

Evaluation of 2584 Ott Road According to *Ontario Regulation 9/06* Town of Fort Erie

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
2.0	METHOD	1
2.1	Field Survey	1
2.2	Research	1
2.3	Consultation	1
2.4	Method Conclusion	1
3.0	PROPERTY INFORMATION	1
4.0	LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK	4
4.1	Provincial Policies and Guidelines	4
4	1.1 The Planning Act	4
4	1.2 The Provincial Planning Statement (2024)	4
4	1.3 Ontario Heritage Act	5
5.0	BACKGROUND INFORMATION	6
5.1	Architecture or Design	6
5.2	History	11
5	2.1 Pre-Contact History	11
5	2.2 Post-Contact	12
5.3	Context	18
6.0	EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE	19
7.0	HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES	20
8.0	STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST	21
9.0	CONCLUSIONS	23
10 N	RIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES	24

MAPS

Map 1: Subject Property in the Town of Fort Erie	2
Map 2: Subject Property on a Current Aerial	3
Map 3: Subject Property Shown on an 1862 Historic Map	35
Map 4: Subject Property Shown on an 1876 Historic Map	36
Map 5: Subject Property Shown on Historic 1907 Topographic Map	37
Map 6: Subject Property Shown on 1954 Aerial Photograph	38
IMAGES	
IIII/AGEG	
Image 1: Façade of 2584 Ott Road	28
Image 2: Northwest Corner of 2584 Ott Road	28
Image 3: North Elevation of 2584 Ott Road	29
Image 4:Southwest Corner of 2584 Ott Road	29
Image 5: South Elevation of 2584 Ott Road	30
Image 6: Detail of Façade of 2584 Ott Road	30
Image 7: Detail of Typical Window Opening of 2584 Ott Road	31
Image 8: 2584 Ott Road Parking Lot	31
Image 9: Contextual View of Ott Street	32
Image 10: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road	32
Image 11: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road	33
Image 12: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road	33
Image 13: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road – at Rear of Meetinghouse	34
Image 14: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road - Detail	34
TABLES	
Table 1: Selection of Mennonite Meetinghouse in Ontario	8
Table 2: Characteristics of Mennonite Meetinghouses	10
Table 3: Pre-Contact Settlement History	11
Table 4: Post-Contact Settlement History	12
Table 5: Summary of Property Ownership at 2584 Ott Road	17
Table 6: Evaluation of the Cultural Heritage Value or Interest of 2584 Ott Road in	
Accordance with <i>O. Reg. 9/06</i>	19
Table 7: Relationship of Heritage Attributes to Cultural Heritage Values	20
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Photographs	28
Appendix A. Photographs Appendix B: Historic Maps	20 35
Appendix 6: Figures and Historic Photos	39
Appendix 6. Figures and filstone rilotos	39

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARA – Archaeological Research Associates Ltd.

CHVI - Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

GTR- Grand Trunk Railway

LRO - Land Registry Office

MCM – Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism

MCR – Michigan Central Railway

MMAH - Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

NR - Niagara River

OHA – Ontario Heritage Act

O. Reg. - Ontario Regulation

PPS – Provincial Planning Statement

UEL – United Empire Loyalist

WTPH - Welland Tribune Printing House

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Fort Erie has requested that Archaeological Research Associates Ltd. (ARA) to evaluate the cultural heritage value or interest (CHVI) of 2584 Ott Road according to *Ontario Regulation 9/06* as amended by *Ontario Regulation 569/22* (O. Reg.) to determine if the property is worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (OHA).

2.0 METHOD

This report examines the design of the property, presents its history and describes its context.

2.1 Field Survey

A field survey was conducted on September 20, 2024. The property was viewed and photographed from the public realm only. No interior access was afforded at this time. A site visit with permission to enter may assist with a deeper understanding of the property and its heritage attributes.

2.2 Research

Background information was obtained from historical maps (i.e., illustrated atlases), archival sources (i.e., historical publications and records) and published secondary sources (online and print).

2.3 Consultation

The Town of Fort Erie initiated this report as one of the properties prioritised for designation by the Municipal Heritage Committee as a result of changes to the Ontario Heritage Act brought on by Bill 23. Specifically, this work addresses the deadline for all listed properties to be designated, or removed from the Heritage Register, within two years (January 1, 2025). On June 6, 2024, Bill 200 was passed extending the deadline to January 1, 2027. The MHC was consulted and provided previously completed research, photographs, and statement of significance which was considered within this report.

2.4 Method Conclusion

Using the results of the field survey and research detailed above, the CHVI of 2584 Ott Road is evaluated against the criteria prescribed in *O. Reg. 9/06* of the *OHA*. If the property meets two or more criteria, a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest is then provided including a list of heritage attributes.

3.0 PROPERTY INFORMATION

Civic Address: 2584 Ott Road, Town of Fort Erie

Alternative Name(s): The Reformed Mennonite Meetinghouse

Legal Description: PART LOT 12 CONCESSION 12 NIAGARA RIVER, BERTIE TOWNSHIP

The subject property location is shown on Map 1 and Map 2.



Map 1: Subject Property in the Town of Fort Erie (Produced by ARA under licence using ArcGIS® software by Esri, © Esri)



Map 2: Subject Property on a Current Aerial (Produced by ARA under licence using ArcGIS® software by Esri, © Esri)

4.0 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

4.1 Provincial Policies and Guidelines

4.1.1 The Planning Act

In Ontario, the *Planning Act* is the primary document used by provincial and municipal governments in land use planning decisions. The purpose of the *Planning Act* is outlined in Section 1.1 of the Act, which states:

- **1.1** The purposes of this Act are,
- (a) to promote sustainable economic development in a healthy natural environment within the policy and by the means provided under this Act;
- (b) to provide for a land use planning system led by provincial policy;
- (c) to integrate matters of provincial interest in provincial and municipal planning decisions:
- (d) to provide for planning processes that are fair by making them open, accessible, timely and efficient;
- (e) to encourage co-operation and co-ordination among various interests;
- (f) to recognize the decision-making authority and accountability of municipal councils in planning 1994, c. 23, s. 4.

Part I Provincial Administration, Section 2 states:

The Minister, the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board and the Municipal Board, in carrying out their responsibilities under the Act, shall have regard to, among other matters, matters of provincial interest such as,

(d) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological, or scientific interest. 1990: Part I (2. d).

Part I Provincial Administration, Section 3, 5 Policy statements and provincial plans states:

A decision of the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board, a minister of the Crown and a ministry, board, commission or agency of the government, including the Tribunal, in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter,

- (a) shall be consistent with the policy statements issued under subsection
- (1) that are in effect on the date of the decision; and
- (b) shall conform with the provincial plans that are in effect on that date, or shall not conflict with them, as the case may be. 2006, c. 23, s. 5; 2017, c. 23, Sched. 5, s. 80.

The current Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) is enforced as of October 20, 2024.

4.1.2 The Provincial Planning Statement (2024)

The *Provincial Planning Statement* (PPS 2024) contains a combined statement of the Province's land use planning policies. It provides the provincial government's policies on a range of land use planning issues including cultural heritage outlined in Chapter 1:

Cultural heritage and archaeology in Ontario will provide people with a sense of place... The Province's rich cultural diversity is one of its distinctive and defining features. (MMAH 2024:1-2).

The PPS 2024, which is enforced as of October 20, 2024, promotes the conservation of cultural heritage resources through detailed polices in Section 4.6, such as 4.6.1 "Protected heritage property, which may contain built heritage resources or cultural heritage landscapes, shall be conserved" and 4.6.3 "Planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property unless the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserve" (MMAH 2024:28).

Further, 4.6.5 b) notes "Planning authorities are encouraged to develop and implement: b) proactive strategies for conserving *significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes*" (MMAH 2024:28).

4.1.3 Ontario Heritage Act

The OHA, R.S.O. 1990, c.018 is the guiding piece of provincial legislation for the conservation of significant cultural heritage resources in Ontario. The OHA gives provincial and municipal governments the authority and power to conserve Ontario's heritage. The OHA has policies which address individual properties (Part IV) and heritage districts (Part IV), which require municipalities to keep a register of such properties and allows the municipalities to list non-designated properties which may have cultural heritage value or interest (Section 27).

In order to objectively identify cultural heritage resources, O. Reg. 9/06 (as amended by O. Reg, 569/22) made under the *OHA* sets out nine criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest (CHVI) (MCM 2006b:20–27). The criteria set out in the regulation were developed to identify and evaluate properties for designation under the *OHA*. Best practices in evaluating properties that are not yet protected employ O. Reg. 9/06 (as amended by O. Reg, 569/22) to determine if they have CHVI. These nine criteria are:

- 1. The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
- 2. The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or
- 3. The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.
- 4. The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
- 5. The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
- 6. The property has historical value or associative value because it, demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.
- 7. The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
- 8. The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or

9. The property has contextual value because it is a landmark. (O. Reg. 569/22, s. 1 (2)).

An *OHA* designation provides the strongest heritage protection available for conserving cultural heritage resources.

5.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5.1 Architecture or Design

Meetinghouses are the religious gathering place of Quakers and Mennonites. The building name is noted in sources as both "Meeting House" and "Meetinghouse", for consistency in this report, "Meetinghouse" will be applied as the term. According to the Pennsylvania's Historical & Museum Commission:

The simply designed meetinghouse form is most often associated with the Quaker faith, but is also common to other religious sects, especially the Mennonites. Other early religious sects built meetinghouse style churches in Pennsylvania as well, including the Moravians, German Baptists, the German or Dutch Reformed, and the Brethren in Christ. In the early settlement period churches often shared a building for worship, so a meetinghouse may have been built to meet several sects' needs. Basically, meetinghouses are physical manifestations of faith. Thus, religious sects that emphasized simplicity, piety, equality, and a focus on the spiritual, not material world chose the meetinghouse form of church as an expression of their religious values. Interestingly, the Amish, a sect with many of these values, do not build churches or meetinghouses; rather they worship in homes or barns (2015).

They are further described as:

As a vernacular building type, designed without an architect or a desire to follow current fashionable styles, the meetinghouse form remains relatively unaltered over time. However, there is some variation in the design of meetinghouses, due to the preferences of religious sects, regional preferences, or the era of construction. Built of stone, brick, log or clapboard, the meetinghouses are representative of building practices in their region. Interior detail is usually very minimal with pews or benches for seating, but no altar, decorative stained windows, or bell tower (2015).

A sample of Mennonite meetinghouses in Ontario are found in Table 1. Based on the above description and Table 1, the characteristics of Mennonite meetinghouse in Ontario include: one or two-storey height, rectangular plan, little to no decoration, gable roof, rectangular or segmentally arched window openings and regularly placed window openings.

A description of the architecture/design of 2584 Ott Road is as follows:

- One-storey meetinghouse (Image 1, Image 2, Image 4)
 - o Follows a rectangular shaped plan
 - o Slightly projecting parged foundation with brick watertable
- Front gable roof with overhanging eaves (Image 1 Image 5)
 - Modernized roofline finished with what appears to be modern solid soffit, wood fascia board covered with tin, asphalt shingles and modern ventilation caps

- o Roof includes a modern drainage system composed of metal eaves and downspouts
- Roofline is finished by a small but moulded wood frieze board
- Red brick envelope (Image 1 Image 4)
 - Envelope is coursed in a modified version of common bond, with stretchers in between headers
 - Brickwork exhibits evidence of previous remediation work. In this case it appears that the envelope was sandblasted
 - Envelope includes evidence of ghosting along the north and south elevations.
 Ghosting is indicative of additional entryway openings that have been bricked-in (Figure 1 Figure 3)
- Segmentally arched window openings (Image 1 Image 7)
 - Segmental arch is comprised of alternating brick voussoirs laid in soldier and header bond
 - Openings are single, tall and narrow
 - Openings house modern rectangular vinyl windows with applied grilles and are encased with modern metal surrounds
 - o All openings are finished with tooled, stone sills
 - Openings are organized in a five-bay configuration along the north and south elevations
- Symmetrical three-bay façade (Image 1, Image 6)
 - o Centered, segmentally arched primary entranceway
 - Entranceway currently includes a modern metal door finished with what appears to be wood surrounds and topped by a sealed rectangular transom
 - Entrance is slightly elevated and accessed via a concrete pad that also acts as an accessibility ramp
- One-storey rear addition (Image 3, Image 5, Image 8)
 - Constructed over a poured concrete foundation
 - Side gable roof with a small flat roof overhang, roofline carries over finished from main roof
 - Red brick construction coursed in a stretcher bond
 - Rectangular window opening with modern window and rectangular door opening with modern double doors
- Set back from the road
 - o Small yard with large open grassed lawn and mature trees
- Large asphalt driveway along north elevation (Image 8)

When examined against the typical characteristics of Mennonite meetinghouses, 2584 Ott Road exhibits all of the characteristics and can therefore be considered a representative example (see Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1: Selection of Mennonite Meetinghouse in Ontario

Table 1: Selection of Mennonite Meetinghouse in Ontario						
Name and Location	Recognition	Brief Description	Photo (from Google Earth, ACO Toronto 2024)			
2584 Ott Road (Subject Property) Town of Fort Erie	Listed	One-storey, front gable roof, segmentally arched window openings, regularly placed windows, overall modest scale and simplicity.				
Reformed Mennonite Meetinghouse Town of Port Colborne	Designated under By-law No. 3206/78/95.	Constructed in 1872. One-storey, front gable roof, tall segmentally arched window openings Overall modest scale and simplicity (Parks Canada n.d.)				
Martins Mennonite Meetinghouse and Cemetery City of Waterloo	Listed.	Building: Constructed in 1848. One-storey, front gable roof, rectangular plan, wood siding, simple and unadorned architecture. Cemetery: located to the south of the building, grave markers face west, arranged in straight rows.				

Name and Location	Recognition	Brief Description	Photo (from Google Earth, ACO Toronto 2024)
Detweiler Meetinghouse Township of North Dumfries	Unknown	Building: Constructed in 1855. One storey, side gable roof, stone building, rectangular window openings, two entrance doors regularly placed windows. Overall modest scale and simplicity. Cemetery: grave markers oriented facing east (Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario 2014).	
Black Creek Pioneer Village; Edgeley Mennonite Meetinghouse City of Vaughan	None	Constructed 1823 and considered the oldest surviving Mennonite Meetinghouse in Ontario. A one-storey wood church rectangular window openings, two entrance doors regularly placed windows. Overall modest scale and simplicity (ACO Toronto 2024).	

Table 2: Characteristics of Mennonite Meetinghouses

Characteristics	Characteristics of 2584 Ott Road
One to two storeys	Yes
Rectangular plan	Yes
Little to no decoration	Yes
Rectangular or segmentally arched window opening	Yes
Regularly placed windows openings	Yes

Cemeteries serve to maintain a link with Ontario's past – a link through which we may glean information about individuals, families and communities. These quiet and reflective spaces, along with the monuments and vegetation they contain, hold stories about our history. Each cemetery is unique and will tell different tales of past lifeways.

Ontario cemeteries are a tangible link to ordinary individuals as well as famous people in our past. Many are an irreplaceable part of the province's cultural heritage. Their cultural heritage landscape, monuments and vegetation are part of our built environment, with their own unique history, development, and growth. Older cemeteries are a tangible link to ordinary individuals as well as famous people in our past. The inscriptions on their monuments instruct us about local, medical, and material history, cultural geography, historical archaeology, folklore, genealogy, and much more (Government of Ontario 2022).

Most cemeteries associated with churches in Ontario share some characteristics. For church cemeteries, "Older cemeteries were generally rectangular in form, reflecting a sense of order and "rationality" also found in town and rural surveying schemes" (Canadian Encyclopedia 2024). Specifically, McIlwraith and Hunter in their paper *Grave and Nave: An Architecture of Cemeteries and Sanctuaries in Rural Ontario* note that many cemeteries in Ontario are oriented to the east.

For Christianity, the direction 'east' holds special significance. The nativity star stood in the east; the Magi came from the east. Sanctuaries face east, and burials are with the feet to the east, allowing the incumbent to rise facing the dawn on the Day of Judgment (2005: 139-140).

For Mennonite cemeteries burials were conducted in the east-west axis of the typical Christian burial.

A description of the cemetery at 2584 Ott Road is as follows:

- Subject property includes the "Stevensville Reformed Mennonite Cemetery" (Image 10– Image 14)
 - Cemetery extends from the rear (east) of the meetinghouse northward (Map 2)
 - Cemetery includes a variety of gravestone markers with granite and limestone examples facing east/west
 - Gravestone distribution appears to be organized in rows resulting in an overall grid like pattern
 - There is a band of land just north of the parking lot that does not appear to contain gravestones (Image 12)
 - Gravestone ornamentation varies between each burial with traditional "hand pointing up, scroll, log and dove" motifs

 Cemetery is lined with mature and adolescent vegetation along the east and north boundary (Image 11)

5.2 History

5.2.1 Pre-Contact History

The Pre-Contact history of the region is lengthy and rich, and a variety of Indigenous groups inhabited the landscape. Archaeologists generally divide this vibrant history into three periods: Palaeo, Archaic, and Woodland. Each of these periods comprise a range of discrete sub-periods characterized by identifiable trends in material culture and settlement patters, which are used to interpret past lifeways. The principal characteristics of these sub-periods are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Pre-Contact Settlement History (Wright 1972; Ellis and Ferris 1990; Warrick 2000; Munson and Jamieson 2013)

Sub-Period	Timeframe	Characteristics
Sub-reliou	Tillellalle	
Early Palaeo	9000-8400 BC	Gainey, Barnes and Crowfield traditions; Small bands; Mobile hunters and gatherers; Utilization of seasonal resources and large territories; Fluted points
Late Palaeo	8400–7500 BC	Holcombe, Hi-Lo and Lanceolate biface traditions; Continuing mobility; Campsite/Way-Station sites; Smaller territories are utilized; Non-fluted points
Early Archaic	7500–6000 BC	Side-Notched, Corner-Notched (Nettling, Thebes) and Bifurcate traditions; Growing diversity of stone tool types; Heavy woodworking tools appear (e.g., ground stone axes and chisels)
Middle Archaic	6000-2500 BC	Stemmed (Kirk, Stanly/Neville), Brewerton Side- and Corner-Notched traditions; Reliance on local resources; Populations increasing; More ritual activities; Fully ground and polished tools; Net-sinkers common; Earliest copper tools
Late Archaic	2500–900 BC	Narrow Point (Lamoka), Broad Point (Genesee) and Small Point (Crawford Knoll) traditions; Less mobility; Use of fish-weirs; True cemeteries appear; Stone pipes emerge; Long-distance trade (marine shells and galena)
Early Woodland	900–400 BC	Meadowood tradition; Crude cord-roughened ceramics emerge; Meadowood cache blades and side-notched points; Bands of up to 35 people
Middle Woodland	400 BC-AD 600	Local Saugeen-like tradition; Others argue for Point Peninsula tradition; Ceramics continue but many are undecorated; Seasonal settlements and resource utilization; Each watershed may have had a unique tradition; Regional patterns poorly understood at this time
Middle/Late Woodland Transition	AD 600–900	Princess Point tradition; Cord roughening, impressed lines and punctate designs on pottery; Adoption of maize horticulture at the western end of Lake Ontario; Oval houses and 'incipient' longhouses; First palisades; Villages with 75 people
Late Woodland (Early)	AD 900–1300	Glen Meyer tradition; Settled village-life based on agriculture; Small villages (0.4 ha) with 75–200 people and 4–5 longhouses; Semipermanent settlements
Late Woodland (Middle)	AD 1300–1400	Uren and Middleport traditions; Classic longhouses emerge; Larger villages (1.2 ha) with up to 600 people; More permanent settlements (30 years)
Late Woodland (Late)	AD 1400–1600	Pre-Contact Neutral tradition; Larger villages (1.7 ha); Examples up to 5 ha with 2,500 people; Extensive croplands; Also hamlets, cabins, camps and cemeteries; Potential tribal units; Fur trade begins ca. 1580; European trade goods appear

Although Iroquoian-speaking populations tended to leave a much more obvious mark on the archaeological record and are therefore emphasized in the Late Woodland entries above, it must be understood that Algonquin-speaking populations also represented a significant presence in south Ontario. Due to the sustainability of their lifeways, archaeological evidence directly associated with the Anishinaabeg remains elusive, particularly when compared to sites associated with the more sedentary agriculturalists. Many artifact scatters in southern Ontario were likely campsites, chipping stations, or processing areas associated with the more mobile Anishinaabeg, utilized during their travels along the local drainage basins while making use of seasonal resources. It must be recognized that this part of south Ontario represents the ancestral territory of various Indigenous groups, each with their own land use and settlement pattern tendencies.

5.2.2 Post-Contact

The arrival of European explorers and traders at the beginning of the 17th century triggered widespread shifts in Indigenous lifeways and set the stage for the ensuing Euro-Canadian settlement process. Documentation for this period is abundant, ranging from the first sketches of Upper Canada and the written accounts of early explorers to detailed township maps and lengthy histories. The Post-Contact period can be effectively discussed in terms of major historical events, and the principal characteristics associated with these events are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Post-Contact Settlement History (Smith 1846; WTPH 1887; Coyne 1895; Lajeunesse 1960; Disher, 1972; Ellis and Ferris 1990; Surtees 1994; Hammerburg 2008; FEHM 2004; AO 2015)

Historical Event	Timeframe	Characteristics
Early Exploration	Early 17 th century	Brûlé explores southern Ontario in 1610/11; Champlain travels through in 1613 and 1615/1616, making contact with a number of Indigenous groups (including the Algonquin, Huron-Wendat and other First Nations); European trade goods become increasingly common and begin to put pressure on traditional industries
Increased Contact and Conflict	Mid- to late 17 th century	Conflicts between various First Nations during the Beaver Wars result in numerous population shifts; European explorers continue to document the area, and many Indigenous groups trade directly with the French and English; 'The Great Peace of Montreal' treaty established between roughly 39 different First Nations and New France in 1701
Fur Trade Development	Early to mid-18 th century	Growth and spread of the fur trade; Peace between the French and English with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713; Ethnogenesis of the Métis; Hostilities between French and British lead to the Seven Years' War in 1754; French surrender in 1760
British Control	Mid- to late 18 th century	Royal Proclamation of 1763 recognizes the title of the First Nations to the land; Numerous treaties subsequently arranged by the Crown; First land cession under the new protocols is the Seneca surrender of the west side of the Niagara River in 1764; The Niagara Purchase (Treaty 381) in 1781 included this area
Loyalist Influx	Late 18 th century	United Empire Loyalist influx during and after the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783); British develop interior communication routes and acquire additional lands; Between the Lakes Purchase completed with the Mississaugas in 1784 and confirmed in 1792 (Treaty 3); Constitutional Act of 1791 creates Upper and Lower Canada
County Development	Late 18 th to mid-19 th century	Became part of Lincoln County's 'Fourth Riding' in 1792; Became part of the Niagara District in 1798; Welland Canal was a major feature, conceived by W.H. Merritt and opened in 1829; Welland County formed from the southeastern part of Lincoln County in 1845; Independent after the abolition of the district system in 1849

Historical Event Timeframe		Characteristics	
Township Formation Late 18 th to early 19 th century		Stockade and post established by the French near Fort Erie ca. 1750; Fort Erie established by the British near the shoreline in 1764; Township surveyed sporadically beginning in the 1780s; Township divided into Willoughby Township and Bertie Township in honour of the Fourth Earl of Abingdon; First settled by United Empire Loyalists (mainly Butler's Rangers) in 1784; Ridgeway established as the seat of government for Bertie Township; 10 families obtained 200-acre free grants; Foundations of new Fort Erie laid ca. 1806; First township meeting occurred in 1807; The scene of many battles during the War of 1812; Bertie had a population of 1,600 and contained 200 houses, a Quaker church and six schools at that time	
Township Development	Mid-19 th to early 20 th century	Population reached 2,318 by 1841; 13,484 ha taken up by 1846, with 5,058 ha under cultivation; Two grist mills and seven saw mills in operation at that time; Township incorporated in 1850; Traversed by the Buffalo, Brantford & Goderich/Buffalo & Lake Huron Railway (1853), Erie & Ontario Railway (1864), the Great Western Railway's Canada Air Line (1873) and Canada Southern Railway (1873); Village of Fort Erie incorporated in 1857; Fenian Raids occurred in 1866; Principal community was Fort Erie, with smaller settlements at Ridgeway, Stevensville and Victoria (previously International Bridge), which in 1890 was larger than Fort Erie, although the seat of government operated out of Bertie Township Hall (built 1874), which is now the Fort Erie Historical Museum	

5.2.2.1 Stevensville

Similar to the community of Ridgeway, Stevensville is an unincorporated settlement that was initially settled in the 1790s by UELs and named for Colonel Stevens, who built a home on what is now the corner of Main Street East and Stevensville Road (Herbert & Burtniak 1989). The area was abundantly forested, and its location on Black Creek made it attractive for commercial interests. There were a number of mills built along the creek, consisting of three sawmills, one grist mill, and a lumber mill (FEHM 2004). In 1812 Stevensville was the largest community in Bertie Township, and the settlement received a post office in 1835 (FEHM 2004).

The first businessmen in Stevensville were Louis Shields, John Gilmore, and William Wade, who all settled there in the 1840s. Wade was a tailor who often traveled to Fort Erie for work (FEHM 2004). By the 1850s the village had flour, saw, and planning mills, as well as a blacksmith shop and a general store (Herbert & Burtniak 1989). Two fires in 1860 destroyed most of the town core, and although the village did regain its prosperity, it took some time (Herbert & Burtniak 1989, FEHM 2004). The first church building in Stevensville was the United Brethren church, built in the early 1860s. It was also destroyed by fire in 1914 and rebuilt. A brick schoolhouse was constructed in 1868, but by 1879 a second schoolhouse was constructed on Airline Road due to Stevensville's growing population (Herbert & Burtniak 1989).

The advent of the railway in 1873 boosted Stevensville's economy, in 1886 the village was served by two lines: the GTR and the Michigan Central Railway (MCR). As a result, commercial farming of grain and fruit became an important economic activity (FEHM 2004). Paul Hendershot was responsible for introducing fruit growing operations to the area; he owned land on the east side of the village with approximately 1,500 fruit trees and 15 acres of grapevine (Herbert & Burtniak 1989). Stevensville's population in 1886 was approximately 600 (FEHM 2004).

Many of Stevensville's buildings were constructed by John Haun, a lumber merchant who also ran a planing mill. In the 1880s he sold his business interests in the town to J.H. Weaver and

moved to take advantage of milling interests in Muskoka (FEHM 2004). Haun built the Hutcheon House hotel in 1884, the name was later changed to the Stevensville Hotel and was operated by several proprietors, including men named Gore, Bower, and Hawkins (FEHM 2004). In 1885, John Edgewater built a large general store that also housed a telegraph office and post office. A Mennonite church was built in 1872, and a Methodist church was constructed in 1885 (Herbert & Burtniak 1989). The Kraft family was also from the Stevensville area; Kraft Foods founder J.L. Kraft was born in Stevensville in 1875 although the family later relocated closer to Fort Erie (Petrie 1983).

Stevensville had telephone service by 1889. And the village received electricity in 1916 (Herbert & Burtniak 1989). The village was tied to the railways, and as passenger service began to decline, so did Stevensville's economic importance in Bertie Township. Today Stevensville is predominately residential with a steady population of around 640 in 1976, although there are several manufacturing industries located on the outskirts of the settlement (Herbert & Burtniak 1989, FEHM 2004).

5.2.2.2 Site Specific History

The building at 2584 Ott Road was constructed in 1872 as the Reformed Mennonite Meetinghouse and cemetery, although an earlier log church had been located on the property since around 1825. Below is a history of the property from 1796 until the present day.

- The Crown Patent for Lot 12, Concession 12 Niagara River (NR) was granted, along with Lots 11, 13, and 14, to John Warren by the Crown on August 24, 1796, which totalled around 500 acres of land (see Table 5, LRO 59)
- On October 4, 1805, John Warren, Junior sold all 500 acres to Christian Reesor
- On June 9, 1812, Peter Reesor sold all of Lot 12, which consisted of 100 acres, to Peter Grow
- Peter Grow sold 50 acres of Lot 12 to Benjamin Morningstar on June 9, 1812, and Benjamin Morningstar owned the property until December 1829, when he sold it to Martin Beam for a sum of £500
- On July 26, 1833, Peter Grow sold 47 acres of Lot 12 to Benjamin Beam, and sold the remaining three acres in Lot 12 to Benjamin Beam a year later, in 1834
- Martin Beam sold his 50 acres of Lot 12 to Benjamin Beam on February 15, 1836, for £300, which resulted in Benjamin Beam owning all 100 acres of Lot 12, Concession 12 NR
- An 1862 historical atlas indicates the subject property was located on the east side of historical road, known today as Ott Road, on land that belonged to B. Beam. There appeared to be a building on the subject property that was marked as a church cemetery (see Map 3). Although the subject property was not sold to the Trustees of the Reformed Mennonite Church until 1871, it is likely that the congregation was using the subject property as a meetinghouse and cemetery before it was officially sold, as indicated on the 1862 atlas. Surrounding landowners included Michael Baker, Wilson Haun, and Nelson Haun. Local landmarks included two sawmills and a gristmill to the west of the subject property, the settlement of Stevensville to the east, and another sawmill to the southwest of the subject property
- Benjamin Beam sold one acre to the Trustees of the Reformed Mennonite Church on July 3, 171, for a sum of \$100
 - Upper Canada was attractive to Mennonite settlers from predominately Pennsylvania due to the exemption "from bearing arms as under the ancient

Government of British States" granted to the Society of Friends (Quakers) by Lieutenant Governor Simcoe in 1792, as many Anabaptist groups such as the Mennonites and Amish, the Quakers, and the Tunkers (Brethren in Christ) were practitioners of pacifist non-resistance. Although they are sometimes referred to as Loyalist settlers, their reasons for coming to Ontario were different from those of Loyalists of British descent that remained loyal to the British crown (Fretz 1953)

- Mennonites were encouraged to immigrate by the Quakers, who had a presence in Niagara since at least 1785. The first Mennonites and Tunkers began arriving around 1786 (Nigh 1986)
- In many cases, Mennonites, Quakers, and Tunkers all worshipped together, and they would use the same facilities for their services. However, the log church at Stevensville (formerly located on the subject property) seemed to be almost exclusively used by Reformed Mennonites (Fretz 1953)
- Reformed Mennonites have been in the Stevensville area since the early 19th century at congregations in Humberstone and Stevensville (FEHM 2004)
 - Reformed Mennonites were organized in Ontario in 1825 by John Herr, and one of their beliefs was that the congregation needed to return to the purer forms of Anabaptist doctrine espoused by the earliest Mennonite theologians (Nigh 1986)
 - According to Reformed Mennonite beliefs, the goal of the church was "to live in Christ-like humility and simplicity, without ostentation and vain display" (FEHM n.d)
 - The first Reformed Mennonite church was in Humberstone of around 70 people, and a later church was established in Stevensville, on Ott Road. Many conservative and apolitical Mennonites joined this branch after the schism (Nigh 1986)
- The first church on the site was a log cabin, and it may have been in existence where the brick church is today as early as 1825. Some of its earliest congregants were members of the Beam, Neff, Stoner, Augustine, Baker, Weaver, and Morningstar families (Nigh 1986)
- The extant brick church was built in 1872 for a cost of \$2,170.41. The first minister there was either Samuel or Benjamin Beam, who was the minister from 1863 until 1877 (FEHM 2004, FEHM n.d.a.)
 - Both Reformed Mennonite churches (the subject property and the one in Humberstone) were served by the same minister. The Humberstone church was later sold as a private residence as transportation around the township improved (FEHM 2004)
- The meetinghouse is associated with a cemetery, located behind and north of the building. The earliest legible inscription there belongs to Margaret Beam, who died on October 9, 1838 (FEHM 2004)
 - Locally prominent families such as the Beams, the Kraffts, the Morningstars, the Sherks, and the Wingers are buried in the associated cemetery. Common surnames on headstones include such families as the Beams, the Bakers, the Krafts, the Morningstars, the Noyes family, the Sherks, the Tripps, and the Youngs (OGS 1988, FEHM 2004, FEPL n.d.a.)
 - Some stones are inscribed in German, even into the late 1870s. Headstone
 inscriptions range from the earliest, in 1838, to some as late as 1987, such
 as that of Ruth Beam (OGS 1988)
 - An updated transcription to determine any burials post-1988 has not been located

- Undated photographs of the subject property can be seen in Figure 1 and Figure
- o An addition with washrooms was added in 1970 (FEHM 2004; see Figure 3)
- According to an 1876 atlas, the subject property was located on the east side of Ott Road on land that belonged to Benjamin Beam. A church was marked on the subject property (see Map 4). Unlike the 1862 atlas, Stevensville's Main Street had been extended to Ott Road, and the subject property was located at the northeast southeast corner of that intersection. A watercourse was located directly to the north of the church, and rail corridors were located to the north and to the south of the subject property. Other nearby landowners included Nelson and George Haun, and other local landmarks included the settlement of Stevensville located to the east of the subject property, and a mill to the southwest
- A 1907 topographic map indicates that the subject property was located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Stevensville's Main Street and Ott Road. There was a brick or stone church, and a cemetery marked on the subject property, although the denomination was not listed (see Map 5). Unlike the previous two atlases, individual landowners were not named. A watercourse was located directly adjacent to the north of the church, and there was a rail line located to the north of the subject property, with another rail line to the south. Other landmarks included the town of Stevensville to the east of the subject property, which contained a sawmill, several schools, a post office, another church, constructed of wood, and a hotel, and a wool factory located to the southwest of the subject property
- A 1954 aerial photograph indicates that the subject property was located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Main Street West and Ott Road, and that Black Creek was located directly behind the subject property, to the north. There appears to be a building on the subject property, but the resolution of the photograph is poor and individual details, such as the cemetery, cannot be discerned (see Map 6). The settlement of Stevensville can be seen to the east of the subject property, although the majority of the surrounding topography consisted of agricultural fields interspersed with woodlot
- The subject property at 2584 Ott Road remains a Mennonite meetinghouse and active cemetery. The Stevensville congregation of Reformed Mennonites is one of the oldest continually meeting congregations of Anabaptists remaining in Niagara Peninsula (Nigh 1986)

Table 5: Summary of Property Ownership at 2584 Ott Road (LRO #59)

(2110 1100)						
Instrument #	Instrument	Date	Grantor	Grantee	Comments	
	Patent	24 Aug 1796	Crown	John Warren	500 acres Lots 11, 12, 13, 14, Con 12 Niagara River	
11927	B&S	4 Oct 1805	John Warren, son	Christian Reesor	All 500 ac	
15334	B&S	9 Jun 1812	Peter Reesor	Peter Grow	All Lot 12, 100 ac	
5335	B & S	9 Jun 1812	Peter Grow	Benjamin Morningstar	Part Lot, 50 ac	
7975	B&S	22 Dec 1829	Benjamin Morningstar	Martin Beam	Part Lot, 50 ac; £500	
9359	B&S	26 Jul 1833	Peter Grow	Benjamin Beam	Part Lot, 47 ac; £600	
10070	B&S	8 May 1834	Peter Grow	Benjamin Beam	Part Lot, 3 ac; £10	
12925	B&S	15 Feb 1836	Martin Beam	Benjamin Beam	Part Lot, 50 ac; £300	
BE600	B&S	3 Jul 1871	Benjamin Beam	Trustees of the Reformed Mennonite Church	Part Lot, 1 ac; \$100	

5.3 Context

- Located at 2584 Ott Road in Stevensville
 - Ott Road is a two-lane asphalt road oriented along a north-south axis. The section of road near the subject property includes a relatively shallow culvert and lacks a sidewalk or modern sewage system. The roadway is partially lined with mature trees
- Subject building is located along the east bank of the road
- Subject property is in proximity to Black Creek located to the north. With a slight decline in elevation towards the river valley
- Subject building is situated in a low-density residential neighborhood and is surrounded by residences on all sides
- The Ott Road North streetscape can be described as follows:
 - Comprised of predominantly one to two-storey buildings
 - Set back with building facades and driveways oriented towards Ott Road
 - Primarily 21st century residential buildings
 - Majority of buildings are frame constructions clad with brick and horizontal vinyl siding
 - Modernized low-pitch hip and gable roofs almost exclusively clad with modern asphalt shingles
 - Rectangular window openings housing modern vinyl windows
 - Mix of detached and attached garages

6.0 EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Table 6: Evaluation of the Cultural Heritage Value or Interest of 2584 Ott Road in Accordance with *O. Reg. 9/06*

Accordance with O. Reg. 9/06			
Description	Yes/No	Value	
The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	Yes	2584 Ott Road is a representative example of a Mennonite Meetinghouse in Ontario. The one-storey rectangular plan building has a front gable roof with overhanging eaves, red brick envelope and a symmetrical three-bay façade. Additionally, the symmetrical composition of the subject property combined with the tall and segmentally arched window openings with stone sills that are regularly placed as well as the modest construction and lack of are additional features of Mennonite Meetinghouses with little ornamentation.	
The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic value	No	2584 Ott Road does not display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic value. Although the building has good craftsmanship which exhibits knowledge in masonry, the materials and techniques used for its construction would be considered common for their time.	
The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	No	2584 Ott Road does not display a high degree of technical or scientific achievement. There is no significant evidence to suggest that the construction required technical expertise or that the design was a breakthrough in architecture	
The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community	Yes	2584 Ott Road has historical associations with the Mennonite settlement of Bertie Township as a Reformed Mennonite congregation that has been meeting in the same location since around 1825. Mennonites were some of the earliest settlers in Niagara, lured by the promise of being allowed pacifistic non-resistance afforded to other groups such as the Society of Friends (the Quakers) and the Tunkers (Brethren in Christ). Mennonites began settling in Niagara as early as 1786. The first church at 2584 Ott Road was a log cabin, and its earliest congregants were members from the Beam, Neff, Stoner, Augustine, Baker, Weaver, and Morningstar families. The extant brick church was constructed in 1872, and a congregation of Reformed Mennonites have been meeting at the location on the subject property for almost 200 years. 2584 Ott Road is also associated with a Reformed Mennonite cemetery, the earliest legible inscription dates to 1838 but was likely in use since the mid-1820s. Surnames such as Beam, Baker, Kraft, Morningstar, Noyes, Sherk, Tripp, and Young are common on the headstone inscriptions, and represent some of the earliest and most locally significant Mennonite families in Bertie Township.	
The property has historical value or associative value because it yields or has the potential to yield information that contributes to the understanding of a community or culture The property has historical value or	Yes	2584 Ott Road has the potential to yield information regarding the early Mennonite community of Fort Erie. The property contains gravestones which provide information about earlier setters including family genealogical information and serves as a tangible link to understanding the past. Surnames such as Beam, Baker, Kraft, Morningstar, Noyes, Sherk, Tripp, and Young are common on the headstone inscriptions, and represent some of the earliest and most locally significant Mennonite families in Bertie Township. Further, the cemetery provides information about traditional practices and genealogical information related to the Mennonite community. 2584 Ott Road does not reflect the ideas of an architect, builder,	
associative value because it	No	designer, or theorist. Research did not indicate a builder or	

Description	Yes/No	Value
demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, builder, artist, designer or theorist who is significant to a community		architect associated with the property. Research indicates that the design of the meetinghouse did not generate key ideas in the field of architecture.
The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area	No	2584 Ott Road is not important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of the area. Although this section of Ott Road exhibits a cohesive residential character with properties similar in setback and massing it's predominantly comprised of residential buildings constructed in the early 21st century thus, the property does not support or define the character of the area.
The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings	No	2584 Ott Road is not physically linked to its surroundings. There is no demonstrated material connection between the property and its surroundings. 2584 Ott Road is not functionally linked to its surroundings. The property's function is not dependant on its surroundings. 2584 Ott Road is not visually linked to its surroundings. There is no significant visual connection between the subject property and the surrounding context
The property has contextual value because it is a landmark	Yes	2584 Ott Road can be considered a local landmark as it is meaningful to the Reformed Mennonite community. The Stevensville congregation of Reformed Mennonites is one of the oldest continually meeting congregations of Anabaptists remaining in Niagara Peninsula and have been meeting at this location for over 200 years. As such, the subject building is a well-known marker in the community.

7.0 HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES

An examination of the relationship between the heritage attributes and the cultural heritage value or interest outlined in Table 7 assisted with the development of the list of heritage attributes.

Table 7: Relationship of Heritage Attributes to Cultural Heritage Values

Table 7: Relationship of Heritage Attributes to Cultural Heritage values				
Cultural Heritage Value or Interest	Heritage Attribute			
2584 Ott Road is a representative example of a Mennonite Meetinghouse in Ontario.	 One-storey Mennonite Meetinghouse Overall height form and massing Front gable roof Three-bay façade and symmetrical side elevations Red-brick construction Segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and stone sills Centered and arched front entranceway opening 			
2584 Ott Road has historical associations with the Mennonite settlement of Bertie Township as a Reformed Mennonite congregation that has been meeting in the same area since around 1825.	 One-storey Mennonite Meetinghouse Overall height form and massing Location at the intersection of Ott Road and Stevensville's Main Street Relationship of Meetinghouse and cemetery The 19th century monuments and grave markers, the earliest of which date to 1838 with their variety of materials, design motifs, surviving inscriptions some of which are in German Orientation of the cemetery plots facing east and in a grid like pattern 			

Cultural Heritage Value or Interest	Heritage Attribute
2584 Ott Road has the potential to yield information regarding the early Mennonite community of Fort Erie.	 The 19th century monuments and grave markers, the earliest of which date to 1838 with their variety of materials, design motifs, surviving inscriptions some of which are in German
2584 Ott Road can be considered a local landmark as it is meaningful to the Reformed Mennonite community.	 One-storey Mennonite Meetinghouse Relationship of Meetinghouse and cemetery The 19th century monuments and grave markers, the earliest of which date to 1838 with their variety of materials, design motifs, surviving inscriptions some of which are in German

8.0 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

Introduction and Description of Property

2584 Ott Road is located on the east side of Ott Road in the community of Stevensville. The property contains a one-storey brick Mennonite Meetinghouse built in 1872, with a cemetery located to the north of the building.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

2584 Ott Road is a representative example of a Mennonite Meetinghouse in Ontario. The one-storey rectangular shaped plan building has a front gable roof with overhanging eaves, red brick envelope and a symmetrical three-bay façade. Additionally, the symmetrical composition of the subject property combined with the tall and segmentally arched window openings with stone sills that are regularly placed as well as the modest construction and lack of are additional features of Mennonite Meetinghouses ornamentation.

2584 Ott Road has historical associations with the Mennonite settlement of Bertie Township as a Reformed Mennonite congregation that has been meeting in the same area since around 1825. Mennonites were some of the earliest settlers in Niagara, lured by the promise of being allowed pacifistic non-resistance afforded to other groups such as the Society of Friends (the Quakers) and the Tunkers (Brethren in Christ). Mennonites began settling in Niagara as early as 1786, and many Anabaptist groups used the same facilities for church services. The Reformed Mennonites were organized in Ontario around 1825 by John Herr, who sought to take the religion back to its earliest theological tenets of simplicity and humility. The first church at 2584 Ott Road was a log cabin, and its earliest congregants were members from the Beam, Neff, Stoner, Augustine, Baker, Weaver, and Morningstar families. The extant brick church was constructed in 1872, and a congregation of Reformed Mennonites have been meeting at the location on the subject property for almost 200 years.

2584 Ott Road is also associated with a Reformed Mennonite cemetery whose earliest legible inscription date to 1838 but was likely in use since the mid-1820s. Surnames such as Beam, Baker, Kraft, Morningstar, Noyes, Sherk, Tripp, and Young are common on the headstone inscriptions, and represent some of the earliest and most locally significant Mennonite families in Bertie Township.

2584 Ott Road has the potential to yield information regarding the early Mennonite community of Fort Erie. The property contains gravestones which provide information about earlier setters including family genealogical information and serves as a tangible link to

understanding the past. Surnames such as Beam, Baker, Kraft, Morningstar, Noyes, Sherk, Tripp, and Young are common on the headstone inscriptions, and represent some of the earliest and most locally significant Mennonite families in Bertie Township. Further, the cemetery provides information about traditional practices and genealogical information related to the Mennonite community.

2584 Ott Road can be considered a local landmark as it is meaningful to the Reformed Mennonite community. The Stevensville congregation of Reformed Mennonites is one of the oldest continually meeting congregations of Anabaptists remaining in Niagara Peninsula and have been meeting at this location for over 200 years. As such, the subject building is a well-known marker in the community

Cultural Heritage Attributes

2584 Ott Road is a representative example of a Mennonite Meetinghouse in Ontario. The property contains the following heritage attributes that reflects this value:

- One-storey Mennonite Meetinghouse
- · Front gable roof
- Overall height, form and massing
- Three-bay façade and symmetrical side elevations
- Red-brick construction
- Segmentally arched window openings with brick voussoirs and stone sills
- Centered and arched front entranceway opening

2584 Ott Road has historical associations with the Mennonite settlement of Bertie Township as a Reformed Mennonite congregation that has been meeting in the same area since around 1825. The property contains the following heritage attributes that reflect this value:

- One-storey Mennonite Meetinghouse
- Overall height, form and massing
- Location at the intersection of Ott Road and Stevensville's Main Street
- Relationship of the Meetinghouse and cemetery
- The 19th century monuments and grave markers, the earliest of which date to 1838 with their variety of materials, design motifs, surviving inscriptions some of which are in German
- Orientation of the cemetery plots facing east and in a grid like pattern

2584 Ott Road has the potential to yield information regarding the early Mennonite community of Fort Erie. The property contains the following heritage attributes that reflect this value:

• The 19th century monuments and grave markers, the earliest of which date to 1838 with their variety of materials, design motifs, surviving inscriptions some of which are in German

2584 Ott Road can be considered a local landmark as it is meaningful to the Reformed Mennonite community. The property contains the following heritage attributes that reflect this value:

- One-storey Mennonite Meetinghouse
- Relationship of Meetinghouse and cemetery

 The 19th century monuments and grave markers, the earliest of which date to 1838 with their variety of materials, design motifs, surviving inscriptions some of which are in German

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

O. Reg. 9/06 of the OHA requires that to be designated, a property must meet at least two of the criteria. 2584 Ott Road meets four of the criteria for determining CHVI as outlined in O. Reg. 9/06, therefore it is worthy of designation under O. Reg. 9/06 of the OHA.

The *Provincial Planning Statement* notes that CHVI is bestowed upon cultural heritage resources by communities (MMAH 2024). Accordingly, the system by which heritage is governed in this province places an emphasis on the decision-making of local municipalities in determining CHVI. It is hoped that the information presented in this report will be useful in those deliberations.

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Appendix A: Photographs

Image 1: Façade of 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken September 20, 2024; Facing East)



Image 2: Northwest Corner of 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken September 20, 2024; Facing Southeast)



Image 3: North Elevation of 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken September 20, 2024; Facing Southeast)



Image 4:Southwest Corner of 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken September 20, 2024; Facing Northeast)



Image 5: South Elevation of 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken September 20, 2024; Facing Northeast)



Image 6: Detail of Façade of 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing East)



Image 7: Detail of Typical Window Opening of 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing East)



Image 8: 2584 Ott Road Parking Lot (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing South)



Image 9: Contextual View of Ott Street (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing South)



Image 10: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing North)



Image 11: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing North)



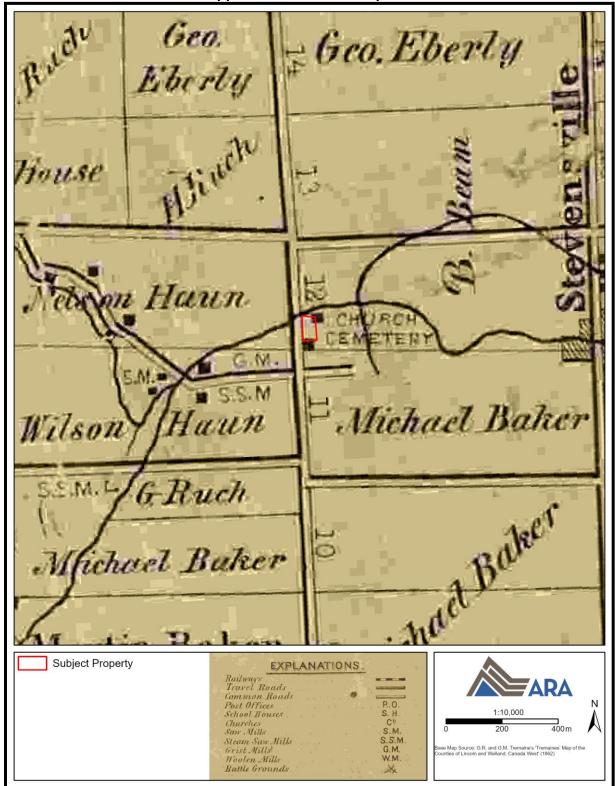
Image 12: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing East)



Image 13: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road – at Rear of Meetinghouse (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing Southeast)

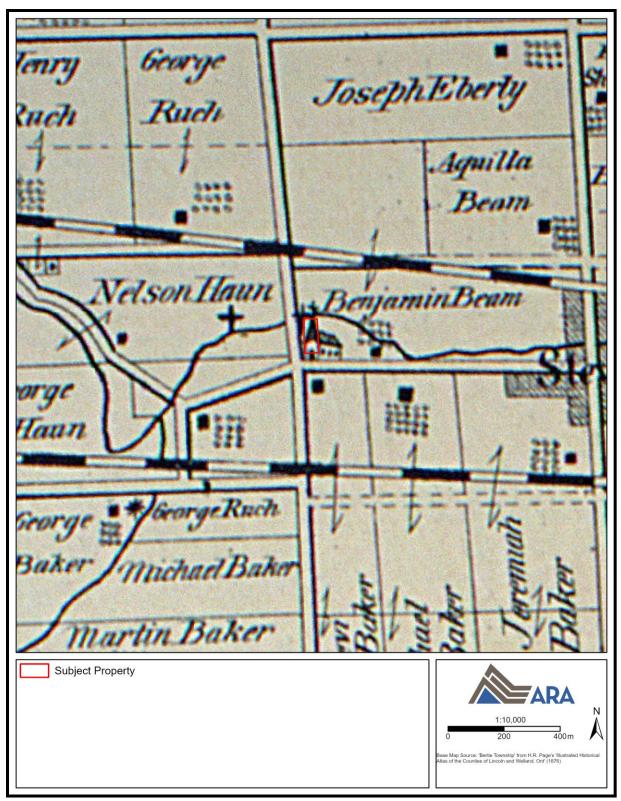


Image 14: Cemetery at 2584 Ott Road - Detail (Photo taken on September 20, 2024; Facing Northeast)

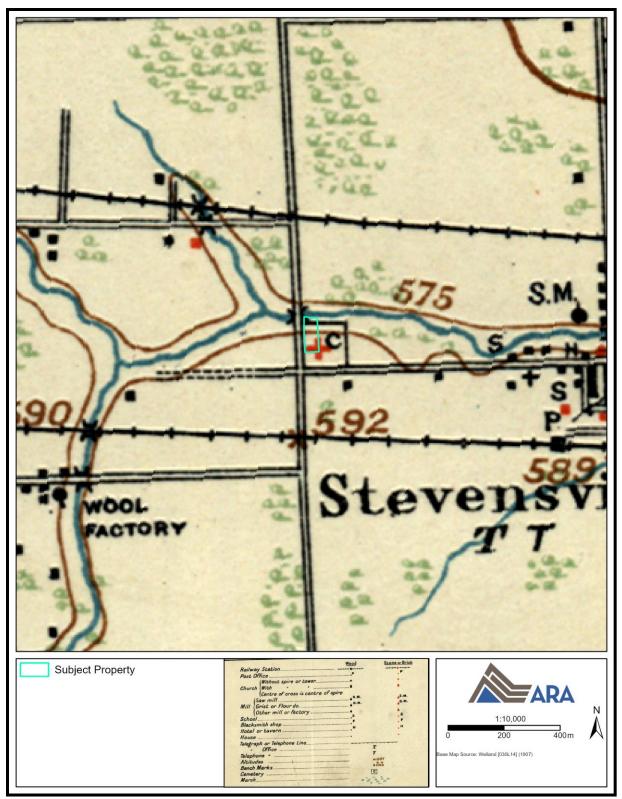


Appendix B: Historic Maps

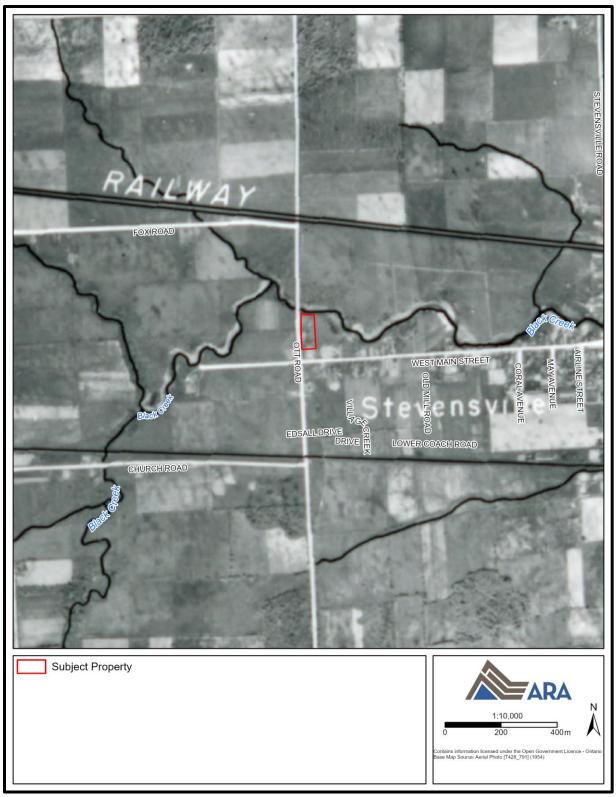
Map 3: Subject Property Shown on an 1862 Historic Map (Produced under licence using ArcGIS® software by Esri, © Esri; OHCMP 2018)



Map 4: Subject Property Shown on an 1876 Historic Map (Produced under licence using ArcGIS® software by Esri, © Esri; McGill University 2001)



Map 5: Subject Property Shown on Historic 1907 Topographic Map (Produced under licence using ArcGIS® software by Esri, © Esri; OCUL 2021)



Map 6: Subject Property Shown on 1954 Aerial Photograph (Produced under licence using ArcGIS® software by Esri, © Esri; University of Toronto 2021)



Appendix C: Figures and Historic Photos

Figure 1: Undated Photograph of 2584 Ott Road with Vestibule (FEHM n.d.b.)



Figure 2: Undated Photograph of 2584 Ott Road without Vestibule (FEPL n.d.b.)



Figure 3: Undated Photograph of 2584 Ott Road (FEHM n.d.c.)