

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

ADDRESS: 8682 Highway 27

LEGAL: Concession 9, Part of Lot 12, Plan 64R7626 Part 1-4

ROLL: 192800033124700

1 ½ storey, Georgian/Regency vernacular style, rubble stone exterior (c. 1855)

OVERVIEW

The cultural heritage value of the property known as 8682 Highway 27 meets the criteria set out by the *Ontario Heritage Act* under Province of Ontario Regulation 9/06 for the categories of design/physical, historical/associative and contextual value.

REASON FOR REGISTRATION

Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* enables municipalities to create a Heritage Register of properties of “cultural heritage value or interest”. The current City of Vaughan Register was established and approved by Council on June 27, 2005. The Register has not been updated since that date. The Register also includes properties that are individually Designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

LSHS - Properties of Architectural or Historical Significance

These properties are officially “listed” under Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. These properties do not require a Heritage Permit to alter, and the owner must give 60-day notice to the municipality if they wish to demolish all or any part of the structure. The City may ask for a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment as part of an application (per VOP 2010). The municipality has the right to initiate the designation process under Section 29, which means that a property acquires the protection of a designated property.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The farmhouse is associated with John Lawrie, who was prominent in the township as a councillor on the first Township Council when municipal government was established throughout rural Ontario by provincial legislation in 1849. John and Sarah Lawrie also participated in the development and construction the Pine Grove Congregational Church, established in 1841.

The farmhouse is associated with four generations of the Lawrie family who owned the farm located on the east half of Lot 12 for nearly 120 years. The family was of sufficient prominence to be documented in the Tweedsmuir history of the community even though they no longer owned the farm and were not resident in the area.

Local history associates the construction of the farmhouse with Henry Burton, a skilled local stone mason who constructed several prominent masonry structures in the community and is reputed to have been involved in the construction of an addition to

Osgoode Hall in Toronto. It is possible that Henry Burton both designed and built the Lawrie farmhouse.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The John Lawrie Farmhouse is a one and half storey farmhouse, of the vernacular late Georgian style. The form of the house is composed of two main sections: a main front-facing fieldstone section and a brick tail addition at the back, slightly off-centre from the main addition. The house is visible from Highway 27.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The main body of the building is built in a T-shaped plan, with the tail wing off-centre, located slightly to the north. The stone cladding is dressed and coursed on main elevation, laid in random fashion on rest of elevations, with variation of colours typical field stone of the area. Finely tooled /dressed limestone quoining is prevalent on the main elevation, which has three bays, a centre door (now within a vestibule) and two large window openings on either side. The central existing door opening is enclosed within a hip roof, frame vestibule that is clad in clapboard. This three-part Palladian-inspired composition contains a central double hung sash with six-over-six panes, flanked by narrower windows, with two over two lights, finely tooled/dressed limestone lintel and lug sill. The original windows documented in 2010 have since been vandalized.

There is a small dormer window on west slope, south of tail wing; field stone flat arches encompass the rest of the building's windows. North and South elevation composition: two window openings on the ground floor and smaller window openings on the upper floor. Upper floor window openings are inset equally from the ends of the wall on both sides of the building.

Gabled roof has eaves return. Two chimneys (on peak at north and south ends), have stucco clad brick with corbelled tops. Side elevation roof detailing trim includes projecting boxed verges, returned eaves, plain soffits and moulded fascias. Other features include a south side entrance to cellar: a stone "vestibule" structure with gable roof that protects a basement entrance.

The rear 1 ½-storey tail wing brick-clad running bond, painted construction (c. 1870 or 1890) has two gable dormers featuring radiating segmental arches, positioned across from each other. Window style is two-over-two double hung sashes, painted white. The chimney is no longer extant, but evidence remains on west wall.

Later additions to the tail wing incorporate a one-storey, brick exterior shed roof (dating to around the turn of century, serving as a modified garage entrance), and another one-storey, at the other side (in place of side porches – 20th century, uncertain date).

Construction

Outer structure: (see also description of stone in architectural style)

- Field Stone

- Finely dressed limestone quoining at eastern facing corners
- Large fieldstone quoining at western facing corners
- Windows of typical proportions that closely approximate a 1:2 ratio of width to height Inner structure:
- Wood construction/ frame floor construction, roof and interior walls (hand split lath and plaster)
- Sill beams are hand hewn with mortise and tenon connections at the sill intersection and joist connections
- Heavy timber girders, machine cut, early mill
- Evidence of wood joists sawn by vertical machine saw (early “frame saw” automated the action of previous “pit saw”) - pit saws would have been the necessity of the pioneer with no access to a mill* (see O’Hara Mill c. 1850 and Ontario Historic Mills).

Typical Joist Measurements: depth of 10 inches; width variation, some are 2 and some are 3 inches; spacing also varies to approximately 20 inches apart. The interior features tongue and groove plank subfloor. The general layout consists of a central hallway with staircase and flanking rooms. The front door, side lights and transom, have been replaced. Original main door opening remains recognizable and has interior and exterior trim.

Existing interior features contributing to the character of the farmhouse are:

- Ground floor: layout, interior walls, window and door casements, baseboards,
- Second floor: layout, interior walls, window and door casements, baseboards,
- Plank wood floorboards
- Wood frame structure: early mill - sawn studs
- Hand-split lath
- Plaster
- Staircase: photographic evidence from 2010 of spindles and woodwork.
- Main level interior doors removed except for door to rear wing and north-west room: “cross and bible” wood door, typical of 1850’s or earlier. The door leading to the wing addition has more ornate recessed paneling and thumb latch door hardware. The paneling and thickness of the door may be indicative of it being at one time a door leading to the exterior.

Known Alterations

- Ground floor windows facing east have been broken, all original window openings remain
- front vestibule added mid. 20th century (front door opening and trim still discernable)
- Mid-20th century: rear south side porch enclosed
- Mid-20th century north side porch enclosed
- Front door replaced and infilled to construct interior closet. Change is reversible, original door opening and surround easily discerned
- Garage door introduced to rear brick lean-to addition

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The York Herald newspaper (Richmond Hill Library)

City of Vaughan Archives

A History of Vaughan Township

The Liberal newspaper (Richmond Hill Library)

2014 CHIA 8682 Highway 27, Concession 9, Lot 12 (Unterman McPhail Associates, in association with Wayne Morgan)