

## **STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE**

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

ADDRESS: 12000 Pine Valley Drive  
LEGAL: 34, Concession 7

### **OVERVIEW**

The cultural heritage value of the property known as 12000 Pine Valley Drive meets the criteria set out by the *Ontario Heritage Act* under Province of Ontario Regulation 9/06 for the categories of historical/associative, design/physical and contextual value.

Name: McMurchy House / Brysona  
Date Built: 1857  
Style: Georgian  
Condition: Good

### **ARCHITECTURAL VALUE**

The structure located 12000 Pine Valley Drive is an example of a rectangular stone Georgian farmhouse. Georgian style is referred to the timeframe during the reign of first four King Georges of England. Georgian structures are considered to be sturdy and secure, and the characteristics of the style include simplicity, lack of ornamentation, and symmetry.

The structure was originally 1-1/2 storey Georgian stone building. Sometime between 1924-1926 the roof was raised to create a 2-storey home. The upper half of the building has vertical wooden panels that have been painted blue. Though there have been changes, the structures still maintain its Georgian elements. There is a 1-storey portion of the building that extends from the south-facing wall. The west facing elevation has a 2-storey porch, and there are windows on both levels. In addition, the upper and ground level porches have columns that are evenly spaced. The east facing elevation (towards Pine Valley Drive) contains a stone chimney. This elevation also has four symmetrically placed windows; two windows on the ground level, and two on the upper level. Additionally, the north facing elevation has a symmetrical arrangement of six windows: three at the ground level, and three on the upper level.

### **HISTORICAL/ASSOCIATIVE VALUE**

The structure located at 12000 Pine Valley is located on the east half of Lot 34, Concession 7. James McMurchy purchased 100 acres of Lot 34, Concession 7 in 1841 for 87 pounds, 10 shillings. The existing stone home was built in 1857. For fire protection, a stone wall was built through the middle of the house from the cellar to the roof. While tending to the land was done through horsepower, items such as blankets, sweaters, and socks came from the wool of their own sheep. This helps to give insight into the lifestyle of early settlers in Vaughan.

Upon the passing of James McMurchy in 1886, the farm was passed on to his son Archie. James had left the farm, a pair of horses and harnesses, 2 cows, 6 sheep, a plough, a wagon, a sleigh and a fanning mill to Archie. As Archie was not married, his sister Rose, managed the domestic duties of the household. James had also left Archie in charge in taking care of his wife, and Archie's mother, Mary McMillan. In the will Archie was to provide her with the

following: the garden, two western rows of trees in the orchard, pastureland, cows, sheep and other goods such as flour, pork, potatoes, wood, as well as providing her an payment of 100 dollars of cash each year. This helps to give insight into the familial responsibilities during transitions in ownership, and how family members looked after each other. Archie later moved to Maple in 1901, and the farm was rented to William Kerr and his family until 1910.

When Archie passed away in 1905, he had ordered his farm to be sold. In 1907, the property was sold for \$7000. Moreover, Hugh McTaggart had been holding a trust for Thomas McMurchy, who was living in South Dakota, and purchased the property on his behalf. When Tom McMurchy passed away, he had no heirs or a will. Alexander MacMurchy of Strange (community in King Township), a creditor, applied to administrate Tom McMurchy's estate. By 1910, he sold the property at public auction in King Township, to Alexander Bryson.

By 1922, Alexander sold the property to his son William Calvin Bryson. William Bryson was married to Barbara Beatrice Ireland Bryson, and together they had three children. They had two daughters, Jean and Verna, and their son's name was Jesse. Archival documentation indicates that William Bryson was responsible for raising the roof of the house sometime around 1924-1926, and as a result converting the structure to a 2-storey house. Other changes to the house included the addition of an attic, removing two fireplaces, as well as adding more doors and windows. These alterations showcase how the home was adapted to meet the needs of the family. Developments were also made to the farm. In 1939 a new pig pen was built, and the first tractor was purchased. In addition, by 1952 the horses were sold, and a second tractor was purchased. The purchasing of the tractors highlights how progress in technology contributed to the shifts in farmwork.

William Bryson purchased lot 1, Concession 6 in King Township in 1948. When he later moved to the King Township property, his son Jesse Bryson (1920-1997) moved to the farm with his wife Jean Alberta Keffer (1922-2013) in 1950. They had a daughter, Barbara Ruth, and a son they adopted named Ray. Jesse Bryson was an active member within the Vaughan community. He served two terms as Councillor from 1957 – 1958, and 1959 –1960. He then went on to serve two terms as Deputy Reeve from 1961 –1962, and 1963 –1964. A *Liberal* article from 1960 states he was the only fully-fledged farmer in Vaughan Township's governing body. The article also describes him as a conservationist. This is reflected in his role as an executive committee member of the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and served as chairman of that groups Reforestation and Land Use Advisory Board. He was also a member of the Soil Conservation Society of America, and the Agricultural Institute of Canada. He was also interested in historical matters and was a member of the of the Vaughan Museum Committee, and the Vaughan Township Historical Society. The 1960 *Liberal* article also indicates he was interested in education and served as a board member of the Purpleville Public School for five years. His wife, Jean Keffer, was also involved in the community. The 1960 *Liberal* article states She was part of the Tweedsmuir History Committee of Vellore and as a member of the Women's Institute, supported the collection of information about Vaughan's history of early settlers. This helps to showcase she was a contributor to the preservation of Vaughan's history and stories about its development.

The Bryson family ownership of the property would come to an end in 1973, when it was sold to Larry Pass. By 1988, Larry Pass sold to speculators.

## **CONTEXTUAL VALUE**

The structure located at 12000 Pine Valley Drive holds contextual value through its historical connection to the area. The structure is setback on the lot, and is located at the end of a long drive. As a longstanding feature in the area, the property historically represents a way of life during the time period it was built. The building also reflects the hard work and contributions of the farming families that lived on the property. These include members from McMurchy, and Bryson families. It is here that the merit of the house lies, just as much as in the architectural value.

## **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES**

### **Architectural Value**

- Stone Structure
- 2-Storey
- 2-storey porch, with columns

### **Historical Value**

- Originally 1-1/2 storey structure, and later the roof was raised to create the 2-storey home
- William Bryson was responsible for raising the roof to the house in 1926
- First tractor was purchased in 1939, which influenced farming tasks
- Jesse Bryson was active within the community; Served as Councillor and Deputy Reeve. Was also a member of the Agricultural Institute of Canada, and Vaughan Museum Committee
- Jean Keffer (wife of Jesse Bryson), was part of the Tweedsmuir History Committee of Vellore and as a member of the Women's Institute

### **Contextual Value**

- Structure is historically linked to the Lot and Concession it was originally built upon
- The structure is setback from the main road, and located at the end of a long drive

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