

## **COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE UPDATE TO DECEMBER 24, 2019 (8:30 a.m.)**

### **Referred for Action**

- (1) December 20, 2019, regarding “Council vandalism” (Hedge Cutting)** (Referred to the Director of Engineering & Transportation Services for consideration and response)

### **Referred for Action from Other Governments and Government Agencies**

No items.

### **Received for Information**

- (2) December 19, 2019, regarding Proposed: Heritage Revitalization Agreement Bylaw No. 5030, 2019; and Heritage Designation Bylaw No. 5031, 2019 for 985 Duchess Avenue (Boyd House)** (Referred to the January 13, 2020 public hearing)
- (3) 4 submissions, December 21-23, 2019, regarding Protection of the Forrest-Baker House (1143 Eyremount Drive)**
- (4) December 21, 2019, regarding “Proposed tax increases”**
- (5) December 21, 2019, regarding Climate Action**

### **Received for Information from Other Governments and Government Agencies**

No items.

### **Responses to Correspondence**

No items.

1785-02

**From:** [Redacted] s. 22(1)  
**Sent:** Friday, December 20, 2019 1:16 PM  
**To:** MayorandCouncil  
**Subject:** Council vandalism  
**Attachments:** image1.jpeg; ATT00001.txt

[Redacted] s.22(1) to witness the vandalism of hedge cutting on the corner of Summit Place and Overstone that was order by the council. This is an absolute disgrace. This hedge has been a local feature for at least 16 years (the time I [Redacted] s.22(1) [Redacted] s.22(1) and has been well maintained by the owners. Now we are left with an eyesore.

For what justifiable reason was this done? Who does the council serve apart from the local residents, because none of the locals wanted this? Who is going to be sacked for such a detestable decision?

I appreciate a swift response

Best  
[Redacted] s. 22(1)



1610-20-5030/5031

s. 22(1)  
[Redacted]  
West Vancouver, BC  
s. 22(1)

December 19, 2019

To Mayor and Council  
West Vancouver, BC

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: The Boyd House

s. 22(1) I would be much affected by the changes in the present proposal for development if passed. Please know that in contravention of present rules the property was used as a business -short term rentals- during 2018 and 2019. Especially during the summer months it was very disruptive. Disrespecting the quiet neighbourhood, tourists were partying, being loud, drinking and smoking, music , often deep into the night.

Protection of the Heritage designation in exchange for subdivision of the land, construction of a second house, more than twice the size of the existing one, using both houses for a commercial enterprise, namely short term rentals, is ridiculous.

To date this area is zoned for single dwelling houses. Commercial interests must not be allowed.

Initially, was it not the intention for a cottage house to be built of about the same size as the existing one?

I am asking mayor and council to review and consider carefully this application before you. It would – if approved - result in a massive change to our quiet and beautiful neighbourhood on Sentinel Hill .

s. 22(1)  
[Redacted]

Delivered by hand

**From:** [Redacted] s. 22(1)  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 21, 2019 2:47 PM  
**To:** MayorandCouncil  
**Subject:** Save the Forrest-Baker House

I am appalled at the lack of protection for such an icon of a house. West Vancouver more than ever needs to preserve and promote this brilliant local architecture. It has worked wonders for Palm Springs. The mountains and water is beautiful there but you need more to attract people to live and work there. Showing culture and design is a HUGE drawing magnet for people all over the world.

Please extend the protection and provide Heritage status for this Iconic building.

Thank-you!

Regards,

[Redacted] s. 22(1)  
[Redacted] s. 22(1)  
Toronto, Ont  
[Redacted] s. 22(1)

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2585-01

**From:** Robert Salikan [REDACTED] s.22(1)  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 21, 2019 4:08 PM  
**To:** MayorandCouncil  
**Subject:** Save the Forrest-Baker house

Mayor and Council, West Vancouver:

I would like to add my support to save the Forrest-Baker house from demolition. This is an award-winning, iconic example of west coast modern architecture of the 1960's, and is a key part of West Vancouver's unique architectural heritage.

Regards,

Robert Salikan, Architect AIBC, MRAIC  
**SALIKAN ARCHITECTURE INC.**  
#923 - 409 Granville Street  
Vancouver, B. C. V6C 1T2  
T. 604-688-0100 / F. 604-331-8781  
[www.salikanarchitecture.ca](http://www.salikanarchitecture.ca)

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2585-01

**From:** [Redacted] s. 22(1)  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 22, 2019 12:10 PM  
**To:** MayorandCouncil  
**Subject:** Save the Forrest-Baker House: from Dick Mann's former assistant

Dear Mayor & Council

I had the good blessing to have been hired by and to have worked for Dick Mann in 1982. As his assistant till 1987/88 and as an Associate of Thompson Berwick Pratt & Partners (& it's successor firm of Hemingway Nelson Architects Ltd) from 1982-1996, I had much time with Dick and other partners and also spent many hours in the dusty storage vaults of the iconic firm, looking at drawings from many old projects.

I was also one of 2 Canadians invited to exhibit my work at the XV Venice Architecture Biennale in 2016 - cited for essentially 'west coast architecture' which the curators thought should be exposed to the world.

May I offer my humble opinion that the Forrest-Baker House was one of Ron Thom/Dick Mann's top 2 single family home projects and support & encourage efforts to save it. It is one of the premier examples of west coast architecture.

Sincerely,  
Fook Weng Chan  
architect  
FWC Architecture & Urban Design Inc.  
Vancouver.

s. 22(1)



*[Faint, illegible text and markings at the bottom right of the page]*

2585-01

**From:** Trevor Boddy [redacted] s.22(1)  
**Sent:** Monday, December 23, 2019 10:27 AM  
**To:** Mayor and Council; [redacted] s. 22(1)  
**Subject:** A Note and an Article to Read: Save the Forrest-Baker House  
**Attachments:** [redacted] s. 22(1)

Dear Mayor and Council:

The most globally prominent expression of West Vancouver's creativity and culture is its post-war domestic architecture. There is hardly a better exemplar of it than Ron Thom's Forrest-Baker House--this is a house I have shown in public lectures across Canada and on other continents.

I was a Globe and Mail columnist a dozen years ago when the West Vancouver Graham House by Arthur Erickson was needlessly demolished in mid-winter. I wrote the attached column about the neglect of BC's modernist legacy. I do not want to write another column on the demolition of the Forrest-Baker house.

Find a creative way to save it, please!

I would be happy to elaborate on this in any public or private context.

Sincerely

Trev

**Trevor Boddy** B.A. M.Arch. FRAIC, AIA hon

**Design Communications Consultant**

**Architecture Curator, Critic and Editor**

[redacted] s.22(1)

**email:** [redacted] s.22(1)

[redacted] s. 22(1)

19 December 2019 10:27 AM  
 Trevor Boddy  
 2585-01

## ANALYSIS

### “DEMOLITION DERBY: Why Can’t BC Preserve Its Heritage?”

By Trevor Boddy

It was downtown Vancouver’s last building that could remind us of the 1930s—a whirling wedding cake of streamline stucco that most of us knew as the Fido outlet at Georgia and Richards, first built as the Collier Auto Showroom. It got knocked down early one morning during the civic strike, leaving one more empty-tooth slot in the mug’s face of downtown.

Then on December 6, the wrecking crews went to work on one of Arthur Erickson’s most world-renown and influential houses, a grand sequence of portals and frames elegantly descending down a Horseshoe Bay cliff-side. This 1963 house for David Graham was featured on the pages of *Life Magazine* and leased as a love nest to Warren Beatty and Julie Christie when in town to shoot Robert Altman’s *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*. West Vancouver resident Barry Downs, one of British Columbia’s most-respected house architects and authors, says “The Graham House was Arthur Erickson’s Fallingwater,”—a reference to the Frank Lloyd Wright’s career-reviving rural Pennsylvania concrete and brick house, which similarly cascades over rocks down a hill.

The Georgia Street Collier/Fido showroom was a vision in white from when modernism was new, and the West Vancouver Graham House was the evolution of these same ideas of seeing architecture afresh, but tempered to our climate, our building materials, and west-coast lifestyles.

Someone broke the law, surely, when these two got whacked? Alas, no.

These losses draw attention to the weakness of British Columbia’s heritage legislation, as neither building had meaningful legal protection, and there was almost nothing except a perfunctory demolition permit needed by their owners to excise these two crucial visual reminders of how we lived in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Heritage advocates worry that the loss of these high profile downtown Vancouver and West Vancouver buildings will clear the way for an end-of-the-building-boom destruction frenzy for many more, a kind of ‘demolition derby.’ [see sidebar for more BC buildings on preservationist’s ‘watch list’]

Herb Stovel—head of heritage studies at Carleton University, and one of Canada’s leading preservationists—says that BC heritage legislation and programs are strong in the soft strategies of convincing and cajoling owners to preserve our history, but weak on legal guarantees to prevent demolitions like these. Prof. Stovel says BC is having some success with the “nurture and support” of conservation efforts, but cautions “Governments need to preserve and protect buildings, too.”

The modest—and reversible—protections of BC heritage designation are nearly always requested by building owners. In other words, we have no significant legal protections to

private buildings where there is a will and a chance for re-development—let's call it protection for the already-protected. Stovel notes that heritage protection efforts are significantly blunted by a clause in BC heritage legislation requiring public compensation if designation reduces potential private re-development profits.

Heritage designation—or as the Americans call it, the “landmarking” of private buildings without owner's approval—is commonplace in the “don't tread on me” capitalist United States, and a crucial historic preservation tool in every other O.E.C.D. nation. American preservation efforts are powered by the private sector, in large part because of tax incentives instituted under Ronald Reagan. With this public intervention into private real estate markets in the name of preserving ‘Mom and Apple Pie America,’ maybe the Harper government will come to realize it can please ‘Bonspiel and Tim Horton's Canada’ through similar tax changes here (starting with the brewing controversy over an entirely non-elitist construction, Kingsway's 2400 Court Motel.)

Canada's current federal historic sites protection for private buildings is even weaker than our provincial laws, in large part because of resistance to our central government asserting powers over heritage. Heritage preservation straddles land use and cultural concerns, and federal activism is seen to threaten entrenched constitutional rights of the provinces, especially Quebec. Federal political systems, however, have not stopped Australia and Germany from implementing strong heritage programs at both national and state levels.

BC's weak heritage legislation is the legacy of both Socred/Liberal and NDP governments, right and left both eschewing perceptions of cultural elitism in preserving our best buildings at the cost of private development rights. Consequently, we all lose a common good—a sense of our own past. With every demolition, Metro Vancouver comes closer to status as a muscular and aggressive zombie-town, with no brain and no heart.

At both municipal and provincial levels, heritage efforts are under-staffed and under-funded, with most current efforts devoted to research on sites and creative advice to owners and developers, backed up with modest grants (available to designated properties only) for their upkeep and occasional restoration. This means many micro successes—the replacement of rotting eave ornament on lots of Edwardian former doctor's residences, for example—but a few macro failures, such as the recent demolitions, and those which likely to follow in the current regulatory climate.

At a level below official designation is the largely honorific category of heritage registers—West Vancouver's is currently being compiled, while Vancouver's is being updated—which are listings of potential heritage sites. Heritage registers are useful tools for heritage and urban planners to flag properties, so the soft arts of persuasion can be applied in the context of other land use approvals. Some BC municipalities require the approval of owners even to be listed on their heritage registers, which seems to me the architectural equivalent of asking words if they want to be in the dictionary.

The District of West Vancouver debated adding the Graham residence to its draft heritage register shortly before it came down, but was reluctant to do so without the support of owner Shiraz Lalji, and everyone involved knew this would be but symbolic, not actual protection. West Vancouver city planners and politicians did everything they could to hang on to the Erickson masterpiece, but in the context of current provincial legislation and funding programs, they had no arrows in their quiver; when it comes to heritage preservation, the province owns the whole armoury.

Soft strategies of moral suasion have had some success, notably the campaign led by Arthur Erickson Conservancy founder Cheryl Cooper to protect his Evergreen Building on West Pender. But crucial to this 'soft' success, says Cooper, was some 'hard' cash, in the form of valuable "Transfer of Development Rights" which can be bought then moved to another piece of downtown. But even this device is not available today, as earlier this year Vancouver city council placed a moratorium the issuance of new TDR agreements, while it examines the large stock of existing credits yet to be plunked down on a downtown peninsula already subject to hyper-development. Vancouver is the only municipality in British Columbia that has developed a 'density bank' system, and incentives like these only work in building-hungry boom-times, seemingly about to end.

With the Graham house now gone, preservationist's worries have moved on to two even more important West Vancouver residences—houses-cum-painting studios with important gardens for artists B.C. Binning and Thomas Gordon Smith. The self-designed 1942 Binning house—a National Historic site, and arguably the first residence in Canada entirely shaped by the European Modern Movement—was thought to be safe, when Jessie Binning's will stated a first preference to donate the house and garden for permanent use as a scholar's residence or house-museum preserving the pioneering works of her pre-deceased husband. But according to one of her will's executors and former Erickson partner Geoff Massey, there has been no luck in convincing the likes of UBC, SFU or Emily Carr College of Art and Design to take on stewardship of this modest but sublime nexus of art and architecture. "If there was a half million dollars on the table, it could be done," said Massey of the funds needed to endow repairs and property taxes, "otherwise, it is going."

Similarly, and somewhat unbelievably, there is no heritage designation protection or conservation plan in place for the 1964 house designed by Arthur Erickson for Marion and Thomas Gordon Smith, recently named by his architectural peers as one of the top five buildings constructed in Canada in the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Smiths still live there, and unlike the wilful decline of the Graham property, it has never looked better. However, the Smiths have talked of willing the house and garden to the Vancouver Art Gallery. With VAG's announcement this week of their planned construction of what could end up being a quarter billion dollar new gallery building, there will be strong pressure to extract the maximum benefit out of the property—by demolishing the house or building on its integral garden.

I know and have chatted with all of our remaining stalwarts of heroic modernism, most well into their 80s: Erickson, Massey and Downs as architects, and the Smiths and the

late Jessie Binning as clients. There is often a sheepish tone of resignation in their voices, as if it was inevitable that these markers of their lives and times will be destroyed, the self-consuming monster of modernism moving on to new challenges. These sentiments are understandable, but the duty to preserve these and similar buildings is not for those for made them, but for all of us.

Like many people his age, 83 year-old Arthur Erickson has good days, and he has bad days. I talked to him in both modes recently, and there is one strong word he voiced both times about the demise of the Graham house: "Tragic."

[1485 words]

*tboddy@globeandmail.com*

**[SIDEBAR:**

*Please get photos for these if possible, as the visuals are the best arguments for their preservation. My texts below can run as extended captions]*

**GOING, GOING, GONE: BC's Threatened Modern Architecture**

1. **B.C. Binning Residence Studio and Garden, 2968 Mathers Crescent, West Vancouver.** (*photo note: for access contact current resident Adrian Archambault at 604-809-4233 cell, 922-4827 home, ¾ view of house front from below best.*) *Why should we care:* A sublime mixture of small house and contemporary garden, designed and partially built by prominent painter Bertram Charles Binning and his wife Jessie. This is the omega point for pure and Purist modernism not just in B.C. but all across Canada, being the first International Style residence named a National Historic Site (a welcome honorific without preservation powers.) *Current Status:* Without children needing a legacy, the late Mrs. Binning's will instructs that the house and garden to be maintained intact for academic or artistic purposes, but lacking an endowment of a half million dollars to cover taxes and maintenance there have been no takers so far, and executors may be forced to sell the house and its crucial garden for re-development.
2. **B.C. Hydro Dal Grauer Substation, Burrard Street between Smithe and Nelson Streets, Vancouver.** (*photo note: best shot at night, as scratched plastic obscures views in, or else get rights to VAG's image of the building in its prime on the cover of the "New Spirit" catalogue.*) *Why should we care:* Designed by Thompson Berwick Pratt, this late 1940s electrical hub was the first pure Modern building downtown, noted for its all-glass façade and bright B.C. Binning murals within. *Current Status:* When the cinema-condo project next door was proposed, the talk was of B.C. Hydro restoring Binning's murals and replacing its scratched plastic windows with clear ones. Several years after the Scotiabank/Paramount theatre opened, things are still fuzzy next door.
3. **Thomas Gordon and Marion Smith Residence, Studio and Garden, the Byway, West Vancouver.** (*photo note: best images are from New York's ESTO Agency, but the Smiths will likely grant access.*) *Why should we care:* Arthur

Erickson's most playful and profound house—small rooms spiral around a carp pond, the framing beams extended out to serve as markers for the glorious landscape, conceived by Erickson and enhanced by frequent collaborator Cornelia Oberlander. Named one of the five most important 20<sup>th</sup> century Canadian buildings by Erickson's peers at the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.

*Current Status:* Gordon and Marion Smith, both in their mid-80s, still live in the house, and the studios are in active use. The house and garden have no historic preservation protection.

4. **Robson Square and Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver.** (*photo note: shoot at lower, ice rink level looking across and up to 'stramps' and concrete forms of Robson Square/Law Courts behind, and or get permission from architect Clive Grout for first publication of current proposal--unlikely.*) *Why should we care:* This three block complex of buildings put downtown Vancouver on the global architecture map. Architect Bing Thom, Erickson's former design associate on the project, says "Robson Square now needs to be protected." *Current Status:* Deep worries in Vancouver's design community were prompted this fall when an architect's drawing circulated showing an immense wooden roof along Robson Street to cover the General Electric-sponsored skating rink renovation below. Architect Clive Grout says this is not the definitive design, but taking a page from many Ken Dobell-managed projects for our provincial government, most 2010-related designs are rushed out at the last minute, with no time for public input and commentary. One of the city's finest lecture halls was replaced by three generic classrooms in a UBC Robson Square renovation several years ago, and the future is unsure for the Rattenbury-designed former courthouse if VAG departs, as proposed. Robson Square has no historic preservation protection, but in any regard, provincial and federal governments have powers to exempt their own buildings from any such controls.

0800 -01

**From:** [Redacted] s. 22(1)  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 21, 2019 2:52 PM  
**To:** MayorandCouncil  
**Subject:** Proposed tax increases

Dear Mayor & Council: I was shocked to learn of the planned tax increase for 2020. The 6% rise is well above the rate of inflation and , in my opinion, completely unjustified. For a jurisdiction with a small and stable population we seem bent on competing with much larger municipalities. Let me give you a few examples! On a walk through Ambleside yesterday I counted eight municipal trucks with little evidence of much work being done. On that note I recently observed that several rocks had broken away from a rock face on Aspen Drive in Caulfeild. The task of removing the few stones warranted two workers at most. Instead a total of eight personnel, manning three trucks, a backhoe, and a "bobcat" turned up to deal with this monumental task. No wonder our taxes are high and rising. A simple solution would be to sell off most equipment and return to contracting out. While your at it, take a look at the rising number of management staff earning high income while producing little of benefit to the taxpayer. The forgoing are just a few suggestions you should examine. Time to roll up your sleeves! [Redacted] s. 22(1)

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

[Redacted] s. 22(1)

**From:** [Redacted] s. 22(1)  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 21, 2019 1:32 PM  
**To:** MayorandCouncil  
**Subject:** Conservative Party Wisdom - Franklin D. Roosevelt - A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself

A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself. Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people.

**Franklin D. Roosevelt**

[Redacted] s. 22(1)  
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West Vancouver BC  
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[Redacted]