

87-1 35

Jasper, Alberta
Fire Hall
Elm and Patricia Streets

HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT

The Fire Hall in Jasper was constructed in 1936 to designs prepared by the Architectural Division of the National Parks Branch. It replaced an earlier fire hall of log construction put up on the same site in 1914. The 1936 building continues to serve as a fire hall to this day. The building has also housed other functions, including the weather bureau and the courts, and today houses the main communications centre for the park. A rear addition was added in 1948 to contain office and workshop space, and a third bay for emergency vehicles was added in the early 1970s. The custodial department is Environment Canada. See FHBRO Building Report 87-1 35.

Reasons for Designation

The Fire Hall has been designated Recognized because of its design qualities and its contribution to the heritage character of the Jasper townsite.

The design of the building, by the Architectural Division of National Parks, follows the "rustic" approach felt to be most compatible for protecting and enhancing the natural environment. In the case of the Fire Hall, this approach has led to an eclectic mix of Queen Anne and Tudor Revival detailing within the context of a building of irregular massing and picturesque silhouette. It is a cost-conscious attempt at making a utilitarian and functional structure conform to the aesthetic principles and design guidelines of the park. The functional design has worked well, with only minor changes over the years.

The building is an important element in establishing the heritage character of the core area of Jasper. This area around the Administration Building and Athabaska Park contains a good collection of historically and architecturally important buildings and acts as a significant draw for visitors. The Fire Hall is also known to residents because of the community services it provides.

Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of the Fire Hall is defined by the exterior treatment of the building, its related interior elements, and its setting.

.../2

-2-

Jasper, Alberta
Fire Hall (Continued)

The building is a two-storey structure with a steeply-pitched gable roof, shed dormers,

and a corner hose-drying tower. A small projecting porch at the rear adds to the irregular massing. The wall finish is stucco, with imitation half-timbering in the shed dormers and tower, mock beams above the windows, and brick detailing on the principal façade. The small-paned windows are of irregular size and shape, adding to the picturesque effect.

The form, materials and detailing of the original building should be preserved as far as possible. In addition to a program of preventive maintenance, periodic repainting and repair should be carried out using qualified conservation staff and good historical

documentation. Where alterations are required to maintain the usefulness of the building, their design should be compatible in scale, materials and detailing, and should enhance the heritage character of the existing structure. The two later additions are reasonably consistent, but could be removed or replaced if desired without affecting the heritage character in any serious way.

The immediate setting of the Fire Hall has been modified by later additions and changing patterns of access. However, the overall relationship to its surroundings, including the Administration Building, is unchanged. It is important that the physical presence of the building be maintained, and that any modifications to the site or the surrounding area not damage or obscure the views of the building.

1990.05.31