

Decision Note

Title: 59 Duckworth Street –Designated Heritage Building - DEV2400024

Date Prepared: July 8, 2025

Report To: Regular Meeting of Council

Councillor and Role: Councillor Maggie Burton, Built Heritage Experts Panel

Ward: Ward 2

Decision/Direction Required:

To approve exterior alterations to 59 Duckworth Street, a designated Heritage Building.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

The subject property is within the Commercial District of the Envision St. John's Municipal Plan and is zoned Commercial Downtown Mixed (CDM). The property is in Heritage Area 3 and is a designated Heritage Building (Devon House) of the City as well as a Registered Heritage Structure of the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (Heritage NL). The proposed changes accommodate the residential units intended for this building, which were previously approved by Council as a Heritage Use. A location map and the heritage statement of significance are attached.

The applicant proposes to make the following alterations to the front of the building:

- replace the roofing material on the mansard roof with shingles to blend with existing; and
- replace windows of the same size and style.

The applicant proposes to make the following alterations to the rear of the building:

- replace one upper dormer window with a door, maintaining the shape of the original arched dormer; and
- adding balconies to the upper stories with a glass and metal railing system.

The applicant proposes to make the following alterations to the east of the building:

- remove one window identified as Item 6 and fill in with brick to match existing siding;
- install a new railing system on the fire escape to meet code requirements;
- replace windows as needed with same size and style; and
- upgrade existing railing at the street level.

Applicable Heritage Design Standards for Residential Designated Heritage Buildings from the St. John's Heritage By-Law:

Cladding/Siding Materials - Original cladding/siding to be maintained.

Where replacement is required, modern cladding/siding materials may be permitted where, in the opinion of Council, the appearance replicates the building's period/architectural characteristics. However, vinyl siding, metal siding, vertical boards, board and batten siding and cove siding are not permitted.

Window Style - Original style, size, and shape of windows to be retained, unless otherwise approved by Council.

For any façade facing a public street and/or publicly maintained space, the style and configuration of the windows shall be in keeping with the building's architectural characteristics.

Window Replacements - All window replacements shall be restored/returned in keeping with the window style and window configuration of the building's architectural characteristics.

Where appropriate, in the opinion of Council, additional facades, or parts thereof, may be required to comply with the foregoing.

Window Trim Style and Materials – Window trims shall be compatible with the building's architectural characteristics. Materials may include wood, stone brick, the building's original material, or material otherwise approved by Council.

Note: The width and style of window trims shall be consistent throughout the building's facades, unless otherwise approved by Council.

Window Materials – Modern window material may be permitted provided, in the opinion of Council, the appearance replicates the building's period/architectural characteristics.

Dormers - Original dormer shape, size and proportion to be maintained.

Doors - Door styles shall be compatible with the building's architectural characteristics.

Fence, Railing, Retaining Wall, Deck and Balcony Materials - Modern materials are permitted provided the appearance replicates the building's period/architectural characteristics.

Decks and Balconies - Decks and balconies shall not be permitted on a façade facing a public street unless it's an original feature of the building. In this case, original style and design to be maintained.

Decks and balconies on other facades visible from a public street may be permitted where, in the opinion of Council, the design is compatible with the building's architectural characteristics and does not detract from the character defining elements of the building.

Since Devon House is provincially designated as well, Heritage NL was engaged in the review process and supports the proposed changes.

The Built Heritage Experts Panel (BHEP) reviewed the proposed alterations at their regular meeting on June 25, 2025, and provided comments about using brick, rather than wood, to fill in windows and doors proposed to be removed. Any exterior alterations to a designated Heritage Building require Council approval. Changes to the proposed alterations were made by the applicant as recommended by the BHEP and the final elevations are attached for Council's review and approval.

The proposed exterior alterations to 59 Duckworth Street meet the City's Heritage By-Law, Schedule D Heritage Design Standards and are therefore recommended for approval.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Not applicable.
2. Partners or Interested Parties: Property owner; heritage advocates; Heritage NL.
3. Is this a New Plan or Strategy: No
4. Alignment with Strategic Directions:

A Sustainable City: Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live.

An Effective City: Ensure accountability and good governance through transparent and open decision making.

5. Alignment with Adopted Plans: St. John's Heritage By-Law.
6. Accessibility and Inclusion: Not applicable.
7. Legal or Policy Implications: In line with the Heritage By-Law, Schedule D – Heritage Design Standards for Residential Designated Heritage Buildings.
8. Privacy Implications: Not applicable.
9. Engagement and Communications Considerations: Not applicable.
10. Human Resource Implications: Not applicable.
11. Procurement Implications: Not applicable.

12. Information Technology Implications: Not applicable.

13. Information Management Implications: Not applicable.

14. Other Implications: Not applicable.

Recommendation:

That Council approve the exterior alterations, as proposed, to 59 Duckworth Street, a designated Heritage Building.

Prepared by: Lindsay Church, MCIP, Planner III – Urban Design and Heritage

Approved by: Ken O'Brien, MCIP, Chief Municipal Planner

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	59 Duckworth Street - DEV2400024 - Designated Heritage Building.docx
Attachments:	- 59 Duckworth Street - Location Map.pdf - 59 Duckworth Street - Statement of Significance.pdf - A500 ELEVATIONS JULY 8_25.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jul 9, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

No Signature - Task assigned to Ken O'Brien was completed by delegate Lindsay Lyghtle Brushett

Ken O'Brien - Jul 9, 2025 - 9:55 AM

Jason Sinyard - Jul 9, 2025 - 9:59 AM