

For the Heritage Easement Agreement – 4600 Steeles Avenue

**REASONS FOR IDENTIFICATION**

**Milliken Public School**

**4600 Steeles Avenue**

The Owner and the Town agree that for the purposes of this Agreement the following statement (hereafter called the “Reasons for Identification” sets out the reasons why the Town of Markham has identified the Building as having historical, architectural and contextual significance.

**Statement of Reasons for Identification**

**Historical Value**

The Milliken Public School is of cultural heritage value or interest as a remnant of the rural crossroads community of Milliken. It is the second school building to have been constructed in this vicinity during the area’s historical period prior to large-scale suburban development.

According to the Journals of the Upper Canada Legislative Assembly, there was a school operating on Lot 1, Concession 6 in 1838 which received an operating grant from the Legislative Assembly. William Galloway was listed as the teacher and 26 students were reported in attendance in June of 1838, 23 students in December 1838.

By 1851, there was another school located on Lot 5, Concession 5 which served the Warden/Kennedy area north of Steeles Avenue to Highway #7. This area was designated as School Section #8 in 1855.

It is not known when the school on Lot 1, Concession 6 closed, nor what happened to the building but the children of Milliken attended school either at Hagerman’s Corners to the north or at L’Amoreaux school to the south (Scarborough Township) until 1929.

At that time (1929), the union school, Milliken Public School was opened. It was known as a union school because children on both sides of the line dividing Markham and Scarborough were able to attend. The community of Milliken, similar to the case of Armadale, straddled the Township boundaries.

Mr. L.E. Morgan provided the site for the new school by selling 2 acres to the Board for \$600. The total cost of the project, including land, building and furniture was \$28,000.00. The former Milliken Public School is the only public building designed in the Collegiate Gothic style of architecture to remain in the Town of Markham.

Milliken Public School served the community of Milliken for 39 years until its closure in 1968. This was as a result of the establishment of Marklee School and new schools in Unionville which could accommodate the Milliken Students.

The building was sold in 1968. Later occupants included the Richmond College of Liberal Arts and the Scarborough Christian High School.

### **Architectural Value**

The Milliken Public School is a good example of the Collegiate Gothic style of institutional architecture, and is the only example of its type in the Town of Markham. This style, a version of the Neo-Gothic, was used for many larger elementary school, high school and university buildings in Ontario from the 1910s to the 1920s. The Milliken example is unusual because of its modest size and rural location.

Standing two storeys high, with its main façade directed south, the school is based on a traditional rectangular, centre hall plan with a projecting frontispiece and an enclosed, one-storey, flat roofed entrance porch. Constructed of reddish brown brick laid in common bond, the building has stone copings and string courses that add decorative relief. The school has a raised, full basement, no longer a regular feature in the more contemporary schools that are generally constructed with grade-level entrances.

With its flat roof, battlement-style central parapet, grouped windows and projecting string courses, the Milliken Public School represented a significant departure in architectural style and decoration from the traditional Victorian one room school house model seen elsewhere in rural Markham Township.

All window openings are flat-headed with soldier coursed brick lintels, and the fenestration is uniform throughout. Original leaded glass windows still exist over the main front entry section of the building. Double-hung windows with a 6/1 glazing pattern have been restored on the main floor. At the basement level, the glazing pattern of the restored windows is 3/3.

The main classroom windows are grouped in fives. A continuous stone lugsill further joins these windows together. The three basement windows below the main floor classroom windows are centred beneath the openings above, but spaced apart. A special group of three leaded glass windows lie immediately above the main entrance and below the scribed stone tablet that bears the name of the school. These windows have carved stone surrounds.

The main entrance is within a projecting, enclosed porch, placed centrally on the façade. The structural opening shape of this doorway has a Tudor arched head. A double set of wood French doors, heavily recessed within a carved stone surround, adds to the decorative quality of the entrance as a whole. A battlement detail of brick and stone is located on the parapet wall of the centre bay.

The date stone of 1929 is placed on the southwest corner of the main façade – right above the first projecting belt course. The tablet inscribed with the school's name, is above the leaded glass windows, mentioned earlier. A battlement detail of brick and stone is located on the parapet wall of the centre bay.

As a solution to allow for the integration of the former Milliken Public School into the new development, the south façade and portions of the east and west side walls were preserved as an historic façade, while the remainder of the building was demolished. The interior doors, sidelights and transom light of the vestibule were also preserved and integrated into the new development in context with the preserved façade.

### **Contextual Value**

The former Milliken Public School is a landmark historical feature in the community of Milliken. The school served the community for almost forty years as a public building and later, as a private school.

Apart from the Ebenezer United Church, some distance to the east, the building is the most significant and visible architectural landmark remaining from Milliken's period as a rural crossroads community.

### **Description of Heritage Attributes**

Exterior, character-defining elements that embody the cultural heritage value of 4600 Steeles Avenue include:

- south (front) façade and 4.26 metre portions of the east and west sidewalls
- one and a half storey height
- buff brick walls with soldier coursed over window openings
- stone accents, including copings, string courses, door and window surrounds, window sills
- leaded glass windows over main entrance
- paired glazed wood entrance doors with their Tudor arched tops
- stone name plaque reading "Milliken Public School" on the parapet
- datestone reading "1929" at the corner of the building
- restored 6/1 windows on the main floor, restored 3/3 windows on the raised basement level
- wood, multi-paned paired doors, sidelights and transom light inside the vestibule
- battlements in the parapet of the central bay

