

# **REPORT**

## ***Climate Action, Planning and Development***

**To:** Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council  
**Date:** July 10, 2023

**From:** Jackie Teed, Acting Director, Climate Action, Planning and Development  
**File:** HER00885  
HER00887  
HER00888

**Item #:** 2023-463

**Subject:** **Heritage Revitalization Agreement: 1426 Seventh Avenue – Preliminary Report**

---

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That** Council direct staff to work with the applicant to prepare a plan of development for the subject property suitable for consideration of First and Second Readings, as outlined in the “Application Review Process” section of this report.

---

### **PURPOSE**

To seek Council’s approval to process the Heritage Revitalization Agreement application for an infill housing development, including preservation and long-term protection of a heritage house, in the West End.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

An application has been received for a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) at 1426 Seventh Avenue in the West End. Through stratification, the project would retain a 1911 heritage house with rental secondary suite, add one large infill house (with secondary suite) and two small infill houses, for a total of four primary stratified units, and two rental secondary units. Drawings indicate a proposed density of 0.82 FSR.

Stratification, additional units, higher density, and reduced off-street resident parking are the primary Zoning Bylaw relaxations proposed through the HRA. Some additional minor siting relaxations are also being sought. In exchange, the 1911 house would be restored, and legally protected through a Heritage Designation Bylaw and listed on the City’s Heritage Register.

**BACKGROUND**

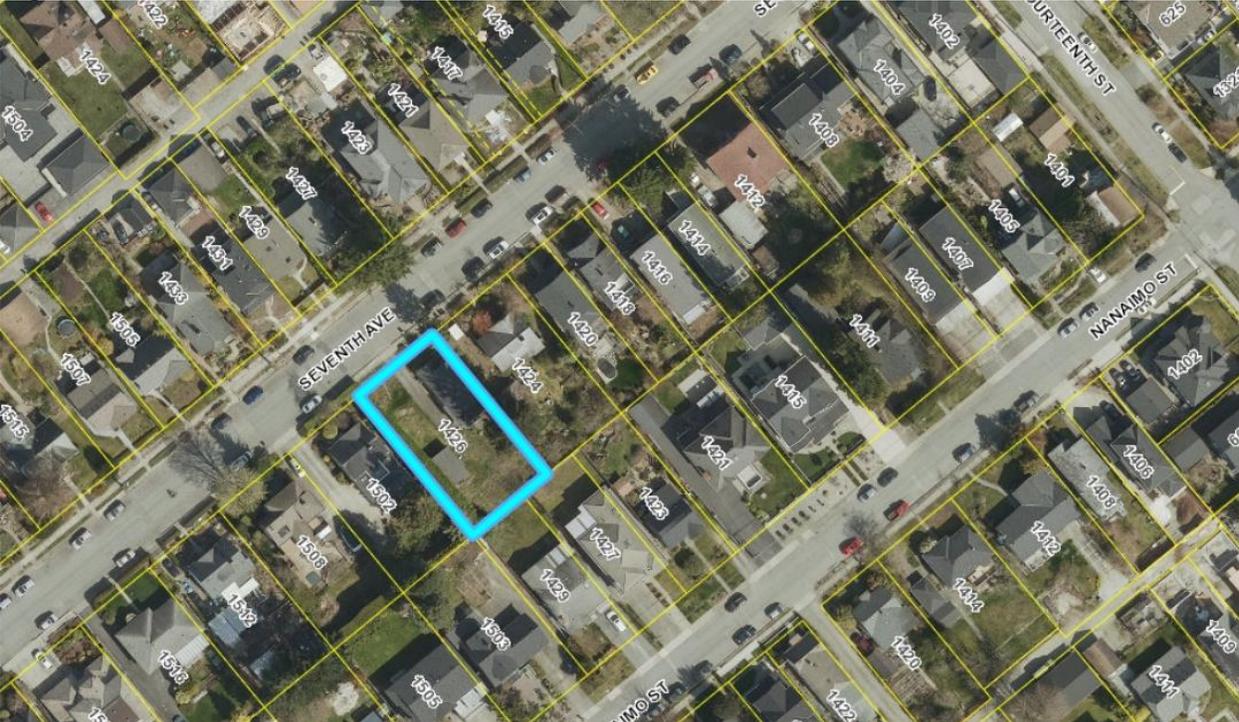
**Policy and Regulations**

The proposed project is consistent with the Official Community Plan (OCP), which designates the site (RD) Residential – Detached and Semi-Detached Housing. The proposal is not consistent with the property’s zoning (NR-1), which allows for a single-detached house, secondary suite and/or a carriage house. As such, a rezoning or HRA is required. As the project proposes restoration and protection of a heritage asset, an HRA is the appropriate tool. A summary of these and other related City policies and regulations are included in Attachment 1.

**Site Characteristics and Context**

The subject site is located in the West End, in an area composed of single-detached dwellings. The lot has an area of 758.8 sq. m. (8,168.2 sq. ft.), and an approximate downslope of 11.5% from the north corner to the south corner. One single-detached dwelling, built in 1911, is currently situated on the lot. The property is approximately two and a half blocks west of Twelfth Street, and is located on the Crosstown Greenway. Additional site context information is provided in Attachment 1.

*Figure 1: Site Context Map with 1426 Seventh Avenue in blue*



**Heritage Value of the Existing House**

Built by Joseph and Winnifred Pelland in 1911, the Pelland Residence has aesthetic, cultural, and historic value. It is valued for its Craftsman Bungalow style, which includes the one and a half storey massing, original front gable roofline, eaves, decorative brackets, porch and bay extensions. It is also valued for its association with the New Westminster Fire Department, having served as the residence of Captain Joseph Pelland and Assistant Battalion Chief Bernard “Bud” Clarke. Additionally, the house has significance as an early West End residence, indicative of the neighbourhood’s 1911 to 1912 building boom. See Figure 2 below for an image of the building in its current condition.

*Figure 2: Current photograph of the house, provided by the project’s heritage consultant*



Further review of the heritage value of the house and proposed conservation work would be conducted by the Community Heritage Commission should the application proceed. The proposed work would be evaluated against the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

**PROJECT PROPOSAL**

The project proposes construction of one large infill house with secondary suite (200.5 sq. m. / 2,158.8 sq. ft.) fronting Seventh Avenue, and two small infill houses (71.3 sq. m. / 768.0 sq. ft.) at the rear of the site. The existing 1911 house and secondary suite would remain in its current location, facing Seventh Avenue. The heritage house, and new infill houses would be stratified, and the two secondary suites would be rental. Four off-street parking spaces are proposed, accessed via a shared driveway from Seventh Avenue. Select project drawings are included in Attachment 2 and project statistics and relaxations in Attachment 1.

**DISCUSSION**

**Overall Evaluation**

Given the modest size of the Pelland Residence, (276.1 sq. m. / 2,971.9 sq. ft.), it may be at risk of demolition in the future. The HRA would provide the house long-term legal protection and require its restoration and maintenance. The project proposes additional benefits by increasing housing choice in the West End, through provision of:

- Family-friendly units in the heritage house and large infill house;
- Small, stratified infill houses, which may be more financially accessible than other ground-oriented forms, due to their size; and,
- Two rental secondary suites.

The OCP enables consideration of an infill development at this site through use of an HRA, provided it meets livability and character design criteria, and strikes a balance between benefits to the property owner and the community. Further discussion of the central relaxations proposed by this project is provided below. Analysis of these relaxations in relation to proposed community benefits would be conducted throughout the application review process.

**Stratification**

The application proposes four stratified units in the heritage house and infill houses. While the site’s existing zoning permits only freehold ownership and rental tenure, stratification of the property can be considered per the City’s *Policy for the Use of HRAs*, instead of small lot subdivision. The stratification of existing buildings typically requires significant upgrades to meet Building Code requirements, which can conflict with heritage objectives of retaining original materials. Further analysis of the implications of stratification would be completed through the application review process.

**Density and Units**

Under the site’s NR-1 zoning, a new principal dwelling of 0.51 FSR and a carriage house of 0.11 FSR could be built, for a sitewide total of 0.62 FSR. The proposal is for a total of 0.82 FSR, which is approximately 32% greater than otherwise allowed. Further to this, whereas the existing zoning enables one primary unit and two secondary units, the application proposes four primary and two secondary units.

**Livability and Open Space**

The proposed density and unit configuration would be further reviewed, should the application progress. The proposed secondary suites would also be required to comply with Zoning Bylaw and Building Code requirements. The development would be expected to achieve livability and design criteria for infill housing, including provision of adequate open space and mitigation of privacy and overlook concerns. The current proposal does not include adequate private open space, given the number of units and lack of rear lane access. This would be further examined as the application progresses.

**Trees**

As part of this HRA application, the applicant has submitted an arborist report in support of a Tree Permit application. One tree is present on-site, and three trees and several hedges present off-site. The application proposes removal of the on-site tree and retention all off-site trees and hedges. The initial findings of the arborist report indicate that the on-site tree is specimen-sized and a native species, however additional information is needed regarding its health to evaluate the request for removal. Further review of the project’s tree retention and replacement strategy would be undertaken by staff during the application review process.

**Off-Street Parking and Access**

The Zoning Bylaw requires that one off-street parking space be provided for a single-detached house, and two spaces if the house includes a secondary suite. Per Zoning Bylaw requirements, six parking spaces would be required of this project. This application proposes a reduction to required off-street parking from six to four spaces. Further review of the proposed parking relaxations would be completed through the application review process.

Given that there is no rear lane, access is proposed from Seventh Avenue, which is a designated greenway (Crosstown Greenway). Further review of the proposed access and methods to mitigate potential conflicts with cyclists, would be completed through the application review process.

**APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS**

Below is an overall outline of the development review process for this project.

1. Preliminary Report to Council (July 10, 2023) **(WE ARE HERE)**;
2. Interdepartmental staff review towards a suitable plan of development (ongoing);
3. Creation of a Be Heard New West webpage;
4. Council consideration of First and Second Readings of the Heritage Revitalization Agreement and Heritage Designation Bylaws;
5. A Public Hearing followed by Council’s consideration of Third Readings of the Bylaws;
6. Council consideration of Adoption of the Bylaws; and,
7. Issuance of the Heritage Alteration Permit by the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development.

As fewer than 6 storeys are proposed, and the form of development is consistent with the Official Community Plan, the application would not be forwarded to the New Westminster Design Panel or the Advisory Planning Committee for review and comment.

**INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON**

The City has a project-based team approach for reviewing development applications, which facilitates interdepartmental review, providing comments to the applicant throughout the development review process. This project-based team includes staff from Engineering; Climate Action, Planning and Development; Parks and Recreation, Electrical and Fire Departments.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial considerations will be evaluated as part of the application review process and any relevant details will be included in the Comprehensive Report.

**OPTIONS**

The following options are available for Council’s consideration:

- 1. **That** Council direct staff to work with the applicant to prepare a plan of development for the subject property suitable for consideration of First and Second Readings, as outlined in the “Application Review Process” section of this report.
  
- 2. That Council provide staff with alternative direction.

Staff recommends Option 1.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1: Background Information
- Attachment 2: Preliminary Application Materials (Select)

**APPROVALS**

This report was prepared by:  
Wendee Lang, Development Planner

This report was reviewed by:  
Mike Watson, Acting Manager of Development Planning; and  
Demian Reuter, Acting Senior Manager of Climate Action, Planning and Development

This report was approved by:  
Jackie Teed, Acting Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development; and  
Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer