

Heritage Assessment

951 Srigley Street
Newmarket, Ont.



For : **Groundswell Urban Planners Inc.**

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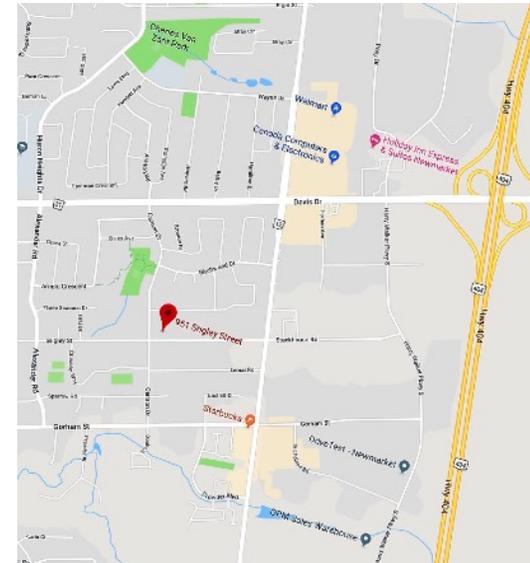
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1.0 Introduction

The property at 951 Srigley St includes a house, which I understand was constructed in a series of stages between 1970s and 1990s. The house generally exhibits a design aesthetic that was popular in the late 1970s and later and in terms of massing, scale, materials and forms are still being designed today.

I have been informed at the core of this house, in the centre bay was an older smaller home that was renovated in 1970s as the first stage in building up the current building. To this core house a western addition and later and eastern addition were added. We were not able to confirm the construction date of the first house, but a surviving garage suggests it may have been from the 1930-40s period. No features of the first house have survived.

The house design is the work of the local architect Fraser Milne and is believed to have been built as his own home. Although he undertook many projects locally he is not considered a significant architect as understood for the requirements of Reg 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage ACT.



1. Location map. Google



3. Front view of house Google



2. Aerial view of site. Google

2.0 Historic Background

2.1 Context and Setting

John Graves Simcoe, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, proposed the formation of a military road to be used as a strategic route in the event of an American invasion of Upper Canada. In 1793, when war broke out between England and France, Simcoe strategically transferred the capital of Upper Canada from Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake) to York (Toronto). Major roads were mapped out for both defence and development. On September 25, 1793, Simcoe accompanied by some soldiers and aboriginal guides followed the Carrying Place Trail portage route from Lake Ontario to Lake Simcoe following the Humber and Holland Rivers. Simcoe established the military road running straight from York to Holland Landing, and named the road Yonge Street, after Sir George Yonge, Secretary of War in the British Cabinet and a family friend.

Newmarket was later located on the Holland River, since it was a major portage route on the Carrying-Place Trail. There were two routes that were established along the Holland River through the area that would later become the Newmarket area. On the eastern side of the trail, the route passed through the Oak Ridges Moraine and met Lake Ontario at the Rouge River. On the western branch of the river, the trail passed through the moraine to the Humber River.

2.2 Newmarket

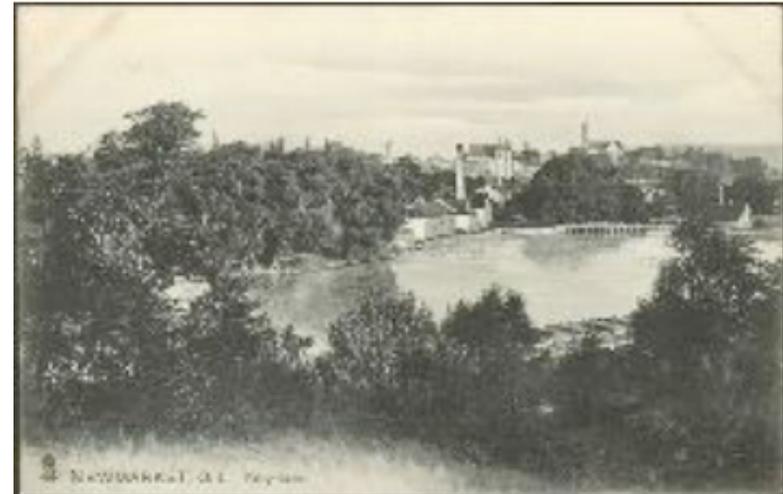
Early settlement in the Newmarket area occurred when Quakers from the United States moved northward. In June 1800, Timothy Rogers, a Quaker from Vermont explored the area around the Holland River searching for a new area suitable for a Quaker settlement. Rogers, Samuel Lundy and their group of Religious Society of Friends received a large grant of 8,000 acres around the Holland River. In 1801, Rogers returned with several Quaker families who had left their homes in Vermont and Pennsylvania to settle in the area in 1801-03.

The first mill was constructed on the Holland River by Joseph Hill. The mill pond was named Fairy Lake. Early settlement was located near the river and not Yonge Street which was further west. Hill also built a tannery, general store, and additional mills. The town continued to expand throughout the early 19th century in addition to the surrounding area of Aurora and Holland Landing.

The population by 1846 reached 600. The town which was surrounded by farmland included six churches, a post office, five stores, several taverns and some industries including two grist-mills, two breweries, a distillery, a tannery, foundry and textile business. In 1853, the railway linked Newmarket to the south, when the Toronto, Simcoe & Lake Huron Railroad, which was later renamed the Northern Railway of Canada, was established in Newmarket. The railway provided passenger service as well as shipped agricultural products and manufactured goods.

In 1857, the village of Newmarket was incorporated with a population of 700. By 1869, the population was 1500 and in addition to the train, stage coaches were available for transportation to nearby communities. By the time of the 1871 census, the population was 1,760. In 1881, the population had increased to 2,006. In 1899, the Toronto and York Radial Railway service reached Newmarket.

In the early 20th century, Newmarket was settled along Davis Drive, between Yonge Street on the west and between Bayview and Leslie Street in the east, extending to Davis Drive on the north to the Fairy Lake area in the south. By the early 1950s, Newmarket was experiencing a suburban building boom and the population increased from 5,000 to 11,000 between 1950 and 1970. In 1971, the Regional Municipality of York was formed



4. View of Fairy Lake in 1910



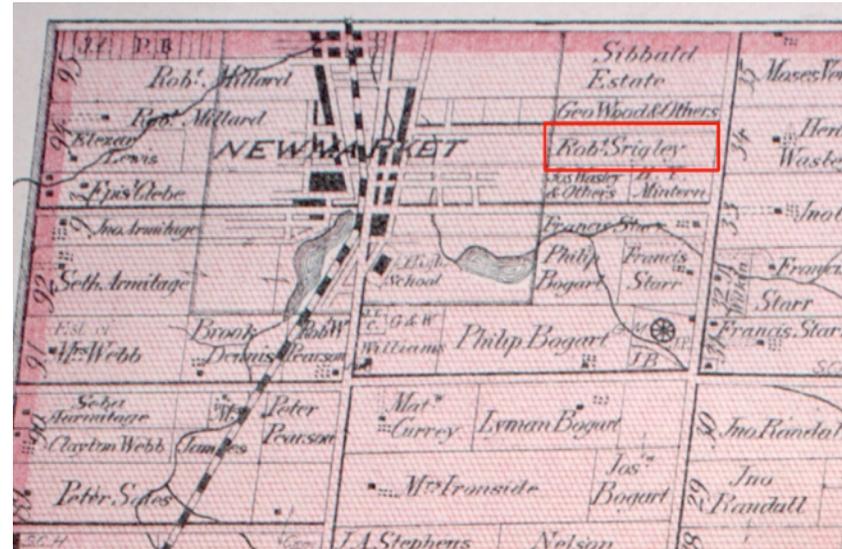
5. Main Street, Newmarket 1856

merging Newmarket, the Township of East Gwillimbury, the Township of King and the Township of Whitchurch.

2.3 Srigley Sreet

Srigley Street is located west of Leslie Street south of Davis Drive and north of Gorham Street. The street was named after early settler Robert Srigley who was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania in 1777. In 1788, the Srigley family including parents Enoch and Mary along with Robert moved from Buck's County to Pelham Township in the Niagara District in Upper Canada. The family name was also spelled Shrigley. Robert later moved to York County after purchasing land east of the Holland River and built a house near the site of the present-day Prince Charles Public School. The land was located on Concession II, lot 34 in the Township of Whitchurch. The location of Srigley Street was once the roadway access to his farm. Robert Srigley donated a corner of his farm land for the area's first public school site at the present day northeast corner of Prospect and Timothy Streets.

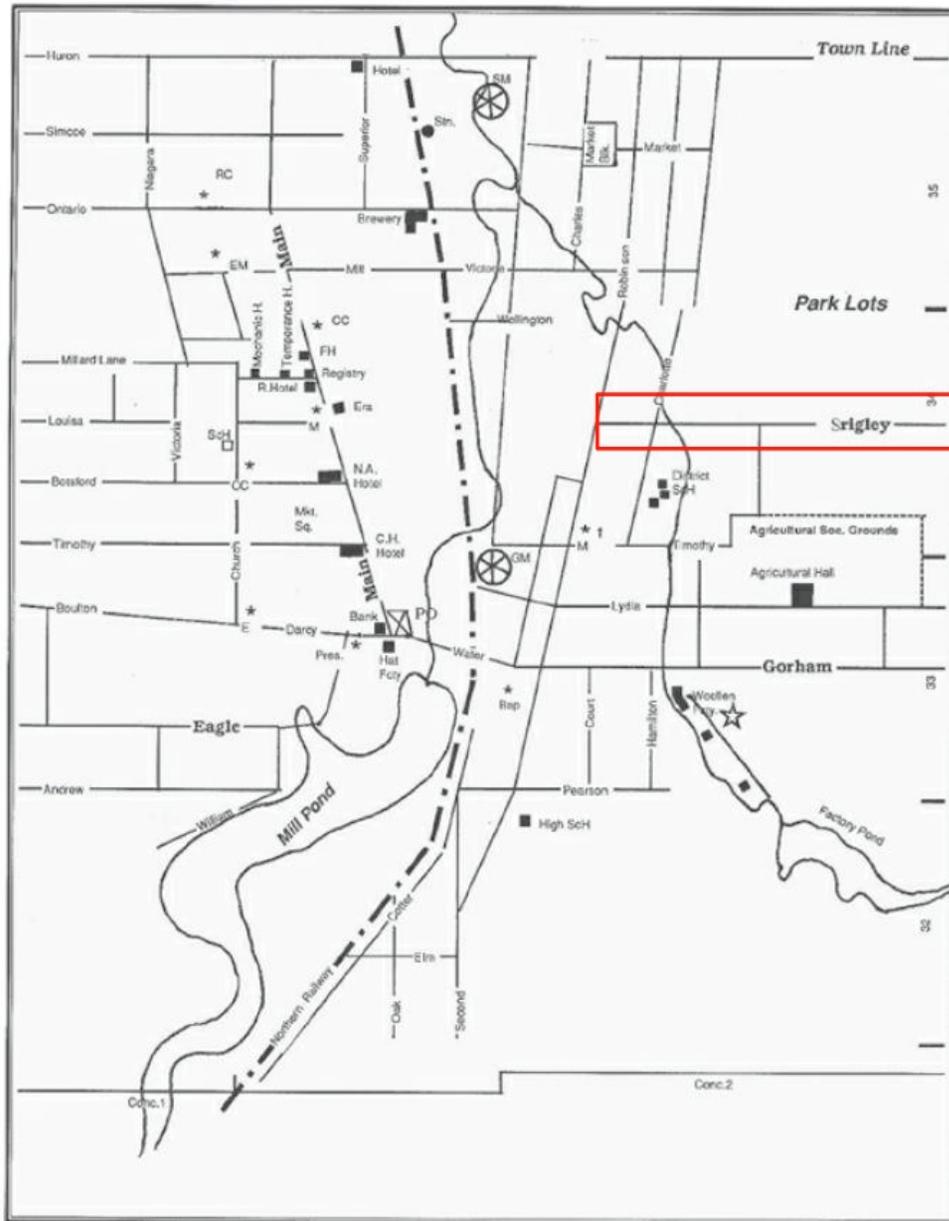
The first public school building was erected in 1824 and was a small log building that was large enough for eight students. As the number of students increased, a new 24 foot square frame schoolhouse with a metal dome was constructed in 1853, and wings were added on the north and south sides in 1858. The building was able to accommodate 120 students. In 1891, a new brick building was completed at the corner of Prospect and Timothy Streets and named the Alexander Muir Public School.



6. Boulton Atlas or 1878 showing the location of the Srigley land holding



7. Alexander Muir Public School, Prospect St. photo c1910 designed by architect Marshall Benjamin Aylesworth, demolished in 1979.



8. Map of 19th Century Newmarket adapted from the County of York Illustrated Historical Atlas, 1878. Illustrating the location of Srigley St.

2.4 Architects, Smith and Milne

Fraser Milne was a local architect, who was involved in a number of local projects often in partnership as the architectural firm, Smith and Milne. Milne was a long-time resident of Newmarket residing there since 1955 and was often presenting plans to the local council. In February 1967, Fraser Milne made a presentation to council on potential plans for a community centre. In September 1967, Smith and Milne designed a 12,000 square foot light manufacturing building near Oak Street.

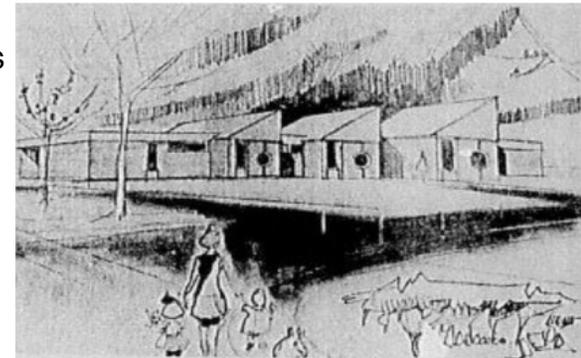
On October 2, 1968, the council of Newmarket approved the construction of a proposed building that was designed by Smith and Milne on land located in the industrial section near the Mulock Sideroad. The building was designed as an Adult Training Centre and was brick on the exterior with cedar siding on the back. In October 1970, Smith and Milne were involved in the renovations to the local arena which included expansion of the arena floor.

In December 1971, Smith and Milne presented plans for the Newmarket Day Care Centre.

On February 3, 1977, the local paper published plans prepared by Smith and Milne designing a 100 unit nine storey Ontario Housing Corp senior citizens apartment building. In 1977, Smith and Milne had an office located at 48 Main Street, Newmarket. In September 1977, Smith and Milne managed the tender for St. Paul's Catholic School .

In April, 1978, Fraser and Milne designed an addition to the Newmarket Public Library. On November 1, 1978, Fraser Milne presented plans for the Newmarket Theatre Centre.

In April 4, 1979, Fraser Milne prepared a report to City council in support of constructing an arts cultural centre. In August 1979, Fraser Milne prepared a report regarding expansion of the fire station on Davis Drive.



9. Newmarket Daycare proposal 1971, Smith and Milne



10. Newmarket Senior citizens building proposal 1977, Smith and Milne

Newmarket's population doubled during the period from 1971 to 1980. Mayor Ray Twinney elected in 1970, had to make a decision about the limited space in the municipal offices that were located at 171 Main Street in 1987. Architects Smith and Milne prepared a proposal to add an extension on the south side of the existing structure. The preliminary estimates were very high coming in at \$650,000 so alternative proposals were explored.

3.0 Heritage Assessment

Heritage assessments are based on Provincial criteria under Reg 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act. These are as follows:

1. The property has design value or physical value because it;
 - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method
 - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
 - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

2. The property has historical value or associative value because it;
 - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community
 - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
 - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

3. The property has contextual value because it,

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- i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
- ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
- iii. is a landmark.

3.1 Design or Physical value

The house at 951 Srigley St. is the result of a series of adaptations and addition. It is believed the house began in the 1970s with the renovation of an existing house. There is little material on site that would indicate what this first house looked like before renovation. The only clue is an old badly deteriorated garage behind the house which is assumed to date to the period of the first house. Based on this I have surmised that the first house dates to roughly the 1930s or 40s.

The interior of the first house has been completely gutted into an open space plan and the exterior completely altered, no exposed element of the first house remains from its first design with the possible exception of the simple gable ended roof and rectangular form.

The current owner explained that the first house was subsequently added to to the west. This makes sense in both the design of the addition and the presence of the old garage which would have remained functional in this period and may date to the 1970s. The addition is awkwardly linked to the first house with a parallel small corridor to a couple of new bedrooms and a bath, a steep set of stairs connects to a lower level. At the junction between forms a small sunroom with a solarium was included. this space is unheated and may have had only seasonal use.



11. Front, centre bay is the renovated first house. PGA



12. S-W corner, west addition to house. PGA

Later, reportedly in the 1990s a west addition was added, this created a new entrance and at an upper level a family room with a curiously sculpted fireplace. Below this is a covered car port open at the sides. This new carport made the old garage redundant.

The resulting form of the building is awkward although the roof forms, in part sawtooth do reflect a popular approach in the 1970s. As a composition the building is disjointed assembly of parts that does not achieve a high level of design quality.

The exterior of the building is clad in board and batten siding, a popular choice in the 1970s. The siding is stained a mid grey and the stain is severely worn and in need of renewal.

With the exception of the aluminium and glass solarium all windows, doors, trim, and finishes are wood and of a very basic and typical commercial design.

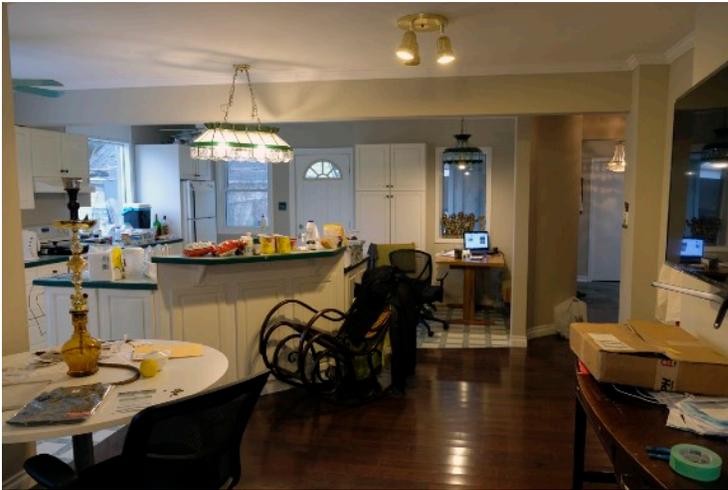
The landscape of the property is not well developed. At the front yard, it includes very typical grouping of shrubs, a grass lawn and a large front yard tree. The rear yard includes a patio, now in poor condition, adjacent to the house and beyond a fenced tennis court , grass lawns and border trees and shrubs. It is not a high quality or landscape design of any significance.

It is my opinion that although reflecting some period styling to the 1970s, this is **not** a property that is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method nor does it display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

13. Rear view of house and deck area. PGA



14. Old garage, dilapidated. PGA



15. View of central open plan looking east, dining and kitchen. PGA



16. View of central open plan looking west, dining and living. PGA



17. View of entrance. PGA



18. View up to raised family room over car port PGA



19. View of family room fireplace
PGA

3.2 Historical or Associative Value

As a private home this property does not have any association with any institutions or organizations. It is a “custom” home the result of a series of additions.

The property does have an association with Fraser Milne, and was for a time his home. Fraser Milne was a partner in the local Architectural firm of Smith and Milne. Although no doubt this firm produced a number of competent works in the community the test is whether or not this property demonstrates the work or ideas of an Architect “significant” to a community.

From a review of the projects of this firm It is difficult to conclude that this house is a significant project or reflects ideas of the designer significant to the community. As noted above the firm undertook work which still exists in the community and in scope, design aesthetic, and innovation these projects appear to be larger scale, institutional or of a planning nature and competent but not necessarily significant, also I do **not** believe this house to be a good demonstration of their work. It is my opinion this house has low Associative Value.

3.3 Contextual Value

The house is located on a large lot in an area and on a street with a suburban urban design character and with a wide variety of house designs. Near to this property houses are very typical 1950-1970s designs found in suburban developments throughout the region. In this mix are other houses that are newer and have, I assume, replaced earlier and smaller houses.



19. Aerial view of site context. this property is similar to others in setbacks and size Google

The property at 951 Srigley is not significant in this context but simply another house in a 1970s aesthetic that is a bit different from its immediate neighbours but not unique in the period.

It is my opinion that this property is **not** important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area is not physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings and is not is a landmark.



19. Context view of street looking east, 951 on the left PGA



20. Context view of street looking east, 951 on the mid right PGA

4.0 Conclusions

The purpose of this report was to consider if the property at 951 Srigley is significant and should be considered a “heritage” property under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Although it is the result of work by its Architect owner, Fraser Milne, and therefore has some associative value, I do not think it a good, representative, or significant sample of his work nor do I feel the work of the firm, although undoubtedly competent, is at a level to be considered “significant” to the community in the meaning of the word as defined in the PPS 2014.

This is perhaps due to its creation over time in a series of parts that do not quite add up as a fully coherent work of architecture or perhaps as the expression goes, it is like “shoemakers children” when designed for himself it produced a liveable home but not his best work.

Aesthetically different from its immediate 1960s neighbours the house does not make an important contribution to the context, but in scale and design is simply another house in an area of mixed house design. The primary contribution could be considered to be the front yard landscape consistent with the suburban landscape aesthetic of the area. If the house building is replaced consideration should be given to the creation of a front yard landscape that continues in this tradition. Also if possible the retention of the large tree in the middle front would be a benefit.

Having assessed this property under O.Reg 9/06 I conclude this property is **not of heritage significance**.

5.0 Bibliography

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