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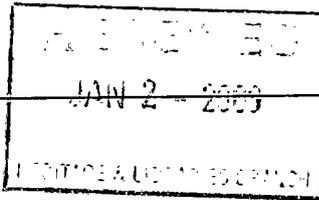


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CORPORATE SERVICES COMMISSION  
Clerk's Department

REGISTERED MAIL

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER O.18;  
AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LAND AND PREMISES IN PART OF LOT 1,  
CONCESSION 10, KNOWN MUNICIPALLY AS 7960 STEELES AVENUE, TOWN OF  
MARKHAM, IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

TO: Heritage Policy and Program Development Unit  
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation  
400 University Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2R9

TAKE NOTICE THAT the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Markham intends to designate the property, including land and building, known municipally as 7960 Steeles Avenue, Markham, as a property of architectural and/or historic interest or value under Part IV of The Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18.

A Statement of the Reasons for the Proposed Designation of The Robert Milroy Jr. House, is attached.

NOTICE OF OBJECTION to the designation may be served on the Town Clerk within thirty (30) days, or before 4:30 p.m. on the 17th day of January, 2003.

Sheila Birrell, Town Clerk  
The Town of Markham  
101 Town Centre Boulevard  
Markham, ON L3R 9W3

December 17, 2002

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DESIGNATION PROPOSAL



THE ROBERT MILROY JR. HOUSE  
7960 Steeles Avenue  
Part Lot 1, Concession 10  
Markham

Prepared For: Heritage Markham

Prepared By: Marie Jones

## STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

The Robert Milroy Jr. House is recommended for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act because of its historical, architectural and contextual significance.

### Historical Reasons

The house at 7960 Steeles Avenue was built c.1859 on land that had originally been granted to Lt. Col. William Jervois on Oct. 12, 1816. Jervois's patent was rescinded Sept. 25, 1817. Richard Strangé acquired a patent for the full 200 acres on Jan. 12, 1833. On Jan. 24, 1834, one year later, the property was sold to Robert Milroy Sr. for 344 pounds.

Robert Milroy Sr., b.1791 d. Nov. 18, 1854, came to Canada with his wife Anne, from Kirkcowan in Wigtown, Scotland in 1827, where they had operated a wollen mill. Their three children, a son James, b.1823 and two daughters Agnes and Celia accompanied them. Research indicates that the Milroy family was most likely living on this property prior to them purchasing it in 1834. They may have leased it from the owner Richard Strange. Robert Jr. was born in 1834, the year his father purchased the property, and died Sept. 17, 1862 in Cedar Grove at the age of 28.

Robert Milroy Sr. built a sawmill in the late 1830's, which survived until 1924 when it was destroyed by fire. It appears that the Milroy family resided in a 1 ½ storey log building c.1833. The mill was constructed where the river crosses the townline on the banks of the Little Rouge at Concession 10, opposite the present site of the Cedar Grove Park.

The 1851 Census lists Robert Milroy Sr., his wife Ann and children James, Celia, Agnes, John and Robert Jr. (17 years old) living in a 1 ½ storey log building on the west part of this property. In 1853 Robert's eldest son, James, has title to the East part of 50 acres. James continues to reside at the family home until 1859 when it appears he builds his own 1 ½ storey frame structure. In 1854, Robert Sr. died and was buried at the Cedar Grove Mennonite Cemetery.

The 1857 and 1858 Assessment Rolls lists Robert Milroy Jr. as farming the 138 acres then owned by his widowed mother Ann. In 1859, the 137 acre parcel was divided into the west part 68 ½ acres, which goes to John, the youngest son, who also inherits the family home. The middle part, 68 ½ acres, went to Robert the middle son who was married to Elizabeth Reesor. It is about this time that the house at 7960 Steeles Ave. was constructed. George Tremaine's Map of 1860 shows the Robert Milroy Jr. house on its present day site. The Census of 1861 lists Robert Jr. with his wife, Elizabeth (nee Reesor), and their one year old son, Robert, residing in a 1 ½ storey frame house at his location.

Robert Milroy Jr. died on Sept. 17, 1862, in his 28 th year leaving his 23 year old wife, Elizabeth and year old son, Robert. Robert was buried at the Zion Cemetery, beside the Zion Presbyterian Church, which is located at the rear of Lot 1, Concession 10 on land donated by James Milroy. The Milroy family were Scottish Presbyterians and made up much of the early congregation of the church. Elizabeth remained a widow for the remainder of her life, but after her husband's death left the farm to reside with her brothers Robert and David Reesor at Silver Spring Farms (Lot 9 east, Concession 7) with son Robert for a number of years. The Census of 1871 lists James Craigie with his wife and four children farming the property as tenants. In 1881, the Census lists Elizabeth and son Robert, who is 20 years old, back on the property farming. A few years later they were again residing with David Reesor until the time of her death in 1906. Robert who never married died in Cedar Grove on Mar. 25, 1895. He and his mother, Elizabeth, are buried at Grace Anglican Church Cemetery.

By 1885, John Milroy controlled the original 180 acres, which he divided again in order to set up his three sons Alexander, Robert A. and Arthur. It is Robert A. who inherits the middle part of 68 ½ acres. Descendants of this early Milroy family continued to farm this tract of land for over 150 years.

#### Architectural Reasons

The building located at 7960 Steeles Avenue, although somewhat altered, is an example of the simple architectural tastes of some of Markham's early rural families. The 1 ½ storey Georgian Style cottage is presently 2 bays across by 1 bay deep. The original openings have been covered over, but the form suggests that the house was, when constructed, 3 bays across by 2 bays deep. There is a centrally located addition at the rear of the main house. The gable roof is of a low pitch with plain projecting eaves and verges. The 2/2 rectangular windows are newer and have plain wood trim. The house sits on a fieldstone foundation and has a single mid side right chimney. The dwelling is clad in a horizontal siding of modern material over the original wood clapboard.

#### Contextual Reasons

The Robert Milroy Junior House is of contextual significance as one of a number of early farmhouses in the southern part of the township. Together with other houses in the vicinity, the house provides a sense of the historic agricultural tradition in the area. The house forms part of the greater community of Cedar Grove and is part of the remaining remnants of rural farmhouses that were prevalent in this area. It is a reminder of the community surrounding the Zion United Church and cemetery, located on land, which was donated by the Milroy family, Scottish Presbyterians who settled on this property.

## IDENTIFICATION

Property: The Robert Milroy Junior House  
7960 Steeles Avenue

Legal Description: Part Lot 1, Concession 10

Owners: Catholic Cemetery Board

Inventroy Number: K7 -1

Assessment Roll Number: 250-281-00

Date of Construction: c.1859

Style of Architecture: Georgian Cottage Style

Type of Structure: Farm Residence

Number of Storeys: 1.5

Exterior Wall Material: Horizontal Modern Siding over Wood  
clapboard

Special Features: Original form intact