

# Heritage Vaughan Committee Report

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**DATE:** Wednesday, October 20, 2021

**WARD(S):** 1

**TITLE:** DEMOLITION OF 9600 KEELE (GEORGE BAILEY PUBLIC SCHOOL)

**FROM:**

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

**ACTION:** DECISION

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**Purpose**

To seek a recommendation from the Heritage Vaughan Committee for the proposed demolition of the existing Heritage building located at 9600 Keele Street, in the Maple Heritage Conservation District and designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, as shown on Attachment 1.

**Report Highlights**

THAT Heritage Vaughan Committee recommend Council approve the proposed demolition existing heritage building located at 9600 Keele Street under Section 42 of *Ontario Heritage Act*, subject to the following conditions:

- 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 Deputy City Manager, Planning & Growth Management;
- 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; and
- That the Applicant submit Building Permit stage construction drawings and building material specifications for the commemorative plaque to the satisfaction of Urban Design and Cultural Heritage Division and Chief Building Official.

## **Recommendations**

1. THAT Heritage Vaughan recommend Council approve the proposed demolition of George Bailey Public School at 9600 Keele 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 *Ontario 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 submit final demolition plans, and construction drawings and building material specifications for the commemorative plaque to the satisfaction of the Vaughan Development Planning Department, Urban Design and Cultural Heritage Division prior for the Heritage Permit release;
2. THAT the York Regional School Board contact the City of Vaughan Parks Infrastructure Planning and Development (PIPD) to the potential for temporary use or potential acquisition of the subject property, or portions thereof.

## **Background**

The subject property consists of the George Bailey Public School (constructed in 1955 with additions constructed in 1957 and 1967 respectively), located at 9600 Keele Street in the community of Maple in the City of Vaughan (see Attachment 1). The property is located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Keele Street and Knightswood Avenue. Historically, two other schools and a residential building have previously been located on the property: the original Maple School S.S. #6 (1861-1896), a second school (1896-2002), and a residential building at the corner of Keele Street and Knightswood Avenue (1946-1995). The exact site of the first schoolhouse is not known, though the historical location of the other two structures is noted in Figure 3 of the submitted Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) submitted in support of the application (refer to Attachment 2).

The school, in the Modernist style, has an L-shaped footprint that is oriented parallel to Keele Street, and access to the property is via two vehicular driveways on Knightswood

Avenue. Coniferous and deciduous trees have been planted within the green spaces created by the configuration of the parking lot. A row of maple trees is present along Keele Street, while there is a second row of trees running perpendicular to Keele Street near the boundary of an adjacent residential building.

The George Bailey Public School has not been used since the 2001-2002 school year when it assisted Joseph A. Gibson Public School in holding students until the opening of Maple Creek Public School in September 2002. Between 2002-2018, Maple High School Alternative Education classes and the Access program have utilized the George Bailey Public School until it was determined that the condition of the building required it to be vacated.

According to the York Region District School Board, the building requires \$4,000,000 in renewal over the next 5 years, of which \$1,500,000 will be required immediately if the facility is maintained to a standard that can accommodate students. A report on designated substances and hazardous materials was completed by ECOH (dated October 20, 2018, see Appendix E in the CHIA) found that much of the building had friable and non-friable asbestos-containing materials.

A full history of the property is available from the submitted Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) shown in Attachment 2.

### **Previous Reports/Authority**

Not applicable.

### **Analysis and Options**

***All new development must conform to the policies, objectives and supporting guidelines within the Maple Heritage Conservation District Plan.***

The following is an analysis of the proposed demolition of the existing Heritage building located at 9600 Keele Street according to the Maple Heritage Conservation District Plan guidelines.

#### ***City of Vaughan Official Plan 6.3.2.5***

***That a demolition permit for a building or part of a building within a Heritage Conservation District shall not be issued until plans for a replacement structure have been submitted to the City and Council has approved the replacement structure and any related proposed landscaping features in accordance with the relevant Heritage Conservation District Plan, the Vaughan Heritage Conservation Guidelines and the policies of this Plan.***

The applicant is proposing to convert the subject property to a park area, until such time that a new school is needed as identified by the policies of the York Regional School

Board. The proposal includes benches, pathways and a commemorative plaque created in part from salvaged brick from the school. The property will be held in reserve as a school site.

## **2.2 Statement of Heritage Value**

The George Bailey Public School is functionally and historically linked to its surroundings in relation to the Village of Maple. The property has been used for educational purposes since the mid-1800s, with the existing school as the third generation of school buildings on the property. Known as School House No. 6, the first two educational buildings would have served the Village of Maple as the primary educational institution in the broader area during the latter half of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century. Construction of the George Bailey school (original known as School House No. 6) continued to serve the growing Village of Maple in the post-World War II period and until approximately the mid 1960s when another school was built closer to the Village of Maple. Education buildings are intrinsic and fundamental institutions that support and sustain community growth and permanent settlement patterns. As such, this property and its 150+ years history of educational service is an important site that is inextricably linked, both functionally and historically, with the Village of Maple.

A complete statement of cultural heritage value of this property may be found on pg. 60 of the CHIA (refer to Attachment 2).

## **Proposed Work**

### **4.2.4 Demolition of Heritage Buildings**

- a) *The demolition of heritage buildings within a Heritage Conservation District is not supported.*
- b) *The City, under the Ontario Heritage Act, may refuse a demolition permit for either an individually designated building or a building located within the District.*

The George Bailey Public School is a building of cultural heritage value. The proposed removal of the building will change the character of the property, creating a green space that will function as a de facto extension of the adjacent Frank Robson Park.

The proposed demolition of the George Bailey Public School will leave the existing trees associated with the southern perimeter of the c.1896 schoolhouse property as the only heritage attributes remaining on the property. However, their association with the c.1896 schoolhouse property will not change (see Arborist's Report in Appendix F of the CHIA, shown in Attachment 2).

### **4.2.5 Salvage of Historic Building Materials and Features**

- a) *In the rare case where a heritage building is permitted to be demolished, the building will be documented (researched and photographed) and the proponents*

*of the demolition will be required to advertise in the local press, the availability of the building for relocation or salvage of architectural features, as a condition of the demolition permit.*

- b) The City may require the demolition of a building to be undertaken in such a manner as to expose the construction techniques used for documentation and educational purposes.*

The proposed demolition of the school building includes the construction of a small commemorative structure that will provide historical information about the property. The structure is designed to reference the architectural style of one bay of the existing George Bailey Public School and will utilize salvaged brick from the school (see Attachment 4).

### **5.7 Vegetation**

*The vegetative cover in the public realm of the District significantly contributes to the area's human-scale, village-like character. Street trees, flowers in baskets, shrubs, and vegetation found in the open spaces and along watercourses all contribute to the area's distinctiveness. In addition to their scenic beauty, trees and other vegetation are equally important for controlling the effects of climate by reducing wind velocity, providing shelter from sun, rain, and snow, and creating a moderated microclimate.*

- a) Plant material introduced to the public realm should be should be hardy, urban tolerant in recognition of harsher environmental conditions, but that express form, canopy, leaf and colour characteristics compatible with native, indigenous trees, where possible.*
- b) Existing mature trees and other vegetative amenities in the public realm should be retained and preserved except where removal is necessary due to disease or damage, or to ensure public health and safety.*
- c) The shaping of street tree canopies for utility wires will be undertaken in a sensitive manner so as not to disfigure the tree. The impact of this process on existing trees may be a factor when burial of utility wires is being considered.*
- d) An appraisal of the health of tree cover in the public realm will be undertaken with the result being a replanting policy or plan to replace unhealthy trees and coordinate new plantings.*
- e) The placement of new tree-plantings should enhance the streetscape and frame buildings of cultural and heritage value and minimize the screening or blocking of significant features.*
- f) Plantings will contribute to screening less attractive sites in the District, including above-ground utilities, where practical from an operation and maintenance perspective.*
- g) Guidelines for appropriate vegetation are located in Section 9.7.*

The proposed demolition of the George Bailey Public School will result in the creation of a new green space. As currently proposed, the location of the George Bailey Public School and the existing asphalt will be replaced with sod to create a large green space with the existing pathway from Frank Robson Park continued through the property

towards Knightswood Avenue. This green space will not detract from the park's cultural heritage value or the cultural heritage value of the heritage conservation district.

Though this space is intended to be temporary, further interventions in the form of pathways, benches, vegetation and recreational space would also contribute positively. If any new trees are planted, they should follow the guidelines in Section 9.7 of the MHCD Plan, while the existing trees associated with the southern perimeter of the c.1896 schoolhouse property will be retained.

The City of Vaughan's Parks Infrastructure Planning and Development (PIPD) staff has reviewed the submitted CHIA and support the proposed limestone screening path, sod and benches shown on the Site Plan (Attachment 3) or proposed Commemorative Monument (Attachment 4). PIPD staff are interested in discussing with the school board the potential for temporary use or potential acquisition of the subject property, or portions thereof. Cultural Heritage staff support this recommendation and have added it as a condition of approval for the demolition. By communicating with the PIPD staff, the green space will be further integrated into the Frank Robson Park area, which is part of the intent of the restorative park.

### **9.7.1 Planting**

*No heritage permits are required for planting activities, but voluntary compliance with the guidelines in this Section can help maintain and enhance the natural heritage of the Maple and its valley.*

*Suitable new planting and management of existing flora are a primary means of ensuring the health of the entire ecosystem:*

- plants contribute to stormwater and groundwater management*
- erosion control*
- provide habitat and nutrition for wild fauna.*

### **Guidelines:**

- Maintain health of mature indigenous tree by pruning and fertilizing.*
- Over time, remove unhealthy, invasive and non-indigenous species.*
- Site buildings and additions to preserve suitable mature trees.*
- Protect and preserve mature trees during construction.*

Existing trees and other plantings, including the demarcation of the older school area will be preserved. New plantings will be according to the MHCD Plan.

## **Financial Impact**

There are no requirements for new funding associated with this report.

## **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

The subject property is owned and operated by the York Regional School Board, who have assessed the potential regional impacts prior to this application.

## **Conclusion**

The Development Planning Department is satisfied the proposed heritage site demolition and related works conform to the policies and guidelines within the MHCD Plan. Accordingly, staff can support Council approval of the proposed demolition of the existing Heritage building located at 9600 Keele Street under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

**For more information**, please contact: Katrina Guy, Heritage Coordinator, ext. 8115

## **Attachments**

- Attachment 1 – 9600Keele – Location map
- Attachment 2 – 9600Keele – Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Attachment 3 – 9600Keele – Proposed Site Plan
- Attachment 4 – 9600Keele – Proposed Monument Design

## **Prepared by**

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