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BY-LAW 2003-314

A by-law to designate a property as being of
Historic and/or Architectural Value or Interest
Walker Homestead

WHEREAS Pursuant to Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, the council of a municipality is authorized to enact by-laws to designate a real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historic and/or architectural value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Markham has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises at:

Mr. Robert Turcotte
Buttonville Golf and Country Club
9064 Woodbine Avenue
Markham, ON L3R 0J7

and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to designate Walker Homestead, 2920 16th Avenue having a general circulation in the municipality;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designations are set out in Schedule "B" attached hereto and forming part of this by-law;

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MARKHAM HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT the following real properties, more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto and forming part of this by-law is hereby designated as being of historic and/or architectural value or interest:

Walker Homestead
2920 16th Avenue
Town of Markham
The Regional Municipality of York

2. THAT the Town Solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the properties described in Schedule "A" attached hereto in the property Land Registry Office.

READ A FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD TIME AND PASSED THIS
21ST DAY OF OCTOBER, 2003.


SHEILA BIRRELL, TOWN CLERK


DON COUSENS, MAYOR

SCHEDULE 'A' TO BY-LAW 2003-314

In the Town of Markham in the Regional Municipality of York, property descriptions as follows:

Part Lot 16, Concession 3, Pt 2 65R12460

TOWN OF MARKHAM
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

SCHEDULE 'B' TO BY-LAW 2003-314

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES

The Walker Homestead is recommended for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act as a property of cultural heritage value and interest containing the following heritage attributes:

Historical Attributes

The Walker family was among the early settlers of the Buttonville district of Markham Township. John Walker (1788-1865) was born in Coleraine, Ireland. He was a member and precentor (leader of singing) in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. He married Rachael Keith and came to Canada with his family in 1834. John's son, James (1819-1901), the builder of the brick house at 2920 16th Avenue, was 14 years of age when the family came to Markham.

The Walkers settled on the northeast 50 acres of Lot 16, Concession 4, which they purchased from Thomas Gauley in 1849. They cleared the land and built a log house. Prior to that date, the farm must have been leased as they are listed in that location in Brown's Directory of 1846-47. This farm was later expanded to include the northwest 50 acres of Lot 16, Concession 4, to form a continuous property that stretched from Woodbine Avenue to Kennedy Road.

John Walker continued his church involvement in his new home, becoming a founding member and elder of the Brown's Corners Presbyterian (now United) Church. Initially, the church was planned to be built on or near the Walker farm on Kennedy Road, but instead was constructed on land donated by Alexander Brown in 1843 to be more convenient to Scottish families in the area. John Walker is interred in the old cemetery to the east of the existing church. There is no marker for his wife, Rachael, who predeceased him.

The census of 1851 lists John Walker, farmer and widower, aged 63, and his son, James, aged 29, living in a log house on Lot 16, Concession 4. James' wife Rachael White (1819-1900) and their six young children are included in the household.

In 1852, John Walker and his son James purchased the north east 50 acres of Lot 16, Concession 3, from John Rumohr. The east property line of the new Walker farm was somewhat to the west of the Woodbine Avenue frontage because previous owners had sold off a number of small parcels along the concession road. Two of these were later purchased by the Walkers, one 3 ½ acre lot in 1856 and another in 1887. A further 40 acres of the former Rumohr holdings were added to the new Walker farm in 1868. The log house that the family had lived in on their original farm on Lot 16, Concession 4, was moved to the new farm.

The census of 1861 indicates that the Walker family had relocated to the new farm on Lot 16, Concession 3, and were living in a brick house. Interestingly, the brick house was described in the census as a one storey building, when in fact it was a one and a half storey dwelling. This is not an unusual occurrence in the census records. Depending on the census enumerator, unless a house was a full two storey building, some enumerators did not make the distinction between a one and a one and a half storey height. In 1861, John and James Walker are listed as labourers rather than farmers. There were now ten children in James and Rachael's family. Later census records list James Walker's occupation as a farmer.

According to a 1942 newspaper article that appeared in Richmond Hill's local newspaper, *The Liberal*, the family constructed the present brick house on Lot 16, Concession 3 in 1858, the same year as James Walker Jr. was born.

James Walker Jr. (1858-1942) married Rachael Stonehouse (1870-1959) in March of 1892. They resided in the old log house on the Walker farm that remained standing even after the building of the fine brick farmhouse. One of their sons, Roy A. Walker, fell at Dieppe on August 19, 1942. James' brother John worked the farm directly across the road until he moved to Saskatchewan in 1908 to take advantage of the opportunities available in the opening of the Canadian West.

James and Rachael (White) Walker, James and Rachael (Stonehouse) Walker, Sarah J. (Walker) Elson, and Roy A. Walker are interred in the Buttonville Cemetery, not far from the old family farm. It is not known when the log house on the Walker farm was demolished. The brick house remained in the ownership of the family well into the 20th century.

Architectural Attributes

Architectural Description:

The Walker house is a one and a half storey brick and frame dwelling with a L-shaped plan. The main block is brick, with a simple rectangular plan that faces east. The frame rear wing is offset to the north of the rear wall of the main block and has been modified with a continuous shed dormer on the south side, and a modern, enclosed, flat-roofed verandah in the ell that wraps around the rear wall of the frame rear wing. The brick portion of the building rests on a raised fieldstone foundation that provides basement space.

The red brick walls are laid in running bond on the front elevation, and common bond on the sides and rear. The red brick body is accented with white (i.e. buff coloured) brick in the form of angled voussoirs over door and window openings, raised alternating quoins, a raised water table or belt course, and below the wood cornice on the front wall, a decorative belt course that incorporates a sawtooth detail in alternating red and white bricks.

The low-pitched gable roof has projecting, boxed eaves and prominent eaves returns treated with Classical mouldings. There are heavy, single-stack gable end chimneys at either end of the roof. The chimneys have simple corbelled caps.

Windows are typically 2 over 2 sash style with matching wooden storm windows and wooden lugsills. The ground floor windows are larger than those on the second floor. The front or east elevation is three bay, with a central door flanked by a window on either side. On the south gable end is a single window spaced toward the west, and above, two smaller windows spaced widely apart on the wall. The north gable end wall is similarly treated.

The single-leaf front door with a flat-headed, single paned transom light, is centred on the east façade. The door has four recessed panels with robust Classical bolection mouldings (a panel moulding that overlaps the rails and stiles) and raised, fielded centers. The lock rail is wide in keeping with the mid 19th century period of the building. There are obvious indications that the doorcase has been altered from its original appearance by the removal of sidelights. This is shown by noticeable brick infilling on either side of the door, and the fact that the brick arch over the opening extends well past the outer edges of the existing door. The door itself, however, appears to be the original.

The frame rear wing is clad in wood board and batten siding. It was originally a single-storey kitchen tail that has been altered with the addition of a second floor. The gable roof has been modified with the addition of a shed-roofed dormer. There is a mixture of window styles in the rear wing. On the ground floor, the windows have 6 over 6 glazing. Window in the dormer are 2 over 2.

The interior of the Walker house retains much of its original Classic Revival trim, although there has been much remodeling to suit more modern needs and decorating tastes. On the second floor, storage cupboards and banks of drawers have been added. One of the ground floor rooms has impressive mouldings and other architectural details in the form of panelled window aprons, window architraves that extend all the way to the floor, and high, richly moulded baseboards. Trim in other parts of the house (represented in the photographs in the file) follows the theme of Classical profiles, but upstairs, typical of the period, they are diminished in scale compared to what is seen in the parlour or dining room. Recent photographs show that the interior has been subject to water damage from a leaking roof.

Stylistic Analysis:

The Walker house is a good example of a patterned brick, Georgian tradition farmhouse of the mid 19th century. Its refined detailing, quality materials and workmanship attest to the prosperity and high standing the Walker family had in their rural community. Although the home is currently unoccupied and has suffered somewhat from a lack of routine maintenance, it remains a very well preserved example of its style and period. Alterations to the main brick block have been minimal.

The Georgian architectural tradition, with its roots in 18th century Britain, enjoyed a long period of popularity in old Ontario as the solid and dignified style of dwelling preferred by all levels of society ranging from tradesmen to the wealthy. The scale, materials, and level of detailing may have varied according to the tastes and financial assets of the owner, but the essential principles of balance, conventions of proportion and symmetry, and simple rectangular or square plans remained a constant.

Although most Georgian tradition buildings and buildings in the related styles of Neo-Classical and Classic Revival exhibit restraint in the use of exterior ornament, special attention was often given to the main door. In the case of the Walker house, evidence of a doorcase that was formerly more elaborate in its design is very clear. Its flat headed transom light and (now absent) sidelights can be said to be characteristic of a restrained Classic Revival (or Greek Revival) influence. The use of correct Classic mouldings in the cornice is also related to the Classic Revival.

The 2 over 2 window treatment may be an early use of this glazing pattern, or a replacement for windows with a 6 over 6 glazing, more typical in a house of 1858.

The patterned brickwork of the Walker house is perhaps its most noteworthy feature. The raised, alternating quoins and sawtooth belt course add a rich texture that is the exception rather than the rule in patterned brick buildings of the mid 19th century. It is much more common to see the decorative brickwork flush with the face of the main wall. Patterned brick was introduced locally in the 1840s, and is particularly associated with Southern Ontario. Its popularity lasted through the mid to late 19th century as more picturesque architectural styles such as the Gothic Revival and Italianate became prominent. In fact, the sawtooth belt course of the Walker house anticipates the more lavish patterned brick treatments of the 1870s and 1880s.

The Walker house is similar in terms of design and materials to the Alexander Brown house and the John Galloway house, two other patterned brick houses from the Buttonville area that were also built in 1858. It is possible that the same builder was involved with their construction. Future restoration of the front doorcase of the Walker house could be based on the designs of these other local examples.

Contextual Attributes

The Walker house stands on its original site and in a rural setting, though what was once a farm is now an active golf course. It is surrounded by mature vegetation and is a landmark building in the Buttonville community. Its south gable end wall is clearly visible amongst the stand of trees that frame it. To the west, the Rouge River winds its way through the property. Another heritage building, the Daniel Quantz house, 2960 16th Avenue, is located on the north west corner of 16th Avenue and Woodbine.

Significant Heritage Attributes

1. The rectangular, 1 ½ storey brick main block;
2. The ground floor of the frame, board and batten clad rear wing;
3. The patterned brickwork in red and white brick, including raised quoins, water table belt course, sawtooth belt course, and angled voussoirs;
4. The gable roof with its wood eaves, soffits, cornice and returned eaves;
5. The single stack brick gable end chimneys;
6. The wood 2 over 2 windows of the brick main block, with their wood frames and wood lugsills;
7. The wood 6 over 6 windows of the rear wing;
8. The 4 panelled front door and original dimensions of the doorcase

IDENTIFICATION

<u>Property:</u>	The Walker Homestead
<u>Municipal Address:</u>	2920 16 th Avenue
<u>Legal Description:</u>	Part East ½ Lot 16, Concession 3
<u>Owner:</u>	Markham Golf and Country Club
<u>Inventory Number:</u>	C4-2
<u>Assessment Roll Number:</u>	136-430-00
<u>Date of Construction:</u>	1858
<u>Architectural Style:</u>	Georgian Tradition with Classic Revival Detailing
<u>Type of Structure:</u>	Residence (vacant)
<u>Number of Storeys:</u>	1 ½
<u>Exterior Wall Material:</u>	Red brick with white brick accents

