

**THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER
HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
VIA ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION FACILITIES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2021**

Committee Members: P. Grossman (Chair), S. Abri, B. Clark, M. Geller, P. Hundal, J. Mawson; and Councillor S. Thompson attended the meeting via electronic communication facilities. Absent: J. McDougall, H. Nesbitt; and T. Wardell.

Staff: E. Syvokas, Community Planner; and C. Mayne, Committee Clerk, attended the meeting via electronic communication facilities.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:39 p.m.

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT

1. all remaining Heritage Advisory Committee meetings for 2021 be held via electronic communication facilities only;
2. the Municipal Hall Atrium be designated as the place where the public may attend to hear, or watch and hear, the Heritage Advisory Committee meeting proceedings; and
3. a staff member be in attendance at the Municipal Hall Atrium for each of the scheduled meetings.

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the October 7, 2021 Heritage Advisory Committee meeting agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the July 29, 2021 Heritage Advisory Committee meeting minutes be amended by:

- Item 7 Expansion of List of District Heritage Assets, 1/2 way down page 5 "Unidentified heritage resources are on the work plan...Paul, Sama and Jason would be interested to form a group to work on unidentified heritage resources." This should read...."Paul, Sama and Jason would be interested to join Brenda and John to work on unidentified heritage resources."

AND THAT the minutes be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

REPORTS / ITEMS

4. Guest: Mayor Booth

Mayor Booth acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Squamish Nation, Tsleil -Waututh Nation and Musqueam Nation.

Mayor Booth thanked the Committee for their commitment and good work preserving the District's buildings, spaces and trees. Mayor Booth indicated that each member of the Committee has a particular expertise, brings a ton of passion, and this is what makes West Vancouver run as well as it does.

The following updates were provided by Mayor Booth:

- Navvy Jack House: the Streamkeepers Society had a Department of Fisheries and Oceans representative investigate the long term viability of Lawson creek and determined that there was uncertainty that there would be water in that creek in the future. As such, the Lawson Creek Restoration Project has been cancelled. Staff are regrouping on next steps regarding the Navvy Jack House Restoration Project; the house will need to be raised to deal with sea level rise.
- Harry Jerome Track: the track was named in honour of Harry Jerome in February 2021. The fundraising has been going on and 3.6 million dollars has been raised to date including 2.2 million dollars from the District. An update of the cost has added to the 5 million dollar budget, due to the fill that was used in the 60's (refuse) which is not a good foundation for the track or field. Council is behind this project. The fundraising committee has been meeting to move the project forward. The original plan was to be breaking ground in the spring, currently waiting to hear options.
- Municipal Hall: the seismic upgrade and renewal project is ongoing. Human Resources has moved back to the hall. The Council Chamber and administration offices are to be ready at the end of October. The project is anticipated to be completed in the first quarter of 2022. The project is ahead of schedule and under budget, (just under 20 million dollars). There have been some interesting discoveries throughout construction. The building has been seismically enforced and will now be a safe building.

Committee Comments and Questions:

The Committee went on to comment / question Mayor Booth, staff responses are in *italics*:

- appreciated Council's support for the different options for the Navvy Jack house. The news about the Lawson Creek Restoration Project is surprising and will make quite a difference for the final resolution. As far as flood level goes, the Ferry Building is currently being raised and restored and is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished.
- the cancellation of the Lawson Creek Restoration Project was an unfortunate outcome after 10 years of effort from the Streamkeepers. The flipside is that it gives the citizen group, Heritage Advisory Committee, staff and Council some breathing space and this provides a third option to evaluate.

- have the old mail tubes been preserved in Municipal Hall through the renovation? *Mayor Booth will look into that.*

5. Guest: West Coast Modern League

S. Gairns (West Coast Modern League) provided a presentation including:

- Who is the West Coast Modern League?
 - an independent, volunteer-based, registered non-profit society
 - established in 2013 by Founder, Adele Weder, along with a number of current and past board members
 - a group of architects, writers, curators, professionals, homeowners, and interested individuals with a passion for modern west coast architecture and the allied arts
 - Lead by a volunteer Board of Directors
- The West Coast Modern League (WCML):
 - is dedicated to celebrating, and advancing understanding and appreciation of, modern architecture and design of the North American west coast, with a special focus on BC south coast
 - is a bridge between a cultural/heritage organization
 - provides a broad range of public programming – salons, lectures, debates, and celebrations – digital media, and the support of projects that encourage a stronger architectural culture
 - educates the public on West Coast Modern design culture past and present
 - advocates for the select preservation of West Coast Modern heritage
 - partners with other organizations, like minded societies, disciplines, and homeowners, among others
- Purpose & Objectives:
 - advance awareness and appreciation of architecture, design, and the built environment
 - celebrate and recognize the enduring regional legacy of architects, artists, and designers on our built environment, shared culture, and collective memory
 - inspire future generations to explore and carry forward the distinctive design tenets of this place
 - foster camaraderie and discourse among a diverse design community by providing a platform to celebrate shared history, culture, influences and to stimulate the cross-pollination of ideas

- Advocacy:
 - advocate for the select preservation of significant West Coast Modern houses and buildings (i.e. Forrest-Baker House and Binning House)
 - lead and support public advocacy campaigns and petitions
 - participate in letter writing campaigns and speak at Council meetings
 - educate the public on local design culture and heritage significance
 - collaborate with other local architectural heritage/advocacy organization
- Places:
 - inventory of modern west coast architecture, landscape architecture, and public art primarily across BC
 - covering west coast mid-century modernism, from the 1941 B.C. Binning House, to contemporary projects
 - Identified from modern heritage inventories (i.e. West Vancouver Survey of Significant Architecture), designers, publications, media, owners, etc.
 - 1,000+ buildings and projects to date
- Watch List:
 - working list of homes/buildings of utmost architectural/ heritage significance
 - not necessarily under imminent threat, rather, intended to help various stakeholders establish priorities and opportunities for collaboration
 - municipality-by-municipality
 - currently in its infancy, with intention to collaborate with heritage organizations and other parties
 - top 10 with intention to expand over time

Committee Discussion and Questions:

The Committee went on to comment and question the presenter, with the applicants' and staff responses in *italics*:

- With regards to the Watch List, when preparing this list are you using existing inventories/ heritage lists? Yes, we *try to capture everything in those documents and then add to those lists*. How do you determine what goes on the list? We *don't have any definitive criteria, we are just trying to capture as many buildings as we can that have been influenced by West Coast Modern design. There is a lot that doesn't show up on lists. We are including a lot of post and beams of Lewis construction, many of which are in poor condition, but we will include them so people know they are out there. We look at the heritage lists across the region*.
- West Vancouver has a fine potential of masterpieces, people have the money to build and preserve them. Thank you for keeping track and documenting these buildings.

- Mayor Booth indicated that it is her understanding that west coast modern homes are fetching a premium as a sought after architectural benefit and that they are in demand. Is this WCML's understanding as well? *There is a growing interest in these homes and preserving them. A number of people reaching out asking questions. It is becoming more evident that homeowners are not aware of the options and incentives available for heritage retention.* *Last year staff sent out a letter to all homeowners on the District's Community Heritage Register, outlining incentives available through a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) and have just recently sent a letter out to the local real estate community. In exchange for legal protection of a heritage resource, an Heritage Revitalization Agreement allows the District to provide incentives to the property owner which may include conversion of single-family homes into multi-family use, fee simple subdivisions or infill options (such as cottages or coach house on the same lot), an increase in density, zoning relaxations (siting, height, site coverage etc.), relaxations to off-street parking requirements, a property to be used as a bed and breakfast or short-term rental etc. that would make it feasible to preserve a home. There are also equivalencies under the BC Building Code that allow heritage homes to be updated. We are trying to get ahead of demolition and trying to get information out there that it is a positive to own a heritage home. Incentives can be flexible. The volume of inquiries and interest has increased.*

Action Item: Staff to send a copy of the letter to the West Coast Modern League.

- Very pleased to learn about the WCML's initiative on building a database. One of the things that is on the Heritage Advisory Committee's work plan is to expand the list of heritage resources. Hopefully the Heritage Advisory Committee can partner with the WCML on this initiative. We need to recognize that there are two initiatives in West Vancouver: 1) a very formal HRA agreement process and 2) options for homeowners who just want to live in and retain their house. WCML has identified that information for homeowners is important, that it is a business decision. Are there incentives that homeowners that you have talked to have identified which would encourage them to retain a house rather than demolish it? *That is a question that one of our board members is interested in, I will reach out to one of our board members.*

6. Guest: North Shore Heritage Preservation Society

J. Clay (North Shore Heritage Preservation Society) provided a presentation including:

- Who is the North Shore Heritage Preservation Society (NSH)?
 - Non-profit society founded in 2005
 - Board consists of 13 heritage homeowners from North and West Vancouver
 - Promotes the preservation and restoration of "heritage" buildings in North and West Vancouver
 - Aims to educate and raise awareness in our community on the merits of heritage buildings

- North Shore Heritage Activities:
 - Promote awareness through special events such as workshops and lectures
 - Act as a resource for heritage homeowners in regard to renovations, restorations or additions
 - Take part in Community Day events
 - Connect homeowners with heritage tradespeople
 - Educate primary school children
 - Provide feedback and support for heritage development projects
 - Provide input to local governments on policies
 - Act when buildings are under threat
 - Host Christmas and summer social events in heritage homes
 - Create regular blog posts & post on social media
- Why Save Heritage?
 - High quality of craftsmanship
 - Premium quality building materials
 - Aesthetically pleasing
 - Environmentally sustainable
 - Part of the fabric of the neighbourhood
 - Connection to the past
 - Each home has a story
 - Irreplaceable
- What can the District of West Vancouver do?
 - Organize an annual Heritage Home Tour for Councillors
 - Educate heritage homeowners and neighbours
 - Streamline the Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) process
 - Publish a flow chart of the process with timelines and cost estimates (include case studies)
 - Set up a process for preliminary applications
- Establish a Comprehensive Incentive Program
 - Prepare a comprehensive list of incentives that may be available for heritage developments that the District of West Vancouver is actually prepared to give (e.g. fast track permits, reduce or eliminate permit fees, relaxation of off-street parking requirements, allow stratification of heritage properties, eliminate basement square footage from FSR calculations).
- More Ideas
 - Offer heritage homeowners benefits such as short-term rentals, without doing an HRA
 - Educate staff and front-line clerks so that enquiries are directed to the right person
 - Implement an annual grant program to fund repair and restoration of heritage properties, to assist in the creation of Statement Of Significance and support local heritage education and awareness

- Address insurance issue - provide a statement on requirements for rebuilding in the case of full or partial loss of a heritage register home
 - Undertake a review of Support Buildings on the 1988 District of West Vancouver Heritage Inventory and expand Heritage Register
 - Celebrate victories with dedicated Heritage Awards
- How can NSH assist the District of West Vancouver?
 - Development of new policies, procedures and information materials to promote greater protection of heritage assets
 - *As representatives of many owners of heritage assets, NSH can provide input on proposals and suggestions*
 - Outreach/Awareness
 - *Via membership and its own outreach, NSH can help increase awareness of tools, incentives and policies regarding heritage assets*
 - Increase the number of protected assets
 - *NSH can support owners of heritage assets through the process of applying for HRAs*
- Educate the homeowners, be good for them to see a flow chart. Hopefully some timelines and cost estimates, would be a good idea to have some case studies, to understand what it possible. Setting up a process for preliminary applications.
- Incentives, important, each project is different. Good for developers or homeowners to know a full list of incentives. Fast tracking permits, let them go ahead of all other development, reduce or remove permit fees. Relaxation for off street parking. Allowing stratification of heritage properties, which is already allowed. Key benefit incentive. Eliminating basement FSR from calculations. The heritage houses, their basements are not deep enough.
- J. Clay indicated that:
 - the District of North Vancouver provides grants for the preparation of a Statement of Significance, conservation and maintenance plan, or both, as well as for repair and restoration to heritage property through their grant program.
 - owning a heritage home and maintaining it is expensive. It is also hard to get insurance for a heritage home. NSH's opinion is that this is because insurance companies are not educated on the matter. Concern on the part of the insurance company is around total loss and whether the municipality would require the homeowner to rebuild the home to the same specifications if the home was lost. NSH feels that municipalities should put information on the website regarding the requirements for rebuilding, so if and when the insurance company asks the information, it is readily available.

- having a dedicated awards night for heritage conservation is important to recognize these accomplishments.
- it is important for homeowners to reach out to neighbors. If the neighbours are on board from beginning there is a much greater chance of a successful outcome. Another incentive is property tax exemptions, however there are pros and cons to this approach. A grant might be better.

Committee Discussion and Questions:

The Committee went on to comment and question the presenter, with the applicants' and staff responses in *italics*:

- *E. Syvokas indicated that staff are currently looking at updating the information on the website regarding heritage conservation, adding case studies and the process for Heritage Revitalization Agreements, and generally to make the information available more user friendly. Properties on the Heritage Register and support category resources are identified on the District's Westmap (GIS) and are flagged for follow up by Planning when a building permit application is received which has resulted in discussions around opportunities available through a HRA. The District also has a pre-application process for Heritage Revitalization Agreements before submission of a full formal application which aims to help applicants identify and discuss potential issues and concerns with District staff and the community in the early stages of a development proposal.*
- this was an incredibly valuable presentation. The more the Heritage Advisory Committee can collaborate with other heritage organizations the better. The reality is that in West Vancouver, there is a lot of inventory, however there are not a lot of on the ground success stories. In terms of looking at the list of benefits, it is also about recognizing that the public loves heritage and heritage can enhance value.
- lots of great ideas were identified, particularly eliminating the basement square footage from FAR calculations and grants to help people with preparing a SOS.
- I believe in the long run most of the structures that are lived in will be restored, will remain with us, not just as a result of people that have deep pockets, but also by ordinary people with modest means who work on their house over time. In that context, the incentives identified such as tax incentives, grants, reduced permit fees etc. may seem quite small, however for somebody who is working on restoring a house slowly over time, these are very important.
- is the District of North Vancouver grant is funded through a levy? *It is a set amount that is a line item in the budget, not a levy in demolitions. Council will find that money every year.*
- another option would be to consider charging a penalty fee for demolition of homes on the Heritage Register. It could be a way to make people think twice before demolishing.

- charging penalty fee might not be deterrent at all to most developers and could open up a can of worms. Better to focus on positive incentives.

7. Heritage Project Updates

1. Letter to the real estate community: Staff received positive feedback from the test group of realtors that were consulted in drafting the letter. The letter was mailed out on September 21, 2021 to 380 local realtors. Staff have received a few phone calls directly in response to the letter. The general consensus was that it was well received and will result in more awareness around the benefits of heritage retention.
2. Staff provided an update on two projects that the Heritage Advisory Committee has reviewed in the past:
 - Woyat-Bowie building on Clyde Avenue: - a Hollingsworth and Downs commercial building on the Heritage Register, reviewed in 2019. The heritage building is part of a comprehensive development proposal which would allow construction of an 8 story residential building at the corner of Taylor Way and Marine Drive and would designate the Woyat-Bowie through that process. Council gave first reading on the proposal on September 13, 2021 and set the date for a Public Hearing on October 19, 2021.
 - Klee Wyck: Heritage Advisory Committee supported a motion to support the Klee Wyck Plan in September of 2020 with comments related to wayfinding and interpretive signage, preserving heritage trees and plantings, that the caretaker's home be considered for heritage retention and restoration, and that the area where the greenhouses are be remediated. Work is now underway on the site to demolish the dwelling and the studio, remove 4 greenhouses and relocate 2 onsite, and landscaping the area for park use. Interpretive signage and pathways will be added featuring historic plantings. This all relates to comments that were provided. A conditional assessment of the gatehouse is proposed to be conducted and staff will liaise with the Facilities department once this is completed.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

C. Reynolds had the following comments/questions:

- Very interesting meeting, lots to learn from it.
- Can we see the draft minutes before the meeting?
- Can committee meetings be recorded and is it possible to obtain a copy of the presentations? A copy of today's presentations would be helpful then I can refer to them in my newsletter.

Staff will inquire with Legislative Services and report back.

NEXT MEETING

9. NEXT MEETING

Staff confirmed that the next Heritage Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for October 26, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the October 7, 2021 Heritage Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 6:41p.m.

Certified Correct:

Paula Grossman

Chair

Laura Snyders

Staff Liaison