

Heritage Vaughan Committee Report

DATE: Wednesday, May 29, 2024

WARD: 2

TITLE: EXPANSION AND REBUILDING OF THE EXISTING LIUNA TRAINING FACILITY – ROBERT AGAR HOUSE KEPT IN SITU LOCATED AT 8700 HUNTINGTON ROAD, WOODBRIDGE

FROM:

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To seek Heritage Vaughan Committee's support and recommend to Committee of the Whole approval for the proposed alterations of the Robert Agar House and expansion of the existing LiUNA training facility located at 8700 Huntington Road, a property located on the west side of Huntington Road, south of Rutherford Road, and designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, as shown on Attachments 1-6.

Report Highlights

- The Owner is proposing irreversible alterations of the Robert Agar House and expansion of the existing LiUNA training facility at 8700 Huntington Road, Woodbridge.
- Heritage Vaughan review and Council approval is required under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- Staff is recommending approval of the proposed expansion and rebuilding of the existing LiUNA training facility.

Recommendations

THAT Heritage Vaughan recommend Council approve the proposed expansion and rebuilding of the existing LiUNA training facility at 8700 Huntington Road under Section 42 of *Ontario Heritage Act*, subject to the following conditions:

- a) Any significant changes to the proposal by the Owner may require reconsideration by the Heritage Vaughan Committee, which shall be

determined at the discretion of the Director of Development Planning and Manager of Urban Design and Cultural Heritage.

- b) That Heritage Vaughan Committee recommendations to Council do not constitute specific support for any Development Application under the *Planning Act* or permits currently under review or to be submitted in the future by the Owner as it relates to the subject application.
- c) That the applicant submits Building Permit stage architectural drawings and building material specifications to the satisfaction of the Vaughan Development Planning Department, Urban Design and Cultural Heritage Division.

Background

The Site contains a one-and-a-half-storey vernacular house-form building, originally built c. 1855 as a residence for Robert Agar and Margaret Lawrie. This heritage resource is known as the “Robert Agar House,” and is currently in use as part of the Vaughan campus training facilities for the Laborers’ International Union of North America (“LiUNA”).

The site has evolved considerably since LiUNA’s occupation of the site in 1991, from its historical use as a working farmstead into a remnant house-form building within an evolving industrial context. Most recently, this has included the construction of a one-storey storage facility to facilitate the ongoing use and expansion of LiUNA’s operation of the site. The proposed development will conserve the site’s historic house-form building in situ, retaining, and reinforcing its relationship to and visibility along Huntington Road, while expanding the existing LiUNA training facility.

Previous Reports/Authority

[By-Law 46-82](#)

[Construction of new storage building, 2022](#)

Analysis and Options

The proposed new building is designed in a modified “U-shape”, with a two-story rectilinear wing running north-south, connecting the heritage structure to the existing campus buildings, as well as two rectilinear two-storey wings running east-west, flanking, and extending proud of the heritage house. The southern east-west wing will be parallel to the heritage resource, while the northern east-west wing will be slightly offset to align with the northern property line and to create sight lines to the heritage structure from Huntington Road.

To the rear (west) of the “U-shaped” Building “A”, the development proposes to include a one-storey workshop, identified as Building “E” in the architectural drawing set. Building “E” will connect to the existing campus structures, identified as Buildings “F1,” “F2,” and “F3,” respectively.

Two existing buildings will be retained on the west half of the lot (Buildings “S” and “T”), with a proposed open grid gravel system punctuating the lot perimeter between the existing asphalt driveway and the southern property line, and along the north perimeter of Building “T” to the west end of the lot; the latter extending the existing north driveway in length with a different material, transitioning from asphalt to gravel. South of this added treatment at grade will be an existing tunnel below grade connecting to an existing manhole shaft at the northwest corner of the Site to the existing training facility identified as Building “T.”

The City of Vaughan Official Plan

6.2.2.4. Designated heritage properties shall be conserved in accordance with good heritage conservation practice. The City may permit alterations or additions to designated heritage properties when those properties and their heritage attributes are conserved in accordance with good heritage conservation practice.

6.2.2.6. That, in reviewing heritage permit applications, the City be guided by the following heritage conservation principles:

- a. good heritage conservation practices.*
- b. protecting heritage buildings, Cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological sites including their environs from any adverse impacts of the proposed alterations, additions, works or development.*
- c. retaining and repairing original building fabric and architectural features.*

The built heritage resource on the subject lands will be conserved with good heritage conservation practice. The proposed development retains the site’s historic building in situ, retaining and reinforcing its relationship to and visibility along Huntington Road, while expanding the LiUNA training facility.

Impact on the cultural heritage value:

- The post-1970 bay window on the south elevation will be removed and replaced with a new entrance;
- The north-south wing of Building “A” will abuts the rear (west) of the Robert Agar House, modifying the existing opening on its west façade to facilitate the connection of the mechanical system of the new school with the heritage resource;
- Removal of the existing interior (not a heritage attribute) of the Robert Agar House, which is to be replaced with a structural stability system allowing for a lowered floorplate to grade and a raised ceiling height;
- East-west wings of Building “A” will flank and extend proud of the heritage resource; and
- Continued elevation of the site and area context from agricultural to industrial.

Mitigation efforts include:

- restoration of all exterior heritage attributes of the building
- accessibility accommodations will be facilitated through the creation of a new entrance at grade
- an expansive view of the heritage structure from within the glazed corridor of the northern east-west wing
- a reconfiguration of landscaping features, including trees to establish a view corridor to the Robert Agar House from Huntington Road
- the proposed building “A” will be clad in a material that is in keeping with heritage resource, existing campus structure, and evolving character of Huntington Road.

By-Law 46-82

Reasons for Designation:

The Robert Agar house (ca. 1855) is recommended for designation on architectural grounds as a good example of a mid-19th century, red brick Ontario farmhouse exhibiting particular features designed in the Classical Revival style. The front façade is embellished by white brick detailing providing a stylized entablature and simulated corner quoins while the front doorway, with its rectangular glazed transom and sidelights, exhibits further elements borrowed from the Classical Revival style.

The proposed construction on the subject site will not affect the items listed in the reason for designation and is therefore supported.

Financial Impact

There are no Financial Impacts associated with this report.

Operational Impact

There are no Operational Impacts associated with this report.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

There are no broader regional impacts or considerations.

Conclusion

The Development Planning Department is satisfied the proposed alterations to the Robert Agar House and proposed expansion of the campus conform to the policies and guidelines within the Vaughan Official Plan and By-Law 46-82. Accordingly, staff can support Council approval of the proposed works at 8700 Huntington Road under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

For more information, please contact: Vanessa Lio, Heritage Specialist, ext. 8512.

Attachments

- Attachment 1 - 8700Huntington-AGAR_Location Map.
- Attachment 2 - 8700 Huntington Road-AGAR_CHIA.
- Attachment 3 - 8700Huntington-AGAR_Heritage Conservation Plan.
- Attachment 4 - 8700Huntington-AGAR_Architectural Drawings.
- Attachment 5 - 8700Huntington-AGAR_3D Renderings.
- Attachment 6 - 8700Huntington-AGAR_Materials Samples and Specifications.

Prepared by

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