



Staff Report for Heritage Richmond Hill Meeting

Date of Meeting: September 14, 2023

Report Number: SRPBS.23.002

Department: Planning and Building Services

Division: Policy Planning

Subject: SRPBS.23.002 - Notice of Intent to Demolish - Listed Property on the Richmond Hill Heritage Register - 9893 Leslie Street (Horner House) City File D12-07255

Purpose:

To seek Heritage Richmond Hill Committee's endorsement of the demolition request submitted by the owner of the listed heritage property at 9893 Leslie Street. The property has been evaluated under the prescribed provincial criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, and it has been determined that the property does not merit designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and should be removed from the Richmond Hill Heritage Register.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That Heritage Richmond Hill advise Council that the Horner House located at 9893 Leslie Street does not merit cultural heritage designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and
- b) That 9893 Leslie Street be removed from Richmond Hill's Heritage Register, subject to the following conditions:
 - i) That prior to the issuance of any permit for the subject property, including a building permit, or a permit related to the demolition, shoring and excavation of the subject property, the owner shall submit building documentation for the Horner House, including documentation photographs of the interior and exterior, and as-built measured plan and elevation drawings, to the satisfaction of Heritage and Urban Design staff.

Contact Person:

Julia Smith, Urban Design/Heritage Planner - Phone 905-771-5529

Steven Bell, Manager of Heritage and Urban Design – Phone 905-771-9996

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Report Approval:

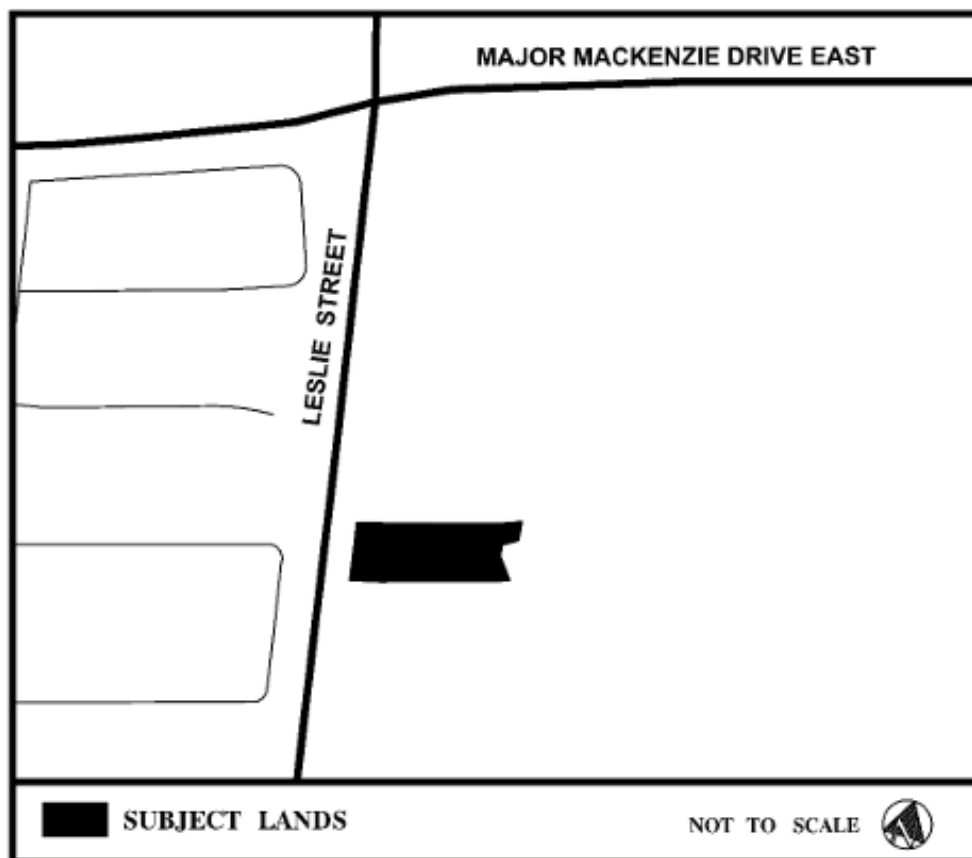
Submitted by: Kelvin Kwan, Commissioner of Planning and Building Services

Approved by: Darlene Joslin, City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

Location Map:

The map below depicts the location of the subject property. Should you require an alternative format, call the contact person listed in this document.



Background:

This Staff Report provides a summary and review of the cultural heritage value of the Horner House at 9893 Leslie Street, based on *Ontario Regulation 9/06* criteria (as amended), the prescribed provincial criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest under the *Ontario Heritage Act* ("the Act"). This report also seeks Heritage Richmond Hill's (HRH) consideration and endorsement of the determination that the

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subject property does not possess sufficient cultural heritage value to merit designation under Part IV of the Act, and should be removed from the Richmond Hill Heritage Register.

Property Description

The subject property is located on the east side of Leslie Street, south of Major Mackenzie Drive East, and contains a 2 ½ storey house-form building now used as a long-term care facility for seniors. The property is adjacent to low-rise built form to the north, the Rouge River valley corridor to the east, several designated and listed heritage properties now containing office and institutional uses to the south, and Leslie Street, and a low-density residential subdivision the west. The subject property is located within the 19th century historical hamlet of Headford, and contains a c.1909 residential building, known as the Horner House, that has undergone significant alterations over time. The subject property is listed on the City's Heritage Register as a non-designated property.

Development Applications Submitted

The City has received Zoning By-law Amendment and Site Plan applications for the subject property, which propose to demolish the Horner House to enable the construction of a new high-rise institutional building containing long-term care, medical, and active community centre uses for seniors. The applicant's submission package included a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment ("CHIA") prepared by Stevens Burgess Architects Ltd., which evaluated the cultural heritage value of the subject property.

Staff have reviewed the CHIA and have confirmed that it meets the City's Terms of Reference. The CHIA is attached as Appendix 'A' to this report.

If Council, after considering HRH's advice on the matter, determines that the subject property does not meet the criteria for heritage designation outlined in O. Reg. 9/06 (as amended), the property will be removed from the Heritage Register, and the building may be demolished to enable the redevelopment of the site.

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Figure 1 View of the 9893 Leslie Street's west (front) elevation with enclosed front porch, and c. 1960s side/rear addition visible on the right (Source: Stevens Burgess Architects Ltd.)



Figure 2 View of the 9893 Leslie Street's south (side) elevation with enclosed front porch on the left, and c. 1960s side/rear addition partially visible on the right (Source: Stevens Burgess Architects Ltd.)

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Cultural Heritage Evaluation:

In order for a property to be deemed worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, it must meet at least two of the nine criteria prescribed under *Ontario Regulation 9/06* (as amended). O. Reg. 9/06 criteria include the following:

1. 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.
2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.
3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
4. 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.
5. The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.
6. The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.
8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.
9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

The following sections provide Staff's summary and determination of the subject property's cultural heritage value based on the application of O. Reg. 9/06 criteria (as amended), and as presented in the CHIA prepared by Stevens Burgess Architects Ltd.

Design/Physical Value

In order for a property to be considered a candidate for designation based on design/physical value, the property must be a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type or expression of a particular period. Alternatively, the property may display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

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Originally constructed c. 1909 in the Edwardian Foursquare architectural style, the house has undergone significant interior and exterior alterations, making it difficult to discern its original form and appearance. The house's original red brick cladding has been obscured by a three-coat cementitious plaster/stucco coating. Further, the house has had a number of unsympathetic additions over the years, including an enclosed front porch on its west (front) elevation, and a c. 1960s two-storey rear/side addition at the southeast, which obscures the house's original L-shaped plan and massing. The house also appears to be lacking any original exterior architectural details or material finishes, such as window/door units or wood/masonry detailing.

As a result of these unsympathetic changes, the subject property possesses limited design value. It is not a rare, unique or early example of an architectural style, and the alterations to the exterior prevent the dwelling from being representative of the Edwardian Foursquare architectural style. The house also does not exhibit a high degree of artistic merit either in its craftsmanship or in its design. Staff concur with the CHIA's assessment that the subject property does not possess significant design or physical value.



Figure 2 View of 9893 Leslie Street's original red brick cladding, visible from the interior of the enclosed front porch; note that this brick is now completely obscured by the irreversible application of a cementitious coating on the exterior of the building (Source: Stevens Burgess Architects Ltd.)

Historical/Associative Value

In order for a property to be considered a candidate for designation based on historical/associative value, a strong connection must be established between the property and an activity, person, or architect of historical significance. Alternatively, the property may yield information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.

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While the house does possess some minimal associative value in connection with the Horners, a prominent land-owning family who resided in Headford in the 19th and 20th centuries, there is an absence of historical evidence or documentation that would help to establish the strength of this association more concretely. Further, the house was constructed c. 1909, at a time when the Hamlet of Headford was in decline, and so is not considered significant in yielding information that contributes to an understanding of Headford as a prosperous milling and agricultural community in the mid-to-late-19th century.

No known architect, builder, or designer has been associated with the Horner House at 9893 Leslie Street.

As a result, Staff concur with the CHIA's assessment that the subject property possesses only minimal historical or associative value.

Contextual Value

In order for a property to be considered a candidate for designation based on contextual value, the property must be important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area. Alternatively, contextual value may be met if the property is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or considered a landmark.

The surrounding Hamlet of Headford was an agricultural and milling community that prospered during the mid-to-late-19th century around the intersection of Leslie Street and Major Mackenzie Drive East. Although the surrounding context has been significantly altered by the development of contemporary residential subdivisions to the west and large industrial parks to the south, a cluster of 19th century residential built form still remains on Leslie Street, south of Major Mackenzie Drive East. This built form is typified by the Ontario Gothic Vernacular architectural style, featuring modest footprints, 1 ½ -storey scale, steeply-pitched gabled roofs with central dormers, and brick, stucco, or board and batten construction. However, due to the Horner House's later construction date of c. 1909, and significant alterations obscuring its original form and architectural details, the subject property does not define, maintain, or support the character of surrounding 19th century residential built form, and is not considered to be significantly linked to its surroundings.

As a result, Staff concur with the CHIA's assessment that the subject property does not possess significant contextual value.

Staff Comments

Staff is in agreement with the conclusions of the CHIA prepared by Stevens Burgess Architects Ltd. (attached as Appendix A to this report) that the listed property at 9893 Leslie does not possess significant design/physical, historical/associative, or contextual value, and fails to meet the threshold for designation under Part IV of the Act.

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However, as the subject property may possess some minimal associative value in connection with the Horner family of Headford, Staff are requesting a number of additional submission requirements prior to granting planning/building approvals for this site, including:

- Building Documentation of the Horner House, consisting of documentation photographs of the interior and exterior of the building and as-built measured plan and elevation drawings; and
- A Commemoration Strategy for the site addressing themes such as the Horner family and/or the Hamlet of Headford.

Process/Procedural Requirement for Demolition Requests:

The following is a summary of the key process and notification requirements associated with the demolition of a building/structure listed on a municipal heritage register under the Act:

- Council is to consider the request for demolition within 60 days after notice of receipt is served;
- Council is to be advised by its municipal heritage committee with respect to an application to demolish or remove any building or structure;
- Council may consent to the demolition (with or without terms and conditions) or not support the demolition and pass an intention to designate the property under Part IV of the Act. Notification is provided to the applicant;
- If Council fails to make a decision within the identified time period, the demolition will proceed.

For the purpose of this demolition request, the City acknowledges August 10, 2023 as the date of receipt for the notice of intention to demolish with the timeline expiring on October 9, 2023.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

There are no financial or staffing implications at this time.

Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities 2020-2022:

The Council priority "***Strong Sense of Belonging***" combines a desire for everyone to feel welcome and a commitment to community building. As the subject property has been significantly altered, it does not merit designation under Part IV of the Act, and its demolition provides new opportunities for inclusive community building through the construction of a long-term care, medical, and community centre facility for seniors.

Conclusion:

Staff are of the opinion that the Horner House at 9893 Leslie Street does not possess sufficient design/physical, historical/associative, or contextual value to merit designation

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under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Staff recommend that the property be removed from the Richmond Hill Heritage Register.

Attachments:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. All attachments have been reviewed and made accessible. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- **Appendix A:** Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Stevens Burgess Architects Ltd. (dated March 25, 2020; re-issued February 23, 2021)

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPBS.23.002 - Notice of Intent to Demolish - 9893 Leslie Street (Horner House), City File D12-07255.docx
Attachments:	- SRPBS.23.002 - Appendix A_AODA.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Aug 18, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Maria Flores - Aug 17, 2023 - 3:08 PM

Kelvin Kwan - Aug 17, 2023 - 3:54 PM

Darlene Joslin - Aug 18, 2023 - 2:05 PM