

2016/06/20

To Preservation Board members,

During World War 1, a number of seeds from oak trees on Vimy Ridge were sent back to a farm in Scarborough and planted in the hopes of growing the trees in memory of those who had given their life in the cause of democracy. Over time, all the oak trees at Vimy Ridge were destroyed and all that remained were the seeds sent home by one Scarborough soldier.

The history behind this is well documented and last fall, several cuttings were made from these trees and sent to a nursery in Niagara in the hope of growing some saplings to take back to Vimy Ridge for re-planting. This has been successful and the young trees will be sent to Vimy Ridge early next year and planted in time for the 100th anniversary celebrations.

These trees are different from oak trees usually found in North America and this, too, is well documented. Due to the importance of this Scarborough site of national significance and the approaching timeline of Vimy Ridge celebrations in 2017, the Scarborough Community Preservation Panel feels that action on the recommendation to designate the bush lot should be taken as soon as possible so that any necessary processes can be finalized before the 2017 celebrations. Designation of a bush lot is not unique as Scarborough has already designated several black walnut trees of the site of the famous Falcon Inn.

The committee will also be looking for support for a plaque on the Vimy Oaks/Scarborough site as well as public awareness of the importance of the unique oak trees on this property. To this end, the committee felt that Scarborough Community Council should be given the opportunity to discuss the proposed recommended designation and report back to the Preservation Board.

At the most recent committee meeting, the following resolution was passed unanimously:
"Be it resolved that the Toronto Preservation Board be requested to ask the Scarborough Community Council for appropriate comment and action with regard to the proposed designation of the bush lot known as Vimy Oaks Bush located at 3223 Kennedy Road in Scarborough, under the terms of the Ontario Heritage Act."

The support of the Toronto Preservation Board would be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

Rick Schofield, SCPP Chair.