



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Sharon Cemetery, Etobicoke – Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act

Date:	February 24, 2009
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Etobicoke York Community Council
From:	Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Etobicoke North – Ward 2
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The Board of Trustees of Sharon Cemetery, Etobicoke, have requested the designation of the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The cemetery is located on the north side of Rexdale Boulevard, west of Highway 27, in north Etobicoke.

Sharon Cemetery was founded in 1842 and contains approximately 160 burials and over 75 grave markers that are associated with the historical community of Highfield. The proposed designation would enable the cemetery trustees to apply to the Toronto Heritage Grant Program for funding to assist in the restoration of the historical grave markers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council include Sharon Cemetery, Etobicoke, on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties;
2. City Council state its intention to designate Sharon Cemetery, Etobicoke, under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act;
3. If there are no objections to the designation in accordance with Section 29(6) of the Ontario Heritage Act, the solicitor be authorized to introduce the Bills in Council designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act; and

4. If there are objections in accordance with Section 29(7) of the Ontario Heritage Act, the Clerk be directed to refer the proposed designation to the Conservation Review Board.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report. The public Notice of Intention to Designate will be advertised on the City's web site in accordance with the City of Toronto Act provisions.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Board of Trustees of Sharon Cemetery, Etobicoke, has requested that the property be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. Etobicoke historian Randall Reid has provided the historical research and current photographs to assist in the preparation of the Reasons for Designation.

The proposed designation would enable the cemetery trustees to apply to the Toronto Heritage Grant Program for funding for the ongoing restoration of the cemetery markers.

COMMENTS

Sharon Cemetery, Etobicoke, is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the categories of design, associative and contextual value. Located on the north side of Rexdale Boulevard, west of Highway 27 (in Concession 3, Part Lot 31, Etobicoke Township), Sharon Cemetery is an important surviving cemetery that represents the last physical reminder of the former community of Highfield.

Location maps (Attachment No. 1) and photographs (Attachment No. 2) are attached. The Reasons for Designation (Attachment No. 3) are intended to be posted on the City of Toronto's web site and served on the property owner and the Ontario Heritage Trust according to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act. The Reasons for Designation included a statement of the cultural heritage value of the property with a description of its heritage attributes.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

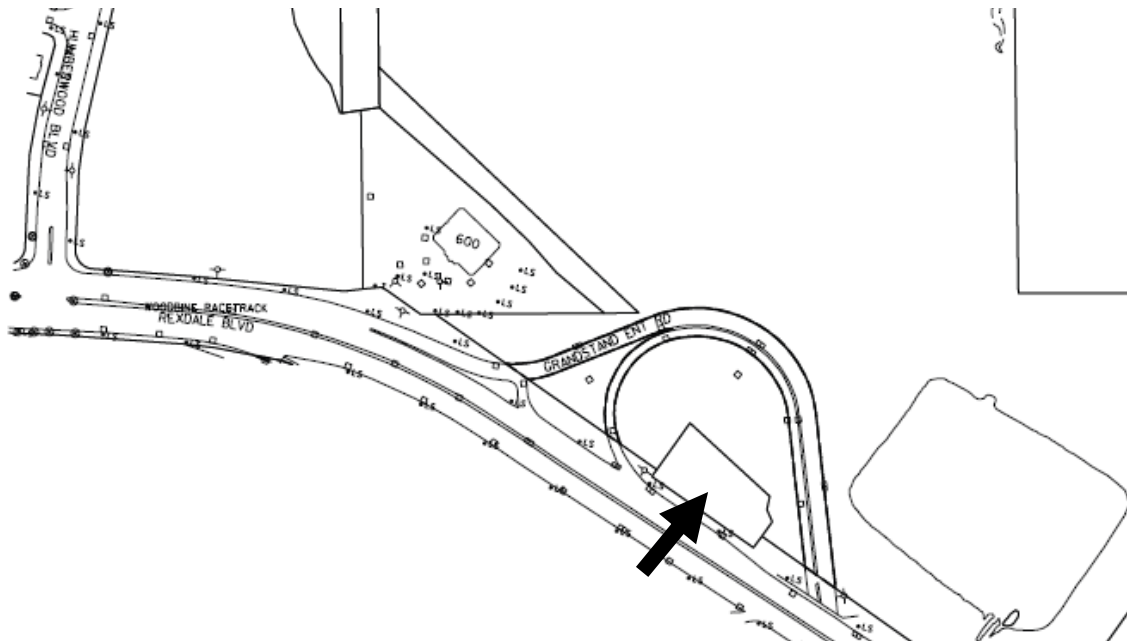
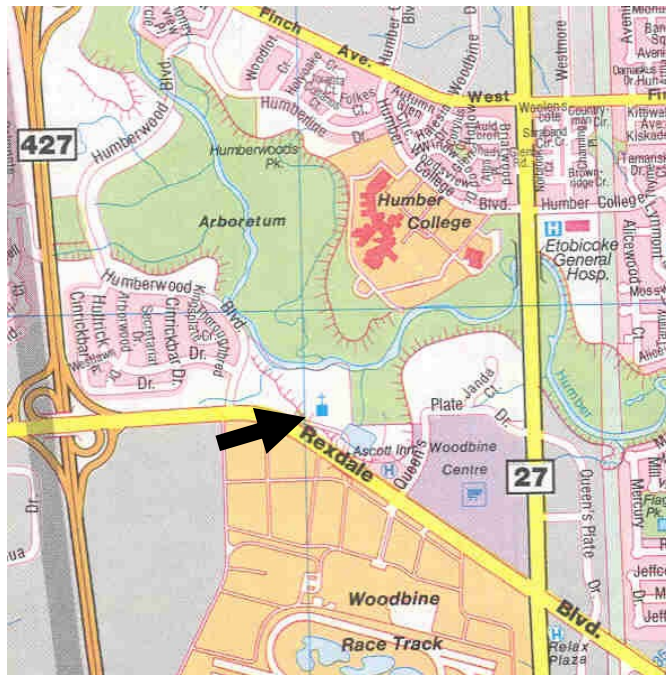
Barbara Leonhardt
Director, Policy and Research
City Planning Division

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1: Location Map
Attachment No. 2: Photographs
Attachment No. 3: Reasons for Designation

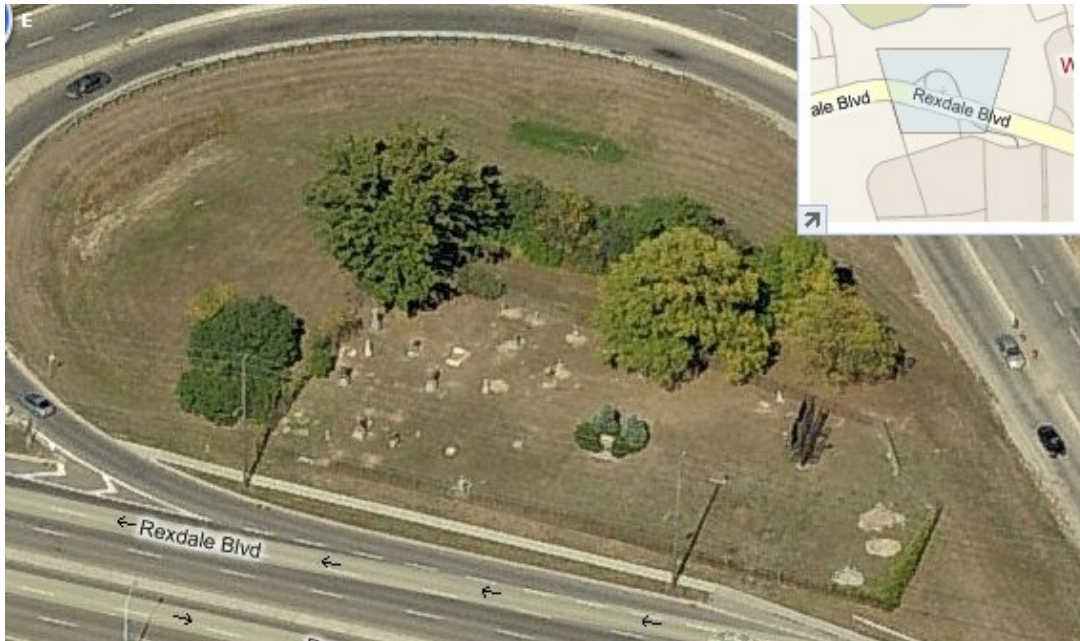
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LOCATION MAP: SHARON CEMETERY, ETOBICOKE ATTACHMENT NO. 1



The location of the cemetery is indicated by the **arrow**.

The location map is for information purposes only.
The exact boundaries of the property are not shown.



Aerial view



View to the west, showing the variety of grave markers



Cairn and Historical Marker



Sample 19th century grave markers

Description

Sharon Cemetery, Etobicoke, is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, associative and contextual value. Located on the north side of Rexdale Boulevard, west of Highway 27 (in Part Lot 31, Concession 3, Etobicoke Township), Sharon Cemetery was established in 1842 and encompasses approximately 160 burials and more than 75 grave markers. Beginning in 2005, the cemetery trustees initiated a restoration project that uncovered many monuments and resulted in the repair and remounting of damaged markers.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

Sharon Cemetery is historically associated with the Primitive Methodist congregation that was established in the Etobicoke community of Highfield in 1842. During the latter year, a church known as Hainstock's Chapel and adjoining burial ground opened near the intersection of present-day Rexdale Boulevard and Highway 27 where a rural settlement had developed. A second church completed on the site in 1856 was renamed Sharon Chapel and later known as Sharon Methodist Church (1884) and Sharon United Church (1925). The latter building was demolished in 1967, leaving the cemetery as the remaining physical reminder of the historical use of the property. The cemetery contains the graves of many of Etobicoke's founding families and their descendants.

The cemetery's design value is drawn from the collection of monuments that date from 1845 to 1948, and range from modest grave markers to more elaborate monuments with intricate shapes and decorative carvings. The oldest extant marker (dated October 17, 1845) recognizes the grave of Mary Etherington. A more recent cairn with a plaque identifies the historical background of Sharon Cemetery, and a monument lists the names of families whose ancestors were interned there.

Contextually, Sharon Cemetery is an important visual feature on Rexdale Boulevard, west of Highway 27, where it occupies a parklike setting adjoining the Humber Arboretum.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of Sharon Cemetery related to its design, associative and contextual value as an early cemetery associated with the Highfield community in Etobicoke are:

- The collection of grave markers, including granite, marble and limestone monuments in the tablet, block and obelisk styles
- The stone cairn with a plaque identifying the cemetery, and the granite monument listing the names of families with ancestors buried on the site
- The placement and orientation of the grave markers
- The unobstructed views across the cemetery
- The mature trees