

55 Yeomans Road - Inclusion on the Heritage Register

Date: September 21, 2023

To: Toronto Preservation Board

North York Community Council

From: Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

Wards: 6 - York Centre

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council include the property at 55 Yeomans Road on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register for its cultural heritage value and interest.

Located on the northeast corner of Danby Avenue and Yeomans Road, south of Sheppard Avenue West, west of Bathurst Street, the subject property at 55 Yeomans Road comprises a Modernist style synagogue, known as the Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, completed in 1959 to the designs of celebrated modernist Canadian architect Irving Grossman and artist Graham Coughtry.

The Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue was identified in the North York Modern Inventory in 1997.

The property at 55 Yeomans Road has been researched and evaluated by staff using the criteria prescribed in Ontario Regulation 9/06 and meets one or more of the provincial criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest and is believed to be of cultural heritage value or interest.

A municipal heritage register may include properties that have not been designated but Council believes to be of "cultural heritage value or interest", and that meet one or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether they are of cultural heritage value or interest. The Ontario Heritage Act (the Act) now also limits listing to a period of two years.

Properties on the Heritage Register will be conserved and maintained in accordance with the Official Plan's Heritage Policies. The listing of non-designated properties on the municipal heritage register also extends interim protection from demolition and provides an opportunity for City Council to determine whether the property warrants conservation through designation under the Act should a development or demolition application be submitted.

On January 1, 2023, amendments to the Act through the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) came into effect. Under the Act, should a property be subject to an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application, properties must be listed on the Heritage Register prior to Part IV designation and before the occurrence of a "Prescribed Event". Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) are required for development applications that affect listed properties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council include the property at 55 Yeomans Road on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in accordance with the Listing Statement (Reasons for Inclusion), attached as Attachment 1 to the report (September 21, 2023) from the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report. The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

POLICY AND REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Provincial Plans and Policies

The conservation of cultural heritage resources is an integral component of good planning, contributing to a sense of place, economic prosperity, and healthy and equitable communities. Heritage conservation in Ontario is identified as a provincial interest under the Planning Act.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>

Further, the policies and definitions of the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) identify the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage evaluation and heritage conservation will be implemented.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>

<https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-place-to-grow-office-consolidation-en-2020-08-28.pdf>

Ontario Regulation 9/06 sets out the criteria for evaluating properties to be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The criteria are based on an evaluation of design/physical value, historical and associative value and contextual value. A property may

be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009>

Official Plan

The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime and provides policies to guide decision making within the City. It contains a number of policies related to properties on the City's Heritage Register and properties adjacent to them, as well as the protection of areas of archaeological potential. The Official Plan should be read as a whole to understand its comprehensive and integrative intent as a policy framework for priority setting and decision making. The Official Plan can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

COMMENTS

Identifying properties of cultural heritage value or interest is an essential part of a municipality's role in heritage conservation. Including non-designated properties in the municipal register is a means to identify properties that the City believes to have cultural heritage value or interest.

Short descriptive listings are prepared using a method by which properties are identified and recommended for inclusion on the Heritage Register. This approach to listing provides sufficient information to meet the requirements of Section 27 of the Act to list a non-designated property on the Heritage Register and satisfies direction found within the City's Official Plan to make use of provincial criteria when adding properties to the Register.

A brief statement named, "Reasons for Inclusion", is prepared for each recommended property explaining why the property is believed to have cultural heritage value and how it meets one or more of the provincial criteria under O. Reg 9/06 providing a preliminary evaluation of the cultural heritage value or interest of the property. The description may include features of the property that may warrant conservation should the property be subject to development and/or further evaluated and determined to merit designation under Part IV of the Act. Location map and photographs are included in each Reason for Inclusion.

On January 1, 2023, the Province's proposed amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act (the Act) through the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) came into effect. Bill 23 makes listing a prerequisite to designation, should a property be subject to a development application and before the occurrence of a "Prescribed Event." A prescribed event is a point of time when the application for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application has been deemed complete and the City Clerk provides notice of complete application to the public in accordance with the Planning Act.

If the property is recommended for designation under the Act, further evaluation will be undertaken in accordance with O. Reg 9/06 and the statement of cultural heritage value, including a description of the heritage attributes, will be identified and prepared in compliance

with the Act. More detailed historical research conducted through a future evaluation may determine additional heritage values for this property.

CONCLUSION

Following research and evaluation in accordance with Ontario Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 55 Yeomans Road meets one or more provincial criteria and merit inclusion on the City's Heritage Register. The Listing Statement (Reasons for Inclusion) for the subject property is presented in Attachment 1.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

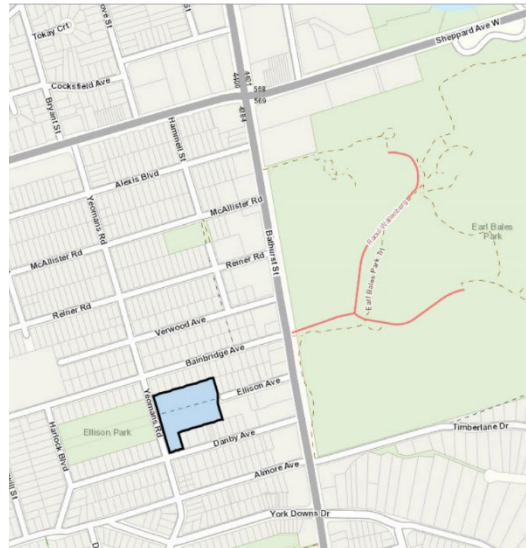
Mary L. MacDonald, MA, CAHP
Senior Manager, Heritage Planning
Urban Design, City Planning

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Listing Statement (Reasons for Inclusion) - 55 Yeomans Road

Listing Statement (Reasons for Inclusion)
55 Yeomans Road

ATTACHMENT 1



(Top) View of 55 Yeomans Road from northwest showing entrance. Heritage Planning, 2023. (Lower Left) View of prefabricated concrete bas-relief panels with stained-glass openings. Heritage Planning, 2023. (Lower Right) Map of the area showing 55 Yeomans Road in blue. Note: This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown. City of Toronto Mapping.

55 Yeomans Road - Reasons for Inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register:

Located on the northeast corner of Danby Avenue and Yeomans Road, south of Sheppard Avenue West, west of Bathurst Street, the property at 55 Yeomans Road comprises a Modernist style synagogue, known as the Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, set on a large lot amidst a low-rise residential neighbourhood in North York.

The Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue was identified in the North York Modern Inventory completed by the North York Planning Department and adopted by North York Council in 1997.

The subject property has cultural heritage value as it meets the following criteria under Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

The subject property has design value as a representative and unique example of a Modernist synagogue with a high degree of artistic merit. Completed in 1959, the two-storey prefabricated concrete structure is distinguished by its simple geometric form, intended to resemble a "jewel box". The volumetric composition combines an elliptical cylinder (entrance) subtly linked to a rectangular block (including the sanctuary among other spaces), showcasing the Jewish religious symbolism expressed in the prefabricated concrete bas-relief panels with stained-glass openings. The prefabricated concrete panels define both the structure and ornamentation of the building, fusing architecture and art through the abstract expression of traditional iconography, including repeating menorah motifs, the sacred wine goblet, the tree of life, and curved forms representing the cupped hands of the high priest.

David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue holds historical value for its association with the Beth David Congregation which amalgamated with the B'nai Israel Congregation in 1960 and with Beth Am Congregation in 1977.

The Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue has associative value for its reflection of the work and ideas of the celebrated modernist Canadian architect Irving Grossman and nationally recognized artist Graham Coughtry, who collaborated together on the 1957 design of the synagogue. The subject property has contextual value as an architectural landmark in the local neighbourhood.