



Corporation of the City of
NEW WESTMINSTER

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Community Heritage Commission

Date: November 3, 2021

From: Samantha Bohmert,
Planning Assistant

File: HER00844

Item #: 2021-477

Subject: Heritage Designation Application: 125 Third Street

PURPOSE

To review the value of the heritage house and its revised Statement of Significance, and to provide a recommendation to Council on its heritage protection.

SUMMARY

An application has been received to protect 125 Third Street (the Johnston House) through a Heritage Designation Bylaw, which is the strongest form of heritage protection. The house, in the Queen's Park neighbourhood, has aesthetic and social value, and has been previously recognized through inclusion on the Heritage Inventory, Heritage Register, and Heritage Conservation Area protection.

GUIDING POLICY AND REGULATIONS

Heritage Designation Bylaw

A Heritage Designation Bylaw is a regulation that places long-term legal protection on the land title of a property. Any changes to a protected heritage property must first receive approval from Council (or its delegate, the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development) through a Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP). Future development is no longer entitled, but could be permitted by through an HAP. HAP applications are also evaluated by staff against the Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as well as the Heritage Conservation Area guidelines, where appropriate.

Heritage Register

A Heritage Register is an official list identified by the City of physical or intangible elements in the city that have heritage merit. The City encourages owners of buildings on the Heritage Register to retain and protect the structure, while continuing its use, density entitlement, and function. In support of this, inclusion on the Heritage Register allows Council to temporarily withhold a Building or Demolition Permit, or to order a heritage impact assessment, toward finding alternative options to demolition. Properties listed on a Heritage Register are eligible for special provisions in the BC Building Code and the Homeowner Protection Act, which support life safety while retaining heritage features.

Heritage Inventory

The Heritage Resource Inventory is an unofficial list of properties considered to have heritage value. The Inventory was created in the 1980s and was the City's first large scale attempt to identify its heritage resources. Inclusion on the Inventory does not provide heritage protection, but does indicate heritage value.

Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area

The subject property is protected under the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area. The Conservation Area policy places a layer of heritage protection over all properties within the area, regardless of construction age. Properties are classified in two categories: Protected and Non-Protected. Building Permit applications for some kinds of work (e.g., new buildings; demolition; or changes affecting the front, sides, or visible roofline of Protected properties) and subdivision applications require a Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP) and are reviewed for design guideline compliance. For Protected Properties, an HAP and additional review is also given for exterior changes that do not require a Building Permit.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site Characteristics and Context

125 Third Street is located in the Queen's Park neighbourhood on the east side of Third Street, across from Tipperary Park. The site is mid-block, between Manitoba Street and Queen's Avenue. The site is 807 square metres (8,686 square feet) and the house, constructed in 1905, has a Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 0.378. The FSR is the ratio of the total floor area of the house to the area of the property. A site context map is included as Appendix A.

Current Heritage Protection

The property was included in the Heritage Inventory in 1985, was added to the City's Heritage Register in 2012, and was classified as a Protected property in the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area in 2017.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Heritage Designation Application

The owner proposes to increase the protection of the 1905 house at 125 Third Street through a Heritage Designation Bylaw, which is the strongest form of heritage protection. This application for Designation is not accompanied by an application for a Heritage Revitalization Agreement or other proposed changes, and is voluntary. A rationale letter from the owner is Appendix B.

Is Heritage Designation an appropriate application type (tool) to consider for this site?

Heritage Value

The property has already been recognized for several heritage values through inclusion on the Inventory, Register, and in the Heritage Conservation Area. The house has historic value for its association with J.J. Johnston, former Mayor and public figure of New Westminster. The house has aesthetic value for the integrity of its design as well as for its association with celebrated local architects and craftspeople, such as Clow & Welsh (architects), Gardiner & Mercer (architects), and Henry Bloomfield (stained glass manufacturer). Further information is in the Statements of Significance (Appendices C and D) which are discussed below. Historic and current photos are in Appendix E.

Is there sufficient heritage value in the house to warrant Heritage Designation?

Revised Statement of Significance

A Statement of Significance (SOS) was prepared for the house when it was added to the Heritage Register. As ten years has passed, this application for Designation allows an opportunity to update the SOS, which should reflect the site's historic context and heritage value as well as list the building's character defining elements. The property's original 2012 SOS is in Appendix C. A revised version is proposed (Appendix D) which primarily alters the formatting to the newer standard and language for such documents, though also includes some new historic information.

Is the SOS appropriately comprehensive?

Are there elements missing which could or should be included?

Are there any additions or revisions needed to this draft?

FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMISSION

The Community Heritage Commission is being asked to review the application and provide feedback in relation to:

- 1) the value of the heritage property, and
- 2) the proposed revised Statement of Significance.

The following options are available for consideration by the Commission:

- 1) That the Community Heritage Commission recommend that Council support protecting 125 Third Avenue through a Heritage Designation Bylaw.
- 2) That the Community Heritage Commission recommend that Council not support a Heritage Designation Bylaw application for 125 Third Avenue.
- 3) That the Community Heritage Commission provide an alternative recommendation, stemming from elements identified in their discussion.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Site Context Map

Appendix B: Letter from Owner

Appendix C: Existing Statement of Significance

Appendix D: Revised Statement of Significance

Appendix E: Photos of Site

This report was prepared by: Samantha Bohmert, Planning Assistant

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