

# ***A New Way of “Heritage Districting” in Economically Struggling Communities***

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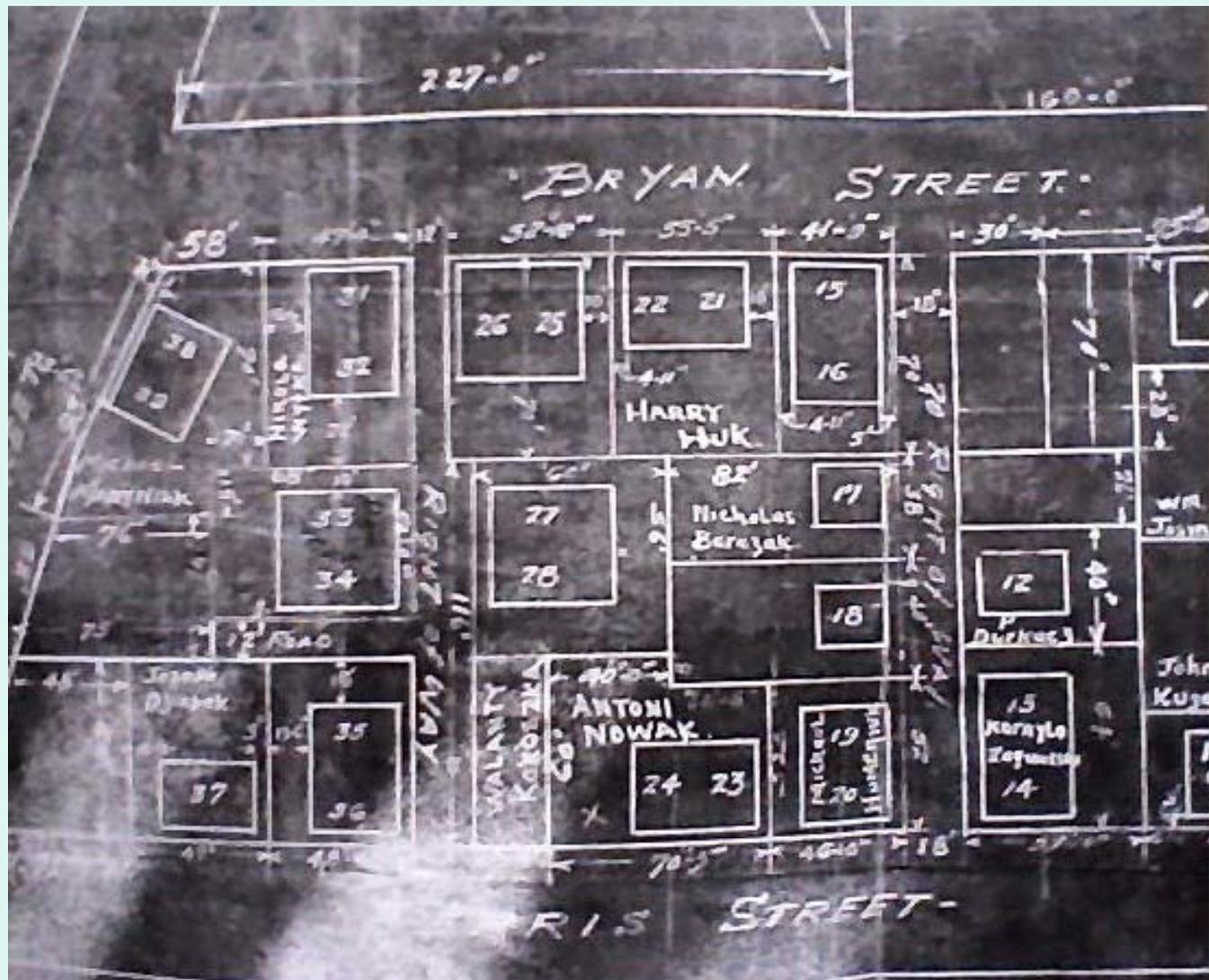
# Heritage Districting

- Traditional conservation policies & regulatory tools designed to deal with development pressures.
- But what about conserving and promoting heritage in “slow” growth communities? i.e. communities that have lost industry and population – lack of investment, urban decay.

# Life in Kolonia



*“...the rationale...is to recognize, protect and commemorate the tangible assets, cultural geography, many traditions, oral histories and the invaluable stories of residents...”*











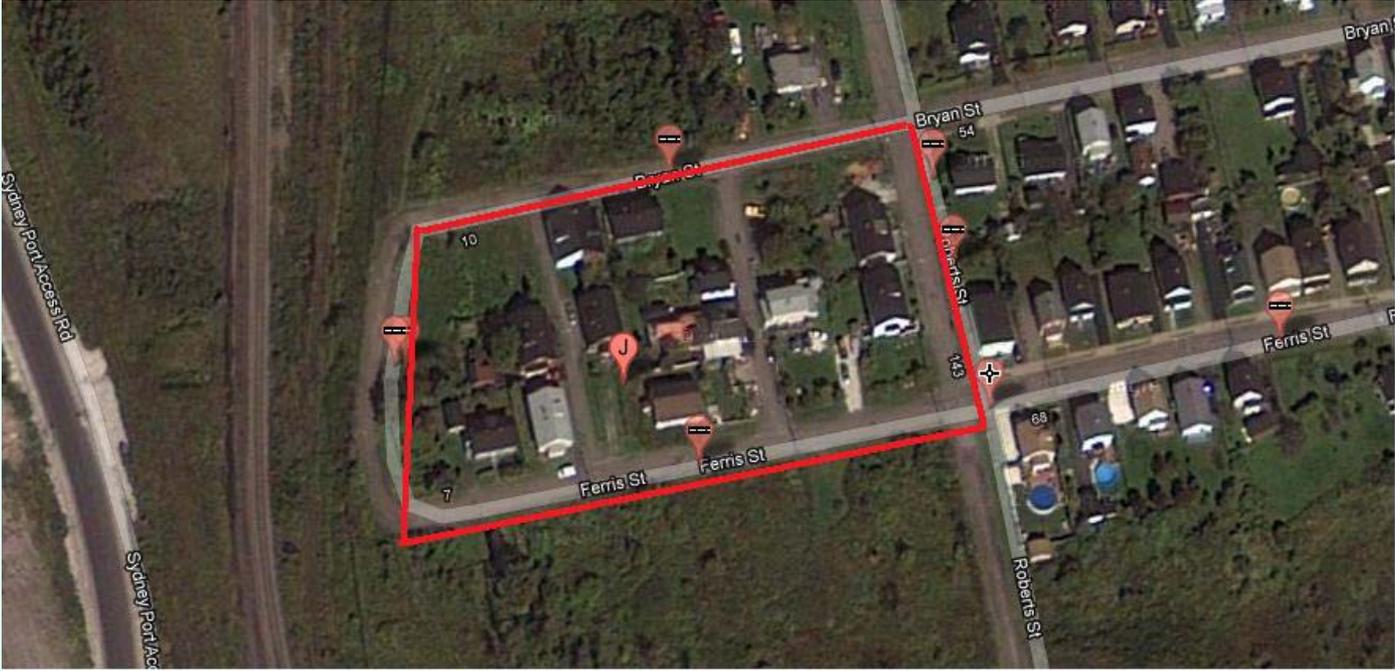






*“The built vernacular heritage is important; it is the fundamental expression of the culture of a community, of its relationship with its territory and, at the same time, the expression of the world's cultural diversity. Vernacular building is the traditional and natural way by which communities house themselves. It is a continuing process including necessary changes and continuous adaptation as a response to social and environmental constraints. The survival of this tradition is threatened world-wide by the forces of economic, cultural and architectural homogenization” (ICOMOS, 1999).*





*“To live a dignified life is most important to all Poles. Living amongst others they had no problems, but coming to an alien country and environment became quite difficult. Although work was plentiful, wages were low and good housing was scarce if at all available”. -Edmund Durkacz*



*“Once the children started attending the English school system, various cultures lost much of their incentives. Some struggled to keep their cultures intact, but little by little, many absorbed the local (English) culture. To this day, many struggle to keep customs of their parents and grandparents alive”. - Edmund Durkacz*

# Developing an “Opt In” Heritage Conservation District 1

## The Process:

- Identifying the district boundaries and developing the statements of significance for the district and individual properties, generally in close collaboration with students, residents, and local organizations.
- Designating the defined area as a heritage conservation district and approving the measures to be taken by public bodies for identification and enhancement, but without immediate new restrictions on private property owners.

# Developing an “Opt In” Heritage Conservation District 2

- Making property owners eligible for grants from the Municipal Heritage Fund, with appropriate criteria.
- Stipulating that acceptance of a heritage grant deems a property to have “opted in” to the district’s regulations, which should usually be modest so as not to prevent the re-use and adaptation of buildings (as opposed to abandonment).
- In addition to the existing Municipal Heritage Fund, establishing, under the auspices of the municipality, a district-specific Heritage Legacy Fund as a receptacle for private contributions.

# Mechanic and Foundry Street, Glace Bay, C.B.

aerial view of mechanic and foundry streets glace bay - Google Maps

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To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the Print link next to the map.



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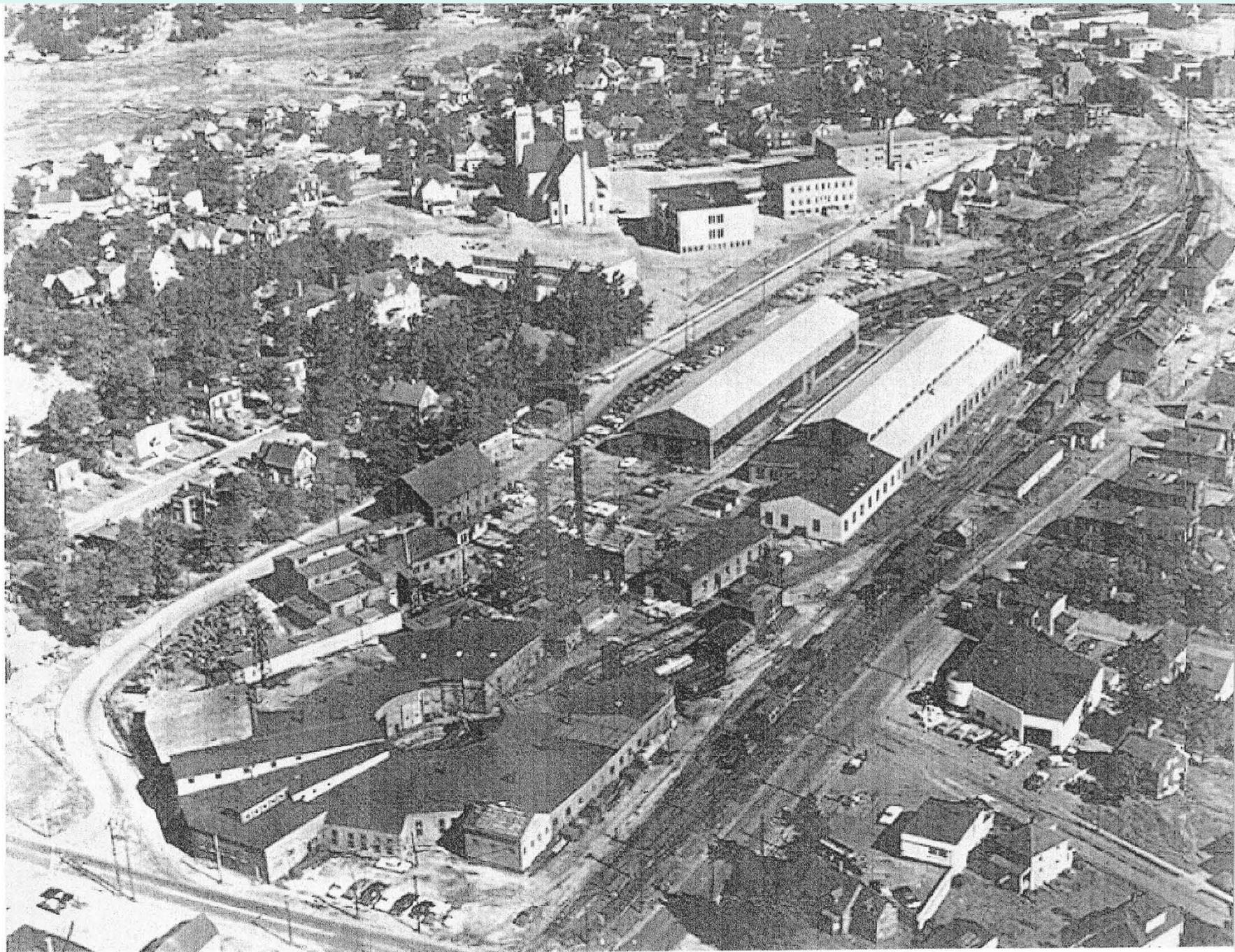


# Mechanic and Foundry Street, G.B. - Company Houses

- All built by the early 1900's.
- Two story wooden duplexes built on the ground – rented and later sold to the residents.
- Gabled, Gothic Revival – put up quickly – “7 day wonders.”
- Peaked roofs in the middle.
- Style functional for the climate.

# Mechanic and Foundry Streets

- Strong sense of community
- Workers housed so that they would be close to the S&L railway – ran right in front of Mechanic St.
- Also – machine shop, forgery, pattern shop, coal yard. “You could get work anywhere.”



## 50 MECHANIC STREET

The “Macintyre” home.  
Remained in the same  
family for generations.

The first CB company  
house to be designated  
under the Municipal  
Heritage Property Act.

Houses predated current  
street names – started  
as “Dominion Rows.”



# Growing up in 50 Mechanic St.

- “Was a very pleasant experience. There was always a warm and nurturing feeling in the home that expanded out to residents in the neighbourhood. Children in the community would often stay for supper with the Macintyre's, as their parents felt their children were safe staying with the family. Although the family never owned a car, the location of the home was in very close proximity to downtown Glace Bay and their workplace, the railroad. Even though the home was close to a railway station, the disruptions of the train driving through town (upwards of 20 times a day) were something you got used to.”

Habitat for Humanity's Cape Breton Committee was created to work on renovations. It accepted the donation of this property. The CBU/NSCC Housing Applied Research Group is playing a supporting role.



# A Heritage District -1

- Educating the public about what constitutes a heritage property and what their obligations are.
- Shed a lingering bias towards ornate and elite properties.



# A Heritage District -2

- A number of the homes are in need of repairs - eligibility for grants from the Municipal Heritage Fund would be a good selling point for “opting in” and accepting modest regulations.
- Could attract district-specific Heritage Legacy Fund contributions.