

E.1.a Report from the January 18, 2024 COTW Meeting

Moved By Councillor Dell

Seconded By Councillor Caradonna

That the following recommendations from the January 18, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting be approved:

E.1.a.a 557-561 Fisgard Street: Heritage Designation Permit No. 000205 (Downtown)

That Council:

1. approve the designation of the property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street pursuant to Section 611 of the Local Government Act, as a Municipal Heritage Site; and
2. direct staff to prepare the Heritage Designation Bylaw for introductory readings at a subsequent meeting and a Public Hearing date be set.

E.1.a.b 565 Fisgard Street: Heritage Designation Permit No. 000207 (Downtown)

That Council:

1. approve the designation of the property located at 565 Fisgard Street, pursuant to Section 611 of the Local Government Act, as a Municipal Heritage Site; and
2. direct staff to prepare the Heritage Designation Bylaw for introductory readings at a subsequent meeting and a Public Hearing date be set.

E.1.a.c Council Member Motion: Accelerating the Network of Greener, Quieter, Low-Traffic Streets

That Council direct staff to identify, accelerate, and pilot shared street or partial or complete road closures to create or enable new boulevards, community spaces, placemaking initiatives, and green spaces; and that staff use some or all of the following criteria to guide and prioritize pilot projects:

1. identify areas in which overall impacts to traffic flow are marginal;
2. enhance safety for children, pedestrians, seniors, and those with mobility challenges, as well as pilots that enhance liveability and community vibrancy;
3. consider ways of activating streets and supporting small businesses via new pedestrianized zones, with the emphasis on village centres;
4. choose projects that connect green spaces bifurcated by roads and/or connect school grounds to green spaces;

5. ensure prioritization for greenspace, pollinator corridors, biodiverse native plants, shade trees, and, where possible, food-producing plants;
6. where possible, implement bioswales, rainwater gardens, and other green stormwater strategies
7. identify the impact changed vehicle traffic will have on streets affected by road closures.

E.1.a.d Council Member Motion: Greater Transparency of Closed Meeting Matters

- A. That Council direct staff to report back on the implications, if any, of adjusting the existing “rise and report” process following a closed city committee or council meeting by making changes to the process such as:
 1. defaulting to reveal as much information as possible to let the public know issues discussed in closed meetings, as long as they do not breach either the Province’s Community Charter, Victoria’s Code of Conduct Bylaw, or other legal obligations
 2. at the end of each item of every closed meeting, discuss what information will be revealed, with a timeline as soon as possible
 3. where possible, revealing that a meeting took place, even when no other details can be revealed
 4. when an issue is brought into open, revealing that a final vote has been unanimous or not unanimous, and the breakdown of the vote
- B. That Council direct staff to report back on what, if any, existing “rise and report” processes are undertaken, and to what extent and under what circumstances, to publicly report out on matters discussed in a closed city committee or council meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. CONSENT AGENDA

Council requested that item **G.4 - Council Member Motion: Canadian Capital Cities Organization Winter Conference** be added to the consent agenda.

Council requested that item **G.2 - Council Member Motion: Greater Transparency of Closed Meeting Matters** be removed from the consent agenda.

Moved By Councillor Thompson
Seconded By Councillor Coleman

That the following Consent Agenda items be approved:

E.1 557-561 Fisgard Street: Heritage Designation Permit No. 000205 (Downtown)

Committee received a report dated December 19, 2023 from the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development regarding a Heritage Designation Application for the property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street in order to designate the exterior of the heritage-registered property, and recommending that it proceed to a Public Hearing.

That Council:

1. approve the designation of the property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street pursuant to Section 611 of the Local Government Act, as a Municipal Heritage Site; and
2. direct staff to prepare the Heritage Designation Bylaw for introductory readings at a subsequent meeting and a Public Hearing date be set.

E.2 565 Fisgard Street: Heritage Designation Permit No. 000207 (Downtown)

Committee received a report dated December 19, 2023 from the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development regarding the Heritage Designation Application for the property located at 565 Fisgard Street in order to designate the exterior of the heritage-registered property, and recommending that it proceed to a Public Hearing.

That Council:

1. approve the designation of the property located at 565 Fisgard Street, pursuant to Section 611 of the Local Government Act, as a Municipal Heritage Site; and
2. direct staff to prepare the Heritage Designation Bylaw for introductory readings at a subsequent meeting and a Public Hearing date be set.

G.4 Council Member Motion: Canadian Capital Cities Organization Winter Conference

1. That Council authorizes the attendance and associated costs for Councillor Loughton to attend the Canadian Capital Cities Organization Winter Conference in Ottawa from January 31 to February 2, 2024.
2. That this motion be forwarded to the daytime Council meeting on January 18, 2024, for Council consideration.

The estimated total cost for attending is:

Accommodation (3 nights)	\$ 797.34
Flights	\$ 708.31
Meals	\$ 275
Ground Transportation (incl Taxis to/from airports)	\$ 250
Carbon offset	\$219
TOTAL	\$2,249.65

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of January 18, 2024

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** December 19, 2023
From: Karen Hoese, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development
Subject: Heritage Designation Application No. 000205 for 557-561 Fisgard Street

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. approve the designation of the property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street pursuant to Section 611 of the Local Government Act, as a Municipal Heritage Site; and
2. direct staff to prepare the Heritage Designation Bylaw for introductory readings at a subsequent meeting and a Public Hearing date be set.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

In accordance with Section 611 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may designate real property, in whole or in part, as protected property.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations regarding an owner request to designate the exterior of the heritage-registered property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street. The commercial and institutional building was built in 1908 and contributes to the historic character of Victoria's Historic Chinatown.

The designation of this building is generally consistent with Section 8: "Placemaking (Urban Design and Heritage)" of the *Official Community Plan, 2012 (OCP)*, with Section 7, "*Heritage*" of the *Downtown Core Area Plan*, and with the *Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework*.

The application was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Panel at its December 12, 2023 meeting and it was recommended that Council consider approving the designation of the heritage-registered property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street.



City of Victoria Archives

Image circa 1965

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposal

The property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street, also referred to as Lee Woy & Company Building, is a modest two-storey plus 'cheater' mezzanine brick-clad building, built in the heart of Chinatown in 1908. The exterior façade has minimal ornamentation with a metal balcony at the second-floor level that was added later, and retail storefronts at the ground level. The Dart Coon Club and Chih Kung T'ang occupy the second floor of the building. Some of its character-defining elements include:

- location on the south side of Fisgard Street, part of a grouping of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century historic masonry buildings in Victoria's Chinatown National Historic Site
- continuous commercial and institutional use
- siting on the front and side property lines, with no setbacks
- commercial form, scale and massing as expressed by its two-storey height with 'cheater' mezzanine, symmetrical plan, and flat roof
- retail storefronts facing Fisgard Street and association meeting rooms above
- brick walls, with corbelled detailing and tooled joints
- two second floor doors, leading to metal balconies added later.

The property is also valued as part of a grouping of early buildings that contribute to the historic character and urban pattern of Victoria's Chinatown National Historic Site, the oldest and most intact Chinatown in Canada.



Regulatory Considerations

The proposed heritage designation of the building is compatible with the *Official Community Plan, 2012* (OCP), and is consistent with the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*.

Condition

The building is in fair to good condition.

ANALYSIS

The following sections provide a summary of the application's consistency with the relevant City policies and guidelines.

Official Community Plan

The designation of this building is consistent with the *Official Community Plan (2012)*, which in the section entitled "Placemaking (Urban Design and Heritage)" states:

Goals

8 (B) *Victoria's cultural and natural heritage resources are protected and celebrated.*

Broad Objectives

8 (j) *That heritage property is conserved as resources with value for present and future generations.*

8 (l) *That heritage and cultural values are identified, celebrated, and retained through community engagement.*

City Form

8.6 *Conserve and enhance the heritage value, character and special features of areas, districts, streetscapes, cultural landscapes and individual properties throughout the city.*

8.11 *Determine the heritage value of areas, districts, streetscapes, cultural landscape and individual properties using the Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework as identified in Figure 12.*

Buildings and Sites

8.51 *Continue to give consideration to tools available under legislation to protect or conserve heritage property including, but not limited to: heritage designation bylaws; listing on the heritage register; temporary protection; heritage alteration permits; heritage revitalization agreements; design guidelines; and, the protection of views of heritage landmark buildings from public vantage points as identified in Map 8, and to be determined in future local area plans.*

8.54 *Continue to work with senior government, community and business partners to identify, protect and conserve property of heritage value.*

Downtown Core Area Plan

The designation of the building is consistent with Section 7: "Heritage" of the *Downtown Core Area Plan 2011* which states:

Heritage - Objectives

1 *Retain, protect and improve real property with aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual value and heritage character as a benefit to the public.*

Areas and Districts - Policies and Actions

7.3. *Conserve heritage values of the Downtown Core Area and its character-defining elements, such as individual buildings, collections of buildings, streetscapes, structures and features.*

Buildings and Sites - Policies and Actions

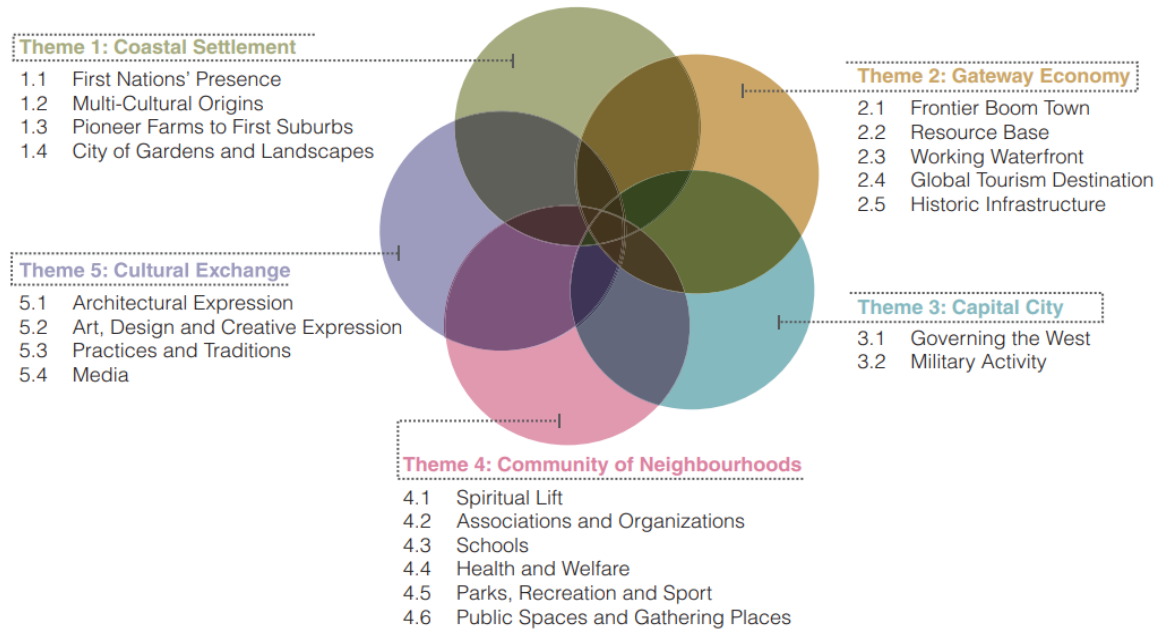
7.20. *Continue to work with the private sector to identify, protect and conserve property and areas with heritage value in the Downtown Core Area.*

7.28. *Produce and update, as required, Statements of Significance for properties listed on the Heritage Register in the Downtown Core Area.*

Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework

A key policy of the OCP includes the determination of heritage value using a values-based approach. In this regard, a City-wide thematic framework (OCP Fig. 12) was developed and

incorporated into the OCP to identify the key civic historic themes. The *Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework* functions as a means to organize and define historical events, to identify representative historic places, and to place sites, persons and events in an overall context. The thematic framework recognizes a broad range of values under which City-wide themes can be articulated. A Heritage Value assessment with consideration of the *Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework* is incorporated into the Statement of Significance.



Victoria's Heritage Thematic Framework, OCP

Statement of Significance

A Statement of Significance describing the historic place, its attributes, and history is attached to this report.

Heritage Advisory Panel

The application was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Panel at its December 12, 2023 meeting and was recommended for approval. Minutes from the meeting are attached in Appendix F.

Resource Impacts

Heritage Designation will enable the applicant to be eligible for heritage grants and incentives for ongoing maintenance, and potential seismic upgrading.

CONCLUSIONS

This application for the heritage designation of the property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street as a Municipal Heritage Site is for a building that is a good example of Victoria's commercial and institutional development from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The property is part of an intact grouping of historic masonry buildings in Chinatown. It is therefore recommended

that Council consider approving the Heritage Designation Application for the heritage-registered building located at 557-561 Fisgard Street.

ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council decline Heritage Designation Application No. 000205 for the property located at 557-561 Fisgard Street.

Respectfully submitted,

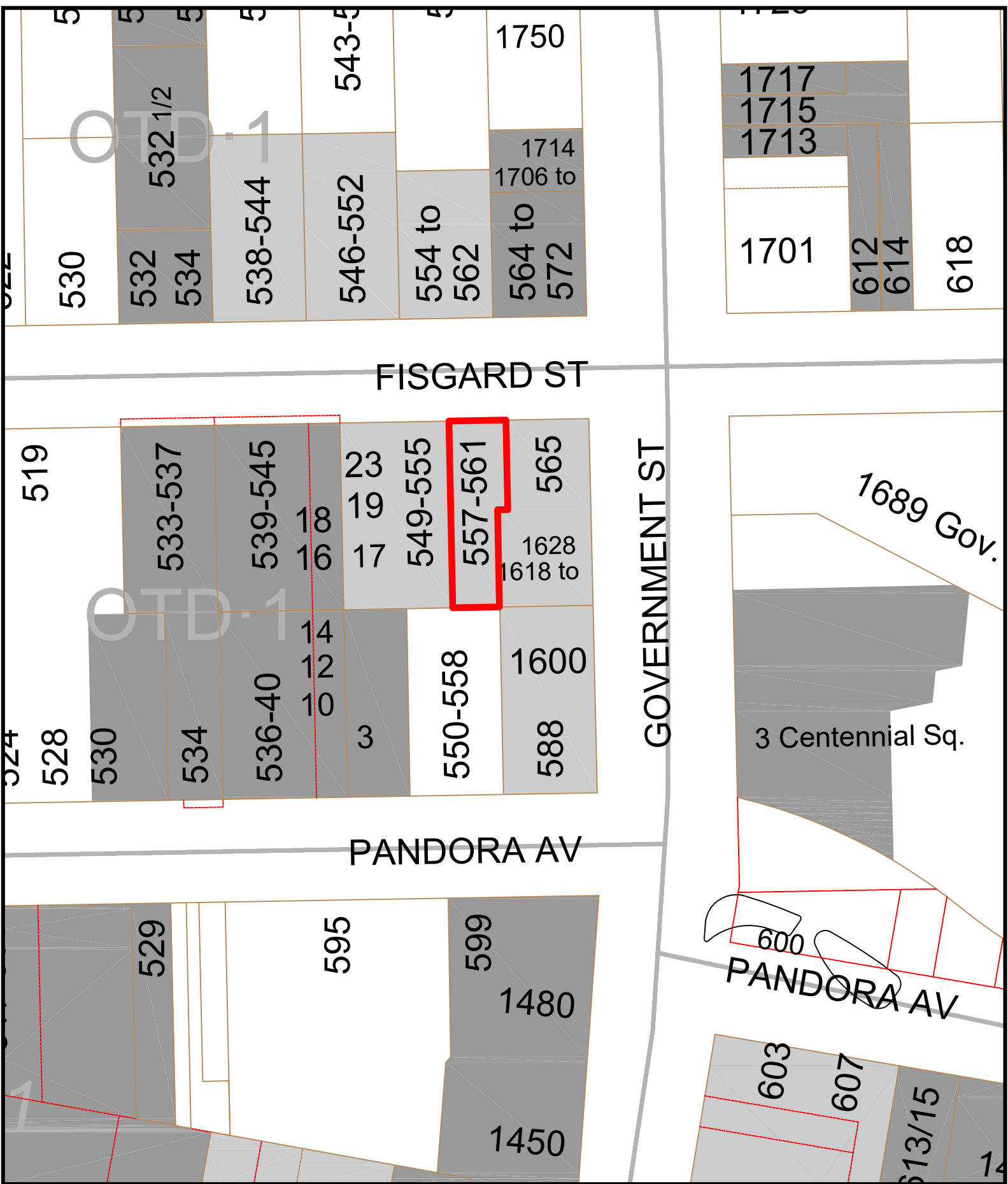
Kristal Stevenot
Senior Heritage Planner
Development Services Division

Karen Hoese, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager.

List of Attachments

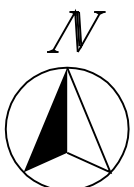
- Attachment A: Subject Map
- Attachment B: Aerial Map
- Attachment C: Photographs
- Attachment D: Statement of Significance
- Attachment E: Letter from the applicant, date stamped May 18, 2023.
- Attachment F: Draft Minutes Heritage Advisory Panel December 12, 2023



557 Fisgard Street

ATTACHMENT A

Heritage Designation #000205



Designated



Registered



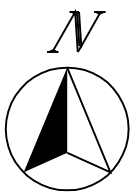
CITY OF
VICTORIA



557 Fisgard Street

ATTACHMENT B

Heritage Designation #000205



Photographs of 557-561 Fisgard Street



Photographs of 557-561 Fisgard Street



CITY OF VICTORIA STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
LEE WOY & COMPANY BUILDING 557-561 FISGARD STREET

Updated December 2023

Civic Address: 557-561 Fisgard Street

Original Owners: Lee Woy, Lee Yan and Lee Chong

Architects: Hooper & Watkins

Date: 1908

Description of Historic Place:

The Lee Woy & Company Building is a modest brick-clad, two-storey plus 'cheater' mezzanine, commercial and institutional building located on the south side of Fisgard Street in the heart of Victoria's Chinatown National Historic Site. The façade has minimal ornamentation with a later metal balcony at the second-floor level and retail storefronts at the ground level. The Dart Coon Club and Chih Kung T'ang occupy the second floor of the building.

Heritage Value of Historic Place

The Lee Woy & Company Building is valued as part of a grouping of early buildings that contribute to the historic character and urban pattern of Victoria's Chinatown National Historic Site, the oldest and most intact Chinatown in Canada. In the 1850s, exacerbated by political and social turmoil in China, thousands of Chinese migrated from a small region in the southern province of Guangdong to frontier gold rush sites in California, setting up a permanent base in San Francisco. In 1858, the Fraser Gold Rush spurred the growth of Victoria as a significant port town and prompted the movement of many Chinese into the province. Victoria was the primary point of entry for Chinese into Canada until the early twentieth century.

The building is also representative of the dominant role Chinese merchants played in Victoria's Chinatown. Chinese merchants, already established in San Francisco, moved to Victoria and purchased lots as early as 1858, opening stores backed by funding from San Francisco headquarters. The Lee Woy & Company building was a product of the second wave of merchants who immigrated to Victoria's Chinatown in the 1890s to 1910s. Built in 1908, the building was constructed as stores with tenements above. The original owner, Lee Woy, Lee Yan and Lee Chong, of Lee Woy & Company, purchased the eastern portion of Lot 443 and a portion of Lot 442 from the Todd family and built on Lot 443. Lee Woy was born in China circa 1855, and his business success allowed the construction of this building. It is one of the few in Chinatown that has remained in Chinese possession.

The building is further valued for its later, and ongoing, relationship with volunteer associations such as the Dart Coon Club and the Chih Kung T'ang. Volunteer associations, or Tong, were established at the time of the first Chinese settlement as protection against the intolerance and prejudices of Western society and opposing Chinese clans. Some of these early associations, such as the Chih Kung T'ang, were secret society-based political groups, who opposed the corrupt rule of the later Qing Dynasty. The Chih Kung T'ang was the first Chinese volunteer

association in Canada, established in Barkerville in 1863, and in Victoria in 1876, and was set up to maintain businesses and social relationships, as well as organizing gambling activities. The Dart Coon Club arose as a political organization, supported by the Chih Kung T'ang. In accordance with most volunteer associations, funding was obtained entirely by membership dues, gambling, opium dens and exiting fees. Volunteer associations usually had their own buildings, typically housing the meeting halls and offices on the upper floor and leased storefronts on the ground floor.

The Lee Woy & Company Building is also significant as an example of the work of architects Hooper & Watkins. Western architects were hired to design the buildings throughout Chinatown, as the Chinese were shunned as professionals in the building trades. Thomas Hooper (1857-1935) and C. Elwood Watkins (1875-1942) were two of the most important early architects in British Columbia. They designed many of the commercial and institutional buildings in downtown Victoria.

Character-Defining Elements

Key elements that define the heritage character of the Lee Woy & Company include its:

- location on the south side of Fisgard Street, part of a grouping of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century historic masonry buildings in Victoria's Chinatown National Historic Site
- continuous commercial and institutional use
- siting on the front and side property lines, with no setbacks
- commercial form, scale and massing as expressed by its two-storey height with 'cheater' mezzanine, symmetrical plan, flat roof
- retail storefronts facing Fisgard Street and association meeting rooms above
- brick walls, with corbelled detailing and tooled joints
- two second floor doors, leading to later metal balconies.

Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework

The property at 557-561 Fisgard fits within a few different themes of Victoria's Heritage Thematic Framework. Firstly, this building represents Theme 1.2 Multi-Cultural Origins and 2.1 Frontier Boom Town as in the 1850s, due to political and social turmoil in China, thousands of Chinese migrated from a small region in the southern province of Guangdong to frontier gold rush sites in California, setting up a permanent base in San Francisco. In 1858, the Fraser Gold Rush spurred the growth of Victoria as a significant port town and prompted the movement of many Chinese into the province. The building is also representative of the dominant role Chinese merchants played in Victoria's Chinatown and the Lee Block was a product of the second wave of merchants who immigrated to Victoria's Chinatown in the 1890s to 1910s. With the building being used for the Dart Coon Club, Chih Kung T'ang and the Chinese Freemasons, we can also apply Theme 4.2 Associations and Organizations. Although a modest building, the two-storey plus 'cheater' mezzanine is a character-defining element that is unique to Chinatown, so Theme 5.1 Architectural Expression is relevant here.

Dart Coon Club of Victoria

557 Fisgard St.

Victoria, B.C.

May 18, 2023

City of Victoria

Mayor, Marianne Alto

Councillors

Dear Mayor Alto and City Councillors:

The Dart Coon Club of Victoria is the parent society for the Chee Kong Tong society and the Victoria chapter of the Chinese Freemasons. We are requesting to have our two buildings at 557 and 565 designated as Heritage for the city. The building at 565 is a landmark for the city and anchors Chinatown next to the Gate of Harmonious Interest. The building adjacent is the home of the Chinese Freemasons, oldest chapter of the Freemasons in Canada. We are very interested in preserving these buildings as it has so much history in Victoria's Chinatown. As our membership is getting older, we want to ensure that the next generation will respect the heritage and preserve what these buildings stand for. Therefore, we respectfully request that our buildings will be granted heritage designation. If you have any question, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Theresa Chen, President, Dart Coon Club.

HD000205 for 557-561 Fisgard Street

Kristal provided a brief description and presentation.

Panel Questions and Comments

Is work still underway to determine what the social uses were. *Yes, with the restoration this use is being looked into. The Kung Fu club has moved out but looking into the possibility of restoring the space as meeting rooms or utilize as housing suites to assist with housing supply in the City.*

Are there different associations that use the building? *Yes, over several years.*

Has the building ever been seismically upgraded, what would be required to do that? *No it has not been seismically upgraded and the high costs associated and limited grant funding are barriers but we are looking at ways to protect the building and preserve it.*

Motion:

That the Heritage Advisory Panel recommend that Council approve the Heritage Designation Application No.000205 for 557-561 Fisgard Street.

Moved by Liberty Brears

Seconded by Nikki Strong-Boag

Carried Unanimously

Motion to adjourn: Lorenda Calvert

Seconded: Jim Kerr

Adjournment: Unanimous

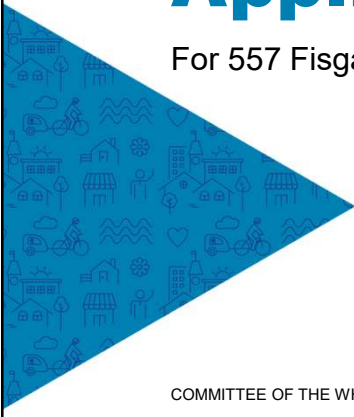
Adjourned at 12:39pm

2024

CITY OF VICTORIA | Sustainable Planning & Community Development

Heritage Designation Application No.00205

For 557 Fisgard Street



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE | January 18, 2024



1



Aerial Photo



2

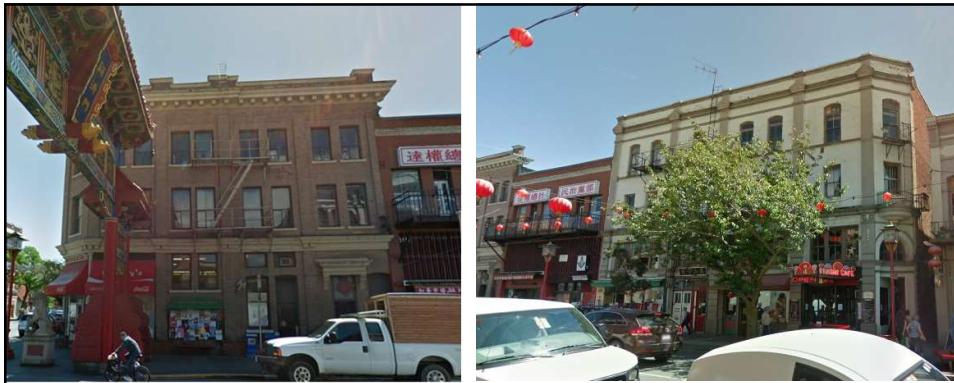


3

Subject Property



3



4

Neighbouring Properties



4

Legislative Authority

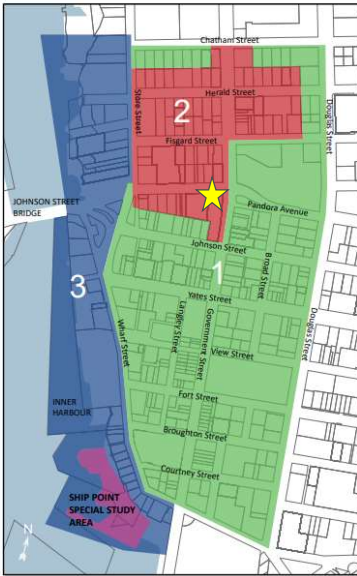
- In accordance with Section 611 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may designate real property, in whole or in part, as protected property.



City of Victoria Archives



Old Town Sub Areas



Legend
 1 Old Commercial District 2 Chinatown 3 Waterfront

Map 2: Old Town Sub Areas

Old Town Heritage Properties



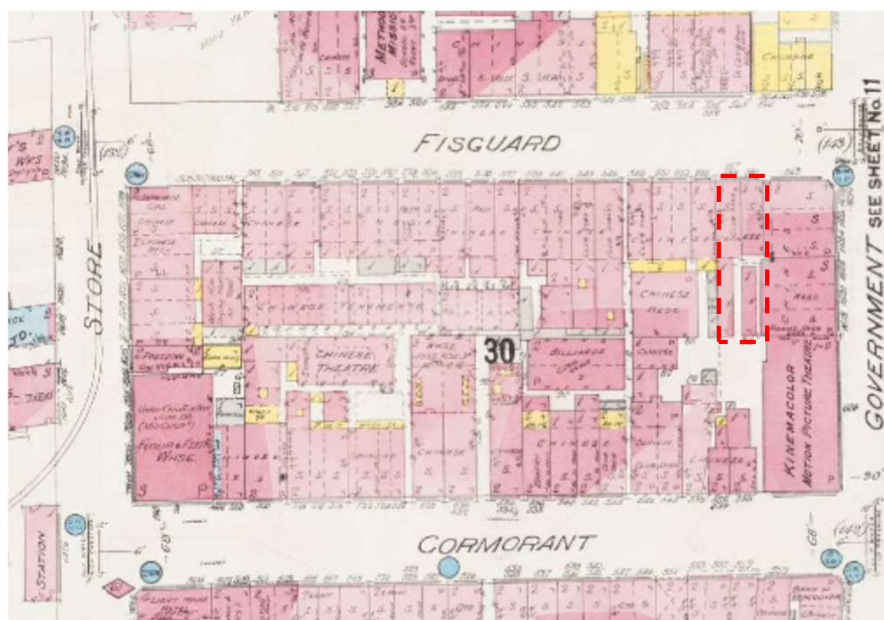
Legend
 Designated Heritage Property
 Registered Heritage Property
This map is based on information as of November 2018

Map 4: Old Town Heritage Properties

OCP Designation



7



Historic Plan

1913 Fire Insurance Plan



7

8



City of Victoria Archives

Description of Place

Lee Woy & Company Building

Original Owners: Lee Woy, Lee Yan and Lee Chong

Date of Construction: 1908

Status: Heritage Register

Architect: Hooper & Watkins



8

9

Heritage Value



9

10

Character-Defining Elements



- location
- part of a grouping of late-19th and early-20th century historic masonry buildings in Chinatown
- continuous use
- commercial form, scale and massing as expressed by its two-storey height with 'cheater' mezzanine, symmetrical plan, flat roof
- retail storefronts, and association meeting rooms above
- brick walls, with corbelled detailing and tooled joints
- two second floor doors, leading to later metal balconies.



10