

Oregon Historic Site Form

Lee School
2222 92nd Ave
Portland, Multnomah County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 2222 NE 92nd Ave apprx. addr

Portland vcnty Multnomah County

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

historic name: Lee School

current/
 other names: Jason Lee Elementary School

block nbr: SEC lot nbr: R94 tax lot nbr: R31911
 township: _____ range: _____ section: _____ 1/4: _____
 zip: _____

PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: Building height (# stories): 1

elig. evaluation: eligible/contributing

primary constr date: 1953 (c.) secondary date: 1957 (c.)
 (optional--use for major addns)

primary orig use: School

secondary orig use: _____

primary style: International

secondary style: _____

primary siding: Standard Brick

secondary siding: Stone:Other/Undefined

plan type: School (General)

total # eligible resources: 1 total # ineligible resources: 1

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

orig use comments: Elementary school

prim style comments: Fifties modern

sec style comments: _____

siding comments: Rusticated, buff-colored stone at main entrance, red brick elsewhere.

architect: Donald Edmundson

builder: _____

comments/notes:

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

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

farmstead/cluster name: _____ external site #: 264
 (ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: _____

ILS survey date: 6/26/2009

RLS survey date: 6/26/2009

Gen File date: _____

106 Project(s)



West elevation

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ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

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

Description Summary

Situated in a primarily residential neighborhood in Northeast Portland, the Lee School is located at 2222 NE 92nd Street. Facilities on the 9.1-acre grass and asphalt-covered campus include the U-shaped school building (264A) and a covered playshed (264B). Built in 1953, the International style school building is clad in red brick. The one-story building sits on a poured concrete foundation. The wings that comprise the U-shaped plan are covered with a mixture of shed and flat roofs. The school provides facilities for classrooms, a gymnasium, a cafetorium, a library, and an administrative office.

Architectural Description

Situated in a primarily residential neighborhood in Northeast Portland, Lee School is located at 2222 NE 92nd Street. Entry to the school is from the west on NE 92nd Street. Facilities on the 9.1-acre grass and asphalt-covered campus include the U-shaped school building (264A) and (264B). The playground, playfields, and a covered play shed located directly south and east of the school. The parking area is located directly north of the building.

The single story building is oriented on a north-south axis. The two parallel wings of the U-shaped plan create a courtyard that provides light and ventilation to the classrooms. Clad in red brick, the wood frame building sits on a concrete foundation. The wings that comprise the U-shaped plan are covered with a mixture of shed and flat roofs. The portions of the building covered by flat roofs are capped by metal parapet. A vaulted double height gymnasium projects above the rear elevation. The primary (west) elevation features a buff-colored stone wall that delineates the entry to the building. A low brick wall creates a small patio for students awaiting pick-up. A canopy, supported by wood columns, provides a covered entry to the school. Fenestration consists of vertical three light metal frame hinged windows.

The interior layout of the school consists of a U-shaped plan. Finishes in the double-loaded corridors include tubular fluorescent lights suspended from low acoustic tile ceilings, linoleum tile floors, and metal molding. Wooden doors with metal framing provide access to the classrooms. The hallways in the east wing are lined with a ceramic tile wainscot.

The public and community spaces for the school are centrally located at the base of the "U". A combined auditorium and cafeteria is directly opposite the entry. The flat ceiling is supported by wood beams and illumination is provided by fluorescent light fixtures. Finishes in the room include acoustic ceiling tiles, linoleum tile floors, and original wooden doors.

The gymnasium, located at the rear of the central wing, retains its original configuration and height. The vaulted doubled height space is supported by curving metal arches. Suspended fluorescent lights and three metal frame windows illuminate the space. Brick walls, capped by vertical wood panel walls, provide a durable play surface.

The classrooms are square or rectangular. Built-in cabinets provide storage for coats, rolls of paper, and other supplies. Sinks are set into the linoleum counters. The rooms retain their original configurations, height, linoleum tile floors, and unpainted wood framing and molding. There are tubular fluorescent light fixtures suspended from an acoustic tile clad ceiling. The entries to the classrooms are recessed within the built-in fixtures that line the interior wall.

The library, created by combining two classrooms in the east wing, is spacious and open. It is divided into several work and study areas with wooden book shelves, chairs, and desks. The floor is carpeted. Tubular fluorescent light fixtures supplement the light from the hinged metal frame windows.

The building is heated by steam boilers located in the boiler room in the front wing. There are radiators with metal covers. Cool air is pushed through the building's vents by compressor-powered fans.

Alterations

The original plan for the school was U-shaped. The first alteration to the school occurred in 1957 when two classrooms were added to the south end of the west wing. The 2 classrooms added to east wing in 1963 maintained the symmetry of the building and the existing corridor configuration. Other minor alterations include the conversion of the shop to a classroom in 1988 and the development of the media center in 1990.

Integrity

Lee School retains a high degree of integrity. The classrooms added in 1957 and 1963 are compatible with the original portions of the building. The new segments of the building seamlessly connects to the U-shaped corridor plan. The gymnasium and cafetorium retain their original building materials and features (Jason Lee Facility Profile and Plan).

HISTORY

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

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Statement of Significance

In response to residential growth in northeast Portland, the district acquired the site at 2222 NE 92nd street in 1952 for \$34,255.00 (Portland Chronology Binder). Named for pioneer missionary Jason Lee, the original building was constructed in 1953 for \$698,006.00 (Snyder 1979: 239; Portland Chronology Binder). The school was built during a period of modernization and new construction initiated by Portland Public Schools (PPS) after World War II. In 1945, the citizens of Portland approved a ballot measure that provided \$5,000,000 over five years to construct, improve, and rehabilitate its public school buildings (Portland Public Schools 1945: 2). The ballot measure enabled PPS to respond to the explosive growth in school-age children that had occurred in the city as a result of the arrival of defense plant workers and their families, as well as the deferred maintenance arising from the lack of funds during the depression (Portland Public Schools 1945: 2-3). Beginning with this initial bond measure, PPS embarked on an effort to improve its school facilities through renovations, additions, and new construction of over fifty schools between 1945 and 1970.

For the new building program, PPS schools adopted the call of architects and school planners across the country for new types of schools. Nationally known architects including Richard Neutra, the Walter Gropius led Architects Collective, and the Perkins Will architectural firm promoted new school types that reflected both evolving educational practices and design philosophies (Ogata 2008: 567-568; Perkins and Cocking 1949: 238-246). Emphasizing the need for economy and rapid construction, the designers adopted new materials that were standardized and mass produced including steel, plywood, glass block, and aluminum. In many buildings, architects achieved flexibility through the building's structure by employing non-load-bearing partition walls and zoned ventilation and heating systems. Folding walls and moveable cabinets provided additional flexibility intended to enable teachers to rearrange rooms based on lesson plan and activities (Ogata 2008: 568).

Although many of the architects for schools in Portland continued to design their schools to be extensible, designers turned away from the two-story schools with centralized massing popularized by Naramore and Jones. Instead many architects adopted the principles of the Modern movement and its regional variant, the Northwest Regional style, choosing to express functional areas through massing and materials to create innovative forms (McMath 1974: 628). Classrooms featured extensive built-ins that included sinks, slots for bulky rolls of paper, and coat storage. Many buildings incorporated interior courtyards which facilitated access to the outdoors and expanded the opportunities for passive ventilation and daylighting, a hallmark of the Northwest style.

For the design of Lee School, the architect Donald Edmundson adopted the building program and principles that dominated the discourse for school design during the second half of the twentieth century. A native of Oregon, Donald Edmundson graduated from Salem High School before attending North Pacific Evangelistic School and classes at the University of Oregon Extension School. In the mid-1920s Edmundson gained experience in the office of Houghtaling & Dougan, the architects of Washington High School. During World War II he worked for the Vancouver Housing Authority. From 1943-1953 Edmundson worked independently until he formed a partnership with Neil R. Kochendoerfer. The firm added Evan Kennedy as engineer to the partnership Edmundson, Kochendoerfer & Kennedy in 1962. In addition to Lee School, Edmundson is listed as the sole architect of Clinton Kelly School and of an addition to Cleveland High School. With Neil Kochendoerfer he designed Wilson High School. During Kennedy's tenure, the firm designed the gymnasium addition for Cleveland High School. Other important projects designed by the firm were Morgan's Alley and O'Bryant Park in Portland and hospitals in the Dalles, Hood River, and Pendleton, Oregon (Ritz 2002: 122).

A good example of the finger plan type school in the International style that exhibits a high degree of integrity with its floor plan, cladding, and many interior finishes intact, Jason Lee Elementary School is recommended as eligible for the NRHP. The 1953 school was built in response to the residential development in northeast Portland during the PPS program of post-war construction and is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A. Although designed by Donald Edmundson, a successful architect in Portland, archival research does not indicate that the school was a major commission. However, the building is a good example of the use of finger plan schools to facilitate rapid construction and expansion; therefore, the building is also eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C.

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

McMath, George. "A Regional Style Comes to the City." In *Space, Style and Structure: Buildings in Northwest America*. Ed. Thomas Vaughan, 467-499. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974.

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Ogata, Amy F. "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 67, no. 4, December 2008: 562-591.

Oregonian: Arson Delays School Opening (09-05-1982).

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Portland Public Schools. Repairing, Rehabilitating and Modernizing the School Plant. Portland: Portland Public Schools. Office of the Superintendent, 1945.

_____. Lee Elementary School. Facility Plan.

_____. Lee Elementary School. Facility Profile.

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.

Snyder, Eugene E. Portland Names and Neighborhoods. Their Historic Origins. Portland: Binford & Mort Publishing; 1st edition 1979.



West elevation front elevation



Gymnasium east and north elevation



South and east elevation



South and east elevation



West elevation front entry

**Lee School
Exterior Photos
ENTRIX, 2009**



Corridor



Cafetorium



Gymnasium



Corridor

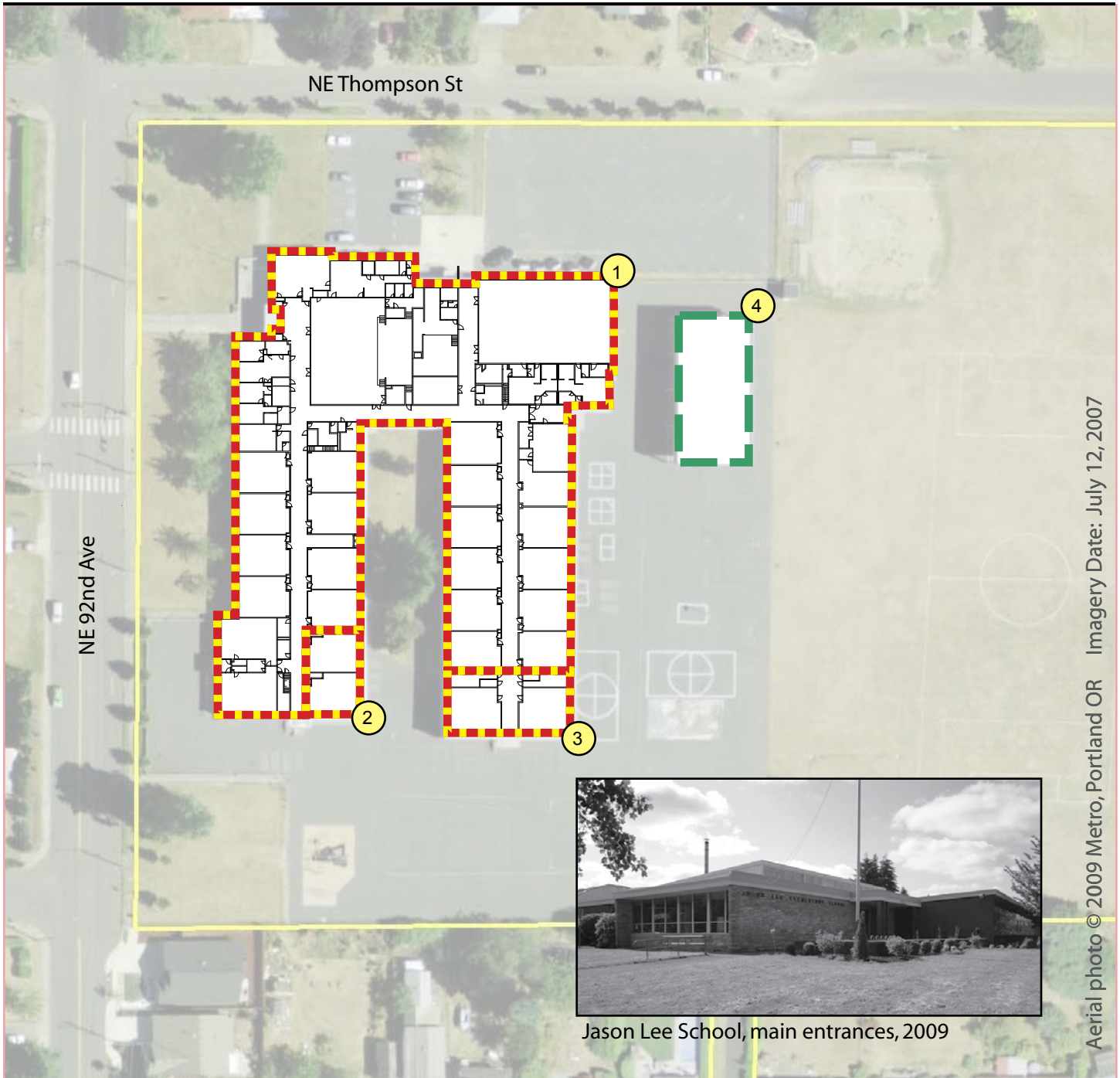


Media Center

Lee School

2222 NE 92nd Ave, Portland OR, 97220

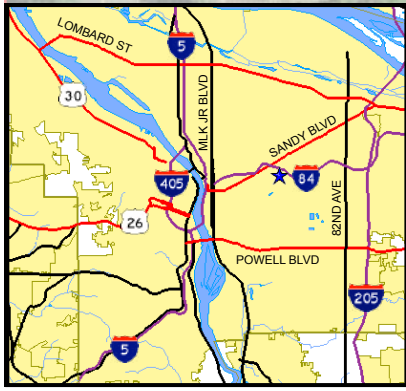
[View Site in Google Maps](#)






Aerial photo © 2009 Metro, Portland OR Imagery Date: July 12, 2007



Jason Lee School, main entrances, 2009



Historical Significance and Building Integrity

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



Building Periods

1. Original Building (264A), 1953
2. Classroom Addition (264A), 1957
3. Classroom Addition (264A), 1963
4. Play Shed (264B), 1978