

# DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

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**Title:** 119 Waterford Bridge Road

**Date Prepared:** August 12, 2019

**Report To:** Chair and Members, Built Heritage Experts Panel

**Councillor and Role:** Councillor Maggie Burton, Planning and Development Lead

**Ward:** 3

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**Decision/Direction Required:**

To seek approval to designate 119 Waterford Bridge Road as a Heritage Building.

**Discussion – Background and Current Status:**

The City received an application to designate 119 Waterford Bridge Road as a Heritage Building. The subject property is located in the Residential Low Density District of the St. John's Municipal Plan and is zoned Residential Low Density (R1). The property is not located in a Heritage Area.

The subject property was considered outside of the City of St. John's boundaries until 1952, and the first tax/assessment record on record is dated 1949. Further, the original documents detailing the exact building date and registry of the property deed has been destroyed by fire. However, *McAlpine's Newfoundland Directory, 1894 to 1897*, identifies John Syme as residing at Summerlea, Waterford Bridge Road.

Mr. John Syme was a Scottish immigrant who moved to Newfoundland in 1863. There is evidence that Mr. Syme lived in Harbour Grace in the early 1870s and moved to St. John's shortly thereafter. There is an obituary in the August 28, 1880 *Harbour Grace Standard* announcing that John Syme's son, Robert Alexander Syme, had passed away at Summerlea, St. John's on August 21, 1880. An article in the Evening Telegram states that the original house burned on June 13, 1886, and that Mr. Syme intended to build a large cottage. Therefore, it is assumed that the house at Summerlea was built in the late 1880s. However, that was not the house that stands today.

Through the *McAlpine's Newfoundland Directory*, from 1894-1909, Mr. Syme was listed as a general accountant for municipal council and then later as a commission agent, broker and Chartered Accountant. His business was located at 1 Water Street West. He was also appointed to a position with the Legislative Council of Government in Newfoundland during the mid-late 1880s and volunteered on the St. John's Curling Club Executive and the Regatta Committee.

# ST. JOHN'S

Summerlea is situated on the south side of Waterford Bridge Road and is one of the few homes original to the area. The dwelling is built in the Carpenter Gothic style of architecture and is unique in design compared to the surrounding properties. Notable features include a steep pitched gable roof, a single-front peak roof, decorative bargeboard, a pinnacle, rounded arch windows, gable windows, and diagonal siding in patterns on multiple sides of the structure. The dwelling also includes two bay windows at the front with decorative corbels, stained-glass windows and four-pane windows throughout. While the heritage designation does not regulate the interior of buildings, it is worthwhile to note that many of the original materials remain including plaster mouldings and medallions on the ceiling, and wooden floors and trims throughout.

The criteria review (attached and subject to review by the Heritage Panel) shows a score of 75 out of 100 which qualifies for heritage designation. A draft Statement of Significance is also attached for your reference.

The property is currently undergoing exterior renovations to remove some of the existing siding and trims, however new clapboard and trims will replicate the existing. As the structure was not a Designated Heritage Building at the time of applying for exterior renovations, there were no heritage requirements. The applicants recognize the historic significance of this property and are restoring it to its original condition.

Considering the above, it is recommended that Council proceeds to designate 119 Waterford Bridge Road as a Heritage Building by directing legal to undertake a Designation By-law for Council's consideration.

**Key Considerations/Implications:**

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Not applicable.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders:  
Applicant, citizens, and the City
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans:  
*A Sustainable City* – Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live.
4. Legal or Policy Implications:  
Legal will be asked to undertake the development of a Heritage Designation By-law for 119 Waterford Bridge Road for Council's consideration.
5. Privacy Implications: Not applicable.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: Not applicable.
7. Human Resource Implications: Not applicable.

8. Procurement Implications: Not applicable.
9. Information Technology Implications: Not applicable.
10. Other Implications: Not applicable.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Council designate 119 Waterford Bridge Road as a Heritage Building.

Should Council wish to proceed with heritage designation, Council may direct Legal to undertake a Designation By-law for consideration.

**Prepared by/Signature:**

Ann-Marie Cashin, MCIP – Planner III, Urban Design and Heritage

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved by/Date/Signature:**

Ken O'Brien, MCIP – Chief Municipal Planner

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

AMC/dlm

**Attachments:**

Location of Subject Property  
Designation Criteria Review  
Draft Statement of Significance  
Applicant's Submission

**Location of Subject Property**  
119 Waterford Bridge Road





## Statement of Significance



### **119 Waterford Bridge Road**

#### **Formal Recognition Type**

City of St. John's Heritage Building, Structure, Land or Area

#### **Description of Historic Place**

Summerlea is a two and a half storey wooden dwelling located at 119 Waterford Bridge Road, St. John's, NL. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

#### **Heritage Value**

119 Waterford Bridge Road has been designated because of its historical and aesthetic values.

119 Waterford Bridge Road was the home to Mr. John Syme, a Scottish immigrant who moved to Newfoundland in 1863. Mr. Syme first resided in Harbour Grace and later moved to St. John's. It is believed that Summerlea was built in the late 1870s and was located outside City boundaries at the time. Mr. Syme was listed as a general accountant for municipal council and later as a commission agent, broker and Chartered Accountant. Mr. Syme was also appointed to a position with the Legislation Council of Government in Newfoundland during the mid-late 1880s and volunteered on the St. John's Curling Club Executive and the Regatta Committee.

119 Waterford Bridge Road achieves aesthetic value because it is a good, surviving example of a vernacular interpretation of Gothic Revival style (Carpenter Gothic) of architecture. The Gothic style is unique in this area and is one of the few remaining original structures.

Features of this style include: a steep pitched gable roof, a single-front peak roof, decorative bargeboard, a pinnacle, rounded arch windows, gable windows, and decorative clapboard and trims. The dwelling also includes two bay windows at the front with decorative corbels, as well as stained-glass windows and four-pane windows throughout.

Source: Designated at a regular meeting of the St. John's Municipal Council held.....

### Character Defining Elements

All elements that define the building's Carpenter Gothic design including:

- steep pitched gable roof
- single-front peak roof
- decorative bargeboard
- pinnacle
- rounded arch windows
- decorative siding and trims
- bay windows at the front with decorative corbels
- stained-glass

### Location and History

<b>Community</b>	St. John's
<b>Municipality</b>	City of St. John's
<b>Civic Address</b>	119 Waterford Bridge Road
<b>Construction</b>	Approx. late 1870s
<b>Builder</b>	Unknown
<b>Style</b>	Carpenter Gothic
<b>Building Plan</b>	Rectangular

Additional Photos: