Who cares? Community Value in the Preservation of Seattle's Historic Public Schools

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Abstract

Who cares?
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Who cares about historic public school buildings? Seattle Public Schools, preservationists, and local communities, all have a stake in the future of Seattle’s historic school buildings. But they can’t seem to agree on what is significant about these buildings. SPS wants to redevelop its properties for educational needs. Preservationists see them as significant historical artifacts. But communities see them as something more.

This thesis examines five historic school buildings within Seattle that have undergone a form of adaptive reuse, to examine the impacts of the process on the communities connected to those schools. In these cases there are alternative values that communities see in historic properties that the legal preservation system, and Seattle Public Schools do not. Within these case studies, it has been found that Seattle’s current preservation regulations favor white communities, and was more difficult for minoritized ones. Power is given to developers, not those with a stake in historic properties. The methods for determining significance are unsuitable for modern understandings of diverse histories, preservation struggles to listen when a community is not well established and defined, and lacks the collaboration or consultation to appropriately investigate the identities and values of communities that are supposed to be included in Seattle’s criterion c.

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Acknowledgments

I offer my thanks to my thesis committee, Jeffrey Karl Ochsner and Kathryn Rogers Merlino, for inspiring my academic journey and fantastic guidance for my research. Jeffrey's exacting editorial standards has honed me into a better writer, and academic. His classes led me to this point and gave me the foundation of Seattle history that made understanding any of these case studies possible, and his recommendations, questions, and opinions posed a challenge worth attempting. Kathryn's first class introduced me to alternative reasons for historic preservation. As an archaeologist I still thought history was for history's sake. Her research and book on adaptive reuse showed me that their could be pragmatic reasons. Her questions and discussions kept on inspiring me to look for more and more reasons.

My cohort, Saloni Rege and Amrita Vindo, were the best discussion partners, and friends.

Finally, I would like to thank my partner Maggie Hargus, for incredible patience, willingness to discuss these topics at length, and even editing and reading to keep me on track. I wouldn't have even applied to do a Masters without her, and wouldn't have completed it either.

Preface

First, I acknowledge that the land I live on, that the University of Washington stands on, is occupied land, stolen from the Coast Salish peoples.

This thesis touches on a wide range of social issues, from attachment, community resilience, radical action, systemic racism, the erasure of heritage, to many other serious things. I am not the right person to talk about most of these issues. I am twice over a colonizer, my parents are *Pakeha* (not Māori) from New Zealand, and I was born in Portland, OR, and I am a white man. The communities I am writing about are not my communities, though I live near many of them. In fact I discovered that my house was once the house of one of the principals of the Colman School (Chapter 8). I have included as many direct quotes where I can and I hope to continue this research through collaborative methods in the future.

I am an archaeologist, and have worked in the Pacific Northwest as a cultural resource specialist for five years. I dug a lot of holes, shovel probes about one-meter deep and 40-cm wide, usually twenty a day. But I also began to write Historic Preservation Inventory forms, documenting historic buildings. I began to write and think about architecture. When you are surveying homes you can't ignore the human, no matter how

rushed the client wants the project.

Most importantly I talked to many people. Construction workers, developers, curious pedestrians, home owners, passing homeless people, other archaeologists, geologists, and members of multiple Tribal Nations. These people asked questions about what we did. And there were questions that I couldn't answer – like *why was their house – a historic building – not going to be protected? If we were surveying could we make sure the historic streetlights be saved? The local dairy had been part of their neighborhood forever – why was it being demolished?*"

I couldn't answer. Usually the answer was, that we did it that way, because of the regulations. *The regulations didn't account for that part of your history, so our survey probably isn't going to save it.* The regulations meant we did things in a very particular way.

Figure 1: Nick at the bottom of an eight foot hole during construction monitoring, scraping the underside of a historic street car line.

Coming back to the University of Washington and considering thesis topics, my partner suggested historic schools. My high school in Portland, Grant, a year after I graduated, was gutted. It had been built sometime before WWII and had been modified for a huge rush of students during the war trying to graduate to get jobs or join the army as soon as possible. I only knew this because there were several small photos hung above the lockers beside the library. The school has been modernized. The pretty brick facade outside remains, with larger "sympathetic" additions around it, but the interior is gone. No painted lines to guide student traffic, the arrows over the stairs trying to direct you only up or down. None of the scuffs, dents, or cracks that I or any other student had put there. Everyone has a school, but not everyone's school is still there. I think I can try to answer some of those questions by looking at schools.

Figure 2: Children playing in front of a Warren Avenue School, a model-school, 1905. (Nelson 1988)

Who Cares?
Community Value in Preservation of Seattle's Historic Public Schools

1.1 Introduction

In 2014, many Indigenous Seattleites clashed with Seattle Public Schools (SPS) over the fate of the historic Woodrow Wilson and Pacific School buildings (Wilson-Pacific). The campus was connected to a nearby Indigenous heritage site,[1] had once housed a successful Indigenous-centered high school,[2] and had a shared history of Indigenous community use. By the end of 2014, the building had been demolished,[3] and the strong community was in decline.[4]

Schools are a frequent site of community attachment. The buildings form the centers of networks of parents, teachers, students, and neighbors, and their connection to these buildings increased through time. Additionally, historic schools, like Wilson-Pacific, are frequently under threat: it is characteristic of public schools that there is a constant push and pull of student numbers and modernization of education. As such, historic schools provide rich ground for exploring the impacts of preservation on communities, the values

[1] Wilson and Lockwood 2014
[2] Hidalgo 2013, Puget Sounds Productions 1994, UNEA 2023, Walker 2015
[3] Walker 2015
[4] Gillis 2009, Gross 2018

communities ascribe to historic properties, how communities grow around historic properties, how developers seek to remove community spaces, and if preservation can be a tool of support for communities, especially minoritized communities. Analysis of the relationships between schools and their communities may aid in preventing community displacement events like the demolition of Wilson-Pacific.

> *By exploring historic schools in the City of Seattle, this thesis seeks to answer the question "How does preservation impact communities?"*

This thesis exploration is framed by considering the significance of community value, which holds that historic properties should be preserved for their beneficial qualities to a community. This lens invites communities themselves, not just professional preservationists, to define what is significant to them.

This thesis presents five preservation case studies: Interlake, Queen Anne High, Beacon Hill, Colman, and Woodrow Wilson school buildings, all of which have strong community ties. When they were considered for preservation, members of the public came to argue for the buildings, describing different reasons they considered the buildings significant. The five case studies were chosen for the variety of outcomes, variety of locations and times, and for the conflicted character of their preservation process. The Seattle Landmark Preservation Board (LPB) (acting within the city's legal preservation framework), Seattle Public Schools (SPS), and the public speakers, all demonstrate different perspectives on preservation and community value. By considering their statements and suggesting alternatives, a more diverse preservation process can be constructed, providing agency to disadvantaged people.

Figure 3: Protestors at the occupied Beacon Hill School operating a child care service. El Centro de la Raza archives 1972

1.2 Thesis Structure

This thesis is structured in eleven chapters:

Chapter 1 describes the structure of the thesis, methods, definition of terms, and the thesis statement.

Chapter 2 presents arguments that preservation and schools can benefit community building. Preservation can benefit communities, but also harm them; each case study shows different processes and outcomes.

Chapter 3 is a short history of how SPS has handled its properties, from the 1900s to the current day, providing context for the case studies, and presenting background for SPS's argument against preservation.

Chapter 4 presents the basics of the historic preservation process as practiced in Seattle, from the perspective of a building passing through the system. This discussion provides context for the description of the preservation process in each case study.

Chapters 5 through **Chapters 9** present the five individual case studies, showing a range of adaptive reuse projects and timeframes, yet each with a strong self-identifying community presence.

Chapter 10 includes an examination of the overall trends in preservation of Seattle Schools, their effects on community value, and general methods and problems seen through all case studies. This chapter analyzes the exclusionary character of significance criteria, the disadvantages for minoritized community input, and the value of historic properties to minoritized people.

Chapter 11, finally, presents comments on the connection between community and preservation, and suggests what could be changed about preservation policy to better protect communities.

Figure 4: Case study schools mapped to overview of City of Seattle.
Imagery ©2023 TerraMetrics, Map data ©2023

Chapter 5: Interlake School (now known as the Wallingford Center) which was adaptively reused as a commercial space but retained its character as a school inside and out and has become a center for the neighborhood.

Chapter 6: Queen Anne High School (now known as the Queen Anne Apartments) was adapted from a high school campus into housing and has had its classrooms remodeled, leaving hallways and the exterior as the only original portions surviving. Despite its changes, there is a strong and devoted historical society dedicated to its memory.

Chapter 7: Beacon Hill School (now known as El Centro de la Raza) was a historic school building that was occupied by Latino activists until they were granted a lease to convert it into a community center; the center has flourished as a gathering point within Seattle to the present day.

Chapter 8: Colman School (now known as the Northwest African American Museum) was the site of the longest occupation of a building in protest in the United States, leading to the conversion of the closed school into an African American museum; however, its ultimate fate was to be taken over by city officials and become split museum and housing, a decision that generates conflict to this day.

Chapter 9: Woodrow Wilson and Pacific School buildings (now demolished, replaced by Robert Eagle Staff Middle and Cascadia Elementary School on the same site) was the center of a strong Indigenous community that fought to have the space saved, but ultimately the building was removed and only the outwardly cultural elements were preserved.

The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

700 Third Avenue · 4th floor · Seattle, Washington 98104 · (206) 684-0228

REPORT ON DESIGNATION LPB 353/05

(former) Colman School
2300 S. Massachusetts Street

Legal Description: N 388.9 FT OF W 211.86 FT OF E 267.91 FT OF GL 6 LESS POR FOR STS; and 1-2-3 2 ATLANTIC HEIGHTS LESS POR FOR STS

At the public meeting held on August 17, 2005, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the (former) Colman School at 2300 S. Massachusetts St. as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.

D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.

F. Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.

Figure 5: Landmarks Preservation Board designation report for Colman School. LPB 353/05

1.3 Methods

Like other explorations in history and theory, this thesis combines both documentation and analysis/interpretation. Each case study is explored and then analyzed. Broader interpretations are built on the findings of all five case studies. For each case study, the following process has been conducted:

1. Constructing a narrative of each preservation process, including arguments made, background politics, and public opinion;
2. Identifying specific stakeholders within communities who involved themselves in the preservation process, documenting their expressed opinions and reasons for involvement, and identifying what they considered valuable about each historic school.

Primary sources, such as contemporary documents, were used to identify a majority of statements made directly by members of the communities involved in preservation of the schools. These primary sources were accessed in collections held by the Northwest African American Museum, the collection of the African American Heritage Museum and Cultural Center, interviews in archived newspapers, self-published histories such as Seattle's El Centro de la Raza Dr. King's Living Laboratory (Burce E. Johansen, 2020), the publications of the Urban Native Education Alliance and the Queen Anne Historical Society.

Additionally, the Department of Neighborhoods (DoN) and the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), provided access to government documents, such as the Landmark Preservation Board Hearing Minutes (LPB Minutes), and preservation documents, such as historic property inventories and nomination reports. The DoN's archived material also included letters, notes, newspaper clippings, photos, and emails collected during preservation hearings. The City of Seattle Municipal Archives stores LPB Minutes for the years of 1973-1980. DAHP's Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data (WISAARD) was consulted for preservation documents submitted to fulfill Washington State or United States regulations, and for historic register nomination forms.

LPB Minutes constitute a large body of information and statements from many parties. LPB documents are cited with their official numbering and as such are not cited

Figure 6: Pile of document folders from Department of Neighborhoods archives. Photo by author 2023.

individually in the bibliography. Additionally, these archives are not complete, and records of certain LPB meetings no longer exist. For example, the minutes of the designation hearing of the Colman School are not present in the Municipal Archives.

Seattle Public Libraries provide archives of The *Seattle Times* and the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, providing access to contemporary second hand accounts and photos. A variety of secondary sources were used, including the Seattle Public Schools Historic Building Survey (Patricia C. Erigero, 1989), Building for Learning (Nile Thompson and Carolyn J. Marr, 2001), and Good Schools The Seattle Public School System (Bryce E. Nelson, 1988). These covered the history of Seattle Public Schools, descriptions of the structures, and the history of construction. Finally, this thesis uses a long list of essays and books on the theories of preservation and anthropology to create a theoretical framework for interpreting these events.

In the future it would be preferable to do collaborative research with the communities involved with preservation of schools, to get perspectives from outside the preservation system, and to build methods for preservationists to work with communities. Due to the limited time in completing a thesis document, this research focuses on the written documentation only, with only four in-person interviews.

1.4 Definition of Terms

The study of historic preservation intersects with multiple disciplines and has its own terminology. Key terms that are used in this thesis are identified and defined in this section, so they may be incorporated without definitions in later sections to increase readability.

1.4.1 Demographic Descriptors

The four main demographic groups addressed in this thesis are: Euro-American/ White, Black, Indigenous, and Latino. These terms were chosen to be pan-ethnic, regardless of race, and reflect both the political movements and the shared realities of each group.

"Euro-American" is the term used herein to describe the historic people who came to the area as colonists in the second half of the nineteenth century, descendants of European immigrants, or other Caucasian Americans who moved to Washington later. Those settlers and later immigrants are a diverse and mixed ethnic group. When used historically, Euro-American refers to any and all people who arrived during Western expansion into the then-Washington Territory. It is the term used ubiquitously in cultural resource assessments and historic anthropology.[1] *"White"* will be used here for the ethnic group in more recent times, especially when in context of time periods when Euro-Americans defined themselves in contrast to "non-whites," against whom they often discriminated.

"Black" is the term used herein to describe African Americans, African immigrants and other people who have been treated as a homogenous group historically. This term reflects both the political reality and movement of being "Black,"[2] as well as the diversity beyond the term "African-American," especially in Seattle where there is a large number of African immigrant communities.

"Indigenous" is the term chosen to describe the native people of the United States, who have been commonly called "American Indians" or "Native Americans." Indigenous is a term growing in use as a political movement and connects the experiences and knowledge of native people around the world.[3] Where possible, individuals or groups of Indigenous people have their names listed followed by their Tribal Nation or family membership in

[1] DAHP 2023, pp. 3
[2] Erickson 2015
[3] Blakely 2020, Smith 2008, pp. 108

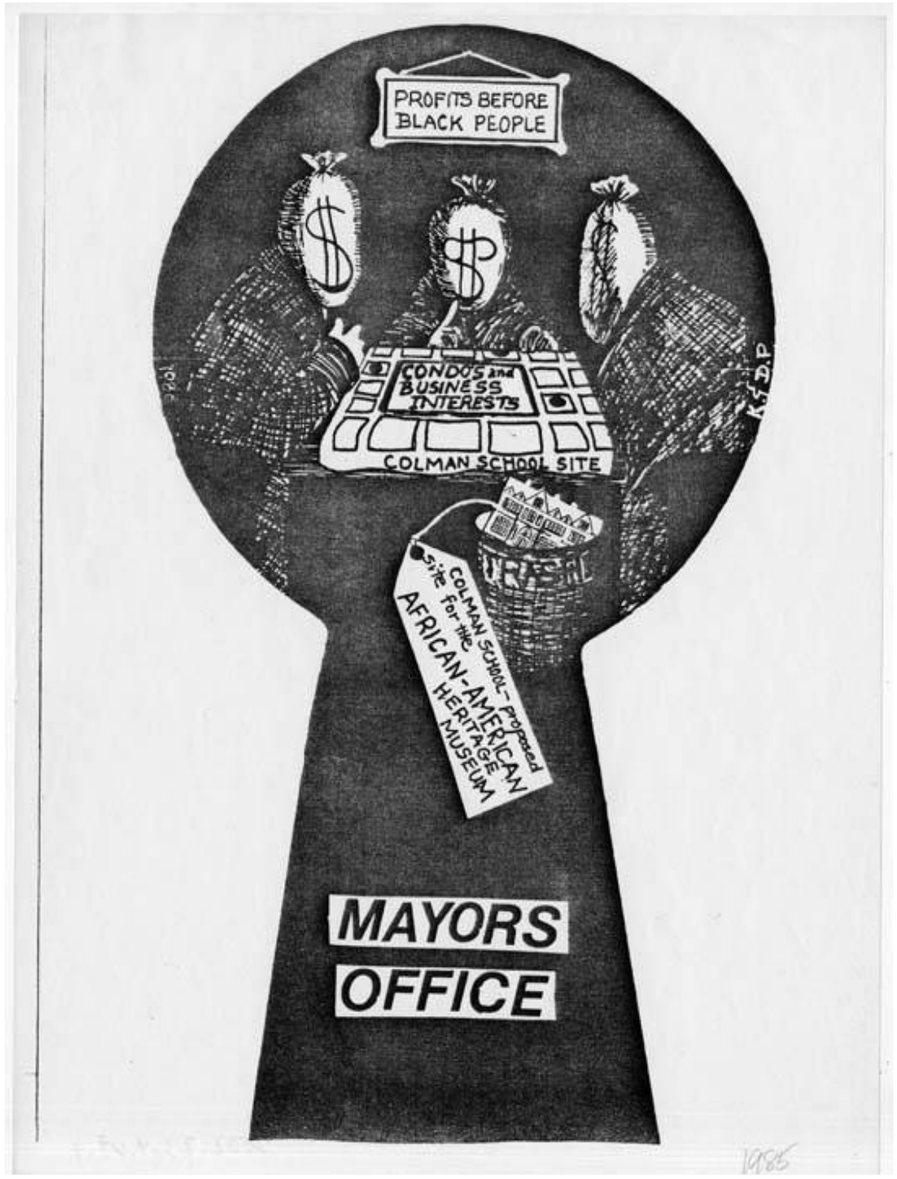

Figure 7: Newspaper cartoon representing the mayor's office "trashing" of the Colman School project.

parentheses. "American Indian" and "Native American" may appear in quotes, or when describing legal language.

"Latin"o is the term used here to describe people who speak Spanish or descend from Spanish or Latin American ancestry. While "Latinx" and "Latine" are increasingly used to remove the gendered nature of "Latino," the older gendered term is still in use by El Centro de la Raza, the community organization this thesis explores in Chapter 7.[1] Discussions of the Latino community, center around this organization, this thesis uses the language they have chosen to describe themselves.

Additionally, the anthropological term *"minoritized"* is used in this thesis to describe people of demographics that are underserved, negatively impacted, or are the minority counterpart to majority Euro-American society. Becoming a minority results from the actions of others, but may or may not be part of their self-chosen identity, thus minoritized is used rather than minority. Within their own communities, they are not a minority.

Finally, a distinction is drawn between "*community*" and "*stakeholders*." A longer discussion of theories of community identity and this distinction is posed in Chapter 2. Community is used herein to refer to the generalized view of a community, encompassing the majority of people within an ethnic or neighborhood group. Stakeholders, in contrast, is used to refer to the specific people, who share a group identity, involved with the historic properties included in this thesis.

1.4.2 Historic Preservation: Definitions

There are several terms used in historic preservation that are widely used throughout this thesis. These are historic preservation, preservation process, preservation regulations, historic property, designated as a City of Seattle Landmark, significance, integrity, historic age, and adaptive reuse. A range of more specific terms, including legal regulations, preservation organizations, and others are included in Chapter 4.

"Historic preservation" is the practice of maintaining old buildings. It is a subset of cultural resource management, which also includes the survey and protection of archaeological sites. Historic preservation professionals typically survey buildings, evaluate them for historical significance (defined below), and determine how best to mitigate any

[1] Johansen 2020, pp. xiii

damages that might affect them. This process is referred to as the preservation process. The legal rules governing this process are referred to as the preservation regulations, and sometimes as rules, laws, or code.

"Historic properties" are buildings of a certain age, that, if potentially impacted by a project, must be surveyed in the preservation process. Under the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC), a building must be 25 years or older, more than 5,000 sq ft. in size, and outside of an industrial zone, to be considered for designation as a City of Seattle Landmark;[1] in addition, some buildings less than 25 years old may become eligible under special criteria.[2] The age requirement for listing on the National Register is 50 years; again, exceptional buildings of less than 50 years may be listed.

"Designated as a City of Seattle Landmark" is a phrase that describes the action the city makes to protect historic properties. This process falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Neighborhoods, and the majority of the decision-making is through public hearings of the Landmark Preservation Board, who votes to nominate, designate, and control historic properties. However, at the end of the process, the City Council must pass, and the Mayor must sign, the ordinance that legally designates the historic building and/or site as a Seattle Landmark and identifies the protections offered.

"Significance" is used in this thesis as it appears in preservation legal documents and policy documents in Seattle and across the United States. The Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) describes that an "object, site or improvement" may be designated for preservation as a landmark if it "has significant character" and has the integrity to "convey its significance."[3] If a building has integrity, it is in such a condition that the historic character that has been deemed significant is still present.[4] The exact criteria required for the determination of significance is given later in Chapter 4, when the specific regulations controlling significance are discussed.

"Adaptive reuse" is the act of modifying a pre-existing building to accommodate a new use. It is not a requirement for a pre-existing building to be historic to be considered for adaptive reuse; however, all case studies in this thesis met the requirements for historic age when they were adaptively reused.[5]

[1] Seattle MC 25.12.350
[2] Seattle MC 25.12.350
[3] Seattle MC 25.12.350
[4] Seattle MC 25.12.350
[5] Merlino 2019

1.5 Thesis

The answer to the question: How are communities impacted by preservation? is, in part, an equity issue. The authors of preservation regulations, and many proponents of preservation, claim to support communities; there is a rising movement to decolonize preservation and work on increasing inclusivity. However, statistical analysis of City of Seattle Landmarks significance statements has shown 65% of Seattle's landmarks are not described with any association with minoritized communities.[1] The preservation process, as will be seen in these case studies, is not currently equitable.

The first two case studies, the Interlake School and Queen Anne High School, are both located within middle-class to upper-class neighborhoods with a majority White population.[2] In these cases, the preservation process resulted in a successful conversion of the school into a community-appropriate space. In contrast, the Beacon Hill School, which the Latino community had requested the right to lease for a community center, and the Colman School, which was located in a Black majority neighborhood that was suffering displacement, succeeded only through radical action. Finally, preservation activity at the Wilson-Pacific School, the home of a highly successful Indigenous-focused school program and many cultural gatherings, was an utter failure. Seattle Public Schools made use of preservation regulations and criteria to override the Indigenous speakers and advocates, and ultimately were permitted by the LPB to demolish the building; Indigenous programs were subsequently removed from the site.

If Seattle landmarks are disproportionately associated with white, male, and cis-normative histories, and the preservation process only produces beneficial effects for white, middle-to-upper class communities there is something very wrong with the process. This thesis will explore these five case studies in depth, attempt to determine some of the reasons the process may not be working, and present alternatives.

[1] 45Culture 2016
[2] Balk 2021

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Figure 8: Pamphlet from an event using the THIS PLACE MATTERS ® slogan, coined in 2008. (saveplaces.org 2023)

Theories of Preservation

2.1 Introduction

This thesis has been developed, drawing on a background of theory and criticism, to address the question: *How are communities impacted by historic preservation?* It makes use of case studies of Seattle's historic public schools based upon the overlap in theories of preservation and the value of schools, as well as Seattle's history of preservation conflicts concerning schools.

Preservationists frequently use the slogan THIS PLACE MATTERS®. In other words, preservationists routinely argue that historic properties can be significant for their value to a community, that historic properties benefit communities. However, research for this thesis shows that Seattle's preservation processes, at least as applied to the public schools, are inequitable. Thus, research into the impacts of preservation on communities is an important and timely question.

Preservationists explicitly or implicitly hold a theory of "community value," usually embodying a variety of ideas of the benefits to a community from the preservation of portions of the built environment. Community value theory holds that a historic property

can be significant if a living community considers it valuable. Theoretical perspectives such as "social infrastructure," "diverse city fabric," "legibility of cities/sense of place," and "community attachment" argue that traits of the built environment can promote social interaction and connection and that such connections or associations make a community stronger. Based on the theory of community value, it can be argued that historic properties may hold those associations or connections, and preservation can protect those benefits for community groups. Examining buildings, their preservation, and their connected communities, can demonstrate the benefits or harms that preservation can produce.

The choice to use Seattle's historic public schools as case studies for this thesis has been based upon the history of Seattle's schools in relation to their neighboring communities (Chapter 3), and upon the argument that schools can serve as "social infrastructure" that builds social strength.[1]

The framing of this research through the study of Seattle schools has also been based on the history of the Seattle Public Schools' (SPS) tension with the City of Seattle preservation process, as evident in documentation of the activities of the Landmark Preservation Board (LPB). SPS has often resisted preservation, disputing what is most beneficial for students and their communities. Considering previously reported on equity problems with both SPS and the LPB, these case studies may demonstrate that the impacts of preservation are different between minoritized groups and/or White groups. These case studies thus can demonstrate if Seattle's preservation policies maintain community value, or if the policies are upholding inequitable structures.

This chapter provides the framework on which the thesis question is built, and theories that can aid in evaluating the impact of preservation in each case study. The following text differentiates the terms "community" and "stakeholder," and discusses the problematic nature of generalizing communities (Section 2.2). Next, the text describes differing theories of historic significance and establishes the theory of community value(2.3). This chapter continues by outlining specific theories identifying the potential benefits of the built environment (2.3), and finally discusses ongoing equity issues in preservation and SPS (2.4).

[1] Klinenberg 2018, pp. 115-145

Figure 9: Class photo from Colman School, 1943. (NAAM Archive)

2.2 Defining Community and Stakeholders

The term "community" is often used in broad ways, and when used for minoritized groups, often generalizes people into a "monolith." Many sociologists have stated that the word is too often used reductively, to homogenize ethnic or minoritized people, such as referring to the "Black community" as if all Black people are in agreement and share similar taste and behavior.[1] In the vernacular, the term "community," is defined as "a body of people or things viewed collectively,"[2] or "a unified body of individuals: such as the people with common interests living in a particular area."[3] But, to many anthropologists, the term has been restructured to capture the complex and dynamic nature of real-world

[1] Putnam 2000, pp. 24-25, Pyburn 2014, pp. 96, Erickson 2015
[2] Oxford English Dictionary 2023
[3] Merriam-Webster 2023

communities.[1]

A more inclusive and complex definition, is that communities are a constant debate between individuals inside and outside a social network, formed to address a common issue.[2] For example, the community that was involved in the adaptive reuse of the Colman Elementary School building, was made up of members who were predominantly Black, young, residents of the Atlantic neighborhood near the school, and concerned with youth violence and education. They were defined by their shared involvement in addressing the education of Black youth. This community did not include every Black person living in Seattle, or even the neighborhood, and its identity was formed and changed through debate between the insiders and outsiders, throughout the conflict.

Although the more complex anthropological definition is useful, it is far from commonly understood. To differentiate from the generic sense of "community," the term "stakeholder" is used instead. "Stakeholder" refers to a group of people with self-stated, shared interest in a historic property, whether or not they are officially recognized. "Community" is used in the broad sense, as understood by the individuals involved in these debates.

[1] Erickson 2015. I will note here that Erickson explains how the idea of a homogenous "Black community" obliterates internal differences. This can emerge when crime is seen as coming "from the Black community," and not an individual.
[2] Putnam 2000, pp. 24-25, Pyburn 2014, pp. 96, Erickson 2015

Figure 10: Pamphlet from the Department of Neighborhoods website, describing the benefits of preservation. These benefits can be compared to theories of significance below. (DoN 2023)

2.3 Theories of Significance

Although historic preservation is a broad and encompassing field, the ultimate disposition of a historic property or site typically the result of a legal decision. As a result, preservation relies on a legal process to arrive at a determination of whether a building is "significant." (See Chapter 4.) This legal process is carried out within preservation's legal system, first structurally defined in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which has slowly accumulated new justifications for significance over time. There is a scholarly debate regarding significance, but that debate only has impact in any jurisdiction only insofar as the legal framework includes newer definitions or interpretations of the term "significance." The theories behind each reframing of significance reveal some intended purposes of preservation as it has developed over the years. Bias toward or against

impacting communities can be evaluated by examining which theories of significance are being used and how well they are integrated into the system (more discussion is included in Chapter 4).

Thomas F. King, an archaeologist and commentator regarding state and federal preservation, has critiqued the lack of discussion of the background theories of preservation practice. He has written: "this system is designed, in theory, to ensure the fair, systematic consideration – and where feasible the preservation and enhancement – of places regarded as historically significant." But, he notes, the process is "rather unsystematic" as it "tries to accommodate at least six distinct theories of significance [...] within which people evaluate the significance of old places."[1] King argues that preservationists often do not understand these as separate concepts, causing confusion and conflict. He explains "theories of significance" as general categories of reasoning for the significance of a historic property. These can be compared to the criteria in use by Seattle's landmark process.[2] To briefly summarize:

Theory	Places are significant if they...	Seattle Criteria
Commemoration & illustration	commemorate or illustrate an important historical event, process, or theme.	A, B, C
Unique-representative	are one-of-a-kind, last-ditch survivors, or are representative of a type.	D, E
Scholarly value	can be studied to learn about the past.	F
Ambience retention	convey a distinct and valuable sense of place.	
Kitsch	reflects perhaps obscure but interesting aspect of popular culture.	
Community value	are valued by a living community.	C

[1] King 2003, pp. 15
[2] King 2003, pp. 16

King's cultural value theory of significance highlights what may be the widest category of value. King describes this theory as seeing "a place as significant if it is valued by a living community," which may come from the community's belief that the place contributes to their "sense of identity," "cultural integrity," and their relationship with the "biophysical – and sometimes spiritual – environment."[1]

25.12.350 - Standards for designation.

An object, site or improvement which is more than twenty-five (25) years old may be designated for preservation as a landmark site or landmark if it has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, state, or nation, if it has integrity or the ability to convey its significance, and if it falls into one (1) of the following categories:

A. It is the location of, or is associated in a significant way with, an historic event with a significant effect upon the community, City, state, or nation; or

B. It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the City, state, or nation; or

C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation; or

D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction; or

E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder; or

F. Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the City and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City.

(Ord. 119439 § 1, 1999: Ord. 106348 § 3.01, 1977.)

Figure 11: Seattle Municipal Code describing the criteria for evaluating significance.

[1] King 2013, pp. 16

Figure 12: Students on a "milk break," 1915 at unknown school. (Nelson 1988)

2.3.1 Theory of Community Value

Community value is a commonly understood element of preservation, preservation regulations intend to support community value (further discussed in Chapter 4), and there are concrete benefits historic preservation can provide as described by various other theories. The connection between community strength and preservation is emphasized by the words of one of the National Historic Preservation Act's original drafters, Robert R. Garvey Jr. as summarized by Thomas King:

> Historic preservation is not intended to benefit old buildings, archaeological sites, or even "traditional cultural properties" for their own sakes. [B]uildings and sites don't care whether they're preserved or not. People and their communities want to preserve environments that they care about, and it's those people and communities that historic preservation should serve.[1]

Garvey Jr., (or at least as described by King) is saying that preservation is not about, or at least not solely about, the physical characteristics of a building or its historic importance; rather, existing communities should dictate[2] the importance of historic buildings

[1] King 2017, pp. 35
[2] I am basing this statement on the phrase "it's those people and communities that historic preservation should serve."

and whether preservation is merited. Although the NHPA requirements are not explicit in this regard (as will be discussed in Chapter 4), the intent was present from the beginning.

Preservationists are frequently asked, by the public and non-preservationist agencies, what is the value of preservation. Carol Rose, an attorney, described these questions as: "whether current [preservation] programs serve the public well-being? Why *should* our public institutions take an interest in preserving the nation's architectural heritage? [emphasis in original.]"[1] Rose builds an argument based on the legal language and case histories of preservation issues, and answers by giving the "community-building rationale": an argument for preservation stemming from a more recent school of thought concerned with the "environmental and psychological effects of historic preservation."[2] This rationale, like King's theory of cultural value, and the statement by Garvey Jr. that preservation should serve people and communities, convincingly demonstrates that preservation is deeply connected to community building and strength.

A similar perspective is embodied in Seattle's preservation system, as stated in public resources for preservation, and the preface to the city's Municipal Code (see Chapter 4). The Department of Neighborhoods (DoN), which oversees preservation, has published a public-facing pamphlet which demonstrates their intention to conduct collaborative preservation and protect community value:

> Historic preservation in Seattle begins with community. Our historic resources provide tangible connections to the people and events that have shaped our communities and our collective histories.[3]

In Seattle's regulations, Criterion C (for evaluating whether a property should be considered a Landmark) makes an attempt to include community value and culture in significance:

> c) It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state, or nation [emphasis added].[4]

This statement, in theory, should provide a basis for protection for sites identified by or associated with by the community. However, there is no clear definition for what constitutes a "significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage." Nor does the

[1] Rose 1981, pp. 474
[2] Rose 1981, pp. 474
[3] DoN n.d.
[4] SMC 25.12.350

Figure 13: Teachers in the break room at the Warren Avenue School, 1905. (Nelson 1988)

ordinance require investigation of local communities to evaluate community significance. Furthermore, by comparing Seattle's significance criteria to King's theories of significance (see table above), it can be seen that Seattle preservation is heavily weighted towards the material and spatial fabric of historic properties and neglects cultural elements. Community value is nominally included, but not in a clear, rigorous or specific way.

Community value theory can also be seen in action in Washington State's regulations. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) includes "historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage" and "an environment which supports diversity and variety of individual choice."[1] The Governor's Executive Order 21-02 (EO 21-02) defines cultural resources as "archaeological and historic sites [representing] Washington's rich and diverse cultural heritage,"[2] and "Native American sacred places and landscape [being] foundational to the identity and spiritual practices of Washington's tribal nations."[3] EO 21-02 also explicitly states that "[archaeological] sites, buildings, and places hold special cultural, historical, and spiritual significance for both tribal members and non-tribal members" are to

[1] RCW 43.21C.020 (2)(e)
[2] EO 21-02, § 1
[3] EO 21-02, § 2

be considered significant.[1] The inclusion of these types of heritage implies that community-building should be included systematically, in Washington State and, therefore, in Seattle.

On the national level, preservationists have called for further and more precise criteria for protecting social, cultural, and community values. Holly Taylor, preservationist, writes, "this proposal to recognize social value is part of a paradigm shift from fabric-centered to values-centered preservation."[2] Taylor and other preservationists call out three problems[3] with the use of significance in preservation:

- Significance is culturally constructed, and due to its time of writing it only represents a very specific set of values and not is not comprehensive;[4]
- Significance is constrained by the use of the period of significance and the age limits for historic properties,[5] and;
- The use of integrity to evaluate a building for its ability to convey its significance greatly disadvantages low income property owners and communities.[6]

These issues will be seen in the case studies in this thesis, demonstrating that Seattle's preservation process still has systemic elements that can negatively impact the agency and strength of communities.

[1] EO 21-02, § 4
[2] Taylor 2018
[3] This is, of course, not exhaustive.
[4] Mason 2004
[5] Taylor 2018
[6] Taylor 2018

2.4 Benefits of Preservation to Communities

There is a wide range of research on the benefits of the built environment and historic properties for communities. These benefits are listed (as Rose describes as well), for example, in Jane Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities,* where it is argued that built environments with a mix of ages and uses contribute to a healthier and safer city,[1] and Kevin Lynch's *Image of the City*, where the senses of place and personal ownership add to the safety and interest of individuals in the urban fabric.[2] Additionally, the sociological theories of **social capital** and **social infrastructure**, which hold that buildings can contribute to the forming of community connections, can be considered in light of research on **place attachment** as a common result of ongoing use of historic properties.

2.4.1 Benefit of Preservation: Diversity in Cost and Commerce

Jane Jacobs's argument for "aged buildings" is found in the second part of her book, "The Conditions for City Diversity." Jacobs argues that diversity of people, buildings, and spaces promote community cohesion, health, safety, and even an increase in business. Jacobs draws a distinction between the typical historically significant building and the insignificant:

> By old buildings I mean not museum-piece old buildings, not old buildings in an excellent and expensive state of rehabilitation [...] but also a good lot of plain, ordinary, low value old buildings, including some rundown old buildings.[3]

She argues that cities need these "not museum-piece buildings" to increase the range of possible users. If a city has only new buildings, it limits the range of owners to the well established, and large companies. Old buildings instead serve as "the bargains of a following generation," providing cheaper ownership or rent costs to newcomers and low income residents. This reduces the risk of new enterprises, allowing an influx of new ideas, and unique businesses that otherwise would not be able to be self-supporting. Additionally, a mix of building ages also diversifies the size of commercial space, prompting mixed use, which draws customers from near or far.[4]

[1] Rose 1978, Jacobs 1992
[2] Rose 1978, Lynch 1960
[3] Jacobs 1992, pp. 187
[4] Jacobs 1992, pp. 188-199

2.4.2 Benefit of Preservation: Legibility of the City or Sense of Place

Rose includes the **sense of place,** as a part of the community-building rationale; she argues that spaces have associations and these anchor a community to a place "giving individuals interest, orientation, and a sense of familiarity in their surroundings."[1] Another form of this concept is Kevin Lynch's "legibility" of a city, the ability for a person to move through the city without difficulty. He argues this can play "a social role as well. It can furnish the raw material for the symbols and collective memories of group communication."[2] In his study, Lynch questioned residents of cities on the images they could recall about the urban environment. One feature, he notes, is that contrast is frequently the background for increased legibility, including contrasts in time. Evocatively he relates "many descriptions of the scene by established residents, young or old, were accompanied by the ghosts of what used to be there," and changes "left scars on the mental image." The legibility of the city was strengthened by its history, and residents struggled to see their city clearly if changes were happening rapidly and that history removed.[3]

Sense of place also increases **place attachment**, the connection between people and places, and between people and communities.[4] In a review of studies of community attachment to place, sociologist David M. Hummon summarizes that the qualities of spaces that created community attachment were not majorly based on physical details. Instead,

> Community attachment seems to be most strongly associated with social integration into the local area. Here, local friends play a particularly significant part in attachment, as do social factors that influence such local integration: for example, length of residence and life-cycle stage.[5]

Essentially, the longer the time a person spends going to a given place, the more attached they become to that place and the community associated with that place. Therefore, one could conclude historic buildings will have more place attachment for their associated communities, since length of use will have been longer and more social interactions will have occurred in the space.

[1] Rose 1981, pp. 480
[2] Lynch 1960, pp. 4
[3] Lynch 1960, pp. 45
[4] While this concept is usually referred to as *community attachment***,** for simplicity I combine these terms.
[5] Hummon 1992, pp. 258

2.4.3 Benefit of Preservation: Social Infrastructure

Community value presupposes that benefits are generated by historic properties. A possible method for this generation is described by the sociological theory of **social infrastructure**, a concept that buildings may be designed to induce social connections.

Sociologist Eric Klinenberg describes how, like physical infrastructure that produces tangible benefit, social infrastructure generates social benefit. Social infrastructure like schools may "provide space for recurring interaction, often programmed, and tend to encourage more durable relationships," and generates what has been called **social capital**.[1] Social capital is defined for the purposes of this thesis as a unit of social connection, using the description by Robert Putnam: "The core idea of social capital theory is that social networks have value. […] social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups."[2] The benefit of generating social capital is a creation of trust and reciprocity between people. Putnam describes that "frequent interaction among a diverse set of people tends to produce a norm of generalized reciprocity."[3] Neighborhoods with a strong network of reciprocity have lower fatalities in times of crisis, less crime, and are described as safer by residents.

Although the majority of research into this topic does not focus on the historic character of buildings or sites, it can be argued that historic properties frequently serve as social infrastructure due to many features of historic buildings, and the length of use (see sense of place above), increasing the benefits of the infrastructure. The combination of heritage and social infrastructure has a powerful effect on community attachment. Social capital is accumulated over time: connections can be formed across generations and passed down and remembered through shared use. A "continuum of use" is created as community members remember past use and continue to enact it, thus reinforcing attachment and preserving heritage.

Additionally, American schools are often effective at forming communities, so examining different preservation approaches demonstrates different effects it can have on community health. Since the nineteenth century, schools in the United States have been built to both satisfy the need for education, but also as a method to improve community

[1] Klinenberg 2018, pp. 17-18
[2] Putnam 2000, pp. 19
[3] Putnam 2000, pp. 21

character.[1] Typically, schools also share space with community services such as family aid or health services.

Klinenberg[2] and Putnam[3] both discuss schools, as they are frequently a form of social infrastructure where social capital is generated: students, teachers, parents, and the local public mingle and can develop connections. Some of the tangible design elements described by Klinenberg, are spaces where diverse peoples mix such as school courtyards used by waiting parents, playgrounds that mix children of different ages and backgrounds, and smaller schools or classrooms, where students have more opportunity to connect with each other, their teachers, and the local community. It is no wonder that communities are often very involved in preservation discussions about their schools. Seattle schools serve as a powerful example and tool in examining how these invested communities are impacted by different preservation methods.

[1] Maddex 1985, pp. 150
[2] Klinenberg 2018, pp. 115-145
[3] Putnam 2000, pp. 296-306

2.5 Equity Comparisons

Seattle Public School representatives have stated in lawsuits that designation of their properties impedes their ability to make use of those properties to educate students. Since the theory of community value is included in the preservation regulations and because schools are social infrastructure that can strengthen communities, it should be beneficial to communities for historic schools to be preserved. If communities are not benefited, then the SPS may be correct, that the most beneficial use of the buildings is full freedom to demolish and redevelop them as needed. One method for examining the success of either stance is to examine ongoing equity issues with each system, before examining the success of each case study.

2.5.1 Currently Reported Equity Issues with Seattle's Preservation Policy

If community and cultural value is an integral part of Seattle and Washington preservation, then its impacts on local communities should be beneficial. This poses a troubling question, as statistically, Seattle Landmarks are heavily imbalance towards white, cis-normative, and male figures.[1]

Seattle's track record for historic preservation is a complex issue, ranging from non-existent to scrupulous. Seattle's LPB has designated over 780 properties as city Landmarks. A very visible example of a Seattle preservation success, is the Smith Tower, a skyscraper with a pyramidal top often described as "the tallest building west of the Mississippi" at the time of its construction. The tower interior and exterior were designated by the LPB in 1984. Designation of interiors is rare, but the LPB voted that several lobbies, ceilings, and many interior decorations were significant for their associations with an important person, how they embody distinctive architecture, and their prominence.[2] Controls were enacted on the building, and in 1998-1999 the LPB oversaw alterations and upgrades by NBBJ and Mithun Partners.[3] The LPB has been involved in numerous design decisions and is designating more Seattle Landmarks every year.

[1] 4Culture 2016
[2] Ordinance 113427, Designation 61.10
[3] Kreisman 1999, pp. 39

Conversely, there have been challenges and losses of historic properties, even with widespread public interest. Attitudes about preservation have evolved faster than municipal codes can be updated. Vernacular structures, properties related to the heritage of ethnic groups or minoritized communities, and structures lacking outstanding aesthetic value, have occasionally failed to be designated, or allowed to be demolished through open-ended controls.[1]

The "Beyond Integrity" initiative, a group of historians and preservationists concerned about equity issues in preservation, has issued yearly reports from 2016-2019, and 2022 on the depiction of minoritized communities within significance statements and the disproportionate number of Euro-American and male centered historic properties designated as landmarks in Seattle.[2] In 2016 Beyond Integrity found that of Landmarks designated prior to 2015, 90 out of 359 (25.1%) Seattle landmarks possessed an association with minoritized communities, and of these only 7.8% were designated as a landmark primarily for that association. Additionally, only 8.6% of Landmarks were designated without fulfilling an architectural criterion, in comparison to 17.8% designated for only architectural criteria.[3] These figures demonstrate the overall bias, still present in the structure of preservation since the 1970s, for the conventionally architecturally valuable and patriarchally historical.

Seattle's preservation practice has also been criticized for facilitating development while doing the bare minimum to conserve historical significance. Preservationists in Seattle have spoken out at length on "façadism," the practice of only protecting the exterior of a historic property while allowing development to remove any and all interior structure. Critics claim that the practice, heavily used in neighborhoods like Capitol Hill where development is booming, removes the interior elements, and their association with the exterior, that can demonstrate the property's historic significance; historic events, people, and associations often have more to do with the interior space than the exterior.[4]

The LPB's ability to enforce preservation policies is hampered by the potential economic impact a Landmark designation may represent to developers or city planners. Ultimately, if a developer or city planner pressures the Board, in many cases the LPB has

[1] Kreisman 1999, pp. 25
[2] 4Culture 2016, Freeman 2017, Aguila 2018, Williams 2019, Alampay 2022
[3] 4Culture 2016, pp. 13-29
[4] Woo 2015

had a weak response.[1] Overall, Seattle's preservation has grown more inclusive over time; however, there are still challenges to its ability to save historic properties, especially when financial pressure from high-cost developments or well funded institutions are brought to bear on the LPB. Property owners have rights that protect their ability to use and profit from their property. In private cases, preservation happens because of the landowner's belief in preservation.

2.5.2 Equity issues in SPS's current practices

In contrast to SPS's legal complaints about preservation, is SPS's own history of equity issues. At the end of the 19th century, the school board was an in-group of wealthy, White, Protestant businessmen, who worked to keep the board exclusive to their own social group. The early organization and growth of SPS was highly guided by this board's political beliefs.[2] During the 20th century, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, schools grew to be segregated, due to racist real estate practices, and SPS's attempt to desegregate schools was ultimately a failure. Schools today are more segregated than before the desegregation movement.[3]

SPS acknowledges this problem and has attempted several programs to support minoritized students, including several experiments with programs such as the American Indian Heritage School. Seattle Public Schools' 2019-2024 strategic plan begins with:

> At Seattle Public Schools, we are working to dramatically improve academic and life outcomes for Students of Color by disrupting the legacies of racism in our educational system. This work supports our commitment to make sure every student graduates prepared for college, a career, and community participation.[4]

However, as of 2022, graduation rates compared by federal race/ethnicity categories, demonstrates that non-White students are less likely to graduate than White students. More than 90% of both White and Asian students graduated, while between 80-90% of Black, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islanders and students reporting two races graduated. 75% of Hispanic/Latino students, and 67% of Indigenous students, graduated. These percentages have been increasing overall, although Indigenous students dropped from 90% in 2021 to

[1] Berger 2015, Woo 2015
[2] Nelson 1988, pp. 10-13
[3] Balk 2020
[4] Seattle Public Schools 2019

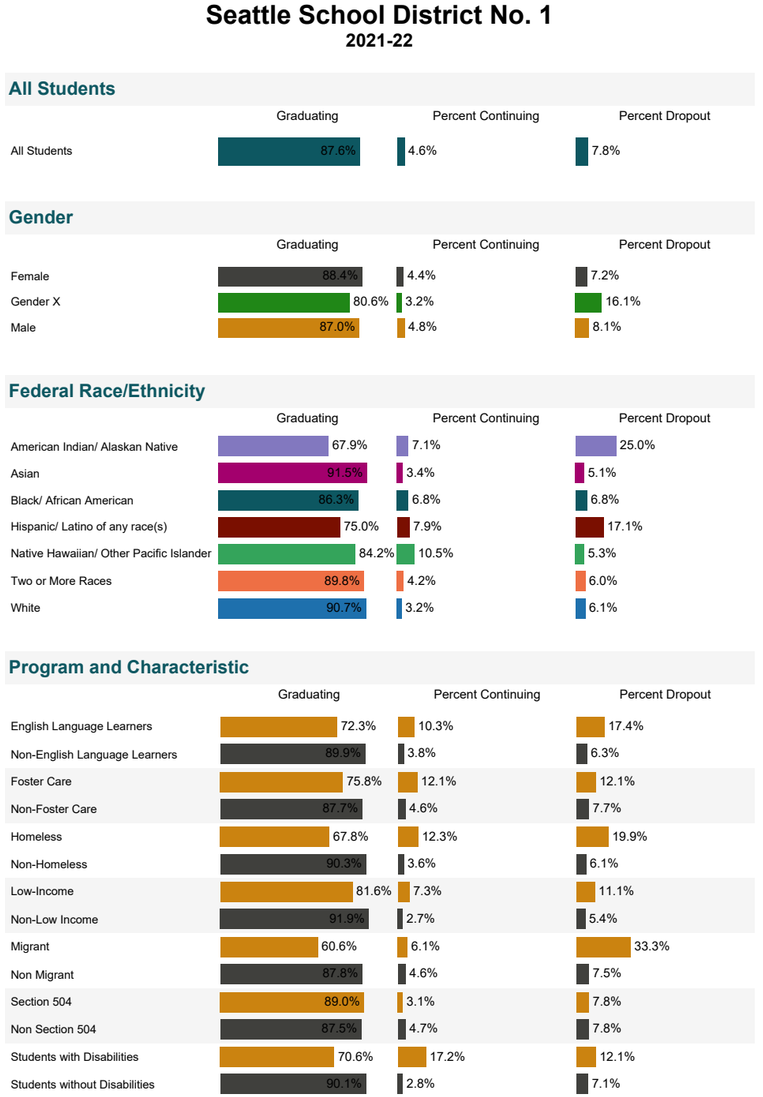

Figure 14: Seattle School District's graduation statistics for the 2021-2022 year. (Washington Department of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2023)

67% in 2022.[1] Other education metrics have also shown disadvantages for minoritized students:

> [The] reading-success percentages in the grades tested for most every other youngster for 2021-22: Blacks, 28.8; Hispanic/Latinx, 41.7; American Indian/Alaska Native, 32.7; Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 30.6. Looked at this way, between 60 and 70 percent of BIPOC students in Seattle can't read effectively.[2]

While the situation is improving, it provides a background to the effects on the school communities considered in the following case studies. It will be seen that SPS generally took action that could be considered negative to the theory of community value.

The equity issues of Seattle's preservation process and SPS practices both have done harm. This thesis discusses some of the strategies and structures that caused this harm, and describes the conflict between the perspectives of minoritized groups and the official systems running these programs. These harms also cast the community benefits of historic properties in a new light, failing to protect such value removes those benefits from already disadvantaged communities. Understanding the failures of the preservation process can allow for more equitable methodologies, and restitution of previous harm.

[1] Washington Department of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2023
[2] Lilly 2022

2.6 Conclusion

The theoretical basis for this thesis establishes the ability to compare what theories of significance preservation regulations support, that there are possible benefits of historical properties for communities, and yet there are major equity issues with preservation. These theories justify the thesis question: How are communities impacted by historic value, as analyzed through five case studies of Seattle's historic public schools?

The language of the Department of Neighborhoods states: "Preservations starts with community."[1] Historic properties can be a driving factor behind community strength, and as such preservation is designed, in part, to cater to that strength. But, as preservation has been constructed since the 1960s, this intention has been inconsistently achieved. Chapter 4 describes the current preservation process so that the case studies may be better understood in context, and departures from normal practices can be recognized.

[1] Department of Neighborhoods n.d., "Historic Preservation"

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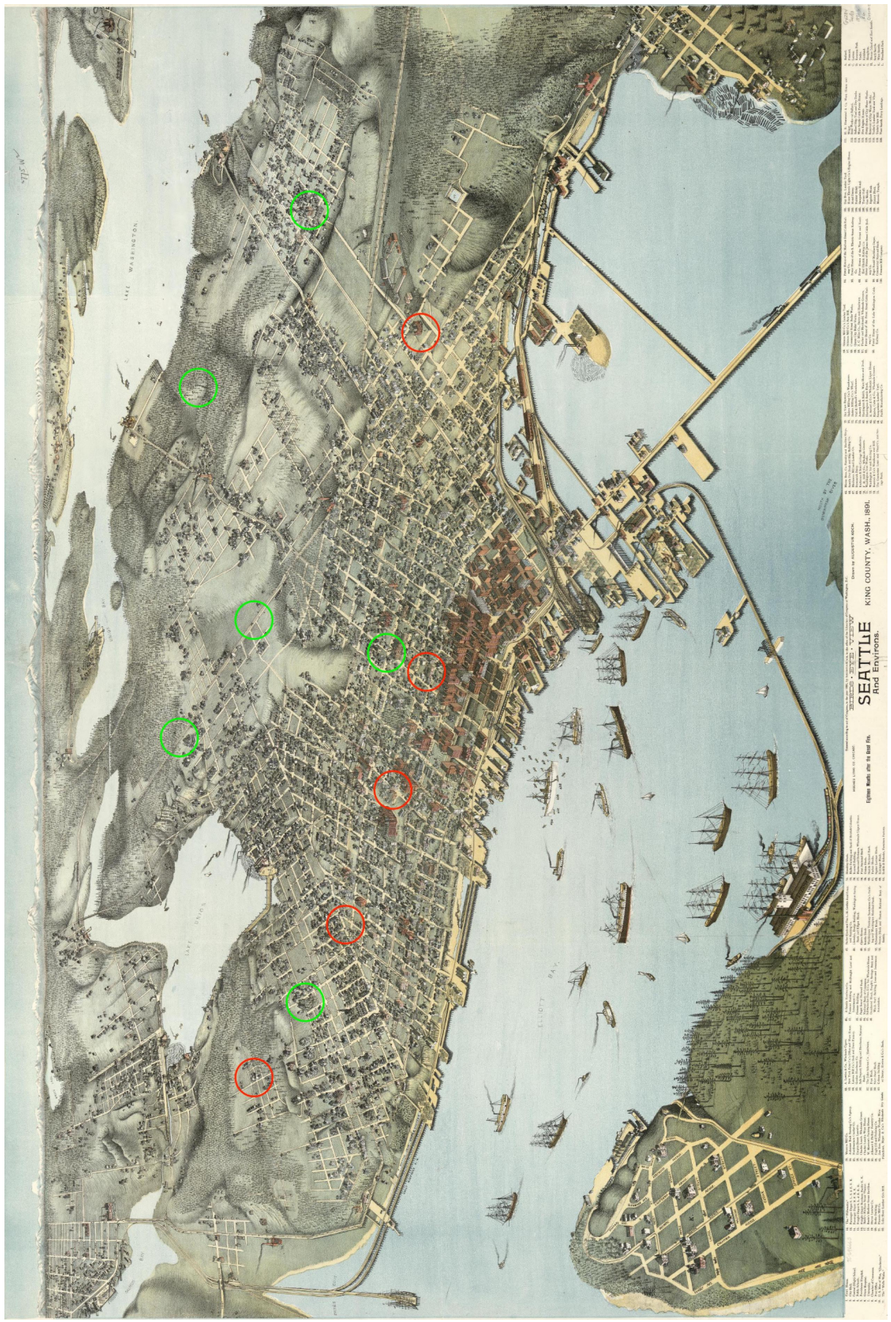

Figure 15: Bird's eye view of Seattle 1891. Approximate locations of schools pre-1900 marked with red circles, locations of post-1900 schools in green. (Koch 1891; Library of Congress 2023)

3

Seattle Public Schools History

3.1 Introduction

As described in Chapter 2, the purpose of this thesis is to examine how preservation impacts communities, explored through the lens of Seattle's historic public schools. Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has constantly grappled with managing school properties to adjust to the rise and fall of student numbers over the years, and school buildings have been replaced, expanded, modernized, or sold as the character of the district changed. Accordingly, the SPS has frequently engaged in adaptive reuse, though the process was informal before preservation policy was adopted. Since the City of Seattle adopted formal preservation regulations and established the Landmark Preservation Board (LPB) in 1973, the LPB has struggled to convince SPS of the benefits of preservation.

In addition to their historic character, schools in Seattle have also always had a relationship to their neighborhoods or communities. In early days, the schools were frequently heavily supported by their neighborhoods, and in turn community events were frequently held within the buildings. As the school district formalized its structure at the beginning of the 20th century, SPS began attempting to limit non-educational uses for

school buildings,[1] but in 1911, eventually accepted community use, and community clubs and other gatherings made use of school property through the 1980s.[2] With changing attitudes towards student safety in the 1990-2000s, the district created formal regulations for building use, and developed programs to engage local community organizations in aiding in education. The current 2019-2024 strategic plan stresses educating students to be good community members, and SPS currently has a department dedicated to community engagement.[3]

This chapter relates a brief history of SPS from its 1890–1900 beginnings (Section 3.2), the creation of the model school plan (3.3), its growing pains during and after the wars (3.4), attempts to desegregate schools and handle underused buildings (3.5), and finally the modernization of schools to the current day (3.6). The conclusion (3.7) will describes overall trends in SPS' interaction with communities and summarizes some of its modern day community programs.

[1] Nelson 1988, pp. 20
[2] Nelson 1988, pp. 20
[3] Seattle Public Schools 2023

3.2 Population Drives Locations

Before an official school district was formed, early schools were often one- or two-room wood structures, or in several cases, were simply hosted in local private residences or churches. School buildings were provided when a group of residents had need for one and could pool funds to construct one; thus, schools were placed central to population groups.[1] Seattle's growth began to accelerate, and soon these individual schools were insufficient. In 1865 a public meeting was held and the creation of a Seattle school district approved. From the early 1880s to the Great Fire of 1889, the School District, led by a superintendent and a board of three local businessmen, continued to build schools at the centers of the largest population centers without a holistic plan, having by 1882 North (Denny) and Central Schools; South School did not move forward until the late 1880s due to financial limits. These schools remained inadequate in the face of Seattle's growth. By the 1880s, it was common practice for overflowing schools to hold classes in rented rooms in neighboring businesses or churches.[2]

During the design competition for South School, the first Central School burned. As the firm Boone & Meeker submitted two designs for South School, one was selected for South and another was selected for the (second) Central School. All three schools were outside the area, destroyed in the June 1889 Great Fire. But growth was so rapid, schools rapidly became overcrowded. Four new schools were proposed in 1889, and were constructed in 1890. Student numbers were also increased through the annexation of surrounding land–leading to construction of additional school like the B.F. Day School in Fremont, completed in the early 1890s. The institution of a compulsory attendance law in 1903 led to increased attendance and a need for even more schools. By 1906, Seattle had the highest percentage of children attending schools in the country.[3] To handle this growth, the SPS created a system of comprehensive high schools and small, well spread grade schools.[4]

SPS's expansion plans in the early twentieth century followed schemes popular across the country. The 1921 manual *School Architecture Principles and Practices,* by John J.

[1] Ochsner and Anderson 1992
[2] Erigero 1989, pp. 1-3
[3] Nelson 1988, pp. 10-13
[4] Nelson 1988, pp. 16-17

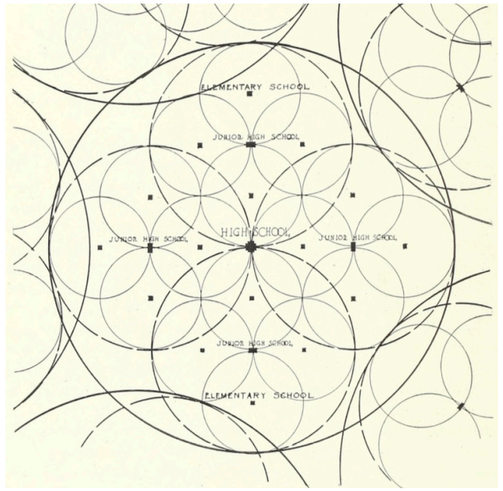

Figure 16: Instructional diagram of school placement radii. (Donovan 1921)

Figure 17: Seattle Public Schools board of directions 1910. (Nelson 1988)

[2] Donovan 1921, pp. 2-3
[3] DeMay 2019

Donovan, describes the general process: the city should be charted geographically and divided into zones based on census data of ages of potential students.[1] Then the city is broken into zones for each grade level; initially Seattle decided to build high schools and grade schools, but no junior high schools. Elementary schools were constructed with regard to walking distance within residential neighborhoods, roughly one mile apart, to limit young children walking further than a half-mile. High schools were larger and spread further apart, located at prominent locations to serve a wide area.[2] The high school locations also were often determined by established or planned streetcar lines that were rapidly spreading outwards from Seattle's center. Streetcar suburbs, neighborhoods like Wallingford, Green Lake, University, West Seattle, Beacon Hill and others were connected to central Seattle through the lines.[3] When Seattle annexed small towns adjacent to the city, their schools became part of the District and were commonly replaced or upgraded by SPS.

This placement scheme created a wide spread of neighborhood schools, starting with eight buildings in 1889-90 and six more by 1902. As Seattle was predominantly made up of single family neighborhoods, and naturally broken into neighborhood boundaries by hills or water, grade schools were placed centrally in these areas.[1]

[1] Donovan 1921, pp. 2

High schools were constructed beginning in the early twentieth century. Broadway High School opened in 1902, despite complaints of high costs and excess size. Within a year it was filled to capacity. In 1907, it was joined by Lincoln High School in the Wallingford neighborhood, and Queen Anne High School in Queen Anne in 1909. With its first high schools, the Board emphasized the need for well-designed and monumental architectural styles, drawing on various revival movements to create palatial buildings to inspire students.[2] In general, the school board prioritized clean and sturdy buildings with planned and well-kept landscaping.[3]

Smaller grade schools quickly became strongly connected with neighborhood identity. In 1903 the school board renamed almost all schools using an "American Immortals" list circulating around the country, but after protest from neighborhood communities, the names were rescinded. As of 1922 fifty-six of the sixty-nine grade schools in Seattle were named for their locations. Community groups sought to use schools for gatherings outside of educational use, a practice that had begun before the 1900 school district structure.[4] Overall, although schools were not constructed with neighborhood identity in mind, schools became strong identifiers for neighborhoods due to their prominent locations and the social character of education, generating a sense of place, and place attachment.

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 4-5
[2] Erigero 1989, pp. 16-17
[3] Erigero 1989, pp. 16-17
[4] Nelson 1988, pp. 18-19

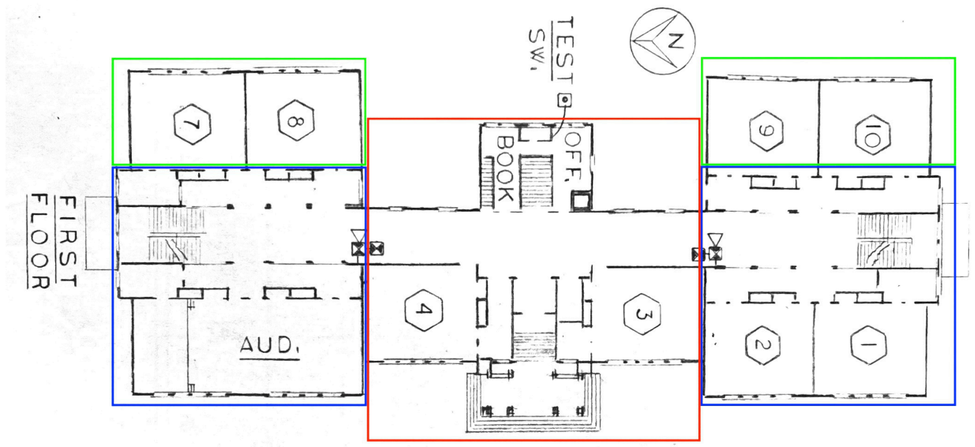

Figure 18: Floor plan of 1908 Interlake School, a wood-frame model-school, with service-wing marked in red, 2-over-2 classroom-wings in blue, with 2-over-2 additions in green. Interlake was a alternative model-school plan modified for a smaller expected student body.

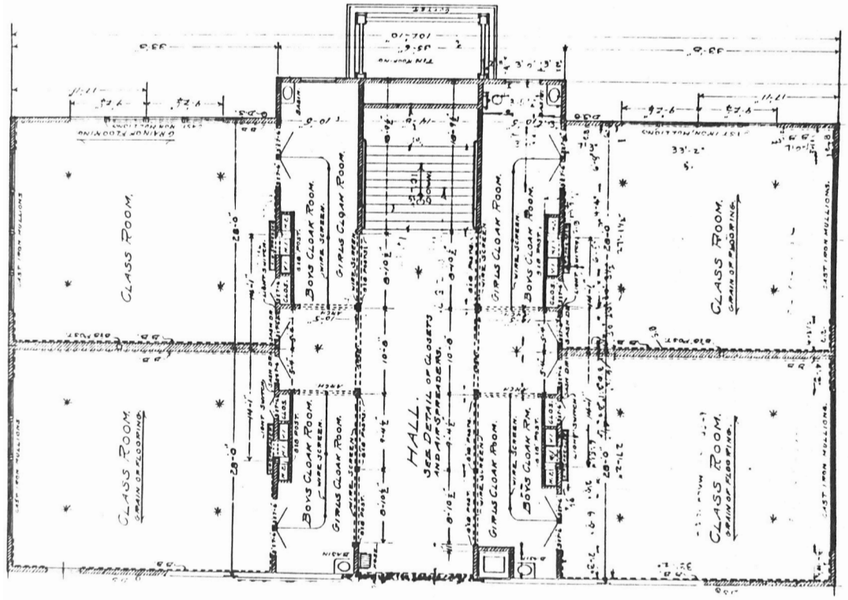

Figure 19: 1902 model-school plan as drafted by James Stephen. (Erigero 1989)

3.3 Model Schools for Growth

National trends and growing student numbers drove changes within the school district between 1900 and the beginning of World War I. The School District, mainly against Superintendent Frank B. Cooper's protests, went from a small and conservative group, to an increasingly efficiency-focused bureaucracy. Although Seattle voters almost always passed levies and supported higher taxes for better education, a growing contingent within the board and in upper-middle class "taxpayer leagues," began to call for cutbacks on school-related and public spending. National interest in the success of "business-like" public systems spread to Seattle, and soon the school district had a network of accountants and managers overseeing schools and their teachers. By 1912 the school district had enough bureaucracy that the school board no longer could directly oversee most business.[1]

One solution to overcrowding and the need for efficiency was the adoption of new school designs. When the school board began creating a comprehensive plan early in 1900, architect James Stephen presented plans to create a wood frame "model school." Stephen became the district's second "school architect," designing and overseeing construction of nineteen of the twenty-eight buildings constructed between 1900 and 1908.[2] With the board planning a large construction boom and in need of new grade schools, his first school, Green Lake (1903), was provided a basis for the "Model School Plan."[3] This thesis includes three model schools in its case studies, Interlake School (wood frame), Colman School, (brick and cast concrete), and Beacon Hill School (wood frame).

Officially adopted by the district in 1903, the plan provided an economical and efficient process to build schools that allowed for easy expansion in phases. Stephen's design used a standard floor plan and wood structure. Floor plans and materials were standardized, while exterior and interior details and facades were left up to the designer. For example, Stephens's schools frequently demonstrated his carpentry background, through elaborate wood work and cabinetry. However, each school was designed with intentional plain elevations on certain sides, to allow for future expansions.[4]

[1] Nelson 1988, pp. 62-64
[2] Erigero 1989, pp. 10-11
[3] Krafft 1994, pp. 58
[4] Krafft 1994, pp. 60

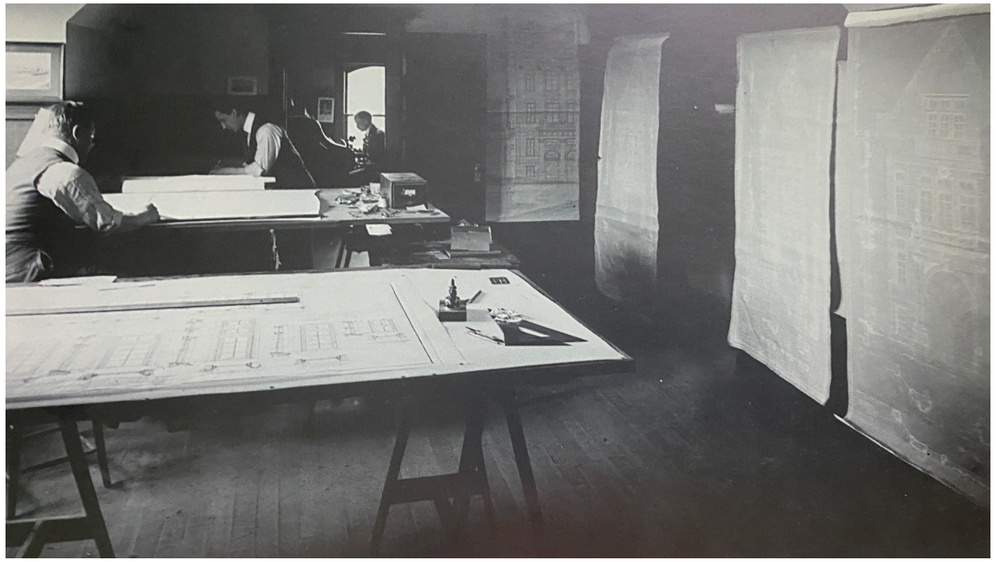

Figure 20: Photograph of School Architect's office in 1909. (Nelson 1988)

Figure 21: Beacon Hill School, a wood-frame model-school, under construction in 1904 prior to expansion. (MOHAI)

The basic model school plan consisted of three parts: an 8-room two-story core, with four classrooms per floor and a central hallway; this allowed the addition of eight room (four over four) wings to either side, producing 16-room and 24-room schools. The SPS did not believe an elementary school should be larger than 24 classrooms. Variations on the basic model plan included narrower two-story wings with fewer classrooms plus support spaces. Initial phases of construction would include typically include just the core, or the core plus one wing, and later construction would add additional wings as needed to create a 24-classroom school (or sometimes, particularly on tight sites, a smaller version at 20 rooms). Added wings were connected by removing featureless exterior walls to expose hall ends, which would become an axis for new wings. Numerous variations were possible; for example, Wallingford has a 4-room core (2 over 2, with two 8-room wings); the first John Hay School (in Queen Anne) has an 8-room core, but wings were never added. These schools also had basements allowing for systems, washrooms, and occasionally common rooms.[1]

Classrooms made use of wide banks of vertical multi-paned windows with double-hung sash to let in light and air to every classroom, along with a tall attic to house air ducts. While his first model-schools were wood framed structures, Stephen visited Chicago in 1907 to study East Coast school design and returned with new brick model-school plans for fireproof buildings.[2]

For his brick schools after 1907, James Stephen tended to favor the Jacobean style, an American revival of the medieval English style of the same name that had originally developed in the 1600s. In America, the style borrowed the use of symmetrical plans and ornamentation using French or Italian designs, and steeply pitched, front-facing gable facades;[3] ornaments were formed from false-half timbering, stucco or decorative brick infilling.[4] The Colman School, a case study in this thesis, made use of the Jacobean style, with terra-cotta and heavy use of brick. Stephen's use of English styles also extended to more elaborate works, replicating the appearances of English Renaissance Palaces for the Queen Anne High School, also included in this thesis as a case study.

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[1] NPS 2019, pp. 10 (Beacon Hill)
[2] Extant brick model plan schools are Colman (1909), Greenwood (1909), and Emerson (1908-9). Krafft 1994, pp. 61.
[3] Schwartz 2021
[4] City of Urbana 2016

3.4 Growing Pains

In 1909 James Stephen was replaced as Schools Architect, by Edgar Blair. Blair had been assistant to Stephen for three years, and after he took over, he directed the completion of several of Stephens's model schools. After 1910, Blair began to use his own standard plan, simplifying the massing and making use of classical features, as well as adding metallic ornamentation. Unfortunately, with the advent of World War I, all supplies and construction was directed towards Seattle industry for the war effort, and many of the decorative elements from Blair's designs were stripped for other uses.[1] The Blair plan took the original form of Stephens's, but expanded the quantity of rooms in the service wing by five. Classroom wings remained eight-room additions. Blair also designed a single-loaded corridor school plan for use for additions on tight school sites (an example is the addition at Seward School in Eastlake). Blair's plans also modernized heating, plumbing, and ventilation systems.[2] Blair's 1912 expansion to the Beacon Hill School, which had previously used Stephen's plan, increased the capacity to 500 students between 20 classrooms.[3]

Up to the 1920s, the district struggled to keep up with growth. Portable classrooms were common, to expand space on school grounds, while more high schools were opened in newly prominent neighborhoods. Additionally, new fashions in education, the increase in sophisticated education programs, and greater interest in community use, led to a need to add specialized spaces to older buildings. Shops, labs, home economics rooms, auditoriums, lunchrooms, and industrial training rooms were added or included in new buildings.[4]

In 1918, Blair began to disagree with Nathan Eckstein, chair of the school board's building committee, and resigned in March. In 1921 Blair wrote a stern critique of the district:

> In our obsession for economy we have exalted considerations of secondary importance, adopting into our school systems all the idols of big business– organization, administration, operative efficiency, standardization of project, quantity, output and so on– with such effect that the typical school plant needs no smoke stack to suggest a home of modern industry.[5]

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 20
[2] NPS 2019, pp. 11
[3] NPS 2019, pp. 11
[4] Erigero 1989, pp. 22
[5] Erigero 1989, pp. 25

Even without a designated architect like Blair or Stephen, the board set out on an ambitious building plan, constructing dozens of new schools, including new intermediate schools.[1]

After World War I, the use of junior high schools to address overcrowded elementary schools had become popular nationwide.[2] To oversee the work, SPS hired Floyd Naramore, a school designer who had been working in Portland, Oregon, since 1912. Naramore's designs encapsulated the ideals Blair decried, prioritizing efficiency and a factory-like educational program, integrated into a standard floor plan with a simplified Georgian style. His floor plan and style remained constant through most of his tenure as schools architect up to 1931. One of his last schools, Loyal Heights Elementary (1931), was a two-story version of one of his first, the one-story Highland Park (1920). Naramore left SPS to open his own firm, later designing many additions to SPS buildings, and is one of the four founders of the firm that would be named Naramore Bain Brady & Johnson (NBBJ).[3]

Figure 22: Portable building in use at Ballard High School (Nelson 1988)

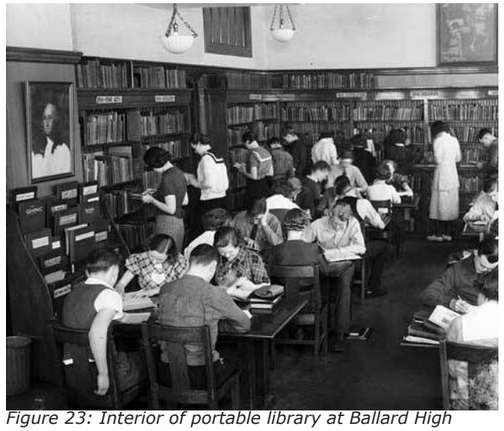

Figure 23: Interior of portable library at Ballard High School (Nelson 1988)

Student numbers declined during the Great Depression and World War II, when families were impacted both by wartime challenges and the United States imprisonment of Japanese and Japanese descendants in concentration camps. Naramore oversaw the consolidation of schools, with the closure of sixteen older schools, removal of temporary

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 25
[2] Thomson and Marr 2001, pp. xii
[3] Erigero 1989, pp. 27-28

structures, and minor improvements. Additionally, during the war, federal housing projects were completed outside the already-heavily-developed areas, placing families away from existing school sites and overflowing the nearest schools, while once-full schools became underused.[1] Portables were added to some school grounds, and some new elementary schools were built where needed.

The 1950s saw a jump in student numbers, due to the "baby boom" and the City of Seattle's expansion. In 1954 Seattle expanded its borders north, annexing the southern portion of unincorporated King County (known before its annexation as Shoreline, Sheridan Beach, Lake Forest Park). Shoreline had operated its own school district briefly before Seattle's annexation and had opened a number of quickly-constructed modern schools, including Woodrow Wilson School, a case study included in this thesis, which was constructed in 1953. These post-1945 schools had a modern appearance, with concrete block walls, ribbon windows, and open plans to reduce costs. Wilson, among other schools, was purchased by the Seattle school district in 1954, only a year after it opened. In these new schools and throughout the district, portables continued to be used as a stopgap, with 20% of students in 1958 being educated in portable structures.[2]

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. xii-xiii
[2] NPS 2019, pp. 12

3.5 Desegregation and Surplus

The early 1960s saw progressive social policies and experimental education programs challenging conventional school structure. The concept of open plan classrooms became popular, and four experimental schools with open floor plans (lacking classroom divisions) were constructed within the Beacon Hill neighborhood.[1] The new schools in the area meant the existing Beacon Hill school, a model school constructed in 1904, was closed. It was occupied, in 1973, by Latino activists who used the building to open El Centro de la Raza, a Latino community center, as described in Chapter 7 of this thesis.

By 1970, the school district oversaw 155 schools,[2] and the Civil Rights movement began to put pressure on SPS to desegregate its schools. Seattle had been relatively open to diverse ethnic groups, largely to fulfill needs for cheap labor, lacking restrictive "white only" laws that were instituted in places like Portland, Oregon. However, this acceptance did not extend to integrating living areas and non-White groups, and the poor were left to live in the marginal areas of the city. After World War I, many realtors instituted a "safety rating" system to effectively prevent home sales to non-White buyers in the majority of the city. In 1923, the City of Seattle adopted its first zoning ordinance. Since land within the city was largely subdivided, the ordinance initially had limited effect on the shape of Seattle neighborhoods. The ordinance had no provisions with regard to race or ethnicity. Just a year later, in 1924, developers began implementing private racial restrictions (private covenants or deed restrictions) on new suburban developments, mostly outside Seattle. At the same time, some Seattle neighborhoods acted to implement private racial restrictions by adopting new deed restrictions or private covenants.[3] Additionally, many White neighborhoods formed unofficial coalitions to keep them segregated.

In Seattle, the non-White residents were relegated to less desirable areas like the Central District, located south and east of the downtown area, bordered to the west and south by industry. The Central District is largely flat and lacking the views or pleasant parks placed on the crests of surrounding hills. Consequently, schools located in the Central

[1] Beacon Hill and its surrounds are still a neglected area of Seattle. Recent discussions have posed the argument that it is a victim of "environmental racism," especially as the flight paths of Boeing and SeaTac airports cross directly overhead, producing noise and light disturbance all day and night. Colloquially, the impacts are seen in the "Beacon Hill pause," the stop in conversation when an airplane flies overhead. (South Seattle Emerald 2023)
[2] Erigero 1989, pp. 30. In comparison, SPS in 2023 has a little more than 100 school buildings.
[3] Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project n.d., "Segregated Seattle"

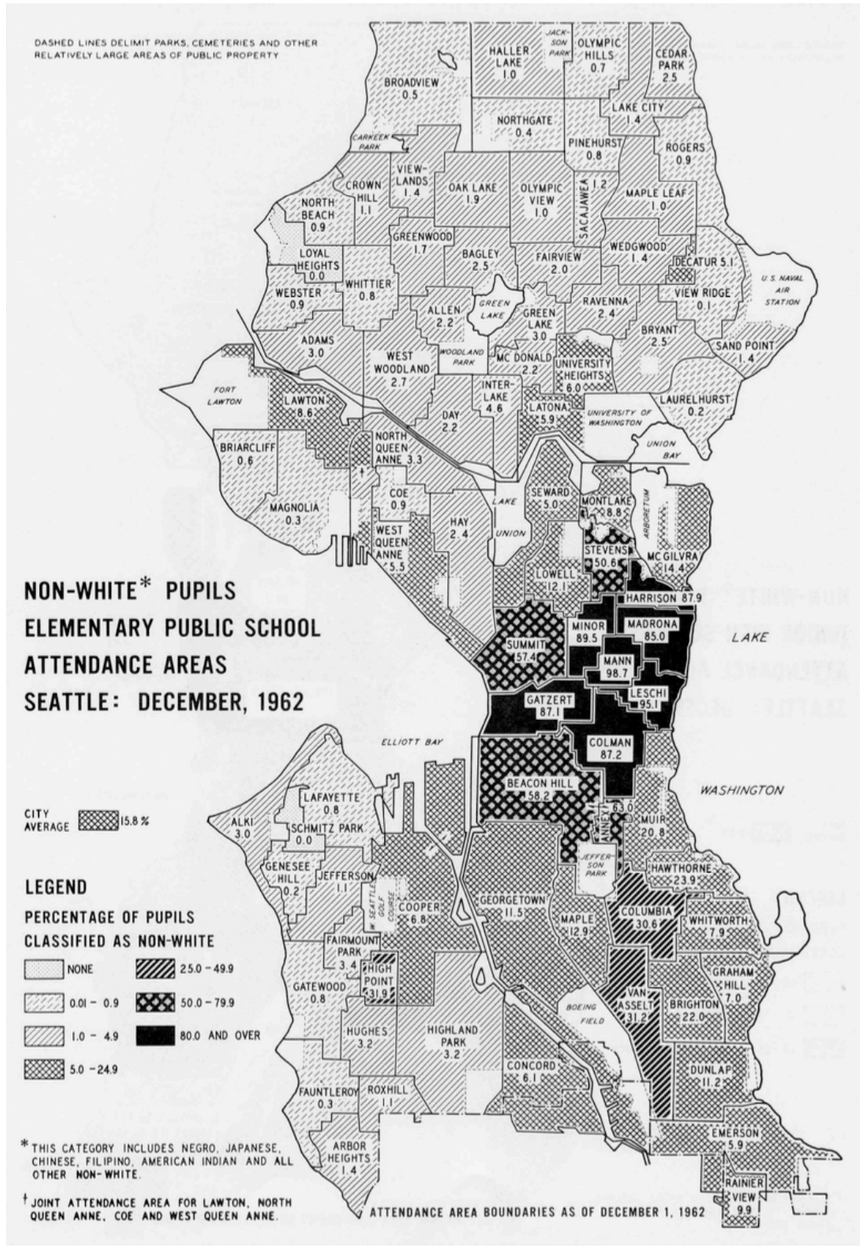

Figure 24: Map of Seattle elementary public school attendance areas from December, 1962, collected for SPS. (Schmid and McVey Jr. 1964)

District were nearly entirely non-White students. As Black, Indigenous, Asian, and Latino people began calling for civil rights, these schools were a clear example of the large disparity in funding, support, and care "colored" students received at school.

The conflict and challenge of this period is clear in the turnover of SPS superintendents. Superintendent Forbes Bottomly took on the position from 1965 to 1974, lasting eight years. The following superintendents, J. Loren Troxel and David Moberly, lasted three and four years respectively. Bottomly attempted to solve the segregation problem by offering volunteer school switching programs, but did not offer district-funded transportation until 1971, when mandatory desegregation was put into place for four middle schools and their feeder elementary schools. Students in majority White schools were bused into the Central District to diversify "colored" schools.[1]

This plan was expanded to half of all schools, except kindergartens, in 1977, under Superintendent Moberly. Some of these desegregation policies unintentionally caused the closure of schools in minoritized neighborhoods, as they required a certain percentage of diversity, meaning a highly segregated neighborhood of minoritized families would be non-compliant if White students were not being bused there by SPS.[2] The public debated the plan and students from White schools protested against busing, declaring it an unsuitable plan. Student protestors at one rally declared that the busing would only harm students. Opponents called the argument a thinly veiled excuse for racism.[3] The entire system of enrollment was substantially changed. Students, both White and non-White, were faced with being separated from friends, bused across long distances, far from their community and neighborhoods.[4]

The impacts were felt quickly as White parents began to withdraw their children from mandatory busing schools. Queen Anne High School, one of the case studies in this thesis, was one of these and showed a dramatic drop in student numbers. Combined with the falling birthrate in the 1960s after the baby boom of the 1940s and 1950s, student numbers in the district dropped by 50%; the central and southeast areas (the areas with larger numbers of non-White students) were the least impacted by enrollment decline. Superintendent Moberly, already unpopular for the mandatory busing, began to pose the

[1] Vandermyn 1980
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001
[3] DeYonge and McClave 1970
[4] Angelos 1983

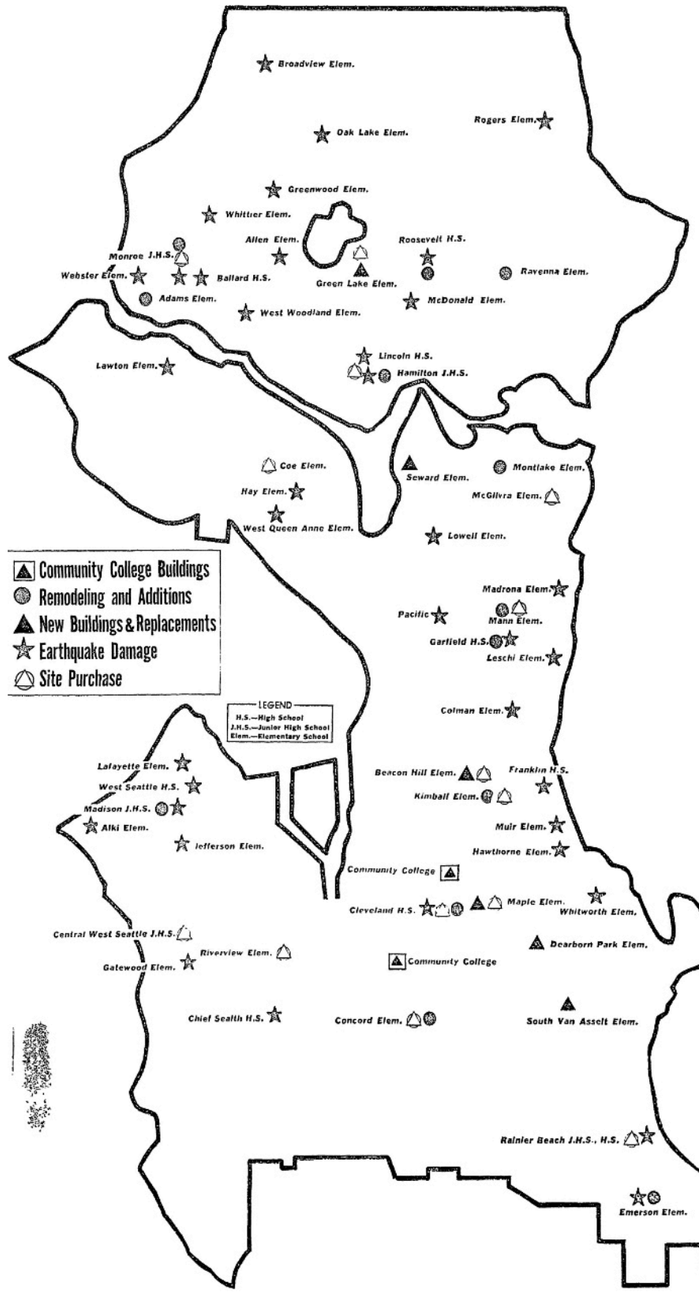

Figure 25: Map of schools included in the Moberly Plan as proposed in 1965. (Russel 1965)

idea of closing 25 or more schools and leasing them to private developers in exchange for rent and a minor percentage of profits.[1] (The city and its schools were also negatively impacted by the "Boeing Bust," the economic downturn beginning in 1969-70 with the cancellation of Boeing's SST contract, slowing growth and for a few years generating increased out-migration.)

During the beginnings of this plan, the LPB wrote a letter on January 29th, 1980 to Moberly calling for an evaluation of significance be included as part of their facilities planning process; this was ignored.[2] The so-called "Moberly Plan" was unpopular, raising complaints from neighborhoods which were invested in their local school buildings and disliked the idea of non-school use of property in their area,[3] or from those that were concerned reusing schools would require dramatic changes in rezoning or planning.[4] Nevertheless, in 1981 the plan officially declared that two high schools (including Queen Anne) and twenty elementary schools (including Interlake) were to be closed,[5] with at least half of that number to be leased. With so many school buildings available publicly, several government offices like King County considered moving to surplussed schools.[6] Other organizations, like housing initiatives also considered signing a lease for space. Some of these schools were purchased completely[7] and either reused, or demolished. Even those leased saw changes to adapt them to their new intended use.

The Moberly Plan removed many historic schools from direct educational use, including Interlake School and Queen Anne High School. These two, after delaying the LPB proceedings, SPS leased to Lorig Associates, a local firm interested in adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Colman School, another case study herein, was also shut down during this period, although not included in the Moberly Plan. The expansion of Interstate-90 resulted in construction disturbances and the demolition of surrounding residences, causing a reduction in the student body that led to Colman's closure.

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[1] *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1980, *Seattle Times* 1980
[2] LPB 011680
[3] Robinson 1981
[4] Phillips 1980
[5] *Seattle Times* 1980
[6] *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1981
[7] *Seattle Times* 1982

3.6 Modernization

After the 1981 closures, the school district conducted a survey of its remaining school buildings to determine which required upgrading or replacement. Discussions began between SPS and the public on whether to modernize, renovate, or replace buildings.[1] In 1982, a structural analysis of Franklin High School claimed that it required significant structural upgrades, and it would be more economical to demolish the historic building. After protests by Franklin students and community members, SPS relented and designers modified the structural plans to reduce costs.[2] A similar debate occurred around Ballard High School, which was eventually replaced with a new building.[3] SPS continued to resist Landmark designation of its structures and in 1995, after continued objections from the LPB, the Seattle City Council voted 6-3 to remove preservation controls from a 1917 addition to Ballard High, overturning the LPB's decision and allowing its demolition. Adams Elementary and Bailey Gatzert Elementary, both unevaluated for landmarking, were also demolished shortly thereafter.[4] By the end of the 2000s, only three 19th century school buildings survived: West Queen Anne School, B.F. Day School, and Denny-Fuhrman School, all renovated or adaptively reused.[5]

In the 1990s and 2000s, several factors necessitated modifications to existing school buildings to meet district needs. New preschool plans, various special programs, the standardization of grade levels, and reorganization of the district into clusters, moved students around, impacting school buildings across the city. In particular, special programs were a priority between the 1980s and 2010s, with several alternative, advanced education, special education and specialization programs moved into underutilized buildings.[6]

The district ended mandatory busing in 1997, moving to an application basis for school entry, with a "tiebreaker" system to determine admissions for in-demand schools based on specific categories, including race.[7] In 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that race was no longer allowed for tiebreakers; instead, by 2009 the district moved to a

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. xv
[2] Thompson 2012, pp. 11
[3] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. xv
[4] Kreisman 1999, pp. 22
[5] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. xv
[6] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. xv
[7] Thompson 2012, pp. 92

residence-based system.[1] With busing ended, SPS began to revert to its de facto segregation. As of 2019, demographics of public schools show that they are more segregated now than the 1970s, in the year prior to the implementation of mandatory busing.[2] While this means students are now more likely to attend their local schools, and thus the schools belong more to the surrounding communities, it certainly highlights the inherent inequalities in Seattle's neighborhoods, and can make decisions regarding different

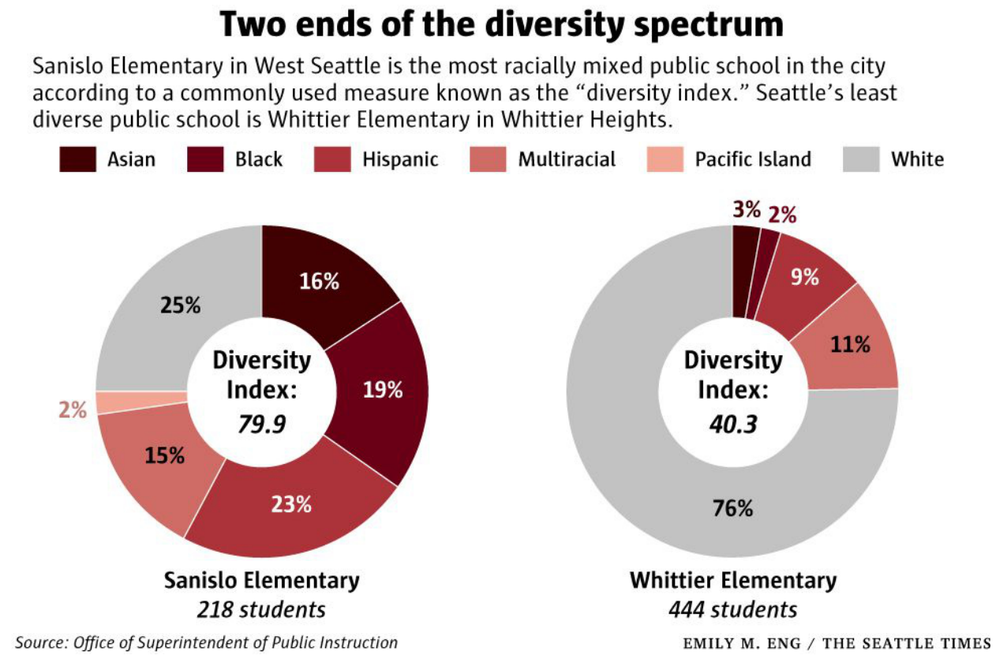

Figure 26: Percentages of ethnicities within the most diverse, and least diverse schools within Seattle Public Schools.

schools more fraught with racial and socioeconomic implications.

[1] Thompson 2012, pp. 96
[2] Mynorthwest 2019

3.7 Schools for Community

Seattle Public Schools has had a long history with community engagement, even from the very first, and currently the SPS provides a series of programs and a dedicated department to encourage community engagement with schools, cementing their role as social infrastructure. As early as the 1900s, the school district and the public were in debate on the use of school buildings for non-educational activities.[1] Seattle's hilly nature, constrained by bodies of water, delineated natural neighborhood clusters; when grade schools were constructed within those clusters they frequently became beloved landmarks of those neighborhoods, exemplifying place-attachment. Pre-1900s schools, often directly funded by neighborhoods or through private funding, were also regularly used for community gatherings. In 1901 the school board attempted to confine school building use to youth education only, but after public protests and the support of the superintendent, relented in 1911.[2] The superintendent at the time stated:

> The schoolhouse when used by the people for the discussion of public and social questions becomes in a new and very vital sense the seat of influences for the maintenance and perpetuation of free institutions.[3]

Adult community groups and events were permitted to use school property, but the school board avoided supervising children after hours, relegating playgrounds and fields to Seattle's parks,[4] but eventually took partial responsibility for play parks and athletics in the later part of the 20th century.

By the 1920s, the concept of community use for school buildings had grown more popular. In a manual for school design in 1921, the movement is described:

> Within the last decade there has been a strong tendency to link the school and the community together by providing separate rooms for community purposes, such as clubrooms, small libraries, etc. This movement is accomplishing its purpose, for out of it is growing a valuable connection, namely, the continuation school. The close relation between the school and the community must be fostered if education is to prosper ; but instead of devoting valuable space in the building for occasional use, rooms such as the teachers' restroom, the library, the assembly hall, or the music room should be the meeting places of the community clubs.[5]

[1] Nelson 1988, pp. 20
[2] Nelson 1988, pp. 20
[3] Nelson 1988, pp. 20
[4] Nelson 1988, pp. 20-22
[5] Donovan 1921, pp. 20

The manual advocated that community use should mix with educational use, not stand apart. Of the schools included in this thesis, nearly all of them were connected to or used by the community. Interlake School hosted local voting, public debates, and community and commercial club meetings, and up until its closure in 1971; Woodrow Wilson School was used as part of community events alongside its use as the American Indian Heritage School. The schools that were not directly used by their neighbors were frequently notable parts of their neighborhood, providing a strongly characterized sense of place, and impacted the neighborhood's development. Queen Anne High School was both a community space and signifier of local character, a very visual icon of the neighborhood with students who were incredibly involved with their surrounding neighborhood, with several local businesses were established to directly cater to students. Colman and Interlake were also very visually connected with the neighborhoods, standing out in the landscape and within the urban fabric. Beacon Hill was not used as a community space, but the occupation and subsequent restoration were all in service of providing community services.

Other schools in Seattle are much the same, included in their surrounding neighborhood communities in one way or another for the last century. SPS acknowledges this and has even built it into their ongoing development plans. Additionally, SPS has several outreach programs and policies for community support and collaboration. The School and Community Partnerships Department explains that they "collaborate with partners representing our district, community-based organizations and public agencies."[1] They highlight their commitment to create support for organizations to aid in district objectives, as well as to align community organizations and schools and provide opportunities for the community organizations to be involved in district decision-making. One blurb specifically addresses minoritized students:

> Our department seeks to create consistent and accessible systems for collecting feedback from Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that center students of color furthest from educational justice, as well as centering Black-led and culturally-responsive CBOs to inform partnership models, approaches, and supports for schools and partnering organizations.[2]

The department has a range of programs, including housing support initiatives, to bring struggling minoritized students more resources, and provides organization and support to

[1] Seattle Public Schools 2023, "School and Community Partnerships Department"
[2] Seattle Public Schools 2023, "School and Community Partnerships Department"

before- or after-school programs. According to their guidelines, outlined in Policy 4265,[1] they also allow non-SPS organizations providing youth- or education-oriented programs to use of their property outside of school operation.

The inclusion of community organizations in the education process demonstrates SPS' commitment to an educational structure that requires or promotes community strength. And why should this community involvement cease when a school closes? As this chapter has shown, the surrounding neighborhood and community of a school has always played a role, from requesting construction to the naming of a school, to the use of the buildings throughout their existence. This connection does not cease when a school is no longer taking students - place attachment lingers regardless, which should also be given weight when considering the preservation of a historic school building. Historic Seattle schools offer a unique chance to see how current preservation policies, discussed in the following chapter, both do and do not serve existing communities in the city.

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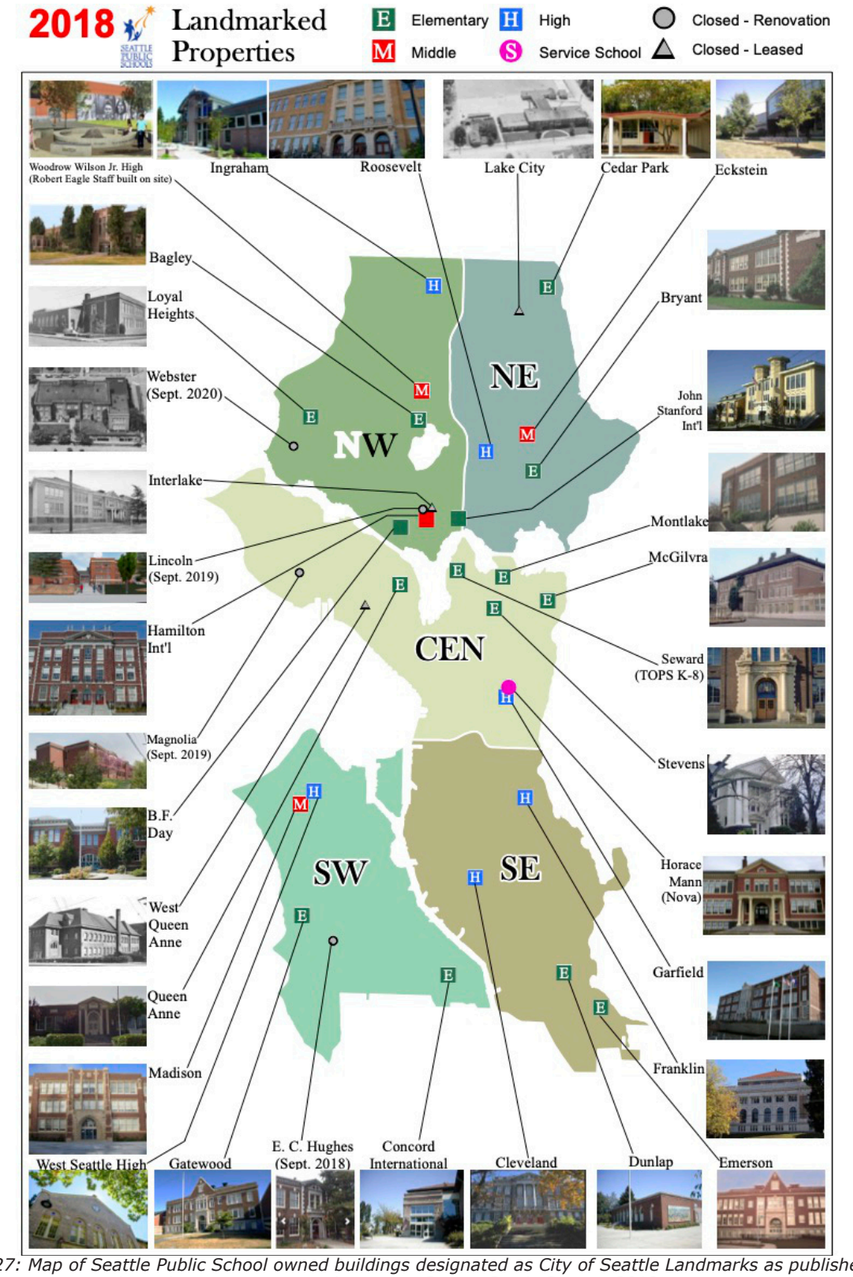


Figure 27: Map of Seattle Public School owned buildings designated as City of Seattle Landmarks as published by SPS. Note that demolished Landmarks are not included. (Seattle Public Schools 2018)

Legal Structure of Historic Preservation

The National Trust for Historic Preservation launched the slogan THIS PLACE MATTERS® in 2008 to engage the preservation community, inspire everyday people, celebrate meaningful places, and raise awareness about threatened sites.[1] The Trust, and many other preservation organizations, hope to prompt the public to see the value in historic properties and begin supporting their preservation. While conducting the research regarding the case studies in this thesis, many members of the public did speak up about the value of historic properties. However, the research shows it was not guaranteed that the legal framework would help the protection of these valued places.

Because preservation is not automatic, it can only occur if a legal entity, a government or public agency, becomes involved. For most buildings and sites this happens when a proposal, usually for new construction, may impact cultural resources. When impacts are possible, permits for demolition and/or for construction are contingent on following the preservation regulations and securing approval from the governing body that addresses preservation. It is worth noting, that when a historic property is surveyed and presented to a governing body, it is presented by the project lead agency, company, or

[1] NTHS 2023

consultant, who will often have an interest in their project progressing. There is a strong legal framework, explained in detail below, but the process also depends on the good-intentions of those involved, particularly the project leads, and if it is lacking, then public participation and advocacy may be required to achieve protection for a threatened historic building or site. Advocacy requires money, time, and supporters, so unofficial advocacy groups seldom succeed during preservation proceedings; larger, more established advocacy groups have a better chance of succeeding in protecting a building or site, but even they can lose. Thus, in this chapter and the following case studies it must be remembered that the process is often adversarial with various stakeholders, official and unofficial, in competition with each other.

This chapter outlines the current legal framework shaping preservation in Seattle. The text follows a hypothetical historic property through the process, explaining the triggering of national, state, and municipal regulations. Understanding the preservation process reveals how Seattle preservation is built on specific theories of significance, and how it operates in a "developer-facing" manner, placing those against preservation in a position of power.

4.1 Definitions of Terms

Preservation policy texts make use of many acronyms. To make these easier to understand, each is written in full and followed with the acronym in common usage within the body of text, and included is the following list of acronyms in alphabetical order for easier reference.

Cultural Resource

An umbrella term for historic properties, archaeological sites, traditional cultural places, or any other heritage or cultural element.

Cultural Resource Management (CRM)

The general term for the business and process of preservation and archaeological investigation to handle cultural resources. Typically done by consultation companies at the behest of government agencies or project proponent companies.

Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)

The office in Washington State that addresses preservation at the state level. The National Historic Preservation Act (1966) fostered the creation of State Historic Preservation Offices like DAHP to manage preservation activities for the states. Overseen by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

A report that is produced by government agencies that survey all potential impacts of a project on the human and natural environment. Required by the National Environmental Policy Act for any project involving use of federal funds, federal permits or other federal involvement.

Governor's Executive Order 21-02 (EO 21-02)

Washington regulation that requires government agencies not subject to federal oversight to still fulfill the regulations of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Historic Property Inventory (HPI)

A form completed by a government agency or consultant to submit to DAHP to fulfill preservation requirements. It includes a physical description of a historic structure, and an evaluation of the structure's significance. For large projects (for example, for a Link Light Rail line), hundreds of such forms may be completed.

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA)

The federal act that created the National Register of Historic Places, allowed states to form State Historic Preservation Offices (like DAHP), allowed Tribal nations to form Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, and created the first national system of evaluation for historic properties in the United States.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 (NEPA)

A federal act that established policies for maintaining the human and natural environment. Government agencies must create an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) surveying all potential impacts and produce a plan to mitigate those impacts.

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

A list of historic properties that are considered historically significant, are 50 years old or older, maintain integrity and have been accepted for listing on the Register. The federal official overseeing the National Register is the Keeper of the National Register.

State Environmental Policy Act of 1983 (SEPA)

Washington State's state-level version of the National Environmental Policy Act. Provides Washington-specific guidelines. Includes the addition of requirements to consult with Tribal Nations.

State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)

The head of a state Historic Preservation Office, such as Washington's Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP).

Traditional Cultural Places (TCP)

A site or landscape deemed important for religious, cultural or other reasons included in updates to the National Historic Preservation Act. Currently, applied almost entirely to Indigenous sites.

Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO)

An office for preservation that may be created by Tribal Nations, as allowed by the National Historic Preservation Act.

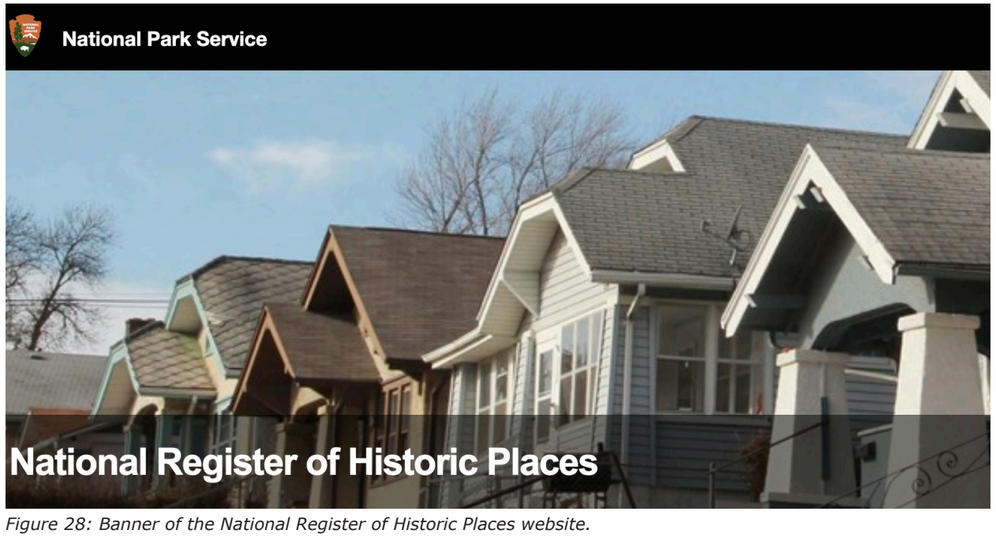


Figure 28: Banner of the National Register of Historic Places website.

4.2 State and National Preservation in Seattle

This section establishes the cultural resource process for projects that, in addition to, or instead of Seattle's regulations, fall within the state or federal jurisdiction. While the state and federal preservation process does not feature in a significant way in the following case studies (because land use regulation is a power delegated by the state to cities and counties in Washington State), the framework for writing Seattle's regulations were shaped by the state and federal systems as models, and similarly the state's system follows from the federal. Any project involving state or national funding, permits, or oversight, even when it also triggers Seattle policies, will require the fulfillment of the state and federal regulations. Frequently, historic properties must be evaluated through both systems. Once triggered, the state and national regulations require the lead government agency to evaluate historic properties more than 50 years old, within their impact area for their eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Properties.

The government agency involved (or if multiple, one agency will claim a leading role) will determine how best to follow preservation regulations--that agency is called the "lead agency." In Washington, a federal or state lead agency will work with the Department of

Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) to ensure a project fulfills preservation requirements. Section 106[1] of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires federal agencies to evaluate a project's impacts on historic sites that may be *eligible* for the National Register of Historic Property.[2] The property does not need to be listed to be included, and there is no obligation to nominate a historic property if it is included in a survey. The NHPA states that a historic property is defined as:

> Any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included on, or eligible for inclusion on, the National Register, including artifacts, records, and material remains relating to the district, site, building, structure, or object.[3]

Any site, building, structure, or cultural place, 50-years of age or older, is evaluated for its significance by examining if it fulfills one of the following criteria:

A) That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B) That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C) That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D) That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.[4]

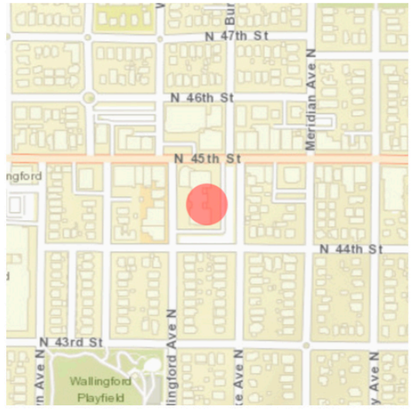
Cultural resources are simultaneously evaluated for their "integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association."[5] This evaluation considers how the resource has been altered over time and if it still maintains a connection to its historic significance. Section 106 also lists extra reasoning for a place to be considered eligible for inclusion to the NRHP, "in General. —Property of traditional religious and cultural importance to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization may be determined to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register."[6] In such cases, when a Tribe does "attach religious or cultural significance to property," federal agencies are required to consult with that Tribe.[7] This requirement has not been added to the NRHP criteria, but is supplied by a later bulletin.

[1] 54 U.S.C. § 306108 and 36 CFR Part 800-801 are considered colloquially as Section 106 after previous numbering. CRM professionals often refer to "Section 106" when discussing compliance with preservation rules.
[2] 36 CFR § 800.6 (b)
[3] 54 U.S.C. § 300308
[4] NRB 15 1997, pp. 2
[5] NRB 15 1997, pp. 2
[6] 54 U.S.C § 302706 (a)
[7] 54 U.S.C. § 302706 (b)

Historic Property Report

Resource Name: Interlake Public School Property ID: 336735

Location



Address: 4416 Wallingford Avenue North, Seattle, WA
Tax No/Parcel No: 4083300140
Plat/Block/Lot: LAKE UNION ADD LESS ST
Geographic Areas: King County, SEATTLE NORTH Quadrangle, T25R04E18

Figure 29: Screenshot of a Historic Property Inventory (HPI) form as shown on DAHP's WISAARD.

Typically, an agency hires a cultural resource management company which evaluates properties within the project area.[1] The consultant does background research and submits an assessment that defines the project area, includes a description of the context of the project area, and a survey of properties within that area that may have cultural resources that can be impacted by the project. They produce suggestions for how to mitigate impacts, provide help consulting with Tribal Nations or other groups, and how to fulfill any legal obligations of parties involved.

DAHP requires, and must approve, a written description of the physical features of a property as well as a "statement of significance" that argues for or against its eligibility for the National Register. Cultural resources do not need to be listed on the Register, but may

[1] National regulations use the term "Area of Potential Effect (APE)," and Washington State uses "Area of Potential Impacts (API)." These are defined in different ways, often by the agency in charge. For example, WSDOT includes all tax parcels adjacent to areas that will be directly impacted, creating a wider APE/API.

simply be *eligible* for listing to fall under the requirements of the NHPA. Physical descriptions and evaluations are collected by consultants in Historic Preservation Inventory forms (HPI) and submitted to DAHP's database of cultural resources for reference.

When DAHP identifies a property as eligible for listing, the NHPA states specifically that Federal agencies are required to:

- "make appropriate records" of historic properties that are to be substantially altered or demolished.[1]
- "To the maximum extent possible [...] minimize harm to [National Historic] Landmark[s]."[2]
- "Take into account the effect [...] on any historic property" prior to approving the use of federal funds."[3]
- "Communicate and consult with Tribes[4] about historic properties they consider "of traditional cultural or religious significance."[5]
- "Provide information to owners of historic properties and encourage them to preserve the property intact, and if the owner is conducting archaeological excavations, to encourage them to meet Federal standards."[6]

Section 106 requires parties to consult with Tribal Nations, but ultimately mitigation of impacts in most cases is at the discretion of the lead agency, with some oversight by DAHP.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which can be fulfilled simultaneously with Section 106,[7] requires analysis and planning to preserve historic properties. It requires federal agencies to create a report on federal actions that summarizes impacts on the human environment, any adverse effects that cannot be avoided, alternatives to the proposed project, and that any other federal, state, or local agencies involved in environmental standards for the area are consulted.[8] Typically, this requires an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that summarizes the agency's findings. This includes the above evaluations for historic properties and potential negative effects and plans to mitigate them.

Washington's State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), instituted in 1983, extends NEPA and adds new policies for projects with involved State of Washington agencies. It is worth noting that a specific addition in SEPA's RCW 43.21C.038 specifies that an EIS must

[1] 54 U.S.C. § 306103
[2] 54 U.S.C. § 306107 - omitted language defining the types of undertaking that trigger this requirement.
[3] 54 U.S.C. § 306108 - omitted language defining the types of undertaking that trigger this requirement.
[4] 54 U.S.C. § 302701
[5] 54 U.S.C. § 302706
[6] 54 U.S.C. § 306131
[7] 36 CFR § 801.6
[8] 42 U.S.C. § 4332

be created for the closure of schools.[1] The Governor's Executive Order 21-02 (EO 21-02, previously EO 05-05), first produced in 2005, provides requirements to conduct CRM in projects with state involvement that do not already require it through the NHPA. The main difference for agencies submitting documents to fulfill obligations in State and National requirements is terminology.

The act of identifying cultural resources, through EIS surveys or cultural resource surveys requested by a Tribal Nation or DAHP, is reliant on the efforts of the agency, or consultant performing the survey, and the ability of DAHP or a Tribe to review its contents. In practice, both parties work hard to review all reports, but time and funding produces a constant pressure and choke-point for ensuring accurate assessments.

Non-compliance with state regulations may result in permit delays. EO 21-02 requires agencies that cannot agree with DAHP or Tribe recommendations to consult with the Office of Financial Management to identify an appropriate resolution.[2] If an agreement is not reached, permits will not be issued. Additionally, to encourage projects to fulfill their preservation obligations, Washington provides tax incentives, aiming to offset costs of maintaining a historic property.[3]

[1] RCW 43.21C.038
[2] EO 21-02, pp. 2
[3] RCW 84.26

4.3 Seattle Landmarking

In Seattle, the preservation movement began in the 1960s when several local architects and the public began to grow interested in revitalizing and protecting historic areas such as the neighborhood of post 1889 buildings in Pioneer Square and at Pike Place Market.[1] In 1973 the first Landmarks Preservation Ordinance established the Seattle Landmark Preservation Board (LPB) and preservation regulations at the city level.[2]

Seattle Municipal Code Title 25 (SMC 25) requires that project leads prepare an EIS, that would fulfill SEPA regulations, and present it to the City, before projects are given permits.[3] Project leads, for example in the case of public schools the lead would be Seattle Public Schools, are required to submit a written Nomination Report to the LPB for each historic property within the project area. Additionally, the city's HPO, LPB members, property owners, and members of the public can nominate any building as a Landmark and present it to the LPB.[4]

Currently, historic properties (older than 25 years, excluding single-family residences, exceeding 5,000 square feet, and not in industrial zones) that fall within a construction project's area, must be considered for Landmark status before the City of Seattle will provide permits for demolition or significant alterations.[5] The LPB is presented with a survey of each historic property's context, history, and reasons that it might be significant. The LPB makes an evaluation of the property's significance, whether it should be designated as a City of Seattle Landmark, and finally if there will be incentives given to the property owner in exchange for preservation and/or controls restricting or mitigating impacts to the property. Additional requirements apply to historic properties within official "Historic Preservation Districts." The buildings discussed in this thesis are not within these districts, so those requirements will not be included here.

[1] Kreisman 1999, pp. 16
[2] Kreisman 1999, pp. 16
[3] SMC 25.05.020
[4] SMC 25.05.350
[5] SMC 25.05.350

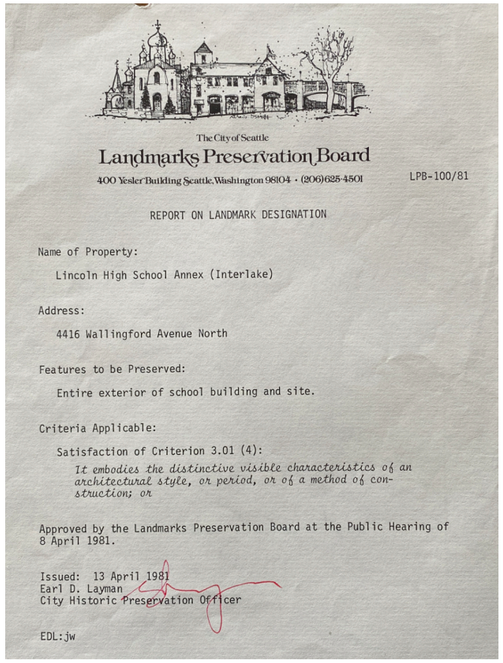
4.3.1 Landmark Preservation Board Structure and Hearings

SMC 25 established the organization of the LPB in 1973. Today the LPB has 11 members who vote to nominate, designate and control Seattle Landmarks. The Code stipulates that the Board must include:

> At least two architects [...], two historians, one person with an urban planning background, one structural engineer, one representative from the field of real estate management, one representative from the field of finance. [...and] one designated young adult position [...] pursuant to the Get Engaged Program[1]

All members are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council for up to two terms of three years each.[2] The Department of Neighborhoods (DoN) provides staff and a Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) to keep records, conduct correspondence, and organize meetings. The HPO also has responsibilities to investigate and consult on resources potentially in need of preservation.[3] Meetings are public and recorded in detailed minutes.[4]

In the case of development projects, typically, the government lead or developer hires a consultant to complete the research and writing of the Nomination Report and the consultant communicates with the historic preservation staff in the DoN to fulfill preservation requirements. The Nomination Report must include historical background, local context, physical descriptions, the property's historic use, and its current state. The Report also typically presents information on original owners, designers, possibly engineers, community context, stylistic development, and similar aspects–these may provide a


The City of Seattle
Landmarks Preservation Board
400 Yesler Building Seattle, Washington 98104 · (206) 625-4501
LPB-100/81

REPORT ON LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Name of Property:
Lincoln High School Annex (Interlake)

Address:
4416 Wallingford Avenue North

Features to be Preserved:
Entire exterior of school building and site.

Criteria Applicable:
Satisfaction of Criterion 3.01 (4):
It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction; or

Approved by the Landmarks Preservation Board at the Public Hearing of 8 April 1981.

Issued: 13 April 1981
Earl D. Layman
City Historic Preservation Officer

EDL:jw

Figure 30: Designation report published for the Interlake School.

[1] MC 25.12.270
[2] MC 25.12.280-290
[3] MC 25.12.320
[4] MC 25.12.330-340

basis for claiming the property is significant, but the project lead or consultant is not allowed to present arguments for or against significance of a historic property in the written report. The staff of the city's Preservation Program reads the reports and requests more information on the historic property as needed, before accepting a report and distributing the report to the LPB members. The staff may also prepare example text for various possible actions the LPB may take.

Once the Nomination Report is accepted, a Nomination Hearing is scheduled and announced to elicit public comment. Letters from the public and other organizations are given to the LPB members prior to the meetings. The HPO and DoN staff also present a recommendation for a decision to the LPB members ahead of time, including the official language that could be used for the vote.

At the first hearing, the project lead introduces the historic property to the LPB and they, or a representative, presents the Nomination Report. They also may recommend nomination, or ask for it to be rejected, and make arguments for why the property is significant or maintains integrity. Often these speakers also mention their plans for developments, but the LPB members considering nomination and designation decisions are officially forbidden from considering future work as part of the argument. Speakers for the project leads are given an individually scheduled time slot to present. LPB members ask questions and discuss significance before the public may give comments. Public speakers receive two minutes to comment, and public organizations may receive four minutes with prior requests. The LPB members continue to discuss before finally calling for a vote. The vote is public, with the individual vote of each LPB member recorded in the Minutes. If the LPB denies the nomination, the property may not be nominated again for five years. If the LPB approves the Nomination of the historic property, a Designation Hearing is held thirty to sixty days later. Designation hearings proceed in a similar fashion with a spokesperson of the project presenting a designation recommendation, the board discusses, public comment is received, and a vote is held.[1] Again, the vote of each LPB member is recorded one-by-one; members state the reasons for their votes.

SMC 25 expands the NRHP criteria into six criteria for designation as a Seattle Landmark:

[1] SMC 25.12.350

25.12.350 - Standards for designation.

An object, site or improvement which is more than twenty-five (25) years old may be designated for preservation as a landmark site or landmark if it has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, state, or nation, if it has integrity or the ability to convey its significance, and if it falls into one (1) of the following categories:

A. It is the location of, or is associated in a significant way with, an historic event with a significant effect upon the community, City, state, or nation; or

B. It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the City, state, or nation; or

C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation; or

D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction; or

E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder; or

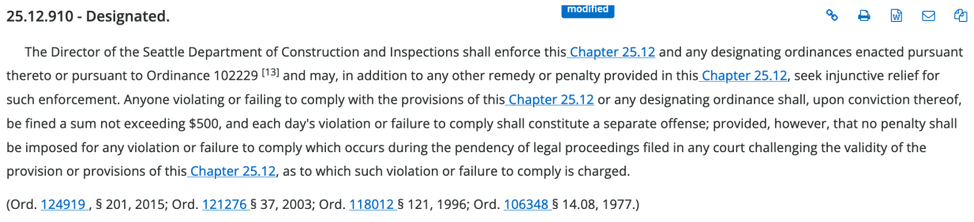
F. Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the City and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City.

Figure 31: Screenshot of SMC 25.12.350 showing the six criteria used by Seattle. (MC 25.12.350)

Additionally, the historic property must still retain its integrity to demonstrate its significance and be 25-years old or older (with exceptions for exceptional properties). The designation criteria broadens the NRHP criteria to include cultural and community associations, as well as historic properties that visually stand out in a neighborhood.[1] The designation standards also reduce the age requirement from 50-years (for the National Register) to 25-years for a Seattle Landmark. This departure is mainly due to the shorter history of Seattle and its structures.

The LPB also decides which parts of the property are included as significant, which includes different portions of the building, exteriors or interiors, landscaping, or other siting.[2]

[1] The concept of visual landmarks in urban planning is in part inspired by Kevin Lynch's book *Image of the City*, (previously discussed in Chapter 2)
[2] SMC 25.12.350



25.12.910 - Designated.

modified

The Director of the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections shall enforce this Chapter 25.12 and any designating ordinances enacted pursuant thereto or pursuant to Ordinance 102229 [13] and may, in addition to any other remedy or penalty provided in this Chapter 25.12, seek injunctive relief for such enforcement. Anyone violating or failing to comply with the provisions of this Chapter 25.12 or any designating ordinance shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined a sum not exceeding $500, and each day's violation or failure to comply shall constitute a separate offense; provided, however, that no penalty shall be imposed for any violation or failure to comply which occurs during the pendency of legal proceedings filed in any court challenging the validity of the provision or provisions of this Chapter 25.12, as to which such violation or failure to comply is charged.

(Ord. 124919 , § 201, 2015; Ord. 121276 § 37, 2003; Ord. 118012 § 121, 1996; Ord. 106348 § 14.08, 1977.)

Figure 32: Screenshot of SMC 25.12.910 showing penalties for violations of preservation regulations.

Once designated, the City HPO and the Landmark owners negotiate a Controls and Incentives Agreement, which establishes tax benefits or other incentives, and sets controls (identifying exactly which features are protected) on the treatment of the Landmark.[1] This is discussed until both parties agree, at which point a public Controls and Incentives Hearing is held.[2] The Agreement is presented, public comment heard, and a vote held on whether to accept the agreement. Once the Agreement is accepted, an ordinance stipulating the requirements to preserve the building and mitigate potential impacts is published. If not accepted, the Agreement returns to negotiation and in the event that an agreement on controls is not made by the owners and the DoN, the controls decided upon by the LPB are still instituted and a "certificate of approval" (COA) is required for the building owner to alter the property in any way that may impact the character of the landmark.[3] These Agreements are case-by-case and can be extremely restrictive or very sparse. The final step in the process is for City Council to approve the ordinance establishing the building or site as a protected Landmark and ratifying the controls, followed by the Mayor signing the legislation.

As permits are not granted to project proponents before MC 25 is fulfilled, it is uncommon for projects to begin construction or demolition prior to the completion of preservation evaluation. However, the Seattle Municipal Code stipulates, for any entity that violates or fails to comply with the provisions of 25.12.910, they will be fined up to $500 for an offense, and each day of violation or failure to comply counts as separate offenses.[4]

[1] Department of Nieghborhoods 2023
[2] SMC 25.12.350
[3] SMC 25.12.520
[4] SMC 25.12.910

4.4 Intentions of Preservation Law

Seattle Landmarks law allows the city to impose controls on designated historic properties. National Register listing and other national preservation policies do not impose legal controls, but may impact historic properties affected by federally permitted or funded projects (or projects that seek to benefit from federal tax credits); otherwise, National Register listing is only honorific. National preservation policy requires evaluation and mitigation of impacts for projects with federal funding or that require federal permits pr that seek federal tax credits; however, there is no requirement for projects that do not involve these "federal actions" to follow recommendations for mitigation. Most of the time, listing on the National Register is meant to honor historic properties and bring attention to significant places. Seattle's system, like those of other jurisdictions, directly controls impacts on designated historic properties because land use law is typically local law.

While the regulations present a legal structure and evaluation criteria, their language and introductory statements also include statements of intent indicating the basis for these regulations. These stated intentions also reveal "theories of significance," and assumptions regarding the benefit of recognizing and protecting historic properties. This thesis questions whether the ideals of these regulations and the preservation movement are upheld by the regulations as practiced. Following are descriptions of intentions as described in national, Washington State, and Seattle government documents.

4.4.1 Intention of National Preservation Law

The NHPA begins with a list of findings that describe the importance and benefits of historic properties that prompted the creation of the law.[1] Congress finds (underlining not original):

> (1) the spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage;
>
> (2) the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people;
>
> (3) historic properties significant to the Nation's heritage are being lost or substantially altered, often inadvertently, with increasing frequency;

[1] NHPA 2016, pp. 1

> (4) the preservation of this irreplaceable heritage is in the public interest so that its vital legacy of cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, economic, and energy benefits will be maintained and enriched for future generations of Americans;
>
> (5) [...];[1]
>
> (6) the increased knowledge of our historic resources, the establishment of better means of identifying and administering them, and the encouragement of their preservation will improve the planning and execution of Federal and federally assisted projects and will assist economic growth and development.[2]

The first chapter of the NHPA also describes the policy that the federal government shall follow, including the following, which further elucidates the reasoning behind the Act:

> (1) use measures, including financial and technical assistance, to foster conditions under which our modern society and our historic property can exist in productive harmony and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations.[3]

This text confirms that the NHPA seeks to involve everyday people and organizations with the preservation of historic heritage, and that its authors saw preservation as beneficial for the public. To gain those benefits, the NHPA states it is the federal government's policy to:

> (5) encourage the public and private preservation and utilization of all usable elements of the Nation's historic built environment.[4]

Overall, these statements offer a clear picture of the intention of the NHPA and its view of historic heritage. Historic properties contribute to national identity, and may provide cultural, economic, education, aesthetic, and inspirational benefits to present and future generations.

In contrast to the specific historic property focus of the NHPA, the NEPA covers historic properties under the category of the human environment as a whole, including heritage with natural resources and present environment. NEPA states its purpose in section 4321 "To declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment,"[5] and improve federal plans and programs to "preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity, and variety of individual choice."[6]

[1] Removed due to irrelevance. (5) acknowledges that ongoing development threatens historic heritage and current policies are not sufficient to protect it.
[2] NHPA 2016, Section 1, Pub. L. No. 89-665, as amended by Pub. L. No. 96-515
[3] 54 U.S.C. § 300101
[4] 54 U.S.C. § 300101
[5] 42 U.S.C. § 4321
[6] 42 U.S.C. § 4331

4.4.2 Intention of Washington State Preservation

SEPA enforces expanded regulations for environmental protection for Washington State agency projects, including cultural resources. The SEPA document describes that the legislature has found:

> That the analysis of environmental impacts required under the state environmental policy act adds value to government decision-making processes in Washington state and helps minimize the potential environmental harm coming from those government decisions.[1]

According to its first two sections its purpose is to "encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between humankind and the environment; [...] promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment [...] and enrich understanding [of the environment],"[2] and it recognizes that humans depend on their "biological and physical surroundings"[3] for survival and "for cultural enrichment as well,"[4] and thus the State of Washington should: protect and promote those features of the environment to "attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment [...],[5] preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage; maintain [...],[6] an environment which supports diversity and variety of individual choice,"[7] and should do so to "fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations."[8]

Like NHPA, SEPA considers cultural resources to provide benefits to national heritage, to diversity, and cultural enrichment. SEPA also states that these benefits should be preserved for future generations, and that the use of preservation and environmental protection reduces harm to the environment from government decisions and adds value to government decision-making. Preservation and environmental protection, are valuable because they cause agencies to consider more factors while formulating plans.

While SEPA is the Washington State version of NEPA, EO 21-02 attempts to enforce "NHPA-like" regulations at the state level. EO 21-02 states that state agencies have a responsibility to protect cultural resources, which it describes as "archaeological and historic

[1] Finding-Intent-2017 c 289
[2] RCW 43.21C.010
[3] RCW 43.21C.020 (1)
[4] RCW 43.21C.020 (1)
[5] RCW 43.21C.020 (2)(c)
[6] RCW 43.21C.020 (2)(d)
[7] RCW 43.21C.020 (2)(e)
[8] RCW 43.21C.020 (2)@

sites [representing] Washington's rich and diverse cultural heritage,"[1] and "Native American sacred places and landscape."[2] The importance of these being "[archaeological] sites, buildings and places hold special cultural, historical, and spiritual significance for both tribal members and non-tribal members,"[3] and sacred places being "foundational to the identity and spiritual practices of Washington's tribal nations."[4] Thus, the purpose of EO 21-02 is preserving heritage that holds special significance for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, providing identity, cultural, historical or spiritual significance. However, the Executive Order does not define heritage, nor significance.

4.4.3 Intention of Seattle Preservation

Seattle Municipal Code 25.15.020 (SMC 25.15.020) begins with a purpose statement declaring that "the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of" cultural resources:

> Are required in the interest of the prosperity, civic pride and general welfare of the people; and [the City's legislative authority] finds that the economic, cultural and aesthetic standing of this City cannot be maintained or enhanced by disregarding the heritage of the City and by allowing the unnecessary destruction or defacement of such cultural assets.[5]

SMC 25.15.020 further states that the code seeks to preserve cultural resources that

- reflect significant elements of the City's cultural, aesthetic, social, economic, political, architectural, engineering, historic or other heritage, consistent with the established long-term goals and policies of the City;
- to foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past;
- to stabilize or improve the aesthetic and economic vitality and values of such sites, improvements and objects;
- to protect and enhance the City's attraction to tourists and visitors;
- to promote the use of outstanding sites, improvements and objects for the education, stimulation and welfare of the people of the City.[6]

These statements suggest a view of cultural resources similar to the federal and state policies, indicating that they are sources of benefits such as tourism and economic vitality, provide education, but they also contribute to the City's culture, aesthetic, and social or historic heritage. The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, which is home to the city's

[1] EO 21-02, § 1
[2] EO 21-02, § 2
[3] EO 21-02, § 4
[4] EO 21-02, § 2
[5] SMC 25.12.020 A
[6] SMC 25.12.020 B

Historic Preservation Program and the LPB that oversees preservation, promotes the idea of preservation by describing the benefits in more detail:

> The benefits of preservation are not merely aesthetic. Preservation is integral to our economic development planning, and it enhances our city's attraction as a center for tourism. It reminds us of our history while providing new resources for today's homes and businesses. It promotes sustainability through the reuse, repair and upgrading of existing built resources. Historic preservation allows us to recognize the quality and uniqueness of the past as we change and adapt for the future.
>
> [...]
>
> Through the process of designating and protecting new and existing districts and landmarks, we work with community members to promote the aesthetic, cultural, and economic strength of Seattle. Historic preservation in Seattle begins with community. Our historic resources provide tangible connections to the people and events that have shaped our communities and our collective histories. Learn more about the City of Seattle's Historic Preservation program and how you can get involved by watching our video below.[1]

There is an emphasis on cultural resources as a form of "capital" for the city, contributing to tourism, the economy, and even environmental sustainability. The DoN pamphlet is intended to convey preservation policy to the public outside of the preservation profession, focusing on very tangible and literal benefits. However, they also state that "historic preservation in Seattle begins with community,"[2] suggesting that community consultation is, or should be, a major part of Seattle preservation.

[1] Department of Neighborhoods 2021
[2] Department of Neighborhoods 2021

4.5 Conclusion

The Seattle Public Schools administration has, at different times, stated during legal proceedings that they consider preservation to be an obstacle to their ability to educate students. Their position conflicts with the stated intention of preservationists to promote education, foster civic pride, and maintain cultural strengths of Seattle.

The LPB first clashed with SPS not long after the establishment of the Landmarks ordinance in 1973. During its first meetings, the LPB began to examine Seattle school buildings for their historic significance, and planned to designate and protect historic schools. The District, claiming to be a state agency independent of city control, declared itself exempt from municipal preservation regulations.

The Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority began to organize a comprehensive survey of school buildings in 1980, while the LPB began hearings on their significance,[1] eventually culminating in the 1989 *Seattle Public Schools Historic Building Survey* complied by Patricia Erigero.[2] Seattle Public Schools was not involved in the survey. In 1978 SPS sued the City of Seattle and the LPB over the designation of the University Heights Elementary School, arguing that the LPB was interfering with the SPS's obligation to promote the best possible education for students.[3]

The ongoing conflict is explored in this thesis. All five schools described in the case studies involved conflicts between SPS and preservation, preservation and the public, or SPS and the public, allowing comparisons to be made between the positions of SPS, the LPB, and the public, while simultaneously examining impacts on communities and on people's lives. The preservation process has a rigorous legal structure, but there are broad intentions behind the law. This thesis asks if those intentions are being met, and if the needs of communities are met. The thesis also asks, when adaptive reuse takes place, who sees the continuing benefits of preservation?

[1] LPB 102/80
[2] Erigero 1989, LPB 091681
[3] LPB 122078

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Figure 33: Interlake School students pose in theatrical costumes in 1931. Historic photo hung in basement of the Wallingford Center. (Photo by author 2021)

Interlake School

5.1 Introduction

The Interlake School building is located at 4416 Wallingford Avenue North , centrally positioned within the Wallingford neighborhood of Seattle. Used variously as an elementary school and high school annex for over seventy-five years, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) declared the site surplus in 1981 and leased it as a commercial space. In 1984-1985, the school building was remodeled for new use, with housing on the top floor and commercial spaces in the basement and first floor. Contemporaneously, Interlake was designated a Seattle Landmark in 1985 for its association with the "model school" design of James Stephen; on the basis of criterion D: "it embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction."[1] It is now known as the Wallingford Center.

The Interlake School exemplifies how the preservation of a historic building that no longer serves its original purpose can still serve the community by adaptive reuse, instead of demolition. The Wallingford neighborhood grew up around the school at the beginning of

[1] LPB 100/81

Timeline

1904	SPS constructs Interlake School to serve grades K-8 based on the design by James Stephen.
1908	James Stephen oversees eight-room addition.
1923	Overcrowding at Interlake causes the installation of many portable classrooms.
1926	Interlake School is the largest K-8 school in Seattle with a student population of 1,062.
1927	Opening of Hamilton Intermediate School relieves overcrowding and portables are removed.
1971	Interlake School is closed due to declining student numbers. The building opens as an annex for Lincoln High School.
1970s	The building begins to be used for special programs and begins to be referred to as the Interlake Annex.
1981	The building (along with 13 other school buildings in the district) is declared surplus.
1981	The neighborhood nominates the school for Landmarking and it is designated a Landmark by the Landscape Preservation Board (LPB).
1982	The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
1982	The building is leased for commercial purposes to Lorig Associates.
1984-1985	Tonkin Architects designs a complete a remodel to convert the school into commercial spaces.
1986	The remodeled commercial center wins the "Outstanding Merit Award" from the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, and the "Award for Design & Construction Excellence" from Associated General Contractors.
1990	The remodeled commercial center wins the "Neighborhood Designs That Work" award from the Seattle Design Commission.

the twentieth century, and its commercial center adjoined the Interlake School. When there was a greater need for commercial space and less need for the school, the Wallingford community supported preserving the building as an iconic component of their neighborhood, but also supported adaptively reusing the space to address new needs. However, SPS delayed preservation proceedings for three years until its successful leasing, and then immediately agreed. SPS was also sued in the State Superior Court for the negative impacts of Surplussing the school in 1981.[1] The events around SPS demonstrate the conflicts in seeing the value in school buildings, even when community value seems clear.

Historic Name

Interlake School (Constructed 1904)

Lincoln Annex (1971)

Interlake Center (1978)

Historic Architects (Year Completed)

James Stephen (1904)

Current Name

Wallingford Center

Modern Architects (New Building)

Tonkin Architecture (1984-1985)

Neighborhood

Wallingford

Address

4416 Wallingford Avenue North

This chapter includes the site history, construction and physical characteristics of the Interlake school, prior to its surplussing in 1981 (5.2), a description of the building's use (5.3), and communities involved in its use prior to 1981 (many of whom became stakeholders during its preservation) (5.4), and a description of the preservation process, including the lawsuit (5.5), to the completion of its conversion into housing and commercial space (5.6). This discussion is followed by an analysis of events examining how the communities around the school were affected by the adaptive reuse of the building, and how the actions of the community, city government, and public reflect attitudes towards historic buildings and their preservation (5.7).

[1] Dunphy 1976

Figure 34: West face elevation of Interlake School. (Photo from author 2021)

Figure 36: Interlake School aerial 1936. (Historic Aerials 2023)

Figure 35: Interlake School aerial 2023. (Imagery ©2023 CNES / Airbus, Maxar Technologies, U.S. Geological Survey, Map data ©2023)

5.1.1 Interlake School

A parent group from the north side of Lake Union approached the Seattle School District in 1904, asking to either improve the existing northern schools or build a new building. The city expected the north side of the lake would grow quickly following the opening of a streetcar line in 1899. The School District purchased land in 1890 near the proposed streetcar line, and district architect James Stephen designed the building using his "model school" plan with a four-room core that opened in 1904. The new school was named Interlake Public School, referring to its location between Lake Union and Green Lake. The new school was opened at a crucial time and place in Wallingford, when new bridges and the streetcar line brought development, and a commercial center quickly grew up around the school.[1] By 1908 the population was large enough that the four-room core was increased by adding two eight-room wings to the north and south of the building, producing the 20-room school that stands today.

However, the demand for student seats did not last: enrollment numbers began to decline after WWII, and the school district made the decision to surplus the building in 1981. The neighborhood feared they would lose this iconic structure, but also acknowledged its poor-location. The community prompted the LPB to nominate Interlake School as a City of Seattle Landmark and it was designated in 1981, under Criterion D, for its architectural significance. In 1982 it was nominated and listed on the National Register of Historic Places for the same reasons. The National Register nomination states:

> This school is an essentially unaltered example of the "Model School Plan" adopted by the Seattle School Board as rapid expansion and increased school enrollments occurred in the city generally, and the Wallingford neighborhood specifically. The Interlake Public School, which is now located adjacent to an active commercial thoroughfare, has strong associations with the earliest establishment of the surrounding neighborhood.[2]

The developers chose to adapt the building with minimal impact and changes to its character and feeling. The preservation of the building included interior and exterior spaces and the owners continue to maintain a detailed plan of its upkeep and look.[3]

[1] Veith 2005, pp. 32
[2] Krafft 1983, pp. 3
[3] Krafft 1984, pp. 3, personal interviews by author 2022

5.1.2 Wallingford - Forested Shore to Commercial Success

In 1904, north of Lake Union had only isolated housing developments and two established communities. The land had first been surveyed in 1855 and by 1885 rail lines had begun to connect the north shore with downtown Seattle, allowing businesses to access the area and for the first time letting earlier settlers travel freely to Seattle.[1] Two communities grew: Edgeworth, a consolidation of real estate properties east of the newly plated Fremont community, and Latona, located around a stop on the rail line. Access was increased again with the addition of the streetcar line on Wallingford Avenue North, in 1899.[2] The streetcar supported northward growth with extra stops in undeveloped areas, and the School District purchased a lot of land adjacent to the new streetcar line, midway between the pre-existing communities.[3] By 1903, the Latona School to the east and B.F. Day School in Fremont to the west had become overcrowded, with students being sent to distant buildings to make room.[4]

In 1903, a parents' group, organized between both communities, petitioned the School Board to either improve the Latona School or construct a new school on a lot purchased in 1899.[5] The school site was still forested prior to its construction, as was most of the surrounding area, but after the school's opening, the road, North 45th Street was paved and adjacent lots were cleared for development. Industry grew quickly on the shore of Lake Union, with a gas plant opening on its north shore in 1906.[6]

Another streetcar line opened along North 45th Street in 1909 and began to attract commercial businesses; by this point the Wallingford Commercial Club had been formed, taking its name from Wallingford Avenue and the associated streetcar line. By 1912 two churches opened, also using the name Wallingford, and in 1913 the Wallingford Fire and Police Station opened, and the neighborhood name was sealed.[7] Three other schools were constructed in the vicinity: Lincoln High School (1906), a larger replacement for the old Latona (1908), and McDonald (1913); by 1908 the Interlake School had been expanded

[1] Veith 2005, pp. 15-17
[2] Veith 2005, pp. 18-19
[3] Veith 2005, pp. 20-21
[4] Krafft 1983, pp. 3
[5] Krafft 1983, pp. 3
[6] Veith 2005, pp. 38, Krafft 1983, It should be noted that Veith and the NRHP disagree on the year (1904 and 1903 respectively). Veith cites Thompson and Marr, which while the main source for school information doesn't itself include citations and has several notable errors. In this case I will consider the NRHP compliers more likely to be accurate.
[7] Veith 2005, pp. 41

Figure 37: Latona Bridge circa 1892. (Seattle Photograph Collection SEA 1087)

with eight room additions overseen by James Stephen.[1] By 1920 the population of the area had grown from 1,500 to 19,200, and schools would continue to become overcrowded.[2]

From the early twentieth century, the North 45th Street corridor became the commercial hub of the new neighborhood, hosting speakeasies during Prohibition; a new post office opened, and many new businesses surrounded the Interlake School.[3] The development was so intense that in 1946 the Wallingford Commercial Club proposed relocating the school building to free up space for additional commercial use.[4] The school was not moved, but the intersection became the center of the commercial area, with grocery stores opening nearby, including Food Giant in 1950, directly across North 45th Street from the school. The store was a point of pride to Wallingford residents, and featured giant illuminated letters which have remained as a feature of the neighborhood even after the store's sale to QFC.[5] In 1969, Westerprise Inc. applied for a legal variance, desiring to expand a tavern adjacent to the school, that was being blocked by restrictions on proximity of taverns to school buildings.[6] Interlake would continue to grow out of place as post-war

[1] Krafft 1983, pp. 4
[2] Krafft 1983, pp. 4
[3] Veith 2005, pp. 90-94
[4] Veith 2005, pp. 94
[5] Veith 2005, pp. 97-98
[6] *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1969

Wallingford attempted to change its reputation as an industrial neighborhood.[1]

Environmental changes in the 1950s-1970s induced the slow decline of the industrial ribbon along the Lake Union shore. The vicinity was significantly impacted by the new I-5 construction that sliced through the east end of Wallingford, removing the majority of the residential area served by the Latona School. By 1971, the changes caused a reduction of population and declining student numbers, leading to many school closures, including McDonald and Interlake Schools. Interlake was closed as a K-8 in spring 1971 and reopened in September as an annex to the nearby Lincoln High School. Lincoln remained well-attended until desegregation with busing began to bring non-White students to the school shortly thereafter. Students left the school, partially due to the highway construction and partially due to White families pulling their children out of the school in reaction to the busing policies. Lincoln High School closed in 1981 and, with it, Interlake School was declared surplus.[2]

As the Wallingford community struggled to keep its commercial prosperity in the face of population changes, Interlake was leased to a developer for commercial use, in part fulfilling the hopes of the Wallingford Commercial Club in the 1940s. However, pride in the building prompted residents to insist on designating the building a Seattle Landmark and pursuing listing on the National Register.[3]

[1] Veith 2005, pp. 100
[2] Veith 2005, pp. 100-113
[3] Veith 2005, pp. 113

5.2 Construction History

The Interlake School building was constructed in 1904, on the southeast corner of North 45th Street and Wallingford Avenue North, following James Stephan's original wood-frame model school plan.[1] At first the building was only a four-room core, but in 1908 the building was extended with two eight-room classroom wings on the north and south ends, for a total of twenty classrooms.[2] The school was built entirely of wood, supported by a concrete foundation. There were no major alterations after the 1908 additions. In 1958 the property had minor wall partitions added to create offices in one classroom space. Likely at the same time, windows were filled in or moved for a new library space on the second floor. New fire safety systems such as fire alarms were added in 1967.[3]

5.2.1 Original Structure (1904)

Interlake shared its model school plan with the now-demolished Green Lake School to the north. At the time of construction in 1904 the structure was a simple "I" plan with entries on the east and west side and two-each classrooms on the ground and second floors. The attic was used for heating ducts, and the basement contained bathrooms, storage, and the furnace room. The building was constructed at the northwest corner of the lot, with a playground to the east. North 45th Street, running east-west past the school, was paved by 1906.[4]

The school has a wood frame structure with cast iron columns and beams for further support; it is clad with thin wooden bevel siding, and sits on a concrete foundation and basement. The building has four-over-four double-hung windows in banks into each classroom, and single windows into hallways. The building is topped with a side-gable roof, with hipped-roof ventilators and masonry chimneys breaking its peak. The front (west) facade, facing onto Wallingford Avenue North, has a central entry. The entrance porch has a flat dentilated cornice bearing the name of the school, held up by four ionic columns. An arched entry with decorated pilasters leads into the entry vestibule. Fan lights over double-

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 37, Krafft 1983, pp. 61
[2] It should be noted that the NPS submittal in 1984 claims Interlake began with an eight-room service wing, not a four-room. However, plans collected by Tonkin Architects clearly show only two rooms per floor.
[3] Maintenance Plans SPS, from scans by Tonkin Architects 1984
[4] Krafft 1983, pp. 2

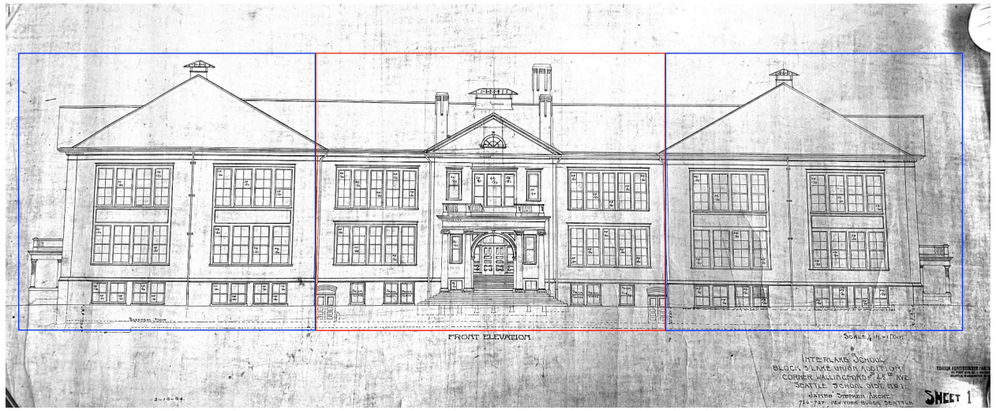


Figure 38: James Stephen's 1908 elevation of the Interlake School. Red indicates the service-wing, blue, the classroom-wings. (Tonkin Architects 1985)

hung windows let light into the vestibule and stairwell from the second floor. A gable end pediment extends above the roofline over the portico, and further dentillated cornices under the eaves accentuate the classical form.[1] The eastern entry has similar detailing, with fluted square columns over a smaller portico and matching stairwell windows and pediment at the roofline.[2]

The interior is finished with hard plaster with fir trim and floors. The trim included wooden pilasters supporting arched entrances to classrooms and assembly spaces, and as of its designation as a Landmark had unaltered paneled doors, wainscoting, and door and window surrounds. The basement is sparse, with tile and concrete walls and polished concrete floors. Bathrooms located in the basement had marble partitions and counters, and porcelain toilets and urinals.[3]

[1] Krafft 1983, pp. 2
[2] Krafft 1983, pp. 2
[3] Krafft 1983, pp. 2

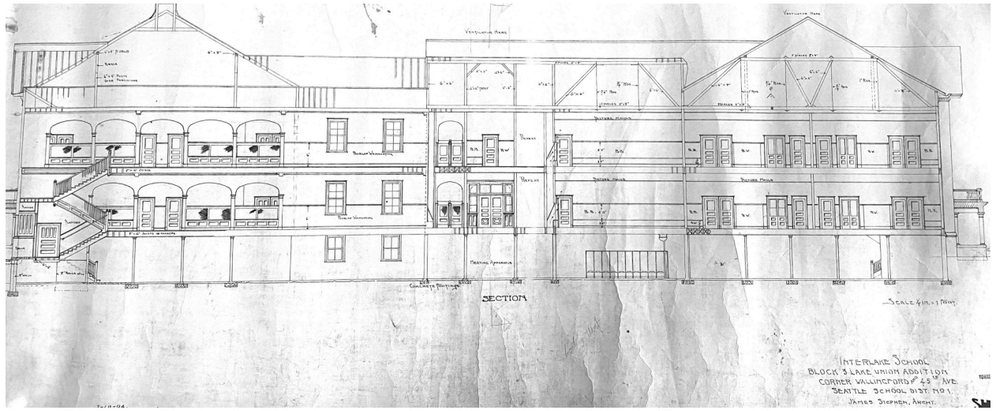


Figure 39: James Stephen's 1908 interior elevation of the Interlake School. (Tonkin Architects 1985)

5.2.2 Eight-Room Wing Additions (1908)

Just two years after its construction, the school was already overcrowded, and James Stephen managed the addition of two eight-room wings, following the "H" form of the model school plan. Each wing connected to the original north-south corridor with entries to two new rooms on east and west. The wings also provided additional entrances at each end of the corridor, decorated with an entrance porch with a cornice and similar large stairwell windows above.[1]

[1] Krafft 1983, pp. 2

Figure 40: Interlake School class photo as displayed inside the Wallingford Center. (Photo by author 2021)

5.3 Building Use History

Seattle Public Schools predicted that the new Wallingford Avenue North streetcar line would lead to an increase in population. The school thus predated much of the neighborhood, making it a notable visual landmark that became the center of the area. During the rise and fall of student population, Wallingford community members used the site for other purposes. Although theAlt Though, the surrounding area has remained primarily majority single-family residences, the growing commercial corridor along 45th Avenue South put pressure on the school and the school's eventual closure allowed for the building to find a new role within the neighborhood.

5.3.1 Interlake Elementary School (K-8) to Closure (1904-1971)

The school served as a K-8 elementary school and grew to the be the largest student body in Seattle in the 1920s, with 1,062 students in 1926.[1] Overcrowding was a district-wide problem, and in 1927, intermediate schools were introduced, removing grades 6-8 from elementary schools. Interlake School continued semi-successfully before and after World War II; in 1939 the School D district proposed a levy to modernize school buildings, including Interlake, though the plans fell through and no modifications were made.[2] In the 1940s, the school was led by Principal C.E. Gibson, a passionate apiarist who installed a bee hive in a classroom and directed teachers to provide classes related to bees, changes which only lasted during his tenure.[3] In 1953 the attendance area was reduced, dropping student numbers to 620.[4]

PAULA ZOOK, 3, waited for her dad, Peter, as he voted at the Interlake School, 4416 Wallingford N. yesterday. An election official at the school said, "It's sad, vrey sad" when asked about the voter turnout. But another official said that it wasn't "any worse than last year." She said that the tunout in her precinct would be about 29 per cent. — P-I Photo by Tom Barlet.

Figure 41: Newspaper clipping with a young girl waiting for her dad at the Interlake School. (Seattle Post-Intelligencer 1974).

Throughout it's existence, the school served as a community meeting place when students were not present. The school hosted community club meetings, protests, and held ballot machines during state and federal voting,[5] but it remained coveted by commercial interests, and in 1946, the Wallingford Commercial Club suggested that the school be moved so its location could be used for additional space.[6] Continuing neighborhood changes, the removal of industrial use along Lake Union Lake, and the construction of Interstate 5

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001
[2] *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1939
[3] Thompson and Marr 2001. Language classes prepared reports on their observations of the bees. Civics classes were directed to take the bees as an example of cooperative effort. Math classes calculated the annula honey harvest.
[4] Thompson and Marr 2001
[5] (Club meetings) *Seattle Times* 1831, (protests) *Seattle Times* 1932, (voting) *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1974
[6] Veith 2005, pp. 94

through the Latona neighborhood, led to drops in student numbers and increasing efforts to make Wallingford a commercially successful neighborhood. In 1971 the elementary school was closed and began use as an annex to Lincoln High School.[1]

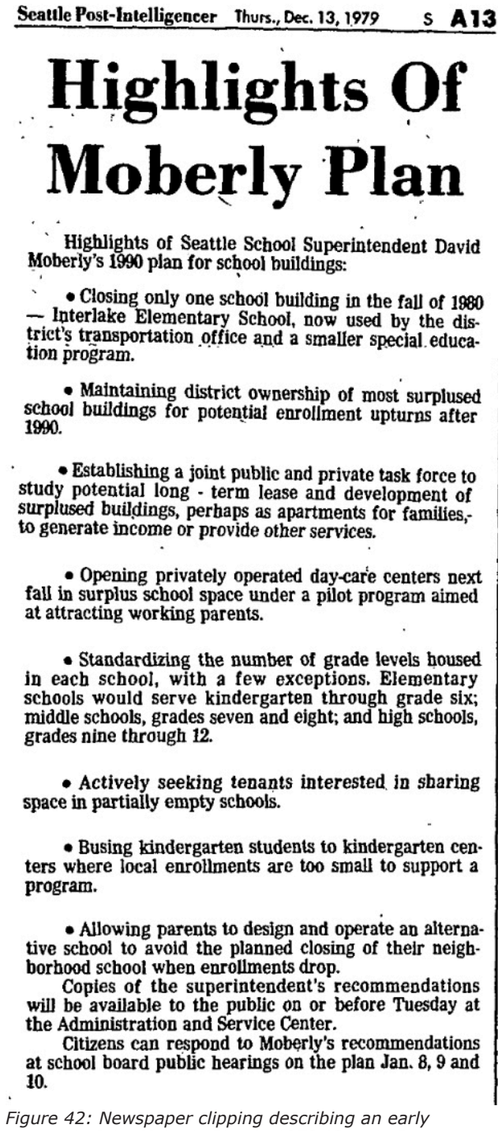
5.3.2 Lincoln Annex & Interlake Center (1971-1981)

Beginning in the fall of 1971, language arts, social studies, and special education classes from Lincoln High School were held in the Interlake School building, and eight portables were added to the property. By 1975 the school was renamed the Interlake Center and hosted special programs, including the Project Follow Through, Lincoln Evening School, School Age Parent, Continuation Program, Interim School I, People's School No. 1, and the Work Training Program. In 1981 SPS's transportation office and book depository used the site. From 1981 until 1984, the site was surrounded by a chain-link fence, and was not open to the public.[2]

In 1970 Superintendent David L. Moberly proposed, leasing schools that were no longer needed, to generate extra funds for the district.[3] The Seattle City Council supported the sale of Interlake and other schools, urging the School District to convert the old building "because the site is prime commercial property, the profit could 'run the school district for several years.'"[4] Moberly's plan to surplus schools was not well received. In some cases, neighborhoods resented the plan, mainly due to the potential for unwanted building use nearby, and some argued the plan would not have been needed if desegregation plans had not been enacted.[5] When the Thurston County School District sued the state for lack of funding, they refused to follow a similar surplussing plan, and cited the flight of residents from the Wallingford neighborhood, "because their neighbors left, their social life was leaving."[6]

In 1976, Dr. Howard M. Johnson, a U.W. Bureau of School Service and Research professor, defended the Seattle School District in the State Superior Court against claims that school closures, including Interlake Elementary School, had negatively impacted neighborhoods. Johnson stated that a study had shown that there was little evidence of

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001
[3] Russel 1965, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1979, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1980, *Seattle Times* 1980
[4] Angelos 1980
[5] Robinson 1981
[6] Layton 1976



Seattle Post-Intelligencer Thurs., Dec. 13, 1979 S A13

Highlights Of Moberly Plan

Highlights of Seattle School Superintendent David Moberly's 1990 plan for school buildings:

• Closing only one school building in the fall of 1980 — Interlake Elementary School, now used by the district's transportation office and a smaller special education program.

• Maintaining district ownership of most surplused school buildings for potential enrollment upturns after 1990.

• Establishing a joint public and private task force to study potential long - term lease and development of surplused buildings, perhaps as apartments for families, to generate income or provide other services.

• Opening privately operated day-care centers next fall in surplus school space under a pilot program aimed at attracting working parents.

• Standardizing the number of grade levels housed in each school, with a few exceptions. Elementary schools would serve kindergarten through grade six; middle schools, grades seven and eight; and high schools, grades nine through 12.

• Actively seeking tenants interested in sharing space in partially empty schools.

• Busing kindergarten students to kindergarten centers where local enrollments are too small to support a program.

• Allowing parents to design and operate an alternative school to avoid the planned closing of their neighborhood school when enrollments drop.

Copies of the superintendent's recommendations will be available to the public on or before Tuesday at the Administration and Service Center.

Citizens can respond to Moberly's recommendations at school board public hearings on the plan Jan. 8, 9 and 10.

Figure 42: Newspaper clipping describing an early proposal of the Moberly Plan in 1979 (Seattle Post-Intelligencer)

families leaving neighborhoods with closed schools, that school closures did not affect local achievement scores, nor reduce property value. It did not increase the crime rate, or alter levy support. He described the impact in Wallingford, specifically, as having a slight increase in property sales (7.4% population drop), and a slight decrease in new families entering the area. Additionally, there was a decline in housing stability, decline in the number of professional and technical workers, and yet a slight improvement of employment numbers in Wallingford.[1]

These claims would be dropped and the Moberly Plan officially declared Interlake and several other schools surplus in 1981, and began advertising in local papers for proposals of development. A lease for Interlake posed a problem for the School District, despite the location, as when they received no offers until 1984, three years after the declaration of its surplus status. Meanwhile the LPB began an independent survey of school buildings, putting pressure on the SPS, with what the District saw as a threat to their ability to lease the building.[2]

[1] Dunphy 1976
[2] LPB 102/80

5.4 Communities & Stakeholders

5.4.1 Seattle Public Schools

As owner of the building, and administrator, Seattle Public Schools was the main stakeholder in the preservation of Interlake School. The school surplussing in 1981 caused the LPB to include it in early school surveys and the Office of Urban Conservation[1] presented its nomination to the LPB. As SPS was also attempting to reach a leasing agreement with a developer, they did not want any controls on the building that would interfere with developer interests.

5.4.2 Wallingford Community

The neighborhood of the Interlake School, Wallingford, had long used the school building for public purposes, and debated its use. The Wallingford Commercial Club had called for the school to be relocated to allow more commercial space, while in 1971 there was concern that its closure would lead to a loss of families in the neighborhood. As such the community was invested in what became of the Interlake School building. The Wallingford Community Council would meet and discuss project plans during the preservation process.

5.4.3 Lorig Associates

After a long delay SPS agreed to lease Interlake to Lorig Associates who proposed to adapt the historic building into new commercial space. The developers approached the LPB in the "controls and incentives" hearings to reach an agreement on how they could modify the building.

[1] At the time oversight of the LPB was under the Office of Urban Conservation and Historic Seattle. Later it was absorbed by the Department of Neighborhoods.

5.5 Preservation Process

In 1980, the LPB began to organize a survey of historic Seattle schools, followed by initial nominations.[1] Four elementary schools, including Interlake, were the first included in preliminary hearings in 1980, and a formal nomination report was submitted by the Office of Urban Conservation in November the same year. SPS objected strongly to the attempt to mass-designate their properties and wrote letters in protest, pointing to the precedent of State of Washington v. City of Seattle (1980) and the lawsuit concerning the University Heights building.[2] The first public hearing for nomination was held on March 4, 1981, at which the LPB voted unanimously to nominate Interlake, B.F.Day and Greenlake schools. LPB held a designation hearing April 8 and again unanimously voted to designate. SPS continued to protest the decision, while the Wallingford Community Council wrote in support. Once the designation was officially announced, SPS began to delay on negotiations. After stating they would negotiate, on June 22, SPS requested a further extension, and continued to request extensions until December 6, 1983. The official ordinance for the preservation of Interlake was eventually released in 1984.

Presented below is a timeline of events, followed by the main arguments of each stakeholder summarized across the lead up to nomination to the end of adaptive reuse.

5.5.1 Seattle Public School Arguments

SPS was very resistant to the designation of Interlake School. As a lease had not been secured for the soon to be surplussed building, it is possible that their hesitancy related to the threat that if the LPB enforced unfavorable controls, developers would not agree to lease the building. SPS staff member, Public Counsel Michael Hoge began to send letters to the Office of Urban Conservation. He asserted that the city had no jurisdiction over school district buildings, citing two cases: SPS's lawsuit against the City of Seattle and the LPB for designation of the University Heights School building in 1978,[3] and a recently completed case between the city and University of Washington.[4]

[1] LPB 102/80
[2] LPB 122078
[3] LPB 102/80
[4] State of Washington v. City of Seattle 1978

Preservation Timeline

1980 Nov. 7 Staff of Urban Conservation submits nomination form. Hearing scheduled for Feb. 4, but delayed due to SPS no-show.

1981 Mar. 4 SPS Public School Counsel Michael Hoge sends letter of complaint to LPB in opposition to nomination and controls.

1981 Mar. 4 Nomination hearing of several schools held. Letter from Michael Hoge read into record. Board voted unanimously to nominated Interlake.

1981 Apr. 8 SPS's Michael Hoge sends letter of complaint to the LPB objecting to the designation meeting and requested a discussion of controls prior to designation.

1981 Apr. 8 Designation hearing of several schools is held. Interlake is designated. No Minutes survive.

1981 Apr. 13 Interlake designation report is issued. The school (entire exterior) is designated on the basis of Criterion D.

1981 Jun. 11 A letter is sent by Karen Boyle, president of the Wallingford Community Council, approving of designation of Interlake.

1981 Jun. 15 SPS requests extension for negotiation period by letter; Accepted by LPB. SPS states intention to meet with the board on June 22.

1981 Jun. 22 SPS requests extension for negotiation period by letter; Accepted by LPB

1981 Sep. 16 SPS requests extension for negotiation period by letter; Accepted by LPB

1981 Oct. 7 SPS requests extension for negotiation period by letter; Accepted by LPB

1981 Oct. 14 SPS requests extension for negotiation period by letter; Accepted by LPB

1981 Dec. 16 SPS requests extension for negotiation period by letter; Accepted by LPB

1982 Dec. 16 Lorig Associates and SPS sign a lease for Interlake for 99-years

1983 Apr. 18 National Register receives Interlake Nomination

1983 Aug. 3 NRHP accepts Interlake for listing on the register.

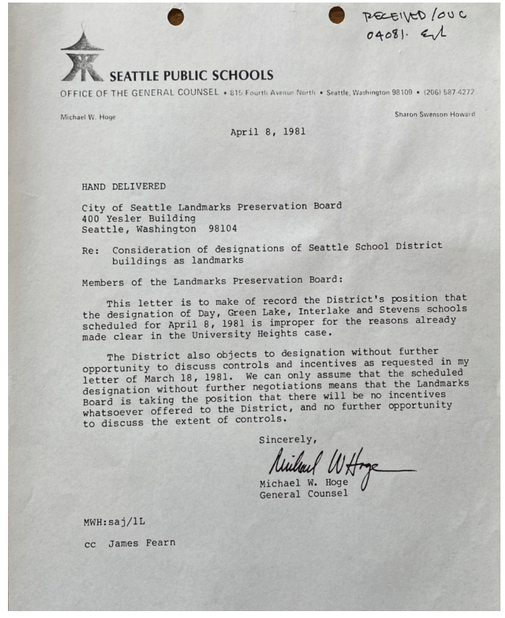
1983 Nov. 2 LPB members visit Interlake to negotiate Controls with Tonkin/Griessinger Architects & Lorig Associates

1983 Dec. Landmark ordinance signed

1983 Nov. 8 A certificate of approval is signed and Tonkin permitted to proceed with renovation.

1984 Dec. 1 Lorig Associates invites community to visit grand opening of Wallingford Center

In these letters, and during statements in the University Heights case, Michael Hoge cited the State Supreme Court case State of Washington v. City of Seattle. The university had succeeded in getting a judgment that their property was not subject to city ordinance and could not be considered under the city's landmarking process. (This decision was overturned in 2017 due to the State Growth Management Act.[1]) SPS argued similarly that, as a state agency, its buildings were not within the city's jurisdiction and Landmark designations of school buildings interfered with their legal obligation to manage property to properly cater to students' education.[2]



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SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL • 815 Fourth Avenue North • Seattle, Washington 98109 • (206) 587-4272

Michael W. Hoge — Sharon Svenson Howard

April 8, 1981

HAND DELIVERED

City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board
400 Yesler Building
Seattle, Washington 98104

Re: Consideration of designations of Seattle School District buildings as landmarks

Members of the Landmarks Preservation Board:

This letter is to make of record the District's position that the designation of Day, Green Lake, Interlake and Stevens schools scheduled for April 8, 1981 is improper for the reasons already made clear in the University Heights case.

The District also objects to designation without further opportunity to discuss controls and incentives as requested in my letter of March 18, 1981. We can only assume that the scheduled designation without further negotiations means that the Landmarks Board is taking the position that there will be no incentives whatsoever offered to the District, and no further opportunity to discuss the extent of controls.

Sincerely,

Michael W. Hoge
General Counsel

MWH:saj/1L

cc James Fearn

Figure 43: Michael Hoge letter as received by the LPB, April 8, 1981. (DoN Archives)

When the LPB met to nominate the school, one such letter was read into record to document the ongoing disapproval of the District. However, the LPB noted that earlier precedence claimed by SPS was not relevant to this case, and that the city's Law Department advised the LPB to go forward with nomination. The nominations of Interlake, B.F. Day, Stevens and Greenlake schools all proceeded in March 1981. Unfortunately, the minutes of the designation hearing have not survived; however, the Interlake School building was officially designated by the LPB on April 8, 1981.

Although the building was designated, SPS could argue with the LPB regarding what incentives they would receive for preserving the building, and what controls were enforced. This was especially important to SPS, as restrictions on treatment of the building could limit what developers could do, and could potentially make leasing much less attractive to private companies. SPS began to delay negotiations on controls and incentives: Michael Hoge requested extensions seven times over the latter half of 1981, delaying until 1982. Finally,

[1] City of Seattle v. University of Washington 2017
[2] Hoge 1981

SPS leased the building to Lorig Associates (the company that would also lease Queen Anne High School in 1985), in December1982, for 99 years.[1] Lorig and Tonkin/Griessinger Architects met with the LPB to negotiate controls and incentives, finally allowing the project to go forward in November, 1983.

Once SPS had secured the lease for Wallingford, their attitude toward designation changed. Lorig Associates was willing to preserve the historic structure and adaptively reuse it; therefore, SPS was no longer concerned about controls interfering with developer interest. In 1985 Lorig also contracted with SPS to adaptively reuse Queen Anne High School. SPS's property manager Michael Caroll compared the new project to Interlake:

> The Seattle School District has agreed to negotiate the disposition of Queen Anne High School to the Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority. We are aware that the site and building are being nominated for Historic Landmark status. We hope to duplicate the cooperative effort that is resulting in such wonderfully adaptive reuses at our former Interlake and West Queen Anne schools.[2]

Perhaps, Michael Caroll had not been privy to any of Michael Hoge's previous letters, or, more likely, the success of the Interlake reuse convinced the District that it could accept the Landmarking of some historic schools.

5.5.2 Preservationist & LPB Arguments

As described above, the LPB received letters from SPS objecting to the nomination or designation of school buildings. At that time, the LPB had been operating for less than ten years, and contentiousness persisted between it and other state and city departments. However, the Office of Urban Conservation and the LPB remained committed to preserving historic buildings. During the lead-up to the nomination of Interlake, the LPB attempted to reach a "middle ground" with SPS and offered either the a system for the creation of memorandum of agreements (MOAs),[3] or holding consent hearings prior to nomination. After multiple letters to Superintendent David Moberly, no agreement was made, nor were any such processes initiated.[4]

On March 4, 1981, Mark Peckham, architectural historian, and Earl Layman, City Historic Preservation Officer in the Office of Urban Conservation, presented the history and

[1] Angelos 1982
[2] Carroll 1984
[3] LPB 102/80
[4] LPB 28/81

significance of the Interlake School building.[1] Gary Swenson, LPB member, moved to approve the entire exterior and site of Interlake, and the LPB unanimously voted "aye."[2] No minutes survive from the designation meeting in April 1981; however the designation of Interlake's exterior was publicly announced on April 13 on the basis of Criterion D: "It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction."[3] Ultimately, despite SPS's resistance, the LPB prevailed and Interlake was preserved; the board oversaw Lorig's adaptive reuse plan that maintained both the exterior, as well as many of the historic interior elements not included in the designation.

5.5.3 Community Arguments

Overall, the community, mainly represented by the Wallingford Community Council, supported the preservation of Interlake. The Community Council wrote to the LPB in June 1981, supporting the vote for nomination[4] and again in November .[5] The building occupied a central site in the neighborhood, the Council argued, and they supported reusing the historic structure for community use. Prior to the finalization of the lease in 1982 the city and potential developers questioned representatives of the community and business district, who stated interest in:

> …mixed-use development, which at street level will add to the shopping area and encourage pedestrian activity. Non-street-level uses could include professional offices, light manufacturing, performing arts/cinema, or small apartments. Parking could be included and public space is urged.[6]

Lorig invited the community to visit the building at its grand opening, on December 1, 1984, offering tours of the apartments and commercial spaces before they were rented, and hosting live-music, food, and activities for children.[7] There is no doubt that the neighborhood, and Lorig Associates, saw the building as a part of the community.

[1] LPB 421/80
[2] LPB 030481.3
[3] LPB 100/81
[4] Wallingford Community Council June 1981
[5] Wallingford Community Council November 1981
[6] *Seattle Times* 1982
[7] Lorig Associates 1984

5.6 Transformation

After the 1981 Moberly plan declared the Interlake School surplus, the School District listed an advertisement in the Seattle Times on March 14, 1982, requesting potential proposals for redevelopment.[1] By May they had received proposals from the private Northwest School of the Arts, Humanities and Environment, and from Lorig Associates.[2] By December a 99-year lease to Lorig had been approved.[3]

5.6.1 Building Changes

Lorig Associates proposed converting Interlake School into flexible commercial spaces. After the lease was signed, Lorig began submitting their plans to the LPB, during and after the controls and incentives hearing. After receiving the LPB's acceptance in November, their architect Tonkin/Greissinger designed and completed construction documents for the remodel, which converted the ground and central floor into commercial spaces, and the top floor into apartments.[4]

The remodel restored the symmetry of the original 1908 building, removing modifications made in the 1960s and 1970s. A one-story utility room that had been added to the eastern side of the building was removed; its windows were recovered and used to restore the windows on the upper floor that had been filled-in to create a library space around 1958. The porticos, which had been altered over the years, were also restored to their original form. The remodel also modernized the structure, adding new utilities. Exterior and interior cables were located along horizontal transitions, such as the division between concrete and wooden siding, to minimize visual impact. The attic space, which originally housed an extra large air duct system, was altered with a modern air-conditioning system and new fire safety devices.[5]

The interior layout with central corridors and axial staircases was preserved, while classroom spaces were either subdivided or combined.[6] Many detail elements were retained: wooden floors, chalkboards, classroom doors for apartment entrances, and brass dust-

[1] *Seattle Times* 1982
[2] *Seattle Times* 1982
[3] Angelos 1982
[4] Tonkin 1985
[5] Tonkin 1985
[6] Tonkin 1985

Figure 45:Interlake School in 1980. (LPB 421/80)

Figure 44:Wallingford Center in 2021. (Photo by author 2021)

catchers along the stairways. Many elements that could not be retained were recycled elsewhere, such as marble taken from the walls of the student bathrooms, to be used as lining on the east entrance.[1]

The grade around the building was lowered, exposing the ground floor, which had been effectively a basement during its later years. The ground floor was divided into four long shop spaces to cater to grocers, drug stores, or hardware stores that needed more room. All-gender bathrooms, building manager offices, and a delivery and service entrance were housed within the central wing. The main floor (second) classroom layouts were preserved, but the doorways were modified with windows and glass paneled doors, forming shopfronts facing into the hall. At the center of the main floor a counter was installed for a cafe; it currently (2023) houses a cupcake store. Upper classrooms were divided to provide housing, the high ceilings and tall windows providing natural light and airy space.[2]

The LPB was involved with the creation of a signage plan. As exterior signage could impact the historic character of the structure, the LPB and Lorig implemented a plan to control signs in windows, with several neon signs being installed early in its use. New businesses present their signage submissions to the LPB when alterations are needed.[3]

5.6.2 Community Changes

[1] Brown 1985
[2] Tonkin 1985
[3] Tonkin 1985

By 1985, residents were moving in and businesses had rented shop space. B. Freshman's, a food market, moved into one of the northern ground floor spaces.[1] In the center of the main floor was Cafe Recess, using the cafe counter, and, a bookstore, wine shop and deli opened as well.[2] Many news stories, describing early uses of the new Wallingford Center, emphasize teachers and students returning. Dorothy Nordquist had attended kindergarten at Interlake, in 1924, and moved into an apartment on the same side of the building as her former classroom.[3]

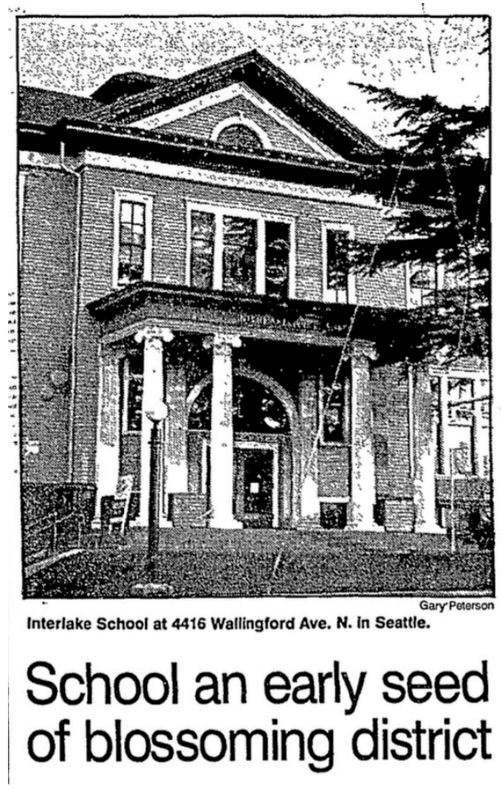
Two years after its opening, the *Post-Intelligencer* described the center's success as "yet to meet the financial projects of the [school] district."[4] They reported that SPS had so far only collected base rent on the building. However, the article captured the feeling of the time: that Wallingford prior to the Wallingford Center opening had been depressed, and by 1987, it was beginning to gain momentum as a "mix of trendy restaurants, espresso bars, high-class gift shops along with more traditional business."[5] This new growth was in contrast to an article in 1980 that described many shops that were historic institutions, lasting in some cases from the 1920s. Of note is the Stained Glass Shoppe remains open in the same location in 2023.[6]

Today the Wallingford Center has similar shops. A health pharmacy and an Ace Hardware fill the north half of the ground floor, with a restaurant and preschool in the south. On the main floor is a cupcake store in the center, with a variety of small scale boutique shops and services using the classroom shop spaces.

[1] Brown 1985
[2] Pucci 1987
[3] Brown 1985
[4] Pucci 1987
[5] Pucci 1987
[6] Huston 1980

5.7 Analysis

Interlake was in many ways a "success" of community strengthening through preservation. Success here can be defined by whether the value of the building identified by the community has been preserved. Analysis of this case study what SPS saw as the official value, then what the local community stated as the values of the historic building, and finally, how successfully those values were preserved after the adaptive reuse process, analyzed from the perspective of the community value theories discussed in Chapter 3.


Gary Peterson

Interlake School at 4416 Wallingford Ave. N. in Seattle.

School an early seed of blossoming district

Figure 46: Newspaper clipping of Interlake School describing its role in the neighborhood. (Lentz 1989)

5.7.1 Official Value

The Interlake School had been closed as the first step in the Moberly Plan, a proposal to lease underused property to make a profit for Seattle Public Schools. Seattle's population was dropping due to economic changes, and white families were withdrawing their children in reaction to desegregation. With Interlake nearly empty, Moberly proposed the sale or lease of the school. The possible use by new owners or renters was debated in the news. Possible lease options ranged from other public use such as an extra space for the King County Courts, to sale to private owners. The Seattle City Council weighed in, after the first leases to declare that there was no requirement for SPS to keep unused school buildings, and that there was no requirement to keep public buildings public.[1]

[1] *Seattle Times* 1981

This view of school buildings as valuable for their potential economic use, may have informed the decision to object to the designation of the school as a Landmark. The letter-writing campaign by Mike Hoge, SPS legal counsel, was made to stop designation, and after that failed, SPS delayed controls negotiations for two years. Only once Lorig Associates had signed the lease, did controls get defined, and Lorig Associates was the party to negotiate the final control document. SPS effectively waited for a developer who would agree to an adaptive reuse plan, before allowing the LPB to finalize their process.

Seattle Public Schools may not consider the preservation of Interlake School a success. The Moberly Plan aimed to make a profit from the unused building; however, after twenty-four years, analysis has shown that the leases generally have did not made significant money for the District. One challenge was a lack of adjustments to total rent to account for inflation, making the rent effectively reduce over time. In total, all leased properties (except for the Memorial Stadium's parking lot) earned the District $1.2 million in 2005, which School Board member Irene Stewart called "a pittance."[1]

5.7.2 Value to the Community

The Wallingford Community Council directly stated their support for the designation of the building:

> Because of its strong architectural qualities and key location in the Wallingford Business District, Interlake's future is of prime interest to the Wallingford Community Council. In addition to the decisions being formulated concerning Interlake, Wallingford faces the loss of the North Central Police precinct, also a prominent building architecturally and locationally, and the closure of Lincoln High School. We feel that Wallingford's future as a cohesive and identifiable district hinges upon the continuity and character that buildings like Interlake School provide our district. We feel that in spite of the restrictions landmark status may impose, the Interlake School buildings holds great potential for creative reuse.[2]

This statement gives the community's view of the Interlake School buildings as it pertains to Seattle's Landmark criteria C, E, & F, showing clear place attachment, the creation of sense of place, and upholding the theory of community value. They saw its significance in its architectural quality, the building's very apparent visibility, and its importance to the character of the neighborhood. The history of the school validates this perspective. News articles describe the school as a prominent visual part of the neighborhood, and its role as a meeting place for the community.

In the 1940s the Wallingford Commercial Club called for the building to be picked up and moved, acknowledging the juxtaposition of the conflict between the school and the commercial centric location, and its meaning to the neighborhood. A survey of representatives of the community and business district prior in 1982, described local opinion on what they wanted from the school site:

> …mixed-use development, which at street level will add to the shopping area and encourage pedestrian activity. Non-street-level uses could include professional offices, light manufacturing, performing arts/cinema, or small apartments. Parking could be included and public space is urged.[1]

The main challenge to the preservation of the school, from within the neighborhood, was the conflict between its use and its location.

5.7.3 Adaptive Reuse Keeping Interlake School Successful as Social Infrastructure

After the completion of the adaptive reuse plan, the Interlake School building remained a visual landmark. It became a publicly accessible space with a preschool and commercial stores, allowing it both to fit the commercial corridor of the neighborhood, and to remain a space that could be used for gathering. As a new commercial space, it could be both a space for shopping, and a meeting spot. Additionally, the adaptive reuse project added apartments into the third story, providing lower cost residences in the mainly single-family house neighborhood.

Including a range of shop sizes, from small grocer, to one person boutiques, as well as the apartments, is a direct corollary to Jane Jacobs's theories on the benefits of diverse cities. The shop spaces can attract smaller business owners who cannot afford the larger commercial spaces in the Wallingford commercial corridor, and younger or older residents who cannot afford to own a full single-family residence can live in the apartments. The open public hallways with clear view lines also provide an inviting, and importantly, safe space. Apartment renters can see out into the parking lot, and street, maintaining Jacobs's "eyes on the street" idea, and the variety of commercial and café use, keeps local, reputable, people nearby.

[1] Bhatt 2005
[2] Wallingford Community Council 1981

[1] *Seattle Times* 1982

The most obvious advantage of maintaining Interlake's character is its visual prominence. The building centers the entire North 45th Street corridor and serves as a landmark for residents and shoppers alike. The combination of historic shops, height restricted buildings, the school, and the parallel grocery sign across the street, provides a strong sense of a prosperous and lively neighborhood.

This adaptive reuse can be seen as a successful design to maintain previously-functional social infrastructure. Interlake had been the home of voting booths, club meetings, and interaction between many different members of the neighborhood from its opening until its closure to the public in 1981. Although the LPB had not included the interior in the designation, Lorig chose to maintain the majority of the detail and logic of the inside spaces as well as celebrate features of the school by putting chalkboards, photos of the school and students, and historic floor plans on display in the publicly accessible halls. Inside, directions to different stores are displayed on chalkboards to further the academic aesthetic. Choosing to maintain the interior hallways, and placing shops into classroom spaces, the reuse makes use of the physical layout of a school to promote social mixing. The logic of the entrances, located at the centers of each side of the structure, each leading to staircases that connect the first and second floors, provides direct views of all public space, inviting the community in. Shoppers come into the space seeing into the building, both being attracted to the shops, but also seeing other people within the building. The east and west entrances lead directly to an open, ornamented space with a café in the center. This maintenance of the historic structure also maintains the value that the community saw in the building and allows a crucial piece of social infrastructure to remain in the community it served for over one hundred years.

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Figure 47: Photo of six young women in the Queen Anne High School gymnasium, 1913. (Nelson 1988)

Queen Anne High School

6.1 Introduction

The Queen Anne High School building is located at 201 Galer Street within the Queen Anne neighborhood. The school is situated on the south side of Queen Anne Hill, overlooking downtown Seattle and with a commanding view to the southeast, south and southwest. Visitors to the Space Needle are directed to spot the school during their ascent in the elevators.[1] The school, which was constructed as a high school but for a time also housed a junior high school, closed in 1981 in response to reduced student numbers. It was subsequently leased to a developer by SPS. In 1985 the building was designated as a City of Seattle Landmark on the basis of Criteria C, D, E, and F, with its original exterior elevations protected, and in 1986 it reopened as the Queen Anne Apartments. The criteria indicate that the building is significant for:

C) It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation; or

D) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or a method of construction; or

[1] Space Needle site visit 2021.

Timeline

1908 Jefferson High School constructed based on the design of James Stephen; renamed Queen Anne High School in October, 1908.

1909 Queen Anne High School opens in September,

1921 Property expanded to 2.98 acres. No additional facilities added.

1928 Floyd A. Naramore designs an expansion including gymnasium.

1943 Grade 8 students attend the school to alleviate overcrowding in other schools.

1952 Grade 9 students added 8 center and is renamed Queen Anne Junior High, a separate school within the building.

1955 NBBJ designs second addition.

1955 Queen Anne Junior High expands to include grade 7.

1956 Property expanded to 6.15 acres opening a track and play field north of the building.

1960s School is called Queen Anne Junior-Senior High School, catering to grades 7-12.

1961 Additional gymnasium opens.

1964 Grade 7-8 students leave to attend McClure Junior High.

1980 Enrollment drops to 850 students and school is slated for closure.

1984 SPS and Historic Seattle select a local developer to lease and convert the building into luxury housing. The 1928 gymnasium demolished. Field and 1961 gymnasium not included and join the later John Hay School opened on the site in 1989.

1985 LPB votes to designate Queen Anne as a City of Seattle Landmark on May 6.

1987 Queen Anne Apartments opens.

E) It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder; or

F) Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City.

Historic Name

Jefferson High School (1908 July-Oct.)

Queen Anne High School (1908 Oct.)

Historic Architects (Year Completed)

James Stephen (1908 Designer)

Anderson Power (Builder)

Floyd A. Naramore (1929 Designer)

NBBJ (1951 Designer)

Current Name

Queen Anne Condos (1985)

Modern Architects (Year Completed)

Bumgardener Architects (1985)

Neighborhood

East Queen Anne

Address

201 Galer Street, Seattle, WA 98109

The school serves as a positive example of a historic building adaptively reused to better fit the needs of its community. Queen Anne Hill drew middle class, upper middle class and upper class residents, and by the 1930s it was fully developed with single-family housing, a commercial strip along Queen Anne Avenue, minor commercial spaces in a few other locations, and very minor industrial development along its waterfront base (now called "Lower Queen Anne" or "Uptown") The crests of the hill with views to downtown, Lake Union, or the Puget Sound attracted the development of expensive larger homes, while other areas with no views were built up with smaller less expensive residences. Highland Drive, with views toward downtown, was the site of some of the city's most expensive housing in the early twentieth century. In the late 1960s and early, the period of the "Boeing bust," development slowed and the population declined. A school of the size of Queen Anne High School was no longer needed and developers began considering the land a profitable spot for luxury condominiums. Eventually the school was surplussed, leased and converted to condominium housing.

This chapter includes site history prior to 1984, a description of the construction and physical characteristics of the Queen Anne High School until 1984 (Section 6.2), a description of the building's use and communities involved in its use (who became stakeholders during its preservation) (6.3), and a description of the preservation process leading to its adaptive reuse as luxury housing (6.4). This discussion is followed by an

Figure 48: 1936 aerial photo of Queen Anne High School. (Historic Aerials 1936)

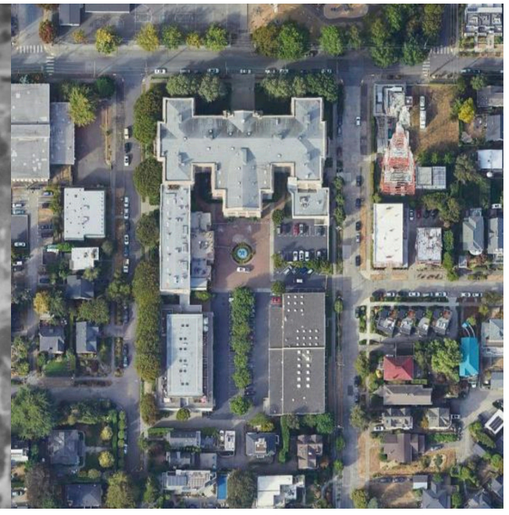

Figure 49: 2023 aerial photo of Queen Anne High School. (Imagery ©2023 CNES / Airbus, Maxar Technologies, U.S. Geological Survey, Map data ©2023)

analysis of events examining how the communities around the school were affected by the adaptive reuse of the building, and how the actions of the community, city government, and public reflect attitudes towards historic buildings and their preservation (6.5).

6.1.1 Queen Anne High School

Queen Anne High School presents an imposing appearance, situated high on the hilltop above north downtown. Its position gives it high visibility from the south, southwest, and southeast, and has cemented its place as a visual neighborhood landmark. Located within the traditionally middle class, upper middle and upper class, largely White neighborhood that shares its name,[1] the school remains a fond memory for many of its graduates. The strong neighborhood character and attachment to the school was clear from the time of its construction, when Queen Anne residents protested the school district's choice to name the new school "Jefferson High School" and the school was soon renamed after its location.

[1] Balk 2021

The school opened in 1908 in response to the rising population of the hill following rapid development. The school board president, John Schram directed school architect James Stephen to design a school whose "building and its surroundings and equipment command admiration."[1] The first school principal echoed this concept later, stating the high school is the people's college."[2] James Stephen designed the school in a style:

> Derived from English late Renaissance palace architecture, in its massing, axial symmetry, rusticated basement story, pediment entries and gable ends, and prominent, ornamented cornice and parapet.[3]

The Queen Anne High School building was branded "the summit of achievement thus far in Seattle school architecture," and "the most modern and costly building in Seattle"[4] by Stephen's assistant, and future school architect, Edgar Blair.

6.1.2 Queen Anne Neighborhood History - Eden Hill

Queen Anne Hill was named "Eden Hill" by pioneer Thomas Mercer, and its height and appearance has been a continuing factor in its character and history. The steep southern slope separated the hill from the industrial development growing along the shorelines of Elliott Bay and Lake Union, and kept commercial development from spreading into the residential suburb (other than the commercial core along Queen Anne Avenue). By the end of 1889 forty-one plats had been filed for future development (some of these plats were not developed until after 1900, and some as late as the 1920s), the road grid was laid out, and logging cleared the top of the hill. The area overlooking downtown featured a few large residences by 1890; Highland Drive, the street on the hill crest overlooking downtown, was built up with large expensive houses in the first decade of the twentieth century. The area earned the name "Queen Anne Town" for the early popularity of the Queen Anne style on the south-facing slope of the hill. The residences were mainly single-family, with only one or two boarding houses. In 1889 a one-room wood school was constructed on the modern site of West Queen Anne School, and in 1890 the Mercer School, an eight-room school, opened at the lower southeast corner of the hill.[5]

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 248
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 248
[3] Lorig Associates 1984, pp. 3
[4] Demers-Changelo 2018
[5] Lentz and Sheridan 2005, pp. 5-7

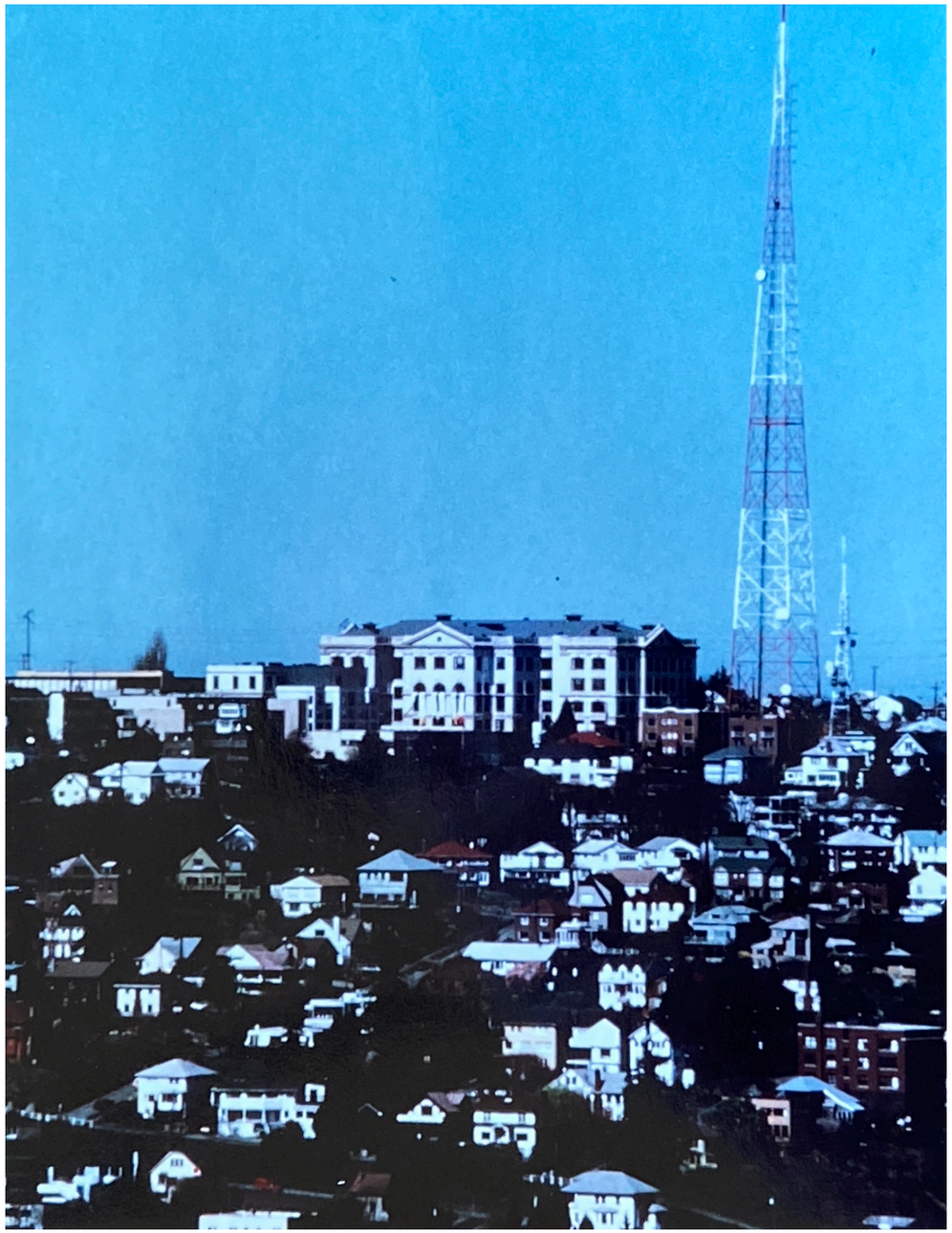

Figure 50:Queen Anne High School visible on hill top, 1985. (DoN Archives)

Queen Anne's popularity increased in the early 20th century, with the Denny Regrade opening up views and better access to the hill, and the completion of the canals between the Sound and Lake Union separating Queen Anne from Fremont. By 1914 streetcar lines interconnected the neighborhood and provided access to the city center.[1] The residential population expanded, new house construction, reflecting "period revival" styles for most large homes, and Craftsman modes for smaller houses, followed until World War I.

Up to the 1930s growth continued, as single-family residences filled the remaining lots, and commercial and residential districts solidified into their modern shapes.[2] Growth stopped during the Great Depression, and by World War II, few lots remained unbuilt except on the north slope of the hill. The population remained stable until the 1970s when Boeing lay-offs led to citywide decline, and the hill became a neighborhood with many empty-nesters as their children graduated from high school or college and moved on.[3] In 1981 Queen Anne High School was closed, and plans began for its preservation and reuse, its views and grand appearance leading to interest from developers.

[1] Puget Sound Traction Light and Power Company 1914
[2] Lentz and Sheridan 2005, pp. 18
[3] Lentz and Sheridan 2005, pp. 22-25

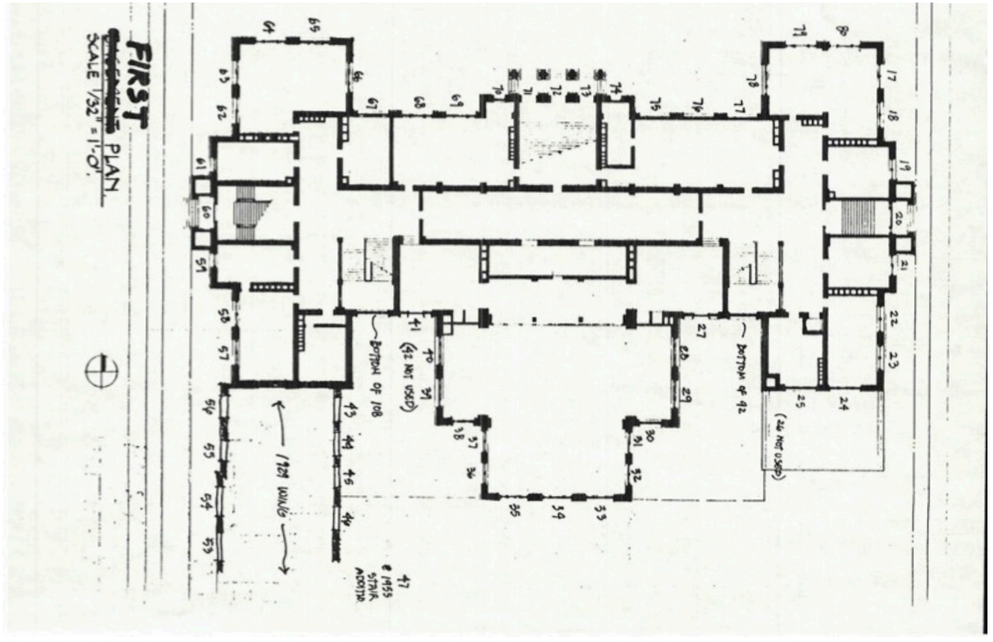

Figure 51: First floor plan of 1908 portion of Queen Anne High School. (Lorig Associates 1986)

6.2 Construction History

With the expanding population of Seattle and the desire for high school education in the early twentieth century, the Seattle School District built several new high schools after the year 1900. As they began planning a new high school to serve northern areas near downtown, the district considered a site on newly flattened land from the Denny Regrade, but advocates for Queen Anne convinced the district to purchase a large parcel on the hill. The district asked Schools Architect James Stephen to design an appropriately embellished and high quality high school. In addition to James Stephen designing the original building , Queen Anne High School had two additional building periods. The original structure was completed in 1909, an expansion was completed in 1928-29, designed by Schools Architect Floyd A. Naramore, and a final expansion took place in 1955, designed by Naramore's (now) independent firm.

6.2.1 Original Structure (1908)

The first phase (1908-1909) was designed by James Stephen, a four-story building facing north onto Galer Street and extending the full width of the block between Second and Third Avenues. The extra height of the building gave the building a significant overlook of the neighborhood, and it was clearly visible from the adjacent neighborhoods to the south. The school windows offered wide views of the city and surrounding water.[1]

The building details were derived from English Renaissance precedents, with a rusticated basement, terra-cotta ornamentation and overall massing, symmetry, and details. In this era, when high school was the most education most people received, high school buildings were embellished as symbols of the quality of the education offered and as symbolic markers of the importance of education in the community. The building is bilaterally symmetrical around the north-south axis extending from the north-facing entrance, with a large extended south wing for assembly rooms.

On the east and west of the main structure are two smaller wings with further entrances onto the sidewalks. Each entry has a pediment, and is centered under a gabled roof. The cornice is heavily detailed and the exterior walls have a clear classical form with prominent vertical elements. The building is well-illuminated, with many windows demarcating internal spaces. The central entrance is prominent with a higher gable, arch-topped double-height windows over the entry, and extra ornamentation. The southern wing and north entry have rectangular two-over-two double-hung windows, while the east and west wings have three-over-three, with an arched variant on the fourth floor.[2]

The exterior is clad with buff colored brick and terra-cotta trim, making the building an off-white that accentuates its form when seen from a distance. The structure of the building was mainly masonry and concrete, with concrete footings and basement walls, load-bearing masonry exterior walls, with concrete reinforced floors in hallways and staircases. Floors of other rooms have wooden trusses, and the ceilings and attics are likewise supported by a wood structure. Some light steel I-beams reinforce corners of the parapet.[3]

[1] Lorig Associates 1986, pp. 1-2
[2] Lorig Associates 1986, pp. 2
[3] Lorig Associates 1986, pp. 2-3

Figure 52: Queen Anne High School, looking northward on west side. Note 1955, 1927, and 1908 progression of structures, increasing in complexity.

The interior was very spacious with significant embellishment, with wide corridors, well lit stairs, and the entirety of the south wing given over to shared spaces such as a gymnasium sunk below the first floor for extra height, a two-story assembly hall , and a lunchroom. The interior walls were plaster over brick masonry, and many elements of trim were cement or plaster, making the building more fire-resistant than the mainly wood elementary schools being built at the time. The classrooms had wainscots, with painted fir and varnished maple floors, and each room had state-of-the-art clocks, bells, and an intercom telephone system.[1]

6.2.2 Naramore Addition (1927)

In 1927, the school district architect, Floyd A. Naramore, designed an addition consisting of two extensions to the existing east and west wings. The east extension was one-story and contained a gymnasium, assembly hall, and added dressing rooms. The west extensions consisted of three-stories of classrooms and basement . These additions mimicked the original building in style, but featured less ornamentation, with no details on

[1] Lorig Associates 1986, pp. 3

the south facade of the gym and auditorium wing. The street-facing sides of each wing being better matched.

6.2.3 Final Addition (1955)

In the 1950s, Naramore, then a partner in Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson (predecessor to today's NBBJ), designed the second addition on the west and east side extending farther to the south. The design work also improved roofing, adding seismic reinforcement, and subdividing old labs and workshop rooms that would be replaced by new spaces in the new addition. Again the addition was divided into an east and west portion, with a two-story wing on the west containing a shop, drawing and homemaking classrooms. The east was a one-story wing containing music rooms, a lunchroom, and kitchen. Both buildings used modern materials and style, following the Modern design vocabulary of the time. The west wing is constructed of reinforced concrete with a glass and metal curtainwall, while the east is a light steel frame structure with wood and concrete. Both new additions were connected to the 1929 wings and the 1909 building by internal corridors and underground tunnels.[1]

Little change was made to the original 1909 interior finishes or layout, with only minor subdivision of larger work spaces, utility updates, and the seismic reinforcement. No further alterations were made before the school closure in 1981.[2]

[1] Lorig Associates 1986, pp. 3-4
[2] Lorig Associates 1986, pp. 4

6.3 Building Use History

Between 1902 and 1910 Seattle's number of high school students rose from approximately 700 to 4500. With this growth, the school district began discussing locations for new schools. Up to this point school locations had been chosen to be locationally spread out; however with schools already placed centrally, north and south the district began to consider a second high school near downtown. Instead, during school board meetings in 1906 a contingent from the Queen Anne neighborhood convinced the board to purchase a site on the hill.[1] The District planned to name the school Jefferson, but the neighborhood insisted it be changed and in the autumn of 1908 Queen Anne High School finished construction; these events demonstrating the growing influence of the neighborhood. Queen Anne High School opened in 1909 with 613 students.[2]

The school served as a high school until World War II when grades 7-8 were added as older students rushed to graduate to join the war effort. In 1961 the middle school grades were fully incorporated into the school, making it a Junior-Senior High School until 1964 when the lower grades were sent to the newly opened McClure Junior High (centrally located on the top of Queen Anne Hill).[3]

In 1972 the Counterbalance Program was hosted to provide a flexible class structure and was a major draw for the school. In the 1960s until its closure, the school also had a contentious political climate, with the rise of the civil rights movement and desegregation dividing the student body. A group of students protested desegregation and mandatory bussing and complained about a "student union" that had been organized by students in a rear portable to spread communist and civil rights pamphlets.[4]

6.3.1 Queen Anne High School (1908-1982)

The school's first principal, Otto Luther, previously a history teacher at Broadway High School, set high academic standards, describing "the high school is the peoples' college." He remained principal from 1908 until he retired in 1951.[5] The school hosted

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001
[2] Lentz and Sheridan 2005, pp. 14
[3] Thompson and Marr 2001, Hargus (b) 2023
[4] Thompson and Marr 2001, Hargus (b) 2023
[5] Thompson and Marr 2001

Figure 53: Photo of Queen Anne High School International Club, Jan. 24, 1975. Photo by Dan Wallen. (UW Special Collections MPH911)

laboratories, manual training, domestic science classrooms, a botany laboratory, and for a short time a greenhouse. The school had an active school paper called the *Kuay* (transliterating the initials QA), which was renamed *The Grizzly* after a popular lunch spot across the street became a habitual student hangout.[1]

During World War II older students took extra classes to graduate early to enlist, and to make use of the extra space an 8th grade program was created, funneling students from the overcrowded Lawton and Magnolia Junior Highs. In 1952 the 8th grade program was replaced by Queen Anne Junior-High which catered to 8-9 grade students separately from the higher grades, and 7-graders were added in 1955. In 1961 the two programs were combined into the Queen Anne Junior-Senior High School. The student numbers dropped again when the 7–9 graders were moved to the newly opened McClure Junior High in 1964.[2]

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001, the current Alumni newsletter is called *Kuay* after the original
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001

The high school slowly dropped in numbers from the 1960s onwards. The school was almost entirely White students,[1] and generally from middle class, upper middle class and upper class families living in the Queen Anne and Magnolia neighborhoods, although, a small number of "army brats" attended the school from housing at Fort Lawton (now Discovery Park).[2]

By the 1970s, there were some Black administrators and students. A student union was formed and operated out of a portable on the athletics field that disseminated underground newspapers. Maoist literature, Black Panther and John Birch Society pamphlets were handed out by politically minded students on both sides.[3] A portion of the student body protested the District's announcement of mandatory bussing to desegregate schools. Queen Anne student speakers presented signatures and called for Seattle voters to boycott Seattle Public Schools in response to bussing.[4] One opponent described the protest speeches as a "thinly disguised racist position."[5] The school underwent several experimental phases, including a student-run traffic court, open campus rules, abolished study halls,[6] and the Counterbalance program, which provided a flexible and self-guided class structure.[7] In the 1970s Queen Anne was the target of several violent attacks, including at least two fire bombings, which appeared to target administrators, while political and anti-war slogans were spray-painted on walls.[8]

Desegregation was debated into the 1980s. Voluntary bussing programs were already taking students from north end schools to the Central District. Mandatory bussing plans, moving White or non-White students to partner schools, were implemented to increase diversity across the city. Superintendent David L. Moberly presented a pared-back plan in 1980 that had previously suggested adding 12 more schools to the bussing program. The new plan included moving the remaining student body of Queen Anne to Franklin High School southeast of downtown. Later that year, Moberly introduced the plan to surplus the building and secure a lease. In 1982 the Queen Anne High School closed.[9]

[1] Hargus (b) 2023
[2] Hargus (c) 2023
[3] Hargus (b) 2023, Thompson and Marr 2001
[4] DeYonge and McClave, Seattle Post-Intelligencer 1970, Oct. 29
[5] DeYonge and McClave, Seattle Post-Intelligencer 1970, Oct. 29
[6] Hargus (b) 2023
[7] Thompson and Marr 2001
[8] Seattle Post-Intelligencer 1970, Feb. 3
[9] Vandermyn 1980

6.4 Communities & Stakeholders

6.4.1 Seattle Public School Administrators and Others

As owner, Seattle Public Schools normally would be the primary agency handling Landmark nominations and hearings. With the school surplussed in 1981 any redevelopment by lessors would lead to a presentation to the LPB. During this time, SPS was completing the leasing and landmarking process with Interlake School. After Interlake was designated a Landmark in 1980, SPS delayed hearings until it secured a lease with Lorig Associates, who agreed to an adaptive reuse project instead of demolition. Avoiding a similar conflict, SPS also leased Queen Anne to Lorig Associates for a somewhat similar reuse project.

6.4.2 Developers - Lorig Associates

After the success of Interlake, SPS agreed to lease Queen Anne to Lorig Associates in 1983, and in 1984 Lorig Associates presented the nomination report to the LPB. Lorig hoped to develop the historic property into condominium residences. As a result, they did have several specific needs for controls and incentives from the LPB. They hoped to reuse each structure for new uses, including parking, residences, gathering spaces, and new systems.

Lorig Associates, a company helmed by Bruce Lorig had previously built large scale residential development at Pike Place. The lease with SPS for Interlake and Queen Anne began the company's series of adaptive reuse projects.[1]

6.4.3 Queen Anne Neighborhood Community

Queen Anne High School had been a very visible part of the neighborhood since its construction. The local community had a vested interest in the building's future. The Queen Anne Community Council met and discussed the plans for designation and reuse with Lorig Associates during the process. The Queen Anne alumni group also remained involved with the building, but did not directly interact with the LPB. Later, several alumni would visit the school before construction began.

[1] Lorig Associates

6.5 Preservation Process

Lorig Associates, and their designers, Bumgardner Architects, submitted a nomination report in April 1984, and the first public hearing for nomination was held on June 6. After a unanimous vote to nominate, the LPB held a designation hearing July 18, and again unanimously voted to designate. Controls and incentives negotiations lasted until signing on October 17, 1984, with the official ordinance for the preservation of Queen Anne adopted January 3, 1985.

Presented below is a timeline of events, followed by the main arguments of each stakeholder summarized across the lead up to nomination to the end of adaptive reuse.

6.5.1 SPS & Developer Arguments

Seattle Public Schools decided early to lease the Queen Anne High School building to developers. SPS immediately considered Queen Anne High School for historic preservation, especially as a prominent visual part of the neighborhood. The nomination report, submitted on their behalf, quoted a letter from Kathryn Seymour, president of the Queen Anne Historical Society:

> Most importantly, to the community, Queen Anne HIgh School "is the grand dame of the hill. It is an integral part of the hill, physically, emotionally and socially. For 75 years, life has been influenced and molded by the school, and even as an empty shell, it evokes strong emotions from the residents concerning its future fate.[1]

SPS partnered with Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority (Historic Seattle) and secured a lease with Lorig Associates to develop the historic building into residential space. At LPB hearings, Al Elliot represented Historic Seattle, recommended nomination and recounted historical details, while Don Brubeck of Bumgardner Architects (contracted by Lorig), presented a significance statement to the LPB during nomination, as well as Lorig's support for designation. Brubeck also read collected letters of support from the Queen Anne Community Council, Historic Seattle, and the School District.

Bumgardner stated they considered the building, including all additions, eligible as a Landmark for its association with historic education development, as a prominent visual element in the neighborhood, and for association with school architect James Stephen.[2]

[1] Lorig Associates 1985
[2] Ordinance 112274

Preservation Timeline

1979: Jun. 15 Queen Anne is recorded on a Historic Property Inventory form.

1981: Feb. SPS superintendent David L. Moberly announces the plan to surplus 12 school buildings in 1970 and follows through despite public disapproval, either selling or leasing buildings to developers.

1984 Apr. 11 Lorig Associates submits first nomination report draft

1984 May 24 Lorig Associates submits final nomination report. After submission and comments from city staff, the final report is completed and is submitted for the LPB to read.

1984 Jun. 6 Nomination Hearing. Al Elliot of the Office of Urban Conservation and Don Brubeck of Bumgardner Architects presented project and supported nomination. LPB votes to approve nomination: 7:0:0.

1984 Jul. 3 Public Notice of Designation Hearing

1984 Jul. 10 Michael Carroll, general manager of SPS's property systems department, writes to Gart Swenson, chairman of the LPB, that SPS and Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority are collaborating on a reuse plan to preserve and provide new use compatible with the existing neighborhood.

1984 Jul. 11 Lorig Associates presents reuse plan to QA Community Council. LPB votes to support designation, but withhold judgment on any development plans.

1984 Jul. 18 Designation Hearing attended by SPS spokesperson, Dun Brubeck, Historic Seattle, and LPB members, Susan Boyle, Linda Larson, Esther Mumford, Kenichi Nakano, Gary Swenson, and Robert Weaver. Votes 6:0:0 to designate.

1984 Oct. 3 Controls and Incentives Hearing, attended by LPB Members David Streatfield, Esther Mumford, Gary Swenson, Susan Boyle, Linda Larson, Robert Weaver, Walt Greissinger, Horace Foxhall, Kenichi Nakano. Voted to extend discussion to Oct. 17.

1984 Oct. 11 Controls and Incentives Hearing. Discussion of reusing the cafeteria instead of demolition. Is attended by Bruce Long, Al Elliot, Susan Boyle, and others not recorded.

1984 Oct. 17 Controls and Incentives Agreement is signed, supports plans by Lorig Associates.

1985 Jan. 3 DoN issues ordinance for the controls on Queen Anne.

1985 Mar. 1 NPS Register application is sent.

1985 Nov. 21 Queen Anne is listed on NRHP and WHR.

Bumgardner Architects and Lorig Associates met with the LPB's Architectural Review Committee three times to negotiate the controls and incentives for preserving the school. While all incentives were approved by the LPB, the primary debate revolved around which historic additions could be demolished, or if reuse plans could be implemented to save them. The 1909 building, with west classroom wing additions from 1929 and 1955, and the 1929 auditorium and 1955 portions of the east wing, were permitted to be converted into residential space or parking structures. The 1929 cafeteria and gym addition, located south of the 1909 building and between the east and west wings, were considered for additional reuse applications, but finally the LPB approved demolition. The new space opened up the center of the campus to serve as a shared square.[1]

6.5.2 Board Comments

Since SPS had collaborated with the city's Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority, and secured a developer interested in adaptive reuse, the LPB was favorable towards the project at the outset. The LPB agreed with the potential of the building as a Landmark, but members expressed concern that not all structures within Queen Anne High School met the landmark criteria. The board unanimously voted to support designation of the entire exterior and select interior spaces on the basis of criteria C, D, E and F. They elected to designate the Galer Street entrance foyer and decorative elements of the auditorium as protected interior elements.[2] During later meetings, removal of the decorative parts of the auditorium, to be placed in storage, was approved.[3]

Additional changes to the exterior of the building, including installing a fountain in the central square, adding exterior floodlights, and replacing windows, were overseen by LPB review.[4] Overall, the LPB has supported changes in line with the building's historic character or of minor impact.

[1] LPB 78/94
[2] LPB 109/84
[3] LPB 109/84
[4] ie. LPB 55/87

6.5.3 Queen Anne Community Arguments

After the building's surplussing in 1981 the community was mainly concerned with keeping the historic building, and preventing unwanted development in the neighborhood. Proposed reuse projects by various entities were hotly debated in local papers. In 1982 County Council member Bob Grieve suggested new county government expansions could use Queen Anne.[1] Shortly after controls were agreed in January 1984, the Sonics stated they may consider using the gymnasium to practice.[2] In the early 1980s, the Queen Anne Neighborhood was prime real estate and developers began proposing multi-family condominium or apartment buildings on the hill.[3]

The Queen Anne community supported Landmark designation. The neighborhood was zoned as single-family residential, but the city was considering changes to allow multiple-family housing. Outspoken residents and the Community Council protested the changes, describing the neighborhood:

> Surrounding the old Queen Anne High School complex, is dominated by modest, colonial and tudor-style older homes that line narrow streets [...]. It is almost picture-postcard stuff, rooted in a single-family tradition that is finding some reinforcement from an influx of young couples with small children.[4]

When the agreement between SPS and Lorig Associates was struck, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* wrote that it was expected that many of the new residences would be inhabited by retired teachers. The Seattle Retired Teachers Association was involved in talks to secure favorable rates for their members.[5]

On July 11, 1985, Lorig Associates visited the meeting of the Queen Anne Community Council and presented their plans to redevelop the building. The Community Council sent a letter of approval to the chairman of the LPB in support of designation, though, they stated they currently did not have an opinion on design plans, but appreciated the collaboration between Lorig Associates, Historic Seattle, and Bumgardner Architects.[6] In September of that year, alumni visited the school one last time.[7]

[1] Schaefer 1982
[2] Owen 1985
[3] Goldberg 1987
[4] Clever 1985
[5] Angelos 1985
[6] Engrissei 1984
[7] Varney 1985

6.6 Outcome of Preservation

The LPB's designation and open communication with Lorig Associations, allowed Lorig to proceed with the adaptive reuse converting the school into luxury apartments. Construction began in 1986 and was completed in February 1987.

6.6.1 Building Transformation

The central portions of the additions were demolished, and the central square repaved and decorated to serve as a courtyard. The high parts of the southern additions were divided into townhouses, while the low parts were converted into parking; the original structure was divided into high-ceilinged condominiums. Some hallways and the northern entry foyer were maintained intact; however apartments did not maintain the classroom layouts or spaces. The condominium units featured lofts and open plans to make best use of the tall ceilings and windows of classrooms, focusing on the views that one Queen Anne High School alum described as "wasted on us" as students.[1]

Figure 54: Queen Anne Condo interior. (Photo by NWMLS ©)

6.6.2 Community Changes

Overall, the Queen Anne community has only grown wealthier, with views, access to downtown, and limited housing raising land values. The residents are upper-middle- or upper-class families. They successfully blocked the majority of multifamily development, and have maintained the neighborhood character. The community has remained a higher income residential area with minor commercial use (although the up-zoning of the commercial core along Queen Anne Avenue has led to the replacement of one-story commercial buildings and parking lots with three and four story apartment buildings). The Queen Anne Community Council continues to hold meetings and makes up committees to work with developers to fit new building's into their design guidelines and streetscape plan.

The Queen Anne Historical Society and its associated alumni group have remained an active part of the community. The alumni association publishes a newsletter, Kuay, named after the original student paper (named for the school's initials "QA.") The alumni have hosted reunions, including tours of the remodeled school building, and several alumni have stated that the sight of the building, from other parts of Seattle, anchors them. The Queen Anne Historical Society and school alumni remained a strong presence invested in the school's use and future, visiting during reunion events and tours, as well as collecting ephemera and artifacts related to the school.[2]

[1] Hargus (b) 2023
[2] Queen Anne Historical Society 2023

6.7 Analysis

Queen Anne High School is an example of successful adaptive reuse. Success here can be defined by how well the value of the building identified by the community is preserved. This section will first discuss the change of attitude of SPS towards preservation in comparison to the Interlake process. Then analysis of this case study will examine what the local community stated as the values of the historic building, then how successfully those values were preserved after the adaptive reuse process. Finally, additional analysis based of the theoretical framework will be discussed.

6.7.1 Seattle Public Schools Code Switch

During the previous designation of the Interlake School, SPS had been quite vocal that they did not consider the historic building as valuable for any reason other than economically.[1] They had been in the process of suing the LPB over the similar designation of the University Heights building, and frequently used that case to justify their argument against Landmarking Interlake.

SPS finally gave way when they had secured a lease from Lorig Associates. Shortly thereafter, Lorig also agreed to lease Queen Anne High School from SPS. With the beginning of the Queen Anne High School nomination, there was a notable shift in tone. Lorig and SPS brought Queen Anne to the LPB of their own accord and preemptively argued for the entire structure to be designated. Michael Carroll, the general manager of SPS' Property Systems Department, wrote to the LPB at the beginning of the Queen Anne project: "we hope to duplicate the cooperative effort that is resulting in such wonderfully adaptive reuses at our former Interlake and West Queen Anne [Elementary] Schools."[2] Carroll seems to completely ignore the ten letters of complaint previously sent to the LPB by SPS Counsel Michael Hoge, objecting to the process. This presents an interesting narrative of SPS decision-making, marking the point where it was realized that Queen Anne High School was more valuable as a historic structure, than as simply real estate for a new ground-up development.

[1] Hoge 1981
[2] Caroll 1984

6.7.2 Value to the Community

Stories of student life are often shared in the historical society newspaper, or between alumni. Several graduates interviewed for this thesis recounted that new students were often tricked into believing there was a hidden pool located on the fourth floor.[1] One of those alumni, described the feeling of being reminded of high school, seeing the building:

> I haven't toured the renovated structure but I'm glad the building is still there. Sure, it's a big old pile of masonry looking grim atop the hill, but it anchors me and brings back memories when I see it from I-5 or if I look up from the International Fountain when I'm riding my bike through the Seattle Center. There's where my German class was, top floor southeast corner with incredible views that were wasted on us. But on windy fall days we'd watch workmen in a little cable-hoisted basket placing lonnng strings of Christmas lights up the radio tower across the street. A biology class freezer failed over a spring break and that end of the floor stunk for weeks. The long lab benches in chem class had troughs which we once filled with water, gently poured alcohol on top and lit for an almost invisible curtain of blue flame -- terrifying, even in the back bench because Mr. Kato, the teacher, had a black belt in judo or karate. The usual high-school hi-jinks.[2]

The visual reminder of the past matters to the alumni around it. Its character stands out with its classical form, as well as its the time-worn nature of the school.

The building's location in the neighborhood informed its value to the community, as a stop gap for infill needs. As a mainly single-family residential area, development has been a constant concern of residents, who fear the loss of neighborhood character. Adaptive reuse of the school posed the possibility of appeasing the need for additional housing without removing a historic element of the neighborhood.[3] This can be seen in a letter from the Queen Anne Community Council, supporting designation, but advising that it should in no way impact:

> …any future opportunity to reduce the densities currently proposed in order to mitigate any adverse environmental impacts upon the existing neighborhood and the planned construction of a new John Hay Elementary School on Luther Field.[4]

The historic school was both a necessary element of the neighborhood's character, as well as a possible part of a solution to issues the neighborhood was facing.

6.7.3 Overall Success

The Queen Anne High School project was, by all accounts, successful. The school building was important to the community in much the same way historic significance is

[1] Hargus (a, b, c) 2023
[2] Hargus (b) 2023
[3] Goldberg 1983
[4] Engrissei 1984

defined by the LPB's criteria. Its visual prominence orients people in the neighborhood, fulfilling Criterion F, as well as defining the community character, fulfilling Criterion C. Additionally, the neighborhood valued the building for its architectural style and its history, making it eligible under Criteria D and E. The community's values matched the significance criteria, which allowed the adaptive reuse process to maintain those values without conflict.

The high school can be seen as a visual landmark, as in Lynch's theory of city legibility, and as a site that provides a strong sense of place. Its time as a school presents a "feel-good" nostalgia that contributes to place-attachment, and overall community-attachment in the neighborhood. The building cannot really be seen as increasing the diversity of the neighborhood, as recommended by Jane Jacobs, as it does not bring new mixed-use, and the new residences were, by all accounts, the highest market rate at their opening.[1]

The school was not maintained as social infrastructure. It historically had a vibrant community interaction and use, with student organizations directly working with local businesses. Students supported local owners, engaged in neighborhood support by creating a peer judged traffic court to reduce student traffic problems, and formed groups to address civil rights issues and engage in activism in Seattle. This all changed with its adaptive reuse. Lorig Associates was required to maintain the large entry foyer, and chose to open up the middle of the campus, removing an addition, providing a courtyard which is reachable from the street. However, there are no gathering spaces for the public, no public access, and no commercial services, rendering the building inaccessible to the neighborhood.

The success for SPS was minimal. Like Interlake, the rent gained from the property was small, impacted by a lack of accounting for inflation. The District's goal had always been about extraction of value from their buildings, and in this way, the Queen Anne Apartments cannot be considered a triumph.[2]

[1] Goldberg 1984
[2] Bhatt 2005

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Figure 55: Protestors at the occupied Beacon Hill School 1972. (MOHAI 2000.107.124.39.08)

Beacon Hill School

7.1 Introduction

The Beacon Hill School building is located at 2524 16th Avenue South in the North Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle, Washington. Beacon Hill has not been designated a Seattle Landmark, but was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2019 on the basis of Criterion A and also Criterion C, as an example of James Stephen's "model school" plan. It has not been described as significant for its use as a cultural and community space.[1]

A) Be associated with important events that have contributed significantly to the broad pattern of our history") for its association with the 1973 occupation of the school.[2]

C) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represent the work of a master.[3]

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) initially leased and later sold the site to El Centro de la Raza, a Latino community group, that occupied the building after the school had been closed, and renovated it after securing a lease in 1973. The building is important as a case study of historic preservation, as it is a very early example of a community choosing to

[1] NPS 2019, pp. 1
[2] DAHP 2023
[3] DAHP 2023

Timeline

1904 Saunders & Lawton design Beacon Hill School, based on the design by James Stephen.

1912 Edgar Blair designs a twelve-room addition.

1931 Upgrades and modification designed by Floyd A. Naramore.

1971 After a decline in enrollment, the school is closed.

1972 Maestas, Roberto Gallegos and over 100 others enter Beacon Hill School and begin occupation.

1972 Seattle Police Department begins spread rumors about arms being held in Beacon Hill School. The SPD destroyed records from this period in 1975.

1973 May. City agrees to lease the building for $1/year, and after eight months of stalling, City Council finalizes an agreement, ending the occupation.

1973 FBI monitors Maestas, attempting to connect him to crimes or membership to the Communist Party. They likely had been collecting information on Maestas since the 1950s.

1978 Fifty Chicano workers conduct a sit-in in SPS Superintendent Moberly's office. Moberly and the protestors agree that SPS will grant a long term lease, and the protestors would campaign for a school levy Moberly hoped to pass the following year.

1983 City withholds a previously approved grant to renovate the third floor of Beacon Hill; Maestas invites the mayor and other officials and convinces them to release funds. The school is fully renovated and brought up to code.

2019 Beacon Hill HPI, including a history of the occupation (but not later cultural use), is submitted.

2019 Beacon Hill is listed on the NRHP.

2023 As yet, Beacon Hill has not been nominated as a City of Seattle Landmark.

make use of a school for community benefit, and taking preservation into its own hands. El Centro de la Raza has been highly successful as a community group, and, as mentioned above, its creation has become part of the reason for listing on the National Register.

This chapter presents this case to examine how radical action can produce meaningful community support, with historic preservation as a side effect. What the occupiers achieved is a form of "Latino Urbanism," a term that describes the transformation of American cities immigrants and descendants arriving in the United States during the so-called "urban crisis." This presents a best case scenario for preservation supporting community value: a programmatic preservation initiative that maintained and bolstered community health (and simultaneously protected the building).

Historic Name

Beacon Hill School (1904)

Historic Architects (Year Completed)

Saunders & Lawton (1904)

Cawsy & Carney (Builders)

Edgar Blair (1912)

A.W. Quist & Co. (Builders)

Floyd A. Naramore (1931)

Current Name

El Centro de la Raza

Modern Architects (Year Completed)

Community & volunteers (1973-1982)

Neighborhood

Beacon Hill

Address

2524 16th Avenue South, 98144

This chapter includes a description of the construction and physical characteristics of the Beacon Hill School to 1972 (section 7.2), a description of the building's use (7,3) and communities involved in its use who became stakeholders during its preservation (7.4), and a description of preservation process to the end of its adaption into a community center (7.5). This discussion will be followed by an analysis of events examining how the communities around the school were affected by the adaptive reuse of the building, and how the actions of the community, city government, and public reflect attitudes towards historic buildings and their preservation (7.6).

Figure 56: Modern day El Centro de la Raza in 2021. (Photo from El Centro de la Raza 2021)

Figure 57: Aerial map of Beacon Hill School in 1936. (Historic Aerials 1936)

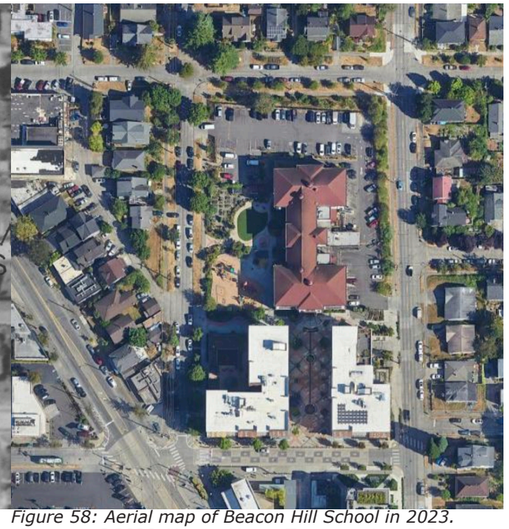

Figure 58: Aerial map of Beacon Hill School in 2023. (Imagery ©2023 Airbus, Maxar Technologies, U.S. Geological Survey,, Map data ©2023 Google)

7.1.1 Beacon Hill School

The Seattle School District purchased land in 1892 and constructed a wooden two-room school building on the site in 1899. In 1904 the District constructed a more substantial wood frame model school designed by Saunders & Lawton, based on the model school plan of James Stephen; the building was expanded again in 1912. When attitudes in school design changed in the 1950s, the Beacon Hill School's principal was invited to aid in the organization of a new open-plan school. The new school opened in 1960 and the original Beacon Hill building was closed.[1]

In 1972, with the Beacon Hill building still unused,, funding ceased for the English and Adult Education Program at the South Seattle Community College. One of its teachers, Roberto Maestas, along with fellow activists, decided to begin a new community program for Latinos in Seattle. While looking for a site, they asked SPS to allow them to make use of the empty Beacon Hill building, but the district stalled. The activists requested an inspection of the building and once a groundskeeper unlocked the door, the group and over 100 students and supporters of the Latino community entered and began an occupation of the building on October 11th, 1972. They remained for eight months until the city and school district agreed to lease the building to them as a new Latino-focused community center for $1/year. The group named their new center: El Centro de la Raza. As the occupation began, they had already started hosting educational, cultural, medical and social services.[2] This chapter will examine how the preservation of the historic building happened symbiotically with the creation of a Latino community space, providing benefit to each stakeholder, thanks to the radical action undertaken by Maestas and his compatriots.

7.1.2 Beacon Hill Neighborhood History: Wave after Wave

Beacon Hill is a long north-south ridge dividing the Rainier Valley from what was once the tide flats at the mouth of the Duwamish river. This ridge once extended as far north as King Street, but regrades removed the north end of the ridge,[3] leaving a sharp and stunted drop to the west and north into the SODO area and the International District (Little Saigon) respectively.

[1] USDOI 2019
[2] Johansen 2020
[3] Tobin 2004

Figure 59: The Junction, 1974, the intersection of Beacon Ave South and 15th Avenue South. (MOHAI 2000.107.189.08.01)

Beacon Hill was an early site of settlement in King County. The first road in the county crossed the hill, named appropriately Road No. 1; present-day Beacon Avenue follows a portion of its alignment.[1] A small number of houses were built during the 1850s, but substantial development did not occur until the area was platted in 1869-1878. A large area was subdivided ahead of the hoped for - but never arriving - terminus of the Northern Pacific transcontinental railroad, which instead went to Tacoma, and many plats remained empty until the 1890s and after.[2]

Beacon Hill development proceeded slowly until the opening of the first streetcar to Beacon Hill in 1891.[3] The spread of the streetcar system also connected Beacon Hill to Columbia City, in the Rainier Valley, making the eastern slope of the hill accessible for development, eventually connecting the two areas. The Rainier Valley had been noted for its large Italian population (being known as the "garlic gulch") and the new access led to the spread of Italian families up the hill.[4]

The slow development of Beacon Hill, and its location, defined much of its early structure. A commercial district nicknamed "The Junction" grew around the intersection of

[1] Tobin 2004
[2] Tobin 2004
[3] Tobin 2004
[4] Tobin 2004

15th Avenue South and the streetcar line following Beacon Avenue. The Junction and surrounding neighborhood grew slowly and retained a working class population, including butchers, packers, and ship builders who worked in the industrial area of Georgetown west of the ridge.[1] Territorial governor Eugene Semple began a series of dredging projects, including an attempt to cut a ship canal through Beacon Hill to Lake Washington. (The current day Columbian Way interchange makes use of the partial excavation site to connect Beacon Hill with I-5.)[2] At the beginning of the twentieth century, the north end of the ridge was successfully regraded to connect downtown with the Rainier Valley, bringing the Junction closer to the northernmost tip of the area.[3] The soil blasted off the hill was used to fill in the tide flats to the west, extending the industrial zone further, increasing demand for nearby workers' housing.[4]

Figure 60: Beacon Ave South street car line 1934. (Seattle Municipal Archives 8678)

The first years of the twentieth century saw the neighborhood fill out, with wood frame houses covering the north end of the hill, and dwindling in number southward. Reservoirs and pumps were built for Seattle's water supply, and in 1903, the Olmsted Brothers included Beacon Hill Park (present day Jefferson Park) in their citywide parks plan.[5] In 1909 the Seattle Parks Department started clearing the land, and in 1912 the Olmsted Brothers produced a full park design, including the first municipal golf course, which remains there today.[6] World War I spurred growth on the hill with a need to supply a workforce to the shipyards to the west. In 1918, Skinner and Eddy Corporation, the largest of the yards, built the Liberty Court apartment complex with 136 housing units for workers on Beacon Hill.[7]

[1] Tobin 2004
[2] Tobin 2004
[3] Tobin 2004
[4] Tobin 2004
[5] Tobin 2004
[6] Tobin 2004
[7] Tobin 2004

The neighborhood grew slowly between the World Wars. The Junction commercial area spread along Beacon Avenue, and the United States Marine Hospital was constructed and opened in 1933 at the northern edge of the hill.[1] The neighborhood had unusual diversity compared to many other Seattle neighborhoods: it was a working class area and lacked discriminatory real estate covenants in use elsewhere. Cultural groups came in waves, starting with Chinese- and Japanese-Americans who were leaving the Central District ahead of Black residents moving there. Filipino and African American residents followed.[2]

Today, Beacon Hill has the largest Asian population outside of the International District. The Italian population was largely displaced during the construction of Interstate-90 in the 1970s and 1980s, which removed more of the northern tip of the neighborhood.[3] There was little Latino population within Beacon Hill until 1970, when the first of what would become a large influx had begun. Roberto Maestas, one of the founding members of El Centro de la Raza, lived in the Georgetown area in the 1950s and went to school and befriended Italian families on Beacon Hill.[4]

7.1.3 Latino Population and Roberto Maestas

In the 1970s, Latinos were the largest minority in Washington State. Farm laborers had followed seasonal warmth northwards out of Texas or California and became fruit pickers in the Yakima Valley in eastern Washington. Facing exploitative employers and deadly working conditions, they began to leave:

> They departed with few good feelings; the average lifespan for field workers in 1970 was forty-eight years, with lives often shortened by exposure to pesticides. One in three migrant mothers' children died in infancy.[5]

In response, workers loaded up cars and trucks and moved westward along I-90, where Rainier Valley and Beacon Hill were the first exits into Seattle. Of these Latinos, a portion entered the University of Washington, and young Latinos, including Maestas, formed the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano/a de Aztlán (MEChA).[6] In the 1960-1970s this group began protesting and picketing in line with national civil rights action by César Chávez and

[1] Tobin 2004
[2] Tobin 2004
[3] Tobin 2004
[4] Tobin 2004
[5] Johansen 2020, pp. 44-45
[6] Johansen 2020, pp. 46

other Latino movements. Chávez himself visited Seattle in 1969 and spoke with the mayor and supported ongoing strikes against abuse of farm labor. While the strikes were successful, farm business owners put pressure on state institutions such as the UW to eject all protestors, and Maestas, just after completing his Masters, was forced out. He went on to become the director of the English as a Second Language program (ESL), run through the South Seattle Community College. The ESL program's funding was cut in 1972.[1] Students of his classes, many of them members of the new Latino population moving from the east part of the state, were key in supporting the occupation of Beacon Hill School and opening El Centro de la Raza in 1973.[2]

Maestas was heavily involved with protests for the rights of Blacks, Indigenous, and Latino people. His involvement with activist movements earned him many friends, and he had wide support from all sides.[3] When spending on the Vietnam War caused the government to cut federal aid for low income programs, Maestas's ESL program was ended and the growing community of Latinos no longer had a home. Maestas and a core of people from his program and other activist groups began planning the take-over of a location where they could continue their work.[4] The choice of building, their plan for its use, and their method of occupation and dealing with the city were all intentional and planned.

[1] Johansen 2020
[2] Johansen 2020
[3] Johansen 2020
[4] Thompson and Marr 2001, Johansen 2020

Figure 61: Beacon Hill School under construction in 1904. (Asahel Curtis Collection CUR328

7.2 Construction History

To accommodate the growing population, the Seattle School District purchased a block east of the Junction in 1892, and in 1899, they opened a two-room wood school. Shortly thereafter, attempting to keep up with increasing enrollment, the district hired Saunders & Lawton to design a larger school, and in 1904 the new eight-room Beacon Hill School opened.[1] The new school made use of the James Stephen "model school" plan, having squared sides that could accommodate additions, and in 1912 the new school architect Edgar Blair oversaw the addition of two new six-room wings, completing the "H" shape of the model school. A small extension was added in 1931 under Floyd A. Naramore and some repairs and modernization were completed at the same time.[2]

7.2.1 Original Structure (1904)

The Beacon Hill School was constructed in the center of its lot, with a main entrance facing south onto South Lander Street. The structure was a simple rectangular eight-room building in a Classical Revival style with a hipped roof, and entries on two sides. The rectangular plan extended from east to west, with the entrance facing south toward Lander Street. The main entry was emphasized with a higher hipped dormer and a stepped out entry pavilion with a smaller hipped roof, and was inset in an arched enclosure with paneled doors. The building was ornamented with wooden molding, with curling lintels under the eaves, and fluted wood pilasters outlining the doors and corners of the structure. The structure was wood frame supported on concrete footings with a brick-wrapped basement, and the building was clad with thin wood lapped siding.[1] It had wide banks of four-over-four double hipped windows demarcating interior spaces; a three-window bank stood over the entry with a cornice detail over top. The interior of the building used cement, plaster, and wood, and was arranged around the central corridors; bathrooms and playrooms were included in the basement.[2]

[1] The 1899 pavilion remained until 1988 when it burned to the ground.
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001

7.2.2 Addition of 8-room Blocks (1912)

With the need for more space, Edgar Blair oversaw the addition of twelve classrooms, comprised of a six-room north-south wing and a second six-room wing at the north end, matching the original south block, forming a full "H" plan. The main entry was moved to the center of the form, facing west with a pavilion matching the original south entry, which was removed and replaced with a flush pilastered entry with a flat cornice and a one-and-a-half-story window with a palladian style frame providing light into the stairwell. A stairwell structure projected from the center of the east facade.[3]

The 1912 addition expanded the spatial framework of the centrally-arranged 1904 south wing and included new office spaces for administration. The structure was a combination of reinforced concrete, steel framing, and wood framing, supported by concrete footings encircled by brick basement walls. The halls and classrooms had decorative trim, picture rails, and wainscoting, mainly in a mixture of Keene's cement, burlap, and plasters. James Stephen's cabinetry background inspired several wood details that Blair used, including decoratively laid floor boards and cabinetry around blackboards.[4]

[1] Erigero 1989
[2] NPS 2019, pp. 5
[3] Ereigero 1989, NPS 2019
[4] NPS 2019, pp. 6

Figure 62: Beacon Hill School circa 1960. (Rainier Valley Historical Society 93.001.448)

7.2.3 Addition and Repairs (1931)

In 1931 Floyd Naramore oversaw some minor additions, including a one-story extension between the stairwell on the east facade and the north and south blocks, complicating the massing on the school's eastern side. A lower brick extension housed new utilities, while the rest of the spaces were used for further classrooms.[1] Some of the original features were removed, shortening some windows and removing and reinstalling several others from the 1912 addition.[2] The interior was updated with newer materials, including linoleum floors in offices, storage spaces, and restrooms, and plaster to replace burlap wainscoting that was removed from offices.[3]

Color photos of the building in 1975 (following the occupation) show that the brick basement walls were natural red, the siding and trim were white, and the roof shingles were green.[4] Portables were installed on site during high student numbers and removed later as the population dropped again.[5] The wooden 1899 pavilion continued to be used until it burned down in 1988.[6]

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001
[2] NPS 2019, pp. 5
[3] NPS 2019, pp. 6
[4] NPS 2019, pp. 5
[5] Thompson and Marr 2001
[6] Thompson and Marr 2001

7.3 Building Use History

The school struggled with overcrowding through most of its use until the population decline in the 1970s. The reactions of White families to desegregation plans, the end of the post-war baby boom, and the mass layoffs from Boeing, led to the reorganization of schools throughout the city.[1] With the growing interest in experimental teaching methods, the Beacon Hill School was closed to make way for three new "open-concept" schools in the neighborhood.[2] SPS planned to sell the property, but no buyers emerged before the 1972 occupation. Utilities were switched off.[3]

7.3.1 Beacon Hill Elementary School to Closure (1904-1971)

Beacon Hill Elementary opened its doors in 1904 to grades 1-8, adding Kindergarten in 1905. Its population grew rapidly, resulting in the 1912 addition, with the student population rising to 400 students in 20 classrooms, and filled by 500 students by 1916. In 1926, portable buildings were added to provide space for an additional 300 students.[4] Little change occurred during the wars, but the resulting baby boom post-World War II and expansion by annexation overwhelmed Seattle's schools once again. Consequently, to ease overcrowding, a system of new junior high schools was added and seventh and eighth graders were removed from Beacon Hill. Yet another annex was added to accommodate a further 200 students, reflecting the overwhelming increase in student numbers. The school reached a peak of 1000 students before the 1960s, when a slow decline in Seattle's population began.[5]

Simultaneously, experimental education ideas were gaining popularity and Beacon Hill's principal was chosen to be involved in designing a new school with "open concept" classrooms. Three classes would be held in each room, intended to increase the flexibility and interaction between ages and education levels. With the population already shrinking and a new Beacon Hill School to be opened a few blocks north, the original elementary was closed in 1971.[6]

[1] NPS 2019, pp. 9-12
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 20
[3] NPS 2019, pp. 12
[4] NPS 2019, pp. 11
[5] NPS 2019, pp. 12
[6] NPS 2019, pp. 13

7.3.2 Occupation of Beacon Hill School (1972)

Figure 65: Carpenters Ismael Puente, right, and Thomas Walston working on bathroom in the occupied Beacon Hill School, 1973. (MOHAI 2000.107.124.39.10)

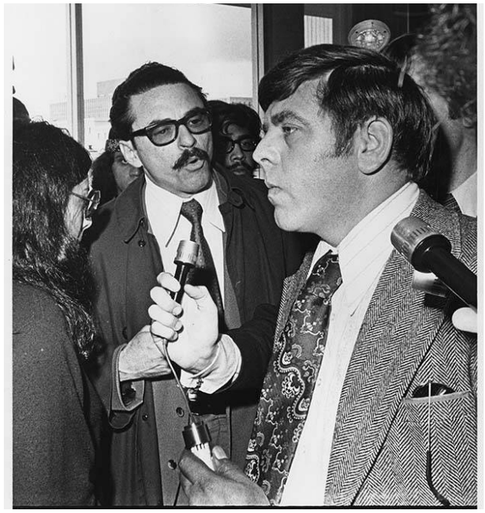

Figure 66: Keo Capastany and Robert Gogerty at sit in of Mayor Ulhman's office, April 5, 1973. (MOHAI 2000.107.124.39.13)

Roberto Maestas was familiar with the Beacon Hill School building, having passed it as he traveled to the UW every morning.[1] In 1972, the school had been closed for a year with no plans for its use implemented or announced, and Maestas saw an opportunity. With no federal funding or rent assistance, groups like his could not afford to rent space for a community center. The school building provided a possible inexpensive and useable site, but initial negotiations with the city were unsuccessful. Maestas chose a different approach.[2]

The group planned the occupation down to the last detail. A large group of Latino, Black, Asian, and White activists were included so that the occupation was large enough to discourage police interference. A select group of city officials, aid officials, and local neighborhood leaders, who could be trusted, were told of the plans. The occupiers arranged themselves around the neighborhood out of sight, so as to not alert police. Maestas and the other leaders, who had been trying to receive an official lease from the City for a year, arranged to meet a school district building inspector at the site in mid-October 1972. When the man opened the building, Maestas and a sudden surge of people from all directions swarmed into the building. Approximately fifty activists occupied the building on October 11, 1972.[1]

Another hundred people, hearing about the protest, joined the occupiers with extra supplies.[2] The first weeks were used in organizing the logistics of living in the building, lacking running water, heat or power, as well as gathering support from local government officials. City Council members John Miller and Sam Smith were vocal supporters, and the SPS superintendent Forbes Bottomly pledged that there would be no eviction attempt.[3]

The occupiers allowed police and fire department inspectors to examine how they were using the building and made changes as they suggested. The occupiers issued statements to the neighborhood, promising they would be civil and keep safety in mind, and any community members interested in visiting could come at any time.[4] Neighbors and supporters were invited to fundraising dinners and dances within the school.[5] The activists chose to name their community space "El Centro de la Raza" (Center for all Races") and its members were referred to as "Centrolistas." The

Figure 63: Alfonso Simiano, left, and Isidoro Gonzales inspecting sleeping bags an bedding being stored behind the classroom that had been converted into a dormitory during the occupation of the Beacon Hill School, 1972. (MOHAI 2000.107.124.39.02)

Figure 64: Group taking classes within occupied Beacon Hill School, 1972. (MOHAI 2000.107.124.39.05)

[1] Johansen 2020
[2] Johansen 2020

[1] *Seattle Times* 1972
[2] Johansen 1972
[3] Johansen 2020
[4] Johansen 2029
[5] *Seattle Times* 1972

group intentionally maintained as much cross-cultural involvement as possible to live up to name.

The group also began restoring the dilapidated building, making use of any workers and construction experts they could attract to the movement.[1] Inspectors had stated that the building would cost $18,000 to modernize. While negotiations were ongoing and delayed by the City, the large quantity of tradespeople amidst the occupiers got to work repairing the lighting, windows, and cleaning up the peeling walls. Artists decorated walls with murals depicting the struggles of Latino workers.

Later, when negotiations stalled, Maestas and community leaders Antonio Solis and Alfonso Simiano began a hunger strike to force Seattle Public Schools to act on their behalf.[2] Members of the group also conducted sit-ins in the City Council Chambers and the mayor's office multiple times in 1972 and 1973. After eight months of occupation, the City Council approved a lease on November 10, 1972,[3] but the mayor refused to sign off and Maestas and others once again conducted a sit-in at his office. Maestas and seventeen others were arrested;[4] however, after a few days, the mayor capitulated and signed the paperwork on April 5. The community group acted quickly: by the end of its first year as El Centro de la Raza, the school's basement and first floor had been cleaned up. A clinic had been set up, as well as a library and a suite of classrooms for bilingual education. Permits were being sought for a legal office, a children's center, and for La Cocina Popular, a kitchen and restaurant.[5]

[1] Bell 1972
[2] Dunphy 1972
[3] *Seattle Times* 1972
[4] Sperry 1973
[5] Johansen 2020

7.4 Communities & Stakeholders

7.4.1 Mayor's Office and Other City of Seattle Officials

Throughout the process of creating El Centro de la Raza there were state, county, and city officials who involved themselves in the conflict. Seattle Public Schools was mostly passive toward the occupiers, determining that they would not evict the Centrolistas, nor would they agree to a lease without City support. The occupiers reminded the District that the superintendent had previously been quoted saying that closed public school buildings should be used.[1]

The Mayor's office and City Council were the main negotiators with Maestas and his group. Mayor Wesley ("Wes") C. Uhlman was in office from 1969 to 1978, and Maestas and the Centrolistas occupied his office multiple times to force him to sign documents, as he stalled. Several City Council members supported the occupiers, but were not successful swaying votes of their colleagues.

7.4.2 Latino & Associated Communities

Roberto Maestas and the Centrolistas, described in detail above in Section 7.1.3, were engaged in "informal preservation" through collaborative work repairing the building. They were not directly involved in any official preservation process.

7.4.3 Neighboring Residents

The occupiers were very conscious that their actions would be judged by the neighborhood, and support or opposition could determine succeeding events. The occupiers sent pamphlets to neighboring residences and businesses describing their requests of the city, their intention to be peaceful, and invited anyone interested in the occupation to visit. The neighborhood, an already very diverse area, was supportive, allowing occupiers to use nearby businesses' bathrooms, and bringing food.

[1] Johansen 2020

7.5 Preservation Process

Beacon Hill School was never submitted for nomination as a City of Seattle Landmark. It has been included in surveys of historic structures, as well as three formal historic property inventory (HPI) forms in 1984, 1990, and 2011. An HPI consists of a physical description of the building as well as an argument for significance using the criteria of the National Register of Historic Properties (NRHP). Finally, in 2019 a new HPI was conducted and a full NRHP nomination was made, including the Latino occupation. It was approved on the basis of criteria A and C, for its association with James Stephen and the "model school" plans, and for the Latino occupation.

Figure 67: Roberto Maestas greeting guests at fundraising event on the ground floor of the occupied Beacon Hill School. (El Centro de la Raza Archives 1972)

Presented below is a timeline of events, followed by the main arguments of each stakeholder summarized across the lead up to nomination to the end of adaptive reuse.

El Centro de la Raza was occupied prior to the official founding of the City of Seattle Landmark Preservation Board in 1973, and despite the long-term struggles with leases and official permitting, the structure has never been presented to the LPB for evaluation. The 1989 *Seattle Public Schools Historic Building Survey* argued that it would be eligible as a City of Seattle Landmark on the basis of Seattle's landmark criteria D and F:

D) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction," and

F) Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the city.[1]

The majority of the significance statement describes the association with school architect James Stephen, as one of only two extant buildings with latter additions designed

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 20

Preservation Timeline

1979-1980	*Historic Resources Survey* records Beacon Hill School
1984 Nov. 6	HPI of Beacon Hill School is submitted to DAHP says it is eligible for listing on the basis of its association with school architect James Stephen and the "model school" plan.
1989	Survey of Historic Seattle Schools records Beacon Hill stating "In 1975 the building was leased; its future is presently under consideration."
1990 Apr. 9	HPI of Beacon Hill School is submitted to DAHP. Not preserved.
2001	Building for Learning includes chapter on Beacon Hill. One sentence describes the Latino occupation.
2008 Jun. 5	SHPO determines Beacon Hill is eligible for the NRHP
2011 Jul. 1	HPI of Beacon Hill School is submitted to DAHP. Not preserved.
2019 May 9	HPI of Beacon Hill School is submitted to DAHP. First time the history of the Latino occupation is included in the record. Significance text and physical description is included in English and Spanish.
2019 May 29	Michael Houser, DAHP Architectural Historian reviews HPI
2019 Aug. 8	New NRHP application is submitted and is approved by SHPO. First formal nomination of Beacon Hill, including the Latino history; the Spanish text of the HPI is not used.
2019 Aug. 14	NRHP lists Beacon Hill School.

in conformance with the "model school" plan forming the "H" shape.[1] Of the Latino occupation, all that is said is: "In 1975 [sic] the building was leased; its future is presently under consideration."[2] Seattle Public Schools' 2001 official history of Beacon Hill mentions the occupation in passing:

> A federal antipoverty program was abruptly curtailed in fall 1972 ending the English and Adult Education Program at South Seattle Community College. As a result, about a dozen Latino students and their supporters occupied the 1904 building for three months [sic]. This was the birth of El Centro de la Raza, a social and cultural center for the Latino community, which still operates at the site today.[3]

This is the longest description of the Latino occupation and was used by El Centro de la Raza in any cultural resource document until 2019. It is also important to note that both of the above quotes have significant factual errors about the occupation: the building was leased in 1973, not 1975, as claimed in the significance statement, and the occupation lasted for eight months rather than the three months stated by the official SPS history. This shows a distinct lack of care surrounding the importance of the Latino occupation.

The building has been included in at least four historic property inventory forms submitted to DAHP; only the first (1984) and most recent (2019) have been retained. The significance statement written in 1984 argues for eligibility of the school on the basis of its association with James Stephen and the "model school" plan. No mention is made of the occupation or El Centro. In 2016 preservationist Holly Taylor published "Recognizing the Contemporary Cultural Significance of Historic Places: A Proposal to Amend National Register Criteria to Include Social Value," as part of a collection of essays on the 50th anniversary of the NHPA. In her essay Taylor criticized the national preservation regulations for not acknowledging cultural use of historic properties in evaluations of significance. She used El Centro de la Raza as an example, noting that it has been a community hub since 1972, yet the significance statements produced to date ignore, the "Latino community's four decades of holiday celebrations, classes, political organizing, mural painting and other traditions."[4]

Finally, in 2019 the Latino Heritage Survey submitted an HPI and National Register nomination form. The survey argued for significance based on the National Register criteria A, B, and C, for its association with the development of the Latino community, its

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 20
[2] Erigero 1989, pp. 19
[3] Thompson and Marr, pp. 21
[4] Taylor 2016, pp. 3

association with Roberto Maestas, and because of its architectural character and high degree of integrity.[1] The HPI significance statement briefly described the architectural association before a lengthier history of the occupation, with its narrative ending in 1972. It included the context of the Latino movement into Seattle, and the artistic movements that led to the murals within the school. The narrative is also written in Spanish.[2] The National Register nomination form includes the same text, but the Spanish translation is omitted.[3]

7.5.1 Building Changes

The repairs to Beacon Hill continued after occupation. The influx of Latino laborers from the east meant they had an ever expanding workforce willing to help, with the skills to do so. By 1979 the school building was almost all in use, with a bookstore, space for Maestas's original English as a Second Language program, restaurant, immigrant offices, health care, and museum space.[4]

After ten years of use, detractors still complained that the building had code violations, and so Maestas invited them and city officials to a banquet at the school. At the banquet Maestas pointed out that together the officials were all violating the fire code and should be arresting or fining each other; instead he hoped for the Mayor's support to allow the continued use of the building, and the final repairs on the third floor, completing the rehabilitation of the structure. After a decade of stalling on long-term leases, the Mayor agreed and construction went forwards.[5]

The building was refurbished and made structurally sound; by its 15th year the roof and exterior cladding had been replaced and a fire safety system installed.[6] In 1988 when a fire destroyed the original 1899 annex that predated Beacon Hill the exterior was damaged[7] and the wood siding was replaced with vinyl of a similar color to the original with trim and decorative elements painted dark brown.[8]

Original wooden decorative wood flooring from the 1904-1912 building were maintained, as well as many of the original cabinets within classrooms, a testament to

[1] Johansen and Kiyama 2018
[2] Johansen and Kiyama 2018
[3] NPS 2019
[4] Johansen 2020, pp. 86-87
[5] Johansen 2020, pp. 99
[6] Johansen 2020, pp. 99
[7] NPS 2019, pp. 7
[8] NPS 2019, pp. 5

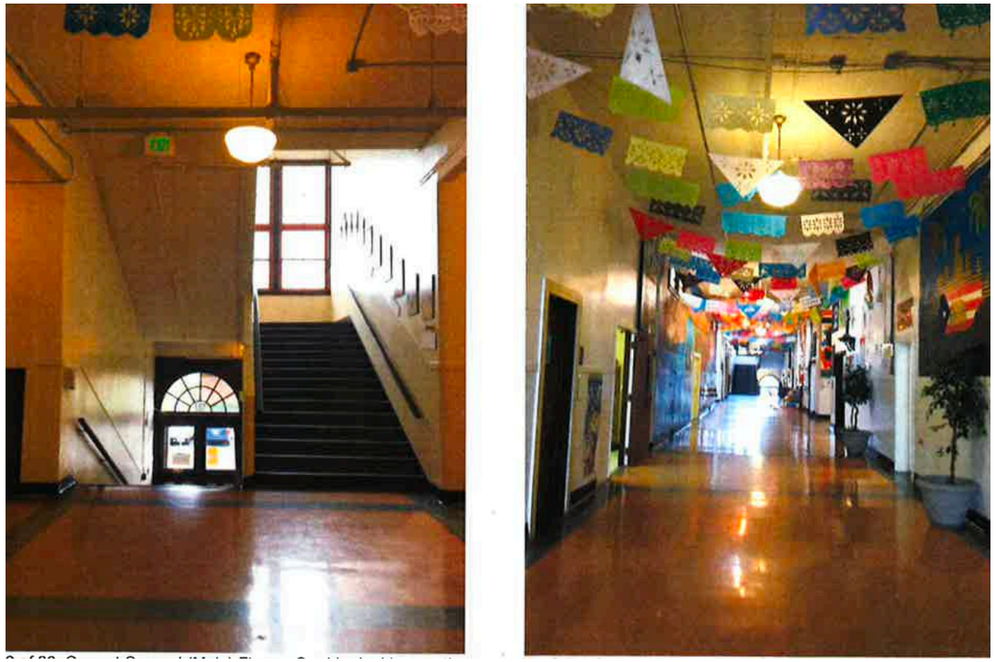

Figure 68: El Centro de la Raza hallways in 2019. (NPS 2019)

James Stephen's background.[1] Historic doors, both the entry and interior, remain, as well as historic trim in some of the classroom spaces.[2] Windows and doors were replaced in kind, and two additional doors were installed in 2006 and 2007. In 2012 the building had a seismic retrofit and the east chimney removed.[3]

The internal layout was only significantly changed on the basement floor, with the spaces subdivided for the main service centers: the child development center, dining room, kitchen, senior center and staff lounge. The upper floors were not heavily altered. The northeastern stairwell was removed and converted for an elevator in 2006 and as of 2019 the southeast stairwell was in poor repair and roped off to prevent use. The stairs to the attic were enclosed, and new access made from a door in the corridor.[4] The only major alterations to the upper floor have been the installation of acoustic ceilings.[1]

Twenty-seven total murals have been painted inside the building. The murals cover a variety of cultural symbols, depictions of historic events, representative murals of political struggles, portraits of political leaders, and representation of El Centro's quest to provide for all races.[2]

The largest change is not to the building, but the property as a whole. Seeking to add low income housing, public space, and space for new services, El Centro subdivided the property and constructed two structures around a central plaza, named after Roberto Maestas, arranged as a corridor towards the south facade of the Beacon Hill building. A small porch or platform with a steel and glass canopy overhead centers the original school as the backdrop of events in the space. The new structures contained 112 affordable apartments, commercial, residential aid, and childcare spaces.[3]

7.5.2 Community Changes

The city continued to cast doubt on their ability to administer the Center. In 1976 and 1977, asylum seekers fleeing the coup of the Chilean government by Pinochet and the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza, plus an influx of poor Mexican immigrants swelled the community even further.[4] The new skills of the newcomers aided them in solidifying the policies of the center. The Chileans in particular, many who had been in government positions, aided and encouraged the movement to define itself. Eventually in 1977 they defined twelve principles, what would eventually be called El Centro's "constitution." El Centro defined an organizational structure and methods to keep members involved with decision-making.[5] One of the Twelve Principles states their intention:

> (4) To promote the recapture of the culture, language and respect for the Chicano/Mexicano/Latino community as a priority in all of our work without falling into ethnocentrism; to strengthen and help the struggle to recapture the cultures of our sister communities.[6]

With the Twelve Principles, the organization reaffirmed their belief that El Centro would be a service facility for all races.

[1] NPS 2019, pp. 6
[2] NPS 2019, pp. 7
[3] NPS 2019, pp. 7
[4] NPS 2019, pp. 7

[1] NPS 2019, pp. 6
[2] Johansen 2020
[3] NPS 2019, pp. 7
[4] Johansen 2020, pp. 87
[5] Johansen 2020, pp. 88-89
[6] Johansen 2020, pp. 92, El Centro de la Raza 2023

Maestas and the Centrolistas continued to face racist reactions to the movement, despite its success and entirely peaceful actions. The City and SPS overall stalled on negotiating with the Centrolistas, and newspapers published articles about Maestas as if he was a violent revolutionary, the Seattle Police Department attempted to frame Maestas for storing illegal weapons in El Centro, and the FBI conducted surveillance and collected records on Maestas (that were destroyed before the Freedom of Information Act would have released them).[1] Maestas was invited by the *Seattle Times* to write articles on issues facing non-white people in 1984.[2] He wrote on many topics, including Indigenous rights,[3] violence in American society,[4] the power of the media,[5] and Reagan's plan for intervention in Nicaragua.[6] Many of his articles generated responses in letters that almost all complained that Maesta was biased, that racism was no longer present in America, and that no other country had developed such a fair government as the United States.[7]

[1] *Seattle Times* 1972, Dunphy 1972
[2] Johansen 2020
[3] Maestas 1984, Sep. 1
[4] Maestas 1984, Aug. 4
[5] Maestas 1984, Dec. 5
[6] Seattle-Managua Sister City Association, et al. 1984
[7] Kennedy 184, McFarland 1984

7.6 Analysis

El Centro de la Raza has, against all opposition, been very successful. However, Beacon Hill was not a "success" for the City, SPS, or the preservation process. In 1975, Maesta stated, "I found that the only way to get things done in this city is to do it-and then work it out."[1] The Centrolistas knew what they wanted, and took measures to get them. They then found ways to force the city agencies to accept them.

7.6.1 Value to the Community

Unlike the schools that had been surplussed during the Moberly Plan, Beacon Hill had been closed when three experimental schools opened nearby. The building sat empty, and SPS did not yet have a plan for its reuse. For the Centrolistas, it served as an opportunity to ask for a public use building without undercutting SPS.

The school also served as a symbolic space. As a public school the sense of community attachment was high, and as an educational structure it was conceptually meshed with community services and institutional legitimacy. Maestas described commuting past the school to classes at the UW, and becoming fond of run-down yet familiar school building.

The school also was valuable to the Centrolistas for a very material reason. As a well planned wood-frame structure, the group could repair and make the building safe without a massive intervention. Instead, with a small number of construction experts and the growing pool of Latino laborers, they could do much of the work themselves. When the city tried to complain about structural concerns, Maestas invited city officials to a banquet. After a night of hospitality, Maestas informed them that they were in a technically derelict building, and, therefore, the Police Commissioner and the Fire Marshall should be fining or arresting each other for being there. Instead, the Mayor agreed to getting them a permit that night.

The Beacon Hill School had been chosen for multiple reasons. It was centrally located in a diverse neighborhood that already practiced values important to the Centrolistas. The school was a public building, and one that had served for education. In fact, Washington State governor, Dan Evans, had advised that empty schools be used for community needs,

[1] Johansen 2020, pp. 85

something quoted by the Centrolistas.[1] Of course, instead of a Latino community center, the School District had hoped in the future to surplus empty schools to collect rent, a plan eventually completed in 1981 under Superintendent Moberly.[2] Maestas and the Centrolistas had a clear opinion about the city's complaints. During the occupation, the Centrolistas sent news pamphlets to the neighborhood stating:

> We hope to remind our local officials that there is no such thing as city property or school property. All public property is 'people's property,' and as such should be used. It is wasteful and irresponsible to allow property like this to go without generating utility or revenue.[3]

To them, if a public building was not providing services, then any other public projects should make use of that space. And since city officials needed "reminding," they were not going to wait to begin providing to their community.

7.6.2 Preservation in Latino Urbanism

The preservation of Beacon Hill School can be seen as a type of "Latino Urbanism." The term, as described by A.K. Sandoval-Strausz in *Barrio America*, refers to "the everyday modes of city-dwelling that Latin American immigrants and their descendants created in the United States."[4] This case study exemplifies many of the major trends in Latino Urbanism. The Beacon Hill School was located along the Beacon Hill neighborhood's already walkable commercial street. Housing multiple services El Centro increased the density of the area, and with the addition of two new apartment blocks created a plaza, a type of place Sandoval-Strausz describes as being a "place for conversation, buying and selling, debate, demonstrations, courtship, and many other aspects of civic life."[5]

El Centro's interior is akin to an art gallery, with almost all major walls covered. Many of these murals were painted during the occupation, reflecting the movement's desire to connect their identity and history to the old building. Even in the face of official criticism, the sought to make the historic structure home.[6] Colorful decorations commonly are used to define identity and generate social interaction.[7]

[1] Johansen 2020, pp. 59
[2] *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1980
[3] Johansen 2020, pp. 62, quoting Chicano Ad-hoc 1972, pp. 1
[4] Sandoval-Strausz 2019, pp. 264-269
[5] Sandoval-Strausz 2019, pp. 264-269
[6] Johansen 2020, pp. 87
[7] Sandoval-Strausz 2019, pp. 264-269

The social health, strong sense of identity, and ongoing commitment to adapt urban areas can be seen in the long list of events held at the school building. A large Cinco de Mayo celebration was held in 2023, the first since the Covid-19 pandemic restricted large gatherings. The festival included performances from Latino, Indigenous, and Asian groups, hosted many food and craft stalls, as well as booths providing vaccinations and other services to visitors.[1] Previously in the year, there has been the Mercado del Día del Niño, Mercado Día de la Primavera, and many, many more. El Centro also contains a skate rink, which holds holiday events. Simultaneously, El Centro is organizing rallies for housing, promoting panels featuring activist leaders, such as the Women of Color Leading Change event, calling for letter writing to representatives for certain issues, as well as recent meetings on a new community space, affordable housing, and church space being planned for Columbia City.[2]

7.6.3 Programmatic Preservation

The largest objection to El Centro's actions, voiced by city and SPS leadership, was the lack of official approval for the use of the school building. The Mayor's Office and City Council called for the Centrolistas to prove their administrative ability, source funding, and to provide program plans ahead events. In 1979, Maestas said:

> After seven years of growth and development, the city took the position that El Centro de la Raza didn't know how to administrate. They had the racist arrogance to ask us to prove ourselves.[3]

What Maestas understood was that the Centrolistas could not rely on his leadership alone. Instead, the city had to be forced to legitimize what they had done. Then, even if they had more opposition, the Centrolistas had evidence that they were supported.

To make El Centro "programmatic" Maestas focused on, forming connections across all ethnic-based activist movements, working solely on building services without bothering about trying to convince people of his ideology, and forcing the system to legitimize the project.

[1] El Centro de la Raza 2023, "Calendar"
[2] El Centro de la Raza 2023, "Calendar"
[3] Johansen 2020, pp. 87

7.6.4 Mutual Aid

Maestas and the Centrolistas worked to forge bonds with other minoritized movements, so that all groups could provide mutual support. Maestas involved himself with advocacy for every community: supporting the use of Martin Luther King Jr. Day,[1] he spoke on panels about Latino struggles,[2] and at hearings for federal funding for low income neighborhoods in Seattle.[3] Not only that, but he joined Black activists and University students protesting the recent shooting of two Black students at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.[4] He joined the occupation of Fort Lawton that would lead to the Daybreak Star Center,[5] and during the occupation of Beacon Hill, he traveled to join protestors at Wounded Knee, and was a vocal supporter of Indigenous movements all his life.[6]

During the time prior to Beacon Hill, Maestas had befriended Bernie Whitebear (Indigenous), Bob Santos (Filipino), and Larry Gossett (African American), all leaders of their own movements. Along with Maestas the four would come to be known as the Four Amigos. Maestas also worked hard to keep local support for his movement, emphasizing peace and safety, no matter how fiery his rhetoric, no one would be harmed by his side.[7]

7.6.5 Systemic Change

When Maestas was asked if he was a communist, he stated, "Was Jesus a communist? What does it matter to you?" His focus was on providing services that could get Latino (or any other minoritized person) work, support, and health. As soon as the occupation began, the opening of services was crucial. Maestas critiqued the White leftist movements who often focused on convincing others of their ideas, instead of achieving tangible results. The Centrolistas focused on creating systemic change, instead of promoting ideology. When the occupation began, a soup kitchen was set up, a medical clinic saw patients, and childcare was offered. Maestas continued to teach ESL, and immigration law advice and instruction on finding jobs were given in offices on the main floor.

[1] Fisher 1970
[2] Dunphy 1970
[3] Dunphy 1971
[4] Bell 1972
[5] *Seattle Times* 1973, Mar. 31, *Seattle Times* 1973, Jan. 17
[6] Johansen 2020
[7] Johansen 2020

7.6.6 Strong-arming the City

Even with wide support and successful organization, the city continued to question El Centro. The strategy used by the city and SPS officials had been described in Martin Luther King's Where Do We Go From Here, Chaos or Community? MLK described reactions to the civil rights and anti-war movements.

> Underneath the invitation to prepare programs is the premise that the government is inherently benevolent - it only awaits presentation of imaginative ideas. [...] This premise shifts the burden of responsibility from the white majority, by pretending it is withholding nothing, and places it on the oppressed minority, by pretending the latter is asking for nothing.[1]

Despite ongoing operation of youth education programs, a medical clinic, soup kitchen, and an organized structure, the city refused to acknowledge the ideas of Maestas and the Centrolistas.

To force the city to make decisions, Maestas attempted several radical strategies. Late in the occupation, he and compatriots held a hunger strike.[2] Most successful was enacting occupations and sit-ins directly. Maestas had participated in several occupations prior to Beacon Hill, including the occupation of Fort Lawton, joining a coalition of Indigenous protestors seeking a return of land, opening of a community center, and securing recompense for the many treaties broken by the United States government. Maestas learned that with enough people and persistence, things could be changed. It became a large part of his strategy to employ sit-ins in government offices, bringing a group to remain inside the office peacefully until their demands were met.[3]

Ten years after the occupation ended, Maestas finally secured a long term lease for $1 per month, through a personal appeal to the mayor. Yet in 1998, after over twenty years of use, SPS began sending requests for back rent at full market value and fees for not paying, rising to a total of $89,425.80 due July 5, 1998. Instead of honoring this backtracking, the Centrolistas pooled their resources and purchased the building outright for $1.08 million. Maesta had stated in 1975 "I found that the only way to get things done in this city is to do it-and then work it out."[4] With ownership finally in their hands, the Centrolistas could focus on future projects.

[1] King 1968, pp. 143-144
[2]
[3] Sperry 1973
[4] Johansen 2020, pp. 85

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Figure 69: Colman School 6th grade class photo, 1959. (NAAM Archives)

8

Colman School

8.1 Introduction

The Colman School building is located at 2300 South Massachusetts Street in the Atlantic neighborhood of Seattle. The Colman building was designated a Seattle Landmark in 2005 for its association with the "model school" design of James Stephen, on the basis of Criteria C, D, and F:.

C) c)It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.

D) d) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.

E) f) Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.[1]

In 2003, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) had sold the site to Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (ULMS), which redeveloped the building for affordable housing and a museum space for the Northwest African American Museum (NAAM).

[1] LPB 353/05

Timeline

1909 Colman Elementary School constructed based on the design by James Stephen.

1940 A gymnasium, designed by Floyd Naramore, is added to the south side.

1979 School is closed due to declining student numbers.

1981 Community Exchange, a multi-racial coalition, proposes the Colman School as a location for an African American cultural center and museum.

1983 WSDOT purchases and demolishes blocks of residences north of Colman for the I-90 tunnel project, devastating the majority Black neighborhood.

1985 Protestors, who would become the group African American Heritage Museum & Cultural Center (AAHM&CC), take over the Colman School to demand the City of Seattle creates an African American cultural center.

1993 City forms a committee composed of three primary groups from the Black community (Black Heritage Society, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (ULMS), and AAHM&CC) to discuss the use of the building as a museum. Occupation ends.

1994 Committee produces a report recommending using the Colman School as an African American museum.

1998 Committee is effectively dissolved due to infighting between AAHM&CC and ULMS.

1998 Document drawn up for the sale of the Colman School to AAHM&CC. This was later contested.

1998 Police raid a trailer on the Colman Property leased by AAHM&CC, ostensibly because the trailer was due for removal.

2001 ULMS takes on the museum project as sole developers.

2003 Building ownership transferred from SPS to ULMS. AAHM&CC contests this sale.

2005 LPB designates the Colman School as a Landmark.

2006 Northwest African American Museum (NAAM) is given 501(c)3 status.

2008 Museum opens; protest by Kwame Tahir-Garrett of the AAHM&CC.

Historic Name

Colman Elementary School (1909)

Historic Architects (Year Completed)

James Stephen (1909)

Floyd A. Naramore (1940)

Current Name

Urban League Village Apartments (2007)

Northwest African American Museum (2007)

Modern Architects (Year Completed)

DKA Architects (2007)

Neighborhood

Atlantic

Address

2300 South Massachusetts Street, 98144

Although the City Clerk's office labels the neighborhood Atlantic,[1] Colman is situated at the borders of the neighborhoods more commonly known as the Central District and Mt Baker. The Central District is bounded by East Madison on the north, Jackson Street on the south, 12th Avenue on the west and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way on the east.[2] Mt Baker's northern end fits into the corner of the Central District, bordered by Martin Luther King, Jr. Way on the west, and South Irving Street at the north. The surrounding area is also sometimes referred to as Judkins Park, based on the large park of the same name built over the I-90 tunnel that passes underneath the land directly to the north of the Colman property.

The school was the location of the longest occupation of a building in protest in the United States, becoming a major source of conflict between Black activists and city officials. The preservation process came at the end of over ten years of fighting, and was a step in legitimizing the city officials' solution and take over of the school. The school, now a museum and affordable housing, remains a case study in how a community-beneficial site can remain contentious even when the building is preserved.

This chapter includes a description of the construction of the Colman School to 1980 (8.2), a description of the building's use (8.3) and communities involved in its use which became stakeholders during its preservation (8.4), and a description of preservation process to the end of its adaption into housing and museum space (8.5). This discussion is followed by an analysis of how the actions of the community, city government, and public reflect attitudes towards historic buildings and their preservation (8.6).

[1] Seattle City Clerk 2023
[2] Henry 2001

Figure 70: Colman School

Figure 71: Aerial photo of Colman School 1936. (Historic Aerials 1936)

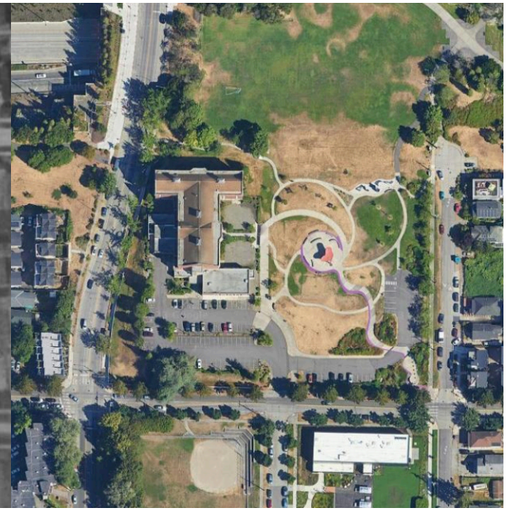

Figure 72: Aerial photo of Colman School 2016. (©2023 Airbus, CNES / Airbus, Maxar Technologies, U/S/ Geological Survey, May data ©2023 Google)

8.1.1 Colman School

The south end of the Central District began to grow after the completion of a streetcar line at the beginning of the 20th century. To accommodate this growing neighborhood, SPS purchased a site for a new school at the north end of the Rainier Valley. School Architect James Stephen, having recently returned from a research trip to the East Coast, began implementing his new brick and concrete "model school" plan to remove fire risk. The Colman School was an example of the new plan. The Colman School was not modified again until 1940 when the gymnasium was added to its south end, so it remains an excellent example of Stephen's brick design.

Colman School is historic both for its intact 1909 James Stephan design, and for being the site of the longest occupation of a building in protest in the United States, conducted by Black protestors from 1985 to 1993. When the construction of I-90 began in 1983 the state demolished blocks of residences north of Colman, devastating the neighborhood and the lives of Black residents. By 1985 the Colman School had become a solitary building in the middle of an area that had been completely cleared. The SPS planned to sell the Colman School to WSDOT to allow for its removal, but a group of Black activists saw an opportunity to create an educational space that could bring a sense of community back to the area and help people connect with their heritage.

These events were shaped by conflicts between different groups that laid claim to the building. Omari Tahir-Garret and fellow "street community" activists felt they should control Colman because they were from the school's neighborhood, and it was their homes that were being destroyed by the I-90 project. They distinguished themselves from the "Black community" as a whole by emphasizing their poverty and "street" living. The Urban League and other Black community leaders such as Joseph "Pop" Warner of the Black Heritage Society, Ron Sims, a Black King County Council member,[1] Sam Smith, Black president of the Seattle City Council,[2] and Jeri Ware, an African American member of the Seattle Human Rights Commission, and aide to Rep. Mike Lowry,[3] questioned the activists' right to Colman, citing that, in their eyes, the Black community did not support protests of this sort. Instead, the City and State focused primarily on the legal ownership of the structure and sought a

[1] *Seattle Times* 1986
[2] Hayasak 1986
[3] Langston 1987

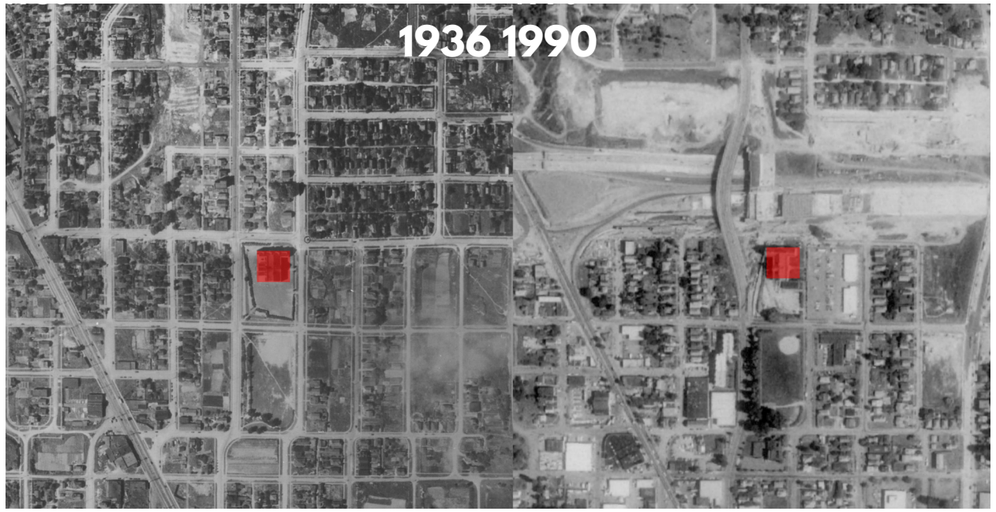

Figure 73: Aerial photos of area surrounding Colman (red) showing destruction surrounding it. (Historic Aerials 1936, 1990)

solution by working with Black leaders like Warner, Simes, Smith and Ware.

The events of the school's transition from school - to site of occupation - to museum highlights the debate over the identity of the "Black community." Throughout the transitions, city officials, Black community leaders, the protestors, and local Black residents all argued over who could claim to be the "authentic" Black community that should control Colman's future. The Colman School conflict was not primarily a question of historic preservation. But the conflict forced preservation to happen, and impacted the way it was accomplished.

8.1.2 Central District: Black Community & Urban Renewal

The history of Colman School is a small part of the wider history of the Central District as a neighborhood characterized by Black residents, forced to live there by redlining and racist practices that excluded them from many other Seattle and suburban neighborhoods, followed by the disruption of the community by infrastructure expansion projects such as the construction of I-90.

In 1909 at the time of Colman's construction, the neighborhood was made up of a majority of Italian immigrants, and the Rainier Valley south of Colman was largely home to

Italian immigrants or their descendants and was known colloquially as "Garlic Gulch."[1] Residential blocks of wood-frame houses fully surrounded the school site by the 1920s.[2] In 1938 work began on a new floating bridge across Lake Washington (to connect Seattle to Highway 10 to eastern Washington), which opened in July 1940. Highway 10 was later decommissioned and replaced by Interstate 90 (I-90). With access from the bridge crossing Lake Washington to central Seattle blocked by the steep Mt Baker ridge, the highway department (now WSDOT) chose to construct a tunnel at the narrowest point on the ridge, which lay near South Atlantic Street directly north of the Colman School. Construction workers completed boring the tunnel in 1940[3] and the Lake Washington Bridge was dedicated on July 2, 1940.[4] Highway 10 was a four-lane roadway that crossed north of Colman area and extended to downtown Seattle.

Figure 74: Aerial of Colman (foreground) in 1940. (MOHAI PI20560)

During this period, African American newcomers had begun to move to the neighborhoods north of and adjacent to Colman. By the 1940s, as discriminatory "white only" real estate policies became more enforced in many other neighborhoods, the Black population became the majority in the Central District. Although Seattle's zoning ordinance (first adopted in 1923) did not include racial provisions, beginning in 1924, private developers, real estate professionals, mortgage bankers, and neighborhood associations began advocating and adopting private racial restrictions (private covenants or deed restrictions) that limited the ethnic groups that could live in specific neighborhoods. Such restrictions most often applied to Black, Asian, and Jewish populations. In the 1930s, mortgage bankers also began practicing "redlining," which limited the mortgages and insurance available to home purchasers or owners in usually minority neighborhoods. From the 1920s to the 1950s, such restrictions and practices prevented Black homeownership in

[1] Erickson 2015, pp. 51
[2] Erigero 1989, pp. 37
[3] Caldbick 2021
[4] Lange 1999

anything but the least desirable areas.[1] At first African American homeowners shared the Central District with Asian residents (particularly Japanese). However, during WWII, beginning in early 1942, the United States government forcibly removed all Japanese immigrants and descendants to concentration camps in the western-central United States.[2] The Central District's identity as a "Black neighborhood" was cemented. New housing filled in the residential areas around Colman.

During World War II, the federal government funded a large housing project in the Colman district,[3] named the Stadium Federal Housing Project, raising the population of the neighborhood. Colman's student body increased by 550 students. By the 1960s, the de facto segregation that pushed Black homeowners and businesses to the Central District led to equal segregation of local schools. Six elementary schools in and adjoining the Central District reached a Black majority of 60%.[4] When civil rights activists convinced SPS to start voluntary desegregation programs, over 250 Colman students were bused to schools north of the Central District.

In 1967 the Lake Washington Bridge was renamed the Lacey V. Murrow Bridge after the second director of WSDOT. By the end of the 1970s, traffic on the bridge had increased with many collisions occurring every year. In the early 1960s, WSDOT began to prepare for the construction of a second floating bridge and a raised highway interchange west of the tunnel to connect I-90 with Interstate 5.[5] After releasing an EIS report for the NEPA requirements, a group of Seattle citizens challenged the need to complete a second cut and cover tunnel through Mount Baker ridge and simultaneously Black activists began questioning the routing of the highway through low-income neighborhoods - neighborhoods that African Americans had been forced into. The corridor plan was revised, but eventually a court injunction was lifted, allowing the work to proceed. When the Colman School was closed, it was seen as a "symbolic abandonment of the neighborhood."[6] As part of the I-90 expansion, WSDOT purchased land for right-of-way, including many residential blocks that had housed Black families. This swath of demolitions bifurcated the Black neighborhood and displaced many residents and small businesses.

[1] Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project 2023
[2] Fiset 2000
[3] Erigero 1989, pp. 37
[4] Henry 2001
[5] The proposed R.H. Thomson Expressway, a north-south freeway following the alignment of Empire Way (now Martin Luther King Jr. Way) would have further devestated the Central District. SR520 2023
[6] LPB 353/05, pp. 8

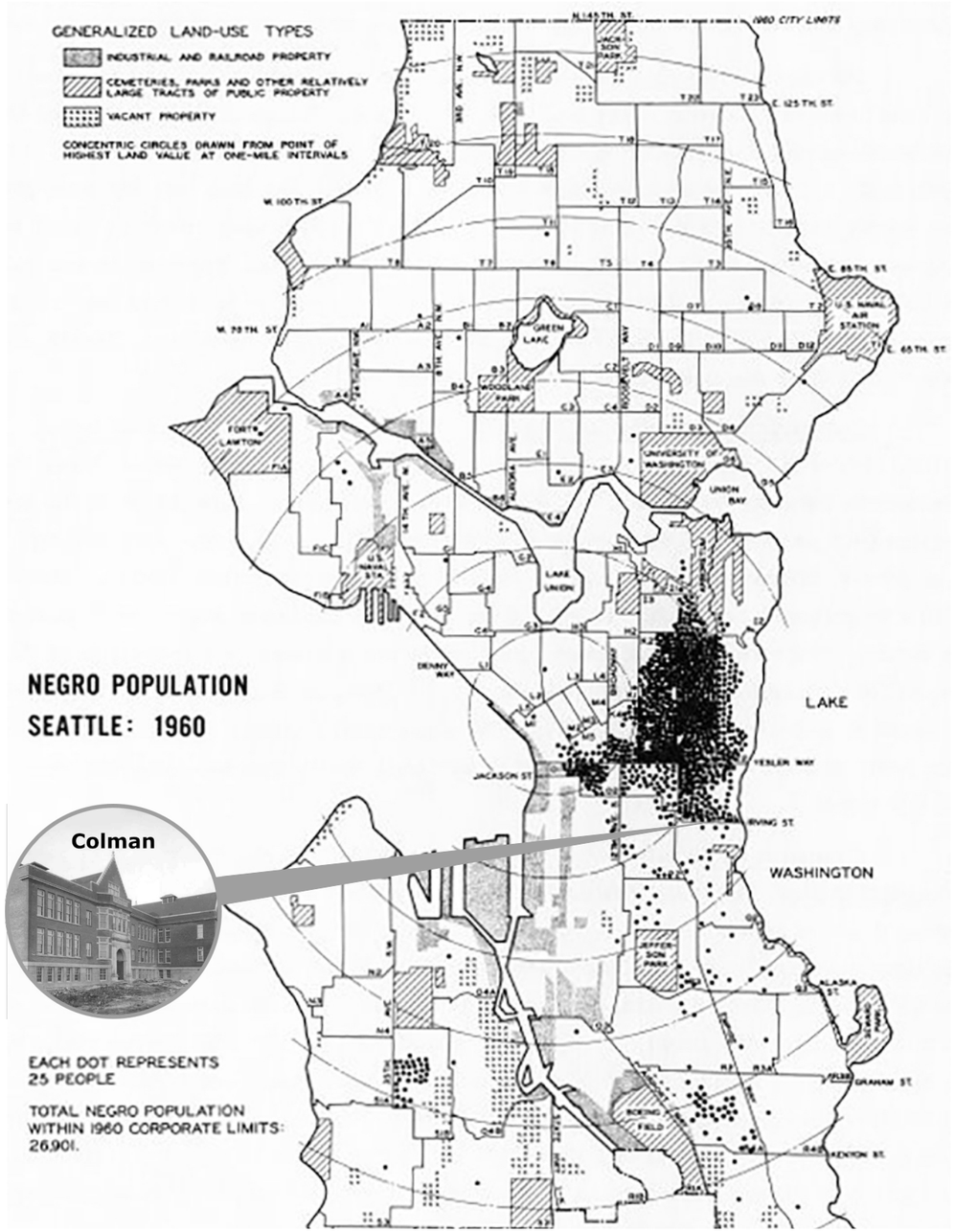

Figure 75: Map of Seattle showing Black population in 1960. (Schmid and McVey Jr. 1964)

Figure 76: Colman, viewed looking northwest, nearing completion in 1909. Note the flat facade (south) intended for a further classroom-wing. (Thompson and Marr 2001)

8.2 Construction History

In 1909 in response to continually increasing student numbers, SPS purchased an approximately 2 acre tract of land within the Rainier Valley,[1] along the Rainier streetcar line.[2] The new school was constructed on the western edge of a raised and flat rectangular tract of land overlooking the Rainier and Empire way (now Martin Luther King, Jr., Way) corridors, within the Central District (currently within the Judkins Park neighborhood). The property was expanded to 4.54 acres in 1950, with a playfield on its eastern end. At the time it was bounded by 23rd Avenue South, 25th Avenue South, and Massachusetts and Atlantic Streets. Later, the east half of the site and the playfield were abandoned and the border of the site was set at 24th Avenue South.[3]

The Colman School building was constructed on the site in 1909 as a two-story model school of concrete, brick and terracotta. It included the model school eight room core and included one eight classroom-wing north of the core running east-west. It was one of

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 37
[2] Filer 2008
[3] Erigero 1989, pp. 33

two identical schools (the other being Adams in NW Seattle) built with the "model school" plan and decorated with Jacobean features, following the design by SPS architect James Stephen.[1]

8.2.1 Original Structure (1909)

Colman was constructed on the west side of the property in a T-shape facing north, with two two-story wings, with central entryways on either side. The entrance on its east side, the "front," previously had a tall and steeply pitched gable end with stucco ornamentation that has since been replaced with a smaller stabilized gable end.[2] A one-story wing extended from the center of the main body, but was altered at the time of the 1940 additions (see below). Each entrance, the east main entry, and a north entry at the center of the wings, have two-and-a-half-story angled bays with entry doors several steps above grade. The main entry is especially decorated with an arched portal flanked by ionic pilasters.[3]

The interior was separated into 16 classrooms, with a playroom, lunchroom and offices. The floors and basement walls were constructed of reinforced concrete, with brick load-bearing walls above. The walls were ornamented with wood wainscoting and trim, as well as wood balustrades and wood stairs. The original windows were wood-framed with double-hung sashes.[4]

Figure 77: Colman School, viewed looking east-northeast in 2022, with gymnasium addition on left. (Photo by author, 2022)

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 37, Krafft 1994, pp. 61
[2] Erigero 1989, pp. 34
[3] Erigero 1989, pp. 35
[4] Erigero 1989, pp. 35-36

8.2.2 Gymnasium Addition and Alterations (1940)

In 1940 a one-and-one-half story gymnasium, designed by Floyd Naramore, was constructed extending from the southern face of the "model school" core, removing the potential of adding the planned southern "model school" wing. A survey of historic schools conducted in 1989 described the addition as "relat[ing] poorly to the original building."[1] The gymnasium does share materials and coloring with the original, with a reinforced concrete structure, using brick and concrete in a simplified allusion to the more ornate detailing of the 1909 brick and terra-cotta building.

The gymnasium had large double-hung windows facing south, and an entryway at the corner of the gym and the original structure, creating a new southern passage into the school. Additionally, acoustic ceiling tile and fluorescent lights were added to the original building.[2]

[1] Erigero 1989, pp. 36
[2] Erigero 1989, pp. 36

8.3 Building Use History

Elementary schools like Colman were located to create walking distance zones within neighborhoods. Colman thus drew students from the Central District, and by the 1940s had a majority Black student body. It continued as an elementary school from its construction in 1909 to 1979 when the student body dropped below 200 students during the demolition of surrounding residences. The remaining students were taken to a temporary site, leaving the building empty. Effectively abandoned, the building had a small fire and fell into disrepair quickly.

Figure 79:Colman School class photo 1928. (Chiles 2005)

Figure 78:Colman School class photo 1940. (NAAM Archives)

In 1985 eight Black activists entered the building through a broken window and demanded that the building be converted into a museum and community center for the Black community that was being damaged by the demolition of the neighborhood. During the occupation, groups such as the Black Heritage Society, a more established group with older and higher income members, other Black business owners, and non-profit groups such as the Urban League became involved in the deliberations on a new African American museum.

The school was legally owned by SPS until its sale to the Urban League. However, the Mayor's Office, Department of Neighborhoods, and WSDOT all were involved in gathering funding, organization, and other official responses to the occupiers and later protests.

8.3.1 Colman Elementary School to Closure (1909-1985)

The school opened to 519 students and peaked in population at 626 in the 1913-1914 school year. A program for students with disabilities opened at the school in 1925. In 1939 the Colman School became a K-6 grade school and the student body dropped to 230; however, in 1940 the Rainier School was closed, and 200 students were moved to Colman (the same year the gymnasium was added). During World War II, with the opening of the Stadium Federal Housing Project, the student body rose to 550. The student body dropped from there until the school closed in 1979.[1]

During attempts in the 1970s to desegregate SPS schools, over 250 Colman students were bused to schools to the north.[2]

The student population dropped as the WSDOT project to expand I-90 began and land north of the school was purchased. WSDOT was to provide land to construct a new school for the Colman students. Briefly, the Summit K-12 alternative school used the Colman building, with 387 students until construction of the highway led to the move to Jane Addams School in September 1979. The remaining Colman students were housed temporarily in other schools until the completion of a new building in 1990, which was named Thurgood Marshall Elementary in honor of the first African American Supreme Court Justice who led the movement to desegregate schools.[3]

8.3.2 Occupation of Colman School (1983-1993)

After the student body was moved from the building during highway construction in 1985, the Colman school was left empty. Newspaper accounts at the time recount a fire in the building, and damage, including broken windows.[4]

In 1981 activists of the Black United Front and Cultural Exchange group successfully blocked the opening of a new police station in the Central District, calling for more housing and support for Black families including the opening of a local African American museum. The same year, they presented a plan to Mayor Charles Royer, hoping a museum could celebrate the heritage and history of African American residents of Seattle.[5] Members of the

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 206
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 206
[3] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 207
[4]
[5] NAAM 2023

group also participated in the occupation of Beacon Hill School, leading to the opening of El Centro de la Raza in 1972.[1] The opening of the new Latino community center in Seattle convinced members of the group that an African American museum was possible.[2]

Mayor Royer's office began preliminary studies for the creation of a museum in 1981. A study was produced by the consultants Dana Larson Roubal & Associates which examined the potential of converting the Colman Building. Curtis Boozer, a space planner for the company, completed sketches as a preliminary effort for the mayoral task force. Mayoral aide Maureen Sullivan described to journalists the challenges of converting Colman, saying renovation would cost as much as $8 million, and the task force planned to meet in January 1986.[3]

On November 26, 1985, six Black activists,[4] Omari Tahir-Garrett, Earl Debnam, Charlie James, Michael Greenwood, Lawrence Robinson and Greg Anderson, entered the Colman building through a previously broken window. Their occupation made the historic building into a symbol of Black resistance in the face of racism, and activists fought to define the way Colman could be reused to better serve their community. Earl Debnam told a journalist in 1987: "The law may not be on my side, but justice is. We have an Indian heritage center, the International District has one, and it's past time that the black community in Seattle has its cultural arts center."[5] Charlie James described the historic meaning of the building, "It housed thousands and thousands of African American children, it's a symbol of community pride already."[6]

The occupiers defined themselves as the "street community," considering themselves activists for the local low-income and underserved Black residents of the Central District. The group was led by local residents Omari Tahir-Garrett and Earl Debnam on the inside, with Charlie James working as spokesman for the citizens' support committee for the museum and speaking with journalists.[7] The leaders argued that a cultural center and museum could be a celebration of local Black identity and a site of education and safety for the young residents of the Central District, whom they felt were turning to crime and

[1] AAHM&CC 2023, *Seattle Times* 1985
[2] NAAM 2023, AAHM&CC 2023
[3] Angelos and Powell 1985
[4] *Seattle Times* 1985, There are several contradictory statements of the number of occupiers. The article cited here claimed 40 occupiers, but the majority of other lists ionly nclude the six names listed.
[5] Langston 1987
[6] Kelley 1995
[7] *Seattle Times* 1986

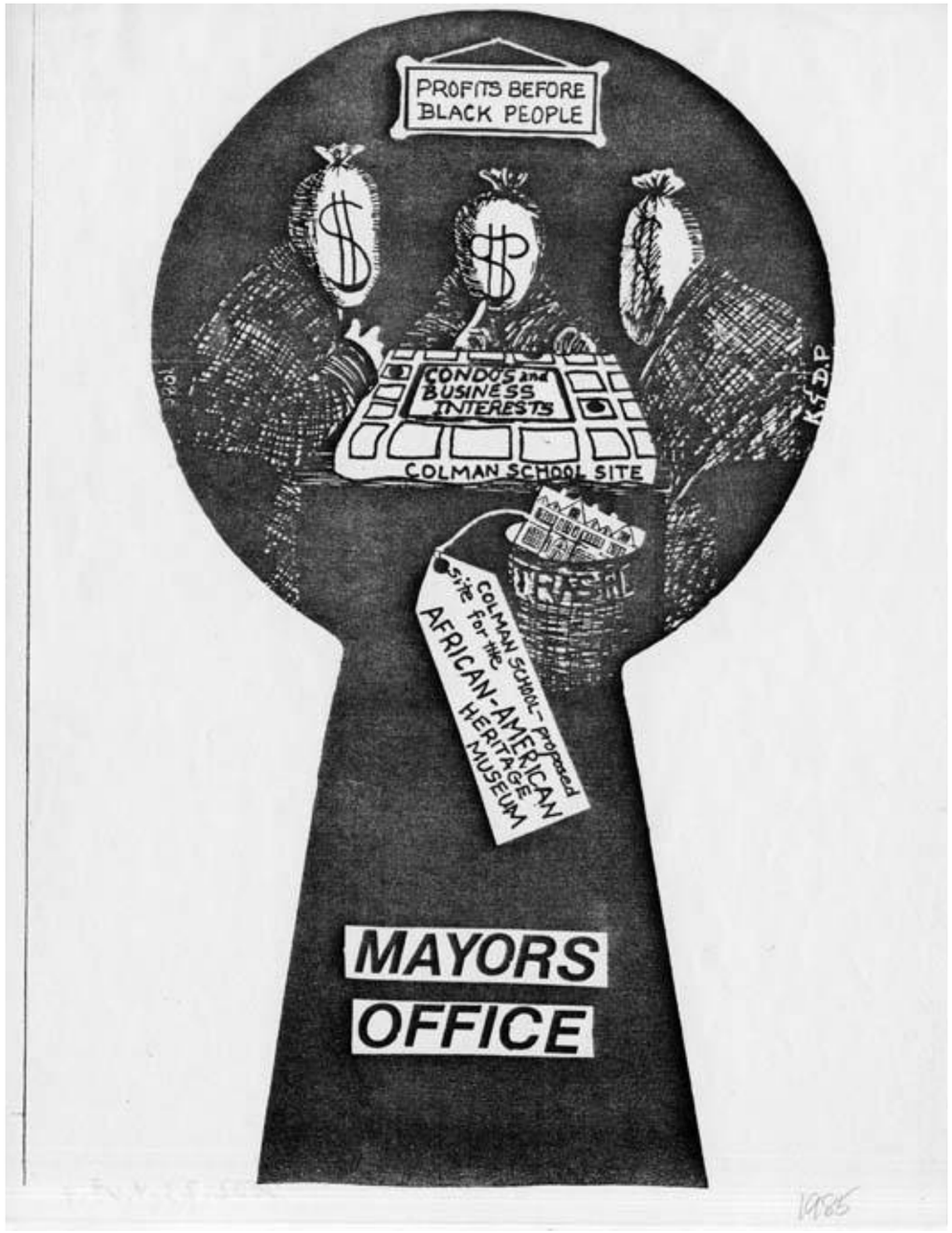

Figure 80: Political cartoon of events in 1985. (MOHAI 2002.23.4.69.1)

violence because of the lack of support from SPS and the city. They frequently told reporters that they hoped to include recording studios and art spaces, so young people could realize their talents and become the next Black celebrity in the style of Jimmi Hendrix.[1]

8.3.3 Longest Occupation in the United States

The occupation was popular at first, attracting journalists and generating discussion across Seattle.[2] Eddie Rye Jr., a supporter, told the SPS School Board "They are not a bunch of wild-eyed radicals, the city of Seattle promised the school to a group of folks. [...] another promise broken to the black community."[3] The occupiers collected signatures, over 200 from citizens and at least 40 from neighbors of the school, who approved the use of Colman. The Citizen Support Group that supplied the occupiers had 200 active members and at least 3,000 donating members as of February 19, 1986.[4] By April 28, 1986, the occupiers had 12,000 signatures.[5]

As city officials stalled, passing blame for the hold-ups between the Mayor's Office, WSDOT, and SPS, the occupiers committed to a long-term occupation. The school already did not have water, and after six weeks SPS cut power to the building, leading to the occupiers not having heat, light, or working bathrooms. Neighbors to the building began to offer food, showers, and other aid. Grassroots support flourished. Black contractors provided gas powered generators to provide power.[6] In 1988 a homeless feeding charity, the Strand Helpers, petitioned the city to turn utilities back on in Colman, so they could use the kitchens for their service, a move that would benefit their charity and the occupiers at the same time.[7] The occupiers also began providing the cultural center services they hoped to create officially, creating impromptu art and history exhibits, using the gymnasium for youth basketball games, conducting art classes such as woodworking[8] and upholstery and providing a music center.[9] A mural was painted in the gymnasium showing Black historical figures and activists.[10]

[1] AAHM&CC 2023
[2] *Seattle Times* 1985, Nov. 26. *Seattle Times* 1985, Nov. 29
[3] Angelos and Powell 1985
[4] O'Ryan 1986
[5] Glover 1986
[6] *Seattle Times* 1986, Dec. 1
[7] Collins 1988
[8] Langston 1987
[9] Glover 1986
[10] O'Ryan 1986

Figure 81: Photo of Omari and Kwame Tahir-Garrett during occupation in The Seattle times, December 4, 1985. (Brown 1985)

To continue the long term occupation, the protesters began to take shifts, usually leaving one or two people inside at a time.[1] Omari Tahir-Garrett and his son Kwame were frequently alone in the structure. Tahir-Garrett and fellow activist Earl Debnam replied to threats of police expulsion by saying that they were willing to defend themselves, although it was never declared if they had weapons. The occupiers brought several dogs to the school to serve as further deterrents, Although children and visitors were welcome at first, near the end of the occupation children were barred, and the site was intentionally staged to discourage visitors.[2] The situation became a stalemate that lasted eight years.

[1] Langston 1987
[2] Bruscas 1993

8.3.4 Response to Occupation

Because the protesters had entered the building through an already broken window, they had not committed "breaking and entering," but they were considered trespassers by the City.[1] They hoped that the City would quickly agree to their terms, as the City had with Latino and Black protesters at Beacon Hill School in 1972. However, the City refused to act because of SPS's planned sale of the building to WSDOT, which meant the school was not under city control. The School District spokesperson Jim Hawkings stated that the negotiation with WSDOT tied their hands.[2] "'This is a case of eminent domain,' Hawkins said, 'and we're in no position to lease Colman to anyone else.'"[3] Brian Henkel, the project manager of the I-90 construction, stated, "the DOT doesn't necessarily need the property. But on the other hand, he added, the state has no intention of giving the property away, either."[4] The Mayor's Office insisted that they could not prevent the sale and the future demolition of the building. The spokesperson for the Mayor, Maureen Sullivan, said it would be "inappropriate [...] we don't own it, and we don't operate it. [...] this kind of thing is difficult financially."[5]

In 1986 the superintendent of the Department of Parks and Recreation complicated matters by offering a nearby shelter house within the Colman Playground to the Black Heritage Society, which agreed to repair and rent the building. The Black Heritage Society, an organization founded in 1980, predated the occupation and was unaffiliated with the occupiers.[6] The Society was led by its president, Joseph "Pop" Warner. Besides confusing many, who assumed the move

Figure 82: Earl Debnam outside Colman in 1993 two years before occupation ended. (MOHAI 2000.107.046.22.02)

[1] *Seattle Times* 1985, Nov. 26
[2] *Seattle Times* 1985, Nov. 26
[3] *Seattle Times* 1985, Nov. 26
[4] *Seattle Times* 1985, Nov. 26
[5] *Seattle Times* 1985, Nov. 26
[6] *Seattle Times* 1986, Jan. 29

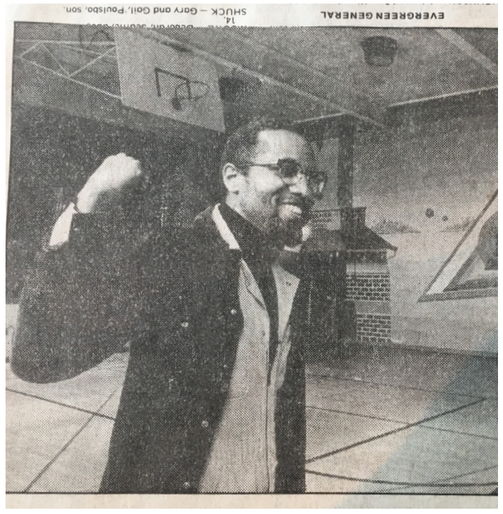

Figure 83: Omari Tahir-Garrett in Colman's gymnasium. (O'Ryan 1986)

was intended to cater to the occupiers, the activists within Colman were outraged that the city government might be trying to undercut their efforts by granting a cultural center to an organization they saw as mainstream and backed by White commercial interests.[1] Charles James, the occupiers' spokesperson, stated the building offered to the Heritage Society was far too small for a museum.[2]

As the occupation wore on, other Black speakers, such as the members of the Black Heritage Society, and Ron Sims, a Black King County Council member, questioned the protesters' right to speak for the Black community.[3] In 1986, the Black president of the Seattle City Council, Sam Smith, told the *Post-Intelligencer* that he supported the city moving to fund small ethnic museums if they included African American, Nordic, and Asian heritage museums.[4] When speaking to newspapers, the Mayor's Office claimed the occupiers had little support from other Black Seattleites. In 1987 *Seattle Times* writer Vanessa Langston wrote:

> Graffiti defaces the sign that invites others to ``join the community struggle'' but the call has gone unheeded. Very little money has been raised and a public official has yet to step forward and champion the cause.[5]

Jeri Ware, an aide to Rep. Mike Lowry,[6] commented: "The people who are organizing the movement are not credible, and that gets in the way of gathering support."[7] At the time, Jerline Abair "Jeri" Ware, herself a Black woman who, in 1963, had joined civil rights marchers in Washington DC, at the time of her statement was a member of the Seattle

[1] *Seattle Times* 1986, Jan. 14
[2] *Seattle Times* 1986, Jan. 14
[3] *Seattle Times* 1986, Jan. 11
[4] Hayasak 1986
[5] Langston 1987
[6] Mike Lowry was a (white) U.S. Representative and governor in the 1900s before resigning in the face of sexual misconduct allegations.
[7] Langston 1987

Human Rights Commission.[1] Other officials, such as Clarke Camper, assistant to Council members Jane Noland and Sam Smith, asked the community to provide funds to "put their money where their mouths are."[2]

Figure 84: Earl Debnam photographed in the AAHM&CC's office 1986. (Gilmore 1986)

In 1988, in an attempt to find a compromise, the occupiers attended a meeting with SPS and offered to lease the building until either they or the City could secure a building for a museum space. The School District refused. John Richmond, director of property management for SPS, stated, "We're not going to deal with trespassers. The present situation would have to be dealt with first. [...] It can't occur all in one meeting." Since they demanded the building be vacated so they could finalize its sale to WSDOT, no deal was made.[3]

At the end of the occupation, in 1993, in a neighborhood poll of 60 Black, White, and Asian residents, 28% supported demolition, 22% supported renovation into a community center, and 14% supported a museum.[4] After eight years of occupation, public opinion remained split and many neighbors complained that the school was growing more and more dangerous. Several White residents, led by Denby Barnett, attempted to have King County's Department of Health and Safety inspect the site.[5] Earl Debnam responded that the complaining neighbors were racist.[6]

After eight years of occupation, and the replacement of Mayor Royer with Norman Rice, a Black man, the City finally committed to forming an African American museum in exchange for a promise from the occupiers that the building would be vacated.[7] Rice created a committee and invited members of the occupiers and leaders of the wider Black

[1] Beers 1997
[2] Langston 1987
[3] *Seattle Times* 1988, Apr. 30
[4] Keene 1993
[5] Bruscas 1993
[6] Keene 1993
[7] Strickland 1994

Figure 85: Cover of report completed in 1994 for possible plans for a museum. Frequently cited by occupiers. (Strickland 1994)

community to satisfy the protesters' request to be involved in the process. The committee began to develop plans to convert Colman into a museum of local Black history.

8.3.5 Planning for Reuse as Affordable Housing and Museum (2001-Present)

The newly formed committee started by hiring consultants to evaluate plans for the site. In 1994 after the building was officially sealed by SPS and occupiers had left:

> [The committee] recommended the project be governed in two ways: By forming a public-development authority to handle lease negotiations, hire architects and handle other business matters related to renovating a building; and by creating a nonprofit corporation to raise money and devise programs for the museum.[1]

And they agreed that the original community leaders, who successfully campaigned for the building, should also serve on the board.

Questions were still raised about the credibility of the occupiers, especially since they demanded full control over who entered or did not belong on the committee. At first, it seemed their decisions were even-handed, and the committee was not a narrow group, but, in the words of attorney James Fearn:

[1] Strickland 1994

> Rather, the museum's board is becoming a mix of young and old, of professionals and community-spirited, of "those who can contribute money, wealth or wisdom.[1]

By 1996 the committee had officially formed the African American Heritage Museum and Cultural Center (AAHM&CC), with Earl Debnam, Charlie James and Omari Tahir-Garrett as members of the committee.[2] At the time, the Youth Action Committee began providing internships for students, as well as organizing security for the building and outlining a course of programming for community outreach for the museum.[3]

Mayor Rice invited several members of his fraternity, Sigma Pi Phi, including Robert Flowers, a bank manager and a board member of the Urban League of Seattle (UL) to participate.[4] Sale of Colman was pending to the AAHM&CC for $445,000 with a 90-day lease from SPS until it was finalized. The Department of Neighborhoods agreed to provide half of the cost, and members of the public were expected to fulfill the rest through fundraising.[5]

However, sixty days after Flowers and other new members joined, conflict began to break out within the committee. Earl Debman and Charlie James were removed from president and vice-president positions and Robert Flowers, of the UL, replaced Debman. Some accounts list Omari Tahir-Garrett as a supporter of Flowers during the ousting.[6] Debman went to the King County Superior Court to file suit against the AAHM&CC Board for acting in bad faith and by defaming Debnam for being a liability due to a stroke. He stated that the newcomers "wanted to brush me aside to a put a fresh horse in," and called Flowers "a downtown personality who knows when to smile, how to smile and who to smile at."[7] Omari Tahir-Garrett remained on the AAHM&CC Board. An article in 1997 summarized the issues at the Board:

Figure 86: Floyd Naramore rendering of the gymnasium 1940. (DKA 2005)

[1] Strickland 1994
[2] Lilly 1996
[3] Lilly 1996, *Page The Free Press* 1998
[4] AAHM&CC 2023, NAAM 2023
[5] Mills 1996
[6] Shapiro 1998
[7] Mills 1996

> There are two opposing interests represented on the board--on one side, community activists including the Youth Action Committee, CopWatch members and others; on the other, "salaried professionals", politicians, and others referred to by members of the Community as "uncle toms". The sellouts on the board have been working hand in glove with City officials and the police department to purge out the progressive elements of the museum. In other words, anyone who wants the Museum to be a living institution controlled by the Black Community will have to go.[1]

The protesting museum founders and members of the Youth Action Committee complained that committee members were refusing to show receipts and were wasting money, allowing the project to go over budget to receive remuneration, as well as excluding community activists. Debnam, and later Tahir-Garrett, accused Flowers of hiring project manager Pat Chandler, without a proper national search, and that consultants were being overpaid instead of using funds on community support projects.[2]

One basis for their suspicions remained the issue of "authentic Blackness." In a 1997 memo from Kwame Tahir-Garrett declared his suspicion about the committee:

> Overall it appears that there exist certain elements and forces within the board who are new to this project and the concept of community building and who are attempting to steer this project from it's [sic] grassroots community origins. It seems that these individuals are striving to create an institution which caters to the preferences of the European dominated society and the upper echelon of the African–American community rather than an institution which serves as a solution to the problems faced by poverty stricken and working poor African-American community.[3]

Tahir-Garrett drew a distinction between Black people based on their perceived socioeconomic status, aligning those higher-status individuals with the White community rather than his own Black community. A member of consulting firm Streeter & Schacht took issue with this divisiveness, and wrote to the remaining board members in 1998 that the community wanted a museum, but:

> ... we must all admit that the project is not on a course that will make this happen. AAHM has fallen victim to individual agendas and issues of personal ownership. To succeed it must have a broad community agenda and its stakeholders must understand that they are stewards of a community vision—not owners of a private enterprise... Far too much pressure has been brought to bear on the project. It is forced to do too many things too quickly. Cultural institutions have long gestation periods. They grow slowly, broadening the scope of their programs over many years, as they develop constituencies and institutional skills and resources. The development of the museum, even if all of the current ills are resolved, is a lifelong endeavor. We say it is time to turn away from the conflict and the accusations. It is time to make the museum itself the focus of people's attention.[4]

[1] Persak 1997
[2] Shapiro 1998
[3] Erickson 2015, pp. 60
[4] Erickson 2015, pp. 60

In 1998 the Committee finally collapsed. Omari Tahir-Garrett read a letter to the Board describing his dissatisfaction, arguing that Robert Flowers did not respect the project, had unfairly criticized individuals for working at the museum on "unauthorized activities" even though Flowers had not been present, and that several employees of Flowers's office had been skimming money from the museum for their salaries.[1] The AAHM&CC had effectively been split into two groups, the city-supported board represented shortly by Robert Flowers, and the AAHM&CC run by Omair Tahir-Garrett who kept control of the museum office, a leased trailer on the Colman property.[2]

As meetings fell apart, Tahir-Garrett traveled to Olympia and registered the AAHM&CC, after its corporate license had expired, in his name, thus laying claim to the bill-of-sale for Colman that had been signed by SPS on January 16, 1998.[3] By 1999 the Secretary of State confirmed that the organization was officially in his name, despite attempts by Flowers and his board to amend the title.[4] However, this also led to City funding being frozen.[5] Tahir-Garrett continued to organize and hold events at Colman as part of the AAHM&CC and operated services out of the leased trailer, including "Little League, barbecues and Ethiopian lessons."[6] The group also organized and hosted the African Heritage Festival and Parade (Umoja Fest) in 1997 and 1998, the largest gathering of Africans in the city.[7]

Tahir-Garrett continued to be challenged by the city committee and the police. On March 15, 1998, the lease on the trailer ended and police began attempting to evict.[8] On April 29, 1998, the King County Sheriff's Department arrived at midnight to evict the AAHM&CC during an event and were refused.[9] On June 4, 1998, SWAT teams and FBI agents raided the trailer on orders from King County.[10] The group, including the YAC, continued to argue that they were providing cultural services and thus doing nothing wrong, and that the city and county did not need the property. After the eviction attempts, Debnam explained that the neighborhood was asking, "did they beat Omari? Is he shot?" Omari

[1] Tahir-Garrett 1988
[2] *Page The Free Press* 1998
[3] Seattle School District 1998
[4] Fryer 1999
[5] Fryer 1999
[6] Shapiro 1998
[7] Jackson 1999
[8] Shapiro 1998
[9] AAHM&CC 1998
[10] IWW 1999

Tahir-Garret's son Kwame compared the cost of allowing them to continue to use the trailer to the cost of paying police to stake out the site.[1]

Contesting the use, Secretary of Transportation Sid Morrison was quoted as saying that although the YAC "may perform some worthwhile functions, their activity is divisive and lacks community support." County Council Member Larry Gossett wrote a letter to WSDOT in support of the YAC, requesting that they allow the program to continue to use the trailer.[2]

Flowers resigned in 1999 and was replaced by James Fearn, and SPS confirmed that their bill-of-sale remained with his board, not Tahir-Garrett's. Tahir-Garrett attempted to present proof of a loan to SPS to meet payment deadlines but was rebuffed, with SPS officials citing the police trouble and illegal inhabitation of the trailer as causes.[3] On December 10, 1999 Tahir-Garrett was arrested while trying to enter the Colman School and begin a new occupation, shortly after one of his supporters punched Fearn at an attempted reconciliation meeting.[4]

Fearn desperately tried to get the two sides to reconcile, but eventually resigned, along with many other board members, in 2000, as Tahir-Garrett intruded on meetings to claim he was the proper board chairman.[5] SPS pulled its offer to sell the school and instead sold the building in 2001 to the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (UL), a national community support organization.

UL agreed to develop the building into affordable housing and a museum space for the Northwest African American Museum, with designs provided by Black architect Donald King's firm DKA.[6]

[1] Shapiro 1998
[2] Shapiro 1998
[3] Fryer 1998
[4] Fryer 1999
[5] Ervin 2000
[6] Nabbefeld 2001

8.4 Communities & Stakeholders

8.4.1 Mayor's Office and Other City of Seattle Officials

Throughout the process there were state, county, and city officials involved in the conflict. City Council aides and the Mayor's Office attempted to mediate the process throughout, and promised funds at various periods. The Department of Neighborhoods also frequently asked the public to provide funds, questioning the dedication of the Black community to the project. SPS kept ownership of the site after the occupiers halted the sale to WSDOT.

8.4.2 Black Occupiers & African American Heritage Museum

The occupiers were supported by other local Black residents of the neighborhood who provided food, water, and off-site places for bathing. The occupiers and neighbors self-identified as the "street community" or "those who are left behind," and the "true" Black community.[1] Community support appears to have wavered after the end of occupation, but Omari Tahir-Garrett and his supporters conducted community projects and services until they were forcibly evicted in 1998. Community events were well attended and, until the use of SWAT and FBI teams, succeeded in preventing the eviction. Overall, the argument of Tahir-Garrett and allied groups can be summarized by his comments to the *Seattle Times* in 1999: "Once people see an idea, they come in and milk all the money and leave a shell."[2]

Since the events at Colman School, Omari Tahir-Garrett and other Black activists have joined Africatown, a collective community project purchasing historic and non-historic properties in Seattle and converting them into affordable housing and community spaces.[3]

8.4.3 Black Leaders & Urban League Speakers

Throughout the conflict, journalists questioned Black government officials and business owners to understand the "Black community" support. Since the Mayor's Office and Department of Neighborhoods asked the public to match their payment for the building, it

[1] Converge 2021
[2] Fryer 1999
[3]

became a question of "putting your money where your mouth is" as one speaker explained. These Black officials had a variety of responses, from denying any Black support, to acknowledging how much community work Tahir-Garrett's programs had done, and asking the state to allow their continued, but technically illegal, use of the Colman property.

Officials such as County Council member Ron Sims and City Council member Sam Smith, both Black men, questioned the occupiers' right to speak for the "Black community,"[1] and speakers like Jerline Abair Ware, a civil rights activist, member of the Seattle Human Rights Commission and assistant to a U.S. Representative, described them as "not credible."[2] Norman Rice, the first African American Mayor of Seattle, encouraged the creation of the museum, and his office offered funding if the activists could raise half of the cost themselves.

The officials and Black leaders were arguing that the museum and community space needed systemic support. During the occupation, the activists had relied on neighbors for resources, but when the committee formed and the activists continued to be hostile, the officials wanted some assurance that resources would not be squandered.

[1] *Seattle Times* 1986, Jan. 11
[2] Langston 1987

8.5 Preservation Process

The Colman School building's legal preservation took place late in the course of events. It can be seen as one part of the city's process of asserting control over the project. The LPB did worry that Wyking Kwame Tahir-Garrett might appear and threaten them. The Minutes from the designation hearing have not survived, but the LPB voted to designate the building in 2005. The Tahir-Garrett's involvement had already ended.

Presented below is a timeline of events, followed by the main arguments of each stakeholder summarized across the lead up to nomination to the end of adaptive reuse.

8.5.1 Urban League Arguments

James Kelly, of the Urban League, which has owned the building since 2001, presented the organization's plans for the building, followed by a presentation of the nomination report from the Johnson Partnership (TJP). Larry Johnson presented the basic description and history of the building and its neighborhood, as well as its condition. One question discussed by TJP and considered by the LPB was the state of removed gable decorations that were taken down in 1956. Johnson supported designation for criterion A, for its association with James Colman, a prominent businessman for whom the school was named, and Anna Kane, the longest serving principal who served between 1912-1940. He supported criterion C for its location within what was known historically as Little Italy. He added criterion D for its characteristic Jacobean style, and criterion F for its visual prominence in the neighborhood. He did not address the recent occupation as a reason for Landmark status as it had taken place less than 25 years before, so likely he did not consider the history of occupation within the legal period allowed to be considered under the Seattle Landmarks ordinance.

The LPB questioned Johnson on the condition of interior casework, as school architect James Stephen was known for his cabinetmaking. The building was in poor condition and still filled with debris, and the LPB members were concerned that historic interior elements might be more intact underneath debris than it seemed. During occupation, the building suffered a fire and had been tagged with graffiti and had windows

Preservation Timeline

1985 Mar. SPS board closes Colman.

1985 Nov. 11 African American Heritage Museum and Community Center is founded.

1985 Nov. 26 Occupiers enter Colman and begin occupation. The building suffers a fire, has windows broken or boarded up, and graffiti painted in the interior.

1994 Feb. Mayor's AAHM&CC Council releases feasibility study of using Colman as museum.

1995 Mayor agrees to commit to opening a museum, occupation ends.

2001 SPS sells Colman to Urban League.

2005 Jul. 6 Colman School Nomination Hearing is held, attended by Virginia Wilcox, Vernon Abelsen, Shriley Aguilera, Mark Hannum, Stephen Lee, Ronald Martinson, Henry Matthews, John Schwartz, Mollie Tremaine, Tom Veith, Susan Millinich. Voted to nominate interior and exterior 10:0:1. (Schwartz abstained at the beginning of the hearing.)

2005 Aug. 17 Designation Hearing is held, Colman based designate on criteria C, D, and F. The designation meeting minutes do not survive.

2005 Aug. 26 Colman designation report published.

2005 Dec. 5 Colman submitted to Washington Heritage Register.

2019 Aug. 14 Colman submitted to NRHP.

and some interior elements damaged.[1] Johnson described that much of the interior had been destroyed, although some original ceilings, and the layout, remained. He also added that the "unsympathetic" 1940 gymnasium had a notable mural painted during the activists' occupation.

The Urban League hoped to discourage nomination of the interior, as it could restrict their plans for reuse. James Kelly brought Leila Miles, manager of the development fund for NAAM, and Knute Berkman, developer of the housing, to discuss the planned development of the building; however, DoN Preservation Program staff member Elizabeth Chave immediately stated that the LPB could legally only consider the historic character of the building and not any future plans. Later, LPB member Shirley Aguilera noted that nominating the interior would restrict usage of the site, but other member Susan Millinich again commented that future use was not an issue for LPB consideration.[2]

The Minutes of the designation meeting do not survive. When designated on August 17, 2005, only the exterior was designated, indicating that the interior

[1] DKA 2005
[2] LPB 306/05

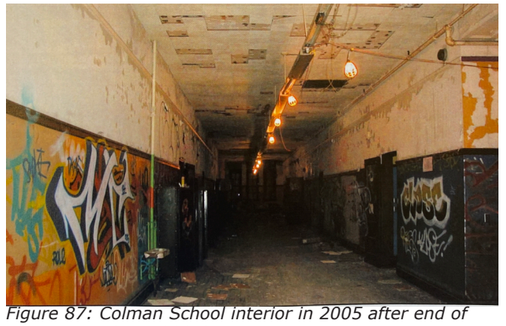

Figure 87: Colman School interior in 2005 after end of occupation. (DKA 2005)

Figure 88: Website banner of the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle. (urbanleague.org 2023)

The City of Seattle
Landmarks Preservation Board
700 Third Avenue · 4th floor · Seattle, Washington 98104 · (206) 684-0228

REPORT ON DESIGNATION LPB 353/05

(former) Colman School
2300 S. Massachusetts Street

Legal Description: N 388.9 FT OF W 211.86 FT OF E 267.91 FT OF GL 6 LESS POR FOR STS; and 1-2-3 2 ATLANTIC HEIGHTS LESS POR FOR STS

At the public meeting held on August 17, 2005, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the (former) Colman School at 2300 S. Massachusetts St. as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.

D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.

F. Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.

Figure 89: Designation report of Colman School. (LPB 353/05)

spaces were considered to be lacking integrity.

During a series of LPB architectural review hearings, DKA project architect Rico Quirindongo presented a variety of alternatives in design until April 21, 2006, when the DKA design was approved. The remodel added an access tower on the south facade to provide an additional staircase, as well as a fire exit. The ground elevation was lowered at the eastern main entrance back to its historic depth, lowering the front doors by two feet. In earlier meetings, Quirindongo hoped to replace original windows with higher efficiency units.[1] The LPB Architectural Review Committee refused the request and Quirindongo agreed to maintain the original windows and doors instead of replacing them.[2] Interior spaces were not included in the designation as a City Landmark, and, therefore, the interior museum and housing modifications were not subject to the review.[3]

8.5.2 Activist Arguments

There was no presence from the AAHM&CC or any other activists involved with the occupation at Landmark hearings. On July 1, 2005, staff member Elizabeth Chave asked Preservation Program manager Karen Gordon, who was overseeing the preservation process, for increased security at the nomination meeting.[4] After an unrecorded call from Chave to Mike Kolatski, the security manager at City Hall, Kolatski emailed the local SPD precinct stating:

> I just wanted to alert you about the above meeting coming up. [...] I was informed that the guy who smacked Mayor Schell in the head with the bullhorn is one of the persons who is planning on showing up for this meeting. I plan to have a uniformed security officer stationed at this meeting but wanted to let you know that we might need SPD assistance if this guy gets out of hand.[5]

The "guy who smacked Mayor Schell" was Omari Tahir-Garret's son Wyking Kwame, who stayed with occupiers and organized the Youth Action Committee.[6] As far as is recorded, Wyking Kwame Tahir-Garrett was not at the meeting.

[1] King 2023
[2] King 2023
[3] LPB 306/05
[4] Gordon 2005
[5] Kolatski 2005
[6]

8.5.3 LPB Comments

John Schwartz, who also operated the development firm Barrientas LLC (now Barrientos RYAN), which would be involved in Colman's restoration, abstained from the vote on nomination, likely due to a conflict of interest.[1] The LPB agreed that the exterior should be designated. The LPB had toured the building and observed some existing original cabinetry, ceilings, and the attic space, and at the hearing LPB members asked owner representatives about the conditions, and whether terra-cotta elements stored in the attic made up the removed gable decorations or original finials.

Although the owner representatives emphasized that preserving the interior would impact their reuse plans, the LPB consistently stated that the vote would only consider the historic character of the structure. Members generally stated they did not see many interior rooms that maintained high integrity, but staff recommended that nominating interiors could be done "with a broad brush" and interior spaces then could be removed from the designation at a later date when it had been cleaned. It was stated that portions of a building could be removed from the designation of a Landmark, but not added later. Ultimately, they did include the interior for nomination. The August 17, 2005, designation vote only included the exterior. Likely during clean-up the interior spaces were proved to be badly impacted and lacked integrity.

On the community and cultural basis, several members of the LPB commented about the significance of the building due to its occupation. When discussing the 1940 gymnasium, Larry Johnson told the LPB that there was a notable mural inside. LPB member Shirley Aguilera noted the mural was painted in 1978.[2] LPB member Tom Veith stated:

> Despite threats to destruction, the building has managed to survive. He believed the building is significant because of its citywide notoriety related to the freeway construction, in addition, he believed the occupation incident meets criteria (a) or (b).[3]

LPB member Henry Matthews (former WSU professor of architectural history) commented that despite the lack of integrity, "the building's character shines through and the occupation attests to the community's support and interest."[4]

[1] His firm would go on to consut for Urban League when developing Colman. (BarrientosRYAN.com 2023)
[2] Accounts differ on the mural. Some say the mural was painted during the occupation. If painted in 1978 it would have been a year before the school closed (LPB 306/05)
[3] LPB 306/05
[4] LPB 306/05

Figure 90: Dr. Marcia Tate at 2023 Kwanza celebration inside NAAM's event space. (Amanda Snyder / Crosscut 2023)

8.5.4 Outcome

On August 17, 2005, the LPB nominated the former Colman School as a Seattle landmark, under the criteria C, D, and F:

C) It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.

D) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.

E) Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.[1]

8.5.5 Transformation

The Urban League purchased the building in 2001 and was the principal agency involved in designating the building. They contracted with Donald King Architects (DKA) to renovate the building. Architects Donald King and Rico Quirindongo had visited the site prior to the end of occupation and had already begun evaluating the potential scope of the project.[2] According to the nomination report prepared by TJP, personal correspondence with

[1] LPB 306/05
[2] King 2023

Figure 91: Family visiting NAAM on its reopening on MLK Day 2023. (DIWAS Photography 2023)

King, and later reports, the building was in poor condition. Interior and exterior walls were unsecured masonry and much of the mortar had deteriorated, leaving brick walls so loose it swayed to the touch.[1] A fire had broken out in some upper rooms and badly damaged several interior spaces. Historic cabinetry had been removed. Graffiti had been painted on several internal walls. According to King, the main debris removed was pigeon guano, and trash and other materials, reported by neighbors during the occupation,[2] were not present.[3]

Rico Quirindongo was the project architect and presented design alternatives to the LPB's Architectural Review Committee. The grade around the building was to be lowered, removing fill that had been added after its construction. The original ground floor had become a "basement" due to infill[4] and, by removing material, entry stairs could be removed, and the main entrance made ADA accessible.[5] One of the largest changes to the structure was the addition of a central steel cage through all floors to secure the masonry against seismic activity.[6]

[1] DKA 2005
[2]
[3] King 2023
[4] King 2023
[5] King 2023, ARC Hearing 2005
[6] King 2023

Interior spaces were left relatively intact, with dividers within classrooms separating them into individual apartments. Each apartment also featured the exposed brick walls of the exterior and central wall, highlighting the historic feeling of the building. The first floor had minor partitions added to rooms to provide the museum space with additional internal access and office spaces.[1]

The new residential apartments in the structure were made available as low-income housing in 2008/2009 and was named the Urban League Village with aims to maintain the housing for predominantly Black residents. In 2008 the Northwest African American Museum opened, utilizing the first floor as the museum.[2]

8.5.6 Community Changes

On October 7, 2001, while negotiating the purchase of the school, the Urban League of Seattle posted a public webpage describing the Coleman [sic] School project. The website described fundraising plans, potential costs (around $17 million) and the concept of "Colman Village," with "affordable housing," "human services, playfields, a community center and educational and cultural resources."[3] They planned to "link two of Seattle's historically African American neighborhoods: the Central Area and North Rainier," and "create a social fabric [...] to enhance the vibrancy of life in the area."[4] The site promised to restore the school as a community symbol, "a testament to a neighborhood that was lost in the wake of progress," as well as create 30,000 square feet of mixed-income multifamily housing, and "an African American museum to complement Seattle's cultural history."[5] By the end of 2003 the website had announced the purchase of the building[6] and by the end of 2005, announced that the museum was funded, and housing was soon to open.[7] By the end of 2006 a full committee to oversee the museum was announced,[8] and it finally became an independent organization obtaining a 501(c)3 status.[9]

[1] Formations 2008
[2] NAAM 2023
[3] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org/colman/ 2001
[4] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org/colman/ 2001
[5] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org/colman/ 2001
[6] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org/colman/ 2003
[7] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org/colman/ 2005
[8] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org/coleman/ 2006 [sic]
[9] NAAM 2023

The Urban League opened its affordable housing units sometime in 2008/2009, although no announcement has survived.[1] The Northwest African American Museum (NAAM) opened its doors March 8, 2008.[2] The Museum began hosting community and cultural events immediately, hosting a Black Nativity through November - December, lectures on culture, and visiting artists are all listed on its webpage.[3] Other than its three-year closure during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Museum provided Black-centric events and drew visitors from near and far.

On the opening day of the Museum, Omari Tahir-Garrett's son Wyking Kwame stepped up and took the microphone before the Museum's Executive Director, Carver Gayton could begin his speech. Wyking Kwame called to the crowd:

> I'm one of the people that was in this building, that occupied this building for our community--our youth. Our youth are dying on the streets and they put thirty-six apartments in here. There's no youth programs in here and this is a disgrace. This is not what we fought for, this is not what we sacrificed our lives for, and this is a scam! NAAM is a scam on our community! It stops right here. We're gonna have a gang truce! We're gonna have a gang truce and we're gonna fight for our community![4]

He was booed and taken off-stage to the approval of the crowd.[5] Photos taken during the opening leave out this disturbance.[6] Omari and Wyking Kwame Tahir-Garrett continued to protest the Museum, arguing that the Black business owners and local officials supporting the Urban League were not "authentic" Black people.

Architect Donald King, who visited the protestors occupying the building before the city's agreement to open a museum, described that the occupiers were both shocked at the potential costs, and that during planning Omari and his son both reiterated that they wanted the building and museum to be in their names.[7] They claimed that the Urban League was planning on switching the housing at Colman from mixed-income to high-income to make a profit, as well as under-serving youth by not hosting programs. They had wide-ranging ideals, that NAAM could not or would not live up to:

> For Tahir and some of the other activists, the museum project was seen as a means by which an entire community could be transformed if only the necessary programs and resources were attached to it. Their efforts to create a museum were inseparable from their efforts to revive the local African American community, reduce crime, celebrate Black pride, and increase job opportunities. The museum was a catalyst

[1] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org/ 2008
[2] Wayback Machine, Storm PhotoGraphics 2008
[3] Wayback Machine, Naamnw.org 2008
[4] Erickson 2015, pp. 40-41
[5] Erickson 2015, pp. 41
[6] Wayback Machine, Storm Photographics 2008
[7] King 2023

> that could radically improve the lives of thousands and, from this perspective, they were not simply fighting for a museum—they were fighting for the very life and soul of their community.[1]

In turn, Omari Tahir-Garrett and his son were not well-received by other members of the Black community. Carver Gayton, a Black man and the Museum's Executive Director, stated after Wyking Kwame was taken off-stage, "Well that's one opinion."[2]

During the occupation, and committee negotiations, several Black officials, Ron Sims (King County Council Member), Sam Smith (President of Seattle City Council), Jerline Abair Ware (Assistant to U.S. Representative & member of Seattle Civil Rights Commision), and Bob Flowers (member of the museum committee) spoke against the occupiers' methods and attitude.

The Urban League listed supporters of its plans on its website between 2001 and 2008, including the Boeing Employee Community Fund,[3] retired Urban League board member Jummue Simmons who was the last principal of Colman School,[4] and Norman Rice, no longer Mayor and then president of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle.[5] A large portion of Black leaders in Seattle supported the Urban League's plans. In 2006 the Museum plans from DKA won the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry Black Creativity Program Exhibit.[6]

Despite the Tahir-Garretts' criticism, the Museum was successful, starting with a viewing party of Barack Obama's inauguration, which brought a flood of visitors.[7] Programs both covered cultural events and became gathering places. Visitors came and left comments in large numbers, identifying the Museum as a place to connect to identity, inclusion, and long overdue recognition.[8] According to Donald King, Black families, who have been displaced from Seattle, still drive to attend NAAM programs, and that the housing in the Urban Village has been low-income and mainly Black, providing needed residences in the struggling community.[9]

[1] Erickson 2015, pp. 58
[2] Erickson 2015, pp. 41
[3] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org 2003
[4] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org 2001
[5] Wayback Machine, Urbanleague.org 2001
[6] Wayback Machine, tabor100.org 2006
[7] Erickson 2015, pp. 97
[8] Erickson 2015, pp. 103
[9] King 2023

Preservation of Colman School did not save the neighborhood, no matter the hopes of the activists. Job growth in Seattle, beginning in the 1990s, started to lead to rising demand for housing and, with it, rising costs. Beginning with Microsoft, Seattle and its suburbs became a magnet for tech businesses. With their growth, the urban areas around downtown, including the Central District, saw rising demand for development from the year 2000 onward. Discrepancies in incomes and opportunities led to increasing gentrification and displacement of Black residents. Of twenty-five Black churches, which had been the core of Central District communities, twelve closed between 2000 and 2020.[1] Colman School had already been a symbol of the displacement of Black residents and in many ways has remained so.

[1] Born and co., pp. 7

8.6 Analysis

Colman School may be considered another "success" of preservation through adaptive reuse, but not in the ways hoped for by early stakeholders. Reuse of Colman School began as an informal project, led by activists determined to get what they needed. However, conflict among interested parties led to a stalemate that was only broken with the intervention of the city and the decision to sell the building to an established group, the Urban League, rather than the group of activists.

This case study demonstrates the dilemma in creating a community organization out of a radical movement. The bureaucratic system is very slow, complicated, and has strict legal rules and processes. After eight years of questioning from Black officials, news writers and neighbors, the occupiers were defensive of their claim of being the "authentic Black community," an attitude that hindered their ability to work within the system. The occupiers had succeeded at getting their project started, but they were unable to complete the official groundwork needed to build an organization, raise funds or conduct effective outreach. In this way, the debate of "authentic Blackness" shaped how Colman was preserved.

8.6.1 Official Value

The official attitudes towards the value of the Colman building changed from the beginning to the end of the conflict. At first, there was skepticism that the building could even be used, dictating that the occupiers must prove enough investment to make the risk worth it. But, by the end of the occupation, the idea had much more support, and an official committee was formed to realize it.

Statements from officials summed up the risk they saw in pursuing the Colman project. Jeri Ware, a Black woman, and aide to Rep. Mike Lowry, commented: "The people who are organizing the movement are not credible, and that gets in the way of gathering support."[1] This can be seen in the multiple requests that the occupiers provide half of the funding. While officials tentatively accepted that an African-American museum was a possible idea, they were not convinced that the occupiers could raise funds and build one.

[1] Langston 1987

The occupiers outlasted these doubts, and by the end of the occupation, those in power more freely accepted the idea. The city began to commit to the project, under the condition that the occupiers share control with a committee. When the school entered the preservation process, there was no debate that it was eligible under Criterion C: it was significant to a community. The officials agreed with the occupiers and planned to maintain Colman's value.

8.6.2 Value to the Community

The founders of the AAHMCC never described the reasoning behind choosing Colman School as the site of their occupation. However, the displacement of the southern edge of the Central District was certainly a motivating factor. Additionally, Omari Tahir-Garrett has said that the publication of SPS statistics, demonstrating that Black students were falling behind on reading and math metrics, spurred the AAHMCC to be formed. The school had had a majority of Black students at the time of its closing, and the occupiers were able to use its survival amidst the otherwise demolished neighborhood as a symbol of the disadvantages faced by Black youth.

The Colman School building was not significant to the occupiers or community in a way that easily fit Seattle's preservation criteria. Criterion C only includes historic properties that are a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, not symbolic or educational, despite the commonly stated intention of preservation to educate "present and future generations."

8.6.3 El Centro de la Raza Taught the Wrong Lesson

The occupiers of Colman School believed that the protest would end in a shorter period of time than the eight years it lasted. Many of the members had been peripherally involved in the occupation of Beacon Hill School which, after three months in 1972-1973, ended with the lease of the building to El Centro de la Raza. The Colman occupiers expected their protest to progress in a similar way. They had learned that occupation could produce tangible change, and that a space could be formed to help their community. But the events at Colman were different in three important ways: the activists did not have the community connections that were held by the Centrolistas, the Colman School was not clearly owned by

SPS, and finally the building was brick, not wood. (In addition, the 1980s were a different era politically from the 1970s.)

As described in Chapter 7, the Centrolistas had widely supported other activist organizations, including Larry Gosset, an organizer of the Black movement in Seattle. In contrast, the AAHM&CC had fewer connections. The occupiers had been part of a similar protest at the planned construction site of a new police precinct in the Central District, and had been tangentially involved at Beacon Hill, but were not truly a part of the activist circles traversed by the Centrolistas. Although the AAHM&CC was supported by local groups and nearby neighbors, it was not supported by the wider community. This issue also demonstrates the difference between the broad "Black community," and the narrower group of direct stakeholders involved in the occupation.

Finally, Colman School posed a structural issue for the occupiers. Beacon Hill is a wood frame building, and the Centrolistas were able to do the majority of repairs and structural improvements themselves. Colman School, on the other hand, is a brick, concrete, and steel structure. Like most early 20th century brick structures, Colman had an unsecured facade, a danger in the earthquake-prone Seattle. The seismic upgrades necessary for the building required expert design, expensive materials, and a great deal of funding; the Colman occupiers could not repair the building themselves. Even without the issue of a seismic upgrade, Colman repairs required experienced brick masons, concrete contractors and other skilled construction trades. When architect Donald King spoke to the occupiers on site, he examined the structure and explained the likely costs. The mortar joints in interior brick walls were deteriorating, one wall literally swaying to the touch, and the interior had also been damaged by fire at some point during the occupation. Making the building safe would require the insertion of steel seismic bracing through the floors of the building before any other repairs and modifications could be made, which would be a significant undertaking itself. This news shocked the occupiers, and they quickly began doubting whether these observations were legitimate.[1] Without experienced craftsmen and/or construction workers among the occupiers (unlike at Beacon Hill), there was a fundamental misunderstanding of the work and cost required to bring the Colman School up to modern safety standards.

[1] King 2023

In many ways, Beacon Hill's example misled the members of the AAHM&CC. On the surface, their movements were similar, with both claiming a James Stephen-designed model school that had been left empty. However, the realities each group faced were quite different. Colman's occupiers were successful in preventing the sale to WSDOT and preventing the building's demolition; however, they seem not to have been able to address the administrative, financial and practical challenges of reusing the building.

8.6.4 Preservation Alongside Community Identity

The conflict around Colman is complex, and involves a myriad of factors. This thesis does not have the scope to address the majority of these issues. Preservation of Colman was a side concern, but many of the larger issues (systemic racism, defining authentic Black identity, education of Black youth, community health, and the like) were intertwined with the question of how the building would be reused.

The occupiers and city officials often spoke in terms of authentic "Blackness," when questioning how much agency each other should have over the reuse. Initial doubts that the occupiers could represent the Black community were used to challenge their right to protest. Later the city organized a committee with the occupiers in leadership positions, granting them greater agency over the project, so long as they accepted working within the system. The occupiers, justifiably suspicious (and likely jaded after years of frustration), began accusing other members of working secretly for White interests, attempting to disqualify thos members' rights to make decisions. Ultimately, the activists' refusal to accept compromises on their vision led to the committee's schism. To move the museum reuse forward, the project was transferred to the Urban League and no further debate on issues of agency took place.

By the time of the LPB hearings, almost all parties agreed on the worth of Colman, and that a museum would be valuable for the community. Yet, Omari and Kwame Tahir-Garrett continued to protest the results. Their words often drew a connection between agency and "Blackness" –that is, that only the true Black community can make decisions, and as such it is possible they saw compromises on their vision of the museum as impacting their own authenticity.

In preservation, this should be a concept of deep concern. The occupiers did not have enough information to make informed decisions or to accept the decisions of others. The value they wanted from the building was never clearly defined, they described a heritage museum, community center, and youth-focused programs all at once, without clear descriptions of which parts of the project they considered most important, nor why they wanted all these elements at Colman School. Despite forcing official approval of the preservation, they never clearly stated what they wanted the city to do. Instead, their actions drew agencies in who had concerns about the lack of organization, the long-term physical safety of the building, and the lack of funds. The conflation of identity and right to agency further impaired the process, and the aggressiveness of the occupiers in testing the committee served to alienate them from the support they had gathered. On the other hand, the officials involved frequently overlooked systematic problems that prevented the occupiers achieving what they wanted.

Even when preservation is done collaboratively, carefully building knowledge in stakeholders and providing agency, unseen problems can arise.

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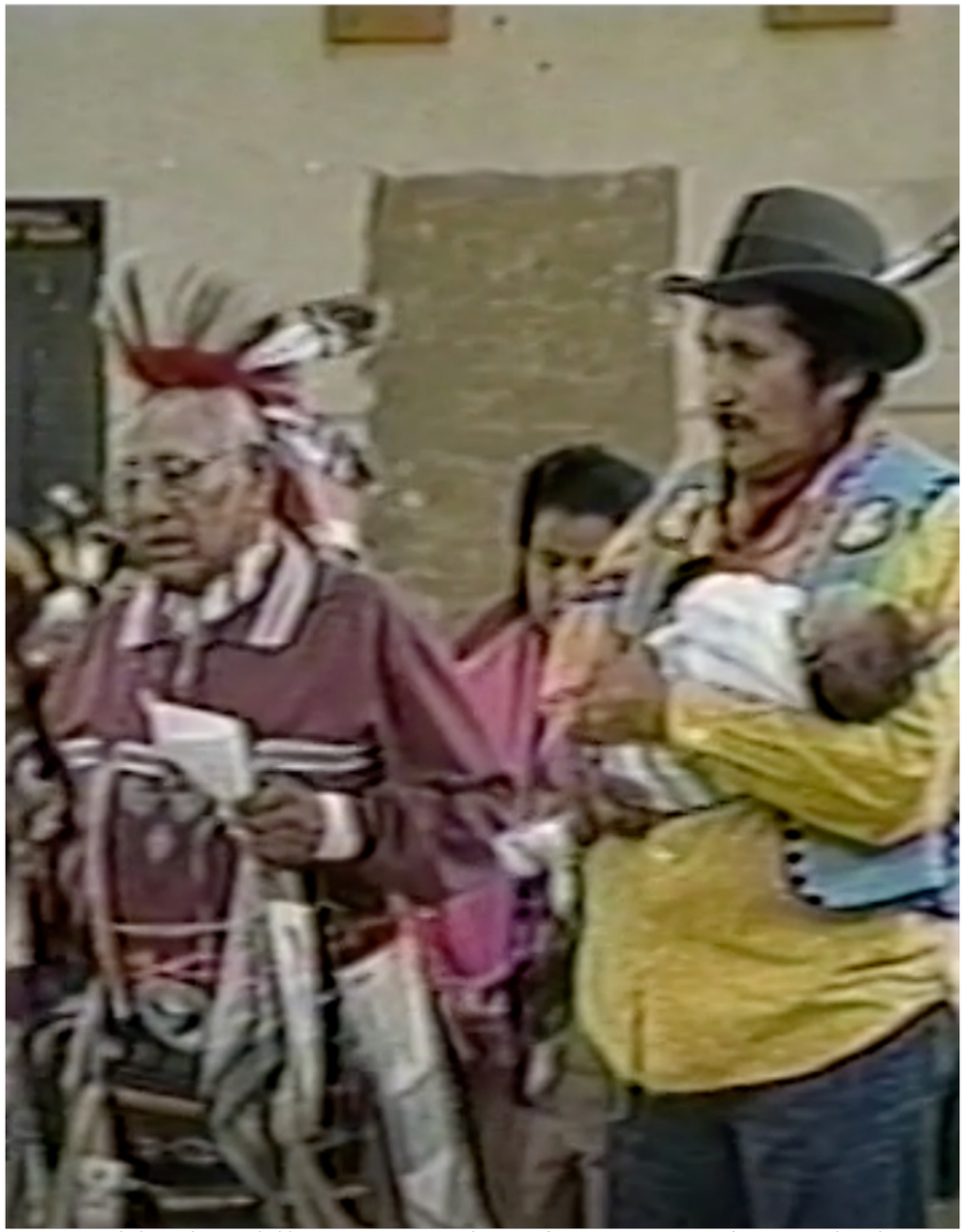


Figure 92: Tribal members and elders at pow-wow at Wilson-Pacific gymnasium, 1994. (Puget Sound Productions 1994)

Woodrow Wilson School

The Wilson-Pacific School buildings, now demolished, were located at 1330 North 90th Street within the Licton Springs neighborhood (also known as North College Park) of Seattle. Wilson-Pacific was designated a Seattle Landmark in 2014 for its association with the American Indian Heritage School (AIHS) and its principal Robert Eaglestaff, on the basis of criteria A and B: A) that it is significant for its association with a historic event with a significant effect upon the community, and B) It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the city, state, or nation. Seattle Public Schools (SPS) chose to develop the site in 2013 and the Seattle Landmark Preservation Board (LPB) granted them permission to modify the Landmark by not adopting protective controls; in 2014 the buildings were demolished, and the site was redeveloped for two new buildings to host two present-day schools: Robert Eagle Staff Middle School and Cascadia Elementary School.

The Wilson-Pacific School represents a failure by preservation groups and SPS in protecting a vulnerable community. The building once served as a successful Indigenous-focused school, community, and cultural space, but it was demolished after SPS both threatened to sue the LPB, and argued that the building was not able to demonstrate its

Timeline

Over 6000 years ago	Indigenous people use the land around Licton Springs.
1870	Arthur and David Denny build a summer cabin near WP Site.
1953	Shoreline School District constructs four new buildings and opens Woodrow Wilson Junior High School.
1954	City of Seattle annexes land north of 80th/85th and Seattle Public Schools (SPS) purchases the WP site and building (as well as other schools) from the Shoreline School District No. 412.
1960	SPS adds five new buildings to the campus.
1974	American Indian Heritage School (AIHS) opens at another location.
1978	Wilson stops regular classes due to enrollment decline, instead becomes the Pacific School, a program for students with disabilities.
1989	Pacific School closes due to program closure. AIHS moves into Wilson-Pacific.
1996	AIHS principal Robert Eaglestaff dies unexpectedly.
2000	AIHS enrollment declines to 70 students; Middle College High School is merged with AIHS and joins it at WP.
2001-2007	Native artist Andrew Morrison paints large-scale murals of Indigenous figures on the exterior and interior walls of Wilson-Pacific.
2012	AIHS moves out of Wilson-Pacific buildings.
2013	AIHS enrollment declines to 15 students, only three Native, taught by premade computer classes. AIHS is disbanded at end of school year - June 2013.
2014	Archaeological and built environment surveys of the Wilson-Pacific site completed for SPS.
2014 May	Seattle Landmark Preservation Board (LPB) votes to nominate Wilson-Pacific.
2014 Jun.	LPB votes to designate Wilson-Pacific a Landmark
2014 Oct.	The Johnson Partnership presents a "no-controls" plan to the LPB; LPB agrees.
2015	Wilson-Pacific School is demolished; walls with murals retained.
2016	New buildings are constructed.
2017	New middle school is named Robert Eagle Staff in honor of AIHS principal Robert Eaglestaff.

history. This case study examines the impact these events had on the Indigenous people involved with the school, the methods and strategy used by SPS and their spokespeople in overcoming the preservation process, and what the community valued about the school that the legal framework of preservation does not protect.

This chapter includes site history prior to 2014, a description of the construction and physical characteristics of the Wilson-Pacific School to 2014 (9.2), a description of the building's use (9.3) and communities involved in its use (9.4), and a description of preservation process to the opening of the new schools (9.5). This discussion will be followed by an analysis of events examining how the communities around the school were affected by the loss of the building and construction of new structures (9.6), and how the actions of the community, city government, and public reflect attitudes towards historic buildings and their preservation (9.7).

Historic Name

Woodrow Wilson Jr. High School

Pacific School

American Indian Heritage School

Historic Architects (Year Completed)

William Mallis, Mallis & DeHart Architects (1952, 1955, 1958)

Poston Construction (Builder 1952)

Nelse Mortenson (Builder 1955)

Northern State (Builder 1958)

Arnold G. Ganges (1978)

Current Name

Robert Eagle Staff Middle School (2016)

Cascadia Elementary School (2016)

Modern Architects (Year Completed)

BOLA Architecture + Planning (2016)

Lydig Construction (2016)

Mahlum (2016)

Neighborhood

North College Park (licton Springs)

Address

1330 North 90th Street

9.6.1 Wilson-Pacific School

In 1953, the Shoreline School District No. 412 purchased land north of the City of Seattle and built Woodrow Wilson Junior High School. The building and sirte were subsequently acquired by the Seattle School District, and over the years, the school building was home to three school programs, Woodrow Wilson, the Pacific School, and the American

Figure 93: Woodrow Wilson School, gymnasium exterior, photographed in 2013. (Johnson and Mirro 2013)

Figure 94: Aerial photo of Woodrow Wilson School 1969. (Historic Aerials 1969)

Figure 95: Aerial photo of Woodrow Wilson School 2023. (Imagery ©2023 Maxar Technologies, U.S. Geological Survey, USDA/FPAC?GEO, Map data ©2023)

Indian Heritage School (AIHS). In 2013 Seattle Public Schools (SPS) was granted $694.9 million from a capital levy, which included a plan for the demolition and redevelopment of the school buildings collectively known as Wilson-Pacific. The LPB received a report on its historic significance and met in May and again in June 2014, nominating and designating Wilson-Pacific as a City of Seattle landmark. However, in October, in an unusual (but not unprecedented[1]) decision, the LPB voted to put no controls on SPS's use of the building, effectively allowing the Landmark's demolition.

The process from nomination to demolition produced a complex debate over how significance is demonstrated in buildings related to ethnic communities. Local site users hoped to keep the building as a community space, while outsider Indigenous speakers for SPS, with no relation to the local stakeholders, worked to convince the LPB that the cultural significance of the site was represented entirely by a group of removable murals.

9.6.2 Licton Springs Neighborhood History

Prior to development, the 17 acre Wilson-Pacific School campus was an undeveloped marsh land. During the archaeological testing conducted prior to the 2014-2016 new school construction project, Holocene aged peat was found in a stratum under fill soils of gravel and sand, indicating the survival of pre-Euro-American soils on the site.[2] This means the soils, as seen and used by Indigenous people, have remained intact under the future school property. Seattle was originally inhabited by the Coast Salish peoples,[3] an Indigenous cultural group defined by their language. These people lived in dispersed groups throughout western Washington and moved seasonally between village sites.[4] Present-day tribal nations were formed after Euro-American settlers pressured Indigenous peoples into signing the Treaty of Point Elliot (1855) and required them to relocate to reservations.[5] The peoples living in village sites within the modern Seattle area were forced out after their homes and long-houses were burned to the ground by the United States Army.[6]

[1] A Denny's Restaurant was designated as a Landmark in 2008, and demolished the same year. (Krishnan 2008)
[2] Wilson and Lockwood 2014
[3] The identity of Indigenous peoples prior to Euro-American settlement is a complex issue. Tribal distinctions were invented for the purposes of reservation creation and Tribal Nation names comes from more loosely and shared names. Chief Si'ahl, namesake of the City of Seattle signed the Treaty of Point Elliot in 1855 under Duwamish and other group names. Present day Tribal Nations share and sometimes contest each other's relationship to these titles.
[4] Suttles 1987, pp. 30-34, Thrush 2007, pp. 23
[5] Duwamish 2018, Thrush 2007, pp. 23
[6] Duwamish 2018

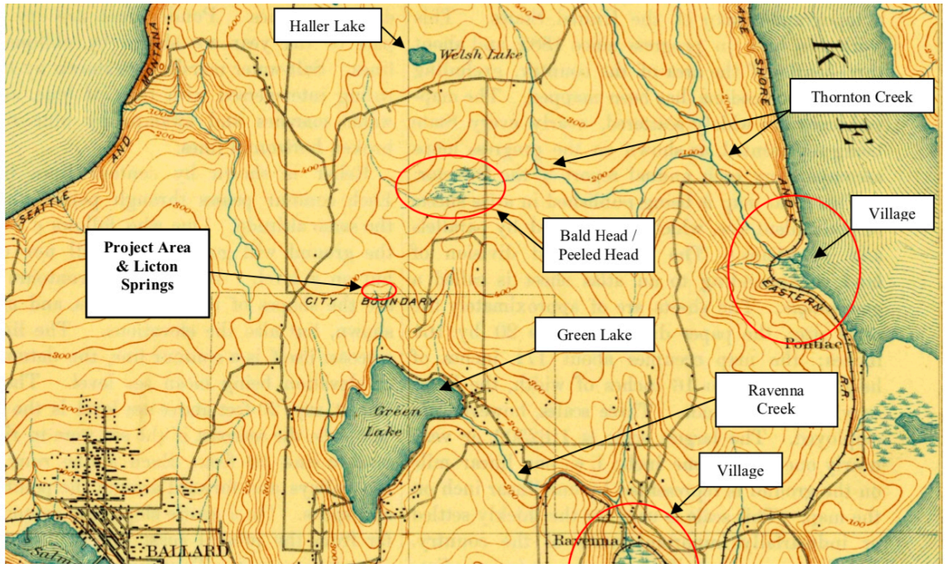


Figure 98: Ethnographic places near Woodrow Wilson School (labeled "Project Area"). (Wilson and Lockwood 2014)

9.6.3 Ceremonial Coast Salish Site

The school site and Licton Springs are within the area recorded from interviews of Indigenous residents, as s'łuqwač, translated from Salish as "Bald Head."[1] Licton Springs and Bald Head were locations of spiritual importance and served as a site of ceremonies for the Salish peoples,[2] and have remained recognized by the Duwamish as a site of heritage.[3] Water from the Licton Spring, 800 feet west of the school site, once flowed through what would become the school property, into the Pilings Pond bird sanctuary neighboring the school,[4] and then southward to Green Lake.[5] Licton Springs derives its Anglicized name from the original Whulshootseed name łéétud, meaning "red paint."[6] The springs produce a heavily mineralized clay with a distinctive red color, which was collected as a resource and was used for traditional practices, such as face painting.[7] Stone tools have been found by previous archaeological investigations in the surrounding area of Bald Head and Licton

[1] Waterman 2000, pp. 91-84
[2] Sheridan and Tobin 2001, Duwamish 2018
[3] Duwamish 2018, LPB 285/14
[4] Wilson and Lockwood 2014
[5] Wilson and Lockwood 2014
[6] Wilson and Lockwood 2014
[7] Wilson and Lockwood 2014

Springs, demonstrating Indigenous presence[1] for at least 6000 years.[2]

9.6.4 Euro-American Use of the Site

In 1870 the property and surrounding land was claimed by Seattle founders Arthur A. and David T. Denny. They constructed a summer cottage near Licton Springs sometime between 1870 and 1890, followed in around 1890 by a two-story wood-frame house (located to the west of the Wilson-Pacific site) that remains standing today.[3] Suburban development in unincorporated King County slowly expanded around Licton Springs and by 1895 the last Indigenous residents of the area were forcibly expelled from Seattle when the United States Army burned their longhouses to the ground;[4] Licton Springs had its Indigenous history ignored and was "whitewashed" as a "hidden-gem discovered" by new Euro-American owners.[5]

In 1903, the Denny family attempted to sell Licton Springs to the City of Seattle for the creation of a park,

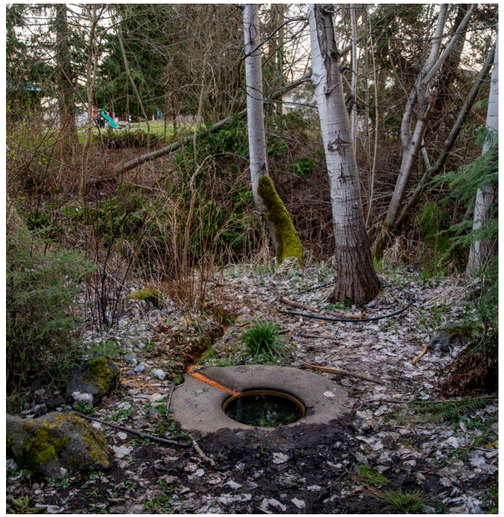


Figure 96: Licton Springs in 2019. (Secaira 2019)

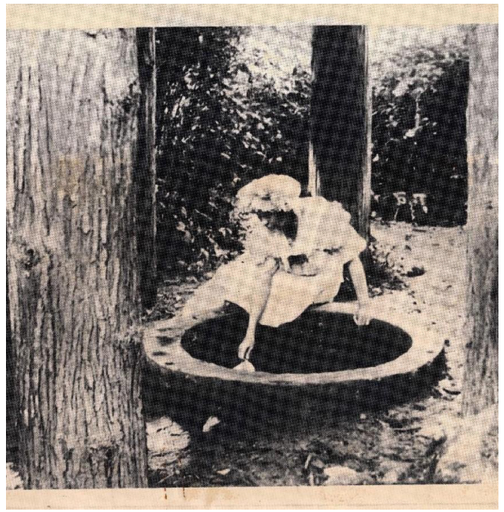


Figure 97: Licton Springs in advert for the spa circa 1930s. (Secaira 2019)

[1] Wilson and Lockwood 2014
[2] Duwamish 2018
[3] Sheridan and Tobin 2001
[4] Duwamish 2018
[5] Secaira 2019

and repeated the offer until the city purchased 6.5 acres in 1960. In the interim, the springs were used as a spa by a citizen named Edward A. Jensen, who claimed the natural waters would improve health.[1] News articles and spa advertisements described the springs and surrounding forest and marsh land as "wild" and "an unknown gem" furthering the narrative of Euro-American discovery of a "pure" and "natural" wilderness, devoid of its Indigenous users.[2]

The spa buildings were demolished in 1960 after the city purchased the remaining undeveloped land, and it was converted into a public park.[3] The Duwamish Tribe and others have advocated for the Licton Springs to be clearly marked as an Indigenous heritage site and its pre-contact history taught to park visitors.[4] The Urban Native Education Alliance, an organization formed in 2000 to cater to Indigenous youth, reaffirmed this wish in 2018 stating:

> [...] WHEREAS, Licton Springs is a x̌á?x̌a?'ali (Sacred Place) a place of spiritual power. This has been a Duwamish religious and holy site since time immemorial; [...]
>
> BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department works with our youth advocates, elders, and community members, the Duwamish and other Coast Salish tribal people to develop historically and culturally accurate signage for Licton Springs. [...][5]

This history of Indigenous use, expulsion of Indigenous people, and subsequent omission of Indigenous history were stated by Indigenous speakers in the first and second LPB meetings in 2014 as a reason for the Wilson-Pacific site to be considered connected to the greater Indigenous heritage that remains in Seattle, and that preservation of Wilson-Pacific could constitute a method of restitution on the part of the city.[6]

[1] Wilson and Lockwood 2014
[2] Secaira 2019
[3] Miller 1952
[4] Secaira 2019
[5] UNEA 2019
[6] LPB 285/14, LPB 411/14

Figure 99: Woodrow Wilson School Unit B, photographed 2013. (Johnson and Mirro 2014)

9.1 Construction History

In 1952 the Shoreline School District No. 412 purchased 16.87 acres located at 1330 North 90th Street, within the Licton Springs neighborhood.[1] The Woodrow Wilson Junior High opened in 1953 with 28 classrooms and support spaces.[2] The Wilson-Pacific School buildings were built in two phases, with continual additions, adaptations, and changes over the school's history, eventually totaling nine connected buildings by the time of its demolition in 2015.[3] The first four structures were designed in 1952 and completed by September 1953.[4] After the Shoreline School District was combined by the Seattle School District, the campus was expanded by two additional buildings in 1958 and another three in 1960.[5]

The Shoreline School District, founded in 1944, had seen a seven-fold increase in student numbers in its first four years of existence. They consistently failed to secure levy funds to construct new buildings, and students had to attend classes in shifts to fit in

[1] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 324
[2] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 4
[3] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 4
[4] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 4
[5] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 6-8

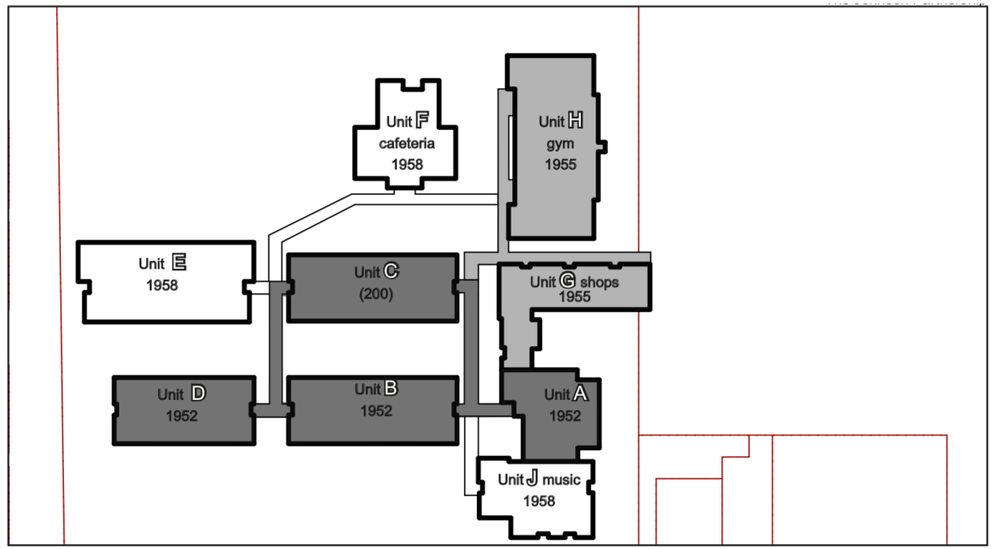


Figure 100: Woodrow Wilson map of units with years constructed. (Johnson and Mirro 2013)

existing classrooms. In 1952 public voters finally approved a construction levy for Shoreline, and they rushed to construct new buildings to alleviate overcrowding.[1]

Meanwhile, after World War II the Modern Movement in architecture was spreading and taking hold and by 1945, designers integrated Modern principles into school building plans. John Morse, a Seattle architect, wrote in 1957:

> New designs for one-story schools came out of Michigan, Texas and California – plans based on groups of classroom wings and landscaped courts [...] Washington State contributed to the national wakening with pioneering work in top-lighting, color design and concrete design in both pre-stressed and shell design.
>
> The principal changes in regular classrooms have been these: more floor area per pupil – minimum 30 sq. ft., square rooms, sinks in all primary classrooms, day-lighting from above or from two sides, lower ceilings – down from 12 feet to 8 or 9 feet [...].[2]

In the rush to construct new buildings, over 127 new classrooms were added across the Shoreline District in 1952. With the overwhelming need for new buildings, designers were limited to using less expensive materials and quickly erected structures.[3] The Modern

[1] Lehr 2002
[2] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 15, quoting John M. Morse 1957 "The Art of Building Has Changed," Washington Education, pp. 13-15
[3] Lehr 2002

design of these school responded to these limitations by making use of concrete, minimal ornamentation, walkways and open-air plans that could reduce the need for hallways, and the low one-story school buildings could be built simply and quickly.

William Mallis's school design for Woodrow Wilson made use of all of these features, creating what would eventually be a campus of nine buildings, spread apart and connected by covered outside walkways. Clerestory windows and windows along the entirety of walls brought in fresh air and light. The buildings were not overly decorated, using simple brick veneers over concrete and concrete blocks, with wooden support beams for its low slanting ceilings.[1]

In 1953-1954 the City of Seattle annexed all land south of 145th Street, including the Licton Springs neighborhood that housed Woodrow Wilson and the Shoreline District sold all buildings south of that line to the Seattle School District. Reorganizations by SPS, the Pacific School program, and the AIHS all modified the buildings on the Woodrow Wilson site and several additions were made over the years.

9.1.1 Units A, B, C and D (1953)

The first phase (1952-1958) was designed by William Mallis of Mallis & DeHart Architects and constructed by Poston Construction's Seattle office. The first four structures (known as Units A, B, C, and D; see Figure 10 above) were located in the center of the property surrounded by a wide grassy area. Unit A featured an assembly hall with a raised stage, offices, kitchens, toilets, and service spaces.[2] Units B, C, and D were classroom buildings, arranged apart from each other, maintaining a central green space. All structures featured clerestory windows, aluminum ribbon windows and covered walkways around exterior spaces, accentuating natural light and fresh air. Proposed Units E and F were included in 1952 and 1953 plans, but were never built.[3] Units B & C were remodeled in 1955.

Units A, B, C, & D had concrete frames and glue-laminated roof beams for structure, with concrete block and Roman brick veneer exterior walls. All interiors were all finished with plasterboard walls, acoustic tile ceilings, floor tiles, and glazed ceramic in restrooms.

[1] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 5-10
[2] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 5
[3] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 5-6

Figure 101: Unit A assembly space. (Johnson and Mirro 2014)

Each unit was separated by 9-feet, with flat-roofed covered walkways connecting entrances.[1]

Unit A was irregular in plan with multiple rectangular volumes combined with flat, sloping shed, and gable roof sections. The west wall had ceiling high windows on 3-foot brick soldier course sills made up of stacks of 11 panes with aluminum frames.[2]

Units B, C & D used the same structural materials as Unit A, and were rectangular in plan with gable roofs with a clerestory running east-west down the center of each building. The east and west walls were painted concrete block walls, while the north and south faces were made up of concrete with brick veneers and ribbons of five pane aluminum windows on brick soldier course sills. These ribbon windows were only broken up by entry doors and downspouts.[3]

9.1.2 Units H and G (1958)

In 1958, after acquisition by the Seattle School District, two additional buildings opened: Unit H, a gymnasium, and Unit G, a workshop classroom adjacent to Unit A. These connected into the existing network of walkways, creating breezeways between all student spaces.[4]

Unit H had a large concrete pillar and bond beam frame with infill walls and steel roof trusses. It had a rectangular footprint with a central clear-span gymnasium and locker rooms to the north and south. The gymnasium had a wood floor and painted interior, and the locker rooms were tiled with ceramic.[5]

[1] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 5-6
[2] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 5-6
[3] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 6
[4] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 6-7
[5] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 7

Unit G connected through Unit A's boiler room and extended in an L-shape plan. It was constructed from concrete block walls, with a concrete floor slab. The building had a shed roof, rising to the north, with a high clerestory window to allow light into the interior. The west and south walls had tall banks of aluminum framed windows. The north had a covered walkway spanning its length, connecting the workshops to the walkway north-south from the gym and the walkways between Unit A and C.[1]

Figure 102: Unit G gymnasium interior. (Johnson and Mirro 2014)

9.1.3 Units E, F and J (1960)

The third phase (1958-1960) was designed by William Mallis of Mallis & DeHart Architects in 1958 and opened in 1960, adding three more structures: Unit E, a science/art classroom, Unit F, a cafeteria, and Unit J, a U-shaped structure housing music classrooms attached to Unit A. These new structures abandoned the clerestory element but maintained the ribbon windows and covered walkway connections.[2]

Unit E filled the northwest corner of the four-structure plan around the central green space, but was slightly larger in footprint. The building had two banks of classrooms with a central corridor with built-in storage. Unlike the previous buildings, Unit E had a flat roof and did not include clerestory windows. Like Units B, C, & D it had similar aluminum framed windows in ribbons along its east and west facades but without breaks for downspouts.[3]

Unit F was located north of Unit C and west of the gymnasium and is connected by a walkway along its southern side. The structure was constructed from concrete with brick veneer and banks of tall windows along east and west sides. The building contained a lunchroom, kitchen, teacher dining room, dry storage, bathrooms and delivery spaces.[4]

[1] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 7
[2] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 7, LPB 285/14, pp. 2-4
[3] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 7
[4] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 7

Unit J abutted Unit A, but was connected by a walkway on the west side. The north and south facades had ribbon windows like the other classrooms, with exits on the south.[1]

9.1.4 Additional Remodels 1970-2014

In 1970 Units A, B, and C were remodeled to be used as a learning resources center. The school was subdivided for a new organizational plan.[2] The subdivisions were removed to cater to the Pacific School for the developmentally challenged which operated at the site from 1978 to 1989.[3] The buildings were further altered by the site's use as administrative storage and by the AIHS moving into the buildings in 1989.[4] At unknown dates several of the buildings had roof insulation installed, increasing roof overhangs from 1-foot to 2-feet, and railings and ramps were added to comply with accessibility codes.[5] In 2001 artist Andrew Morrison painted large scale murals on multiple walls throughout the school buildings.[6]

Overall, the Wilson-Pacific site was continually expanded and modified for its users, with subdivisions for special learning centers, offices, and storage being added or removed as needed. The walkways and internal green spaces provided outside spaces for students, as well as central mingling grounds for users. The gymnasium and assembly hall were well-used by students and later community members for many years. The separated classroom buildings could be easily used to reorganize or compartmentalize portions of the student body.

[1] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 8
[2] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 8
[3] Calkins 1991
[4] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 5
[5] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 6
[6] Morrison 2023

9.2 Building Use History

The junior high school opened in 1953 and was named in a student contest after the Nobel Prize winner and 28th President of the United States Woodrow Wilson.[1] The junior high saw a slow decline in population until it was closed in 1978[2] and the building was used by the Pacific School, a special program for students with disabilities, until the program was closed down in 1989. By this time, the school building had become colloquially known as Wilson-Pacific.[3] Shortly thereafter, the AIHS was moved to the site in 1989, and then finally, in 2012, the space was used as storage, community space, for and special program events.

9.2.1 Wilson Junior High

The school was opened by the Shoreline School District No. 412 as a junior high school for grades 5-7 and had a student body of 750 in its first year. The school was annexed into the Seattle School District in 1954 and the grades taught were changed to 7-9. Its student population peaked at 1,347 in the academic year of 1959-1960. In 1970-1971, the buildings were altered for grades 6-8 as part of city-wide desegregation plans, moving middle school students between northern and central parts of the city.[4] Units A, B, and C were subdivided to create separate "houses" that could be overseen by individual administrators, providing a smaller student body with direct oversight.[5] In 1972 over one-hundred African American students were bused to Wilson, while white students were bused to the Meany/Madrona Middle School near Capitol Hill. The student body of Wilson declined to 996 in 1975, and 556 in 1978 when the site was closed and students reassigned to Thomson, Hamilton or Sharples middle schools nearby.[6]

9.2.2 Pacific School & Administration Annex

The subdivisions installed during the desegregation reorganization were removed in 1978, and the spaces converted to cater to the Pacific School, a special education program

[1] Calkins 1991, pp. 259, Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 324
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 324
[3] Calkins 1991, pp. 258, Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 324
[4] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 324
[5] Johnson and Mirro 2013, pp. 8
[6] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 325

for students with disabilities.[1] The program had been created in 1940 (As the Prevocational and Adjustment Center for Girls) and 1946 (Prevocational and Adjustment Center for Boys) at the Pacific School building located in the center of Seattle. The program intended to train handicapped students to be self sufficient and potentially take on employment. The original building was condemned in 1975 and the program was moved to the Washington building, and finally Wilson in 1978. Wilson's campus was chosen for its availability and also because it was composed of one-stroy buildings making access easier for those with disabilities.[2] The program served around 2000 students until the program's cessation in June 1989. The building was then used as an administrative annex, mainly for storage purposes in adapted office and classrooms spaces.[3]

9.2.3 American Indian Heritage School

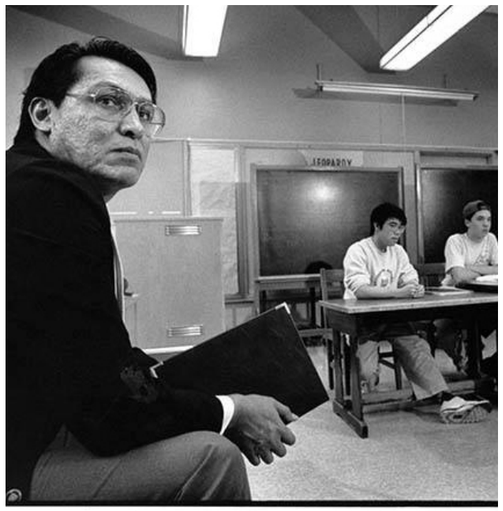


Figure 104: Robert Eaglestaff at West Seattle High School advising ASB Officers as they replace their mascot, the "Indians."

In 1989 the American Indian Heritage School (AIHS) was moved to this campus. The program, started in 1974, had been moved among multiple locations, including Rainier Beach in southern Seattle, but remained in Wilson-Pacific for the longest continuous time.[4] It was assigned to Wilson-Pacific after Superintendent William Kendrick recommended consolidating alternative programs there.[5] The program was a specially created high school program aimed at improving the educational success of Indigenous students in the SPS system. It was intended to provide an Indigenous-created curriculum, led by Indigenous teachers and administrators.[1]

[1] Calkins 1991
[2] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 244-245
[3] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 325
[4] LPB 411/14
[5] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 325

Figure 103: Students playing pool after school at the AIHS in Wilson-Pacific. (Puget Sound Productions 2014)

The program was helmed by principal Robert Eaglestaff from 1989 to 1996, a Lakota Tribal member, who promoted and fought for the school to have a primarily Indigenous leadership and student body.[2] He led the school to have deep connections with Tribal organizations and insured the involvement of Elders and other community leaders in the events and educational programs at the school.[3] Under his leadership, from 1994 to 1996 the school had a 100% graduation and college admittance rate, an astonishingly high number.[4] In Robert Eaglestaff's own words, the school prepared students:

> For citizenships, healthy relationships, and academic as well as vocational and professional success" [while preserving culture,] "involving the parents and elders promoting preservation of the Indian culture and respect for and celebration for the traditions of our diverse Native American community.[5]

Robert Eaglestaff died unexpectedly on July 19, 1996, while dancing in a powwow in Wallowa, Oregon.[6] The superintendent at the time, John Stanford, spoke to his widow, and promised vocally to continue the AIHS program.[7]

9.2.4 Continued Community Use

After Robert Eaglestaff's death, the AIHS program continued at Wilson-Pacific until 2012 when it was relocated to a rented space in Northgate Mall. Indigenous cultural and community events continued in Wilson-Pacific during and after the school's tenure in the

[1] Cornwell 2017
[2] Cornwell 2017
[3] Puget Sound Productions 1994
[4] Hidalgo 2013, Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 325
[5] UNEA 2018
[6] Puget Sound Productions 1994
[7] *Confederated Umatilla Journal* 1996

buildings.[1] Speakers at LPB meetings described how the local Indigenous community continued to use the site. Trena Harmon, a local Indigenous woman, and a representative of the Duwamish Tribe and the Seattle Committee to Save Schools, described:

> She said that they are still there at the building, and the Indian youth still play basketball there. She said they have their beads and artwork in storage there. She said they are planning on meeting there in the Fall. She said they hold the school precious.[2]

Blaine Parce, a board member for United Native Education Alliance (UNEA) and an alum of American Indian Heritage School, and Licton Springs resident, listed more community events:

> She said that in April 2013 her kids had their naming ceremony at the school. She said that many other students and staff have done memorials at Indian Heritage. […] She said it was stated earlier that they still have a program at Woodrow Wilson; it is Indian Heritage's Seattle Clear Sky Native Youth Council, and the after-school tutoring program which is housed there weekly. She said that their program runs eight months to a year, so the school facilities are still being used by Native youth and Board Members from UNEA.[3]

Many of these cultural events were not recorded officially, and speakers complained that SPS did not maintain the records that should have existed. During these community events, artist Andrew Morrison, an Apache and Haida tribal member, painted large murals on interior and exterior walls around the campus between 2001 and 2007.[4] All of these were large scale renderings of notable Indigenous figures, including the largest depiction of Chief Sealth ever created.[5]

Many speakers associated the community use during the AIHS and after its closure with Indigenous use of the lands around Licton Springs prior to Euro-American settlement. They considered the historic significance of Wilson-Pacific to be more important because its use before and after-Euro-American settlement, the AIHS, and later community events, connected the site and school into a continuum of use, that they hoped could continue in the future. Blaine Parce lamented at the end of her comment: "it is sad to think that [Parce's] kids would be the last generation to have ceremonies like that in such a sacred place."[6]

[1] LPB 285/14, pp. 4
[2] LPB 411/14
[3] LPB 411/14
[4] Johnson and Mirro 2013, LPB 605/14, Morrison 2021
[5] Morrison 2021
[6] LPB 411/14

Figure 105: Murals on Woodrow Wilson School building in 201e. (Johnson and Lockwood 2013)

9.3 Communities & Stakeholders

9.3.1 Seattle Public School Administrators and Others

In 2013 72% of Seattle voters approved the Building Excellence IV (BEX IV) Capital Levy granting SPS $694.4 million to update and redevelop properties to prepare for expected increases in student population. Seventeen construction projects were planned and have, as of 2022, been completed. In their words:

> Seventeen major building projects will result in new schools, replacement schools or modernized schools. By replacing or renovating school buildings, Seattle Public Schools is not just creating better learning and teaching environments. These projects also reduce the maintenance backlog by updating or replacing aging structures. Modernization of existing schools includes earthquake safety improvements.[1]

One of the proposed projects was the demolition of Wilson-Pacific and the construction of two new school buildings. As the buildings were over 25-years of age, SPS was required to submit a Landmark nomination to the LPB during their planning process. Since they planned to demolish the building, they were invested in convincing the LPB that

[1] Seattle Public Schools 2013

Wilson-Pacific was not historically significant.

An SPS spokesperson attended each LPB meeting, and also brought representatives of the Johnson Partnership (TJP) to present the nomination, and in the second and third meetings they brought Johnpaul Jones (Choctaw/Cherokee), of Jones & Jones Architects, to consult on the Indigenous heritage of the site. Johnpaul Jones described his expertise:

> [M]ost of his work now is dedicated to indigenous communities in Seattle and throughout the northwest, and it culminated in Washington DC with the Smithsonian Museum where he had to deal with 17 different groups.[1]

9.3.2 AIHS Alumni & Related Indigenous Users

Through its association with pre-settlement use and the AIHS, the Wilson-Pacific School building became intertwined with Indigenous culture and memory. Robert Eaglestaff's vision was that the school would combine typical classroom activities with cultural and community events. He invited Elders from nearby tribes, Indigenous youth not in the program, and any other Indigenous or non-Indigenous person to be a part of the community. He saw the need to form connections between people. Many alumni, parents, and involved individuals continued to use the Wilson-Pacific space due to its connection to the AIHS and Indigenous heritage overall.

In 2000, a student unsatisfied with Indigenous-focused extracurricular programs offered by SPS formed the Urban Native Education Alliance (UNEA), an organization that would operate youth education, sports, and entertainment events. Up to 2014 UNEA used Wilson-Pacific for its Clear Sky Native Youth Leadership program, and its Native Warrior Athletics program.[2] UNEA identifies its members as the "urban Seattleite native community," and several representatives spoke at the two public LPB meetings.[3] UNEA also continues to advocate for the reopening of an Indigenous high school program, despite continual rejection by SPS officials.[4] Trena Harmon (Colville Tribe), a board member of UNEA represented the alliance at the 2014 LPB meetings, arguing for its distinctive and visible characteristics and cultural heritage of the Indigenous stakeholders.[5]

[1] LPB 411/14, pp. 7
[2] UNEA 2022, Brazille 2019
[3] UNEA 2022
[4] UNEA 2022
[5] UNEA 2022

9.3.3 "Taxpayers," "Neighbors," and "Future Parents"

An assortment of non-Indigenous speakers also appeared at LPB meetings. These individuals came from a variety of backgrounds and often identified themselves as taxpayers, neighbors, or parents of future Wilson-Pacific students. One speaker, Chris Jackins, represented the Committee to Save Seattle Schools (CSSS), a group that advocates against the demolition of historic school buildings and runs the "saveseattleschools.org" blog, a site that frequently posts about SPS related news and has a very active population of commenters, even including some SPS planners. Jackins worked with the Indigenous groups involved with the AIHS to create a description of criteria for nominating Wilson-Pacific, and additionally collected signatures to petition the LPB.

Two speakers at LPB meetings were Peter Mayer, a former SPS Board member,[1] and Lisa McFarlane, the state director of Democrats for Education Reform PAC since 2012, a lobbying group focused on creating public charter schools in Washington.[2] Neither admitted their connection to SPS, and instead identified themselves as neighbors and taxpayers. Both argued that the school was unsafe, due to its proximity to Aurora Avenue North, and both attempted to claim the AIHS had not been present at the site as long as the Indigenous stakeholders described. This claim was completely false.

Predominantly on online articles or the saveseattleschools.org comment sections, a small number of anonymous commenters reacted to news of the upcoming Landmarking Wilson-Pacific and the AIHS program with extreme emotion, attacked the concept of preventing new construction, and questioned the legitimacy of the significance of the AIHS.

[1] Seattle Public Schools 2023
[2] Ballotpedia.org 2023

9.4 Preservation Process

Once SPS began the planning process for developing the Wilson-Pacific property, they were legally obligated to evaluate environmental effects of planned construction, including impacts to historical buildings.

Presented below is a timeline of events, followed by the main arguments of each stakeholder summarized across the lead up to nomination to the end of designation. In this case, the controls and incentives will be described in a separate section below. Legal action was taken prior and after the controls hearing, and requires a more in depth

9.4.1 Arguments of Seattle Public Schools

During the preservation process, SPS stated that with the passing of BEX IV in 2012, they were obligated by 72% of city voters to complete the construction of new school buildings, and therefore they strongly objected to designation of Wilson-Pacific. SPS had completed an EIS prior to the BEX IV plan, but did not submit a nomination report to the LPB until the beginning of the city permitting process in 2013, after designs had been established.

TJP, contracted by SPS, submitted the nomination report in August 2013. The historic background in the report could be considered "boilerplate," using general history of the Shoreline School District, Seattle Public Schools, and the architectural styles used. In more detail, TJP included a full physical description of the structure with a timeline of construction phases. They included brief histories of the building use, including the American Indian Heritage School, although omitting the Pacific School.[1]

At the nomination hearing in May 2014, Erick Becker, representative of Seattle Public Schools, and a committee member of the Wilson-Pacific redevelopment project, stated that SPS planned to replace Wilson-Pacific and that they felt the current buildings did not rise to Landmark status. He also presented a letter from consulting architect Johnpaul Jones declaring that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), to save the murals painted by Andrew Morisson, had been made between SPS and the artist.[2]

[1] Johnson and Mirro 2013
[2] LPB 285/14, pp. 2

Preservation Timeline

2012 Jan.	SPS releases first draft of The Building Excellent levy; proposes to fund the SPS building and modernizing 16 buildings with $694 million.
2013 Feb.	Voters approve BEX IV with a roughly 3/4 approval. Approval triggers the need to fulfill environmental surveys.
2013	AESI Inc. completes Geological Survey. They identify Holocene aged soils, thus demonstrating that intact surfaces from pre-human occupation exist.
2013	The Johnson Partnership (TJP) completes Built Environment Survey of the structures on the Wilson-Pacific property and documents the context of surrounding neighborhoods.
2013 Aug.	TJP compiles a nomination report as required by SMC.25. LPB Staff begin review.
2014 Mar.	Environmental Science Associates (ESA) submits Literature Review. ESA recommends a full archaeological survey based on AESI Inc. Geological survey.
2014 Apr. 2	LPB Announces Nomination vote for W-P. An official meeting announcement is made and the public is invited to comment.
2014 May 12	MOU between SPS and Andrew Morrison.
2014 May 21	Nomination Hearing attended by LPB members: Nick Carter, Robert Ketcherside, Aaron Luoma, Jeffrey Murdock, Valerie Porter, Marie Strong, Alison Walker Brems, and Meredith Wirsching. Vote for nomination: 8:0:0.
2014 Jun. 25, 30	LPB members visit the W-P site. They comment on the deterioration of the buildings.
2014 Jul. 19	Designation Hearing is held. Linda Amato, Deb Barker, Robery Ketcherside, Aaron Luoma, Jeffery Murdock, Valerie Porter, Elaine Wine, and Meredith Wirsching vote 7:0:1 to designate Wilson-Pacific as a Seattle Landmark.
2014 Aug. 4	SPS "reluctantly" brings complaint against City of Seattle and LPB over Designation in King County Superior Court SPS states that the City's Landmarking of Wilson-Pacific created "uncertainty, delay, and substantially increased costs."
2014 Oct. 14	On October 14, 2014, the LPB meets to outline protections for the designated Wilson-Pacific Landmark. The meeting was attended by LPB members Deb Barker, Nick Carter, Robert Ketcherside, Aaron Luoma, Jeffrey Murdock, Valerie Porter, Sarah Shadid, Matthew Sneddon, Marie Strong, Alison Walker Brems, and Elaine Wine. With a vote of 7:3:1, LPB approves a "No-Controls" decision.
2015 Feb. 26	Seattle Committee to Save Schools appeals against demolition decision with the City Hearing Examiner on the basis that mitigation is not sufficient and requests additional impact studies.
2015 Apr. 6	Seattle Committee to Save Schools appeal is dismissed. SPS responds that the Hearing Examiner does not have jurisdiction over preservation decisions. Examiner agrees.
	Woodrow Wilson is demolished.
2015 Jun. 3	LPB approves gathering circle as mitigation of Wilson-Pacific
2016 Feb.	ESA identifies Holocene peat under 3-7 feet of fill, thus observing ground soil that would have been exposed prior to Euro-American settlement, and walked ons by Indigenous peoples.

Ellen Mirro and Larry Johnson of TJP presented the nomination to the LPB. They argued that the period of significance was its construction and existence as a school 50 years prior to 2014. Johnson argued that the period of significance relating to Robert Eaglestaff and the AIHS (1953-1964) was not relevant to the 1940-1950s period when the building was constructed, therefore it did not meet criteria for listing for historic significance. LPB member Jeffrey Murdock disagreed, reminding them that the AIHS usage of the site occurred over 25-years ago, and as such *was* relevant.[1] Johnson and Mirro also argued that the association with Licton Springs was no longer relevant as the spring water had been diverted through pipes and no longer surfaced on the project site.[2] Johnson also claimed the building was not an outstanding example of Modern architectural design. Recorded in the LPB minutes:

> He said that this one is less coherently organized and lacks refinement. He went over other work by Mallis – Enumclaw High School, Ronald School, Maple School, and Renton; and work by Mallis and Dehart noting a shift toward modernism - Jane Addams School, and Nathan Eckstein School which Mr. Johnson said is the finest example of their work. He said that Woodrow Wilson School is not an outstanding work of the firm. [3]

He and Ellen Mirro added that Shoreline Community College, Highland Terrace Elementary School,[4] and Genesee Hill Elementary School[5] also were built with campus-like plans featuring walkways. Johnson also emphasized the lack of adaptability of the buildings: the design and plan inhibited the ability to modernize the structures, expand the school, and bring it up to code, and, in their professional opinion, the buildings had fallen into disrepair since the school's closure in 1989, although an LPB member noted this was irrelevant.[6]

In July 2014, at the designation hearing, Richard Best, Director of SPS's department of Capital Works and Planning, opened the meeting requesting the LPB deny designation as SPS hopes to build two new schools on the site, a plan overwhelmingly approved by voters.[7] The passing of BEX IV remained the basis of the School District's argument that designation was not appropriate.

[1] LPB 285/14, pp. 3
[2] LPB 285/14, pp. 2-3
[3] LPB 285/14, pp. 2-3
[4] Shoreline and Highland Terrace are in the modern style and buildings often have extended eaves creating covered walkways connecting interior spaces. This is a different design than Wilson-Pacific which has distinct walkways, rather than extended eave spaces. Additionally the modern design used in these examples is of a later period.
[5] Genesse Hill was erroneously referred to as "Tenesse Hill" in LPB minutes. The school building did feature very similar modern features as Wilson-Pacific and had covered walkways enclosed by school buildings. The building was demolished in September, 2014. Ironically before its demolition the school hosted an alternate elementary school program called "Huchoosedah" for Indigenous students. The program was continued and now is located at Pathfinder Elementary School adjacent to the Duwamish Longhouse. (Thompson and Marr 2001)
[6] Thompson and Marr 2001, pp. 325
[7] LPB 411/14, pp. 325

Larry Johnson of TJP again presented the history of the school and reiterated his argument that the lack of quality, disqualified it for Criteria D, E, and F, and that since the AIHS had been moved to Northgate Mall the Wilson-Pacific building was no longer associated with the Indigenous community elements and thus should not be considered eligible under Criterion C.[1]

Both Johnpaul Jones (Choctaw/Cherokee) of Jones & Jones and Andrew Morrison (Apache and Haida) spoke against designation and described the MOU between SPS and Andrew Morrison. Both argued that as long as new construction included the murals, the Indigenous cultural value would be maintained. Although self-identified as Indigenous, they also self-identified as being paid by Seattle Public Schools for their part in the design process.[2] Johnpaul Jones established:

> [SPS & Designer's] main concern is that [the Morrison murals] are significant in the Native community; there is a lot of support in the non-Native community to save them. He said that they could all work together cooperatively to do that.[3]

He also stated that he "hoped" Indigenous programs and education could be hosted at the new site:

> He said that what they are hoping to do a little more than just save the murals, because the Indian Heritage program was significant to help Native kids get a better education and graduate and move on. [...]
>
> He said that they hope to tell the students and the parents and people that come to the school why the murals are there. He said the School District has agreed to provide an interpretive area at both new schools, where they can describe the murals and the reason behind them. He said they also want to work in Eaglestaff, his faculty, and what happened with the Indian Heritage School into the interpretive display.
>
> He said they are working with the school district on a program, possibly a continuing education program, so that a few times a year a program in the schools can contribute to being run by Native faculty in the school district, to help impress cultural understanding.
>
> He said that there is a program that goes on right now called the Clear Sky Native American after school program. He said they are designated to be located and continue here at this site. He said that besides saving the murals and getting them located into two good school areas, they are hoping to continue the education and encourage cross-cultural understanding, and continue at the school program for the Clear Sky program that goes on now at the school.[4]

[1] LPB 411/14, pp. 7
[2] LPB 411/14, pp. 7-8
[3] LPB 411/14, pp. 7
[4] LPB 411/14, pp. 7

The crux of the argument from SPS spokespeople was that the murals, representing the AIHS and Indigenous meaning of the site, would be preserved, and additionally they were willing to take on mitigation plans to work with the community, while the building itself is both unsuitable for adaptation (not relevant for LPB consideration), and the building did not demonstrate its significance (subjective).

Seattle Public Schools' arguments and actions after designation until the end of the controls and incentives negotiations is related in 9.4.5 below.

9.4.2 Arguments of AIHS Alumni & Related Indigenous Users

Public speakers, who identified themselves as involved at some point with AIHS or continuing Indigenous usage of the Wilson-Pacific site, argued for both tangible and intangible reasons for listing, focusing on the significance of Robert Eaglestaff and AIHS, as well as the cultural importance of the building to the community.

Trena Harmon, a representative of UNEA, partnered with Chris Jackins (not Indigenous) of the Committee to Save Seattle Schools, to present the board with letters of comment, including the history of AIHS, the life of Robert Eagle Staff, and collected comments from other Indigenous stakeholders, describing the personal importance of Wilson-Pacific. They also both spoke at the nomination and designation meetings and presented petitions with hundreds of signatures from Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.[1]

At the nomination hearing in May, Harmon recommended that Wilson-Pacific was eligible for its prominence as a focal point, demonstrating in a distinct and visible way the characteristics and cultural heritage of the Indigenous stakeholders.[2] She also presented a letter from Duwamish Tribe leader Cecile Hansen that indicated she believed the school's location near Licton Springs made the building an important Indigenous heritage site:

> If you cannot honor the early history of natives and the Duwamish, then you dishonor the Chief's people. It is time to honor the past but not erase the historical facts, as these archaeological resources, Licton Springs and the native spirits should be kept in mind and give it prominence in history's sake and the future of this area.[3]

[1] LPB 285/14, pp. 4
[2] LPB 285/14, pp. 4
[3] LPB 285/14, pp. 4

Harmon also related an article on Wilson-Pacific from Ramon Shiloh (Creek, Cherokee, Filipino, African) on the stakes of losing Wilson-Pacific:

> …the importance as the home of American Indian Heritage School at Wilson Pacific in north Seattle also serves as a perfect rally point to inform the community about Seattle Public Schools' decision to demolish the historic building. What is at stake is the loss of a 40-year-old legacy of tribal continuity.[1]

Chris Jackins (not Indigenous) argued at both the nomination and designation meetings that Wilson-Pacific was eligible under Criterion A (historical events) for its association with the AIHS, the history of early Seattle and Indigenous peoples, the Denny Family, and other historic uses such as Pilling's Dairy (located one block east of the property), for Criterion B for its association with the life of Robert Eaglestaff, for Criterion D as an example of the Modern style of school building inspired by open air schools in California, and Criterion F as a prominent structure on its property.[2] Also relevant to Indigenous users was Jackin's description of cultural events at Wilson-Pacific, including "a blessing ceremony for the Andrew Morrison murals that included the Mayor of Seattle and many tribes."[3]

Indigenous voices at the designation hearing in July continued to recommend designation on the basis of its connections to Indigenous heritage, its importance to the Indigenous stakeholder's community survival, and its connections to Robert Eaglestaff and the AIHS. Trena Harmon returned and listed the logistical benefits of the site: the gymnasium where Indigenous youth still played basketball, storage which was still used for storing Indigenous art objects, and that meetings were planned for Fall 2014. Scathingly she commented:

> […]that some of the school board members have commented that it is a sad, neglected school that needs to be demolished and is ugly. She said that as American Indians look at our reservations and are used to it. She said they will stay there until it is torn down.[4]

Blaine Parce, self-identified as a UNEA board member and an alum of AIHS, and taxpayer and resident of the Licton Springs neighborhood, described the continuing cultural and community use of the buildings:

> She said that in April 2013 her kids had their naming ceremony at the school. She said that many other students and staff have done memorials at Indian Heritage. […] She said it was stated earlier that they still have a program at Woodrow Wilson; it is Indian Heritage's Seattle Clear Sky Native Youth Council, and the after-school

[1] LPB 285/14, pp. 5
[2] LPB 285/14, pp. 5
[3] LPB 411/14
[4] LPB 411/14

> tutoring program which is housed there weekly. She said that their program runs eight months to a year, so the school facilities are still being used by Native youth and Board Members from UNEA. […] She said that it is sad to think that her kids would be the last generation to have ceremonies like that in such a sacred place.[1]

After designation, several commenters on the Save Seattle Schools website (the website for the Committee to Save Seattle Schools operated by Chris Jackins (see below)) identified themselves as Indigenous stakeholders. User "SPS mom" commented:

> The school is close to bus stops making it very accessible to the Native community which is why it's become the focal point for the community whether the school is there or not. The murals add to the historical and frankly emotional ties the community has to the school. There are still community gatherings at W-P because of it's historical significance. Daybreak Star is just too far away for a lot of Native folks to access on a regular basis, so they go to W-P. […]
>
> [N]o matter what you build there, the Native people are going to keep going there for community gatherings. […]
>
> My kids are doing fine in their schools so I wouldn't move them to W-P, but I would like to access culturally based community gatherings at W-P.[2]

Another commenter, "Seattle citizen," declared:

> [T]the Landmark designation cited lists three criteria met for designation.
>
> I'd add a fourth: Whereas the Duwamish are still waiting for the reservation promised them in 1853; Whereas Native Americans have been successfully supporting Seattle children on the site for a number of years;
>
> Be it recognized that the Wilson Pacific site is, de facto, a small "reservation" by virtue of occupancy and by virtue of eminent domain: Native peoples can be seen as having reclaimed it as payment in lieu of promised reserved lands and then occupied it successfully.
>
> Ergo, it is a Landmark of Native importance and historical worth and should be maintained by Native peoples in collaboration with the recent immigrant peoples who are, 161 years later, still in debt of one reservation to the local First Nations.
>
> It's a landmark to the Indians of enormous worth.[3]

Indigenous speakers all argued that the school had ongoing meaning to them, through its continued use, its symbolic significance due to its location near Licton Springs, and the logistical usefulness of the site for the Indigenous stakeholders.

No Indigenous speakers were included in the negotiations of controls and incentives after designation. Chris Jackins sent a letter to the LPB to be read at the controls and incentives hearing.[4]

[1] LPB 411/14
[2] Saveseattleschools.blogspot.com, 2014, Aug. 12
[3] Saveseattleschools.blogspot.com, 2014, Aug. 12
[4] LPB 605/14

9.4.3 Arguments of "Taxpayers" and "Neighbors"

Three public speakers at LPB meetings, and several public commenters responding to news stories on the website saveseattleschools.org, self-identified as taxpayers, neighbors, or parents of future Wilson-Pacific students.

A speaker who stated they were a parent of children who would attend the new school at Wilson-Pacific, stated their concern that the open plan of the school caused it to be dangerous, especially in relation to the neighborhood being known for crime.[1] Two speakers at LPB meetings were Peter Mayer, self identified as a" neighbor," but in fact a former SPS board member,[2] and Lisa McFarlane, self identified as a "taxpayer," but in fact the state director of Democrats for Education Reform PAC since 2012, a lobbying group focused on creating public charter schools in Washington.[3] Both argued that the building was in disrepair and likely to be dangerous due to its open plan and situation near Aurora Avenue North.[4]

Lisa McFarlane also cast doubt on the legitimacy of the claim that the AIHS had been housed at Wilson-Pacific for sufficient time to be significant, citing the program moving to other sites before returning to Wilson-Pacific, thus making it a non-consecutive use, and that the program had been housed at Rainier Beach for a longer period of time.[5] Trena Harmon (described above) responded by describing that the SPS had failed to secure federal funding and maintain clear communication to support the program and that records had not been adequately kept, leading to debate and confusion. However, AIHS alum Blaine Parce (above) stated she was certain of the dates during which the AIHS inhabited Wilson-Pacific.[6] According to the designation report, AIHS was located at Rainier Beach HS from 1974-1978. It moved to Wilson-Pacific in 1989 and moved out in 2012. Accounts do differ on whether it moved to Wilson-Pacific in 1990[7] or in 1989.[8] However, this indicates that McFarlane was wrong.

Predominantly on online articles or the saveseattleschools.org comment sections after designation, a small number of anonymous commenters reacted to news about

[1] LPB 285/14, pp. 3
[2] Seattle Public Schools 2023
[3] Ballotpedia.org 2023
[4] LPB 411/14, pp. 9
[5] LPB 411/14, pp. 9-10
[6] LPB 411/14, pp. 10-11
[7] Gordon 2014
[8] Johnson and Mirro 2013

Landmarking Wilson-Pacific and the AIHS program with extreme emotion. Many of these other arguments were based around their perception that the AIHS program that catered to Indigenous students was a form of "separate but equal" segregation. In contradiction to this, other commenters noted that the program was non-exclusionary and merely was focused on Indigenous education. The extreme assumptions of anti-White discrimination and emotionally charged language may represent attempts to generate antagonism. All commenters of this sort did not respond to further comments.

9.4.4 Landmark Board Comments

During their site visit, LPB members completed a tour of the campus and remarked on the poor condition of the structures, noting overgrowth of greenery, deterioration of the covered walkway roofs, and damage to the buildings overall.[1] Photos taken during the TJP survey in 2013 show these conditions, including peeling paint surfaces and damage to elements such as windows.[2]

Karen Gordon, the City Historic Preservation Officer, presented the recommendation plan with "no controls" that had been drafted by her office and the SPS. She stated that the interpretive exhibits and gathering space would constitute mitigation measures. She stated: "she believes the LPB is not in a position to impose controls." Though, she did not elucidate what that meant. Later she stated:

> that if the Board does not accept the Controls and Incentives they have 15 days to come up with their own recommendations. She noted the next scheduled Landmarks Board meeting is in 21 days.[3]

During the LPB meeting, members questioned if there would be outreach to Indigenous communities on the new designs. Johnpaul Jones stated that there had been no outreach, but that as the consultant for Indigenous heritage on the site:

> he has talked with a number of Native leaders. He said they haven't had any workshops yet but they will do the outreach. He said that it is hard to communicate in the Native community because there is so much going on. He said the designs are only concept now, and they will develop them.[4]

[1] LPB 411/14, pp. 13
[2] Johnson and Mirro 2013
[3] LPB 605/14, pp. 6
[4] LPB 605/14, pp. 7

Preservation office staff mentioned that delaying a decision on controls would cause "a major delay in getting kids back into this school."[1]

The LPB actions after designation until the end of the controls and incentives negotiations is related in 9.5.5 below.

9.4.5 Legal Action and Controls and Incentives Hearing

After designation, SPS continued its letter-writing campaign, this time Rich Hill emailed in June 2014, stating that the Department of Neighborhoods should allow an extension of the sixty-day limit so that the District had time to prepare "the information necessary to demonstrate that Wilson Pacific does not merit designation." Additionally, they began to question (again) the legal ability of the LPB to designate SPS buildings. One of their main arguments was that the features of the building, mainly its association with Robert Eaglestaff was outside the 25-year age of historic properties described by the ordinance.

Karen Gordon, Historic Preservation Program manager and CHPO, responded stating clearly that she disagreed with SPS's reading of the ordinances, and that Wilson-Pacific had been designated on the basis of its association with the AIHS, a program that existed since 1974. As the program was the historic portion, despite the movement of the program in 1990 the building is still associated with the history. She replied directly to Hill's comment that Erin Doherty had stated in her staff report that the murals did not qualify for designation due to their age, by stating:

> the goal was to make it clear that the murals as objects do not meet the minimum age requirement. It was not an interpretation of potential significance, nor how the designation standards are applied. The concern was that someone may propose to nominate only the murals, and without complying with the minimum age requirement that would not be possible.[2]

Hill responded the same day to state SPS "will of course continue to work with you [...] in the hope that we can reach an outcome that fully addresses the education needs" of students.[3] In July, Hill emailed again to say that the District would share "some options" in the following weeks.[4]

[1] LPB 605/14, pp. 6
[2] Gordon 2014
[3] Hill (b) 2014
[4] Hill (c) 2014

9.4.6 Complaint Submitted to the King County Superior Court

On August 4, 2014, the Seattle School District No. 1 (the legal organization of SPS) brought a "complaint for declaratory judgment and, in the alternative, land use petition and application for writs" against the City of Seattle and the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board in the King County Superior Court.[1]

SPS stated that the complaint was necessary as the city allowed no review of the LPB's decisions. They stated the decision to designate Wilson Pacific as a Landmark "creates uncertainty, delay, and substantially increased costs. It throws a serious wrench into the District's ability to fulfill the directive of 72% of the City's voters."[2] They reiterated that their directive was to house Seattle's "expanding student population," and that school buildings need to be as modern as possible.

Their basis for the complaint was that the City and LPB violated RCW 28A.335.090 that states the School District has "exclusive control" of all school property. Additionally, they stated that the LPB decision to designate the building on the basis of its association with "a high school principal" from 1990-1996 were not sufficient to designate the building, and it did not meet the 25-year landmark cutoff. Thus, SPS, declared, the LPB decision was unconstitutional and unlawful, against both the SMC and the RCW.[3] The city elaborated that the Landmark process uses criteria that are "inherently subjective," and there is no opportunity to appeal. They also stated, erroneously, that once a building is designated "no changes may be made to it, or to its site, without approval of the Landmarks Board." They described the effect of designation as the LPB gaining "exclusive control over development of the school property." This they evocatively described as requiring their staff to

> Guess at what the Landmarks Board might approve, to spend money on architects to design options for the Landmarks Board to consider, and to address the likelihood that any option accepted by the Board will result in compromise to education specifications.[4]

All of this, they summarized, "imposes a substantial burden" on the district. The trial was scheduled for September 2015.[5] However, the city agreed to settle it out of court;[6] no publicly available records of the agreement survives.

[1] Seattle School District No. 1 v. City of Seattle and Landmark Preservation Board 2014
[2] Seattle School District No. 1 v. City of Seattle and Landmark Preservation Board 2014
[3] Seattle School District No. 1 v. City of Seattle and Landmark Preservation Board 2014
[4]
[5] Seattle School District No. 1 v. City of Seattle and Landmark Preservation Board 2014
[6] No records of the settlement can be found. The court casw was never judged.

9.4.7 Controls and Incentives Meeting

On October 14, 2014, the LPB met to outline protections for the designated Wilson-Pacific Landmark. The meeting was attended by LPB members Deb Barker, Nick Carter, Robert Ketcherside, Aaron Luoma, Jeffrey Murdock, Valerie Porter, Sarah Shadid, Matthew Sneddon, Marie Strong, Alison Walker Brems, and Elaine Wine.

Karen Gordon, HPO, presented a proposed preservation plan with no controls, otherwise stated, the plan would allow the demolition of Wilson-Pacific but will mitigate the impacts by including interpretive exhibits and an outdoor gathering/commemorative space.[1]

Elaine Wine and Jeffrey Murdock both stated they had serious reservations about allowing the "no controls" plan, as SPS had not provided proof of economic hardships or impacts, and that there had not been any alternatives such as adaptive reuse plans proposed. Wine also stated that the LPB had been given the design when it was almost completed, not giving the LPB time to evaluate.[2] Aaron Luoma reiterated that he felt the building failed to demonstrate its significance:

> He said that the stories, legacy and Principal were significant and the buildings can't convey that. He commented on the unique mitigation plans and consultants that has been hired to implement it.[3]

During the designation meeting, Luoma had supported designation for criteria B and C, describing that the:

> Cultural significance of the site is much bigger than just the murals, with no disrespect to the murals. He said that they are amazing, but there is something much bigger – it is a site in and of itself that these memories are contained in. He said that no particular door, no particular building per se but the site itself as their school and as where Robert Eaglestaff taught.[4]

Public comment was received from Chris Jackins (CSS) who read a letter objecting to the lack of controls.

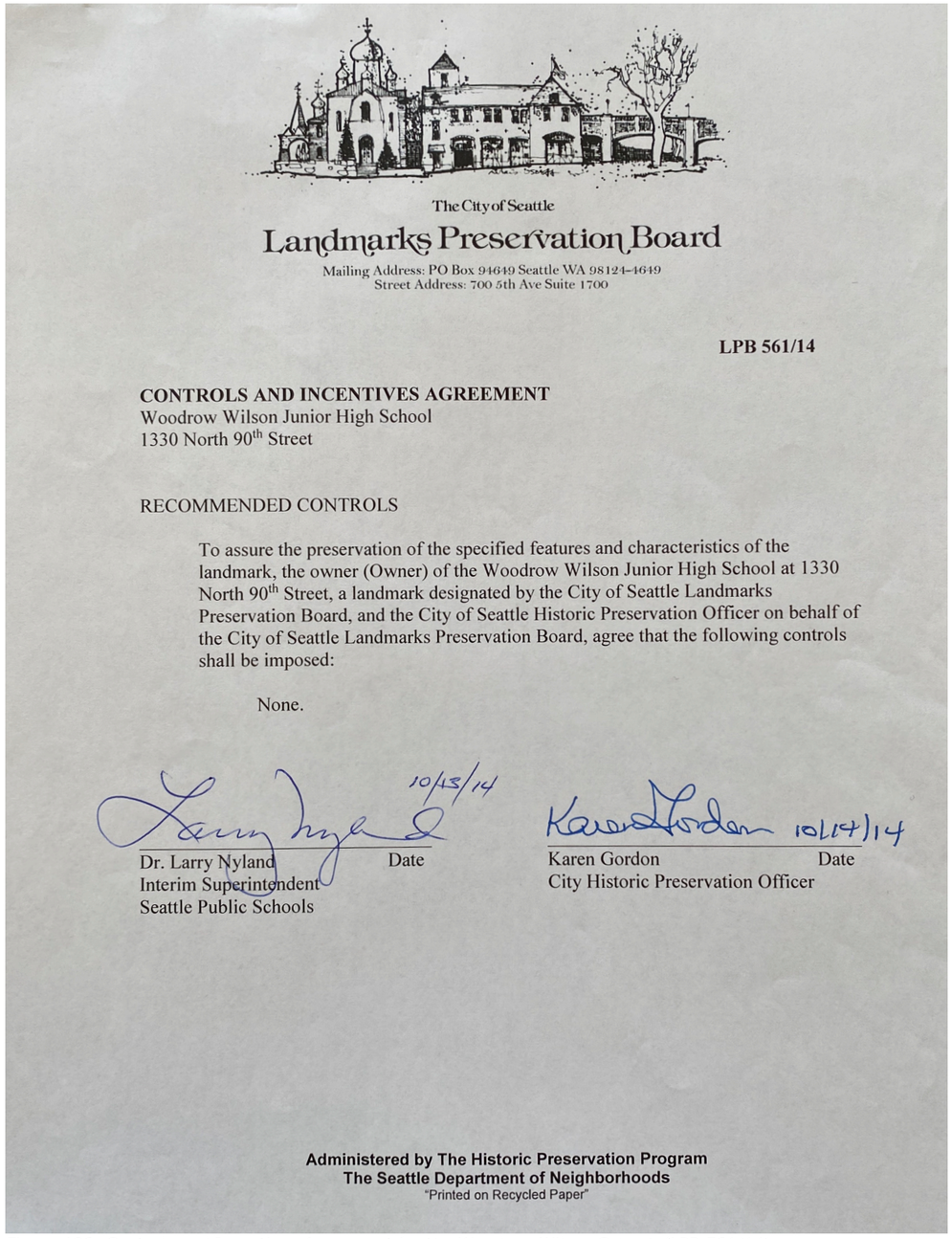
With a vote of 7:3:1, LPB approved a "No-Controls" decision.[5] The LPB members stated that this was "a very unusual situation" and they were "concerned about setting a precedent."[6] Wine, Barker, and Ketcherside voted against.[7]

[1] LPB 605/14, pp.6
[2] LPB 605/14, pp. 7
[3] LPB 605/14, pp. 7
[4] LPB 411/14, pp. 13
[5] LPB 605/14, pp. 9
[6] LPB 605/14, pp. 7
[7] LPB 605/14, pp. 9

9.4.8 Chris Jackins Appeal

After the demolition had been approved and issued city permits, Chris Jackins, who had previously partnered with Trena Harmon to present the Indigenous importance of the site, made an appeal to the School District Hearing Examiner on February 26, 2015. The Hearing Examiner decided the demolition permit was legal and concluded the appeal.[1] On March 24, 2015, Jackins tried again with the City Hearing Examiner, attempting to establish that the SPS had not fulfilled an Environmental Impact Assessment and further study was needed. SPS filed a motion to dismiss the appeal on the basis that the City Examiner did not have jurisdiction, that mitigation called for by the appeal was in fact already planned by the District, and finally that the claims that policy decisions made leading up to allowing the demolition were unlawful were incorrect. The City Examiner agreed, and the appeal was dismissed.[2]

[1] Hearing Examiner 2014
[2] Hearing Examiner 2014



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

LPB 561/14

CONTROLS AND INCENTIVES AGREEMENT
Woodrow Wilson Junior High School
1330 North 90th Street

RECOMMENDED CONTROLS

To assure the preservation of the specified features and characteristics of the landmark, the owner (Owner) of the Woodrow Wilson Junior High School at 1330 North 90th Street, a landmark designated by the City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board, and the City of Seattle Historic Preservation Officer on behalf of the City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board, agree that the following controls shall be imposed:

None.

10/13/14
Dr. Larry Nyland Date
Interim Superintendent
Seattle Public Schools

10/14/14
Karen Gordon Date
City Historic Preservation Officer

Administered by The Historic Preservation Program
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods
"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Figure 106: Controls and Incentives Agreement for the Woodrow Wilson School. (LPB 561/14)

9.5 Outcome of Preservation

The "no controls" plan allowed Seattle Public Schools to proceed with the demolition of Wilson-Pacific, while abiding by the MOU with artist Andrew Morrison. Demolition began on June 5, 2015[1] and was completed on August 30, 2016.[2]

The walls with the murals were retained and supported with metal supports, and then protected with a heat-shrunk polyethylene film on site while construction of the new building proceeded. They were moved to new locations and integrated into the exterior of Robert Eagle Staff Middle School and Cascadia Elementary School.[3]

There is an "honor circle" with an inspirational quote in an outside space, and two informational displays are located in common spaces within both schools. The circle has quotes around a concrete circle and is overlooked by some of Morrison's largest murals.

The Indigenous speakers at the LPB meetings called for SPS to name the new middle school after Robert Eaglestaff to better preserve his memory. SPS complied and there was a naming ceremony held with members of Eaglestaff's family in attendance.[4]

9.5.1 Mitigation: Community Outreach

Mitigation was required by the agreement between DoN and SPS, including the construction of an "honor circle" and two "educational displays" within the new school campus that were to be designed through community outreach meetings. During the planning of outreach programs, Erin Daughtery, Seattle historic preservation staff member, wrote to SPS and Jones & Jones Architects to include members of UNEA.[5] The first outreach meeting was held January 14, 2015. Prominent speakers were Johnpaul Jones, who led the discussions, Andrew Morrison and sister Jute, Gail Morris (an Indigenous school teacher) and Chris Jackins. Jackins again called for the halting of demolition. It is unclear if members of UNEA were present. The Morrisons both talked about the importance of the site. The statement that was reiterated by multiple speakers was the need for "deep sensitivity, deep compassion, and deep understanding." Despite the requirement for mitigating the loss of

[1] Robertson 2015
[2] Campanario 2015
[3] Campanario 2015
[4] Cornwell 2017
[5] Daughtery 2015

Figure 107: Woodrow Wilson School demolition in 2015. (Robertson 2015)

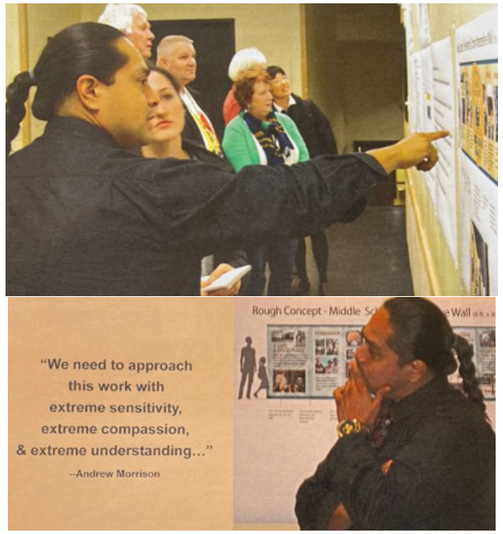


Figure 108: Mitigation meeting 1. (Jones nad Jones 2015)

the Wilson-Pacific Landmark, the outreach sessions were titled: "Andrew Morrison Indian Heritage Murals."[1]

A second meeting was held in March 2015[2] with similar events. Speakers made suggestions for the circle and displays. Photos of the event seem to emphasize Andrew Morrison's involvement, with two of three photos showing Morrison in foreground pointing at poster boards.[3] Design decisions for the circle and interpretive wall were finalized in June 2015.[4]

9.5.2 Building Changes

Two new schools were constructed on the site: Cascadia Elementary School and Robert Eagle Staff Middle School, both opening in Fall 2017. Buildings were designed by Mahlum and constructed by Lydig Construction.[5] The buildings were designed to accommodate 660 elementary students, and 850 middle school students.

A portion of the Cascadia School building was planned for the use of the K-8 Licton Springs School, an Indigenous-focused elementary and middle-school program. Accounts from the opening in 2017 claim that the classrooms in Cascadia Elementary, designated for the Licton Springs program, were too small to cater to the number of enrolled students, and several classes were held in hallways until facilities could be adapted or students relocated. The library was situated in the hallway, mathematics taught in an alcove along another hallway.[6] In 2021 the Licton Springs program was moved to the newly reopened Webster School building in Ballard.[7]

[1] Jones and Jones Architects 2015
[2] The second outreach meeting was scheduled for February 18, but the published summary states March.
[3] Jones and Jones Architects 2015
[4] Mahlum 2015
[5] Lydig 2021
[6] Gross 2017
[7] Seattle Public Schools 2018

Figure 109: Staged photos Robert Eagle Staff Middle and Cascadia Elementary School. (Lydig 2021)

9.5.3 Effects on the Indigenous Community

Despite its success, the AIHS program dwindled in the face of reduced and eventually lack of SPS funding and support. After Robert Eaglestaff's tragic death in 1996, SPS superintendent John Standford promised Eaglestaff's widow that the AIHS would continue to be supported. However, by 2000 the school's enrollment had dwindled to 70 students, with no effort being made by SPS to promote the program to Indigenous students. It was merged with the Middle College High School, a program aimed at preventing dropouts among "under-privileged" students, thus removing the Indigenous focus of the AIHS.

In 2012 SPS missed a deadline for the *Huchoosedah*, a fund for Indigenous cultural and academic programs, leading to layoffs of two teachers from the AIHS.[1] By the 2012-2013 school year there were 15 students enrolled, only three of whom were Indigenous, and teaching was shifted to digital resources, absent any teaching staff.[2] The program was moved to the Middle College site in 2013, housed within the Northgate Mall in a space described as "an attic,"[3] and by the end of 2013 the program was ended.

Although Indigenous students continue to have one of the lowest graduation rates in the SPS system, the Indigenous-focused AIHS, that had boasted a 100% graduation and college admittance rate in 1993-1996, has not been replaced. UNEA and other Indigenous stakeholders have continued to request a new Indigenous focused high school.[4] SPS leadership have emphasized their belief that making improvements at all public schools was preferable to one focused on a specific ethnic group.[5]

Similar reasoning may also be responsible for the declining support for other Indigenous-focused programs, several of which were created in 2000 in response to the flagging AIHS. One of these was the Clear Sky Program, a student-created program focusing on socialization, study and sports for Indigenous students of SPS. In 2019 the Clear Sky after-school program, which had previously been allowed to use SPS facilities rent-free, began instead being forced to pay full fees, undercutting a program that already was subsisting solely off donations.[6]

[1] Hidalgo 2013
[2] Hidalgo 2013
[3] Horne 2018
[4] Walker 2018, change.org 2016, UNEA 2023
[5] Saveseattleschools.blogspot.com 2014
[6] Brazile 2019

9.6 Analysis

The conflict at Wilson-Pacific highlights a divide between the historic significance of the site as seen by the LPB and SPS spokespeople, and the community value seen by the Indigenous speakers. The LPB and legal preservation policy includes only a limited definition of significance and integrity. Doubts by LPB members that Wilson-Pacific did not "convey the significance" of its Indigenous past indicates the strict view of how buildings as material artifacts demonstrate their value. The non-preservationists and Indigenous stakeholders, who argued for preservation, instead highlighted that the continuing use of the building and site was central to how the building conveyed its historical significance. They also described how the building had provided a place for social connection, practicing cultural events, and passing intangible heritage on to future generations. It was seen by them as a place of collective memory and had generated clear place attachment.

The result of ignoring these non-preservationist values resulted in an already vulnerable and underrepresented community being further weakened. Only two Indigenous community sites remain within Seattle: the Daybreak Star Center in Discovery Park, and the Duwamish Longhouse constructed in 2009 in the industrial district south of Harbor Island. Wilson-Pacific could have been a central site already logistically adapted to the community, tied to Indigenous heritage due to its nearness to Licton Springs, and historically significant for its past as an Indigenous high school and community meeting place.

9.6.1 Value to the Community

Many of the local Indigenous stakeholders described that one of the most important values of the site was the continuing use of the site from its pre-Euro-American use by Coast Salish peoples, later the AIHS, and the continuing community use after AIHS closure. Indigenous peoples have been forced to adapt to Euro-American society, and use of the school was a way for them to keep a connection to the nearby Licton Springs, now buried under modern Seattle and no longer available as a gathering space. In this way, Wilson-Pacific fit into a continuum of use that long predated the school, making it arguably even more important from a preservation standpoint.

Additionally, the possibility of a continuum from the past AIHS and cultural use to the future was very important. One speaker stated, "what is at stake is the loss of a 40-year-old legacy of tribal continuity."[1] Blaine Parce, a graduate of the AIHS, said that "it is sad to think that her kids would be the last generation to have ceremonies like that in such a sacred place."[2] The value of the Wilson-Pacific site was not the physical structure, but that the stakeholders had been using the site over several long and connected sequences. In the comments from speakers in LPB meetings, there was a sense that the Indigenous stakeholders hoped that preservation could maintain that use. Considering the intentions stated in preservation regulations, the lack of preservation of this use is notable, especially since the Indigenous stakeholders explained definitively that they were not afforded space for their continued cultural use anywhere else in Seattle.

9.6.2 Preservation as Restitution

Indigenous stakeholders at LPB meetings also voiced how preservation of a site such as Wilson-Pacific could serve as a form of restitution. Seattle's settlers had violently expelled Indigenous people despite previous agreements, and continued to exploit and harm Indigenous workers and people throughout Seattle history.[3] Seattle itself is the anglicized name of Chief Si'ahl, who identified as Duwamish along with other cultural groups. The Duwamish Tribe sued the United States government in 1925 and were awarded the cost of their land without interest in 1970, a pitiful $64 per member, for 54,000 acres of land, amounting to the entire footprint of the city of Seattle. This land is now valued in the billions of dollars. The tribe was to receive federal recognition during the Clinton administration, but the case was halted after the election of George W. Bush.[4]

As Licton Springs was a site of great cultural importance to the Duwamish, some Indigenous speakers saw the preservation of Wilson-Pacific, and the implication that it would remain open for Indigenous cultural use, as a token of apology and support from the city government after over a century of injustices. Yet this understanding had no bearing on the historic designation of Wilson-Pacific because the legal framework of Seattle's preservation ordinance does not address it. Unlike the federal system, which now has

[1] LPB 285/14
[2] LPB 411/14
[3] Duwamish 2023
[4] Duwamish 2019

provisions for Traditional Cultural Places (TCPs), Seattle has no special provisions to recognize Indigenous sites. One might argue that this is yet another injustice perpetrated against the Indigenous people of Seattle in the face of their vocal disagreement.

9.6.3 Undermining the Criteria

Why was Wilson-Pacific School not designated for its physical form? The building was one of very few open-plan schools of the modern style remaining in Seattle. It had minimal alterations, and additions had been designed in sympathy with the previous construction. Part of the LPB's reasoning was the condition of the buildings: SPS had deferred maintenance, causing the buildings to be in poor repair at the time of the LPB hearings, including allowing plantings to overgrow which caused a certain visual impact. Indeed, LPB members toured the site and found it to be "shabby" and unappealing, undercutting the argument towards Criteria E and F, and implying considerable work would be required to restore the buildings. This implication was stated openly by The Johnson Partnership (TJP) which, in the first meeting, had begun describing the school buildings as outdated, dilapidated, and impossibly expensive to save.[1]

The LPB was also misled by TJP, which argued in hearings that two other modern open-plan schools have similar features, such as the covered breezeways and ribbon windows; however, this is factually incorrect as the schools named do not have open breezeways or an open-plan. The statements were never challenged by the LPB or others in attendance, and community stakeholders did not have the specialized knowledge required to point out the inaccuracies in TJP arguments. Thus, arguments for significance by Criterion D were also undermined. The case for significance was therefore weakened greatly, making it difficult for the Indigenous community members to successfully argue that Criteria A and B for the school's association with Robert Eaglestaff were sufficient to afford protection and preservation. Yet, the building was designated as a Landmark; it was not until the "controls and incentives" phase (and a threatened lawsuit), that the LPB determined not to protect the building in a divided vote.

9.6.4 Undermining Indigenous Identity

[1] LPB 285/14

The spokespeople for SPS used specific strategies to maneuver the LPB into allowing the demolition of Wilson-Pacific. After the school had been nominated, their argument shifted in several distinct ways. During the first meeting, Larry Johnson and Ellen Mirro focused on the school's significance at the time of its construction in the 1950s, attempting to disregard the importance of the AIHS. The LPB did not accept this argument: the school's time as the AIHS began more than 25 years ago, which remains within Seattle's range for eligibility, and the significance of the AIHS was clearly very high. Then, in the designation hearing, Johnson and SPS speakers questioned the timeline of AIHS use of the site, and brought Johnpaul Jones and Andrew Morrison to present a counter Indigenous argument, obfuscating the previous stakeholder's values.

Once TJP's argument that the AIHS was not old enough to be relevant was discarded and the building was nominated, their tactic shifted to re-contextualizing how the school represented AIHS cultural significance. At the second meeting, Johnpaul Jones and Andrew Morrison were brought in to describe how the murals of Indigenous leaders painted by Morrison in 2001-2007 were to be saved and utilized in the new designs.[1] Both Johnpaul Jones (Choctaw/Cherokee) and Andrew Morrison (Apache and Haida) are Indigenous, and Morrison was personally involved in the AIHS and its later cultural meetings at the time of the painting.[2] Between both of their statements they describe how significant the murals are to the AIHS history, despite being created after Robert Eaglestaff's death. Andrew Morrison very emphatically described his own artistic education and skill to hammer home the point that the murals were important.[3] Still the building was designated as a Landmark.

This insistence that the murals were the crucial element of Wilson-Pacific directly responded to LPB member doubts that the building lacked integrity and the ability to demonstrate its significance.[4] To make this argument effective, it was necessary to convince the LPB that allowing the demolition, and preservation only of the murals, would satisfy the Indigenous community. Both Johnpaul Jones and Andrew Morrison emphatically self-identified as Indigenous in their statements,[5] and Jones in particular listed his work on the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian and his work with tribes on the East Coast.[6]

[1] LPB 411/14
[2] Morrison 2023, LPB 411/14
[3] LPB 411/14
[4] LPB 285/14, LPB 411/14
[5] LPB 411/14
[6] LPB 411/14

Jones also described his empathy and understanding of the worries of the local Indigenous stakeholders.[1] He described his "hope" that some consultation could be had with the local stakeholders, and that space could be included for community gatherings. Considering the closure of the AIHS and declining support in Indigenous youth programs, there was little formal organization of local Indigenous Seattleites to consult,[2] and no community gathering space was ever provided other than the token honor circle.

By voicing his empathy with the local stakeholders, yet advocating for the preservation of the murals alone, Johnpaul Jones, twisted the local Indigenous argument (that the AIHS and Robert Eaglestaff and the continuing use of the building for cultural events were and remained historically significant and important values), to a much narrower picture of what preservation should mean at Wilson-Pacific. He and Andrew Morrison effectively said that Wilson-Pacific was significant, but only the murals demonstrate that significance, and as Indigenous speakers we can speak for other Indigenous people. One would hope this strategy was an unconscious one; however, it was reused in the third meeting.[3]

The strategy of defining an ethnic community as homogenous has a long history of diminishing the concerns of minoritized communities.[4] This anonymized definition of community is similar to how Johnpaul Jones and SPS[5] used the term "Native American community." Johnpaul Jones and Andrew Morrison, while both admitting they were being paid by SPS, effectively re-defined the arguments of the local Indigenous stakeholders by putting themselves forwards as members and representatives of that community. Thus, they could state that the significant part of Wilson-Pacific was the murals, and nothing else, overpowering the voices of the actual local Indigenous community saying they felt otherwise.

[1] LPB 411/14
[2] LPB 605/14
[3] LPB 605/14
[4] Erickson 2015, pp. 12-13
[5] LPB 411/14

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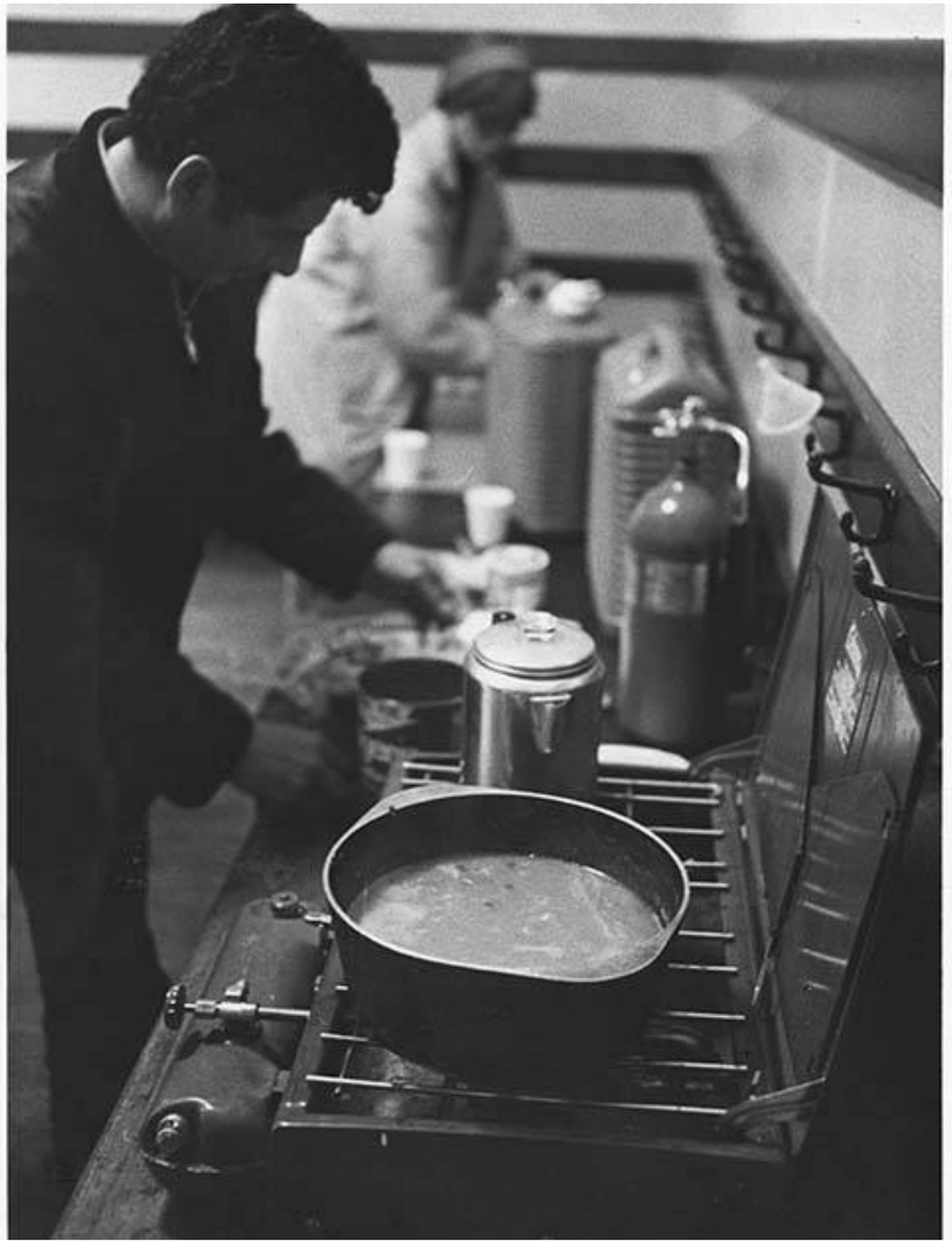

Figure 110: Isidoro Gonzales working in makeshift kitchen in the occupied Beacon Hill School in 1972. (MOHAI 2000.107.124.39.01)

Analysis

10.1 Introduction

This thesis set out to determine how historic preservation practice impacts communities by exploring the treatment of historic public schools. The five case studies present a complex picture. In two cases (Queen Anne and Interlake) the schools were successfully preserved and adaptively reused in a way that benefited the local stakeholders. Two (Beacon Hill and Colman) were also successfully preserved, but were protected through radical action that was retroactively approved by the city. (In fact, Beacon Hill has never been designated a Seattle Landmark, but it could be argued it is the most successful in addressing community needs.) Finally, the case of Wilson-Pacific directly failed, destroying a designated City of Seattle Landmark and directly contributing to the ending of a successful place serving Seattle's Indigenous community.

In the previous chapters, the case studies have been described and analyzed individually. This chapter presents conclusions based upon the case studies and wider theoretical background issues as summarized in Chapter 4. An overall finding from the case studies is that preservation and adaptive reuse of historic schools has been easier when the

school is associated with a white middle class to upper class community. For minoritized communities, preservation has been more difficult and in the cases presented here, success required radical action. In the case of Beacon Hill, the adaptive reuse of the school has been very successful, but the legal process to Landmark the building was never part of the process. For Colman, Landmarking only took place after radical action had saved the building and then recognized Black leaders in Seattle intervened to support and facilitate its reuse. Wilson-Pacific presents the most tragic case–a site, used by Indigenous people for thousands of years, and then used again for an innovative educational program and for community events for Indigenous people, was lost. Although the building was designated as a Landmark, it was destroyed when the City shirked from enforcing Landmark protections. The case studies suggest over-generalization of minoritized identity in the cases of Beacon Hill, Colman and Wilson-Pacific. These cases raise the question, who can speak for minoritized communities, especially when those communities may be internally divided?

The thesis investigation raises a series of general questions regarding how preservation is frames and how it is implemented in individual cases. The following is a list of the most important issues.

First, there is the question of the term "significance" and its meaning as it is understood within the framework established for preservation, especially as a legal process to protect buildings. There is a lack of flexibility in the criteria that restricts their use for the now accepted diversity present in the built environment.

Second, there is the problem of time. The Seattle preservation framework requires that a building be at least 25 years of age before it can be considered for Landmark protection. However, this age limit has been extended as a means to exclude consideration of the involvement of more recent stakeholders (for example, the Indigenous stakeholders at the Wilson-Pacific site were told that Robert Eaglestaff's involvement in the AIHS at the site was too recent to be considered; similarly, Indigenous community use was considered too recent to be considered). This problem also arises in the question of "period of significance"; by setting specific limits on when a property became significant and then stopped being significant (often when a property was designed and built and used initially), "period of significance" can eliminate consideration of later community use and contemporary community value.

Third, the preservation system has too often had a problem addressing sites that are associated with the working class, minoritized communities, and others whose voices have long been muted. Although the "new history" has in the last few decades begun to address the histories of different groups (rather than just presenting the history of the dominant group as the only history), preservation has followed more slowly. Because preservation depends on legal action to protect buildings and sites, it can be expensive, especially when significant research is required to demonstrate significance. The cost of simply making the case to the LPB can potentially exclude some properties from consideration.

Related is the problem of integrity (typically meaning material integrity) or the "ability of a property to convey its significance," as defined in Seattle's preservation ordinance. In the case studies in this thesis, integrity was an issue that led the LPB to vote no controls on the interior of Colman School, and integrity was an issue at Wilson-Pacific, when the SPS failure to maintain the buildings and site led to questions about their condition. Maintenance of old properties is optional and expensive.

Fourth, the preservation system is challenged by communities that may speak with multiple voices. At Beacon Hill, Roberto Maestas proved a remarkable leader, able to form a coalition of multiple Latino community stakeholders. At Colman, those who saved the building were unable to build such a coalition; they faced a legal (ownership) situation that was complex, and the physical/structural interventions required to preserve the building were expensive; so it was only when the "establishment" part of the Black community became involved that the adaptive reuse could actually move forward. At Wilson-Pacific, the Indigenous stakeholders who had longer term involvement in the building were opposed by the SPS which brought in (and paid) other Indigenous speakers who had no prior involvement with the building or site; even then the LPB voted to designate; it was only when the City was sued by the SPS that the LPB agreed, in a divided vote, to allow the building to be destroyed, preserving only the murals–the long-term Indigenous stakeholders experienced this result as a complete loss.

The City of Seattle preservation framework is not structured to address Indigenous sites and properties. The federal system has created a special category for Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) that is used for Indigenous sites that otherwise do not fit under the National Register criteria; the City of Seattle has nothing similar. Sites of significance to Indigenous people rarely fit within the six criteria in the SMC, especially as these criteria are

often interpreted within a framework that does not recognize traditional cultural practices of Indigenous communities.

Fifth, the preservation system is only as strong as the city's willingness to enforce it. Experience has shown that the City has a mixed record in this regard. At Wilson-Pacific, the City faced a strong opponent with the ability to draw on significant funds to make their legal case in a lawsuit. The City of Seattle has a history of choosing to compromise when an opponent is likely to win, especially if the costs may be significant. The SPS approach to the Wilson-Pacific site was to move forward with design of the new buildings first, then to approach the LPB; the District had already spent considerable funds and could argue that any delay would add to the cost of construction due to inflation in construction costs. The District could also argue that Seattle voters had approved the levy that specifically authorized replacement of Wilson-Pacific. The City may have been able to win their case (protecting Wilson-Pacific), but it would have been challenging and costly to do so, and there was a possibility they would lose (and incur significant expense).

Figure 111: Licton Springs, in 2019. (Secaira 2019)

10.2 Significance

Significance, as outlined in Seattle's legal preservation criteria, embodies a specific approach to value. University of Colorado-Denver professor Christopher Koziol explains that preservationists have, over time, created arguments for the value of heritage to convince decision-makers and the public for support.[1] Justifying preservation has been necessary to gain support, generate funding, and make regulations acceptable. The significance of a historic property is the direct expression of the value as framed by the regulations. In the words of preservationist and scholar University of Pennsylvania professor Randall Mason:

> A "statement of significance" gathers together all the reasons why a building or place should be preserved, why it is meaningful or useful, and what aspects require most urgent protection. Once defined, significance is used as a basis for policy, planning and design decisions.[2]

Seattle's regulations state that preservation has many benefits, it can help strengthen national, state, city, or community pride and identity, it can produce aesthetic or economic value, it can be environmentally sustainable, and it can maintain the knowledge of historic events or historic people.

[1] Kozil 2013, 246
[2] Mason 2003

These are already a limited list of the benefits of a human-created space, but in practice, the criteria of significance narrow the list further. In Seattle, Criteria A and B cover historical associations, Criteria D and E, cover architectural, engineering, construction or aesthetic prominence, Criterion F addresses visual prominence, and Criterion C attempts to cover "significant aspects of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation." These broad categories are limited to only a portion of the reasons stated in the preambles to these documents, and they limit arguments of significance to a strict framework. Minoritized stakeholders must make use of this framework, instead of their own cultural perspectives.

Two of the case studies, Queen Anne and Interlake, fit the existing criteria for significance easily. The buildings were both designated as City of Seattle Landmarks for their significance for their architectural style, and their association with a historic architect, James Stephen, with minimal arguments suggesting significance. Beacon Hill and Colman also fit the traditional definitions of significance (even though Beacon Hill has never actually been Landmarked), but those definitions do not encompass why these buildings are significant to their present-day stakeholder communities.

Beacon Hill clearly has significance in its long-term use as El Centro de la Raza, but the National Register nomination makes little or no mention of this continuing use because present-day social value and cultural value are not in the National Register Criteria. Colman clearly has historical significance for the occupation and present-day social and cultural value as the Northwest African American Museum, but these values are not embodied in the Landmark nomination and relatively little is said about the occupation even though it lasted eight years! These buildings have been protected and adaptively reused, but their significance to recent and present-day stakeholders is not recognized in preservation documents. Criterion C was not cited to include the factors that were keeping the community strong.

The absence of these values in the Seattle preservation framework generated a crisis at Wilson-Pacific. There minoritized stakeholders attempted to argue inside and outside the preservation regulation language, but this was generally vulnerable to challenge by the site owner, the SPS. Although the LPB still voted for designation of Wilson-Pacific, the LPB members voting "yes" were required to justify their vote using the six criteria in the ordinance, which, to the Indigenous stakeholders, were reasons of less significance than the

values the school embodied for them as a place of social value and both long-term and present-day traditional cultural value.

These three cases demonstrate how the wording of "significance criteria" too often does not address the stakeholder communities who actually show deep personal investment in the buildings and sites. Although two have been preserved, minoritized voices have been effectively silenced. At Wilson-Pacific, the lack of value for Traditional Cultural Places in the Seattle preservation ordinance led directly to the loss of not only a building, but effectively, of the whole site for the Indigenous community. The murals were saved, but the Wilson-Pacific is no longer a site that supports the continuity of the Indigenous community and their intangible cultural practices. Thus, the limitations of the Seattle significance criteria exclude a wider and more diverse set of values from protection, often disenfranchising minoritized communities, and leaving sites of significance to them unprotected.

A flexible system of criteria, built on the understanding that different people have different viewpoints, could better include minoritized places. If the criteria are examined through Thomas King's "theories of significance" (see Chapter 2), Seattle's criteria fall into rough categories: architectural value - some feature of its design, its architect, or manner of construction, historical value - its association with a person or event considered notable in history, and aesthetic value - it is a unique building, visually prominent or integral to a location's character. Finally, criterion C includes community value. However, the Seattle process approaches these values in the same way, with no allowance for how, for example, a feature of a building serves the needs of a community, is different than the architecturally notable elements of that building,

Indigenous stakeholders during the hearings for Wilson-Pacific frequently stated that the building was important for its cultural use and its connection to Licton Springs, but when listing criteria they focused on Robert Eaglestaff and the AIHS, because those aspects were easier to fit into the current Seattle criteria of significance. Without architectural value (see10.4.1 for a discussion of integrity), there was no process to protect these intangible values. The "honor circle" was intended to address the community needs, while interpretive signs preserved the history of the site. But as can be seen by the exclusion of Indigenous use of the site, there was no method to truly mitigate the disruption of the community.

Even when properties are preserved as at Beacon Hill or Colman, these communities' contributions and values are often omitted from preservation documents. At these sites, the

histories of occupation and reuse are largely omitted from the documents–the later histories of these buildings are not considered significant because of the arbitrary limits of the so-called "period of significance" (see 10.3). Should current ownership change, preservation would not have the basis to protect those values without the same challenges.

Significance, as a legally defined category, cannot include every value people see in a building. In Seattle, where displacement is an ever-mounting problem, sites of cultural and community value that can be considered collectively held, like schools, are at risk. Historic buildings, especially ones that are no longer appropriate for schools, are natural candidates for new collaborative spaces. Several case studies demonstrated how reuse can be successfully implemented, such as the creation of the Wallingford Center, but also how significant cultural resources can be lost, as in the case of Wilson-Pacific. Put together, these five case studies illustrate the many of the benefits and failings of the current historic preservation system in Seattle.

Figure 112: Traditional dancers at Cinco de Mayo celebration at El Centro de la Raza on stage in front of Beacon Hill's entryway. (El Centro de la Raza 2023)

10.3 Time

Where the process of establishing significance is not well adapted to community value, the use of the "period of significance" and the 25-year age limit are usually appropriate for architectural and historical value, but become a hindrance to community value. Even with the open-ended Criterion C, it is difficult for a community to define its own values when they are limited to describing how these values were demonstrated 25 or more years ago. "Period of significance" is also used as a "filter" to challenge self-declared significance by allowing detractors to direct attention to a specific period, often the years of construction, instead of when the minoritized stakeholders made use of the property.

Colman and Beacon Hill are both included on historic registers and Colman is a designated Landmark. Yet, both have only tangential descriptions of the occupations that took place and also do not include descriptions of the large-scale community-building efforts the occupiers and the following organizations have carried out, because they were more contemporary than the 25-year age at the time of the preservation process. However, these features of the community are some of the most important, and the most instrumental elements in why the building was preserved. Those community uses are both the reason

and the method in which the historic property was maintained.

Criterion C is especially difficult to use to preserve community value for this reason: much of community strength is held in the present or recent past, so with a 25-year minimum, historical use of the site may be severed from the present community. The present community is not given as much value, and thus impacts on that community are not seen as impacts on the historic property. How is preservation intended to benefit communities if it does not value the present-day community?

Instead, often the restriction of time is also useful for project proponents to occlude significance. As the nominators of property are often those who seek to replace it, when they s contribute the context research (see 10.6) that defines the "period of significance," they typically present its history up to the age limit cut off, but omit anything later. Further, in writing the context history, the nominators choose what to emphasize and what to downplay. The staff of the Historic Preservation Program may request extra detail on any subject within the nomination, but this is not consistent or well regulated. If a consultant or nominating party has included a topic (even in a cursory fashion), it is typically considered sufficiently addressed. This allows the nominator to omit details, and it is often common to do so for more recent periods.

At Wilson-Pacific hearings, the Johnson Partnership presented a history that focused on the 1950s period, when the building had been constructed. When the AIHS and Robert Eaglestaff were mentioned by an LPB member, TJP argued they were not relevant to the history of the building. By allowing the nominator, who has a vested interest in the building not being designated, to establish the limits of the historic period to be considered significant, the procedures again put the public (including local stakeholders and community members) at a disadvantage. Further, developers, owners and government agencies routinely recruit (and even pay) "public speakers" to advance their viewpoints. Several "public speakers," who were in fact connected to SPS, spoke in Wilson-Pacific meetings to question if the AIHS and Robert Eaglestaff had even been in the building for long enough, or during the years claimed.

10.4 Adapting to Minoritized Voices

These case studies indicate that there is great value in historic buildings for minoritized communities outside of the framework of preservation regulations. Beyond the criteria for association with notable historic events, people, architects, or architectural styles, community speakers called out values such as the memory of past use, symbolic value, serving as a gathering space with proximity to another important cultural site, association with a wider value such as education, having green space, the sense of ownership from long term association, having ample space for gatherings, even proximity to public transport, and others. These values are not well-represented in the Landmark ordinance criteria, but speakers reiterated how important it was to share values they had experienced at these sites in the past with their present community, and with their children.

Examining the statements during Beacon Hill and Colman's occupation, and the preservation hearings for Wilson-Pacific, it can be seen that minoritized stakeholders frequently had to argue for the significance of their spaces by adjusting claims about the value of the building in their community to fit in the values inherent in the legal language. Colman has been designated as a Landmark and listed on the National Register, and Beacon Hill has been listed on the National Register, for their architectural styles, their association with the designs of James Stephen, and their prominence in the neighborhood. These arguments remain true; however, they are not the "whole truth."

The occupiers may never have listed these reasons; instead they would have argued that the buildings had importance for their age, public character, educational history and suitability for reuse. Today, they would likely argue that their history as reused adaptively is the most important part of their history and what gives these buildings value for their stakeholders and broader minoritized communities. At Wilson-Pacific, Indigenous stakeholders frequently began or ended their arguments with their recommendations for which criteria applied to the building; however, often their reasons did not connect deeply with those criteria. Criteria A and B were connected to the historic events of the AIHS and Robert Eaglestaff. The claim was true but limited, as challenged by SPS, due to the very narrow window of time the AIHS actually operated in the building within the 25-year limit for Landmarks. Speakers also frequently argued for criteria C and F, citing its importance to the Indigenous community and its spatial location in the neighborhood, but these claims

were less successful. And ultimately, under threat of lawsuit, the demolition was approved.

Local communities are also disadvantaged because there is no community consultation requirement, and a nomination is most often presented by a professional consultant paid by the owner, developer or government agency seeking to modify or demolish the property. Neighborhoods and other community groups with formal organizations are more likely to be recognized and consulted. A community like Queen Anne, with a long-standing and influential Community Council, will receive more attention than a neighborhood that is less well organized or whose members are less financially capable. Communities of wealth have an advantage in receiving a respectful audience. They are also less likely to be questioned as stakeholders. This benefits white middle-to-upper class communities, while disadvantaging majority non-white communities.

10.4.1 Integrity

Related is the problem of integrity (typically meaning material integrity) or the "ability of a property to convey its significance," as defined in Seattle's preservation ordinance. In the case studies in this thesis, integrity was an issue that led the LPB to vote no controls on the interior of Colman School, and integrity was an issue at Wilson-Pacific, when the SPS failure to maintain the buildings and site led to questions about their condition. Maintenance of old properties is optional and expensive. Wealth also can impact the preservation of historic properties associated with minoritized or working class communities, through misuse of the "integrity" clause of the Landmark regulations. Without the wealth and opportunities to maintain historic properties, it is more likely that historic properties in lower income or minoritized communities will have been modified or allowed to deteriorate, often incorrectly leading surveyors to determine a building has low integrity, disqualifying it from preservation.

LPB members, SPS speakers, and city officials described Wilson-Pacific School as run-down, difficult to reuse, and unsafe. An Indigenous speaker, Trena Harmon, commented:

> […]that some of the school board members have commented that it is a sad, neglected school that needs to be demolished and is ugly. She said that as American Indians look at our reservations and are used to it. She said they will stay there until it is torn down.[1]

[1] LPB 411/14

A statement by Keo J. Capestany, a member of the Washington State Commission on Mexican-American Affairs, on the first day of the occupation of Beacon Hill School mirrored this sentiment: "We are used to worse living conditions than that. But it must be safe and sanitary."[1] Ironically, the preservation of Beacon Hill School by the Latino occupiers and their supporters maintained a greater proportion of the school's historic character in contrast to historic preservation projects like Queen Anne High School where portions of the interior were altered.

The informal adaptation of Beacon Hill to fit community use can be seen as a side effect of "Latino Urbanism," the tradition of upgrading less desirable urban areas to better fit Latino culture and community use. This frequently involved increasing the walkability of an urban space, engaging in character generating decorations, and better upkeep and community safety. While other minoritized groups have different attitudes towards urban spaces and community use, when limited only to older or shabby spaces they work to improve it for their own use. This can only happen, however, when either preservationists or radical action grant protection and support to a building to allow it to be improved. Without resources and skilled collaborators, only straightforward buildings (like Beacon Hill) will be improved, while properties requiring more complex structural or constructional interventions remain in conditions that are not considered respectable. The occupiers of Colman did not have the ability to restore the school, nor arrange for the funding and organization to formally maintain the physical structure. The preservation of Colman required the "establishment" part of the Black community to take over and address the structural and constructional issues by bringing significant funding to pay for needed interventions.

[1] *Seattle Times* 1972, Oct. 12

10.5 Inter-Community Diversity

The Colman, Beacon Hill, and Wilson-Pacific cases provide contrasting narratives in how communities are supported by their own organizations; , those without strong institutional or organizational frameworks already in place usually cannot build such organizational support in the short time available when a building becomes threatened. . Each of these schools was associated with a specific group of stakeholders with their own community of interrelated people with shared goals: further the education of youth, providing a safe space for cultural and community expression, and formation or continuation of an official shared space. The specific identity of stakeholders is crucial, as in the case of Colman and Wilson-Pacific a generalized view of the community by outsiders may lead to arguments that already are "Indigenous community" and "Black community" centers in Seattle. However, these arguments may fail to recognize the diversity within these minoritized communities where existing centers are not centers for the specific stakeholders interested in these schools. Without a formal organization, it is more difficult to provide a consensus on community value, and when public speakers receive two minutes of speaking time, the lack of consensus can weaken arguments for significance.

Roberto Maestas, who led the Beacon Hill occupiers, was exceptional in that he was an effective and charismatic leader, not just in triggering the occupation, but also in building an organization, finding funding and reaching out for support. Even then, he described how in 1979 "after seven years of growth and development, the city took the position that El Centro de la Raza didn't know how to administrate. They had the racist arrogance to ask us to prove ourselves."[1] Yet, the structure of El Centro de la Raza made clear that it was an entity that has sufficient institutional strength to go forward with the property.

The City of Seattle has a process for collaborating and hearing Indigenous voices through its Tribal Relations Department and Indigenous Advisory Council. However, both deal closely with federally recognized Tribal Nations, a classification that is contentious and highly politically motivated. The Indigenous Advisory Council has only one seat (of five) for a member of "an urban Indian organization."[2] Preservation does not have a system for interacting or listening to voices outside of official organizations, which can not include or represent the needs of every minoritized person or group of stakeholders.

If it can be established that intangible elements of historic properties are valid parts of significance, such as place attachment or features of social infrastructure, then preservation could begin to address the various voices on an individual community and stakeholder level. In these case studies, the minoritized communities frequently requested the ability to use the site going forward. At Beacon Hill and Colman, occupiers directly occupied the schools to create a space that could be used, and Wilson-Pacific Indigenous stakeholders described the past use and hope for future use to continue.

Present and future use was as important as past use, and is often more important to stakeholders and communities than the tangible physical details of a building like classical cornices or gothic finials. Preservationists recognize that the best way to preserve a building is to keep it in use, but Seattle's preservation regulations ignore this reality. Preserving a wider range of aspects beyond the physical or material elements greatly increases the preservation not just of the building but also of community and cultural value.

10.5.1 Indigenous Seattle

The federal and state system does have a system for addressing intangible significance of places for Indigenous groups. As stated above, this only applies to federally recognized Tribal Nations. These places labeled "Traditional Cultural Properties: (TCPs) are defined by the Tribal Nation, and consent is required before non-Tribal members are informed of their location, or the reason for their significance. In Washington, a database is used to compare planned construction sites with TCP locations, and consultation is required with Tribal Nations that have defined larger areas of interest to afford them the ability to stipulate a TCP that is not previously shared.

Seattle has no such policy. TCP sites seldom fit criteria of significance in the Landmark ordinance, due to differing cultural perspectives on heritage and land use. With no federally recognized Tribal Nation within Seattle, there is also little appreciation for differences in frameworks for examining sites, nor consultation. Multiple times during the preservation hearings for Wilson-Pacific, Indigenous speakers highlighted the connection to Licton Springs. The area around the spring had special significance, and gathering nearby had a crucial cultural meaning. The spring, school, and land were all connected. The

[1] Johansen 2020, pp. 87
[2] City of Seattle 2023, "Indigenous Advisory Council"

significance has not been removed either, instead Indigenous people who consider it significant are not permitted to access it.[1]

Speakers also offered that allowing continued use of the land could be considered an act of restitution, repairing at least a small part of the harm done to Indigenous people over the course of Seattle's history. Licton Springs itself was not designated as a Landmark until October 2019.[2]

[1] Another example of this is the lack of Tribal Nation consultation done by the University of Washington. The southern half of the campus is considered a significant landscape by many tribes. However, the UW states that due to previous development of the land, any significant connection has been erased. See de Vry 2021
[2] Jaeger 2020

10.6 Power of the LPB

Any changes or attempts to address community value may also be limited by the ability and willingness of the LPB to act. The LPB is constrained by the text of the ordinance language in the Seattle Municipal Code. However, the text is still subject to interpretation. Most LPB members do not stay members for more than one term, and they are unpaid. Turnover reduces the consistency and long-term vision needed for equitable preservation. They also have little power should an agency or developer choose to pressure the City.

The volunteer LPB members represent different professions or disciplines, but their expertise is limited, and they are required to make legal judgments that they can defend based on their interpretations of the criteria in the ordinance. Their interpretations of the criteria are necessarily subjective, requiring advocates for historic properties to prove significance.

The LPB voted to designate Wilson-Pacific on the basis of criteria A and B, agreeing that the building was significant for its association with the AIHS and Robert Eaglestaff. However, the power of the School District and the initiation of a lawsuit, led to a divided vote with a majority not imposing controls (protections). The building's demolition eliminated any tangible way of demonstrating the existence of the AIHS and the work of Robert Eaglestaff other than token plaques posted in the school. The City did not think the physical structure important enough to that history to fight the School District in Court, and the Seattle regulations make no provision for protecting the site for its Indigenous history and as a location of Indigenous cultural practices extending back thousands of years.

The Seattle School District, in its lawsuit challenging the designation and protection of Wilson-Pacific, argued, "The criteria for approval are inherently subjective. There are no objective standards."[1] They claimed that as the owner, they had no way to appeal the decisions of the LPB, and that the criteria are always subject to interpretation. Since the lawsuit did not go forward, it is unclear whether this argument might have been upheld in the Courts.

The SPS would also likely have argued that the protection of Wilson-Pacific was financially destructive for the District–for the expenses already incurred, for the increased cost of construction due to delay, and for the cost of another site for two schools if the

[1] Seattle School District No. 1 v. City of Seattle and Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board 2014, pp. 5

Wilson-Pacific site could not be used. Even if the Landmarks law was upheld, the cost issues may have doomed Wilson-Pacific as the SMC Landmark provisions state that an owner cannot be made to retain a building if the building will lose money. While this provision has been used successfully by developers which have received decisions allowing the demolition of Landmarked buildings due to the financial losses associated with retaining those buildings, this provision in the law could have been argued by the School District as well.

The District may also have been able to bring evidence that the LPB has determined a building is not eligible for designation as a Landmark, but five or more years later has reached the opposite conclusion. While this may reflect better research underlying the renomination, it would have provided a basis for the School District to argue for the subjectivity of these decisions. The issue may be affected by the changing personnel serving on the LPB; because the LPB is a board of unpaid volunteers meeting at late hours during the work week, members are, to a large extent, self-selected from individuals with high interest in the field of preservation. Their choices may be shaped, at least in part, not just by the language of the ordinance or the evidence presented, but by also their professional and/or personal perspectives. In fact, a building's preservation or demolition may occasionally even depend on which members are able to attend the LPB hearings.

Power is also given to the party against strict preservation controls. As noted above Landmark nominations are routinely written by those who seek to demolish (or severely alter) a historic building. Seattle requires that any building that is at least 25 years of age, larger than 5000 square feet, not in an industrial zone, not a consecrated church, and not a single-family residence, be considered for possible Landmark status before a demolition permit can be issued. Building owners, developers, or government entities like the School District who wish to use the sites of older buildings for new construction must prepare and submit Landmark nominations. They hire and pay preservation consultants who do the research and write the nominations. The consultant is aware if the owner, developer or government agency wishes to destroy the building to clear the site, and may be able to "shade" the nomination to make it less likely that the LPB will find the building significant. Owners may also remove historical features, or allow a building to deteriorate through neglect, to make it more likely that the building will fail the "integrity test."

The communities and stakeholders who may value the building and site are usually not involved until the nomination is submitted; they may then submit written comments and

may try to provide more information about the building and site, but they are often limited by lack of time, lack of access to resources, their unfamiliarity with building history research and their unfamiliarity with the specific provisions of preservation ordinances. Further, rather than making the case for the building independently, community members and stakeholders are usually responding to the nomination, so they are trying to add to significance or refute claims that may be seen to reduce the likelihood that the LPB will find the building significant. Combined with the narrow set of criteria under which the LPB may find the building significant, the advantage is held by the party nominating the building, typically the developer or government agency.

At the nomination hearing and again at the designation hearing, the nominating party receives a large block of time to present their arguments. As nominator, they make PowerPoint presentations with time based upon the scope of content being presented. In contrast, individual public speakers receive only two minutes; those representing organizations may, by pre-arrangement, receive four minutes, but this is provisional. Criterion C becomes especially problematic in this case, as the nominator is first to present the building and its context, giving the nominator the opportunity to make an initial definition of the "community" to be considered for Criterion C. When public speakers have two minutes to present, there is little time to spare for redefining the identity of the community in question. This can lead to over-generalizations, widening of the scope of criterion C, and allowing outside arguments that are not specific to the stakeholders involved.

10.7 Conclusion

Overall, the current preservation process in Seattle may be contributing to the perpetuation of systemic racism. The system was established at a time when diverse perspectives of history were not valued, so the system largely excludes those values–not explicitly, but implicitly in the framing of criteria, in the limiting of timeframes and historical periods to be considered, and in the requirements for "integrity." By providing a strict and narrow system for determining the significance of historic properties, preservation excludes non-conventional historic properties that are valuable to minoritized communities for values not embodied in the criteria. The criteria for significance provide a list of values that are accepted: architectural value, historic value, aesthetic value, and past community value. However, the additions of time restrictions, integrity, and the power given to the owners and developers, all serve to disadvantage local communities, especially minoritized stakeholders, arguing for community value.

Of the five Seattle schools case studies in this thesis, two demonstrate how preservation can benefit communities, at least for middle class and wealthy white neighborhoods, but the additional three demonstrate a range of outcomes from success to failure that relied on radical action and minoritized community support. These cases demonstrated that the lack of flexibility to adapt or create new systems for the preservation of alternative values, lack of criteria for values that benefit minoritized communities, and difficulty addressing multiple voices from a community or unorganized group, undermine the arguments of minoritized stakeholders in preservation cases. A rigorous requirement for consultation and the acceptance of more diverse values for preservation are needed to rectify the injustices of the present Seattle preservation system.

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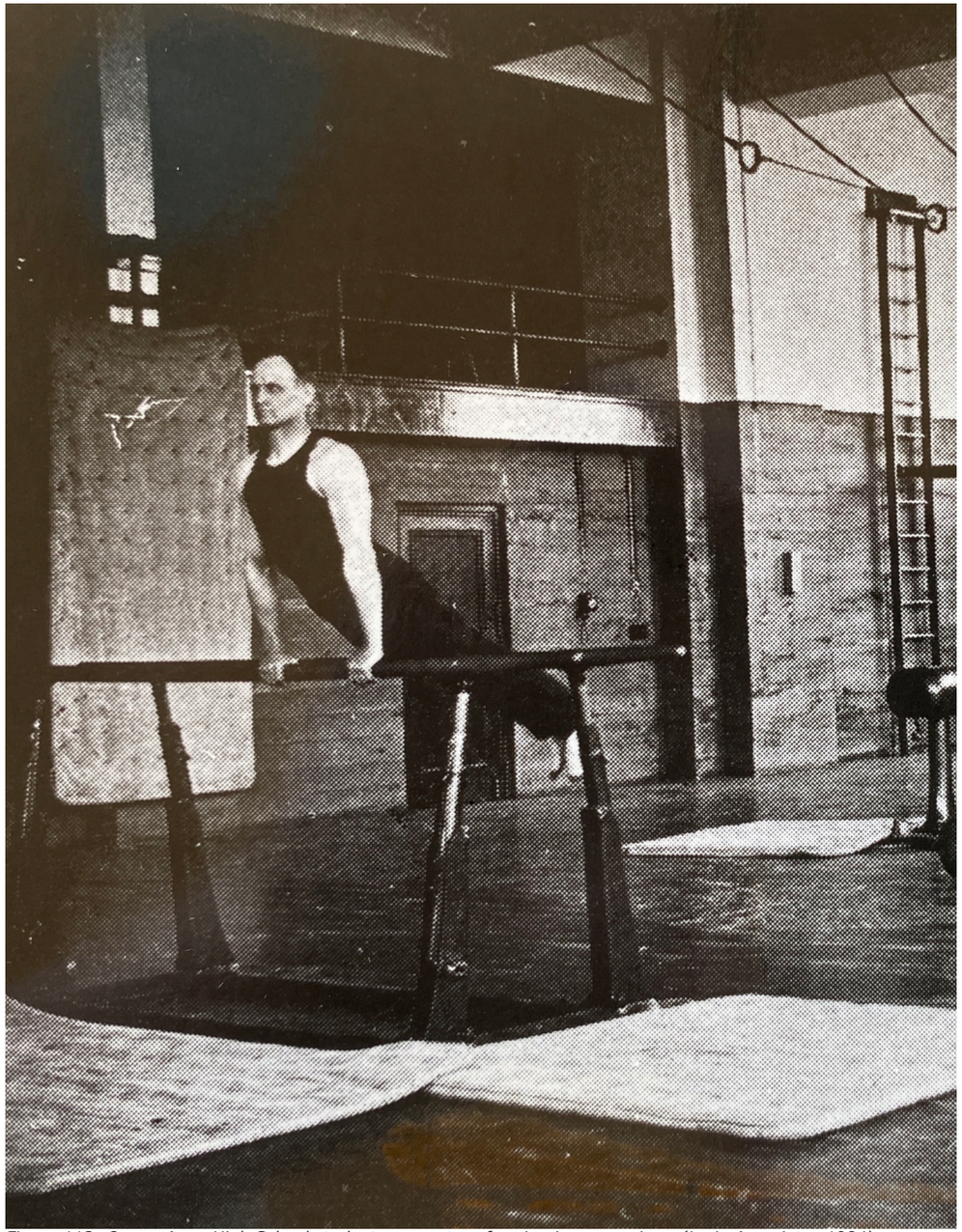

Figure 113: Queen Anne High School student gymnast performing in gymnasium. (Lorig Associates 1984)

Conclusions and Final Reflections

This thesis suggests that sites considered for preservation may not all be treated in the same way. Although the legal system is supposed to treat all cases as "equal before the law," the complexities of preservation make it challenging to achieve equitable processes and equitable results.

Of five case studies addressed in this thesis, only two had community-appropriate results coming directly from the preservation process; these two schools were located in White, middle-class or upper-class neighborhoods. Of the remaining three, two were preserved, but through processes that were partly or completely outside Seattle's legal preservation framework. Beacon Hill was vacant and may have been sold for commercial use; Colman was targeted for demolition to ease the path of an Interstate highway. Both were saved by activists who occupied the buildings. Beacon Hill was transformed under control of the occupiers, but Colman was only transformed when politically connected leaders became involved. Wilson-Pacific was lost following the legal process–the building was nominated and designated, but once the School District initiated a lawsuit, the Landmarks Board, at the behest of the City's Preservation Officer, voted against implementing controls leaving the building and site unprotected.

The easiest preservation cases were those in White communities; those most heavily associated with minoritized communities faced greater challenges. In the end, the school preservation/adaptive reuse projects primarily addressing minoritized communities only succeeded when those communities were well-connected politically. However, this finding must be tempered by recognition that the five cases stretch over a period of nearly four decades; a broader study would be needed to verify that the conditions uncovered in these case studies remain true in all cases today.

The school buildings addressed in these case studies that were preserved fit within the narrow scope of the established significance criteria. The successful arguments for preservation and Landmark status were tailored to fit the criteria. When communities and/or stakeholders argued for preservation based on community-specific reasons of social value, contemporary cultural value, memory, symbolism and continuing use, these reasons could not legally be considered by LPB members.

The typical process of reviewing a building for Landmark status gives advantages to owners (including government departments and agencies) and developers as they commission consultants whom they pay to prepare the nomination reports; although the city staff require that the nomination document not take an overt position on significance, the writers can "shade" their reports to serve their clients' wishes. In the hearings, the consultants present the nomination to the LPB without time constraints, establishing the scope of the historical context, period of significance, and communities identified as stakeholders. The time for responses by community members, stakeholders and the public is severely limited. It is also commonplace for outsiders to generalize community identity for minoritized communities. In turn, this can stifle dissenting voices and lead to questions about whether there is community support for a particular place. When community identities are ignored, and properties are lost, as at Wilson-Pacific, the results can be devastating for those long-term stakeholders whose valuation of the historic property was silenced or ignored. Problems like these may accumulate to the disadvantage of minoritized community groups trying to engage in the preservation process, resulting in a continuing imbalance in what is protected and what is not.

Analysis of all City of Seattle Landmark significance statements up to 2016, show that 65% of landmarks are not described with any association with minoritized communities.[1] The figure below shows this data: a 0 represents no stated association with underrepresented communities, a 1 indicates association with underrepresented communities that is not included in the final statement of significance, a 2 means the association with underrepresented communities contributed to the significance, and a 3 is means association with underrepresented communities is a critical part of significance. Only 18% of King County landmarks and 10% of Seattle landmarks are categorized as a 2 or a 3, illustrating clearly how the landmarking process is failing to represent and serve minoritized communities.

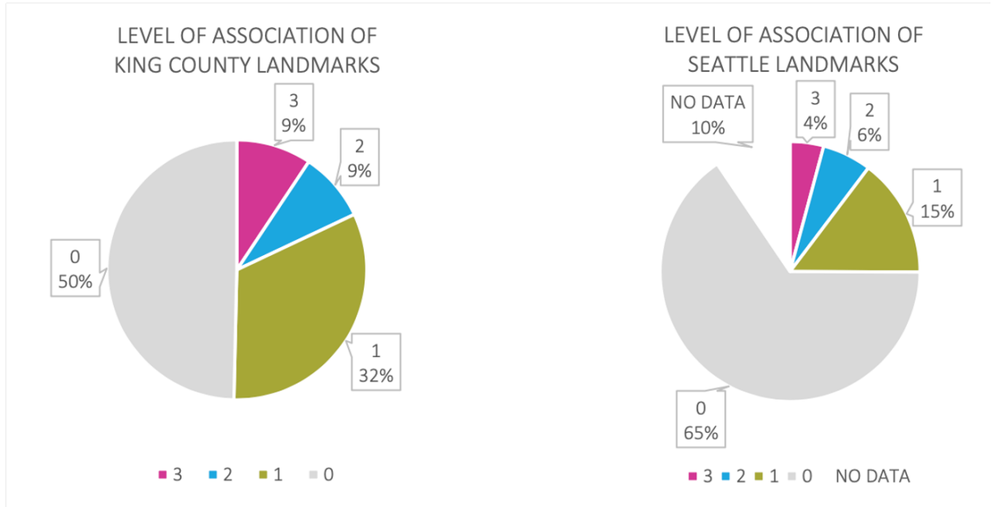

Figure 114: Levels of association from 4Culture's 2016 analysis report.

[1] 4Culture 2016

Figure 115: Councilman John Miller speaking to occupiers in the Beacon Hill School, October 12, 1972. (MOHAI 2000.107.124.39.04)

11.1 Moving Forward

Moving forward, the legal framework of preservation should be changed to accommodate a wider range of valuation of historic properties. Where there is significant continuing use, preservation documents should include that continuing use to the present. Where buildings are nominated for historical reasons, the period of significance should address historical significance continuing to the present. When properties are nominated for architectural reasons, "integrity" can be evaluated as it is now, based on retention of physical features. However, when a building is nominated for criteria that are historical or cultural or social, then the valuation of integrity should be on a scale that recognizes that not every historical detail is important to the building significance. Preservation processes should also consider significant the features of historic properties identified by community speakers, whether tangible or intangible. Landmark preservation could provide controls to maintain use when continuing use is part of its significance, including retention of public use of publicly accessible spaces. In cases of adaptive reuse, the character of the building as social infrastructure and its symbolic connections should be allowed to be considered. And, consideration should be given to creating a category of protection for Traditional Cultural Places (TCPs) in city ordinances, paralleling the TCP framework at the national level. Physical preservation is already expensive and an ongoing requirement for historic property owners; substituting programmatic preservation of use, tradition, or culture within a site would not add to costs that preservation will already incur.

Overall, the legal preservation process should require a greater level of consultation and investigation, to put preservationists in the role of go-between for interested communities and owners or developers (rather than serving as agents only of owners and/or developers). Consultation is already a requirement of broader cultural resource management regulations at the state and national level, specifically for federally recognized Tribal Nations. Expanding the stated inclusion of community consultation, to be fully required rather than suggested, could aid in identifying the valuable elements of a historic property, and how best to preserve them in ways that benefits local communities, as well as the greater public.

Changing preservation regulations will be a challenging process. Developers seek to rewrite laws to reduce restrictions and limit participation, while preservationists will see to make preservation regulations and processes more inclusive and welcoming to all people. Based upon the five case studies addressed in this thesis, preservationists should attempt to bring agency to minoritized people, fostering a new generation of decision-makers who can address how preservation is enacted in their own communities.

Currently, preservation regulations require a level of consultation, in Washington, most commonly with federally recognized Tribal Nations. Some of these regulations imply that a level of local community consultation should be considered, but in the reality of practice, with small budgets and fast schedules, there is little opportunity for collaborative work.[1] Preservation regulations and government oversight should require more investigation of stakeholder identity. Preservation law should begin to ensure the question "who cares?" is being answered, and once that is determined allow those who care to answer "why do they care?"

Increasing the agency of stakeholders in preservation also involves widening the view of what can be preserved, and how things may be preserved. Historic properties often have a public element, being recognized as part of a community identity, a gathering space, or providing the public a service. During the initial discussion of the SPS Moberly

[1] Nissley 2016

Plan, which proposed to lease underused schools to private developers for a profit, the Seattle City Council voted that the School District had no obligation to maintain public buildings as public.[1] The vote should be rescinded–public access should be protected.

The minoritized stakeholders in these case studies felt invested in their historic properties. They had developed place attachment, and their community strength was in some part connected to the property. During the occupation of Beacon Hill, the protestors sent pamphlets to the surrounding neighborhood stating,

> We hope to remind our local officials that there is no such thing as city property or school property. All public property is 'people's property,' and as such should be used. It is wasteful and irresponsible to allow property like this to go without generating utility or revenue.[2]

Schools are a form of public property providing public space that functions as social infrastructure. Schools have a strong sense of place (schoolness), generate place attachment, and are a site of cultural practices. These are intangible values, but they are not impossible to preserve. Preservationists could examine how physical portions of the historic property contribute, as well as considering the addition of requiring continued use and access from stakeholders.

[1] Angelos 1980
[2] Johansen 2020, pp. 62, quoting Chicano Ad-hoc 1972, pp. 1

11.2 Program Building

The investigation conducted for this thesis raises issues that extend beyond those strictly focused on preservation. When addressing the larger question of support for (or preservation of) the communities themselves, the role of public agencies has been equivocal at best and especially poor in addressing minoritized communities.

When minoritized stakeholders were not already well-organized, the city and/or School District did not support them, or even attempted to undercut them. SPS withdrew their support from the AIHS, removed Indigenous teachers, stopped informing students of the possibility of joining the program, and cut funding; the once-successful Indigenous high school program was decimated.

El Centro de la Raza was continually questioned and probed because of its unconventional organization. In Where Do We Go From Here? Chaos or Community by Martin Luther King Jr., a touchstone for the Centrolistas, King describes how the government does this purposefully:

> Underneath the invitation to prepare programs is the premise that the government is inherently benevolent - it only awaits presentation of imaginative ideas. [...] This premise shifts the burden of responsibility from the white majority, by pretending it is withholding nothing, and places it on the oppressed minority, by pretending the latter is asking for nothing.[1]

In these cases, the city and other official groups were well aware that systemic programs could be created to maintain these communities; that is what they were asking the communities to provide. But when the communities did provide ideas, ones that would work for that community, the official response was to declare it too unconventional to work. It was often a "no-win" situation for these communities.

Beacon Hill provides the best case scenario of how things can be resolved, but one that required an effective multi-talented and charismatic leader like Roberto Maestas who was able to lead the activists to create systems themselves before forcing the City to accept them as official. Maestas did not care if other people believed in his ideology; he focused on creating the services needed, and finding and involving other people. Because of this structural focus, when Maestas retired, the community services continued. Wilson-Pacific , was led by Robert Eagelstaff, who had similar ideas. Eaglestaff hoped to gather community

[1] King 1968, pp. 143-144

members from any and all Indigenous groups nearby who could continue to support the students. But due to his untimely death in 1996 he did not have the opportunity to create the self-sustaining programs that Maestas did. Though he had gathered other people to assist with community-building, they did not have an official structure like El Centro de la Raza. As such, when Robert Eaglestaff died and SPS withdrew support, it was more challenging for the project to continue. Smaller fragment organizations moved on to other sites, and the overall community was lost.

Colman lays in a middle ground where the city's official support did convert informal community work into official programs. Though many of the occupiers were unhappy with the ultimate structure (they were excluded from its final creation), it formalized the project and has maintained it into the present day, based around the historic school building. These events demonstrate that preservation, or other official programs, can produce the foundations to successful community projects, especially when a group is allowed to determine for themselves how a building is used to support their community.

11.3 Final Thoughts

An understated element of this thesis is the role of the property market on preservation and adaptive reuse. The problems of capitalist values in preservation is a complex and deep seated issue that cannot be explored in depth in the scope of this thesis. Briefly, the market value of property too often directly hinders creative preservation policy that could strengthen communities.

It has been made clear that SPS considered its historic properties as having monetary value, and they have stated in legal cases that preservation may devalue their property. Schools need funding, and Washington State has had past and ongoing issues with providing sufficient funds for their programs. The reliance on property sales or leases reflects some of the issues with profit driven government services. Since the 1990s property values in Seattle have risen sharply, and the opportunity to develop land for new uses, maximizing profit, is a tantalizing opportunity for many owners. Currently, Seattle's preservation regulations are hamstrung by a clause that eliminates controls should the owner of the property be unable to profit from whatever stands on their land. As a result, when the City (and the LPB) is pressured, as when SPS began a lawsuit during the Wilson-Pacific case, it is forced to give in.

Preservation regulations exist within the legal framework of land use law. In Washington State, decisions by the State Appellate Court and Supreme Court have afforded extreme protections to the "vested rights" of property owners. These legal cases have not been used to try to invalidate preservation laws, but they have allowed owners and developers to circumvent them. Historic properties most frequently are considered for preservation when an owner or developers to seek to manipulate the system to achieve development goals. When a community has a well funded and recognized neighborhood organization or other spokespersons, they are more likely to be informed and empowered to speak at LPB hearings and have better opportunities to save buildings that matter to them. But, communities with little or no official support struggle to achieve the same results. Minoritized communities are clearly at a disadvantage in such cases. Preservation reforms should put more agency in the hands of disadvantaged people.

Some may say that preservation is not the best means for community building and support. Similar sentiments were voiced for other fields that have begun the difficult process

of decolonizing their practice. Anthropology shares many elements with historic preservation, and in the last decade has begun recognizing the colonial roots of the discipline and its practices: its tradition of othering of foreign and minoritized peoples, extracting knowledge and resources from disadvantaged groups without recompense, and aiding in the theoretical justifications behind conquest and racism. As a field, anthropology has begun to work on not-just anti-colonial practices, but actively looking inward to remove and rectify deeply held beliefs and traditional techniques that continue to harm disadvantaged people today.[1] Preservation should do the same.

The "This Place Matters" campaign, in use by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, demonstrates that the field hopes to involve everyday people in valuing and maintaining heritage.[2] However, it has not yet demonstrated that it welcomes everyday people in direct decision-making. "This Place Matters" does not yet promise that your place will be understood in the way you understand it, nor that the reason it matters to you will be a basis for its preservation. Every statement made by speakers in all five case studies can be read as a request for agency. They wanted a say in what buildings were saved, how they were saved, and how they should be used in the years ahead.

[1] Schneider and Hayes 2020
[2] Natural Trust for Historic Preservation 2023

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