

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION

**DATE:** 2019 August 27

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**FILE:** 77000 20  
*Reference: Fairacres Estate*

**SUBJECT: HERITAGE DESIGNATION BYLAW  
FAIRACRES “ESTATE GATE” AND “GREENHOUSE FOUNDATION  
WALL,” 6344 DEER LAKE AVENUE**

**PURPOSE:** To seek Council authorization to designate the historic Fairacres “Estate Gate” and “Greenhouse Foundation Wall” as part of the existing civic Heritage Site.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council request staff to prepare a Heritage Designation Bylaw for the Fairacres “Estate Gate” and “Greenhouse Foundation Wall” to be advanced to First Reading and to a Public Hearing at a future date.
2. **THAT** Council approve the addition of the Fairacres “Estate Gate” and “Greenhouse Foundation Wall” to the Burnaby Community Heritage Register as ‘protected’ heritage landmarks.
3. **THAT** Council forward a copy of this report to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission for their information.

**REPORT****1.0 BACKGROUND**

The Fairacres Estate is a 20-acre property that was purchased by the City of Burnaby in 1966, and incorporated into Deer Lake Park. The estate was developed by Grace and Henry Ceperley, who purchased the property in 1909.

Fairacres was one of Burnaby’s largest private estates and includes several of the original estate buildings, including the Chauffeur’s Cottage, Garage and Stables, Root House, and Steam Plant. The Fairacres mansion, now home to the Burnaby Art Gallery, is one of the City’s heritage sites. The mansion and outbuildings are among the City of Burnaby’s landmark heritage buildings, and were designated as protected City of Burnaby civic heritage resources in 1992. Over time, the Community Heritage Commission and Council have accomplished the restoration of the mansion and estate outbuildings, including recent repair and conservation work at the Garage and Stables building which was damaged by a fire in 2018.

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The original 1992 Heritage Designation Bylaw of the Fairacres Estate was focused on the protection of the heritage buildings and did not include provision for the protection of the site's other important heritage structures which include the "Estate Gate" and "Greenhouse Foundation Wall." This oversight was recently discovered by staff at its meeting on 2019 June 06, and the Community Heritage Commission requested a report to designate these historic features and develop a conservation plan for their protection.

## 2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

The proposal to protect and designate significant heritage resources owned by the City aligns with the following goals and sub-goals of the Corporate Strategic Plan:

- **A Dynamic Community**
  - City Facilities and Infrastructure – Build and maintain infrastructure that meets the needs of our growing community.
- **A Thriving Organization**
  - Reliable services, technology and information – Protect the integrity and security of City information, services and assets.

In addition to these goals, Burnaby's Official Community Plan includes the direction under its Heritage Policy (12.4.4) that the City continue its stewardship of civic heritage resources.

## 3.0 HERITAGE DESIGNATION BYLAW

### 3.1 Local Government Act – Heritage Designation Bylaw Process

Under the terms of the *Local Government Act*, provision is made for the designation by bylaw of property that "...has heritage value or character..." (Section 611). The intention of the designation bylaw is to protect these heritage features.

Section 612 of the *Local Government Act* specifies the formal procedures of the designation process which includes a public hearing, notification of all persons with a registered interest in the property and its occupants, publication of newspaper notices, and preparation of a report. The report is to be made available to the public, and is to include: the heritage character of the property; the compatibility of conservation with the official community plan and other community planning objectives; the compatibility of conservation with lawful uses of the property and adjoining lands; the condition and economic viability of the property; and, the possible need for financial or other support to enable appropriate conservation. The City is required to give notice of the completed bylaw to the Land Title Office and to the owners.

### 3.2 Heritage Designation Report

The following provides the information required under Section 612 (5) of the *Local Government Act*.

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### **3.2.1 Heritage Character Statement**

The “Estate Gate” and “Greenhouse Foundation Wall” of “Fairacres” form an integral part of the heritage character of this historic estate, which was designated as a heritage site by the City of Burnaby in 1992 (Bylaw No. 9807).

In 1909, Henry and Grace Ceperley began construction of their “Fairacres” estate at Deer Lake which was completed in 1911. The estate was designed by architect Robert MacKay Fripp and constructed by local contractors. The estate buildings were designed in the Arts & Crafts style, and featured local and imported materials and fine craftsmanship. All of the farm structures were designed using modern “scientific” knowledge for food production. The mansion and surviving outbuildings are a rare surviving architecturally-designed ensemble of high-class agricultural structures.

Fairacres was designed as a country estate with a working farm that included over 10 acres of productive berry and vegetable fields, with a large kitchen garden, a root house to store food, and greenhouses heated by steam. The agricultural potential of the Deer Lake area made it one of the first parts of the municipality to attract settlement. The Fairacres Estate represented a shift toward wealthy country estates over more modest farms, and the Ceperleys employed a large staff to manage the estate’s agricultural production. Agricultural use of the estate continued when a Catholic order of Benedictine monks purchased the estate as part of the Priory of St. Joseph and the Seminary of Christ the King, and continued to farm the land until 1953.

The overall architectural intention of the estate’s architect was to reflect the ideals of the Arts & Crafts movement to showcase craftsmanship, and to incorporate high quality materials, including many local materials, including wood and stone from the site. On the mansion exterior, the rustic style is seen in the use of natural materials such as cedar shingles and siding, cobblestone foundations and chimneys and the half-timbering in gable ends. The estate’s remaining gate pillar features the same rustic field and cobble stones used on the mansion.

In 1909, the Ceperleys built three large greenhouses and a steam plant for heating the structure (see **Attachment #1**). The greenhouses featured granite foundation walls, one of which remains intact today and is a significant site feature adjacent to the restored Steam Plant building, which is a protected heritage building used for the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts ceramic program (see **Attachment #2**).

The original Fairacres Estate driveway had two entrances constructed in 1910, each marked by a pair of entry gate pillars which supported iron gates (see **Attachment #3**). The main entrance gate pillars which marked the lower driveway and the east pillar of the upper entrance were demolished many years ago and the iron gates removed. A single gate pillar remains marking the upper driveway, adjacent to the Garage and Stables (see **Attachment #4**). This gate pillar is a significant site feature and incorporates cobble stone and a carved sandstone capstone. The iron gate pins also remain in place.



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### ***3.2.2 Compatibility of Conservation with Community Plan and Adjoining Land Uses***

Planning for the conservation of heritage resources is outlined in Burnaby’s Official Community Plan (OCP). Burnaby has established a goal “to provide opportunities for the increased awareness and the conservation of the City’s unique natural, cultural, archaeological and built heritage.” The designation of these heritage landmark features are considered compatible with the well-developed neighbourhood context in the Deer Lake Park heritage precinct.

The subject City-owned site is zoned P3 – Park and Public Use District which provides for the location, preservation and development of public land to serve the educational, park and recreational needs of the City. The retention and designation of the gate and greenhouse foundation wall through a designation bylaw will support these goals and add significant heritage landmarks to the City’s list of protected heritage resources. The Fairacres Estate gate and greenhouse foundation wall are important neighbourhood landmarks and their preservation provides another opportunity to retain and interpret the early history and heritage of Burnaby.

### ***3.2.3 Condition and Economic Viability of the Property***

The historic “Estate Gate” and “Greenhouse Foundation Wall” are in fair to good condition. These features have been successfully preserved and integrated into the landscape of Deer Lake Park.

### ***3.2.4 Possible Need for Financial Support to Enable Conservation***

Following designation of these features, the next steps will be to create a landscape plan in cooperation with Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services that supports contemporary uses and the historic character of the estate as a feature within Deer Lake Park. A conservation plan for these features will be developed at the same time (see ***Attachment #5***). At their meeting of 2019 June 06, the Community Heritage Commission reviewed a staff report concerning the condition of the Fairacres estate and supported further staff review of the potential to conserve, protect, and interpret the estate. This conservation and design work will be the subject of a future report to Council.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

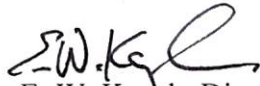
The designation of the historic “Estate Gate” and “Greenhouse Foundation Wall” through a Heritage Designation Bylaw would provide an opportunity to preserve and add another significant heritage resource to Burnaby’s Heritage Register. The proposed bylaw will acknowledge the importance of the gate and greenhouse foundation wall as key elements that define the heritage character of the Fairacres Estate and protect their heritage value as part of the City’s standard stewardship practice for City-owned heritage sites.

Following the protection of the “Estate Gate” and “Greenhouse Foundation Wall” by bylaw as part of the overall “heritage site” at Deer Lake Park, these two features will have legal protection as authorized under the *Local Government Act*. Any future proposed changes to its location or

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design would require Council approval through a Heritage Alteration Permit. With Council approval of the recommendations of this report, the subject bylaw would be advanced to a Public Hearing at a future date.



E. W. Kozak, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

LC:sa

**Attachments**

cc: City Manager  
Director Finance  
Director Engineering  
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services  
City Solicitor  
City Clerk

## Attachment #1

Historic Photographs of the Fairacres Greenhouses.



One of the Fairacres greenhouses and its foundation wall is visible on the left of the photograph, circa 1912.



Grace Ceperley (left) inside one of the estate greenhouses, circa 1912. Greenhouses with the steam plant in the background, circa 1939-1953.



Existing Greenhouse Foundation Wall.



Fairacres Estate Gate, circa 1912.



Note the estate gate visible in the background.  
City of Burnaby Archives photo 241-003



Detail of gate (enlarged historic photograph).



Existing Estate Gate



Pillar from gate marking the location of the upper driveway to the Fairacres Estate.



Cobblestone gate pillar. Note the anchor metal anchor that would have supported a metal gate.



Aerial view of the Fairacres estate today, with location of heritage resources highlighted.

