



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

**Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard
(Mimico Estates) – Intention to Designate under Part IV,
Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act**

Date:	March 21, 2011
To:	Toronto Preservation Board Etobicoke York Community Council
From:	Acting Director, Policy & Research, City Planning Division
Wards:	Etobicoke-Lakeshore – Ward 6
Reference Number:	P:\2011\Cluster B\PLN\HPS\TEYCC\April 21 2011\eyHPS01

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act the properties listed in Recommendation No.1, which are located on the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard West, west of Douglas Boulevard, and at 5, 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard. The properties comprise the main residence and auxiliary buildings associated with the early 20th century Mimico Estates of A. B. Ormsby and James Franceschini.

The properties identified in Recommendation No. 1 are listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. While the properties together compose the Mimico Estates, the buildings have been assigned individual street addresses.

The Mimico Estates are part of the area identified in Mimico 20/20, a revitalization action plan for the Mimico-by-the-Lake community that was initiated by the Etobicoke York Community Council in 2006.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that

1. City Council state its intention to designate the following properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:
 - a. 2325 Lake Shore Boulevard West ("Ormscliffe")
 - b. 2527 Lake Shore Boulevard West ("Ormscliffe")
 - c. 2533-2535 Lake Shore Boulevard West (Semi-Detached Houses)
 - d. 2539A&B Lake Shore Boulevard West (Garage)
 - e. 2541-2541A Lake Shore Boulevard West (Leonard Franceschini House)
 - f. 5, 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard (Power Plant and Row Houses)
2. If there are no objections to the designations in accordance with Section 29(6) of the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the bills in Council designating the properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.
3. If there are objections in accordance with Section 29(7) of the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council direct the City Clerk to refer the designations to the Conservation Review Board.
4. If the designations are referred to the Conservation Review Board, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate staff to attend any hearing held by the Conservation Review Board in support of Council's decision on the designation of the properties.

Financial Impact

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

DECISION HISTORY

On September 13, 2006, the Etobicoke York Community Council requested the Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke District to report on the next steps involved in moving forward the initiative of "Mimico by the Lake Project 20/20: A Perfect Vision for our Community." At its February 13, 2007 meeting, the Community Council directed planning staff to facilitate a public consultation process to establish a vision and determine potential next steps for the project. Over 100 participants attended a community workshop in June 2007, and the resulting consultants' report was provided to the January 15, 2008 meeting of the Community Council. Following a public open house and information session held in February 2008, planning staff developed a questionnaire seeking feedback from the community. A charette was held in April 2009, with the results informing the "Mimico 20/20: Revitalization Action Plan Proceedings Report" prepared by Urban Strategies Inc. This report was followed by the "Mimico-by-the-Lake Implementation Action Memo", which recommended a City-initiated Official Plan

Amendment to create a policy framework for future action. The action report and memo were presented to the Etobicoke York Community Council on October 13, 2008.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The "Mimico 20/20: Revitalization Action Plan Proceedings Report" divided the community along the waterfront into six zones, with the subject properties at Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard placed in Zone F. The report noted that a Heritage Impact Assessment should be undertaken for "potential heritage elements of (the) Estate." While no consultant has been engaged to undertake this work, members of the community have requested the designation of the Mimico Estates so that the properties are protected as the planning process continues.

The Mimico Estates, which were developed by industrialists A. B. Ormsby and James Franceschini in the early 20th century, are included on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. City Council must state its intention to designate the properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act to prevent the demolition of the buildings and preserve their heritage values and attributes.

COMMENTS

Staff have completed the attached Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report (Attachment No. 4) for the properties on Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard that comprise the Mimico Estates. As a result of this assessment, staff have determined that the properties identified in Recommendation No. 1 of this report meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria for municipal designation. The former Mimico Estates contain a collection of buildings dating from the early to mid 20th century when the properties were developed by businessman A. B. Ormsby and, after 1925, entrepreneur James Franceschini.

The Reasons for Designation (Statement of Significance) are found in Attachment No. 3. The Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard properties are worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, and meet the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the three categories of design, associative and contextual values. Located on the southwest corner of Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard, the Mimico Estates are a rare surviving example of a waterfront estate in Etobicoke that retains the main residence with auxiliary buildings and landscaping. The site is associated with two leading Toronto industrialists, Albert Benjamin Ormsby and James Franceschini who developed the estate between 1903 and 1940, as well as the well-regarded Toronto architect F. H. Herbert and the notable firm of landscape architects, Dunington-Grubb. The Mimico Estates are integral to the understanding of the historical development of the community and, contextually, assist in maintaining the character of Mimico where prominent Torontonians commissioned residential compounds along the waterfront in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Reasons for Designation (Statement of Significance), which is the public Notice of Intention to Designate, will be advertised on the City of Toronto's web site in accordance with the City of Toronto Act provisions and served on the owners of the properties cited in Recommendation No. 1 and on the Ontario Heritage Trust according to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

CONTACT

Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager
Heritage Preservation Services
Tel: 416-338-1079
Fax: 416-392-1973
E-mail: mmacdon7@toronto.ca

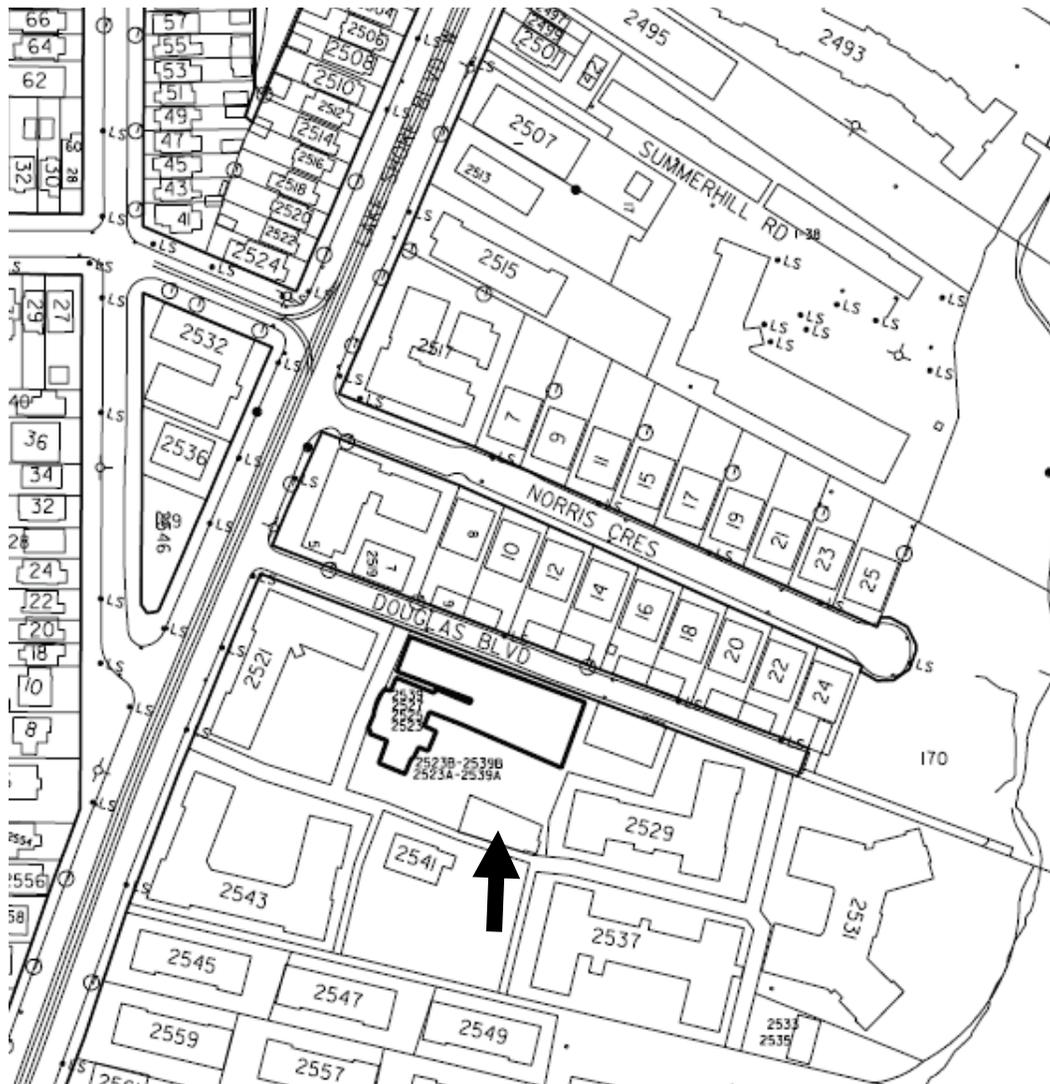
SIGNATURE

Kerri A. Voumvakis, Acting Director
Policy and Research
City Planning Division

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
Attachment No. 2A-D – Photographs
Attachment No. 3 – Reasons for Designation (Statement of Cultural Heritage Value)
Attachment No. 4 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report

LOCATION MAP:
LAKE SHORE BOULEVARD WEST & DOUGLAS BOULEVARD



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

The following properties are identified in the Reasons for Designation:

- 2523 & 2527 Lake Shore Boulevard West: Ormscliffe (estate house)
- 2533-2535 Lake Shore Boulevard West: Semi-Detached Houses
- 2539A&B Lake Shore Boulevard West: Garage (marked by **arrow**)
- 2541 (2541A) Lake Shore Boulevard West: Leonard Franceschini House
- 5, 7 & 9 Douglas Boulevard: Power Plant and Row Houses (west side of street)

PHOTOGRAPHS:
2523 & 2527 LAKE SHORE BLVD WEST

ATTACHMENT NO. 2A



2523 Lake Shore Boulevard West: Ormscliffe, south elevation and landscaping



2523 Lake Shore Boulevard West: Ormscliffe, north façade

PHOTOGRAPHS:
2527 AND 2533-2535 LAKE SHORE BOULEVARD WEST

ATTACHMENT NO. 2B



2527 Lake Shore Boulevard West: garden wall at the southeast end of Ormscliffe



2533-2535 Lake Shore Boulevard West: Semi-detached House Form Buildings

PHOTOGRAPHS:
2539A-B AND 2541-2541A LAKE SHORE BOULEVARD WEST

ATTACHMENT NO. 2C



2539A-B Lake Shore Boulevard West: Garage



2541-2541A Lake Shore Boulevard West: Leonard Franceschini House

PHOTOGRAPHS: 5, 7 AND 9 DOUGLAS BOULEVARD



5 Douglas Boulevard: Power Plant – south end with the chimney (smokestack)



5, 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard (left to right): Power Plant and Row Houses

Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard: Mimico Estates

Description

The properties on the southwest corner of Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard containing the Mimico Estates of A. B. Ormsby and James Franceschini are worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for their cultural heritage value, and meet the criteria for municipal designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design, associative and contextual values. Developed between 1903 and 1940, the estates contain the main residence, five auxiliary buildings consisting of the Leonard Franceschini House, semi-detached houses, row houses, a garage, and a power plant, as well as landscape features.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Mimico Estates are a rare surviving example of a residential compound on the Lake Ontario shoreline in Etobicoke where "Ormscliffe", the main residence, is adjoined by a group of auxiliary structures, as well as remnants of the original landscaping.

The properties are associated with two important Toronto industrialists, Albert Benjamin Ormsby and James Franceschini. A producer of architectural metal products, Ormsby developed the first phase of the estate in the early 1900s, with the completion of the main residence (1910) and the landscape plan (pre-1923). An entrepreneur who founded a film company and a fruit distribution enterprise in California where he retired, Ormsby occupied the Mimico site with his wife, a leader in the feminist movement in the early 20th century. Founder of the Dufferin Construction Company, Franceschini acquired the property in 1925, renaming the estate "Myrtle Villa", altering the main residence and adding buildings to the grounds where he established an equestrian centre (which no longer survives).

The Mimico Estates are integral to the understanding of the historical development of Mimico, which was founded as a model town for railway workers and evolved to include a residential enclave along the Lake Ontario shoreline where wealthy Torontonians constructed waterfront estates.

The properties are also associated with the career of Toronto architect F. H. Herbert, whose high-end residential commissions included Ormsby's Mimico estate house, "Ormscliffe." The designs for the residence influenced the materials and detailing on several of the auxiliary buildings that survive on the estate. The landscape plan was devised by the important Canadian landscape architects Dunington-Grubb, whose innumerable projects of note include the Oakes Theatre Garden in Niagara Falls and Toronto's University Avenue median.

Contextually, Ormsby and Franceschini's estates define, support and maintain the historical character of Mimico, where the area between Lake Shore Boulevard West and Lake Ontario was developed in the late 19th and early 20th century as the setting of lakefront estates. The Mimico Estates are historically linked to the site's surroundings, where a number of early 20th century residences remain along Lake Shore Boulevard West, including the first house occupied by distiller Lawrence J. McGuinness, Sr., at #2619, which is recognized on the City's heritage inventory.

Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the Mimico Estates are found on the surviving estate house, "Ormscliffe," the five surviving auxiliary buildings, and the remaining landscape features.

2523 and 2527 Lake Shore Boulevard West: "Ormscliffe"

- The detached house form building
- The scale, form and massing of the 2½-storey plan
- The materials, with stone, stucco and wood
- The steeply-pitched gable roof with extended eaves, dormers and, on the east and west ends, mock timbering
- The principal (north) façade, with the French doors, the mixture of flat-headed and segmental-arched window openings, the bay windows, and the window detailing with multi-paned sash windows and fanlights
- Protecting the north entry, the portico with fluted piers beneath an enclosed second-storey sun porch with gables and a balustrade
- The south elevation with a two-storey enclosed sun porch that overlooks the garden
- The fenestration on the side elevations (east and west), with quarter-round openings in the attic level
- The single-storey wing on the west end
- Attached to the southeast end of the main house, the garden wall with columns and round-arched openings with fanlights
- Directly south of the house, the garden that is enclosed by stone walls, with pillars and metal gates at the south end
- Along the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard West, the stone walls and gates with name plates initialled "MV" (for "Myrtle Villa")

2533-2535 Lake Shore Boulevard West: Semi-Detached Houses

- The pair of semi-detached house form buildings
- The scale, form and massing of the two-storey rectangular plan
- The materials, with brick and wood
- The truncated hip roof with a brick chimney
- On the principal (north) three-bay facades, the pair of centrally-placed door openings under an open porch with treillage and, in the projecting outer bays,

- the single segmental-arched openings that extend above the eaves
- The remaining fenestration on the north façade and other elevations

2539A&B Lake Shore Boulevard : Garage

- The detached garage
- The scale, form and massing of the 1½ storey rectangular plan
- The materials, with stucco, stone and wood
- The truncated hip roof with segmental-arched dormers on all slopes
- The fenestration and door openings, the classical detailing, and the arched motifs on the north façade

2541-2541A Lake Shore Boulevard West: Leonard Franceschini House

- The single detached house form building
- The scale, form and massing of the two-storey plan with a south wing
- The materials, with brick, stone and wood
- The gable roof with returned eaves, a brick chimney on the west end, and an extended shed-roof dormer with mock timbering on the north slope
- The principal (north) façade, which is organized into three bays with a central entrance
- The north entry, which is set in a round-arched surround with stone voussoirs and contains a panelled wood door, a fanlight, and three-quarter-length sidelights
- The fenestration, with segmental-arched and flat-headed openings, and bay windows on the north, east and west elevations
- The rear (south) wing, with a two-storey enclosed sun porch on the south wall

5 Douglas Boulevard: Power Plant

- The power plant, which is attached to the south end of the row houses at 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard
- The scale, form and massing of the 1½-storey rectangular plan
- The materials, with stucco cladding
- The gable roof, with a gabled dormer on the east slope
- The principal (east) façade, which extends three bays with a central entrance between flat-headed window openings
- At the southwest corner, the tall brick chimney (smokestack)

7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard: Row Houses

- The three row houses, which are attached to the north end of the power plant
- The scale, form and massing of the 2½-storey rectangular plan
- The materials, with stucco cladding
- The gable roof with returned eaves
- The flat-headed door and window openings on the principal (east) façade and the rear (west) wall

HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT



**MIMICO ESTATES (ORMSCLIFFE & MYRTLE VILLA)
LAKE SHORE BOULEVARD WEST AND DOUGLAS BOULEVARD, TORONTO**

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services
City Planning Division
City of Toronto

March 2011

1. DESCRIPTION



Above: north entrance, Ormscliffe (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)
Cover; south façade & garden, Ormscliffe (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)

Lake Shore Boulevard West and 5, 7 & 9 Douglas Boulevard: Mimico Estates (Ormscliffe and Myrtle Villa)	
ADDRESS	Southwest corner of Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard
WARD	6 (Etobicoke Lakeshore)
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Plan 1217, Lots 10-14
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Mimico
HISTORICAL NAME	1910: Ormscliffe (A. B. Ormsby Estate); 1925: Myrtle Villa (James Franceschini Estate)
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1910 (main residence)
ORIGINAL OWNER	A. B. Ormsby, businessman
ORIGINAL USE	Residential (estate, with main and secondary residences, auxiliary buildings and landscape features)
CURRENT USE*	Residential (multiple units) * This does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined by the Zoning By-law
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Ormscliffe: F. H. Herbert, architect; landscaping: Dunnington-Grubb, landscape architects
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Ormscliffe: stone, stucco & wood
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Ormscliffe: Queen Anne Revival
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	See Historical Timeline below
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative & Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Listed on City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Kathryn Anderson
REPORT DATE	March 2011

2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the Mimico Estates on the southwest corner of Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard, and applies evaluation criteria to determine whether the properties merit designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in Section 4 (Summary).

i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
1900 Sept	Plan 1217 is registered on the south side of Lake Shore Road with 21 lots
1903 May & June	A.B. Ormsby purchases Lots 10 and 11 as recorded in the Land Registry Office
1904	Ormsby is listed as a non resident in the Township of Etobicoke's tax assessment rolls; no buildings are recorded on his two lots
1909 Apr	Ormsby buys the north part of Lot 12, and acquires the rest of the parcel in 1916 and 1920
1910 Apr	According to the tax rolls, Ormsby owns an unfinished house valued at \$2400
1910 Jul	Ormscliffe is profiled in <u>Construction</u> magazine
1910	Ormsby resides on Lake Shore Road according to the Toronto City Directory compiled by the end of 1910
1912	Goad's Atlas for 1910, updated to 1912, shows Ormscliffe and two auxiliary buildings on Ormsby's property
1916 Oct	Ormsby acquires part of Lot 13, buying an additional portion in 1920
1920 Apr	The tax rolls for the Town of Mimico record three buildings on Ormsby's property, including the main residence with an assessed value of \$10,000
Pre-1923	Landscape architects Dunington-Grubb prepare a landscape plan for the site, which is cited in Middleton's <u>Municipality of Toronto</u> (1923)
1923	Goad's Atlas updated to 1923 shows the same buildings as on the previous (1912) map
1925 Mar	Ormsby sells his estate to James Franceschini
1925 April	Before relinquishing the estate, Ormsby is thanked in the local newspaper for opening his grounds to the public
1925 Aug	The tax assessment roll records James Franceschini, his brother Leonard, their wives and staff as the occupants of the estate
1926 Sept	Four buildings are recorded on the assessment roll, including the estate house
1931	Franceschini purchases additional property in Lot 13
1938 Nov	Franceschini acquires Lot 14
1939 June	The estate is transferred to Franceschini's Dufferin Construction Company
1939	Franceschini develops an equestrian centre on his property (as cited in his obituary)
1950	The Dufferin Construction Company sells the estate to Amedeo & Lawrence Longo, who develop the Amedeo Garden Court Apartments on the site
1965	The estate is transferred to Longo Properties Limited
2006	The listing of the properties on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties is confirmed

ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Mimico

The properties comprising the Mimico Estates developed by A. B. Ormsby and James Franceschini on the southwest corner of Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard are located in the community of Mimico.¹ Situated on the north shore of Lake Ontario, west of Mimico Creek, the area originated as part of the Township of Etobicoke. In the mid 19th century, the Hamilton and Toronto Railway (a branch of the Great Western Railway) was constructed to link the two cities (Image 3). A model town was created at Mimico for the workers building the rail line, and the 1856 plan for the community is illustrated in Section 6, Image 2. In 1890, the Toronto and Mimico Electric Railway and Light Company constructed an electric-powered radial railway along Lake Shore Road (later Lake Shore Boulevard West). The steam railway and streetcar line, along with lake steamers, brought occasional and seasonal visitors to the area. “After the turn of the 20th century, the well-treed lakefront area in Mimico, with its long sandy beach, became the setting for a number of beautiful estates covering many acres. They were established for the most part by wealthy families from Toronto, first as summer homes and later, when automobiles had come into common use, as year-round residences.”² With members of the Loblaw, Eaton and McGuiness families acquiring properties along Lake Shore Road, A. B. Ormsby secured valuable land along Lake Ontario, east of Church Street (now Royal York Road).

Ormsby Estate: Ormscliffe

Following the registration of a 21-lot subdivision along the lake shore east of present-day Royal York Road, Albert Benjamin Ormsby (1862-1943) purchased the first of four allotments in 1903.³ The founder and president of A. B. Ormsby Limited, which fabricated metal door and window frames,⁴ Ormsby acquired the lakefront site for a permanent residence.⁵ An “unfinished house” on Lot 11 was recorded in the tax assessment rolls for Etobicoke Township in April 1910. Three months later, the estate’s main residence named Ormscliffe was profiled in the July 1910 issue of Construction magazine, which described it in a caption as “one of the more interesting houses of recent erection” (Image 5).⁶ According to the article, the property included ‘its own private

¹ Mimico separated from Etobicoke Township as a police village in 1905, followed by incorporation as a village in 1911 and a town in 1917

² Heyes, 126

³ According to land records, Ormsby purchased land in Lots 10-13, Plan 1217, between 1903 and 1920

⁴ At the time of his acquisition of the Mimico property, Ormsby operated his business at 157-65 Queen Street East, but relocated to a factory and showroom at the southeast corner of King Street West and Dufferin Street in 1913

⁵ Given (2003), 82

⁶ Construction (July 1910), 112

pumping plant with soft water equipment...”⁷ The estate was recorded on Goad's Atlas, revised to 1912, where the main residence and two outbuildings are shown on Ormsby's tract (Lots 10-12, illustrated in Image 4). Prior to 1923, Ormsby engaged the notable firm of landscape architects, Dunington-Grubb to lay out the extensive gardens south of the estate house, part of which is shown in the archival photographs attached as Images 6 and 7.⁸ By 1920, Ormsby's property encompassed parts of four waterfront lots, with three buildings assessed for tax purposes and illustrated on updates to Goad's Atlas in 1923 (Image 4). Ormsby sold his Mimico estate in 1925, retiring to California where he engaged in real estate ventures and operated a successful fruit packaging and distribution enterprise prior to his death in 1943.⁹

Franceschini Estate: “Myrtle Villa”

James Franceschini (1890-1960) purchased Ormsby's Mimico estate in 1925. Franceschini had immigrated to Canada from Italy in 1905 and, after arriving in Toronto, he was purportedly “well on his way to amassing a fortune, only to lose it through a partnership deal. Starting all over again, he built a second and far greater fortune, this time on his own.”¹⁰ Franceschini founded the Dufferin Construction Company (later the Dufferin Paving and Crusted Stone Company), which became one of the most successful enterprises in the city with the securing of contracts to build roads for the provincial government during the pre-World War II era.

Following his acquisition of the Mimico estate, Franceschini transformed the property through changes to the main house, the addition of buildings, and the expansion of the grounds with adjoining land in Lots 13 and 14. Renaming the site “Myrtle Villa” after his only child, the extent of Franceschini's modifications to the estate house can be seen in a comparison of the original design (Image 5) with current photographs (including Images 9-12), which removed the “simple window treatment” and altered the “interesting feature of the design (of) the large porch spanning the entire front” with the enclosure of the first storey beneath the pediments.¹¹ When Franceschini's property was assessed for tax purposes in August 1926, a year after his acquisition of the estate, it included additional structures. Recorded on-site were his brother, Leonard Franceschini, and sister-in-law, as well as a gardener and teamster and their wives. These notations suggest that the detached house form building (now identified as 2541-2541A Lake Shore Boulevard West – Image 13) was occupied by Leonard Franceschini and his family, with the semi-detached houses (2533-2535 Lake Shore Boulevard West – Image 14), the residential space above the garage (2439A&B – Images 15 and 16), and the row housing

⁷ Construction (July 1910), 113. This pumping plant may be the outbuilding depicted on Lot 10, south of Douglas Boulevard, that is shown on Goad's Atlases, with revisions in 1912 and 1923 when Ormsby owned the land

⁸ Middleton, 183. The A. B. Ormsby Estate is not included among Dunington-Grubb's plans described in the finding aid for the collection at the University of Guelph Library. The firm's name is often misspelled, but has only one ‘n’

⁹ Harrison, 2

¹⁰ Globe (September 17, 1960)

¹¹ Construction (July 1910), 112-113

attached to the power plant (5, 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard – Images 17-18) for staff accommodations. James Franceschini developed the west end of his property when, “in 1939, he erected on the (Mimico) estate one of the largest horse stables and training quarters in Canada.”¹² This facility is visible on an aerial photograph of the area in 1947 (Image 8), which also shows the breadth of the estate, including the extensive landscaped gardens between the main residence and the lakefront.

In 1939, James Franceschini transferred his Mimico estate to the Dufferin Construction Company.¹³ The following year, in an event that attracted national attention, the entrepreneur was arrested on suspicion of engaging in “Fascist activity.”¹⁴ After spending a year in an internment camp, Franceschini was released on compassionate grounds for medical treatment. Although a public inquiry determined that he was innocent of the charges, the case led to unwanted publicity for and criticism of the federal government, which had secured war-time contracts with Franceschini’s Dufferin Shipbuilding Company. In poor health and semi-retired, Franceschini sold many of his business interests. However, his obituary reported that, prior to his death Franceschini “still maintained his interest in hackney show horses”...and “as many as 100 are at his various farms, and some were shown at the Royal Winter Fair last year under the name of Dufferin Stock Farms.”¹⁵

In 1959, the Dufferin Construction Company sold Franceschini’s estate to Amedeo and Lawrence Longo, who developed the Amedeo Garden Court Apartments on the property. While six large apartment houses were added to the site, the buildings were configured to retain the main estate house with its garden-wall extension (which was linked to the apartments at 2525 Lake Shore Boulevard West),¹⁶ the detached house and garage to the southwest, the former power plant and staff housing on Douglas Boulevard and, in the southwest corner of the property, the semi-detached houses for staff accommodations. The buildings designed for the Mimico Estates remained in residential use, with part of the former garage converted for commercial purposes. The introduction along the waterfront of apartment complexes such as these dated back to 1928, following the widening of Lake Shore Road and the approval of an 18-suite complex by a Detroit entrepreneur.¹⁷ However, “by 1967, Mimico’s lakefront had changed from homes on large lots to rows of apartment buildings, making it a densely populated area.”¹⁸ Through its development company, the Longo family retains the Lake Shore Road and Douglas Boulevard properties in 2011.

¹² Globe (September 17, 1960)

¹³ Franceschini had added the adjoining lot 14 to his allotment in 1938, as reflected in land records

¹⁴ Globe (September 17, 1960)

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ The extension to the southeast end of Ormscliffe is recorded on Goad’s Atlases updated to 1912 and 1923

¹⁷ Etobicoke Guardian (December 20, 1928), 12

¹⁸ Given (2007), 87

F. H. Herbert, Architect

“Ormscliffe,” the estate house commissioned by A. B. Ormsby, was designed by the well-regarded Toronto architect, F. H. Herbert. Born in England, Frederick Henry Herbert (1865-1914) moved to Toronto in 1885 and, after completing an apprenticeship, opened a solo practice four years later. He quickly “emerged as a versatile and talented proponent of the Queen Anne style who...established a new standard for residential architecture in Toronto at the turn of the century.”¹⁹ However, Herbert’s portfolio demonstrated his prowess with a range of architectural modes, from the Romanesque Revival of the Thomas W. Horn House in the East Annex, to those described as “of no fixed affiliation” that blended classical, medieval and other derivatives.²⁰ While the majority of Herbert’s residential commissions were confined to the city’s fashionable downtown neighbourhoods, he also designed summer residences in Muskoka and on Toronto Island, as well as Ormscliffe.

Dunington-Grubb, Landscape Architects²¹

Prior to 1923 when the project was cited in a biographical entry about the landscape architects, Ormsby engaged the Toronto-based partnership of Dunington-Grubb to design the gardens at his Mimico estate. The firm originated in England when Howard B. Grubb (1881-1965) and Lorrie A. Dunington (1877-1945) married and combined their surnames. Immigrating to Canada in 1911, the couple founded Sheridan Nurseries to provide products for the public and private commissions they secured, mainly in Toronto and Southern Ontario. Dunington-Grubb’s vast portfolio included the Oakes Theatre Gardens in Niagara Falls and, in Toronto, the design of the median on University Avenue, south of Queen’s Park.

iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The surviving buildings associated with the Ormsby and Franceschini Estates are comprised of the main residence with the original west wing and the garden wall extending from the southeast corner, the detached house form building occupied by Leonard Franceschini, the semi-detached houses designed for staff, the garage, and the adjoining power plant and row houses at the east end of the site.

Ormscliffe: 2523 and 2527 Lake Shore Boulevard West (Images 9-12)

For the main residence on A. B. Ormsby’s Mimico estate, architect F. H. Herbert applied the Queen Anne Revival style in which he was well versed. The structure displays the mixture of materials, irregular outline, and variety of classical- and medieval-inspired elements that characterized the style, which retained its popularity until World War I. As

¹⁹ Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950, unpagged

²⁰ McHugh, 265

²¹ The firm was renamed Dunington-Grubb and Stensson when Jesse Vilhelm Stensson (son of the manager of Sheridan Nurseries and a graduate of the School of Design at Harvard University) joined the practice, and was later succeeded by his wife, Janina Korkuc.

originally designed, the north façade facing Lake Shore Boulevard West is illustrated in the extract from Construction magazine attached as Image 5. The photographs show the limestone cladding with stone, stucco, and wood trim. Although designed as a permanent residence, Ormscliffe has the appearance of a cottage with its low-slung main floor under a gable roof so steeply pitched that it incorporates twin shed-roof dormers and tucks the second-floor window openings under the extended and flared eaves on the north and south slopes. Massive stone chimneys mark the east and west end walls, where the adjoining wall surfaces have mock-timbering and, near the apex of each gable, quarter-round openings. The 2½-storey structure features an L-shaped plan with a single-storey wing at the west end. The fenestration mixes flat-headed openings with bay windows, most of which retain multi-paned sash windows. Following James Franceschini's acquisition of the property, the north verandah was altered with the enclosure of the first storey at either end of the north façade, the addition of a portico with fluted piers and a balustrade, and the modification of the French doors incorporating multi-paned fanlights. The south façade of Ormscliffe, which originally overlooked extensive gardens and Lake Ontario, features a two-storey porch that has been enclosed. The fenestration has flat-headed openings. The garden wall adjoining the southeast end of the house is incorporated on the west face of the apartment building at 2525 Lake Shore Boulevard West.²² Directly south of the main residence, the surviving portion of the landscaped garden is enclosed by stone walls with stone piers and metal gates at the south end. This area with the stone fountain, paths and planting beds is visible in Image 8. Its design complements the stone walls and gates along the Lake Shore Boulevard West where Franceschini added the letters "MV" (Myrtle Villa).

Leonard Franceschini House: 2541-2541A Lake Shore Boulevard West (Image 13)

Located southwest of the main residence and designed as a detached single family residence, the Leonard Franceschini House complements the 1910 estate house in its cladding and detailing. Rising two stories, the house form building features brick and stone cladding. The steeply-pitched gable roof has a brick chimney at the west end, returned eaves on the east and west, and extended eaves with brackets on the north slope where a shed-roof dormer extends across the full width of the structure. The dormer, which incorporates trios of flat-headed window openings at each end, displays mock timbering. This cladding, along with the stone facing and detailing on the first storey of the north façade, links the building stylistically to the estate house. On the three-bay north elevation, the central entrance displays stone voussoirs and incorporates a paneled wood door, three-quarter length sidelights, and a fanlight. A single-storey bay window is placed right (west) of the entry, with a segmental-arched window opening on the left (east) side. The side elevations (east and west) display red brick cladding. The fenestration is irregularly placed, with different sizes of segmental-arched and flat-headed openings, as well as a bay windows on the east and west elevations. The house is extended to the south by a two-storey brick-clad wing with an enclosed two-storey porch on the rear (south) wall.

²² A structure is shown in this location on the 1912 and 1923 versions of Goad's Atlases in Image 4

Staff Houses; 2533-2535 Lake Shore Boulevard West (Image 14)

Located in the southwest corner of the property where their rear (south) walls face Lake Ontario, the pair of two-storey semi-detached houses is protected by a truncated hip roof with a brick chimney. Trimmed with brick and wood, the structures are faced with red brick that complements the cladding on the Leonard Franceschini House. On the principal (north) façade, the entrances are placed side-by-side in the centre of the wall and protected by a shed roof supported on wood posts with treillage. The entries are surmounted by flat-headed window openings. In the outer bays, the single segmental-arched openings extend above the ridge of the roof. The remaining elevations display flat-headed window openings, which are symmetrically placed on the rear (south) wall.

Garage: 2539A-B Lake Shore Boulevard West (Images 15-16)

The garage is placed southwest of the main estate house. The structure is clad with stucco, and the stone detailing with quoins on the north façade ties the design to the main residence and the Leonard Franceschini House. Rising 1½ stories, the garage features a long rectangular plan. The truncated hip roof has single segmental-arched dormers on the north, east and south slopes, and a row of similar dormers along the west slope. Attention is focused on the narrow north façade where the design incorporates arches supported on brick piers. The long east elevation features flat-headed door and window opening with wood detailing. Large openings for garage doors are placed along the extended west façade. All the elevations display flat-headed openings, some with classical detailing.

Power Plant and Row Houses: 5, 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard (Image 17-18)

On the west side of Douglas Boulevard, south of Lake Shore Boulevard West, the 1½-storey power plant (south) adjoins a three-unit 2½-storey row houses (north). The structures share stucco cladding. The power plant at 5 Douglas Boulevard is covered by a gable roof with a gabled dormer on the east end. The east façade features a centrally placed door between two small flat-headed window openings. A chimney (smokestack) marks the southwest corner of the structure and rises above the roofline. The north wall abuts the neighbouring row houses at 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard, which feature a rectangular plan beneath a gable roof with returned eaves. Flat-headed openings are irregularly placed on the east façade and the rear (west) wall. The north elevation is blank, while the south wall abuts the power plant.

iv. CONTEXT

The properties comprising the A. B. Ormsby estate, which was subsequently acquired and expanded by James Franceschini, are found near the southwest corner of Lake Shore Road West and Douglas Boulevard in Mimico (Image 1). Located east of Royal York Road, the site overlooks Lake Ontario to the south. The estate buildings are placed in landscaped open space where they are adjoined by six low-rise apartment buildings known as the Amedeo Garden Court.

The area along Lake Shore Road West, west of the Mimico Estates to Royal York Road, contains less than a dozen surviving residential buildings associated with the waterfront properties that were developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s by leading Toronto businessman for permanent or seasonal use.²³ However, unlike the lands developed by A. B. Ormsby and James Franceschini, none of these sites is as large, nor do they contain a collection of estate buildings and landscaped features.

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 Example of a Type – The Mimico Estates is a rare surviving example of a waterfront estate in Etobicoke that retains the original estate house with auxiliary buildings and landscaping. Although the shoreline of Mimico was once lined with the estates of prominent Torontonians, many were demolished after World War II and replaced by apartment complexes along Lake Shore Boulevard West. On this thoroughfare, west of the Mimico Estates of Ormsby and Franceschini, less than a dozen buildings associated with earlier estates remain, including the first estate house built by distiller Lawrence J. McGuinness, Sr., which is recognized on the City’s heritage inventory. Only the Mimico Estates at Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard display a collection of estate buildings, along with part of the landscaping devised by Dunington-Grubb that stands directly south of the main residence.

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	X

²³ Those to the east, including the former estate of T.B. Loblaw (founder of the grocery chain) that adjoined Ormsby and Franceschini’s properties, were demolished for apartment complexes

Person – The Mimico Estates at Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard are associated with two successive Toronto industrialists during the first half of the 20th century. The site was initially developed by A. W. Ormsby, the Toronto businessman who founded a company specializing in metal building products. Ormsby’s factory and showroom (1913) at 1195 King Street West in Toronto is recognized on the City’s Heritage Inventory. Apart from his entrepreneurial skills, the entrepreneur formed the Ormsby Film Corporation in California, producing one teleplay named “Neptune’s Bride”.²⁴ Ormsby's wife, Florence, was prominent in women's issues, hosting famous suffragists Nellie L. McClung and Emmeline Pankhurst at Ormscliffe.²⁵

Ormsby transferred his Mimico estate to James Franceschini, another notable Toronto entrepreneur and philanthropist. According to his obituary, Franceschini had “parlayed a pick-and-shovel job into ownership of several million-dollar companies, of which Toronto's Dufferin Construction Company was the best-known.”²⁶ His success led to his acquisition of the Mimico estate, which Franceschini renamed “Myrtle” Villa, where he extended the acreage and financed additional buildings, including extensive facilities for horses.

Community – The properties at Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard contribute to the understanding of the development of Mimico. Part of the community evolved from its mid-19th century origins as a model town created for railway workers and, in the early 1900s, supplied much of the work force for the adjoining Grand Trunk Railway’s Mimico Yard. In contrast, Mimico’s waterfront attracted wealthy businessmen, industrialists, architects and jurists from the neighbouring city who built seasonal or permanent residences. The latter sector is represented by the Mimico Estates.

Architect - Ormscliffe, the residence financed by A. B. Ormsby, is associated with the career of F. H. Herbert. Described as “an important and successful Toronto architect who excelled in the design of sumptuous houses for wealthy clients residing in the fashionable neighbourhoods of Rosedale, The Annex, and in Parkdale,”²⁷ Apart from his commissions in the latter enclaves, Herbert produced seasonal residences in Muskoka and on Toronto Island, as well as stores, hotels, bank branches, factories, churches and hospitals in Toronto and Southern Ontario. Ormsby’s Mimico estate is the architect’s only documented project in Etobicoke.²⁸

The landscaping of Ormscliffe was created by the notable landscape architectural firm of Dunington-Grubb. Headed by the English husband and wife team of Howard B. Grubb and Lorrie A. Dunington, the partners founded Sheridan Nurseries and were instrumental in organizing the profession of landscape architects in Canada and educating its members. The firm’s extensive portfolio included the Oakes Garden Theatre in Niagara

²⁴ [Toronto Daily Star](#) (June 4, 1921)

²⁵ Harrison, 2

²⁶ [Globe](#) (September 17, 1960)

²⁷ [Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950](#), unpagged

²⁸ *Ibid*, unpagged

Falls and the landscaped central boulevard on University Avenue in Toronto. The gardens at Ormscliffe represent the firm's earlier work in Canada and were cited in a profile of the firm in Middleton's The Municipality of Toronto (1923).

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

Character – The Mimico Estates define, support and maintain the historical character of Mimico, where the section of the community between Lake Shore Boulevard West and Lake Ontario was developed as lakefront estates for wealthy Torontonians. As the only remaining intact estate along Mimico's waterfront, the properties are important reminders of the early 20th century appearance of this neighbourhood.

Surroundings – The Mimico Estates are historically linked to their surroundings where a number of early 20th century residences designed for prominent Toronto businessmen, industrialists, architects, lawyers and jurists remain along Lake Shore Boulevard West, including the neighbouring property of distiller Lawrence J. McGuiness, Sr., at 2619 Lake Shore Boulevard West, which is also listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. On the subject properties, the collection of six surviving estate buildings remain in their original locations, where they contribute to the open space and ambience of the Amedeo Garden Court, the apartment complex that is built around them.

4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the Mimico Estates at the southwest corner of Lake Shore Boulevard West and Douglas Boulevard have design, associative and contextual values. The site contains a rare surviving example of a waterfront estate in Etobicoke with the main residence, a collection of auxiliary buildings, and original landscaping. The Mimico Estates are associated with Albert Benjamin Ormsby and James Franceschini, two leading Toronto industrialists who developed the properties between 1903 and 1940, along with Toronto architect F. H. Herbert and landscape architects Dunington-Grubb. The lakefront properties are integral to an understanding of the historical development of Mimico and, contextually, are historically linked to their setting. The Mimico Estates assist in maintaining, supporting and defining the historical character of the community where prominent Torontonians commissioned residential enclaves along the waterfront in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While the setting has been altered with the addition of the Amedeo Garden Court Apartments, the surviving estate buildings and the landscaping retain their integrity and continue to communicate the cultural heritage values of the site.

5. SOURCES

Archival Sources

Abstract Indices of Deeds, Plan 1217, Lots 10-14
Aerial Map, City of Toronto, 1947
Assessment Rolls, Town of Mimico, 1920 ff.
Assessment Rolls, Township of Etobicoke, 1910-19
City of Toronto Directories, 1910 ff.
Goad's Atlases, 1910 revised to 1912 and 1923
Historical Atlas of York County, 1878
Photographs, Ormscliffe, City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 3109 (c. 1911),
Fonds 1266, Items 1159 and 1161 (July 26, 1923)
Plan of Mimico, Browne, 1856
Town of Mimico Council Minutes, February 27, 1928
Underwriters Insurance Company Atlas, 1952 revised to 1962

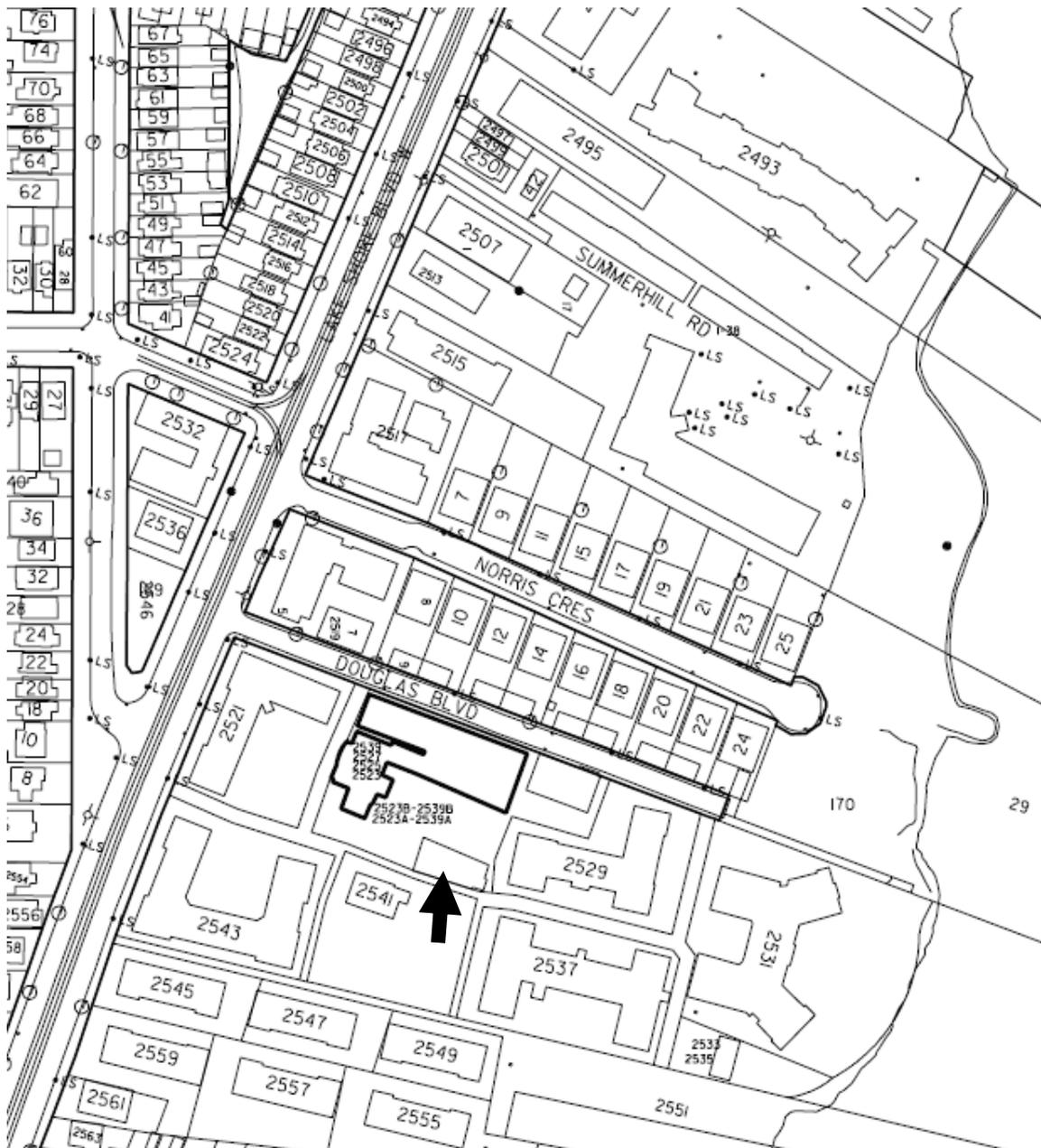
Books, Periodicals and Newspapers

Currell, Harvey, The Mimico Story, 2nd rev. ed., 1967
Eland, Edwin, The Story of Mimico, 1935
"Former labourer a millionaire," Globe (September 17, 1960)
Given, Robert, The Etobicoke Story, 1953 and 2007
Heyes, Esther, Etobicoke: from furrow to borough, 1974
"Huge lakeshore estates were the past grandeur of small town Mimico," Etobicoke Guardian (21 April 1976), 11
"Local man A.B. Ormsby in the movie business," Toronto Daily Star (June 4, 1921)
Maitland, Leslie, The Queen Anne Revival Style in Canadian Architecture, 1990
McHugh, Patricia. Toronto Architecture: a city guide, 2nd ed., 1989
Middleton, J. E., The Municipality of Toronto, Vol. III, 1923
"Mimico locals," Etobicoke Advertiser (April 16, 1925), (July 16, 1925) and (December 20, 1928)
"Residential design in Canada," Construction (July 1910), 112-113
"A Trim and a trip to the past," Toronto Star (March 21, 2004)
Villages of Etobicoke, Etobicoke Historical Board, 1983

Other Sources

Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Fonds, University of Guelph Library,
www.lib.uoguelph.ca/resources/archival_&_special_collections
"F. H. Herbert, entry in Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada,
www.dictionarofarchitectsincanada.org
Michael Harrison, Property Nomination Form, 2523-2541A Lake Shore Boulevard West
and 5, 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard, 2010
"The Mimico Beach Estates," <http://mimicoestates.blogspot.com>

6. IMAGES

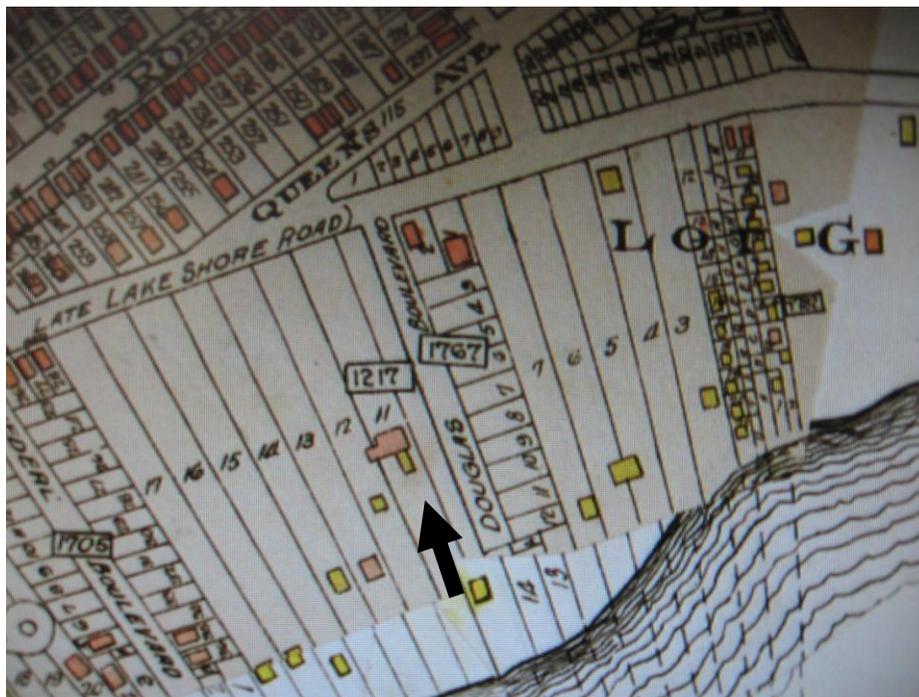
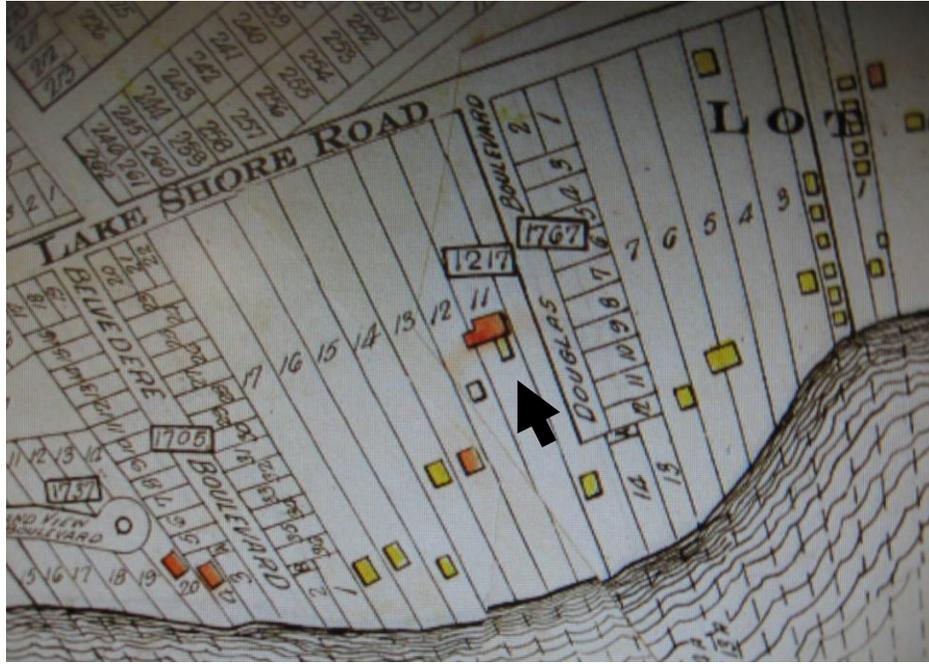




2. Plan of Mimico, Browne, 1856: showing the model town laid out in Mimico that accompanied the building of the Hamilton and Toronto Railway in 1855



3. Historical Atlas of York County, 1878: showing the south part of Etobicoke Township with the street plan of Mimico, the Great Western Railway line and, marked by the **arrow**, the area where the lakefront estates were developed in the 1890s and afterward



4. Goad's Atlases, 1910, updated to 1912 (top) and 1923 (bottom): showing the placement of the estate house (marked by the **arrows**).



Residence of A. B. Ormsby, Situated on the Lake Shore, near Mimico, Ont. One of the More Interesting Homes of Recent Erection. F. H. Herbert, Architect.



View Showing Service Wing, Residence of A. B. Ormsby, Mimico, Ont. The Walls of this House are of White Limestone, with Cement Stucco Gables, the Pillars of the verandah being of Concrete. F. H. Herbert, Architect.

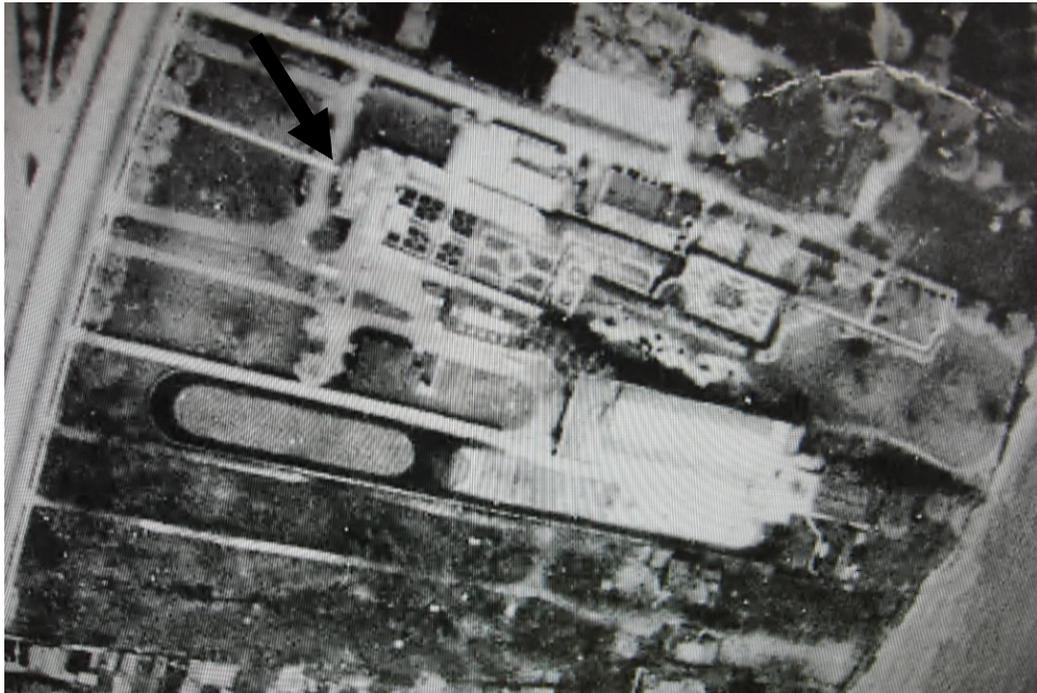
5. Construction Magazine, July 1910: showing the north façade of Ormscliffe following the completion of the estate house



6. Photograph, Ormscliffe, circa 1911 (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, #3109)



7. Photograph, Ormsby Estate, July 1923 (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1266, #1159)



8. Aerial Photograph, 1947: with **arrows** marking the Franceschini Estate (top image) and the estate house (bottom image). The extensive gardens south (right) of the main house are visible, as well as the horse ring and equestrian facilities west (below) and southwest of the residence (City of Toronto Archives)



9. Photograph, 2523 Lake Shore Boulevard West: showing the north façade of Ormscliffe (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



10. Photograph, 2523 Lake Shore Boulevard West: showing the south elevation of Ormscliffe, and the garden with the stone fence and piers with the metal gates (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



11. Photograph, 2523 Lake Shore Boulevard West: showing the west elevation of Ormscliffe, with the original south wing that is visible in the Construction magazine photographs in Image 5 (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



12. Photograph, 2527 Lake Shore Boulevard West: showing the garden wall adjoining the south façade of Ormscliffe (left) (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



13. Photograph, 2541-2541A Lake Shore Boulevard West: showing the north (right) and east (left) elevations of the detached house occupied by James Franceschini's brother, Leonard (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



14. Photograph, 2533-2535 Lake Shore Boulevard West: showing the north facades of the semi-detached houses at the southwest corner of the estate that were built for staff accommodation (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



15. Photograph, 2539A&B Lake Shore Boulevard West: showing the east (left) and north (right) elevations of the garage (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



16. Photograph, 2539A&B Lake Shore Boulevard West: showing the west (left) and south (right) elevations of the garage, with the south façade of Ormscliffe visible in the background (right) (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



17. Photograph, 5 Douglas Boulevard: showing the power plant adjoining the housing at #7 and 9 Douglas (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)



18. Photograph, 7 and 9 Douglas Boulevard: showing the east façade of the staff housing (Heritage Preservation Services, 2010)