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Beyond Integrity:
Prioritizing Historic Significance over Historic Integrity for a
Representative Landscape of Built Cultural Heritage in Seattle's Central District

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Abstract

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Traditionally, the field and practice of historic preservation in much of the Western world has valued primarily white, European, upper-class male history and heritage. This is in large part because historic integrity is prioritized over historic significance in the evaluation of historic properties, which leaves vernacular built heritage associated with minority communities unrecognized and unprotected. Such is the case in Seattle's historically Black Central District neighborhood, which is currently experiencing rapid growth and development that threatens many vernacular properties considered significant to Black history and culture. Using archival methods, analytical mapping, and field ethnography, this thesis quantifies how historic integrity has triumphed over historic significance in the evaluation of vernacular built heritage associated

with Black history and culture in the Central District, and explores four cases in depth that illustrate this point further. The final chapter reflects on ways to rethink the evaluation of historic integrity and historic significance on both national and local levels, and offers suggestions to improve local efforts to preserve culturally significant heritage associated with minority communities.

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Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

Through the act of preserving our history and cultural heritage, we are making choices about what and who we value, and what history and heritage we want future generations to know and to remember. David Lowenthal's landmark book, *The Past Is A Foreign Country* illustrates how an individual or societal relationship to the past is not a given - significance of history is a social construction. The way in which we view the past allows us to make sense of the present, and to shape the future. A "usable past"¹ needs to be constructed out of various remnants, fragments, and stories, and the construction of these remaining fragments communicate what we value as a society.

BACKGROUND

Traditionally, historic preservation practice in much of the Western world has valued primarily white, European, upper-class male history and heritage.² This can be seen throughout the American built landscape in the form of historic house museums of wealthy white high society males and their families, built monuments to political and military leaders, and historic districts comprised of high-style residential architecture, in which only wealthier residents can afford to live. Through the limited preservation of this kind, historic preservation practice primarily portrays one version of American history, leaving out a significant portion of the country's built heritage that represents a diverse, complicated, and messy history.

In the past 50 years, however, historic preservation practice has made efforts to diversify its practice. Since passing the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, federal, state, and local preservation efforts have questioned and reexamined what we preserve, and for whom. On a federal level, the National Park Service (NPS) has produced guidebooks, reports, created programs and initiatives that aim to protect and preserve diverse cultural heritage. The 1991 and 1992 National Preservation Conferences in San Francisco and Miami (respectively) brought the topic of diversity to the forefront of historic preservation

¹ Mason, R. (2006). Theoretical and Practical Arguments for Values-Centered Preservation. CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship, 3(2). Retrieved from <https://www.nps.gov/CRMJournal/Summer2006/view2.html>

² Lee, Toni. 2012. "Cultural Diversity in Historic Preservation: Where We Have Been, Where We Are Going." Forum Journal 27 (1): 20-34.

discussion, and the field has since progressed towards the goal of a more equitable representation of cultural heritage.³

Even still, the picture of American history, represented by officially-recognized historic sites does not accurately reflect the diverse history in the United States.⁴ As of February 2017, there are 95,214 listings on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), a roughly 19% increase from 2004 numbers. Out of 95,214 properties, 1,894 are associated with African American heritage, 199 with Hispanic, and 92 with Asian.⁵ In total, properties associated with ethnic heritage in 2017 reflect only 2% of the total properties listed on the National Register. There is still much room for improvement. More than one-third of Americans now belong to racial or ethnic minorities. In addition, the minority population is projected to rise to 56 percent of the total in 2060, and nonwhites are expected to become the majority of the nation's children by 2020.⁶

Black and African American Built Heritage in Seattle's Central District

The Central District (CD), or Central Area, is in the southeast section of the Seattle and is the city's historically Black neighborhood. Black pioneer and wealthy landowner William Grose bought a 12-acre tract of farmland in 1882, around which grew an enclave of middle-class African American landowners into the early 20th century. By the early 1970s, the vibrant Central District was over 70 percent Black, and the center of African American culture in Seattle.⁷ Today, however, systematic marginalization and rising home prices have dropped that number to around 20 percent, while the White population has grown to around 60 percent in 2016.⁸

Seattle is currently facing development pressures in many of its neighborhoods, and the Central District, with its older housing stock and proximity to downtown, is a prime target for redevelopment. The intersection of 23rd Ave and E. Madison St. has become the center of the fight against the gentrification of the CD, and serves as a window to what may come in the rest of the neighborhood. Development

³ Lee (2012), 21

⁴ Kaufman, Ned. 2009. "Eliminating the Diversity Deficit." In *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation*.

⁵ Author's calculations from April 2017 National Register of Historic Places All Data database

⁶ Yoshinaga, Kendra. 2016. "Babies Of Color Are Now The Majority, Census Says : NPR Ed : NPR." NPR. <http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/07/01/484325664/babies-of-color-are-now-the-majority-census-says>.

⁷ Beason, Tyrone. 2016. "Central District's Shrinking Black Community Wonders What's next | The Seattle Times." The Seattle Times. <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/central-districts-shrinking-Black-community-wonders-whats-next/>.

⁸ Ibid.,

threatens much of the CD's older, mostly ordinary, everyday built heritage that is important to the history and cultural identity of the historically Black neighborhood. It is important and imperative that Seattle prioritize the interpretation and preservation of African American and Black heritage in the Central District, as increasing development and rapid gentrification that is displacing the Black community.

Historic Integrity and Historic Significance

In historic preservation practice, historic integrity and historic significance are two of the main criteria used by federal, state, and local preservation authorities for evaluating historic properties. As defined by the NPS, historic significance is “the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture of a community, State, or the nation.”⁹ It is achieved in several ways: association with an event; association with an important person; distinctive characteristic of design, construction, or form; or for the potential to yield important information. Historic integrity is defined as “the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period.”¹⁰ Historic integrity has seven qualities: location, design, setting, association, material, workmanship, and feeling. As will be discussed in this thesis, historic integrity is often an impediment to the recognition and designation ordinary, everyday heritage that is often considered important to many non-dominant cultures.

Vernacular Built Heritage

The term ‘vernacular’ as it applies to buildings means much the same as it does when applied to language. Vernacular buildings are common, functional, and practical, built with affordable materials that are easily accessible during the time of construction. Vernacular buildings are not necessarily built to last, but instead built to fit current needs, and vernacular building often change according to need and ownership. Vernacular style opposes monumental or high-style architecture, which focuses on the aesthetic and design of the building, rather than its practicality. High-style buildings are often built with high quality materials, and are meant to be permanent. As will be discussed in this thesis, much of the built heritage of non-dominant cultural groups is vernacular in style.

⁹ “National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form.” 1997. <https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/pdfs/nrb16a.pdf>.

¹⁰ Ibid.,

Lessons for Practice

This work is significant because it considers ways in which historic preservation practice in the United States can better represent diverse built heritage through the reconsideration of the ways in which historic significance and historic integrity are used as evaluative criteria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis aims explore how historic significance and historic integrity, when used as evaluative criteria for historic properties, pose unintended obstacles for built cultural heritage associated with minority communities. This thesis will focus on vernacular built cultural heritage in Seattle's Central District (or Central Area), the city's historically Black neighborhood.

My primary research question is:

- Does heritage preserved using historic significance and historic integrity as evaluative criteria capture built sites important to the African American communities in the Central District?

To answer this main question, I use three supporting questions:

- What cultural resources exist in the Central District?
- To what degree are built cultural resources associated with Black culture and history in the Central District recognized at federal, state, and local levels?
- What percentage of built heritage recognized at the federal, state, and local levels in the Central District are designated primarily for their historic significance as opposed to their historic integrity?

LIMITATIONS

It is important for me to state that I am a white woman and non-native Seattleite. I have not lived in the Central District, nor am I personally involved in formal or informal cultural or community activities in the Central District. I do not pretend to know firsthand what it is like to be a person of African American or Black heritage in Seattle. I have not interviewed community members to understand how they think about their heritage, so I relied primarily secondary sources to understand the landscape of cultural built heritage and important community resources in the CD.

I also encountered obstacles researching local landmark nominations that have been rejected. The City of Seattle does not have a system to track rejected landmark nominations, so it is very possible that there

have been more cases of sites associated with Black heritage within the CD have been nominated and rejected due to issues with historic integrity and historic significance, but I was unable to find them.

AUDIENCE

This thesis is for urban planners, historic preservation professionals, cultural heritage professionals, and community members who are interested in preserving their cultural resources associated with non-dominant groups in a rapidly transforming urban setting. With this thesis, I hope to contribute to the recent body of literature that challenges traditional historic preservation practice to develop methods and programs that represent the ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse history and heritage in the United States.

TERMINOLOGY

This thesis uses the terms ‘Black’ and ‘African American’ interchangeably to refer to individuals with African ancestry, or who self-identify as Black from any ethnicity. This thesis focuses on history, heritage, and culture of African Americans and Black Americans rather than recent immigrants from Africa or other countries with ethnically Black populations. ‘Non-dominant’ is used to refer to non-white European cultures or communities, and it can be used interchangeably with the term ‘minority’.

The terms ‘heritage’ and ‘cultural resources’ are used interchangeably in this thesis. They are used to refer primarily to the tangible – sites, buildings, and artifacts - as well as the intangible – oral histories, rituals, language, etc. – that are significant to a culture or community. Because this thesis focuses on sites and buildings, the term ‘built heritage’ is often used to refer to culturally significant properties.

ROADMAP

Chapter 2 presents a thorough literature review of three important topics that form the foundation for this thesis. First, I discuss how the field and practice of historic preservation has tackled issues around diversity in the past 50 years, and more specifically how the field has treated the preservation of African American built heritage. Next, I present a brief history of the American historic preservation practice, the development of the concepts of historic significance and historic integrity, and how these concepts have proven to be problematic as criteria to evaluate certain types of built heritage, especially when evaluating African American built heritage. Finally, I present an overview of vernacular built heritage, and discuss

continuing issues in the preservation and recognition of vernacular architecture, as it relates to African American built heritage.

In Chapter 3, I contextualize my main research question to Seattle's Central District, and issues surrounding the preservation and interpretation of African American built heritage in Seattle. I give a brief introduction to the history and demographics of the Central District. I also discuss how city planning efforts are reshaping the neighborhood's built environment, and how the city has tried to mitigate the negative effects of new development by working with community groups to reclaim Black identity within the Central District.

In Chapter 4, I give an overview of major stakeholders involved in preservation in the Central District, and explore the CD's built cultural resources (both officially designated and unofficially designated) through a series of maps. I also examine the nature in which landmark buildings and NRHP sites were designated, and whether or not these sites capture built heritage that is associated with Black culture and history. Finally, I discuss African American community-based efforts to redefine significance in order to identify and recognize Black cultural heritage in the CD.

In Chapter 5, I discuss in depth several case studies in the CD that demonstrate how historic integrity is often prioritized over historic significance when considering the nomination and designation of sites of Black vernacular heritage. I use the Liberty Bank building, Yesler Terrace, the William Grose house, and three Black Panther sites to investigate how historic significance and historic integrity can be interpreted for vernacular non-dominant cultural heritage.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I reflect on ways in which the field and practice could reexamine or alter the ways in which it prioritizes historic integrity over historic significance. I discuss current community and city efforts to create a more diverse and representative field of historic preservation in Seattle, and emphasize areas where more emphasis could be placed to prioritize the advocacy around the preservation of built heritage associated with minority communities.

METHODS

This thesis was completed using three main methods: archival, analytical mapping, and field ethnography. Due to the limited scope and timeline of this thesis, archival methods were used to find secondary sources research. Analytical mapping using ArcGIS was important to identify the extent and scope of historic

built resources in the Central District. Field ethnography included site visits and photo documentation of the neighborhood, as well as interviews with preservation stakeholders working in Seattle, in order to better understand the CD's built environment and current preservation efforts.

Archival

Sources for the foundational knowledge in the literature review were found initially through a keyword search of University of Washington's main online library database, which directs to all online journals to which the University has a subscription. My keyword search included words like "historic integrity", "historic significance" "diversity in historic preservation", "vernacular architecture", and "Seattle Central District history". I also used recommendations by professors, Google Scholar, and bibliographies and works cited sections of relevant literature. Federal and city documents found online were consulted for information regarding federal and Seattle-specific historic preservation regulations and procedures.

This research was done in order to provide foundational knowledge for the study of three main bodies of literature: vernacular heritage preservation, and specifically how it relates to African American and Black built heritage; how current preservation practice interprets and evaluates historic significance and historic integrity in historic properties; and racial and cultural diversity in historic preservation practice.

Cases were recommended by historic preservation professionals in Seattle. These cases were chosen for their location in or on the border of the Central District, for their association with African American built heritage, and because they are underrepresented by official registers, or because they were rejected for official nominations due to issues with historic integrity. Information regarding details of case study nominations and designation status were obtained through Seattle Historic Landmark Preservation Board minutes from nomination and designation hearings. On-site observations of cases provided information on form, style, and surrounding context of what exists currently (if case study building has been demolished).

Analytical Mapping

Data was collected from various municipal and federal sources, including King County Assessor's Office, WAGDA, and the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places, and from various City and nonprofit inventories. Parcel data provided information on building age, which, when mapped, revealed patterns of older and potentially historic building stock, as well as newer building stock.

Seattle's Department of Neighborhoods (DoN) conducted two historic resource surveys for the entire city, and resources are categorized by neighborhood. The first survey, done in 1979, has not yet been digitized,

so records for the Central District were obtained from the DoN offices and then digitized. The second survey, done in 2000, has been digitized, so those records were easily accessible through the DoN website, limiting records to those located in the Central District. Properties that have been designated as Seattle Historic Landmarks are also found on the DoN website, although they are not easily searchable by neighborhood. Properties specific to the Central District were identified using the map provided by the website. NRHP sites were found through the website for the NRHP, and sites specific to the Central District were identified in a database that contained all sites in the country. Other cultural resources were found using information provided by HCAACD, which directed me to lists of cultural heritage identified through efforts of Seattle's Arts and Culture Department, and a local Seattle preservation non-profit. This information was then formatted as .csv files and used in ArcGIS to create both a somewhat comprehensive map of Seattle's officially recognized built heritage, as well as a map of unregistered cultural resources in the Central District.

Field Ethnography

Site visits and photo documentation were done during 3 weekends in April 2017. Two times, I walked north on 23rd Ave from Yesler to Union, east on Union, and south on MLK Blvd back down to Yesler. I also walked on several residential streets between 23rd and MLK Blvd, and along Cherry and Jackson streets. During one visit, I visited the site of each of my four vignette sites (Liberty Bank, Yesler Terrace, William Grose house, and the three Black Panther sites).

A small number of informal interviews were conducted with historic preservation stakeholders in Seattle. These stakeholders are: Eugenia Woo from Historic Seattle (nonprofit), Dana Phelan from 4Culture (King County public development authority), Stephanie Johnson-Tolliver from Historic Central Area Arts and Culture District (HCAACD - community group), Jennifer Meisner from King County (county department), Jennifer Mortensen from the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation (nonprofit), and brief email correspondence with Erin Doherty from the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (city department). These stakeholders were chosen because of their organization's focus in historic preservation, and because they represent diverse perspectives on historic and heritage preservation in Seattle.

These interviews were conducted in person, over the phone, and through email correspondence, and all took place during the work day. The in-person interviews were conducted at café's over coffee or lunch. Each interviewee was asked the same 11 questions about their organization's work within the Central District and/or with African American heritage, the successes and challenges they have experienced in

that work, and upcoming or potential projects to preserve Black heritage. The interview style was informal and open-ended, and meant to allow the interviewee to guide the conversation where she deemed necessary, within the general parameters of the topic. The interviewees were not required to answer questions in order, or even to answer all 11 questions.

Chapter 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review covers three main bodies of literature: cultural diversity in historic preservation practice; the process in historic preservation practice through which properties are nominated to the National Register of Historic Sites using the criteria of historic integrity and historic significance; and the field of vernacular heritage. Together, these three “buckets” of literature form an important foundation for understanding how and why vernacular and culturally diverse historic properties often do not meet the current standards set by the National Register, leaving them unprotected and unrecognized by greater society.

DIVERSITY IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Diversity Gap in Historic Preservation Practice

The United States has always been racially diverse, and that diversity contributes to the rich cultural heritage that we share. Despite this fact, historic preservation has not done enough to address this diversity.¹¹ Cultural diversity in the context of this thesis means the recognition of traditionally-named minority groups - non-white, and culturally non-dominant groups. The field of historic preservation has traditionally focused more attention on sites associated with white Europeans, elites, and national leaders than on sites associated with other minority groups.¹² The picture of American history that is represented by officially-recognized historic sites does not accurately reflect the diverse history in the United States.¹³ More than one-third of Americans now belong to racial or ethnic minorities.¹⁴ In addition, the minority population is projected to rise to 56 percent of the total in 2060, and nonwhites are expected to become the majority of the nation’s children by 2020.¹⁵ Listings on the National Register do not reflect this diversity in the U.S. population, and recently, the National Park Service has made efforts to try and address this imbalance.

Federal Efforts to Recognize and Minimize the Diversity Gap

In 2002, the National Park Service commissioned a report entitled *Cultural Heritage Needs Assessment Project: Phase 1* to “gain a better understanding of what aspects of cultural heritage are important to

¹¹ Kaufman, 75

¹² Lee (2012), 27

¹³ Kaufman, 74

¹⁴ Yoshinaga

¹⁵ Ibid.,

minority cultures and what the federal government's cultural programs could do to better address these aspects of heritage".¹⁶ National Park Service policy states that the agency will "present factual and balanced presentations of the many American cultures, heritages, and histories".¹⁷ While this is difficult to measure, the National Register of Historic Places provides a valid yardstick. The NPS report on cultural heritage was published in 2004, and the author, Ned Kaufman, published updated numbers in Chapter 3 of his book *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation*. The 2004 report found that "out of over 77,000 listings included in the National Register of Historic Places in 2004, only about 1,300 were explicitly associated with African American heritage, 90 with Hispanic, and 67 with Asian".¹⁸ Taken together, sites identified as African American, Asian American, or Latino amount to slightly more than 1 per cent of the total.¹⁹ Kaufman says that these results should be taken with caution because "most properties are not listed by virtue of their association with a particular ethnic group",²⁰ so getting accurate data on the diversity of National Register listings is difficult. An official follow-up to the 2004 report has not been published.

Data accessible through the NPS website for the National Register of Historic Sites provides an updated picture on federal efforts to minimize the diversity gap in the National Register. As of February 2017, there are 95,214 listings on the National Register, a roughly 19% increase from 2004 numbers. Out of 95,214 properties, 1,894 are associated with African American heritage, 199 with Hispanic, and 92 with Asian. The National Register also identifies European, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Other as additional ethnic groups associated with cultural heritage. The 2017 data shows that there is a total of 4,347 properties associated with ethnic heritage, up from 3,000 properties in 2004.²¹ While this an improvement in total listings associated with cultural heritage, accounting for the increase in total properties listed from 2004 to 2017, the relative percentage hasn't changed much. Properties associated with ethnic heritage in 2004 and in 2017 reflect around 2% of the total properties listed on the National Register.

¹⁶ Kaufman, Ned. 2002. "Draft Cultural Heritage Needs Assessment: Phase I," 1–68.
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/crdi/publications/PhaseIReport.pdf>.

¹⁷ *National Park Service Policies 2006*, ec 7.5.6.

¹⁸ Kaufman (2009), 74

¹⁹ Kaufman (2002), 1

²⁰ Kaufman (2009), 75

²¹ Table provided in Appendix A (author's calculations)

Despite this slow progress, the National Park Service has made considerable efforts to reduce the diversity gap and raise awareness about the importance of diverse cultural heritage preservation. In 1990, the National Park Service published a report that broke new ground in recognizing that diverse cultural heritage requires more enhanced methods of preservation than were then being used. The *Keepers of the Treasures* report encouraged a shift in focus away from easily definable and distinct historic properties to considering the cultural environment as a whole.²² The *Keepers* report was developed to coincide with a new grant program to fund Native American tribal historic preservation programs and projects, and it makes a concerted effort to understand historic and cultural preservation from the varying perspectives of Native American tribes. The report also focused on intangible heritage preservation, the understanding of which is crucial when working with diverse cultural heritage. At the 1991 National Preservation Conference in San Francisco, diversity emerged as a key topic that the future of historic preservation must address.²³ As a result, diversity was the focus topic of the 1992 National Preservation Conference in Miami, FL. Some of the articles published for the conference have titles such as: “Historical Survey of an Early Black Community in Prince George’s County, Maryland,”; “Using Intangible Resources to Document and Interpret Places Significant to Ethnic History,”; and “Boston’s Chinatown: Community-Based Planning and Preservation in a Multicultural Context.”²⁴ In 1998, the Park Service published *National Register Bulletin 38: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties*, to supplement other National Register guidelines, particularly *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation and Guidelines for Completing National Register of Historic Places Forms*. Although this NPS Bulletin was intended to inform preservation of traditional properties from all cultures, it has become primarily associated with the preservation of Native American properties.

In 2013, the Park Service published a cultural resources action plan entitled *Cultural Resource Challenge: Preserving America’s Shared Heritage in the 21st Century*. The action plan, which encompasses goals for “2016 and beyond”, outlines goals and strategies that will be used to “craft future budget increase requests, and will be tailored to take advantage of future administration or congressional initiatives in accordance with the following critical funding priorities”.²⁵ One of the main goals listed at the beginning of the document calls for a strategy that identifies a culturally inclusive and representative system of parks and protected sites. The document explicitly states that the Park Service recognizes the need to:

²² Parker, Patricia L. 1990. “Keepers of the Treasures: Protecting Historic Properties and Cultural Traditions on Indian Lands.” Washington D.C.

²³ Lee, (2012), 22

²⁴ Lee (2012), bibliography

²⁵ “Cultural Resource Challenge: Preserving America’s Shared Heritage in the 21st Century.” 2013. Vol. I.

“...assess the gaps in the National Park System and the National Historic Landmarks and National Register of Historic Places programs of sites related to underrepresented groups and resource types, to raise awareness of important sites associated with underrepresented communities, to tell the stories that make up our diverse national identity, to promote understanding and sensitivity to issues of a contested past, and to identify candidates for a national system of parks and protected sites that fully represents the nation’s cultural experience.”²⁶

This is not a comprehensive list, but it is a sampling of federal efforts to diversify nationally-recognized cultural heritage. For the purpose of this thesis, the remainder of this portion of the literature review will cover a range of examples of Black and African American heritage preservation.

The Practice of Preserving Black and African American Heritage

The first site associated with the Black experience in America to receive recognition at the national level was the birthplace of agricultural scientist George Washington Carver in Diamond, Mo., dedicated as a National Monument in 1943.²⁷ The Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960 and the emergence of the ‘new social history’ (as discussed later in relation to vernacular architecture) expanded the scope of historic preservation.²⁸ The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 emphasized the recognition of sites with local importance, which set the groundwork for heritage preservation associated with minority groups. In 1965, Tuskegee University - a historically Black university founded in 1881 - was designated a National Landmark, and Congress authorized the establishment of the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site. The Hunterfly Road Houses in Weeksville, NY were some of the earliest African American historic properties to capture the attention of the preservation community. The remaining houses of Weeksville, the site of a 19th century neighborhood founded by African American freedmen, were declared New York City landmarks in 1970, and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. In 1984, the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office published *Historic Black Resources: A Handbook for the Identification, Documentation, and Evaluation of Historic African-American Properties*. This benchmark report acknowledges the “often ignored” fact that understanding African American history and heritage is essential to the nation’s development and to American identity, and so the report provides guidelines for the documentation, identification, and evaluation in order to “protect the significant Black resources in... communities [in Georgia]”.²⁹

²⁶ Ibid., 3

²⁷ Leggs, By Brent, Kerri Rubman, and Byrd Wood. 2012. “Preserving African American Historic Places.” Washington D.C.

²⁸ Lee (2012), 23

²⁹ Merritt, Carole. 1984. “Historic Black Resources: A Handbook for the Identification, Documentation, and Evaluation of Historic African-American Properties in Georgia.”

In 1998, Congress passed the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act, which established a program within the NPS to “coordinate preservation and education efforts nationwide and integrate local historical places, museums, and interpretive programs associated with the Underground Railroad into a mosaic of community, regional, and national stories.”³⁰ To date, the program has 574 listings, 400 sites, 108 program, and 66 facilities in 37 states, plus the District of Columbia and Virgin Islands.³¹ The NPS has also dedicated a lot of work towards recognizing sites of Civil Rights history. Their Civil Rights web portal includes profiles on each National Park and National Register listing associated with Civil Rights history, how to visit each site, historical photos and documents, and educational material.³² In January 2017, the NPS announced funding for 39 projects in over 20 states that will preserve and highlight the sites and stories associated with the Civil Rights Movement and the African American experience.³³

Recently, a new wave of African American preservationists has joined the movement to identify and save their local African American heritage across the country.³⁴ In 2012, the National Trust for Historic Preservation published a resource handbook for individuals and organizations interested in preserving African American heritage. The resource is called *Preserving African American Historic Places*, and it presents an overview of traditional preservation networks and their roles, offers tips on how to get preservation underway in your community, and looks at the various legal and financial tools that help protect historic properties. The African American Heritage Preservation Foundation (AAHPF) was established in 1994 as a resource center for groups primarily in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast. All-volunteer commissions or committees in at least seven states work in partnership with state government agencies to identify Black heritage sites within their state. The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia has recently compiled an inventory of African American historic sites in Philadelphia. Heritage types include churches, schools, businesses, clubs, benevolent associations, and more.³⁵

³⁰ “About the Network to Freedom.” 2017. National Park Service. Accessed June 11. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/ugrr/about_ntf/index.htm.

³¹ “Program History.” 2017. National Park Service. Accessed June 11. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/ugrr/about_ntf/program_history.htm.

³² “Civil Rights In America.” 2017. National Park Service. Accessed June 11. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/civilrights/index.htm>.

³³ Barnum, Jeremy. 2017. “National Park Service Announces Over \$7.5 Million in Grants to Preserve African American Civil Rights Movement Sites.” National Park Service. <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1207/01-12-2017-civil-rights-grants.htm>.

³⁴ Leggs, 3

³⁵ “African American Heritage - Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia.” 2017. Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia. Accessed June 11. <http://www.preservationalliance.com/what-we-do/african-american-heritage/>.

Columbus Neighborhoods is a documentary series and community engagement project that is put on by local Columbus radio stations WOSU. A part of the series focuses on African American Historic Preservation, and discusses how African Americans have historically been left out of the efforts to conserve buildings in Columbus. These efforts represent only a small sample of the local movement to preserve Black heritage in the United States.

The next section of this literature review discusses a brief history of the field of historic preservation in the United States, and issues surrounding the interpretation of historic integrity and historic significance when evaluating built heritage.

HISTORIC INTEGRITY & HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE IN CURRENT PRESERVATION PRACTICE

A Brief History of Historic Preservation in the United States

The U.S. federal government's involvement in the field of historic preservation starts in the early 20th century, with the signing of The American Antiquities Act of 1906, followed by the Historic Sites Act of 1935. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was an expansion of the two previous acts of legislation, and was signed into law on October 15, 1966 by president Lyndon B. Johnson. The NHPA represents the most far-reaching preservation legislation ever enacted in the United States, and it continues to shape our national, state, and local preservation programs today.³⁶

Among the most important legislation, the NHPA established the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), Section 106 Review, the list of National Historic Landmarks, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and State Historic Preservation Offices. Section 106 Review requires that federal agencies undergo a review process for all projects and programs that they carry out, approve, or fund that may have an effect on historic properties. The purpose of Section 106 is to minimize any harm or damage done by federal agencies to historic properties. The National Register of Historic Places is “the official list of the Nation’s historic places worthy of preservation”.³⁷ Sites on the NRHP have no inherent federal mandate for preservation, only encouragement. However, the designation does make NRHP sites eligible for

³⁶ Tomlan, Michael. 2015. *Historic Preservation: Caring for Our Expanding Legacy*. Edited by Springer. New York, NY.

³⁷ “National Register of Historic Places Official Website.” 2017. National Park Service. Accessed June 11. <https://www.nps.gov/Nr/>.

numerous federal and state rehabilitation tax credits, as well as for protective consideration by federal agencies planning projects that could impact historic properties.

Public-sector federal level historic preservation efforts are carried out by the National Park Service (NPS) in the Department of Interior, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The Advisory Council is an independent federal agency that advises the president and Congress on preservation policy. The agency's main function is to review and comment on proposed projects that would affect properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the NRHP if the federal government is carrying out, approving, or funding the project. Private-sector federal efforts are handled by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Trust, founded in 1949, is a privately-funded national-level nonprofit organization that offers a wealth of information for preservationists, property owners, heritage tourists, and other interested citizens. This information can be access online through their website, in print, and at the Trust's annual conference and other training sessions.

State-level, public-sector efforts are handled by State Historic Preservation Offices, or SHPOs. SHPOs serve as the public-sector preservation partners, and by federal law, there is a SHPO in each of the 50 states. Each SHPO plays a central role in administering federal historic preservation policy, as well as supporting local organizations and citizens in preservation work. These offices have a variety of responsibilities, which include identifying historic properties, considering National Register nominations, reviewing federal projects for their impact on historic properties, and administering tax credit projects and grant programs. Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, or THPOs compliment SHPO work by focusing on tribal heritage preservation. Each state has its own number of private-sector organizations that organize state-level preservation efforts.³⁸ Washington's state historic preservation office is housed in the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in Olympia, WA. Washington's SHPO funds the state's Main Street program, manages the State Inventory of Cultural Resources, nominations to the National Register, and all matters of federally mandated compliance.

Local public-sector preservation efforts are headed by preservation commissions, usually in the form of architectural review boards or historic preservation commissions. The local preservation commission or local government agency oversees decisions regarding nomination and designation of historic properties that are subject to review in the community. They can also designate historic districts. In the private-sector, local nonprofit preservation organizations and Main Street programs are able to tailor preservation

³⁸ Tomlan, 114

efforts specific to the communities they serve.³⁹ Seattle’s historic preservation program is housed within the Department of Neighborhoods, and has its own Landmark Preservation Board, which oversees and approves all nominations, designations, and controls for City landmarks and historic districts.

PRESERVATION RESOURCES		
	Private Sector	Public Sector
Federal/ National	National Trust for Historic Preservation	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation National Park Service
State	Statewide Preservation Organization	State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO)
Local	Local Preservation Organizations Main Street Organizations	Local Preservation Commissions Certified Local Governments

Figure 2.1. Preservation Resources (Source: National Trust for Historic Preservation)

Historic Significance in Historic Preservation - As Understood and Implemented by the National Park Service

The concepts of significance and integrity as they relate to historic preservation are not always referred to as “historic significance” and “historic integrity” in academic scholarship or government documents. For the purpose of this thesis, however, the concepts of significance and integrity as they relate to historic preservation will be referred to as historic significance and historic integrity.

The NHPA of 1966 also established a Historic Preservation task force to develop criteria, standards, and guidelines to review the country’s historic resources. The most important legacy of the task force was setting forth the concept of significance to evaluate historic properties.⁴⁰ These criteria would develop and shape the landscape of federally and locally designated built heritage we see in the U.S. today. Joseph Tainter and John Lucas write extensively about the development of the significance concept in historic

³⁹ Ibid.,153

⁴⁰ Sprinkle, John H. 2014. *Crafting Preservation Criteria: The National Register of Historic Places and American Historic Preservation*. New York, NY: Routledge.

preservation in the United States.⁴¹ During the turn of the 20th century, property was considered significant only if it was proven to be of value to the entire nation.⁴² Both governmental and private preservation organizations were confronted with the problem of developing criteria for evaluating and historic properties worthy of being saved - buildings were considered significant for their associative value (association with great persons and great events), but also for their architectural value.

NPS Chief Historian Verne Chatelain was the first to attempt to formulate standards for selecting historic sites in 1934. These standards focused on association with great figures or events from American history.⁴³ In 1949, The private National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings attempted to further develop the 1934 standards. These updated standards added a focus on association with “social or cultural history of the nation, state, or region”⁴⁴, as well as sites associated with important prehistory. These criteria were again revised and expanded by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1956, and this time the focus on associative value of significance shifted to include an importance of architectural value. The 1956 revision of the criteria by the National Trust served as the foundation for federal attempts to define significance after the NHPA was passed in 1966. Our current criteria for evaluation on a national level closely mirrors the 1956 revision, and are as follows:⁴⁵

- (a) association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- (b) association with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- (c) 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 value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (d) yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

Historic Significance - Problematizing the Concept

While these criteria can encompass many interpretations of historic significance and leave a lot of room for flexibility, the language is vague and allows for endless uncertainty, ambiguity, and

⁴¹ Tainter, J. A., & Lucas, G. J. (1983). Epistemology of the Significance Concept. *American Antiquity*, 48(4), 707–719. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/279772>

⁴² Tainter, 707

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 708

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*,

⁴⁵ “National Register Evaluation Criteria.” 2017. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Accessed June 11. <http://www.achp.gov/nrcriteria.html>.

misunderstanding.⁴⁶ Historic significance is a social construct^{47 48} meant to hierarchically evaluate products of culture. However, it is often interpreted as an inherent characteristic that a cultural property either possesses or it lacks.⁴⁹ Green finds issue in the way that the National Register defines historic significance. In the criteria, historic significance is found in sites associated with significant events and/or significant people. Generally, significance can be seen objectively or subjectively. In other words, one can view a significant object as equally significant to everyone, or recognize that the object may be very significant for some, but not for others. Meaning from history is derived in the present, which automatically make this interpretation a subjective process, open to interpretation. Historic significance is created by people in the present. Importance is not inherent in a building or an event, but instead is ascribed, and can also change over time. Additionally, historic significance is not something that is or should be determined by professionals or individuals; it is instead through “a broad social and political process”⁵⁰ that determines what is important to whom, and why. Our interpretation of historic significance is constantly evolving.^{51 52} Therefore, it is illogical to expect a fixed and stagnant set of criteria to be able to evaluate an ever-changing social construct. It can be argued that the issue is not our current process and criteria for evaluating significance, but instead how we are interpreting it and consequently choosing to see only portions of history.⁵³

Although this established criteria exists for evaluated historic properties, there is no systematic approach to determine what properties are listed on the National Register. This can be both an advantage and a disadvantage to the site, because it leaves historic significance to be interpreted by individuals on a local, state, or federal level. It is not guaranteed that those in charge of determination will see eye to eye with the individual or group making the nomination. “Nomination is instigated by individuals, businesses, and public and private sector organizations for many different reasons. Even in state and local surveys,

⁴⁶ Tainter, 709

⁴⁷ Green, Howard L. 1998. “The Social Construction of Historic Significance.” In *Preservation for What, For Whom?*, edited by Michael Tomlan, 85–96. Ithaca: The National Council for Preservation Education.

⁴⁸ Longstreth, Richard. 2008. “Architectural History and the Practice of Historic Preservation in the United States.” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* *Architectural History* 58 (3): 326–33. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/991525>.

⁴⁹ Tainter, 710

⁵⁰ Green, 94

⁵¹ *Ibid.*,

⁵² Mason, Randall. 2003. “Fixing Historic Preservation: A Constructive Critique of ‘Significance.’” *Places-Massachusetts* 16 (1): 64–71.

⁵³ Van West

where a more comprehensive approach is generally taken, the boundaries of the area examined and prejudices against certain periods or types of resources can create major gaps”.⁵⁴

Scholarship has discussed issues surrounding historic significance as the definitive criterion for evaluating and preserving built heritage. Tainter and Lucas cite the concept’s developmental roots in the Western philosophical tradition known as empiricist-positivist theory as inherently problematic. The authors claim that empiricist-positivist thought has had a strong influence in the discipline of history and in the public perception of science, and has thus influenced laws and regulations pertaining to historic preservation.⁵⁵ Empiricist-positivist theory assumes: 1) experiences are objective; 2) perception of meaning should be the same to all; and 3) meaning should not change through time. The application of these rules onto the concept of significance would mean that significance is inherent, and the meaning of significance should not change over time. This is problematic as applied to evaluating built heritage. Built heritage is a physical expression of culture, and because culture is constantly shifting,^{56 57} our valuations and reevaluations of what is historically significant need to be periodically updated to reflect changing cultural politics. Historic significance is a socially constructed idea, and not something that is fixed and inherent.

Historic Integrity in Historic Preservation - As Understood and Implemented by the NPS

Preservation historian Dr. Carroll Van West has said that architectural (or historic) integrity is the “most loaded cultural construct in all preservation literature and practice”.⁵⁸ Historic Integrity accompanies historic significance as the other major criterion for the evaluation of historic properties. If a property meets at least one of the standards for historic significance, it also needs to possess several, if not most, of the seven aspects of historic integrity : location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The U.S. Department of the Interior defines historic integrity as “the ability of a property to convey its significance”.⁵⁹ Also following the Secretary of the Interior’s standards, “historic properties either retain integrity, or they do not”,⁶⁰ a statement that reflects empiricist-positivist quality that often

⁵⁴ Longstreth, 329

⁵⁵ Tainter, 711

⁵⁶ Mason

⁵⁷ Green

⁵⁸ Van West, Caroll. 1998. “Assessing Significance and Integrity in the National Register Process: Questions of Race, Class, and Gender.” In *Preservation for What, For Whom?* edited by Michael Tomlan, 109–16. Ithaca: The National Council for Preservation Education.

⁵⁹ “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.” 1997. National Park Service. Washington D.C.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*,

accompanies historic significance. Another definition of historic integrity as it applies to things (and not people) says that integrity is the state of being unimpaired; having soundness, completeness, and unity.⁶¹

Historic Integrity - Problematizing the Concept

According to the NRHP, historic significance is based upon historic integrity. In order to convey significance, a property must retain its historic integrity. However, the NRHP standards also state that historic integrity can be assessed only after historic significance is fully established. How can historic significance be established before assessing the thing historic integrity which, as the NRHP defines, gives the property the ability to convey its historic significance? Howett may better articulate this circular conflict: “The significance of a resource is to be determined on the basis of its integrity; integrity is recognized in the way that the resource conveys its significance”.⁶² It becomes a circular argument that doesn’t have a clear progression of steps.

This ambiguity in the relationship between historic significance and historic integrity can lead to a host of further questions. Is it possible for a property to demonstrate historic significance if it doesn’t possess historic integrity? How many among the seven aspects of historic integrity does a property need to retain to qualify as having historic integrity? Are some aspects more important than others? Or, more controversially, can a property be significant because it has lost its historic integrity? Shouldn’t we value the story that a property tells us, especially if that property is telling a story of the change that has caused the loss of historic integrity as we currently define it?

These questions demonstrate why historic integrity, as it is currently defined, can be a problematic criterion for evaluating historic properties. Catherine Howett identifies two related problems: 1) the lack of definition for the concept in all regulatory acts, and 2) a corresponding lack of prescriptive, binding forces, easily traceable to the concept’s imprecision.⁶³ In the context of evaluating historic properties, the concept of historic integrity is easily flexible and open to interpretation, which can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. This flexibility can be an advantage when a property can be evaluated according to its local historical context instead of set national standards, but it can be a disadvantage when an interpreter’s traditional or narrow view of what should be considered worthy of preservation leans more towards the elite and away from the vernacular.

⁶¹ Howett, Catherine. 2000. “Integrity as a Value in Cultural Landscape Preservation.” In *Preserving Cultural Landscapes*, edited by Arnold Alanen and Robert Melnick, 191. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

⁶² Howett, 188

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 186

Vernacular architecture is a physical representation of our shifting cultural landscape. Historic integrity poses a particular problem for the evaluation of vernacular architecture. Vernacular buildings are generally not built with the intention of remaining fixed and stagnant for decades into the future; they are built to meet contemporary needs with accessible, and often affordable materials. Throughout the lifetime of a vernacular building, space and design are altered per need and responding to the latest technology. The alterations of the buildings directly reflect the changing time, and thus are an adequate reflection of history. Yet technically they lose historic integrity because they do not reflect their original state. NPS Bulletin 16A defines historic integrity as “the authenticity of a property’s historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property’s prehistoric or historic period”.⁶⁴ Here, historic integrity deals with the unity or completeness of something, but how do we determine one single ‘historic identity’? Within our current system, historic integrity needs to match the period of historic significance that has been determined. However, this can constrain the multiplicity of significant periods that a building has witnessed, because it forces us to choose only one point in time in which we can remember and interpret the history surrounding a building.

Historic properties that represent Black heritage face many roadblocks during the processes of nomination and designation due to these issues around determining historic significance and historic integrity. Regarding the determination of historic significance, there is not much research done regarding the demographic makeup of local preservation boards. This research could provide more insight into what communities are participating in the decision-making and interpretation of historic significance. It is also possible that many African American communities in lower-income areas lack access the resources needed to craft a nomination that could pass historic significance and historic integrity standards. Issues regarding historic integrity are slightly more clear-cut, and are discussed in the following sections on vernacular architecture.

VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Definitions of Vernacular Architecture

The question of what defines vernacular architecture is debated in scholarship. Some say that the term is inadequate because many different types of buildings have been included under the umbrella of

⁶⁴ “National Register Bulletin 16A, Appendix IV:2

‘vernacular’.⁶⁵ There is not an agreed-upon definition for the term.⁶⁶ Early references of vernacular (as relating to buildings) referred to traditional rural buildings that were not ‘consciously’ designed, or were not considered to possess any artistic quality.⁶⁷ There was also discrepancy between the English model of vernacular architecture - pre-industrial or hand-produced folk architecture - and the American vernacular, which “emphasized the intimate relationship between everyday objects and culture, and between ordinary buildings and people”.⁶⁸ Initially, the vernacular itself was considered an architectural style⁶⁹, as a catch-all designation for all of the many buildings that didn’t fit into the restrictive, high style categories that were already established.⁷⁰ Some scholars now see it not as an architectural category, but instead as an approach to architectural studies that “complements more traditional architectural historical inquiries”.⁷¹

As vernacular speech opposes literary or standard language, vernacular architecture stands apart from high style forms of architecture. Vernacular architecture refers to what common people build and what they use.⁷² The word common is used not pejoratively, but instead as relating to the community as a whole, widespread, and prevalent.⁷³ Vernacular architecture comes out of practicality and need, and people’s needs change over time. This need to recognize and acknowledge change as a vital part of vernacular architecture has led its scholars of vernacular architecture to look primarily at the users of buildings and the lifespan of those buildings, and not as much at the original use when the building was first constructed.⁷⁴ Vernacular architecture relates to people’s environmental contexts and available resources, and all forms are built to meet the specific and changing needs of the cultures that produce them.⁷⁵ Vernacular forms are normally not attributed to design professionals.

⁶⁵ Upton, Dell. 1983. “The Power of Things : Recent Studies in American Vernacular Architecture Author (S): Dell Upton Published by : The Johns Hopkins University Press Stable URL : <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2712651> All Use Subject to [Http://about.jstor.org/terms](http://about.jstor.org/terms) THE POWER.” *American Quarterly* 35 (3): 262–79.

⁶⁶ Carter, Thomas, and Elizabeth Collins Cromley. 2005. *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press.

⁶⁷ Upton

⁶⁸ Carter, 7

⁶⁹ Wyatt, Barbara. 1986. “The Challenge of Addressing Vernacular Architecture in a State Historic Preservation Survey Program.” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 2: 37–43. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3514314>.

⁷⁰ Carter; Upton; Wyatt

⁷¹ Upton

⁷² Carter; Alanen

⁷³ Carter

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 16

⁷⁵ Alanen

Vernacular architecture is an important resource for the ethnographic study of material culture. “[It is] an expression of our material culture that is purposely shaped... per culturally-dictated plans”.⁷⁶ It provides a source of primary data for ethnographic studies⁷⁷ - how buildings were built, how they were decorated, how they were organized, and how they were used. This allows us now to interpret for ourselves how people lived and what they cared about during the time building was built and lived in.

Brief History of Vernacular Architecture

Similar to the discussion around its definition, the beginnings of American interest in the study of vernacular architecture is not commonly agreed upon. Some scholarship cites the disappearing stock of New England colonial-era buildings as the nostalgic motivation for late 19th century scholars to identify and document the living artifacts from the time of the country’s founding.⁷⁸ Others look toward the passing of the NHPA in the mid-20th century as the event that reinvigorated an enthusiasm for redefining significance in the American landscape, and reevaluating everyday American architecture.⁷⁹ During a tumultuous era of civil rights and cultural revolution in the 1960s and 1970s, people began to question many of the assumptions inherent in architectural history - a history that had long favored upper class white men and their families. Young architectural students were interesting in investigating lives and families of common people, and this new interest introduced a broader range of buildings worth studying. New historians also questioned the traditional goal of connoisseurship in studying architecture, a goal that was “often solely directed toward developing chronologies or establishing hierarchies of aesthetic merit”.⁸⁰ The vernacular architecture movement came from a variety of scholarly disciplines that included, among others, architecture, folklore, social history, and historic preservation.

The statewide surveying of historic building stock mandated by the NHPA meant that information about traditionally undocumented areas and buildings - such as industrial districts, urban neighborhoods, suburban neighborhoods, and countryside - was starting to be captured across the country. The Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF) was established in 1979, and is the “the premier organization in North America dedicated to the appreciation and study of ordinary buildings and landscapes”.⁸¹ The VAF

⁷⁶ Carter, xiii

⁷⁷ Carter; Upton

⁷⁸ Carter; Upton

⁷⁹ Longstreth; Alanen

⁸⁰ Carter, 3

⁸¹ “Vernacular Architecture Forum.” 2017. Vernacular Architecture Forum. Accessed June 12. <http://www.vernaculararchitectureforum.org/>.

sponsors an annual conference and publications including the journal *Buildings & Landscapes*, and a biannual collection of essays entitled *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*.

Continuing Issues in Preservation and Recognition of Vernacular Architecture

Despite the rise in its recognition and acceptance, vernacular architecture remains a contested form in the context of historic preservation. At the root of this issue is our current framework for assessing historic integrity, and the positive correlation we demand between historic integrity and historic significance. Vernacular architecture is significant because it allows us the opportunity to interpret the physical representation of our shifting and evolving culture. Because culture is constantly in flux (and not stagnant, as preservation often demands), the nature of vernacular buildings will seldom meet the standards we have set to evaluate historic integrity.

The value and meaning in vernacular buildings can not and should not be interpreted only in their original state, frozen in appearance as dictated by their original builders. In her article about the preservation of southern Rest Rooms, Carroll Van West asks the pointed question, “Must change compromise integrity?”⁸² She follows the question by asserting that the issues lies not with a changed building, and many preservation assessments might conclude, but instead with our thinking around and application of definitions of time and taste in assessing historic integrity.⁸³ Another potential issue in the preservation of vernacular built heritage deals with the durability and lifespan of the materials used. Smaller houses built with affordable and easily accessible materials tend not to endure, and as a result the material record of built heritage may be skewed in favor of the elites, just as the written record is.⁸⁴

Wyatt discusses three main problems in inventorying vernacular architecture: 1) The coupling of evolving standards and poorly trained surveyors makes for unevenly conducted surveys; 2) inadequately described and superficially evaluated vernacular architecture; 3) inaccessible survey data due to large size and poor organization. This was written in 1986, so although the third problem has improved significantly, there is most likely still a lot of valuable information that still exists on paper that has yet to be digitized, and therefore is still difficult to access. Wyatt also discusses the difficulties (at the time) of developing official vernacular architecture typologies because State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) hesitate to adopt

⁸² Van West

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 112

⁸⁴ Carter, xxii

terminology that hasn't become generally accepted by both historic preservation and scholarly communities.⁸⁵

It is in the preservation of vernacular buildings that the field and practice of historic preservation can provide a physical place to reinterpret daily life - moments both ordinary and monumental - thus giving value to intangible and often forgotten rich and diverse social history. This is true for all cultures, but is especially important for Black communities in the United States, whose built heritage is most often classified as vernacular.

Contextualizing Vernacular Architecture for Black and African American Built Heritage

Understanding vernacular architecture is a crucial part of preserving African American built heritage. African American built heritage is often found in small, unadorned structures that would not be considered as architectural 'high-style', or worthy of preservation according to federal standards if based solely off of architectural merit. Common typologies of Black and African American built heritage are vernacular in nature, and include residences, churches, schools, and small businesses.⁸⁶ In a guidebook on preserving African American historic places, published in 2012 by the National Trust of Historic Preservation, co-author Brent Leggs reflects that preservation of African American heritage often happens on an informal basis: "Each time someone gives to a church's building fund, that person is helping rebuild historic fabric. Whenever volunteers mow the grass at a historic cemetery, they are conserving an important cultural landscape."⁸⁷ This could indicate that many sites representing Black and African American history and heritage are primarily recognized as important to the communities who still use them on a regular basis. These sites may not appear significant to an outsider, but they often represent important cultural and social history for many communities who consider these sites as keystones of built and social fabric.

Vernacular architecture does have a place in current historic preservation practice. The majority of the sites mentioned in the "Diversity in Historic Preservation" section of this literature review are vernacular in style, and local, state, and federal preservation programs are recognizing the importance of preserving their everyday heritage. The National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program is successfully revitalizing small town economies through the preservation of their vernacular historic

⁸⁵ Wyatt 41

⁸⁶ Leggs

⁸⁷ Ibid.,

building stock.⁸⁸ However, a main point in this thesis is that culturally significant historic buildings need to also possess historic integrity in order to be recognized by local and federal preservation programs. Our current system prioritizes historic integrity to such a degree a historic building can be landmarked purely based on historic integrity and architectural style, but not based upon historic significance alone. This imbalance creates an unrepresentative landscape of built heritage that heavily favors high-style architecture associated with wealthy, majority white history and heritage over vernacular buildings that are a part of non-dominant cultural history and heritage.

Chapter 3 focuses on the history and change of Seattle's Central District in order to understand how issues with historic integrity and historic significance are affecting the preservation of Seattle's African American vernacular built heritage.

⁸⁸ "National Main Street Center, Inc. - Main Street." 2017. National Trust for Historic Preservation. Accessed June 12. <http://www.mainstreet.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-center/>.

Chapter 3. CASE STUDY – SEATTLE’S CENTRAL DISTRICT

GEOGRAPHY OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

The official boundaries of the Central District, or Central Area as it is more commonly called in municipal records, is not altogether agreed upon. According to a neighborhood overview document published by the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods in 2009, attempts to define the neighborhood included a core bounded by Madison Street on the north, Jackson Street on the south, 15th Avenue on the west, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way (formerly Empire Way) on the east.⁸⁹ However, another boundary defines the Central District as bounded by Madison Street on the north, the intersection of Rainier Ave S and 23rd Ave on the south, 12 Ave on the west, and Lake Washington on the east. For the purposes of this thesis, I am using a boundary that was provided as a GIS shapefile by the City of Seattle. I chose this boundary because it encompasses what is now the core of the Central District around 23rd Ave between Madison and Jackson, as well as areas that have been included in the neighborhood historically – south to I-90, east to Lake Washington, and north to Aloha. These boundaries are identified in Figure 3.1. I will also primarily refer to the neighborhood as the ‘Central District’ or the ‘CD’.

Unlike other neighborhoods in Seattle, like Ballard or Ravenna, the Central District has never existed as an entity separate from the City of Seattle. Further, the Central District was not developed as a unified real estate project in coordination with public improvements, such as Mount Baker neighborhood. The development of the Central District as a unique and distinct neighborhood was largely formed through racist planning practices of segregation, redlining, and exclusionary zoning, forcing minority communities - primarily Black communities - to live within the boundaries of the Central District, with little choice of living elsewhere.

⁸⁹ Veith, Thomas. 2009. “History of the Central Area.” Seattle.

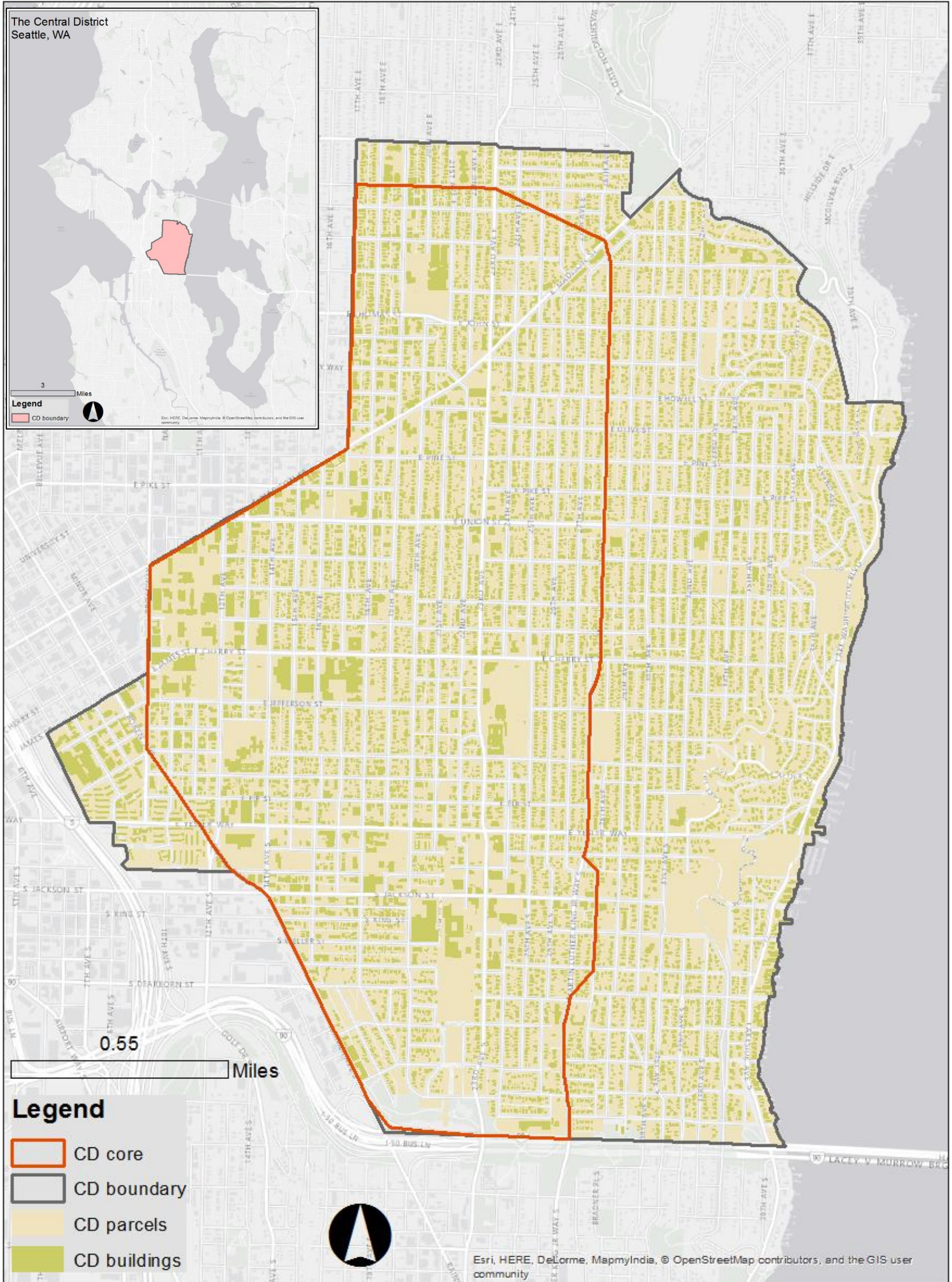


Figure 3.1 Context map of the Central District in Seattle (Source: Author)

HISTORY

Black and African American Beginnings in Seattle

The telling of Seattle's Black history cannot be untangled from the development of the Central District, as the neighborhood quickly became the epicenter of Black culture and Black life in Seattle. Manuel Lopes - Seattle's first Black resident - arrived in Seattle in 1858, only seven years after the Denny party docked at Alki Point. The migration by Black Americans in the late 1800s did not happen in Seattle as it did for most other American cities, as African Americans did not come to Seattle in large numbers before 1940. Seattle's Black population grew from a single resident in 1858 to 406 women and men by 1900, largely due to migration.⁹⁰ Black migrants from the South to Seattle faced surprisingly few racial barriers as compared to other cities in the US. However, it is important to note that racism and segregation was still very real in Seattle. It was because Seattle's Black population was small that its white population was relatively tolerant of the Black community. As whites in the early 20th century saw it, the Black population "posed no major economic or political threat to the existing social order".⁹¹ However, Black migrants arriving in Seattle did face barriers in employment due to racial discrimination, and as a result, many newcomers took jobs in the service industry. Blacks were excluded from positions and industries that helped shaped the city's economy, such as shipbuilding, lumber processing, and masonry.

Despite the very real exclusion and discrimination, in his book, Taylor writes that during the first few decades of the 20th century, Seattle's African Americans on the whole exhibited a general complacency towards the discrimination they experienced, as it was considered benign compared to racial tensions felt in the South and most eastern cities.⁹² Seattle was considered to be a very liberal and tolerant city, and many of the city's Black residents were, as one resident puts it, "satisfied with things the way they were".⁹³ This would change, however, with the migration of thousands of Blacks to the Pacific Northwest during World War II.

Post WWII - A Rapidly Growing Black Seattle

Seattle's Black population increased nearly five times between 1940 and 1950 - from 3,789 to 15,666.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Taylor, Quintard. 1994. *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 through the Civil Rights Era*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

⁹¹ Taylor, 15

⁹² Ibid., 155

⁹³ Ibid., 156

⁹⁴ Ibid., 159

The war-induced labor shortage coupled with President Roosevelt's Executive Order 8802, which prohibited racial discrimination in employment practices, industrial jobs opened up and encouraged a new migration of Black workers into Seattle. Overcrowding by a growing Black population accelerated physical deterioration of the Central District. This migration increased racial tensions between Black and white, as whites were previously tolerant only of a smaller Black population that didn't threaten their economic dominance. With a new wave of Black migrants however, mostly from rural Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma, a rift began to form between old and new populations: older settlers worried about their declining status in a newly racially-charged environment, while new migrants became politically active and demanded civil freedoms that were denied to them in the southern homes they left.

The migration of African Americans into Seattle continued to rise, from 26,901 in 1960 to 37,868 in 1970.⁹⁵ Whereas the total percentage of Black residents stayed around one percent before mid-20th century, it spiked at over seven percent in 1970. Much of this population was concentrated in older and deteriorating housing stock in the Central District. Also thanks to the city's growing Black population, racism and discrimination weren't as easily ignored, and Seattle experienced a powerful civil rights movement whose activists "would, in a single decade, mount the greatest challenge to Seattle's racial order in the city's century-long history."⁹⁶ The movement aimed to end job bias, housing discrimination, and de facto school segregation not only in Seattle, but as part of a national effort to end racial discrimination and empower African Americans.

The history of the Black and African American experience in Seattle is rich and complex, and the information provided here is only a brief snapshot. Quintard Taylor's book "The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1970 through the Civil Rights Era" served as the source for the majority of the information on Seattle's Black history, and is an excellent resource for further knowledge.

Formation of the Central District

Pre-1890, Seattle was geographically compact and largely racially-integrated. Residential housing clustered inside the original downtown by Elliott Bay. Newcomers to the growing city contributed to a rapid increase in population, from 3,533 in 1880 to 80,671 in 1900.⁹⁷ As its residents grew in numbers,

⁹⁵ Ibid., 190

⁹⁶ Ibid.,

⁹⁷ Ibid., 34

Seattle took opportunities to grow in size by annexing surrounding suburbs as soon as public transportation became available. These annexations opened up opportunities for wealthier white residents to move to new suburbs, which were often up into the hills, leaving poorer residents to reside beyond the flatlands that hugged the harbor.

The area that would become the Central District was first platted in the 1870s and 1880s, and is the site of Seattle's oldest housing stock. The central and southern sections of the C.D. were home to the city's Jewish population between 1890-1940, while the northern section was predominately Catholic. In 1890, William Grose - Seattle's second Black resident - bought 12-acres of farmland from Henry Yesler. He built a home in the northeast-corner of the area. Later in his life, incoming African American residents bought pieces of his land to build homes and establish lives in this part of the new city.

The growing economic and racial segregation fostered two distinct African American neighborhoods: Yesler-Jackson and East Madison. East Madison remained an underdeveloped, heavily-wooded area until the Madison Street Cable Car line was extended to Lake Washington in 1889. With public transportation, available, Black professionals, business owners, and skilled artisans were attracted to the area, and many purchased lots from William Grose's farm. Yesler-Jackson, the larger of the two, was home to hotels, lodging houses, saloons, and shops that catered to its working-class residents. Yesler-Jackson was also, at one time, the city's "red-light" district. The neighborhood was considered unsanitary, and even dangerous. As the city's Black population grew, these two separate neighborhoods slowly expanded closer to each other. By World War II, the two districts had become, if only geographically, one African American community.

Between the nineteen-teens and the late 1940s, the Central District was home to a lively and culturally important Black music scene. Seattle's "Black ethos"⁹⁸, or sense of community identity, was in large part formed through entertainment and nightlife. Jackson St in the red-light district was home to the heart of the Black Seattle's nightlife scene. Most of the Black nightclubs were located on Jackson St, and the featured Black entertainers and performers who attracted almost as many white patrons as Black patrons. Washington Hall, on 14th Ave and Fir St, also held many local jazz shows and other forms of entertainment for the Black communities. The Central District jazz scene showcased both local musicians and national performers like Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong. Seattle's Black performers of the early

⁹⁸ Ibid., 147

decades of the 20th century established a legacy and a foundation for legendary musicians that would come later, most notably Quincy Jones Ray Charles, and Jimi Hendrix.⁹⁹

Discriminatory Planning Practices

The CD developed as it did because Blacks were excluded from renting and buying in neighborhoods beyond the Central District due to racial restrictive covenants and redlining. In 1926, the U.S. Supreme Court validated the use of racial deed restrictions, or racial restrictive covenants. These restrictions gave homeowners the legal right to prohibit the sale or rental of property to individuals based on race. Racial restrictive covenants were common in Seattle between 1920 and 1940, and they greatly contributed to pushing Black residents out of most neighborhoods within the city. In 1948, the Supreme Court reversed its decision, deciding that racial restrictive covenants would no longer be enforced, but this decision did little to alter the structural segregation already in place.¹⁰⁰ Finally in 1968, Congress passed the Housing Rights Act, which outlawed legal discriminatory practices based on race or ethnicity in the sale or rental of housing. Seattle followed suit - in the same year, City Council unanimously passed Ordinance 96619 “defining and prohibiting unfair housing practices in the sale and offering for sale and in the rental and offering for rent and in the financing of housing accommodations, and defining offenses and prescribing penalties, and declaring an emergency therefore.”¹⁰¹

In 1975, the Central Seattle Community Council Federation published a report entitled “Redlining and Disinvestment in Central Seattle: How the Banks are Destroying our Neighborhoods. This report addressed redlining and disinvestment practices in the Central District and in Rainier Valley. In this report, redlining is defined as “the practice by banks and other lending institutions of refusing home loans or requiring higher interest rates and larger down payments to otherwise credit-worthy people because they happen to live in a certain area.”¹⁰² Disinvestment, a similar discriminatory practice, was the policy of taking in saving deposits from residents of a redlined area and refusing to reinvest the money back into the community from which it came.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 149

¹⁰⁰ “Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project: Racial Restrictive Covenants.” 2017. University of Washington. Accessed June 12. <http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/covenants.htm>.

¹⁰¹ “The Seattle Open Housing Campaign, 1959-1968 - City Archives | Seattle.gov.” 2017. City of Seattle. Accessed June 12. <https://www.seattle.gov/cityarchives/exhibits-and-education/online-exhibits/seattle-open-housing-campaign>.

¹⁰² “Redlining in Seattle.” 2017. Seattle Municipal Archives. Accessed June 12. <https://www.seattle.gov/cityarchives/exhibits-and-education/online-exhibits/redlining-in-seattle>.

CHANGES IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

Post-1970 - Demographic Changes and Gentrification

Although 1960s demographers predicted a migration that would continue growth in Seattle's African American population to numbers reaching over 100,000 in the 1970s, this did not come to fruition.¹⁰³ As of 1990, only 60,000 Blacks lived in Seattle, representing about 10 percent of the population.¹⁰⁴ According to the 2010 census, residents who identified as Black or African American represented below 8 percent of the total population.¹⁰⁵ As for the Central District, in the 1960's and 1970's the neighborhood was over 70 percent Black, and as of the 2010 census, the percentage has dropped to around 20 percent.¹⁰⁶ The once-small white population in the neighborhood, however, has grown to around 60 percent in 2016,¹⁰⁷ whereas 9 percent are Asian, 6 percent are from two or more races, 3 percent are Other, and Native American and Pacific Islander make up less than 1 percent collectively. Hispanic or Latino of any race consisted around 7 percent of the neighborhood's population.¹⁰⁸

In his article entitled "The Seattle Central District Over Eighty Years", Richard Morrill discusses the complex issues of displacement of the African American population and the gentrification of Seattle's Central District, which transformed the majority Black neighborhood to an increasing majority white neighborhood. Morrill names five main factors in this transformation:

"(1) substantial growth in the Black population; (2) differential discrimination and resistance to entry of Black households into formerly white neighborhoods; (3) a logical if somewhat guided channelization of growth from the core community to the southeast, in part related to mandatory school desegregation; (4) the effect of economic and social restructuring, especially in the Seattle core; and (5) Seattle's planning policies, which together with (4) have resulted in the gentrification of most of the original Central District core, and in the displacement (-) or relocation (+) of Black population, not only to the southeast of the city, but from the city to south King County suburban cities."¹⁰⁹

Exploring these issues in greater depth is not within the scope of this thesis, but Morrill's article provides a detailed examination of these distinct yet interrelated gentrifying factors at work.

¹⁰³ Taylor, 236

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.,

¹⁰⁵ "Seattle City Washington Quick Facts from the US Census Bureau." 2017. United States Census Bureau. Accessed June 12. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/AGE135214/5363000,4159000/accessible>.

¹⁰⁶ Beason

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.,

¹⁰⁸ 2010 Census data for Central Area, Seattle.

¹⁰⁹ Morrill, Richard. 2013. "The Seattle Central District (CD) Over Eighty Years." *Geographical Review* 103 (3): 315–35. doi:10.1111/j.1931-0846.2013.00001.x.

City Efforts to Combat Displacement and Reclaim African American Identity in the CD

Within the last decade, Seattle has recognized that the Central District is experiencing rapid growth and change, and that those who are most affected are those residents who have lived in the area for decades. The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of the City's efforts to balance inevitable development and livability in the CD with placemaking tools that aim to reclaim the neighborhood's Black and African American history and heritage.

Within the Central District, the 23rd and Union-Cherry-Jackson residential urban village is poised to experienced widespread change to meet requirements mandated by Mayor Murray's Housing and Livability Initiative (HALA). HALA was developed in September 2014 by Mayor Murray in collaboration with City Council and Seattle community leaders. HALA is guided by a 10-year goal to produce over 30,000 market rate units and over 20,000 units of guaranteed affordable housing. The "new or preserved" proposed units of affordable housing will triple the city's historical annual production of affordable housing.¹¹⁰ These changes will come largely because of upzones that are a part of Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA), one of HALA's primary strategies. MHA allows developers to build taller and larger buildings in certain areas and requires them to help create rent-regulated units. Developers can build that housing themselves or pay fees. In 1994 when the last iteration of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan was published, much of the CD was zoned for Single Family, Multi Family, and some Commercial zones (See Figure 3.2). This will change if the MHA draft upzone changes are passed by City Council. As of June 2017, the council has already approved upzones in dense neighborhoods like the University District, downtown, and South Lake Union. Most single-family neighborhoods located outside of the city's 27 urban villages will be left alone. The changes are proposed for urban centers and urban villages.

¹¹⁰ "What Is the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda?" 2016. Seattle.

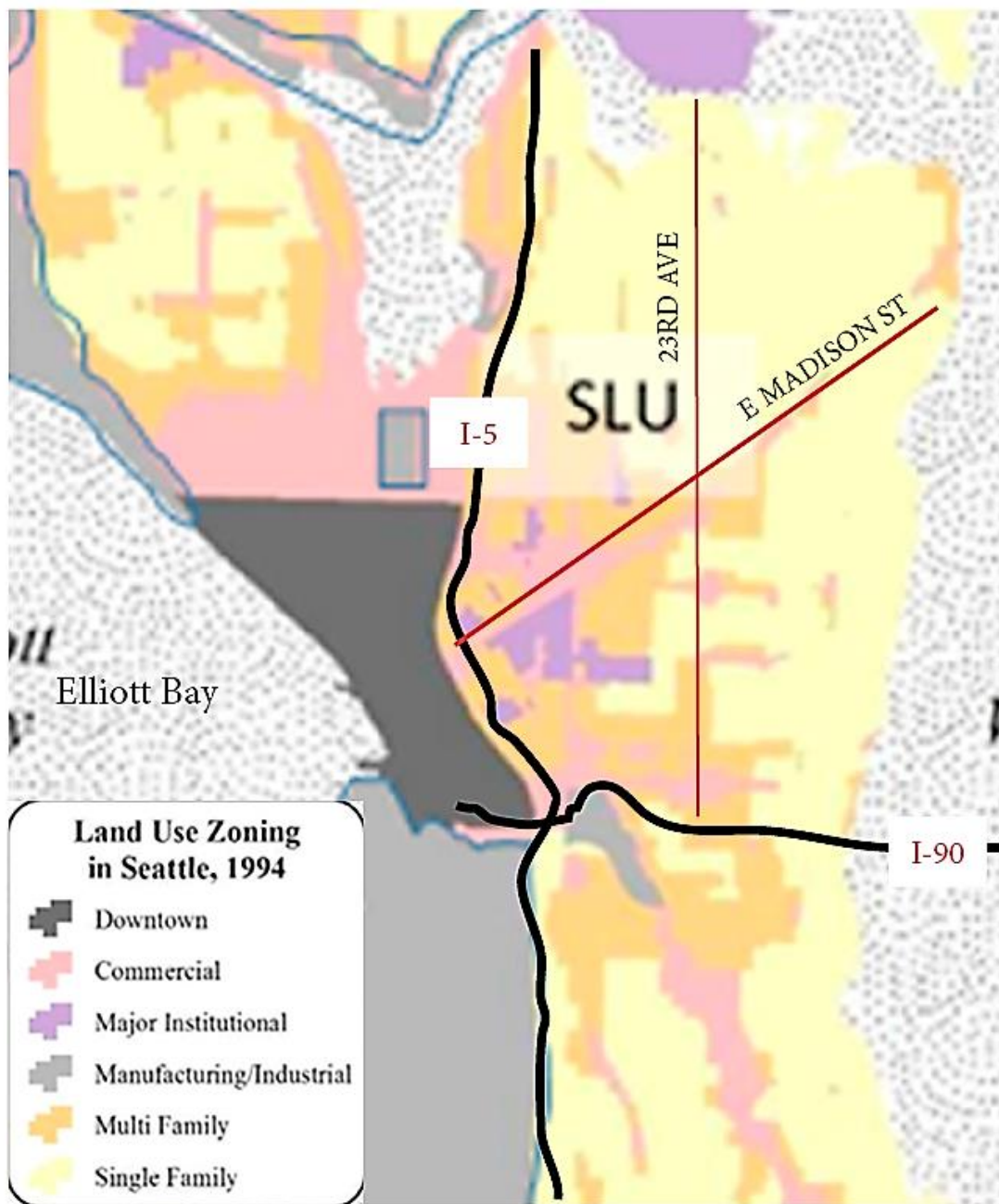


Figure 2.2 1994 Zoning Map of Central Seattle (Source: City of Seattle)

Most of the CD's historic Black core is located within the Union-Jackson Urban Village, and thus will be affected by these upzones. In June 2017, the City released its most recent draft upzones for over two dozen neighborhoods, including Union-Jackson Urban Village. The City offered two alternatives (See Figure 3.3), which appear to differ in the amount of land zoned for Residential Small Lot (RSL), which is what Single Family zones will become within urban villages. Unlike Single Family zones, RSL zones allow for the development of smaller detached homes like cottages or attached-dwelling units (ADUs) that may be more affordable than available housing in Single Family zones. Much of the area within the urban village boundaries will receive a one-level increase in height along with new MHA affordable unit requirements for all new residential construction. However, some areas - indicated on the map with hatched lines (in Figures 3.3a and 3.3b) - will get a more significant increase or change in zoning. In one alternative upzone, several Single-Family zones could be increased to Lowrise 1 (LR1)¹¹¹ or Lowrise 2 (LR2)¹¹², and existing Neighborhood Commercial (NC)¹¹³ zones will get a significant increase in height just north of Union on 23rd Ave. Intersections of 23rd and Jackson and 23rd and Cherry will see height increases in the existing NC zones. In some sections within the urban village boundary - most notably south of Jackson, Single Family zones will be changed LR1 or LR2, which will have a significant effect on the appearance of the neighborhood's urban fabric. The Mayor's strong push for affordable housing in new developments will more than likely increase the demolition of older built fabric in order to make way for newer construction that conforms to HALA standards. The new height increases that accompany the zoning changes will undoubtedly contribute to displacement of lower-income residents. If developers are allowed to build higher, there is more incentive to demolish the current one-two story homes that exist in order to maximize profitable development. Increased heights also mean that developers can build a smaller footprint, creating three-five narrow homes in place of one wider vernacular single-family home.

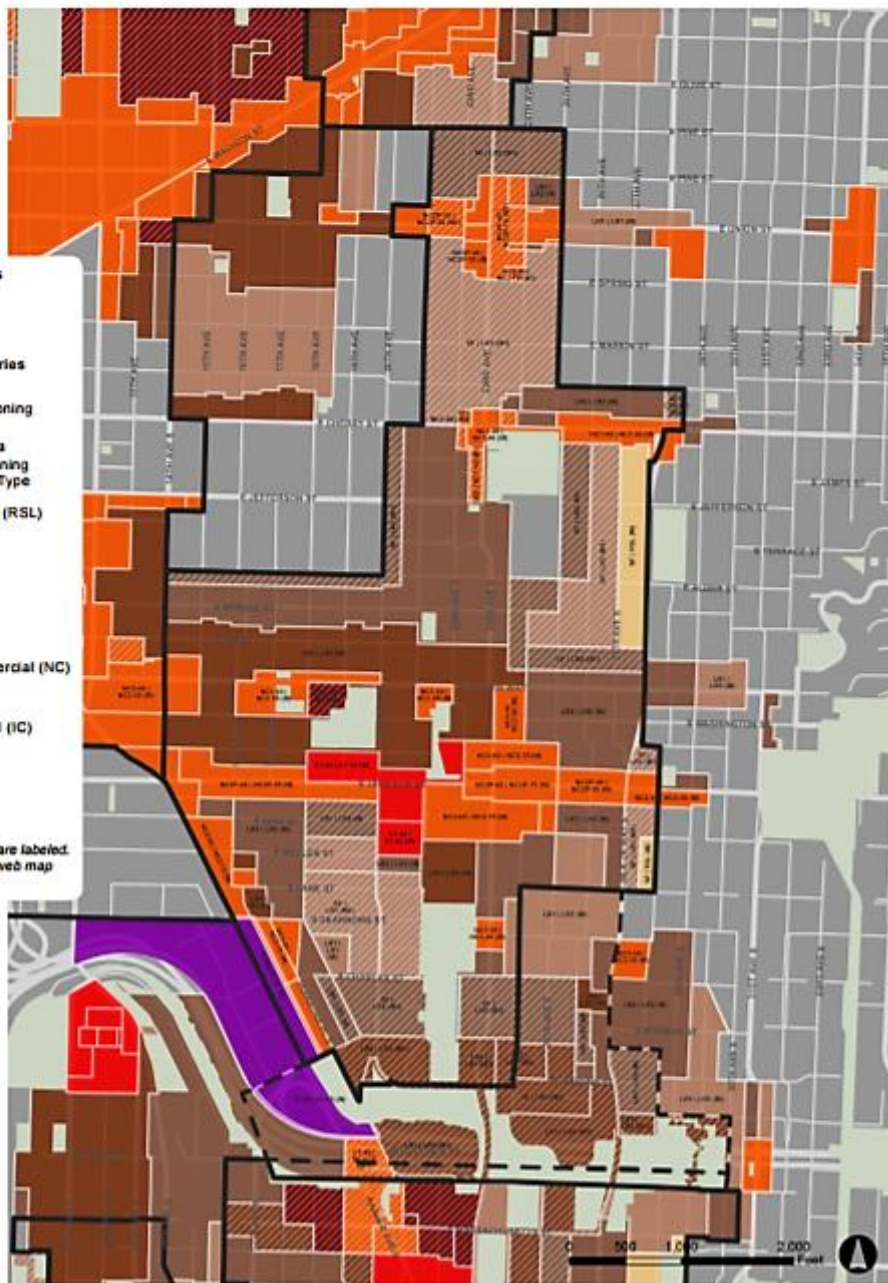
¹¹¹ LR1 = townhouses, rowhouses, or apartments, max height 30 ft.

¹¹² LR2 = townhouses, rowhouses, or apartment, max height 40 ft.

¹¹³ NC = mixed-use buildings with 4-9 stories

**Exhibit H-7
Proposed Zoning,
Alternative 2: 23rd
& Union-Jackson
Urban Village**

- Urban Village Boundaries**
- ▭ Urban Village
 - - - Proposed Expansion
- Proposed Zoning Categories**
- ▬ Solid Areas Have a Typical Increase in Zoning (Usually One Story)
 - ▨ Hatched Areas Have a Larger Increase in Zoning or a Change in Zone Type
 - Residential Small Lot (RSL)
 - Lowrise 1 (LR1)
 - Lowrise 2 (LR2)
 - Lowrise 3 (LR3)
 - Midrise (MR)
 - Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
 - Commercial (C)
 - Industrial Commercial (IC)
 - Seattle Mixed (SM)
 - No Zoning Changes
 - Open Space
- Note: not all zoning changes are labeled. Refer to the MHA interactive web map for detailed zoning labels.*



Source: City of Seattle, 2017.

Figure 3.3a Alternative 2: Proposed Zoning for Union-Jackson Urban Village (Source: City of Seattle)

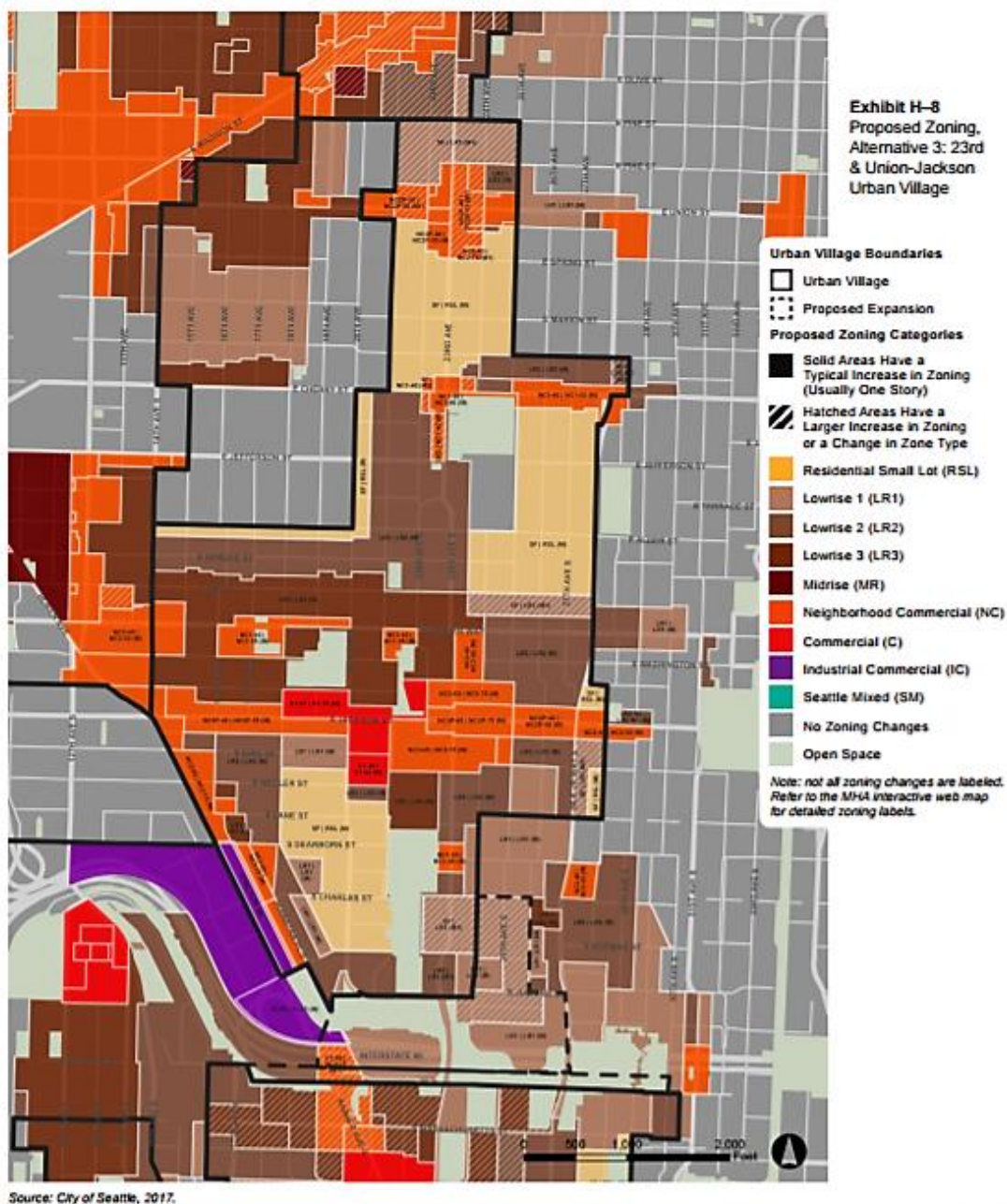


Figure 3.3b Alternative 3: Proposed Zoning for Union-Jackson Urban Village (Source: City of Seattle)

In an attempt to incorporate more affordable housing within the Central District, the city has crafted the 23rd Ave Action Plan that affects the 23rd Ave corridor at Jackson, Cherry, and Union. (Figure 3.4) As part of the Action Plan, which was released as a draft in March 2017, the city has updated the urban design and rezone recommendations for these Central District commercial cores to reflect the mandatory housing affordability requirement as recommended by HALA. The 23rd Ave Action Plan builds upon previous community work in the Central Area Action Plan I (1992), and Action Plan II (1999). In a brochure produced about the Action Plan, the city states that “it is time to refocus our efforts around key priorities for these three community cores – to honor its history and shape its future.”¹¹⁴ Through a process of community outreach and engagement that started in 2013, the Action Plan outlines the top five community priorities, summarized here: African American heritage and identity; health and affordability; access and representation; economic development, and livability and mobility. For the purposes of the topics in this thesis, it is important to highlight the priority that deals with African American heritage and identity: “A destination with unique identity that recognizes the Central Area as the historical heart of the African American community while welcoming all people.”¹¹⁵ For each priority, associated goals, policies, strategies, and actions were developed based on community input. The goals of this section deal with recognizing and strengthening the diversity, culture, and historic significance of the African American community at three distinct community nodes that together create a shared Central District identity: 23rd and Jackson (Shopping Center), 23rd and Union (Business/Restaurant Center), and 23rd and Cherry (Community/Historic Center). Priority A contains 25 action-oriented strategies to support the identified goals. One strategy proposes using public art to enhance the neighborhood’s “multicultural identity, especially as the center of African American community”¹¹⁶; another strategy encourages the celebration of “existing landmarks and facilities by increasing visibility and public events”.¹¹⁷ Other strategies promote preserving existing historic characteristics and small neighborhood businesses within each of the three nodes. These actions represent examples from each priority category, and only provide a snapshot of what is provided in the full document.

¹¹⁴ “23rd Avenue Action Plan.” n.d. Seattle.

¹¹⁵ “Central Area - What and Why.” 2017. City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Accessed June 12. <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cityplanning/completeprojectslist/centralarea/whatwhy/default.htm>.

¹¹⁶ “23rd Avenue Action Plan (Union-Cherry-Jackson).” 2017. Seattle.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Strategy A-3, pg 16

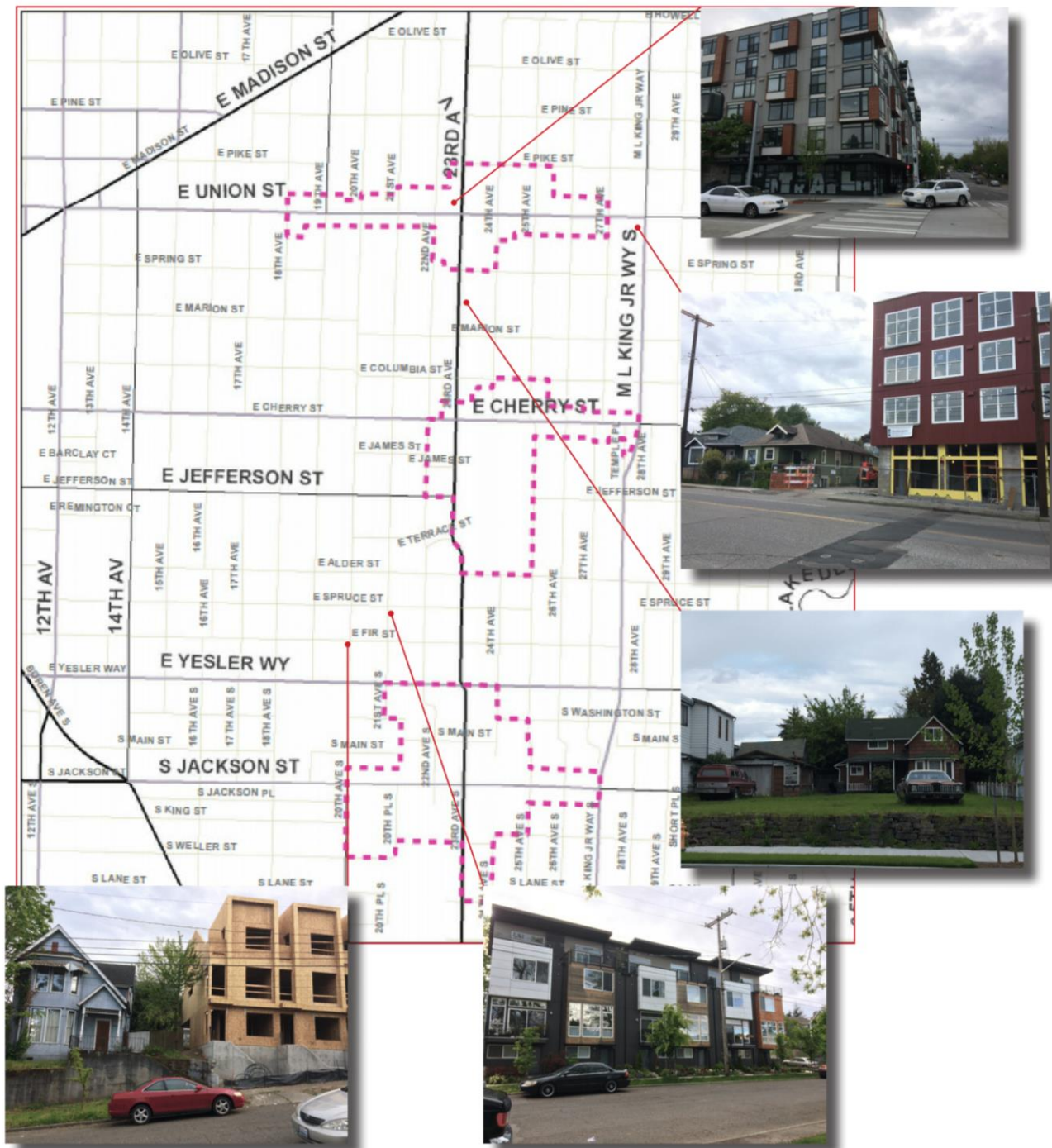


Figure 3.4 Three Nodes of focus in 23rd Action Plan (Source: City of Seattle - map; Author's photos)

Central Area Design Guideline Coalition

The Central Area Design Guideline Coalition (CA DGC) is a self-organized coalition that is working to mitigate these changes. Along with local architects Schemata Workshop and Miramar Studio, the CA DGC aims to “outline a set of neighborhood specific guidelines to guide future development in the CA.”¹¹⁸ Currently, the Central Area does not have neighborhood-specific design guidelines. Given the influx of development and changing culture and demographics in the area, it is important for the community to collaborate with the city to develop design guidelines that will help to shape the neighborhood’s identity that respects its past and help shape its future. The CA DGC held a series of community workshops in February 2017 to gain feedback on their work thus far. In a meeting on February 25, 2017, the CA DGC presented organized feedback that they had received regarding what the community wished to see included in design guidelines for the Central District. Under comments about context and site, one category was titled “History and Heritage”, and included feedback such as:

- African and African American presence (ex: create pockets of culture to represent African American culture in CA)
- Retention and respect for existing neighborhood character
- Honor all heritages from the CD’s past

The CA DGC had also highlighted feedback from community members around guidance and important consideration that they would use when crafting design guidelines for the CD. Many community members had emphasized the incorporation of African and African American aesthetics and cultural references into the design guidelines, and the CA DGC appears to be taking that seriously. The neighborhood guidelines are still in progress as of spring 2017.

Historic Central Area Arts and Culture District

The Historic Central Area Arts and Cultural District (HCAACD) was formed in December 2015 when it became the city’s second Arts and Culture District, after Capitol Hill. With its designation as an Arts and Cultural District, the city recognized the Central District’s significance as a hub of African American art, culture, history, and heritage as something that was worthy of preservation and investment. The district is organized around three pillars, as identified by the community¹¹⁹:

- Preserving an African and African-American legacy in the Central Area;

¹¹⁸ “Central Area - Design Guidelines.” 2017. City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development. Accessed June 12.

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cityplanning/completeprojectslist/centralarea/designguidelines/default.htm>.

¹¹⁹ “Arts and Cultural Districts.” 2017. City of Seattle Office of Arts and Culture. Accessed June 12. <http://www.seattle.gov/arts/arts-and-cultural-districts>.

- Sustaining and strengthening the physical identity and sense of place for cultural relevancy;
- Establishing continued support of artistic creation, economic vibrancy, livability, affordability, desirability, and artistic vitality

More on the HCAACD and their preservation-specific efforts will be discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Seattle’s Department of Transportation (SDOT) is participating in its own projects to complement the Action Plan. The 23rd Ave Corridor Improvements Project is reconfiguring 23rd Ave between E John St and Rainier Ave S from the current four lanes (two lanes in each direction) to three lanes (one lane in each direction and a center turn lane). The project is ongoing and includes new pavement, wider sidewalks, lighting improvements, increased transit reliability, traffic signal improvements, public art, and implementation of an adjacent neighborhood greenway.^{120 121}

Seattle’s most recent Comprehensive Plan addresses the rapid change and development in the Central District in its Neighborhood Plans section. Such policies include:

” Strengthen a unique identity for the Central Area that celebrates its culture, heritage, and diversity; enhance the sense of community; and increase the feeling of pride among Central Area residents, business owners, employees, and visitors through excellent physical and social environments.”¹²²

And:

“Support efforts to encourage existing and new minority and locally owned businesses in the Central Area to grow and expand.”¹²³

Through the creation of these policies, the city recognizes the importance of the Central District’s unique cultural history and diverse identity, and at least in writing, makes a commitment to continue to foster both.

23rd and Union

Despite the city’s stated goals and efforts, the stakes are still very high for Black communities in the Central District. The intersection of 23rd and Union has been called the “symbolic heart of the fight against gentrification in Seattle”.¹²⁴ Midtown Center - a large 106,000 sq. ft. property on the southeast

¹²⁰ 23rd Ave Action Plan, 29

¹²¹ A neighborhood greenway is a non-arterial street that prioritizes bicycle and pedestrian travel.

¹²² “Neighborhood Plans.” n.d. Seattle.

¹²³ Ibid., CA-P35, 229

¹²⁴ Richards, Kathleen. 2015. “A Last-Ditch Effort to Preserve the Heart of the Central District.” The Stranger, February 25.

corner of the intersection - has been under longtime ownership by the Bangasser family - all of whom are white. The majority of the businesses in Midtown Center are Black-owned businesses that cater to the historically Black neighborhood. In 2015, the owners announced that they wanted to sell. They expressed caution around who they would sell to, as they are very aware of what selling the property could mean for the historically Black neighborhood. In February 2017, Forterra - a land conservation organization turned design-build nonprofit - has submitted a letter of intent to purchase the property. This deal would put Black Central District community non-profit Africatown at the center of redevelopment of the landmark property.

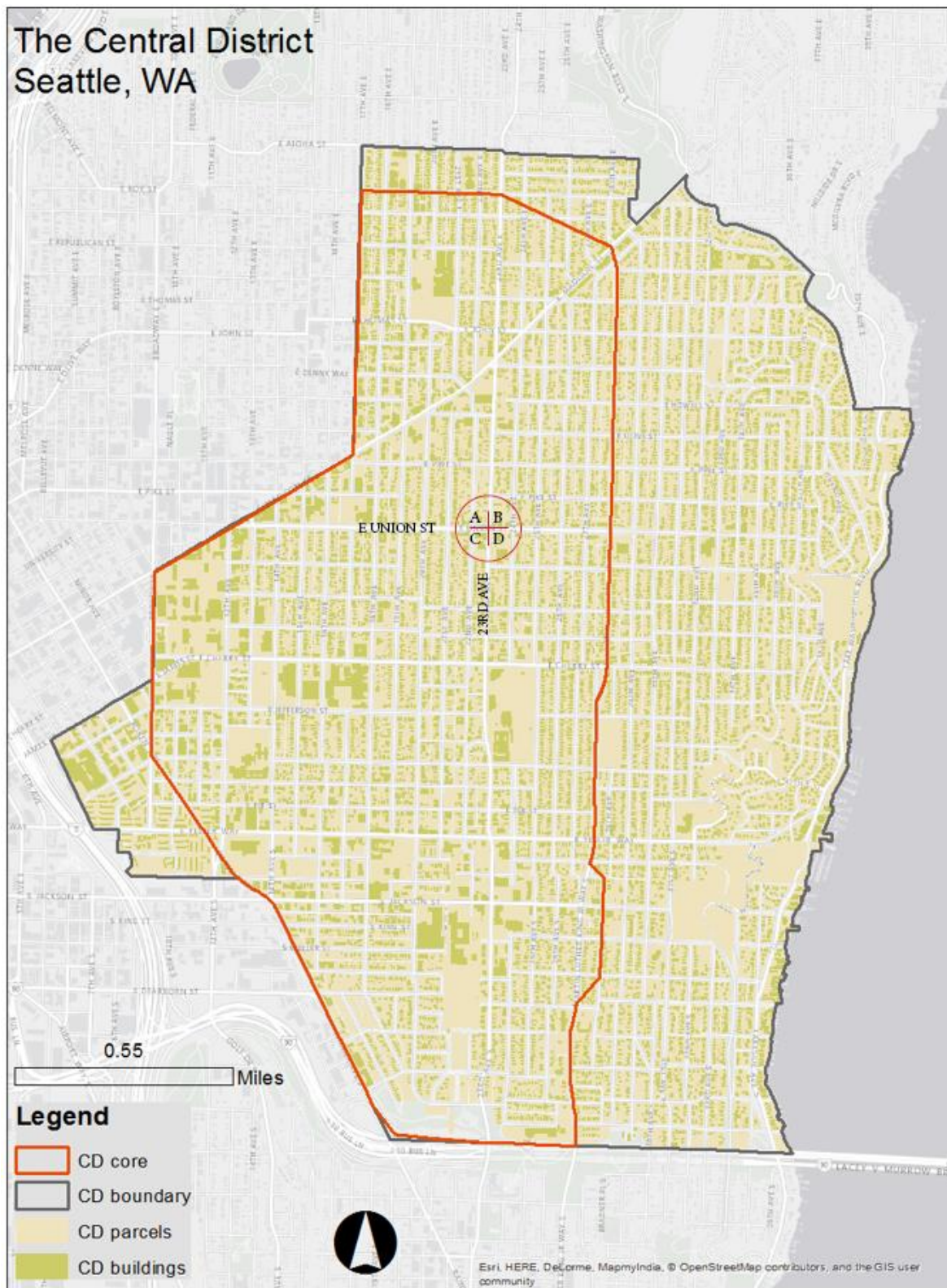


Figure 3.5 Context map for corresponding photos of 23rd and Union in the CD



Figure 3.6 NW corner of 23rd & Union: Development in progress (Source: Author)



Figure 3.7 NE corner of 23rd & Union: Uncle Ike's and the Neighbor Lady (Source: Author)

C



Figure 3.8 SW corner of 23rd & Union: New mixed--used development (Source: Author)

D



Figure 3.9 SE corner of 23rd & Union: Earl's Cuts and Styles in Midtown Center
(Source: Author)

The Central District has already experienced a significant social transformation. The Black population has decreased significantly since the 1970s, and the neighborhood continues to see evidence of that transformation in the growing number of higher-income, white residents who are moving in to the area. Through zoning changes and new development incentives, the Central District is currently experiencing substantial spatial transformation that favors high-density new construction, which in turns displaces lower-income residents of color and their vernacular heritage.

Chapter 4 examines the landscape of cultural built heritage in the Central District, and the gaps that exist between officially recognized built heritage, and cultural resources that are important to the CD's African American community.

Chapter 4. TAKING STOCK OF CULTURAL RESOURCES & PRESERVATION STAKEHOLDERS IN THE CD

The Central District is home to a number of the City’s Historic Landmarks, as well as several NRHP sites, but there is a significant number of cultural heritage resources that have been identified by official surveys and community groups that remain unrecognized by official registers. This chapter will discuss the CD’s current recognized built heritage, all potential cultural resources, major stakeholders involved in preserving the CD’s heritage, as well as several examples of African American community efforts to reclaim and recognize their built heritage.

SEATTLE’S HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAKEHOLDERS

City - Department of Neighborhoods

Within the City of Seattle, the Department of Neighborhoods manages the designation and protection of eight historic districts and all Seattle Historic Landmarks, totaling over 400 historic structures, sites, objects, and vessels.¹²⁵ Within the eight historic districts, the appearance and integrity of the structures, and well as the public space that surrounds them, are managed by a citizen review board and/or the Landmark Preservation Board in accordance with the City ordinance that accompanies each structure and/or district. The elected Landmark Preservation Board, which holds bi-monthly meetings, oversees and approves nominations and designations for potential Historic Landmarks, as well as any changes or alterations to the physical appearance or structure of a City Landmark. More information on Seattle Historic Landmarks is provided in the Mapping section.

The Central District does contain several Seattle Historic Landmarks, which the City maintains. Thus far, the Central District does not contain any historic districts, but as previously discussed, the CD was designated as the second Arts and Culture District in the city.

County - King County Preservation

King County’s Historic Preservation Program provides preservation services to all of the unincorporated areas and 20 suburban cities with which it has interlocal agreements. Because the City of Seattle has its

¹²⁵ “Historic Preservation.” 2017. City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods. Accessed June 12. <https://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/historic-preservation>.

own preservation program (other than regulating the King County Courthouse, which is a designated King County Landmark) King County's Preservation branch does not do any preservation work in Seattle.

Nonprofit - Historic Seattle

Founded in 1974, Historic Seattle is a nonprofit organization that serves to protect and preserve the architectural legacy in both Seattle and greater King County.¹²⁶ Historic Seattle aims to accomplish its mission through three approaches: education, advocacy, and preservation. Under its education approach, Historic Seattle offers events, lectures, and tours focused on the preservation of historic buildings in Seattle and King County. They also promote preservation awareness through various social media outlets. As preservation advocates, Historic Seattle works with individuals and community groups to advocate for the preservation of historic buildings, as well as to provide technical support and assistance to those who wish to preserve their own historic structures. Historic Seattle also does direct preservation work by stewarding the preservation of the eight historic properties they own.¹²⁷

The biggest project that Historic Seattle has been a part of in the Central District was the renovation and continued stewardship of Washington Hall. Washington Hall was built by the Danish Brotherhood in 1908, but has a multi-layered and multi-cultural history. The property's history embodies the cultural changes in the Central District, as it has served as an affordable rental property and performance space for members of the local Jewish, Filipino, African American, Korean, Eritrean, Ethiopian and other communities.¹²⁸ Historic Seattle acquired the building in 2009 and identified community-based arts organizations that had cultural ties to the Central District as anchor tenants for the space. Historic Seattle has kept the Hall affordable to its tenants and has prioritized that much of the space's programming be left up to its tenants.

In 1975, Historic Seattle commenced a project to conduct neighborhood inventories of 16 neighborhoods in Seattle, and the Central District was one of the neighborhoods included in the project. Folke Nyberg and Victor Steinbrueck, well-known in Seattle's urban design and architecture world, served as primary consultants. Each neighborhood inventory provides a historical context and general description of the neighborhood, as well as illustrated sections on common building types and urban design elements.

¹²⁶ "About - Historic Seattle." 2017. Historic Seattle. Accessed June 12. <https://historicseattle.org/about/>.

¹²⁷ Heg-Phillips Apartments, Victorian Row Apartments, Egan House, Good Shepherd Center, Dearborn House, Cadillac Hotel, Belmont-Boylston Houses, and Washington Hall

¹²⁸ "Washington Hall." 2017. Historic Seattle. Accessed June 12. <https://historicseattle.org/project/washington-hall/>.

Today, this survey serves as a valuable source of documentation of many vernacular architectural styles, some of which have probably been lost.

Nonprofit - Washington Trust for Historic Preservation

Founded in 1973, the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation is a registered nonprofit, and Washington's only statewide historic preservation program. The Washington Trust's preservation mission has four avenues: education, advocacy, collaboration, and stewardship.¹²⁹ The organization also facilitates funding programs in conjunction with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), including the Heritage Barn Initiative, Historic Courthouse Program, and the Washington State Main Street Program. As a statewide preservation organization, the Trust has a robust advocacy program. The organization advocates for public policies and laws on both the statewide and nationwide levels to preserve and protect historic resources.

The Washington Trust has advocated for the preservation of Washington Hall and James Washington's home and studio, but has otherwise not participated in specific preservation work within the CD. According to email correspondence with Jennifer Mortensen of the Washington Trust, the organization philosophically "supports the preservation of African American history in Seattle and the state, [but has] not really been able to create strong relationships and tangible ties to [the CD]."¹³⁰

Black Heritage Society of Washington State

The first meeting of the Black Heritage Society of Washington State (BHS) was held in 1977 at the home of Esther Mumford, a writer, publisher, and historian of African American history and heritage in the Pacific Northwest. BHS is a non-profit organization dedicated to the "acquisition, preservation and exhibition of materials relating to the history and culture of African-Americans in the State of Washington."¹³¹ BHS participates in education, collection, preservation, and storytelling about all aspects of Black history, culture, and heritage within the Pacific Northwest. They are currently trying to nominate the William Grose House as a Seattle Landmark.

¹²⁹ "What We Do." 2017. Washington Trust for Historic Preservation. Accessed June 12. <http://preservewa.org/What-We-Do.aspx>.

¹³⁰ Email correspondence with Jennifer Mortensen. May 19, 2017

¹³¹ "Mission and Vision Statements." 2017. Black Heritage Society. Accessed June 12. <http://www.bhswa.org/wordpress/about/mission-and-vision-statements/>.

Public Development Authority - 4Culture

4Culture is a tax-exempt arts and culture public development authority (PDA). A PDA is a public entity created by a city or state government that provides public services with the financial and programmatic flexibility of a private organization. 4Culture receives its funding through a portion of Seattle's lodging tax. 4Culture has a 15-member board who are nominated by the King County Executive and are confirmed by the King County Council. 4Culture's mission is "Advancing Community Through Culture", and the organization focuses its efforts on four main aspects of culture: the Arts, Heritage, Preservation, and Public Art. With only two full-time staff, the preservation program is relatively small as compared to the arts and public art sections of the organizations. 4Culture's primary preservation work comes through advocacy and financial support. 4Culture preservation staff assist organizations and individuals with free and paid technical support to care for, promote, and protect historic properties. 4Culture also has several funding programs to support both designated and under-represented historic sites. Open 4Culture project support provides small awards for projects that are created by or are for underserved and underrepresented communities in King County that wouldn't be served by 4Culture's other programs. This funding program was designed to cover gaps that are created by the Capital Support, which requires that sites and buildings be designated as Seattle Landmarks to be eligible for this support.

Like Historic Seattle, 4Culture's biggest project within the Central District was the restoration of Washington Hall. 4Culture provided grants to Historic Seattle throughout different phases of the project. One of their grants provided 250,000 towards the acquisition of the Hall (half of the total cost); they provided technical support to help write the Landmark nomination; 4Culture grants also fund operations and arts and culture programming support now that the restoration is complete. 4Culture was one of many historic preservation organizations and advocates in Seattle who considered Washington Hall to be culturally too important to lose, so this project was very fortunate in that it received generous support from many players at all levels of the preservation process.¹³²

First African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church, a registered Seattle landmark¹³³ approached 4Culture for funding to restore the building's stained glass windows. Because of the church's landmark status, the church's community group was awarded capital funding for the window restoration. The church group was also a first-time applicant to one of 4Culture's grant programs, and thus received guidance by

¹³² Interview with Dana Phelan, 4Culture Historic Preservation Officer. April 25, 2017.

¹³³ First AME is located at 1522 14th Ave, just outside of the defined boundaries of the Central District

4Culture staff around finding the right contractors and crafting a strong application for the grant. 4Culture considers it a key part of their work to try and help individuals and community groups who may not be familiar or comfortable with the process of applying for funding. 4Culture grants were also able to provide some funding for artist residencies and limited public programming for the James and Janie Washington Foundation, which supports the James T. Washington home and studio (also a Seattle landmark).

4Culture's work is not limited thematically or geographically within Seattle, but the organization often needs to be reactive and respond to efforts already in motion instead of approaching projects proactively.¹³⁴ In speaking with Dana Phelan, Historic Preservation officer at 4Culture, she is cautious of not imposing too much of her organization's version of what historic preservation on underrepresented communities and their heritage. She recognizes the difficult balance of making financial and technical support more accessible to underrepresented community groups without dictating what those community groups 'should' be doing to preserve their heritage. She also acknowledges both the benefits and challenges to the Landmark requirement for much of 4Culture's capital funding grants. In other words, only registered Seattle landmarks can receive capital funding grants, which are often larger than other grants offered by the organization. Limiting grant funding to landmark designations is often a good way to funnel eligible projects, and Dana believes that although landmarking is still a very important tool, it is not always the right tool. 4Culture's work is often predicated on where the landmarks are, and so if there are proportionately fewer landmarks in the Central District, that results in fewer properties that can take advantage of capital funding grants, which contain many of the larger grants.

¹³⁴ Interview with Dana Phelan

MAPPING BUILT HERITAGE IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

Building Age

Before discussing the existing built heritage that exists within the Central District, it is important to understand general building age patterns throughout the neighborhood. This information can reveal areas with older and potentially historic built heritage. Lighter shades indicate older buildings, and darker shades indicate newer buildings. When looking at the larger boundary of the Central District, it appears that much of the older building stock remains, particularly on the eastern side of the neighborhood. While this area in some definitions is still considered the Central District by some, the demographic trends here are whiter and more affluent, as evidenced by Figure 4.1. It is probably, then, that the older building stock within the more affluent neighborhoods is generally more high-style architecture. Within the smaller boundary of the Central District, outlined in red, there are more pockets that contain much newer building stock, particularly around 23rd and Jackson, along Cherry, and along Union. This is where much of the City's 23rd Ave corridor work, discussed in Chapter 3, is taking place.

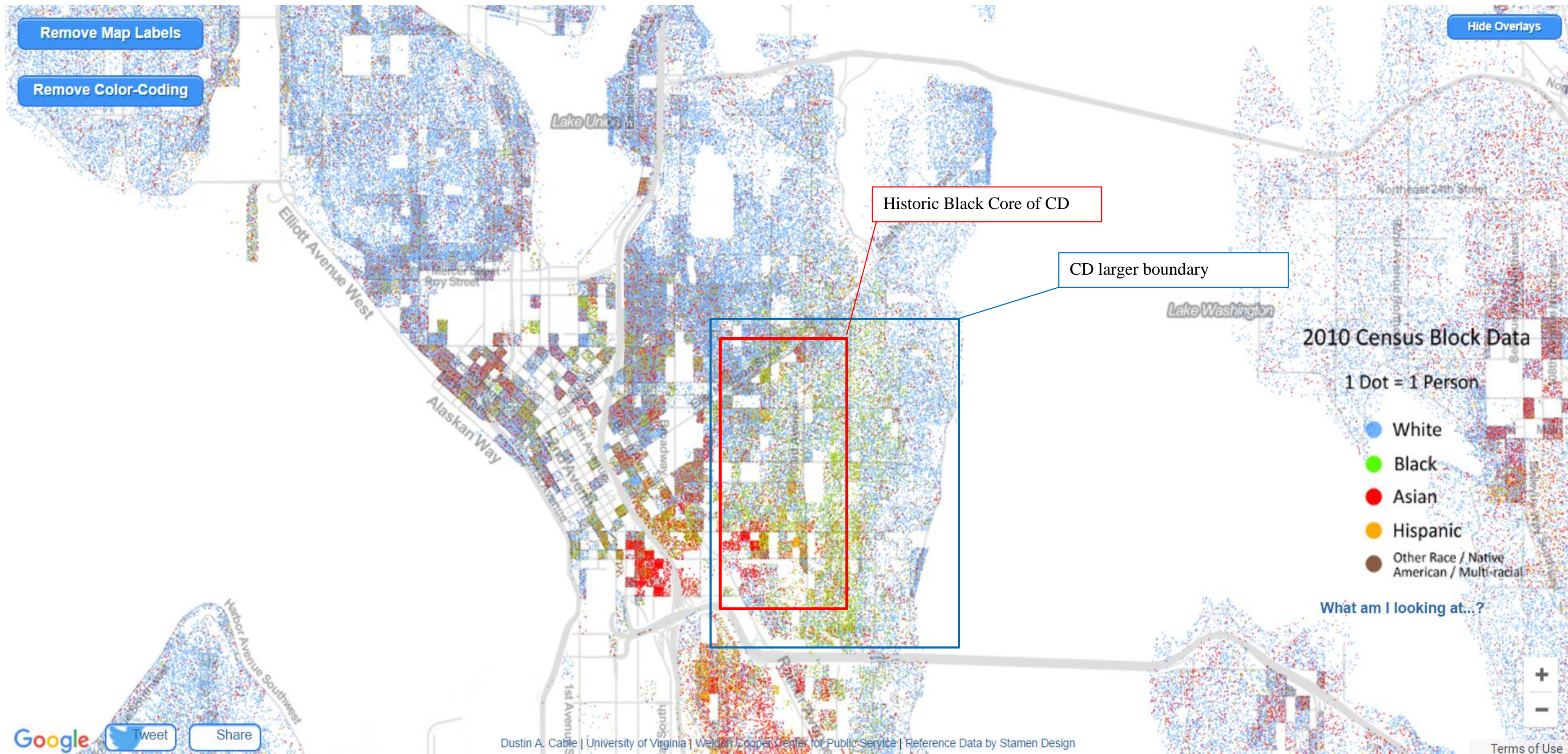


Figure 4.1 2010 Census Block Data showing racial demographic patterns (Source: University of Washington)

BUILDING AGE in the CENTRAL DISTRICT

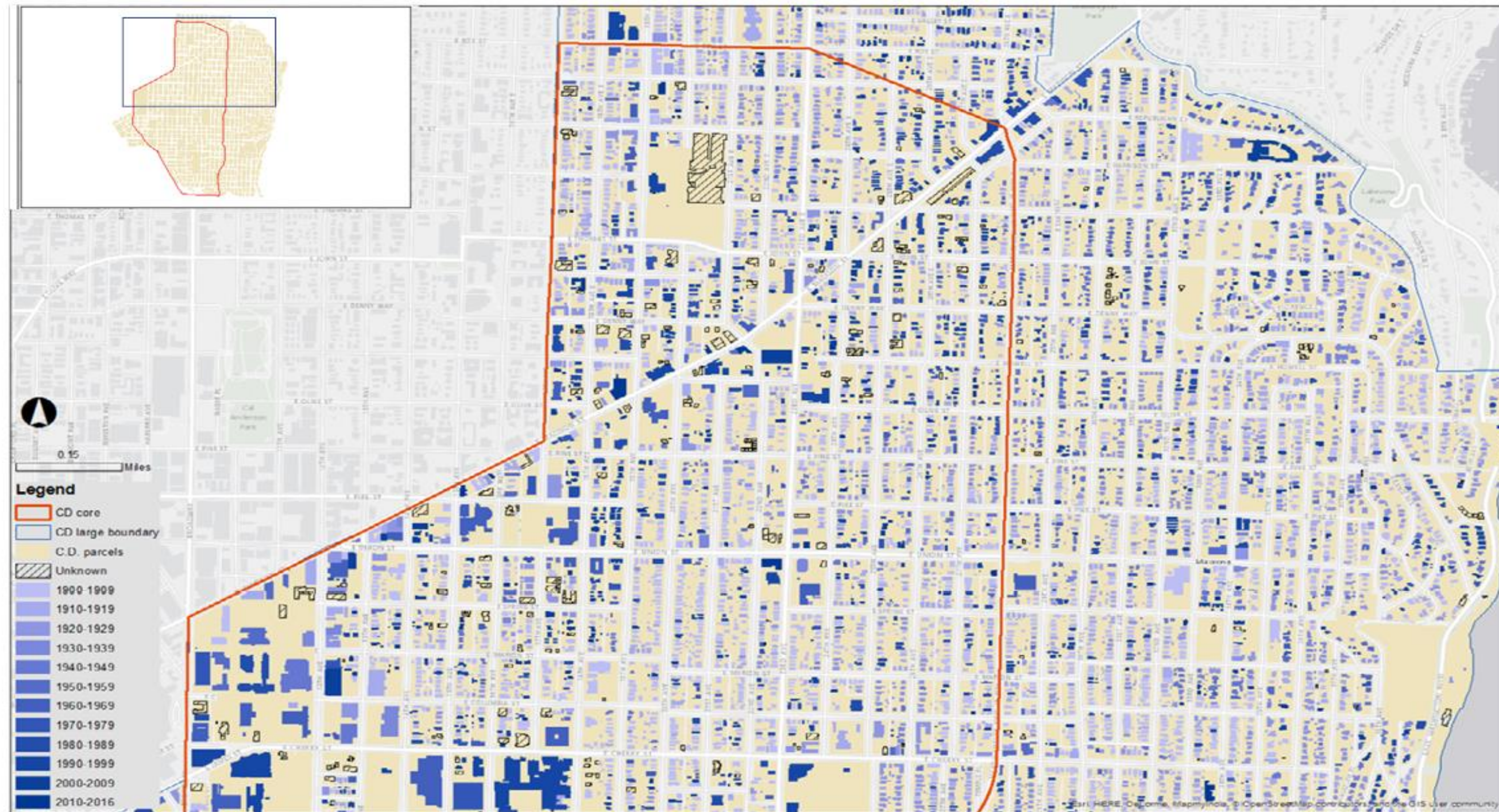


Figure 4.2 Building Age in the CD – north side (Source: Author)

BUILDING AGE in the CENTRAL DISTRICT

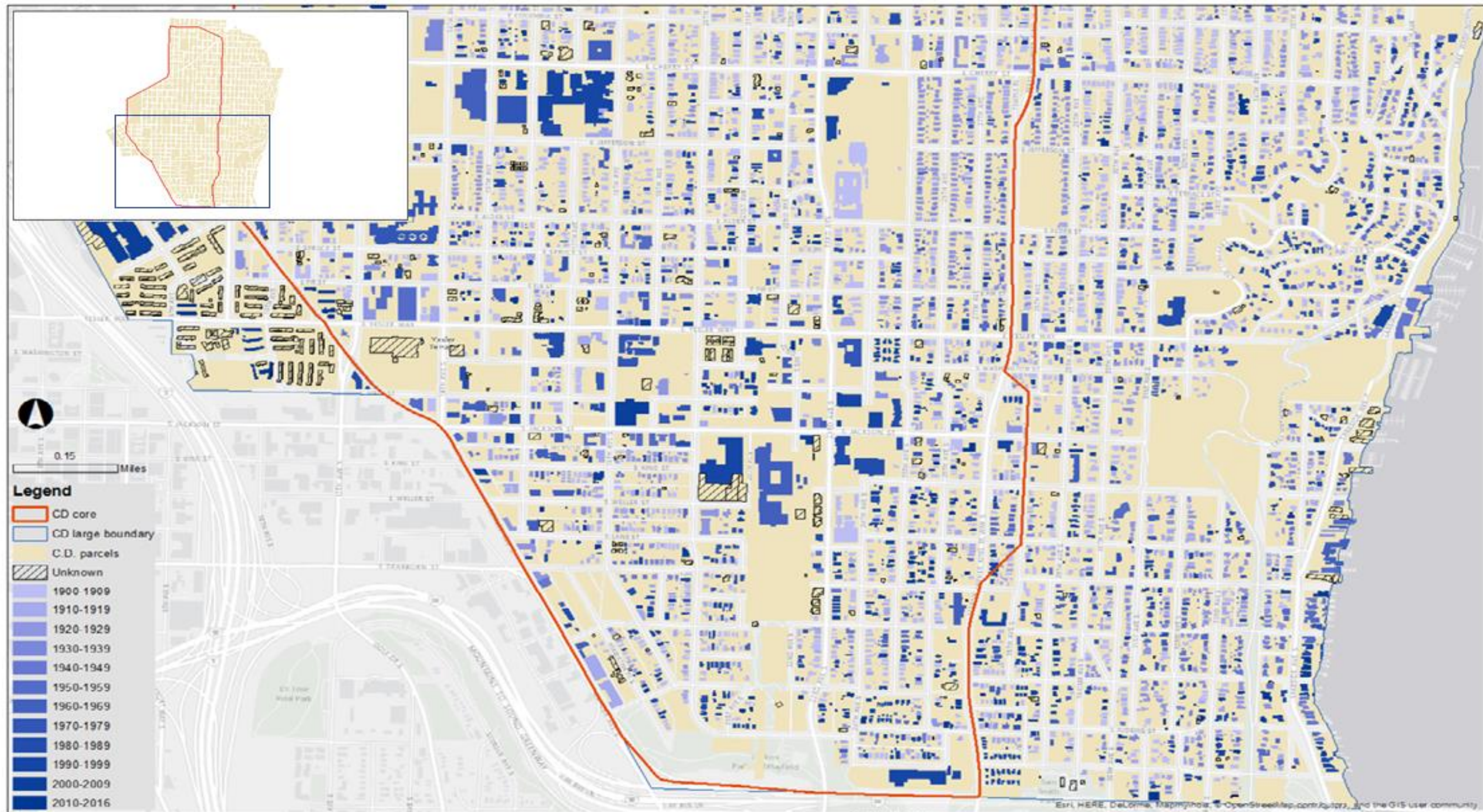


Figure 4.3 Building Age in Seattle - south side (Source: Author)

CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

When examining built heritage in the Central District, it is helpful to think about Rautenberg's two categories of heritage: heritage by designation and heritage by appropriation.¹³⁵ Heritage by designation is the traditional process of giving an honorific label to heritage sites that is most often recognized by general society. The top-down process rarely involves community engagement, and results in predictable designations that have been chosen by a systematic set of criteria. National Register of Historic Site designations and Seattle Historic Landmark designations.

Heritage by appropriation encompasses much of what is left out by the category of heritage by designation. Heritage by appropriation generally emerges organically, acquiring status through use rather than a systematic process or deliberate consideration. This type of heritage appears on no official list, and its status often changes with time and with the surrounding community. Heritage by appropriation can often hold more importance to a community, and because of its unofficial status, is often much more vulnerable to alteration or even demolition by a source outside of the community. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the HCAACD is currently working on a set of criteria that would curate a list of community-identified "heritage by appropriation" sites, but has not done so yet.

Heritage by Designation

This section discusses and maps out sites of built 'heritage by designation' in the Central District. It is important to understand the landscape of designated heritage because what is designated and officially recognized translates into what is valued by society. Designated heritage receives protection, either in the form of legal controls enforced by city governments, or symbolically in the form of branding by an official entity. Assessing the landscape of designated built heritage can also highlight how current interpretations of historic significance and historic integrity have shaped our built heritage by allowing us to see whose heritage is represented, and by default whose heritage is not represented.

The cultural heritage sites included in the map in Figures 4.4-4.6 have been inventoried or identified through efforts by the City of Seattle or a preservation nonprofit working in the city. Some of these resources are officially recognized by local or national bodies, while others are not 'official', meaning that they do not have an official designation or receive any honorary or legal protection, and they also

¹³⁵ Tweed, Christopher, and Margaret Sutherland. 2007. "Built Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Urban Development." *Landscape and Urban Planning* 83: 62–69. doi:10.1016/j.landurbplan.2007.05.008.

have not been chosen by one group as resources that have a specific significance to one community. This is not an exhaustive list, but collectively these resources demonstrate the variety and multitude of cultural heritages resources in the CD.

Officially recognized sites are listed on the local Landmark register, as well as the National Register of Historic Places. Since the founding of the Landmarks program in 1973, the City of Seattle has designated over 450 Historic Landmarks. Seattle's Landmarks include sites, buildings, vessels, vehicles, and street clocks, and each have an accompanying City ordinance that regulates their protection. As outlined in Chapter Two of this thesis, the National Register of Historic Places was established by the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, and is the "official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of protection".¹³⁶

Many of the sites included in the map come from two Historic Resource Surveys. The City of Seattle and the Department of Neighborhoods completed its first Historic Resource Survey (HRS) in 1979. It was a 'windshield survey', meaning that surveyors identified potentially buildings based on their architectural style and appearance, but they did not have the tools or resources to conduct additional historical research to evaluate the significance of the properties. The documentation from this survey is not digitized, and can be found in neighborhood-specific binders that are housed in Department of Neighborhoods offices. For both the HRS 1979 and 2000, the CD boundary used by the City is much smaller than the boundary used in this thesis, so these maps do not show properties recorded that are east of 30th Ave, or north of Madison and west of 23rd. An updated Historic Resource Survey was started in 2000 and completed in 2007. Unlike the 1979 Survey, this most recent Survey was systematic and comprehensive, and done by a team of professional architectural historians and volunteers. To date, eight complete neighborhoods have been surveyed, as well as neighborhood commercial districts and residential properties built before 1906. In total, over 5,000 properties have been captured by the Survey.¹³⁷ The Central District is included as one of the neighborhoods captured by the Survey.

Other properties have been designated by local preservation and cultural organizations. Some are the properties identified as "Significant Central Area Buildings" in the Neighborhood Inventory published by Historic Seattle, mentioned earlier in this chapter. The inventory identifies 44 significant buildings –

¹³⁶ "National Register of Historic Places." 2017. National Park Service. Accessed June 12. <https://www.nps.gov/Nr/>.

¹³⁷ "Historic Resources Survey." 2017. City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods. Accessed June 12. <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/historic-preservation/historic-resources-survey>.

among the types included are churches, residences, storefronts, hospitals, fire stations, libraries, schools, and community centers. Additionally, in 2013, Seattle's Office of Arts and Culture surveyed Seattle's theaters, galleries, arts offices, rehearsal rooms, libraries, music clubs, museums, and cinemas to create a comprehensive list of Seattle's artistic and cultural spaces.¹³⁸ There are 19 cultural spaces located in the Central District.

¹³⁸ "SpaceLab NW." 2017. City of Seattle Office of Arts and Culture. Accessed June 12. <http://www.seattle.gov/arts/spacelab>.

BUILT CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

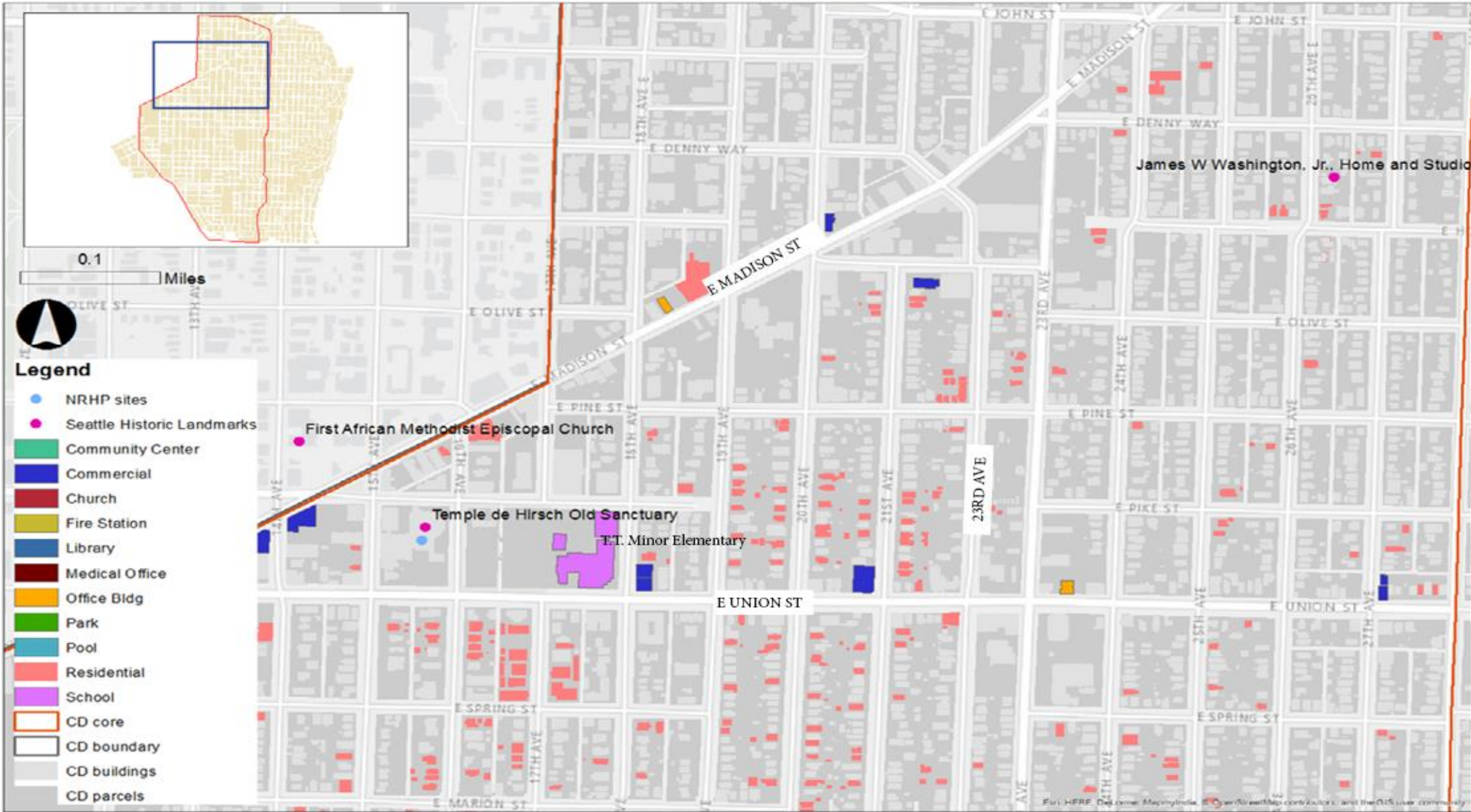


Figure 4.4 Built Cultural Heritage in the Central District (Source: Author)

BUILT CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT



Figure 4.5 Built Cultural Heritage in the Central District (Source: Author)

BUILT CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT

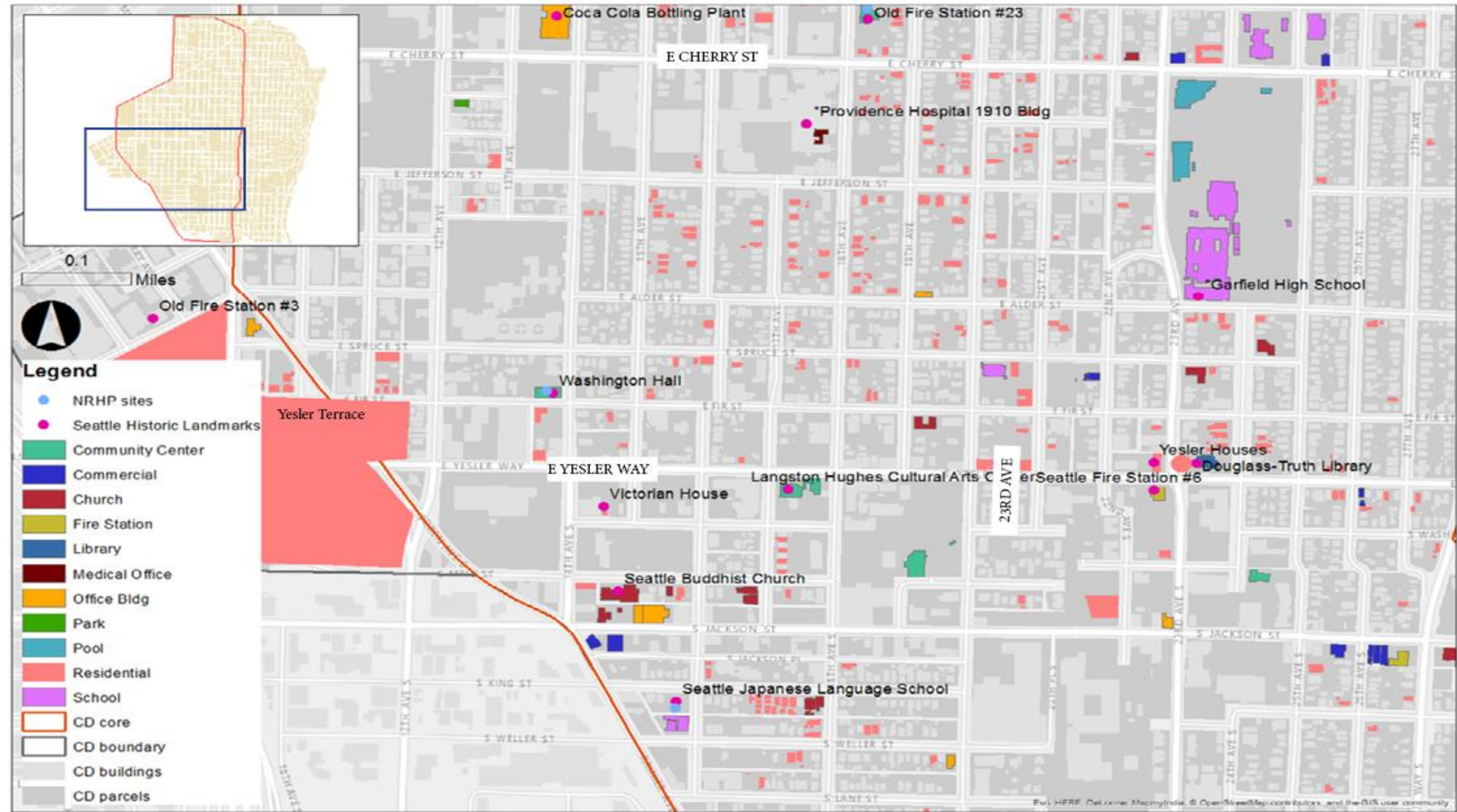


Figure 4.6 Built Cultural Heritage in the Central District (Source: Author)

DISCUSSION

The ‘Heritage by Designation’ map shows that there are eight (8) buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places within the boundaries of the Central District. Out of the eight, only one of the sites - Washington Hall - is most likely associated with Black or African American history or culture.¹³⁹ Washington Hall is also listed as a Seattle Historic Landmark. Washington Hall was originally built by the Danish Brotherhood in 1908, and has had significance to many cultural communities in Seattle, including Seattle’s African American communities. Washington Hall hosted many African American community and cultural events early in its history, including jazz concerts for well-known performers.¹⁴⁰ In 1973, the Sons and Daughters of Haiti, an African American Masonic Lodge, purchased the hall from the Danish brotherhood. This change in ownership marked a shift in the property’s ethnic and cultural identity. Today, Washington Hall is owned and managed by 4Culture, and still functions as a performance space and permanent home to a host of Central Area anchor institutions that focus on art, media, and social justice.¹⁴¹

Nihon Go Gakko is the only other NR site that is designated for its cultural significance as the oldest functioning Japanese language school in the continental United States. Nihon Go Gakko was designated purely on the basis of its cultural significance, as it is a simple, non-high style building. The significance of five remaining National Register sites is tied to their architectural style, and four among these six also have a connection to a figure considered significant to Seattle’s history.¹⁴² One site - the Judge James T. Ronald house - happens to be the oldest site (1889), and is designated based on its political and social significance.

Six (6) of these National Register sites are also Seattle Historic Landmarks, of which there are 26 within the boundaries of the Central District defined in this thesis. Also included are two Seattle Landmark sites that are located just outside of the defined CD boundaries, which brings the total to 27 landmarks. These

¹³⁹ This information came from the assessment of their individual nomination applications. Washington Hall’s nomination application could not be accessed, but its significance is most likely associated with Black and African American history and culture.

¹⁴⁰ “Washington Hall - Landmark Nomination Application.” 2008. Seattle.
<https://historicseattle.org/project/washington-hall/>.

¹⁴¹ “Washington Hall Anchor Organizations.” 2017. Washington Hall. Accessed June 12.
<http://www.washingtonhall.org/about/anchor/>.

¹⁴² All of these individuals are white; one is a woman.

two are included on this map because of their proximity to the CD, and because of their significance to Black history and culture. Of these 27 landmarks, only six (6), or 27 percent of the sites' nomination applications identify explicit ties to their significance in Black culture and history: James W Washington Jr., home and studio, Douglass-Truth Library, Garfield High School, Washington Hall, the Colman School (currently home to the Northwest African American Museum), and the First African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.

The First African Methodist Episcopal Church and James W. Washington's home and studio are the only two sites that were not nominated based also on their architectural significance.¹⁴³ The First AME church was nominated solely on its cultural significance (Criterion C). The designation report acknowledges that the building is "non-stylistic"¹⁴⁴. James W. Washington's home and studio is nominated for both its cultural significance and its association with an important figure. James Washington was a celebrated Black artist whose work has been exhibited internationally. The remaining four sites are not exclusively associated with Black history and culture, and are also recognized as important architectural works. Although it was not nominated for its significance to the Black and African American communities, Langston Hughes Cultural Arts Center is currently a community facility that serves as a center for African American arts and culture in the Central District.¹⁴⁵

Both registers require that nominated sites satisfy only one criterion, yet many are often designated under multiple. Out of 30 sites that are designated as Seattle landmarks and/or NR listings¹⁴⁶, only five (5) sites, or 16 percent, have been designated for non-architectural significance reasons, or historic significance alone.¹⁴⁷ In the Seattle Landmark register, for 15 sites that have been designated in part for historic significance, or under Criteria A, B, or C, 11 have also been designated for their architectural significance. Within the NR, for six (6) sites that have been designated in part for social, historical, political, government, or religious significance, four (4) have also been designated for their architectural significance.

¹⁴³ Tables illustrating the analysis in this section are included in Appendix B

¹⁴⁴ "First African Methodist Episcopal Church - Landmark Nomination Application." 1980. Seattle.

¹⁴⁵ "Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute." 2017. City of Seattle Office of Arts and Culture. Accessed June 12. <http://www.seattle.gov/arts/lhpai>.

¹⁴⁶ Counting sites in both registers only once

¹⁴⁷ Designated under Criterion A, B, or C for Seattle landmarks, or anything other than Architecture for NR

From analysis of this small sample of sites designated as Seattle landmarks or National Register sites, one could imply that it is very difficult to successfully nominate a site based on historic significance alone. National Register criteria dictate that a site must possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association *as well as* at least one of the four significance criteria. The integrity requirement may restrict sites that possess strong historic significance, but only a few out of the seven aspects of integrity. The Seattle landmark ordinance has altered this wording slightly in a way that allows for sites that may lack historic integrity. The Seattle ordinance specifies that “an object, site, or improvement...may be designated for preservation...if it has integrity *or* the ability to convey its significance”¹⁴⁸ (emphasis added). This allows those advocating for sites with strong cultural or social significance to make the case that although their site lacks historic integrity, it retains the ability to convey its significance. As will be discussed in the cases of Liberty Bank and Yesler Terrace in the following chapter, no clear alternative has been provided to suggest how a site might convey its significance if not through its historic integrity. As a result, those in a position to nominate and designate sites are often left without much choice than to directly associate historic integrity with the ability to convey significance.

The following chapter examines in more detail several cases that demonstrate how current historic preservation practice’s prioritization of historic integrity over historic significance can have negative consequences for sites considered significant to Seattle’s Black communities in the Central District.

¹⁴⁸ Seattle Landmarks Preservation Ordinance 25.12.350

Chapter 5. VIGNETTES

This chapter profiles four (4) examples of buildings or sites with strong cultural significance to the African American community of the Central District that have been lost, unrecognized, or both, in large part due to the prioritization of historic integrity over historic significance. Two (2) buildings that have been denied Seattle landmark status and have since been demolished and are awaiting redevelopment, one (1) residential vernacular building that was home to a prominent African American in Seattle's early history and has yet to be nominated for landmark status, and a set of three (3) sites that were once Black Panther Party headquarters (one has since been lost).

An attempt at categorizing these cases was made in order to better understand what has happened to significant built heritage associated with the Central District's Black communities. However, the stories and outcomes of all four cases overlap in ways that make it difficult to construct inductive classifications for each one. The first two cases – the Liberty Bank and Yesler Terrace - were rejected from Landmark status by the City of Seattle for historic integrity issues, have since been lost, and now will be memorialized in a new development projects. The third case – the William Grose house – has retained much of its historic integrity since its construction in the late 19th century, but has remained largely unknown and unrecognized because of its vernacular style as well as its association with a largely-unknown Black historical figure. The last case – sites of 3 Black Panther headquarters – together represent sites that either have been demolished, or are vulnerable to demolition because of their vernacular style and unrecognized association with significant yet controversial Black history.

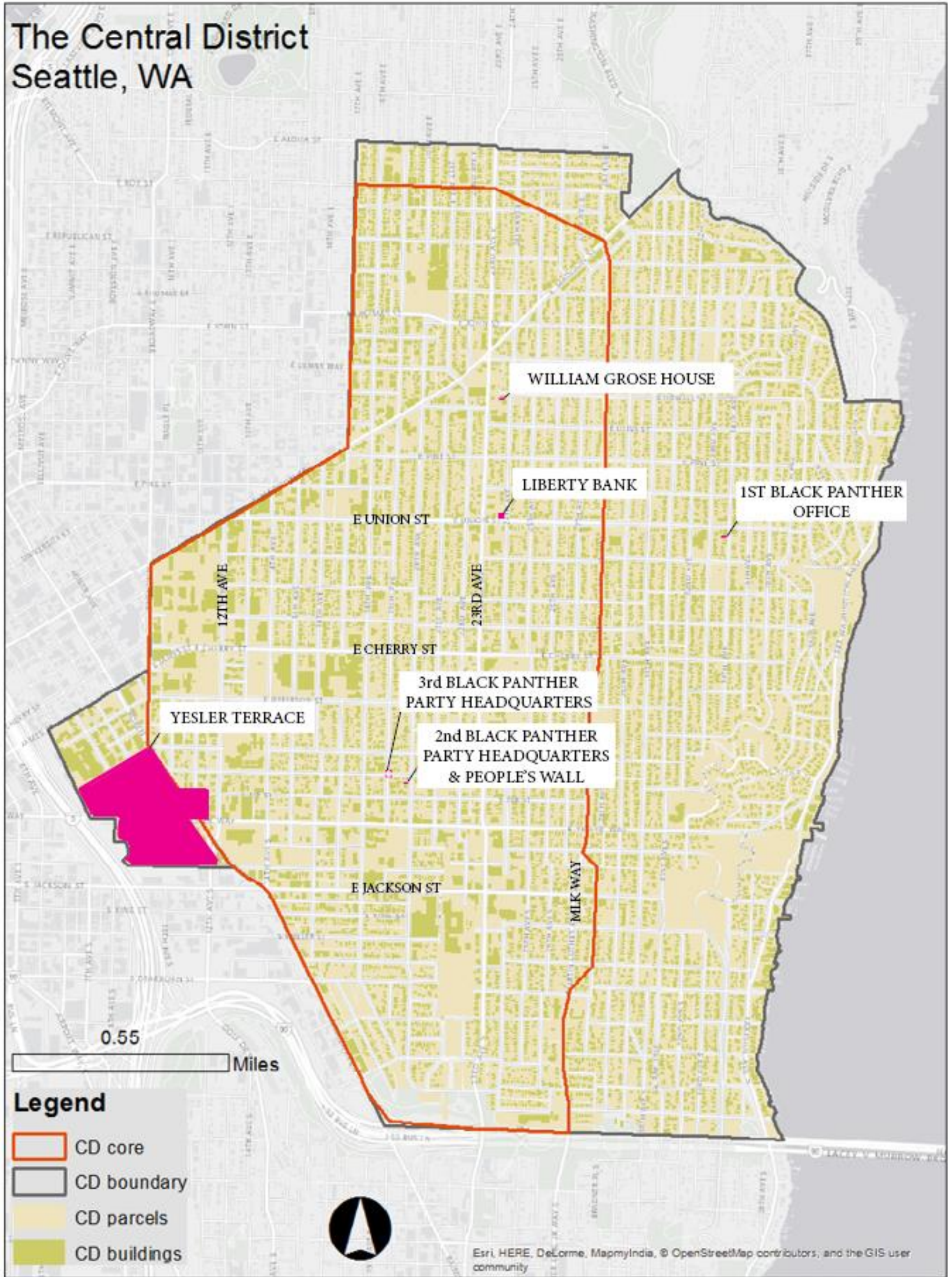


Figure 5.1 Locations of Vignette cases (Source: Author)

LIBERTY BANK

Liberty Bank opened in May 1968 as the first Black-owned bank west of the Mississippi. Located at 24th and Union in the Central District, the bank was an important addition to the predominately Black and African American communities, as its founding was a community response to redlining and city disinvestment in the neighborhood. For 20 years, Liberty Bank provided essential financial services to Black men and women who couldn't otherwise obtain them. The bank's services allowed members of the Black communities in Seattle were able to qualify for loans to buy houses or open businesses. The Liberty Bank building stood as a beacon of hope, autonomy, and prosperity for communities that had been otherwise disadvantaged by larger, predominately white institutions. In 1988, Liberty Bank reopened as Emerald City Bank, which was eventually bought by Key Bank.¹⁴⁹

Prior to its demolition, Liberty Bank building was a one-story brick building designed in line with a 1960's contemporary style. The bank was designed by architect Mel Streeter, who started one of the first Black-owned architectural firms in Seattle. According to Liberty Bank's landmark nomination, Streeter is also known for his contributions to a number of landmark institutions in King County, including: John Muir Elementary, City of Auburn City Hall, the regional Federal Aviation Administration Building, and Seattle's Beacon Hill Neighborhood's African American Academy. The exterior of the bank was topped by a solid white roof overhang, a brick facade, and anterior and posterior floor-to-roof windows. Historic images from 1968 reveal that overall, the building's outward-facing physical appearance had not changed much during its lifetime, apart from minor architectural details.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ "The History of Liberty Bank." 2017. The Liberty Bank Building. Accessed June 12. <http://libertybankbuilding.org/liberty-bank/>.

¹⁵⁰ All information in this paragraph is from the Liberty Bank Landmark nomination application; "Liberty Bank - Landmark Nomination Application." 2013. Seattle.



Figure 5.2 Liberty Bank in 1968 (Source: LibertyBankBuilding.org)

Landmark Nomination

In August 2013, Omari Tahir (aka James C. Garrett), son of H.L. Garrett, a co-founder of Liberty Bank, submitted a landmark nomination application for the Liberty Bank. The nomination included a brief paragraph on the bank's present and original physical appearance and characteristics, a four-page statement of significance, and 90 additional pages of context photographs, historical photographs, and documents and articles that supported Liberty Bank's importance within the Central District's Black community. The author lists four main reasons why Liberty Bank is a worthy historical landmark in Seattle:

- 1) It opened as the first and only African American bank in the Pacific Northwest;
- 2) Its founders included a number of people of historic note, and it was designed by one of America's few well-known African American architects, Mel Streeter (1931-2006);
- 3) Its design is reflective of the culture that characterized Seattle's predominantly African American Central Area in the 1960s, and is one of the few remaining high quality examples of this type of utilitarian urban blue-collar architecture left in the neighborhood, and

- 4) The changing demographics of Seattle's Central District, without protection of the neighborhood's historical landmarks, portends an erasure of a rich cultural past and heritage created by Seattle's African American community.



Figure 5.3 Liberty Bank in 2013 (Source: Capitol Hill Seattle blog)

Landmark Nomination

The nomination hearing for the Liberty Bank took place in February 2014. Omari Tahir, along with an associate Leith Kahl, advocated on behalf of Liberty Bank's cultural and social significance within the Black community in the Central District. Mr. Kahl noted that they believed the Bank to meet all six standards or designation, with an emphasis on Criterion C for cultural significance. An employee of Capitol Hill Housing was at the hearing to represent Key Bank, who owned the building at the time. Capitol Hill Housing stated that they did not support the landmark nomination because the building's lack of integrity fails to convey its important history. This is the overarching conflict seen in both the nomination and designation hearings - everyone recognizes the important history surrounding Liberty Bank, but many argue that the building's lack of integrity removes all possibility for the building to convey that history. Some board members argue that the significance lies in the site and not in the building itself, and so a new development could still interpret the history that occurred on the site. The board decides in a 10:0 vote to approve the nomination of Liberty Bank for consideration as a Seattle

Landmark, and the discussion surrounding the nexus of integrity and the ability to convey significance would continue at the designation hearing.

Landmark Designation

The designation hearing for the Liberty Bank took place in March 2014. The transcription of the hearing minutes come to almost 40 pages in length and reveal a great deal of emotion and tension between those who supported the designation and those who opposed the designation. Many people stepped forward to speak during the public comment section of the hearing, both in favor and against the designation. Community members who spoke in support of designating the bank spoke about personal experiences and emotional connections to the building, and argued that the building's lack of integrity did not affect the building's ability to convey its important social and cultural significance. Those who spoke against the designation acknowledged the importance of the history that the building represented, but argued that the building had been altered to the point where it no longer could convey its significance. This section presents the arguments made for and against the designation for Liberty Bank, as well as key arguments given by public commenters.

In Support of Landmark Nomination

Michelle Purnell Hepburn, daughter of two founders of the Liberty Bank, spoke on behalf of those nominating the building. Her arguments rely heavily on emotion and anecdote to express the cultural significance of the building, and she pays little attention to architectural details. She made the case for the cultural significance of Liberty Bank as “the first minority owned bank and the first of its kind on the west coast”.¹⁵¹ She provided the contextual history of racism, segregation, and discrimination in the U.S. and in Seattle that necessitated the bank's presence in the predominately African American neighborhood of the Central District. She spoke of the vision and personal risk that it took for the bank's founders to “continually push forward with an idea so radical as a minority owned bank in the 1960s.”¹⁵² She provided details about the bank's increase in financial capital following its opening, and of the historical significance the bank's leadership among U.S. minority-owned banks in the 1970s. She briefly articulated the architectural significance of the building, as built by architect Mel Streeter. Ms. Purnell-Hepburn concludes her nomination by acknowledging the need for affordable housing in her community, but that

¹⁵¹ “Liberty Bank Designation Minutes.” 2014. Seattle.

¹⁵² Liberty Bank Meeting minutes, 9

she is “even more eager to preserve the presence of a once thriving business...that was committed to this community”.¹⁵³

Mr. Leith Kahl followed, who also supported designation, spoke more to the architectural integrity of the building, noting that although there had been alterations, but that they were small and purposeful, and did not negatively affect the ability of the building to convey its significance. He built upon Ms. Purnell-Hepburn’s argument that the building stood as a symbol of the efforts to combat redlining and racially restrictive covenants. He concluded his argument by repeating his statement from the nomination hearing, that although the Liberty Bank meets all six criteria for designation, criterion C (cultural significance) “is the one that it most overwhelmingly and obviously meets”.¹⁵⁴

Out of 13 community members who participated in public comment, eight spoke up in support of the landmark designation. Several community members spoke candidly about race, claiming that this decision was about respect for the African American culture¹⁵⁵, and noting that none of the board members were Black, and thus the community should not need to ask the board’s permission to preserve a history that they (the board) are not a part of.¹⁵⁶ Others emphasized the Bank’s importance as a symbol of economic wealth and freedom within the African American community in a system that still seeks to marginalize and minimize the growth and development of African American communities.¹⁵⁷ One woman made an important comment about the nature of how she sees value communicated in the Black community: “we are an oral people; our oral history goes from one generation to the next”¹⁵⁸, referring to African American culture. Even though her grandchildren did not experience Liberty Bank as a living institution, she said, they understood what it was. She said that the building’s significance is not in its architectural merit, but in its existence as a physical edifice to mark the ground for Black history and culture.¹⁵⁹

Opposed to Landmark Designation

Katie Porter of Capitol Hill Housing made a point to acknowledge the “undeniable” history in Seattle and the rest of the country regarding racial discrimination in housing, and appreciated that the applicant provided this history under criterion C. She said that Liberty Bank was the third, not the first, minority-

¹⁵³ Ibid., 11

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 13

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 22

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 24

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 26

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 25

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.,

owned financial institution in the community that provided economic investment in the Central Area - the NAACP Credit Union and the Sentinel Credit Union both preceded Liberty Bank. She also pointed out that the documentary evidence about the bank's impact on the economic condition on the people and businesses it served was limited, which hurt the applicant's ability to demonstrate the bank's systematic impact to curtail the impacts of economic divestment in the neighborhood. Continuing in this logic, she specified to the board that if they did decide to designate the bank under Criterion C, "the significant way that this building impacted a significant cultural or political heritage, meaning the significant way of providing loans to address a cultural political or economic impact of redlining, is not illustrated from the existing buildings.", and thus does not believe the building meets the specific landmark criteria.¹⁶⁰

She introduced Larry Johnson of The Johnson Partnership to speak about criteria E and D - architectural type and work of architect and designer Mel Streeter. Mr. Johnson spoke very technically about the architect's background and plans for the building, and concludes from various pieces of documented information that the Liberty Bank building does not represent an outstanding design by Mel Streeter. Mr. Johnson also spoke about the fact that many of the building's original elements are now missing and/or altered, hurting the integrity of the building. He talked about the percentage of non-original material on each side of the buildings. He showed floorplans of the original design that meant for the interior to be completely open and transparent from the exterior, yet more recent alterations have included partitions that "obscure the visual penetration of the interior."¹⁶¹ His presentation was very technical and detailed in order to demonstrate that "because of the numerous changes the physical and architectural integrity has been degraded to such an extent that the building can't convey any historic significance it may possess."¹⁶²

Mr. Johnson's concluding statement assumed a direct link between integrity and the ability to convey significance. This link is made in the National Register criteria, yet the Landmark ordinance for the City of Seattle makes an important distinction between the two when it requires a building to have "integrity OR the ability to convey its significance"¹⁶³ (emphasis not included in original). This lack of architectural integrity would be important if the building's only significance was in architectural merit, but criterion C considers cultural significance, and should require other ways of demonstrating significance other than relying solely on architectural integrity.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 17

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 20

¹⁶² Ibid.,

¹⁶³ City of Seattle Municipal Code 25.12.350

Five community members spoke out in opposition of the landmark designation. The majority felt that the building did not do justice to the important history that was spoken about during the hearing. One person felt that the building was a “boring 1960’s building, not a landmark”¹⁶⁴, two others felt that a landmark designation would inhibit needed development of affordable housing on the site. A longtime white property owner in the neighborhood felt that designating the Bank would “perpetuate” the institution of redlining that necessitated the bank’s creation in the first place. He said that the community is very interested in jobs, opportunities, and they want ownership, and designation of the Liberty Bank doesn’t accomplish those things.¹⁶⁵

Board Discussion

In their discussion, each board member struggled with the nexus between integrity and the ability to convey significance. Everyone acknowledged the important history that was behind this building, but many struggled to see how preserving the Liberty Bank building as it stood could convey that history. Out of ten board members, six felt that the building’s loss of integrity meant that the building was no longer able to convey its significance. One board member who voted no felt challenged by this decision because what had been discussed during the meeting, most likely issues of racism and marginalization of the Black community, transcended what the board had purview over, and that doing the right thing for the board meant interpreting the guidelines very literally.¹⁶⁶ Four board members supported the designation under Criterion C. One board member aptly remarked that community members weren’t focusing on the building’s architectural style or integrity, which led him to think that the building’s ability to convey its significance isn’t and shouldn’t be reliant on its architectural integrity.¹⁶⁷ Another board member noted that the building is largely nominated because of its cultural significance, and thus it cannot be expected to be ornate or architecturally important as many others that the board reviews.¹⁶⁸

The board chair made an interesting comment at the end of the discussion period when she said to the community members present:

¹⁶⁴ Liberty Bank Meeting Minutes, 22

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 25

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 33

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 35

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 36

“...we’re not your enemies; we’re here as volunteers trying to do the right thing and trying to follow our conscience, and follow the standards that are set before us. If you want to save this building, maybe landmarking isn’t the right way to do it.”¹⁶⁹

Landmark designation for Liberty Bank was rejected in a 5:6 vote.

The Liberty Bank case is an excellent example of the ways in which the prioritization of historic integrity can disqualify a site or building that is clearly significant to a community and significant to a larger narrative of cultural history. These LPB minutes reveal that Board members were clearly struggling with the balance between cultural significance and loss of integrity, and several members expressed that they felt beholden to criteria that mandated historic integrity above all else. The Seattle Historic Preservation ordinance state that a site must possess either integrity or the ability to convey its significance, but it was clear that Board members either weren’t aware of this stipulation, or they had no other reference for how a building could convey its significance, if not through its integrity.

Liberty Bank Today

The Liberty Bank site remains empty awaiting development by Capitol Hill Housing



Figure 5.4 Former Liberty Bank site, (on the right), 24th and Union (Source: Author)

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 37

YESLER TERRACE

Although the site of the original Yesler Terrace housing complex was not located within the boundaries of the Central District specified in this thesis, the nature of its significance as a part of Seattle's Black history and the reasons for its rejected landmark status make Yesler Terrace an interesting case study in issues of historic integrity and historic significance.

History

The original project, located in Seattle's First Hill neighborhood, was a 22-block site that was reconfigured with new grading, streets, cul-de-sacs, and courtyards. The development contained 863 dwelling units in 97 multi-family residences, along with community buildings and a steam plant.¹⁷⁰ Five architects from different Seattle design firms were selected to design Yesler Terrace. Epstein deliberately chose prominent architects to work together toward his vision. The architects included J. Lister Holmes, William Aitken, George W. Stoddard, William T. Bain, and John T. Jacobsen.¹⁷¹ Most of the buildings in Yesler Terrace were modest two-story row houses with flat or low-sloping shed roof forms and simple wood-framing.¹⁷² Cladding was typically made of wood - either clapboard siding, board and batten, or shingles. Units had separate entries with simple porches. Yesler Terrace was designed in a low-density layout - each unit had its own yard, and community open space dotted the development.

¹⁷⁰ "Yesler Terrace - Landmark Nomination Application." 2010. Seattle.

¹⁷¹ Yesler Terrace nomination, 18

¹⁷² Ibid. 23



Figure 5.5 Yesler Terrace at the time of its construction in the 1940s (Source: Paul Dorpat)

Yesler Terrace, completed in 1942, was the first project developed by the newly created Seattle Housing Authority (SHA). It was also the first low-income housing development in Washington State.¹⁷³ SHA director Jesse Epstein had a strong and clear vision of quality public housing that could give families “an opportunity to improve their economic status and the incentive someday to have a home of their own.”¹⁷⁴ Epstein and his SHA board carefully sited the location of the development several blocks from King County’s Harborview Hospital based on specific criteria: its high percentage of substandard housing¹⁷⁵, and its location high atop a hill with views of Mt. Rainier, Elliott Bay, and the Olympic Mountains.¹⁷⁶ This careful consideration to choose a pleasant and attractive location for a public housing project was rare then (and still is), and Epstein was celebrated by local civic groups. Upon its completion, the

¹⁷³ Ibid., 14

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.,

¹⁷⁵ The area that was to become Yesler Terrace may have had substandard housing, but it was also home to a thriving Japanese-American community - an estimated 395 businesses, residences, and institutions, all of which were demolished and removed. Most of this population were non-citizens, and as a result were not resettled within the project. (15-16).

¹⁷⁶ Yesler Terrace nomination, 14

development included private yards, central courtyards and a playfield, views, a community building, a gymnasium, a childcare center, and a steam plant that provided central hot water heating.¹⁷⁷

Yesler Terrace is also significant because it was the first racially-integrated housing development in the country.¹⁷⁸ Epstein chose not to legally segregate Yesler Terrace, and the United States Housing Authority did not oppose this decision, even though their housing developments at the time were for white, low-income residents, and those that were not, were segregated. Epstein's "revolutionary" project envisioned "coloreds and whites [living] side by side".¹⁷⁹ Because the housing development was located on Yesler Hill with sweeping views of Seattle's harbor, the location and quality of the developments were a vast improvement upon the dilapidated and deteriorating Victorian homes and craftsman cottages that housed much of Seattle's Southside poor in the first half of the 20th century.¹⁸⁰

This decision did not come without critique among members of Seattle's Black community. Before the project's completion, Epstein spoke at a public meeting to over 1,000 people at an African American church about the development of the racial policy. There was disagreement among members of the Black community whether the developments should be segregated. Although Epstein publicly shied away from the use of a quota for African American occupancy, his approach to facilitating interracial adjustment including limiting Black residency to 20 percent, as well as a 25 percent limit to welfare recipients. This angered some members of the Black community, as they felt that Epstein's policies further limited their access to badly needed social services for the sake of "social engineering".¹⁸¹

Yesler Terrace's built environment has experienced significant change since its completion in the 1940's. The construction of the I5 freeway required the demolition of 28 of the original buildings with an estimated loss of 256 units and modifications that reduced the sizes of five other buildings.¹⁸² Additional buildings and units were removed to make room for the construction of a community center in 2003.¹⁸³ The Yesler Terrace Landmark Nomination provides further detail about loss of original structures and integrity, as buildings were altered over time as needed.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 15

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 15

¹⁷⁹ Taylor, 169

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.,

¹⁸¹ Ibid.,

¹⁸² Yesler Terrace nomination, 38

¹⁸³ Ibid.,

Landmark Nomination

In June 2010, BOLA Architecture and Planning submitted a landmark nomination report for the Yesler Terrace housing complex at the request of its property owner, the Seattle Housing Authority.¹⁸⁴ The most recent nomination hearing was held by the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board (LPB) in August 2010 for Yesler Terrace and the Kenyon Apartments, which were not original to the Yesler development, but were acquired by the SHA in 1977 for use as an office building housing social and medical service agencies serving low-income residents in the surrounding Yesler Terrace development and First Hill neighborhood.¹⁸⁵ From review of the LPB nomination hearing minutes, it appears that SHA had commissioned this landmark nomination in order to demonstrate Yesler Terrace's ineligibility for landmark status due to issues of historic integrity.

In Favor of Landmark Designation

Two community members gave public comments in support of the landmark nomination, highlighting Yesler Terrace's social importance as "a unique experiment to serve families with children", and as a place for "first generation immigrants and the poor" to use "as a way up and out".¹⁸⁶ Also noted was the sensitivity in design that gave people "light, air, privacy and views" that still existed.¹⁸⁷ In the relatively brief discussion around the question of Yesler Terrace's nomination, eight out of ten board members expressed a strong concern about the development's issues with integrity. Many board members acknowledged the historical significance, but couldn't disassociate it from the loss of historic integrity. Several board members stated that the loss of historic integrity meant that the development was no longer able to convey its significance, despite the fact that Yesler Terrace's significance was never attributed to its architectural merit, even at the time it was built. Board members also expressed that it would be difficult to argue for controlling anything other than the Steam Plant, also because of the loss of integrity. Two board members acknowledged the integrity issues, but argued that the majority of the development's character is attributable to the planning - the thought given to access to light and air - as opposed to the buildings, which were never meant to be high quality. One board member questioned if there was a way to retain key issues of the Terrace that still conveyed this significant planning history. Ultimately, the nomination was rejected in a vote of 6:4 (no board members abstained).

¹⁸⁴ It had been determined that the development was ineligible for National Register of Historic Places because of integrity issues, but it had been placed on the Washington Heritage Register in 1980 based on the 1979 NRHP nomination).

¹⁸⁵ Yesler Terrace nomination, 25

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 18

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.,

Opposed to Nomination

A representative from SHA begins the presentation by acknowledging Yesler Terrace's important social significance as the first racially integrated public housing development in the country, but that it regardless "does not meet the threshold for landmark status."¹⁸⁸ A representative from BOLA architecture presents the historic and context of the development, and describes the changes made to the buildings over time. She makes the claim that the current development "no longer embodies the original character and original meaning" due to the site's physical changes. The Yesler Terrace Steam Plant is given exception for its "strong architectural character" and its unique form - "it is not wood nor is it residential."¹⁸⁹ She concludes her presentation by noting the overall loss of integrity at Yesler Terrace.

The social and cultural history that is represented in the original site and property of Yesler Terrace goes beyond a loss of architectural integrity/physical changes its experienced throughout its existence. Yesler Terrace has a multi-cultural history, and has been home to many members of Seattle's ethnic minorities, including many of the City's Black residents. In 1949, shortly after its opening, 14 percent of Yesler Terrace's residents were African American;¹⁹⁰ in the first decade of the 21st century, around 80 percent of Yesler Terrace's residents were non-white, including large numbers of immigrants¹⁹¹ from Africa and Asia. This history is complicated, and at times painful. Residents acknowledge that the neighborhood that developed within Yesler Terrace has had its share of crime and dilapidated housing,¹⁹² but they also acknowledge the shared sense of community.¹⁹³ The location of the development and the nature of the low-rise, individual apartment units each with its own yard created a unique environment among more traditional high-rise, high-density public housing developments seen around the country - a model that for many residents has been successful.¹⁹⁴ Despite the changes to original buildings, the layout and design of pre-development Yesler Terrace conveyed an important part of Seattle's social and cultural history that was still alive among the diverse communities that called it home. Despite its architectural features that had changed since its construction, the massing, location, and layout of the development was the same, and this is what contributes to its ability to convey significance. In addition, the original development

¹⁸⁸ "Yesler Terrace Nomination Minutes." 2010. Seattle.

¹⁸⁹ Yesler Terrace nomination, 17

¹⁹⁰ Caldbick, John. 2014. "Seattle Housing Authority." History Link. <http://www.historylink.org/File/10761>.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Young, Bob. 2015. "Seattle's Yesler Terrace Faces the Future." The Seattle Times, February 24.

¹⁹³ Broom, Jack. 2008. "Collecting Fond Memories of Seattle's Yesler Terrace." The Seattle Times, July 17.

¹⁹⁴ Oluo, Ijeoma. 2015. "What Seattle Is Losing in Yesler Terrace Redevelopment." The Seattle Globalist. <http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2015/05/21/yesler-terrace-redevelopment-seattle-housing-siff-hagereseb/37378>.

preserved a community that was treasured by many of its residents – an intangible value that will most likely be lost in the new development.

Yesler Terrace today



Figure 5.6 10th and Yesler looking west (Source: Author)

WILLIAM GROSE HOUSE

William Grose (sometimes spelled Gross or Groce), as discussed briefly in Chapter 3 of this thesis, was a prominent African American landowner, pioneer, and community leader during the late 19th century and early 20th century in Seattle. Grose was born in Washington D.C. in 1835, the son of a free Black restaurant owner.¹⁹⁵ He arrived in Seattle in 1861, followed shortly by his wife Sarah and their two children. Upon settling in Seattle, Grose opened a restaurant and a hotel called Our House on Seattle's waterfront, to which he later added a barbershop. When Our House burnt down in the Seattle Fire of 1889, Grose moved out to the 12 acres of land near 23rd and Madison, which he had purchased from Henry Yesler in 1882.¹⁹⁶ By 1900, the area surrounding Grose's farm - now the East Madison neighborhood - had the largest concentration of Black homeowners in the city, and fostered a nascent African American middle class in the area that would become the Central District.¹⁹⁷

The house that is attributed to William Grose is located at 1733 24th Ave, just south of the intersection of E Madison St and 23rd Ave. According to King County Residential Parcel data, 1733 24th Ave was built in 1901, but the Department of Neighborhoods Seattle Historic Sites data puts the construction date much earlier, in 1883. The house is a simple, vernacular two-story 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom house with wood siding and a gable front form with a full height gable projection to the north. It was originally constructed with a full-width Victorian-style front porch. The house sits 12-15 feet above the street level, flanked by a slightly more ornate house of a similar style to the north, which was also a Grose family house.¹⁹⁸ A larger, more modern condominium development sits to the south. The house faces an open green space, Homer Harris Park, directly across 24th Ave. According to Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Historical Sites record, the house originally faced north, which did not align with the street grid layout in the first decade of the 1900s.¹⁹⁹ At some point prior to 1910, the house was moved to face east and 24th Ave.²⁰⁰ Aside from its association with an important figure in Seattle's early history, the house also serves to enhance our knowledge about earlier residential development in Seattle and the Central District specifically.

¹⁹⁵ Taylor, 16

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 35

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.,

¹⁹⁸ "Seattle Historical Sites Search Result - 1733 24th Ave." 2017. City of Seattle. Accessed June 12.

<https://web6.seattle.gov/DPD/HistoricalSite/QueryResult.aspx?ID=394727438>.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.,

²⁰⁰ Ibid.,

The house has undergone numerous changes to the exterior, including shingle siding in the 1972 King County Property Record.²⁰¹ The house appears to have vinyl siding today. A 1973 property record lists interior features such as plaster walls, hardwood floors, fir trim, and an enclosed back porch – it does not indicate if these features are original to the house. The record also mentions a 192-square foot garage with dirt floors, which has since been removed. The same record notes that the house was remodeled in 1931, though there is not further information regarding the details of the changes during the remodel. A photo from Esther Mumford’s book shows the house in 1980 to have a front porch stoop covered with a Tudor-esque porch roof that is visible in 1972 and 1973 Property records, and remains on the house today. The full-width porch was removed in the 1980 and 1991 photograph, but a newer, raised porch has been added and remains on the house today. Noticeable differences in house structure from the circa-1901 photograph show the addition of a 3rd window in the front 1st-story bank of windows, a change in the dimensions of the 2nd-story windows, changes to the roof corners, and the slight offsetting of the front door inward from the corner of the house. It is unknown whether these changes were made during the 1931 remodel.²⁰²



Figure 5.7 Grose house in 1893 (Source: Esther Mumford)

²⁰¹ Boyd, Evan. 2016. “Grose House Nomination.”

²⁰² Boyd, 1



Figure 5.8 Grose house in 1980 (Source: Esther Mumford)



Figure 5.9 Grose house in 1991 (Source: City of Seattle)



Figure 5.10 Grose house in 2017 (Source: Author)

William Grose's house has not yet been landmarked, although a landmark nomination was written in 2016 has since been passed on to the Black Heritage Society of Washington State to submit to the Landmark Preservation Board.²⁰³ For a property associated with a figure as significant to Seattle's early history as William Grose, it is in some ways surprising that the house has not yet gone through the landmark designation process. As illustrated in Chapter 4, properties associated with White social and political figures of, some could argue lesser importance to Seattle's early history, have been nominated and successfully designated. One major difference is that many of the properties associated with an important person are also examples high-style architecture. One exception is the James W. Washington home and studio A, which is not nominated for its architectural significance. The difference between the two may be attributed simply to the fact that landmark nominations are researched and submitted voluntarily, and thus they require the support of an individual or group who has the time and the resources to properly advocate for the site. In the case of the Grose house, the nomination application was written by a University of Washington graduate student at the suggestion of a professor for a class assignment.

²⁰³ Email correspondence with Holly Taylor, May 13, 2017.

This can be a good way for a landmark nomination to be written, as the student has access to a multitude of resources for historic research, and has an academic impetus to do good work.

Despite changes to the exterior, much of the original form of the house remains intact. However, as Seattle's current designation process is structured, the integrity issues from alterations to the exterior would most likely present problems for the property in the landmarking process. As evidenced in the cases of Yesler Terrace and Liberty Bank, changes to all architectural features, aesthetic or structural, can be interpreted as a barrier for the building to convey its significance. For a site whose significance lies primarily in its cultural and social value, what aspects of integrity are most important to consider? Thus far, neither the National Register or the Seattle Historic Preservation ordinance make any distinction between sites nominated for their cultural significance or for their architectural significance regarding which aspects of historic integrity should be prioritized. For a site like the William Grose house, it could be argued that changes to exterior features like windows, porches, or ornamental details should have little effect on the property's ability to convey its significance as a turn of the century vernacular residence that was home to an important figure in Seattle's history. Among the seven aspects of integrity,²⁰⁴ the most important in this case are integrity of location, setting, association, and potentially feeling. It is important that the house hasn't been moved from its original location, as its location at 24th near Madison was the site of Grose's 12-acre farm. This also applies to association - the site's location is associated with the Central District's beginnings and the site of a burgeoning African American community. While setting is similar to location, the NPS clarifies that setting refers to the *character* of the place in which the property played its historical role (emphasis original).²⁰⁵ Although original architectural features have been removed or altered, enough base material remains on the house that refers to its original design. Changes in design, materials, and workmanship do not necessarily detract from the feeling or the setting of the site. If the house can still convey its simple, vernacular style, and hasn't been altered by extraneous or modern additions, it can still successfully reference its association and era of significance.

²⁰⁴ location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association

²⁰⁵ Parker, Patricia L., and Thomas F. King. 1998. "National Register Bulletin 38: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties." National Register. Vol. 38.

BLACK PANTHER PARTY HEADQUARTERS

As discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis, the Central District has been the hub of Black history, culture in Seattle, and during the 1960s and 1970s, the neighborhood was the center of Black civil rights activism and the Seattle's chapter of the Black Panther Party. Today, the Central District does not have many physical or visible reminders of the Black Panther movement, but a recent publication has revealed the locations of three former Black Panther meeting sites in the Central District that could serve as sites of interpretation of an important and controversial piece of Black history in Seattle.

The Black Panther Party for Self Defense was founded in 1966 in the wake of the assassination of Malcom X, the Watts riots of 1965, and an awareness of continued economic and social inequality for Black Americans. The party's original purpose was to patrol neighborhoods and protect African Americans from police brutality²⁰⁶. The Seattle chapter of the Black Panther Party was formed in the spring of 1968, and although the membership was never large, the Party made a major impact on the region, and were both feared and respected throughout the Central District.²⁰⁷ The Party originally organized themselves to monitor police activities and combat harassment in the CD, but they organized a range of activities that demonstrated their concerns for the Black community that extended beyond confrontation with the local police.²⁰⁸ The Party ran candidates for District legislative seats in 1968 not necessarily to win, but "to educate the Black community on their platform of full employment, decent housing, education for Black people, military exemption for Black males, and justice for all."²⁰⁹ The Seattle Panthers established a free medical clinic, prison visitation programs, and a free breakfast program for impoverished children. They also participated in dialogue with Asian American business groups in the CD through the Seattle chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League.²¹⁰ Through the development of both community-building programs and violent protest, the Seattle Panther Party demonstrated its commitment to racial justice for Black Americans during its active years in the 1960s and 70s, and much of that important history can only be interpreted within the Central District.

Although Seattle's Panther Party is no longer an active group, local efforts are being made to document Seattle's Panther history. The University of Washington's Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project

²⁰⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Black-Panther-Party>

²⁰⁷ <http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/BPP.htm>

²⁰⁸ Taylor, 221

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

has collected oral histories, rare photographs, historic documents, and personal biographies connected to Seattle Black Panther history and memory. Additionally, Ghosts of Seattle Past is local project that aims to commemorate Seattle's lost places in a rapidly changing city. The project published an anthology in spring 2017 of storytelling and cartography to preserve the venues, restaurants, shops and institutions that have been lost in Seattle's booming development. Both projects have documented in some way the locations of three Black Panther offices and headquarters in the Central District that were active during the height of the Civil Rights in Seattle. The locations of the first two offices are clearly identified, while only the intersection of the third office is identified.

The first Black Panther Party office was located at 1127 34th Ave, (See Figure 5.11) and the building still exists today. The building is a one-story, wood frame building built in 1900, and still retains much of the same massing as it did when in use by the Panther party (See Figure 5.12). According to Elmer Dixon, a founding member of the Seattle Panther Party who shares his story with the Ghosts of Seattle Past project, that location in Madrona was still part of the Black community in 1968 when they opened the office. The building's ground floor positioning acted as a storefront for the Party, and the Party grew to around 300-400 members.²¹¹ This location was only active from 1968-1969 – the office was invaded by Police on several occasions, and in December 1969, the Party had to move locations for safety concerns.

²¹¹ Jackson, Anisa, and Elmer Dixon. 2017. "Ghosts of Seattle Past, an Exclusive Excerpt: Seattle Black Panther Party Headquarters." *The Stranger*. <http://www.thestranger.com/books/2017/04/12/25068568/ghosts-of-seattle-past-an-exclusive-excerpt-seattle-Black-panther-party-headquarters>.



Figure 5.11 1127 34th Ave in the 1960s (Source: University of Washington)



Figure 5.12 1127 34th Ave, current day (Source: Google maps)

The second Party headquarters was located in a duplex at the corner of 20th and Spruce (see Figure 5.13). The building was well-positioned by Garfield High School (where several of the founding Panther members had attended high school), and nearby was one of the first Black-owned grocery stores in the CD²¹², which later became the Odessa Brown Children's Clinic (now at 21st and Yesler). The Party occupied both levels of the duplex, and made modifications to the building that allowed for more protection if necessary. For example, a hole was cut between the first and second floors to serve as a trapdoor that could be used to pass weapons from the second floor to the first in the event of a raid.²¹³ The Party did a lot of community organizing from that location – they started the free medical clinic, ran five free breakfast programs, a busing to prison program, and worked to establish a free food bank. The building itself also housed a free clothing center and Saturday classes.²¹⁴ In 1970, Panther satellite chapters were ordered to move to Oakland, and the Seattle Panther Party moved out of the location on 20th and Spruce. The building was almost immediately torn down following the Party's evacuation, and Elmer Dixon posits that this was because “the police did not want our headquarters to stand as a symbol of our defiance.”²¹⁵ A piece of a mural that surrounded the building, referred to as The People's Wall, still exists at the site (Figure 5.14).

²¹² Jackson (2017).

²¹³ Ibid.,

²¹⁴ “Seattle Black Panther Party Headquarters.” 2017. Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project. Accessed June 13. http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/BPP_map.htm.

²¹⁵ Jackson (2017).



Figure 5.13 173 20th Ave, 1970 (Source: University of Washington)



Figure 34 173 20th Ave, current day (Source: Author)

The exact address the third Party headquarters has not been specified by either the University of Washington or the Ghosts of Seattle project, but it was located down the street from the second office, at 19th and Spruce. This location was the longest operating headquarters. It was the site of a medical clinic run by the Party that was in operation until 1982 – six years after the Seattle chapter broke away from the national chapter. According to Elmer Dixon, the building still stands at 19th and Spruce.

These Black Panther Party headquarters are significant physical sites that can serve to interpret social history that is important not only to Seattle’s Black history, but to a larger national civil rights history. One building has already disappeared, and the two remaining are vulnerable to neighborhood development pressures given their current low quality condition and vernacular architectural style.

DISCUSSION

Together, these site - four residential buildings and two commercial buildings, three lost and three remaining- each represent an important piece of Seattle's Black history in the Central District that illustrate how historic integrity often triumphs over historic significance in the process of recognizing and preserving vernacular cultural built heritage associated with Black and African American communities. These sites have been lost and/or unrecognized in part because of their lack of historic integrity, their unknown or under-acknowledged association with significant Black culture and history, or a combination of the two. The new development on the sites that have been lost – Liberty Bank, Yesler Terrace, and the second Black Panther headquarters – are grappling with questions of how to appropriately and adequately honor and memorialize the important histories that remain. The sites that have gone unrecognized – William Grose's house and all three Black Panther sites – are vulnerable to the neighborhood's rapid development patterns, and are dealing with issues of landmarking and official recognition in order to further protect the sites.

Unfortunately, the building that housed the second Panther headquarters at 20th and Spruce no longer exists, as it was demolished in the 1970s. However, a section of the People's Wall that once surrounded the house on both the north and east sides still exists in part (only the east side) and can be seen on 20th Ave just south of Spruce. The current Seattle Chapter Black Panther Party 2018 Conference Committee is considering nominating the Wall for landmark status to further protect it.²¹⁶

One might wonder if a site of commemoration or memorialization is enough to properly recognize and interpret significant cultural history associated with minority communities. After the demolition of the original Liberty Bank building, Capitol Hill housing (CHH) sought to form partnerships with advocates for the preservation of the Liberty Bank and Black community leaders in the Central District in order to create a new development that reflects the history, spirit, and vibrancy of the Central District. Community partners include Africatown, The Black Community Impact Alliance, and Centerstone. Among many of the project's stated commitments, the project has made a commitment to honor the legacy of the Liberty Bank. CHH convened an advisory board including daughters of the original founders, a former executive director of the bank, long time community members, leaders in the Central Area and religious leadership to advise on how to tell the story of Liberty Bank through art, historic documents, and

²¹⁶ Email correspondence with Stephanie Johnson-Tolliver, May 11, 2017

architecture.²¹⁷ The advisory board published their recommendation in May 2015. The 8-page report makes nine (9) design and architectural recommendations to honor Liberty Bank’s legacy.²¹⁸ The project will name the building “The Liberty Bank Building”, and will create a logo that will be placed in a highly visible location on the building’s façade. The exterior façade will also incorporate reused honey-brick veneer saved from the original building, as well as a commemorative corner plaque detailing the Bank’s history and significance. Interior projects will include framed historic photos, a narrative mural, and interpretive signage in the building’s courtyard. Additionally, the original bank vault door will be used as an art piece in the lobby, and original safety deposit box doors will be used as unit numbers at the entry of each apartment unit. The project will break ground on June 19, 2017.

Undoubtedly, it is critically important that the developers are partnering with local community leaders in the CD and soliciting their input on so much of the building’s design. This is a large step in the right direction, and a fact that should not be overlooked. However, it is also important to recognize that at least one individual on the advisory board and one leader among the partnership organizations were also among the individuals who spoke out in support of preserving the Liberty Bank at the Landmark Preservation Board nomination and designation meetings.²¹⁹ Without interviewing these individuals directly, this connection might suggest that the current development project was not the preferred outcome for some Black community members, and once Liberty Bank was demolished, influential members of the Black community leadership needed to find alternative ways to participate in an inevitable process, lest their input be neglected altogether. Could it have been a possibility to save the Liberty Bank building and incorporate it into a new affordable housing project? An important continuation of this research could include interviewing longstanding African American community members in the CD to understand how important the retention of the physical site was as opposed to commemorating it now that it has been lost.

Yesler Terrace is experiencing a similar fate. The SHA is currently working to redevelop a new high density, mixed-use, mixed-income version of Yesler Terrace. The new development will include 5,000 units of new housing, 1,800 of which will be subsidized units for low to moderate-income residents.²²⁰ The SHA brochure on the project states that the new project will “honor the neighborhood’s history and

²¹⁷ “About Us – Liberty Bank Building.” 2017. The Liberty Bank Building Project. Accessed June 13. <http://libertybankbuilding.org/the-project-partners/>.

²¹⁸ Liberty Bank Advisory Board. 2015. “Project Report and Architectural Program Recommendations.” Seattle.

²¹⁹ Wyking Garrett (Africatown leadership) and Michelle Purnell-Hepburn (advisory board member)

²²⁰ “Redevelopment of Yesler Terrace.” 2017. Seattle Housing Authority. Accessed June 12. <https://www.seattlehousing.org/about-us/redevelopment/redevelopment-of-yesler-terrace>.

cultural richness while creating safe, healthy and sustainable affordable housing, attractive new parks and open spaces, increased transportation options and enhanced economic opportunities.”²²¹ Despite this promise, newspaper articles have captured residents’ concern about the possible displacement that will occur once the development is finished. Affluent residents will outnumber lower-income residents - 3,200 market rate units to 1,800 low-income units - and some estimates project Yesler Terrace as Seattle’s densest neighborhood when all is finished - 6,875 people will live in the neighborhood that only 1,200 called home when construction started in 2013.²²² Unlike Liberty Bank, Yesler Terrace is not widely considered an important cultural institution, so the project is not attempting to honor or memorialize architectural or historical aspects of the old site. However, Yesler Terrace holds important social significance to many of Seattle’s minority communities who called the development home, Black residents among them. The new development is attempting to preserve cultures and communities that were formed around the original housing project, but something so intangible is not easily replicated.

The first Panther headquarters building, although still standing, is considered of low quality per King County and is in a section of the Central District that will be affected by proposed upzones. The building, located near the intersection of 34th and Union, is currently zoned for NC1-30, and draft MHA zoning for that area would increase heights by 10 feet, to NC1-40. With the affordable housing requirements that are a part of MHA, it is very possible that this small, low-quality vernacular building could soon be replaced with a new mixed-use development. Although the exact location of the third building used for Party headquarters has not been specified in sources available for this thesis, an examination of the building age around the intersection of 19th and Spruce illustrates that there is already some newer development cropping up among a selection of older building stock. Additionally, because 19th and Spruce is located within the 23rd Union-Jackson urban village, this area is more vulnerable to new development than areas outside of urban villages. Because these sites still exist much as they did when the Seattle Panther Party used them as headquarters, there still exists the opportunity to interpret Black Panther history in and around these sites.

William Grose’s house is similarly vulnerable to potential encroaching development, because the area where it is located has been identified as an area to increase zoning from LR2 to LR3 as part of MHA draft zoning. This would increase height requirements from 30’ to 40’, and generally encourage more moderate-scale multi-family development. As previously mentioned, however, a landmark nomination

²²¹ SHA brochure: Renewing Yesler’s Promise

²²² “Yesler Terrace: Soon to Be Seattle’s Densest Neighborhood.” 2016. Puget Sound Business Journal. <http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2016/05/06/yesler-terrace-soon-to-be-seattles-densest.html>.

has been written for the Grose house and only awaits to be pushed the nomination process. Aside from the previously discussed potential issues with historic integrity, the current owners of the Grose house have not yet been contacted to be a part of the landmarking process.²²³ Although Seattle's landmarking process does not require private homeowners' permission, it is considered good practice to work with private homeowners to landmark a property, unless impending demolition requires an emergency nomination or designation by another party. In general, the designation of private residences can be difficult, especially if the significance of the private residence isn't widely known or accepted. Landmarking is accompanied by design and structural controls that some homeowners feel restricts their rights to make changes to their property. This could pose problems for residential homes that have significant associations with minority cultural history that isn't widely known or accepted.

The next and final chapter reflects on overall lessons learned, and suggests ways to rethink the evaluation of historic integrity and historic significance on both national and local levels.

²²³ As of May 2017

Chapter 6. REFLECTIONS

The field and practice of historic preservation has a lot of ground to cover to create a more diverse and representative landscape of built cultural heritage in the United States. As demonstrated in the body of this thesis, the prioritization of historic integrity over historic significance plays a major role in limiting the number of sites associated with minority cultures that are recognized nationally or locally in Seattle. This is because, as explored in the Literature Review, sites that most often retain their historic integrity are monumental or high-style buildings, constructed with expensive and durable materials. These sites are primarily associated with white, European cultures. Conversely, many sites associated with minority communities and cultures are vernacular in nature, and are made of affordable and available materials that are not built to last. These buildings are often considered to have lost much of their historic integrity when evaluated. This thesis has proven that such is also the case for built cultural heritage associated with Black and African American cultures in Seattle's Central District. While this will take time and a concerted effort at all levels, I believe that there are ways in which to rethink how local and national preservation organizations think about the evaluation of built heritage that could contribute to preserving culturally significant cultural heritage associated with minority communities.

Nationally, efforts could be made to expand or diversify ways of evaluating and interpreting historic integrity, particularly for sites associated with minority communities. Currently, all local historic preservation criteria for evaluation are taken from the National Register criteria and are either copied verbatim, or are expanded upon. The National Register identifies seven aspects of criteria (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association), and requires that the retention of "specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to convey its significance."²²⁴ The National Register also says that determining which of these aspects are most important to a property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant,²²⁵ however it does not provide any further clarifications as to how to determine which aspects of integrity are most important to a property.

As discussed in the William Grose house vignette in Chapter 5, I believe that there are several aspects of integrity that are more important to a site that is important for reasons of cultural significance. Integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association are all paramount for a building to be able to convey its

²²⁴ "National Register Evaluation Criteria." 2017. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Accessed June 11. <http://www.achp.gov/nrcriteria.html>.

²²⁵ Ibid.,

significance. Changes in design, materials, or even workmanship do not necessarily prevent a culturally significant building from conveying its significance in a way that they would for a building that is significant for architecturally significant reasons. To return to the example of the William Grose house – although the house has undergone changes to its façade, it has not been relocated, so it can still be used to interpret history about late 20th century residential building patterns. Setting is similar – the neighborhood is still residential (as it was in the early 20th century), and the view shed has been protected directly across the street, so the view from the house has been preserved. The house has not experienced any additional development, so the feeling has remained largely intact (although this can be very subjective). Much like feeling, association is another subjective aspect of integrity, and is often tied to the existence of other aspects of integrity. The distinction between aspects of integrity that are important to architecturally significant buildings as opposed to culturally significant buildings could be articulated in National Register criteria in order to aid state and local preservation boards to evaluate integrity on a more contextual basis.

This same consideration can and should be made locally in Seattle when evaluating properties for Seattle Landmark designation. Currently, one local group by the name of ‘Beyond Integrity’ is working to challenge the importance place on historic integrity. Beyond Integrity is a working group associated with 4Culture, focused on addressing issues of equity in the field of historic preservation. The group was formed in the Fall of 2014, and is comprised of preservation professionals and advocates who are concerned that “standard historic preservation methods don’t always support saving places that are valued in their communities.”²²⁶ Beyond Integrity explores many of the issues raised in this thesis, although I did not learn of their group until I had already started my research. The group has identified three goals:

- Documenting inequity in local historic preservation practices
- Engaging local decision-makers and community on issues of equity through training opportunities
- Fostering a stronger voice for the public in historic preservation process

In Summer 2017, Beyond Integrity will fund an internship for the second year in a row that will closely examine the number of Landmarks that are associated with underrepresented communities, cases of landmark nominations rejected for issues of integrity, and sites associated with underrepresented communities that are thus far unrecognized. The work done by Beyond Integrity and the internship that they sponsor could collect enough convincing data supporting the group’s cause to potentially influence local preservation legislation to approach

²²⁶ Presentation by Dana Phelan, May 2, 2016.

issues of historic integrity of a more flexible, case by case basis, especially when dealing with heritage associated with minority communities.

Local efforts should be made to understand the full range of properties associated with minority and non-dominant cultural groups. Besides the work of Beyond Integrity's internship, a local Central District organization associated with the Historic Central Area Arts and Culture District, or HAACD is currently doing this work for sites associated with Black culture and heritage. As mentioned in Chapter 3 of this thesis, the Historic Central Area Arts and Culture District (HCAACD) was formed in December 2015 as Seattle's second Arts and Culture District. The Arts and Culture District designation gives community groups who are working to develop the Arts and Culture District a Placemaking Toolkit that is designed to support artists, art spaces, and neighborhoods.²²⁷ Among the many tools included in the toolkit, several aim to develop cultural preservation and landmarking that can help the District creatively and uniquely represent and interpret its history. Using this toolkit, community members who had originally proposed the Central District as an Arts and Culture District organized themselves in 2016 and formed an Executive Committee consisting of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chairs of six standing committees to organize the HCAACD efforts. The six committees are: Strategic Planning, Marketing, Policy and Advocacy, Community Audit, Placemaking, and Membership.²²⁸

The Community Audit committee is responsible for developing the list of heritage sites that are included in this map. Initially, 15-16 arts and cultural groups came together to form the committee, and as of February 2017, 10 were solidly committed.²²⁹ Their stated purpose is to "identify arts and heritage assets that are within the geographic boundaries of the Central Area."²³⁰ The Committee's main goal is to create an inventory or register of these "heritage sites and art that are within the Central Area boundary to increase the sense of place with mindful consideration for properties representative of the historic presence of Black residents and businesses."²³¹ The committee intends that the inventory will be an accessible public register. The Committee defines an asset as "a cultural space whose primary value benefits the legacy, preservation and sense of place that is vital to Central Area history."²³² As of May

²²⁷ "Arts and Cultural Districts." 2017. City of Seattle Office of Arts and Culture

²²⁸ Email correspondence with Stephanie Johnson-Tolliver, May 11, 2017

²²⁹ Phone call with Stephanie Johnson-Tolliver, February 21, 2017

²³⁰ HCAACD Community Audit Committee, Statement of Purpose

²³¹ HCAACD Community Audit Community, Overview document

²³² HCAACD Community Audit Committee, definition of asset

2017, the Audit Committee has identified a mission, goals, outcomes, and strategies toward creating a heritage inventory. They have compiled lists of cultural heritage sites from existing city resources that served as the basis for the Cultural Heritage Resources map included in this thesis. The Audit Committee is still working on crafting the criteria that would create their own list of significant heritage.

It is important that we support and encourage more of this type of community-led preservation, or ‘heritage by appropriation’ as defined in Chapter 4. While HCAACD is committed to its goals and mission, the committee is entirely volunteer-based, which means that most if not all members have other commitments that require much of their full-time attention. Support for these efforts can come in the form of financial funding, and it can come in the form of professional consulting. As discussed in Chapter 4, 4Culture wants to offer both funding and technical assistance for underrepresented community groups who want to preserve their heritage. 4Culture aids with putting together landmark nominations, specifically helping with documentation, historical surveys, and non-brick and mortar work. 4Culture is sensitive to the fact that for some groups or individuals, the obstacle is not only having money to do the nomination, but also being matched with someone who has the expertise to go through the process. In addition, the Community4Culture funding program is an annual funding program that deals with equity issues, and specifically seeks to fund groups/individuals who historically have not been funded by 4Culture. The funds for this program are not large, but they attempt to fill the gap that is left by their larger funding programs that only fund sites that are already designated landmarks.

These local efforts are important, but more can be done to encourage a more widespread reassessment of the ways in which we evaluate cultural heritage associated with minority cultures. The findings in this thesis show that we are prioritizing historic integrity over historic significance when we evaluate sites associated with Black history and heritage. If continued, this will a) leave us with fewer and fewer sites through which to interpret Seattle’s Black history and culture, and b) contribute to the continued displacement of Black communities in the Central District. Moving forward, we need to prioritize community-identified definitions of significance and allow for more flexible interpretations of historic integrity to preserve a more representative landscape of built cultural heritage.

APPENDIX A

Calculations of total percentage ethnic heritage in 2004 and 2017

Type of Heritage	2004 (Kaufman data)	2017 (Author's data)
Black	1,300	1,894
Asian	67	92
Hispanic	90	119
Total Ethnic	3,000	4,347
Total in NRHP	>77,000	95,214
Total Ethnic percentage	1.89%	2.21%

APPENDIX B

Data from Seattle landmark designation forms

Seattle Landmark	Address	Date Built	Des. Date	Designation Criteria	Specified architectural style	Nomination - Assoc. w Black History or Culture?	Current Site - Assoc. w Black History or Culture?	On NR?
Langston Hughes Cultural Arts Center	104 17th Ave S	1909-1915	1980	D, E, F	Neo-Classical/Byzantine	No	Yes	No
Black Manufacturing Building	1130 Rainier Ave S	1914	1987	A, C	Warehouse	No	No	No
Victorian House	1414 S Washington	N/A	N/A	N/A	Italianate	No	No	No
Seattle Buddhist Church	1427 S Main St	1941	1975	A, C, E	Vernacular	No	No	No
Brehm Bros House #1	219 36th Ave E	1909	1979	D, E	N/A	No	No	No
Brehm Bros House #2	221 36th Ave E	1909	1979	D, E	N/A	No	No	No
James W Washington Jr., House & Studio	1816 26th Ave	1918	1991	B, C	Arts and Crafts	Yes	Yes	No
Immaculate Conception Church	820 18th Ave	1904	1973	*	Romanesque	No	No	No
Twenty-Third Ave Houses Group	812-828 23rd Ave	1892-3	1978	C, D, F	Carpenter Gothic	No	No	No
Seattle Fire Station #6	101 23rd Ave S	1932	2005	D, E, F	Art Deco	No	No	No
Old Fire Station #23	722 18th Ave	N/A	1978	N/A	N/A	No	Yes	Yes
Charles Bussell House	1630 36th Ave	1892	1978	B, D	Victorian	No	No	No
St. Joseph's Church	732 18th Ave E	1929	1980	C, D, E, F	Romanesque/Gothic	No	No	No
Epiphany Chapel	3719 E Denny Way	1911	1978	B, C, E, F	English Tudor	No	No	No
Myron Ogden House	702 35th Ave	1912-13	1978	B, C, D, E	Georgian	No	No	Yes
Judge Ronald House	421 30th Avenue S	1889	2013	B, D, F	Neo-Classical	No	No	Yes
Yesler Homes	103 23rd Ave	N/A	1997	D, F	N/A	No	No	No
Douglass-Truth Library	2300 E Yesler way	1914	2001	C, D, E, F	N/A	Yes	Yes	No
Providence Hospital 1910 Building	528 17th Ave	1883	2003	D, E, F	N/A	No	No	No
Garfield HS	400 23rd Ave	1923	2003	C, D, E, F	N/A	Yes	Yes	No
Seattle Japanese Language School	1414 S Weller St	1912-1929	2006	A, C	Vernacular	No	No	Yes
Coca Cola Building	1313 E Columbia St	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No	No
Temple de Hirsch	1500 E Union	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No	Yes
Yesler Steam Plant	120 8th Ave	1940s	2010	D, F	N/A	No	No	No
Washington Hall	153 14th Ave	1907	2009	C, D		Yes	Yes	Yes
Colman School**	2300 S Massachussetts St	1900	2005	C, D, F	Brick schoolhouse	Yes	Yes	No
First African Methodist Episcopal Church**	1522 14th Ave	1912	1980	C	Vernacular	Yes	Yes	No

KEY
*Immaculate Conception Church was designated in 1973 and its significance was classified as "historical, architectural, and cultural"
**Outside of identified CD boundary
Nomination does reflect association with Black culture
Nomination does not reflect association with Black culture
Non-dominant cultural resource

(Associated with Seattle landmark table)

Data from national register designation forms

NR Resource	Address	Date Built	Designation Date	Areas of Significance	Specified architectural style	Nomination - Assoc. w Black History or Culture?	Current Site - Assoc. w Black History or Culture?	Also a Seattle Landmark?
Temple de Hirsch	1511 E Pike St	1907	1984	Architecture; Religion	Neo-Classical	No	No	Yes
Fire Station No. 23	722 18th Ave	1908	1971	Art/Architecture; Other (Civic/Fire Dept history)	(not specified in application)	No	No	Yes
Galland, Caroline Kline, House	1605 17th Ave	1903	1980	Architecture; Social/Humanitarian	Georgian Revival	No	No	No
Ballinger, Richard A., House	1733 39th Ave	1902-1903	1976	Architecture; Politics/Government	Colonial Revival	No	No	No
Raymond-Ogden Mansion	702 35th Ave	1912-1913	1979	Architecture	Georgian Revival	No	No	Yes
Ronald Judge James T., House	421 30th Ave S	1889	1975	Political; Social/Humanitarian	Georgian Revival, Southern Plantation			Yes
Nihon Go Gakko	1414 S. Weller St	1913	1982	Education; Social/Humanitarian	Vernacular/Non high-style (not specified in application)	No	No	Yes
Washington Hall	153 14th Ave	1907				Yes	Yes	Yes

Key
Nomination does reflect association with Black culture
Non-dominant cultural resource

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