



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649  
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

### REPORT ON DESIGNATION

LPB 274/06

Name and Address of Property: **Hamilton Middle School**  
**1610 N. 41<sup>st</sup> Street**

#### Legal Description:

Block 17, Lake Union addition to Seattle as recorded in Volume 1 of Plats, at Page 238 records of King County, Washington;

And:

The South 27 feet of the north 33 feet of North 42<sup>nd</sup> Street as vacated by Ordinance No. 98969 and per joint use agreement established by ordinance No. 100262.

At the public meeting held on August 2, 2006, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Hamilton Middle School at 1610 N. 41<sup>st</sup> 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, 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 the neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.*

### DESCRIPTION

#### Setting

Hamilton Middle School is located at 1610 North 41<sup>st</sup> Street in the Wallingford Neighborhood of Seattle; the immediate neighborhood consists of cohesive blocks of bungalows from the 1910's and 1920's. Wallingford playfield, a City of Seattle Park, abuts

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**The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

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the north boundary of the school site, along the former centerline of the vacated North 42<sup>nd</sup> Street right-of-way.

The school property is a 2.04-acre site with more than 30 feet of elevation change diagonally from the northeast corner at 243 feet to the southwest corner at 212 feet. The building was erected on a plateau with its principal elevation facing south and its main entry more than ten feet above the street level. The school building consists of the original 1926 20<sup>th</sup> three storey main building, with two small gymnasiums at the rear of the U-shaped floor plan and the auditorium in the center, including a library added in the second-storey volume of the auditorium in 1970. Two portable classrooms were placed at the rear of the building in 1959.

The school site is bounded by North 41<sup>st</sup> Street to the south, Woodlawn Avenue North to the west, and Densmore Avenue North to the East. Wallingford Avenue, a primary north-south arterial, is one block to the east of the site; Stone Way, a primary north-south arterial, is three blocks to the west of the site; North 40<sup>th</sup> Street a primary east-west arterial, is one block south of the site; and North 45<sup>th</sup> Street, a major east-west arterial and the commercial core of the Wallingford neighborhood, is four blocks north of the site.

### **Appearance – 1927 Original Building**

Twentieth Century Georgian is a revival style starting from around 1910. Georgian style architecture is based on seventeenth and eighteenth century Colonial architecture; school district architect Floyd Naramore favored the Twentieth Century Georgian style in his school building design. As was typical with other schools designed by Naramore, Hamilton was sited to present an imposing façade with terraces and entry stairs to enhance the monumentality and institutional mission of the school.

Hamilton is a three-story U-shaped building. Hamilton was the prototype of the “hollow square” plan concept in which a one-story assembly room, lunchroom and kitchen are located at the heart of the building and encircled by corridors and classrooms. The symmetry of the plan is reflected in the exterior elevations. The gymnasiums are articulated as separate masses flanking a one-story service wing located north of the heart of the building enclosing lockers, shops and offices with a heating plant in the basement.

The building is a reinforced concrete structure with dark red burlap brick veneer laid in a running bond with buff-colored mortar. The building has parapeted flat composition roofs with skylights. Molded cast stone coping, cornice architrave and belt course decorate the exterior of the building except at the gymnasium wings which only have molded cast stone copings with a narrow string course below. Cast stone quoins trim the corners of the principle elevations. The windows are typically eight-over-eight, double-hung, painted wood sash with ground-faced, flat-arched brick soldier course at the head. Cast stone keystones and sills occur at windows on the second floor at the primary elevations. The building has a concrete plinth with a cement plaster finish.

The primary south elevation has a tripartite organization with a pedimented central entry pavilion that projects slightly forward of the classroom bays on each side and has a slightly

higher parapet. Six tall cast stone urns decorating the entry pavilion parapet were removed after a major earthquake in the 1960's. Three semi-round entry portals lined with cast stone panels and keystones frame recessed entry doors which have leaded-glass fanlights. Ornamental wrought iron balconets occur at the second floor double-hung windows. Cast stone spandrel panels with ornamental garlands are located between the second and third floor windows. A cast stone frieze above the pilasters is incised with the school name and a cast stone shield with garlands is centered in the pediment.

The east and west elevations of the building are similar to the front classroom bays in materials and detailing and are identical to each other except for details at recessed exit doors at the first floor of the stairwell bays. On the east elevation the doors have cast stone lunettes with sunburst patterns. Both west doors in the original design had leaded-glass fanlights. The fanlight at the southwest door has been removed and replaced with clear glazing. Stairwell bays at the north and south ends have tall triple-sash windows and are trimmed with cast stone quoins. Between the stairwells are regularly spaced double-hung windows at each classroom.

The one and one-half story gymnasiums at the northwest and northeast corners are identical to each other in massing and detail. The gymnasium wings project approximately seventeen feet beyond the stairwells on the side elevations. Each has a large skylight and six tall ten-over-ten windows on the elevations facing the street and two windows at each corner of the north elevations.

The exterior elevations at the interior of the U-shape have cast stone copings but no other cast stone detail. Windows have brick sills, not cast stone sills and do not have the flat-arched soldier course as do windows on the external part of the U-shape.

### **Appearance – 1971 Addition**

There has been a steady stream of minor remodels to Hamilton's interior over the life of the building. The most significant alteration is the 1970-71 interior remodel and infill designed by architects Bindon & Wright. The program included the removal of the roof, trusses and windows at the assembly room and lunch room and infill construction matching the floor levels of the existing second and third floors to provide a Learning Resource Center.

The character of the assembly room was significantly diminished with the remodel and removal of its wood trusses, arched proscenium, large paneled wood sliding doors and high windows on the east and west walls. The remodel included the addition of folding partitions at the assembly room and relocation of the projection booth to the rear of room to provide one large or three smaller large group instruction spaces. New suspended ceilings with recessed light fixtures were provided at the assembly room and lunchroom.

Materials used in the Learning Resource Center infill include concrete and concrete block with brick veneer at exterior walls, pan-joint floor and roof construction with post-tensioned beams, metal stud and gypsum wallboard at interior walls, painted wood frames for reliights, aluminum frames for new windows, suspended acoustic ceiling tile and carpeting.

### **Current Condition**

Hamilton's building was designed for a large capacity and its exterior has been largely unaltered. The six ornamental cast stone urns decorating the parapet of the primary south elevation were removed after the earthquake in 1965 as the principal at the time feared they may fall off in the event of another earthquake. In 1990, leaded-glass fan lights above the main entry doors were repaired, restored and protected with polycarbonate sheets. The leaded-glass fanlight over the southwest entrance door has been replaced with clear glazing. Flat panels have been applied to the exterior faces of the original paneled wood exterior doors.

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The remodel also included renovation of the Boys' and Girls' shower locker areas, relocation of the book room, remodel of the Girls' locker room and Room 104 to provide a pupil personnel services area, sprinklers at the first and second floor corridors and a new book room.

Materials used in the Boys' and Girls' shower and locker facility remodel include concrete block plastered and painted with ceramic tile wainscot, cement floors with ceramic tile in toilet and shower areas, painted exposed slab ceilings and new lockers and locker baskets.

The following is a chronology of alterations to Hamilton School building and grounds:

- 1927 Irrigation and landscaping, kitchen sinks and mechanical piping. Design by Naramore.
- 1953 Display case at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
- 1954 Display case
- 1955 Stage lighting
- 1956 Remodel art room sinks at Room 304

- 1957 Remodel counseling office Room 105; remodel storage room 212 to become science room.
- 1958 Install dust-collection system at woodworking shop; science room remodel at Rms. 212 and 213
- 1959 Portable relocation to Hamilton
- 1962 Electrical alterations - lighting and outlets. Installation of public address system
- 1963 New art room Rm. 305 and language lab Rm. 311
- 1970 Vacation of N. 42<sup>nd</sup> Street between Woodlawn and Densmore. Property addition for playground expansion.
- 1970 Construct retaining wall, fence and develop addition to existing school playground. Contract for \$23,968 awarded to Almer Construction Company.
- 1970 Alter interior by adding floor space to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor - Phase I design by architects Bindon & Wright. Contract for \$186,700 awarded to Kurth Construction Company.
- 1970 Alter portion of existing building to add a new learning resource center on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor; boy's and girl's physical education locker rooms and showers; pupil personnel offices; and a large group instruction area - Phase II design by architects Bindon and Wright. Contract for \$376,800 awarded to Algene Construction Company.
- 1970 Signage over library desk, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor reading room and other rooms
- 1971 Fire Department approves partial sprinkler installation with understanding of future completion as funds are available:
  - 1. 3<sup>rd</sup> floor corridor and stairs from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
  - 2. Boiler room
  - 3. Storage rooms opening into corridors on all floors
- 1971 Joint use agreement between the City of Seattle and School District for property adjoining school. City acquired the property and requires School District to improve the recreational facilities.
- 1971 Remodel Room 303, nurse's exam room, women's lounge, stock room and shop
- 1976 Fire sprinkler improvements
- 1978 Install wood shop portable
- 1979 Seismic improvements: strong-back, tie-downs, anchors, corrections to the existing chimney. Tuck pointing and patching cracks.
- 1982 Repair stone and brick parapet. Rake mortar joints and repoint.
- 1983 Burner replacement
- 1984 Wood shop remodel - equipment relocation
- 1984 Boys' and Girls' restroom plumbing improvements. Remove existing fixtures and provide new fixtures at new locations.
- 1985 Life-safety improvements including providing fire doors at stairs
- 1987 Wood shop audio-visual room and display remodel
- 1987 Re-roofing and roof drains
- 1988 Welding booth modifications in metal shop
- 1990 Provide dual-fuel boiler and water heater

- 1990 Door and window glazing replacement. Leaded glass window over door repaired and restored and polycarbonate protective glazing added. Obscure wire glass at gyms replaced. Metal parapet coping added. Exterior lights at parapet added. Roofing at southwest portion and roof painting at entire roof.
- 1991 Exterior restoration and seismic improvements (Capital Levy No. B336B). Exterior maintenance and restoration at the north side and interior courts including cleaning and sealing of cast stone, masonry and concrete surfaces, repointing of masonry joints, repair and repainting windows and doors, replacing damaged glazing and providing safety glazing at doors. Strong-backing of walls at attic.
- 1994 Mechanical upgrades
- 2000 Life-safety/ADA electrical improvements including modifications to science rooms 254, 263 and 356; band room concrete ramp; mechanical improvements; re-facing chalkboards with white board and new storage cabinets.

### **Historic Context of Hamilton School**

The Wallingford neighborhood emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as the population of Seattle's north end rapidly grew. The neighborhood experienced not only residential growth but commercial development as well, and corner stores became a characteristic feature. By 1912, the Wallingford Church was constructed on North 45<sup>th</sup> Street, and in 1913, the City completed Wallingford Fire and Police Station at the southwest corner of 45<sup>th</sup> and Densmore.

As the number of new single-family houses in the Wallingford area continued to increase during the 1920s, Interlake quickly became the largest elementary school in Seattle. In 1926, K-8 enrollment at Interlake reached 1,062 and the small playfield to the east of the building was nearly covered with portable classrooms. As Seattle High schools also suffered from overcrowding, the development of an intermediate school program was a natural next step for the Seattle School District.

Hamilton has the distinction of being the first Seattle school building designed specifically for the intermediate school program. It was constructed during an era of growth. In 1922, the K-12 average daily attendance was over 42,000 and by 1933 it had increased to over 57,000. The movement toward providing an intermediate school began in 1917. School Board members E. Shorrock and Superintendent Thomas Cole were interested in and worked to establish middle schools in Seattle. In 1919, the School Board adopted a resolution stating that the interests of education in the district would best be served by establishing an intermediate department concentrating students in grades seven through nine and offering educational services tailored to the abilities and interests of these students. That same year a committee of Seattle principals recommended that the School Board select a site. The site, Block 17 in the Lake Union Addition was chosen. It was selected because it was near both Interlake School and Lincoln High School and would alleviate the over enrollment at those schools. The site was purchased in 1920 from Mr. and Mrs. George Holman for \$18,000.

Design for a new intermediate school was delayed as construction funds from the 1919 bond issue were being used to expand and build new elementary schools and high schools to alleviate overcrowding in existing schools. In 1923, \$150,000 from a special tax levy of three mills was approved by voters for the construction of an intermediate school. On November 16, 1923 the School Board authorized School District architect Floyd Naramore to prepare plans for a new intermediate school consisting of twelve classrooms, two manual training rooms, two home economics rooms and administrative rooms. In 1925, a tax levy for a \$2,250,000 bond fund was approved for school construction and provided funds for the balance of construction cost for Hamilton.

The Seattle School Board carefully examined the operation of intermediate schools around the country and the board president declared in the 1927 Three-Year Report that Seattle's plan of intermediate-school organization to be representative of the best intermediate-school educational methods and tested in light of practical experience. The intermediate school is especially designed to offer better educational opportunities for 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls. It was thought that by concentrating large numbers of students in these grades into one school, the needs of the individual pupils could be met more effectively by being able to offer a wider selection of subjects including manual training and home economics. Better equipment and a wider range of courses could be provided at a marked savings in room space and number of teachers than would be possible with students located in several elementary schools. In September, 1926 the seventh and eighth grades of what had previously been known as the Georgetown Elementary School were organized on the intermediate school basis. On January 3, 1927, this organization together with that of Grover Cleveland High School, occupied the new Grover Cleveland High School. Later that month the city's first intermediate school building, Alexander Hamilton Intermediate School opened.<sup>2</sup>

Naramore's design for Hamilton was prototypical of his three other intermediate schools - John Marshall, James Madison and James Monroe. All four intermediate schools are similar in functional organization, massing, structure and construction materials. Each school has a "hollow square" floor plan with major public rooms - the assembly room and cafeteria - located in the center of the building surrounded by corridors and classrooms. In all four schools, gymnasiums, heating plants and specialized classrooms such as wood shop are located in one-story or one-and-a-half story wings at the rear of the building. Unlike Naramore's other junior high schools, Hamilton has a clearly articulated pedimented entry pavilion and cast stone lunettes on the side entries. Hamilton's interior organization also differs from the other "hollow square" intermediate schools in that the heart of the structure was flipped in successive intermediate schools with a raised stage near the front of the room, behind the entry lobby and the assembly-lunch room on one level fanning out from the stage. The double-loaded corridor was altered to a single-loaded corridor reducing the number of rooms without daylight. Offices and service rooms were located at the front and back of the building. Heating and ventilating was provided by a dual system of radiators and fans.

Design changes were made during bidding for the construction contract. On December 31, 1925 a substitution of cast stone for terra cotta was approved and the alternates for physical training rooms were deleted. On January 8, 1926 a contract with Hans Pederson for general work for \$265,000 was approved. Design changes were also made during construction. In

March that year representatives of the Parent-Teacher Associations from McDonald, Latona, B.F. Day, Greenlake and Interlake elementary schools requested that gymnasiums be provided. The Buildings Committee recommended that the gymnasiums be provided at a cost of \$21,605. It was also determined that the soil bearing was poor and the floor slab was changed to reinforced concrete with beams and concrete columns. In June 1926, additional funds were approved for replacement of cement floors with linoleum, maple floors in lieu of “factory” floors, painting and tinting of walls and ceilings and adding fences and a retaining wall at the rear yard.

Wallingford residents proposed the new intermediate school be named Wallingford Intermediate School so as to establish a neighborhood identity. The school was also referred to as Interlake Intermediate School as an extension of Interlake Elementary school (now Wallingford Center). however on July 25, 1925 the School Board adopted the name Alexander Hamilton in accordance with the policy of naming schools after prominent statesmen.

Hamilton opened on January 31, 1927 with an enrollment of 725 seventh and eighth graders from Interlake, B.F. Day, Latona, Ross and F.A. McDonald schools. The following year Hamilton relieved Lincoln High School of a portion of its ninth graders. Mr. George R. Austin transferred from Interlake School and was Hamilton’s first principal. He held this position until his retirement twenty years later in 1947.

On February 11, 1927 a landscaping design by Floyd Naramore was approved at a cost of \$1000. On February 17, 1927 Hamilton Intermediate school was dedicated. This was two weeks after the dedication of Cleveland Intermediate and High School. School Board President Edward B. Holmes stated in the 1924-27 Triennial Report of the Seattle Public Schools that schools had successfully been reorganized so as to include the intermediate program. Hamilton and John Marshall Intermediate Schools provided under the 1925 building program had a capacity for 1,450 students.

Hamilton Intermediate School was changed to Hamilton Junior High in 1919 to 1930. In 1971, Hamilton and three other junior high schools were converted to middle schools serving grades six through eight as part of an early desegregation program. Hamilton’s named changed to Hamilton Middle School. Classes emphasized team teaching and individualized instruction. In 1972, Hamilton participated in a voluntary desegregation plan and exchanged students with Meany-Madrona Middle School. Hamilton became an international middle school in the fall of 2000, offering intensive foreign language instruction and a focus on global studies as a follow-up to the John Stanford International Elementary School at Latona.<sup>3</sup> Hamilton’s enrollment has ranged from a low of 727 in 2006 to a high of 1,281 in 1953-54.



### **Floyd A. Naramore (Seattle School District Architect, 1911-1932)<sup>7</sup>**

Floyd Naramore was born in Illinois in 1892 and graduated from MIT in 1907 with a degree in architecture. The Seattle School Board brought Naramore from Portland where he had been architect and Superintendent of Properties for the Portland School System and gained national attention for his design of Couch Elementary School (1914-15) and for his ability to control costs. Naramore succeeded Edgar Blair as architect for the Seattle School District. His first project with the school district was the design of Highland Park Elementary School (1919-1912). He went on to design multiple school buildings for the Seattle School District. During this phase of his career, he was known for his modernized Twentieth Century Georgian style in his buildings.

Hamilton International Middle School, designed by Naramore is the first school building designed for the intermediate school program for the Seattle School District. Hamilton is a more muted Twentieth Century Georgian style than in some of Naramore's other schools of this style such as Dunlap Elementary School and Roosevelt High School. Naramore favored siting a building to present an imposing façade as can be seen at Hamilton International Middle School, Roosevelt High School and Cleveland High School. His use of terraces and entry stairs such as at Hamilton, Cleveland and Roosevelt enhanced the facades and created a relationship between building and landscape suited to the institutional mission of the school.

A chronology of Naramore's projects for the Seattle School District includes:

1919	Highland Park Elementary School
1920	Brighton Elementary School
1921	John Hay Elementary School
1921-22	Roosevelt High School
1922	Columbia Elementary School
1922-23	James A. Garfield High School
1924	Dunlap Elementary School
1924	Montlake Elementary School
1926	Bryant Elementary School
1926	E.C. Hughes Elementary School
1926-27	Alexander Hamilton International Middle School
1927	Grover Cleveland High School
1927	John Marshall Junior High School
1927	Magnolia Elementary School
1928	Whittier Elementary School
1929	Daniel Bagley Elementary School
1929	Addition to James A. Garfield School
1929	James Madison Junior High School
1929	Laurelhurst Elementary School
1930	James Monroe Junior High School
1930	Addition to Lincoln High School
1931	Loyal Heights Elementary School

Naramore formed a partnership with Alvin Menke from 1924 to 1929 designing schools in Ellensburg and Aberdeen. After the Depression, school construction diminished due to lack of funds and the partnership dissolved. Naramore resigned from the Seattle School District in 1932 after the completion of Loyal Heights Elementary School. He sought more collaborative work, and teamed up with Grainger & Thomas and Bebb & Gould to complete Bagley Hall at the University of Washington (1935-36). In 1939, Naramore joined Clifton Brady and designed T.T. Minor Elementary School (1940-41) where he abandoned the modernized classical symmetrical compositions and favored a more modern articulation of building spaces. By the mid-1940's Naramore had been part of several collaborative design partnerships: Naramore & Brady; Naramore Grainger & Thomas; Naramore Grainger & Johanson; and Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, which outlasted the other ventures and became known as NBBJ. Naramore was elected a Fellow of the AIA in 1935 and served as AIA Seattle president from 1939 to 1941. Floyd Naramore died October 29, 1970.

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## **The features of the Landmark to be preserved, include:**

*The exterior of the building, the site excluding the portables, and the following features of the interior: the main entrance hall and lobby, the second floor library, and the two gymnasiums*

Issued: August 16, 2006

Karen Gordon  
City Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Fred Stephens  
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