



## COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Via MS TEAMS

### MINUTES

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**Present:** Jennifer Clay  
Philip Baynton  
Daniel Francis  
Rob Griesdale  
Mel Montgomery  
Jim Paul (Vice-Chair)  
Anne Savill (Chair)  
Cllr. Matthew Bond

**Regrets:** Alastair Moore

**Guest:** Sara Moayeri (applicant)

**Staff:** Nicole Foth, Community Planner  
Mary Jukich, Community Service Clerk

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#### 1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm.

#### 2. Adoption of the Agenda

MOVED by Daniel Francis and seconded by Mel Montgomery  
To adopt the agenda.

**CARRIED**

#### 3. Adoption of the Minutes

Some typographical errors were noted.

MOVED by Daniel Francis and seconded by Mel Montgomery  
To adopt the revised June 24, 2020 minutes.

**CARRIED**

#### 4. Virtual Meeting Check

Check-in around the functioning of the virtual meeting technology.

## 5. 3729 Edgemont Blvd / 3723-2727 Bluebonnet Rd

As background, the property is on the heritage register, and designed by Hollingsworth. The development permit areas are for Form and Character, and Energy, Water and Greenhouse gas emissions. These development permit areas apply because it is a multi-family building. The application is for development permit with variances (Council decision). The variance is for siting area on this property, i.e. the footprint area of the building. The Committee was informed that work without permits started on the property, there was a Stop Work Order put on the building, and now the applicant is seeking permits for that work.

The applicant provided an overview of the project and the following items were noted:

- The proposed changes include:
  - Enlarge the living room, and family room by five feet
  - Enlarge the entrance to allow a wheelchair in the downstairs
  - The addition of a bedroom upstairs
  - New siding (fibre cement) to replace the original stucco
  - Some wood frame windows preserved, some wood frame windows replaced with white vinyl windows, and some new white vinyl windows added in building additions
  - New roofing material to be same as original
  - Keep paint colour same as other units (grey)
- Preserved:
  - The brick wall that runs through the building
  - Some of the wood frame windows (living room)
  - Exterior doors re-used
  - Interior flooring salvaged
  - Fireplace

The following questions and comments were presented to the applicant:

- The Committee encourages preserving or restoring the original wood frame windows as part of the design, instead of introducing new vinyl windows (Drawing A6 refers to new vinyl windows). The applicant indicated that most of the windows had rotted and new wood windows would be more costly. The applicant indicated that some of the wood windows would be preserved (living room area).
- A question was asked whether the proposed renovations were sympathetic to the Hollingsworth design and if an architect or designer was brought in to consult. The applicant responded that her father is an experienced architect. The applicant also indicated that there was an article in the North Shore News that discussed Mr. Hollingsworth's design vision; the article will be forwarded to the Committee.

- Although outside the scope of heritage, a comment was made that if the applicant was looking to make the unit accessible as the applicant indicated, there should be a two foot space allowance for wheelchair accessibility from the bathroom door.
- A question was asked if installing an elevator is proposed, and how that would work with the style of the building. The applicant noted that the elevator is not being installed now, though they are considering it for the future.

The applicant left the meeting. The following comments were made during the Committee discussion:

- Concern was raised that renovations were undertaken without permits.
- The Committee questioned their role since work without permits had already been done. They discussed that their role in this case is to provide comments on the work as if the work is being proposed for permit. The Committee's comments should be related to the heritage aspect to the materials, colour, shape or design particularly of the exterior.
- A question was raised whether the property has enough density within current zoning to allow the square footage of the additions. Information was provided that the work would need a variance to the siting area to permit the additions, and a plan checker would check if there are any other variances resulting from the design. The applicant would be seeking a variance which is a Council decision. If the variance is not approved, the applicant would need to bring the building back to the original footprint/undo the work that was done.
- Concern was noted that this is a challenging application for the Committee to comment on where renovations have already taken place. For example, it appeared that some wood frame windows have already been removed and discarded, and replaced by new vinyl windows that change some of the character of the building. This makes it difficult in the heritage sense because if the applicant discarded old windows, they will not be able to put them back.
- A question was raised about how they could find out if work was being done without permits. The Committee was informed that there is a permit search on the District's website to look up properties and whether permits have been issued.
- Appreciation for keeping some of the original wood frame windows. Comments were made that replacing wood window frames, as the originals, are preferred. Alternatively, a fibreglass window could work with sympathetic profile and trim to help the windows to fit the original Hollingsworth character.
- One member noted there may be a stream on one side of the property and questioned if there are stream setback requirements. The Committee was encouraged to review within the scope of heritage aspects.

- The original fourplex design had symmetry in a pinwheel design. An addition could alter the symmetry.
- A suggestion was made for some Committee members to visit the site, given this circumstance where work was partially completed. Nicole will follow-up on this request.
- A question was raised whether there is a penalty for doing renovations without permits.
- Members were reminded that the building is not legally protected and is on the heritage register and as such the owner has the ability to alter or do renovations. The Committee's review is to make suggestions to the owner, and it is the owner's decision as to what they wish to include in their application for Council consideration.

#### Addendum – October 7, 2020

- Some Committee members visited the site on October 7, 2020, with the owner's permission, to better understand the work that had been done.
- The following comments and suggestions were made by the members:
  - Replicate the original roof system that used a sloped roof and embedded drains. Avoid adding new standard gutters to the leading edge of the roof, which changes the exterior look and drainage pattern.
  - The new white vinyl windows do not appear to be in keeping with the look of a Hollingsworth house. The applicant is encouraged to retain original wood frame window or replace with wood frame windows. If an owner does not want to use wood frame windows, then select window frame colour, material and size that best matches the original windows.
  - It is suggested to make a best effort to line up the windows and door heights in the same plane, as some appear to be different sizes and orientations. The narrow, repeated vertical windows by the living room would benefit the original style to be lined up on the same plane.
  - Suggest to use the traditional stucco finish for the siding, as it was the original material. Hardie siding is not a material in keeping with this heritage character.
  - Interest to see if there is a proposed railing system for the upper decks (where some upper windows have been replaced with sliding balcony doors). The proposed railing system should complement the overall heritage house look.

## 6. Heritage Grants Program Update

Nicole Foth provided the Committee with a presentation and overview of the first draft of the revised grants program. Before 2020, funds were received from the North Shore Community Foundation account for the grant program. This year, Council added \$50,000 to the budget which was part of Heritage Strategic Plan implementation.

Feedback was requested on the grant program purpose, grant categories, funding amounts, and sliding scale. The following comments were provided:

- Clarification was requested on how the designation grant would work. Information was provided that the idea for a designation grant is to give someone a financial incentive/grant to have their house designated, meaning on-going legal protection. It is up for discussion what form the incentive could take.
- In terms of heritage designated properties, consider a way to increase the property value so that there would be some sort of percentage above market for the property and insulate the owner's investment. The property could have a higher assessed value and whatever the percentage will always remain higher than a typical house, and BC Assessment would have to be involved. The value could be leveraged when renovations are required.
- Consider a lower or 50% tax rate for heritage properties, and require owners of such properties to maintain a certain amount of repairs/updates/paint and submit the paperwork in order to keep those incentives.
- Donald Luxton, consultant for the Heritage Strategic Plan, had said from his experience that providing a tax rebate to heritage properties does not necessarily translate into the property's longevity or that repairs to the property are done, or whether the property is preserved. He had said grants for conservation work are more successful in realizing conservation.
- Suggestion to fast track heritage permits to incentivize keeping and conserving heritage properties.
- Information was requested with respect to whether a future owner of a designated property could go to Council and request that the property be undesignated.

**Action: Nicole will follow-up on the question about un-designating a property.**

- In terms of incentives for owners to designate properties, clarification was provided that the purpose of the program is to have people conserve their property by offering something to the homeowner. The value of the heritage designation as part of the goal is to have properties legally protected. If a cash incentive to designate a property is an effective way, this should be explored and a dollar amount determined.

- Members were reminded that although grants may be awarded to properties that are on the Heritage Register, there is no security whether or not properties without legal protection would be demolished by the owner.
- A question was raised as to how much of the total sum is given to each of the three proposed grant categories and whether they are meant to be comparable. Information was provided that the money is not divided up for each grant category, but the Committee would evaluate the received applications as a whole and determine which are the best applications and balance against the available funds.
- Feedback was provided that \$1,000 may not be sufficient for extensive renovation of a heritage property.
- Concern was raised that if the grants are only for projects retroactive of one year, the Committee could have a lot of good applications from previous years. There should be some leeway in being able to go back three years or something more than one year.
- Concern was raised that a large designation grant has the potential to “eat up” the grant funds and have less funds available for conservation grants.
- A suggestion was made that the designation grant should not be a one-time cash incentive and the Committee consider tax incentives so that the buyer continues to get the benefit. If this were a tax rebate, a member questioned whether the tax rebate would take money from the grant fund or the District would just take a lower tax rate for that property and not take from the grant fund.
- A tax relief may be a larger incentive than the grant program and would probably be more impactful and easier to understand and obtain.
- The conservation grant mentions smaller items can bundle together for a larger renovation. An extensive renovation should be sufficiently rewarded.
- If a tax rebate for a heritage register or inventory house is granted where the property is not protected, it is based on hope that conservation would happen, where in fact it may or may not happen. However, a tax rebate in exchange of designation could be considered because the designation provides legal protection and would require maintenance as part of designation.
- A question was raised on why permit fees are excluded from the eligible costs. Information was provided that the idea of the grant is to directly support the labour and materials of a conservation project undertaken.

- Concern was expressed about giving a designation grant and then leaving it to Council to decide to designate. The homeowner would have to go through a lot of work and Council may decide against the designation. There should be some preliminary consultation with the District to know even before whether it will be viable. Information was provided that since designation is done by bylaw, it has to be a Council decision. If someone applies for a designation grant, they would need a Statement of Significant and the building would need to be in good condition.

**Action: Committee members to post additional comments on Basecamp by October 6, 2020.**

## **7. Recruitment**

Members were informed that Daniel Francis will be finishing his term on the Committee as of December 2020.

In terms of recruitment, the Committee will be seeking to fill two vacancies, one for a landscape architect and the second for a historian.

## **8. Any Other Business**

No other business was presented.

## **9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:51 pm.

## **10. Next Meeting**

Members were requested to hold Wednesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 3:00 – 5:00 pm for a possible meeting.