

Recommendation

Concerning the proposed designation of the residence located at Lot 42, Blk/Par 4, Plan no. 99SA00788 extension 0 (also known as 1102 Spadina Crescent East, Saskatoon) as a Municipal Heritage Property.



May 27, 2015

Background:

The City of Saskatoon issued a Notice of Intention to 1102 Spadina Crescent East, Saskatoon, as Municipal Heritage Property on February 10, 2015. This notice ran in the *Star-Phoenix* on both February 14 and 15, 2015 and advised citizens that any objection to this designation must be received by the City Clerk no later than March 20, 2015. An objection was received from Mr. Don Greer and City Council unanimously referred the matter to the Saskatchewan Heritage Property Review Board for their recommendation on the matter.

A public hearing was held on May 22, 2015 at City Park Collegiate High School in Saskatoon. The proponents for designation put forward the argument that the structure's modest size and massing, when taken with its occupancy by several prominent residents of Saskatoon, warranted a municipal heritage designation. The objector put forward the argument that recent renovations had resulted in the loss of much of the building's original fabric and that the connection between the structure and its former occupants was not strong enough to warrant designation. During this hearing Review Board Members heard submissions on behalf of the City of Saskatoon, the property owner and the objector to designation. There were no representations made by local residents.

Authority and Scope of Decision Making:

The Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation has authority under Section 5.1(f) of the *Heritage Property Act (2014)* to "review public objections to proposed heritage designations... by convening public hearings and reporting on its findings and recommendations," following the process outlined in Section 14 and 15. This may, and has, been delegated to the Saskatchewan Heritage Property Review Board as per Sections 6.1(1)(B)(i) and 6.3 of the *Act*. The Review Board interprets its authority to extend only to the assessment of the property's architectural, historical, cultural, environmental, archeological, paleontological, aesthetic and/or scientific value, and cannot make a recommendation based on other circumstances or considerations.

Findings of Fact:

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/pc/R62-343-2010-eng.pdf) identify three approaches to conservation (preservation, restoration and rehabilitation), with preference being given to preservation work that focuses on the retention of as much historic fabric as possible. While rehabilitation allows for alterations necessary to accommodate new or expanded uses of a place, rehabilitation should be also compatible with the architectural style of the structure as well as the structure's original materials. Even in rehabilitation, treatment aspects of preservation and restoration should also be given consideration. Every attempt should be made to retain as much original fabric as possible and to reinstate character defining elements of the structure that are missing or too deteriorated to preserve.

In the case of 1102 Spadina Crescent East, there is little evidence that commonly accepted conservation practices were employed during renovation. Virtually all of the structure's original fabric and character defining elements have been removed. In addition the footprint of the property has been altered and the materials used were not in keeping with the building's original fabric, materials commonly available at the time, or materials used on comparable buildings of that era and style. The Saskatchewan Heritage Property Review Board therefore finds that 1102 Spadina Crescent East is no longer a representative example of a home of this style and era and does not warrant being set apart as a municipal heritage property for the purposes of representing a typical boomtown residence in this neighbourhood of Saskatoon.

Associative values of any historic property should be strongly linked to the property's physical values. In the case of 1102 Spadina Crescent East, despite a number of early residents who called the property home for various lengths of time, nothing in the materials provided to the Review Board suggests that the reasons that these persons may be considered significant in their own right was because of their connection to the property. For example, 1102 Spadina Crescent East was not the location where significant works were produced nor was it the location where defining events in the lives of these individuals had occurred. Consideration should be given to alternate means and venues for the commemoration of these individuals that are more directly associated with their reasons for municipal significance. Additionally, given the extensive loss of historic fabric, the property is no longer representative of the periods during which these individuals resided at the property.

Recommendation:

The Saskatchewan Heritage Property Review Board unanimously recommends that 1102 Spadina Crescent East not be designated as a Municipal Heritage Property.

The Review Board observed that after the property owners approached the City of Saskatoon about the possibility of designation, they were given permission to proceed with the redevelopment plans prior to the property being reviewed by the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee and prior to the property's formal designation by the City. By allowing the renovation work to proceed before the *Application for Municipal Heritage Designation and Tax Abatement Funding under the Heritage Conservation Program* was accepted and implemented, the City of Saskatoon lost its opportunity to ensure that the character defining elements outlined in the preliminary heritage assessment of the property were appropriately protected.

As a result, the Saskatchewan Heritage Property Review Board suggests that the City of Saskatoon undertake a review of its municipal heritage property designation process and its work approval process. It is suggested that the City of Saskatoon review the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport publication entitled *Municipal Heritage Property Designation* (<http://www.tpcs.gov.sk.ca/MHPDesGuide>) to assist in this review. The Review Board further

suggests that the City of Saskatoon review all redevelopment plans for Municipal Heritage Properties against the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* to ensure that the highest principles of heritage conservation are being observed.

During the public hearing, the Review Board heard concerns from all parties that the fundamental character of the City Park neighbourhood was under threat as modest boom era residences were being demolished in favour of large, modern homes that are not in keeping with this neighbourhood's sense of place. It was apparent that the modest size and massing of 1102 Spadina Crescent East, despite the loss of original fabric, was seen to be more in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood as a whole. Given that one of the primary arguments for designation is that the property is more in keeping with the more traditional modest style of residences original to the neighbourhood, it is suggested that the city investigate implementing an architectural control district for the area as the means by which to conserve the distinctive character of the area rather than pursuing designation of this particular property.

The passion for, and sense of connection to, 1102 Spadina Crescent East on the part of the property owners was clearly evident and the Review Board commends the owners for the work they have done to create an attractive home for themselves in a property that obviously has great family and sentimental value. The Review Board recognizes the unfortunate position in which the owners were placed given that the work was approved by the City of Saskatoon and proceeded prior to municipal designation formally being bestowed.

Information and Knowledge Taken into Account in making this Recommendation:

The City of Saskatoon, the property owners, the objector and other interested parties had the opportunity to make oral representations, written representations or both to the Saskatchewan Heritage Property Review Board. In total, Review Board Members received three written submission and heard verbal testimony from the following people:

1. Ms. Catherine Kambeitz (City of Saskatoon);
2. Mr. Richard Maj (Property Owner);
3. Mr. Don Greer (Objector);
4. Ms. Paula Kotaseck-Toth (City of Saskatoon).

The Saskatchewan Heritage Property Review Board was provided with additional biographical information from both Mr. Greer and Mr. Maj at the end of the public hearing.