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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AURORA

By-law Number 4361-02.R

**BEING A BY-LAW to
designate a certain property
as being of Historic and/or
Architectural Value or Interest
– The Red House**

WHEREAS pursuant to Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.o.18, the Council of a municipality is authorized to enact Bylaws to designate a real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be historic and/or architectural value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the municipal Council of The Corporation of the Town of Aurora has cause to be served on the owners of the lands and premises at:

237-253 Old Yonge Street
Aurora, Ontario
L4G 6J6

and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to designate The Red House, located at 237-253 Old Yonge Street and a statement of the reasons for the proposed designation, and further, has caused said notice of intention to be published in the Era Banner, being a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality;

AND WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the municipality;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "B" attached hereto and form part of this By-law;

NOW THEREFORE THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AURORA ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT the following real property, 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:

The Red House
237-253 Old Yonge Street
Town of Aurora
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 property described in Schedule "A" attached hereto in the property Land Registry Office.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME THIS 10TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2002.


T. JONES, MAYOR


B. PANIZZA, TOWN CLERK

***SCHEDULE "A" TO
BY-LAW 4361-02.R***

In the Town of Aurora in the Regional Municipality of York, property description as follows:

Part Lot 3, Plan 461 as in R524310 (Whitchurch)
Town of Aurora
Regional Municipality of York

SCHEDULE "B" TO BY-LAW 4361-02.R

STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

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

Historical Reasons

Historically, the house, with its neighbours the Pargeter House and Willow Farm, is a reminder of the once distinct settlement of Cosford's Corners.

On arriving from England, Thomas Cosford, blacksmith and carriage maker, purchased on half interest in the blacksmith shop and one acre parcel on Lot 85, Concession 1, Whitchurch, belonging to James White of West Gwillimbury. Cosford sold his interest to William Doan in 1832. In the meantime, he had acquired Lot 85, Concession 1, King in 1827, then in 1834, the 12 ¾ acres at the west end of the Lot 85, Whitchurch. He sold one acre to G.B. Willard a year later, but bought it back in 1839, along with an additional one acre parcel on Lot 84. This 13 ¾ parcel corresponds with the lands delineated in Registered Plan 461, or which the Red House property is Lot 3. Tremaine's map of 1860 identifies the house as "Oakland Cottage." At the time of his death, he also owned part of Lot 86, Concession 1, King. Thus the name "Cosford's Corners" is appropriate.

Cosford's family remained on the Whitchurch property until 1884, with the land returning to the Cosford's in 1903 through Thomas Cosford Jr. and his wife Isabella. The widowed Isabella sold it in 1907. Other significant owners were Stephen Leacock's brother George, and in 1968, Dorothy Clark McClure, noted regional artist specializing in sketches of heritage buildings, who called the house "The Red House Studio."

Architectural Reasons

The Red House is very significant to the built history of Aurora. It is one of the earliest brick houses in the community, and possibly the only existing one from the early 1840's. Architecturally, it encompasses a number of styles, Georgian, Regency, and Italianate, combining to produce an attractive house, evocative of a period in the history of York Region, and of which there are fewer remaining examples each year.

The c. 1840 house is a 1 ½ storey Classic Ontario solid brick building with a 1 storey solid brick rear wing. Both main house and wing sit on fieldstone foundations, as do the three fireplaces. The north/south moderately pitched gable roof of the house contains a west-facing centre gable; the east/west gable roof of the wing now lies under a more recent roof which encloses a further addition to the rear and an enclosed sunporch to the south.

The brick façade is laid in Flemish bond. Bricks and mortar have been coated with strong red wash, then overlaid with white tuck pointing. This brick treatment was used to give a more prestigious appearance to the principal face of the building.

The rest of the building is of multi-coloured soft brick laid in common bond, generally with four courses of stretchers between the header courses.

There are four pairs of French doors – two on the front at the first floor, one in the centre gable, and one at the west end of the south wall at the first floor level. Each leaf of the doors has 4 lights, surrounded by a band of narrow panes, a style typical of the 1840's. Below the lights, the doors are panelled. Alterations to the brickwork clearly indicated that the upper windows on the façade replaced French doors.

Window openings throughout the building contain six-over-six single hung windows. Pane size on the first floor is 12" x 16" and on the second floor is 10" x 12"; muntins have a fine profile. Windows on the east and west, added at a later date, have no parting stops. All windows have wooden lugsills. All but those set into the frieze have flat-arched voussoirs which on the façade are 1 ½ bricks high and sloped. The others are one brick high and vertical. Upper openings on the façade, and all windows on the north, have louvered shutters. Those on the north have bottom left panels which are

adjustable in an unusual manner. Remnants of shutter hardware indicate that there were shutters on the south openings as well.

The three internal chimneys have been rebuilt above the roof line, but are essential components of the 19th century house which relied on fireplaces, and later stoves, for heat.

The wide eaves have plain fascia boards, flat soffits, a sloped bedmould inset with widely-spaced dentil-like blocks, and a plain frieze finished with a narrow slightly projecting band. Deep returns complete the eaves detailing.

Extensive changes in the brickwork, remnants of former paint lines, and alterations to the uprights at the upper floor level, show that the original gable roof was raised. Subsequent plastering over accordion lath indicates that this major change to the house occurred early in its history, probably prior to 1860.

Lack of change to the brickwork around the first floor openings confirms the presence of the French doors and the south-facing six-over-six single hung window in the original house. Wood inserts around the centre opening on the façade, combined with its transom and its depth to floor level, indicate that this was the original front door, with a wide door surround.

Replaced bricks along the façade, south and east sides of the house are evidence of a former verandah wrapping around all but the north side of the main house. Given that the upper façade windows were formerly French doors, this would have had to support a second floor gallery at least on the façade.

There is some evidence that the trim was a deep red at one time. If so, given the strong red wash on the bricks and the mortar of the façade, the name "The Red House" is appropriate, although research does not indicate when the term came into use.

Contextual Reasons

The Red House is prominently situated on a rise of land at the southeast corner of Yonge Street and St. John's Sideroad West, and lies between Yonge Street and Old Yonge Street, serving as a reminder of the early history of the military road to the north which could not always follow the rigidly straight lines of the early survey. A driveway winds up the slope from Yonge Street, with a rear driveway giving access off Old Yonge Street. The façade of the house is oriented parallel to Yonge.

With the Pargeter House across Old Yonge Street and Willow Farm across Yonge Street, the Red House is all that is left of Cosford's Corners, a little settlement that included homes of prosperous farmers, smaller dwellings, and a blacksmith and carriage shop.

Although the Cosford houses have quite different settings - the Red House on a rise, and Willow Farm tucked in behind the creek -- together they are remnants of the 19th century rural life in the former York Country, and are important components of the northern limits of Aurora on the Yonge Street corridor.

REGISTRATION ON TITLE

The owner of the property has agreed to allow the Town of Aurora to designate the Red House under the Ontario Heritage Act and register this designation By-law and Statement of Reasons for Designation against title of the lands as a condition of a site plan agreement.