




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services 

PREPARED BY: Regan Hutcheson, Manager-Heritage Planning

DATE: January 15, 2010

SUBJECT: Approval of a Designated Heritage Property Grant Program
Development Services Committee - January 12, 2010
Agenda Item #8

This January 12th Development Services Committee agenda item was referred to staff for further discussion with the Deputy Mayor and Councillors on the Heritage Markham Committee. The revised recommendation below incorporates modifications (in BOLD) arising from the follow up meetings held on January 14th between Heritage Section staff and Council representatives.

REVISED RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the report entitled "Approval of a Markham Designated Heritage Property Grant Program", dated January 12, 2010, be received; and,
- 2) That the memorandum from the Commissioner of Development Services dated January 15, 2010 providing an update on discussions, be received; and
- 3) That the Markham Designated Heritage Property Grant Program and Guidelines (attached as Appendix "A" to this report), be approved for a four year period (2010-2013) subject to the following amendments:
 - The maximum amount of the grant be increased from \$4,000 to **\$5,000;**
 - For Part V (Heritage District), the definition of "properties of cultural heritage value or interest" be further clarified in the Program Guidelines by indicating the property classification system used in each heritage conservation district plan (i.e. in the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Plan, Class A and Class B properties are eligible);

- **Projects in Markham Heritage Estates are eligible for the grant program if the relocated building has been on the new lot for at least 20 years;**
 - **A property may receive one grant only for exterior painting in documented original colours to a maximum of \$2,000 or 25% of the cost, whichever is the lesser.**
- 4) That a by-law be adopted to implement the program generally in the form attached as Appendix “B” to this report **and amended by this resolution**; and,
 - 5) That a reserve fund entitled “Designated Heritage Property Grants” be established; and,
 - 5) That the Designated Heritage Property Grant Reserve Fund be allocated \$120,000 in funding for the four year period (2010-2013) from the following sources:
 - (i) a transfer of \$95,000 from the Heritage Loan Reserve Fund; and
 - (ii) a transfer of the \$25,000 in the 2008 Capital Project - Residential/Non-Commercial Heritage Grant Program; and,
 - 6) **That staff be directed to provide an update on the program criteria, costs and participation in the current heritage financial assistance programs; and,**
 - 7) **That staff investigate and report back on the concept of creating one overall fund for the purpose of heritage property improvement using the current Heritage Loan Fund, and accrued interest as the base funding; and further**
 - 8) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Background

Two meetings were held on January 14, 2010 to further explore the details of the proposed program and the overall heritage financial assistance programs at the Town. Those in attendance were: Jack Heath, Carolina Moretti, Valerie Burke and Regan Hutcheson. The following changes to the program were discussed and are recommended:

a) Amount of Grant

It was suggested that the maximum allowable grant amount be increased from \$4,000 to \$5,000 to better reflect the higher costs associated with heritage projects and Council’s commitment to assisting with these costs.

b) Eligible Properties

It was suggested that further clarification was required as to which properties in heritage conservation districts were considered eligible. The reference to “properties of cultural heritage value or interest” in each heritage conservation district will be further defined in the Program Guidelines as Class A and B properties in Thornhill, Type A properties in Markham Village, and Class A and B (at the discretion of Council on the

recommendation of Heritage staff) in Unionville. Staff indicated that properties in Unionville District were last examined and classified in 1997 and that some Class B properties could now be considered to meet the criteria of Class A properties.

Staff had recommended that Markham Heritage Estates properties not be eligible as they have received financial assistance through reduced lot prices. Based on the revised recommendation as discussed with Council representatives,, these properties will be eligible for grant assistance if the relocated building has been on the new lot for at least 20 years.

c) Eligible Work - Exterior Paint

Originally exterior painting was not an eligible project as it was considered regular maintenance. However, Council representatives thought there to be great value in assisting property owners with exterior painting as a means of further enhancing the heritage areas, and Markham overall. To link this type of work to heritage conservation, it was recommended that a property may receive one grant only for exterior painting in documented original colours to a maximum of \$2,000 or 25% of the cost, whichever is the lesser. After the initial grant, it is expected that paint maintenance will be the owner's responsibility (this was the same criteria and policy supported by the Ministry of Culture in the former grant program it sponsored in the 1980s). A one time grant for exterior painting would not preclude the property owner from submitting a future grant application for other eligible works.

The following additional recommendations related to heritage property financial assistance in general were supported by the Councillors:

a) Review of existing heritage financial programs

It was suggested that Council would benefit from an update on the program criteria, costs and participation in the current heritage financial assistance programs. Staff indicated that this could be provided at a future Development Services Committee meeting this Spring.

b) Examination of Funding Models

Staff was asked to investigate and report back on the concept of creating one overall fund for the purpose of designated heritage property improvement potentially using the current Heritage Loan Fund, ad accrued interest as the base funding. The suggestion put forward is an annualized base funding for heritage financial assistance programs similar to the Town' funding approach for the Environmental Sustainability Fund. Staff indicated that this discussion could also occur at a future Development Services Committee meeting this Spring.