



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: February 27, 2007  
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CC File No.: 08-2000-51  
Meeting Date: March 13, 2007

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Heritage Designation and Heritage Revitalization Agreement - 1529 West 33rd Avenue

#### RECOMMENDATION

A. THAT Council authorize the City to enter into a Heritage Revitalization Agreement for the site at 1529 West 33rd Avenue to secure the rehabilitation of the house known as the Crosby House, and to vary the RS-5 District Schedule and Section 10 of the Zoning and Development By-law:

- for permitted use to allow a second dwelling on the property;
- for above-grade FSR from 0.3 to 0.45;
- to reduce the required front yard for the infill dwelling (front edge of the side walls and roof) from 10.8 m (35.4 ft.) to 10.64 (34.9 ft.);
- to reduce the required east side yard width for the infill dwelling only from 15% of site width (4.6 metres or 15 feet) to a site width of 0.9 metres (3 feet);
- to reduce the minimum rear yard depth for the infill dwelling only from 10.7 metres (35.1 ft.) to 0.61 metres (2 ft.);
- to permit building depth to be increased from required 40% of site depth (17.7 metres or 58 ft.) to a site depth of 32.9 metres (108 ft.);
- to increase the maximum height of the fence in the front yard from 1.2 m (3.9 ft.) to 2.23 m (7.3 ft.);
- to increase the maximum height of the fence in the east side yard between the entrance front roof line of infill to rear of property from 1.9 m (6.2 ft.) to 3.05 m (10 ft.);
- to increase the maximum height of the fence in the rear yard from 1.9 m (6.2 ft.) to 2.74 m (9 ft.); and,

- to address existing non-conforming ancillary building (double garage) and front yard and west side yard set back of the existing house.

as described in detail in this report and as indicated under Development Application DE410501.

- B. THAT the house at 1529 West 33rd Avenue, the Crosby House, listed in the "B" category on the Vancouver Heritage Register, be designated as Protected Heritage Property.
- C. THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to bring forward for enactment a by-law to authorize the Heritage Revitalization Agreement and by-law to designate the heritage building as Protected Heritage Property.
- D. THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to prepare a side agreement to ensure that neither the heritage house nor the infill dwelling may be converted to accommodate a secondary suite. The nature of this agreement is to be to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services in consultation with the Director of Current Planning.

#### GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of Recommendations A, B, C, and D.

#### COUNCIL POLICY

Heritage Policies and Guidelines state, in part, that:

- The City's long-term goal is to protect through voluntary designation as many resources on the Vancouver Heritage Register as possible.
- Legal designation will be a prerequisite to accepting certain bonuses and incentives.

The Arbutus Ridge/Kerrisdale/Shaugnessy (ARKS) Community Vision, as approved by Council in November 2005, includes Direction 13.2, which states:

"For buildings listed in the Vancouver Heritage Register, the City should encourage retention by implementing additional incentives which are suitable in ARKS."

#### PURPOSE

This report seeks Council approval to designate and enter into a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) with the owners to secure the conservation and heritage protection of the house at 1529 West 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, known as the Crosby House.

## BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

The site is located in Shaughnessy and zoned RS-5 (Site Map, Appendix A). The intention is to retain and rehabilitate the single-family house, and to construct an infill dwelling along the east and north sides of the site, including an attached garage with access from the rear lane.

## DISCUSSION

**Heritage Value:** The Crosby House is on the Vancouver Heritage Register as a B-listing. It was completed in 1937 by architect Robert Berwick, one of his first professional commissions, for his mother-in-law, Isabelle Crosby. Berwick went on to work with prominent local architects Sharp and Thompson, and became partners with Ned Pratt to lead the firm into a new direction into more modern architecture.

The house is a significant rare example in Vancouver of early modernist residential architecture which coincided with the ending of the Depression. Its design features cubic proportions, planar expression of wall surfaces in the form of concrete block and corner windows (Photographs, Appendix B). It represents the further development of Second Shaughnessy between the two world wars. Berwick's innovative design was featured in the Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in 1939.

**Revitalization Program:** The development application proposes rehabilitating the single family dwelling and constructing an infill dwelling (Appendix C, Site Plan and Elevations). There have been alterations over many years that have compromised its heritage character, and the rehabilitation will reverse these. Work required on the heritage house includes removal of awnings, removal of the newer window arrangement with metal windows based on original details, re-painting of the brick masonry in its original colours and new copper gutters and downspouts. The tall cedar hedge in front will be reduced in height to increase the visibility of the front of the heritage house from the street.

The design concept for the infill dwelling is to be discrete, complementary, and secondary to the heritage house, particularly when viewed from W 33rd Avenue. The low massing of the infill allows the heritage house to remain the focal point. Its placement on the east and north perimeter of the property adjacent the lane respects the space around the heritage house with a dedicated garden. The dedicated private space for the infill is in the form of a large enclosed courtyard at the front, in addition to two other smaller enclosed courtyards at the rear corner and along the east side. All windows of the infill except one will face the courtyards.

**Compatibility with Community Planning Objectives:** The intent of the RS-5 District Schedule is to maintain the existing single family residential character. By rehabilitating the heritage house and constructing an infill that respects its presence and space, and by drawing further from the direction provided under the Community Vision, Development Application DE410501 meets the intent of the zoning.

**Economic Viability:** To make the rehabilitation of the house economically viable, the owners have requested variances to the RS-5 District Schedule. To achieve this, the owners are prepared to enter into a Heritage Revitalization Agreement and designate the house. They have agreed that the variances to the Zoning and Development By-law represent fair and

complete compensation in exchange for the designation of the property and have waived their rights to further compensation.

**Zoning Variances:** The variances to the RS-5 District Schedule and Section 10 that will be addressed through the Heritage Revitalization Agreement are as follows:

RS-5 District Schedule	Required/Permitted	Existing	Proposed
2.2.A (b) Accessory Building	7.9 m (25.9 ft.) of rear property line	10.2 m (33.5 ft.)	Existing non-conforming
3.2.1.DW Infill Dwelling	Infill one-family dwelling provided it shall be for a caretaker and shall not exceed 75 m <sup>2</sup>	N/A	Infill one-family dwelling
4.4 Yards - Front Existing Dwelling	10.8 m (35.4 ft.) - for existing dwelling and proposed infill	10.6 m (34.9 ft.)	Existing non-conforming
Proposed Infill		N/A	10.64 (34.9 ft.)
4.5 Yards - Side (West)	3.0 m (10 ft.)	2.6 m (8.7 ft.)	Existing non-conforming
4.5 Yards - Side (East)	4.6 m (15 ft.)	N/A	0.9 m (3 ft.) in respect of the infill dwelling
4.6 Yards - Rear	10.7 m (35 ft.)	N/A	0.61 m (2 ft.) in respect of the infill dwelling
4.7.1 overall FSR	0.61 [808.2 sq. m(8,700 sq.ft.)]	0.25 [304.1 sq. m (3,677 sq.ft.)]	0.5 [674.2 sq. m (7,257 sq.ft.)]
4.7.1 FSR above grade	0.2 + 1400 sq.ft. = 0.3 [399.5 m <sup>2</sup> (4,300 sq. ft.)]	0.23 [303.9 m <sup>2</sup> (3,273 sq.ft)]	0.45 [602.9 m <sup>2</sup> (6,489 sq.ft.)]
4.16 Building Depth	17.7 m (58 ft.)	N/A	32.9 m (108 ft.)
<b>Section 10</b>	<b>Required/Permitted</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
10.16.3 - Fence in side yard (east)	1.9 m (6.2 ft.)	N/A	3.05 m (10 ft.)
10.16.4 Fence in front yard	1.2 m (4 ft.)	N/A	2.23 m (7.3 ft.)
10.16.3 Fence in rear yard	1.9 m (6.2 ft.)	N/A	2.74 m (9 ft.)

Under the RS-5 Schedule of the zoning bylaw, if the heritage house were to be demolished, a single house with an overall FSR of 0.6 [808.2 sq. m (8,700 sq. ft.)] would be permitted, to include up to 399.5 sq.m (4,300 sq.ft.) above grade. Under the proposed development, the heritage house would not be enlarged, and when combined with the infill, the overall FSR is 0.5 which is within the permitted overall FSR. However, the above grade FSR of the proposed development including the heritage house and infill exceeds the permitted above grade FSR for the site and therefore this must be varied under this HRA to permit 0.45.

Under the RS-5 Schedule of the Zoning bylaw, an infill is permitted solely for use by a caretaker. Under the proposed development, the restricted use of the infill is to be varied under the HRA to permit a second single family dwelling on the site.

In order that the infill dwelling respect the placement and prominence of the heritage house on the site, the HRA proposes to vary the front yard, east side and north side setbacks together with the building depth. The lanes flanking the east and north sides of the site will mitigate the impact of the placement of the infill with respect to adjoining properties.

To allow for private exterior spaces for the infill dwelling, the HRA proposes to vary the front yard, east side and rear fence heights. To ensure the retention of the existing hedge fronting 33<sup>rd</sup> avenue, the concrete garden wall proposed to be located behind the hedge is being required to be set back a minimum of 3 feet to prevent damage to the root system. Along the east side lane, to mitigate the visual impact of the courtyard wall when viewed from the lane, the wall is being set back 3 feet from the property line to allow for substantial layered foundation planting. Climbing vines will also be planted along the length of the lane side of the wall together with an additional tree adjacent to the courtyard.

Staff analysed the project economics and determined that the modest size additional dwelling does not provide the owners with undue profit, noting the scope of heritage rehabilitation planned.

**Notification:** Prior to making application, in May 2005 the owners showed the proposed development to the surrounding owners. Written responses were obtained from nine of the immediate neighbours, of which four provided support in writing; the others acknowledged reviewing the plans but expressed neither support nor objection. As part of the standard Development Application review process, 17 property owners were notified, along with the Shaughnessy Heights Property Owners Association (SHPOA).

The only response questioning the proposal was received from SHPOA, which passed a motion at its meeting on September 11, 2006 expressing concern for the size of the proposed infill and the setbacks at the rear and at the side. On October 16, 2006, City staff met with SHPOA members. Their concerns were reviewed and further questions were answered pertaining to precedent for infill and how the proposal ties into existing Council-approved policies. As a result, on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006, SHPOA contacted the City to confirm their support for the heritage of the building and the concept of the infill house on this specific application. However, SHPOA added that they do not support the design of this particular infill proposal and that they want the new infill to be complementary to the design of the existing heritage house and to be built at the rear of the property.

On July 18, 2005 the Vancouver Heritage Commission reviewed this proposal at the inquiry stage, including the zoning variances. The Commission expressed its support in principle for the proposal including the placement of the infill adjacent to the lanes, the relationship of the infill to the heritage house with the latter remaining the prominent dwelling, and the courtyard extending into the front yard. It requested research into the original colours and materials for compatibility.

As part of the Public Hearing process, the Director of Legal Services will prepare the necessary Heritage By-law and requirements will be met for notification as specified by the *Vancouver Charter*.

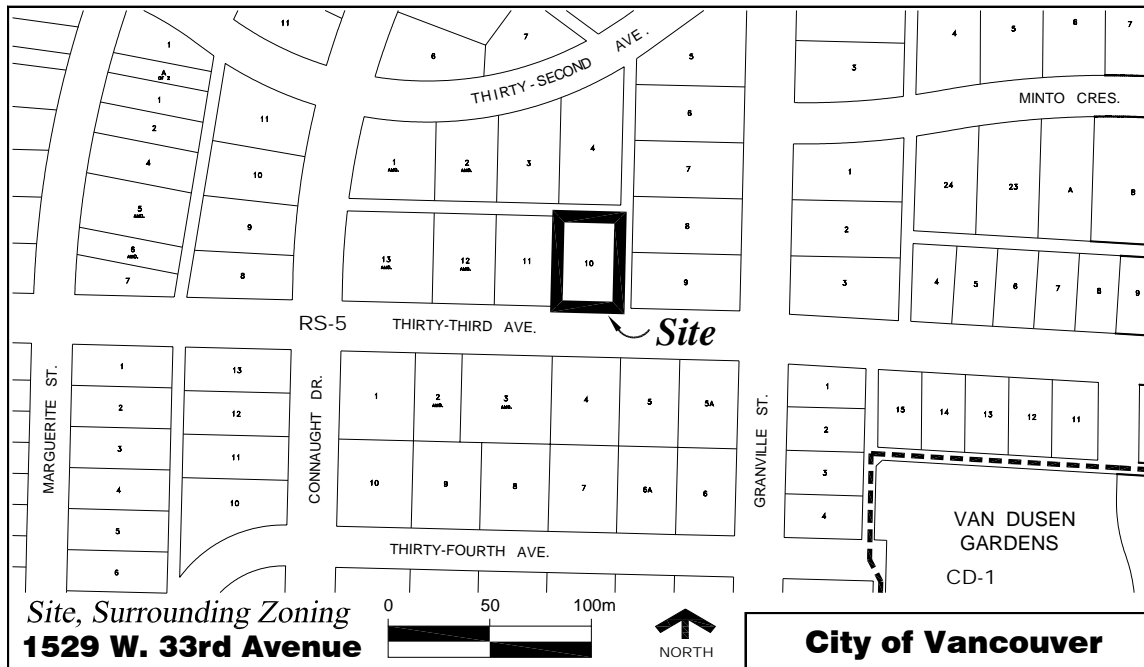
#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

#### CONCLUSION

The Crosby House at 1529 West 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is a rare example of early modernist domestic architecture in Vancouver , a design by Robert Berwick prior to his joining the firm of Sharp and Thompson, later becoming one of the principal partners. The owner has accepted the zoning variances associated with the proposed infill as full and fair compensation for designation of the house. Therefore, staff recommend that Council support the requisite Heritage Revitalization Agreement and designate the Crosby House at 1529 West 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue as Protected Heritage Property.

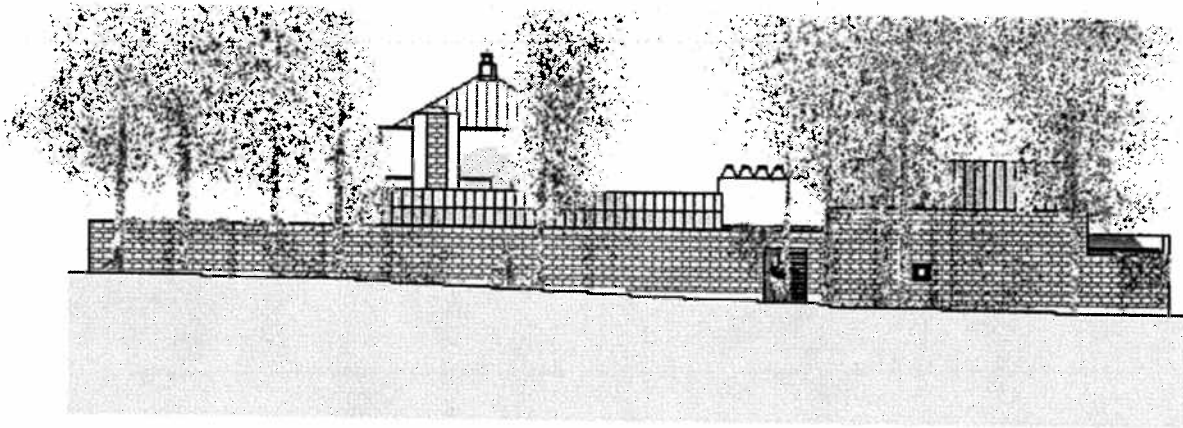
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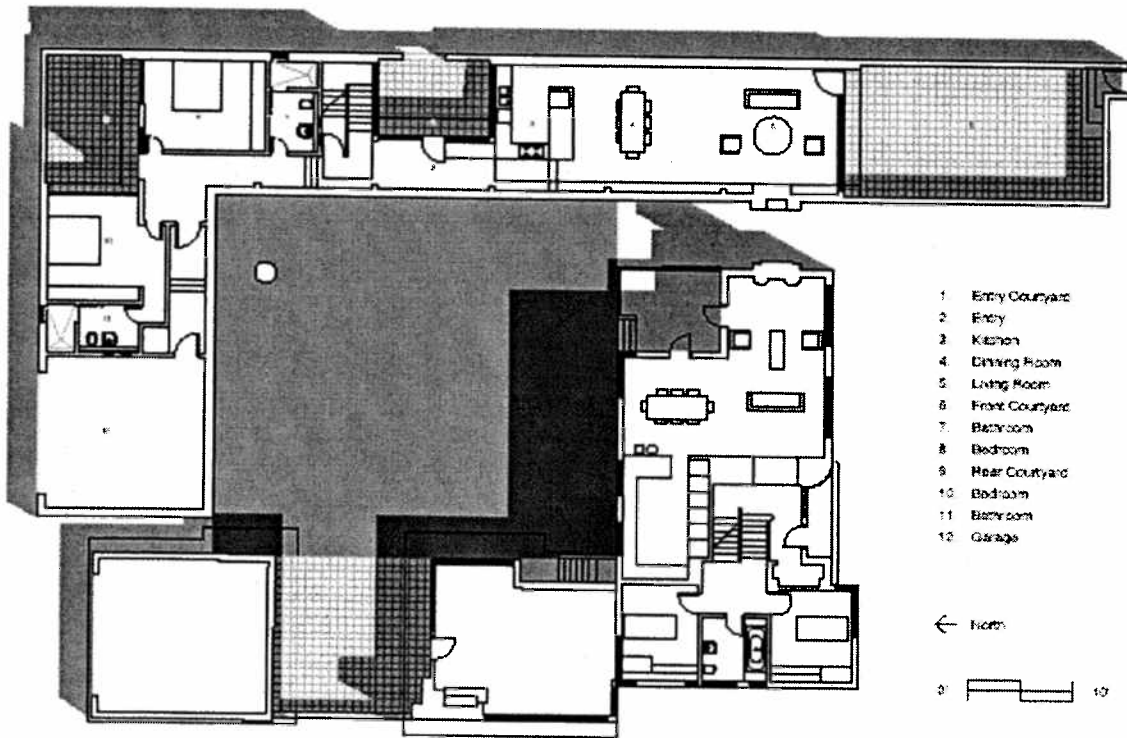




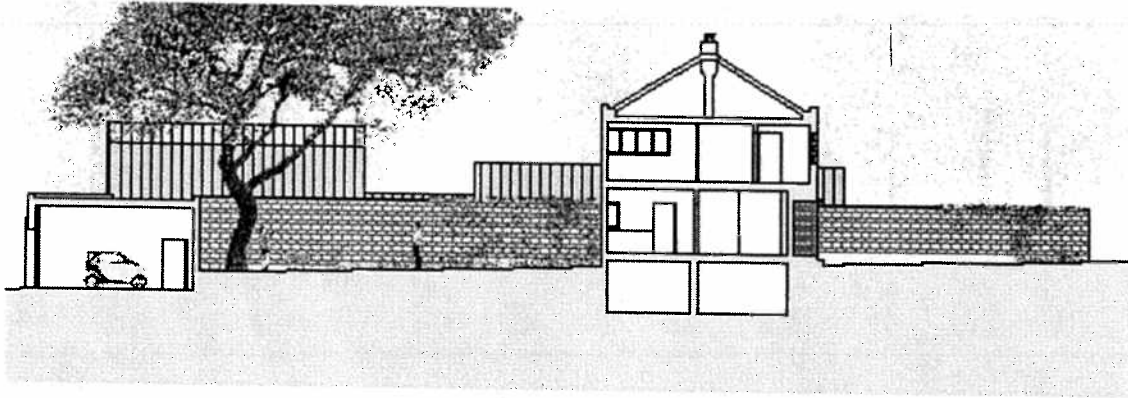
PRESERVATION THROUGH DENSIFICATION



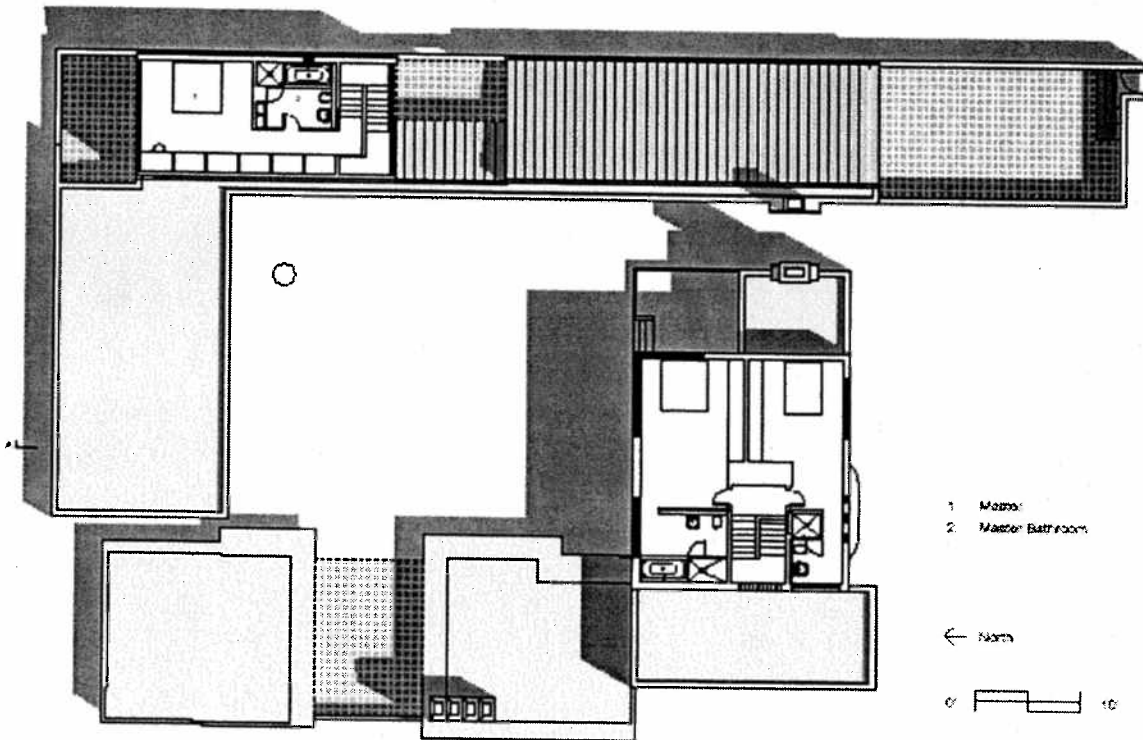
East Side Elevation



Main Level Plan



West Section Elevation



Upper Level Plan

# STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Donald Luxton and Associates, June 2005

## D R A F T

### Name of Historic Place

Crosby House

### Street and Street Number

1529 West 33rd Avenue

### Description of Historic Place

The Crosby House is a modernistic, two-storey masonry residence, with corner windows and scored horizontal lines on the exterior concrete brick walls. It is located mid-block on an alley, just west of Granville Street in Vancouver's Second Shaughnessy neighbourhood.

### Heritage Value of Historic Place

The Crosby House is a significant example of early modern architecture in Vancouver, reflecting a shift away from traditional domestic architecture in the pre-Second World War era. Robert A.D. Berwick (1909-1974) prepared the plans for the Crosby House for architects Sharp and Thompson. Berwick became a successful Vancouver architect, who worked in association with Sharp and Thompson between 1936 and 1968, becoming partner in 1956, rejuvenating the firm with architect Ned Pratt. As one of his first professional commissions, Berwick designed this house for his mother-in-law, Isabelle Peters Crosby (1873-1949) in 1937, before his graduation from the University of Toronto in 1938. As a young architect, trained in Eastern Canada, Berwick embraced modern technology through his use of material such as concrete and glass block. This style heralded the new machine age inspired by modern technology, as reflected in its long scored horizontal lines, which implied speed and aerodynamics. The overall form, scale and massing of the Crosby House remains intact, displaying modern characteristics of irregular cubic proportions, planar expression of wall surfaces, and the combination of straight and curved lines. The garden setting was minimal, which presented the house in a clean and unadorned manner. The house was featured in the *Journal of the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada* in 1939, a prestigious achievement for a young architect, and indicates the innovation of the design.

The Crosby House represents the ongoing development of Second Shaughnessy, part of Vancouver's most prominent subdivision, designed to attract affluent and prominent families to the area. The CPR's original land grant for bringing the railway into Vancouver included much of the west side of the city. Subdivided in 1914, Second Shaughnessy consisted of the area south of King Edward Boulevard to 37th Avenue, and had smaller lots and more modest houses than First Shaughnessy to the north. In 1922, building restrictions were implemented to guarantee prestigious residential development through minimum construction cost standards and restrictions on buildings and landscaping. The Crosby House was constructed as

part of the final wave of development in the area, when construction was resuming near the end of the Depression.

### Character-Defining Elements

Key elements that define the heritage character of Crosby House include its:

- mid-block location near Granville Street in Second Shaughnessy
- garden setting with expanse of surrounding lawn, with minimal foundation plantings and taller perimeter plantings
- form, scale and massing as expressed by its irregular two-storey plus partial basement height and split level plan
- geometric expression, as exhibited by its linear proportions; combination of curved and horizontal lines such as the scored horizontal lines on the exterior walls; use of glass block; rectilinear corner windows; curved projecting canopy over the front entrance; and recessed exterior lighting
- flat roofs combined with a shallow hipped roof over the centre portion with coping and internal gutters with downspouts
- masonry construction of concrete lower walls, scored concrete beams over structural openings and concrete brick cladding
- fenestration, including: regular and asymmetrical window openings; corner window openings with corner steel posts; and three original 3-paned steel casement windows with horizontal muntins, on the second storey
- original wooden doors with porthole windows
- three large rectangular chimneys with chimneypots (one in the 1950s addition)
- features of the one-storey 1950s rear addition including the flat roof with deep overhang; large plate glass and ribbon windows; interior brick fireplace; and exterior courtyard with brick wall, exterior oven and concrete counter
- interior features including the marble-faced fireplace in the living room and the central interior staircase