



MINUTES
OAK BAY HERITAGE COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2016 AT 5:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL HALL, 2167 OAK BAY AVENUE

MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Collier
Marion Cumming
Cairine Green
Joan Heagle
Jan Mears

Margaret Palmer
Susan Ross
Robert Taylor
Pat Wilson
Councillor Kevin Murdoch

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Deborah Jensen, Planner
Roy Thomassen, Director Building and Planning

Krista Mitchell, Building / Engineering Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT

Members of the Public: 4

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm.

a. Elections

It was moved and seconded that C. Green be elected as Chair.

The motion was carried.
None opposed.

The Commission determined that a Vice Chair will be appointed as necessary.

2. Approval of Agenda and Late Items

The agenda was approved with the addition of the following items:

- Hallmark Awards
- Streamlining Paper Flow

3. Adoption of Minutes

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes from December 15, 2015 be adopted.

The motion was carried.

4. Correspondence

a. 2015 Annual Report to Mayor and Council

The Commission thanked Bronwyn Taylor and Robert Taylor for preparing the Annual Report.

It was moved and seconded that the 2015 Annual Report be adopted.

The motion was carried.

None opposed.

5. Chair's Report

C. Green thanked the Commission for its support and welcomes input from the members.

6. Old Business

a. DP000007 - 1701 Beach Drive

To permit redevelopment of the Glenlyon Norfolk School site.

C. Rowe gave a presentation on the proposed development, summarizing the information as discussed at the previous Heritage Commission meeting. Some of the comments included:

- Most of the comments received from Heritage Commission members at the site visit focussed on the link between the heritage buildings and the new buildings.
- The heritage views through the site from Beach Drive to the ocean have been protected as much as possible through building alignment and materials.
- The entryway is an important feature. It provides the transition between old and new buildings, opening up the breezeway and using transparent materials in order to see the ocean.
- It is best to differentiate between old and new construction. Wood and brick materials will enhance existing materials in a similar colour palette. Dark stained wood and red brick will improve relationship to the existing house.
- Conservation principles will be met through upgrades to the Rattenbury heritage house and site.
- Proposed roof line is cost effective and folded as a pitched roof to break down mass and allow light penetration to site. No height variances are required.
- Coach house will be relocated and the second floor will be removed.
- Underground staff parking will be accessed from Beach Drive at the north end of the site where the coach house currently sits.
- The ramp will be in the same location as existing ramp, and access will be almost flush with ground level.
- Not being built to LEED certification, but will be constructed to high sustainability standards.
- No modifications to the seawall are proposed.

Commission Comments

Commission members commended the efforts to restore the buildings, including the boat house (designed for little people), and moving the coach house better facilitates the parking. The Commission also identified a number of concerns, including:

- Standards and guidelines for the proposed development not being adhered to, and particularly the new buildings are not physically or visually compatible with the historic place. The new building is not subordinate to the old.
- Important to note the heritage goals, conserve the streetscape in neighborhoods, historic buildings and structures, cultural and natural landscape features, and celebrate Oak Bay's unique history.
- Roof of the new building is higher than the existing buildings and seems to dominate the building, becoming a focal point of the front elevation.
- There is an abruptness to the new construction as compared to the grace of the existing buildings, and needs to be more compatible and in harmony with the Rattenbury design.
- Need to retain streetscape, and proposed design of second storey blocks the view and closes off the site.

D. Luxton, speaking for the applicant, stated that a serious approach has been taken to meeting the standards and guidelines throughout development of the project. He also noted:

- Applicant wants to restore a major portion of the site as existing situation is not as respectful to the importance of the setting as it should be.
- Contemporary addition is obvious without being overstated, and is more sensitive than what is currently on the site. Development is physically compatible through massing and setbacks, and visually compatible through selection of materials.
- To be subordinate does not necessarily mean size, but rather does the new building dominate?
- Proposed development is distinguishable in that it is both subtle and contemporary. It meets the range of standards, including standard 12. Heritage will not be hurt for the future.

Commission members reiterated their concerns regarding the dominance of the roofline and overall compatibility with the modern building in that is too modern and too dominant, with an abruptness to the design. Commission members also stated existing structures provide for an openness and view opportunities through the site; while the proposed building blocks the view, particularly with the second storey, and questioned whether the buildings could be separated or angled to open the site.

C. Rowe advised that separating buildings would result in loss of significant play area for the children, and that the current separation of buildings results in a bad wind tunnel through the winter months. A redesign would be cost prohibitive.

C. Rowe also commented that the design incorporates simplicity of form and material. For the entrance way specifically, the form is not just a large brick mass, but is broken up from other angles and incorporates brick and wood.

A commission member reiterated that there is not enough of a visual distinction between the two buildings, and particularly with the second floor.

It was moved and seconded to recommend that Council support the proposed conservation of the historic buildings and the design of the new buildings. The Commission does not support the juxtaposition of the proposed main entrance and the historic house as it relates to compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

The motion was carried.
None opposed.

b. Heritage Brochures

D. Jensen presented two design formats for the heritage designation brochure to the Commission. The Commission noted a preference for the green design, preferring additional photos and use of open space.

The Commission inquired whether a graphic designer could be contracted to design a brochure.

D Jensen advised staff will investigate opportunities to work with a graphic designer. If this is not feasible, then staff will continue development of the selected design.

J. Mears left the meeting at 7:04 pm.

It was moved and seconded that the Commission supports the proposed green design for the upcoming heritage designation brochure.

The motion was carried.
None opposed.

It was moved and seconded to defer the remainder of the agenda items until February 10, 2016.

The motion was carried.
None opposed.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Heritage Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10, 2016

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.