

**1. PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF STRUCTURE AT 259 WOODBRIDGE AVENUE – WARD 2**

**Recommendation**

Cultural Services staff recommends:

1. That the demolition of the structure at 259 Woodbridge Avenue, be approved with the following conditions:
  - a. That the demolition be done in such a way to allow a heritage consultant retained by the applicant to compile a photographic record of the various material layers of the structure during and after demolition to the satisfaction of Urban Design and Cultural Heritage staff; and,
  - b. To the extent possible, after a Heritage Vaughan decision for demolition approval has been granted, that prior to the demolition of the structure any items of cultural interest such as the main stair rail, newel post and other building materials of unique value such as the timbers and any bricks, be offered/coordinated for salvage by the owner to an interested community member or group; and,
  - c. That the demolition clearance be effective from the date of the Building Permit approval, in accordance with OP policy 6.3.2.5. This policy states that the demolition permit for the structure shall not be issued until plans for a replacement structure have been submitted to the City and Council has approved the replacement structure and any related proposed landscaping features.
  - d. That new construction be in accordance with the Woodbridge Heritage District Plan and the applicant return to Heritage Vaughan for approval of the infill structure in addition to all other necessary approvals; and,
  - e. That for any period of time that property is vacant awaiting new construction, that it is maintained in compliance with the City Property Standards by-laws, including that the lot be maintained clean of debris, garbage, and grass be cut.

**Contribution to Sustainability**

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in the Green Directions, Vaughan, Community Sustainability Environmental Master Plan, Goal 4, and Objective 4.1:

- To foster a city with strong social cohesion, an engaging arts scene, and a clear sense of its culture and heritage.

**Economic Impact**

N/A

**Communications Plan**

All agenda items and minutes relating to Heritage Vaughan committee meetings are circulated to relevant City departments, applicants and their representatives.

**Purpose**

To review the proposed demolition, information provided in the Built Heritage Evaluation of the structure at 259 Woodbridge Avenue, Analysis and background sections of the report.

## **Background - Analysis and Options**

The property at 259 Woodbridge Avenue is a designated property under part 5 of the Ontario Heritage Act. It is located inside the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District.

Designated structures require the review by the Heritage Vaughan Committee in order to obtain approval for demolition. The property is identified as non-contributing in the Woodbridge Heritage Conservation District Plan.

The owner submitted a proposal for demolition of the house on September 29, 2014 and has indicated that there are currently no plans or design for a replacement structure. The home is currently divided into several living units.

On October 6, 2014 Cultural Services staff performed a site visit and subsequently evaluated the structure by completing a Built Heritage Evaluation or "BHE" (please refer to attachments in this report). The built Heritage Evaluation is a City of Vaughan guiding tool that aids in the determination of cultural value of a built heritage resource. It is complementary to the overarching Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The BHE breaks down the range of degree of significance in four groups, A, B, C and D, from most significant to least respectively.

The owner submitted a Heritage Impact Assessment done by an accredited professional heritage consultant, Don Loucks from IBI Group.

### **Analysis**

#### ***Summary of Built Heritage Evaluation by Cultural Heritage Staff – Little or no Cultural Heritage Significance***

The structure as it stands today is a two storey plus attic home, with an almost square plan core and a one storey addition in the back. The house has a hip roof with a large shed dormer at the front a larger one on the back and one on the west side.

In summary, the subject structure rates as a Group D building in the City's BHE, one of "little or no cultural heritage significance. Records indicate that the original portion of the structure dates to 1850. The extent the original portion includes part of the wood framing, red brick cladding likely still existing under the currently visible brick cladding and some parts of the foundation. Red brick is visible in the basement on top of the basement window. There are remains of a rubble stone foundation wall at the north side which has been underpinned. Overall the current foundation has been retrofitted extensively with poured concrete. This evidence together with aerial photography suggests that the location of the structure has remained the same.

The house underwent significant exterior alterations in 1992 which currently almost completely masque its origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The original structure is concealed and heavily altered under pink brick installed in 1992. The alterations also include new windows, prefinished aluminum soffits and detailing, a rear addition that removed the back wall at the ground level and the roof has been altered to include numerous dormers.

The elements that likely date to c.1850 to c.1870 and are discernable include: main stair railing, newel posts at the ground and second floor (approximately c.1870), wood framing elements (starting c.1850) and red brick cladding, which is currently between the new brick and the wood framing. The brick cladding could date to as early as 1850 or belong to a later alteration in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The fire insurance plan from 1926 indicates its presence.

There are signs of an early structure as noted under the construction section of the evaluation. Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act outlines criteria for determining cultural heritage value in Ontario. One of these criteria is that a resource "yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture." The structure has

this potential in a limited way given the signs of an earlier structure mentioned above and the extent of the alterations that the structure has undergone.

As a result of the extensive changes to the structure, the cultural heritage value that contributes to the village streetscape character has been compromised – that is, the style and craftsmanship of the original structure are no longer visible or ascertained from a streetscape perspective other than the original setbacks and some indication on the remaining form. However, considering the extent of the original wood framing and cladding that potentially still exist underneath layers of new material, careful demolition and thorough documentation and salvage for reuse of the materials belonging to the original structure is recommended. These include some of the timber and red brick as well as the main stair rail. The careful demolition and documentation is in order to uncover and leave an archival record in the community of the cultural value that may still exist.

Please refer to the complete BHE in the attachment section of this report.

#### *Summary of Heritage Assessment Report Submitted by Applicant – Record Building and Salvage Materials Where Possible*

The study includes a summary of the history of the area and the subject property. It finds that “given the extensive alterations to the original house there is no visible, architectural, character defining elements. The prominent location of the house on the edge of the Humber Valley overlooking Woodbridge Avenue and Humber Creek though is a contextual, character defining element or attribute.”

In terms of Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act, that sets out the criteria for cultural value or interest, the report finds that the structure “...has the potential to help in understanding the history of Woodbridge in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century because of its age and proximity to the rail line”. Also that “... the property is physically and historically linked to its context, yet the building has been significantly modified”.

The report concludes that “[g]iven its non-contributing status...”[a] careful photographic record should be made before, during and after demolition and every effort should be made to save and reuse any intact, original elements of the house such as the interior, main stair rail.” (p.9, IBI)

#### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan**

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the report will provide:

- STRATEGIC GOAL:  
Service Excellence - Providing service excellence to citizens.
- STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:  
Preserve our heritage and support diversity, arts and culture.

The findings and recommendations are consistent with City of Vaughan policies and practices and factor the analysis of the proposal described in this report.

#### **Regional Implications**

N/A

#### **Conclusion**

Please refer to recommendation section of this report.

**Attachments**

1. Location Map
- 2-18. BHE (Built Heritage Evaluation)

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