

CITY OF BURNABY  
COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS

RE: ALTERNATIVES FOR THE PROTECTION OF  
ST. JOHN THE DEVINE CHURCH AT 3895 KINGSWAY

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a copy of this report be sent to the Anglican Church of the Diocese of New Westminster and that they be requested to consider the use of the property that continues to preserve the heritage church sanctuary.
2. THAT Council authorize staff to initiate informal discussions with the owner of St. John the Divine Church regarding alternatives for the protection of the heritage building.
3. THAT Douglas Porter be sent a copy of this report.

REPORT

The Community Heritage Commission, at its meeting held on 1997 November 27 received the attached report regarding the protection of St. John the Divine Church, 3895 Kingsway as a heritage site and adopted the recommendations contained therein.

The Commission also received correspondence from Douglas Porter who resides in the neighbourhood of the church, acknowledging that the church is one of the oldest in the community, has historical significant value and should be preserved as an historical site.

Arising from discussion on this subject, the Commission expressed a concern that with any delay, that the building could be sold and/or historical artifacts removed from the interior and exterior of the building. It was therefore deemed prudent that staff initiate informal discussions with the owner of the property at the earliest possible date to consider alternatives for protection of the St. John the Devine Church on the subject property.

: COPY - CITY MANAGER  
- DIR. PLNG. & BLDG.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Doreen Lawson,  
Chair

Councillor Celest Redman,  
Vice Chair

TO: COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION

1997 October 22

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

Our File: 10.346

SUBJECT: **ALTERNATIVES FOR THE PROTECTION OF  
THE HERITAGE BUILDING,  
the St. John the Divine Church at 3895 Kingsway**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council receive this report for information, and
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to the Anglican Church of the Diocese of New Westminster and that they be requested to consider the use of the property that continues to preserve the heritage church sanctuary.

**REPORT**

**1.0 Background:**

At the Community Heritage Commission Meeting held on 1997 September 24, the following motion was approved:

1. **THAT** staff explore alternatives to protect the St. John the Divine Church as a heritage building and report back.

**2.0 Current Situation:**

The St. John the Divine Anglican Church at 3895 Kingsway across from Central Park was designed by Joseph Bowman, Architect and was constructed on this site in 1905. It represented a statement about the importance of religion and community to the early residents of what was then a young settlement and has been a landmark building in Burnaby ever since. Over the years additions have been made to the building. In 1914 a wing and parish room were added; in 1920 a hall was constructed and in 1930 a gymnasium was built. In the 1950's unsympathetic changes were made to the exterior of the building which have diminished its aesthetic qualities. Over the years additional property around the church was purchased and the site expanded for parking. It is the oldest remaining church in Burnaby.

In 1977 this church was one of two primary heritage buildings identified by the City in the preparation of the "Metrotown Development Plan" as being significant from a historical viewpoint in the development of Burnaby. In 1990 the Heritage Advisory Commission had staff prepare an evaluation of the two buildings and requested that Council "Initiate discussions with the owners to pursue the heritage designation of the properties." While the other property, the Andy Johnson House, is protected by a heritage covenant, St. John the Divine is not legally protected at present.

*COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION*

*Re: Alternatives for the Protection of Heritage Buildings*

*St. John the Divine Church, 3895 Kingsway*

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In recent years, the size of the congregation of the Church has declined and the Diocese of the Anglican Church in New Westminster, the owner, has recently proposed that St. John the Divine be closed and the congregation relocated to another church in Burnaby. Over the past several years, Planning and Building Department staff have met with representatives of the church regarding the future of the site. Staff have indicated that the church should be preserved on the property in line with the adopted Metrotown Development Plan. The site remains an institutionally designated and zoned church property and any redevelopment discussions regarding the site have presumed the preservation of the church sanctuary. To date, no decisions appear to have been made about the future of the site by the Diocese.

**3.0 Alternative Methods of Protection for Heritage Buildings:**

There are a number of ways that buildings that are significant can be protected as heritage sites.

The Municipal Act provides for several methods of protecting heritage buildings and sites. Several options include:

- Heritage Designation
- Temporary heritage protection
- Heritage Revitalization Agreements
- Heritage conservation covenants
- Heritage alteration permits
- Heritage Registers

Generally, most local governments have used standard zoning controls to regulate redevelopment and preservation in this type of situation. In this case the importance of the building has been recognized in the adopted Plan for this area. St John the Divine represents not only Burnaby's oldest church but also represents a symbol of the tradition of the early British residents who were instrumental in the formation of the City. An innovative solution likely involving a rezoning application which would include the retention of the church on this large piece of property would permit it to be restored in order to continue to contribute to religious and cultural life in Burnaby. The City would welcome any initiatives by the owner, the Diocese, to discuss ways to retain St. John the Divine church on this property.



D. G. Stenson

Director Planning and Building

