

Attachment B

Heritage Assessment and Current Photographs

Heritage Assessment

437 Elmer Street, New Westminster, BC :: 1912/1945



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RESEARCH FINDINGS

NEIGHBOURHOOD: Sapperton

ORIGINAL OWNERS:

- 1912 dwelling: William Walker (1912-1913)
- 1945 dwelling: Emil and Dorothy Kindt (1924-1949)

ARCHITECTS: N/A

DEVELOPERS:

- 1912 dwelling: Jacob A. Fleger
- 1945 dwelling: Emil and Dorothy Kindt

CONSTRUCTION DATES: 1912 / 1945

LEGAL: Lot 34 Sub Block 3 Plan NWP2620 Land District 36 OF LOT 23

STATE: Rented

HERITAGE STATUS: N/A

The subject building at 437 Elmer Street is a modest vernacular, square-shaped building that was built in 1945. It may contain structural elements from a dwelling that was previously located on the north half of the lot, built by Jacob A. Fleger for William Walker in 1912. This smaller, rectangular 1912 structure may have been relocated and used in part for the construction of the current 1945 house, as the permit records for this property do not include a demolition permit. However, evidence of the 1912 structure on the lot or in the house is scarce. Furthermore, the tax assessment for 1946 shows a significant jump in improvement value, the highest relative increase in the property's history at that time, which confirms that the current house was substantially built in 1945. Its 1940s design and finishes support this observation. For this reason, the City of New Westminster's "Buildings 100 Years Old and Older" heritage review policy would not apply to this structure which dates to 1945, however as the permit records still indicate a 1912 development on the lot, the following heritage assessment was carried out nonetheless.

HISTORIC BRIEF

Home to the Qayqayt, Kwantlen and Stó:lô First Nations who occupied the Brunette River valley for thousands of years, using the mouth of the Brunette for seasonal fishing activities, what would become known as Sapperton was surveyed by the Royal Engineers in 1860. Colonial settlement was solidified by the 1880s, after the construction of the Royal Columbian Hospital in 1862 and the New Westminster Brewery in 1879. The arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway line in New Westminster in 1887 provided transport for local passenger service and industries to Vancouver, and spurred further real estate subdivision in Sapperton. The BC Electric Railway reached the neighbourhood in 1888, which resulted in commercial and residential growth. A year later, Sapperton was incorporated into the City of New Westminster.

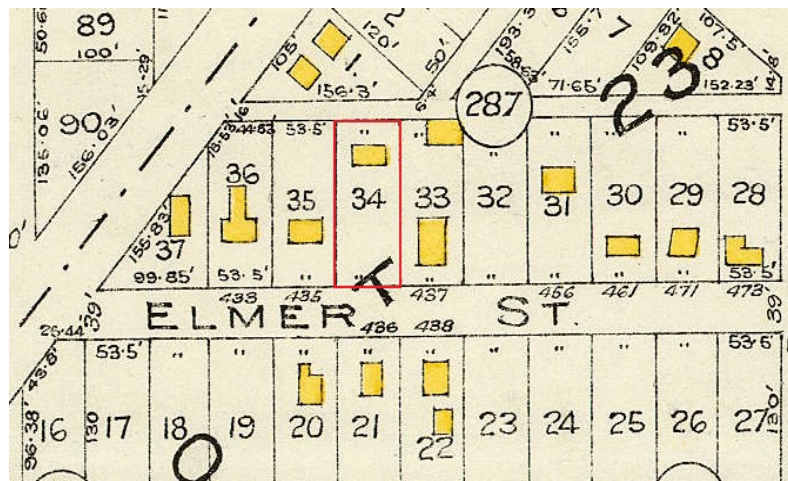
The residential section of the Sapperton neighbourhood was developed northeast of Cumberland Street for its proximity to the Asylum, Penitentiary, train lines, canneries and sawmills on the waterfront. After the first building boom took place in the 1890s, the subject property was first developed during the Edwardian economic and building boom in the early 1900s.

In 1912, William Walker signed an Agreement to Purchase for the subject property with Jacob A. Fleger, who owned multiple properties on the 400 Block of Elmer Street. In the same year, a small, rectangular cottage was built on the north half of the property.



William Walker (1863-1943) was a well-known poultry expert throughout British Columbia. He exhibited at Vancouver and New Westminster fairs and was superintendent of the poultry show in New Westminster for many years. (Sources: The Province, 10 August 1926; The Vancouver Sun, 13 July 1943; Ancestry.ca.)

Because the adjacent property (lot 33) was first listed in the City Directories and on the 1913 Fire Insurance Map as 437 Elmer Street, and the Tax Assessment Rolls do not provide addresses for lots 33 and 34 in 1912 and 1913, the earliest residency at the subject property cannot be determined. However, from at least 1914 onward, the building was home to Bertie Humphrey and his mother Eliza Robertson. They built an addition to the dwelling in 1915. While Bertie Robertson was still listed as the owner of the property in the 1921-1923 Tax Assessment Rolls, Fred and Ivy Maud McGrath lived at 437 Elmer Street with their two children in 1921 (and maybe later).

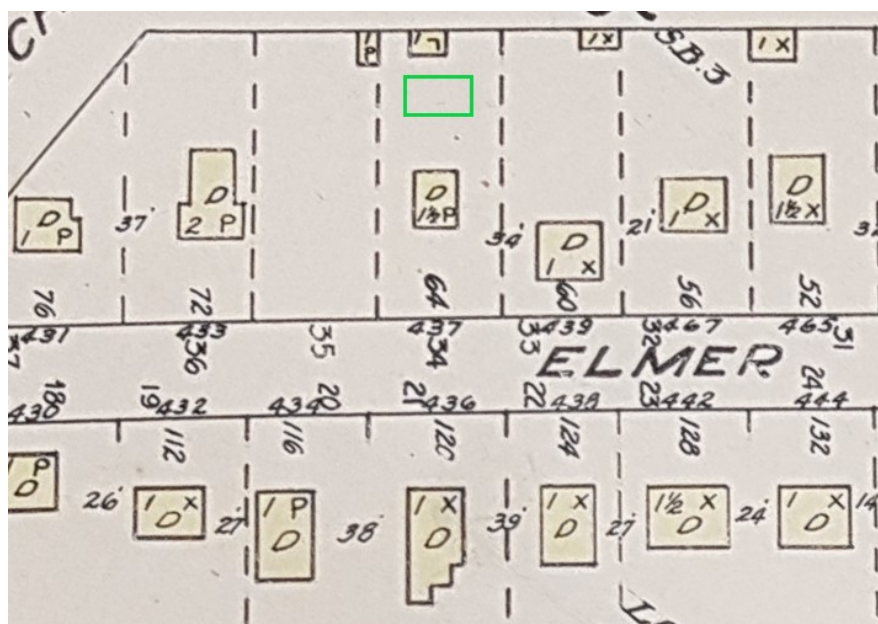


Fire Insurance Map of New Westminster, 1913. Marked with a red box is the subject property. A rectangular dwelling was built on the property in 1912. Note that at this time, there was no address for the subject property, and the dwelling at the adjacent lot was referred to as 437 Elmer Street until probably 1914. Source: City of Vancouver Archives, Goad's Atlas, 1913.

The subject property was purchased by Emil and Dorothy Kindt in 1924. The Kindts were a working-class family. Throughout his career, Emil held various jobs at the New Westminster Brewery in Sapperton, Westminster Shook Mills, Mohawk Handle, as a caretaker, and janitor.

Like his father, Albert worked at Mohawk Handle, and later as a bus operator; his brother Robert worked as a poundkeeper and boom man.

An analysis of the 1913 and 1931 (revised in 1947) Fire Insurance Maps, building permits from 1927 and 1945, the 1945-1946 Tax Assessment Rolls, and material evidence (interior and exterior) show that during the residency of the Kindt family, either relocation and significant alterations were made to the 1912 dwelling or a complete rebuild took place in 1945. The early structure from 1912 may have been relocated within the lot, to be included in the current dwelling, or it's possible was replaced with a completely new structure. From at least the 1960s onward, the one-and-a-half-storey, front gabled house has been clad with wood shingles at the basement level, stucco at the main floor and lap siding at the upper floor.



Fire Insurance Map of 1931-1947. The 1931 map was revised in 1947 and shows the location of the current dwelling. Marked with a green box is the location of the earlier construction on this lot, which was gone by 1947. Also note the small structure at the rear of the lot. Source: City of New Westminster Archives, Fire Insurance Map, 1931-1947.

After the Kindt Family moved out in 1949, residency at the subject house changed from working-class family to working-class family every couple of years for over a decade. Longer residencies included those of the Soderman Family (1963-1981) and Eddie Tam (1991-2002 or later).

The subject house is currently overall in poor/fair condition.



The subject house was for sale in the summer of 1980. Source: The Vancouver Sun, 23 August, 1980.

ASSESSMENT ¹

Evaluation criteria	Value	Comments
Historical Association	7/20	
a. Level of importance of a directly associated person or event (national/provincial/local).	2/10	The house was developed by Jacob A. Fleger for William Walker, a well-known poultry expert throughout BC. Walker lived in Burquitlam and did not live at the subject property. Either substantial alterations or a rebuild were undertaken in 1945 by the Kindt Family, a working-class family who all made their living in New Westminster.
b. Does the building illustrate a significant phase in the history/development of the local community?	5/10	The 1912 dwelling was irreversibly altered into a 1940s dwelling. It represents the replacement or renewal of some of the earlier Sapperton cottages during the wartime period, which is not a significant nor dominant phase of development for the neighbourhood.
Architecture	12/40	
a. Visual quality of the building in the context of an architectural style or type (aesthetics).	0/15	The 1912 dwelling was irreversibly altered into a 1940s dwelling. Its original architectural character and siting are no longer evident.

¹ This table includes the heritage value assessment of the 1912 dwelling, as per the City of New Westminster's "Buildings 100 Years Old and Older" heritage protection tool.

Evaluation criteria	Value	Comments
b. Is the building still used for original function?	10/10	The original use of the site was residential in a single-family detached home and has not been changed since 1912.
c. Quality of workmanship and handling of materials.	2/10	Few if any surviving elements of workmanship and material from the 1912 house can be identified in the 1940s dwelling apart from some structural timbers visible in the basement that could date from 1912..
d. Association with particular designer or architect.	0/5	The designer or architect of the original 1912 house is unknown.
Context	3/35	
a. The integrity of historic relationship between the building and its associated context.	3/10	Between the early 1900s and the 1940s, significant changes took place throughout this area in the Sapperton neighbourhood, particularly on the 400 block of Elmer Street, where earlier constructions were demolished in favour of new buildings, or older buildings were significantly altered. The block now contains a mix of house styles and ages with the subject house not contributing in any substantial way to the character of the block.
b. Influence of the building on the present character of the area (setting).	0/10	Since there is no surviving exterior fabric of the 1912 dwelling, the old dwelling no longer contributes to the character of the area.

Evaluation criteria	Value	Comments
c. Nature of the building's identity within the community (landmark).	0/15	The dwelling has no landmark value within the community as there is basically no visual evidence of its existence left.
Adaptability	8/20	
a. Can the building continue with its current/original use?	8/10	The 1912 building's original use as a single-family dwelling was continued in the 1945 dwelling and can be continued in the future. Its condition however is deteriorated and major maintenance would be needed to keep the house liveable.
b. Can the building be adapted for new contemporary uses without compromising heritage values?	0/10	Insufficient fabric of the 1912 dwelling survives to conserve any heritage values of the original house.
Integrity	0/30	
a. Presence of original character-defining elements.	0/10	There are no surviving character-defining elements.

Evaluation criteria	Value	Comments
b. Compatibility of contemporary alterations and materials.	0/10	The irreversible interventions to the 1912 dwelling completely altered the original footprint, massing, form, scale, design and finishing materials of the building.
c. Overall exterior condition of structure and materials.	2/10	There is no surviving exterior fabric of the 1912 dwelling. The condition of the 1945 house is poor.
Summary: 21%	32/145	

CONCLUSION

This heritage assessment was undertaken as per the City of New Westminster's "Buildings 100 Years Old and Older" heritage review policy, and as such only includes an assessment of the 1912 dwelling. The original dwelling was redeveloped in 1945 and has thus lost its 100+ year old footprint, massing, form, scale, design, and finishing materials. Among the many changes that took place in the neighbourhood between the early 1900s and 1940s, the historic relationship between the original building and its neighbourhood context, as well as with its original owner and builder also came to an end. There are no visible 100+ year old surviving character-defining elements. The property has low heritage value and is in poor condition.

RESEARCH RESOURCES

Ancestry.ca

- British Columbia, Canada, Death Index, 1872-1990
- British Columbia, Canada, Marriage Index, 1872-1935
- Canada, World War I CEF Attestation Papers, 1914-1918
- Canada, Voters List, 1935-1980
- Canadian Phone and Address Directories, 1995-2002
- Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current
- 1901, 1911 and 1921 Census of Canada

BC Archives

- Birth, marriage and death indexes

BC Assessment (<https://www.bcassessment.ca/>)

City of New Westminster Archives

- Archival photographs
- Field Assessment Cards
- Fire Insurance Maps, 1931-1947
- Tax Assessment Rolls, 1910-1913, 1921-1927, 1944-1946
- Water Permit (16 December, 1911)

City of New Westminster, CityViews Maps

- Public Development Site Report, 473 Elmer Street

City of New Westminster, Historic Neighbourhood Context Statements

- McBride-Sapperton (August 2016)

City of Vancouver Archives

- Goad's Atlas of the City of New Westminster, 1913 (Volume III)

New Westminster Public Library

- Columbian Newspaper, 1957-1983
- Information Files
- Lower Fraser Valley Directory, 1956 - 1992
- Public Library Photo Database

Newspapers.com

UBC Library Open Collections

- BC Historical Newspapers

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Vancouver Public Library:

- BC City Directories, 1860-1955 (<https://bccd.vpl.ca/>)

Vintage Air Photos (<https://vintageairphotos.com/>)

Wolf, Jim. 2005. Royal City: a photographic history of New Westminster 1858-1960. Surrey, BC: Heritage House.

Site visit. November, 2022.

CURRENT PHOTOS



front view



rear view



side view
(northeast
elevation)



side view
(southwest
elevation)