

On April **, 2024, Oakville Town Council resolved to pass a Notice of Intention to Designate the following property under Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18, as amended, as a property of cultural heritage value and interest:

Thomas and Electa Leach House
159 Balsam Drive
Part Lot 11, Concession 3 Trafalgar, South of Dundas Street; As In TW30301;
Now Known As ; Lot 33, Plan 1009 ; OAKVILLE

Description of Property

The Thomas and Electa Leach House property is located at 159 Balsam Drive on the east side of Balsam Drive north of Lakeshore Road East. The property contains a c.1830s one-and-a-half storey detached frame house with later additions to the front and the rear.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Design and Physical Value

The Thomas and Electa Leach House has design and physical value as an example of a modest Neoclassical home, an early and rare example of its kind in Oakville. Common in Ontario between 1800 and 1860, the Neoclassical style is characterized by simple symmetrical designs and refined Classical architectural ornamentation. Facades typically include a generously sized central entrance accompanied by entablatures, pilaster strips and decorative friezes. The subject house exhibits numerous features of the Neoclassical style, including its uncluttered symmetrical façade with a central entrance flanked by four windows. The house contains the main distinguishing feature of the Neoclassical style behind the front portico addition: the prominent central entrance with a multipanelled wood door, framed by sidelights separated by pilasters. The original twelve-over-twelve sash windows are typical of the historic style, as are the louvered wood shutters. The windows on the front façade contain entablatures, another element that defines the Neoclassical style. Simple cornices and cornice returns along the roofline complete the Neoclassical look of the house.

Historical and Associative Value

The Thomas and Electa Leach House has cultural heritage value because of its direct associations with the Leach family, an early local settler family who were renowned for their skills as carpenters. The property is also associated with the Wass family who were significant to the community because of their business endeavours, public service and active involvement in the development of St. John's United Church. The property also has cultural heritage value because it demonstrates and reflects the work of the Leach family, local settlers and carpenters, who built the subject house, among others in Oakville.

Contextual Value

The Thomas and Electa Leach House has cultural heritage value because it is important in supporting the area as one that has transitioned from being predominantly mid-19th century farmland to that of a 20th century suburban subdivision development. The streetscape is characterized by medium to large lots, containing medium to large houses that were built in a variety of architectural styles from a variety of architectural eras. The property is significant as one of the first buildings to be constructed in the immediate area and serves as a key anchor point in the neighbourhood as it stands out as atypical and visually different from more recent, more numerous 20th century structures. While the house has been relocated within the immediate area, it remains physically, functionally, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings.

Description of Heritage Attributes

Key attributes of Thomas and Electa Leach House that exemplify its value as an early example of a modest Neoclassical house, as they relate to the north, south and west elevations of the original one-and-a-half storey 1830s house, include:

- The form and footprint of the structure with its low-sloped gable roof;
- Horizontal wood clapboard cladding with wood corner boards and wood cornice with cornice returns;
- Historic 12/12, 2/2 and 6/6 wood windows and wood storm windows with wood trim, wood entablatures, and remaining wood louvered shutters;
- Front entrance with panelled wood door, wood sidelight windows, and simple wood pilasters;
- Lakestone foundation above grade.

For the purpose of clarity, the cultural heritage value or interest and heritage attributes do not include:

- The two-storey front portico wing;
- The one-storey rear wing; and
- The detached garage.

Any objection to this designation must be filed no later than May **, 2024. Objections must be directed to the Town Clerk at townclerk@oakville.ca or 1225 Trafalgar Road, Oakville, Ontario L6H 0H3. The objection must include the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts.

Further information respecting this proposed designation is available from the Town of Oakville. Any inquiries may be directed to Carolyn Van Sligtenhorst, Supervisor of Heritage Conservation at 905-845-6601, ext.3875 (TTY 905-338-4200), or by email at carolyn.van@oakville.ca.

Issued at the Town of Oakville on April **, 2024.