

Battery area gets blanket heritage tag

Battery Street, the battleground for a bitter fight over heritage preservation in May, is slated to become Victoria's first blanket heritage development permit area.

The city's advisory planning commission has recommended to council that the new official community plan be amended to recognize the heritage qualities of the Battery/Paddon area. The recommendation was endorsed by council.

Under bill 62, introduced by the province last year, the blanket heritage development permit areas are allowed in concert with an official community plan.

The heritage area will include all homes fronting

Council must amend new community plan

on Battery Street and will run between Government and Douglas streets.

If the amendment to the community plan is passed, property owners will need a development permit before making any exterior alterations or additions to the building and council will probably have some control over landscaping in the area.

Features of homes in the area include deep gables, sleeping porches, balustrades and picket fences, says the planning commission report.

The area already has five heritage designated buildings, four heritage registry buildings and two homes on which designation is in process.

Heritage designated buildings cannot be altered without council's permission but owners can apply for renovation funds from the Victoria Heritage Trust.

Buildings on the registry are flagged as being of heritage interest.

Battery Street residents took to the streets earlier this year in an all-out effort to persuade council not to allow developer John Hanrahan to demolish 648 Battery St. to expand his Niagara Street nursing home.

Hanrahan eventually sold the house to a buyer who said he would apply for heritage designation.