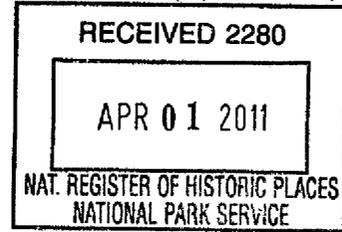


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name John B. Allen School
other names/site number Phinney Neighborhood Center

2. Location

street & number 6532 Phinney Avenue North not for publication
city or town Seattle vicinity
state Washington code WA county King code 033 zip code 98103

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Ally M 2-31-11
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

WASHINGTON STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)

for Edson H. Beall 5-11-11
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 2 | | buildings |
| | | district |
| | | site |
| 1 | 3 | structure |
| | | object |
| 3 | 3 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION / school

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL / civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
 AMERICAN MOVEMENTS / Craftsman
 LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS /
 Classical Revival

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: BRICK, CONCRETE
 walls: WOOD
 BRICK
 roof: ASPHALT; STONE / slate
 other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The John B. Allen School, located in Seattle's Phinney Ridge neighborhood, is comprised of two buildings—a 1904 wood structure and a 1918 brick structure—and one structure, an air raid siren, situated on an essentially square site. The site has a steep change in grade sloping down from west to east, for an overall grade change of approximately 40 feet. The property is surrounded by a variety of building types ranging from small, low-scale commercial buildings and early 20th-century bungalows, to later two- and three-story apartment buildings.

The Site

The John B. Allen School property is located in the Greenwood/Phinney neighborhood of Seattle, approximately six miles north of downtown and half a mile west of Green Lake. The site is bounded by Phinney Avenue North on the west, North 67th Street on the north, Dayton Avenue North on the east, and residential parcels on the south. Along the western edge of the site is a tall concrete retaining wall, adjacent to the sidewalk along Phinney Avenue.

The site measures 316' by 460', with a 1904 wood building located at the southwest corner of the site and a 1918 brick building, long and narrow, located along the eastern edge of the property. The site is bisected in a north-south direction by a steeply sloping planted area. In the center of the site, there is a children's play area with equipment integrated into the sloping hillside. To the west of the slope is a paved parking lot and another small children's play area. Two sets of concrete steps connect the area west of the planted strip to the much lower east side, which contains another paved parking lot, a larger children's play area, and an area used for a weekly summer farmers' market. The level parking lots and play areas once contained portable school buildings and were also used for outdoor physical activity areas.

The south side of the wooden building was once the main entry to this 1904 school building, with a large open area and special garden plantings. When Phinney Avenue was widened and residential structures were built to the south, the axial approach to the building changed significantly, although the location of the main entry did not change. Later, in 1987 a wooden walkway and stairs were added to the north side, creating a double-sided, less-direct entry sequence to the building. In the late 1980s, the courtyard at the original entry was landscaped with small trees and perennials. A set of concrete stairs connects this small courtyard to the lower terrace at the west of the brick building.

The steeply-sloped site provides for entry to the brick building at the first floor on the west side and at the ground floor on the east. At either end of this building, concrete stairs connect the level parking lot to the sidewalk along Dayton Avenue below. A concrete sidewalk borders the site on the north side; single-family residences border the site along the east (across Dayton Avenue North) and along the eastern portion of the south property line. An intermittent chain link fence surrounds the buildings on three sides and serves to delineate the property edges rather than restrict access to or from the site.

The site presently contains three small utilitarian structures (non-contributing)—one at the upper parking area and two at the lower area near the 1918 Brick Building, one of which is a demonstration "green-roof" project. In 2005, six large water tanks were installed beneath the north entry stair of the 1904 Wood Building as another demonstration project for the capture and reuse use of rainwater from the building's roof.

The Wood Building (1904)

The first of the two Allen School buildings was constructed in 1904 on the southwest corner of the site. This rectangular, 66' by 89' wood-frame structure is three stories tall. It has a hipped roof with hipped wall dormers on the east and west façades and a slightly-projecting hipped center block at the centrally located entry on the primary south façade. The exposed basement walls are finished painted common brick, with a molded wood water table above. The upper portion of the building is sheathed in painted horizontal lap siding, with a four-inch exposure. A wide, painted frieze board runs just below the overhanging eaves, which are accented by ornamentally sawn rafter tails. Composition shingles have been

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installed in place of the original wood shingles. The main roof is capped with a large hip-roofed cupola that originally served as part of the building's ventilation system.

The building is constructed of wood framing, with 3' x 3' stepped concrete footings and concrete foundation walls. The interior columns are symmetrically spaced between 12' and 10'-7" in the north-south direction, and between 10'-2" and 14' in the east-west direction. The central stair is supported on internal 8"-wide concrete bearing walls at the center of the building. The exterior basement walls are noted on the original drawings as 17" thick. Above the painted brick, the exterior walls are wood frame. The first floor is framed by 15" (42#) I-beams which are supported on exposed 6-3/4" diameter steel columns. Wood joists, 3" x 16"s at 16" on center, span between them. The second floor is framed with 3" x 16"s at 16" on center.

The hipped roof is framed using mill construction, comprised of four large trusses, made up of a unique combination of straight and diagonal 2" x 6"s, 2" x 8"s, 2" x 10"s, and 6" x 6"s, tied at four locations with bolted 3/4" diameter steel rods. The large dormers and the front entry porch are of standard wood framing.

The building's original design had three primary elevations – south, east, and west, with the main entry and porch on the south façade. The fenestration on the east and west elevations is symmetrically organized and identical, due to the symmetrical classroom layout within. These were comprised of a regular pattern of tall, narrow (4' x 11'), double-hung, 4:4 wood sash at each classroom, arranged with a group of three windows flanked by a single window on each side. Smaller dormer windows are vertically aligned over the tripled classroom windows. Over each grouping is a molded cornice trim. This arrangement serves to increase the vertical appearance of these two façades. At the basement level on the east, the windows are smaller (4' x 7'), 4:4 wood sash with sandstone sills, recessed slightly into the brick wall surface. At the west side basement level, the windows are 3'-6" x 4', 2:2 wood sash.

At the south façade, slightly shorter 4:4 wood sashes are centered on the stair that forms the central vertical circulation spine of the building. These windows also have a cornice molding, and are separated by a painted wood spandrel panel at the floor line. The central group of three windows is flanked by smaller 4:4, double-hung windows. A slightly projecting central section emphasizes the original main entry on this façade. The entry porch has a gabled roof supported by substantial square posts at the corners—three at each outer corner and two at the corners closer to the building façade. Shaped wood "capitals" top these porch posts. A vertical slat balustrade spans between the posts. The gable end of the porch roof is clad with painted lap siding, and the porch itself has exposed rafter tails. The porch shelters the original main entry, which consists of two pairs of glazed, wood-paneled entry doors with transoms above. These doors lead to the main stair landing – one-half flight up to the first floor and one-half flight down to the basement. To either side of the porch, concrete steps lead directly down to the basement, which is accessed through a single glazed and paneled painted wood door.

The north elevation, originally the secondary façade, has many fewer windows than the other three, although symmetrically arranged. The fenestration consists of paired 4:4, double-hung windows at the first and second floors, flanked by single, narrow 4:4 wood sash on the east side and a similar single wood window on the west. An entry at the first floor and a fire exit at the second floor have been added in line with the western window in each pair, replacing the lower sash. These doors are glazed wood-panel types. A painted wood-frame stair was added to the building circa 1960, and an entry landing/bridge was added in 1987. The bridge now serves as a primary accessible entry to the building from the northwest parking area below and from Phinney Avenue to the west.

Building Interior

The plan of the building is simple—two floors of four classrooms each, organized around a large central hall, with a basement comprised of two more classrooms and service spaces, for a total of ten original classrooms. A large imposing wooden stairwell at the south entry side of the building serves to connect the three floors. The stairwell, which is 14'-8" wide, is comprised of a dark-varnished fir balustrade with turned balusters, heavy shaped top rail, and seven-sided newel posts topped with a rounded, acorn-shaped cap. The stair treads—well worn in the center from over one hundred years of daily use—and connecting landings are wood, painted in a dark, glossy brown. The stairwell walls are lined with varnished 1-1/2" tongue and groove wainscoting to 6'-6" above the stained stringers. Above the wood is painted plaster. At the south side, a large double-height window floods the stair with natural light.

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The central hallways on the first and second floors are similar in their symmetry and finish materials. The main halls are 14' tall floor-to-ceiling and are the same width as the central stair. They are finished with stained 2-1/2"-wide tongue and groove fir flooring, and varnished 1-1/2" tongue and groove wainscoting extending up to 5'-6" above the finish floor. The wainscoting outside the classrooms is sprinkled with the remnants of child-height coat hooks and small metal name tag holders. In many locations, the hooks and name holders remain above the wooden benches. Secondary side-aisle spaces are created by three full-height 10-1/2"-square fir columns, spaced at 9'-9-1/2" along the long side of each central hallway. The columns, which support three wide flat arches, are detailed on each side with fluting that extends up to approximately 9' above the finish floor.

The side aisles outside the eight main level classrooms were originally enclosed on the hallway side with metal screens that spanned between the large columns. At the far end was a small single sink. The purpose of the divided hallway is unclear, but it may have served as coat and boot storage, to segregate the boys and girls at each grade level, or to provide for separate entry into and exit from each classroom.ⁱ

Each of the eight classrooms on the first and second floors was originally 33' long by 27' wide. Each was identical, with a 4'-high blackboard on each end of the room. Burlap wainscoting covered the walls below each blackboard, beside and below the windows, and on the wall opposite the windows. The burlap has been removed, and the walls are presently painted plaster. Each classroom was entered through one of three stained wood doors directly off of the central hallway. The classroom doors were typically comprised of three raised panels, with an upper glazed light. The majority of these doors remain.

Changes to the Building

Very few changes have been made to the 1904 structure. These included fire alarm and electrical alterations, and some exterior paving modifications. When the Phinney Neighborhood Association (PNA) was contracted by the Seattle School District to manage the building in 1981, a few additional changes were planned to improve the building's use as a community center. In 1987, the southwest first-floor classroom and entry corridor were remodeled for use as staff offices and reception area, and an original principal's office was converted to the current entry vestibule. On the second floor, the demising wall between the two west classrooms was removed to create a larger space. Wall mirrors and foot rails were added to the end walls, but sections of the original black boards remain. The original windows remain intact. The 1904 building was repainted in 2001-03. The current color scheme consists of blue for the body, cream trim, yellow window sash, and dark green doors and lower trim.

The Brick Building (1918)

The brick building of the Allen School complex was completed in 1918. The structure of the "fire-proof" brick building consists of reinforced concrete foundation walls (21-1/2" wide) with internal 6' x 6' concrete footings and concrete posts, ranging from 12" x 12", up to 18" x 18". The floors and stairs are also reinforced concrete, ranging from 4" to 9-1/2" thick, with reinforced concrete beams. The structural grid is approximately 11'-2" on center in the north-south direction, and asymmetrical in the east-west direction, based on the interior plan layout. On the interior, the partition walls are 4" or 6" hollow clay tile. The roof framing of the brick building is a unique mill construction, comprised of 8" x 8" diagonals, 8" x 10" purlins, and 6" x 10" rafters. The trusses are tied with 3/4"-diameter steel rods. The exterior walls above the concrete foundations are bearing brick masonry.

The building was entered at the first floor from the west side, proximate to the wooden building, or at the ground floor on the east side, from Dayton Avenue North. In contrast to the wooden building, the brick building has a concrete internal structure, with brick perimeter walls finished with pressed red brick set in a common bond. (Drawings indicate the pressed brick was shade #82 from the Denny Renton Clay and Coal Company.) Additional façade details include decorative brick bond patterns, projecting horizontal courses, and projecting pilasters.

ⁱ A drawing for the Madrona School (designed by Stephen in 1904, now demolished) shows a similar arrangement and partition wall designed of pipe rails and expanded metal infill. It is entitled "cloak room".

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The building's long rectangular form is topped with a simple hipped roof that has an 8:12 slope. Eaves overhang 3'-6" and are supported by large decorative carved wood brackets. While the original drawings indicate terra cotta tile for roofing, the roof is presently sheathed with slate, which was likely an original substitution. The decorative galvanized iron gutter covering has been replaced with painted sheet metal fascia and gutters.

The east side (Dayton Avenue) façade features a rusticated base, formed by recessing each header course (every ninth course). Dividing the base from the upper portion of the building is a decorative band—something like an oversized basket weave, six courses tall. At the first floor line, a soldier course (actually one-and-a-half soldiers in height) encircles the entire perimeter of the building, creating a strong horizontal line. A soldier course also runs along the second-story lintel level, capping the building. Above that, just below the eave line, a simple frieze band is formed with a rowlock course above and below eight courses of common bond. (On architectural drawings, the frieze was specified to be laid in Flemish bond.) A simple brick pilaster is located between each window bay. Narrow corner pilasters have decorative capitals and bases.

A central entrance in the east façade is emphasized by a concrete and brick decorative surround. A semi-circular arched tympanum is of cast concrete with brick detailing. The arched opening is accented by a brick arch above. A pair of glazed wood entry doors is capped by a large, approximately 6'-tall 18-light transom. Above the entrance, at the second story, are three narrow windows with a projecting brick feature below them, supported by a series of brick corbels.

On the east elevation, at the first and second floors, the windows along the corridor portion are typically single, narrow windows, each with a four-light transom above. In each opening is a two-part window, divided vertically in the middle and hinged at that point. Each side consists of a tall, narrow six-light sash—two lights wide and three lights tall. One sash is hinged at the wall side, like a casement window, then the other sash is hinged to it, and the opposite edge of the second sash runs in a track. In this way, to open the window, one sash opens out and the other sash folds against the first. On the west elevation, classroom side, the windows are like those on the east but they are paired. Three pairs of windows light each classroom. Between classrooms, narrower unpaired windows are used; they light offices on either side of the central entry and restrooms farther down. The north and south elevations have no windows.

Due to the steeply sloping site, the west elevation presents two stories above grade, the first and second floors. Matching the plan, the elevation is defiantly symmetrical, with a main entry into the central stairwell in the center of the façade and a secondary entrance (also corresponding with an interior stairwell) at each end. A concrete base runs along the first floor line, at grade. Brick pilasters, one between each window bay, sit on the concrete base and have slightly decorative brick bases and capitals. Above each pair of entry doors is a large, 14-light transom window. The central stairwell is flooded with natural light from the second floor to the basement, as a result of the paired windows above the entry level, as well as a matching pair of transom windows above. All three entries on this façade are covered with small, asphalt-shingled shed roofs with decorative brackets to protect the door openings.

The single-story brick block on the north end of the main building is the former fan room. It has a flat roof with concrete coping, and a brick soldier course 2'-6" below the coping. On the east façade, a blocked up opening, which formerly was a large air intake, is flanked by two wood 4:4 double-hung windows. An 8'-wide concrete stair separates the boiler building from the main brick building. On the south end is a similarly-sized brick boiler room. This one-story block is attached to the building. It also has flat roof with concrete coping and a brick soldier course 3' below the coping. The original window opening, which contained three wood 4:4 windows, has been shortened and the original windows removed. The short masonry chimney was originally over 62' tall. South of the boiler block is an 8'-wide stair from the sidewalk to the lower play area.

Building Interior

The plan of the building is a long simple rectangle, 39'-3" wide by 316' long. On the first and second floors, four classrooms, approximately 35'-6" by 19'-8", are symmetrically located with two on either side of a central stair core. The plan is split longitudinally, with four classrooms along the west side of the building along the single-loaded, 11'-wide corridor on the east side. On each floor, two classrooms are symmetrically located on either side of a central stair core that extends from the first floor, up to the second floor, and down to the basement. The second floor contains the original "book room" and the "emergency room" either side of the central stair. On the first floor, a "teachers' room" and principal's office flanked the center stair. At the basement level, there is one large playroom and an auditorium/lunchroom.

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Interior finishes of the classrooms consist of the original materials of painted plaster over the hollow clay tile partition walls, with a "cement wainscot" up to 30" above the stained wood floor, a 3'-6"-tall linear blackboard above that, and a picture rail mounted approximately 4' above that. On the wall opposite the blackboard, the classrooms contained a unique "hidden" varnished wood storage unit with push-up blackboard door panels, flanked by a glazed bookcase unit. The ceiling heights are approximately 13'. In most classrooms the ceilings are covered in suspended acoustical tile, with recessed 2' by 4' fluorescent light fixtures.

The corridors on each floor are also comprised of painted durable cement wainscot wall finish, with a stained trim rail that circles the entire space at the height of the door heads. The trim line serves to accentuate the long, horizontal design of the circulation space. Above the trim, the wall finish is painted plaster. The doors and trim are varnished wood throughout. The ceilings retain the original suspended glass globe "schoolhouse" light fixtures, with acoustical tiles glued to the underside of the concrete ceiling material. The floors are highly polished "plastic" according to the original 1916 drawings. (It appears to be linoleum with a high gloss wax finish.) The students toilets, both boys' and girls', contain original marble toilet stalls, stained doors, painted concrete floors, and many original plumbing fixtures. The walls are painted plaster and cement.

The three sets of stairs connecting the three levels of the building are painted concrete, with some contrasting trim bands. The stair side rails are also constructed of concrete, with painted steel handrails. In a few classrooms, and at the Ground Floor Auditorium, the original wood floors have been replaced with new.

Changes to the Building

Since its original construction, the 1918 building has remained virtually unchanged. In 1936, the ground-floor Auditorium was remodeled to enlarge the stage. When the building was constructed it did not contain a lunchroom or kitchen, even though it was originally designed to contain both, separated by a partition. Instead it was decided to provide a Home Economics Classroom. (The children ate in one of the portables located on the upper portion of the site.) In 1957, the Home Economics area was converted to an Auditorium/Lunchroom, and a kitchen was added to the northeast corner. Occupancy of the building by the PNA resulted in few changes, as the large classrooms work well for meeting spaces and community activities. Teacher offices are leased to individuals.

Air-Raid Siren Tower

A post-World War II 45'-tall air-raid siren tower is located at the northwest corner of the site. Four steel legs are set into concrete footings at the 12' x 12' base, with two legs of the tower outside the cyclone fence on city right-of-way and two inside the fence on the subject property. A platform atop the legs supports the nearly six-ton siren. The legs and platform are painted dark green, while the siren itself is painted yellow.

Non-contributing Structures

There are three small, non-contributing utilitarian structures presently on site. A small shed-roofed, CMU storage shed is located at the east edge of the upper parking area (labeled "shed" on the attached site plan). At the lower portion of the site, just west of the 1918 Brick Building near its south end, are two very small non-permanent structures (labeled "garden sheds" on the attached site plan). One of these is a demonstration "green-roof" project, the other is a gable-roofed tool shed.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1904-1957

Significant Dates

1904, construction of first school building

1918, construction of second school building

1953, installation of air raid siren

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Stephen, James (arch.)

Blair, Edgar (arch.)

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the property as a whole spans from 1904, when the earlier wood building was constructed as Allen School, to 1957, when the last major changes were made to the buildings.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The John B. Allen property is significant under Criterion A, for its association with the Seattle Public School system and expression of shifting educational philosophy as demonstrated by the differences in plan between the two buildings; and under Criterion C, containing two buildings that remain virtually unchanged since their original construction and thus represent two different architectural periods of school design. The buildings show the shift from the simple, easily constructed wood-frame structure to a new technique of masonry and concrete "fire-proof construction" adopted only 13 years later as a safer construction type. The two buildings reflect the general change in the choice of architectural style for new school buildings, from the Colonial Revival style of the 1904 building to the simplified interpretation of the Italian Renaissance style of the 1918 building.

The pair of buildings clearly contrasts the first model plan of stacked classrooms surrounding a central core to the later preferred linear model arrangement of classrooms allowing for more efficient use of space, easier circulation, and increased access to natural light and ventilation. The differing plans also demonstrate the shift from the general classroom education philosophy to the incorporation of specialty educational functions and assembly spaces, which could provide multi-use facilities to the wider community.

The air-raid siren tower is also significant under Criterion A, as a distinct emblem of the Cold War that so shaped American Society after World War II, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s.

Site History

The Seattle School District purchased the subject property for \$1,850 in 1902, when it was an unplotted three-acre site, in order to provide a new school for the growing neighborhood. Prior to that time, several children were being taught in the private living room of house on Green Lake Way. The new school, named Park School for its proximity to Woodland Park, was a grouping of three portable buildings that housed 99 students in grades one through seven. In 1904, a fourth portable was added to the site and enrollment increased to 181, and an eighth grade was added. Even the new portable did not relieve the pressures of the growing student population, and the School Board proposed and approved that a new eight room school building be built on the site.

The new permanent building constructed in 1904 was named for John Beard Allen, Washington's first U.S. Senator. A lawyer, J.B. Allen was from Indiana by way of Walla Walla. He was instrumental in the construction of the Naval Ship yard in Bremerton and the development of Fort Lawton and construction of the Lake Washington Ship Canal in Seattle.

The new school was constructed in a way that was intended to allow for expansion as student enrollment increased. However, when Phinney Avenue was widened in 1911, it reduced the area of the site to the west and placed physical restrictions on the expansion opportunities for the building, and resulted in the wooden structure appearing substantially lower than street level. This also changed the physical approach to the building.ⁱⁱ In 1917, rather than adding to the existing building as demand for classroom space grew, the District chose to construct the "modern" brick building on the lower eastern portion of the site, along Dayton Avenue North, and to join the two buildings by using the large expanse of site in between as play areas with connecting stairways. The classrooms in the two buildings were also numbered consecutively—1 through 8 in the first building and 9 through 16 in the second—to further unify the two structures.

Enrollment peaked in 1932-33 at 758, and in late 1940 parents petitioned the District to provide a double portable as a gymnasium. In the early 1940s, the 7th and 8th graders were moved to their nearest junior high schools, and by 1944, the 1904 structure was noted as having "outlived its usefulness." Over time, the school's emphasis shifted to the 1918 brick building, and the older building was closed to regular elementary classes. In 1972, an alternative school—the Allen Free School—was opened in a portable on the site and offered a variety of learning approaches. The program, for 4th and 5th graders, was supervised by the Allen principal; parents could choose either traditional or alternative learning curricula. Within three years, classes were increased to include K through 5th grade, with an enrollment of 108 students, and the program moved into the older building.

ⁱⁱ Meetings with the City in 1910 included discussions of moving the school building to accommodate the street widening and future additions. This did not occur.

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In 1977, the Allen Free School became the Allen-Orca Alternative School for grades K through 5, and by 1980 had a waiting list of 70. Unfortunately, due to declining traditional student enrollment, decreasing federal funding, and determination that the building would be unsafe in a seismic event, the School District closed the Allen School in early 1981. It was subsequently leased as a community facility by the Phinney Neighborhood Association (PNA) and purchased by the them in 2009.

Phinney-Greenwood Neighborhood Development

The Allen School is located on Phinney Ridge, slightly south of the Greenwood neighborhood. The Homestead Act of 1862 brought the first homesteaders and speculators to the area. "From 1868 to 1873, twenty-one individuals filed claims to the four sections (four square miles) of Township 25 North containing Green Lake."ⁱⁱⁱ Most likely, the majority of these individuals were speculators, especially in areas less conducive to farming.

Seattle's Phinney Ridge owes its name to Guy Carleton Phinney (1852–1893), a Scottish entrepreneur from Nova Scotia. He arrived in Seattle in 1881, and within ten years had amassed a small fortune. In early 1889, Phinney purchased 342 acres of timberland for \$10,000 in what is now known as Phinney Ridge, a property which extended from the top of the ridge eastward, to the southwest corner of Green Lake.^{iv} He kept more than half of the land for his private estate, which he called Woodland Park—the rest would be developed as real estate.^v In Woodland Park, he laid out formal, English-style gardens and built the Woodland Hotel. The park amenities included picnic grounds, a conservatory, a dance pavilion, two ball fields, a velodrome, a hunting lodge, and a church. As an added attraction, he brought together a small menagerie of animals.^{vi}

In order to attract visitors and potential land buyers, Phinney quickly took steps to create a railway link to Woodland Park. In 1889, Phinney, Daniel Jones, and Benjamin F. Day incorporated the Woodland Park Electric Railway and laid the tracks from Fremont, running north along 5th Street (later renamed Fremont Avenue), ending at the entrance to Woodland Park. By 1890, Phinney had two streetcars running, and 175 lots of his "Woodland Park Addition" platted and ready for prospective buyers. His was the first streetcar system to bring people to the area.^{vii} In 1899, Guy Phinney's widow Nellie sold the parkland to the City of Seattle for \$100,000. Woodland Park was incorporated into a system of linking parks, boulevards, and playgrounds designed by John C. Olmsted, of the Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm, hired by the city in 1903. Olmsted also recommended "hardy wild animals" for Woodland Park Zoo, which were procured from a small zoo at Leschi that had been run by the Lake Washington Cable Railway Company.

Developers' success in selling their residential lots depended on a transportation system that could bring commuters to and from the commercial centers. During the boom that followed the Klondike Gold Rush in 1897, downtown housing became scarcer, which led to improving the streetcar lines. Soon, Seattle's streetcar suburbs began to fill up with new residents. The streetcar-line improvements directly influenced the residential platting of the Phinney-Greenwood neighborhood. From the time of Phinney's first streetcars from 1890 to 1899, others included the extension of the Green Lake Line in 1902, the sightseeing tours of Woodland Park 1903, and the extension of the Phinney Avenue Line to North 50th Street. Businesses also sprang up along the streetcar lines, creating a linear commercial district along Phinney-Greenwood.

Phinney Ridge developed more slowly than the Green Lake neighborhood. In 1903, Green Lake had 8,000 residents compared with only 2,000 residents on the eastern slope of Phinney Ridge^{viii}, although the area had already been logged off.^{ix} However, residential development stepped up as streetcar service to the area improved. By the 1910s, automobiles came into wider use, and the importance of paved roads took precedence over streetcar service. Greenwood Avenue was

ⁱⁱⁱ Fiset, Louis, "Erhart Seifried, known as Green Lake John, files a homestead claim on Green Lake (Seattle) on October 13, 1869," 7 July 1999, *HistoryLink.org*, Seattle: History Ink, 2006 <<http://www.historylink.org>>.

^{iv} Sheridan, "Summary for 5201 Green Lake Way / Parcel ID 0725049002 / Inv. # DPR077", <<http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/historicalsites>>

^v Fiset, Louis. "Seattle Neighborhoods: Green Lake – Thumbnail History", March 14, 2000.

^{vi} Sherwood, Dorpat, 68.

^{vii} Greg Lange, "Woodland Park Railway begins running in 1890," *HistoryLink.org*, May 16, 2001.

^{viii} *Ibid.*

^{ix} Louis Fiset, "Seattle Neighborhoods: Phinney Ridge – Thumbnail History," 29 August 2001, *HistoryLink.org*, Seattle: History Ink, 2006 <<http://www.historylink.org>>.

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one of the first long streets to be paved.^x By the 1920s, most residential streets on Phinney Ridge were paved. As the population steadily expanded and streetcar lines improved, affordable housing became widely available in the suburban neighborhoods of Phinney Ridge and Greenwood. By the 1930s, the urban fabric and character of the neighborhood was set.

As with the streetcar and residential expansion, schools were being built in rapid succession in a northward direction. Allen (1904), Greenwood (1909), and West Woodland (1910) elementary schools attracted families who wished to settle in the area. The only north-end schools previously available were B.F. Day Elementary (1892) in Fremont, Ross Elementary (demolished ca. 1909) in Fremont, and Green Lake Elementary (1901-02). A brick addition to the Allen School (1918) became necessary as the population grew.

School District Overview and Building Programs

Seattle's earliest school sessions were conducted in single-classroom buildings and were financially supported by the pioneer families whose children attended. In 1854, Catherine P. Blaine, the city's first schoolteacher, held the first classes at Bachelor's Hall (a boarding house for single men). Around 1861, the first administrative board for the public school system was formed and public school classes moved into the new Territorial University Building. Public funding was established to pay teacher salaries, but despite this effort, tuition-free classes were not offered in the city until 1866. In 1869, the Washington Territorial Legislature granted Seattle a city charter, and residents voted for a tax levy to fund the city's first free public school building.^{xi} In 1870, the Central School (located on Third Avenue between Madison and Spring Streets) opened with 120 students.^{xii} The city passed other tax levies to construct a handful of one-room and two-room schoolhouses around the city.

The first Territorial Board of Education was established in 1877. In 1881, the legislature granted provisions for the appointment of school superintendents in incorporated city districts. With the appointment of Edward S. Ingraham as Seattle's first school superintendent in 1882, the city experienced a progressive shift towards the development of a modern school system.^{xiii} In 1882, the Seattle School Board began planning for a new central schoolhouse.^{xiv} After another successful tax levy, a six-room schoolhouse, known as the Second Central School, opened in 1883. The following year, the twelve-room Denny School opened. Enrollment in the school district expanded from 1,500 students in 1885 to 6,647 in 1893. From 1890 to 1900, 16 additional public schools opened.^{xv} In 1866, the District held its first high school commencement, marking the end of the pioneer school system.

Promotional pamphlets lauded the city's early public school buildings as representing the character of its citizens, noting their modern style and declaring them a "credit to the city."^{xvi} As Seattle evolved into a metropolitan city, attitudes changed toward education and public architecture, which was reflected in the evolution of Seattle's school architecture. From 1889 to 1890, the District's third superintendent, Frank J. Barnard, oversaw the construction of eight schools. From 1891-93, during a general boom in the city's economy and population, the district built six more schools. Three of the schools built during this time were constructed to accommodate the recently annexed areas north of the city.^{xvii}

By 1901, the District supported nearly 9,000 students in daily attendance. That year, the District hired Frank B. Cooper as superintendent, who served for 21 years. Aided by a supportive and progressive school board, Cooper guided the development of the District into a major urban school system. This included developing numerous specialized programs such as kindergartens, parental schools, adult evening schools, and classes for special-needs students.^{xviii} During this time, the School Board adopted a plan to meet the need for schools in growing suburban residential neighborhoods by developing a series of "model" schools of standard wood framing. These schools were designed with the capacity to accommodate standard additions in the future. In 1903, the District hired architect James Stephen to design these early elementary school buildings. The 1904 Allen School wood building is one of these structures.

^x Sheridan, 26.

^{xi} Marr and Thompson, p. x.

^{xii} Erigero, p. 1.

^{xiii} Robinson, p.33 .

^{xiv} Robinson, p. 16-17.

^{xv} Marr and Thompson, p. x.

^{xvi} Robinson, p. 34.

^{xvii} Erigero, p. 6.

^{xviii} Robinson, p. 99.

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From 1910 to 1921, Seattle's population grew rapidly, resulting in a student population growing to nearly 39,000 in 1919. In the early part of the decade, model schools were constructed in brick, from designs by Edgar Blair, who replaced Stephen as the official School District architect. The 1904 Allen School was not one of these model schools, although it was similar in that the model school plan followed a specific single-loaded corridor/classroom layout, and was generally executed with simple exterior brick and concrete details.

In 1919, a bond issue assured continued growth and expansion of school facilities through the next decade. This included construction of two high schools, three elementary schools, and additions to Broadway and Lincoln High Schools and seven elementary schools. The Broadway Annex, built in 1921, supported a vocational program. Also in 1921, the district constructed a modern administration and facilities building designed by Floyd A. Naramore (later of NBBJ Architects), who replaced Blair as District architect in 1919 and guided school architecture until 1932.

After World War I, increasing costs of providing educational programs to a growing population strained the district. Between 1922 and 1933, school attendance increased from 42,441 to 57,551 students. The District conducted a comprehensive building survey for planning future building programs in order to meet the growing student population. Three bond issues were passed between 1923 and 1929 that supported several important building programs, including the construction of the District's first intermediate school in 1926. The District decided to move toward the organization of three school levels in order to accommodate increased enrollment without building additional small elementary schools. More significantly, it was consistent with a national trend towards the idea of intermediate schools, or junior high schools as they came to be called officially.^{xix}

From 1922 to 1931, the District built six elementary schools and three junior high schools, with specialized facilities for science, art, physical education, industrial arts, and home economics. Additionally, Cleveland High School—which also supported a junior-high student program—was built, and additions to three other high schools were constructed. In 1931, the District's building program shifted from new construction toward the consolidation and rehabilitation of existing structures. No new buildings were constructed during the 1930s.

From 1932 to 1938, enrollment in adult education classes experienced a sharp increase. Due to the high rate of unemployment, many adults were seeking vocational training for new skills. General enrollment declined slightly in the 1930s. Because of population shifts towards the suburban areas, many urban schools had too many personnel for decreased class sizes. Declining revenues and older facilities further strained the school system. Sixteen older schools were closed, and students were consolidated into nearby schools.

By the end of the decade, concerns about old school buildings that had not been maintained and the large number of temporary structures prompted the District to request a tax levy vote for a new building program. Although the Allen School's 1904 building was used as an illustration of this concern, it did not get listed for demolition under the subsequent building program.

Around this time, the District changed its approach to building design and opted to hire architects on a fee basis (rather than employing a School District architect) to carry out individual building programs. From 1940 to 1941, the District retained the firm of Naramore and Brady to carry out building programs. The programs called for the construction of one school and additions and improvements to more than ten others. The program scheduled Seattle's oldest wood-frame schools for demolition replaced some with new buildings. However, the Allen School building once more escaped demolition.

During World War II, all new schools were built as temporary structures to conserve materials for the war effort. Seattle experienced a massive influx of defense workers to supply labor for Boeing and Puget Sound shipyards. Existing school facilities required expansion for the children of these workers, especially in federal housing project areas. The District used numerous temporary "portable" units, including at the Allen School site, and built temporary additions for other schools.

At the close of the war in 1945, the District conducted a study of population trends and future building needs. The resulting proposal included modernization of all existing schools, adding classrooms; multiuse rooms for lunch/assembly; covered

^{xix} Marr and Thompson

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and hard-surfaced play areas and play-courts; expanded gymnasiums; and improved lighting, heating, plumbing, and acoustics.^{xx}

From 1945 until the early 1960s, school enrollment increased from 50,000 to nearly double that amount. This was due in part to the baby boom of the postwar years and the rapid suburbanization of Seattle's north end, including the annexation of part of the Shoreline School District. From 1945 to 1965, the District built 17 elementary schools and ten junior high schools. Additionally, it built four new high schools, two in the newly annexed north end. Seattle voters approved six bond issues between 1946 and 1958 to fund these projects.

Each new building was designed by an architectural team hired for that project. The School Board provided clear guidelines to the architects about functional requirements for educational spaces. The central control of design and use of materials, which had characterized the era of salaried District architects, was no longer part of the process. However, most buildings of the post-war era were very similar in style and focused on rational planning and functionalism. Public school architects in Seattle and throughout the country adopted this design approach. During this era, the idea of transportable schools developed, based on the unit system of classrooms that could be lifted and relocated. The units were attached to a central fireproof corridor, which allowed for easy enlargement or reduction by expanding the corridor and adding or removing units. In 1949, three transportable schools opened, designed by George W. Stoddard. Reportedly, Briarcliff, Genesee Hill, and Arbor Heights elementary schools were the first of their kind in the nation.

After 1965 and through the 1970s, the District suffered from declining enrollment and revenue. Racial desegregation and educational reform became the focus. The open-plan school was adopted to meet the flexible needs of reformed teaching methods that focused on team-teaching, continuous progress, individualized instruction, and integrated activities. Alternative schools and special education programs were added and housed in unused spaces or redundant facilities, such as the Allen-Orca Alternative School (also known as the Allen Free School) program that began in 1974 at the subject property.

In the 1980s, following a 50-percent decline in enrollment, the School Board adopted a comprehensive school-closure plan. Two high schools, seven junior high schools, and 20 elementary schools, including Allen School, were slated for closure. Debates over upgrading old buildings or building new ones spawned community interest in historic preservation. Collaboration between the District and preservation groups during this period resulted in restoration of numerous school buildings, including Franklin High School, Seward School, John Day School, and Coe School. However, many of the school buildings closed as part of the program were sold or put under long-term lease. Some have been remodeled for new uses such as condominiums or shopping facilities. Some have been leased to neighborhood associations. After its doors shut in 1981, the Allen School became the permanent home to the PNA.

Early 20th-Century School Design Theory

Together, the two Allen School buildings uniquely reflect changing ideas about school design. The 1904 wooden building follows a plan of stacked classrooms clustered around a central hall, whereas the 1918 brick building follows a linear plan. The wooden building was one of the first model schools, conceived of by the School Board as a simple way to handle construction necessary to meet the demands of increasing student enrollment. The 1918 brick building was one of six similar schools designed by architect Edgar Blair and represented contemporary thought in school planning, consisting of eight classrooms, an auditorium, and a home economics room. In moving away from the cramped one-room schoolhouse to the model school, and then from the model school to the linear design, school officials were responding to the most important concern of schools—the health of the child. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) scrapbooks from the 1930s list it as the first “cardinal objective for the education of Seven Point Lives.”^{xxi}

Following the Great Fire of 1889, there was a discussion in Seattle about fireproof building materials. E.S. Ingraham, Seattle's first school superintendent, took credit for the decision to switch to brick construction for buildings close to the city center:

Up to this time it was thought that a brick building would prove too damp for Seattle's climate. The directors had about decided to replace the burned Central by another wooden structure. The writer tried to prevent this, if possible. He secured a pressed brick and covered its surface with white paper and wrote thereon these words: “Let the new Central School be built of brick.” He took the brick to our

^{xx} Robinson, p. 192-193.

^{xxi} Pamphlet in the 1930-31 John B. Allen PTA scrapbook

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principal citizens and secured sufficient signatures to cover the entire surface. This he threw at the Board of Directors. It is needless to say, that decided the question.

E.S. Ingraham, "Beginnings of a Great System," Seattle Grade Club Magazine, Vol. IV, No. 1, p. 11.^{xxii}

A recession in the 1890s slowed the development of new schools, but the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897 helped Seattle prosper.^{xxiii} However, a financial shortfall forced the use of lumber instead of masonry when the district made a decision in 1901 to build a series of standard wooden structures with identical floor plans, called model schools. These schools were needed to help meet the needs of a growing school-aged population.

In a six-volume set of *Public School Methods* (1918), it is clear that classroom air quality was to play an important role in the development of new school buildings. The effects of bad air were plain:

It has been stated by the New York Board of Health that forty percent of all deaths are occasioned directly or indirectly by bad air... Each pupil should have air space of not less than two hundred cubic feet — two hundred and twenty-five is better. (Later, this becomes an 'interesting problem' for arithmetic classes.) This quantity of air should remain in good condition for from five to eight minutes... Moreover, this air must be of the proper temperature and be introduced without drafts. As part of the teacher's duties, it is recommended to "master the principles upon which your room is ventilated" and to "test the air frequently; step out where it is pure, draw in one or two breaths and return to your room; if it smells foul or overheated or is "stuffy," it is time for you to act."^{xxiv}

Teachers were instructed, among other things, to look for "fetid discharges from the ear," to install ventilators, and to regulate the temperature by opening and closing the windows. With their high ceilings and large windows, the two Allen School buildings saved teachers from taking such drastic measures. The Allen School also reflects notions about differences between boys and girls and the aims of physical education and play. The plans of the 1904 building show that in the basement there were separate play areas for boys and girls, in keeping with the idea that male and female style of play was different and better to be kept separate.

Historic Context

The school buildings of the John B. Allen site are a unique complex and form one of five elementary school ensembles dating from the early period of the Seattle School District's development, 1902–1920.

Between 1900 and 1908, 18 wood-frame model school buildings were built in the District. Eleven of those were designed by James Stephen, who developed the model plan for the expanding school district during his tenure as District architect. These include:

| | | | |
|-----------------|------|--|-----------------------------|
| • Green Lake | 1902 | Sunnyside and N. 65 th | demolished 1986 |
| • Interbay | 1902 | 16 th W and Barrett | demolished 1948 |
| • John B. Allen | 1904 | Phinney and N. 66 th | Phinney Neighborhood Assoc. |
| • Interlake | 1904 | Wallingford and N. 45 th | now Wallingford Center |
| • Madrona | 1904 | 33 rd and E. Spring | demolished 1960 |
| • John B. Hay | 1905 | 4 th and Newton | elementary school |
| • Seward | 1906 | Franklin and Roanoke | elementary school |
| • Bagley | 1906 | Woodland Park and N. 78 th | demolished 1940 |
| • Latona | 1906 | 5 th NE and N. 42 nd | District offices |
| • Stevens | 1906 | 18 th N and E. Galer | elementary school |
| • Coe | 1907 | 7 th W and Wheeler | burned 2001; reconstructed |

A twelfth, Van Asselt (1909) at Beacon Avenue and Othello Street, was designed by Edgar Blair while apprenticing with James Stephen. It was the last of wood-framed model schools following the design of Stephen to be constructed, and is now vacant.

^{xxii} Erigero, p.4.

^{xxiii} Erigero, p. 8.

^{xxiv} The Methods Company. *Public School Methods: New Edition*. Chicago: Hanson-Bellows Publishing Company, 1918

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The architectural firm of Saunders and Lawton designed two other model schools, following Stephen's design: Horace Mann (1902, at 24th and E. Cherry) and Beacon Hill (1904, at W 61st Street and Lander). Bebb and Mendel designed the 1902 University Heights School (at 14th Ave NE and E 52nd Street). Three other model schools have been demolished: Warren (1903, at Warren and Republican), Longfellow (1902, at 20th and E. Thomas) and Ross (1903, at [N]W 43rd Street and 3rd Ave NW).

In 1918, the new "fireproof" brick structure constructed on the Allen site was one of four similar structures designed by then School District architect, Edgar Blair. This new building was referred to as a "border" school, as it was constructed along the lot line of the existing school site. This approach was typically taken when classroom expansion would require substantial additions to an existing wood-frame model school already on the grounds. These buildings were not termed "model" schools but followed a prescribed plan and were typically two-story structures, with raised basements and classrooms that ran along one side of the structure, and wide corridors for ample natural light.

Blair chose the Renaissance style for his five border schools, which were built at Allen, Seward, Madrona, and Latona in 1917, and Lowell (at E. Mercer and Federal E.) in 1919.^{xxv} These four buildings are virtually identical in their size, rectangular form, and brick detailing. (The 1917 Madrona building was extensively remodeled in the 1990s.) The 1917 Seward and Latona buildings were accented with terra cotta entry portals with decorated columns and stylized quoins. (The 1917 Latona School was demolished in 1999.) The Allen Building and the 1919 Lowell Building are detailed with decorative brick bonding patterns and horizontal elements.

The 1904 Allen Building is one of only ten remaining from the wood-frame model school period of the early 1900s. It has been well maintained, and its interior and exterior remain virtually unchanged with the exception of minor alterations. It remains one of the best representatives of its type in the city. The 1918 Allen Building is also in very good condition, is also virtually unaltered, and is representative of its type. It retains its unusual molded and gauged exterior brickwork. Only two "border school" buildings of this period remain adjacent to their earlier counterparts.

Architectural Styles

Colonial Revival and Craftsman (1904 Building)

The 1904 building of the Allen School features a simple, straightforward architectural composition. Its design has a transitional nature, with some Colonial Revival elements as well as Craftsman details.

The Colonial Revival style is, as the name suggest, a revival of the country's early colonial architecture and the restraint and order it represented, interpreting its classical roots in new forms and materials. Popularized in the early 1900s, the style is characterized by symmetrical façades, moderately pitched hipped or gabled roofs, moderate to large overhangs, doors with transoms and sidelights, Palladian windows, trim based on the classical elements such as denticulated moldings, columns of various orders, and pedimented gabled entries. In Seattle, most of the 19 wood-frame schools constructed following the model plan of 1902 were designed with many of the ubiquitous Colonial Revival elements.

The American Craftsman Style, rooted in the English Arts & Crafts movement, began in the late 19th century and extended into the 1930s. In part a reaction against the Industrial Revolution as well as the Victorian era, the Craftsman style valued the handmade rather than the mass-produced, and featured natural materials and simple forms. Craftsman and Prairie styles dominated domestic architecture in this country during the first two decades of the 20th century. Architectural characteristics of the Craftsman Style include low-pitched rooflines; wide, unenclosed eave overhang; exposed rafters; decorative brackets or braces in gable ends; and full- or partial-width porches, usually supported by square (often battered) porch columns or piers.

The subject building features the symmetry, massing, and a wide frieze band that recalls the Colonial Revival Style, while it also displays characteristic Craftsman elements in its open overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails as well as the Craftsman entry porch.

^{xxv} Erigero, p. 23.

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American Renaissance (1918 Building)

The 1918 brick building of the Allen School was designed in the American Renaissance Style, also sometimes known as the Second Renaissance Revival, a revival style popular from circa 1870 to 1930. Architects looked to classical or renaissance precedents that were intended to evoke civic dignity and strong cultural ideals. Many of the architects practicing in the U.S. in the mid-19th century were fashionably trained at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, where they were educated in classical composition and principles.

In Seattle, Edgar Blair introduced this ordered style to many School District buildings. Because of fiscal restraints imposed by the School Board, Blair often used ornamental colored brick and bonding patterns instead of the preferred terra cotta embellishment and enriched trim details. He typically retained a tri-partite vertical division of base, shaft, and cap; symmetrical fenestration patterns; engaged pilasters; and provided slight embellishments at the buildings' main entries.

Based on a European precedent, the American Renaissance style is characterized in the subject building by its low-pitched, hipped roof; wide, overhanging eaves with large carved wood brackets; large rectangular window openings; Italian-style entryway with cast concrete to mimic pilasters; and a symmetrical façade.

Other characteristics of the style sometimes include a flat roof with decorative parapet or balustrade, monumental scale, use of pavilions and porticoes, and smooth-dressed stone or marble.

The Architects

James Stephen (1858–1938)

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

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

Stephen's model provided the basis for a flexible and economical approach to school construction. The wood construction system and standard floor plan facilitated a phased construction process in which an eight-, twelve-, or 20-room school could be constructed and later expanded. While standard floor plans and interior finish materials were used, the exterior elevations and details of these schools varied greatly and exhibited wood detailing indicative of Stephen's background as a carpenter and cabinetmaker.

Extant schools in Seattle that follow the model plan, or variations on it, include the Allen School wooden building (1904, now the Phinney Neighborhood Center), Interlake (1904, now the Wallingford Center), Summit (1905, now the Northwest School), John Hay (1905), Seward (1905, now TOPS @ Seward), Stevens (1906), and Latona (1906, altered, now the John Stanford International School).

In 1908, Stephen prepared a report on modern school design, construction, and equipment. This report directly led to the creation and adoption of the second model plan that incorporated fireproof materials including concrete, masonry, and terra cotta. These new school plans also incorporated modern lavatory equipment. They were often executed in late Gothic or Jacobean style, then popular. Extant schools that followed the new model were: Emerson (1908-09), Colman (1909), and Greenwood (1909). As District architect, Stephen also designed the original portions of two of Seattle's oldest extant high schools: Lincoln (1906-7) and Queen Anne (1908-09, now condominiums).

Stephen continued in private practice during his tenure as School District architect. He designed numerous residential, ecclesiastical, and commercial buildings, including the original portion of the downtown Seattle YMCA. He also designed

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schools in Redmond, Hoquiam, Renton, Auburn, Olympia, Everett, Kirkland, and Bremerton. In 1908, he went into partnership with his son Frederick as Stephen & Stephen. This partnership produced designs for numerous school buildings in cities throughout Washington State, including Edmonds, Wenatchee, Cashmere, Richmond Beach, Vancouver, Ellensburg, Kirkland, Cle Elum, Chehalis, Fall City, and Port Townsend. William G. Brust, a former classmate of Frederick's, joined the partnership in 1917.

Stephen retired from practice in 1928 and died in 1938, leaving a legacy of stylish school buildings constructed in numerous school districts around the state.

Edgar Blair (1874–1924)

Edgar Blair was born in Des Moines, Iowa and had worked in the Des Moines offices of Clinton Norse while attending school at Des Moines College and Iowa State University. In 1897, he moved to New York to continue his education at Columbia University. He worked as a draftsman for several large New York City firms, among them the prestigious McKim, Mead, and White architectural partnership.

He later moved to Baltimore, gaining additional training in the firm of Baldwin and Pennington. In 1902, he joined the Washington D.C. firm of Mayre and Wright, where he designed the Atlanta Terminal Station and the Richmond, Virginia prison. In 1904 he opened his own practice and later formed a brief partnership with Barn von Leistner of Munich before leaving for the west coast.

Since his arrival in Seattle in 1906, Blair had been working as Stephen's assistant and was appointed as his replacement upon Stephen's resignation. The first Seattle school building to carry Blair's name as designer was the last wood-frame model school, Van Asselt (1909). Blair designed a nine-room brick model school in the Jacobean style, three of which were built in 1910—Gatewood, John Muir (originally York, demolished 1989), and West Woodland (demolished 1990). Clearly based on the designs developed by Stephen the previous year, they differed principally from the earlier schools in the organization of the fenestration on the primary elevation. The nine-room model school plan was retained and used through 1917, although not for the brick Allen School building.

Seattle's industrial growth reached its peak in 1917-18 during World War I, bringing an influx of workers and their families and a spate of school construction around 1917, including the Allen School brick building. However, this small boom was tempered by the need for war materials, and Blair's designs for the buildings constructed during these years were largely stripped of amenities and ornamentation. The 1918 Allen School building is consistent with others Blair designed around that time.

Blair served as the District architect until 1918, and from 1919 to 1924 he had his own practice. He died in Seattle in 1924.

Air-Raid Siren

The air-raid siren tower at the northwest corner of the site was one of many installed in Seattle in 1952-53 to warn citizens of incoming Soviet missiles or atomic bombs. During World War II, Seattle installed 63 air raid sirens, most small enough to attach to telephone poles. Placed in storage after the war, all working sirens reappeared in the early 1950s when tensions mounted with the Soviet Union. The City added 21 more, including several enormous sirens mounted on steel towers, after Seattle Mayor William Devin promised "the best air-raid warning system of any city of our size in America."

The Seattle City Engineering Department received permission from the Seattle School Board on March 13, 1953 to install a motor-driven air raid siren on the northeast corner of the upper play field of the John B. Allen School. They had determined this location to be the most satisfactory site with two legs of the tower supporting the siren outside the cyclone fence on city right of way and two on the inside of the fence on School District property.

Phinney's "Big Bertha" was installed on April 22, 1953. Chrysler built the five-horsepower, 5,542-pound siren, and the Seattle Department of Engineering put it in place. With her gas-powered engine, Big Bertha could top 130 decibels and be heard over a mile and a half away. Wednesday noon siren tests were conducted until the early 1970s: three minutes of an extremely loud, pulsating, undulating tone, followed by a blast of sound lasting one minute, two minutes of silence, a second one-minute blast, two more minutes of silence, and finally a one-minute blast to mean "all clear." During the tests, students at the John B. Allen Elementary School were required to curl up under their desks and hold a heavy book over their heads.

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During the spring of 2002, the PNA made a plea for volunteers to resolve the future of the siren tower. A committee formed and determined that the neighborhood overwhelmingly favored restoring the siren tower to its original appearance. That plan was finally realized in October 2006, when the City of Seattle repaired and repainted it in one of the color combinations the federal government traditionally used for Cold War siren towers: forest green legs, topped by a bright yellow "Big Bertha." Today, the siren remains silent. A small park was established at the base of the tower in 2002.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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- Fiset, Louis, "Seattle Neighborhoods: Greenwood -- Thumbnail History," 21 July 2001, *HistoryLink.org*, Seattle: History Ink, 2006 <<http://www.historylink.org>>.
- John B. Allen PTA scrapbook. 1930-31
- King County Tax Division, Tax Records for the Property
- Kroll Map Company Inc, Seattle. "Kroll Maps of Seattle," 1912 – 1920, 1940 and ca. 2002.
- Lange, Greg. "William Knight becomes first purchaser of the site of Seattle's future Greenwood business district on June 28, 1872," 28 March 28 2001, *HistoryLink.org*, Seattle: History Ink, 2006 <http://www.historylink.org>.
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Ochsner, Jeffrey Karl. Ed., introduction, *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1998.

Phinney Neighborhood Association. "City of Seattle Landmark Nomination: John B. Allen School." July 2007.

Robinson, William Gregory. *A History of Public School Architecture in Seattle*, University of Washington Master's Thesis, 1989.

Sale, Roger. *Seattle Past to Present*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976.

Seattle Public Schools Archives, School Board Meeting Minutes.

Sherwood, Don. *Interpretive Essays of the Histories of Seattle's Parks & Playgrounds*: Seattle Parks and Recreation, vols. 1-7, bound collection held by UW Special Collections, 1974-1984, <<http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/parks/history>> and <<http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/CityArchives/Tools/Sherwood/sherwd.htm>>

Thompson, Nile and Carolyn Marr. *Building for Learning, Seattle Public School Histories, 1862 - 2000*. Seattle, Seattle Public Schools, 2002.

Wing, Warren. *To Seattle by Trolley*, Edmonds, WA, Pacific Fast Mail, 1988.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.54
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------------|------------------|---|-----------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1 | <u>10</u> | <u>5 48 570</u> | <u>52 80 480</u> | 3 | <u>10</u> | <u>5 48 686</u> | <u>52 80 394</u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | <u>10</u> | <u>5 48 681</u> | <u>52 80 481</u> | 4 | <u>10</u> | <u>5 48 571</u> | <u>52 80 393</u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is bounded by Phinney Avenue North on the west, North 67th Street on the north, Dayton Avenue North on the east, and three residential parcels on the south.

Tax parcel number: 0625049063

Legal description: That portion of the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 6, Township 25 N, Range 4 E, W.M., King County, described as follows—Beginning at a point which bears N 660 ft and E 200 ft from the SW corner of said section; thence E 460 ft, more or less, to the NE corner of the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of the SW ¼ of said section; thence S 316 ft; thence W 460 ft to a point S of the point of beginning; thence N 316 ft to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire parcel on which the buildings are sited.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sonja Sokol Fűrész

organization BOLA Architecture + Planning date January 3, 2011

street & number 159 Western Avenue West, suite 486 telephone (206) 447-4749

city or town Seattle state WA zip code 98119

e-mail ssokolfuresz@bolarch.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: John B. Allen School
City or Vicinity: Seattle
County: King **State:** Washington
Photographer: Brian Allen
Date Photographed: September 2006

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

All digital images labeled as follows: WA_King Co_John B. Allen School_#.tif

01. View looking SE across Phinney Avenue North; oblique west and north façades of 1904 building.
02. View looking SW across site toward east façade of 1904 building.
03. East façade of 1904 building.
04. North façade of 1904 building; view looking south across parking lot.
05. View looking NE from Phinney Avenue North sidewalk; oblique south façade of 1904 building.
06. Interior view looking S in lobby of 1904 building.
07. Interior view looking N in Room 7 of 1904 building.
08. View looking SW along Dayton Avenue North; oblique east and north façades of 1918 building.
09. View looking E across the site toward west façade of the 1918 building.
10. View looking E from 1904 building fire escape, showing a portion of the west façade of the 1918 building as well as a view of Green Lake beyond.
11. View looking SE at the NW corner of the 1918 building.
12. View looking NW from Dayton Avenue North; oblique view of south and east façades.
13. Interior view looking N in 3rd-floor hallway of 1918 building.
14. Interior view looking SW in Room 35 of 1918 building.
15. View looking NW across site toward Big Bertha. (Photographer Sonja Sokol Fürész, September 2010)

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Phinney Neighborhood Association
street & number 6532 Phinney Avenue North telephone (206) 783-2244
city or town Seattle state WA zip code 98103

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Assessor's Map

9/15/2010

Print Map Page



John B. Allen School Assessor Map

0625049063
Seattle

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Parcel Number | 0625049063 |
| Site Address | 6532 PHINNEY AVE N |
| Zip code | 98103 |
| Taxpayer | PHINNEY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOC. |

The information included on this map has been compiled by King County staff from a variety of sources and is subject to change without notice. King County makes no representations or warranties, express or implied, as to accuracy, completeness, timeliness, or rights to the use of such information. King County shall not be liable for any general, special, indirect, incidental, or consequential damages including, but not limited to, lost revenues or lost profits resulting from the use or misuse of the information contained on this map. Any sale of this map or information on this map is prohibited except by written permission of King County."

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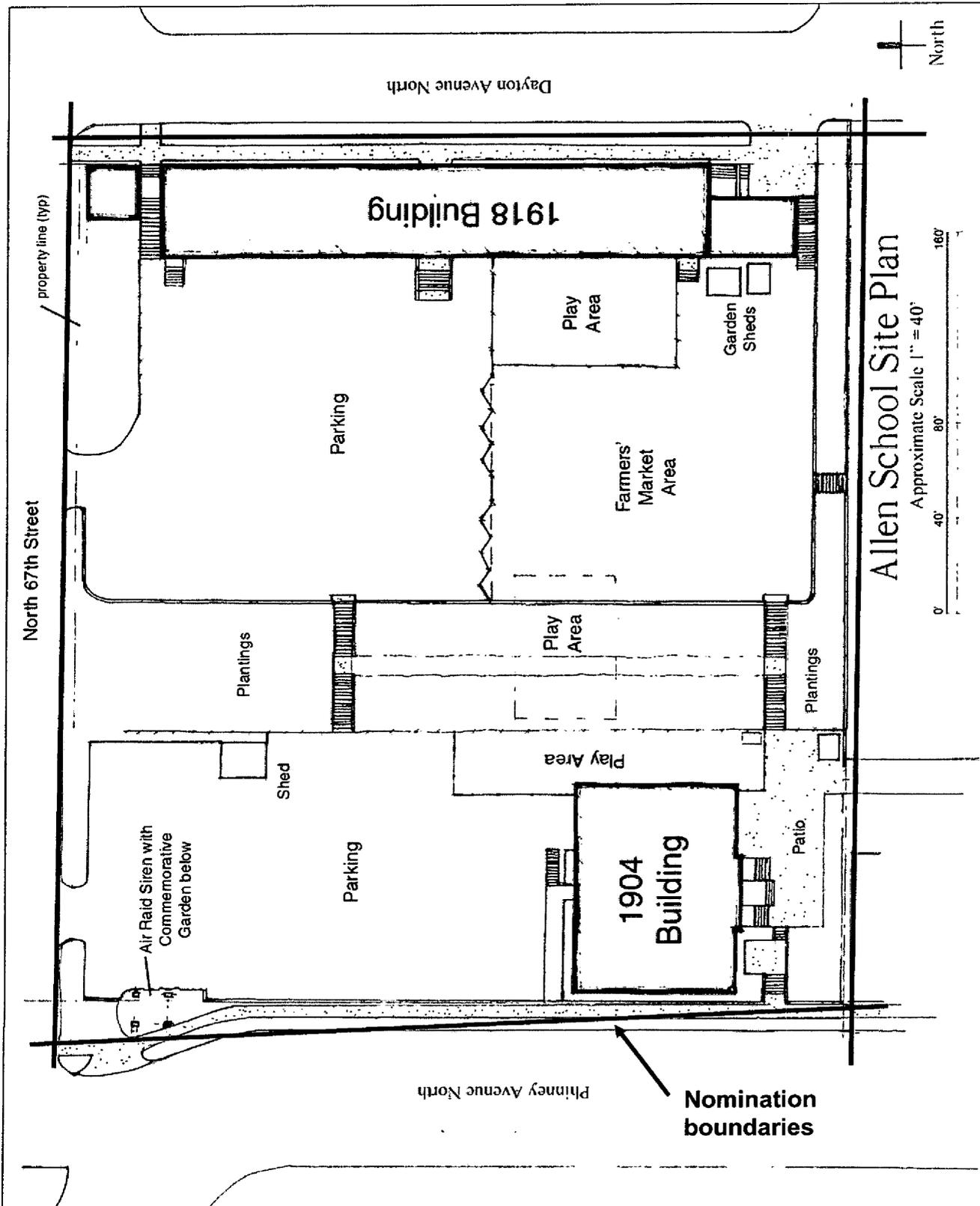
USGS Quad Excerpt



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Site Plan

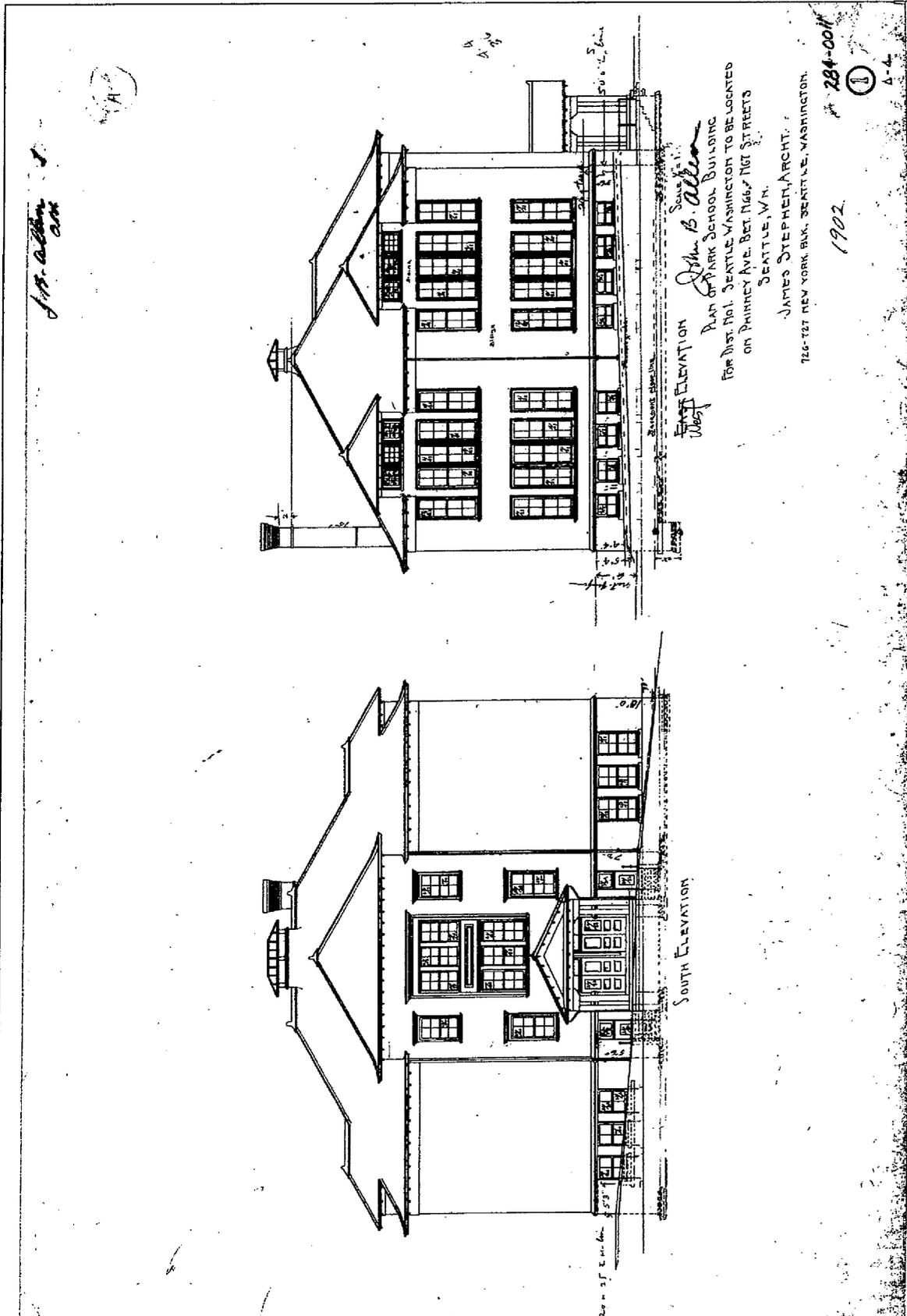


The two school buildings are labeled and shaded. The "shed" and "garden sheds" labeled on this plan are the three non-contributing structures. (BOLA Architecture + Planning.)

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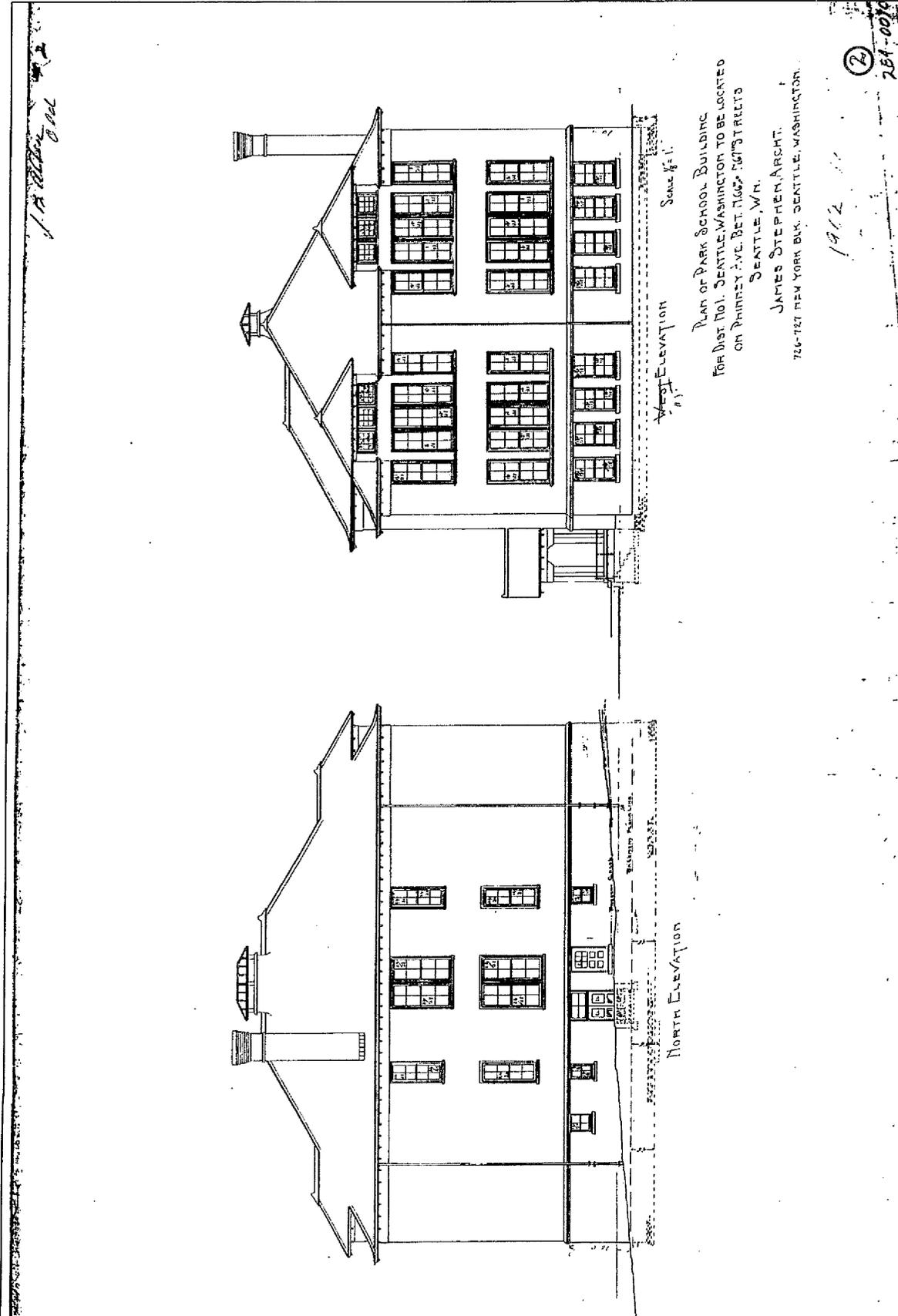
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1904 Building Plans



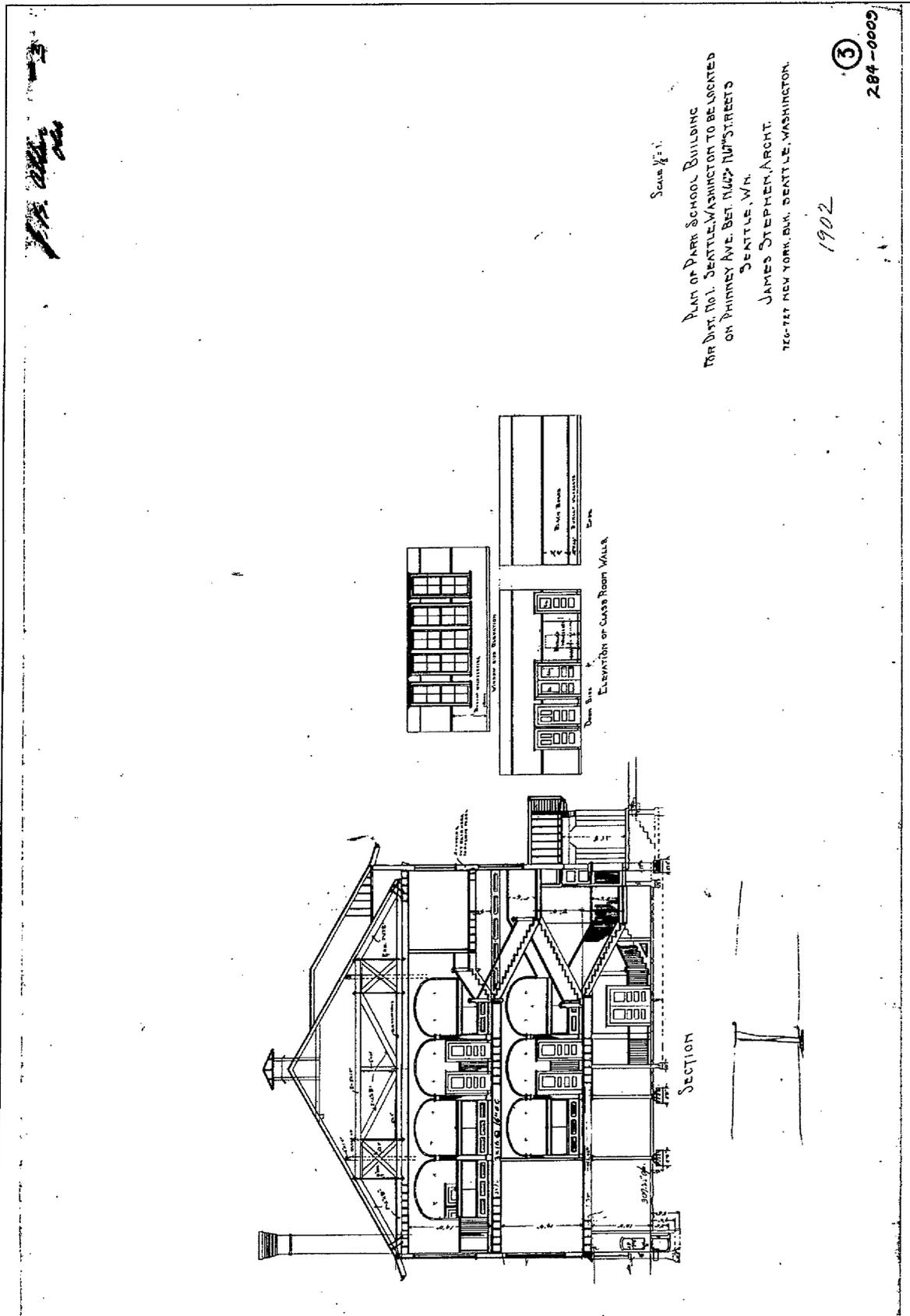
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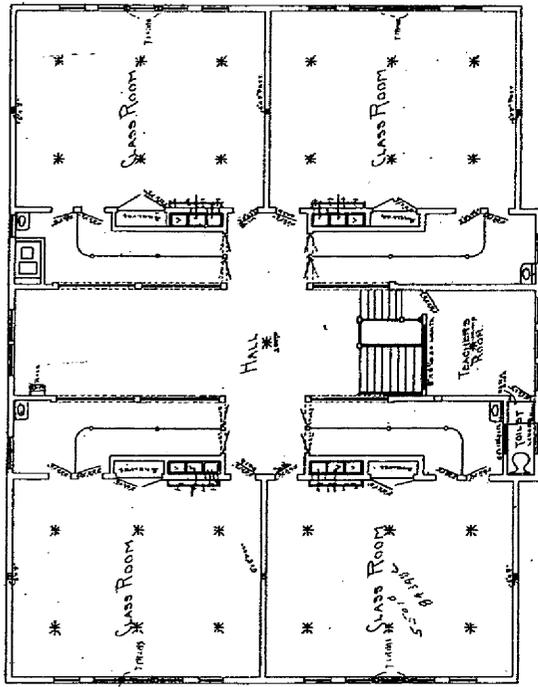
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SECOND FLOOR PLAN

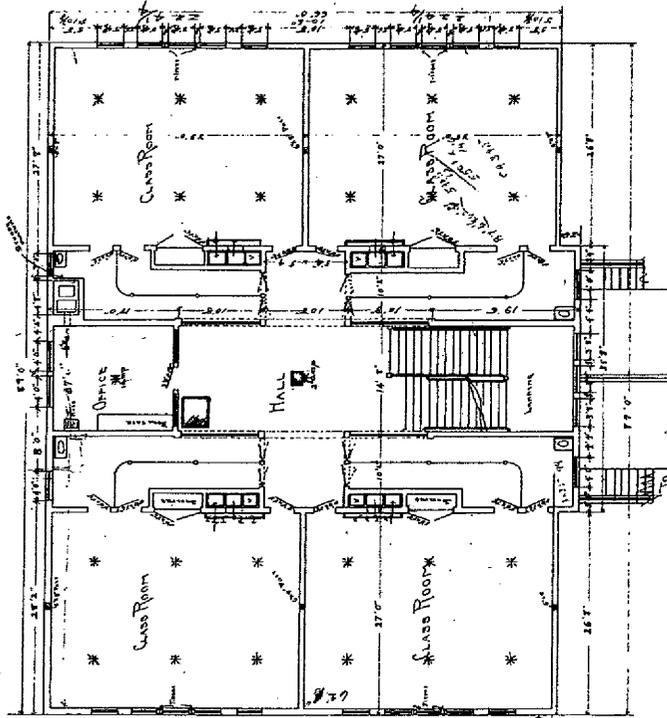
PLAN OF PARK SCHOOL BUILDING
FOR DIST. NO. 1, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON TO BE LOCATED
ON PHINNEY AVE. BET. 11th & 12th STREETS
SEATTLE, WA.

JAMES STEPHEN ARCHT.
715-727 NEW YORK BLDG. SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
1902.

284-0008

1902.

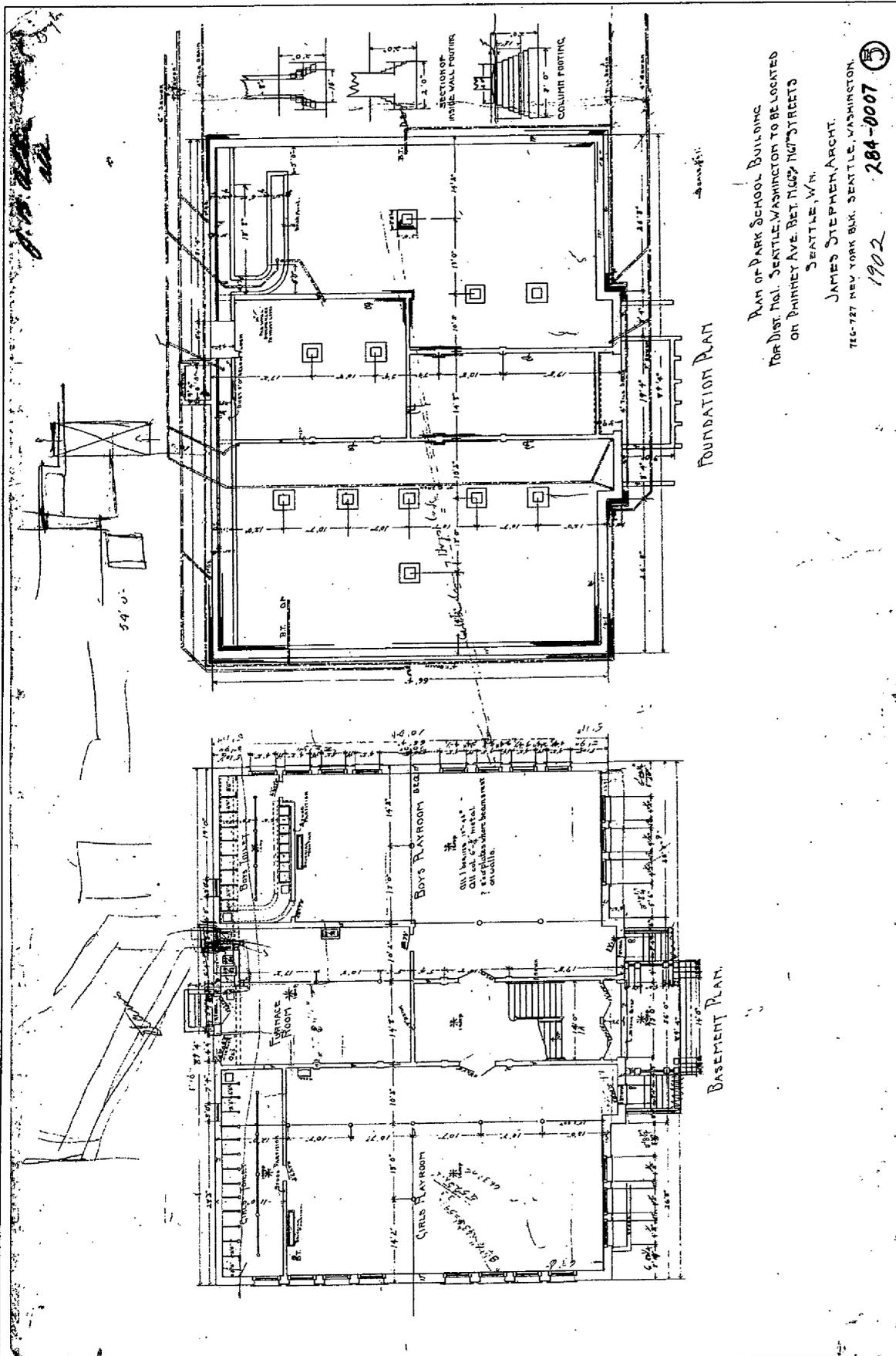
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN

John B. Allen School
Name of Property

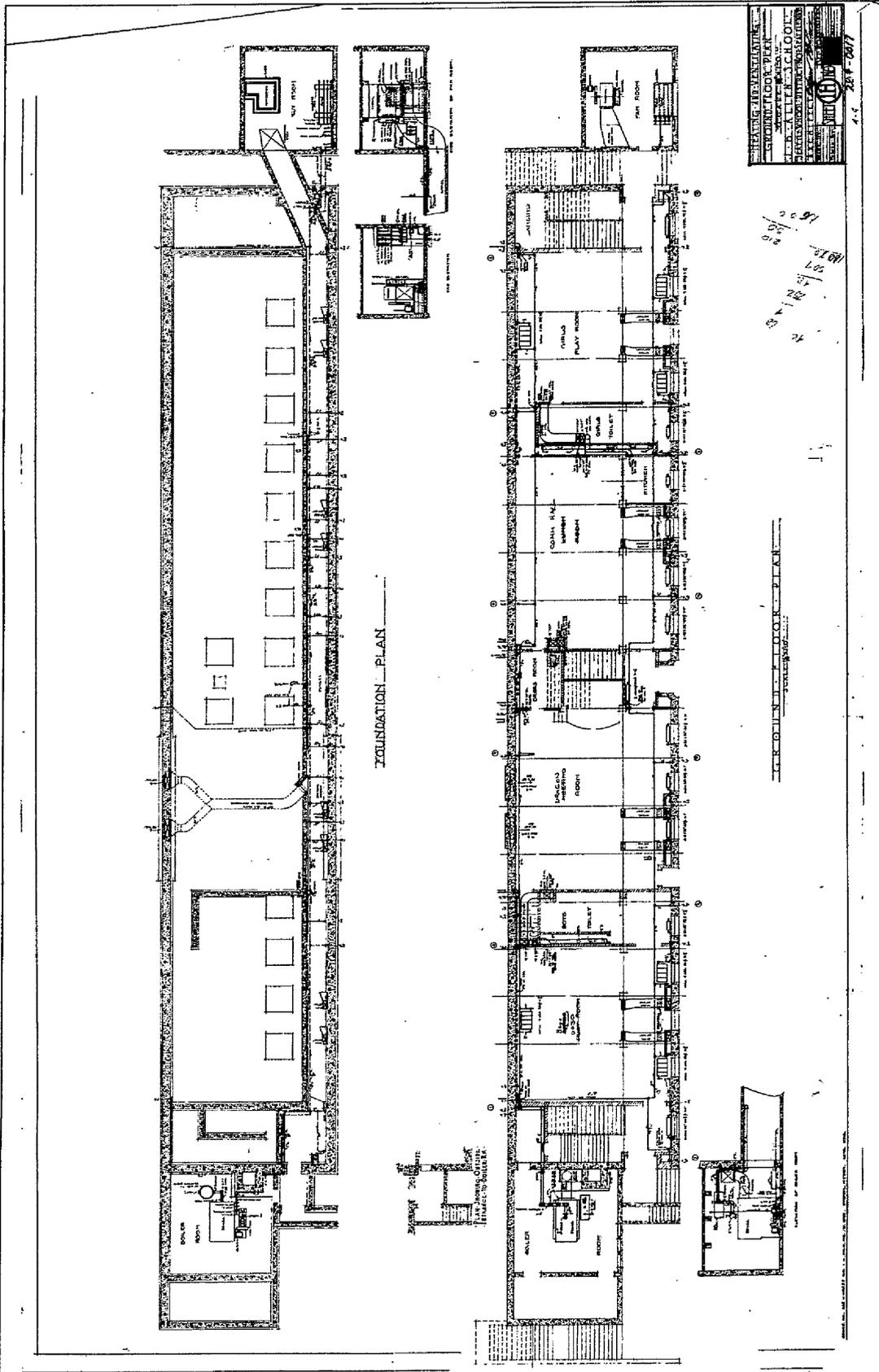
King Co., Washington
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John B. Allen School
Name of Property

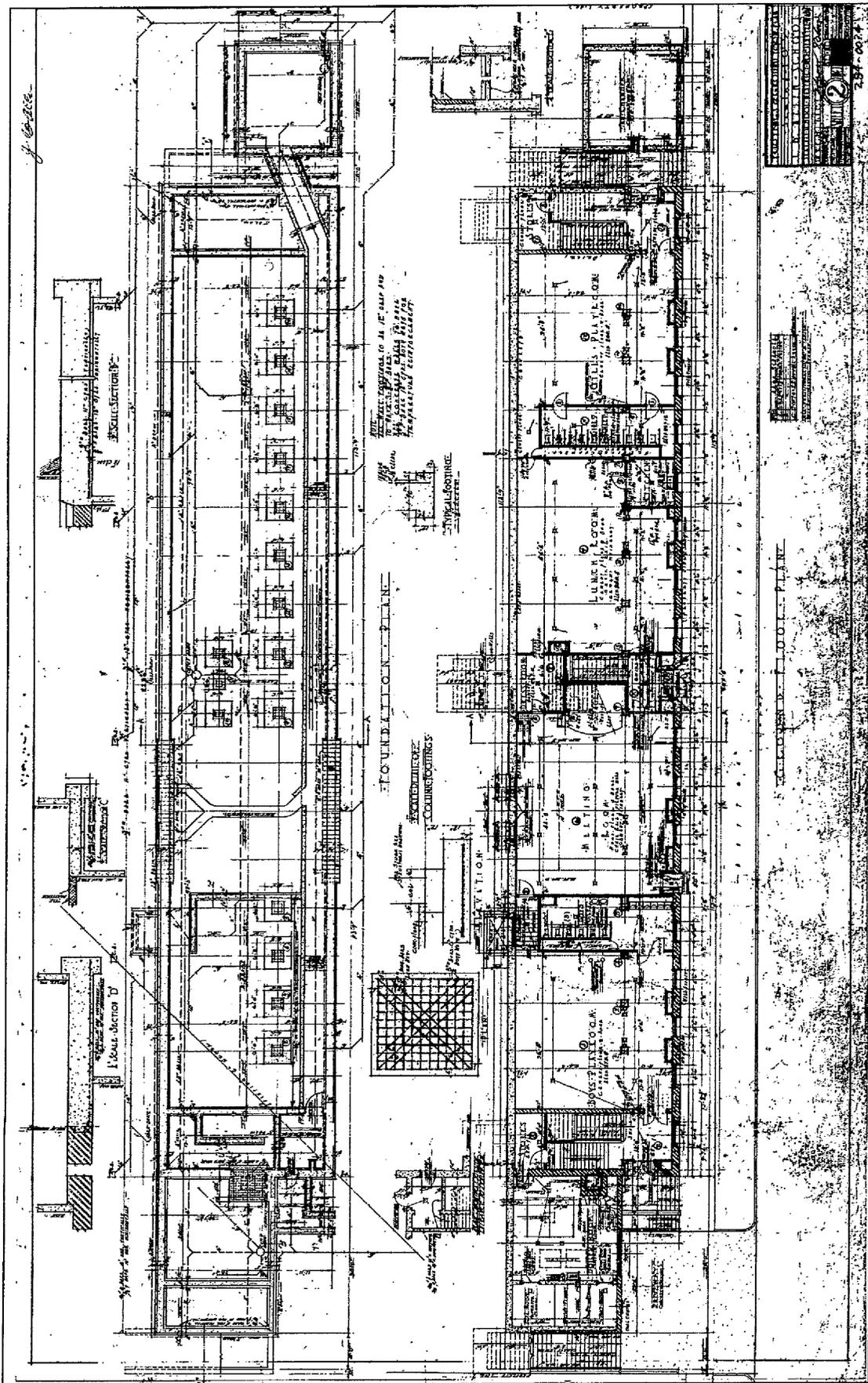
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1918 Building Plans



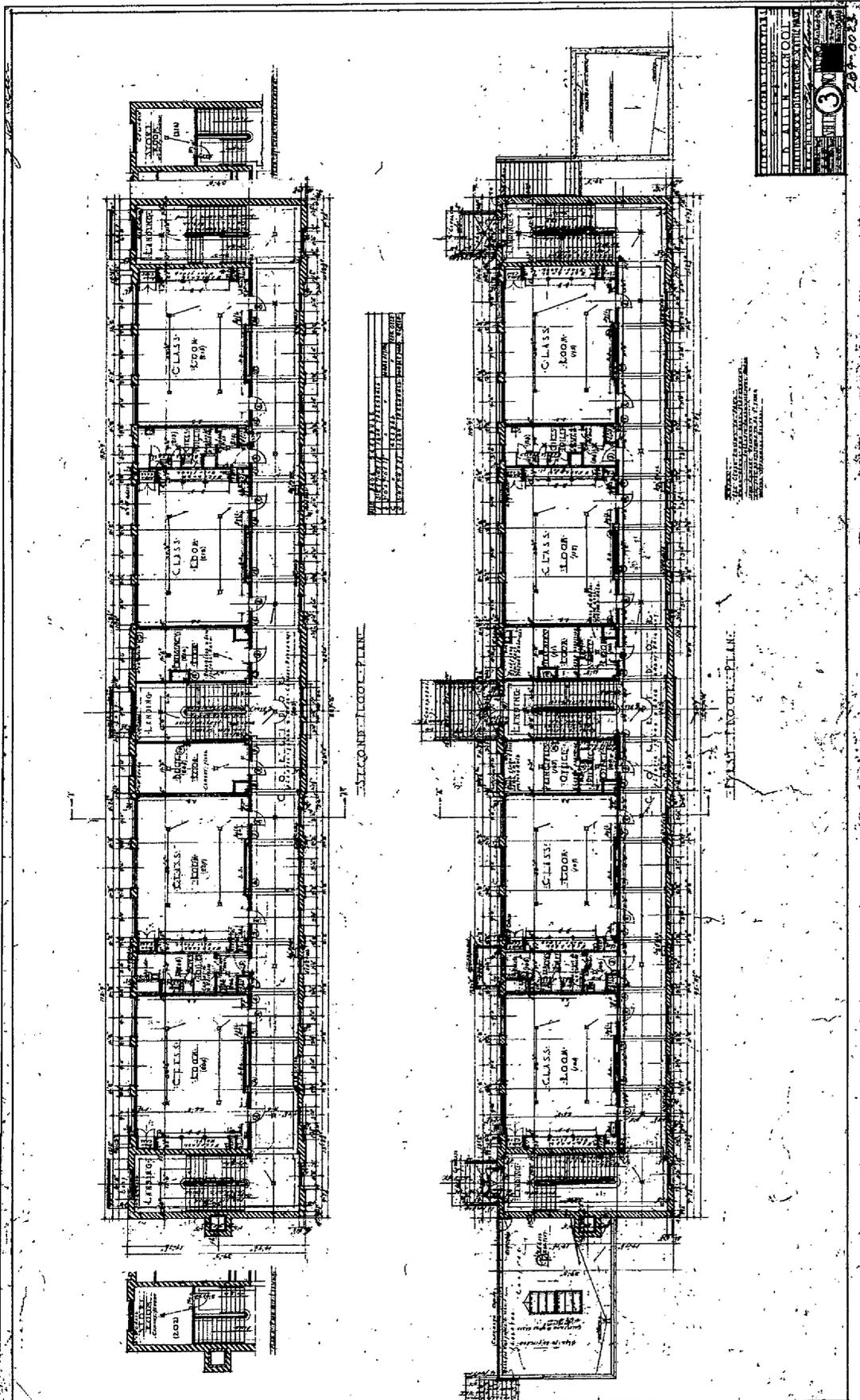
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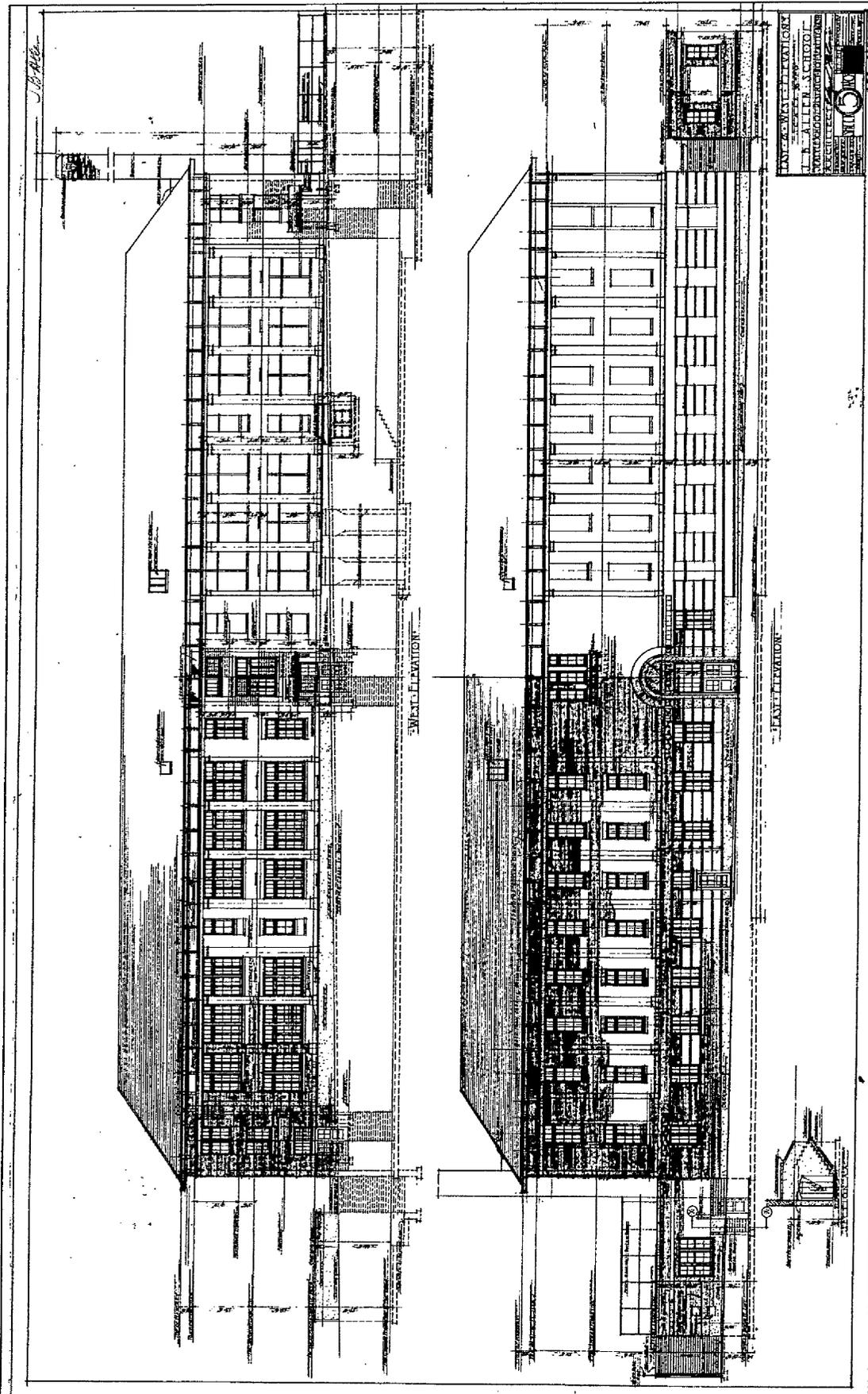
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Continuation Sheets



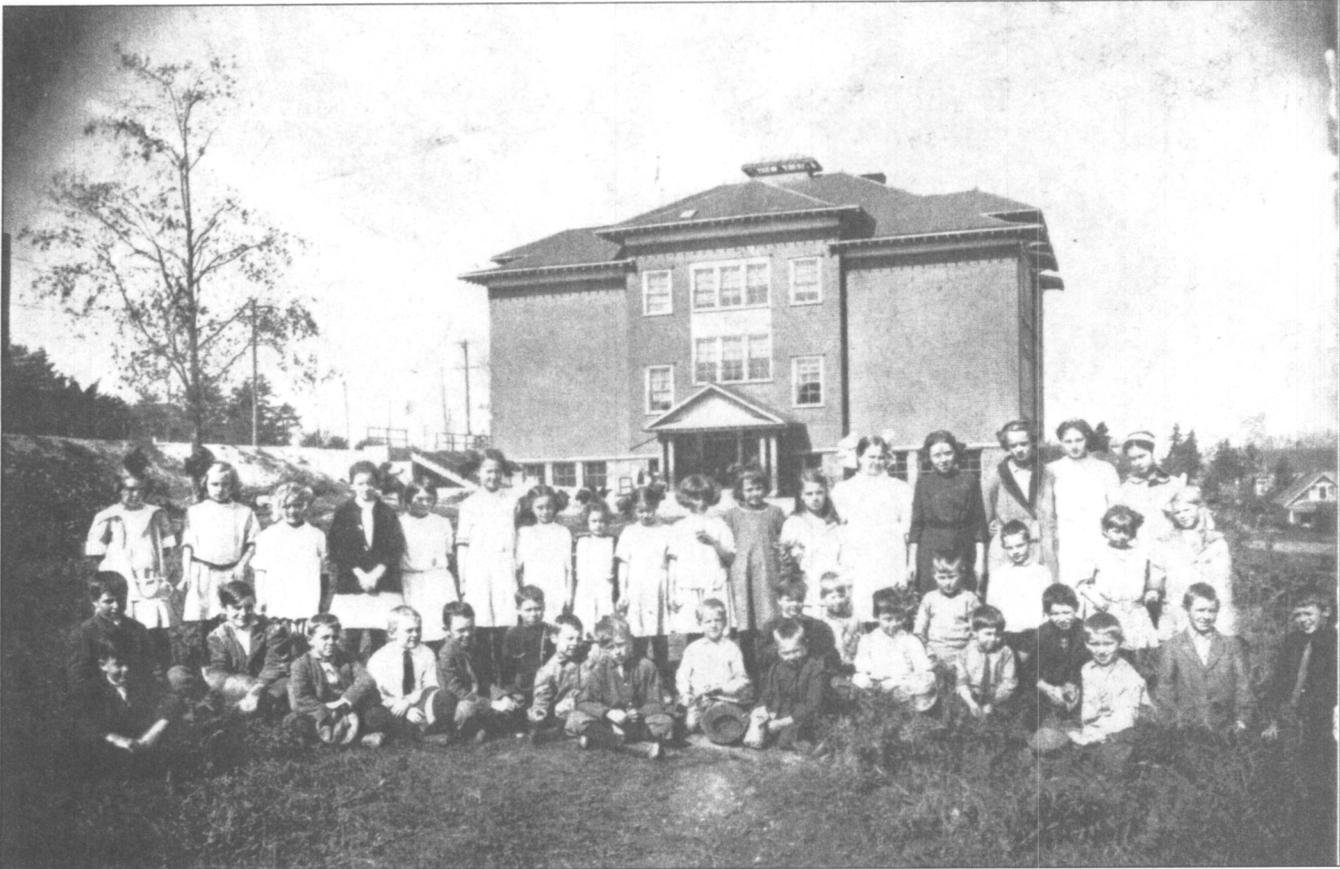
The 1904 wood building ca. 1905, shortly after completion and before regrading and widening of Phinney Avenue. (University of Washington Special Collections.)



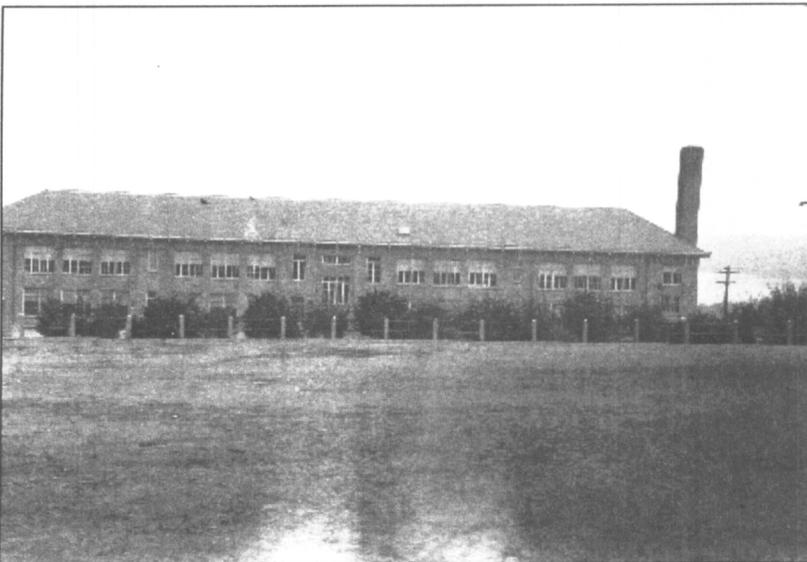
A similar view, ca.1906. (Museum of History & Industry.)

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Above: Students at J.B. Allen School, ca. 1923. (Seattle Public Schools Archives.)



Left: View looking across the site at the west façade of the 1918 building, September 1919. (Seattle Municipal Archives.)

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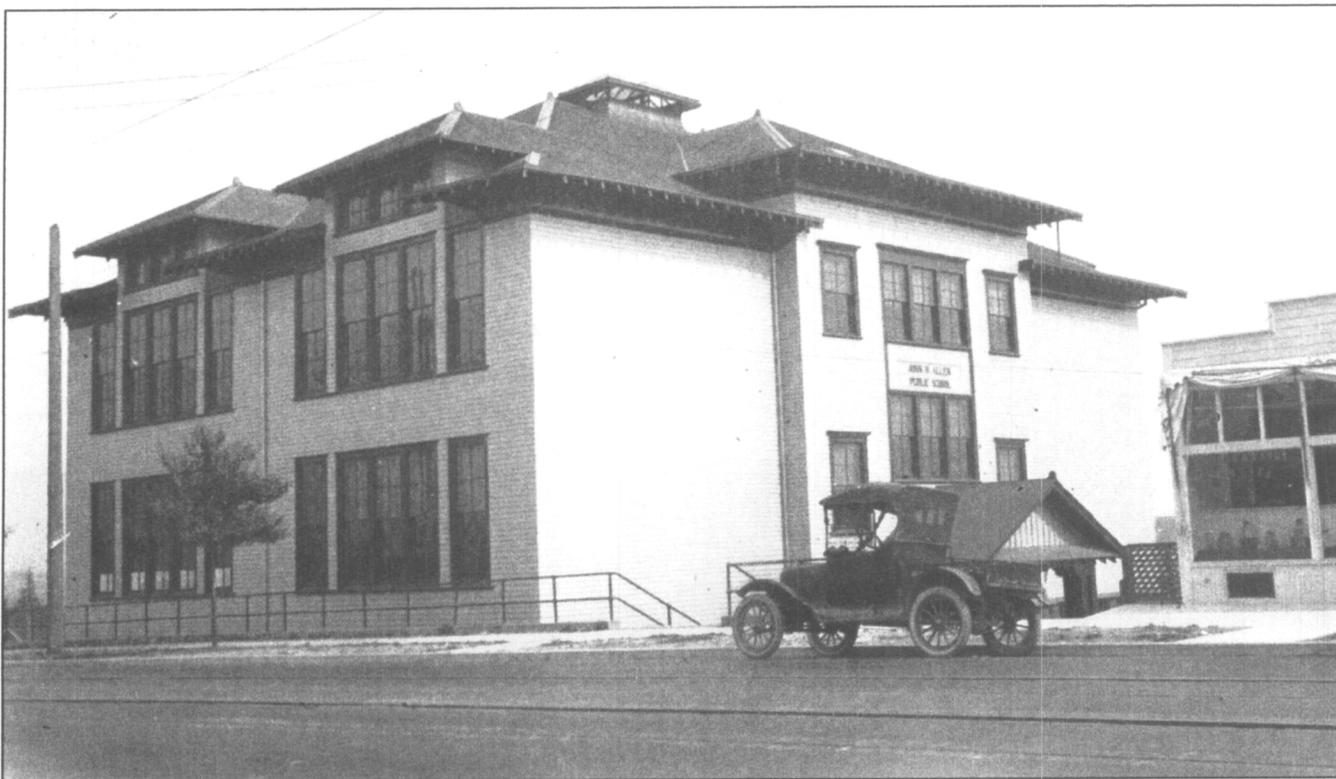
Above: Brick building Dayton Avenue (east) façade, 1924. (University of Washington Libraries Special Collections.)



Left: Terrace construction between the two school buildings, 1934. (University of Washington Libraries Special Collections.)

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Undated WPA photo, view across Phinney Avenue North toward the west and south façades of the 1904 building. (Puget Sound Regional Archives.)



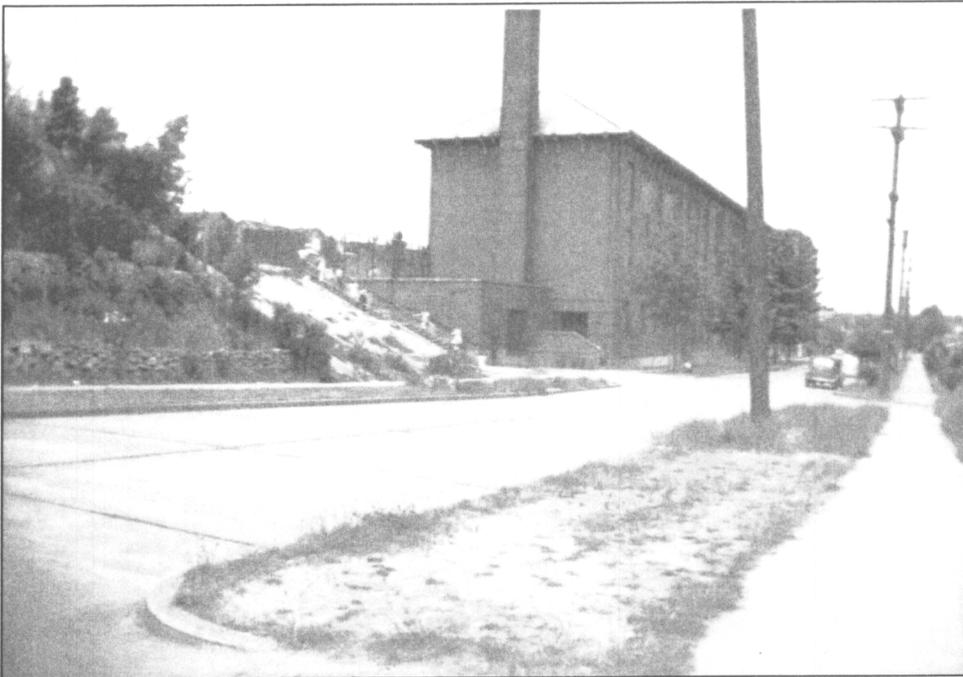
King County tax record photo from 1938, shows the west and south façades of the 1904 building in a view across Phinney Avenue North. Note the streetcar tracks in the foreground. (Puget Sound Regional Archives.)

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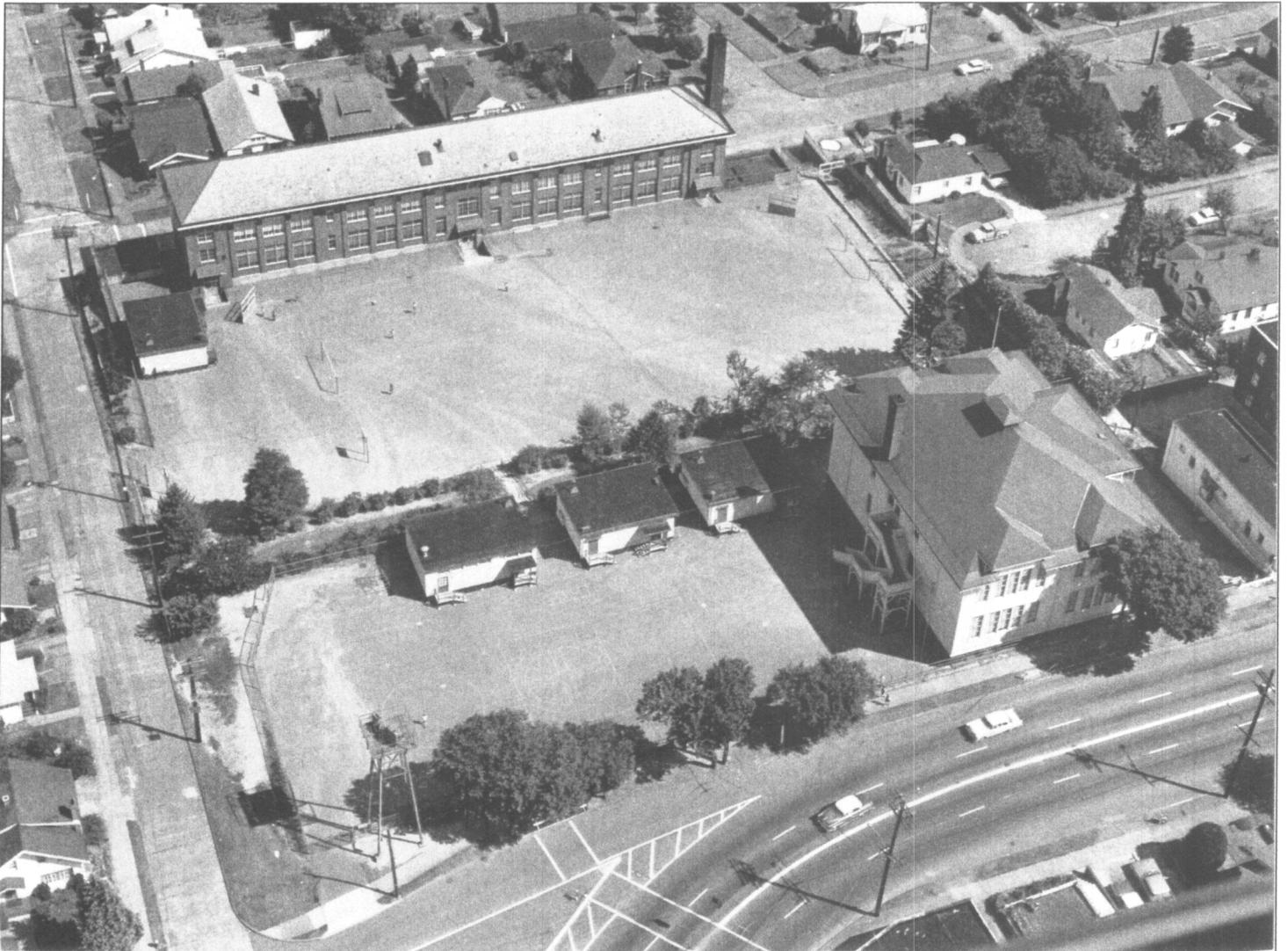
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View looking north along Dayton Avenue North toward the 1918 building, showing south and east façades. Circa 1940, after the widening and paving of Dayton. (Unknown source, photo courtesy of Dale Reuterlinger.)

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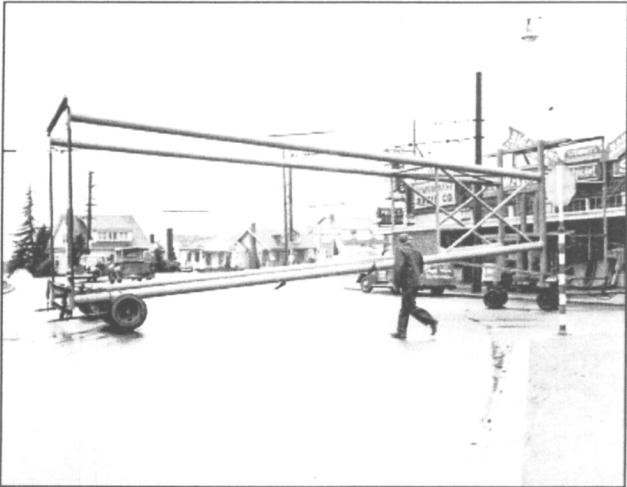


JOHN B. ALLEN

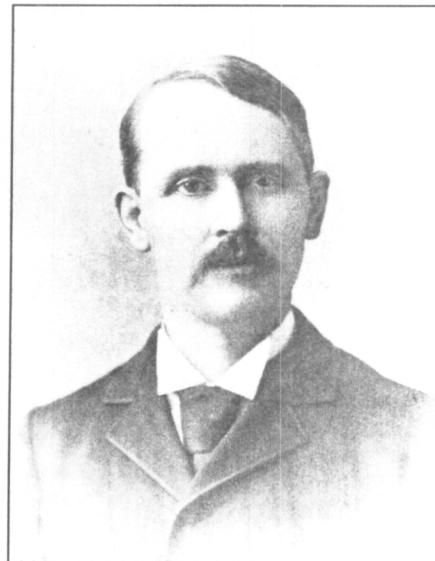
A 1963 aerial view of the entire property, showing the relationship between the school buildings as well as the play areas and portables at the time. (Seattle School District Archives.)

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Above and left: Installation of Chrysler Siren and Tower, April 1953. (Seattle Municipal Archives.)



Right: Senator John Beard Allen (1845–1903), for whom the school was named. (Seattle School District Archives, United States Congress photo.)



PINESY NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

PINESY NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

6532









OOD CENTER











AGE 6-10









