

HRA CASE STUDY

Resource BOYD HOUSE

General Information

Address: 985 Duchess Avenue
 Neighbourhood: Sentinel Hill
 Construction Date: 1956
 HRA Completed: 2020
 Municipally Designated: Yes
 Site Area: 9,123.9 sq.ft. (847.6 m²)
 FAR approved:

- Boyd House (Lot A): 0.28
- Infill house (Lot B): 0.93
- Combined FAR permitted for the site: 0.49

Dwelling units: 2



Description of Heritage Resource and Site

The Boyd House, located at 985 Duchess Avenue was designed by Ron Thom in 1956. The Boyd House is valued as an excellent example of the West Coast Style of modern residential architecture. The Boyd House is a small and unassuming house barely visible from Duchess Avenue. The house is sited on the northern portion of the steep lot. A low-hipped cedar shake roof floats over the cedar and cement block base with floor-to-ceiling glass found throughout to accentuate the southeast views towards Lions Gate Bridge. The house reflects Ron Thom's admiration and commitment to local materials, and his approach to know his clients, their lives, and their preferences.

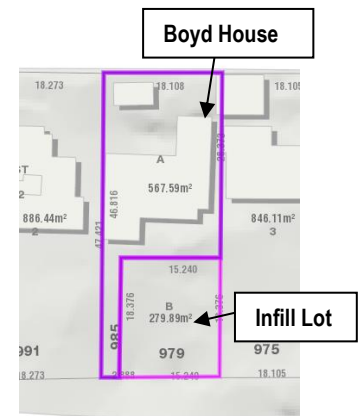
Project Description

The project involved subdivision of the property into two lots with the Boyd House retained on the northern lot (Lot A) and a new dwelling on the southern lot (Lot B).

Incentives

In exchange for conservation and legal protection of the Boyd House, the following incentives were provided through the HRA:

- subdivision of the land into two fee-simple lots with reduced site area;
- construction of a 2,809 sq.ft. (261 m²) dwelling and garage on the new southern lot with an FAR of 0.93 (varied from 0.35);
- variances to lot area, setbacks, and site coverage; and



- short-term rental accommodation use permitted in the Boyd House (which is currently not a permitted use in West Vancouver).

Architectural & Historical Character

A [Heritage Conservation Plan](#), including a Statement of Significance for the Boyd House was prepared by Donald Luxton & Associates. The SOS describes the heritage resource, includes a statement of heritage value, and outlines the “character defining” elements of the house and site.

Challenges

- The site is very steep and the project required a Development Permit under Official Community Plan Policy NE6 for sites with difficult terrain.
- Ensuring that the design of the new house did not detract from the heritage house or impact views for the Boyd House. To this end, the applicant worked to design the home to complement the Boyd House, landscaping was selected to ensure views overtime, and the roof height of the proposed dwelling was reduced to improve the view for the Boyd House.
- A secondary suite was prohibited on the infill lot because of concerns received from the public regarding parking and density of the site.

Learnings

- This was the first site in the District to allow short-term rentals. Allowing short-term rental use for HRA projects going forward would provide added incentive for the developer while allowing the public to use/experience the heritage resource.
- The HRA also included a provision that requires that the Boyd House be made available to heritage conservation associations/groups for tours for a minimum of once per year and that a placard be installed on the property adjacent to Duchess Avenue which provides pedestrians a brief history and overview of the heritage significance of the Boyd House. Both of these provisions provide benefit to the community and could be included in future projects.

More Information

For the HRA application project page including architectural plans:

<https://www.westvancouver.ca/home-building-property/planning/major-applications/the-boyd-house-985-duchess-avenue>