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August 11th, 2010

VIA COURIER

Ontario Heritage Trust
10 Adelaide street East
Toronto, ON M5C 1J3

Region of Halton
Gary Carr, Regional Chair
1151 Bronte Road
Oakville, ON L6M 3L1

Region of Halton
Patrick Moyle, CAO
1151 Bronte Road
Oakville, ON L6M 3L1

Dear Sirs and/or Madames:

Subject: Notice of Intention to Designate
1179 Bronte Road, Oakville, Ontario – Bronte White Oak Tree

Attached please find the Notice of Intention to designate the above-mentioned property which is served upon you in accordance with section 29(3) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.18, (the "*Act*").

Pursuant to section 29(4.1) of the *Act* any person who objects to the proposed designation must file a notice of objection to the designation with the Town Clerk at 1225 Trafalgar Road, P.O. Box 310, Oakville, Ontario L6J 5A6, no later than September 10th, 2010.

Sincerely,

Kelly-Anne Lanaus
Legislative Coordinator

Encls.

c.c. C. Best, Town Clerk
D. Anderson, Director of Planning Services
D. Baker, Assistant Town Solicitor
S. Schappert, Heritage Planning



NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

**1179 Bronte Road, Oakville, Ontario
Bronte White Oak Tree**

TAKE NOTICE that Oakville Town Council, on Monday, August 9, 2010 resolved to pass a Notice of Intention to Designate the Bronte White Oak Tree municipally known as 1179 Bronte Road under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. 18, as a property of cultural heritage value and interest.

Description of Property

The Bronte White Oak Tree (*Quercus alba*) is located on the east side of Bronte Road, just north of the QEW and adjacent to the Halton Regional Building. The tree has the characteristic gnarled branches of a mature white oak. At present time, it is a healthy tree standing 19.5 meters above ground with a massive trunk nearly 1.5 meter in diameter and stout far-reaching limbs spreading approximately 25 meters. The designation will apply to the area specified in the Reference Plan attached in the designation by-law.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The Bronte White Oak Tree has cultural heritage value in its physical value as a fine representative example of a mature white oak tree. The broad spreading crown of this oak tree has round-lobed leaves that transform from a silvery pink in spring to glossy green in summer, and then deepen to a reddish brown in autumn where they remain tenaciously deep into winter. Acorns are produced with periodic abundance and have been gathered to propagate its genetic stock.

A native Carolinian species, white oak is common in southern Ontario and is widespread across the eastern United States. It grows on a wide range of soils and sites from dry forests and fields to moister woodlands. Throughout its range, the white oak provides food and cover for more than 180 different kinds of birds and mammals. This tree species is becoming a historic component of our forests.

In the open, the white oak tends to be stocky and wide spreading, like the Bronte Road tree, while in forests it is taller with a more compact crown. Typically, forest grown white oaks reach 24 to 30 m in height, and the trunk generally ranges from 91 to 122 cm in diameter.

The Bronte White Oak Tree also has physical value as a rare example of a surviving old growth white oak tree. While the species of tree is common to southern Ontario, due to the history of intense logging in the province, old growth white oak trees of this stature are rare. If undisturbed, white oak trees can live 500 to 600 years; however, the lifespan of individual trees can be difficult to predict. The Bronte White Oak Tree is an old-growth tree which has survived despite the threat of logging and modern development, and has the potential to be a long-lived tree.

The Bronte White Oak Tree has cultural heritage value in its historic associations with the development of the hamlet of Merton, the village of Bronte and the Town of Oakville. The Bronte White Oak Tree is estimated to date back to the 1730s, and therefore pre-dates historical European settlement in the Oakville area. The Bronte White Oak Tree is one of a very few pre-settlement white oak trees that remain in Oakville.

Before European settlement, large white oaks dominated forests across eastern North America. However, early settlers recognized that the hard, heavy, tough oak wood was a valuable source of lumber. Numerous mills were built across Oakville, Bronte and Trafalgar Township in order to process timber. At that time, oak trees were so in abundance in this part of southern Ontario that the name Oakville was chosen for one of the area settlements whose founder, William Chisholm, was also named "White Oak" by the First Nations people.

The Bronte White Oak Tree has historical value in its association with past owners of the land on which it stands. The tree was once located on Woodlands Orchards, an estate owned by James White who bought the land in the 1840s. James White was a sawmill owner, lumber merchant, gentleman farmer, and livestock breeder. He was a major developer of the timber resources of the Twelve Mile Creek valley, and was also the owner of the horse (Don Juan) who won the first Queen's Plate. The land later passed to White's son-in-law, Paul Campbell, who transformed the 315 acre farm into the best known orchards in the area.

In 1921, George Chew Atkins bought the property and moved his family from New Jersey. In the 1970s, the property was owned by his son, George Atkins, who was an important figure in Canadian broadcasting. He received a honorary degree from the University of Guelph, was named a Fellow of the Agricultural Institute of Canada in 1980, received the AIC International Recognition Award in 1993 and an Order of Canada in 1989. Atkins was responsible for the first efforts to preserve the Oak Tree when it was put at risk by road construction in the 1970s. He enlisted the assistance of Erik Jorgenson of the Shade Tree Research Laboratory of the University of Toronto, who identified the tree as one of few remaining old oak trees in Ontario. In 1972, Atkins signed an agreement with the Department of Transportation that ensured that "every possible precaution will be taken to guard the safety of said Tree".

The Bronte White Oak Tree also has cultural heritage value in through its special associations and relationship with the local community. Due to its age, size and location, the Bronte White Oak Tree has been recognized by the community as a highly valued landmark natural heritage landmark for many years.

In 2006, the Bronte White Oak Tree was preserved due to community efforts to divert a regional road around the tree and the preservation campaign gained national attention. The 'Woodlands Oak Tree Preservation Committee' was successful in its attempt to protect the tree, and although a relatively recent event, in years to come this effort will likely be seen as an important moment for the community. The current property owners, the Region of Halton, have demonstrated a strong commitment to the tree's preservation and to ensuring its ongoing biological health.

The Bronte White Oak Tree has cultural heritage value in its contextual value as it has existed at this location for approximately 250 years, pre-dating the European settlement and development of the area. The Bronte White Oak Tree is a community landmark and is well known by its prominent location on Bronte Road. The tree is a physical reminder of the rural character of this area, which has only recently experienced intensive development.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key attributes of the Bronte White Oak Tree which embody its physical, historical and contextual value as a rare remaining example of an old growth white oak tree and:

- the crown, trunk, branches and root system of the Bronte White Oak tree

Key attributes of the Bronte White Oak Tree which embody it as a natural heritage landmark in the town of Oakville:

- the location of the Bronte White Oak Tree

OBJECTIONS: Any objection to this designation must be filed no later than **September 10, 2010**. Objections should be directed to Cathie Best, Town Clerk, 1225 Trafalgar Road, P.O. Box 310, Oakville, Ontario L6J 5A6.

MORE INFORMATION: Any inquiries may be directed to Susan Schappert, Heritage Planner at 905-845-6601, extension 3870 or by email at sschappert@oakville.ca.

Last Date to file Notice of Objection: September 10, 2010

Cathie Best, Town Clerk