

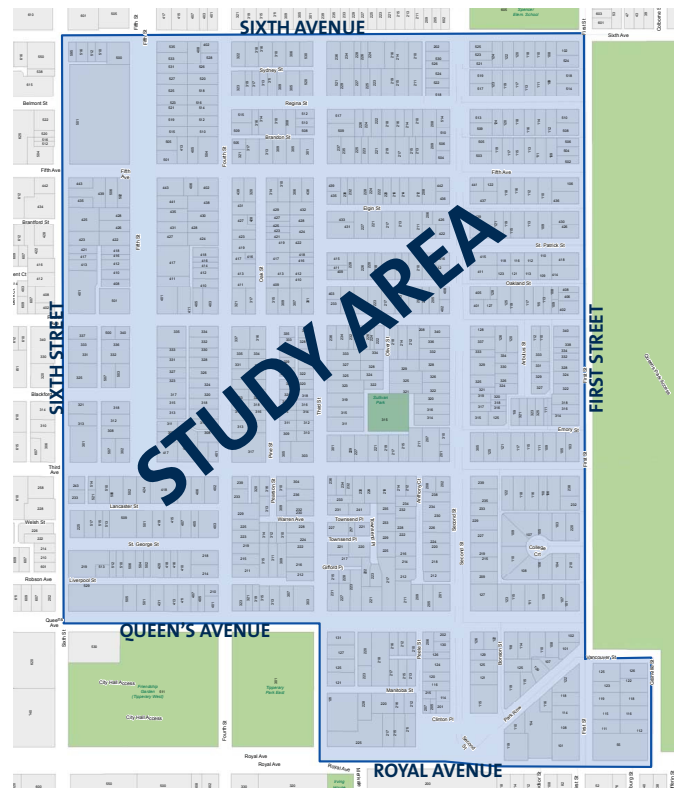
Queen's Park Neighbourhood Heritage Study **NEWSLETTER**

The purpose of the Queen's Park Neighbourhood Heritage Study is to examine different approaches for retaining and enhancing the character of the Queen's Park neighbourhood. The Study involves a number of research tasks and neighbourhood consultation.

City Council established a Working Group to work with staff to come up with ideas for reducing demolitions, encouraging sympathetic changes to existing houses, and exploring the role of compatible new house design guidelines.

The Working Group and staff are reviewing what other municipalities are doing, brainstorming approaches to heritage retention in New Westminster, debating the issues, learning from guest speakers, engaging with members of the community, and ultimately presenting Council with recommendations.

This series of newsletters is one of the ways in which this work is being shared with the neighbourhood.



TOP TEN MYTHS About Heritage

There are any number of myths about heritage conservation that can influence people's choices about purchasing, restoring or protecting a heritage house. Here are some of the most common myths:

1. The Queen's Park neighbourhood has design guidelines that everyone has to follow.

The Queen's Park neighbourhood has voluntary design guidelines. They were endorsed by Council in 1999 with the intention of maintaining the heritage character of single family properties in the neighbourhood. Refined design guidelines are one approach the Queen's Park Neighbourhood Heritage Study is exploring.

2. A house has to be older than 50 years to be considered heritage.

In New Westminster, when a demolition permit is received for any house older than 50 years it is automatically reviewed by the City for heritage value, but a building could be considered heritage if it is as young as 20 years, depending on its significance.

3. There are laws that prevent beautiful old houses from being torn down.

Outside of formal heritage protection (Heritage Designation, Heritage Revitalization Agreement, inclusion on a schedule for a Heritage Conservation Area, or Heritage Conservation Covenant), there is no such law.

4. A wooden plaque on the house means it is protected as heritage.

In New Westminster, a house with a wooden plaque participated in the New Westminster Heritage Preservation Society Tour and Tea. A house with a bronze plaque stating "City of New Westminster Designated Heritage Building" is a protected heritage property.

5. The B.C. Building Code doesn't recognize heritage buildings and will make me replace all my historic material.

The B.C. Building Code is a regulation made under the Municipal Act and is based on the National Building Code of Canada. The code is essentially a set of minimum provisions used to ensure the safety of buildings with respect to public health, fire protection and structural sufficiency. The B.C. Building Code recognizes heritage buildings, which it defines as buildings that are legally recognized by the Province or local government as having historic, architectural or cultural value for the Province or their communities. Alternate Compliance Methods were developed to provide acceptable options for heritage buildings to achieve compliance with the performance level required by the B.C. Building Code without replacing historic material.

6. Heritage Designation means I have no choice in the colours I use to paint my house.

A designated heritage house must receive permission for a paint scheme. There are many choices available and consideration will be given to any proposed paint scheme. Check out the "True Colours Palette" at www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org.
(continued on next page)



TOP TEN MYTHS About Heritage

7. Heritage Designation will devalue my property.

Property value depends on many variables, and heritage status (i.e. being on a heritage register or designated) is just one of them. Some voice the concern that any restrictions on future use or alterations will make a property less attractive in the marketplace. In fact, studies have shown that residential heritage property actually increases in value faster than other properties, and holds its value better during market slumps. Check out Rudy Neilsen's article "The Heritage Advantage" (published in the February 2014 issue of Municipal World) at www.newwestcity.ca/qpnhs

8. If I agree to Heritage Designation, the City will make me restore my house to its original appearance.

The City will not require a property owner to return their house to its original appearance as part of a Heritage Designation process. The Heritage Designation process is a formal process that includes the creation of a bylaw which must receive three readings and a public hearing before Council may consider giving it adoption. There is no charge for this process.

Heritage Designation is often a requirement of a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA). An HRA is a negotiated agreement between the City and property owner which can be used to consider a change in use or increased density on a property that would normally not be allowed under zoning, in exchange for restoration and long term legal protection of the historic building.

9. Heritage Designation means that I can't do anything with my house.

Heritage Designation is limited to the building exterior, unless interior features are specifically protected. Once a property is designated by bylaw, the owner must obtain a Heritage Alteration Permit to make alterations. The owner brings the proposed changes to the City's Planning Division, which takes the application to the Community Heritage Commission (CHC) for comment. If both the Planning Division and the CHC support the application, then it is presented to Council for consideration of approval or approved by Council's delegated authority.

10. Heritage Designation will increase my insurance costs.

Old houses with special architectural features may be more expensive to repair or rebuild. This is particularly true of designated heritage houses which must be rebuilt to replicate the original. Because of this, insurance for unique old homes may be higher, and some insurance companies are unwilling to insure a home with heritage designation. Check out www.heritagebc.ca for a list of heritage-friendly insurance companies.



Resident Feedback **Survey Results**

The Queen's Park neighbourhood received a survey as part of the early phase of neighbourhood consultation. A total of 120 survey responses were submitted. Below is a short summary of the responses:

- Respondents cited “historic neighbourhood” as the attribute they liked most about living in Queen's Park, followed by “location” and “walkability”.
- The most common elements that respondents felt defined heritage were “older homes/area”, “historic neighbourhood/ importance of history”, “specific time periods” (e.g., “turn of the century”) and the “preservation of heritage buildings/houses”.



- The majority of respondents (84.5%) had “some” knowledge or “a lot” of knowledge about the heritage home tour and heritage designation. Just over half of respondents had “some” knowledge or “a lot” of knowledge about the heritage inventory (59.1%), heritage revitalization agreements (56.0%), and the heritage register (50.4%). Most survey respondents (32.2%) did not consider themselves knowledgeable about heritage conservation areas, heritage tree designations, and heritage conservation covenants.
- Most survey respondents (62.4%) thought that the Queen's Park Neighbourhood had experienced either fewer or the same number of demolitions compared with other neighbourhoods over the past five years. In fact, in the last five years, the City-wide average is 3.1 house demolitions per 100 single detached dwellings and 1.9 house demolitions per 100 single detached dwellings in the Queen's Park neighbourhood.
- Approximately nine in ten respondents (88.9%) thought that “protecting and enhancing the character of the Queen's Park Neighbourhood” was either “important” or “very important”. The top reasons mentioned by survey respondents included history, sets us apart/makes us unique, and concerns about the architecture of new homes being incompatible.
- A majority of respondents supported statements related to protecting and enhancing the character of the Queen's Park Neighbourhood as being either “important” or “very important”. Support was especially strong for “ensuring new construction is compatible with the neighbourhood in terms of design and scale”. *(continued on next page)*

Resident Feedback

Survey Results

- The greatest barriers that respondents felt prevented them from taking steps to protecting with heritage designation were “change of property value”, “unclear process”, and “expense of process”.
- The most common ideas for encouraging protection through heritage designation were financial incentives (eg. grants, tax breaks or credits), more information and guidance, and fewer restrictions on renovations or alterations.
- Approximately four in five respondents (79.8%) live in a single detached house without a secondary suite.
- More than nine in ten respondents (91.6%) own their home.
- More than three in four respondents (76.9%) live in homes that had been built before the end of World War II.
- Approximately two in three respondents (67.5%) had lived in the Queen’s Park area for 10 years or more.
- Approximately half of respondents (48.2%) are in the 50-64 year old age range.
- Half of respondents (50.0%) who provided geographical information lived in the Queen’s Park North area, between Sixth Avenue and Fourth Avenue.

QUESTIONS WE HEARD AT THE LAST OPEN HOUSE:

My house needs work; where do I start?

Who do I talk to at City Hall?

What can I read to learn about heritage conservation?

What about laneway houses and stratification?

What are the criteria for a Heritage Conservation Area?

Can we get a copy of the map showing the age of the houses?

What are the definitions of heritage terms?

Can we know the rules of heritage designation before we decide?

Can you create a pamphlet about heritage recognition?

The answers to these questions will be available shortly on the Study’s webpage:

www.newwestcity.ca/qpnhs

Study Process **NEXT STEPS**

WINTER 2015	SPRING 2015	SUMMER 2015	FALL 2015
<p>Innovations, Solutions & Strategies</p> <p>The Working Group sub-committees will continue with further research on a variety of heritage topics.</p> <p>Speaker Series</p> <p>Informative Speakers have been scheduled to provide information to both the Working Group and the public. In January, Mr. D'Agostini provided an overview of the Vancouver Heritage Action Plan and insight into Vancouver's heritage/character house demolition discussion.</p>	<p>Public Open House</p> <p>The next Open House will be scheduled to take place in April.</p> <p>Implementation Strategy Development</p> <p>The Working Group will be working with staff to review open house feedback and develop implementation strategies which will form part of a proposed implementation and monitoring program.</p>	<p>Document Preparation</p> <p>The Working Group will be working with staff to prepare a report outlining recommendations to Council.</p> <p>Document Review</p> <p>The Working Group will be reviewing the proposed recommendations; preparing a newsletter to update the community; and preparing for the next Open House which will be scheduled in September.</p>	<p>Public Open House</p> <p>An Open House will be scheduled to take place in September.</p> <p>Council Presentation</p> <p>The Working Group will be working with staff to review open house feedback, making final revisions to the recommendations, and presenting the final document to Council for their review.</p>

COUNCIL REVIEW



Next **Speakers** Series

“Vancouver’s First Shaughnessy: Options for Conserving a Heritage Area”

Donald Luxton, Heritage Professional

*City of New Westminister Council Chamber
February 26, 2015 @7:00pm*

“Property values of historic homes in the Queen’s Park neighbourhood and what insurance companies think about historic homes”

BC Assessment Authority and Westland Insurance Group

*City of New Westminister Council Chamber
March 26, 2015 @ 7:00pm*

For More **Information**

City of New Westminister

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Working Group’s Facebook Page

 /Queen’s Park Neighbourhood Heritage Study Working Group

Queen’s Park Residents’ Association

 qpra.org

Heritage Preservation Society

 newwestheritage.org