



MISSION COMMUNITY HERITAGE COMMISSION

September 24, 2018

Dear Resident of Bakerview Avenue,

Each year, the Mission Community Heritage Commission (MCHC) determines the recipients of the Mission Heritage Awards. These are allocated to organizations or individuals who have made a special contribution (architectural, restoration, education, etc.) to community heritage.

For 2018, the MCHC has recommended three awards be given for Heritage Streetscapes. Each of the neighbourhoods receiving this award represent either a significant period of housing development in Mission and/or an important mixture of architectural styles.

The commission identified Bakerview Avenue as one of the recognized neighbourhoods. The enclosed two-page information sheet has more details on this history and significance of your streetscape.

This award is commemorative in nature. It recognizes and celebrates the diversity of Mission's places. The award does not constrain property owners from making any changes to their property or provide any legal protection of heritage character or status.

The awards will be presented to Council on October 15, 2018. You are welcome to attend this Council meeting to hear the presentations and to meet with members of the MCHC. A poster exhibit on Mission's 2018 Heritage Award winners will be on display later this autumn at the Mission Leisure Centre.

Please contact the District of Mission Planning Department at 604-820-3748 or email planning@mission.ca if you have questions regarding this award or if you would like to know more about the possibility of heritage protection.

If you happen to have any additional information about your streetscape or property that would help with future research into your neighbourhood, please let the Mission Community Archives know. The Archives are located next to the Mission Library on 2nd Avenue.

Thank you,

Michelle Rhodes
Chair, Mission Community Heritage Commission

~ Bakerview Ave ~

Streetscape Award 2018

Location:

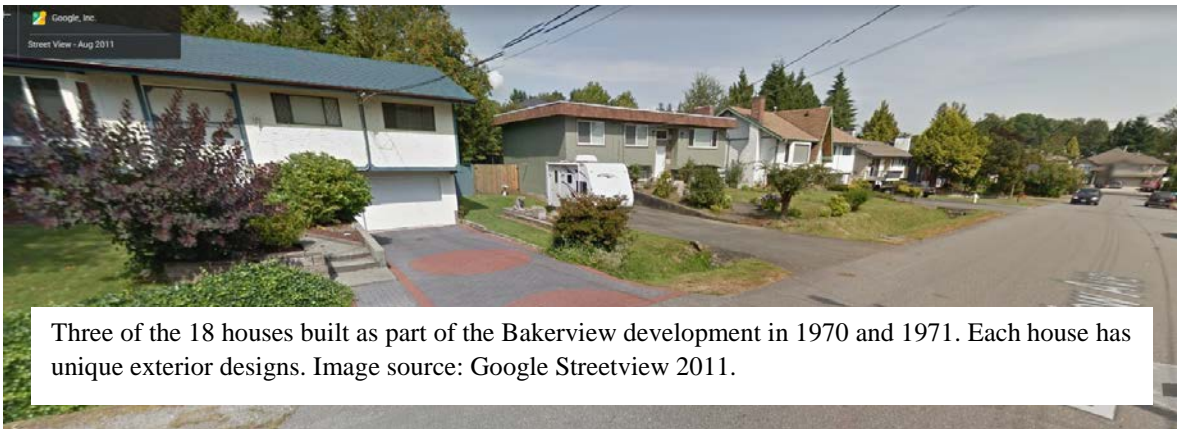
Bakerview Avenue, between Cedar and Bluebell

Prepared By:

Mission Community
Heritage Commission

Streetscape Description:

A collection of 18 single-family “BC Box” homes, built in 1970 and 1971, lining the one-block long Bakerview Avenue, just east of Cedar. The term BC Box¹ refers to a mass-produced, simple, two-storey house form that is characterized a low-pitch roof (either simple or hipped), asymmetrical front windows, and a single or double-car garage or carport built into the form. The houses sit parallel to the road.



Three of the 18 houses built as part of the Bakerview development in 1970 and 1971. Each house has unique exterior designs. Image source: Google Streetview 2011.

Significance:

All of the houses on Bakerview Ave were erected between 1970 and 1971 by the same group of builders. Inside, the houses all had the same or very similar floor plans. Outside, however, the builders used different facades, rooflines, exterior materials, and even window treatments. Even the stucco—which was used on most if not all of the houses—varied in pattern and colour. According to an ad in the *Fraser Valley Record* from May 1971, the builders boasted “designs never duplicated”.

This house style has been prized in the past for its low cost in construction and its versatility. By the late 1960s, most BC Boxes were built partly or wholly in a factory setting, with components transported in parts to the lot. This lowered final building costs.

Too often, heritage awards fail to include the most common types of residential landscapes associated with rapid suburban development. Yet, most of Mission’s population lives in houses built after 1960, and many of them live in a BC Box. As Mission’s population continues to grow, the need to find new locations for housing means that many of its current BC Box housing stock will see a similar fate.

¹ The house is more commonly called a ‘raised ranch’ elsewhere in Canada and the US.

This award is not being given to Bakerview Ave as an attempt to preserve these homes, as redevelopment pressures will likely increase over time. Rather, the Heritage Commission is acknowledging the important role played by neighbourhoods like this in housing Mission's population over the past 50 years. We are presenting this award to Bakerview specifically because of the eclectic nature of what is otherwise a standardized housing form, making this streetscape unique among Mission's suburban landscapes.



One of the more interesting features of homes on Bakerview is the use of columns and wood siding, which have remained even as the home has been updated. The house to the right has a different shape roofline and stucco.

Image source: Google Streetview 2011.

History:

At the end of World War II, Mission's population grew rapidly as a result of the baby boom. At the time, the land that would be transformed into Bakerview Estates still lay quite a bit north and uphill from most new development. However, as the number of people living in Mission and the size of families grew larger, so did the need for larger and affordable homes. New developments sprung up north and west of town in the 1960s. Houses needed to be built quickly, and most spent little time on the market. The greatest demand for homes was for those that were more than 1000 square feet. Families found themselves with few options. Many of Mission's older homes were too small for growing households.

Between 1971 and 1976, Mission's population grew by 4800 people. The houses of Bakerview were built to meet a part of this demand. The homes featured amenities older homes lacked—double fireplaces, en suite bathrooms, walk-in closets, and foyers. Typical of BC Boxes, the first floor (basement) was left unfinished in order to keep costs down and to provide the owner flexibility in how they used the space.

New houses would follow uphill, and as they did, they adopted newer design elements. The vernacular BC Box was transformed by the end of the 1970s into houses that adopted more complicated designs, such as multi-gabled roofs and larger, built-in garages. Technology made these features cheaper to produce, and by the late 1970s and early 1980s, the classic and simple vernacular designs of the BC Box were no longer built en masse, as they had been on Bakerview Ave.

Contact Us with Further Info!

We would love to know more about the history of these homes, and any information or photographs would be greatly appreciated. If you know anything about the past ownership, sale history, construction or renovation of the properties or their history, please contact or visit the Mission Community Archives. We would love to hear from you.