



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: March 6, 2012

SUBJECT:	Proposed Relocation of the Heritage Dwelling 23 Victoria Avenue, Unionville
PREPARED BY:	Regan Hutcheson, Manager, Heritage Planning, ext 2080 Peter Wokral, Heritage Planner ext. 7955
REVIEWED BY:	Biju Karumanchery, Senior Development Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the staff report entitled "Proposed Relocation of the Heritage Dwelling, 23 Victoria Avenue, Unionville", dated March 6, 2012, be received;
- 2) That Council supports the construction of a new foundation under the heritage portions of the existing house, in its original location, provided that:
 - The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority provides written confirmation that permitting a new foundation would not require the existing finished first floor height to be raised more than 6 inches from its current elevation;
 - The new foundation will have a 4-6 inch rebate designed to permit a veneer of granite fieldstone laid in a traditional rubble pattern utilizing the stones of the existing foundation; and
 - The existing house is moved and relocated back onto the new foundation as a complete and original structural entity, including all the existing structural members such as the floor joists, floor, wall studs and roof rafters; and
 - A Heritage Letter of Credit of \$10,000 (in addition to the standard Site Plan Approval financial security) is secured as a condition of approval to be released when the dwelling is successfully placed on its new foundation after the temporary relocation procedure.
- 3) And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Not applicable

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to consider a request by the owner of the property to replace the existing fieldstone foundation and re-position the heritage dwelling at 23 Victoria Avenue in Unionville further back on the lot.

BACKGROUND:

The property is a significant heritage resource in the Unionville Heritage Conservation District

The dwelling on the property is a 1 ½ storey frame vernacular style building constructed circa 1875. As to its heritage status, it is designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act (Unionville Heritage Conservation District) and classified as a Group 'A' building

(of major importance to the area; possessing historical and architectural value; maintains the district's heritage character).

The subject lot is approximately 6,760.7 ft² and located on Victoria Ave. which is a quiet dead end street that runs east off Main St. Unionville. The property is bordered by residential properties to the east and west, the Canadian National Railway to the south, and it faces Victoria Ave. and valleyland to the north.

A site plan control application has been submitted

The owners of 23 Victoria Ave. have submitted a site plan application seeking permission to construct a 2,534 ft² addition to the existing 1,417 ft² single detached heritage dwelling. The owners also plan to restore the heritage house to its original appearance, and construct a new, detached, two-car, garage in the rear yard of the property. There is no objection to the proposed new addition or restoration plans.

Request received to replace the foundation and relocate the house on the lot

The owners have contacted staff to request permission to replace the existing fieldstone foundation with a modern basement and to construct the new foundation 3-6 feet to the south of its existing location to provide a greater front yard setback. See Appendix 'A' for a letter from the property owners. A site visit was undertaken by staff on January 31, 2012 to assess the granite rubble foundation and site conditions.

Heritage Markham supported a new foundation, but did not support relocation

Heritage Markham reviewed the request at its meeting of February 8, 2012 and supported a new foundation, subject to conditions, but did not support the relocation of the dwelling from its current site. See Appendix 'B' for the Heritage Markham extract.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Staff has no objections to a new foundation subject to conditions

After inspecting the existing rubble foundation, staff was of the opinion that the foundation could be replaced with a new foundation based on observations that the existing foundation permitted water infiltration, was insufficiently high or dry to provide useful living or storage space, and that portions of the rear foundation are planned to be removed as part of the proposed new addition to the dwelling.

However, Staff would only support the construction of a new foundation provided that:

- The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority provides written confirmation that permitting a new foundation would not require the existing finished first floor height to be raised more than 6 inches from its current elevation;
- The new foundation has a 4-6 inch rebate designed to permit a veneer of granite fieldstone laid in a traditional rubble pattern utilizing the stones of the existing foundation for the heritage portions of the house;
- The existing house is moved and relocated back onto the new foundation as a complete and original structural entity, including all the existing structural members such as the floor joists, floor, wall studs and roof rafters; and

- An additional Heritage Letter of Credit is secured as a condition of approval to be released when the dwelling is successfully placed on its new foundation after the temporary relocation procedure.

Staff does not support the relocation of the dwelling

Notwithstanding the support for a new foundation subject to the conditions listed above, Staff does not support relocating the existing house further back from the street. Policies contained in the Town's Official Plan and Unionville Heritage Conservation Plan discourages the relocation of heritage buildings from their original location unless threatened with loss or demolition.

Staff is of the opinion that the existing location of the house significantly contributes to the unique heritage character of Victoria Avenue. The Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan states that "*the character of Victoria Avenue is the most representative example of a vernacular streetscape in the District*" and the street "*has evolved into a narrow winding road lined with modest, simple, frame houses situated close to the street*". Further, the Plan notes that "*as with the commercial Main Street, the distinctive curve in Victoria Avenue results in an element of discovery and a terminating vista*". The houses located close the road creates an intimate, informal streetscape that greatly contributes to the heritage character of the area.

The location of the hydro pole

The owners have indicated that placing the heritage building further back on the property will enhance the views of the heritage building and provide an opportunity in the future to relocate the pole from its current location immediately adjacent to the road pavement. However, it is unlikely the pole would be relocated from the road closer to the relocated house due to safety concerns with wires next to residences. There is no compelling safety or aesthetic reason to change the historical relationship of this house to Victoria Avenue.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Council support the new foundation subject to the noted conditions, but the foundation maintain its historic relationship to the streetscape and not be relocated further back on the property. If the house is removed from its foundation and a new foundation installed, the dwelling would have to be temporarily relocated to accommodate the work. A Heritage Letter of Credit of \$10,000 (in addition to the standard site plan approval financial security) would be required as a condition of any approval to ensure the protection of the heritage resource and its features.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)

Not applicable

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable

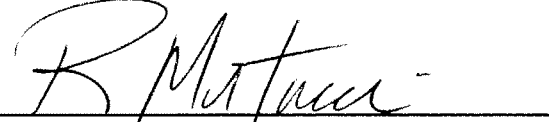
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Not applicable

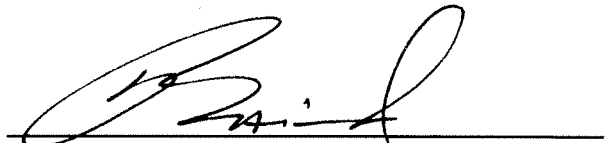
BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

The Heritage Markham Committee reviewed this request on February 8, 2012

RECOMMENDED BY:



Rino Mostacci, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Director, Planning & Urban Design



Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Commissioner of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

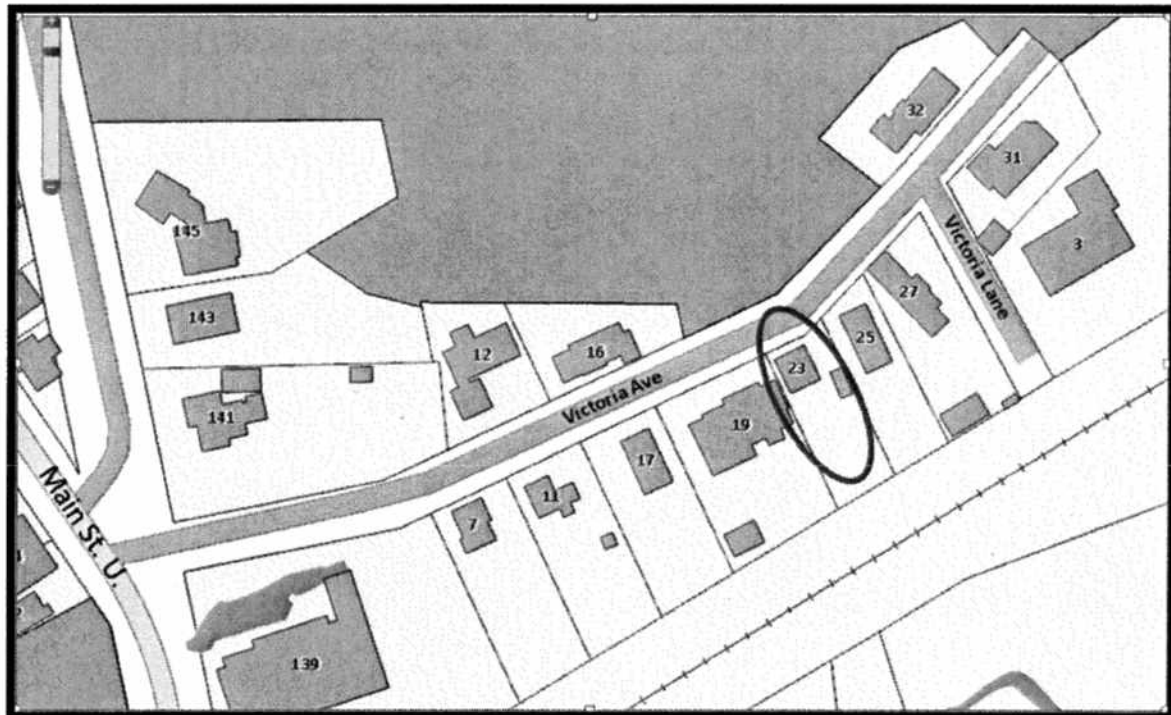
Appendix 'A'	Letter from Property Owner
Appendix 'B'	Heritage Markham Extract – February 8, 2012
Appendix 'C'	Photographs

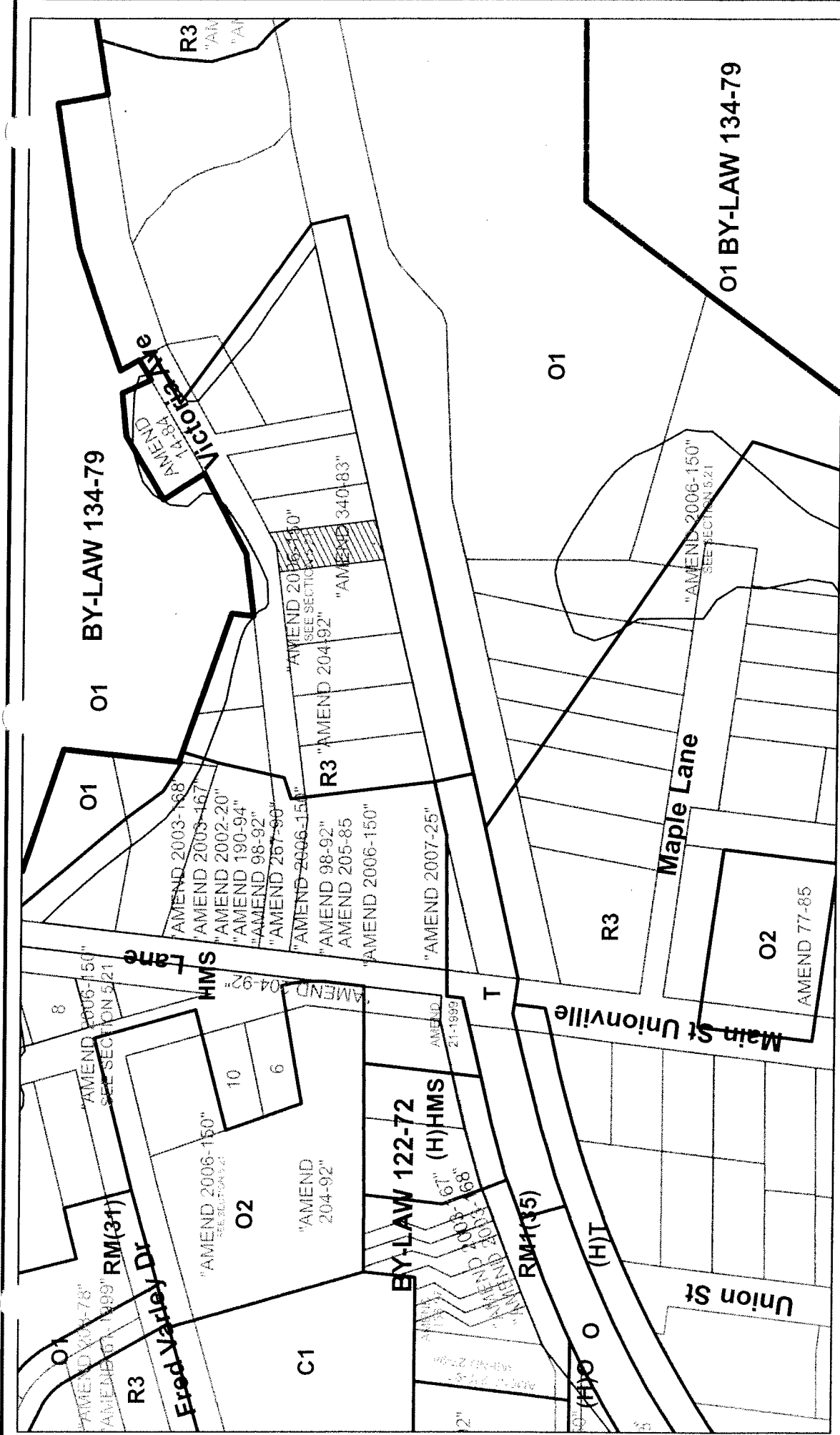
Figure 1

File Path Q:\Development\Heritage\PROPERTY\VICTORAV\23\DSC Reprot March 6 2012.doc

Applicant: Nicholas and Degen Lisi

Location Map





AREA CONTEXT / ZONING

APPLICANT: NICHOLAS AND DEGEN LISI
23 VICTORIA AVENUE, UNIONVILLE

FILE No. SC. 11125817 (RH)

 SUBJECT LANDS






AIR PHOTO

APPLICANT: NICHOLAS AND DEGEN LISI
23 VICTORIA AVENUE, UNIONVILLE

FILE No. SC. 11125817 (RH)

 SUBJECT LANDS



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Drawn By: CPW

Checked By: RH

DATE: 02/13/2012

FIGURE No. 3

APPENDIX A

Feb. 1st, 2012

Please note that we the owners Nicholas & Degen Lisi of 23 Victoria Ave. located in the town of Unionville wish to propose the set back of our house for the following reasons:

The house will regain and increase its heritage preservation with a set back to the current hydro lines that were erected 50 years after the home was built. The hydro lines and polls do not meet the current guide lines set forth by hydro infrastructure planning. The set back would also address future community infrastructure expansion. The hydro poll currently resides on the roadway and is far too close to the current private property line which prohibits the city and Power Stream to use as an option in the event the current pole and lines are to be damaged.

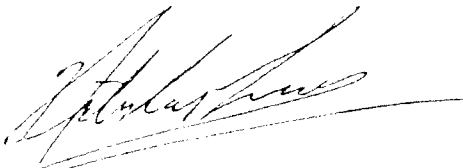
The house set back will also provide a better peripheral view for the children that will be living there and playing on the driveway of any on coming vehicles traveling east on the roadway. This will increase the safety not only for children but for cars reversing from the driveway and increasing the turning radius due to the hydro poll currently set on the road.

The house currently has a 5 foot 9 inch deep basement on the east half with stone and mortar foundation that has mildew and is wet due to current leaks that are believed to be coming up from under the current footings through the sandy floor. The sandy floor depth is 3 and a half feet on the westside of the basement. This space has little benefit to a family of 7 and a set back on new foundation would not only increase the utilization of the basement due to increased space which is desperately needed but also ensure a new engineered foundation further stabilizing the house for many years to come.

The request and process would also follow the set precedents previously laid out by the town and use the certified contractors chosen by the town.

The cost is to be incurred by the home owner. We strongly believe that the community and neighbors will benefit from the increased care and investment being put forth into the home which will maintain heritage integrity and increase interest in similar community development.

We thank you for taking the time in preparation of our meeting together.



Nicholas Lisi



Degen E. Lisi



HERITAGE MARKHAM EXTRACT

DATE: February 13, 2012
TO: R. Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning
P. Wokral, Heritage Planner

EXTRACT CONTAINING ITEM #19 OF THE SECOND HERITAGE MARKHAM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 8, 2012

19. SITE PLAN APPROVAL APPLICATION
FILE NUMBER: SC 11 125817
23 VICTORIA AVENUE, UNIONVILLE
PROPOSED DWELLING RELOCATION/ NEW FOUNDATION
Extracts: R. Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning
P. Wokral, Heritage Planner

The Heritage Planner gave an overview of the proposal to construct a new foundation under the heritage portion of the existing house, in a new location, and explained the conditions that would be required if the proposal was supported.

Nicholas and Degen Lisi, the applicants, were in attendance to discuss the proposal to increase the front yard setback by 3-6 feet, to deal with the close proximity of the hydro pole.

The Committee discussed other properties similarly impacted by hydro poles, and the concern for tree preservation. The importance of the existing placement of houses along Victoria Avenue as it contributes to the unique heritage character of the District was also discussed.

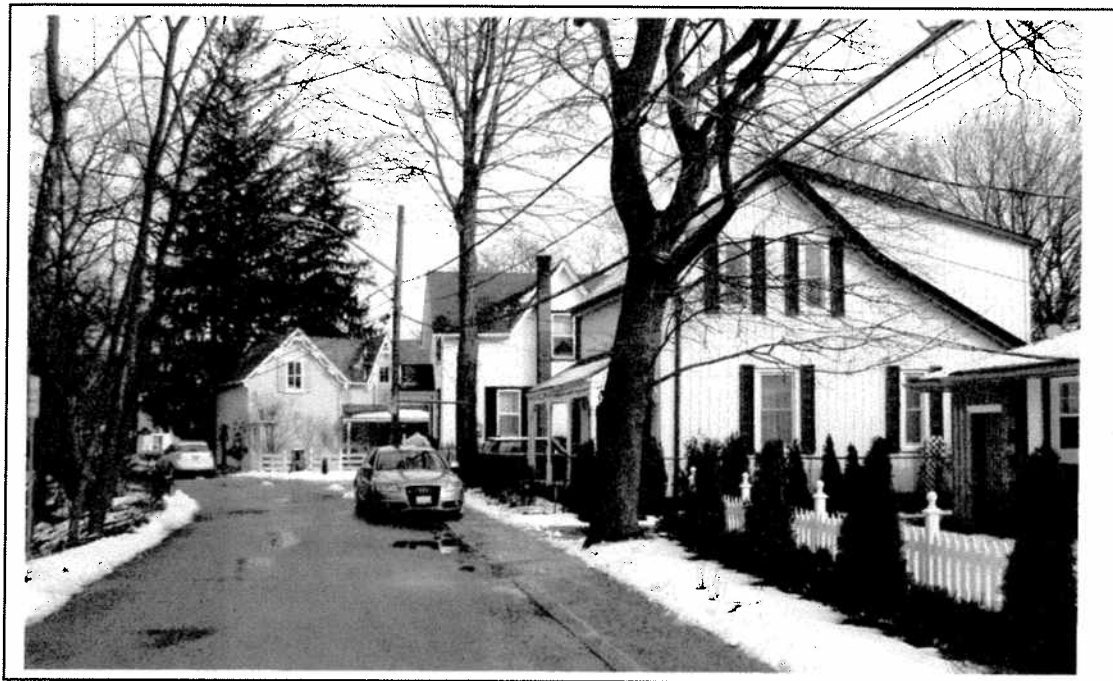
HERITAGE MARKHAM RECOMMENDS:

THAT Heritage Markham supports the construction of a new foundation under the heritage portions of the existing house, in its original location provided that:

- The TRCA provides written confirmation that permitting a new foundation would not require the existing finished first floor height to be raised anymore than 6 inches from its current elevation;
- The new foundation will have a 4-6 inch rebate designed to permit a veneer of granite fieldstone laid in a traditional rubble pattern utilizing the stones of the existing foundation;
- The existing house is moved and relocated back onto the new foundation as a complete and original structural entity, including all the existing structural members such as the floor joists, floor, wall studs and roof rafters;
- An additional Heritage Letter of Credit is secured as a condition of approval to be released when the dwelling is successfully placed on its new foundation after the temporary relocation procedure.

CARRIED

Appendix 'C'
Photographs



Victoria Ave looking east. #23 in foreground.



23 Victoria Ave.

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