

HERITAGE CANADA FOUNDATION – 2013 Cornerstone Award Nomination

Former Work Point Barracks Guardhouse

Adaptive Use/Rehabilitation Category

Project Description:

Location: The former Work Point Barracks Guardhouse, previously identified as WP 1001 within the original 11.95 acre site of Work Point Barracks established in 1887, is now located outside Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt (Work Point) lands. The current address is 445 Head Street, within the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia.

Overview/Context: Adaptive Use of the Guardhouse from an abandoned presence with no apparent defined future, mired in legal delays between various Government departments, to a vibrant state of community activity after seventeen years of being vacant. Currently the building is leased and in use as the headquarters and training centre for # 2483 PPCLI Army Cadet Corps in a similar military fashion to operations in affect since the building was first built in 1891 with the exception of application of the cells. This permits the historical features and values of the building to remain evident, while providing for contemporary community involvement. The owners, Esquimalt nation and Songhees First Nations, have committed to improvements while respecting its heritage values. This maintains the cultural representation as one of three individual Recognized Guardhouse buildings in Canada depicting 19th and 20th century military construction, the other two being at Royal Military College in St. Jean Quebec and at the Fortress of Louisbourg in Nova Scotia.

Historical Background: The Guardhouse was built by contractor George McFarland and Son of Thorold, Ontario, in 1891. A tender for construction was issued on October 16, 1890 by the Dominion Public Works Department in Ottawa, based on their design from preliminary sketches by Henry James, C.E., architect of the Engineer Branch of the Department of Militia and Defence. A contract, numbered 1845, was awarded and signed on December 31, 1891; construction of the building commenced on January 22, 1891 and was completed in June of that year. Appropriation in September 1891 for the Guardhouse and Gateway was \$1790. The Guardhouse was one of four buildings included in the contract, the others being a canteen, a cook house, and married men's quarters. See LAC Drawings Mikan 2171612 and 2171615. Work Point Barracks continued to expand over the many decades of Canadian and British Army Garrison functions, with the Guardhouse, or Guardroom, remaining as the landmark main gateway to the barracks until 1994 when the Garrison forces relocated.

Heritage Status: The Guardhouse was evaluated by heritage studies of 1974, 1982 and by the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office in 1989 (89-205) and consequently was classed as Recognized in 1991. In 2001 the Guardhouse was included in the Naval Officer's Training Centre heritage study. Prior to the sale in 2005, a Heritage Recording was created comprising of Graphic, Photographic and Written records. Upon the sale of the building, it relinquished the Recognized status but retained a heritage clause in the sale agreement which states: "The Purchaser agrees and covenants to protect the heritage value and character defining elements of Building 1001 – Guardhouse (Work Point Barracks) as

described in the Federal Heritage Building Review Officer, Heritage Statement.” A Statement of Significance, written by Colin MacLock, was approved by the Township of Esquimalt and the building was added to the Township’s Heritage Register in 2011.

Interventions: The building remained in- tact from 1891 until prior to 1940 when some minor decorative modifications were made to the front exterior, two front windows were enlarged, an addition was annexed at the rear containing a guard’s room with four new cells, while two of the original four cells were eliminated in favour of a washroom. In 1962 a second brick chimney was added to facilitate heating and in the 1980’s the roof had been re-shingled. In 2005, prior to execution of an agreement of sale to a private company by Transport Canada, who received the building and adjacent property in a transfer of assets with the Department of National Defence, the electrical service was upgraded, floor tiles were replaced. The building remained unoccupied pending finalization of the sale eventually in 2010 and a tenant was then secured in 2011. Locks were rekeyed and a new water service was placed at that time as the existing service had been cut off in 2009. Stairs at the rear entrance were rebuilt in 2012 and in 2013 the roof was re-shingled to match the current colour and exterior painting is being organized which will match the earliest known trim colour, a military Forest Green. During the unoccupied timeframe of 1995 to 2005 when the building was upgraded and sold it was monitored by the Barracks staff. After the sale it was allowed to deteriorate; however, it was monitored and maintained on an unofficial basis by myself and volunteers until the tenant was secured in 2011. Interventions taken place have complied with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places, maintaining the original structural design features and functionality while respecting the heritage character-defining elements determined.

Goals: Occupancy and community based activity has lead the way to a renewed presence while extending the life expectancy and purpose of the building. The intention of the Guardhouse is to remain in situ and maintain its current historical presence and utilization as a community landmark gateway facility aside the entrance to Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt (Work Point) property, with a program of improvements and repairs.

Enclosures:

Nomination Form X 2

Relevant drawings – LAC Mikan 2171612 and 2171615;

Heritage – 2012. Volume XV, Number 2

Victoria News – January 25, 2012 (2)

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony - January 31, 2012 (2)

Lookout Publication – February 6, 2012

10 Photographs:

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|----|---------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 1/ | Before current occupant – August 2009 | 2/ | Before current occupant – August 2009 |
| 3/ | Roof before – January 2011 | 4/ | Roof before – January 2011 |
| 5/ | Exterior stairs before – August 2012 | 6/ | Exterior stairs after – August 2012 |
| 7/ | New water service – December 2011 | 8/ | Re roofing in progress – May 2013 |
| 9/ | Re roofing in progress – May 2013 | 10/ | Roof after – May 2013 |