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**RECEIVED**

**DEC 27 2002**

**CONSERVATION REVIEW  
BOARD**

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 15,  
CONCESSION 4, KNOWN MUNICIPALLY AS 9221 WOODBINE AVENUE, HAMLET  
OF BUTTONVILLE, 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 9221 Woodbine 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 Francis Button 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 3rd day of January, 2003.

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

December 3, 2002

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HERITAGE DESIGNATION REPORT



The Francis Button House  
9221 Woodbine Avenue  
Hamlet of Bliss Corners  
Buttonville Heritage Study Area

Prepared by: Michael Seaman  
Senior Planner – Heritage  
Town of Markham

## RECOMMENDATION

The Francis Button House, built c.1872 is recommended for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act for Historical, Architectural and Contextual Reasons. The owner of the property, Mr. Leo Klug has requested designation of these premises.

## HISTORICAL REASONS

The Francis Button House was built c.1872 as a frame, Gothic Revival styled dwelling near the intersection of Woodbine Avenue and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, a small crossroads community grew around this intersection, which was called Bliss Corners, after the Bliss Family who lived on the property to the north (Royal Bank Building). The date of construction of the house is confirmed by an historical account of a date mark in one of the chimneys, which originally existed on the building. James Bliss, who was a carpenter and was associated with the Bliss House to the north, may have built the house. Local accounts of the history of the dwelling indicate that it was built as the retirement home of Francis Button, who was a member of one of the leading families in the area. His daughter lived in the house following her father. Francis Button's other daughter lived in the house immediately to the north. The Button family owned the house until 1952.

The early history of the house begins with Francis Button (1794-1880, son of John), who gave a one acre lot at the north-west corner of his 100-acre farm to daughter Sarah Bliss in 1868. On March 31, 1871, Francis sold the remaining 99-acre farm to his second son John M. (1818-1900) a blacksmith for the sum of \$6000. Shortly afterward Francis bought back from Sarah for \$1, 1/3 of her acre on January 11, 1872. He and his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Maria then built this house to retire in.

This house was built using the same plan that was used on the Bliss House to the north and as James Bliss was a carpenter-wagon maker, he may have done the work.

Francis died in the house in 1880. Maria lived on in the house until her death in 1884. They are both buried in Buttonville Methodist Cemetery.

The house was left to Newbury Button (1825-1910), who was Francis's third son. He was a farmer located on Lot 35, Concession 1. Newbury sold the house to his brother John for \$525. The house then became part of the farm again. It is likely that John retired to this house as well.

John's only child, Mary Anne married Major James Elliot (1840-1923) and they took over the farm.

When Major Elliot died, the farm was divided between his two sons, William and Robert. William (1878-1949) who had been working the farm, inherited the house, barns and 50 acres of cultivated land.

Robert (1863-1945), the oldest son had a farm near Goderich. He and his wife Alma May Stiver inherited the house on Woodbine, the bush on the east end of the farm and frontage on Woodbine to the cemetery. Robert rented the house to the Murray Roberts and Ryan families. When he died in 1945, his wife moved back to Bliss Corners, where she was born, and lived in the house

until she died in 1951. The house (and property) passed to her son Ian Cecil (known as Cecil). He rented the house for several years. Aubrey Stephenson's son, Ken a mill-worker, was a long-time tenant in the house.

In the early 1960s, the house was bought by Frank Maw and his wife. They operated a clock making business from the summer kitchen, which he restored.

In 1971, Patricia Rick and her married sister bought the property. Patricia lived upstairs and the sisters operated an antique shop called "Buttonville Antiques" downstairs.

In July 1973, Susan and Ed Casella bought the house and enlarged and bricked it over the next decade.

In 2002, the house was owned by Leo and Marilyn Klug, who operated a law office out of the premises.

### **ARCHITECTURAL REASONS**

The Francis Button House at 9221 Woodbine Avenue is a good example of a Gothic Revival styled workers cottage from the 1870s, which although altered in recent years has retained much of its original form and window detailing. It is believed that the house was built with the same plans as the Bliss House, located immediately to the north (Royal Bank).

The house was originally built as a frame, board and batten clad house in 1872. It had a 3-bay façade on the front by two bays on the south side and one bay on the north. The house is 1-½ storeys in height with a Gothic Revival style arched window in the front gable. The house originally had an L-shaped kitchen with a side porch, however, these were removed when the house was remodelled in the 1970s and 80s. A number of original windows exist on the original west section of the building. These are wood, double hung with a 2/2-pane division. Some original old glass is present.

In the 1970s and 80s a number of major changes were made to the house, most significantly, it was clad with red and yellow brick in 1983. Although altered, the original form and much of the original detailing (particularly in the windows) is present.

### **CONTEXTUAL REASONS**

The Francis Button House at 9221 Woodbine Avenue is of contextual significance as one of only four remaining historical attributes of the original settlement of Bliss Corners, located at the intersection of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Woodbine Avenue. Together with the Bliss House in particular, the Francis Button House helps to illustrate that a pioneer community was once located at this intersection.

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Francis Button House is listed on the Markham Inventory of Heritage Buildings and is located in the Buttonville Heritage Conservation District Study Area. The owner of the property, Mr. Leo Klug contacted the Town on October 4, 2002 to request the designation of this building under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.