

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

ADDRESS: 7961 Jane Street
LEGAL: Lot 7, Concession 4

OVERVIEW

The cultural heritage value of the property known as 7961 Jane Street 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.

Date Built: around 1879-1915
Location: east side of Jane Street, north of Highway 7
Condition: good.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

7961 Jane Street is an example of the Foursquare style, also known as American Foursquare, considered a subtype of the Edwardian style. Emerging in the 1890s, the foursquare style utilizes simplicity through minimal decorative elements, and cubical shape. Other characteristics of the Foursquare style include a hipped roof, front porch, and a central dormer. The spread in popularity can be attributed to its affordability, and designs being included in Sears mail-order catalogues. This allowed for an increased convenience for making purchases. The popularity of the style would continue into the 1930s.

The elements of the Foursquare style can be seen at the subject property. The two-storey red brick structure is setback from the road, and the front elevation faces Jane Street. The entrance to the structure is offset and contains a window on the ground floor. The porch spans the width of the building and has a hipped roof that is supported by three columns. The bases of the columns are brick, and are evenly spaced: one column on either end and one column at the center. The second level has two 1-over-1 windows, and the hipped roof has a central dormer window. The south elevation contains windows on both levels of the structure, including a 2-storey bay window.

HISTORICAL / ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

The subject property is known to the Smith family. The presence of the Smith family in Vaughan began with John Smith who arrived from Somerset County, Pennsylvania around 1799. Lot 7, Concession 4 was purchased by John Smith in 1801. He was known to have been a part of the Mennonite Church. The Mennonite Church, which was in the Edgely community, was built in 1824 and was also located on Lot 7, Concession 4. John Smith was later joined by his brother Jacob Smith (1751-1830) and his wife Fanny Weber. Research has indicated that Jacob and Franny were the only family in 1820 to own a wagon for the sole purpose of leisure. This helps to give insight into the lifestyle within Vaughan during this timeframe. John Smith later deeded the property to his brother Jacob.

The grandson of Jacob and Fanny, David Smith, contributed to the development of Vaughan. He was known as a craftsman and a builder within the community. He not only built several homes and barns in the Vaughan community and other townships, but he also helped build the Edgeley United Church. Additionally, David and his sons operated the shingle mill. David's wife, Lydia Snider, also made contributions to the community. While David created the caskets for the community, his wife made the casket pillows. It is understood that families who could afford paid five dollars, while those who could not afford the fee or if the casket was for a child, were not charged.

A map from 1860 indicates Jacob Smith Junior (1793-1867), son of Jacob Smith, occupied the lot at this time. Jacob Smith Jr. was married to Mary Grobb, and together they had eight children – two daughters and six sons. His sons, Abraham and Samuel, would later go on to farm the property.

An 1878 map indicates that the northern portion of the lot was occupied by Samuel Smith, and the southern portion of the lot was occupied by his brother Abraham Smith. While there is documentation that has the structure being built in 1915, further research has indicated that the building could date back to 1879 and was built by Samuel Smith. While the first Smith house was made of logs, the Smith family home built by Samuel was made of bricks.

Samuel Smith's son, Jerry, became a well-known watch and clockmaker. Jerry Smith attended the Canadian Horological Institute in Toronto, where he was one of only three students in Canada to graduate with a Diploma Grade A 1. He went on to own a successful business in Richmond Hill, that was open for over 50 years. His reputation grew to the point where his expertise was sought after from people in various locations, including Quebec, British Columbia, England, and India.

The property remained in the family for 165 years. When the Smith family ownership came to an end in 1966, it was then taken over by the Canadian National Railway which was then used as part of their large marshalling yard. While it was originally called the Toronto Yard, it was later renamed in 1975 as the MacMillan Yard after former president Norman J. MacMillan. As a result, there was a change in how freight trains moved around the GTA, there was a reduce use in the freight yards in Danforth and Mimico, and the MacMillan Yard would contribute to Vaughan's industrial core.

CONTEXTUAL VALUE

The contextual value of the subject property relates to the building's historical link and physical location on the property. Located on the west half of Lot 7, Concession 4, and set back from the road, the property historically represents a way of life during the time period it was built and connects to the Smith family. The Smith family not only made contributions that supported the development of Vaughan, but they were also early settlers in the area. This building reflects their success and hard work in the establishment of a homestead. It is here that the merit of the house lies, just as much as in the architectural value.

SUMMARY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

Physical/Design Value

- ☐ 2-storey structure
- ☐ Red Brick
- ☐ Hipped roof
- ☐ Central dormer
- ☐ Square-shaped
- ☐ Front porch, with three columns

Historical/Associative Value

- ☐ the subject property remained under ownership of one family for over 165 years
- ☐ the conversion in use led to a vast contribution to Vaughan's industrial core

Contextual Value

- ☐ the subject property is linked to the site and the surrounding connecting lot
- ☐ the subject property reflects the success of Smith family within the community

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