

Oregon Historic Site Form

Jefferson High School
5210 Kerby Ave
Portland, Multnomah County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 5210 N Kerby Ave apprx. addr

Portland vcnty Multnomah County

Optional Information
 assoc addresses:
 (former addresses, intersections, etc.)
 location descr:
 (remote sites)

historic name: Jefferson High School

current/
 other names: Thomas Jefferson High School

block nbr: _____ lot nbr: _____ tax lot nbr: _____
 township: _____ range: _____ section: _____ 1/4: _____
 zip: _____

PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: Building height (# stories): 4

elig. evaluation: not eligible/non-contributing

primary constr date: 1909 (c.) secondary date: 1952 (c.)
 (optional--use for major addns)

primary orig use: School

secondary orig use: _____

primary style: Renaissance Revival

secondary style: Late 19th/20th Amer. Mvmts: Other

primary siding: Brick:Other/Undefined

secondary siding: _____

plan type: School (General)

total # eligible resources: 0 total # ineligible resources: 3

NR status: _____
 NR date listed: _____ (indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)

orig use comments: _____

prim style comments: _____

sec style comments: _____

siding comments: _____

architect: Whitehouse & Honeyman/Fouilhoux

builder: _____

comments/notes: HRI Rank II. Piedmont Conservation District - Contributing Resource.

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name: PPS Historic Building Assessment 2009 Survey & Inventory Project

farmstead/cluster name: _____ external site #: 118
 (ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: _____

ILS survey date: 6/22/2009

RLS survey date: 6/22/2009

Gen File date: _____

106 Project(s)

| SHPO Case # | Date | Agency Effect Eval |
|-------------|----------|--------------------|
| | 8/5/2003 | No Adverse Effect |



ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

(Include expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings, and alterations)

Description Summary

Jefferson High School is located at 5210 N. Kerby Ave. in the Humboldt neighborhood of north Portland. The twelve acre campus includes the original 1909 school building (with several subsequent additions), an auto shop, and a gymnasium. The high school building currently exhibits limited evidence of its former architectural style that once revealed the tensions between the Arts and Crafts and Classical Revival Movements. Several subsequent additions and exterior alterations, however, have diminished the building's architectural integrity.

Architectural Description

The Jefferson High School is situated in the Humboldt neighborhood of north Portland. The campus encompasses twelve acres stretched from north to south between N. Kirby Ave. and N. Commercial Ave. and bisected by N. Alberta Ave. Development in the surrounding area consists primarily of single family residences built between 1890 and 1950 along N. Killingsworth Ave., which forms the northern boundary of the property, as well as mixed commercial and residential uses.

The Jefferson High School campus consists of the original main building (1909), gymnasium addition (1928), auditorium addition (1952), girl's gymnasium (1952), free-standing gymnasium (1964), and an auto shop (1968). Most of the buildings are clustered in the center of the property with a football field located to the north and a baseball field situated to the south.

The main building of the Jefferson campus consists of three story brick building with a full fenestrated basement. The original floor plan consisted of an I-shaped double loaded corridor on each of the four floors. The exterior brickwork is laid in a common bond consisting of a row of headers followed by six rows of two stretchers alternating with one header. Openings (entrances as well as windows) within the building are largely defined by cement stucco painted white which emphasizes the principal (north) elevation's bilateral symmetry.

The main ceremonial entrance is approached just to the south of a 1915 statue of a seated Thomas Jefferson. The entrance consists of three semi-circular arched portals that lead to a sheltered entryway. Bronze plaques and bas relief panels adorn the walls in the immediate vicinity of the entries and they memorialize the sacrifices of former students during World Wars I and II. Each of the three doorways into the school feature semicircular arched fanlights. The windows throughout the original building are replacements consisting of fixed sash with sliding panes at the bottom of the window.

Double run stairs approach recessed entries topped with semi-circular arches on the east and west sides of the original building. The building features a watertable, several concrete beltcourses, and a reconstructed fourth floor. The hipped roof is currently covered with composition shingles and once featured a bracketed overhang that was removed in 1952.

Just to the south of the original building on the west side of the complex is the 1952 auditorium. The large triple-height brick-face building features limited fenestration, but lines square openings with glass block pierce the exterior wall particularly on the south side of the addition. The auditorium contrasts with the original building in terms of its fenestration as well as bulky massing to visually dominate the west side of the building. The auditorium is also constructed to the lot line as opposed to the original building which is set back from the sidewalk approximately 20 feet.

On the north side of the campus, is the freestanding concrete gymnasium with a box-shaped massing that was constructed in 1964. The building features limited fenestration, a flat roof, and principal entries consisting of five sets of double-doors on the north and south sides of the building. An additional girl's gymnasium (1952) is located to the south side of the original building. The brick-faced gymnasium is double height and is largely unfenestrated. A free-standing auto shop (1972) is located further to the south of the girl's gymnasium. Attached to the rear of the original building is the 1928 gymnasium. This component of the building exhibits the greatest degree of historical integrity. The principal exterior entry into the gymnasium lies on the west side of the building. It consists of three double doors with cast stone surrounds with a keystone. The exterior walls on the west side also exhibit lozenges. Much of the building also has a cast stone cornice. The windows have largely been replaced.

The primary public spaces of Jefferson High School include the main entrance, three gymnasiums, and the auditorium. The auditorium features a balcony, main seating area, and stage as well as several rear stage service areas and rehearsal rooms for band and individual instrument instruction. The main entrance features two undecorated columns. The corridors of the original building mostly feature locker-lined walls and are illuminated by hanging tubular fluorescent lights. The 1928 gymnasium has been subdivided for use as a television studio, but the exposed brick walls, U-shaped seating, wood flooring, and most wood doors remain intact. The flooring is concrete and 12" x 12" tile. All classroom built-ins have been removed and acoustic tile has been installed in most ceilings. The heating is principally heated from boilers located near the center of the campus and marked by a vertical smokestack. Heat is largely conveyed to individual classrooms via heat registers located on the window side of the classroom.

Alterations

Extensive alterations in 1952 to the exterior of the original building consisted of removing overhanging eaves that exhibited brackets. The wall was subsequently raised to a level just above the third floor windows. The alterations also included the removal of the pyramidal roof that was centered over the central bay of the north elevation. In order to make the older section of the building look more modern in line with the auditorium and girls' gymnasium additions that were added in that year, cement plaster was applied around the windows which covered over lozenge patterned brickwork. Nearly all of the building's windows were removed between 1988 and 1990. Nearly all doors and classroom built-ins have also been removed from the original 1909 building. Jefferson High School only retains its integrity of association, setting, and location, but not design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

HISTORY

(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period [preferably to the present])

Statement of Significance

In 1869, the first high school, housed in two rooms of the former North School building in Portland, was opened (Powers and Corning 1937: 74). Despite early struggles in the development of a consistent curriculum, the high school persisted at the will of the city's residents until the Oregon School Code, adopted in 1878, officially authorized the construction of high schools in the city (Sevetson 2007: 465). The first purpose built high school in Portland was the 1883 Portland High School built on Southwest Fourteenth and Morrison. Before it was even built, the school was the subject of a serious debate among prominent citizens, including George Atkinson and Harvey Scott as to the necessity of a publicly funded high school. Despite the conflict, the 1883 "Transition Gothic" styled Portland High School established a high design standard for the city's high schools as it was prominently featured in William Thayer's "Marvels of the New West" in 1887 (Thayer 1887: 334). Future high schools in the city would be built on a similarly grand scale.

Amidst the growing influence of John Dewey's Progressive Education Movement, Portland's public schools began a dramatic re-building program in the early twentieth century. The program served as a response to changing city demographics and ideas concerning school safety, sanitation, and child centered instructional methods beginning in the first decade of the 1900s (Rippa, 1997: passim; Cremin 1961: 135-153; Cubberley 1915: 283-290). By 1905, it became increasingly clear that dramatic increases in school-age children outstripped the district's existing classroom capacity. Additionally, much of the new residential development was occurring in areas of the city where the existing schools could not effectively serve the growing number of families with children (Cubberley 1915: 283-285, 288-290).

Simultaneous to this growth, several well-publicized school fires elsewhere in the United States brought calls for a more fundamental change in the building stock of the district. In 1906 Portland Mayor Lane called for the construction of new "fireproof" school buildings (Oregonian, 10-31-1906). In 1910, various city neighborhood "advancement clubs" joined forces to discuss the unfit school buildings in their respective neighborhoods (Oregonian 07-31-1910). Soon after this meeting, on August 16, 1910, the Portland City Council enacted a requirement that all schools constructed after January 1, 1911 would have to be of fire proof construction (Powers and Corning 1937: 183). Even as these discussions were occurring, Portland Public Schools was undertaking the construction of the city's largest fire-proof high school; Jefferson High School.

Jefferson High School, constructed in 1909-1910 was a direct reflection of Portland's ambitions as well as its concerns about school safety. By the early twentieth century, PPS was constructing a significant number of frame elementary schools largely designed by architect Thomas J. Jones. Due to the size and fire proof construction necessary for the city's impressive new high schools such as the old Lincoln High School (1912) and the first Washington High School (1906), the school district held a design competition for the new Jefferson High School in July 1908 rather than hand the design over to its own architect. The School Board considered eleven sets of plans, and chose the firm Whitehouse & Honeyman (Honeyman was later replaced by Fouilhoux in the partnership) for its design of a new high school on the east side (PPS Portland School Board Minutes, 1908). In 1909, the site for the new school, part of the Walnut Park Addition and several lots of the K. and M. Patton tract was acquired for \$157,920 (PPS Chronology Binder).

For the new high school, Morris Whitehouse, the founder of Whitehouse, Church, Newberry, & Roer, designed a three story brick building with a full basement that featured an E-shaped plan and reflected the architectural tensions of the Arts and Crafts and Classical Revival architectural movements. Rather than exhibiting the straightforward application of Classical Revival detailing, the building featured concrete plasterwork consisting of horizontal belt courses, diamond-shaped motifs, a hipped roof with a bracketed eave, flush face dormers, as well as projecting walls to diminish the sheer size of the new building. The building, built at a cost of \$321,078 was popularized through a series of color postcards following its construction and was at the time one of the largest high schools constructed in the United States (PPS Chronology Binder). The firm of Whitehouse and Fouilhoux would also eventually design Lincoln High School (1912, now Lincoln Hall on the campus of Portland State University) (Ritz 2003: 421-422).

For much of its early history, Jefferson High School had an attendance consisting largely of whites who lived in north and northeast Portland. Immediately following the Vanport flood of 1948, the demographics of the neighborhoods surrounding Jefferson High School changed dramatically as many displaced African-Americans settled in the neighborhoods that fed the high school. The Vanport Flood is often credited with finally integrating the city in addition to its schools (Oregon Journal 3-10-1952). With the arrival of African Americans into north and northeast Portland, many of the elementary schools, as well as Jefferson High School witnessed a steep increase in the percentage of minority students and a marked decrease in the percentage of white students.

By the 1960s, the Albina cluster of schools would be the flashpoint for accusations of segregation and unequal educational opportunities. Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, PPS enacted several programs in an attempt to integrate the district's schools and gain equity in educational opportunities. In 1978, a controversial desegregation plan to bus Jefferson students to Wilson and Lincoln High Schools was abandoned at the request of the Community Coalition for School Integration (League of Women Voters of Portland 1980: 5-6; Oregonian 1-10-1978). Other measures to diversify the student population at the high schools were adopted by the School Board instead.

The oldest high school remaining in Portland, Jefferson High School retains close associations with the surrounding neighborhood. Although designed by Whitehouse and Honeyman (later Fouilhoux), one of Portland's more prominent architectural firms during the early twentieth century, Jefferson High School does not retain sufficient architectural integrity to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). While associated with the growth of high school education in Portland in the early twentieth century as well as the desegregation of Portland's Public Schools, the alterations to the building's interior and exterior have diminished its associations with these events and trends such that it is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A. The loss of its original overhanging roof with brackets, brick diapering, and interior finishes would also preclude the building from being eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C as the design, workmanship, and materials associated with the original Whitehouse and Honeyman design has been greatly diminished.

Oregon Historic Site Form

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5210 Kerby Ave
Portland, Multnomah County

RESEARCH INFORMATION

(Check all of the basic sources consulted and cite specific important sources)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Title Records | <input type="checkbox"/> Census Records | <input type="checkbox"/> Property Tax Records | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Histories |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biographical Sources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SHPO Files | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obituaries | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic Photographs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Directories | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Permits | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library | |

Local Library: Multnomah County Library University Library: Portland State University Library

Historical Society: Oregon Historical Society Other Repository: PPS Archives

Bibliography: Bibliography

Betelle, James O. "Architectural Styles as Applied to School Buildings." American School Board Journal. Vol. 58 (April 1919).

Cremin, Lawrence. The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957. New York: A. Knopf, 1961.

Cubberley, Ellwood Patterson. The Portland Survey: A Textbook on City School Administration Based on a Concrete Study. Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World Book Co., 1915.

League of Women Voters of Portland. "Creative Approaches: How Will Portland Integrate its Public Schools." January 1980.

Oregonian. "Mayor Lane and the Schools." 10-31-1906.

Oregonian. "School Buildings are Called Unfit." 7-31-1910.

Portland Public Schools. Schools Chronology Binder.

Powers, Alfred and Howard McKinley Corning, History of Education in Portland. [Portland]: Work Projects Administration, 1937.

Rippa, Alexander. Education in a Free Society: An American History. New York: Longman, 1997.

Ritz, Richard. E. Architects of Oregon. A Biographical Dictionary of Architects Deceased – 19th and 20th Centuries. Portland: Lair Hill Publishing, 2003.

Sanborn Map Company 1924-1928, 1908-Dec. 1950 Sanborn Maps, Multnomah County Public Library, Portland, Oregon. Available at: <https://catalog.multcolib.org/validate?url=http%3A%2F%2F0-sanborn.umi.com.catalog.multcolib.org%3A80%2F>. Accessed June 16, 2009.

Sibley, Ernest. "Why I Prefer the Colonial Style." School Board Journal: Vol. 66 (January 1923).



North (main) elevation of main building (118A) with track in foreground



View of 1952 auditorium addition, looking south.



West entrances into old gymnasium.



South elevation of 1952 auditorium addition



Looking southeast toward 1964 gymnasium.

**Jefferson High School
Exterior Photos
ENTRIX, 2009**



Interior of 1952 auditorium with balcony (118A).



View of 1964 gymnasium.



View of old (1928) gymnasium seating



Cafeteria located within 1952 auditorium addition.



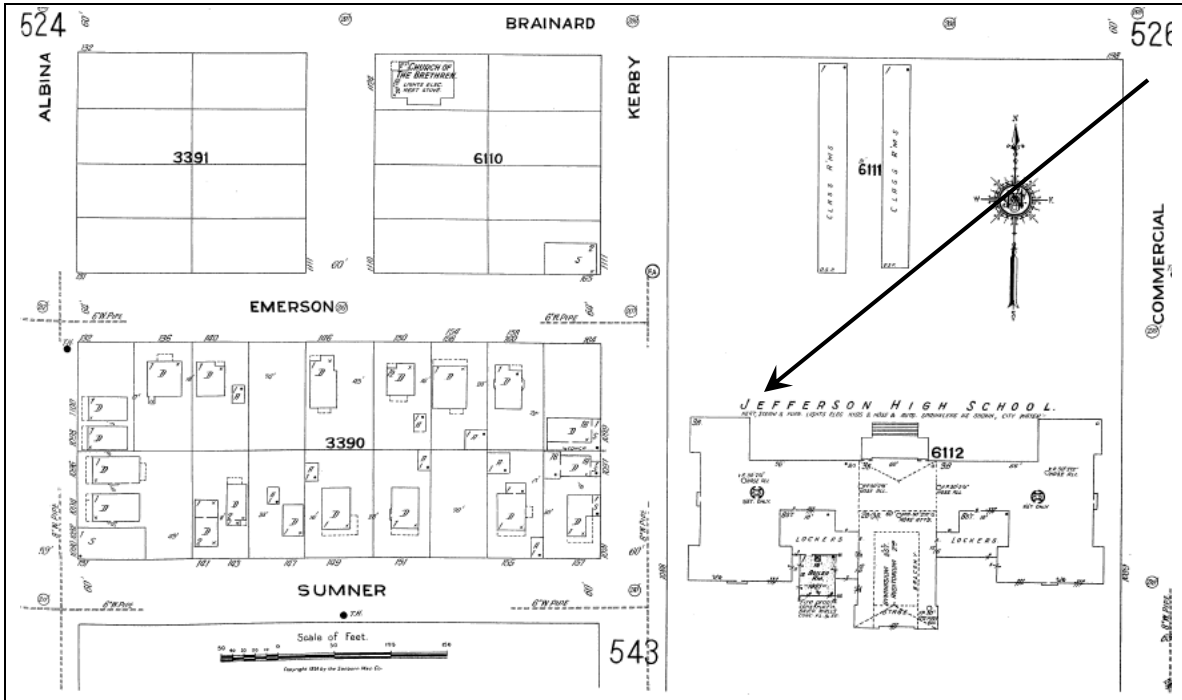
Typical corridor of main building (118A).



ENTRIX

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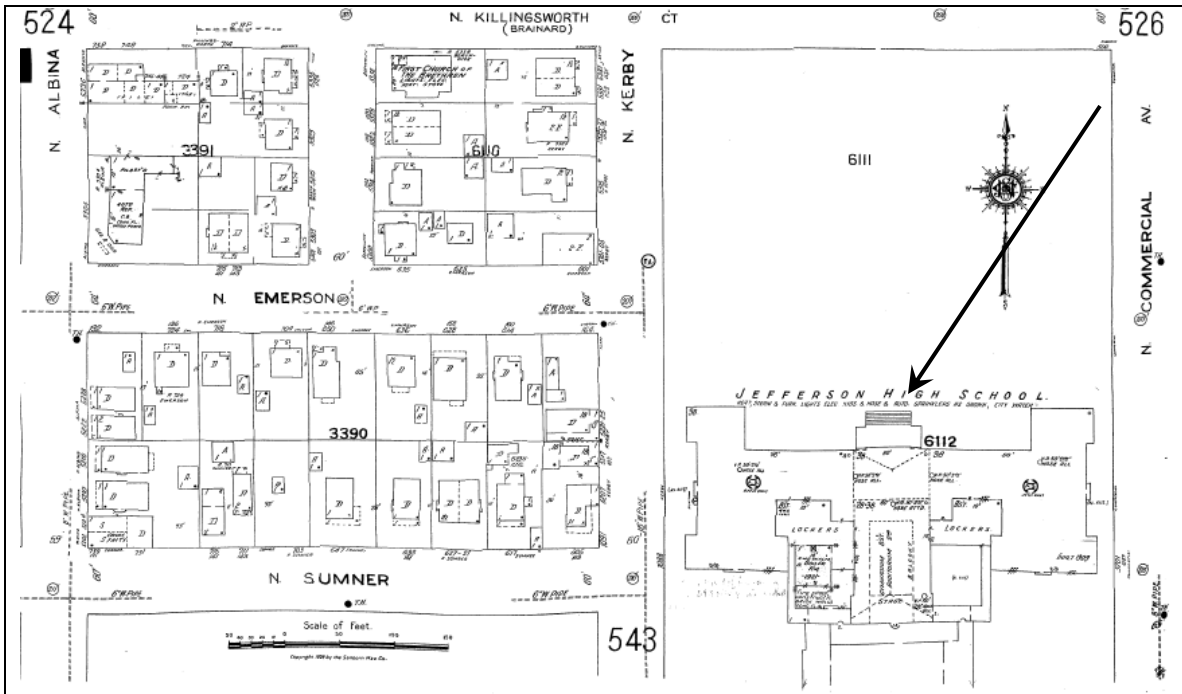


1924-1928, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 525. Arrow points to Jefferson High School.



ENTRIX

Down to Earth. Down to Business.™

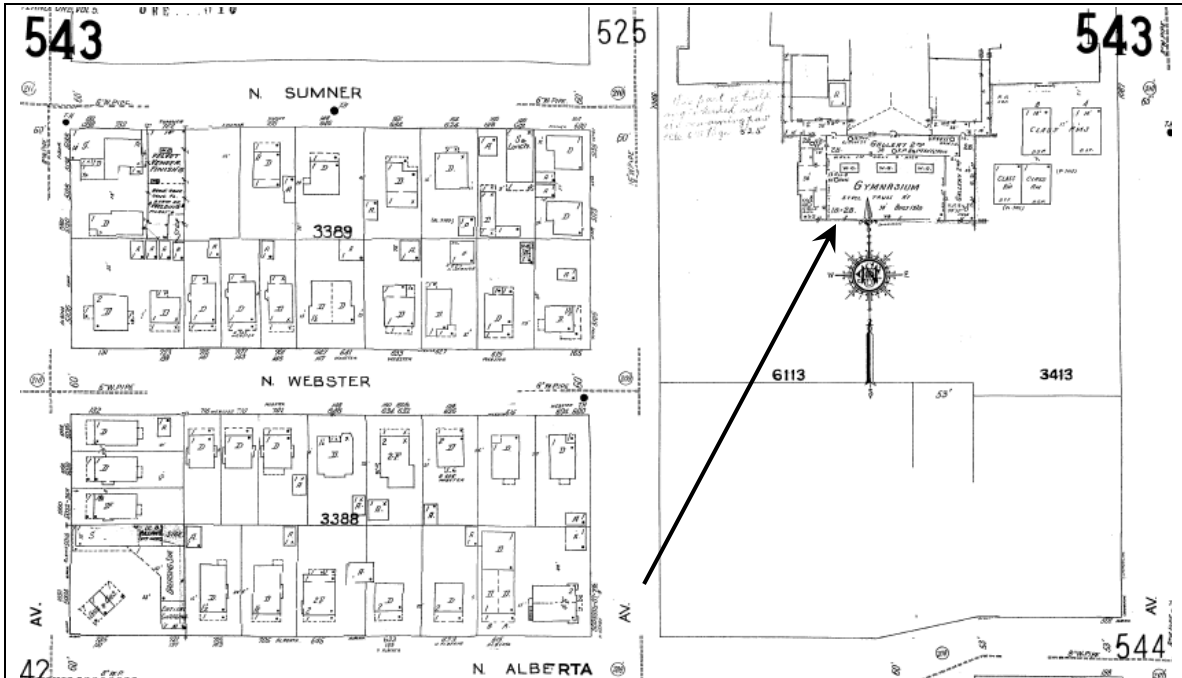


Updated to 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 525.
Arrow points to Jefferson High School. Note street name change.



ENTRIX

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Updated to 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Portland, Oregon, Map 543.
Arrow points to Jefferson High School gymnasium.

Jefferson High School

5210 N Kerby Ave, Portland OR, 97217

[View Site in Google Maps](#)

Building Periods

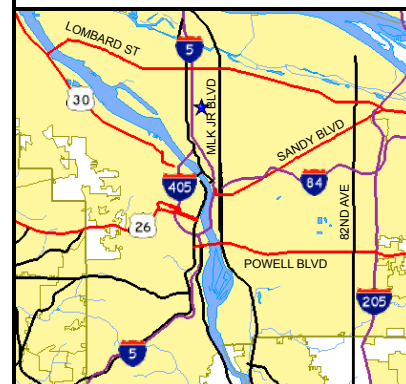
1. Original Bldg (118A), 1909
2. Gym Addition (118B), 1928
3. Auditorium Addition (118C), 1952
4. Girls Gym Addition (118D), 1952
5. Gym Addition (118E), 1964
6. Auto Shop (118F), 1972






Post-1928 aerial of Jefferson High School, looking northeast.

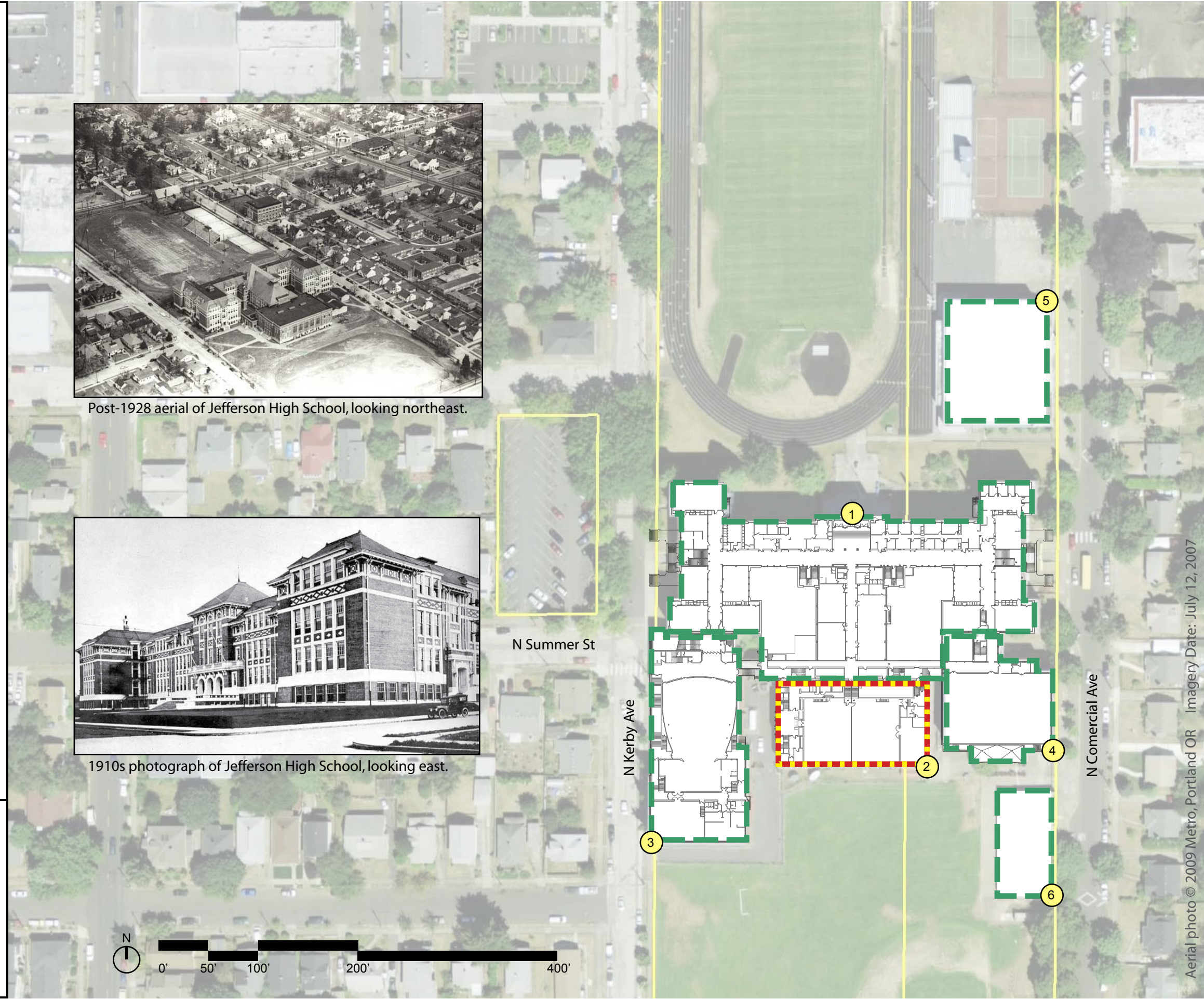


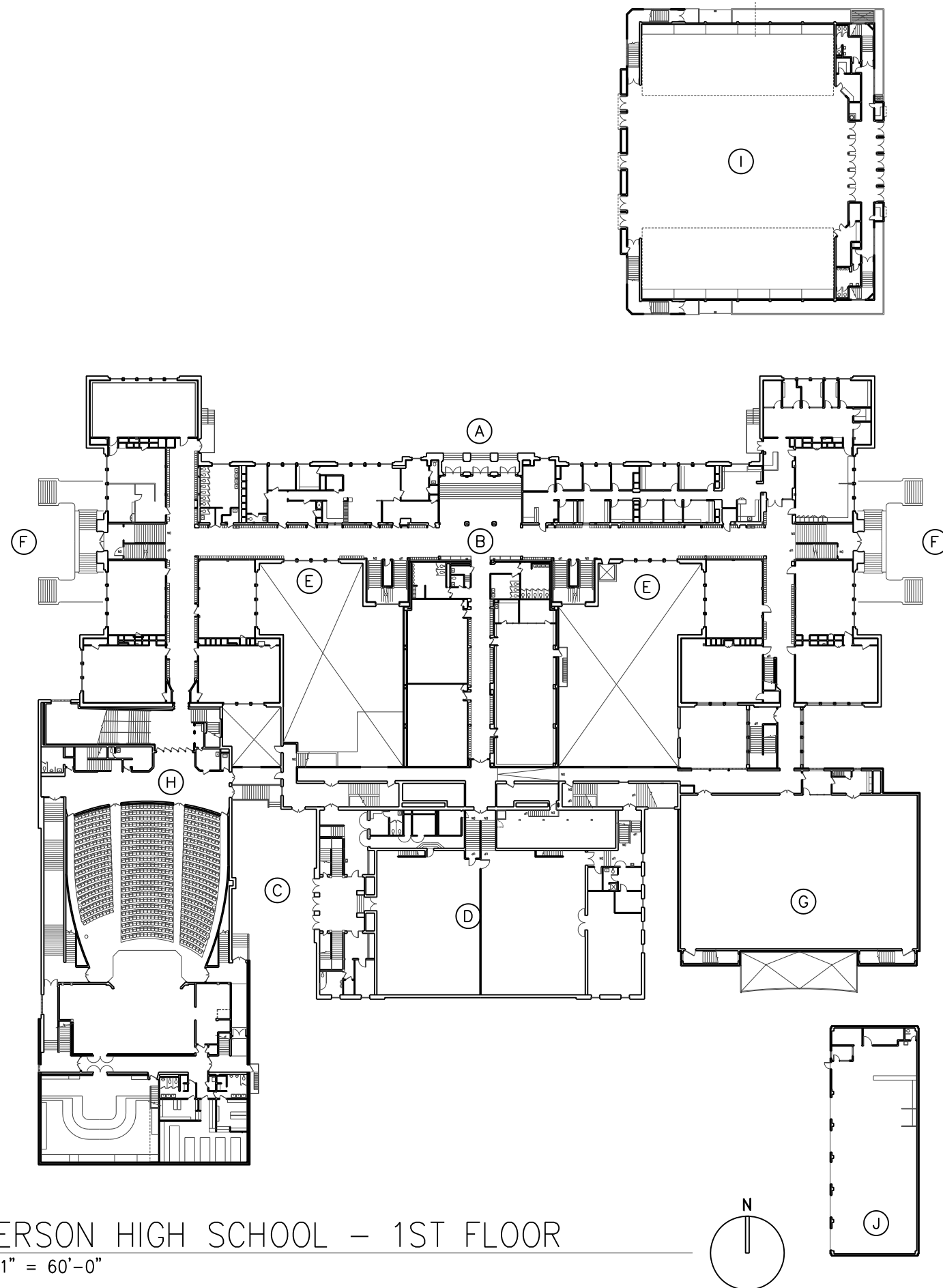
1910s photograph of Jefferson High School, looking east.



Historical Significance and Building Integrity

-  Contributing High Significance
-  Contributing Moderate Signif.
-  Non-Contributing





1 JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL - 1ST FLOOR
SCALE: 1" = 60'-0"

KEYNOTES:

- (A) THE MAIN CEREMONIAL ENTRANCE INTO THE BUILDING CONSISTS OF THREE SEMICIRCULAR ARCHED PORTALS THAT LEAD TO A SHELTERED ENTRYWAY. BRONZE PLAQUES AND BAS RELIEF PANELS THAT MEMORIALIZE THE SACRIFICES OF FORMER STUDENTS DURING WORLD WARS I AND II ARE LOCATED ALONG THE WALLS NEAR THE ENTRANCE. EACH OF THE THREE DOORWAYS THAT LEAD INTO THE SCHOOL FEATURE FANLIGHTS.
- (B) ORIGINAL (1909) SCHOOL BUILDING FEATURES AN I-SHAPED CORRIDOR PLAN.
- (C) ENTRANCE TO 1928 GYMNASIUM EXHIBITS JAGGED CAST STONE SURROUNDS AND EXTERIOR WALLS ELABORATED WITH LOZENGES. THE BRICK FACING IS LAID IN A ONE-TO-FIVE BOND CONSISTING OF ONE ROW OF HEADERS FOLLOWED BY FIVE ROWS OF ALTERNATING HEADERS AND STRETCHERS.
- (D) INTERIOR OF ORIGINAL GYM SUBDIVIDED FOR CURRENT USE AS A TELEVISION STUDIO. ORIGINAL STEPPED SEATING ARRANGED IN A U-SHAPED PLAN SURVIVES AS DOES ORIGINAL FLOORING AND EXPOSED BRICK WALLS. MANY DOORS ALSO SURVIVE IN THIS WING OF THE BUILDING.
- (E) LIGHTWELLS.
- (F) SIDE ENTRANCES FEATURE DOUBLE LANDING STAIRCASES TO A DOUBLE DOOR ENTRY TOPPED BY A SEGMENTAL ARCH. THE ENTRY IS EMPHASIZED THROUGH A PLAIN PLASTERED SURROUND.
- (G) GYMNASIUM ADDITION (1952).
- (H) AUDITORIUM/CAFETERIA ADDITION AT GROUND FLOOR (1952).
- (I) GYMNASIUM BUILDING (1964).
- (J) ONE STORY AUTO SHOP BUILDING (1969).

GENERAL NOTES:

- 1 BRICKWORK OF ORIGINAL BUILDING FEATURES A ONE-TO-FIVE RATIO CONSISTING OF ONE ROW OF HEADERS FOLLOWED BY FIVE ROWS OF ALTERNATING STRETCHERS AND HEADERS.
- 2 EXTENSIVE ALTERATION IN 1952 TO EXTERIOR OF ORIGINAL BUILDING (1909) CONSISTED OF REMOVING THE DISTINCTIVE ROOF OVERHANGS AND APPLYING NEW CEMENT PLASTER OVER THE ORIGINAL LOZENGE PATTERNED BRICKWORK THAT ONCE ELABORATED THE EXTERIOR THUS MAKING THE BUILDING APPEAR MUCH MORE MODERN AND MORE COMPLEMENTARY TO THE NEW AUDITORIUM WING AND GYMNASIUM CONSTRUCTED IN THE SAME YEAR.
- 3 NEARLY ALL ORIGINAL WINDOWS WERE REMOVED FROM THE BUILDING BETWEEN 1988 AND 1990.
- 4 NEARLY ALL DOORS AND CLASSROOM BUILT-INS HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM THE ENTIRE ORIGINAL BUILDING.



JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL - 118

5210 N KERBY AVE 97217

PPS HISTORIC ASSESSMENT



DRAWING: ANNOTATED PLAN

DATE: Sept. 4, 2009