

**Attachment 5**  
*Letter from Owner*

September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Re: Heritage Designation Request

To : Whomever it May Concern,

Hello. My name is Gail Ancill and I am requesting formal protection of my home using a Heritage Designation.

My home is located at 125-Third Street, New Westminster. It was built in 1905, designed by architects Charles Clow and Daniel Welsh. In 1912, the house was renovated with a 4 room addition and front veranda designed by architects Gardiner and Mercer.

The design is Edwardian in a simple Queen Anne Revival style and was built for John Joseph (JJ) and Charlotte Johnston.

JJ Johnston was an outstanding figure in the history of New Westminster, serving on City Council for several years and Mayor for three terms. He was affectionately known as Mr. Mayday, having attended every celebration from his first year in 1870 until his passing in 1966 at the age of 96. He served as the Mayday Master of Ceremonies for over 50 years.

He was also the official Time Keeper of the Salmon Bellies Lacrosse games and the New Westminster Registrar of Voters for many years. He received Citizen of the Year Award twice (1947 and 1950), Man of the Year award (1953) and was awarded the Freeman of the City in 1955.

There are many tributes honouring his outstanding civic contributions throughout the city including the water fountain located in front the Queens Park Arena.

I am requesting this heritage designation not only to honour this native of New Westminster, but to also to prevent any potential future demolition of his beautiful home.

In the 1980's this home fell to severe neglect while Mona Johnston (daughter of JJ) lived there alone. In a most tragic event, Mona fell victim to a home invasion in which she was tied up while being vandalized and robbed. After this event Mona could not trust anyone to enter the home including repair people. As a result, for years she lived without heat, functioning toilets/plumbing or electricity. The roof and sidings became riddled with large holes and inevitably became overrun with rodent, raccoon and insect infestations. The foundation crumbled, and the interior was uninhabitable. The homes exterior colours were indeterminable as the paint had sadly peeled away.

When Mona's health was failing she finally sold it in the mid 80's to the only buyers who promised to restore it. All other potential purchasers could see no value left and wanted it demolished. Those owners spent 3 years cleaning it up to the point where I purchased it in 1989. Since then I have replaced the foundations, drainage, electrical, plumbing/pipes, etc., way too many changes to list.

It is remarkable that all the original wood/mouldings/floors, stained /leaded glass

windows and many light fixtures were still intact and now fully restored. It is truly a beautiful home inside and out.

It is true that heritage homes are money pits, but the time and money spent are very rewarding. I am happy to be part of this homes history and proud to be taking the necessary steps to ensure its survival for future families to love and raise their families in as I did.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Ancill  
125-Third Street  
New Westminster