

**Conservation
Review Board**

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**RE: TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL- INTENTION TO DESIGNATE
1600 MAJOR MACKENZIE DRIVE EAST (THE ADAM HENRICKS HOUSE)**

Robert Bowes, Chair
Andrew Mathers, Member

May 25, 1998

This hearing was convened in the Ontario Municipal Board Room, Municipal Offices of the Town of Richmond Hill, on May 25, 1998 pursuant to Section 29(8) of the Ontario Heritage Act R.S.O., 1990, Ch.0. 18. for the purposes of reporting to the Council of the Town of Richmond Hill whether the property known as the Adam Henricks House, 1600 Major Mackenzie Drive East, should be designated by by-law under the Act, an objection having been raised by the owner of the property, the Ambercroft Labourer's 506 Training Centre.

Notice of Hearing was given under the Act in The Liberal on May 5, 1998, by the Conservation Review Board, hereafter referred to as the Board. The relevant affidavits by the Board were tabled as Exhibit 1. The Board, in accordance with its customary practice, had the opportunity to view the site and the surrounding area prior to the hearing.

The Town was represented by Teresa Kowalishin, Solicitor for the Town of Richmond Hill, who called one witness, George Duncan, the Heritage Coordinator for the Town. The owner and objector, the Ambercroft Labourer's 506 Training Centre, was represented by Richard Arblaster, Solicitor, who called the following witnesses:

- Brian Foote, Director of Labour Relations for the General Contractors Section of the Toronto Construction Association and a member of the Board of Directors of the Ambercroft Training Centre
- Joseph Watson, Vice President of Corporate Development for the company, PCL
- Jack McLaren, Director of Training for the Ambercroft Training Centre

THE CASE FOR THE TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL

After establishing the ownership of the property, Ms. Kowalishin called George Duncan, Heritage Coordinator for the Town of Richmond Hill.

Witness: George Duncan

Mr. Duncan established his credentials as an expert in heritage conservation (Exhibit #4). He reviewed the process LACAC and then Council had gone through in considering designation of the property from the first listing in 1985 to the present. He pointed out that the Adam Henricks house had been part of the historic community of Headford, which was founded in 1832 around a Grist Mill on the Rouge River. The Christian Henrick's family had come to the area about 1794, having joined William Berczy's settlers, and they established themselves in Headford in 1809. The building of the house in 1889 by Adam Henricks, grandson of Christian, was chronicled in the local paper, which was reflective of the fact that it was a building of quality, and the home of a successful farming family.

The house is a good example of a L-shaped farmhouse in the Picturesque style, one of only four remaining in Richmond Hill. The L-shaped plan was popular from the 1850's to the early 1900's. Although the building has Gothic Revival features such as the multiple gables, these are presented in a restrained way without excessive ornamentation, which is generally representative of Gothic Revival expressions in Richmond Hill. Other architectural features include the monochromatic brickwork and the canted bay windows on the south and east site. Traditional features, such as the unpaved farm lane, rows of mature trees and cedar hedging, complement the architecture of the house, which is the first heritage building to be seen in this eastern gateway area of Richmond Hill. The quality of its architecture is enhanced by its wellpreserved state.

Mr. Duncan then addressed a number of issues raised in the letter of objection. He acknowledged that the house had undergone changes but felt that these did not detract from its heritage character and in some cases, such as with the tent-roofed verandah, they enhanced it. He stated that seeing buildings as evolving structures with their own history, is consistent with good heritage conservation practice (Exhibit #11). Since the house is now in a semi-rural landscape it is important to preserve it as a rural landmark. He cited Ministry guidelines (Exhibit #12) which state that a building or property can have contextual significance. He pointed out that LACAC has proceeded with designations against the owners' wishes in some instances in the past because heritage conservation is the paramount concern.

Under cross-examination Mr. Duncan agreed that Adam Henricks was not an outstanding member of the community but felt that the building of the house, as recorded in the paper, was an historic event. In querying the agricultural significance of the building Mr. Arblaster noted that the Richmond Hill area was first cleared and settled in the 1790's, yet the house was not constructed until 1889. Mr. Duncan replied that many farms were not cleared until the late Victorian period and the house represents the continuance of a prosperous agricultural tradition and heralds the achievements of a successful farming family. He agreed that the front verandah was not original and that the eaves were lined in aluminum. He stated that he didn't know when the rear addition was erected and therefore it had not been included in the reasons for designation.

In response to the owner's concern that the entire property would be designated, Mr. Duncan stated that the preparation of a Reference Plan highlighting a smaller area to be protected, focused on the house (as outlined by the owner in Exhibit #15), would be agreeable to him as a heritage planner.

The Case for the Owner

Mr. Arblaster called three witnesses.

Witness: Mr. Brian Foote

Mr. Foote is the Director of Labour Relations for the Toronto Construction Association and a Director of the training centre. He explained that the centre is a non-share capital, not-for-profit corporation, with both workers and contractors on its board, and has as its sole purpose the delivery of training. He had two concerns regarding the proposed designation. Should Ambercroft ever want to expand their operations on the site, designation might be an inhibiting factor. Secondly, if a drop in volumes in the industry caused a cessation of operations at Ambercroft, designation could adversely affect the re-sale value of the property, which would have to go to another not-for-profit organization. If the designation were limited to the property containing and immediately surrounding the house, it would alleviate his concern regarding expansion but not his worry over re-sale value. Mr. Foote also noted that there were currently no plans to sell the site. He also pointed out that the interior of the house had been modernized and that the rear portion was an addition to the original building.

Witness: Joseph Watson

Mr. Watson is the Vice-President of Corporate Development for PCL. In his career he has had extensive experience in sub urban development, developing business parks around major corridors and intersections in the Greater Toronto Area. He has been involved in sourcing sites, obtaining rezoning and financial partners and in selling. He felt that designation would have a negative impact on the development potential of the property. Even if only the portion of the property containing the house and its immediate surroundings were designated, there would still be a negative impact because this area is the most attractive portion of developable land.

Witness, Jack McLaren

Mr. McLaren is the Director of Training for Ambercroft. He attended the LACAC meeting of May 22, 1997 at which designation was discussed. He stated that while he didn't object to the designation personally, he didn't say at the meeting that he represented the owner. During cross-examination it was determined that at that May LACAC meeting, designation had been recommended for another property, where it was known that the owner objected.

Member of the Public: Diane Giangrande

Ms. Giangrande is Vice-Chair of LACAC and stated that the LACAC had worked hard on this designation, which is very*important to the community. She felt that LACAC had had a positive meeting with Mr. MacLaren and stated that when LACAC contacts a property owner and this results in someone attending a meeting, LACAC assumes they represent the owner.

Member of the Public: Joyce Homer

Ms. Homer lives on her family farm at the south west corner of the same intersection, at 9920 Leslie Street. She takes pride in her roots in the community and has two designated properties on her farm, one of which protects the features of her house. She had lived in the Adam Henricks house in the late 1960's and spoke in support of its designation. She stated that she did not feel threatened by the designations of her properties and commended Ambercroft for their upkeep of the Adams Henricks house.

Summation for the Owner

Mr. Arblaster reiterated that the owner did not want the designation and felt it would be detrimental to both any plans for development and the re-sale value of the property. He felt that the building was not historic because it was neither associated with an outstanding local personage nor with the founding period of agricultural settlement. Architecturally, the building was compromised because the verandah was not original, the rear addition had a concrete foundation and there were modern improvements to the windows and eaves. He expressed again the owner's concern that the proposed designation would apply to the entire property. He asked that, if the Board were to support designation, that it also recommend that it be limited to the cross-hatched area in Exhibit #15. He reminded the Board that Mr. Duncan, as a heritage planner, had been agreeable to this and of the Town's past willingness to limit the- scope of the property to be designated in other instances. He further requested that the Board recommend that the reference to a semi-rural landscape be deleted from the reasons for designation, for the sake of clarity.

Summation for the Town

In her summation in support of designation Ms. Kowalishin opined that the objector's complaint regarding potential economic disadvantage was speculative and not relevant. She felt that the farmhouse had a clear historic value as the symbol of a prosperous agricultural family and that it was one of the few remaining late 19th century L-shaped buildings representing the agricultural past of Richmond Hill. The buildings architectural features, she stated, have been well-documented and it is important as a gateway feature as one enters the town from the east.

She cited, in support of her position, the cases of 4034 Mississauga Road North, where a tavern perched on a ravine had been declared a landmark and of 2495 Bronte Road where another 'L-shaped' building which had been owned by a doctor had also been declared a landmark by the Conservation Review Board. She stated that the Town was willing to consider registering the designation against part, rather than all, of the property, through a Reference Plan. The Town feels that the site plan approval process through the Planning Act could protect the driveway.' She asked the Board not to recommend deletion of the reference to a semi-rural landscape from the reasons for designation.

FINDINGS

The Board finds 1600 Major Mackenzie Drive East (the Adam Henricks House) to be of historic and architectural value and interest for a number of reasons. As the late 19th century home of a family active in agriculture with roots in the area, it is a fitting symbol of the agricultural past of the Richmond Hill area. The contemporary newspaper account of the construction of the building confirms its worthiness in this regard and the information on those who built it adds to its architectural value. Agriculture was an activity which played a major role in the economic and social life of the area for a substantial period of time.

The building is one of the few remaining historic farmhouses in Richmond Hill, built on the L-shaped plan in the Picturesque style. Architectural features include the multiple Gothic Revival gables and canted bay windows on the south and east sides. The tentroofed verandah is a sympathetic later addition which enhances its character. Its location as a gateway feature to Richmond Hill contributes to its significance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the recommendation of the Conservation Review Board that 1600 Major Mackenzie Drive East (the Adam Henricks House) be designated by by-law under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The Board supports the suggestion to limit the designation to a portion of the property containing the house and its immediate surroundings, which would be delineated through a Reference Plan. As the Town determines the extent of the area to be covered by the Reference Plan the Board urges it not to lose sight of the importance of the approach to the house, (i.e. traditional features such as the unpaved farm lane with its rows of mature trees), to its significance.

(Original Signed by)

Robert Bowes, Chairman

Andrew Mathers, Member

List of Exhibits

1. Affidavit of Notice of Hearing, the Liberal, May 5, 1998.
2. Copy of Page No. 2186 from the 1997 Assessment Rolls of the Town of Richmond Hill, indicating Ambercroft Labourer's 506 Training Centre as the owner of 1600 Major Mackenzie Drive East.
3. Transfer of Ownership to Ambercroft
4. Curriculum vitae of George W. Duncan
5. Excerpts from the Town of Richmond Hill LACAC, Inventory of Buildings of Historical Importance. Revised February 1992, p. 72
6. Chronology of LACAC interest in heritage designation for 1600 Major Mackenzie Drive East.
7. Outline of Heritage Significance, - 1600 Major Mackenzie Drive East.
8. Heritage Structure Repo for Adam Henricks House, September 1996.
9. Staff report to Council Meeting of October 20, 1997 (including letter of objection from R. Arblaster, of September 17, 1997).
10. Excerpt from Ministry Guidelines for Designation....
11. Excerpt from the Ontario Heritage Foundation's Manual of Principles and Practice for Architectural Conservation by Mark Fram, p. 215.
12. Ministry pamphlet, What Is Heritage Designation?
13. The Ancestral Roof by Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, p. 245.
14. Minutes from LACAC Meeting of May 22, 1997 received by the Planning and Development Committee on June 4, 1997.
15. Drawing of a possible reduced area for designation, surrounding the house, to be protected through a Reference Plan.
16. Photographic Storyboard.
17. Site Plan, Ambercroft Training Centre.