

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Community Heritage Commission **Date:** November 3, 2021

From: Samantha Bohmert, Planning Assistant **File:** HER00846

Item #: [Report Number]

Subject: Heritage Review (Demolition): 133 Debeck Street

PURPOSE

To review the heritage value of the building and provide a recommendation on demolition.

SUMMARY

The house at 133 Debeck Street was constructed in 1912 and is a modest, single storey cottage. The building, in the Sapperton neighbourhood, is in fair condition though most of the original materials have been altered due to additions and renovations over time. The building is not legally protected, nor is it listed on the City's Heritage Register or Inventory. However, as a result of its age, the Community Heritage Commission is being asked to review for heritage value, in advance of the Director's consideration of a Demolition Permit.

GUIDING POLICY AND REGULATIONS

100 Year and Older Heritage Review Policy

In 2020, Council approved a revised heritage review policy, which highlights the City's interest in retaining New Westminster's oldest buildings. As such, redevelopment applications for buildings that are 100 years and older require a Heritage Assessment and review by the Community Heritage Commission.

Demolition Permits

Demolition Permits are issued by the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development, though the Director may forward the application to Council for further consideration, or consideration of a temporary protection order where warranted.

Temporary Protection Order

A temporary protection order may be issued by Council for a property that is or may be considered to have heritage value sufficient to justify its conservation. This can include properties that are not listed on the Heritage Register. Without consent of the owner, a temporary protection order may only last 60 days, after which the permit must be issued.

Heritage Designation

A Heritage Designation Bylaw is a form of land use regulation that places long-term legal protection on the land title of a property and which is the primary form of regulation that can prohibit demolition. Heritage Designation does not require owner consent. However, without consent of the owner, the owner is entitled under Provincial law to claim compensation for loss of zoning entitlement value from the Designation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Location and Context

The property is one lot away from the Fraser Cemetery and is located on the north side of Debeck Street between Miner Street and East Columbia Street. It is surrounded by single detached homes and duplexes, which is characteristic in this area of Sapperton neighbourhood. The buildings on the north side of Debeck Street were constructed between 1926 and 2014, with the exception of the adjacent house at 131 Debeck Street which was also built in 1912. A site context map is included in Appendix B.

Site Characteristics

Built in 1912, this is a one storey house with an exposed basement. The building has an area of 152 square metres (1,632 square feet) and is on a 609 square metre (6,560 square foot) lot. It has a floor space ratio of 0.25 and a site coverage of 16%. A 17 square metres (182 square feet) addition was constructed in 1959 with a building permit and the front porch has been recently completely enclosed with glazing and a screen door. Current photographs of the building are included in Appendix A.

Development Policy and Regulations

The site is zoned Duplex Districts (RT-1), which permits single detached houses, to RS-1 district standard, and duplexes. Houses may be a maximum size of 0.5 floor space ratio (FSR) and duplexes to 0.6 FSR. All properties on the block, including this site, are designated for "Residential – Ground Oriented Infill Housing" (RGO) in the Official Community Plan (OCP). The intent of this designation is to provide a mix of ground oriented infill housing forms which are complementary to the existing neighbourhood character. A redevelopment application that conforms with these policies is expected on this site.

Heritage Protection

The building at 133 Debeck Street is not legally protected nor listed on the City's Heritage Register or Inventory. However, it is over 100 years old. Under the current zoning, no heritage-related permits or Council approvals are required for construction of a new house or duplex on the site. However, the current house is flagged for review for potential heritage value due to its age.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Heritage Value

The house was built in 1912, likely as an early cottage. However, the house no longer has all the typical characteristics of a house constructed during this time period. Currently, some character defining elements include its side gable roof with flush eaves, and an internal brick chimney. Today the house's style is more mid-century, which reflects the era when a major renovation was completed (late 1950s). Photographs of the house are included in Appendix A.

Some information has been found on the owners up to 1955, who were mostly typical working people, and there is minor historic or cultural significance associated with the house. Due to additions and changes, it could be said that the house does not contribute to the community's sense of identity or to the understanding or appreciation of the time when the house was constructed, which would mean little heritage value is present.

Is there sufficient heritage value in the house to warrant considering protection?

Building Condition

A heritage assessment (Appendix C) was completed in July 2021, which indicates that the original windows have been replaced with narrow vinyl and aluminum frames. The exterior cladding has been changed to aluminum (with a possibility of the original siding being present underneath) and the condition of the structure is unknown. Changes to the massing of the building include a small addition at the rear and recent enclosure of the front porch. The building is less than half the size permitted to the owner in the site's zoning.

Does the building's condition negatively or positively impact its heritage value?

FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMISSION

The following options are available for consideration by the Community Heritage Commission:

- 1) That the Community Heritage Commission recommend the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development issue the Demolition Permit for 133 Debeck Street, and that the applicant consider deconstruction as an alternative to demolition waste; or
- 2) That the Community Heritage Commission provide an alternative recommendation, based on their discussions.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Photos 133 Debeck Street

Appendix B: Site Context Map

Appendix C: Heritage Assessment for 133 Debeck Street

This report was prepared by: Samantha Bohmert, Planning Assistant

This report was reviewed and approved by: Britney Dack, Senior Heritage Planner