

REPORT TO COUNCIL



Date: January 11, 2021

To: Council

From: City Manager

Department: Policy and Planning Department

Application: HD20-0002 **Owner:** Central Okanagan Heritage Society

Address: 2269-2279 Benvoulin Road **Applicant:** Lorri Dauncey

Subject: Request for Heritage Designation for Benvoulin Heritage Park

Existing OCP Designation: PARK

Existing Zone: P2 – Education and Minor Institutional

Heritage Conservation Area: None

Heritage Register: Included

1.0 Recommendation

THAT Council consider a Bylaw for a Heritage Designation of the site commonly known as "Benvoulin Heritage Park" and for the building envelope as set out in Schedule 'A' as attached to the Report from the Community Planning Department for the property legally known as Parcel A (KN69976) Block 7 District Lot 130 ODYD Plan 415B, located at 2269-2279 Benvoulin Road, Kelowna, BC, as a Municipal Heritage Site pursuant to Section 611 of the Local Government Act;

AND FURTHER THAT the Heritage Designation Bylaw be forwarded to a Public Hearing for further consideration.

2.0 Purpose

To designate 2269-2279 Benvoulin Road as a municipal heritage site under Section 611 of the Local Government Act.

3.0 Proposal

3.1 Background

The applicant is requesting that the subject property, located at 2269-2279 Benvoulin Road, be designated as a municipal heritage site for long-term protection. Heritage designation is a tool used to achieve long-term protection of heritage properties through the passage of a bylaw. Additionally, designated heritage properties qualify for additional City of Kelowna heritage grants of up to \$12,500 per three-year period for

heritage conservation work. Heritage designation is tied to a property's State of Title and must be registered with the provincial Land Titles Office.

The subject property, known as Benvoulin Heritage Park, is owned by the Central Okanagan Heritage Society (COHS) and is currently operated as a venue and park space where numerous community, cultural, and private events are held each year. There are three buildings on the property: the Benvoulin Church, Reid Hall, and the Mclver House.

The Benvoulin Church is currently protected by a Municipal Heritage Designation Bylaw (#5599); however, the Mclver House, Reid Hall, and the park are not currently protected by a Heritage Designation Bylaw. Through this application, the applicant is seeking to designate the entire property, including all buildings and the park, as a heritage site to protect the property as a whole. In conjunction with this application, should it be approved, the Kelowna Heritage Register would be updated to indicate the designation of the property as a protected historical site. Additionally, updates to the Mclver House Statement of Significance would be reviewed and implemented.

3.2 Heritage Value and Heritage Character

This section outlines the heritage value and character of each aspect of the property:

The Benvoulin Church & Reid Hall

The Benvoulin Church, built in 1892, is a wood Gothic Revival church with a prominent bell tower. The Benvoulin Church has heritage value as the first Presbyterian church between Vernon and the U.S. border and the first Protestant church in the Central Okanagan; for the locally prominent people associated with its construction; for its distinctive architecture and landmark status; as the last significant vestige of the failed Benvoulin townsite; and for the value placed on it by Kelowna residents in restoring it as a gathering place for the community.

The church was built by prominent builder and Kelowna's first mayor, H.W. Raymer. The site was donated by real estate developer G.G. Mackay who laid out the original Benvoulin townsite in 1891. The church was built largely from funds donated by Lord and Lady Aberdeen.

The church served the community for seven decades, first as a Presbyterian Church and then as a United Church. The original Reid Hall, added in the 1950s, served as the Sunday School and was also used for meetings. After the church closed in 1964, its condition deteriorated until it was almost demolished in the early 1980s. In 1982 the COHS was formed, and the restoration of the church was its first project. The restored building opened in 1986, with the tower rebuilt to its original appearance.

Character defining elements of the Benvoulin Church:

- Tall bell tower that includes segmental arches, a pointed-arched railing, pointed-arched louvred openings, ornamental shingles, and entry through the base of the bell tower
- Good representative example of a wood-frame Gothic Revival church, seen in features such as the pointed-arched windows and steeply pitched cross-gabled roof
- Cruciform floor plan
- Original beveled horizontal wood siding

The present-day Reid Hall replaced the original hall in 2000, and while it is newer than the other buildings on the site, it provides value as a community hall. It was named after the Reid family, who still live and farm nearby on Bryns Road. Reid Hall was designed by Peter Chataway, a local architect and past president of COHS, and Gordon Hartley, a Kelowna architect and heritage advocate. Reid Hall was designed to be architecturally compatible with the Church and is set back to ensure that the Church remains the focus of the site.

Mclver House

The Mclver farmhouse, built in 1904, has heritage value for being representative of the vernacular saltbox house-type, an Eastern Canadian tradition that is rare locally. It has further value for its association with early agriculture, and for the interest shown by the Kelowna community in conserving it.

The house, originally located at 1950 KLO Road, was built by Gordon C. Scott, a wheelwright. The house was purchased in 1927 by Bernard Mclver and his wife Harriet, becoming the farmhouse for their 17-acre mixed farming operation. In 1994 the family donated the building to the COHS, which moved it to its current location and restored it. It now serves as the residence for the Benvoulin Heritage Park site manager. The Mclver House was placed on the Kelowna Heritage Register in 2000.

Character defining elements of the Mclver House:

- Traditional vernacular saltbox form that includes a gabled roof with a double slope at the rear
- Gable enclosing the second-floor door on the front elevation and a small balcony off the door
- Verandah across the front and one side, with wood details on the posts and under the eaves
- Horizontal wood shiplap siding
- Double-hung wood windows, with one-over-one and two-over-two sash

Park Site

The park is the original 1.26-acre site that was created in 1891 by early real estate developer G.G. Mackay. Mackay donated the lot for the first Presbyterian Church, which was part of his plan to create the new Benvoulin townsite. The site was turned into a park after COHS restored the church and Reid Hall. Over the last four decades, the site has continued to evolve and currently includes a wedding garden, a pollinator garden, and a memorial garden. The site contains mature landscaping including a Golden Rain Tree, planted by Mayor Walter Gray in 1997, and a large Manitoba Maple in the wedding garden.

3.3 Site Context

The subject property is located in the South Pandosy – KLO city sector on the east side of Benvoulin Road between Byrns Road to the south and Cooper Road to the north. The OCP Future Land Use designation of the property is Park. Additionally, the property is zoned P2 – Education and Minor Institutional, which is a zone that provides land for educational, residential and recreational uses and religious assemblies.

The subject property is not located in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR); however, the properties to the north, east, and south are located in the ARL and are used for agriculture. To the west, across Benvoulin Road, the properties are designated, zoned, and used for low density multiple family housing.

Subject Property Map: 2269-2279 Benvoulin Road (in yellow)



Left: Benvoulin Church, Right: McIver House



4.0 Discussion of Relevant Policies

4.1 Official Community Plan

Chapter 5:

Objective 5.7 Identify and conserve heritage resources.

Policy 5.7.2 Heritage Designation. Encourage owners of properties listed in the Kelowna Heritage Register and identified as significant to voluntarily provide long-term heritage protection to their properties through the use of a Heritage Designation Bylaw.

Chapter 9:

Objective 9.2 Identify and conserve heritage resources.

Policy 9.2.1 Heritage Register. Ensure that the Heritage Register is updated on an on-going basis to reflect the value of built, natural and human landscapes.

4.2 Heritage Strategy

Strategy 1 – Preserve and Protect Heritage Resources. Continue to preserve and protect significant heritage resources through the use of protection tools and heritage planning initiatives.

Strategy 5 – Update Heritage Register. Continue to identify the City’s significant cultural/natural landscapes, archaeological and built heritage resources.

5.0 **Application Chronology**

Date of Application Received: October 14, 2020

Heritage Advisory Committee: November 19, 2020

The above noted application was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Committee at the meeting held on November 19, 2020 and the following recommendations were passed:

THAT the Committee recommends to Council that the subject property be designated as a municipal heritage site for long-term protection.

Report prepared by: Arlene Janousek, Planner II

Approved for Inclusion: James Moore, Long Range Policy Planning Manager

Attachments

Attachment A: Letter of Rationale

Attachment B: Site Plan

Attachment C: McIver House Heritage Conservation Plan