

## **Statement of Significance**

### **42 Richmond Street – Clara Harrison Rental House**

The Clara Harrison Rental House at 42 Richmond Street is recommended for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, as described in the following Statement of Significance.

#### **Description of Property:**

The Clara Harrison Rental House is a 1 ½-storey side-gabled cottage located at the southeast corner of Richmond Street and Elizabeth Street North. The property is located within the historic village of Richmond Hill.

#### **Design and Physical Value:**

Dating to c. 1875, the Clara Harrison Rental House at 42 Richmond Street is a representative example of modest late-19<sup>th</sup>-century vernacular cottage architecture in Richmond Hill showing Georgian stylistic influences. Architectural features expressing Georgian influences include the rectangular plan, side-gabled roof form, flat-headed window and door openings, and the symmetrical three-bay composition of the principal (north) elevation featuring a classical doorcase.

#### **Historical and Associative Value:**

The Clara Harrison Rental House at 42 Richmond Street has historical value for its direct associations with both William and Clara Harrison. William Harrison bought a large parcel of land at the southeast corner of Richmond Street and Elizabeth Street North in 1879, and granted the property at 42 Richmond Street to his eldest daughter Clara in 1905. In 1909, William Harrison purchased a mill worker's cottage in the Mill Pond area, and moved it from Trench Street to its present location at 42 Richmond Street, to serve as an income property for Clara. The subject property remained under the ownership of the Harrison family until 1919. William Harrison was Richmond Hill's second Reeve, owner and operator of a significant saddle- and harness-making business, and one of the village's first local historians. Clara, who remained unmarried until her death in 1942, operated a successful dressmaking business in the village from the 1880s to the 1910s. As local business leaders, property owners and speculators, and active citizens, William and Clara Harrison were significant members of the community who contributed to the development of Richmond Hill in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Contextual Value:**

The Clara Harrison Rental House at 42 Richmond Street has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining, and supporting the cohesive late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century residential character of Richmond Street and Elizabeth Street North, and the historical character of Richmond Hill's village core more broadly.

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The Clara Harrison Rental House also has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, and historically linked to its surroundings within “Harrison’s Corner”, a cluster of buildings at the southeast corner of Richmond and Elizabeth Streets that were owned by the Harrison family in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Other surviving buildings that form part of “Harrison’s Corner” include the adjacent William Harrison Rental House at 32 Richmond Street (1881), as well as the William Harrison Speculative House at 17 Elizabeth Street North (1885).

### Heritage Attributes:

#### Design and Physical Value

The heritage attributes that contribute to the value of the property as a representative example of modest late-19<sup>th</sup>-century vernacular cottage architecture in Richmond Hill showing Georgian stylistic influences are:

- The scale, form and massing of the 1 ½-storey building with a rectangular plan and side-gabled roof;
- The flat-headed windows with wood surrounds on the north, east and west elevations;
- The symmetrical three-bay organization of the building’s front (north) elevation; and
- The central classical doorcase on the building’s front (north) elevation.

#### Historical and Associative Value

Heritage attributes contributing to the historical value of the property for its associations with William and Clara Harrison include:

- The property’s scale, sitting, and orientation on the south side of Richmond Street, east of Elizabeth Street North, within an area formerly known as “Harrison’s Corner;” and
- The house’s front (north) porch, with the hipped roof, tapered square columns, and square newel posts and balusters.

#### Contextual Value

Heritage attributes contributing to the contextual value of the property being functionally, historically, and physically linked to its surroundings as part of “Harrison’s Corner” in the historic village of Richmond Hill include:

- The property’s scale, sitting, and orientation at the southeast corner of Richmond Street and Elizabeth Street North; and
- The property’s modest late-19<sup>th</sup>-century vernacular cottage architecture with Georgian influence, which contributes to the historical residential character of Richmond Street and Elizabeth Street North, as well as the historical character of Richmond Hill’s Village Core more broadly.

Note: the house’s later cross-gabled rear (south) addition is not considered to possess heritage attributes.