

**691 Scarlett Road (St. Matthias Anglican Church) –
Application to Demolish a Designated Heritage Property
and Amendment of Designating By-law**

Date:	May 17, 2010
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Etobicoke York Community Council
From:	Acting Director, Policy and Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Ward 2 - Etobicoke North
Reference Number:	P:\2010\Cluster B\PLN\HPS\EYCC\ey 06 22 10\eyHPS10

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council refuse the application for the demolition of the property at 691 Scarlett Road, which is designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The report further recommends that Council amend the designating By-law No. 264-2003 to update the by-law in accordance with the 2005 amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act.

The owner of the property at 691 Scarlett Road submitted an application to demolish a heritage building under Section 34(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act. A Notice of Receipt was served on the owner on April 22, 2010. City Council must provide a decision on the application within 90 days after the Notice of Receipt is served. This decision deadline is July 21, 2010.

The City has not received an application for the redevelopment of the site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council refuse the application for the demolition of the property at 691 Scarlett Road under Section 34(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act.

2. Should the owner appeal the refusal of the application for demolition, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate staff to attend at the Ontario Municipal Board hearing in opposition of the appeal.
3. City Council amend By-law No. 264-2003 designating the property at 691 Scarlett Road under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act to update the by-law in accordance with Section 30(10) of the Ontario Heritage Act to include a statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a description of its heritage attributes.
4. Should the owner appeal the amending of the designating by-law, City Council authorize the City Clerk to refer the proposed amendment to the Conservation Review Board.
5. Should the owner appeal the amending of the by-law, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate staff to attend at the Conservation Review Board in support of the proposed amendment.
6. City Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate staff to take such necessary steps to implement the foregoing.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council designated the property at 691 Scarlett Road under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act on April 16, 2003 by By-Law No. 264-2003. The designation of the property followed an application by a former owner to redevelop the site. The planning application was refused by the Ontario Municipal Board in 2004.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The owner of the property at 691 Scarlett Road submitted an application to demolish a heritage building under Section 34(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act. A Notice of Receipt was served on the owner on April 22, 2010. City Council must provide a decision on the application within 90 days after the Notice of Receipt is served. This decision deadline is July 21, 2010.

A location map (Attachment No. 1) and photographs (Attachment No. 2) are attached. The site contains a church building dating to 1895 that was moved to the subject property in the 1920s. No development application has been submitted in conjunction with the demolition application.

This report recommends that Council refuse the demolition application. It is also recommended that Council amend By-Law No. 264-2003 designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act to include a statement describing the

cultural heritage value or interest of the property, as well as a description of its heritage attributes.

COMMENTS

Building Condition Assessment

In response to the receipt of the demolition application, staff requested that the applicant provide a building condition assessment to comply with requirements of Chapter 103.24 of the Toronto Municipal Act, which requires an assessment for a designated Part IV building or structure proposed to be demolished or removed.

As outlined in the executive summary of the document, the building condition assessment concludes that:

- the building has fallen into disuse and disrepair, it has been neglected and is in a rapid state of deterioration
- the foundation walls are on the verge of collapse, and there is an immense amount of energy loss given the original construction materials and methods
- The building is a major eyesore in the community
- When the application was made for heritage designation, critical structural and material analysis were not completed which would have revealed unsafe conditions
- In order to maintain and rehabilitate the current building, the cost would be overwhelming

Staff Response

The Official Plan provides policy direction with regards to retention and maintenance of properties on the City's Inventory. Specifically, policy contained within Section 3.1.5 of the Official Plan provides that heritage resources on properties listed on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties will be conserved. The Official Plan notes that "These buildings, districts and landscapes create a unique sense of place and a rooted sense of local identity and continuity for Torontonians." The property at 691 Scarlett Road was included on the heritage inventory of the former City of Etobicoke and, in 2003, Toronto City Council designated the site under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The property owner bases the application for demolition on the property's condition and aesthetics, as well as the costs of maintenance. The comments indicate a failure by the applicant to properly maintain a property that has been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act since April, 2003. The owner is in non-compliance with the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 629, City of Toronto By-law No. 1027-2007, which prescribes minimum standards for maintenance and the preservation of the heritage attributes of properties designated under Parts IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

§ 629-44. Minimum Standards

In addition to the minimum standards for the maintenance and occupancy of property in the City as set out in this chapter, the owner or occupant of a Part IV Heritage Property or a Part V Heritage Property shall:

- A. Maintain, preserve and protect the Heritage Attributes so as to maintain the heritage character, visual and structural heritage integrity of the building or structure.
- B. Maintain the Property in a manner that will ensure the protection and preservation of the heritage values and attributes.

As this application is required to be heard by Council within the legislated 90-day timeframe, staff has not had the opportunity to subject the provided building condition assessment to a peer review by a qualified structural engineer. However, staff are of the opinion that the unsafe condition claims or rationale for demolition based upon financial or practical feasibility are not justified.

Although there is reference to an unsafe condition in the report, nothing is corroborated by an engineer and there are currently no outstanding MLS orders to correct unsafe conditions on the property.

Additionally, although remedial action is consistently ruled out on the basis of financial feasibility, specific costs are not estimated and the relative cost to stabilize structural inadequacies are not identified against the programmatic upgrades that the organization would require to upgrade the facility.

The rationale for demolition of the designated property as provided by the applicant is not consistent with the Official Plan policies, the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 629 (By-Law Standards), nor recognized standards for heritage conservation.

Cultural Heritage Value

The property at 691 Scarlett Road was designated under the Ontario Heritage Act in 2003, prior to the passing of the 2005 amendments to the legislation. At the time the designating by-law was enacted, municipalities were required to advertise notice of the intention to designate, as well as the passing of the designating by-law, in a newspaper having circulation in the community. With the expense of newspaper advertising in Toronto, it was the practice of the City to keep the Reasons for Designation as short as possible while still conveying the property's core values and attributes. Following the revisions to the Ontario Heritage Act in 2005, a process was outlined to amend pre-existing designating by-laws to ensure that they contained a statement of cultural heritage value or interest with a description of a property's heritage attributes.

The Revised Reasons for Designation (Attachment No. 3) contain a statement of the cultural heritage value of the property at 691 Scarlett Road that relates to the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario in 2006, as well as a

description of the site's heritage attributes. The statement of cultural heritage value offers an expansion of the key values outlined in the original Reasons for Designation (Attachment No. 4), and is based on the Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report found in Attachment No. 5. The heritage attributes remain the same as those described in the 2003 by-law.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
Attachment No. 2 – Photographs
Attachment No. 3 – Reasons for Designation (2010)
Attachment No. 4 – Reasons for Designation (2003)
Attachment No. 5 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report



The **arrow** marks the location of the site.

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



St. Matthias Anglican Church

Description

The property at 691 Scarlett Road is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, 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 southeast corner of Scarlett Road and Kingdom Street, St. Matthias Anglican Church (1895) is a single-storey church building that was relocated from Malton to the Etobicoke community of Westmount in 1923.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

St. Matthias Anglican Church has design value as a rare example of a late 19th century country church identified as a heritage resource in Etobicoke that was designed in the Victorian Gothic Revival style. Popularized for religious architecture in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the hallmarks of the style include the pointed-arch window openings and picturesque roofline with a bell cote that are illustrated at St. Matthias.

The property is associated with the historical development of the Westmount community, which was founded in the World War I era as a residential neighbourhood for workers at the munitions plants across the Humber River in Weston. Following its move to Westmount in the early 1920s, St. Matthias Anglican Church became an important institutional building in the hamlet.

The church is also linked to Hurricane Hazel, the tragic event that occurred on October 15, 1954 and devastated the Westmount community. When the flooding of the Humber River swept away houses in Westmount, culminating in the deaths of 36 residents, St. Matthias served as the rescue center for the neighbourhood during the storm and in the days that followed.

Contextually, with its country church appearance and placement on a corner lot on Scarlett Road south of Lawrence Avenue West, St. Matthias Anglican Church is a local landmark in Etobicoke.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the property at 691 Scarlett Road are:

- The scale, form and massing of the single-storey L-shaped plan that incorporates a three-side apse at the east and a shed-roofed wing at the southeast corner
- The steeply-pitched cross-gable roof with a bell cote at the west end and a brick chimney on the south

- The wood construction and cladding (currently concealed)
- The main entrance, which is placed on the principal (west) façade in a single-storey enclosed porch with a gable roof
- The pointed-arch and flat-headed window openings containing stained glass
- The placement and setback of the building on a corner lot

St. Matthias Anglican Church

The property at 691 Scarlett Road is recommended for designation for its cultural heritage value or interest. The property at 691 Scarlett Road is architecturally and historically significant as a centre for local rescue efforts following Hurricane Hazel in 1954 that remains a landmark in the Westmount neighbourhood of Etobicoke. Located on the southeast corner of Scarlett Road and Kingdom Street, the church dates to 1895 when it was constructed as Holy Trinity (Anglican) Church in Malton. In 1923, the building was relocated to Etobicoke where it is more recently known as the Christadelphian Church.

St. Matthias Anglican Church displays features of the Gothic Revival style. The heritage attributes of the building are the ell-shaped plan with a multi-sided apse, the wood construction and cladding (currently concealed), the cross-gable roof with a bell cote, chimney and shed-roofed tail, the west entrance porch, and the pointed-arched and flat-headed window openings with stained glass.

HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT



ST. MATTHIAS ANGLICAN CHURCH
691 SCARLETT ROAD, TORONTO

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services
City Planning Division
City of Toronto

May 2010

1. DESCRIPTION



691 Scarlett Road: St. Matthias Anglican Church	
ADDRESS	691 Scarlett Road (southeast corner of Kingdom Street)
WARD	Ward 2 (Etobicoke North)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan 2002, Lot 19
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Westmount (former Etobicoke Township)
HISTORICAL NAME	St. Matthias Anglican Church
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1895
ORIGINAL OWNER	Not applicable
ORIGINAL USE	Religious (church)
CURRENT USE*	Religious (church) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	None found
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Wood construction and cladding; wood and glass details
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Victorian Gothic Revival
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	1923, relocated from Malton to Etobicoke
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Designated under Part IV, Section 29, Ontario Heritage Act, By-law No. 264-2003, April 16, 2003
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	May 2010

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 691 Scarlett Road, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether it merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act according to Ontario Regulation 9/06. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
1895	Archival records indicate that St. Matthias Anglican Church was constructed in Malton, Peel County
1922	Rector and Wardens of St. Philip's Anglican Church, Etobicoke, purchase part of Lot 19 under Plan 2002
1923	The City Directory for 1924 (with information compiled the previous year) records St. Matthias Anglican Church on the east side of Scarlett Road in the suburban directory for Westmount
1954	Hurricane Hazel strikes on October 15, 1954
1957	Representatives of St. Philip's Church transfer the property to the Anglican Diocese of Toronto
1959	Anglican Diocese of Toronto sells the property to trustees of the Christadelphian Church

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Westmount

The property at 691 Scarlett Road is located in the Westmount neighbourhood of Etobicoke. The origins of Westmount date to the early 1800s when a milling hamlet known as “Weston” developed along the west bank of the Humber River. Following a disastrous flood in 1850 that destroyed most of the buildings, the community relocated to higher ground on the east side of the river where today's Weston is found. During World War I, the opening of munitions plants in Weston led to the demand for workers' housing nearby. Dr. Ely F. Irwin, a Weston physician, acquired the Frank Kingdom Farm on the east side of Scarlett Road, south of present-day Lawrence Avenue West, where he registered a 135-lot subdivision in 1914. Under Plan 2002, new streets were laid out, including Kingdom Street, named for the former land owner, and Raymore Drive, which skirted the riverbank. To facilitate access to Westmount, Dr. Irwin “built a swinging foot bridge across the Humber in 1917 as a convenience to those living in his new subdivision.”¹

¹ Given, The Story of Etobicoke, 1959, 55

In 1922, Frank Bentley, a carpenter from Weston, purchased Lot 19 at the southeast corner of Scarlett Road and Kingdom Street and immediately sold a portion of the site with frontage on Scarlett Road to the Rector and Church Wardens of St. Philip's Anglican Church, Etobicoke.

St. Matthias Anglican Church

The congregation of St. Matthias was established as a mission of St. Philip's Church, which was the second oldest Anglican church established in Etobicoke (after Christ Church Mimico). Founded in 1828 the St. Philip's parish originally extended west from the Humber River to include the village of Malton in the present day Region of Peel.² In the 1920s after receiving unexpected funding from the Mimico Glebe, St. Philip's opened missions in the fledging Thistleton and Westmount areas of the township.³ Rather than constructing a new church building in Westmount, the former Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Malton was relocated to Scarlett Road and renamed St. Matthias.

The details of the church's original location and history remain vague. According to a study of early churches in Toronto Township, Peel County (now Mississauga), "there is very little information about this short-lived congregation (Holy Trinity Malton). At the Toronto Diocese Archives it lists a frame church at Malton, December 1, 1895...served from Woodbridge and then by Christ Church at Claireville. The congregation does not appear in records after 1909."⁴ William Perkins Bull, writing in 1938, noted the earlier presence of "a little church built at Malton," and mentioned that following the sale of another Anglican church in the locality, "the receipts went to pay the mortgage on Holy Trinity Malton."⁵ Perkins Bull also noted the closing or "dropping" of five churches in Peel County, including "Holy Trinity Malton." In its new location on Scarlett Road, St. Matthias Anglican Church was first recorded in the Westmount section of the City of Toronto Directory for 1924 (reflecting information gathered in 1923). With Humber Heights Consolidated School on Lawrence Avenue West, west of Scarlett Road, the church was an important institutional building in the community.

While the details of the church's origins may remain undocumented, its contributions to the community following Hurricane Hazel are undisputed. A century after the first disastrous flood on the Humber River, the hurricane struck on October 15, 1954, after a week-long rainfall produced twice the amount of precipitation ever recorded in the province. The rising flood waters broke dams and dikes along the Humber, with the most devastating and lasting damage confined to Raymore Drive in Westmount. 14 houses were swept into the river and 36 people died. With its location near the worst-hit area, St. Matthias Church played an integral role in the rescue efforts and aftermath. A local history reports that in the church, "just around the corner from Raymore Drive in the

² The current church (1894), located near present-day Dixon Road and St. Philip's Road is recognized on the City's heritage inventory.

³ Heyes, Etobicoke: from furrow to borough, 1974, 86

⁴ Mann, compl., Early Churches of Toronto Township in Peel County (Mississauga), 1999, 61

⁵ Perkins Bull, From Strachan to Owen, 1938, 306

Humber River area, the pews were piled high with clothing and blankets. All day and all night those who were not struck by tragedy brought food and other necessities of life for those who were” and “neighbouring volunteer housewives were there in shifts, sometimes for 20 hours at a stretch. Hundreds of meals were provided and billets found by the Westmount unit of the Etobicoke Red Cross.”⁶ Following the event, Toronto newspapers described the efforts of St. Matthias, noting that “a jeans-clad parson and a small, white frame church combined for a non-stop service of mercy in Etobicoke over the weekend” when “St. Matthias (sic) Anglican, capacity 88 churchgoers – and the parson, Reverend Paul Glover, 24, wearing mud-stained jeans and jacket, ministered to the urgent needs of the flood-devastated area of the Westmount flats.”⁷ The church was described as a “haven for the homeless” following the flood.⁸

While over half of the congregation lost their lives in the disaster, the notoriety that St. Matthias received following Hurricane Hazel resulted in an increase in membership. In 1957, the church relocated to a new building on Royal York Road. At the same time, the property at 691 Scarlett Road was transferred to the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, which sold it to representatives of the Christadelphian church two years later. Described as a “Bible-based community of believers, patterned after the first century ecclesias (churches), who wait for the return of Our Lord Jesus Christ,” the Christadelphian congregation occupied the premises for nearly half a century.⁹

The property at 691 Scarlett Road was listed on the heritage inventory of the former City of Etobicoke, and designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act by the City of Toronto in April 2003.

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

St. Matthias Anglican Church is designed in the Victorian Gothic Revival style favoured for religious buildings in Ontario during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Promoted by English theorist and author John Ruskin and inspired by medieval architecture in Britain and Europe, the style was identified by its pointed-arch or lancet window openings, picturesque rooflines and, in some instances, polychromatic effects. During its prolonged popularity, “the style underwent many permutations, interpretations, and re-interpretations” and, as seen in its application at St. Matthias, was applied to modest as well as monumental church buildings.¹⁰

Rising one extended storey, the building features a L-shaped plan with its shed-roofed wing (southeast), with a multi-sided apse at the east end. Constructed and clad with wood (which is currently concealed), the structure is covered by a steeply-pitched cross-

⁶ Heyes, 180

⁷ Toronto Daily Star (October 18, 1954), 8

⁸ Toronto Daily Star (October 22, 1954), 2

⁹ www.Christadelphia.org

¹⁰ Maitland, “Significant Examples of the Gothic Revival Style in Canadian Architecture,” n.d., 1-2. More modest Gothic Revival-inspired church designs are documented in books including Holroyd and Ondaatje, which are cited in Section 5 (Sources) of this report.

gable roof with a bell cote at the west end and a tall brick chimney on the south. The main entrance is placed on the principal (west) façade where it is protected by an enclosed single-storey gable-roofed porch. The pointed-arched and flat-headed window openings contain stained glass.

iv. CONTEXT

St. Matthias Anglican Church is located on the southeast corner of Scarlett Road and Kingdom Street in the Etobicoke community of Westmount. With the demolition of the former Canning House at 581 Scarlett Road, the church is the only surviving building on the street that is included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties where it is also designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. West of Scarlett Road, the property at 2245 Lawrence that contains part of the former Humber Heights Consolidated School is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. Surviving 19th century house form buildings found on Hill Garden Road, La Rush Drive, and Yorkleigh Avenue in the area west of Scarlett Road are recognized on the City's heritage inventory. With its appearance and location on a corner lot, St. Matthias Anglican Church is a landmark in the Westmount neighbourhood.

3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

Design or Physical Value	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	X
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	N/A
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	N/A

Rare and Representative – St. Matthias Anglican Church is a representative example of a modest country church designed in the Victorian Gothic Revival style. With the pointed-arch window openings that are characteristic of the style, the church is distinguished by its diminutive form, fenestration and roof detailing with a bell cote above the main (west) entrance. St. Matthias is one of fewer than a dozen churches in Etobicoke that are recognized on the City's heritage inventory. Along with the cemetery at Christ Church Mimico, the property is also designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Historical or Associative Value	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	X

ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	X
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

Event – St. Matthias Anglican Church is directly associated with the rescue efforts during and following Hurricane Hazel, the disaster that occurred in October 1954 when the flooding of the Humber River resulted in the loss of lives and property in the Westmount community of Etobicoke. The church was the nerve centre for the neighbourhood in the aftermath of the event, where local volunteers gathered to offer shelter, food and support to victims.

Community – St. Matthias Anglican Church yields information about the development of the Westmount neighbourhood in Etobicoke. With the residential settlement of the area in the World War I era, the church was relocated to Westmount where it served as an important institutional building during the community's formative years. Its prominence as a social and spiritual centre in Westmount was evident during Hurricane Hazel when it was the gathering place for the neighbourhood in a time of crisis.

Contextual Value	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	N/A
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	N/A
iii. landmark	X

Landmark – With its location on a corner lot on an important arterial road and its visual appearance as a country church, St. Matthias Anglican Church is a local landmark in the Westmount neighbourhood of Etobicoke. As an institutional building in a residential community, St. Matthias is a physical and spiritual landmark in Westmount.

4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 691 Scarlett Road has cultural heritage value for its design, historical and contextual significance. St. Matthias Anglican Church (1895) is a representative example of a church building designed in the Victorian Revival style that is associated with the development of the Westmount neighbourhood and the response of that community in the aftermath of Hurricane Hazel. Contextually, with its location on the southeast corner of Scarlett Road and Kingdom Street, St. Matthias Anglican Church is a local landmark.

5. SOURCES

Archival Sources

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Aerial Map, City of Toronto, 1941
Assessment Rolls, Etobicoke Township
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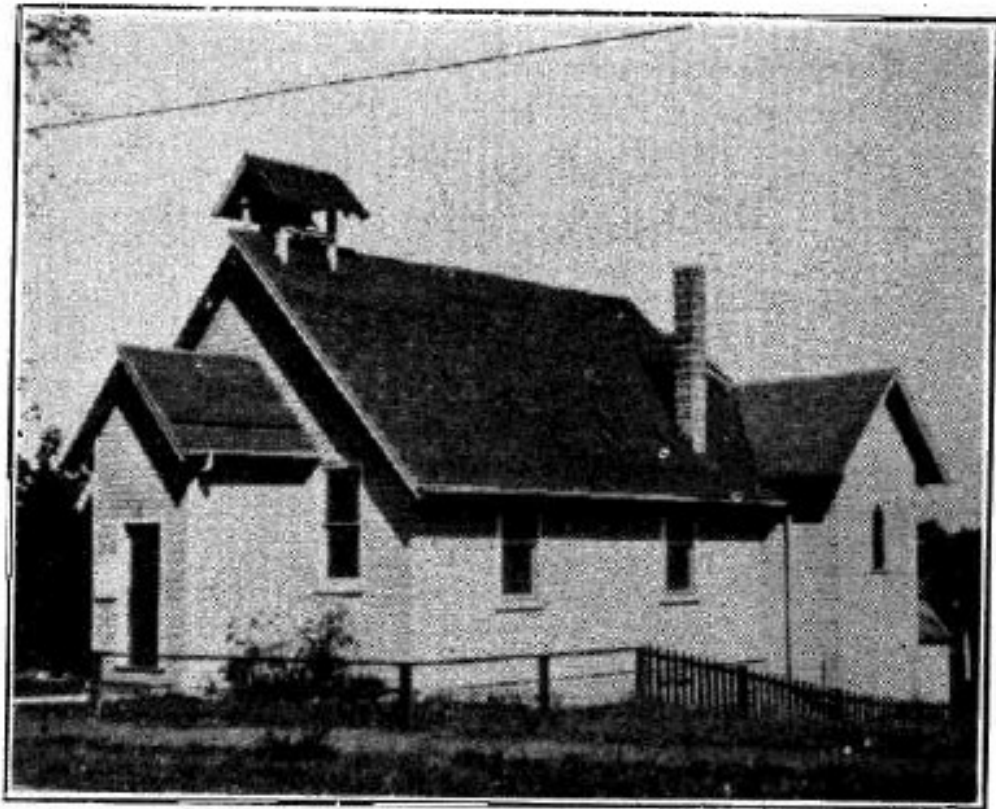
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6. IMAGES



ST. MATTHIAS CHURCH, Westmount

Photograph, St. Philip's Anglican Church Yearbook, no date
(Anglican Diocese of Toronto Archives)



Exterior, St. Matthias Anglican Church, 2002



Interior, St. Matthias Anglican Church, 2009 (view to east)