

Town of High River
Alberta
Bylaw 4248/2009

Being a Bylaw of the Town of High River in the Province of Alberta to apply a Municipal Historic Resource Designation to the McCoy House at Sheppard Family Park.

WHEREAS: Pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, being Chapter M-26 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, and amendments thereto, a Council may pass bylaws relating to people, activities and things in, on or near a public place or place that is open to the public and services provided by or on behalf of the municipality in the manner that Council considers appropriate, **and**

AND

WHEREAS Council considers the McCoy House which is located on lands in the Town of High River in the Province of Alberta, which are legally described as:

Plan 0914066
Block 3
Lot 1

To be an historic resource as defined in the Historic Resources Act being Chapter H-8, R.S.A. 1980

WHEREAS Council considers the preservation of such an historic resource to be in the public interest;

NOW

THEREFORE The Council of the Town of High River in the Province of Alberta, enacts as follows:

That the following described historic resource, being the McCoy House, being legally described as

Plan 0914066
Block 3
Lot 1

is hereby designated as a Municipal Historic Resource pursuant to Section 22 of the Historical Resources Act.

This Bylaw comes into force upon Third and Final Reading.

Read a First time this _____ day of _____ A.D. 2009

Mayor/Deputy Mayor

Town Manager/Dir of Corp Serv.

Read a Second time this _____ day of _____ A.D. 2009

Mayor/Deputy Mayor

Town Manager/Dir. of Corp Serv.

Read a Third time this _____ day of _____ A. D. 2009

Mayor/Deputy Mayor

Town Manager/Dir. of Corp Serv.

Statement of Significance

Sheppard/McCoy House



Description of Historic Place

The Sheppard/McCoy House (log portion) was built on its present site in 1883 for Mr. Andy Bell. The house is part of a legacy bequeathed to the Town of High River by Ruth McCoy upon her death in 1995. The structure features the original hand hewn logs and has been restored, as closely as possible, to resemble its original state. Today, the house is part of a larger “park” which features heritage buildings and events and is open to the public for viewing.

Heritage Value

The heritage value of the Sheppard/McCoy House lies in the fact that the house is presently one of High River’s oldest standing structures. The building has been brilliantly maintained to preserve its unique character and local significance.

The house was home to Ruth McCoy for 70 years. Originally built for Mr. Andy Bell in 1883, to accommodate his need for a change in climate, the cabin was used as a base for fishing and visiting neighbors. When Bell returned to Montreal in 1887, William Ikin purchased the land and buildings. He lived on the property for a time where he stabled his famed Clydesdale herd.

Ikin died in 1921 and the property was sold to Henry Sheppard in 1923. Sheppard converted the stables to cow barns and sold milk and cream in town. His wife, Evelyn, and her daughter, Ruth, created the wonderful flower garden that remains on site today. Mother and daughter’s baking and hospitality were renowned – the front step of the cabin is worn with the footprints of the countless people who entered their home.

The small farm was self-sufficient – drinking water was collected from a clear spring on the other side of the Little Bow River. Today, the footbridge and the protective wooden covering can still be viewed on the property. A cold storage room is dug into the hill behind the house and meat hooks and butchering equipment remain at the house to this day. The buildings have always been red-roofed with white walls, both inside and out. The layers of whitewash on the inside are thick with years of applications.

Henry Sheppard died in 1954. Evelyn and Ruth continued to live in the house – it was first wired for electricity in 1957. After Evelyn died, Ruth lived in the house alone with her dogs – she never married. Upon her death in 1995, the property (13 acres) was bequeathed to the Town of High River in her will. The will stipulated that the property was to be turned into “Sheppard Family Park” and was to remain accessible to the public for their enjoyment.

Sheppard Family Park is currently operated by a private non-profit society and in accordance with Ruth McCoy’s will, the property has been turned into a “heritage park”, welcoming the public to enjoy its bounties.

Character defining Traits

Hand hewn logs – original axe markings are still visible

Daubing – mudding between the logs follows a Portland cement style containing any or all of the following: hydrated lime, sand, horse hair, straw, or other fibrous materials.

Floating floor – installed without the use of glue or nails, the individual planks that make up a floating floor are not secured to the sub-floor, but rather suspended.

Hand dug cellar – the cellar is situated approximately 5 feet from an outside wall under the current kitchen floor. Access is through a trap door in the floor.