



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 220/21

MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting

City Hall

Remote Meeting

Wednesday May 5, 2021 - 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present

Dean Barnes

Roi Chang

Jordan Kiel

Kristen Johnson

John Rodezno

Harriet Wasserman

Staff

Sarah Sodt

Erin Doherty

Melinda Bloom

Absent

Russell Coney

Matt Inpanbutr

Chair Jordan Kiel called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

In-person attendance is currently prohibited per Washington State Governor's Proclamation No. 20-28.5. Meeting participation is limited to access by the WebEx Event link or the telephone call-in line provided on agenda.

ROLL CALL

050521.1

PUBLIC COMMENT

Elizabeth Wales, Fairfax resident spoke in support of nomination. She said it meets the standard as an identifiable, known and cool building; the pure Gothic Revival architectural style, which is rare in Seattle; and for architect James Eustace Blackwell. She said there are many intangibles – how it feels to live here; she noted the beautiful leaded glass and said that beauty creeps into daily life. She noted the beautiful details molded into the whole. She said to please nominate the exterior of the building. She said the building is an example of handsome architecture and understated beauty for housing the middle class. She said she resists the idea that middle class and low-income housing cannot be beautiful.

Ms. Wasserman joined the meeting during public comment.

050521.2 MEETING MINUTES

April 7, 2021 Tabled.

050521.3 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

050521.31 Rosen House

9017 Loyal Avenue NW

Proposed addition and site improvements

Sonya Schneider and Stuart Nagae, the property owners said they love the house and appreciate the craft and its sense of integrity. They have been working for two years on the best way to keep integrity of the house while adding more functional space. They call the house “The Captain” and want to do justice to it.

Tony Salas, Heliotrope Architects said the 5,000 square foot house was constructed in 1933; it has four bedrooms and three bathrooms and a tiny 8’ x 15’ kitchen that has been modified over the years. He said the house was built with care and craft and has been well-maintained. The proposed addition will have a light touch on the landmarked house. He said the only intervention to the exterior of the house is existing window will be punched through to create opening to new kitchen addition. He said the existing kitchen will be remodeled into a butler’s pantry and desk / work area. He explained the siting of the house on one of four lots and indicated how the placement of the addition would be situated on the south side onto existing tennis court space. He said the addition would engage the landscape better.

Mr. Salas noted the design matches the eave line of the existing house. The addition’s east facade will be heavily planted at the textured wall which will become a green wall, and the addition will have a green roof. He said the covered back porch post and beam was picked up and the rhythm extended to the addition overhang. He said the addition is quiet and matches the scale of the existing house; he noted heavy timber, cement floor and glass gasket. He said beautiful casework will be installed in butler’s pantry and replaces existing ceiling and paneling. He went over the material/finish palette.

David Berleth, landscape architect said the immediate area surrounding the addition will be an herb and flower cutting garden. He said the ‘central park’ space has a

large lawn, walkway and benches. He said the street frontage will be non-descript with native species. He said the north side looks like a wooded park in a natural woodland style and the existing landscape will remain as it is. He said the plant palette will create a soft and beautiful garden. He noted the textured bricks at sight walls, Ipe wood bench and brick retaining walls. He said the existing antique swing set will remain; he said he thought it was from the 1950s.

Mr. Rodezno asked about choice of brick and color on the addition.

Mr. Salas said he picked the brick and color palette from the existing house. He said the brick keeps within the color palette in darker tones. He said the proposed brick is not true clinker but looks more crafted and handmade.

Mr. Rodezno said he likes the existing chimney as a connector but said he thought the brick choice seemed odd and should match existing brick.

Ms. Chang said she appreciated the presentation and the many elevations provided helped her to better visualize. She said the addition seems less imposing than she initially thought it would be and asked about its visibility from street level.

Mr. Salas said the existing fence will remain. Via photos he indicated how the fence and plantings visually screen addition. He said the top of the addition will be visible, but it is fairly obscured.

Mr. Berleth said they will leave the vintage chain link fencing around the property; it is covered with vines and at 8-10' tall, provides screening from street.

Mr. Kiel said ARC supported the project and he noted the thoughtful design meets SOI Standards.

Ms. Wasserman said she saw the project at ARC and that it has been tastefully done. She said she appreciated all the plantings that help the addition recede and that the eave lines were matched. She said the proposed landscape is a plus for the site. She said ARC was favorably impressed.

Ms. Johnson concurred with Ms. Wasserman. She said ARC thought the design was quiet but distinguished.

Mr. Barnes said he trusts ARC opinion and noted that he thought it looked good.

Mr. Rodezno said it is a great property and that he likes the addition although he would have preferred a different brick color choice.

Ms. Chang said she supported the project and that the massing is compatible with the existing house. She said the project is well-done and tasteful.

Action: I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application and issue a Certificate of Approval for the one-story addition, interior

alterations, and site/landscape changes at the Rosen House, 9017 Loyal Avenue, as per the attached submittal.

EXPLANATION AND FINDINGS

This action is based on the following:

1. With regard to SMC 25.12.750 A, *the extent to which the proposed alteration or significant change would adversely affect the features or characteristics described in Ordinance 121215.*
 - a. While the proposal includes an addition on the south side of the designated house, the massing, scale, and character of the addition is subservient to the historic building.
 - b. While the proposed changes to the site alter the layout and introduce new plantings, the overall character is compatible with the remaining features.
2. With regard to SMC 25.12.750 B, *the reasonableness or lack thereof of the proposed alterations or significant change in light of other alternatives available to achieve the objectives of the owner and the applicant.*
 - a. The applicant explained the owner’s need to have a larger kitchen that is suitable to the scale of the house, and the proposed location is logical based on the existing layout.
 - b. The applicant explained their desire to change the landscape to be an extension of their “living space” and their proposal preserves the large open space.
3. The factors of SMC 25.12 .750 C, D and E are not applicable.
4. The proposed work as presented is consistent with the following Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation as listed below (or cite other applicable standards):

Standard #9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard #10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

MM/SC/ROI/HW 6:0:0 Motion carried.

050521.32 Lincoln High School
4400 Interlake Avenue N
Proposed site improvements and alterations

Mr. Kiel recused himself.

Becky Hutchinson, Mahlum Architects provided a description of the work and noted that Phase 1 was to rehabilitate the historic buildings and do seismic and structural upgrades. She said Phase 2 will focus on accessibility and seismic upgrades to east side buildings which are not landmarked but sits on the landmarked site.

Ms. Doherty explained she has the ability to administratively review project elements except for the removal of trees and the planting of new ones.

Ms. Hutchinson proposed creating an accessible route from the main parking lot to the main entry along the fire lane that is 20' wide; a clear pedestrian lane will be created. She indicated on photos proposed site work and impacted trees; identified trees will be removed because of seismic upgrade and upgraded foundation work at those locations. She said one tree, #328 will be removed because it is a climbing hazard to the low canopy roof; it will be replaced at the same location with a taller, narrow tree. She said new trees, planters and seat walls will be installed. She pointed out the intersection of Phase 1 and Phase 2 improvements and the obvious demarcation. She pointed out entry and accessibility path to it. She said they will change paving and grade to make access to gym and auditorium to deal with site grade change. She said a gracious ramp will be created and raised terrace to lobby area. She said there will be a new elevator at the gym. She provided current and proposed views and noted the consistence across the site.

Ms. Hutchinson said color materials – concrete paving, rail, neutral colors – reinforce courtyard colors from Phase 1. She noted the Adirondack chairs in red, orange stools to match Phase 1.

Ms. Wasserman said ARC reviewed the project the applicant fit ARC concerns in nicely with the bigger picture. She said doesn't like cutting trees, but it is needed to do this work.

Ms. Johnson said the courtyard will be improved and the replacement of trees will make a nice clean improvement.

Action: I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application and issue a Certificate of Approval for the proposed tree removal and replacement at Lincoln High School, 4400 Interlake Avenue N, as per the attached submittal.

This action is based on the following:

1. The proposed removal of these trees is not a major impact to the designated site as specified in the Report on Designation (LPB 102/16), and the applicant has demonstrated the need to perform this work to improve site safety accessibility, and to accommodate the construction of building seismic improvements.

2. The proposed planting of new trees is compatible with the character of the designated site as specified in the Report on Designation (LPB 102/16).
3. The other factors in SMC 25.12.750 are not applicable to this application.

MM/SC/DB/HW 5:0:1 Motion carried. Mr. Kiel recused.

050521.4 CONTROLS & INCENTIVES

050521.41 Loyal Heights Elementary School
2501 NW 80th Street

Mr. Kiel recused himself.

Ms. Doherty explained the completed Controls and Incentives agreement was signed and went over details such as area for portables called out and specific landscape language, what items will be administratively reviewed by staff.

Jessica Clawson, McCullough Hill Leary said the agreement will be helpful and noted that while each school is individual the same issues come up. This agreement will make it easier for the District, the board, and board staff.

Action: I move to approve Controls and Incentives for Loyal Heights Elementary School, 2501 NW 80th Street.

MM/SC/ROI/DB 5:0:1 Motion carried. Mr. Kiel recused.

050521.42 Georgetown Steam Plant Pump House
7551 8th Avenue S

Ms. Doherty explained the pump house proximity related to the Steam Plant. She said the reengineering, dredging, straightening of the Duwamish Waterway resulted in the pump house being far away from the steam plant; the pump house was built to bring water to the steam plant. She said the Board designated the pump house exterior, interior, and equipment; the valve house exterior and equipment; the site including bulkhead structure in the water. She said only bulkhead submerged land areas and that portion of structure owned by Seattle Department of Parks are controlled; not the Port's land. She said language about pruning and removal of trees was approved months ago, or it would be more similar to previous board item. She noted items that will be reviewed administratively and said items G, H and I were specific to this site and are related to a project soon to happen. She said park and extension of steam plant property to the south are planned and will allow easier walking from lawn to water edge to put in boats like kayaks and canoes. She said the river rises and falls with the tide and erosion relates to water movement and barge traffic. Project will add elements to help protect site safe from erosion.

Ms. Wasserman said it makes sense and it is all consistent with things that have been done before. She said it is logical.

Mr. Kiel concurred.

Action: I move to approve the Controls and Incentives agreement for the Georgetown Steam Plant Pump House, 7551 8th Avenue S.

MM/SC/HW/DB 6:0:0 Motion carried.

050521.5 NOMINATIONS

050521.51 The Fairfax
1508 10th Avenue E

Jeff Murdock, Historic Seattle thanked the ownership for bringing the nomination forward. He said they did a lot of research and did an excellent job. He provided context of the site and neighborhood and said architect James Eustace Blackwell designed and built this building for himself as an investment property.

He said the structure is load bearing brick masonry over concrete basement foundation walls. On the north side, square vertical masonry piers run from the ground to the parapet, stiffening the wall and tying into the interior timber structural system, which is supported by 8" x 8" wood columns. He said there are three stories above the basement and the building houses fourteen apartments. Three walls comprise the primary elevations, due to the stepped plan of the building, two facing west and one facing north. Each of these elevations features paired window openings, vertically aligned at each floor of the building. The window groupings are each framed by a pair of diagonal pilasters that run from the ground to the top of the parapet. Each of these piers is then capped by a Gothic style finial. The Gothic revival decorative elements are repeated in a picturesque ensemble of details such as the pointed arch cast panels installed on the parapet, a pointed arched opening under the entry stair, cast iron balustrade with pointed arch details, and window details on the doors. The brick walls have been painted a buff color for many years.

The narrow primary elevations defined by the building form, along with the vertical pairing of windows and the diagonal piers topped by finials together create an impression of verticality which belies the building's modest footprint of 3,950 gross square feet. The entry portico details include flattened Gothic arches, dentilated cornice and quatrefoils on each side of the arch. Originally, the upper porch on the west elevation was enclosed with a wood balustrade featuring lancet arches. The porch is now enclosed with a metal railing system. All of the windows on the primary elevations are original or have been replaced in-kind. They are double-hung, three-over-one sash windows. The entrance doors (main entry, upper porch and basement) are also original, as indicated on Blackwell's drawings.

Mr. Murdock said form follows function with the parcel shape and noted how the building takes advantage of the curve of 10th Avenue. He noted the recessed main façade and the longer north elevation is set back a bit and is more utilitarian. He said the retaining wall mitigates changing grade. The south elevation is a party wall condition. At least one non-original window has been installed on this wall. The upper part of the wall has been clad with modern siding. The interior light court is also visible. There have been numerous alterations to openings in the light court over the years.

The Fairfax was constructed with interior features that were common in Seattle 1920's era apartments. A July 1923 rental advertisement in the Seattle Daily Times touted, "A combination of the most up-to-date conveniences...incorporated here, including electric ranges". A 1924 ad described corner suites with breakfast nooks, hardwood floors, ivory woodwork, French doors and door mirrors. The floor plan shows some unusual features such as Murphy In-A-Door beds, which pivoted vertically from dedicated closets into living rooms, to provide extra sleeping space. Many of these closets have been converted into small offices, storage spaces and various other uses. A small secondary door for each apartment was accessible from the hall. Each one led to a small closet, which could be locked from inside the apartment, providing space for individual deliveries. Most of these small doors are still extant in the Fairfax. The central stair still reflects the original design, with its trefoil cutouts. The Fairfax public interiors reflect very few changes, remarkable for the building's age, while condominium interiors have been altered to varying degrees to suit their owners.

Mr. Murdock said that some windows in the light court are non-original; the roof has been replaced and the parapet has been braced. A deck and sauna were added to roof. He said the interior main stair is original. He said the building was painted in the 1980s and the color is similar to the original buff. He noted the loss of wood railing atop the entry porch and the wood banister there replaced with wrought iron. He said the architectural expression is all there.

Mr. Murdock said that Gothic Revival is a unique subset. Architectural design in the early 1920's in Seattle reflected eclectic and historical revival styles. The Gothic Revival was most commonly applied to church designs. Numerous examples of the English Gothic and Tudor Revival are found throughout the city. A unique subset of the style, the Collegiate Gothic, is exemplified by the collection of academic buildings called for and designed by the office of Bebb & Gould in their Regents plan for the University of Washington. Integration of the Gothic Revival style for tall buildings in New York (the Woolworth Building, 1910-1914), and Chicago (The Tribune Tower competition, 1922) were highly publicized, and may have inspired Blackwell's designs.

Designed in the same years, Blackwell's use of simplified Gothic design elements appears on both the Fairfax and Shafer buildings. The Seattle Daily Times in July 6, 1924 noted that the Shafer was "of Gothic design and finished in mat-glazed terra cotta. . .the structure is prepossessing in appearance...a noteworthy feature is the elaborate cornice capped by terra cotta finials seven feet in height..." The 1986 City

of Seattle report on designation for the Liggett building (a more elaborate Gothic Revival style office building constructed in 1927) noted that the Shafer Building, was the “first major office building to adapt Gothic decoration to its terra cotta surface.” A later example of a Gothic revival residential building from 1928 is First Hill’s Earl W. Morrison-designed Marlborough Apartments. Features that characterize the simplified Gothic Revival design of the Fairfax are as follows:

- Verticality: Instead of a horizontal cornice, the pier buttresses extend to the top of the building and are terminated by finials with crockets, similar to the Shafer building.
- Pier buttresses: Simple diagonal piers organize the façade and extend from the ground to the top of the building, reinforcing the building’s verticality.
- Pointed arches: A design motif that can be found throughout the building, including on interior stair and exterior railings, parapet friezes, door glazing details and the door opening beneath the entry stair.
- Trefoil decorative elements can be found on the interior stair balustrade and on the front porch roof.

Susan Beardsley, owner/resident in The Fairfax said in the mid-1800s the northern end of what is now Capitol Hill was steep and densely forested. The area was inhabited by the People of the Large Lake, the Duwamish. Rich in deer, wild pigs, game birds and fish, it was also home to cougars, bears and otters. Forests were a major attraction of the Northwest and a source of revenue for early white settlers who grew rich by shipping most of the lumber south to San Francisco. From the city’s beginnings in Pioneer Square, land was cleared in stages from downtown, up Renton Hill (today’s First Hill) and to north Capitol Hill. By 1880 Seattle’s population had grown to 3,533, the native peoples had been displaced, the wildlife gone, and the hill logged off. Farms and orchards dotted the northwestern slopes. The entire area, then called Broadway Hill, began to be of interest as a residential district before 1901 when James A. Moore developed a large tract southeast of what would become Volunteer Park and renamed the area Capitol Hill.

This land was owned by John Leary, one of Seattle’s most energetic and ambitious individuals. Among his many other city properties, this one originally extended from the Cemetery west to Lake Union, between Roy and Roanoke streets. Leary was an enterprising Canadian who had done well in New Brunswick lumber and mercantile businesses and, after a stay in Maine, decided to continue these endeavors along the timber-rich Puget Sound. He arrived in Seattle in 1869, joining about a thousand whites who had settled among the thriving indigenous communities. In 1871 he got a law degree and from that time forward became one of the city’s most influential citizens. Interested in many municipal affairs, he was elected mayor in 1884. As John Leary began clearing this 15-acre property in the early 1900s on which to build two homes, the North Broadway Improvement Club saw a chance to connect the north and south ends of 10th Ave. N., which at that time was bisected by the Leary land. The Broadway business district was growing, and the club hoped to create a continuous thoroughfare that would run the hill’s complete distance northward. Leary eventually agreed to do this, even offering to pay for grading the street and adding sidewalks, on condition that no unsightly poles, billboards, or streetcars disturb his view.

Ms. Beardsley said in the 1920s apartments were going up fast in the area, many as investment properties. She said Blackwell built this building for \$50,000 and sold the building a year later for \$75,000. She provided early ads marketing the apartments as having all the up-to-date conveniences. She said the building was turned to condominiums in 1981 which sold for \$59,000 to \$89,000.

Ms. Beardsley said Blackwell James Eustace Blackwell began his professional life as a civil engineer and ended it as one of the most productive architects in the Pacific Northwest. His work is present in Pioneer Square, along the waterfront, in downtown and on Capitol Hill, First Hill and Queen Anne. He designed everything from drydocks and warehouses to apartment buildings and private residences. One of his commercial buildings in downtown, the Shafer Building, is a City of Seattle landmark. He was also active in the municipal affairs of the city as they related to buildings and roads at a time when Seattle was becoming a modern metropolis.

He was one of thousands seeking their fortunes at that time in the new state of Washington. Some came for the natural resources and some to rebuild Seattle after the Great Fire of 1889. Blackwell settled in Tacoma in 1890. He met architect Robert L. Robertson; they did much work together off and on over the years. Together they designed the Louderback Building (1890), the Vorhees Grain Elevator, the Puyallup Opera House and the Lumberman's Arch over Pacific Avenue to welcome President Harrison to Tacoma (all in 1891).

He left Robertson and Tacoma in 1893 to work on his first major project in the Northwest as partner and Chief Advisory Engineer for Byron Barlow & Company, which had been commissioned to build the first drydock at the Puget Sound Naval Station for the Bureau of Yards and Docks of the U. S. Navy in Bremerton. This necessitated moving his family to Charleston, near Port Orchard, where he also became active in local politics. In April 1896, a final test of the drydock was made when the U. S. S. Monterey came in for servicing. Despite some delays, approval by the government was given, with the distinction of being the only U. S. drydock up to that time to be finished by the contract date.

In 1894 Blackwell was one of the founding members of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. There had been work for many calling themselves architects in the boom years following the fire, but the economic Panic of 1893 saw a downturn in construction and professionally educated architects saw the need of formalizing standards. Even trained architects were having difficulty finding work. Blackwell himself took different jobs occasionally.

After the drydock was completed he made one of his many visits back to Washington, D.C. Upon his return, it appears he took other work to pay the bills, the economy still being poor. Some sources have him reconnecting with Robertson at an office in Portland between 1894 and 1897. However, this seems unlikely since he would still have been working on the drydock in those years.

He parted from Robertson once again in 1904, when Blackwell was hired by the New York Mutual Life Company to update the old Yesler Building they had purchased and add a western addition to it. He maintained an office there himself between 1904 and 1910. In 1905 he built his own home in Harvard Belmont neighborhood. Other projects completed at this time included Backus, E. O. Graves, James Kerr House, Chapin Eddy House, Grand Prix dock, Sears and Roebuck building, the top two floors of the Washington Shoe Building. He met architect Frank Lidstone Baker in 1908 and they formed a partnership that lasted until about 1917. In the 1910 they took office space in the Northern Bank Building at Westlake and Pine, which was becoming the new center of town. The firm Blackwell & Baker produced some notable designs including American Cities Realty Company store and office building, W. W. Chapin residence, James A. Kerr residence, Grand Trunk Pacific Dock, Bellingham Armory, Inland Navigation Company dock, warehouse and office, Sears, Roebuck & Company warehouse, and three Carnegie Libraries: Wenatchee, Olympia, and Burlington. She said that all Carnegie Libraries were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. She said the partnership with Baker ended in 1916.

After their partnership ended, Blackwell returned to his own practice with office in the Hoge Building until 1919, when he moved to the Seaboard Building at 4th and Pike. He was finishing up some construction work on the last two houses for the Vancouver Home Company in Vancouver, WA. Other work done in 1919 includes: Lodge No. 1186 Order of Elks clubhouse in Wenatchee, Rainier Golf and Country club clubhouse and grounds, and Lake Union Dock Company pier and warehouse.

Many of Blackwell's activities in the early 1920s involve Seattle's municipal affairs. He had been a long-time member of the Municipal League, where he served on the Committee on Parks, Buildings and Grounds and on the Streets and Roads Committee. He belonged to the Commercial Club, where he was charter member of the Good Roads Association. He served on the U. S. Shipping Board (1918-1920), the Board of Public Works, and was a member of the first Zoning Commission in 1923. He was also a Freemason and member of the Pacific Northwest Society of Engineers, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Rainier Club, and the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, serving as its President in 1905. He served as Superintendent of Buildings from 1920 to 1922. When his term was over, he was able to return to his architectural practice. He took office space in the Hoge Building Annex where he designed the Fairfax Apartments and, most notably, the Shafer Building, which bears several design features similar to the Fairfax.

The Shafer Building was given Seattle Historic Landmark status on May 18, 1987 and added to the National Register of Historic Places December 13, 1995. Among Blackwell's last completed projects were the I. Colsky store in 1926, Renton's Evans Building in 1929, and the Northern State Hospital's Women's Ward L-M building in Sedro Woolley in 1933. In April 1939, he had gone to the office of Sheriff William Severyns in the City-County Building to show him plans for a model prison farm. While there he suffered a fatal heart attack. He was 83 years old.

Ms. Beardsley said Blackwell was involved in many organizations and was a tireless worker who had projects all over the Pacific Northwest. She said while he worked in many styles and for many purposes, she provided just a sampling of his work throughout the northwest. She said the building meets criteria D, E, and F.

Ms. Wasserman said she saw a presentation about this building at the Capitol Hill Historical Society. She said she has always been intrigued by the building. She suggested inclusion of interior stairwell.

Ms. Beardsley said the ownership is supportive of inclusion of exterior, site, and the interior stairwell.

Ms. Wasserman appreciated the whole presentation and report.

Ms. Chang asked when roof deck and sauna were installed.

Ms. Beardsley said it was done after the building was turned into condos in the 1980s.

Mr. Barnes said he agreed with Ms. Wasserman about including the main interior stairwell.

Mr. Rodezno said it is a lovely building and he supported nomination noting criteria D and E. He noted the rarity of pinnacles and arches.

Ms. Johnson supported nomination and cited criterion D and E as relevant. She said it is a stately building and she liked the shape. She said the building is unique and responsive to its location. She appreciated the report and presentation. She supported inclusion of interior main stair.

Ms. Chang appreciated the thorough presentation and report. She was disappointed with the number of windows changed but noted they are on courtyard or secondary façade of building. She wondered what was originally on the roof. She said the balcony over the entry has changed. She congratulated the owners on being good stewards and said it is clear how loved a space it is. She cited criteria D and E as relevant and supported including the interior main stairwell.

Mr. Kiel supported nomination and said it embodies the style and is a good example of it. He said the building has been well-maintained.

Action: I move that the Board approve the nomination of The Fairfax at 1508 10th Avenue E for consideration as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description in the Nomination Form; that the features and characteristics proposed for preservation include: the interior main stairwell, the site, and the exterior of the building; that the public meeting for Board consideration of designation be scheduled for June 16, 2021; that this action conforms to the known comprehensive and development plans of the City of Seattle.

MM/SC/HW/DB 6:0:0 Motion carried.

Ms. Doherty said in looking at an historic aerial photograph of the roof, a penthouse was there in the 1930s.

Mr. Kiel recused.

050521.52 Aki Kurose Middle School
3928 S Graham Street

David Peterson, Historic Resource Consulting provided an overview of the school and vicinity. He said Aki Kurose Middle School is located on the north side of S Graham Street between 39th and 42nd Avenue S, in the Hillman City neighborhood in southeast Seattle. Brighton Playfield, a City of Seattle park that also serves as the school's athletic fields, extends northward from the school as far as S Juneau Street—approximately three and a half blocks. He explained the school and playfield are on separate tax parcels—the former owned by the Seattle Public Schools, the latter owned by the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation. The subject building was constructed as Caspar W. Sharples Junior High School in 1952 for the Seattle School District. The 169,000 square-foot facility is contained within a single sprawling building which dates to the original construction. It is made up of three large volumes: the cafeteria, the gymnasium, and the auditorium. He said the gym is flanked with boys' and girls' locker rooms on either side. He said the only second story space is around the auditorium. He said that light monitors are used in specialized classrooms for art, shop, and music.

Susan Boyle, Architecture + Planning provided context of the area and noted the subject property is located on the north side of S Graham Street, between 39th and 42nd Avenue S, in the Hillman City neighborhood. Historically, the development of this area was more closely tied to the development of the Rainier Valley, and the long north-south arterials Rainier Avenue S and Martin Luther King Jr. Way S (originally known as Empire Way), rather than to Beacon Hill which rises to the west. She said Hillman City has not seen the same gentrification / discovery as Columbia City and the buildings are sort of flatiron buildings.

She said Columbia City was founded in 1890. Clarence Hillman, a speculator and something of a scoundrel founded Hillman City in 1903. She said both areas were annexed to the City of Seattle in 1907. At that point the railroad was renamed the "Seattle-Renton Railroad". She said Empire Way was platted and paved in 1913. In 1923, most of Rainier Avenue S was zoned for commercial use in Seattle's first zoning ordinance with residential in between. She said that Empire Avenue is really a post WWII vehicular strip-street. She said in 1940 Hillman City's population was described in demographic charts as consisting of 70-80% "foreign born white," with 20-24% having completed four years of high school, and 3-4% having completed four years of college. She said it really was a working-class neighborhood. During the war Holly Park was built for military housing; in 1950s it was given over to the Seattle Housing Authority.

She noted the vast area served by this school. She said there has been a shift in demographics served by the school. She said Asians and African Americans moved into the area in the post war period and the community became very diverse. Said because the school was diverse early on the school didn't experience the strife of bussing and other issues.

Mr. Peterson said the designer of the subject building was William Mallis (1883-1954), a Seattle architect who was active from the 1920s to the early 1950s and a prolific designer of public schools throughout the state. The subject property—one of several junior high schools designed by Mallis's firm—was developed and completed towards the end of his career. His early work in 1920-30s was historicist style using repetitive parts to create façade and put building together. From the early 1920s through the mid-1940s, Mallis found work primarily designing schools for districts in the Seattle region and in Western Washington. He typically employed relatively simple Beaux-Arts plans with straightforward Tudor Revival or classically inspired brick exteriors in his designs, following the historicist conventions of the time. During the Depression era of the mid to late 1930s, Mallis began to experiment with Art Moderne/Art Deco cast concrete structures.

Mr. Peterson said immediately after the war, construction activity began to increase to accommodate the pent-up demand for all building types, and especially schools. On September 14, 1945—just twelve days after the end of the war—the Seattle School Board awarded Mallis the commission for View Ridge Elementary School (1945-48), noting a significant increase in enrollment for grades K-3 over the previous year. This was the first commission by the school board to any architect after the war and would be the first of several postwar school commissions for Mallis over the next decade. From the mid-1940s and for the rest of his career, Mallis's designs would be exclusively Modern in style. He said Mallis's firm grew quickly.

He said Mallis began to be interested in glass block to solve the issue of how to light a classroom with windows on one wall only. Glass block was invented in the 1930s; there were issues with insulation and fogging up. He said glass block was used at Swedish Hospital surgery rooms and at Savidge Chrysler Plymouth dealership. He said Mallis used this motif a lot. The glass block windows featured a narrow strip of clear glass operable steel sash below, further emphasizing the horizontal nature of the building. He said the prisms in the blocks are designed to reflect the whole ceiling to light up the whole room. The clear glass allowed eyes to look out on distance and rest. He said Mallis tilted the ceiling so the windows were larger, and it would also reflect light further into the classroom.

Mallis was hired by the Ellensburg, Washington school district to design Lincoln Elementary School (1947-48). Mallis's design emphasized the horizontality of the building with long rows of glass block windows along the two-story high primary façades, punctuated at a few locations by projecting, fully glazed entry/stair vestibules.

Mr. Peterson said in 1950 Mallis was awarded contracts for Nathan Eckstein Middle School, David Denny Junior High, and the subject building. He said at Eckstein, which is a Seattle landmark, was also cited as the “first Seattle school to have lighting through the walls by means of directional glass block”. Although physically larger than Lincoln Elementary in Ellensburg, and with a more complex program, the two-story primary facades at Eckstein School are dominated by the same rows of glass-block-over-steel-sash windows, interspersed with fully glazed, often projecting, entry/stair vestibules.

Mr. Peterson said the Denny Junior High site was sloping and constricted, resulting in long, separate, one-story buildings which stepped down the slope. At Denny, Mallis continued to employ long strips of glass block windows. He said Mallis was unable to get the long sweeping façades at Denny and started to break up windows.

He said at Eckstein the two-story primary facades at Eckstein School are dominated by the same rows of glass-block-over-steel-sash windows, interspersed with fully glazed, often projecting, entry/stair vestibules. Located on a spacious, flattened hillside site at the corner of NE 75th Street and 30th Avenue NE, the building is sited towards the two streets in order to free up open space at the back, forming a rough “L” shape in plan. A wide, heavily glazed curving facade at the northeast corner serves as the school’s main entry and houses the main offices, library, and auditorium. The functional plan also features a long double-loaded classroom wing extending along NE 75th Street; and a unique, projecting rear wing housing the orchestra room, with a curved rear wall reflecting the curved floor risers inside. The curve is repeated in a curved, glazed rear facade at the cafeteria, bridging the space between the gym and main school mass. Finally, the plan also features a 45 degree pivot where the gymnasium and specialized shop classrooms meet the rest of the building, which may have been in response to site conditions. Nathan Eckstein Middle School was designated a Seattle landmark in 1981, recognized in the supporting nomination as a Modern-International Style work of architecture. However, the school also appears to retain some hints of Art Moderne “streamline” styling, particularly the symmetrically curving main entry facade, curves at projecting entry/stair vestibules, a reeded parapet cap at the roof, the symmetrical gymnasium main facade, and minor ornamental details such as entry doors with porthole windows or the decorative reeding and fluting patterns around the stage proscenium inside the auditorium.

He said by the time he got to design the subject school he began to break up the horizontality of the glass block windows with more prominent vertical window framing elements, emphatically separating the building from any remaining traces of Art Moderne. The school was completed in 1952. The school was originally named for Caspar Sharples, a school board member for a number of years. He said Mallis used the same ‘kit of parts’ used on other schools. Using aerial photo he identified programming and noted specialty classrooms needing more light. He noted how much simpler the gymnasium is compared to the one at Eckstein. He noted how the ceilings pop up at the edges to bring light in.

Mr. Peterson said the building is largely intact except for replacement of windows in 2006 which much simpler windows and glazing which creates a different appearance. He said boiler room and gym retain some windows. The building structure is reinforced concrete wall construction on concrete continuous footings, with reinforced concrete interior floors and floor beams, and roofs supported in most locations by a steel framing system. Exterior walls are clad with reddish-hued Roman brick veneer laid in a one-third running bond pattern. Walls are topped by a narrow, slightly projecting, two-part parapet cap with flashing, creating a crisp shadow line. Some parts of less prominent facades, such as the upper part of the gymnasium or auditorium which rises above the surrounding roofs, are simply finished as painted, rough, board-formed concrete. These were originally painted a white or light color, which emphasized the contrast between the materials and massing. He said there is a continuous roofline and it is imperceptible where ceilings pop up to gain more light.

Mr. Peterson said the back or north side of the building presents a far less formally composed appearance, in contrast to the front. The open spaces between the building wings are largely paved and used for parking. In the past, these open spaces were occupied by over a dozen wood-frame portable classroom buildings; at present, only two portables remain. The open courtyards are enclosed by chain link fencing. In courtyard for portables, he indicated some original glass block remains. He provided close up photo to show how Mallis used framing techniques to either pop windows out or recess them depending on location.

He noted six building entries feature adjacent stairways which provide vertical circulation to the central two-story core of classrooms surrounding the auditorium. The largest and most elaborate is at the main entry which he called 'lantern like'. This 30 by 37 foot stair-hall features a U-shaped open stair lit by a large, 23 by 29 foot south-facing window and outfitted with decorative brushed aluminum stair rails. Secondary stairways are less elaborate, with decorative aluminum railing typically located only at the window landings. All stairways feature painted concrete steps with embedded slip guard tiles; metal pipe handrails, and some have wide painted wood trim topping the knee wall.

Ms. Boyle said 'lantern' and 'beacon' are used metaphorically when talking about buildings but much of this building's physical features are performance features. It is almost like a light fixture.

Mr. Peterson said in regard to the lighting on one side, this was the last project like this that Mallis did. On another project he would alter form of roof to bring lighting into classroom. Finally, they just used artificial light; glass block was not used very long. He said the acoustical panels in auditorium are still there; he noted the curve to proscenium. He said original doors are still intact. He said the cafeteria retains its original asbestos tile floors. He noted gymnasium with massive enclosed truss so the space can be divided and some original glass block. Flanking gymnasium space are huge locker rooms which are intact. He noted terrazzo floors and glazed tile walls. He noted orchestra room with curved wall and curved steps; windows are Kalwall, not glass block. He said one classroom retains original glass block windows and he

pointed out the slanted ceiling. He said the library wall is entirely glazed. Administrative offices all have original cabinetry. He noted high ceiling, one-story classrooms.

He said the windows were very important and said loss of glass block does affect the integrity. The color of glass and the quality of interior light has changed. They were a system of lighting the interior of the classrooms which is what a school is for. Mallis took the component to create interior effect and used it to create a façade as the driving element in a façade. This is the best use of that element by him. He said he thought criteria D, E, and F were relevant but that due to loss of integrity he didn't think the building met the criteria.

Ms. Boyle said regarding Criteria C every school is associated in a significant way in a significant aspect, but the significance is with institution of the school – spirit, letterman jacket, reunion, allegiance – the experience of going to school rather than the building. She said the property is prominent and easily meets Criterion F.

Mr. Peterson said the school was one of the largest and it shrank as others opened. He said the school has not been continuously used. At one point had only 900 students. In 1981 the school was closed and used for other programs. In two years it was Franklin High School during Franklin's renovation. He said by 1999 the school re-opened; and it was renamed for Aki Kurose who was a teacher, peace and social rights activist and presidential award recipient.

Mr. Rodezno asked if the smokestack is original and if the height had changed.

Mr. Peterson said he didn't know.

Ms. Doherty said it looks altered and noted it is common to reduce height to address seismic issues.

Mr. Barnes asked about the letter from Seattle Public Schools, stating that they were okay with the building being landmarked because it won't affect future work at the building.

Ms. Clawson said that nothing is planned at the school now; they are using the site as it is and there are not challenges that other sites have had. She said SPS thinks the site is adaptable.

Ms. Boyle said they were focused on things not relevant to criteria.

Mr. Barnes asked about the number of students there now.

Ms. Clawson said 748.

Mr. Barnes asked to clarify their opinion on landmarking the site versus the building.

Ms. Boyle said they tried to give a factual presentation about the property and offered their opinion. She said schools are valuable by nature how they function could be considered to comply with Criterion C. She said the question is if the board considers the significance associated with the institution of school or the building.

Ms. Chang asked if there have been any significant renovations or seismic upgrades beyond the windows and the stack.

Mr. Peterson said flooring has been changed to vinyl tile, bathrooms, plumbing, lighting fixtures, wiring. He said the most significant change was the switching out of windows which affects the feeling one had while inside the building. He said smaller details like cabinetry and closets weren't noticed.

Ms. Boyle said it speaks to the quality and foresight of the design that it accommodates changes.

Ms. Chang appreciated the presentation and aerial images. She said she was recently at the school and was impressed by the size of the school; it compares to the size of a large high school. She said it was nice to see the layout and courses. She noted the lost original appearance because of loss of the windows. She said the building is striking in size and mass. She said she can't tell the style. She said she leaned toward supporting nomination to allow further deliberation and wanted to hear what other board members thought.

Mr. Rodezno supported nomination. He said loss of the glass block is not enough to devoid the building of status, even though it was part of the original vision. He said Mallis used modern technology to prioritize access to daylight.

Ms. Wasserman supported nomination and said she wished the windows were there. She said Aki Kurose was her son's kindergarten teacher and was a lovely, delightful person.

Mr. Barnes said it is a special building that means a lot to the community. He noted the important recognition of Aki Kurose who was an important part of the community. He said his grandsons attended the subject school and he was glad to see the nomination. He wanted to hear more discussion surrounding the criteria.

Ms. Johnson said she was on the fence and noted that Criterion D was the most appropriate criterion, but the building lost something with the window replacement.

Ms. Chang supported nomination to hear more and noted Criterion F was relevant because of the size of the building.

Action: I move that the Board approve the nomination of Aki Kurose Middle School at 3928 S Graham Street for consideration as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description in the Nomination Form; that the features and characteristics proposed for preservation include: the site and the exterior of the building; that the public

meeting for Board consideration of designation be scheduled for June 16, 2021; that this action conforms to the known comprehensive and development plans of the City of Seattle.

MM/SC/DB/HW 4:1:1 Motion carried. Ms. Johnson opposed. Mr. Kiel recused.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Doherty, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator

Sarah Sodt, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator