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Item No. 9.1.3
Heritage Advisory Committee
July 22, 2020

TO: Chair and Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY: *-Original Signed-*

Kelly Denty, Director of Planning and Development
-Original Signed-

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 1, 2020

SUBJECT: **Case H00474: Request to Include 1342 Robie Street, Halifax in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality**

ORIGIN

Application by the owner, Mia Rankin.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Heritage Property Act

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend that Regional Council:

1. Set a date for a heritage hearing to consider the inclusion of 1342 Robie Street, Halifax, as shown on Map 1, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality; and
2. Approve the request to include 1342 Robie Street, Halifax, as shown on Map 1, in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality as a municipal heritage property.

BACKGROUND

On June 24, 2019 the property owner, Mia Rankin, applied to include her property at 1342 Robie Street, Halifax in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. The subject property is located on the western side of Robie Street, between University Avenue and Coburg Road (Map 1). The property contains a 2.5-storey dwelling, which was likely constructed in 1906. The dwelling is a late example of the Queen Anne Revival style and contains most of the style's defining architectural features (e.g., asymmetrical design, corner tower, front bay window with pediment gable, etc.).

This application is being considered in accordance with Sections 14 (Recommendation as municipal heritage property) and 15 (Registration as municipal heritage property) of the *Heritage Property Act*.

HRM's Heritage Property Program

The purpose of the HRM Heritage Property Program is to help protect and conserve significant heritage resources including buildings, streetscapes, sites, areas, and conservation districts that reflect the rich heritage found in local communities throughout HRM. One of the principal aims of the Heritage Property Program is to recognize significant heritage resources through the inclusion of properties into the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties.

Under the Heritage Property Program, all registration applications for heritage buildings are evaluated by the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) using "The Evaluation Criteria for Registration of Heritage Buildings in Halifax Regional Municipality" (Attachment A).

The Evaluation Criteria for scoring a property and building are broken down into six categories as follows:

Criterion	Highest Possible Score
1. Age	25
2. Historical or Architectural Importance	20
3. Significance of Architect/Builder	10
4. Architectural Merit: Construction type and Style	20
5. Architectural Integrity	15
6. Relationship to Surrounding Area	10
Total	100

Should the HAC score a property with more than 50 points, a positive recommendation will be forwarded to Regional Council. If the property does not score more than 50 points, then the report will not be forwarded to Regional Council.

Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act

HRM's Heritage Property Program receives its authority from the *Heritage Property Act* which seeks:

"...to provide for the identification, designation, preservation, conservation, protection and rehabilitation of buildings, public-building interiors, structures, streetscapes, cultural landscapes, areas and districts of historic, architectural or cultural value, in both urban and rural areas, and to encourage their continued use".

Sections 14(2) and 15(1) under the *Heritage Property Act* require that notice of recommendation is given to the property owner at least thirty (30) days prior to any Council decision to include the property in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. The property owner is also given an opportunity to address Council before they make a decision on the registration request. Should a positive recommendation be forwarded to Council, heritage staff will ensure the required notices are sent to the owners and deposited at the Registry of Deeds.

DISCUSSION

Heritage registration applications are evaluated by the HAC relative to six evaluation criteria as outlined previously, and described in greater detail in Attachment A. To assist the HAC in their evaluation and scoring, staff offer the following comments based on a historical research report (Attachment B). The historical research in support of this application has been undertaken by an independent research consultant.

1. Age:

The subject property was created in November 1886 when the estate of Edward Smith was subdivided into smaller parcels. The lot was subsequently sold to Edmund Albert Smith in 1906. While the existing dwelling's precise construction date is unknown, the Halifax City Directory from 1907 lists Mr. Smith as the property's occupant; this sequence of events suggests the dwelling was likely constructed in 1906.

The dwelling was likely constructed in 1906 and as such, staff recommend a score of 9 points for age.



Figure 1: 1342 Robie Street, Halifax

2. Historical OR Architectural Importance:

Important / Unique Architectural Style or Highly Representative of an Era

The dwelling at 1342 Robie Street is a prime example of the Queen Anne Revival style, which was popular in Nova Scotia between 1880 and 1915. This eclectic architectural style originated during the latter portion of the Victorian Era (1837-1900), along with other styles that emphasized vibrant buildings with ornate detailing, blended with architectural elements from past eras. The Victorian Era gave way to the Edwardian Era (1900-1914) which is marked by simple and balanced buildings with modest detailing. While the dwelling at 1342 Robie Street was constructed during the Edwardian Era, its design clearly reflects Victorian principles.

The dwelling exhibits notable Queen Anne traits, including an asymmetrical building mass, dynamic roof, wood shingles, ornate detailing, and eclectic use of architectural features. Three of the style's trademark defining architectural features - corner (round or polygonal) tower, prominent bay window, and front-facing gable - are clearly displayed on the subject dwelling.

The dwelling at 1342 Robie Street is a highly representative example of the Victorian Era and Queen Anne Revival styles and as such, staff recommend a score between 16 and 20 points.

3. Significance of Architect or Builder:

No information regarding the dwelling's architect or builder have been identified and as such, staff recommend a score of 0 points.

4. Architectural Merit:

Construction type or building technology

The subject dwelling is a 2.5-storey, timber-framed structure with a red brick foundation. Timber framing, often referred to as post-and-beam construction, is a framing technique that connects large pieces of wood together with woodworking joints (i.e., mortise-and-tenon connections). Metal or wood pegs, called trenails, are used to fasten the timber together to create the frame and trusses.

The exterior construction of this Queen Anne Revival building would have been a challenging task; the style's emphasis on asymmetric design, and intricate wood detailing, including the corner tower, would have required careful planning and superior craftsmanship to execute.

Timber-framed dwellings were very popular in Nova Scotia during the early 1800s, though the use of this construction method declined during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, corresponding to the rise of balloon and platform framing. The house represents a late example of timber framing, and as such, staff recommend a score between 4 and 6 points.

Style

The dwelling at 1342 Robie Street is a strong example of the Queen Anne Revival style (c.1880-1915), which is largely defined by the style's asymmetric appearance, intricate detailing, and wood shingle exterior. The dwelling possesses a steeply pitched roof with notable dormers. The roof, along with the prominent corner tower help create visual interest and contrast along the front façade. The front portion of the dwelling also exhibits an off-centered bay window, which terminates in a front-facing pedimented gable, front door with transom, and decorative veranda; all of which are trademarks of the style. The dwelling contains other Queen Anne elements, including intricate stained-glass window panes and an oriel window.

The property's character-defining elements include:

- Asymmetrical building mass and design;
- Wooden shingle cladding;
- Brick foundation;
- Steeply-pitched roof with hipped and gable dormers;
- Two-storey, semi-hexagonal bay window;
- Pediment gable with arched window, large overhangs, and brackets;
- Three-storey corner tower with moulded spandrels between floors, conical roof, ball-shaped finial, modest brackets, and 1:3 windows (with decorative window panes) on the first storey;
- Front entryway with leaded glass panes and transom window;
- Veranda with decorative posts, balusters, circular brackets, and saw-tooth detailing; and
- Side oriel window with stained glass panes and scalloped shingles.

The dwelling is an exemplary representation of the Queen Anne style and as such, staff recommend a score between 7 and 10 points for style.

5. Architectural Integrity:

The dwelling's architectural integrity is very high, as its historic form has largely been preserved. Most of the dwelling's character defining elements, including the roofline, three-storey tower, bay windows, and wood shingles have been maintained in their original form. Many, if not all, of the windows are original wooden windows, though several modern aluminum or wood storm windows have been added to the exterior.

At one point, the original veranda and decorative consoles under the dwelling's front eaves were modified; however, these elements were subsequently restored to their original form in 1998. The dwelling's only notable alteration was a 2018 rear addition that enlarged the kitchen.

The dwelling's original appearance and architectural elements are largely unchanged, and as such, staff recommend a score between 11 and 15 points for architectural integrity.

6. Relationship to Surrounding Area:

The immediate area (i.e., the block bounded by Robie Street, University Avenue, Edward Street, and Coburg Road) is characterized by older detached residential dwellings on large lots. Many of these dwellings were constructed around the turn of the twentieth century and share similar architectural features.

The property at 1342 Robie Street is a noteworthy example of the neighbourhood's Late-Victorian and Edwardian Era residential character, which is magnified by the dwelling's representation of the Queen Anne Revival style and high degree of architectural integrity. The subject property is located very close to the municipally registered Louis Kaye House (circa 1902) at 1328 Robie Street, which is of a similar style and age (Map 1).

The building is an architectural asset that reflects the neighbourhood's historical residential character and prominent architectural styles and as such, staff recommend a score between 6 and 10 points.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with advertising and processing this application can be accommodated within the proposed 2020/21 operating budget for C340 - Social and Heritage Policy.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this Report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process for a heritage registration is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy. The level of community engagement was information sharing achieved through public access to the required Heritage Advisory Committee meeting. As a provision of the *Heritage Property Act*, no registration of a municipal heritage property shall take place until Regional Council has given the owner of the property an opportunity to be heard.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no significant environmental implications associated with the recommendations in this Report.

ALTERNATIVE

1. The Heritage Advisory Committee may choose to reject the application to include 1342 Robie Street, Halifax in the Registry of Heritage Property for the Halifax Regional Municipality. In doing so, the application will not proceed to Regional Council for evaluation.

ATTACHMENTS

Map 1: Location Map

Attachment A: Evaluation Criteria

Attachment B: Research Report

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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