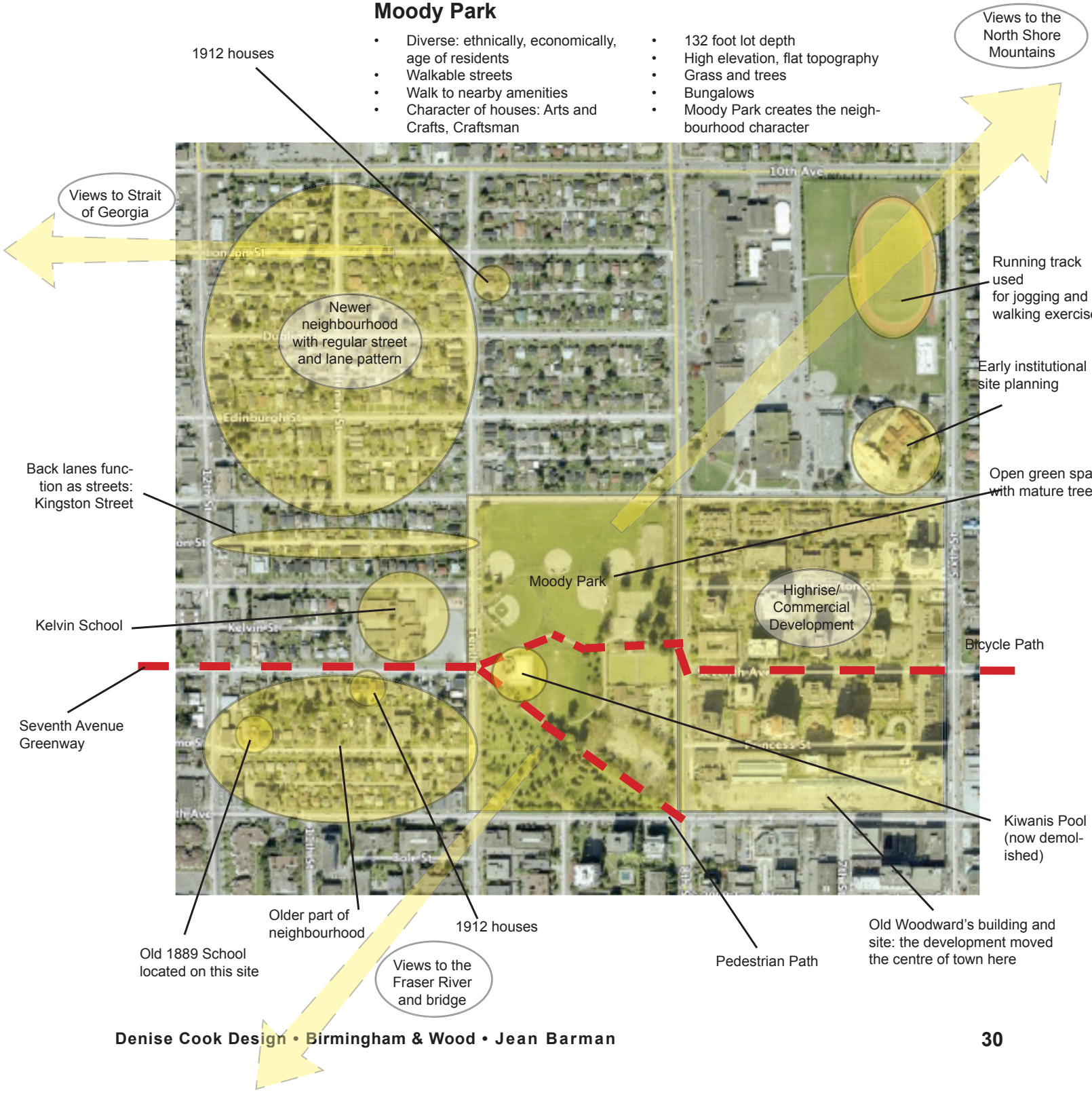


New Westminster's Neighbourhoods
Identifying Historical Contexts

Moody Park

- Diverse: ethnically, economically, age of residents
- Walkable streets
- Walk to nearby amenities
- Character of houses: Arts and Crafts, Craftsman
- 132 foot lot depth
- High elevation, flat topography
- Grass and trees
- Bungalows
- Moody Park creates the neighbourhood character





Moody Park Values



Moody Park's beginnings, like those of Queen's Park, go back in time to the Royal Engineers' provision of grand city sites. The Moody Park neighbourhood is like the West End bounded by 6th and 10th Avenues on the south and north and by 6th and 12th Streets on the east and west. The City defines the same area but without the southeast commercial and highrise residential as Kelvin. Its main feature of the area is 25-acre Moody Park along its southern boundary. The area slopes slightly toward the Fraser River.

The Moody Park neighbourhood is aesthetically valued for its place on the plateau, which gives it a big sky and wonderful views to the North Shore Mountains. Its organization along street grids and parks is of historical value for having been laid out by the Royal Engineers.

The neighbourhood is of historical value also for the BC Electric Railway line that ran along Twelfth Street, and for the area's main north/south streets connecting with major regional arterials: Twelfth Street becomes Kingsway, and Eighth Street becomes Canada Way north of the City.

A social value of the Moody Park neighbourhood is its identification with the park of the same name. The park is heavily used by the neighbourhood for organized and personal recreational use. The area is of social significance for being historically a place for civic institutions, including the Loyal Protestant Orphanage and facilities for the military, who used Moody Park as a marshalling ground. The southeast corner of the neighbourhood is culturally and socially significant as the site of the Woodwards shopping centre, which transformed the commercial character of the city after the war.

The streets and lanes of Moody Park are of social and cultural value for being the prime social spaces for neighbourhood residents.



Beginnings

The Royal Engineers surveyed the area in 1859, and in 1863 the city designated a site bounded by 6th and 8th Avenues and 8th and 10th Streets for public use, and one between 8th and 10th Avenues and 6th and 8th Streets as a cemetery. The area became part of the city in 1888. Subdivisions occurred in the part of the neighbourhood west of 10th Street prior to 1890 in anticipation of the opening of the interurban railway. In 1889 the city created Moody Park, and shortly thereafter residential construction began along 6th Avenue on the new street's northern edge. Craftsman bungalows came to dot the area. The area south of 8th Avenue was largely settled prior to the First World War. Amenities to residents included sewer installation and some small commercial nodes.



The emerging neighbourhood, whose name and boundaries have shifted over time, acquired services beginning with a Methodist church on the corner of 6th Avenue and 12th Street in 1890 and a Presbyterian church in 1891. A school was built at the corner of 12th and Nanaimo streets in 1889. The British Columbia Electric Railway line running along 12th Street connected area residents to downtown New Westminster, to Vancouver, and to the Fraser Valley. The site for Lord Kelvin Elementary School was purchased in 1909. The school, which gave the neighbourhood its earlier name, opened in 1910, and shortly thereafter came the proverbial corner store just across the street from the new school.

In 1907, the area bounded by 10th Avenue, 8th Street, 8th Avenue and 10th Street was subdivided. In 1912, a second school, Lord Lister, was built on the same site. In 1914, the cemetery site was the location of the city Public Works Yard.

A child of the early twentieth century recalled how "Moody Park wasn't much of a park" with "nothing but broom and scrub plants" in much of it (Jim Hyslop in Rudolph: 60). During the First World War it served as a marshalling ground for soldiers. The park was gradually developed for



recreation with the addition of a baseball diamond in 1912, a wading pool and playground in 1921, and a clubhouse in 1938 that was like the wading pool and playground courtesy of the Kiwanis Club. In 1958 the clubhouse would become the home of the New Westminster Parks and Recreation Department.

The interwar years saw the development of the northern part of the neighbourhood. The Loyal Protestant Orphanage opened on an unused part of the cemetery site in 1925, and at the beginning of the Second World War military barracks and a drill field were constructed nearby. With their removal following the war, the site was developed for public high schools. The orphanage was in 1984 renovated as the Royal City Christian Centre. In 2005, an assisted living facility was accommodated on the site.



Revitalization

A study undertaken by the city's Planning Department in 1965 for the purposes of urban renewal divided the city into nineteen areas requiring further study. The areas of 12th Street and Moody Park were roughly coterminous with present day Moody Park neighbourhood. Twelfth Street, which extended a bit further west than does today's neighbourhood, received a middling assessment:

This area, which sits astride one of the major approaches to the City [Kingsway] is very shabby and run-down in spots. Parking and traffic movement in and through the area are major problems. The area contains a mixture of stores, apartments, houses, and other uses which if rehabilitated or in certain cases, redeveloped, would be of benefit not only to the immediate residents and businessmen but to the City as a whole. (62).

Moody Park got a somewhat different assessment:

This area, predominantly single family, is somewhat isolated by a number of major streets. Excellent school and park facilities serve [Moody Park]. Surface drainage problems are known to exist, and



evidence of some deterioration and neglect is apparent in many of the blocks. The treatment of this area appears to be rehabilitation. (62).

The 1950s and 1960s saw a number of apartment buildings constructed along 12th Street and south of 8th Avenue. In 1993, in the course of the city preparing a heritage management plan, several community open houses were held to identify resources and their best management. Twenty-two persons attended the open house held in May 1993 for Brow-of-the-Hill, Uptown and Kelvin. According to the summery of the meeting:



"Residents defined heritage as being "something that has a story to tell" and "something unique worth saving." A heritage resource may also be something of value to the owner or to the community….A heritage resource was further described as being something rare and, once gone, could not be replaced…As a way of defining what they meant by a "heritage resource," participants offered examples ranging in scale from lamp standards to gardens, streetscapes and views….Although there was some concern about the increasing number of demolitions, many people felt that not all old buildings should be saved. New housing should be compatible with the existing neighbourhoods". (np)

In 2001, three-quarters of present day Moody Park lay in the then neighbourhood of Kelvin, whose basic indicators roughly paralleled those of New Westminster as a whole. About half owned their own homes and the other half rented. Just over a quarter were immigrants, primarily from India, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom, with the newest arrivals coming from the Philippines and Bosnia-Herzogovina.

The neighbourhood's outstanding feature is Moody Park which has sports fields, arena with ice rinks, tennis courts, outdoor pool, lacrosse facilities, playgrounds, and spray park. An outdoor public clock was installed in Moody Park in 2008 and an outdoor pool is in the process of completion. The neighbourhood is also home to the outdoor sports facility of Mercer Stadium and to Century House, a municipal facility offering services and leisure activities for seniors.



Perceptions from within the neighbourhood

An open house for the Moody Park neighborhood was held on October 28, 2008. Attendees emphasized the pride they take in their neighbourhood and in its heritage and natural resources. They value the diversity as to age, race, and economic status of the population.

The neighbourhood was described as a 'bungalow community,' reminiscent of its Chicago counterpart. The use of Art Deco for new construction on 12th Street by the 12th Street Neighbourhood Society is appreciated. Garages are considered to be good accessories to heritage buildings. Sometimes it makes more sense to renovate a garage than the house itself. It is important to maintain the character of lanes, for they have an impact on the overall house design. It was noted lanes have potential as future streets.

Streets and streetscapes matter, including 12th Street as a commercial corridor. It was pointed out that the Royal Engineers laid out repetitive areas echoing each other. In some areas, as below 8th Avenue, the streets do not go through, which is an inconvenience.

Moody Park attendees value the neighbourhood's natural environment, including its location on a plateau, up high, with open sky and views of the North Shore mountains. Moody Park itself is beloved, including the pool and trails. Trees on the streets, including the 7th Avenue greenway, and in the park are much appreciated. The monkey puzzle and hemlock trees are considered important neighbourhood features. Attendees value the ability to walk everywhere. It is possible to access the neighbourhood by foot in all different directions.

Attendees made several suggestions for neighbourhood improvement. Green space is cut off by the high school east of 8th Street. While the school track is used by the community, Mercer Stadium is mostly used for the school, not as much as it might be by the community even though it has the potential to become a regional facility.

Moody Park attendees summed up their neighbourhood as having the



following characteristics:

- walking place; 'you can walk everywhere'
- place to see the sky, feeling of being up high
- views of the mountains
- flat topography
- place of grass and trees
- neighbourhood centre in Moody Park itself
- people
- mix of 'lifers' and high turnover
- ethically, economically, and agewise diverse
- meeting place, social place
- threat of being overwhelmed by through traffic
- place of bungalows in the Arts and Craft and Craftsman styles
- place seemingly built up from Edwardian beginnings into the 1930s/1940s
- older area south of 7th Avenue / newer area north of 7th Avenue
- 50' wide lots an important grain
- some old houses with interesting history, as on the north side of Nanaimo almost at 12th Street which was an old school and relocated on skids to present site
- Deco theme given to 12th Street in recent years
- away from the Fraser River as 'New West North'
- importance of 12th Street as the extension of Kingsway and of 8th Street as the extension of Canada Way
- 7th Avenue as a cherished bike and pedestrian route, connected through Moody Park to points east
- institutional buildings as some 'other' that is not part of the Moody Park neighbourhood due to use and building type



Moody Park Thematic Framework

Diverse history of settlement:

- Later settlement in a location away from downtown
- Douglas Road pioneer cemetery
- Variety of housing types over time
- Mix of uses

Sports and recreation hub:

- Early establishment of Moody Park as a centre for recreation
- Ongoing development of recreational facilities

Area of social and civic functions:

- Military use of school site
- Kiwanis Club activities
- Loyal Protestant Home for Children

Post WWII boom and transformation:

- Commercial development on Sixth Street
- Bartholomew Plan
- New high school, Woodward's Department Store

Neighbourhood Features

Landscape Characteristics

- An range of suburban landscapes largely dating from the interwar period of the 20th Century to the 1960s, with some earlier landscapes at its southern edge

Natural Systems and Features

- relatively flat plateau lands

Spatial Organization

- grid of suburban streets with major roads criss-crossing through

Land Use

- Suburban housing



- regional park (Moody Park)
- Post-war redevelopment of southeast quadrant into high density multi-unit housing and regional commercial

Cultural Traditions

- ready access to major City park: Moody Park
- sporting activities and events in Moody Park
- neighbourhood walking/house watching down streets and lanes

Circulation

- grid of major roads and local residential streets

Topography

- plateau lands

Vegetation

- suburban planting from the times of development in the 20th Century
- major evergreen and deciduous trees associated with areas of Moody Park not used as playing fields

Buildings and Structures

- suburban houses in the manner of the times they were built

Views and Vistas

- views to the North Shore mountains, Strait of Georgia and the Fraser River and Patullo Bridge

Water Features

- none remaining