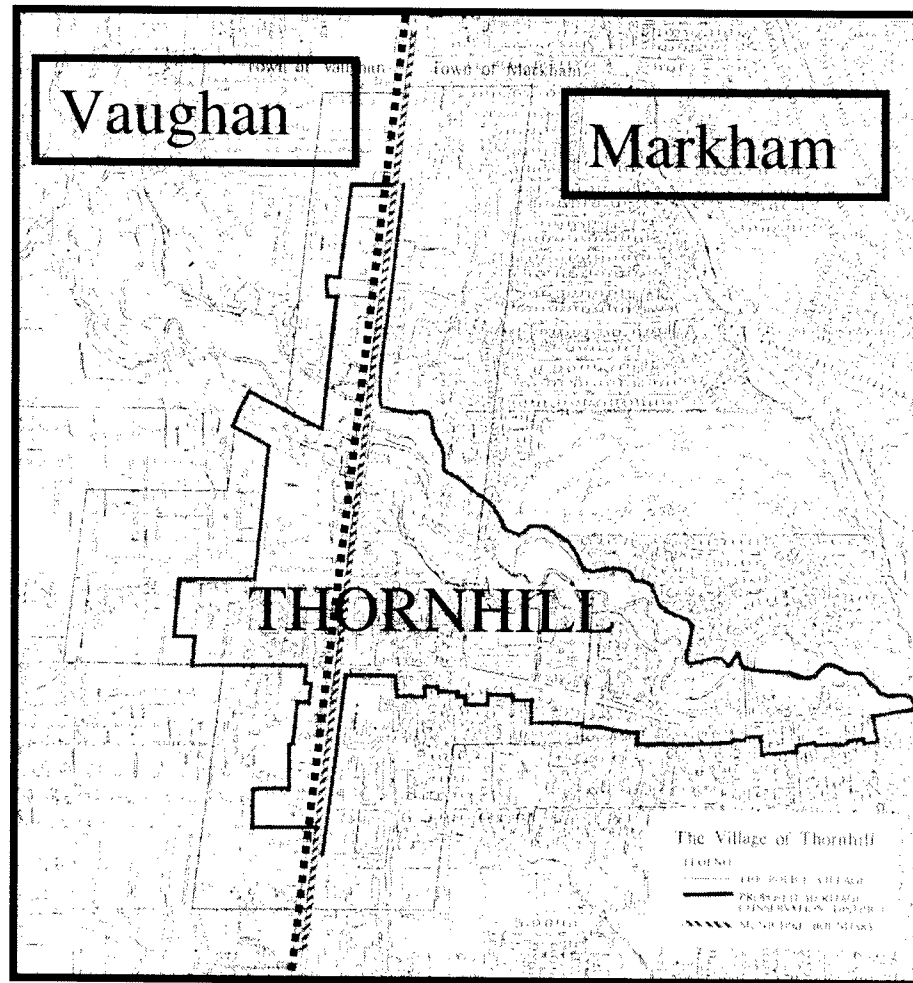
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- ◆ Designated in 1986
- ◆ One of the first districts in Ontario.
- ◆ District Plan adopted by Council to guide change in the district.



# Thornhill – two districts for one community

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# What is a Heritage District?

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- ◆ Collection of buildings, streets and open spaces of special historical and/or architectural significance;
- ◆ Elements combine for a sense of cohesiveness;
- ◆ Place of special character or association, with an integrity of its own, that distinguishes it from other areas of the community;

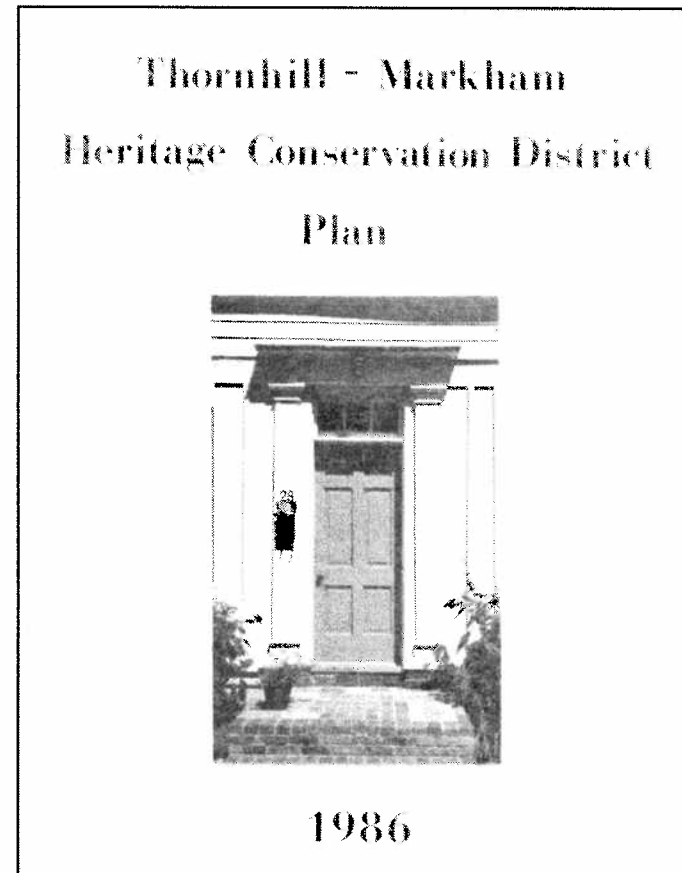
# What a Heritage District is NOT

- ◆It is NOT a static place where change is prohibited;
- ◆It is NOT a museum-like village;
- ◆It is NOT frozen in time;

# Thornhill-Markham Heritage Conservation District Plan

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Created 1986, the existing district plan has served Markham well, however it is now in need of an update.



# District Plan needs updating

- ◆ Plan is 20 year old; some minor revisions
- ◆ Guidelines not clear; require interpretation
- ◆ Additional policies/guidelines required to address new concerns, issues, procedures
- ◆ Needs to be user friendly, more illustrations



# Changes to the Heritage Act

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- ◆ Comprehensive amendments to the Act (April 2005)
  - ◆ Prohibit demolition rather than delay
  - ◆ Requires all new districts to have a Plan
  - ◆ Extends alteration controls to cover property features
  - ◆ Requires municipal by-laws and public works to be consistent with the District Plan
  - ◆ Allows delegation of approvals to staff and exemption of minor alterations (identified in the Plan)
  - ◆ Requires district by-laws to be registered on title

# Impact of other Plans and Policies

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- ◆ Thornhill Secondary Plan
- ◆ New commercial policies in the Official Plan
- ◆ Revised Town Sign By-law
- ◆ Infill Housing Zoning By-law
- ◆ Region of York Yonge Street Transit Improvements (dedicated bus transitway)
- ◆ Region of York OPA 43- Centres and Corridors
- ◆ Thornhill Yonge Street Study

# Heritage Study Approved

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- ◆ Council approved undertaking a review study in 2004
- ◆ Town retained consultants
- ◆ Study Advisory Committee was created
  - ◆ Ward 1 and Regional Councillors
  - ◆ Heritage Markham (2)
  - ◆ Society for the Preservation of Historic Thornhill (1)
  - ◆ Ward 1 South Thornhill Residents Inc (1)
  - ◆ Local Property Owners (2)
  - ◆ Heritage Section staff (2)

# Two Phase Study/Review

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## ◆ Phase 1- Issue Identification

- ◆ Review of 1986 Plan and associated Town policies
- ◆ Identification of issues from staff and public
- ◆ 2 community consultation meetings
- ◆ Issues Identification Report prepared
  - ◆ Summarized major concerns
  - ◆ Current conditions
  - ◆ Offered options
  - ◆ Suggested recommendations

# Two Phase Study/Review

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## ◆ Issue Areas included:

- ◆ Improvement to policies and guidelines (non-heritage properties, new infill buildings, streetscape guidelines, illustrations-clarity);
- ◆ Use of modern materials (non-heritage properties, additions to heritage buildings)
- ◆ Administration and enforcement (review structure, education)
- ◆ Communications (strategies for better information exchange)
- ◆ Planning (ensure consistency with District Plan)
- ◆ Landscape (tree preservation, guidelines)
- ◆ Yonge Street (strong design guidelines, appropriate heights)

# Two Phase Study/Review

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- ◆ In June 2005, Council endorsed in principle the approach outlined in the Issues Identification Report to permit the advancement of the study to Phase 2

# Two Phase Study/Review

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## ◆ Phase 2- District Plan

- ◆ A draft document has been prepared
- ◆ Consultation has occurred with Heritage Markham and the Study Advisory Committee
- ◆ Town staff review
- ◆ Posted on Town website; paper copies available
- ◆ Two public consultation sessions:
  - ◆ June 8<sup>th</sup>- community information meeting
  - ◆ June 20<sup>th</sup> – Statutory Public Meeting

# Revised Heritage Plan

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- ◆ the prime audience for this document is local residents;
- ◆ clear and concise, and uses terminology that should be easily understood by the reader.
- ◆ user-friendly in its format and presentation with illustrations and graphics utilized to explain concepts.



# Revised Heritage Plan

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## What's in the Heritage District Plan?

### PART A DISTRICT OVERVIEW

#### Section 1: Introduction

#### Section 2: Heritage Character Statements and Objectives

These are requirements under the Ontario Heritage Act

#### Section 3: Review and Interpretation

This section states what kind of minor work is exempt from review—  
No permit required.

# Revised Heritage Plan

---

## What's in the Heritage District Plan?

### PART B DISTRICT POLICIES

Section 4: Policies for Buildings and Sites

Section 5: Policies for Streetscape and Infrastructure

Section 6: Policies for Special Areas and Projects

Section 7: Municipal Policies

# Revised Heritage Plan

---

What's in the Heritage District Plan?

## PART C IMPLEMENTING THE DISTRICT

### Section 8: Implementation

This section describes the heritage permit and approval process.

# Revised Heritage Plan

---

## What's in the Heritage District Plan?

### PART D DESIGN GUIDELINES

This is the District's handbook:

- Architectural Styles

- Streetscapes

- Alterations and additions to heritage buildings.

- Alterations and additions to non-heritage buildings.

- New development, residential area

- New development, Yonge Street core

- Commercial features and streetscape elements

- Landscape features

# Revised Heritage Plan

---

- ◆ Key issues of the public are addressed:
  - ◆ Improvements to the Policies and guidelines
    - ◆ Maintain separate guidelines for heritage properties
    - ◆ Allow more flexibility in material use on additions of heritage buildings
    - ◆ Provide separate guidelines for existing, non-heritage buildings
      - ◆ Contemporary alteration approach
      - ◆ Historical conversion approach
      - ◆ Allow modern materials
    - ◆ Separate guidelines for new buildings
    - ◆ Streetscape character guidelines
    - ◆ Focus review of work visible from the public realm

So: Let's look at how the Guidelines work:

Section 9.1 describes the historic styles in Thornhill. From the oldest...

## 9.1 Architectural Styles

### Georgian Tradition 1800-1860

Symmetrical façade  
usually 3 or 5 bays

Rectangular plan

Rear addition or kitchen wing  
in T or L plan

Rear addition may be a "saltbox"—  
a continuation of the rear roof slope

Low to medium pitch gable roof

Low pitched hip roof sometimes  
used

Eave returns

Gable end chimneys



30 Colborne Street

### 9.1.1 Heritage Styles Residential Buildings

6 panelled central door  
may have transom and/or  
sidelights, Classical entrance  
surround

Sash-style windows  
6/6, 12/8 or 12/12 lights  
may have louvered shutters

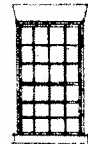
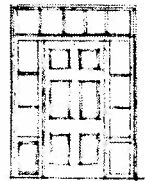
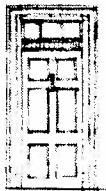
1, 1 ½ or 2 storey form

Brick, wood clapboard,  
roughcast stucco typical local  
exterior finishes

Simple small-scaled trim

Porch or verandah  
sometimes added

### Typical Design Elements:



14 Colborne Street

## Through to the most recent:

### 9.1 Architectural Styles

#### Cape Cod Cottage 1925-1955

Symmetrical façade, usually 3 bays

Rectangular plan, sometimes with  
kitchen or garage extension at one end

Steep, side-gable roof  
sometimes with gable-roofed dormers

1 or 1 ½ storey height

Panelled door, sometimes with small  
windows, door surround and cornice  
are common

Sash-style windows, 6/6 lights,  
flat-headed, louvered shutters are  
common

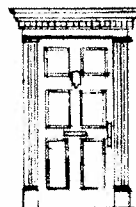
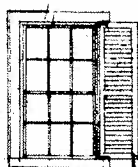
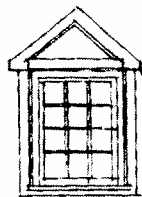
Wood clapboard and brick are  
common exterior finishes



21 John Street

#### 9.1.1 Heritage Styles Residential Buildings

#### Typical Design Elements:



39 John Street

## Section 9.2 deals with heritage buildings. First of all, how to properly keep them intact:

### 9.2 Alterations and Additions to Heritage Buildings

#### 9.2.4.2 Exterior Cladding cont'd

##### Guidelines

1. The original external finish of a heritage building should be conserved and maintained. Repair of the original material, rather than replacement, is always preferred. If replacement is necessary, the material should match the original in form, style, dimensions, profile, texture, and method of installation.
2. If replacement of material is necessary, only the specific deteriorated material should be replaced rather than the entire wall or building.
3. The application of new surfaces or coatings that alter the appearance and character of the heritage building's original cladding should not be utilized. The use of metal and synthetic sidings such as vinyl is not supported.
4. The removal of siding material considered to be unsympathetic to the District is encouraged (i.e., aluminium and vinyl siding, asbestos tile, angelstone, etc.). Once removed, the heritage building should be restored to its original state using available physical and archival evidence. If the original cladding material is unknown, a siding material appropriate to the style of the building and commonly used in the District should be introduced.

##### Existing Wood Siding

5. Wood siding should only be replaced when it has lost its material integrity and its ability to hold a surface coating.
6. Wood siding should remain painted and not stripped bare.
7. Inspect existing paint. Blistering or peeling paint usually means water is getting into the wood, and the source of water should be corrected.
8. Don't "strip" woodwork, unless paint build-up is excessive and obscures architectural detail. Remove loose paint and feather edges.

9. Don't use chemical strippers or torches to remove paint. These can damage the wood and may cause future issues.

10. Use appropriate heritage paint colours. See section 9.2.4.7.

##### Existing Brick Masonry

11. Repointing of masonry should only be undertaken when it is badly deteriorated or when water penetration is a problem. It is normal for old mortar to be weathered back a short distance from the wall face due to its compositions of lime, sand, and water. Old mortar in good condition should not be disturbed.
12. The repointing of historical mortar can be a complex undertaking and often best left to those skilled and experienced in the proper procedures. A good technical resource is a provincial publication entitled *Annotated Master Specification for the Cleaning and Repointing of Historic Masonry* available at the Town.



Progressive deterioration:  
Rainwater splashing on the porch and steps eroded the mortar. That let increasing amounts of water into the bricks and mortar below, and they are spalling and washing away, letting in even more moisture.



# An addition shouldn't subtract from a heritage building:

## 9.2 Alterations and Additions to Heritage Buildings

### 9.2.5. Additions to Heritage Buildings

In designing a new attached exterior addition, consideration should be given to its relationship with the heritage building as well as the historic district. Appropriate new additions will complement and respect the original building yet be distinguishable.

#### 9.2.5.1 Location

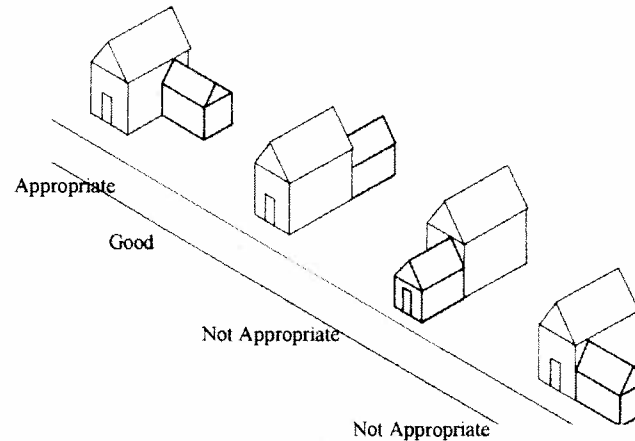
Since many of the buildings in the District date back at least 100 years, it is inevitable that over time additions and alterations would be necessary. Changes in ownership, uses, and personal requirements as well as deterioration have resulted in the need for modern interventions in the historical fabric of Thornhill.

There are a number of heritage buildings in the District to which additions in the 1920s and 1930s have been added. The additions themselves have become part of the continuing history of the heritage buildings.

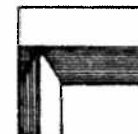
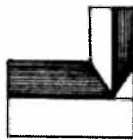
Location can be a point of departure for the sensitive and complementary design of additions to heritage buildings.

#### Guidelines

1. Attached exterior additions should be located at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building.
2. Additions should be limited in size and scale in relationship to the historic building.



The visual impact of the location of an addition and its relationship to the streetscape.



**Appropriate:** addition in rear

**Appropriate:** addition set back to side

**Not appropriate:** addition flush with front of building

**Not appropriate:** addition located in front of building

## Section 9.3 deals with Non-heritage Buildings, and it recognizes two valid approaches to renovations:

### 9.3 Additions and Alterations to Non-Heritage Buildings

Many buildings in the Village are not considered heritage structures. Many of these, by virtue of their scale, siting, and surrounding landscaping, nevertheless contribute the overall character of the area. Buildings deserve some respect on their own terms, and it is not the intent of the Guidelines to ask newer buildings to pretend to be anything other than what they are.

#### 9.3.1 Design Approaches

Additions and alterations to non-heritage buildings have an impact on their heritage neighbours and the overall streetscape. There are two design approaches that are appropriate to additions and alterations to such work in the Village.

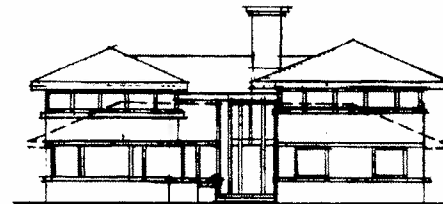
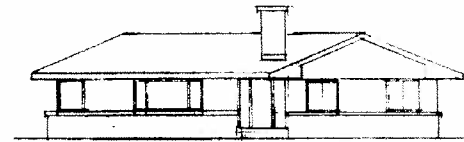
##### 9.3.1.1 Contemporary Alteration Approach

Ordinarily, a modern building should be altered in a way that respects and complements its original design. Interest in preservation of the modern architectural heritage is growing, and good modern design deserves the same respect as good design of the 19th century.

#### Guidelines:

- Additions and alterations using the Contemporary Alteration approach should respect, and be consistent with, the original design of the building.
- The Guidelines in Section 9.2.5 for additions to heritage buildings apply, in terms of siting, scale, and location of additions.
- The use of traditional materials and products such as wood sidings and wood windows is encouraged.
- Non-traditional materials and products such as vinyl and aluminium in configurations and profiles that complement the original design of the building may be used. Consultation with staff is recommended.
- Many modern buildings are old enough to have already undergone renovations, which may not be in character with either the original design, or historic precedent. In such cases, the design of further new work should restore the architectural consistency of the whole.

A typical 1970s ranch bungalow.



The Contemporary Alteration approach used in putting on a second storey addition.

In the second approach, a more modern building can be made more like a historical one:

### 9.3 Additions and Alterations to Non-Heritage Buildings

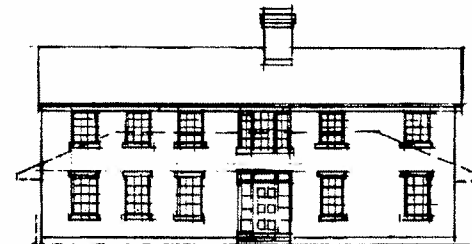
#### 9.3.1.2 Historical Conversion Approach

In some cases, a modern building may be altered in a way that gives it the appearance of an older building. A historical conversion should have the integrity of an historical architectural style. This approach means considerably more than sticking on a few pieces of historical decoration; it may require considerable new construction to achieve an appropriate appearance.

##### Guidelines:

Additions and alterations using the Historical Conversion approach should rely on a local heritage style described and depicted in Section 9.1. Use of a style should be consistent in materials, scale, detail, and ornament. Refer to new construction guidelines in Section 9.4 for further guidance.

- Although most additions should be modest in comparison to the original building, the Historical Conversion approach may call for substantial additions in front of and on top of the existing building.
- The use of traditional materials and products such as wood sidings and windows is encouraged.
- Non-traditional materials and products such as vinyl and aluminium in configurations and profiles that complement the proposed historical design approach may be used. Consultation with staff is recommended.
- Duplication of existing heritage buildings within the District is not supported.
- Avoid the use of decorative features not typical of the local vernacular.
- Avoid the introduction of a singular piece of historical decoration on a non-heritage building.
- The use of paint colours complementary to the heritage character of the District or from a heritage palette (available from most paint companies) is considered appropriate.



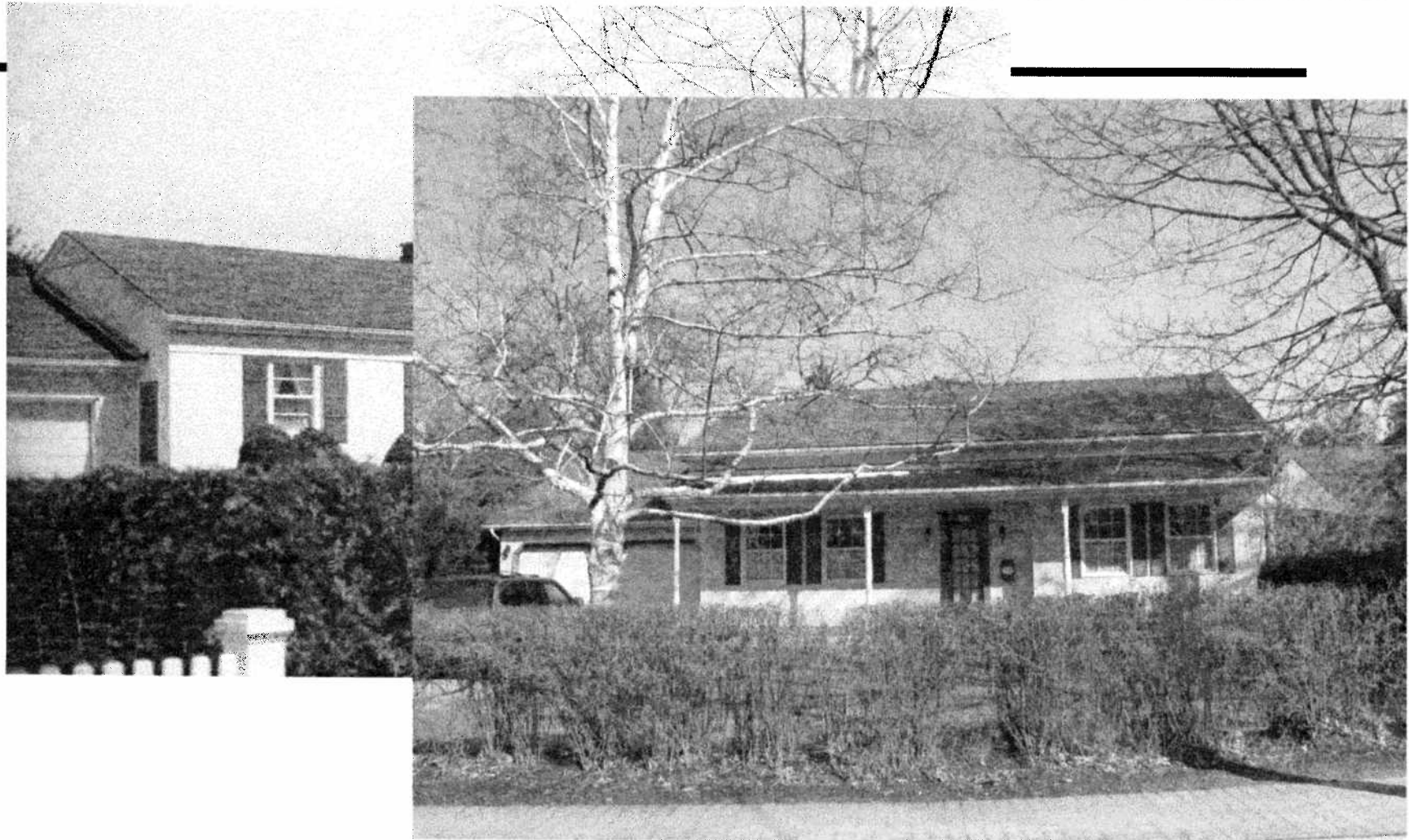
The Historical Conversion approach used in putting a second storey addition on the same house, above.

Here's a very modest, but very successful example:



**32 Colborne Street, 1986**

Here's a very modest, but very successful example:



**32 Colborne Street, 2005**

# New buildings need to fit into the existing context:

## 9.4 New Buildings

### 9.4.2.5 Building Form: Height

The height of most of the residential building stock in the District is relatively constant and falls between one-and-a-half and two storeys. The continuity of height and massing in the District is an important contributor to the distinctive character of the area.

Infill construction that is significantly taller than the adjoining structures will overwhelm the existing heritage character of the street and should be avoided.

#### Guidelines

1. New construction should be compatible with the traditional height pattern in the District of one-and-a-half and two storeys, and should have regard for the adjoining buildings on the street.
2. The height of new residential buildings should not be less than 80% or more than 120% of the average height of the residential buildings on immediately adjacent properties.
3. In order to ensure that height and massing of new development are compatible, all proposals for new buildings in the District should include a detailed streetscape elevation of the adjoining structures and features. Corner lots require two streetscapes.



Appropriate



Too Tall



Too Low

## And make use of local historical design elements:

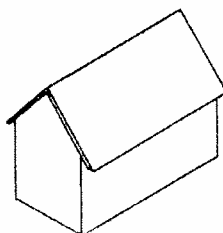
### 9.4 New Buildings

#### 9.4.2.7 Roofs: Appropriate Styles

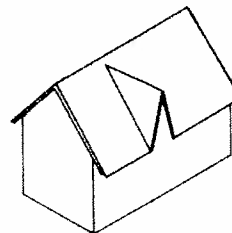
The majority of roof forms in the District are of gable form, with a relatively steep pitch. This form should generally be used. Pitches can be shallower, but should not be less than a 6/12.

##### Guidelines

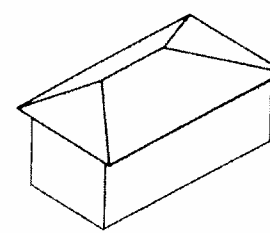
1. Roof design in the District should be compatible with the historic roof type forms in the village and the selected building style.
2. The extent of roof overhang should be appropriate to the architectural expression of the building.
3. Gambrel and gable roofs are appropriate for outbuildings.
4. Hipped roofs are preferred for taller buildings in order to minimize the perceived height.



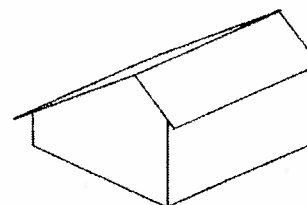
Gable



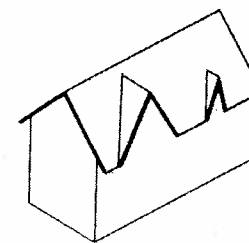
Centre Gable



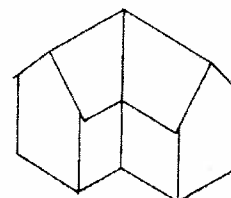
Hipped



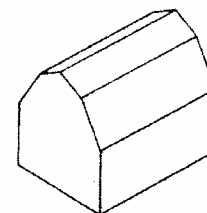
Saltbox



Double Gable



Ell gable



Gambrel

# Details should reflect local precedent. Windows:

## 9.4 New Buildings

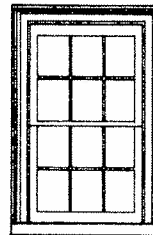
### 9.4.2.14 Windows: Appropriate Styles

The predominant historic window type in the District is wood, double hung, which is characterised by two vertically sliding sashes, each closing a different part of the window. The double-hung window form can include both flat headed and segmental arched designs. Pane division variations include the 6/6 (six panes on top of six panes), 1/1, and 2/2, which are most prevalent.

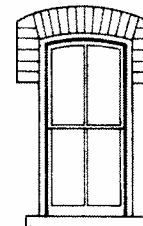
The demand for heritage-friendly construction has improved the visual quality of many products including non-wood windows.

#### Guidelines

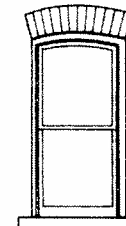
1. Windows on new construction should visually reflect the historic windows in the District (double- or single-hung windows) and be consistent with the style of the house.
2. A consistent approach to window proportion and type should be followed in the design of a new building.
3. As a general principle, windows should be taller than their width (usually 2:1 ratio of length to width).
4. The use of traditional wood windows in historical configurations and profiles is always preferable.
5. Windows made from more modern materials in historical configurations and profiles that visually give the appearance of a wood window may be used. Consultation with staff will be required.



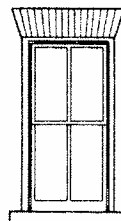
6/6 Double Hung:  
Square Headed



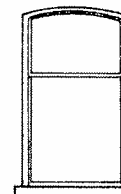
2/2 Double Hung:  
Segmental Arched



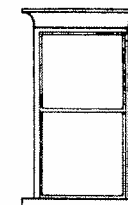
1/1 Double Hung:  
Segmental Arched



2/2 Double Hung:  
with angled brick voussoirs



1/1 Transom Window



1/1 Double Hung:



# Entrance doors:

## 9.4 New Buildings

### 9.4.2.26 Doors: Frames and Surrounds

In the historic doors of Thornhill, the proportion and amount of glazing in the door surround was usually related to the design of the door itself. Typically when there was glazing in the door, sidelights were not seen and when sidelights were applied, they were either installed in pairs or not at all. Sidelights and transoms are most often typified by glass that is divided by true divided muntin bars, rather than single-glazed panels.

#### Guidelines

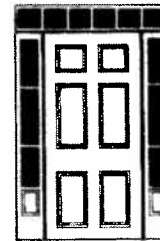
1. The door surround should be appropriate for the architectural style of the building.
2. Door surrounds should be consistent with the traditional design of these elements seen in the District.
3. Sidelights should be used in pairs and only where the door is not glazed.
4. The lower ¼ of the sidelight should be a solid panel.



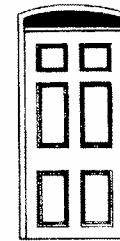
**Appropriate**  
Square Transom,  
no sidelights



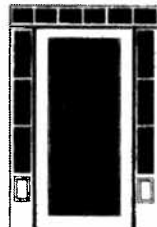
**Appropriate**  
Door with window,  
no sidelights



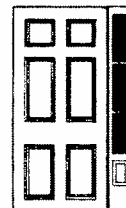
**Appropriate**  
Traditional door, with  
transom and sidelights



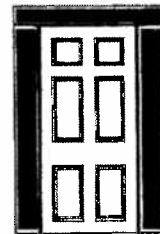
**Appropriate**  
Rounded transom  
no sidelights



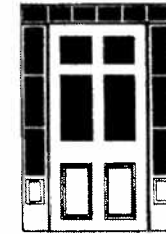
**Not Appropriate**  
Glass door with  
transom and sidelights



**Not Appropriate**  
Single sidelight



**Not Appropriate**  
No articulation of  
sidelights and transom



**Not Appropriate**  
Glass in door with  
with sidelights/transom

# Revised Heritage Plan

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- ◆ Key issues of the public are addressed:
  - ◆ Administration and Enforcement
    - ◆ Maintain existing review process
    - ◆ Improve clarity and lessen subjectivity through enhanced policies and guidelines
    - ◆ Promote learning opportunities
  - ◆ Communications
    - ◆ Enhanced strategies (newsletter, real estate firms, website)
  - ◆ Planning
    - ◆ Changes to ensure OP and by-laws are consistent with Heritage Plan

# Revised Heritage Plan

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- ◆ Key issues of the public are addressed:
  - ◆ Landscape
    - ◆ Support for Tree By-law
    - ◆ Voluntary landscape guidelines
    - ◆ Guidelines on fences and driveways
  - ◆ Yonge Street
    - ◆ Strong design guidelines
    - ◆ Based on Council direction and Thornhill Yonge Street Study

# The use of traditional commercial architectural styles:

## 9.4 New Buildings

### 9.4.3.3 Architectural Style

Traditional commercial areas in Ontario encompass a wide variety of historic architectural styles ranging from Georgian to Edwardian in composition.

#### Guidelines

- a) New mid-rise development should be products of their own time, but should be compatible with the basic tenets and styles of traditional historical commercial architecture typically found in an older Ontario downtown setting.
- b) Buildings should be articulated to express a building base with traditional storefronts, a mid section and a top or cornice.
- c) A consistent approach to design detail for the chosen style should be used for all building elements.
- d) It is important to recognize that the overwhelming characteristic regarding style in Thornhill was its simplicity. Overly elaborate styles and others not generally compatible with a local village context should be avoided.



This photograph of Main Street in Cobourg shows a recent infill building in the foreground, with original 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings beyond.

The low-sloped end-gable roof was common from around 1840 to 1860, with the attic floor used as unheated warehouse space for the shop below. Dormers, to provide light in the attic, are visible on the historic buildings to the left of the lamp post.

This style of commercial building, which dates from the same period as Thornhill's earliest surviving houses, is an appropriate model for Yonge Street redevelopment.

# Height limitations:

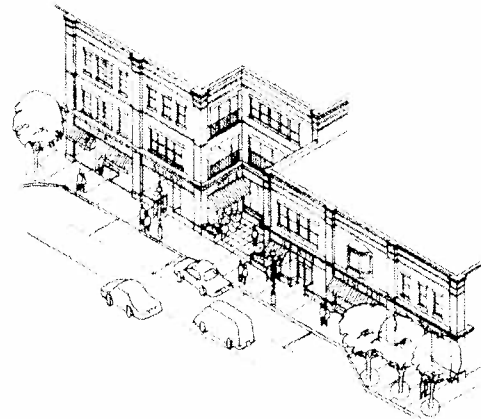
## 9.4 New Buildings

### 9.4.3.5 Building Form - Height

Height is a very sensitive issue given that the commercial properties are located within a heritage conservation district, and adjacent to heritage buildings and nearby low density residential.

#### Guidelines

- a) The maximum building height for new buildings is 3 storeys. An additional 2 storeys of building height may be permitted to a maximum of 5 storeys subject to compliance with specific criteria as outlined in the Thornhill Secondary Plan.
- b) The minimum building height for this area is 2.5 storeys on Yonge Street and 1.5 storeys on local streets.
- c) The height of new buildings adjacent to heritage buildings should transition down to one storey above the height of the heritage building.
- d) Away from the Yonge Street frontage, building heights should transition from the maximum height to the general heights of surrounding residential fabric.



# Traditional design of storefronts and signage:

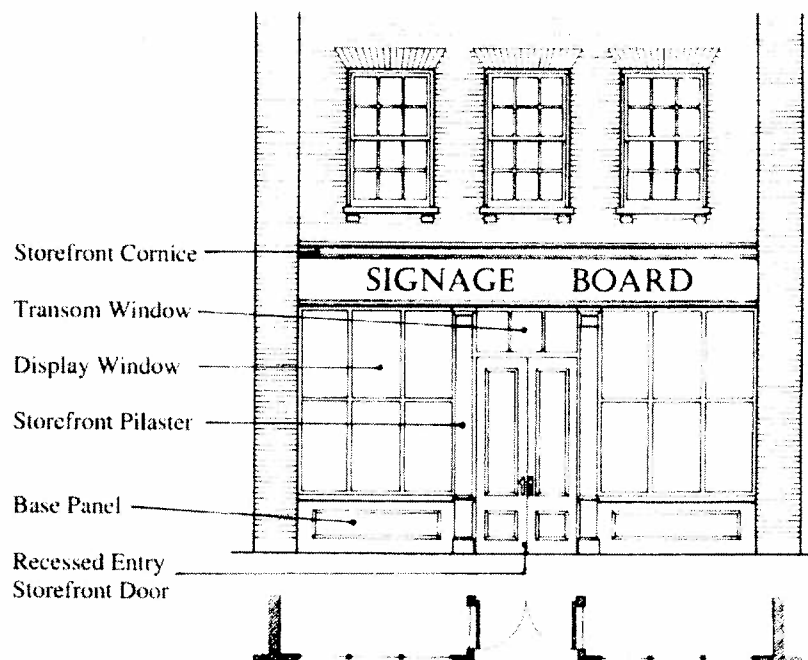
## 9.4 New Buildings

### 9.4.3.7 Storefront Entry Design

Traditional storefront entry design generally consists of large divided glass windows on either side of a central, recessed entry. The display windows remain prominent while the recessed entry calls attention to the doorway. This is one of the most important rhythms of a traditional commercial area.

#### Guidelines

- a) The storefront entry features should include: base panels, display windows, entry doors, transom windows, piers or pilasters, awnings and cornices.
- b) The key vertical storefront parts (such as entries, doors, piers and pilasters) should align with similar parts in the upper façade.
- c) The storefront should be aligned with neighbouring storefront features on the street, especially in terms of height.
- d) Generally, an entry should not be set back a distance greater than 25% of the storefront width.



# Revised Heritage Plan

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- ◆ Main Issues from June 8<sup>th</sup> public information meeting:
  - ◆ Height on Yonge Street
  - ◆ Better enforcement of by-laws (signage, maintenance)
  - ◆ Clarity and flexibility on material use and approvals for non-heritage buildings
  - ◆ Define terms
  - ◆ More precise language, avoid ambiguity
  - ◆ Traditional materials for additions to heritage buildings
  - ◆ Local Review Committee rather than Heritage Markham
  - ◆ Planning policies- lot coverage, coverage calculations
  - ◆ Further consultation on revisions, classifications

# Next Steps

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- ◆ Staff report at Development Services Committee today
  - ◆ the revised Plan (2006) and Building Inventory (2006), be endorsed, subject to clarification or revisions arising from the Statutory Public Meeting.
- ◆ Statutory Public Meeting- tonight
- ◆ if any additional modification are recommended at the statutory public meeting, the changes can be made prior to Council passing the by-law to adopt the revised plan
- ◆ Adoption of By-law – Council – June 27th