

What is a heritage building?

The term “heritage” is defined as the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social and/or spiritual significance of a place.

The heritage value of a place is embodied in the character-defining materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings of the place.

An identified heritage building in New Westminster may fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Older than 50 years old
- Heritage Register
- Formally Protected

Determining if you have a heritage building

From a general point of view, the City considers any structure older than 50 years (pre-1961) to potentially have heritage merit.

A quick check of the City’s on-line map will identify the age of the building and if your property is listed on the Heritage Register or if it is protected heritage property.

Please review the handout *Review Procedures for Heritage Properties – A General Guide* for more details.



Heritage Register

The Heritage Register is an official listing of properties deemed to have heritage value.

Inclusion of a property on the Heritage Register allows Council the option to temporarily withhold a building permit, temporarily withhold a demolition permit, and/or to require a heritage impact assessment.

Applications for the alteration or demolition of properties listed on the Heritage Register are reviewed by the Community Heritage Commission.

Formal Protection

A property may be formally protected through:

- Heritage Designation
- Heritage Revitalization Agreement
- Inclusion on a schedule for a Heritage Conservation Area
- Heritage Conservation Covenant

Applications for the alteration or demolition of a protected heritage building are reviewed by the Community Heritage Commission and are referred to Council. Council may deny alterations to, or demolition of, property that has formal protection.

Existing Advantages

Properties listed on the Heritage Register are eligible for special provisions in the B.C. Building Code and the Homeowner Protection Act.

*Royal City Builder’s Awards
Heritage Restoration Award 1991 -
422 Third Street*

Potential Advantages

If a property has a heritage house of merit on it, the property owner may wish to consider a Heritage Revitalization Agreement.

A Heritage Revitalization Agreement, or HRA for short, is a formal, voluntary, written agreement that is negotiated between a property owner and a local government. It outlines the duties and obligations of, and the benefits to both parties of the agreement.

The agreement allows local governments to supersede local zoning regulations and to provide incentives which would make it viable for owners to conserve and preserve property of heritage merit.

The most common requests in residential HRA projects are:

- property subdivision;
- change in use from single family to multi-family;
- extra floor space;
- fewer parking spaces;
- extra building height.

Please review the handout *Heritage Revitalization Agreements – A General Guide* for more details.

It's Sustainable

The retention of a heritage building is the sustainable choice over demolition and replacement.

We want – and need – more energy-efficient homes. But a new home isn't necessarily more energy efficient than an older one, at least not for 30 years! It takes that long before energy savings will be realized by building a new house rather than rehabilitating an old one.

Think Your Building is too Structurally Unsound to Save?

There are a number of examples in New Westminster where a seemingly derelict building has been rehabilitated (some as part of a Heritage Revitalization Agreement project), to the benefit of the property owner and the community.

Galbraith House



Before



After

Howay Cottage



Before



After

Before You Decide, Talk to Us

If you are considering buying or selling a property that has a heritage building on it, please consider contacting the Planning Division to learn more about taking advantage of any heritage on the site.

If you are considering altering or demolishing a heritage building and you would like some advice, please feel free to contact us and we can arrange for you to meet with the Community Heritage Commission. *Note: projects that require Council approval must be reviewed by Council before being reviewed by any community group.*

For more information:
Development Services Department
604.527.4532