



Planning and Land Use Committee Report For the meeting of September 4, 2014

Date: August 7, 2014 **From:** Murray G. Miller, Senior Heritage Planner

Subject: **Heritage Alteration Permit Application #00179 for 1156 Fort Street
Concurrent with Rezoning Application #00440**
Proposal to conserve the exterior of the 1862 Wentworth Villa; alter the 1957 and 1911 additions; and alter the 1957 Heritage-Designated outbuildings.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations regarding a Heritage Alteration Permit Application for the Heritage-Designated property located at 1156 Fort Street. The application is for the conservation of the exterior of the 1862 property known as Wentworth Villa; the alteration of the 1956 and 1911 additions; and the alteration of the 1957 Heritage-Designated outbuildings.

The proposed rehabilitation work to the exterior of the structures on the site includes significant and beneficial interventions for seismic strengthening, code compliance, accessibility and energy efficiency. In addition, the repair of deteriorated fabric along with the reconstruction of the balustrade will serve to reinstate the Villa's physical integrity and key heritage values.

The application was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Panel at its April 8, 2014 meeting and was recommended for approval. Staff recommend that this application be approved.

Recommendations

Subject to approval of Rezoning Application #00440, that Council authorize the issuance of Heritage Alteration Permit #00179 for 1156 Fort Street, subject to:


- i. Development meeting all *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* requirements; and
- ii. Final plans to be generally in accordance with the plans dated July 23, 2014, for Rezoning Application #00440 and Heritage Alteration Permit #00179 and memo from the applicant dated May 5, 2014, to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development.

Respectfully submitted,

Murray G. Miller
Senior Heritage Planner
Community Planning

Att.

Deb Day, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:  Jason Johnson

Date: August 28, 2014

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present Council with background information, analysis and recommendations regarding a Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP) Application for the Heritage-Designated property located at 1156 Fort Street.

2.0 Background

2.1 Restoration Plan

A previous HAP Application included a Restoration Plan associated with an earlier scheme. While ownership has changed and the approach is now rehabilitation rather than restoration, the 2013 Restoration Plan includes some aspects that are relevant to the proposed work and has been referenced in the May 5, 2014 memo, outlining the relationship between the proposed work and the previous Restoration Plan. A copy of the 162-page document can be provided upon request.

2.2 Description of Proposal

The proposal to conserve the exterior of the 1862 Villa is outlined in letters from the applicant, dated May 5, 2014. The proposal includes conservation work as well as new construction in order to create The Museum of Pacific Northwest Heritage Homes.

The application was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Panel at its April 8, 2014 meeting and was recommended for approval.

2.2 Consistency with City Policy

2.2.1 Official Community Plan (OCP)

Placemaking - Urban Design and Heritage

The proposal is consistent with Placemaking policies (8.49) in the *Official Community Plan 2012* (OCP), which support new additions that conserve and enhance heritage property and that align with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

The property is designated in DPA 7B (HC) Corridors Heritage, where the Standards and Guidelines apply. The proposed work is consistent with the Standards and Guidelines.

3.0 Issues

The key issue associated with this application is exterior changes to the designated property.

4.0 Analysis

The description and heritage value of the historic place along with its character-defining elements are outlined in the Statement of Significance, attached to this report.

5.0 Discussion

5.1 Exterior changes to the designated property

The proposed rehabilitation work to the exterior of the structures on the site includes significant and beneficial interventions for seismic strengthening, code compliance, accessibility and

energy efficiency. In addition, the repair of deteriorated fabric along with the reconstruction of the balustrade will serve to reinstate the Villa's physical integrity and key heritage values. The proposed alteration to the outbuildings would remove the western portion of the wood structure constructed in 1957. The outbuildings are identified as being a character-defining element in the Statement of Significance for illustrating the evolution of the place. Given the relatively small scale of the proposed intervention, it is considered that the remaining outbuildings would still convey this character.

6.0 Conclusions

The proposed conservation of the 1862 Villa aligns with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. The proposed changes to the 1911 and 1957 additions are supportable since the changes are compatible with the character of the additions. The extent of alteration to the 1957 outbuildings is of a scale and effect that would not be considered significant. Staff recommend that the application be approved.

7.0 Recommendations

Subject to approval of Rezoning Application #00440, that Council authorize the issuance of Heritage Alteration Permit #00179 for 1156 Fort Street, subject to:

- a. Development meeting all *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* requirements; and
- b. Final plans to be generally in accordance with the plans dated July 23, 2014, for Rezoning Application #00440 and Heritage Alteration Permit #00179 and memo from the applicant dated May 5, 2014, to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development.

8.0 Alternate Recommendation

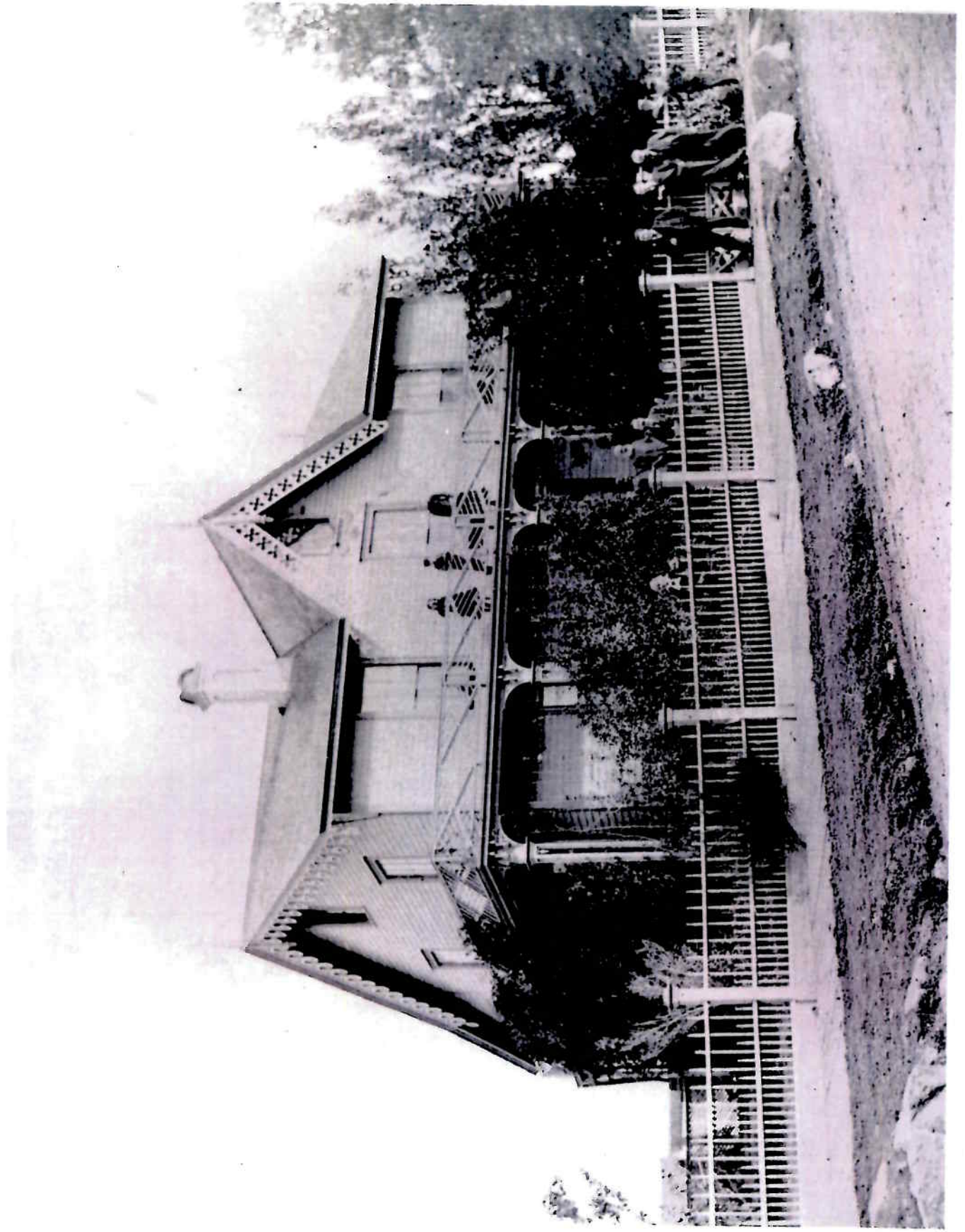
That Heritage Alteration Permit Application #00179 for 1156 Fort Street be declined.

9.0 List of Attachments

- Photos
- Letter from applicant dated March 25, 2014
- Memo from applicant, dated May 5, 2014
- Statement of Significance.

10.0 List of Relevant Attachments included in the Planning and Land Use Committee Report for Rezoning Application #00440

- Zoning map
- Aerial map
- Letters from John Keay & Associate stamped March 5, 2014
- Plans for Rezoning Application #00440 and Heritage Alteration Permit Application #00179 stamped July 23, 2014.



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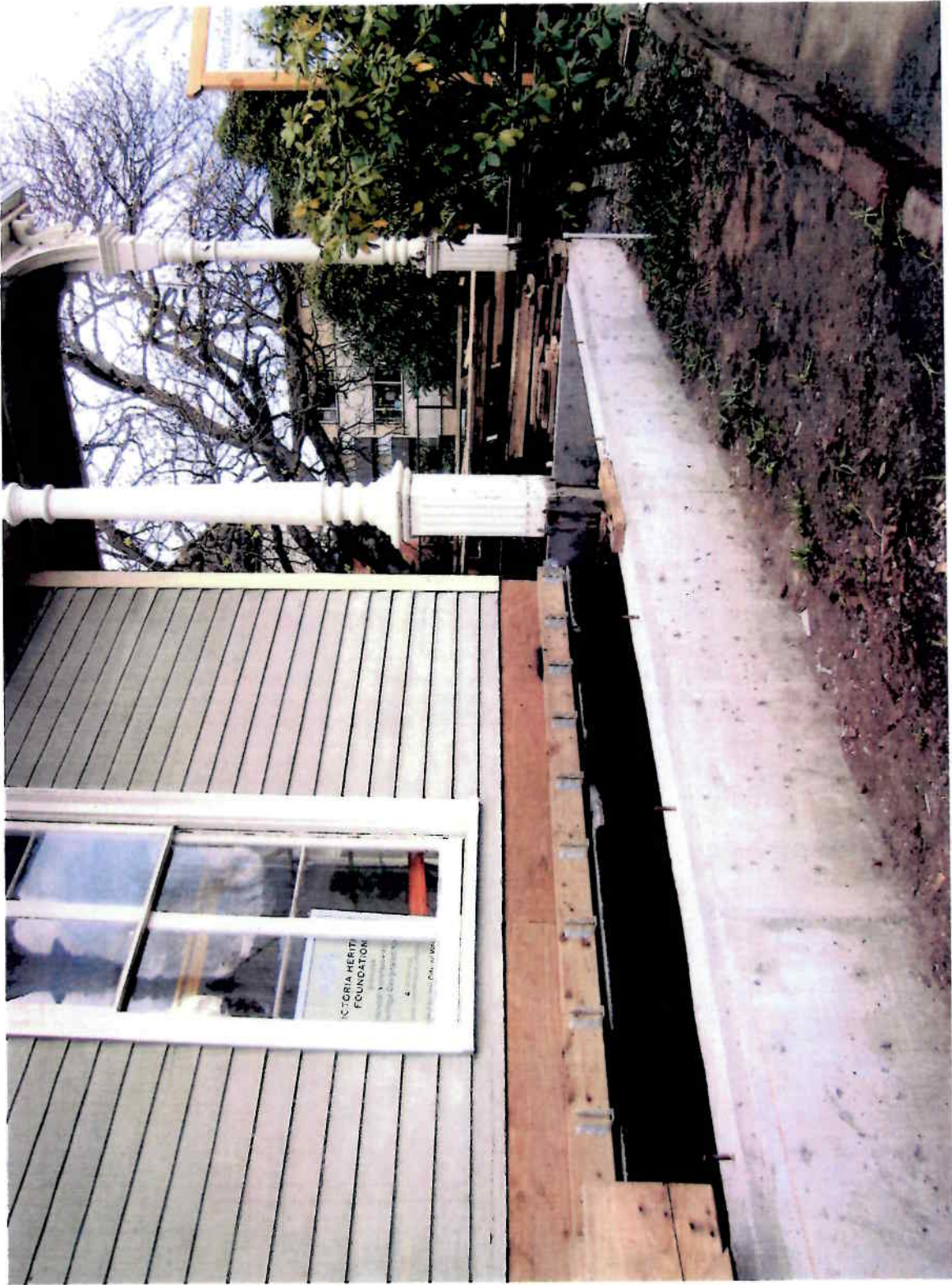
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KEAY & ASSOCIATE, ARCHITECTURE LTD

JOHN KEAY, ARCHITECT AIBC
LARRY CECCO, IA, AIBC
1124 FORT STREET,
VICTORIA, V8V 3K8



March 25, 2014

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
V8W 1P6

Your Worship and Council

re: proposed rezoning, Wentworth Villa, 1156 Fort Street

You will find enclosed an application for rezoning, for the above structure, from C1 to a zone which will permit assembly/museum/display/office use. It is the intention of the applicants to restore the building and grounds, and open them to the public as "The Museum of Pacific Northwest Heritage Homes". This is an eminently suitable use for the building.

Wentworth Villa is the subject of a comprehensive study by Stuart Stark & Associates, its history can be paraphrased as follows:

"Wentworth Villa is one of the oldest, and most valued, heritage houses in the City. Built in the Gothic revival style, the home features hallmarks of the style, including a symmetrical plan with a central front door, pierced bargeboards, steeply pitched roofs, and a gothic style pointed window – with stained glass – high in the central gable illuminating the attic. Tall double-hung windows are small paned: Six over six on the upper floor; four over four on the main floor. The house has wide, bevel siding, and a covered porch that wraps around three sides of the house.

Typical 1860's porch posts originally supported the porch roof. Made of pairs of slender, squared timbers – tripled on the porch corners – they culminated in delicate sawn brackets. Above, the porch roof was edged with a chinoiserie-inspired railing. By the 1890's the porch posts were replaced with solid single turned posts; the fanciful balcony railing lasted for a few years into the 20th century.

Today, Wentworth Villa survives into the 21st century, essentially intact, a rare historic house. This survival was due to an unusual combination of family occupation, lack of modernization, and appreciative care.

Wentworth Villa has been occupied by just two families over the course of 149 years from 1863 until 2012, though each occupancy was continued by three generations."

tel: 250 382 3823
fax: 250 382 0413
email: john@keayarchitecture.com

rezoning, Wentworth Villa, 1156 Fort Street

Interestingly, during its tenure as Faith Grants' "The Connoisseurs Shop" the building remained almost unaltered with the exception of the occasional repainting, and an addition to the north east corner constructed in 1956.

Because of its age and condition, the building remains one of Victoria's most significant residential structures. This has been recognized by the fact that the house and outbuildings have been designated by the City. Restoring Wentworth, and returning it to a use whereby it can be enjoyed by the public, is in line with recent heritage improvements in this area of Fort Street, and also with the City's Heritage policies. A part of the rezoning process will be the upgrading and stabilization of the structure and building services, with the result being a heritage building that will be preserved for the foreseeable future. As well, a full exterior restoration is contemplated, including the replacement of missing exterior decorative elements as shown on the drawings. In the interior, some rooms will be fully restored as part of the museum display, and some will be sensitively adapted to provide areas for display, gift sales, and a small tea room. The outbuildings, which are in poor condition, will be rebuilt using existing materials where possible and will complement the restoration of the garden, including the brick walls and pathways, and wrought iron railings.

We would ask that this rezoning be considered for the following reasons:

- i. The proposed use is compatible with the building and area, allowing public access to one of Victoria's most significant remaining houses. The proposed use, a small museum with ancillary uses, is appropriate for the area. The use provides an interpretation of an aspect of Victoria, that of its domestic architecture, that is not currently available in the community
- ii. the building, designed by Wright and Saunders, has been designated heritage. The proposed use is an effective way of ensuring that this significant building is stabilized, protected, and maintained in good repair We will be looking for equivalencies as part of protecting the original finishes and woodwork
- iii. the building is centrally located in the precinct of the heritage houses located on Fort Street which are mixed residential, commercial, or office use,
- iv. The work required as part of the rezoning will include seismic upgrading, improving thermal efficiency, sprinklering, and new building services, all of which will ensure its preservation.
- v. The proposed use will allow the exterior to remain unaltered and in its original state. Missing decorative elements will be restored, based on archival photographs and on site interpretation. The interior will be restored in some areas, and sensitively adapted in others to fulfill code requirements for safety, handicapped access, and display functions.

As part of the application we are asking for consideration of the following:

- i. minor exterior revisions required for a new fire exit at the rear, and removal of a small entry porch, both part of the 1956 addition
- ii. alterations to the outbuildings, including removal of the small extension to the west and moving the south wall of the second building, both of which will allow for additional landscaped area. The brick wall on the property line will be extended where the small building has been removed
- iii. that the provision of one parking space be acceptable. Although parking is limited on site, there is ample street parking. Public transport is excellent in

the area, and bike racks are proposed for 10 bicycles. The house is located on a popular walking and tour bus route to Craigdarroch Castle and Rockland. During its tenure as a retail business, 13 parking spaces would have been required, the proposed use requires the following:

- a. museum: 6 spaces
- b. tea room: 6 spaces
- c. gift shop: 1 space
- d. office: 1 space

Thus the proposed change of use is essentially compatible with the previous retail use, in other words the impact on the neighbourhood and adjacent street parking will not be changed to any significant degree. The driveway allows for three cars to be stacked, providing sufficient employee parking. Comparable small display museums with limited or no parking are the Emily Carr House, Ross Bay Villa, and the Bateman Gallery on Belleville Street, all function successfully within their neighbourhood context

- iv. equivalencies for certain Building Code requirements have been developed, and are described in the code analysis which is included with this application

We trust that Council will see this application as an opportunity to preserve a landmark building which is clearly, because of its design and prominent siting, a significant element of the Fort Street heritage precinct. The proposed use, with the attendant upgrades in protection, structure, and building services, its adaptive re-use as proposed is a realistic means of ensuring its preservation. As part of the process we will be meeting with the Fernwood Community Association, and neighbours immediately adjacent to the project.

Thank you for your consideration of this application, we look forward to explaining it in further detail to Council.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Keay', written in a cursive style.

John Keay, Architect

cc: Stefan and Magda Opalski

MEMO TO: MURRAY MILLER
FROM: JOHN KEAY
RE: 1156 FORT STREET
DATE: MAY 1, 2014
COPY: STEFAN AND MAGDA OPALSKI



Murray,

Further to your enquiry, we have incorporated elements of Stuart Stark's report into the restoration design as follows:

- i. the step from the front door to the porch has been maintained per the original, in other words the porch is at its original level. Any other option would have resulted in shortening the porch columns
- ii. the front stairs are in two sections, the existing concrete stairs which extend to Fort Street, and new stairs up to the porch, separated by an existing pathway. The stairs have been rebuilt several times, we have submitted a design which is similar to the stairs when the house was last occupied. We have shown simple steel handrails which resolve code requirements with the exception of horizontal runouts. Currently at the request of the Owners we are, with the assistance of the Code consultant, reviewing handrail design and the replication of the newel posts shown in the archival photograph. Depending on the outcome of these discussions we will submit any revisions to you.
- iii. The building has a clean certificate for hazmat
- iv. the original gate is extant, although it does not fit the current concrete/brick walls. We will try to re-install it in an open position
- v. a concrete foundation wall has been poured at the outer edge of the porch to allow backfill to be placed to 24" below the porch decking. Wood trim will be installed to match the original detail under the porch decking
- vi. the porch flooring was photographed and the original pieces numbered and stored. New KD fir will be milled and installed to match
- vii. the porch ceiling will be retained to the maximum extent possible, with spot repairs/replacement as necessary
- viii. paint sampling is being done at several areas around the building to determine original colors
- ix. porch roof balustrade, per the drawings is based on archival photographs. A full size mock up of one panel will be constructed to confirm scale and details, we will let the City know when this is installed.
- x. We have not as yet done a detailed analysis of the porch roof material. The building will be scaffolded for painting and minor repairs, and the roof materials will be analysed at that time. No decisions have been made on the roofing material or the balustrade attachment system at this point
- xi. Gutters and moldings are as shown on the drawings. The gutter is integrated with the crown molding, as shown in the detail drawing. This detail may be modified depending on further on site information becoming available.
- xii. The roof is to be renewed, according to the Victoria Heritage Foundation is about 15 years old. In line with current practice it is intended to use fiberglass shingles, instead of cedar, in a "weathered cedar" color.
- xiii. Finials and other minor decorative elements will be replaced, based on other remaining original pieces
- xiv. Chimneys will be stabilized as required while the building is scaffolded. In my view the previous changes to the arched tops do not warrant reconstruction
- xv. A preliminary paint scheme has been submitted, based on the paint sampling done to date

A few other items which are not part of the Stark restoration plan are:

- i. the existing porch columns will be repaired as required in situ
- ii. a fire escape is to be constructed on the rear elevation as shown
- iii. the chimney is to be removed from the 1956 addition, to allow this space to function as a small lecture/performance hall
- iv. the vestibule is to be removed from the 1956 addition, exposing more of the additional exterior of the house, and allowing for convenient handicapped access

Generally the intent is to restore the building to its 1890's appearance. At this time the balustrade was still in place, but the porch columns had been replaced with the current version. I trust this is the information you are looking for. Give me a call if you have any questions.

Thanks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Keay', written in a cursive style.

John Keay

Statement of Significance - 1156 Fort Street

Description of Historic Place:

Wentworth Villa at 1156 Fort Street, an early two-storey, wood-frame house in the Gothic Revival genre, stands in an imposing position on Fort Street, with a commanding view overlooking downtown Victoria.

Heritage Value:

Built c.1862, this house is one of Victoria's most notable examples of the rural Carpenter-Gothic sub-style, clearly demonstrating that, when the house was built, this woodland area was a significant distance east of the city, which has since burgeoned and enveloped it.

The south-facing house expresses the fortitude, vision and success of its owner, Capt. Henry Ella, who chose to build on the isolated trail from Fort Victoria to the eastern shore.

1156 Fort Street is one of the half-dozen oldest surviving residences in the City. Its style reflects the late arrival of the Gothic Revival movement on the northwest coast, coinciding with incorporation of the City (1862) and the increasing prosperity and stability of the new settlement growing up around Fort Victoria.

The house's 14 rooms testify to the large families of the day, and to Capt. Ella's prosperity as master of several vessels, including the *Recovery* and the *Otter*, and later as a pilot.

The Villa also expresses the evolution of larger homes: Since the departure of the Ella family, the house has been in continuous use over three generations as an antique store, demonstrating the adaptive re-invention of many early residences into sustainable twenty-first century business space.

Sources: City of Victoria Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department; Victoria Heritage Foundation

Character-Defining Elements:

Design features reflecting the 1860s Carpenter Gothic style include:

- symmetrical front façade, with lapped wood-siding
- centred front wall-gable with ornate gothic oriel window, framed with delicate fretted verge-boards and culminated with a finial
- prominent matching side-gables with fretted verge-boards and finials
- full-width porch, with flattened arches and double brackets, wrapping both sides
- symmetrical, hierarchical fenestration, larger windows below, smallest on top floor
- paneled and corbelled chimneys
- prominent position overlooking the City.