

**Heritage Impact Statement**  
**Agar House**  
**10436 Huntington Road**  
**City of Vaughan**



May 2014 photograph of the property from:  
CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT,  
CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPES & BUILT HERITAGE RESOURCES  
Prepared by Unterman McPhail, January 2016- Revised August 2017

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**August 2020**

### **Engagement:**

I am an architect licensed in Ontario, and a professional member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP). I was engaged by the owners to produce a heritage impact statement regarding moving and restoration of the dwelling on the property at 10436 Huntington Road in the City of Vaughan. The property appears in the City's Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value.

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### **Appendices**

- A. Ownership Chronology
- B. CV for Heritage Consultant

## 1. The Mandate:

The subject property is included in the City of Vaughan's *Listing of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Value*, commonly known as Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value. The house is described in the Register as of Gothic Revival style, and dated to 1875.

The *Provincial Policy Statement* addresses the situation of development on protected heritage resources in Section 2.6.3:

**2.6.1 Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.**

**Conserved** is defined in the *Provincial Policy Statement* as follows:

Conserved means the identification, protection, use and/or management of cultural heritage and archaeological resources in such a way that their heritage values, attributes and integrity are retained. This may be addressed through a conservation plan or heritage impact assessment.

This Heritage Impact Statement is prepared in compliance with this requirement in the *Provincial Policy Statement*, and relies on the guidance provided in the City's *Heritage Impact Assessment Terms of Reference*.

## 2. Historical Background

Kleinburg is a typical example of early Ontario's development. Transportation difficulties required local production of many essential goods. Where the road grid intersected with rivers, the establishment of mills to cut timber for construction and grind grains for food was a critical part of the early pattern of settlement. The rivers powered the mills, and the roads allowed the import of raw material and the export of finished goods. A mill and the traffic it generated would attract supporting trades and shopkeepers, and a village would grow up around it. And so it was in Kleinburg.<sup>1</sup>

In 1848 John Nicholas Kline In 1848, John Kline bought 83 acres of Lot 24 in Concession 8, west of Islington Avenue. He built both a sawmill and a gristmill, and according to plats from 1848, he subdivided his land into quarter-acre lots, anticipating the village that would grow up around his mills.



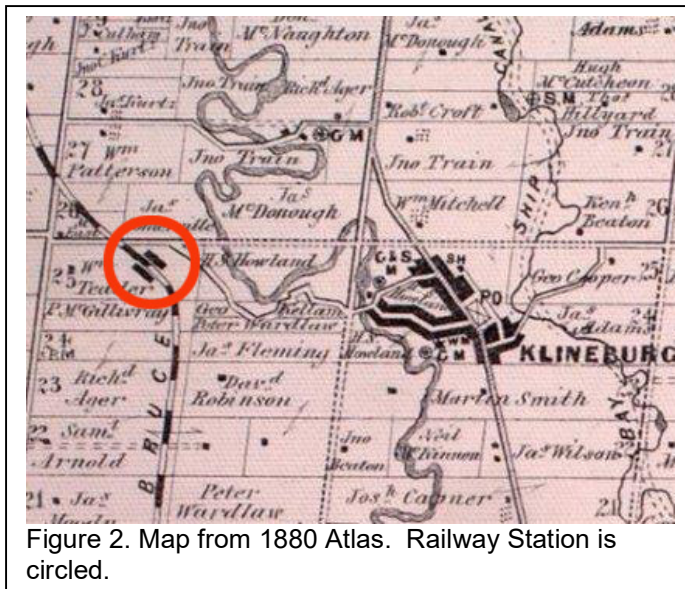
Figure 1. Kleinburg's original development was supported by its mills. This is the dam for Howland's Mill, originally John Klein's.

<sup>1</sup> City of Vaughan, *History Briefs, Bulletin No 5. Early Milling Communities in V.*

A second sawmill, George Stegman's, is shown on John Kline's 1848 plan of subdivision, across town on the East Humber River.

In 1851, John N. Kline sold his property to James Mitchell, who sold it the following year to the Howland brothers, successful millers with operations in Lambton, Waterdown, and St. Catharines. The Howlands, William Pearce, Fred and Henry Stark Howland, went on to great success in business and politics in the world beyond the Humber River valleys.

By 1860, Kleinburg had grown to include a tanner, a tailor, a bootmaker, a carriage maker, a doctor, a saddler and harness maker, an undertaker, two hotels, a church and a school. By 1870 a chemist (druggist), a cabinet maker, an insurance agent, a butcher, a milliner and a tinsmith had been added to the local business roster. The mills that John N. Kline had built and that the Howlands had developed were the largest between Toronto and Barrie. Kleinburg became a popular stopping place for travelling farmers and businessmen on their way to and from Toronto.<sup>2</sup>



Development patterns were changed with the coming of the railways. The first real railway railroad in Canada was the Ontario Simcoe and Huron Railway, which went from Toronto to Lake Simcoe in 1853, and was extended to Georgian Bay at Collingwood in 1855. It was a success and prompted imitation. In 1871 the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway was opened, running from Toronto, through Woodbridge and Orangeville to Mount Forest. It is said that the politically powerful Howlands arranged for the rail line to swing east so as to be closer to their mill. The deviation is known as the Howland Bend.

A station was built, signed as "Kleinburg", but it was 2 km west of the village, just south of Nashville Road. The presence of the railway station once supported commercial enterprises such as Card's lumber yard (there is still a building bearing their sign), a hotel, and more than one grain elevator, the last of these being built about 1930.<sup>3</sup> Something like a hamlet developed towards the west, originally called East's Corners, after James East's store and post office at Nashville Road and Huntington Road. The importance of the railway to the prosperity of Kleinburg's mills created an important connection between the Kleinburg and Nashville. The present name was given by a resident named Jonathan Scott who had come from Nashville, Tennessee. The original 1871 station was replaced in 1907 with the building that was moved in 1976 to Kleinburg, just north of the elementary school.

<sup>2</sup> City of Vaughan website, *Brief History of Kleinburg*.

<sup>3</sup> *A History of Vaughan Township*, Reaman, G. Elmore, Vaughan Historical Society, 1971



Following the Second World War, suburban development came to Vaughan, and the Nashville area is now a mix of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings, and more recent houses. More are to come.

### 3. Introduction to the Site

The subject property is described as: Part of Lot 23 Concession 10, Geographic Township of Vaughan, City of Vaughan, Regional Municipality of York. It is located on the west side of Huntington Road, the house being about 850 metres south of Nashville Road. Lands to the east of Huntington Road have been developed as residential subdivisions, and residential development is pending for the subject property. Layout of the development includes a road intersecting Huntington Road and facing Algoma Road in the subdivision immediately east. This road will necessitate moving the existing listed house.

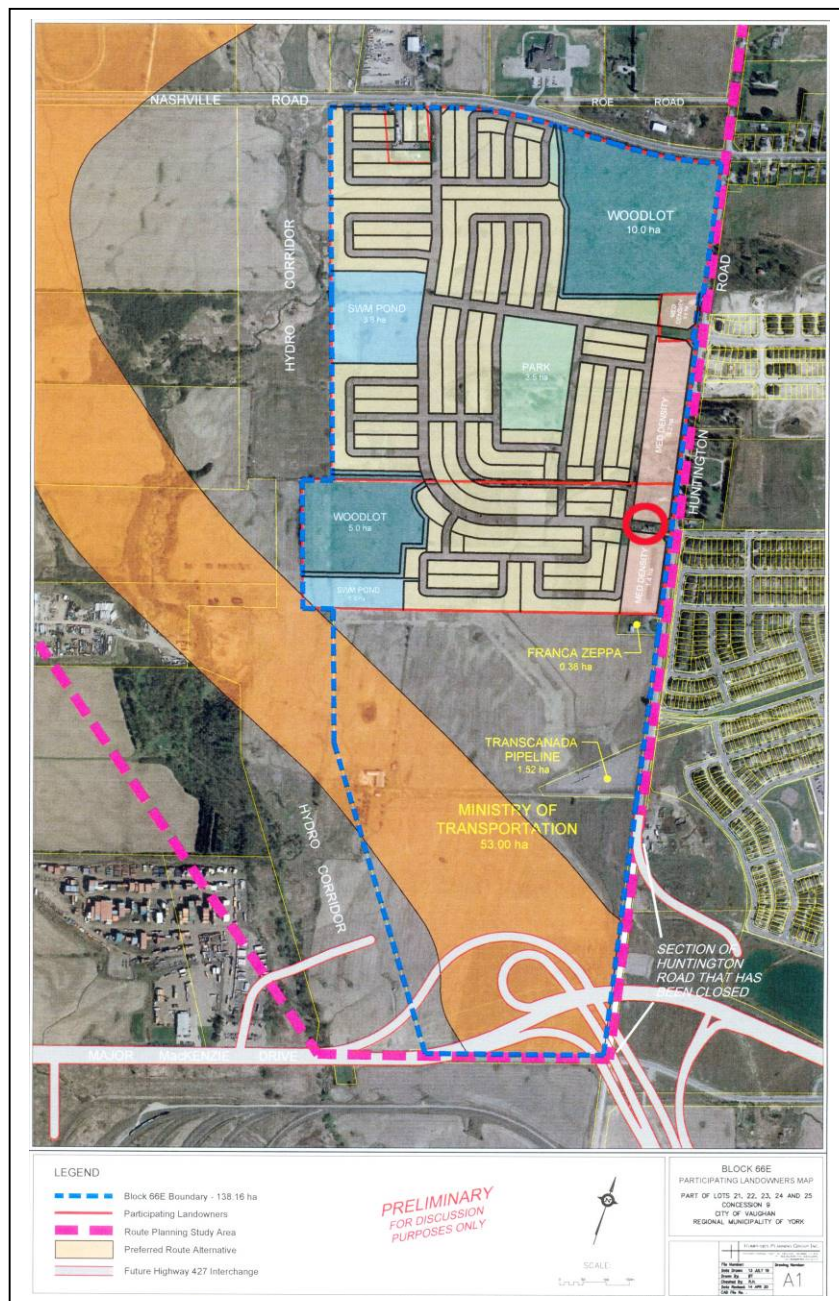


Figure 3.  
Proposal Map of Block 66E.  
Location of existing listed house  
is circled in red.



**4. The Heritage Resource:** The physical design heritage aspects of the house are succinctly described in the Huntington Road Cultural Heritage Assessment by Unterman McPhail as revised in 2017:

The 1½ story red brick farmhouse has a decorative dichromatic detailing consisting of bands, quoins and voussoirs of buff coloured brick. It has a centre gable roof with vergeboard and a three bay front elevation with a centre door and flanking window openings. The front entry porch has decorative woodwork. The Vaughan Heritage Inventory refers to a c1875 "Gothic Revival" style house. A small gable barn, an older concrete silo and other buildings are located on-site. (all now removed). The property is associated with the community of Nashville.

I engaged Diane Harman to research the chain of title on the subject property, from the original Crown Patent to the present (attached as an appendix). The title research shows that at the time the house was built the property was owned by Richard Agar, and that it was owned by three subsequent Agars—a total span of 81 years.

## **5. The Agar Family**

The Agar family's presence in Vaughan was initiated with the arrival of Hannah and Thomas, and six children, from Moolson, Yorkshire, in 1830. They settled on Lot 11, Concession 10 and their descendants continue to reside in Vaughan. Richard married Elizabeth Ash in 1839 and they had 10 children, 4 of whom died in infancy. Elizabeth Ash Agar died in 1854, and Richard then married Jane Francis Train. They had 12 children, four of whom died in childhood. Richard Agar died in 1888, and Jane Frances Train Agar died in 1919.

The subject property was purchased by Richard Agar on 12 April 1869. The census two years later shows him living with Jane and seven children, ranging in age from 1 to 20. Upon Richard's death, the property passed to Robert F. Agar, Richard and Jane's son who was born in 1861. The property passed on through a chain of Agars until Gordon R. Agar and Dorothy V. Agar sold it in 1950. It had been in the family for 81 years. See the Chain of Title in the Appendices.

The Agars are listed as early settlers in Vaughan in G. Elmore Reaman's *A History of Vaughan Township (1971)*. Documents in the Vaughan Archives show Richard as active in the Zoar Primitive Methodist Church, which was located on the south side of the current Nashville Cemetery, which originally belonged to the church. 55 Agars lie in that cemetery. The 1880 map shows "R Ager" as owner of the subject property and also the land opposite, where the cemetery now sits. There is a legend "PM" which I believe means Primitive Methodist. It is possible that Richard Agar sold or donated the land for the church. The Agars continued to be active in the Church as the local Methodist parishes underwent some re-alignments toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The Nashville Methodist Church at 926 Nashville Road was built in 1902, amalgamating two parishes from Bolton and Elder's Mills. Robert Agar was one of the four elders in the first Kirk Session.

The fact that the Agars were early settlers in Vaughan, and their roles in the life and construction of the Methodist churches and the cemetery, makes them significant in the history of the Nashville community.



## 6. The Original Farmhouse

**Condition of the House:** The house is of solid brick construction. Two wythes are tied with headers. Flemish bond on front elevation and front of south elevation, common bond (headers every 6<sup>th</sup> course) elsewhere. Polychrome brickwork with red field and buff quoins, voussoirs, and cruciform banding below the eaves. There is some settlement cracking but not extreme. Quite a few bricks suffer from shallow spalling—estimate less than 1000—and should be replaced. It is probable that the bricks were fired at a low temperature, and are therefore somewhat soft. Gingerbread on the gable, including its finial, is unusually rich—see photo on the front cover. It is falling or has fallen off. Left side is hanging from lightning rod cable, right side is missing, finial is now stored inside. The gingerbread is a defining characteristic and should be restored. Three lightning rods remain on the roof. Woodwork on verandah is intact, though right column seems to have settled slightly. Remnants of cast iron railing on top of verandah, but not restorable, in my opinion. Frieze boards and their decoration are mostly intact (simple design and easy to copy). Front door is original, others are not. Windows are mostly original, some broken glass.

The interiors of principal rooms on the ground floor are rich, with baseboards and casings of a grand scale. The current side door opening facing the stair is not original, and I conjecture that the stair was originally not enclosed, but open to the main room, with a handsome banister. I also conjecture that there was originally a verandah on the south side of the kitchen tail—a typical farmhouse feature.

I measure the footprint of the house at 1078 square feet, so the gross floor area is 2156 square feet. My AutoCad drawings at 1:1 are available.



Figure 5. Front (east) elevation.



Figure 6. South elevation.



Figure 7. North elevation.

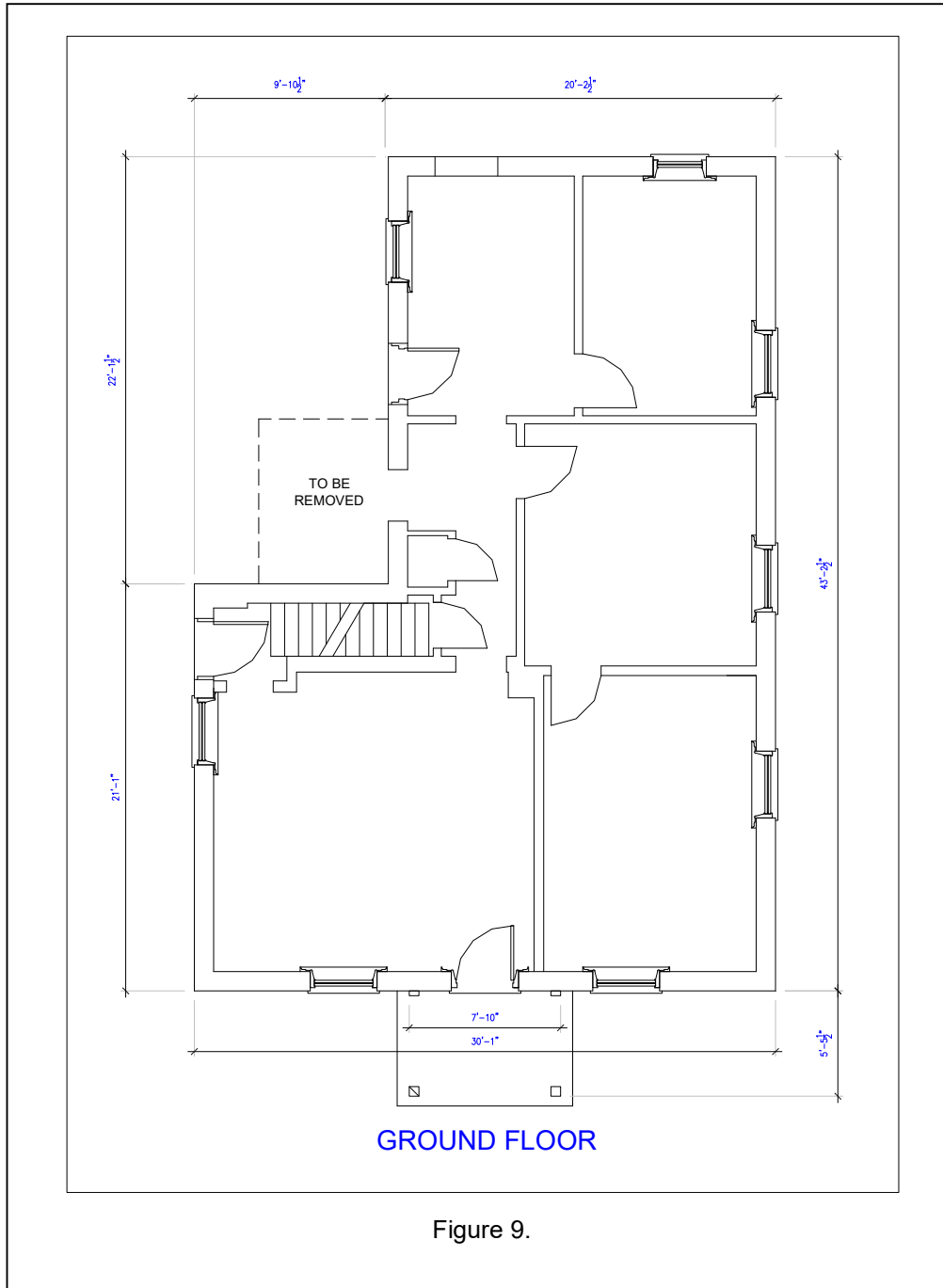


Figure 8. Rear (west) elevation. The brown shed is a later addition and will be removed.



## 7. Measured Drawings.

Note: I don't have the skills to properly render the front gable gingerbread in AutoCad, so I've omitted it. See front cover photo and existing surviving half on site.



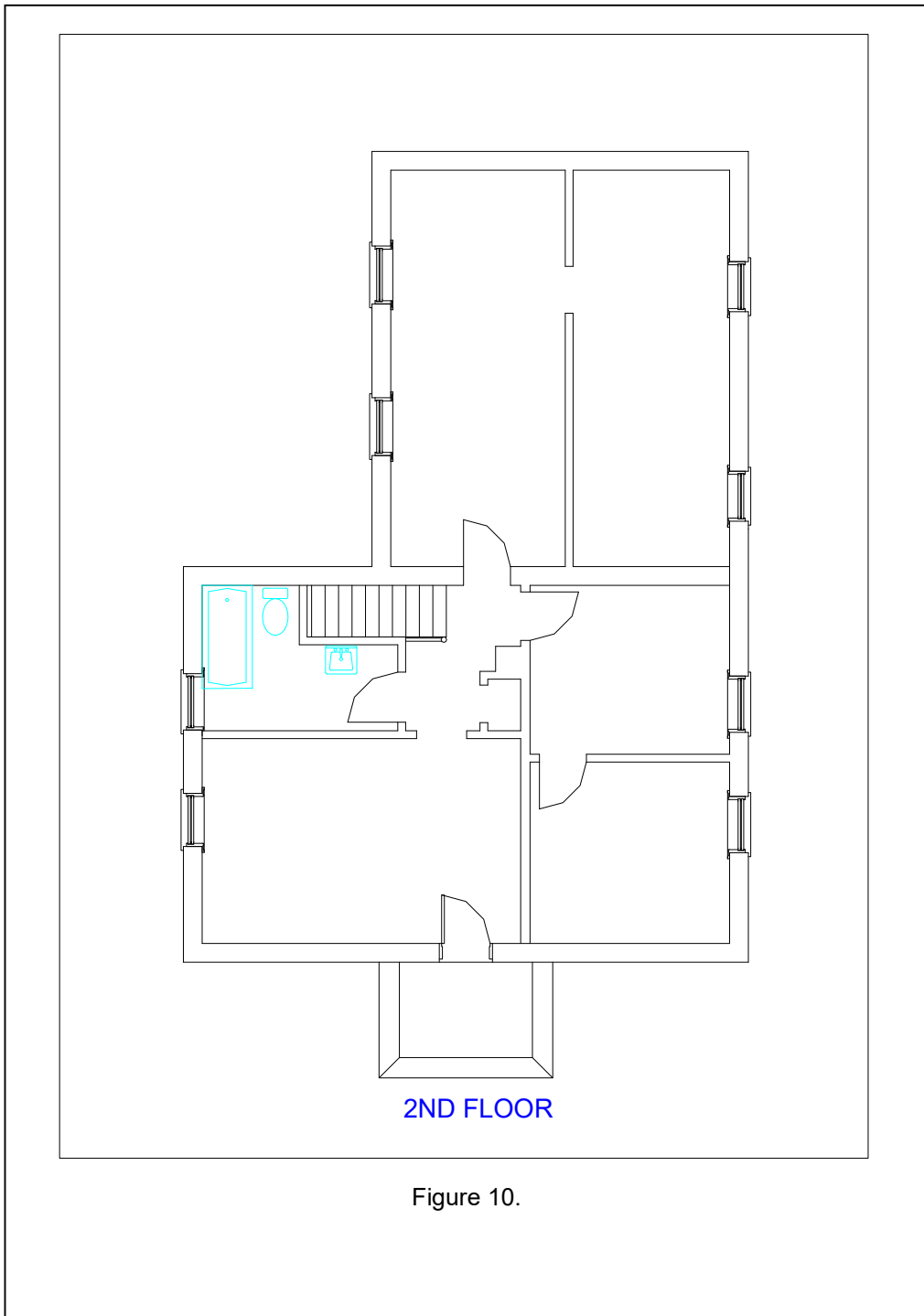




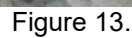
Figure 11.





Figure 12.

The owner proposes to relocate the house from its current position, which conflicts with the proposed road layout, to the southeast corner of the subject property. The later shed in the angle of the tail will be removed, and exterior woodwork and brickwork will be restored.



Aerial photo of subject property showing current and proposed locations of the house.

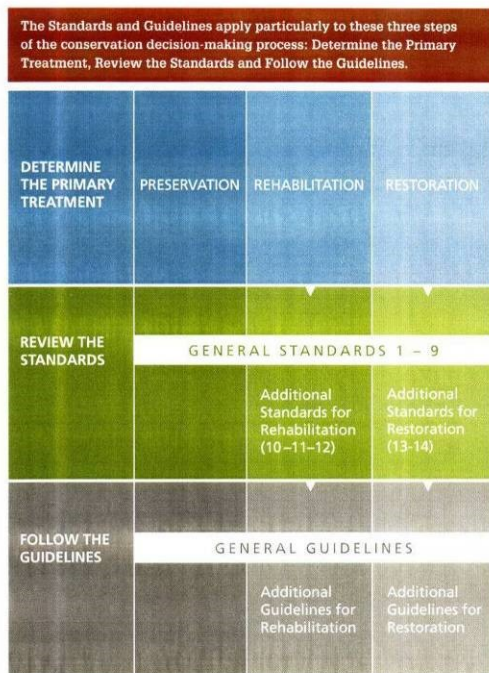


Detail from survey showing new location of house, grades, and other site details.

## 9. Conservation Strategy

### 9.1 Project Conservation Principles

The conservation approach for the House at 872 Nashville Road relies on *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, published by Parks Canada—hereinafter referred to as *Standards and Guidelines*. Briefly stated, it provides guidance for planning and executing conservation projects on identified historic places. The chart below, from the introduction to the document, shows how it is to be used.



The primary treatment for the house is Preservation, which is applicable for resources that are essentially intact and that convey their historic significance without major repairs or alterations.

A portion of the work includes Restoration, since it is returning the gable gingerbread and masonry to a previous (intact) state.

The proposed repairs and maintenance work on the house conform to the applicable Standards and Guidelines. They are minimal interventions, do not alter any character-defining features, and ensure structural stability, weather-tightness, and the ability to sustain a future long-term use.

### 9.2 General Outline of Conservation Work to be Undertaken

- Relocate the house to a new, unthreatened location on the same property. Set onto a new purpose-built foundation where shown in the survey.
- Renew or repair all flashings and rainware,
- Replicate missing right-hand gingerbread on front gable. Reinstall gingerbread, including the central finial.
- Repair all exterior woodwork, including windows, and repaint.
- Restore masonry. Remove paint from south and west facades where they were enclosed by later additions, using non-abrasive methods. Remove remnant flashings, trim, and grounds. Replace damaged bricks, or remove and turn them around. This work to be performed by a qualified restoration contractor. See note on masonry restoration below.
- Clean all masonry using gentlest methods—detergent and water with hand brushing,
- Repoint masonry where joints are eroded, using historic lime mortar to match original,



### **Note on Masonry restoration.**

- The south and west facades have received significant alterations/damage, mostly due to later additions being placed against them. In my professional opinion, decisions about restoration of these areas should be arrived at as conditions are revealed during the work. In particular, original openings have been altered and new ones have been installed. The current south door opening into the stairway is not at all original—it was a wall. The other doors in the rear of the house may have originally been windows. Until the brick shed is removed, and the paint is removed it is difficult to determine the original conditions.

### **10. Evaluation of the property under Ontario Regulation 9/06**

Ontario Regulation 9/06 sets out the criteria for designation, referenced in Section 29(1)(a) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as a requirement for designation under Part IV of the Act.

The Regulation states that “A property may be designated under section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:”

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
  - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
  - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
  - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
  - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
  - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
  - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
3. The property has contextual value because it,
  - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
  - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
  - iii. is a landmark. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (2).

My evaluation of the subject property, on the basis of these criteria follows:

1. i, The existing farmhouse is a representative example of its Victorian Gothic Revival style. The central upper gable, the polychrome brickwork, and the segmented arch openings are characteristics of Victorian Gothic..
1. ii, The craftsmanship or artistic merit of the house is somewhat elevated through the extra details of the cruciform banding under the eaves, the elaborate gable gingerbread, and the interior trim in the principal rooms.
1. iii, There is no demonstration of technical or scientific achievement in the building.
2. i, The Agar family have significance in the development of the Nashville community and its Methodist churches.
2. ii, The building does not yield particular information about the community or culture.
2. iii, There is no identified architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist.
3. i, The building can be said to support the historic character of Nashville, although that character is mixed with more recent development.
3. ii, The building is linked historically to its contemporaries, but not to more recent development.
3. iii, The building is not a landmark.

In my professional opinion, and based on the criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, the property at 810436 Huntington Road in the City of Vaughan is a representative example of a style or type, its craftsmanship is somewhat elevated, and the builder Richard Agar had significance in the development of the Nashville community. It therefore may be considered for designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The third word in the Regulation is “may”—not “must” or even “should”. In this case, the criteria met is sufficiently strong that the City should give consideration to designation.

## **11. Bibliography**

Carter, Phillip H., et al., Kleinburg-Nashville Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan. Vaughan: 2003

Ontario: Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O. 18, as amended.

Ontario Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs. Provincial Policy Statement 2014, Toronto: 2005

Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport: Ontario Heritage Toolkit, Heritage Conservation Districts, Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2006.

Parks Canada. Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, second edition. Queen’s Printer, 2010

## Appendices: