

Heritage Vaughan Committee Report

DATE: Wednesday, May 29, 2024

WARD: 4

**TITLE: PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF 91 THORNHILL WOODS DRIVE
UNDER PART IV OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT**

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 designation of the property municipally known as 91 Thornhill Woods Drive located (as shown on Attachment 1).

Report Highlights

- The report proposes the designation of 91 Thornhill Woods Drive, a brick Georgian building, built in 1853, and a wooden Georgian building built in 1857.
- The property holds physical, associated, and contextual cultural heritage value as described in the attached Statement of Cultural Heritage Value.
- The designation of this property meets the policies of the Vaughan Official Plan and the objectives and required criteria outlined in the *Ontario Heritage Act* by the Province of Ontario Regulation 9/06.

Recommendations

THAT Heritage Vaughan recommend Council approve the proposed designation as presented, subject to following conditions:

1. That Council approve the recommendation of the Heritage Vaughan Committee to designate 91 Thornhill Woods Drive in accordance with Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18.
2. That Staff be authorized to publish and serve the Notice of Intention to Designate in accordance with the requirements under; Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario*

Heritage Act R.S.O 1990, c.O.18 to the Ontario Heritage Trust, the Property Owner, and published in the City's website.

3. If no objection is served on the City Clerk within 30 days of the date of publication of the Notice of Intention, Council shall pass a by-law designating 91 Thornhill Woods Drive and a copy of the by-law shall be served on the Property Owner and Ontario Heritage Trust and a notice shall be posted on the City website.

Background

91 Thornhill Woods Drive was evaluated as having significant architectural, historical and contextual value, and was approved in 2005 by City of Vaughan Council to be added to the Listing of Significant Heritage Structures ('LSHS'), receiving limited protection under Section 27 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Recent staff research on the subject property has confirmed that the cultural heritage value of 91 Thornhill Woods Drive meets the criteria set out under OHA Regulation 9/06 for physical, associative and contextual cultural heritage value. A complete designation report that outlines these values is included herewith.

Previous Reports/Authority

Not applicable.

Analysis and Options

In June 2019, the *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019* (Bill 108) received Royal Assent. Schedule 11 of this Act included amendments to the *Ontario Heritage Act* ('OHA').

The Bill 108 Amendments to the OHA came into force on July 1, 2021, and include a shift in Part IV designations related to certain Planning Act applications. These changes affect Section 29(1.2) of the OHA which now restricts City Council's ability to give notice of its intention to designate a property under the Act to within 90 days after the City Clerk gives notice of a complete application.

The Bill 23, the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, Amendments to the OHA that came into force on January 1, 2023, mandates the municipalities to remove properties from the heritage register under section 27 if they do not pass a by-law designating the property on the second anniversary of the bill coming into force (January 1, 2025).

In light of this new legislation, it is imperative for City of Vaughan staff to identify cultural heritage properties that are currently Listed under Section 27 of the OHA or identified as a property of interest to be evaluated as a candidate for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the OHA. The Province has amended O. Reg. 9/06 under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, which establishes nine provincial criteria for determining whether a property is of cultural heritage value or interest if it meets two or more of the nine criteria.

As set out in Vaughan's Official 2010 Plan, the City of Vaughan states that it is the policy of Council to:

6.1.1.1. To recognize and conserve cultural heritage resources, including heritage buildings and structures, Cultural heritage landscapes, and other cultural heritage resources, and to promote the maintenance and development of an appropriate setting within, around and adjacent to all such resources.

6.1.2.6. That the City shall use criteria established by Provincial regulation under the Ontario Heritage Act for determining cultural heritage value or interest and for identifying and evaluating properties for listing in the Heritage register and for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The City may further refine these criteria and provide guidelines for their use through the Vaughan Heritage Conservation Guidelines.

6.1.2.7. Any property worthy of designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act that fulfills one or more of the criteria identified in policy 6.1.2.6 will be considered to possess cultural heritage value.

6.2.1.1. To make full use of the provisions of Provincial legislation, such as the *Ontario Heritage Act*, *Planning Act*, *Municipal Act* and *Environmental Assessment Act*, to protect and conserve cultural heritage resources in Vaughan.

Following a thorough examination of archival documentation, staff finds that the subject property holds cultural heritage value and meets the criteria set out under the *Ontario Heritage Act* by the Province of Ontario Regulation 9/06 for the categories of design/physical, historical/associative and contextual value.

Designation Comments

ADDRESS: 91 Thornhill Woods Drive

LEGAL: Lot 11, Concession 2

EVALUATION UNDER O.REG 9/06 CRITERIA

Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the *Ontario Heritage Act* establishes nine criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the OHA if it meets two or more of these criteria. The following evaluation tables identify the application of each criterion as "N/A" (not applicable) or "X" (applicable) to the property, with explanatory text below.

1. DESIGN OR PHYSICAL VALUE

The property has design value or physical value because it	
▪ is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	X
▪ displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	N/A
▪ demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

The two structures located at 91 Thornhill Woods Drive are representative of the Georgian architectural style. The Johnathan Baker House (Baker House) is a 2-storey former residence, that was built using red brick. The structure has symmetrical elements and is simplistic in design. The front elevation has a verandah, with simple posts, that spans the width of the façade. There are also two front entrance doorways, with a window on either side.

The Baker Cottage was built using the plank-on-plank construction, which is considered a unique building method. The arrangement of the façade is balanced with a centrally placed front doorway, and a window on either side. The front of the structure also has a verandah with simple posts.

2. HISTORICAL OR ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

The property has historical value or associative value because it	
▪ has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	X
▪ yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	X
▪ demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

The Johnathan Baker House, and the Baker Cottage are situated on the lot that was historically owned by the Baker family. The lot was purchased by Johnathan Baker Senior in 1816, and he worked hard to clear and develop the land. The Baker farm would continue to remain in the family for many years, with each Baker owner making additions to the property for their familial and farming operational needs. These elements allow for an understanding of the community and way of life during the time the structures were built.

The Baker family were well known for their maple syrup production. Locals and the wider public would purchase maple products including maple syrup and maple sugar. The Bakers would also host school trips where they would demonstrate how the trees were tapped and share their knowledge of maple syrup production. The visitors were not limited to locals, but also international visitors, which included nurses, and professors.

After being part of the Baker family for over 180 years, the farm was sold in 1997. The Johnathan Baker House, and the Baker Cottage were sold to the City of Vaughan in 2001, and they were later moved to their current location at 91 Thornhill Woods Drive. The structures are placed near the entrance to the Sugar Baker Bush woodlot trail.

3. CONTEXTUAL VALUE

The property has contextual value because it is	
▪ important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	N/A
▪ physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	X
▪ a landmark	N/A

The two structures located at 91 Thornhill Woods Drive holds contextual value through their historical connection to the area. Although the structures are no longer in the exact location they were originally built, they still remain within Lot 11 of Concession 2, where they were historically situated.

The Jonathan Baker House was originally located at 1150 Maple Sugar Lane, while the Baker Cottage was located at 8640 Bathurst Street. Both structures are connected to the Baker family, and they are representative of the hard work and dedication that went into establishing themselves in a new country. The Baker homestead remained in the family for over 180 years, and the longstanding ownership by the same family creates a significant historical link to the local community. The combination of the Baker family's involvement in the maple syrup industry, and the placement of the structures near the entrance to the Sugar Baker Bush Woodlot, further highlights the historical connection between the Baker structures and the surrounding area. The buildings also symbolize a way of life during the timeframe they were built. It is here that the merit of both structures lies, just as much as in the architectural value.

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 Regional impacts or considerations for this application.

Conclusion

Staff finds that, as examined from archival documentation, the subject property holds cultural heritage value and meets the criteria of criteria as set out under the *Ontario Heritage Act* by the Province of Ontario Regulation 9/06 for the categories of design/physical, historical/associative and contextual value.

The Development Planning Department is satisfied the proposed designation of 91 Thornhill Woods Drive conforms to the policies of the Vaughan Official Plan and the objectives and criteria of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Accordingly, staff can support a Heritage Vaughan recommendation for Council approval of the proposed designation of 91 Thornhill Woods Drive under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

For more information, please contact: Aminata Shaw, Heritage Specialist, ext. 8813.

Attachments

- Attachment 1 – 91ThornhillWoods_Location Map
- Attachment 2 – 91ThornhillWoods_Statement of Cultural Heritage Value
- Attachment 3 – 91ThornhillWoods_Johnathan Baker House Info Pages
- Attachment 4 – 91ThornhillWoods_Baker Cottage Info Pages
- Attachment 5 – 91ThornhillWoods_Johnathan Baker House Building Photos
- Attachment 6 – 91ThornhillWoods_Baker Cottage Building Photos
- Attachment 7 – 91ThornhillWoods_Aerial Photos

Prepared by

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