



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 426/10

Name and Address of Property: **Yesler Terrace Steam Plant**  
**120 - 8th Avenue**

Legal Description: Blocks 2 through 6 and 8, inclusive, Yesler Terrace Addition, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Volume 37 of Plats, Page 21 through 22A, in King County, Washington;

Except that portion of said Blocks 2 and 8, thereof, condemned in United States District Court Cause No. 6189 for primary State Highway No. 1;

And Except that portion of said Block 4 conveyed to the City of Seattle for street purposes by deed recorded under recording No. 420237;

And Block A, Yesler Terrace Addition, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Volume 37 of Plats, Page 21 through 22A, in King County, Washington;

Together with that portion of vacated 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue as vacated under Ordinance No. 71751 of the City of Seattle, which attached by operation of law;

And Lot 1, Block 85, Terry's Second Addition to the Town of Seattle, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Volume 1 of Plats, Page 87, in King County, Washington;

And that portion of vacated 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the portion vacated alley between Lot 1, Block 85, of said Plat of Terry's Second Addition to the Town of Seattle, and Block 4 of said Yesler Terrace Addition, as vacated under Ordinance No. 109446 of the City of Seattle.

At the public meeting held on October 6, 2010, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Yesler Terrace Steam Plant at 120 - 8th Avenue as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

- D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction; and*
- F. Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City.*

## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

### **Historic Urban Context**

The Yesler Terrace Steam Plant is located within the Yesler Terrace housing complex. Yesler Terrace is located on the southwestern edge of Seattle's First Hill neighborhood, on 20 separately platted full blocks and 5 partial or truncated blocks. These blocks were primarily rectangular, but some were truncated parcels due to the street grid shift in the area north of Yesler Way and west of Broadway Avenue. The current property is situated just east of I-5, north of South Main and South Jackson Streets, and south of Alder Street. Its eastern edge extends to a half-block on the east side of Boren Avenue between East Fir Street and Yesler Way. (Note: For reference in this document orientation of north will be consistent with the street grid south of Yesler, even when describing the blocks to the north.)

Originally the property extended west to Maynard Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and north to include several blocks between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues to the west of Harborview Hospital. It was expanded to the north and east in 1942. The additional site included the adjacent half-block area west of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Harborview Hospital, two blocks between Broadway and 9<sup>th</sup> to the north of Spruce Street, and a half-block between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues and north of Yesler Way.

The resulting property had a north boundary along Alder Street, west of Broadway Avenue to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and extending north to encompass a half-block between Jefferson Street and James Street, along the present site of Jefferson Terrace. The west boundary was along 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue north of Yesler Way (in the present I-5 right-of-way), and along Maynard Avenue to the south of Yesler. The south boundary was along Main Street, while the western edges extended to a stepped line along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue South from Main north to encompass the half-block south of Fir Street; from there west to Broadway Avenue and north along Broadway Avenue to where it met Alder Street. (See the site plan, p. 45.)

Steam Plant was one of several non-residential buildings that were constructed in the early 1940s, as part of the larger housing development. A small complex of community facilities were constructed at the foot of Broadway Avenue, just south of the intersection of Broadway and Yesler Way. The Management Office building, which was located directly east of the Community Building along with three residential structures, was demolished in 2003 to allow for construction of a new Seattle Parks Department facility—the Yesler Community Center in 2004.

The Steam Plant is located where 8th Avenue, 9th Avenue, and Spruce Street intersect, on a site that slopes steeply down from north to south. The building has an irregular footprint and features three curving façades, including a primary one at the northwest corner that follows the curvilinear roadbed of 8th Avenue. The secondary south façade and southwest portions of the building have a rectilinear footprint and façades.

On the northwest and west sides, typical narrow strips of grass separate the building from the sidewalk along 8th Avenue. An 18'-wide paved concrete alley is located along the northeast, east, and south sides of the building, serving a small parking area along the southern two-thirds of the east side of the building. At the building's north end, a ramp up from the street provides vehicular access to a service drive on a portion of the flat roof. (Originally, coal delivery trucks used this ramp to access and unload into hoppers.)

The following description is derived from visual observation as well as tax assessor's records from 1960. The one- and two-story building has a concrete foundation and is constructed with a reinforced, poured-in-place concrete frame and roof slab. The massing features several different roof

levels, with projecting eaves and horizontal overhangs. Together with the horizontally striated texture on the board-form concrete façades, the eaves provide a strong horizontality to the building that balances the tall concrete stack rising from its center.

The Steam Plant contains a total of 10,870 sq. ft., with 8,530 sq. ft. at the primary grade level. Overall dimensions of the plant are approximately 77'-6" (east-west) by 130' (north-south). A recess on the east side of the building provides a service court approximately 18' wide by 25' deep. The southern 82'+/- of the building is rectilinear, while the northwestern portion features the curved façades—one along the northwest, another at the east end of the north façade, and a third as the north wall of the west service court. The latter two walls enclose a large storage room. Due to the topography, the northern portion of the building is a single story, while the southern portion is two-story.

Original windows are primarily multiple-light steel sash, set into openings with a slightly projecting concrete sill. Seattle Housing Authority records indicate that the windows along the southern portion of the west façade have been replaced. Both overhead doors and person doors are located on the south and east façades of the building. A number of the wood overhead doors appear to be original. The large overhead metal coiling door on the south façade is a non-original door in an original opening.

The original boiler room at the southwest side of the building constitutes the main volume of the Steam Plant—a 28'-tall open volume approximately 51' by 66'. This room has been recently divided by a metal-framed, gypsum wallboard-clad partition. To the east of it, at the southeast corner of the building, is an approximately 25'-wide, two-story office portion. The northern one-story portion of the plant contains an office, shop, and storage space. Tax records indicate wood-framed interior partitions with painted plaster. Large-scale, painted hollow clay tile or concrete block infill walls are also visible on the interior. Other interior finishes are utilitarian, consisting of concrete floors and walls, some painted plaster or hollow clay tile, and wood doors with metal trim.

Tax records indicate that vehicular roof access originally served coal hoppers to feed the boiler. A partial subbasement provides storage area as well as chimney access. The metal door to the chimney is stamped "Alphons Custodis Chimney Const. Co., Chicago, Ill." Permits indicate revisions to the boiler were undertaken in late 1974, and in mid-1975 a 10,000 gallon service tank was installed in the boiler room. The plant provided steam heat to the residential units until it was decommissioned in 1989-1990. In 1995 the boiler was removed and hazardous materials abated. This project included removal and replacement of five windows along the southern portion of the west façade.

A series of stepped garages were constructed to the east of the plant in 1955. This concrete-block structure measured approximately 105' (north-south) by 23' deep (east-west) and provided five parking bays. It was demolished after 1998, and presently there is surface parking on the former garage area.

Currently, a small portion of the building is used for Yesler Terrace facilities storage, while other portions, including the upper floor area and the majority of the boiler room, are leased to Harborview Hospital and used by the tenant as its cabinet shop and grounds shop.

While the Steam Plant is a utilitarian service structure, it clearly exhibits Modern design features, in contrast to the traditional designs of earlier power plants in the city. These features include the simple curvilinear massing, the flat roof and overhang over a horizontal band of windows along the northwest façade, and the expressive use of architecturally finished concrete as both structure and finish.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

*Note: A nomination of the Yesler Terrace housing complex was reviewed by the Landmarks Preservation Board at public meeting held on August 18, 2010, however the Board subsequently designated only the Yesler Terrace Steam Plant. The following statement of significance was taken from the above-mentioned Yesler Terrace nomination.*

### **The Surrounding First Hill Neighborhood**

The Yesler Terrace housing complex is located on the southern edge of the First Hill neighborhood and north of the easternmost part of the International District. This area is defined by its topography and major transportation corridors, which include the I-5 freeway on the west and Broadway Avenue, Boren Avenue South, and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue South on the east.

The site of Yesler Terrace was prominent from Seattle's beginnings as a city. At its western shoreline, Yesler Way was first the site of Yesler's mill—the first mill in Seattle—and the city's first center of development. The original King County Courthouse was located on this part of First Hill, situated between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues and Terrace and Alder Streets. The Yesler Terrace property extended to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, to an area of Jewish settlement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its southernmost edge was part of what was known then as "Japantown," later the International District. Also known as "Profanity Hill," because of the steepness of street grades, the surrounding area was developed up through the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with dense, wood-frame multi-family townhouses, apartment hotels, and boarding houses. By the 1930s much of the area was considered blighted. (Berner, p. 185.)

There were many benefits to the site selected for Yesler Terrace: The original development would replace deteriorated housing stock. Furthermore, it offered residents close proximity to the nearby County Hospital and several public schools, and to downtown, which was easily accessible by foot or streetcar. The original site also offered "an enviable view which included Mt. Rainier to the south and Elliot Bay and the Olympic Mountains to the west. This view, among other things, was an important factor in offering the eventual residents of Yesler Terrace pride of place." (Sale, p. 165)

### **Early Federal Housing Initiatives**

Provision of adequate housing for all was recognized as a social problem in the United States beginning in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Even during periods of economic stability and growth, there remained a significant number of people living in substandard conditions in both urban and rural areas. In the 1920s "the housing question" came to the forefront as a major social and political issue, a cause championed by such personages as Catherine Bauer, Lewis Mumford, and Walter Stabler, head of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (Aranovici, Radford). Stabler, speaking to a Senate committee in 1920, noted that the "housing question" was the most serious problem "that this country has ever seen" (Radford p. 7). Historically, the Federal government had not played a role in the provision of housing for the American people, but many prominent figures began to call for action (Aranovici, Radford).

During World War I the Federal government undertook the provision of housing for "industrial workers as are engaged in ... industries connected with and essential to the national defense, and their families" (Radford, p. 16). To do this the United States Housing Corporation was created. The USHC relied largely upon existing housing stock but also built some new, efficient housing. The newly constructed housing demonstrated the latest in site planning and design in large-scale housing, and inspired leaders in the field. The Housing Corporation only completed about one-fifth of its

originally projected units before the end of the war, when the program was dismantled. The Federal government dealt with the issue tentatively as there were concerns that war-era program would lead to continued provision of socialized housing after the war ended.

During the Great Depression, housing became a critical issue as rampant foreclosures caused many people to lose their homes. At the same time, the construction industry was brought to a standstill and new homes were not being constructed; there was a general lack of decent and affordable housing for working families. To address these needs, the Roosevelt administration established a series of “New Deal” programs in order to bring relief to struggling people and the struggling market.

The short-lived Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC), established in 1933, provided low-interest, long-term home loans and mortgages to home-owners who were in danger of being foreclosed upon. The focus of the HOLC Housing Division was not solely on low-income housing, but it nonetheless faced significant opposition. Major criticism was due to the Division’s reliance on eminent domain and slum clearance to gain land for new housing projects and limit competition with private construction companies. Despite this, the HOLC financed or constructed 58 developments containing a total of 25,000 dwellings across the U.S. during the 1930s (Ranford, p. 91). These projects were greatly influenced by European public housing projects and they demonstrated novel ways to develop housing and new design approaches.

The Public Works Administration (PWA) was established with a Housing Division organized in 1934 to construct new public housing, raise housing standards, and provide jobs. The Housing Division constructed seven projects financed with low-interest loans. It worked closely with local architects and builders to produce innovative plans and designs. To keep costs low, the Housing Division often obtained land through slum clearance, which brought public opposition and division among some supporters of public housing. (The projects were typically racially exclusive; for African American or whites residents.) Between 1934 and 1935 approximately 25,000 homes were constructed by the Housing Division. Perhaps more significant, its projects created an estimated 5,000,000,000 hours of much-needed work throughout the country for architects, engineers, and construction workers.

The Federal Housing Authority (FHA) was established one year after the HOLC, and became one of the most enduring and successful of the New Deal programs. Its goal was to stimulate the building industry, which had become stagnant. The scope of the FHA was much broader than that of the HOLC; it restructured the way people obtained loans to build homes, regulated loans and mortgages, and provided insurance. Because of it more people could afford to build a home, and more people could be employed building homes. FHA programs were very successful, and it won support from the middle class and the housing industry for it and for other New Deal programs.

### **The U.S. Housing Act of 1937 and the Lanham Act of 1940**

The FHA was not focused on building new public housing, but it stimulated an impressive amount of residential construction by private builders in a restricted economy (Mason). While the FHA brought assistance to many, and set standards for design and planning in new construction, it did not provide aid to low-income people.

Meanwhile a Kentucky court ruling declared the PWA’s Housing Division’s use of eminent domain unconstitutional. In response, housing officials adopted a new approach, brought before Congress in a bill sponsored by Senator Robert Wagner of New York. In 1937 the United States Housing Authority (USHA) was created with passage of the Wagner Act. The legislation was strongly supported by labor, but faced significant opposition due to the perceived socialist nature of government-sponsored housing. Unlike the WPA Housing Division, the USHA was structured as a financial manager to provide loans to local housing authorities, placing the responsibility for

construction and management of the housing projects at the local level. This enabled the USHA to fund many more projects, over than 370 in total. The USHA also placed the federal government in a more indirect role. New projects required local initiation and legislation.

Creation of the U.S. Housing Authority was based on its meeting three goals: elimination of slum housing; provision of quality housing to low-income families; and creation of jobs (Lord, p. 10). (The USHA was handicapped by an amendment that limited funds spent for each unit the agency constructed. This limitation led to many developments being designed more for cost than quality.)

Low-income limits resulted in general disinterest or opposition by the middle-class citizens and led to public housing efforts directed at the poor, in contrast to the original goal of proponents and the legislation, which sought to address housing needs of working and middle-class tenants. America's model for public housing—the lauded public housing of Europe—had successfully accommodated people of a range of income levels, but this approach was not successful on America soil. Despite difficulties, administrators and designers of public projects sought innovation and quality in housing developments, although in many cases financial limitations contributed to the perception of lower-quality housing for lower income levels.

The USHA was organized to loan federal funds to local housing authorities, created by special legislation in each state, to finance the development of low-income housing. The establishment of local authorities allowed the USHA to remain outside such decisions as site selection and project design and management, acting solely as a money lender. This approach also encouraged the construction of a great variety of housing projects across the United States in a short amount of time.

By the end of June 1940 over 73,100 dwelling units in 240 separate developments constructed in Washington had opened under federal programs (Dorpat, 1998, p. 384). By early 1941 the USHA had enabled funding for over 350 projects in the state, completed or under construction (Boyle Wagoner).

In 1939 Congress denied USHA's continuation beyond its initial three-years. By this date the country had stabilized, and war was now the most pressing concern. There was a mass influx of workers to locations of defense industries, and housing for these migrated workers became a primary concern. Low-income housing sites, which were already established, were assessed for possible contributions to defense worker housing, and new public housing construction was dedicated to that need. Between 1940 and 1942 more than 65,000 public housing units that had originally been intended as low-rent housing had been converted to housing for defense workers and their families. This quick action was made possible by the Lanham Act, passed by Congress in 1940, which provided \$150,000,000 for housing in overcrowded defense industry centers. After the war most of this housing was reverted back to low-income programs.

Seattle, as a major center of defense industry, experienced a vast influx of workers at the start of WWII. The housing developments of Holly Park, Rainier Vista and High Point were all built using funding from the Lanham Act, which allowed for them to be built as defense housing during the war and then converted to low-income housing.

The Yesler Terrace housing development was completed before the beginning of WWII and the passing of the Lanham Act. The original project remained low-income housing throughout the war, but the addition to the site, which was originally approved to be built as low-income housing, was turned over to defense housing for the duration of WWII.

Although the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) was the first housing authority in the state, other local housing authorities were quickly formed to take advantage of the new federal programs and deliver

needed low-income and defense worker housing projects. A Housing Authorities were established in King County in 1939, which constructed ten low-income and defense worker housing projects, including complexes in Auburn, Black Diamond, White Center, and the Park Lane Homes in Kirkland, designed in part by architect Ted Jacobsen). Other Housing Authorities were established in Walla Walla, Bremerton, and Tacoma in ca. 1940, in Vancouver and Grant County in 1942, and in Everett in 1943. Examples of early housing developments include the following notable projects:

- Salishan, Lincoln Heights and American Lake Gardens were constructed by the Tacoma Housing Authority in the early 1940s. The largest of these projects, Salishan, housed approximately 2,000 families of shipyard workers on a site of 465 acres. The project included a school and community center along with low-scale, single-family dwellings, duplexes and four-plexes. In 1951 the Tacoma City Council sold Lincoln Heights and American Lake Gardens, and converted the remaining 900 units at Salishan to low-income housing. These dwellings were demolished in 2002 for redevelopment of a new, traditional style, mixed-income housing project funded by a \$35,000,000 Hope IV grant. Site plan drawings of Salishan indicate it was similar to Yesler Housing with a dispersal of rectangular buildings with considerable open space between the units.
- The Bremerton Housing Authority constructed two large war-era developments, Eastpark and Westpark, in 1941. These two projects provided over 6,240 units of housing in low-scale duplex, triplex, and fourplex dwellings, with the first 600 opened in 1941. The two war-era developments included temporary and permanent buildings, and community facilities. The layout of the two Bremerton projects appeared more modest than Yesler Terrace or Salishan, with greater density and modest, one-story multiplex dwellings. Both Westpark and Eastpark have been replaced recently by new mixed-income projects.
- Vanport, built near Vancouver, Washington by the Portland Housing Authority was one of the largest of the projects in the northwest, built to house up to 40,000 residents near the Kaiser Shipyard, which employed 38,000 workers, a quarter of them women, by 1942. Vanport was converted to veterans housing for approximately 18,500 residents after the war, with the addition of Vanport College established to meet demands rising from the GI Bill. The development was destroyed by a flood in 1948.

### **Post War Public Housing Programs**

After the end of World War II significant deterioration of urban neighborhoods led to the National Housing Act of 1949 (NHA). President Harry Truman set the national goal of this program as “decent home and suitable living environment for every American family” (Howe, p. 88). By this time the USHA had become the Public Housing Administration (PHA).

The NHA greatly expanded the scope of government involvement in public housing, and resulted in construction of over 810,000 units. Projecting this many dwellings over a full six years, it took the NHA over two decades to reach this number. This legislation inspired the Urban Renewal effort of the following decades, which was intended to aid the redevelopment of large city areas. However, because the law creating urban renewal programs did not call for “equivalent elimination” as early slum clearance acts required, it allowed real estate developers to use federal subsidies to purchase cleared land without the mandate to rebuild housing. As a result both the NHA and the 1956 Federal Highway Act that followed it, contributed to the loss of inner-city housing.

Programs with more positive impacts on urban housing in the 1960s included President Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society legislation with the Housing and Urban Development Act and creation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Model Cities programs of the

late 1960s. The Fair Housing Act of 1968 eliminated racial discrimination in public housing and promoted integration.

Other programs during this period extended housing programs to include rehabilitation of existing housing, rent subsidies (the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program) and tax breaks for low income homeowners. Programs such as these created semi-private alternatives to public housing. President Richard M. Nixon discontinued federal support for urban renewal and the model cities programs and ended funding for public housing through an executive order, passing in their place the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act, which moved authority to state and local governments, and addressed housing within the context of jobs, public safety and health through Community Development Block Grant programs. In the late 1980s Congress established low-income housing tax credits, which subsidized private investment in low-income housing with federal tax credits awarded on a competitive basis by state housing authorities.

In the 1970s and 1980s local housing authorities in Washington instituted new programs and undertook efforts to subsidize home ownership by low-income families or housing cooperatives. Through block grant programs a number of local housing projects for the low-income elderly were built, and historic buildings were rehabilitated for low-income housing. Seattle's Morrison Hotel and Ravenna School Senior Housing programs exemplify these programs.

Another innovation in low income housing of the time was the scattered site program. In Seattle this resulted in contextual style, low-scale, multiplex housing for families dispersed throughout the city, in neighborhoods other than the central and southeast areas of the city. In 1981 Seattle voters approved a \$48 million bond issue to locally fund low-rise buildings for the elderly and disabled.

HUD's Hope IV program was established in 1993 to allow lower density projects following traditional, "New Urbanism" planning principles, and a mix of tenants with varied incomes. This program led to SHA's redevelopment of Holly Park in 1995 with NewHolly, a \$47 million project providing 1,400 housing units and 100 percent replacement of low-income housing on and off-site; redevelopment in 1998 of the \$17 million Roxbury House and Village project; and redevelopment in 1999 of the \$35 million Rainier Vista (with 850 affordable and market-rate housing units (including 500 units of replacement low income housing on and off site). In 2000 SHA undertook a similar redevelopment of the Highpoint project in West Seattle.

### **Low-Income Housing in Seattle**

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought periods of rapid growth to Seattle. During this time the residential population consistently spread out from the city center. The city's residential numbers ballooned during the earliest decades and then eased during the Depression, growing from 80,671 in 1900 to 237,194 in 1910; 321,931 in 1920; 363,426 in 1930; and just 368,302 in 1940.

Detached, wood-frame houses, multiplexes and apartment-hotels served as typical dwelling types for service and professional workers and their families. Low income and seasonally-employed workers tended to live in boarding houses or single-room occupancy hotels, near the city center or in semi-industrial areas such as the central waterfront or shorelines of Lake Union, Lake Washington, and the Ship Canal. Low income families typically resided in modest houses, or in small rental units.

Significant population growth during the period preceding WWI can be attributed primarily to annexations up until 1910, but growth in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century represents an actual increase in Seattle's population, and it resulted in a sharp need for housing. The city's population in the early 1930s stabilized in the early 1930s up until the 1940s brought an influx of World War II



defense workers. In the meanwhile, the lack of affordable housing left many poor and working-class people living in substandard conditions.

### **Creation of the Seattle Housing Authority**

Creation of a public housing authority in the Seattle was initiated when a young Seattle attorney, Jesse Epstein, approached Mayor Arthur Langlie in 1937 for assistance in realizing local housing reforms. Epstein explained to Langlie how the new federal legislation worked and how Seattle could obtain federal funds for slum clearance projects and new low-income housing. The mayor was not enthusiastic, but Epstein formed a committee to write legislation to enable the city to create a housing authority and thus receive government assistance (Sale, p. 164).

Epstein also approached the members of the City Council with his proposal and secured support from three of its five members. A city ordinance was passed in 1937 creating a Local Advisory Housing Commission; Epstein was made the committee chairman, and \$25,000 was granted to it to begin its work. The words of the ordinance stated the goals of the new committee: "Thousands are unemployed in Seattle, among them hundreds of members of the building trades who will share directly in the benefits derived by the whole community from a well-conceived local municipal low-cost housing program" (Berner, p. 184).

The Committee sponsored a Real Property Survey a Works Project Administration study in 1937. This survey examined low-income housing in Seattle and revealed that 28.5% of residential structures were substandard. It reported that more than 17,000 units were lacking a private bath and toilet (SHA First Annual Report).

In 1938 the City Council declared intent to establish a housing authority eligible for federal assistance (Sale). Epstein's comprehensive knowledge of enabling legislation and new federal funding programs qualified him to draft the bill allowing a housing authority in every city and county in the state. The legislation was passed in 1939, making Washington the 34th state to pass such laws. Meanwhile, in March of that year the SHA was established and Epstein was named director (Berner). Other members of the SHA Board included prominent citizens George W. Coplen, Kenneth J. Morford, Charles W. Doyle, and Mrs. Frank D. Henderson (SHA First Annual Report).

During this process Epstein did his best to persuade the public of the importance of public housing. In a July 1938 article, he outlined the principles and purposes of the U.S. Housing Authority: "to provide financial assistance to the States and political subdivisions thereof for the elimination of unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions, for the eradication of slums, for the provisions of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for families of low-income, and for the reduction of unemployment and the stimulation of business activity." He highlighted the fact that many other states were ahead of Washington in creating local housing authorities and using federal aid for low-income housing projects, and also emphasized the jobs that construction of these projects would provide (Epstein, "Here's How").

Shortly after its organization, SHA received \$3,000,000 from the federal government for low-income public housing and slum clearance (Sale, p. 164). This action raised Epstein's profile in Seattle along with public interest in the funds and how they would be used. The idea of public housing and housing authorities was new, and people were curious, while some were hostile. The Apartment Operators Association and owners of buildings destined to be demolished by slum clearance raised protests. This opposition appears to have been overruled by the evidence presented in the exhaustive study sponsored by the Housing Advisory Commission, which documented existing substandard living conditions and the need for a low-income housing program ("Seattle Votes Housing Plan").

### **Construction of Yesler Terrace**

Yesler Terrace was the first project undertaken by the SHA and was the first low-income housing development in Washington State. The project's siting resulted from the 1937 Real Property Survey, which led to the selection of "Profanity Hill" as the preferred location for the planned public housing development. The site selection had direct relationship to slum clearance as required to meet the requirement of the U. S. Housing Act of 1937, that "for every new home that a local housing authority builds, one substandard unit must be eliminated" (Nelson, p. 2).

SHA Director Jesse Epstein and his board carefully chose several blocks adjacent to King County's Harborview Hospital based on specific criteria: its high percentage of substandard housing and its location high on a hill with commanding views of Mt. Rainier, Elliot Bay, and the Olympic Mountains (Sale). Their choice was lauded by local civic groups, including the Seattle Real Estate Board and the Women's Federated Clubs ("Choice for Housing wins Acclaim").

Before the site could be developed, existing buildings had to be cleared and their tenants relocated. The area designated for the Yesler Terrace development was inhabited by a diverse range of people, most with low incomes. In contrast to the prevailing poverty there was also a thriving Japanese community made up by about a third of the families in the neighborhood, many of whom had operating businesses in the area. The 158 existing buildings on the site contained 471 dwelling units, mostly rented out by absentee landlords. 1,021 residents of these buildings were notified of the plans for development, offered relocation assistance, and counseled on their eligibility as tenants of Yesler Terrace. With exception of foreign-born nationals, who were excluded from the project, the original low-income tenants of the site were given preference in application for new housing (Miller, p. 8).

The construction of Yesler Terrace's new dwellings created an estimated 2,000 jobs; 800 directly on the site and 1,200 in mills and factories ("Yesler Work to Create 2000 Jobs"). The U.S. Housing Authority provided examples of building plans to expedite the design process and limit construction costs, but Epstein gave the design work wholly over to a selected team of local architects. In the end the construction cost was more than 10% less than recommended by the USHA, at \$2,500/unit, rather than \$2,772/unit (Nelson, p. 4).

The SHA First Annual Report of 1940 noted that the City Council had approved an addition to the Yesler Terrace site, construction of which commenced almost immediately upon completion of the original phase in 1942. The addition was constructed on three sites adjacent to the original development: on a half-block area west of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, two blocks between Broadway and 9<sup>th</sup> to the north of Spruce Street, and on a half-block east of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and north of Yesler Way. This second phase added 13 residential buildings to the original 84, and an additional 178 units for housing 600 residents (Cooper, SHA Annual Report 1943). The apartment buildings of the addition were similar in design to the earlier buildings, although reportedly they were not built to the same construction standards.

Yesler Terrace was dedicated to families, with a stated goal of providing "an opportunity to improve their economic status and the incentive someday to have a home of their own" (SHA Brochure). It did not accept individual residents. A tenant's rent was determined by three factors: family size, number of children, and income. The percent of a family's income required for rent decreased with its number of children. Families who reached an income higher than the limit set by the SHA were given notice to leave so that others with less income could be housed.

Although Yesler Terrace housing was not completed until 1942, the first tenant moved in during November 1941 (SHA Second Annual Report). Upon its completion, the project provided new dwellings with individual outdoor spaces, views, and community amenities resulting from a careful

arrangement of the buildings on the sloping site (Steinbrueck, p. 159). According to the 1943 SHA Annual Report the two-phase development resulted in a total of 97 low-rise residential structures, with 3 to 22 units each, a community building that housed a gymnasium-auditorium and SHA management offices, a child center building, and a Steam Plant that provided central hot water heating in lieu of individual building systems. The site was developed with central courtyards and a playfield. Additionally, the Seattle Parks Department ran an on-site program for boys and girls.

Yesler Terrace was the first low-income housing project in the West to provide heat from a central plant. J. Lister Holmes, in a November 1941 article, notes that:

The architects did not like the thought of having small chimneys popping out of the roofs to throw smoke into the windows of the buildings above. With this in mind they investigated other possibilities and found that, because of the length of the buildings, it was feasible to design an economical central heating plant with forced hot water circulation. Estimates showed the operation of this plant would cost \$2.50 less a unit per month than the next most economical method of heating. (*Pencil Points*.)

Social activities and organizations had been part of Yesler Terrace upon its completion, but in the post-war era their presence increased. Nursing classes, Girl Scout troop meetings, sock hops, and a children's circus were scheduled events, and residents were involved in the development of community social programs. Many of these were documented by the staff of *The Projector*, a journal published monthly by the tenants of the SHA. Medical services such as a traveling x-ray trucks and tuberculosis tests were made available to the tenants on a regular basis (SHA Seventh Annual Report). The long-term success of the development was affirmed in 1966, when the Seattle Municipal Art Commission awarded it with a Citation of Excellence for environmental compatibility and design excellence.

### **Civil Rights at Yesler Terrace**

Epstein was adamant that Yesler Terrace be racially integrated, and it has been cited as the first such public housing project in the country (Berner, 1992, p. 186). In a 1973 interview he stated,

So far as racial considerations were concerned, I made the decision administratively, early, that there would be no discrimination, no segregation, and, to me, that particular approach or way of handling the matter was so obvious that I did not ask the Board to declare a policy in writing. I felt that it could be handled administratively and I was also a little concerned that if I raised the question there might be some consideration given to such matters as quotas, even segregation (Droker).

Epstein avoided making desegregation a policy issue with the United States Housing Authority (Droker). Regardless, the USHA did not oppose this decision, despite the fact its housing developments at the time were specifically for white, low-income families; and those that were not, were segregated.

Before the completion of Yesler Terrace, Epstein was questioned by members of Seattle's black community about the development's racial policy. He spoke at a public meeting to over 1,000 people at an African American church. The meeting was heated and some attending demanded that African Americans be given their own assigned sections or buildings. There was also talk of setting quotas. Epstein disagreed and emphasized that all applicants would be evaluated by the same criteria: income and living situation, not race (Droker, p. 2).

Yesler Terrace remained Seattle's first racially integrated public housing development. Epstein recalled in a later interview that there were public meetings to encourage integrated rather than segregated housing, but due to pressures integration was more difficult to achieve in other SHA housing developments. (Droker, p. 2)

Despite the non-discriminatory residency practice that Epstein established for the Yesler Terrace development, non-citizens were not allowed to live in SHA housing. Construction of Yesler Terrace resulted in the demolition and removal of an estimated 395 Japanese American businesses, residences, and institutions. Because of this, and due also to the internment of Japanese-Americans and Japanese following Pearl Harbor, many pre-existing residents were not resettled within the project, regardless of their income levels or other needs. In addition, there were three Japanese churches and four Japanese grocery stores from the area. (The original Japanese Baptist Church at 901 East Spruce Street was one of the buildings removed for Yesler Terrace. This church presently is located north of Yesler Terrace at 106 Broadway Avenue. It was remodeled and expanded with accessory facilities in 1958, 1984, and 1997.)

### **Defense War-Worker Housing and Veterans' Housing in Seattle**

During World War II Seattle experienced a population influx of people who came to work in its wartime industries, including the Boeing Company, which recruited workers from the South. Existing housing was insufficient to meet the rising demand. With the federal government's approval through the Lanham Act of 1940, existing State legislation was amended that allow SHA to construct defense housing and waive the typical requirements of income level and replacement of substandard housing.

The 1942 residential addition to Yesler Terrace initially was not designated for defense housing, but was turned over to this purpose to address housing needs of war-workers. SHA subsequently gained funding for more defense housing projects, and its development built at Sand Point in northeast Seattle was one of the first defense housing projects in the nation. Rainier Vista, Holly Park, and High Point were built with funding provided by the Lanham Act, which allowed them to be used as defense housing during the war but operated as permanent low-income housing after the war's end (Droker). By 1943 SHA had built five housing projects in the city. Yesler Terrace was the only one near downtown Seattle, with the others located in outlying neighborhoods.

In 1946 the SHA shifted its focus to another pressing need: post-war housing for veterans. The census that year revealed that 20% of returning veterans were unable to find housing or were living in crowded conditions or in trailers. New houses were being constructed to meet demands, but SHA chose to provide interim veteran housing (SHA Seventh Annual Report). A February 27 article in the *Seattle Times* stated,

The Authority is concerned daily with the immense task of providing homes for veterans ... Public housing mushroomed in Seattle during the war years to meet the crisis of providing wartime houses to the workers in Seattle's industries. It was an emergency program. But when the war was over, and the greatest housing shortage in American history benumbed Seattle and every other city in the nation, the (war) housing program was versatile enough to become almost overnight a veteran's emergency housing program.

To help returning veterans, SHA began placing them in defense housing units as war workers moved out (SHA Seventh Annual Report, 1946). Eventually most of the housing needs of returning veterans

were met with market housing in the city's growing suburbs, and SHA returned to focus primarily on low-income housing.

### **Jesse Epstein, First Director of the Seattle Housing Authority**

The histories of both the SHA and Yesler Terrace are closely interwoven with the life of Jesse Epstein, whose vision, expertise and perseverance directly resulted in the creation of SHA and its early projects (Sale).

Born in 1910 to a Jewish family, Jesse Epstein was two years old when the Epstein family moved from Russia to the United States in 1912 (Epstein Papers). The Epstein family settled in Great Falls, Montana, where Jesse's father ran a general store (Plank). As a young man Epstein moved from Montana to Seattle to attend the University of Washington, graduating in 1931 with a bachelor's degree in political science. He continued on to law school where he studied constitutional and administrative law, anticipating a career in government or public service (Sale). As a research assistant and teaching fellow, Epstein was involved with the Washington State Research Council, a municipal service organization where he provided information and assistance to cities encouraging the implementation of federal New Deal legislation (Berner, Sale).

After graduating from law school and passing the State Bar in August 1935, Epstein was offered a position as research consultant to the Association of Washington Cities, where he worked for four years until 1939 (Western City). Through the course of this work, Epstein learned about funds available from the newly formed U. S. Housing Authority. He became aware of the need for low-income housing and educated in the new programs, and eventually lobbied for a local housing authority in the City of Seattle in order to gain federal funds for these projects. Epstein wrote legislation and campaigned to inform the public of low-income housing needs and the benefits of new federal programs. His work resulted in the creation of the SHA (SHA). At the age of 29 Epstein became its first director.

SHA's first project, Yesler Terrace, was successful on many levels. Within a few years after its completion, SHA had constructed and was managing four additional housing developments at Holly Park, Rainier Vista, and High Point and Sand Point, largely the result of Epstein's efforts. Epstein was a highly skilled and efficient bureaucrat, and it was this skill that brought these projects to fruition. As described by Seattle historian Roger Sale, "during its heyday the Seattle Housing Authority consisted of one office with enough space for Epstein, an assistant, and a secretary" (Sale, p. 167).

Epstein was appointed the director of Region no. 7 of the Federal Housing Authority in 1945 after six years leading of SHA. This position put him in charge of operations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Alaska. Two years later, he moved from Seattle to San Francisco to become director of Housing Authorities for the West Coast region. (Droker).

Epstein's civil service was ended prematurely by accusations that he was associated with Communist activity as student. Epstein denied the charges and demanded a full investigation. A hearing was held in Seattle in April 1948, in which three individuals testified against him while more than 100 others testified personally or by written statement in support of Epstein's loyalty. He was cleared of all charges but left public service permanently. Resigning from his post in San Francisco, he accepted a Littauer Fellowship at Harvard University where he earned a Master's degree in Public Administration in 1949. Epstein eventually moved back to Seattle where he established a law practice, which continued until his retirement at the age of 74. Throughout his life Epstein was active in community service and efforts against segregation. He was involved in the Mountaineers Club,

serving as its president for a time; the Seattle Indian Center; Neighborhood House; and REI. Epstein died in Seattle on June 18, 1989, at the age of 78 (Plank).

### **The Original Architects and Landscape Architects**

Prior to World War II, most architects in Seattle practiced alone or in small partnerships of two or four male partners with staff architects and drafters. In an effort to undertake larger projects, architects would join together by contract into larger, temporary organizations capable of the required production. The Depression of the 1930s resulted in closure of many of the city's older architectural firms and retirement of their founders. Some designers left the city to travel and/or work abroad. Architects in this period appear to have focused on private residential commissions or on public employment. Some obtained work from New Deal programs, such as the buildings in Moran State Park on Orcas Island, designed by Ellsworth Storey. The SHA, beginning with Yesler Terrace, was one of the earliest local agencies to employ a group of architects on a large public project.

SHA selected five architects from different firms to design Yesler Terrace. Director Jesse Epstein was deliberate in this decision, choosing primarily architects who were prominent figures in their profession to work in a new joint venture. The architects included J. Lister Holmes, who served as the project's chief architect, William Aitken, George W. Stoddard, William T. Bain, and John T. Jacobsen.

Local landscape architects Butler Sturtevant and E. Clair Heilman were chosen to provide the landscape design, which was an important part of the comprehensive plan. Engineering services and the early demolition contracts were given to multiple firms, to help spread the work and gain broader support for the project (Berner, Sale). Engineers for the project included structural engineers John H. Stevenson and De Witt C. Griffin, mechanical engineer Edwin L. Weber, and civil engineers Parker, Hill & H. W. Rutherford. The construction contract was awarded to J. C. Boespflug Construction Co. in January 1941 (SHA Second Annual Report).

The original drawings for Yesler Terrace do not cite individual attribution, but each architect brought different expertise to the project. Reportedly Holmes, Stoddard, and Jacobsen were the primary designers for the site layout and buildings; Bain was largely responsible for specifications and procurement; and Aitken undertook construction administration (Adekanbi, p. 101). Brief biographic profiles for each of the architects and landscape architects follow. Appendix C. provides images of other design projects by the architects.

#### J. Lister Holmes (1891–1986)

J. Lister Holmes was born in Seattle July 6, 1891. He studied civil engineering at the University of Washington from 1909–1911, and earned a Bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1913. Holmes worked in Philadelphia, New York, and Montana before returning to Seattle in 1916. In Seattle he worked initially for several important firms, including Bebb & Gould; B. Marcus Priteca; and Schack, Young & Myers.

Holmes established his own firm in Seattle in 1922. His projects included commercial buildings, small hotels and apartment blocks, and single-family residences. He also earned a reputation as a residential architect, and designed houses in a range of styles, drawing upon his classic Beaux Arts education. Holmes is notable for his successful transition from the Beaux Arts school of thought to the design philosophies of the International Style and the Modern Movement. This is exemplified by his designs of the 1930s; particular examples are the Seattle Weiner Dental Clinic (1936), the Arnold Dessau House (1939), and the Washington State Pavilion for the 1939 New York World's Fair.

In 1941 Holmes was selected by the SHA to serve as the chief architect for the planning and design of the Yesler Terrace housing project (1941–1943). Holmes also worked on SHA’s Gatewood Heights and Seward Park projects (both dating from 1941–1943).

After WWII, Holmes worked for a variety of public and institutional clients. He designed the Seattle Public Schools Administration Building (1946–1948), facilities for the Seattle Goodwill Industries (1948), the Ida Culver Residence (1948–1949, a multi-family project), the State Library on the Washington State Capitol campus (1950), the Seattle Public Schools Administrative and Service Center (1951), Catherine Blaine Junior High School (1952), and the Ancient Order of United Workmen Building (1952). In 1950–1952 he worked on the largest planning project of his career, the Fort Lewis Peacetime Development Master Plan, which included retail, housing, recreational and religious facilities.

Holmes was appointed to the Seattle Planning Commission from 1947–1955, serving as its chair from 1948–1950, and was on the National Board of the American Society of Planning Officials from 1948–1951. He was elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1955. He continued to work through the 1960s, with his later work including several west coast distribution buildings for the United Parcel Service. Holmes’ career lasted five decades. He remained in Seattle until his death on July 18, 1986 at the age of 95.

#### William Aitken (1889–1961)

William Aitken (some times cited as Aiken) was born in Kingarth, Scotland in 1889. He attended Glasgow Technical College from 1903 to 1907 and worked as a draftsman in the city. During this period he also travelled to Great Britain, Ireland, France, Belgium, and Norway. By 1914 he had moved to the U.S. and was practicing architecture in Washington. (In April 1931 a William Aitken filed his naturalization papers in Whatcom County. This record has been attributed to the architect Aitken.)

As an architect, Aitken primarily worked as a sole practioner, although he sometimes collaborated with other firms for larger projects. The earliest citation of his work was in a brief partnership with a Canadian residential designer, Elmer Ellsworth Green (1861–1928), who worked in Seattle in 1908–1909. Aitken was a young man at this time, and may have worked in Canada before his arrival in the US. Green’s Seattle projects included mansions in the Mount Baker neighborhood and the five-story Ben Lomond Apartments on north Capitol Hill (Luxton, p. 341). Aitken also worked on the Foote Memorial Methodist Church in Ballard (1909), and the Pacific Coast or U.S. Dock on the central waterfront (1917).

Aitken began working as a sole designer in 1913, and was licensed by the State of Washington in 1921. His was one of the earliest licenses, No. 4, and it was granted to him on the basis of his work experience rather than education. The 1923 Polk Directory notes that Aitken then had an office in the Lyon Building in downtown Seattle. Around this time he designed a market building near lake Union (1924), and produced what may have been his most important building, the Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon, Washington (1925–1926). The theatre building included attached retail stores and cost \$100,000, including \$22,500 for a Wurlitzer organ.

Both the former Sick’s Seattle Brewing & Malting Co Brewery (1933-1939 in South Lake Union) and the former Sick’s Stadium (1938, on Rainier Avenue South in the Mount Baker neighborhood) have been attributed to Aitken. (Both buildings were owned by brewery owner, Emil Sick.) Aitken cited two projects in his AIA application: the Olympic Pie Company and the Western Warehouse Co. buildings, both in Seattle. (Aitken’s 1939 membership application was sponsored by William Bain,

another member of the Yesler Terrace design team. This application reveals little about Aitken's career or work, however, and he resigned from the AIA in 1945.)

In 1953 Aitken associated with Seattle architects Fred Bassetti and John Morse to design Lakeview Elementary School for the Mercer Island School District. It appears that the partnership of Bassetti, Morse and Aitken was short-lived, and formed strictly for this project (PCAD). Additional information about Aitken's late career and life has not been discovered. He died in 1961 at the age of 72.

#### George W. Stoddard (1895–1967)

George Wellington Stoddard was born in Detroit, Michigan on September 30, 1895. He attended the University of Illinois to earn his Bachelor of Science in architectural engineering in 1917. He was drafted into the military immediately after graduating. Upon his return home from WWI, Stoddard joined his father's (Lewis M. Stoddard) architectural practice in Seattle; the firm was renamed Stoddard & Son. Lewis Stoddard died in 1929, and George W. Stoddard then established his own practice as George Wellington Stoddard & Associates.

The firm worked on a variety of public and commercial projects, including schools, colleges, medical clinics, hospitals, and banks. Stoddard's firm embraced the Modern style early, as evidenced in the design of the Harlan Fairbanks Company in Seattle (1931). Some of his notable works include Overlake High School in Bellevue (1946), Memorial Stadium (1947, eventually incorporated into Seattle Center), Green Lake Aqua Theater (1950), University of Washington Stadium South Stands (1950), National Bank of Commerce at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Olive Street in downtown Seattle (1956), and the Chapel at Veterans Hospital on American Lake, south of Tacoma (1958). In 1959 Stoddard formed a new partnership, George W. Stoddard-Haggard & Associates, Architects and Engineers, with Francis E. Haggard. He retired shortly afterward in 1960, after an active career of 40 years.

Stoddard was active in Seattle civic and social life. He served on the State Hospital Advisory Council Committee (1948–1949); Seattle Civic Arts Committee (chairman, 1947); King County Educational Advisory Committee (1950–1951) and King County Juvenile Advisory Committee (1952); and was a member of the Rainier Club, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Municipal League, and the Seattle Symphony, for which he served as a board member for many years. Stoddard was a member of the Washington State Chapter of the AIA from 1922 and was its president in 1946–1947. He died in 1967 at the age of 71.

#### William T. Bain (1896–1985)

William T. Bain was born in New Westminster, British Columbia on March 27, 1896. He moved to Seattle with his family at the age of seven, and attended the Los Angeles Architecture Club Atelier in 1914 and 1915. Bain began his architectural education as an apprentice in 1915, working for Seattle architects W. B. Wilcox, and Arthur Loveless for a short period. He left Seattle to serve in France during WWI. After the war he enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania, where the architecture program was based on the Beaux Arts tradition. He graduated with an architecture degree in 1921. For the next several years Bain worked in the Los Angeles office of Johnson, Kaufmann & Coated.

Bain returned to Seattle and opened his own practice in 1924. His early work was primarily residential, with designs that reflected traditional elements and French Provincial, Colonial Revival and Georgian Revival styles common in the 1920s. In 1928-1932 he partnered with Seattle architect Lionel Pries, a practice that resulted in several sorority houses near the University of Washington. During this time he designed the Belroy Apartment at 703 Bellevue Avenue on Capitol Hill (1931), an early Modern style building with some Art Deco features. For the duration of the Depression there was little demand for architectural services, and Bain continued to focus on residential commissions.



By the late 1930s he began a broader range of commercial projects, and his designs began to express more of a Modern vocabulary. Bain's Royal Crown Cola Bottling Plant (1940–1941) demonstrates his command of streamlined Moderne style architecture.

Bain served on the design and planning team for the Yesler Terrace Housing Project with J. Lister Holmes. The two men subsequently collaborated on the design of the Rainier Vista Elementary School (1942–1943). During the war he served as the State Camouflage Director, in charge of the mock residences on the roof of the Boeing Plant 2 in south Seattle.

Many architectural associations established during WWII to undertake large government projects were short-lived businesses. The firm of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, organized in 1943, was formed in this way initially, but the partnership thrived and survived to become one of the largest firms in the U.S. As a founding principal of NBBJ, Bain designed and supervised numerous projects including the firm's former First Hill office building (1950–1951), Boeing Pre-Flight Facilities in Renton and Moses Lake (1956–1958), the Scottish Rite Temple (1958–1962) and Susan B. Henry Library (1954) on Seattle's Capitol Hill, and the First Presbyterian Church (1965–1970) on First Hill. Bain also worked on the designs for the Seattle World's Fair Science Center and Coliseum along with his son, William Bain, Jr., and his partner Floyd Naramore and others (1960–1962).

Bain was an active member of the American Institute of Architects throughout his life and served as the Washington State AIA president in 1941–1943. In 1947 Bain was elected a Fellow of the AIA. He retired in 1975, but continued to undertake design work. Bain died at the age of 89 on January 22, 1985 after a prolific and influential career.

#### John "Ted" Jacobsen (1903 – 1998)

Ted Jacobsen was born in 1903 in Seattle. He received his undergraduate degree in architecture at the University of Washington and then moved east to attend the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a Master's degree in 1926. Upon finishing his academic studies, Jacobsen spent time in Russia, where he designed several community schools, and traveled throughout Europe, South America, and Africa.

It is reported that he worked in New York City as a site architect for restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, a multi-phased project that began in the mid-1920s. However, this involvement must have been short-lived; by 1924 Jacobsen had returned to Seattle to study and teach in the University of Washington's Architecture Department. He taught in the department for several years during a period when its curriculum transitioned from Beaux Arts to Modern design training (Johnston, p. 27). Jacobsen was employed in the Seattle firm McClelland and Jones, Architects in 1942–1946 and had a partnership with Victor N. Jones from 1946–1955. This partnership, known as Victor N. Jones & Associates, was also called Jones & Jacobsen, Associated Architects in 1947–1948 (PCAD).

Jacobsen is a recognized figure in the modernist architectural legacy of the Pacific Northwest. Although he worked with Jones for several years, he also took work as a sole practitioner and was reportedly the resident architect for the Seattle Trust Bank. He designed several well-received and early Modern style houses in Seattle, including his own (1936), the George P. Norton House in View Ridge (1938), and the Andrew Gumby House in Seattle (1939). In 1949 Jacobsen designed the University of Washington's Administration Building/Gerberding Hall.

Jacobsen reportedly served as the principal building designer for Yesler Terrace, although he neither stamped nor signed the drawings. Several of the community buildings at Yesler Terrace share formal design aspects with Jacobsen's Stewart Heights housing project in Kirkland (unknown date), and the Bush School in Seattle (ca. 1930).

In later years Jacobsen worked with Lloyd Martin, a Seattle developer, to design several of Honolulu's earliest high-rise buildings. Jacobsen eventually moved to Hawaii with his family and worked there as an architect for John Graham & Co. He ultimately set up his own practice in the state. Prominent projects include Sea Life Park and research facilities in Oahu (unknown date) and a residence designed for Charles Lindbergh (1971). While living in Hawaii, Jacobsen also undertook a survey of historic churches in Maui and became a local expert on historic buildings. In 1969 he created the Lahaina Architectural Style book for the Lahaina County Historic Commission (Docomomo WEWA).

Jacobsen died in Hawaii on March 5, 1998 at the age of 95.

#### Butler Sturtevant (1899–1970)

Butler Sturtevant was born in Delevan, Wisconsin on September 1, 1899. He received undergraduate training in horticulture in Southern California in 1921, at what is now UCLA, and completed coursework for a Masters in Landscape Architecture at Harvard in the early 1920s. He worked in a series of Los Angeles offices before opening his own firm in Seattle in 1928 to develop the Master Plan of the Normandy Park Subdivision with architects Bebb and Gould. Other public projects followed at Butchart Gardens in Victoria, B.C.; Children's' Orthopedic Hospital in Seattle; and campus grounds of Principia College in Elsah, Illinois (1931–1938, with Bernard Maybeck, architect).

Sturtevant practiced on his own until 1938. By the late 1930s, Sturtevant's wide-ranging practice encompassed planning as well as landscape architecture. His private work included several domestic gardens and landscapes in the Highlands, including the Paul Piggot Residence; Frederick Remington garden; Arnold Dessau house and garden, on which Sturtevant worked on with architect J. Lister Holmes; and the Ambrose and Viola Patterson Garden in Seattle (Ochsner).

At the recommendation of University Architect Carl Gould, Sturtevant was selected to serve as the University of Washington's landscape architect from 1931 to 1939. He worked on multiple campus design projects on the Seattle campus including the Medicinal Herb Garden (1934–1936), the grounds of Anderson Hall, and the development of Rainier Vista and the Drumheller Fountain.

In 1941 Sturtevant joined the Army Air Corps and at the same time formed a partnership with Edwin Grohs, an action that allowed him to maintain his professional practice in Seattle while in military service during WWII. Sturtevant received commissions for both Yesler Terrace and Holly Park in Seattle. Other defense-related projects followed, including Westpark, Eastpark, and Bremerton Gardens in Bremerton and the design of airfields throughout the southern U. S. At the end of the war Sturtevant opened an office in San Francisco specializing in airport design, where he continued to work on larger planning projects. In the 1950s he moved his practice to St. Louis, where he designed a number of large-scale private developments and school and campus plans through the late 1960s. (Dietz, in Ochsner, p. 234–239.)

Sturtevant's career exemplifies the development of landscape architecture as a profession distinctly different from garden design and horticulture. Sturtevant was a Seattle landscape architect whose career, like that of J. Lister Holmes, spanned from the Beaux Arts era to Modernism. Sturtevant died in St. Louis in February 1970.

#### E. Clair Heilman (n.d.)

Heilman, a landscape architect, collaborated with Butler Sturtevant to design the landscape for the Yesler Terrace Housing Project in 1939–1941. After the completion of Yesler Terrace, Heilman

worked with landscape architect Noble Hoggson on the landscape design for the Sand Point Housing Project, which was built by SHA as defense worker housing in 1943 (PCAD, and Ochsner, p. 208).

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

The exterior of the building.

Issued: October 19, 2010

Karen Gordon  
City Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Ryan Moore, Seattle Housing Authority  
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