The City of Seattle
Landmarks Preservation Board
700 Third Avenue · 4th floor · Seattle, Washington 98104 · (206) 684-0228

REPORT ON DESIGNATION LPB 353/05

(former) Colman School
2300 S. Massachusetts Street

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

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

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

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

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

DESCRIPTION

Location

Colman School is located on a rectangular lot on a ridge overlooking the Rainier Valley corridor to the west and the valley bisected by Martin Luther King Way on the east. Because of its mass and height, and its location on the ridge, the former Colman School is a prominent visual element for the surrounding area, as well as its immediate neighborhood. The school site was originally bounded by Atlantic Street on the north, 24th Avenue South (abandoned in the 1940s) on the east, South Massachusetts Street on the south, and 23rd Avenue South on the east. The expansion of the I-90 corridor southward, as well as the construction of new freeway lanes and the lid over the corridor, altered local street alignment resulting in the abandonment of South Atlantic Street and the creation of the I-90 right-of-way Park, now known as Sam Smith Park, and an eastward shift of the 23rd

Avenue South right-of-way. Colman Playfield is located directly south across South Massachusetts Street, and the school's former playfield is located directly to the east of the site across the abandoned 23rd Avenue South.

Site

The original school building and its 1940 addition are located in the northern portion of the present site. The southern portion of the site slopes steeply up from its southwestern corner to the terraced building pad. The building's main entry faces eastward toward what was originally 24th Avenue South, now abandoned. Presently this entry is accessed by way of a sidewalk running north/south along the original 24th Street South right-of-way. Plant material along the banks of the walkway probably dates from when the school was occupied. The approach from the south leads upward from Massachusetts Street South along a landscaped bank on the west. To the east of the walk, the ground drops abruptly to the lower former playfield terrace. Concrete stairs lead upward from the walkway to a small upper terrace and a paved path to the main entrance. The east entry terrace path is flanked with pipe railings and the remains of a lawn. A secondary entrance on the building's northern side that once faced South Atlantic Street is now only accessible by way of the building's perimeter walkway because of chain link fencing surrounding the site. There is a very narrow strip of paved level ground on the building's western side before the site slopes steeply down to the realigned 23rd Avenue South right-of-way. There is a relatively small flat paved play area on the building's southern side before the site slopes downward to the southwest. This sloped area is landscaped with shrubs and some trees, mostly volunteers. (Erigero, 1989)

Neighborhood Character

The immediate neighborhood includes a mixture of frame houses dating from the early 1900s through the 1920s, with several recent infill housing projects scattered throughout. A group home and Colman Playground are located on the blocks to the south across South Massachusetts. The former school playfield to the east is now managed by Seattle Parks and Recreation, as is the newly created Sam Smith Park to the north of the site built on the lid over the eastbound lanes of I-90. To the west and down the hill from the site is the commercial strip along Rainer Avenue South. Down slope to the east is Martin Luther King Way South.

Colman School

Note to Readers: A 1989 Report, "Seattle Public Schools," prepared for Historic Seattle by Patricia C. Erigero provided a detailed description of the Colman School at that time. Indented text below is excerpted directly from this report, although minor grammatical corrections and editorial changes were made for this document. The quoted text is also not necessarily in its original order.

Colman School was designed by Seattle School District Architect James Stephen in what is generally known as the Jacobean style. Stephen designed several of his later "new type" masonry schools in this then-popular style. All of these schools have similar massing and stylistic features, differing primarily in the organization of fenestration, in architectural terra cotta detailing, and in size. When Colman was built in 1909, it was similar in plan to Greenwood, Hawthorn, and Rainier Beach (Emerson) schools, also built in that year, and was virtually identical to Adams school in Ballard. These were the last school buildings designed by Stephen, who left the Seattle School District's employ in 1910, although similar schools were later designed and built by architect Edgar

Blair, Stephen's successor. In 1940, a one and-one-half story rectangular wing designed by Floyd A. Naramore was added to the southeast corner of the Colman School building. (Erigero, 1989).

Building Plan & Interior Features

The original three-story building has a plan in the form of a "T," measuring overall approximately 159'-1" in the north/south direction and 145' in the east/west direction. The main southern rectangular block measures 118'-7" in the north/south direction and 69'-8" feet in the east/west direction. The cross of the "T" runs along an east-west axis, and is intersected by the main body of the building, which runs along a north-south axis. The north perpendicular wing, representing the upper part of the "T," measures 40'-6" in the north/south direction and 145'-0" in the east/west direction. The original intent was that a southern wing would eventually be added to complete an "H" form that would create an east-facing courtyard entry facing 24th Avenue South. (Erigero, 1989)

The building's main floor plan has an entrance foyer and interior entry stairs located centrally on the building's eastern side. Doorways at the northern and southern sides of the foyer lead to service stairways that provide access to the basement. The main stairway leads up to a wide double-loaded corridor that provides access to the former school's classrooms and administrative offices. There are four classrooms on the main floor of the main section of the building, two on the western side of the hallway and two on the eastern side. A narrow "Principal's Room" is located just to the north of the main entry stairway and a corresponding "Teacher's Room" is located on the southern side of this stairway. There are student toilet rooms at both the northern and southern ends of the main section of the building adjacent to the western classrooms and to the outside of the toilet rooms are stairways leading to the upper floor and basement. The northern wing has an additional stairway on axis with the hallway of the main section that leads to the upper floor and down to a landing that provides access from the building's northern entry, as well as continuing down to the basement. The northern wing has a single loaded corridor that provides access to that wing's four classrooms, two on each side of the northern stairway. (Erigero, 1989)

The second floor plan is similar to the main floor except that an additional classroom is located above the main entry stairway and the Principal's and Teacher's Rooms, giving the building 17 classrooms on these two floors. The attic is accessible from the second floor and the framing creates a cathedral-like space. Some of the original terra cotta coping from the wall dormer parapets was left in this upper space after it was removed around 1965. Classrooms on the main floor have ceilings that are 14'-7" high and second floor classrooms are 12'-11" inches high. Tall double-hung windows with transoms provide daylight to the classrooms. All classrooms have narrow cloakrooms near the classroom entrance. These cloakrooms also were utilized for inter-floor mechanical ducting. The building's interior has unaltered wood stairs and balustrades, wainscoting and wood trim, and some original light fixtures. (Erigero, 1989)

The basement floor plan departs from the two floors above in that it was devoted to mechanical, miscellaneous spaces, and interior play spaces. The main building section is bifurcated by the main entry stairway and a janitor's room directly beneath the main floor hallway, with the southern half of the main section devoted to boys and the northern half as well as the basement of the northern wing devoted to girls. The only access between the two areas was by way of service areas. The boy's section had a playroom and "Meeting Room" and the larger girl's area had a three large playrooms and a "Domestic Science and Manual Training" classroom. The basement plan also had a one-story

wing on the building's western side that contained large gender-specific toilet rooms adjacent to the boy's and the central girl's playrooms, separated by the building's boiler room. The building's heat exchanger and air handling room was situated beneath the main hallway at the northern end. (Erigero, 1989)

Building Structure & Exterior Features

The building is approximately 61'-3" in height to the top of the ridge of the building's cross-gable roof. The roof has a pitch of 17 in 12 and was originally covered with cedar shingles. The school originally had a series of steeply pitched gable-roofed wall dormers centered on the east, west and north elevations, with two smaller wall dormers flanking the central dormer on the north. The wall dormers over the main and northern entries each originally had tripartite attic story windows with terra cotta trim. These dormers were at some time removed on the eastern and northern elevations and the horizontal parapet line extended. The northern wall dormers have all been removed, including the roof framing, and the masonry facing of the central eastern wall dormer has been replaced with wood sheathing set behind a parapet. The roof, originally covered with cedar shingles, is now sheathed with asphalt shingles. (Erigero, 1989)

The building has reinforced concrete footings, floors and basement walls, with brick bearing walls above the concrete basement walls, and wood frame floors and roofs. The ground floor walls are concrete, with a cement wash lightly scored in an early twentieth century gesture to the rusticated stone bases of the building's historical prototype; the wall is punctured by recessed double-hung wood sash windows with four-over-four lights, located immediately below a concrete water table. The walls are laid in two shades of red pressed brick, set in a running bond, with headers every sixth course. A raised parapet with terra cotta coping runs between the gable ends and gabled wall dormers, and a molded terra cotta cornice runs below the parapet. There are two hip-roofed louvered cupolas spaced along each principal roof ridge. There are several types of transomed double-hung wood sash windows, however the principal type is a four-over-four double-hung wood sash with multi-light transom. All terra cotta is a mat glazed ivory color, tooled at approximately 6 batts to the inch. Most windows have terra cotta sills.

The east entry is indicated by a two and-one-half-story angled bay, with a tripartite ornate molded panel in the parapet. The main entrance is a projecting portal, set several steps above grade, with a semi-circular molded arched opening, springing from terra cotta clad imposts. Modified Ionic pilasters on molded bases, with a full entablature above, frame the arch including a dentil course. The arch spandrels have eagles molded in relief. A blind terra cotta balustrade with bull's eye patterns between paneled pedestals is located above the entablature. Urns have been removed from the pedestals. The entire ensemble is executed in terra cotta. A tripartite window is located above the entry, with a terra cotta cartouche centered above the middle window. The sides of the bay have transomed four-over-four windows at each story. Flush bands of terra cotta run across the bay, from corner to corner, at the lintel, transom and sill levels of the second and third stories. The arched portal leads to two pairs of glazed and paneled recessed doors with transoms and a large fanlight above. The doors are now covered with plywood. The fenestration on the east elevation is framed with molded terra cotta. It generally reflects the organization of the internal spaces, with two banks of five transomed four-over-four double-hung wood sashes, divided by narrow brick piers, on the north and south sides of the entry bay illuminating large classrooms, and smaller, narrower double hung windows illuminating offices immediately adjacent to the bay. The east end of the north wing has a bank of five transomed double-hung wood sash windows with terra cotta trim and sills at the

second and third floors. The first floor windows below these are narrower, and separated by concrete piers. The gable end is shouldered, has a pair of narrow double-hung, terra cotta-trimmed windows in the attic story, and terra cotta coping.

The north elevation of the building is symmetrically organized, with a centralized second entry similar to the main entry on the east. This facade once had a principal, centered, shouldered dormer capped with a finial, and a tripartite, terra cotta framed window in the attic story. The main wall dormer was flanked by two smaller shouldered wall dormers with finials, terra cotta coping, and narrow paired double-hung windows. The removal of the three wall dormers and when the parapet was rebuilt as a straight horizontal line, altered the rhythm and proportional relationship among the facade elements. Below the now-vanished central wall dormer on the north is an angled bay with a tripartite ornate molded panel in the parapet, similar to the panel in the east parapet. The main entrance is a projecting portal, set several steps above grade, with a segmental molded arched opening. The arch is framed by paneled pilasters with egg-and-dart molded capitals and molded paneled bases. It is surmounted a denticulated entablature, above which is a blind-paneled terra cotta mock balcony with paneled pedestals capped with pommels. The arch spandrels have ornamental leaf patterns in relief. The entire ensemble is executed in terra cotta. A tripartite window is located above the entry, with a terra cotta cartouche centered above the middle window. The sides of the bay have transomed four-over-four windows at each story. Flush bands of terra cotta run across the bay, from corner to corner, at the lintel, transom and sill levels of the second and third stories. The arched portal leads to two pairs of glazed and paneled recessed doors with transoms. The doors and transoms are now covered with plywood. The angled bay on the north elevation is flanked by five transomed double-hung windows on each side. The end walls are not fenestrated.

The rear (west) elevation has a brick chimney extending from the peak of the shouldered gabled wall dormer; the height has been truncated and a new coping installed. Like the front elevation, the rear facade reflects the internal organization of the rooms, with paired, transomed two-over two windows indicating classrooms, and smaller single and paired double-hung windows serving smaller rooms and stairwells. A one-story flat-roofed brick boiler room, projects from the center of this elevation; it is flanked on either side by low, one-story brick wings with flat roofs, double-hung wood sash windows and parapets with terra cotta coping. Stairwell exits at the east and west ground floor corners of the main building facade are one-story brick-faced projections with a terra cotta elliptic arch and keystone over two pairs of recessed transomed glazed and paneled doors. The western end of the north wing is an identical, but reversed version of the eastern end, with a bank of five transomed double-hung wood sash windows at the second and third floors, and five double-hung wood sashes in the first floor, which are separated by scored concrete piers. The gabled wall dormer on this elevation does not have shoulders; a finial at the peak has been removed.

The south elevation has three narrow, transomed double-hung wood windows with brick sills centered on the second and third floors, and three smaller, narrow windows in the attic story. These windows serve to light the central corridor of the building. The base is scored concrete, with three narrow double-hung windows centered in it. The gable end originally had a round arched peak with a finial at the top; it was rebuilt, and the arch and finial removed. It has terra cotta coping. The wall is comprised red common brick in anticipation of a later addition, which was never built.

1940 Addition
In 1940, a one-and-one-half story auditorium-gymnasium, designed by Floyd A. Naramore, was added to the southeast corner of the building. The rectangular flat-roofed structure relates poorly to the original building, projecting beyond the 1909 structure's wall plane towards the east to form an irregularly bounded entry court. The reinforced concrete building is faced with red brick veneer and has an exposed concrete base. The main entry, on the northeast corner of the building is a projecting one-story portal formed in concrete, sheltering a pair of glazed and paneled doors. The building has a parapet roof with concrete coping. The south elevation has a bank of large paired double-hung windows with transoms; all transoms have been covered with plywood. The west (rear) elevation is a blank brick wall, with a small louver and grill.

The interior has ceilings are approximately 16 feet in height. There is a mural on the north interior wall that appears to have been a student project.

Building Alterations and Existing Conditions
Colman School has been altered through the removal of its principal wall dormers and the addition of the 1940 gymnasium wing. At some time, a kitchen was added to the northeastern corner of the basement. The interior of the building has serious water damage throughout. Interior wall surfaces have both failing plaster and paint failure. The interior also was vandalized during the occupation and later fire *(see Section 4.2),* as a result, little of the original casework is intact. Over fifty percent of the windowpanes in the building are broken and have been covered with plywood.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Site Context
History of Rainier Valley and the immediate Neighborhood
It is interesting to note that the immediate neighborhood surrounding the old Colman School is both considered a portion of the Rainier Valley and the Mt. Baker neighborhood. The Rainier Valley is quite often thought to be a geographical feature extending six miles southeast of downtown Seattle, almost to Renton and centered on the Columbia City commercial district and including such communities as Rainier Beach, Dunlap, Hillman City, Genesee, Mathieson, Orchard Beach, Kildarton, Wildwood, Lakewood, Hawthorne Hill, and Atlantic City. The Mt. Baker neighborhood, however, is generally thought to include the ridge and land sloping eastward toward Lake Washington proximate to the I-90 highway corridor. The Colman School will be considered to belong within what remains of the Rainier Valley neighborhood, traditionally considered the upper (north) end of the Rainier Valley and lying between Beacon Hill and Mount Baker.

The first major European/American settlement in the neighborhood and the Rainier Valley proper was stimulated by the construction of the Rainier Avenue Electric Railway, later part of the Interurban. This project was started in 1891 by banker J. K. Edmiston to stimulate real estate development on holdings he owned within the area. The line ran along city streets from downtown Seattle, up the steep grade of Washington Street, south on 16th Street, west again on Jackson Street, then south on Rainier Avenue, and then running seven miles to what would become Columbia City. The line, not only was used for the transportation of people, but also carried produce, lumber, and coal mined in Newcastle near Renton. (Wilma, 2001, Anderson, 2005)

Coal mining jobs and cheap land attracted hundreds of Italians to the Rainier Valley. Most of these Italians were of rural origins and they tended to use their land to plant large, productive gardens. They found a ready market for their produce in Seattle. Some Japanese immigrants, Issei (first generation), also bought plots in the valley. (Wilma, 2001)

The Rainier Valley grew into a series of neighborhoods stretching along the valley, the upper or northern section, now known as the Rainier Valley Neighborhood, becoming informally known as "Garlic Gulch." These neighborhoods briefly combined to form a municipality called Southeast Seattle, but in 1907, voted for annexation into the City of Seattle in order to improve access to public services. (Phelps, 1978; Wilma, 2001)
With a largely Italian Catholic population, local community life focused on the parish church. Our Lady of the Virgin, located at 2800 South Massachusetts, was consecrated by the Jesuits in 1911, and in 1918 opened its doors, with the help of Dominican sisters, to a parish school. (Morris, 1991;Wilma, 2001)

In 1909, the Rainier Valley neighborhood pressured the City for a play and picnic ground in the neighborhood, resulting in the purchase and development of the Colman Playground just south of the new Colman Elementary School, also built between 1909 and 1910. An Italianate park shelter designed by A. Wheatley, was latter constructed in the park during the 1930s, with W.P.A. funds. The Dugdale Baseball Park was built in 1913, at the southern end of the Rainier Valley Neighborhood on the eastern side of the Interurban tracks and Rainier Avenue. The Park was destroyed by fire in 1932, but was soon replaced by Sick's Stadium. The Interurban went out of business in 1937, but by that time, automobiles, buses, and trackless trolleys had taken over. (Sherwood, 1975; Wilma, 2001)

In the late 1930s, the state of Washington decided to locate a proposed Lake Washington Floating Bridge running from the Mount Baker area across the lake to the northern end of Mercer Island. The western approach eventually cut a wide swath just to the north of Colman School that literally tore the Rainier Valley Neighborhood apart. (Sherwood, 1975; Wilma, 2001)

World War II particularly impacted on the Rainier Valley Neighborhood, and the Rainier Valley area. Japanese American residents of the Valley, as were those located all over the West Coast, were evacuated to internment camps. Tens of thousands of war workers crowded into Seattle to work at the Boeing Company, the shipyards, or in the port of embarkation, and resultantly the federal government constructed thousands of low-cost temporary units including Stadium Homes, adjacent to Sick's Stadium). The once stable neighborhood was permanently disrupted by this influx of strangers. (Wilma, 2001)

After the War, many of the "temporary" war workers decided to stay and the general regional prosperity created a continued housing shortage in the Seattle area. The Rainier Valley Neighborhood, however, saw a steady loss of its Italian population as families were drawn to suburban developments outside of the original core. The average age of parishioners at Our Lady of the Virgin grew to between 65 and 70 years and the parish saw almost no baptisms and practically no new families joining the parish. Sunday mass attendance was less than 150 people. (Wilma, 2001)

African Americans by then had traditionally clustered within what was known as the Central Area. Discrimination by real estate agents and restrictive covenants prevented them from moving in any

direction except to the south, into the Rainier Valley. Housing became a major source of discontent among ethnic minorities, as once stable populations were intermingled. In 1964, Seattle voters rejected an open housing ordinance, and racial tension between whites and African Americans often broke into actual conflict in the Rainier Valley. The Seattle City Council did approve an open housing ordinance in 1968, following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Empire Way South was renamed Martin Luther King Jr. Way South to honor the civil rights leader. (Wilma, 2001)
With the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, refugees from Southeast Asia arrived in the northwest, and as with the growing Latino community, took advantage of good property values within the Rainier Valley Neighborhood, creating greater multicultural diversity. This new immigration influx rejuvenated the old Our Lady of the Virgin parish, as many of the Southeast Asians were converted Catholics. The church adapted its mission to accommodate these new parishioners, who were mostly non-English speaking refugees with little education. (Morris, 1991;Wilma, 2001)

The Rainier Valley Neighborhood became the focus of national attention when the a group of Seattle citizens challenged the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Impact Study (EIS) prepared for the proposed expansion of the I-90 corridor along the existing Lake Washington Floating Bridge western approach. The proposal called for a cut and cover tunnel through the Mount Baker ridge and a greatly increased corridor width. Concurrently, African American activists questioned the routing of highways through low-income neighborhoods. The corridor plan was revised over several year and a court injunction was lifted in 1979 allowing work to proceed, however the construction of new freeway lanes and the lid over the corridor, altered local street alignment resulting in the abandonment of South Atlantic Street and the creation of the I-90 right-of-way Park, now known as Sam Smith Park, and an eastward shift of the 23rd Avenue South right-of-way. The Colman School, located adjacent to the corridor, was closed in 1979, and was seen as a symbolic abandonment of the neighborhood. (Dorpat, McCoy, 1998)

Although impacts from the I-90 corridor could not be completely mitigated, and urban blight continued in the neighborhood, public and private initiatives have been and are continuing to repair previous damage to the neighborhood, serve its residents, and increase its desirability as a place to live and work. SouthEast Effective Development (SEED) was organized in 1975, as a community-based non-profit that strives to improve the Rainier Valley as part of a comprehensive approach to revitalization. Over the last several years, SEED has developed or redeveloped senior and family housing in the area, as well as developing a vital arts and cultural program. (Baerny, 2004)
Sound Transit's proposed light-rail line running through the Valley, just to the south of the Rainier Valley neighborhood has recently increase public attention on the area. Mayor Greg Nickels recently announced a southeast Seattle "Action Agenda" that proposes to capitalize on the huge public investment in light-rail to spur growth within Rainier Valley. Nickels earmarked $95 million in development funds, including the existing Rainier Valley Community Development Fund and existing voter-approved levies for education, parks, and affordable housing. (Young, 2005)

Today the Rainier Valley Neighborhood as part of the Rainier Valley as a whole has developed into probably the most multi-culturally diverse area of the city. In 2000, nearly 40,000 people lived in the area, with Asians comprising over 45% of the population, with African Americans, Whites, Hispanics, and other nationalities making up the rest. Rainier Valley also has the largest proportion of Seattle's immigrants, with 40% of the population foreign born. This reflects in the largest variety of languages spoken at home, with around 45% of Rainier Valley's residents speaking another

language other than English at home. The median household income was approximately $39,000, well below that of the city as a whole. (RVCDF, 2003)

Colman School

The Jackson Street Regrade Project of 1909, resulted in the demolition of Seattle School District's South School, the community elementary school used by many of the children residing in the upper part of the Rainier Valley. The area had been annexed by the City of Seattle in 1907, and in early 1909, the Seattle School Board authorized the purchase of a relatively small tract of land for the erection of a new school building in the Rainier Valley corridor. The site, at the corner of Atlantic and 24th Avenue South, was bought for $9,525. The new school was named in honor of Seattle pioneer and engineer James M. Colman, who had passed away in 1907. Some of the land that was purchased for the school may have been obtained from Colman's estate. (Sherwood, 1975; Erigero, 1989; Thompson & Marr, 2001)

The school was built for $87,637, from designs completed by the Seattle School District staff architect James Stephen, and was nearly identical to Adams Elementary School built in Ballard the same year. Stephen designed the two "T" shaped seventeen room brick school buildings in the Jacobean Style. The "T" shape was a variation of the earlier nine-room "model schools," with the addition of a flanking wing and the anticipation of another expansion wing to complete the classical composition. The schools also departed from earlier frame "model school" construction, using masonry to create a "new" fireproof type of school. (Erigero, 1989; Thompson & Marr, 2001)

Colman School opened on January 24, 1910, with an enrollment 519 students in grades one through seven. The principal, W.G. McCarthy, supervised fifteen teachers. Miss Anna Kane succeeded McCarthy in 1912. Kane served as principal of Colman until 1940, possibly one of the longest principal ships at one school in the history of the Seattle School District. Kane was succeeded by principal James F. Shannon. (Erigero, 1989; Thompson & Marr, 2001)

In 1940, an undistinguished one-story auditorium-gymnasium structure that was designed by Naramore & Brady, was added to the southern end of the building, precluding any future completion of the intended composition. Between 1944 and 1948, the Seattle School District purchased the land on the block east of 24th Avenue South for a play field. In 1948, the street was vacated by the Seattle City Council, which allowed a direct connection between the two sites. (Erigero, 1989; Thompson & Marr, 2001)

Enrollment at Colman School increased dramatically during World War II, primarily because the federal government built a large housing project in the Colman vicinity and enrollment, which had dropped to 240 students in 1939, shot up to over 600. After the War, with the closure of the housing project, enrollment began to decline. (Erigero, 1989; Thompson & Marr, 2001)
Planned expansion of the Interstate highway system adjacent to the original Lake Washington Floating Bridge began in the late 1960s, with the acquisition of residential properties in the vicinity of Colman School for a right-of-way for a new interstate, Highway 1-90. As houses to the north of the school were demolished, the site became increasingly isolated from surrounding neighborhood. In 1973, enrollment in the school had fallen to 300 students and in June 1979, the school was closed as an elementary school. The building was used for a while by the Summit K-12 alternative school, which was relocated from the old Summit School building on Capitol Hill. For the 1984-85 school year, Summit K-12 had an enrollment of 387 students. The Summit program was then moved from

the Colman School building in 1985, because of highway construction disruptions. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)

Later in 1985, the building was occupied by a group of African-American activists who wished to use the building for an African American Heritage Museum. The occupation lasted eight years, until Mayor Rice, pledged City support for the project. Several years of frustrated attempts to raise funds for the realization of this vision and the continual disintegration of the building caused by vandalism and water infiltration, may soon make way for a proposed adaptive re-use project. (Nabbelfield, 2001; Thompson & Marr, 2001)

Historic Architectural Context

Jacobean Style

At the turn of the last century, the vast majority of larger residential and institutional architecture represented the contemporary programs dressed eclectic architectural styles derived from European models. One of these derivative styles was identified as Jacobean, a melding of medieval and Renaissance features. The form was used extensively in seventeenth century England and in a lesser extent in the American Colonies, taking their inspiration from architectural forms developed in the Netherlands and Germany. This style was first used in the United States in the mid-seventeenth century for major residences in the Mid-Atlantic States of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. (Erigero, 1989; Walker, 1996)

English architect Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912), probably the most influential architect of the Victorian period, drew heavily on earlier example to create flamboyant original compositions for large country estates during the 1860s and 70s. Shaw's architectural designs were widely published in American architectural journals and would influence generations of architect. Shavian medieval style, as it was popularly known, led to the popularity of Queen Anne style buildings and the creation of the Shingle Style developed by Eastern Seaboard architectural firms such as McKim, Meade, & White. The form eventually reached the other areas of the United States where the forms were applied to major residences, university buildings, and men's clubs. The Rainier Club (1902-04, Cutter, Malgren, & Wager) in downtown Seattle is a fine example of this style applied to the latter. Jacobean styling eventually filtered down to school building throughout the nation. (Erigero, 1989; Walker, 1996) See Figures 44-46 in Appendix A.

Seattle School District Architect, James Stephen, and his successor, Edgar Blair, used Jacobean styling in a number of District schools between 1909 and 1917. These schools include but were not limited to: Emerson Elementary (1909); Greenwood Elementary (1909), Colman Elementary (1909), Adams Elementary (1909); Gatewood Elementary (1910); John Muir Elementary (1910); West Woodlawn Elementary (1910); and Fauntleroy Elementary (1917). The style as used in these schools is characterized by steeply-pitched gable or hipped roofs; scrolled or stepped parapets; red brick masonry exteriors often laid in Flemish bond; a centrally located wall dormer over the main entry; terra cotta belt courses; terra cotta trimmed vertical windows with transoms; arched portals trimmed with terra cotta with various medieval ornamental motifs such as strapwork. (Erigero, 1989)

Original Building Owner: Seattle School District No. 1

The first school in Seattle was taught 1854, by Catherine P. Blaine at Bachelor's Hall, a boarding house for single men located near the present day First Avenue and Cherry Street. An initial three-person School Board probably formed around 1861, and in 1862, the first public funds were used to

pay a teacher salary for the 23 children attending school. In 1869, Seattle received a city charter, and residents approved a tax to fund a schoolhouse building. Once the Central Schoolhouse, a two-story building with two classrooms, was built in 1870, enrollment jumped to one hundred students. Shortly thereafter four additional "shack" schools were built to house the growing enrollment. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)

In 1882, Edward Ingraham was named the first superintendent of the Seattle School District. In 1883, a new twelve-room Central School opened. By 1893, over six thousand students attended Seattle Public School, and a major construction program began. Sixteen new schools opened between 1880 and 1890. The first high school commencement was held in 1886 for twelve graduates. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)

Frank B. Cooper was hired as superintendent in 1901. During his 21-year tenure he led the Seattle School District's transformation into a major urban school system. James Stephen also became the school architect and director of construction in 1901, and designed a series of "model" schools, standard wood frame elementary schools. Cooper and the School Board planned for smaller neighborhood elementary schools and comprehensive high schools. By 1910, enrollment was at 24,758 students and more elementary buildings were needed. A new elementary school plan by Edgar Blair using brick construction was endorsed. (Colman was the second of this type of building, opening only 21 days after Adams School.) Under Superintendent Cooper, Seattle Schools initiated programs for students with special needs. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)
As the enrollment continued to grow, more elementary and high schools were needed. In 1919, a bond issue was passed to fund them and Floyd A. Naramore replaced Blaire as school architect and significantly influenced school design for the next decade. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)

In 1923, a bond issue provided funds for the first intermediate or "junior high" school for students in grades 7-9. Between 1923 and 1929, high schools adopted specialized programs for science, art, physical education, industrial arts and home economics. By 1935, all elementary schools also included kindergarten and lunchroom service was being added to all schools. Attendance grew during the 1920s then dropped significantly during the 1930s. Schools were consolidated and 16 were closed. During the World War II, Seattle became a center of aircraft and shipbuilding for the War effort and school enrollment once again grew, especially in areas where there were no current school facilities. However, the new buildings were temporary or portable in order to conserve material for War needs. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)

After the War, enrollment swelled to a peak of 100,000 students in the early 1960s. Between 1946 and 1958, six separate bond issues were approved for new school construction. One of the first priorities during this period was the building of new junior high schools. Between 1945-1965, ten new junior high schools, seventeen new elementary schools, and four new high schools were built. During this period, the Seattle School District once again built quality structures and each school was individually designed. Elementary schools included separate gymnasiums and auditorium/lunchrooms. Older high schools gained additions of gymnasiums and specialized classroom space. Despite all of the construction, there were still extensive needs for portable classrooms for excess enrollment. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)
In 1966, a new type of school was designed based on pedagogical theories of team teaching, open space and synergy. Five new elementary schools were designed and built with an "open concept" and other schools were remodeled with the removal of walls and addition of learning resource

centers. New programs for Head Start, Title 1 remedial, Special Education and Transitional Bilingual were added. Also during the 1960s, racial desegregation of schools was attempted. By 1977, the School Board instigated a sweeping plan of desegregation that included bussing for over half of Seattle's schools. By 1980, school enrollment had dropped by half from the 1960s, and the School Board enacted a school closure plan. (Colman was closed in 1979, and operated as an alternative school until 1985.) Two high schools, seven junior high schools and twenty elementary schools were closed by 1984. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)

In 1984, many schools need upgrading or replacement, and a bond issue passed for 13 new Elementary Schools, upgrading Ballard High and a new facility for Franklin High. Community debates about preservation followed this bond issue. The School Board also decided that excess properties were an asset to the Seattle School District and therefore should not be sold, but rather leased to community groups. Only three of the decommissioned schools were demolished so that the underlying property could be leased, and the rest of the buildings either sit empty or are being revamped for other purposes by long-term leaseholders. (Thompson & Marr, 2001)

Building Architect: James Stephen (1858-1938)
James Stephen was born in Ontario, Canada on March 28, 1858. His father was a skilled cabinetmaker, and James was also trained in his early years as a cabinetmaker and organ maker. He received his architectural training through a correspondence course. He began his practice in Hyde Park Illinois around 1885. He moved briefly to Pasadena, California, before arriving in Seattle in June 1889, immediately after a major fire destroyed the business core of the pioneer town. (Ochsner, Krafft, 1994)

Stephen joined Timotheus Josenhans in a short-lasting partnership beginning in 1894. The firm designed buildings on the Washington Agricultural College (now Washington State). As economic conditions declined in the late 1890s, Stephen fell back on his cabinetmaker's skills, working for the Moran Shipyards in Seattle and Alaska. Seattle School District No.1 hired him in 1899, to prepare plans and specification for several schools, among them the Green Lake School that was adopted as the "Model School Plan" for later District elementary schools. Stephen became a Seattle School District employee in 1901, and continued in this capacity as the Official School Architect until late 1910. During this period, Stephen was responsible for the design of over 50 District schools. (Ochsner, Krafft, 1994)

As Kate Krafft reported in her biographical sketch of Stephen:
His model provided the basis for a flexible and economical approach to school construction. The wooden construction system and standard floor plan both facilitated a phased construction process in which an eight- twelve-, or twenty-room school could be constructed and later expanded. While standard floor plans and interior finish materials were used, the exterior elevations and details of these schools varied greatly and exhibited wood detailing indicative of Stephen's background as a carpenter and cabinetmaker.

Extant schools in Seattle that follow the model plan, or variations on it, include: Interlake (1904; now Wallingford Center), Summit (1905; now the Northwest School), John Hay (1905; now an alternative school), Seward (1905; now an alternative school), Stevens (1906), and Latona (1906, altered). (Ochsner, Krafft, 1994) *See Figure 54 in Appendix A.*

In 1908, Stephen prepared a report on modern school design, construction, and equipment. This report directly led to the creation and adoption of the second model plan that incorporated fireproof materials including concrete, masonry, and terra cotta. These "new" school plans also incorporated modern lavatory equipment. These later schools were often executed in late Gothic or Jacobean style, then popular, and were also designed to be expandable. Extant schools that followed the "new" model were: Emerson (1908-09; a.k.a. Rainier Beach), Colman (1909; now vacant), and Greenwood (1909). As School District Architect, Stephen also designed the original portions of two of Seattle's oldest extant high schools: Lincoln (1906-7) and Queen Anne (1908-09), which has since been altered for housing). (Ochsner, Krafft, 1994) *See Figures 49-53 in Appendix A.*

Stephen continued in private practice during his tenure as School District Architect. He designed numerous residential, ecclesiastical, and commercial buildings including the original portion of the downtown YMCA in Seattle. He also designed schools in Redmond, Renton, Auburn, Olympia, Everett, Kirkland, and Bremerton. In 1908, he went into partnership with his son, Frederick, as Stephen & Stephen. This partnership produced designs for numerous school buildings in cities throughout Washington State, including Wenatchee, Cashmere, Richmond Beach, Vancouver, Ellensburg, Kirkland, Cle Elum, Chehalis, Fall City, and Port Townsend. William G. Brust, a former classmate of Frederick's, joined the partnership in 1917. (Ochsner, Krafft, 1994)

Stephen retired from the practice in 1928, and passed away in 1938, leaving a legacy of stylish school buildings constructed in more than 50 school districts around the state. (Ochsner, Krafft, 1994)

Building Contractor

F.S. Cannon was the contractor for the original Colman School building. The contractor for the 1940 addition is unknown at this time.

Other Associated Individuals

James M. Colman (1832-1906), See Figure 56 in Appendix A.

Note to Readers: Indented text below is excerpted directly from the HistoryLink Cyberpedia Essay, "Colman, James Murray (1832-1906)," written by James R. Warren in September 1999. The text is quoted in its entirety, although minor editorial changes have been made. Scottish-born James Murray Colman arrived in Seattle in 1872, at the age of 40 to lease and operate Yesler's sawmill. Colman was a prime mover in organizing the Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad after the Northern Pacific decided to make Tacoma its Western terminus. He built Colman's Dock (today Pier 52, the terminal for the Washington State Ferries),,,,,, which became a thriving hub of maritime commerce during and after the Klondike Gold Rush of 1997.

Born in 1832 in Scotland, James Colman headed to the western United States at 29. He wound up in San Francisco, where he was hired to run the Port Madison sawmill on Puget Sound. Three years later, he bought a run-down mill at Port Orchard. Just after he had remodeled it, in 1869, it burned down and he found himself bankrupt. In 1872, Colman moved to Seattle where, with San Francisco backers, he leased and operated Yesler's Mill at the foot of Yesler Way, now Pioneer Square. The great Seattle fire of 1889 destroyed Colman's properties. He immediately built a larger four-story brick Colman Building that still stands on First Avenue and built another building on Main Street.

In 1873, Northern Pacific shocked Seattle by picking Tacoma as its railroad terminus. Colman led Seattle in building its own railroad—the Seattle & Walla Walla—in response. He hoped to reach Walla Walla to hook up with the first transcontinental line to reach the Cascades. Eastern capitalists

declined to finance the venture, so Colman put up $20,000 if others would put up $40,000. As the rails neared Renton, a coal-mining company that initially had pledged to ship coal on the line to the waterfront shifted its operations to Newcastle. So Colman built over to Newcastle. Eventually Colman put up most of the $350,000 cost. After Colman turned a profit running the Seattle & Walla Walla, Northern Pacific bought it and extended a spur line to Tacoma.

Colman built the original Colman Dock (now Pier 52, the terminal for Washington State Ferries on the downtown Seattle waterfront). He built it as a 40 x 60-foot shipping dock in 1882, but the 1889 fire destroyed that. He rebuilt it, and the ensuing Klondike Gold Rush (1897) made it a thriving hub. He also built the Colman Creosoting Plant in 1883, where Union Station now stands south of Pioneer Square. He was quarter-owner of the steam tug *Vigilant* and with his sons built three yachts. James Colman died in 1906.
Colman is remembered locally with his namesake dock, his downtown office building, Colman Park (designed by John C. Olmsted in 1910), Colman Playground, and the former Colman School. (Warren, 1999)

Anna B. Kane (1863-1943)
Anna B. Kane arrived in Seattle in 1901, after earning her teaching certificate from the normal school in River Falls, Wisconsin, and teaching briefly in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Her first teaching assignment in Seattle was at Cascade School, followed by stints at Green Lake and T.T. Minor schools. She became the principal at Brighton School in 1910, before moving on to Colman School in 1912. Kane was a careful administrator with progressive values, although also known as a stern disciplinarian by her students, keeping a little used stick in her office. She served as principal at Colman until 1940, a tenure that is thought to be unsurpassed within the Seattle School District. (Pieroth, 2004)

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The features of the Landmark to be preserved, include:
The site and the exterior of the building, excluding the 1940 addition.

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