

Statement of Significance - 1132 Empress Avenue

Description

The 1 1/2 storey house at 1132 Empress Avenue is a good example of an American Craftsman style home in the Fernwood neighbourhood of Victoria. The gabled, low-pitched roof and exposed structural elements like eaves brackets and porch roof beams are classic features to the style while the remaining, original wood frame windows and wood cladding add to the building character. The designation of the home is limited to the building footprint.



Heritage Value

Constructed in 1913 for Mr. James Daly, the wiring inspector for the City of Victoria, the house became a home for a variety of people over the subsequent years. Jason Green, a telegraph operator dwelt in the home in the late 1920's, Theo Mattison, a train man for the E&N Railway, lived here in the 1940's, while James King with his wife Patricia and Michael S. Cousineau with his wife Valerie, both families connected with the Canadian Armed Forces lived here in the 1960's. Through to today, the house has been a continuously occupied residence for the City of Victoria.

Through its architectural form and style, the historic building at 1132 Empress Avenue has aesthetic value as a good example of the Craftsman Bungalow displaying, in particular, the mature American or California design. The 1 1/2 storey massing over a basement with the low-pitched roof lines, full width front verandah, and exposed structural elements present the modesty and functionality of the style. The bays and dormers with shed and gable roofs add interest to the form while the stained glass and multi-pane, wood framed windows along with the bevel edged wood siding and shingle cladding add a touch of elegance. The stone foundation supporting the verandah adds to the contrast in natural materials and textures.

Character Defining Elements

The key elements that define the character of this historic building and support its heritage values are:

- The articulating, condensed form and low scale, 1 1/2 storey plus basement massing
- Craftsman style detailing including:
 - the low pitched, gabled roofs with both gabled and shed dormers
 - exposed structural elements including the eaves brackets and roof beams
 - the stylized wood siding and shingle cladding
- The full width, covered verandah supported on an ashlar stone foundation
- The wood frame, multi lite and stained glass windows
- The corbelled, clay brick chimney contained within the building footprint
- Continuous use as a residential home for the City of Victoria



Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework Evaluation

Theme 1: Coastal Settlement

- 1.3 Pioneer Farms to First Suburbs

1132 Empress Avenue is a good example of showing how the city grew from the first settlements into a suburban area with this type of infill housing starting to shape the neighbourhoods.



Theme 5: Cultural Exchange

- 5.1 Architectural Expression

1132 Empress Avenue is a good example of the developed Craftsman architecture. The low-pitched, gabled roof over the 1 1/2 storey massing with a modest decorative style grew with the emergence of the family home filling in the suburban neighbourhoods, providing the growing populace with a modest style of home that was well built.