



An agency of the Government of Ontario



Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

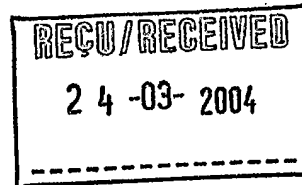
This document was retrieved from the Ontario Heritage Act Register, which is accessible through the website of the Ontario Heritage Trust at **[www.heritagetrust.on.ca](http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca)**.

---

Ce document est tiré du registre aux fins de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*, accessible à partir du site Web de la Fiducie du patrimoine ontarien sur **[www.heritagetrust.on.ca](http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca)**.

March 23, 2004

Ontario Heritage Foundation  
10 Adelaide Street East  
Toronto, ON M5C 1J3

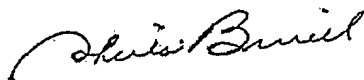


Re: By-law 2003-156- To designate certain properties as being of historic and/or architectural value or interest – The James Dimma House

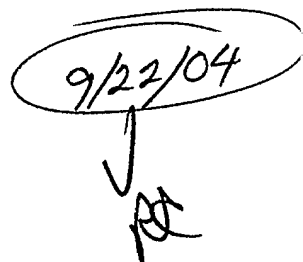
This will advise that Council passed By-law 2003-156, which designated "The James Dimma House", 7933 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, as being of historic and/or architectural value or interest.

A copy of the by-law, with the pertinent registration data, is attached for your information.

Sincerely,



Sheila Birrell  
Town Clerk





## BY-LAW 2003-156

A by-law to designate a property as being of  
Historic and/or Architectural Value or Interest  
The James Dimma House

---

WHEREAS Pursuant to Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, the council of a municipality is authorized to enact by-laws to designate a real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historic and/or architectural value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Markham has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises at:

ONTARIO REALTY CORPORATION  
FERGUSON BLOCK, 11<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
77 WELLESLEY STREET WEST  
TORONTO, ON, M7A 2G3

and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to designate The James Dimma House, 7933 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue having a general circulation in the municipality;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designations are set out in Schedule "B" attached hereto and forming part of this by-law;

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MARKHAM HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT the following real properties, more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto and forming part of this by-law is hereby designated as being of historic and/or architectural value or interest:

The James Dimma House,  
7933 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Town of Markham  
The Regional Municipality of York

2. THAT the Town Solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the properties described in Schedule "A" attached hereto in the property Land Registry Office.

READ A FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD TIME AND PASSED THIS  
27<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MAY, 2003.

"Sheila Birrell"

---

SHEILA BIRRELL, TOWN CLERK

"Don Cousens"

---

DON COUSENS, MAYOR

## **SCHEDULE 'A' TO BY-LAW 2003-156**

In the Town of Markham in the Regional Municipality of York, property descriptions as follows:

PART LOT 5, CONCESSION 10

TOWN OF MARKHAM  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

## SCHEDULE 'B' TO BY-LAW 2003-156

### STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR DESIGNATION:

#### Historical Information

The James Dimma house located on Lot 5, Concession 10 was built on land, which was originally granted to Russell Olmstead. By 1801 Olmstead had successfully fulfilled his settlement duties as he received the patent to the full 200 acre property. (It is interesting that he is not listed in the Berczy Census of 1803.) In Nov. of 1811, Samuel Nash purchased the 200 acre parcel for 200 pounds. In 1836 when the property was sold again it was divided into the W ½ 100 acres, which went to William Robson and the E ½ 100 acres, which was sold to William Dunsheath, an Irishman. At this particular time the E ½ was more valuable than the W ½, which may indicate that any structure, which had previously been constructed, was on this section.


Dunsheath further divided the E ½ of Lot 5 into two 50 acre parcels. The E ½ of the E ½ 50 acres was sold, in 1838, to James Boyd and the W ½ of the E ½ was sold, in 1843 to James Dimma. Again, this parcel was purchased for a significantly higher amount than the adjoining 50 acres. It appears that the structure, which was located on this original parcel, was located on Dimma's property. It is possible that the present house incorporates this earlier building, which may date to before 1840. The Census of 1851 makes reference to the Dimma family living in a 1 ½ storey log building. As early as 1851 there was a cooperage on the property, which supplied barrels to the mills in this area. Robert Haney is listed in the Census of 1851 as being a cooper who lived on the property. The Assessment records for 1853 list the following: James Dimma Sr, age 61, listed as a farmer; James Dimma Jr., age 28, listed as a cooper and householder; Robert Dimma, age 26, listed as a teamster and householder. This same assessment book lists William Dunsheath as residing on 65 acres of the W. part of Lot 5, Concession 10.

Sometime after selling his property on the south side of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue in 1843, William "Daddy" Dunsheath became the proprietor of the local inn in Cedar Grove. William and his family of seven ran the inn on the northeast corner of the Tenth Concession Road and Fourteenth Avenue (Lot 6, concession 10).

James Dimma was born in Sprouston Stead, Berkwickshire, Scotland on Oct. 13, 1788. He married Christina Cessford and together they had three sons, William, James and Robert. James was not a young man when he immigrated to Upper Canada in 1835. He was 47 years old and brought with him his wife and two youngest sons James and Robert. It seems that William, the eldest, joined the family sometime after 1851. James' sister Janet married William Dickson and descendants of theirs went on to settle in the north part of the township, which was later called Dickson Hill.

The Dimma family arrived one year after the Robert Milroy family arrived from Scotland, their neighbours to the south. Together these Scottish Presbyterian families were instrumental in the organization of the early congregation of the Zion church, which first met for services at a log schoolhouse located on the south-east corner of the township. Construction of a frame church on the rear of Lot 1 took place in 1857. James Dimma was a church elder for many years. It was not until 1890 that the present red brick Gothic Revival church was constructed.

The Dimma property became known as Willowdale Farm and was eventually handed down to James Junior after his father's death in 1869. Together with 25 acres of property on the north side of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue he continued to farm the land until his death in 1886. James Dimma junior was active in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Markham Village. He and his parents were buried at the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church Cemetery.



### Architectural Description

The house located at 7933 Fourteenth Avenue is an example of an early 1 ½ storey house influenced by the Regency Style. The house is built on a rectangular plan 5 bays across by 1 bay deep. The exterior wall material is stucco and the foundation, which is present under only part of the house, is of fieldstone. The roof is a low pitch gable with returned eaves. The full width verandah has eaves, which project out through the entire length of the building. This detail was sometimes used in more primitive buildings and is only seen occasionally within Markham. (i.e. The Museum's Hoover House and the Philip Eckhardt House) The door opening is rectangular and offset left. The door has pilasters and entablature with side lights. The windows are rectangular in shape, some having 2/2 pane division and others having 6/6.

The windows have a moulded wood trim. There is a single chimney located on the exterior right side. There is a small gabled dormer on the front elevation, which appears to be a later addition. A simple one storey addition is located at the rear of the building. It appears that part of the existing structure could pre-date James Dimma's ownership of the property and may be as early as c.1840, when William Dunsheath was the owner.

### Contextual Reasons

The James Dimma House is of contextual significance for its association with the historic agricultural community surrounding the village of Cedar Grove. It is a reminder of Markham's early settlers who constructed dwellings along the banks of the Little Rouge River system.

### Significant Attributes

1. All wood double hung windows on all elevations;
2. All existing original exterior doors and storm doors;
3. The fieldstone foundation;
4. The front entrance with pilasters, entablature and side lights;
5. The original footprint of the front and rear of the dwelling;
6. The existing roofline.