

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Community Heritage Commission **Date:** December 7, 2022
From: Lisa Wambaa, Planning Assistant **File:** HER00879
Item #: 2022-737
Subject: Heritage Review (Demolition): 309 Lawrence Street

PURPOSE

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

SUMMARY

The Vernacular house with Arts & Crafts elements at 309 Lawrence Street, in the Queensborough neighbourhood, was built in 1922. The building is not legally protected by bylaw, and has not been listed on the City's Heritage Register. The building is however, listed in the 2010 Queensborough Residential Heritage Inventory and is identified as the Ellis Residence. As a result of the building's age (100 years old), being listed on the Queensborough Residential Heritage Inventory and as it has elements of its original style, the Community Heritage Commission is being asked to review the heritage value of this building in advance of a Demolition Permit process.

GUIDING POLICY AND REGULATIONS

100 Years 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 Values 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. Without consent of the owner, a temporary protection order may only last 60 days, after which the demolition permit must be issued.

Heritage Designation

A Heritage Designation Bylaw is a form of land use regulation that places long-term 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

Property Description

The house at 309 Lawrence Street was built in 1922 and is approximately 168 sq. m. (1,810 sq. ft.). It is a one-storey house with a small porch leading to an upper entry below a modest gable, and faces west on Lawrence Street. The property has a density of about 0.211 floor space ratio (FSR), which is approximately 42% of the squarefootage available to the property in the Zoning Bylaw. Like many houses in the Queensborough neighbourhood, the house was raised due to the typical high water table in the area.

This house has a low-hipped roof covered in asphalt shingles. The exterior of the house has a combination of wooden shingles or shakes and shiplap siding and the exterior treatment is painted in two tones. A single small historic rectangular ornamental stained glass window, which was typical in the first half of the 20th century, is visible on the south side of the house.

Photographs of the building in its current condition are available in Appendix B.

Building Condition

Based on current photos and the heritage value assessment (Appendix B), the house's overall form and massing have been retained. There are indications of deterioration over time and it is not clear whether the building's exterior historic fenestration pattern has been retained. The house has a combination of fixed, double-hung, and horizontal sliding aluminum/vinyl replacement windows. Overall the house appears to be in fair condition.

Development Policy Context

The property is zoned Single Detached RQ-1 which allows for a single detached house and secondary suite to a combined maximum of 0.5 FSR. The owners would be permitted approximately 231.5 sq. m. (2491.85 sq. ft.) of additional floorspace above what is currently on site. As this property is located within the Fraser River floodplain, a routine Flood Plain Development Permit would be required. Further Planning approvals would not be needed.

In the Official Community Plan (OCP), the property is designated as "Residential - Low Density" (QRL) which envisions single detached dwellings (which may include a secondary suite), and duplexes. The surrounding properties fronting Lawrence Street have a similar designation.

Site Context

The subject site is located in the Queensborough neighbourhood, on the west side of Lawrence Street and to the north of Ewen Avenue, which is the main traffic corridor through Queensborough. On this same block of Lawrence Street are single-detached houses that were constructed in the Contemporary House style, ranging from 1994 (1), 1996 (1), 2003 (1), 2007 (2), and 2018 (2). A site location map is included as Appendix A.

DISCUSSION

Heritage Value

A heritage value assessment indicates the house may have historic value for its age (1922) and aesthetic value for its Vernacular style with Arts & Crafts (also known as Craftsman style) elements. It appears to have retained some of its original design and character-defining elements including:

- overall form and massing,
- hipped roof with side-gabled addition and front-gabled porch,
- some original windows including one historic decorative stained-glass window, and
- siding and shingle cladding.

From its construction to the present, it has been determined that no individuals with citywide historical significance are meaningfully associated with the site. A heritage assessment with further details is available in Appendix B.

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 a Demolition Permit for the house at 309 Lawrence Street and that the applicant consider deconstruction as an alternative to demolition waste;
- 2) That the Community Heritage Commission recommend the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development direct staff to further explore retention options (i.e. redevelopment or relocation) for the house at 309 Lawrence Street; or
- 3) That the Community Heritage Commission recommend that Council consider a temporary protection order for 309 Lawrence Street; or
- 4) That the Community Heritage Commission provide an alternative recommendation, based on their discussions.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Site Context Map

Appendix B: Heritage Value Assessment and Current Photographs

This report was prepared by:

Lisa Wambaa, Planning Assistant

This report was reviewed by:

Judith Mosley, Senior Heritage Planner