

Alliance for Historic Wyoming



More than Mortar Preservation Toolkit

Alliance for Historic Wyoming
207 E. Grand Avenue
Laramie, WY 82070
307-333-3508

ExecDirector@HistoricWyoming.org
www.HistoricWyoming.org

Protecting Wyoming's Historic Places and Spaces

***More than Mortar* Preservation Toolkit**

The *More than Mortar Community Toolkit* is designed to provide community leaders and concerned citizens with the information and tools they need to take action in preserving Wyoming's historic schools. These schools can continue to be used as schools or repurposed for new uses such as community centers, offices, museums, or residential living.

Plans for these buildings often develop behind closed doors, requiring citizens to ask questions and persist in obtaining answers from their civic leaders and school district officials. Too many of Wyoming's historic schools have been lost, many without adequate public participation or notice. Forming a group of like-minded citizens and taking proactive measures before decisions are made will greatly increase odds that your historic school will escape the wrecking ball.

The Alliance for Historic Wyoming (AHW) is ready to assist in the effort to preserve your historic school building by providing the community and state connections needed to make your voice heard. Listed below are some recommended steps you can take to ensure your school has a place in the future of your community.

Contact the Alliance for Historic Wyoming

AHW will help you draft a Communication Plan Template. This document will help you organize all of the background information on the school (date of construction, architect, history, significance) and can be used to determine key dates for implementation of a campaign to save your historic school building.



Sinclair Elementary School in Sinclair is poised to undergo a \$1.7 million renovation.
(Photo courtesy Mary Humstone)



***More than Mortar* – HISTORIC SCHOOL COMMUNICATION PLAN**

Name:

Updated:

Leaders/Emails:

School/Address:

Date/Architectural Design:

Campaign: More than Mortar: Our Historic Schools—*places of learning, community and legacy*

Main Messages:

- The Alliance for Historic Wyoming (AHW) champions Wyoming’s historic and cultural places and empowers people to protect them. This effort includes the preservation of our historic school buildings – representing the centers of our communities and Wyoming’s legacy in education.
- Public schools form an essential part of Wyoming’s architectural heritage.
- Historic school buildings may qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Neighborhood schools can help keep older communities vibrant.
- Schools bind communities. They represent a place of great pride to a Wyoming community, no matter how big or how small. They belong to the community.
- Maintaining an historic school building and continuing its use in education means residents old and young can keep the memories of their school experiences alive and from generation to generation.
- Historic school buildings can continue as key components to Wyoming’s towns, rich in history and varied in their buildings and their uses.



Rollout Dates/Activities:

Present Status:

History and Facts:

Era:

Architectural Significance and Amenities:

Importance of School to the Community:

Community Support: ADD EXAMPLES

Key Renovation Dates: ADD

How to Get Involved: Letter writing to support renovation, etc. OTHER WAYS ADD

Key Contacts:

ADD (local CLG and historical society contacts, Main Street program contact, SHPO and community foundation contacts.)

Add local elected officials

Key Messages Specific to School:

Present Building Status: (renovation/remodel, adaptive reuse, replacement, demolition or disposal)

###

Building a Collaborative Alliance

It is important to talk to school district officials, local historical societies or clubs and interested parties early in the effort to save a school. Find out what the school district plans to do with the vacant or soon-to-be-vacant building. Are there plans for an alternative use or demolition? Create a committee and divide up the work. Encourage committee members to talk to their friends and contacts. If you have a city or county Historic Preservation Board, Certified Local Government and/or local historical society, that is a good place to start.

This section includes the following tools:

- Wyoming law on a “Community Collaborative Process”
- Tools for building an alliance
- How to contact and questions to ask local school officials
- How to organize meetings and conduct research
- Developing impactful written materials (oral history accounts)
- How to write a position paper (Sample Position Paper on Natrona County High School)



Building a Collaborative Alliance

Most discussions about renovation or replacement of school buildings take place behind closed doors, without the participation or even the knowledge of the public. Once a decision to demolish and replace is announced, there is very little that can be done to change it. As a citizen you have a right to know the exact process for how school buildings are assessed and how decisions are made. In order to be effective in saving your school, you need to be proactive.

A “Community Collaborative Process” is required by Wyoming law:

In expending funds appropriated under this section and commensurate with school district efforts undertaken in facility planning required under W.S. 21-15-116, the school facilities department shall require school district boards of trustees to incorporate a collaborative committee process, advisory to the board, which assists the school district with planning district remedies for school buildings, ranging from site selection to project planning and design. **The collaborative committee process for remedy development shall include project stakeholders comprised of students, parents, teachers, principals, district administration, school board of trustee members, representative legislators, at-large members of the community and others.** Although advisory to district boards, the collaborative committee shall assist the boards with informing the respective community and in developing community-based input into project development. (<http://legisweb.state.wy.us/2012/Bills/SF0105.pdf>), Section g, page 14-15)

Following are tips for building a collaborative alliance in your community, and working with school officials.

- **Know the Players:** Collect names and contact information of any stakeholder interested in your schools. This may include:
 - **School District Personnel**
 - District Superintendent
 - District Facilities Manager
 - School Principal and Staff
 - **Members of the school District Board of Trustees**
 - Chairman
 - School Board Members
 - **Local Government**
 - City Government Officials
 - County Government Officials
 - City and County Historic Preservation Commission Members and Staff (CLG)
 - Public Library, School Library



Museums or other archives
Downtown Development Authority

▪ **State Government**

Wyoming State Senators and Representatives
School Facilities Commission members
School Facilities Department including Project Manager for your district

▪ **Parents, educators and alumni**

Teachers' Association
Parent-Teachers Association or other outreach to parents of students
Student History Club or other interested student activity group
Alumni Association

▪ **Other educational facilities**

Community College
University of Wyoming or Extension

▪ **State Resources for Historic Preservation**

Wyoming State Archives
State Historic Preservation Office (National Register for Historic Preservation)
Alliance for Historic Wyoming (Historic Architecture Assistance Fund or HAAF)

▪ **Newspapers**

Local Newspaper
State-wide Newspaper – *Casper Star Tribune, Billings Gazette*

- **Develop a Position Paper:** Your position paper should be a single page, with four paragraphs stating who you are, what historic preservation can mean to your community, the benefits of renovating your school and your vision for the future of your school. The position paper can be used as a paid newspaper advertisement, letter to the editor, handout, and introductory information at any interview or presentation. Use AHW's "Talking Points" to help develop your position paper. For an example, see the Natrona County High School Position Paper.
- **Develop a written and visual history of the school building and its students with photographs, time-lines, dates, and important events and people.** This information will help you make a case for why the school is important to your community, and can be used for completing the Communications Plan as well as for posters, news releases, letters to the editor, presentations, etc. It will also enable you to find out whether your school is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Make appointments to meet with faculty members, especially history teachers, to talk about possible student activities such as doing research on the history of their school, visiting local and state archives, researching rural schools — anything that might be of interest to students and fit with the curriculum.



MORE THAN MORTAR
saving wyoming's historic schools

- **Set up meetings with your school district superintendent, district facilities manager and/or school principal to introduce yourselves and your position, and learn what the District has in mind for your school.** Also meet with the district project manager of the School Facilities Department. Send packets of information and set up meetings with the local school board members.

In preparing to meet with school district officials, keep in mind their priorities and goals, and think strategically about the best way to communicate with them. Familiarize yourself with Wyoming's school facilities process and the [School Facilities Department](#). Understand district concerns about the needs of school children.

Basic questions to ask:

- What are the future plans for this school?
 - What will the decision (to renovate or replace) be based on?
 - What is the timeline?
 - Has the School District and/or School Facilities Department conducted a building assessment and/or feasibility study? Other studies? *Request copies of all studies.*
 - How can the public be involved? *Ask specifically about the state-mandated Community Collaborative Process and asked to be on the committee.*
- **Attend public meetings: Be sure you know when your school is on the agenda of school board, School Facilities Commission and City Council meetings, and be there! Bring your position papers, flyers, etc, to hand out if appropriate.**
 - **Find allies among alumni, parents and teachers** (look for class reunion events and e-mail lists). Collect their testimonials about the importance of the school, and ask them to join your effort by writing letters to the editor and to district officials, attending meetings, etc.
 - **Do your research - seek the facts:** The renovation potential of older schools is sometimes dismissed out of hand without an informed consideration of the condition and suitability of the existing school. Once released to the public, information about the deficiencies of older school buildings and costs of renovation – even if they are only assumptions – tend to take on a life of their own, sticking in the minds of school board members and the public and making it more difficult to make a case for preservation. Anticipating negative hype and countering it early with case studies of successful renovation of schools in similar condition can help bring the decision-making process back into balance.

Read the studies and question the conclusions: Not all architects have training, experience or an interest in rehabilitation; often school districts hire architects who know a lot more about designing new buildings than renovating older ones. Many architects are biased against renovation options, and tend to place major emphasis on deficiencies related to structural integrity, codes and life safety, lead paint, asbestos, outdated technology and



classroom size. While these are often real concerns, they can be overly dramatized by evaluators as irreparable conditions, and then used to promote replacement as the only reasonable response to an irredeemable situation.

Weighing the pros and cons of the full range of options takes preservation know-how, experience and creativity. The services of a historic preservation architect may be required to counter unsubstantiated comments about the unsuitability of the school for future use, or the high cost of renovation. If the school district's consulting architect does not have experience with renovation, you might want to ask the district to consider applying for a [HAAF](#) grant to hire a historic preservation architect to take a second look at the renovation potential of your school.

Study the numbers: An accurate and comprehensive cost comparison between renovation and new construction is essential for making the case for renovation. Renovating an existing building generally saves 20% to 25% of the cost of new construction since the building shell is retained. Do cost estimates reflect this savings? Does the estimate for a new school include costs of disposing of the old - abatement of hazardous materials, demolition, and disposal of debris? If the new school will be built on an undeveloped site, have the costs to purchase and develop the land and to build roads, sewers and other infrastructure been included in the estimate? What about the added costs of transportation to the new site?

Encourage the Collaborative Committee to study and/or make site visits to successfully rehabilitated schools. Seeing is believing, and some people will not be convinced until they experience a historic renovated school for themselves. If a site visit is not possible, share the School Renovation Portfolio and other Case Studies.

See the More than Mortar Talking Points for more ideas!



Rollout Dates/Activities:

Present Status:

History and Facts:

Era:

Architectural Significance and Amenities:

Importance of School to the Community:

Community Support: ADD EXAMPLES

Key Renovation Dates: ADD

How to Get Involved: Letter writing to support renovation, etc. OTHER WAYS ADD

Key Contacts:

ADD (local CLG and historical society contacts, Main Street program contact, SHPO and community foundation contacts.)

Add local elected officials

Key Messages Specific to School:

Present Building Status: (renovation/remodel, adaptive reuse, replacement, demolition or disposal)

###

Benefits of Preserving Historic School Buildings

Equip yourself with knowledge on the benefits of preserving an historic school building. This document includes points on why historic schools matter, the economics of renovating versus building new, sustainability benefits and links to other resources. These points can also be used for letter writing and other communications.



Yellowstone School in Rock Springs now serves as a facility for the Boys & Girls Club and for the Sweetwater County Family Justice Center and their partnering agencies.
(photo courtesy Mary Humstone)



***More than Mortar* – HISTORIC SCHOOL COMMUNICATION PLAN**

Name:

Updated:

Leaders/Emails:

School/Address:

Date/Architectural Design:

Campaign: More than Mortar: Our Historic Schools—*places of learning, community and legacy*

Main Messages:

- The Alliance for Historic Wyoming (AHW) champions Wyoming’s historic and cultural places and empowers people to protect them. This effort includes the preservation of our historic school buildings – representing the centers of our communities and Wyoming’s legacy in education.
- Public schools form an essential part of Wyoming’s architectural heritage.
- Historic school buildings may qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Neighborhood schools can help keep older communities vibrant.
- Schools bind communities. They represent a place of great pride to a Wyoming community, no matter how big or how small. They belong to the community.
- Maintaining an historic school building and continuing its use in education means residents old and young can keep the memories of their school experiences alive and from generation to generation.
- Historic school buildings can continue as key components to Wyoming’s towns, rich in history and varied in their buildings and their uses.



Rollout Dates/Activities:

Present Status:

History and Facts:

Era:

Architectural Significance and Amenities:

Importance of School to the Community:

Community Support: ADD EXAMPLES

Key Renovation Dates: ADD

How to Get Involved: Letter writing to support renovation, etc. OTHER WAYS ADD

Key Contacts:

ADD (local CLG and historical society contacts, Main Street program contact, SHPO and community foundation contacts.)

Add local elected officials

Key Messages Specific to School:

Present Building Status: (renovation/remodel, adaptive reuse, replacement, demolition or disposal)

###

Talking Points: Preserving Old Buildings

Why do historic schools matter?

- School buildings have historic and cultural importance to the community that goes beyond classroom size and number of electrical outlets. Older schools provide linkages with earlier generations and foster a sense of tradition and continuity within the community. *(This is best expressed through testimonials from students, alumni, parents and teachers.)*
- Schools serve as anchors for local communities and sites for community events as well as places of learning. Many communities, especially smaller ones, rely on the school as the one public space large enough for community gatherings. Downsizing of school buildings, such as demolishing an existing school with an auditorium and/or gymnasium and replacing it with a modular school with only a small “multi-purpose room,” can have a devastating impact on a small community.
- Older school buildings often have features that cannot be replicated in a new school, such as large and handsome windows, decorative woodwork and tile, terrazzo or wood floors, high ceilings and grand spaces, artwork in the form of murals or other special features and exterior architectural features that make the school a landmark in your community.
- We all support state-of-the-art schools. But state-of-the-art schools do not have to be brand new schools. Our children are best educated in high quality architectural environments, which evoke a sense of the past, continuity with earlier generations, and facilities closely linked to their community.
- A vacant or demolished school will negatively impact the neighborhood, affecting marketability, stability and property values.
- Because of their proximity to homes, neighborhood schools encourage parent participation in their children’s education. Neighborhood schools also contribute to citizens’ health, allowing children to walk to school and neighbors to use recreational facilities (tracks, ball fields, tennis courts, etc.) during non-school hours.

MORE THAN MORTAR

saving wyoming's historic schools

Sustainability

“The greenest building is one that is already built.”- Carl Elefante, FAIA, Quinn Evans Architects

- Renovation is recycling, and conveys an ethic to students and the community that we care about the natural environment enough to avoid the waste of good resources. Building reuse almost always yields fewer environmental impacts than new construction when comparing buildings of similar size and functionality.
- Demolition teaches a mentality of transience and the disposability of society rather than a legacy of the endurance of community.
- Many people believe old buildings are “energy hogs.” In most cases, this is not true. According to the Department of Energy, commercial buildings built before 1920 use less energy per square foot than buildings constructed up until 2000.
- Because they were built before energy was cheap and abundant, many older schools were built with “green” features such as thermal mass, large expanses of natural light, tall ceilings and natural ventilation. These features also contribute to passive survivability - the ability to operate without energy inputs, such as during a power failure.
- Every building contains its own *embodied energy*—the energy that was used directly and indirectly to create, transport, and assemble the raw materials that make up the structure. To destroy a building puts this embodied energy to waste, and requires more energy and raw materials in the construction of a new building. It can take between 10 and 80 years for a new, energy-efficient building to overcome, through more efficient operations, the negative climate change impacts that were created during the construction process.
- Historic buildings often feature durable materials, such as masonry and old-growth wood, which require less maintenance, repair, and restoration (i.e. ENERGY). Historic buildings were often constructed of local materials chosen for their suitability for local climatic conditions.
- Older buildings were built to last, and if properly maintained can last for centuries. What is the life expectancy of new construction?

- New construction neglects the environmental costs of disposing of demolished schools.

Economics

- Renovating historic schools is an economically valid option for managing school facilities and helping Wyoming's communities preserve an important part of their history. Because it is more labor intensive than new construction, renovation generates more jobs in the immediate community, creating a local economic benefit.
- Assessing a historic school for rehabilitation potential is a small investment that can result in significant cost savings, especially since infrastructure and roads are already in place. Many school districts around the country have found that renovation actually costs significantly less than new construction, as was the case when Pennsylvania analyzed 125 school construction projects completed between 2003 and 2006. The study found that the average cost of new construction was \$212.99 per square foot, as compared with only \$114.16 per square foot for renovations.
- The Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) has developed tools for assessing older schools to determine whether they will meet both technical and educational standards. CEFPI is a highly regarded leader in the school construction field. In most cases, modern standards can be met with appropriate renovation, often at a lower cost than new construction.
- A new building on an undeveloped site may burden the city with infrastructure costs including land acquisition and preparation, roadway and utility extensions, busing costs, and fire and police service extensions.
- A new building on an undeveloped site will incur increased transportation costs for busing students.
- If the existing school is planned for demolition, there will be costs to demolish it, abate hazardous materials, and dispose of debris (often 4 to 5% of the overall replacement costs). Construction debris is the largest contributor to landfill waste nationwide. Filling city landfills with the debris of demolished school buildings may overburden their capacity.
- There is a common perception that new construction is maintenance free. While maintenance costs may diminish for a year or two after a major construction project

MORE THAN MORTAR
saving wyoming's historic schools

(new or renovated), deferral of maintenance is how all buildings deteriorate. Most new school buildings actually require more maintenance over time, since they lack the quality construction of an earlier era (plaster rather than wallboard, mortar rather than caulk, terrazzo rather than carpet).

Additional information can be found here:

Older and Historic Schools: Restoration vs. Replacement and the Role of a Feasibility Study,
<http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/historic-schools/>

Older and Historic Schools: A Road Map for Saving Your Historic School
http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/saving-a-place/historic-schools/new-schools-pages/resources-for-advocates-and-policy-makers/school_study_roadmap.pdf

The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse
http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/sustainable-communities/sustainability/green-lab/lca/The_Greenest_Building_lowres.pdf

###

Contact Key Decision Makers

Ask what actions they propose to ensure that the school building is preserved and continues to be used in the community. Try using our template for a sample letter to an elected official.



East Junior High of Rock Springs was demolished in 2012.
(photo courtesy Mary Humstone)



Sample Letter to an Elected Official

Representative Johnson
P.O. Box 001
Buffalo, WY 82834
RE: More than Mortar

Dear Senator Johnson,

I am resident of Buffalo, and I am writing because of my concern for the Clear Creek Elementary School and its future. As many of Wyoming's historic schools have been lost, I would like to encourage your support to see that this valuable building is saved and re-used.

The historic 1908 school building offers our community a connection to past generations, variety in architecture, as well stability in the present built environment. Now that the building is vacated, there are many possible uses that would benefit the public, especially with the lack of space for performing arts, meetings, and other events here in Buffalo. There have also been proposals to use the building for community health services, as well as for the relocation of the Sheridan College, Johnson County campus.

Johnson County School District is still considering potential uses for the historic building, so its future is still unknown. However, I believe it is important for community members to have a voice and be involved in this discussion to ensure their historic school retains its integrity, and that it will continue to provide continuity for our small town. Specifically, I ask that you promote the preservation of Clear Creek Elementary School and encourage open discussions among the citizens of Buffalo concerning the future of this building.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Jane Brown

Contact Key Decision Makers

Ask what actions they propose to ensure that the school building is preserved and continues to be used in the community. Try using our template for a sample letter to an elected official.



East Junior High of Rock Springs was demolished in 2012.
(photo courtesy Mary Humstone)

Collect or Take Photographs

Document the features of the school, and send your best photos to AHW. You can also collect photos of students in the classrooms or on the school grounds to highlight how the school was used and for memories. We will post them on the More than Mortar website with designated pages on your historic school building.

Collect Stories

Testimonials from people who know and love a building are most effective toward convincing local officials and the public that a school should be preserved. Gather the treasured stories from current or former students, teachers, parents and grandparents, whether in writing or orally. Send these stories to AHW (via our website or by mail) to help promote your historic school on the More than Mortar website. Use these oral history accounts in a newsletter, flyer, and/or letters to the editor.

Write Letters and Talk to Neighbors

Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper on the importance of your school to the community and your preservation campaign. Try using our Sample Letter to the Editor as a template. Also, ask for an opportunity to talk on local radio shows.



Discussing options for your neighborhood school can bring a community together.
(photo courtesy Mary Humstone)



Sample Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Joan Barron's December 13th article on Wyoming's historic school buildings, "Construction slowdown could help preserve historic schools in Wyoming," underscores the importance of economic considerations when it comes to decisions about building new schools or updating the state's historic school buildings. Through its "More than Mortar" campaign, the Alliance for Historic Wyoming is working to help communities preserve these treasured community assets, either by renovation for continued use as a school (as in the case of Natrona County High School) or for new uses such as community centers as illustrated in the article.

Communities wanting to keep their existing buildings for continued school use have faced an uphill battle, mainly because Wyoming has no examples to date of major renovations of 100-year-old schools. But that doesn't mean it hasn't been done. There are hundreds of examples throughout the country of 21st century classroom, laboratory and meeting spaces housed in historic school buildings.

Schools built before World War II tend to have masonry walls, plenty of natural light and high ceilings, all features that are sought after today for sustainability and energy savings. When these buildings are renovated, the exterior remains virtually intact while interior spaces are reconfigured and newly furnished to accommodate today's educational needs. Many school districts have found that renovation costs significantly less than new construction, as was the case when Pennsylvania analyzed 125 school construction projects completed between 2003 and 2006. The study found that the average cost of new construction was \$212.99 per square foot, as compared with only \$114.16 per square foot for renovations -- and the renovated schools were brought up to the same standards as new schools.

Wyoming school districts can take advantage of the Historic Architectural Assistance Fund (HAAF), a grant program that provides the services of a preservation architect to evaluate the renovation potential of older buildings. In the initial planning phase for Natrona County High School the school district used a HAAF grant to hire architect Kurt Dubbe of Jackson who met with students, faculty and administrators as part of his evaluation of the school's future potential. For more information about HAAF, please call (307) 333-3508 or visit historicwyoming.org.

Hilery Lindmier, Executive Director, AHW

Nomination to the National Register

If your school is more than 50 years old, it may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the official list of buildings and sites important in American history and culture. Please make an initial contact with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office to start the nomination process. It is also a good idea to contact your local historic society or county affiliate (CLG, etc.), if active in your area.



East Junior High of Rock Springs was demolished in 2012.
(photo courtesy Mary Humstone)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

SUBMITTED 12-4-96

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

LISTED 1-30-97

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

T 33N, R 79W, H 3 SWNE

1. Name of Property 48NA 2542
historic name Roosevelt School
other names/site number North Casper School

2. Location
street & number 140 E. "K" Street
city, town Casper
state Wyoming code county Natrona code zip code 82601

3. Classification
Ownership of Property: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing, Noncontributing buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: State Historic Preservation Office
Date: 11/13/96
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain):

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education

Senior High School

7. DescriptionArchitectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Commercial
Central Block with Wingsfoundation Poured Concrete
walls Red face brick

roof Tar and gravel

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Roosevelt School, originally named North Casper School, is an impressive, though not imposing, structure especially in contrast to the modest neighborhood in which it is located. Designed by the state-renowned firm of Garbutt, Weidner, and Sweeney of Casper in 1921, the school building brings together elements of state-of-the-art architecture and social change to form a unique time piece in Casper's history. Smaller and stylistically overshadowed by the daunting Natrona County High School, which was designed by the same firm and constructed within a few years of Roosevelt School, this building was produced by the same forces of economic growth and community service, and stylistically it prefigures the high school construction. The school is essentially rectangular, follows a commercial pattern of design that suggests a central block with wings, and uses red brick to contrast with limestone ornamentation. Built to serve an economically hard-pressed part of town, the building has often been viewed as retaining its integrity because subsequent resources for improvement went to schools in more privileged neighborhoods. Two significant alterations to the school came much later with the addition of a gymnasium / auditorium at the north end of the school, proposed in 1948-1949 and constructed in 1959, and the remodeling and expansion to add administrative offices in 1995. The gymnasium / auditorium bears a different pattern of construction in its edifices, maintaining primarily continuity in color of brick. The recent addition demonstrates a careful attempt to preserve the general integrity of structure and design in brick pattern and ornamentation and used original window surrounds and sills although windows were replaced with modern materials and designs. The building thus retains its original appearance and feeling.

While not cramped by comparison with schools in dense urban areas, the school lacks the spaciousness associated with expansive playgrounds and landscaping of other schools in the city; indeed shortly after its construction two adjacent lots were purchased to provide additional space, a fact which underscores the limited space available originally. In 1948, with a total area of .86 acre, Roosevelt School tied with one other as the having the smallest grounds in Casper. Mature, but modest, landscaping is

 See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2

evident on the east side, at least on the southern half of that side, as firs and junipers break the rectangular lines of the edifice. Placement of the school building was constrained by space available in an already established area rather than in a developing part of town where the school could shape the physical direction of growth.

Roosevelt School. Contributing.

The wide main entrance to this rectangular building opens in the middle of the east elevation with stairs rising to the entry so that one enters the building between the first and second levels of the building. A similar entrance is situated on the south elevation; with the removal of the flagpole from the east to the area adjacent to that south entrance the school can have the appearance of facing the south. Indeed, the south elevation was briefly the original main entrance until the 1924 construction added the east entrance. Now the gymnasium / auditorium addition obscures the entire original north elevation at the ground level. The original building measures 135 feet, 5 inches along its east and west elevations and 70 feet, 8 inches along the north and south elevations.

The basic style of the building, common for institutional structures of its time, is that of central block with wings. On its east elevation, the front of the building, the center section projects from the main elevation in a manner to resemble a portico. At the entrance, poured concrete steps and a porch covered by a canopy with hipped tile roof enhance the effect. Double doors without panels and with single lites are flanked by sidelites and brick pilasters. Above the canopy two matched energy saving windows, installed in 1995, contain two lites, the smaller, lower lite usable for ventilation; the larger portion above is stationary. Each window rests on a limestone slip sill. The words "ROOSEVELT SCHOOL" are spelled out in block letters in a limestone piece that spans the width of the two windows, separated from them by a flat arch. The elevation continues up to form a parapet wall, capped to represent a plain pediment. A frieze, that courses around the entire building, is based on a single protruding header course of bricks laid on edge, with three courses of brick headers laid flat above it. Two more courses of headers with bricks laid flat begin a slight corbeling for the main element of the frieze, a pattern with bricks on end, then header bricks laid flat, with bricks on end again, separated by plaster diamond ornamentations, the whole then capped with protruding header bricks on edge. The

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

original plane of the wall is then resumed with a common bond of brick masonry, capped by protruding header bricks on edge, themselves capped with limestone coping. The original specifications for the building called for the coping and the school name panel to be terra cotta, but this was changed to limestone in the bidding process. In addition, a large terra cotta shield medallion bearing the date of construction was planned for the area above the frieze and beneath the triangular gable, but was never actually realized.

The central portion of the east elevation contains most elements of architecture found elsewhere in the structure. The central part extends both out from and above the wings on either side which are much wider and generally symmetrical, though with significant differences in the details. Both wings contain two groups of windows on each of the two levels. On the south wing, the groups include three windows while on the north, each set contains four separate windows. This difference is explained by and points out the two stages of building construction, the south wing being completed in 1922 and the center and north wing being added in 1924. All windows are modern, energy-efficient materials and contain, on the south wing a large central lite surrounded by eight smaller panels and on the north wing a narrower vertical lite in the center flanked by nearly equal size. The windows in the north wing are narrower and each window in the second story rests on a limestone slip sill; those in the upper story of the south wing rest on slip sills made of header bricks laid on edge. A poured concrete footing provides the base of both wings and serves as a continuous sill for windows on the lower story. In the south wing a door and a window provide access to the heating unit room instead of windows directly adjacent to the center block of the façade.

The south elevation reflects the design of the façade so much that the south entrance is sometimes referred to, and used, as the front. It might even be proper to say that the east elevation reflects the south (instead of the south reflecting and being secondary to the east), since the south entrance was the main (and only) entrance for the first two years, except that the original plans and the main construction clearly indicate that the east elevation is the main entrance and the front of the building. Like the east elevation, the south elevation is a central block with wings type design. The central part is virtually identical to the central part of the east elevation even to the point of bearing the school name above the canopy and the flag pole has been moved from

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

the east entrance to the south. The stone bearing the name "ROOSEVELT SCHOOL" is the same except that the south entrance begins and ends the words with a fleurette or asterisk symbol. The only windows in the south elevation are those above the canopy, and a smaller window in the east side of the central part as it projects from the plane of the elevation. The wings are each approximately twice the size of the central part and ornamental masonry provides relief to the wall instead of windows serving that purpose. That ornamental brick-work is recessed from the plane of the wall one-half inch and rests on a course of header bricks laid on edge. The same red brick used in the rest of the elevation is used only within the recessed area to form diagonals one brick length wide throughout the area separating diamond-shaped (and consequently, at the sides and top and bottom, triangular) clusters of darker red brick. These two recessed areas flank the central part. The frieze and cornice and concrete footing remain the same as on the façade.

The west elevation has undergone extensive renovation in the last two years with the addition of administrative and counseling offices and an elevator. At the same time, however, careful effort has been made to avoid compromising the integrity of the building. A rectangular addition now projects from the original building separating the south and north portions. Previously the south portion of this elevation was a mirror-image of the south portion of the east elevation. The elevation retains its original appearance with the group of three windows at the extreme south of the elevation. Where previously had been another group of three windows, however, the new addition projects westward from the plane of the wall two stories high at the wall and then drops to a single story both to the west and to the north. The brickwork resembles that in the rest of the building except that the corbeling is less accented and the plaster diamonds are now square and the intervening bricks are two columns of three headers laid flat flanked by a single brick on end; the ornamental band now is repeated around the small second story room addition and around the first floor addition as well. Because the addition does not rise to the entire height of the wall of the original structure, the ornamental band does not join with the frieze of the older wall. The south elevation of the addition has a single window on the first floor that resembles the windows in the rest of the building but has six lites; that window rests on a slip sill of header bricks laid on edge and a flat arch of bricks laid on end. The entrance to the addition is on the south elevation and is covered

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5

with an opaque glass canopy. A single window with two lites is above and east of the canopy. The west elevation of the addition rises only to a single story, continues the same brick pattern and contains three windows with six lites like that on the south side. The north elevation of the addition continues the same brick pattern and contains two windows, the eastern window containing two lites. Perhaps most noticeable in the addition is the absence of the concrete footing integral to the original building.

The remainder of the west elevation retains most of its original configuration. This was originally the rear of the building and had three service entrances at the ground level with no steps. One of these has been incorporated in the addition. The other two remain with metal doors, one projecting from the building with a completely enclosed small brick shelter, the door opening on the north of the shelter. The other door opens to a classroom (now the Commons Room); it is also metal with no lites. The windows on the second story of the north portion of the west elevation mirror those on the east elevation. They are arranged in groups of four with a limestone slip sill and a flat arch of bricks on end. The placement of entrances on the ground floor, however, forces an arrangement of those windows such that some are no longer immediately below their second story counterparts. The two entrances lie directly below windows. In addition, one other window, immediately south of the north door, is situated beneath the brick work that separates the two groups of windows above. Moreover, an extension, providing another door, of yet a different (1959) addition to the building for a boiler room and kitchen, replaces the northern-most window on the ground floor. Between the two additions, the poured concrete footing serves as a continuous sill along the elevation.

Gymnasium / auditorium. Non-contributing. The north elevation has been compromised by the addition in 1959 of a gymnasium / auditorium that is non-contributing. Much of this is a visual impact only since the original elevation is still visible above the first story. A single story foyer connects the new building with the old. The frieze continues around the north elevation and a single window is evident in the center of the second story. The gymnasium / auditorium is a rectangular building constructed of a similar red brick, although it shows no effort to retain the bond, the ornamentation, or the lines of the original structure.

Storage shed. Non-contributing. A small portable storage shed is

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

located adjacent to the boiler room / kitchen addition and also to the gymnasium / auditorium.

Three additional modular classrooms west of the original building. Non-contributing. Three modular units are situated across the alley from the school and bear no architectural relationship to the original structure.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Education

1922-1946

1922, 1924

Architecture

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Garbutt, Arthur; Weidner, James;
Sweeney, William

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Roosevelt School, built in 1922 and added to in 1924, represents a style of architecture dominant in the construction of the modern public school system of Casper, Wyoming, having been designed by the premier architects of schools in central Wyoming and incorporating design elements common to other schools in the area. The school had its origins in the dramatic expansion of the population of Casper during the petroleum boom of the immediate post-World War I period in which the student population increased by 700%. In particular, it served as the neighborhood center of a part of town that suffered neglect and privation and that was characterized by constant turnover and a transient population. Roosevelt School, initially and briefly known as North Casper School, is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A because of its direct association with the growth of education in Casper.

Casper, Wyoming, is situated on the banks of the North Platte River in the interior of the state, approximately midway north and south and a little closer to the eastern border of the state than to the western, although far from either boundary. The location on the river derives from the importance of that river historically as a geographic force, as a path-marking feature for Indians and the earliest white settlers. In the effort to locate a path to the west coast, the Platte River proved the key as its tributary, the Sweetwater River, west of Casper, emanated from the area around the South Pass, a broad area through the Continental Divide where wagons could pass with ease. As mountain men explored that route and in 1832 took wagons through the pass, that route would become the path of more than a third of a million emigrants bound for Utah, California, and Oregon in the 1840s and 1850s.

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

As those emigrants eked their way across the continent, they unleashed a set of forces that would alter the West and as one of their products generate the circumstances responsible for the emergence of the city of Casper. Along their routes commercial developments punctuated the midpassage. Emigrants in need of fresh livestock, food, and other provisions and services constituted a substantial market for suppliers wishing to turn a profit. In the area of modern Casper, the Mormons in 1847 erected a commercial ferry to get emigrants across the river, a venture that lasted until 1851. In that year a toll bridge was erected by John Baptiste Richard to the east of the modern city (in modern Evansville, a suburb of Casper) which prospered mightily. And in 1859-1860 a competitor, Louis Guinard, built a longer, sturdier bridge seven miles upstream that would ultimately prevail. That bridge, a magnificent accomplishment, generated more traffic and more commercial activity so that the Platte Bridge, as it was known, became a distinct mark on the Oregon-California Trail. Indeed shortly after its construction a stage line began to use the bridge; the Pony Express crossed the river at that point; and the telegraph, which replaced the Pony Express, was held aloft by poles attached to the bridge piers.

As if to underline the importance this site held, the military proceeded to station troops nearby. This was because of another force unleashed by the massive migration: the tension with the native inhabitants of the region. Initially welcomed with ample signs of cooperation, the emigrants proved to bring more ominous developments unanticipated by the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho who showed them the way, who cut grass for the emigrants, and who helped them ford rivers. With the destruction of the grass and the killing of game, with the spread of disease that proved especially fatal among the Indians, with the removal of bison to other areas away from the trafficked corridor, and with the increasingly frequent opportunity for minor disputes and disagreements to escalate into hostility, the location of troops only exacerbated the tensions. An actual permanent military station, named Platte Bridge Station, had come into being by 1864. Subsequent conflicts included one in which Lieutenant Caspar Collins was killed and the post was renamed Fort Caspar (official orders misspelled the name Casper). By the time this post was suddenly abandoned in 1867, the telegraph to be moved south and the post to the east, the area around modern Casper, between the two bridges on the Oregon-California Trail, had achieved significant development.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Although the area was officially abandoned by the military, and although the bridge was burned by the Indians immediately, it was only a short period before white settlers began to pick up where the previous development had left off. The primary force in this was that of ranching. In the 1860s and 1870s and 1880s large cattle ranches spread from the Sun Ranch on the Sweetwater to the Goose Egg Ranch of the Seebright Brothers at Bessemer Bend to the Carey Ranch near the old Platte Bridge to the Brooks Ranch east of modern Casper. While these and other ranches began to emerge in the valley of the Platte, an actual settlement did not appear until 1888. In that year the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad (later the Chicago & North Western) arrived in the vicinity of modern Casper in a westward course following yet again the trail of the emigrants and mountain men heading west along the Platte River. And a small settlement emerged with the town filing for incorporation the next year, appropriately, under the name of Casper, Wyoming Territory.

The town that began to emerge grew slowly and for two decades was but one of a number of small villages dotting the plains serving local cattle operations. Few stores existed in the first years. These included four saloons and restaurants, three livery stables, one grocery store, and two general stores. A small newspaper, a bank, and a few other assorted businesses also held forth. By the turn of the century the only stores in town were the general store / dry goods dealers, a bank, the gunsmith, a theater, a few saloons and hotels, and a small number of other establishments that appeared and disappeared with the regularity of the wind. Most buildings were frame. Fewer than a thousand people lived in the town at the turn of the century. In 1900 the city downtown area received a limited amount of electrical lighting with a system that proved to be as flickering and faltering as the light it produced. While the railroad had initially made possible the town of Casper, service on that line was discontinued in 1892; after that the only service was special and occasional until 1903 when the original line resumed its service. Early photographs show a sleepy town with seldom any excitement, with few visitors, with minimal business interaction, and with sagebrush growing in the streets. A fire department existed, but that department was voluntary with only quarters for privately-owned equipment comprising the fire department. The growth of the community in the first decade of the twentieth century was unspectacular, although Casper was clearly coming into a new stage of development with a greater population, permanent business community, and regular transportation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4

The development that changed that pattern was the discovery of oil, or, more properly, the active commercial development of the production and refining of oil in the area. Indeed, oil had been discovered in the area some time earlier by emigrants and had been explored and pumped in the 1890s. The only refinery in the state was placed in Casper in 1895, short-lived though it was. Through a series of reorganizations and take-overs, the refining business in Casper (and Wyoming) proved unsuccessful until the second decade of the century. In 1910 the Franco-Wyoming Oil Company was created and started construction of its own refinery the following year. The same year the Midwest Oil Company was organized and began construction of another refinery in Casper. Those two companies merged in 1914 with a recapitalization. In 1913 and 1914 Standard Oil also moved into the community, purchased land and began construction of a refinery. The oil activity increased dramatically, and the early (1923) historian of the community expressed it so: "During the latter part of 1916 and for nine months in 1917 Casper experienced a wonderful oil boom." That observation, however, lacked the perspective of time. In fact, the boom had begun probably in 1913 and 1914 and continued into the next decade. What that early historian observed was a bubble within the boom.

During the decade and a half that the boom could be said to have existed, Casper was transformed. People poured into the town. Within a period of around a year, in 1913 and 1914, the population went from under three thousand to four thousand. In 1913 the Post Office reported a population increase of a third. Then, according to one estimate, "the population doubled, assessed valuation doubled and redoubled, and there was still no end in sight. . . . Between 1918 and 1921 population doubled again (and woolgrowing fell off 60% and kept on falling)." The same source continues: "The population rose 50% by 1922, rose again 25% by 1924. Some claimed 35,000 for the city in 1925. . . . There were 200,000 sheep in the county. Two railroads serviced the local economy (one individual claims that "During World War I the Northwestern shipped a trainload of gasoline for the war effort every hour from the Midwest and Standard refineries, the largest in the world at that time"). Money in amounts undreamed before circulated. Construction of buildings and expansion of the community seemed endless. New values and habits and technologies infused the community and gave it a new orientation. Casper roared.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5

Along with that boom came new pressures on the public service infrastructure, especially new demands placed on the school system. The school census, a register of the number of students of school age actually enrolled in school, reflected this growth and these pressures. In 1911 the city of Casper had a total of 473 enrolled students. During the school year of 1914-1915, the city had 958 young people who fit into that population; the next year, 1915-16, 1090 students counted among the city's population, an increase of 14% over the previous year, healthy and stressful, but not overwhelming, but double what it had been a few years earlier. The following year, however, 1916-1917, that student population increased by another 31% to 1428. Within a single year, this amount of population increase amongst the clientele of the public schools could only force an expansion of service of unprecedented proportions. The following year, 1917-18, however, saw the student population climb to 2414 young people, an increase of 69% over the previous year. Each year the student population increase was literally doubling the rate it had been the year before. After that, the rate slowed as the school-age population increased by only 29% the following year, 1918-1919, to 3125. The trend continued, though. Different statistics, that use a snapshot of enrollment on a specific date each year to avoid the fluctuations in enrollment generated by a mobile population, show an enrollment in Casper on the last date of each calendar year of 1623 students in 1918, 2158 in 1919, 2627 in 1920, 3458 in 1921, 3833 in 1922, 4768 in 1923, and 4541 in 1924. Whether viewed over the decade or incrementally, these numbers suggest that the superintendent of schools, A. A. Slade, accurately diagnosed the problem of the school system in Casper each year when he reported that "Increased enrollment continues to be the major problem in the administration of the schools." Nor was it just hyperbole that caused Slade, in 1924, to say, "It is doubtful whether any other city or school district in the United States is confronted with a problem similar to that which faces this Board of Education each year." The schools simply could not accommodate the pressures of new students placed on them every year. Partly this was a matter of physical space and teacher availability, and partly it was the simple shift to new schools. As Slade pointed out in 1923: "Because so large a percent of our school population is new, one of our greatest problems is that of a lack of uniformity in preparation. It is not unusual to find rooms where practically all pupils are new in Casper this year and have had their preparation for the present grade in as many schools as there are pupils represented." The pressures for expanding the system of public schools in Casper, at

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6

the very least, were overwhelming.

The actual number of students did not always attend class, however, and, in a way, the system counted on that constant of truancy or illness or dropping out. The schools themselves could not physically accommodate all students. Part of the forces at work involved the transient nature of the population that converged on this boom town. Also, high wages offered school-age young people in the oil fields attracted many. The 1919 annual report of School District No. 2 singled out the attractions of wage-labor along with influenza as the greatest causes for truancy which it regretted, but which it lacked the resources to accommodate if all eligible showed up for school.

In response to this boom in population and demand for services, the Natrona School District No. 2 launched a building campaign which multiplied the city's school capacity, but still the system could not keep up with educational needs. In the period following World War I, the city built and remodeled schools throughout town, including in North Casper. In North Casper, an area separated by railroad tracks from the rest of the community, the needs were especially acute. The primary school was referred to as the Burlington School because of its location on Burlington Avenue. It was small, dingy, crowded, and depressing and its weaknesses and limitations became increasingly obvious with each surge in population growth. In 1919 the school board determined that "The three unfinished rooms in the basement of the North Casper School should be made ready for use." So they were. But the population of North Casper grew probably faster than other parts of town because of low property values, available short-term housing, and the limited incomes of those who followed the labor market in the petroleum industry. That meant that the North Casper School would continue to be outpaced by demand and would also serve needs well beyond instruction in the basic curriculum. In 1921, before the new school was constructed, Vivian Dwyer, the principal at North Casper School described the neighborhood in plain terms: She said, "The conditions in this district are so different from those of the other districts, that it should be treated as a community in itself." Nor was there any mistake about what made that community different: "For the most part, this is a district of small homes, meager means, and large families. In very many cases the children come from most undesirable surroundings." And the children kept coming. During the year for which she reported, 1920-1921, the school's enrollment increased by more than 50%. That year a dental

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7

project meant that dentists came to the school for a period of four weeks and conducted a free clinic, providing cleanings, fillings, and extractions for at least 125 children. Said Dwyer: "That work was especially worth while, as a large percentage of the children in this district either would not or could not have been cared for through the efforts of their parents." In the new building to be constructed she sought also a feature perhaps unexpected and unappreciated in other parts of town: "I could not recommend too strongly the installation of shower baths." The school also took responsibility that year for distributing clothing to needy children and to widows in the area served.

In 1921 Ms. Dwyer anticipated a significant remodeling of the Burlington School. Classes were already being held in the basement, which, despite the remodeling, was most unsatisfactory: those rooms, she said, "are dark, poorly ventilated, and because of the way in which this building is constructed, the sounds from the rooms above are magnified in place of deadened. They are very poor class rooms and could be used more satisfactorily for the gymnasium and shower bath room already recommended." Even as she wrote those lines, the limitations were obvious; the school was running half-day sessions to try to accommodate all the students it could.

In 1921 the school board planned a substantial enlargement of the Burlington School to meet the needs required of it. By the time the board issued the specifications for the new building and then solicited bids, in the fall of 1921, however, the plan had changed. It had been decided to build an entirely new structure on the site. So reported the school board the next year: "Instead of enlarging the Burlington School it was found necessary to reerect in that location a new fourteen room building which is now almost ready for occupancy." Actually, this proved to be an overstatement; part of the building approached readiness for use and the other part was far from ready. The plans for the building, prepared by the esteemed firm of Garbutt, Weidner, and Sweeney, included the fourteen described rooms. For reasons still unclear, the project shifted to include only half the building. In the fall of 1922, the school opened only the area that is now the southern wing of the building. One reason for the alteration in plans involved a labor strike in the community. Indeed, shortly after A.A. Slade prepared his annual report optimistically looking forward to the opening of the new school in the fall, he received a letter from A. M. Garbutt that indicated a change in plans: "You are also advised that there is a strike of building trades workmen now on, dating to

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

April 1. Since that time the contractor has been unable to get first class mechanics." Garbutt went on to tell Slade that:

There is some work that is very unsatisfactory and the contractor was so notified some four or five weeks ago. In some of the rooms in the northeast portion of the basement the woodwork was erected by laborers. In a number of other rooms the woodwork was put up too soon after the plastering and has swollen very badly. A great deal of this work will have to be replaced, and the contractor has been so advised.

Garbutt also told Slade that he did not want to pressure the contractors to the point that they would have to agree to union demands, so some of the requirements of the contract were delayed until they could be completed later "when skilled mechanics will once more be available and the building will have then thoroughly dried out, to allow the contractor to complete his work in the manner required." It may well have been this work stoppage by skilled workmen that caused the school to open with only half the building completed.

The new school, now known as Roosevelt School, after President Theodore Roosevelt, attempted to meet the same needs as its predecessor. When the new school opened in the fall of 1922, it had around 400 students on its rolls, but continued to grow. After December, 1922, the smallest number of students at school was never lower than 479--more than the total number of students in the entire town of Casper a dozen years earlier. Eleanor McLaughlin reported that the school continued to serve the same broad needs of the North Casper community:

We have taken special care of the children's health, have made home visits and distributed clothing with the help of the Welfare Club and Red Cross. One hundred and sixty-eight children vaccinated, more than at any other school. The new school with showers for the children and a kitchenette and rest room for the teachers will usher in a new era for North Casper. If it were possible to acquire more land for playground it would be a fine thing.

It truly was "a new era for North Casper." She anticipated enrollment the following fall at between 600 and 650 students. She also anticipated another development that would herald the new era: "With a new building we will find teachers will want to return to

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

North Casper, parents and children proud of their school, . . ." The school as community center would be more than a school; it would be the first step in revitalization of the community. In fact, at the time it was opened, other organizations, like the North Casper Community Club, petitioned the school board for the opportunity to use the school as a meeting hall. It appeared that the revitalization was underway and was achieving exactly the results planned for it.

Unfortunately for that neighborhood, this revitalization came at a time when Casper turned its direction of growth officially the opposite direction; in 1922 and 1923 the direction in which city streets were numbered was reversed. Where the streets had been numbered, beginning with First Street (subsequently Third Street) moving northward, Second Street remained the same, but Third Street became First Street and First Street became Third moving southward. The city almost literally turned its back on North Casper.

The new era ended less abruptly than it began, but the decline was evident by the middle of the twenties. The boom had come to an end. Production of oil had increased dramatically and that accounted for part of the boom. Moreover, prices went higher too, and especially in the years immediately following World War I, when price controls were lifted, crude oil prices increased by more than fifty per cent, from \$2 a barrel in 1918 to more than \$3 a barrel in 1920. At that point, however, the unusual combination of greater production for increasing prices reached its limit and the price for crude began a sudden drop. By 1923 the price of crude was less than a dollar and half a barrel. Despite a gesture in the direction of recovery in 1925 and 1926, the spiral downward between 1927 and 1929 gutted the petroleum business. Part of the problem was the increase in the ability to extract higher quality fuels from crude, making the increased production of crude that much more redundant; part of the problem was the change in petroleum consumption making gasoline of greater demand than fuel oil; and part of the problem was the decline of competition in the petroleum business as the giants took control. All three parts can be seen locally with the ascendancy of the automobile, the sophistication of the refineries, and the consolidation of power. In 1921 Standard Oil, indeed the Ohio central core of the Rockefeller dynasty, took control of the Midwest Company. One refinery alone operated in Casper.

This was the trend in the nation and this was the trend in Casper.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

With an economy that had never been diversified, the dependence had shifted from agriculture to petroleum. With the decline of petroleum, the agriculture was no longer there to shore up the economy. During the 1920s the agricultural depression afflicting the nation worsened steadily after 1923 to be joined by the rest of the nation's economy in 1929, not to experience any recovery until World War II. Banks began to close, to be swallowed up by other, bigger institutions. Even the electrical power industry locally suffered the same fate. In 1913 the Casper Industrial Club, an organization of commercial boosters, proudly announced that "Owing to the presence of two electric light and power companies in Casper, each with a plant capable of supplying larger cities than Casper, both light and power are to be had at rates greatly below the average." In 1918 those two companies, the Wyoming Electric Company and the Casper Electric Company, merged becoming the Natrona Electric Company. In 1924, that organization was taken over by the Mountain States Electric Company. The process of centralization was abroad as fewer businesses operated in Casper. The boom was coming to an end, with the death knell for certain coming in 1929 with the stock market crash and the subsequent depression. The boom had been furious and powerful and seemingly endless, and before it faded from sight, that boom had permanently transformed Casper, Wyoming, including its school system.

North Casper continued to grow although not at the previous rates. By a perverse law of social planning, the building program of the school district proved adequate only about the time that the boom started to fade. In 1924 the Roosevelt School building was finally completed when the center and the north wing were added. That fall the school opened with a student population of 290 and increased only to 328 by the end of the academic year. Even so, a hundred fifty parents attended a dedication of the building on Theodore Roosevelt's birthday at which they inspected the new structure. And the school continued its broader social mission. The next year Ms. McLaughlin reported that:

During the year 1925-1926 the teachers of Roosevelt have tried to bring a closer relation between school and parents. This campaign began with the special visiting day and tea given for mothers during Educational Week. Every teacher has visited in the home of her pupils at least once. When the work of the pupil demanded it, frequent visits have been made and the pupil's progress discussed. Parents have been urged to visit and observe the class work to try to understand and help the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 11

teacher diagnose the case.

The years of greatest activity at the Roosevelt School were the early years. Almost as soon as the building was completed, with the addition of the north wing, the school population began to decline. In 1926 ten teachers served at the school, but by 1929 Roosevelt had one sixth grade class, one fifth and fourth grades combined, one third and second combined, and one first grade and one kindergarten; six teachers now fulfilled their duty in the school. The depression in the oil fields was accompanied by a series of worsening years for the agriculture sector, and, as both shriveled, the local economy that depended on that activity also waned and the population that had come to Casper on winds of hope trickled and then fled away in gusts of despair. By 1936 Roosevelt School had no sixth grade. In 1938 only five teachers tended the fires of enlightenment at the school.

The coming of World War II intensified the trend already underway. Five months after Pearl Harbor twelve citizens of North Casper, including the three who had sought permission twenty years earlier for the North Casper Community Club to use the school for its meetings, petitioned the school board "to arrange for the closing of the Washington and Roosevelt Schools before the opening of the 1942-1943 terms of schools." This they saw as an economy measure. The school virtually did close. In 1943 it had only three teachers. In 1944 and 1945 the classes at Roosevelt and Lincoln were combined and then in 1946, following the war, when Roosevelt was again open separately to educate the children of the area, it had only three teachers again.

As with the rest of the community and state, the prospects of Roosevelt School brightened with the end of the war and the period of economic growth that stretched into the 1950s. By 1951 the school again had a dozen teachers, turning the corner in a substantial way when it went from seven teachers in 1948 to ten in 1949. It was at exactly that moment that the school district conducted an assessment of building needs for the coming years. At that time only seven of the eleven classrooms at Roosevelt were being used. The distinction of the school was its cafeteria, the only elementary school in the district with such a feature. Two other classrooms were being used for assembly purposes. Roosevelt and Washington Schools were tied in last place with the smallest site (.86 acre). The total score assigned to the building and site and facilities was "fair". The consultants concluded their

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

discussion of the school thus: "It is recommended that the Roosevelt building be continued as an elementary school center housing pupils in kindergarten through grade six; that a combination auditorium-gymnasium be added to the building; and that the site be enlarged." A decade later a gymnasium / auditorium was, in fact, added to the building but the site was not enlarged sufficiently to address the exterior space problem that had plagued it from the beginning, although the school did acquire the adjacent lots to the west of the school, across the alley where now modular school rooms and a parking lot reside. In the middle 1970s the building ceased to be an elementary school and was used instead as an alternate high school, a function which it continues to the present.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Roosevelt School
name of property
Natrona County, Wyoming
county and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Casper Industrial Club, Casper, Wyoming (Casper, n.d. [1922]). A copy of this booklet surveying the economy of Casper at the beginning of the 1920s is located in the Wyoming Department of Commerce, State Archives and Historical Research Collections, Cheyenne.

"Casper School Population Increases More than 700 per cent in Period of 10 Years," Casper Daily Tribune and Wyoming Weekly Review, Special Industrial Edition, January 22, 1922, pp.4,16.

Casper Zonta Club, Casper Chronicles, Casper, 1964.

(See Continuation Sheet)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

Cassity, Michael, A Survey of Historic Buildings in Downtown Casper, Wyoming: Final Survey Report, (Laramie, 1988).

Garbutt, Irving, "Boom Overshadowed Gloom in '25" Casper Star-Tribune, n.d., clipping in "Casper History, 1870-1949," file, Casper College Vertical File, Wyoming Room, Casper College.

Natrona County School District No. 2 Records, Wyoming Department of Commerce, State Archives and Historical Research Collections, Cheyenne. These extensive collections include:

Annual Reports, Superintendent of Schools

Teachers Directory

Public School Census, 1924, 1926

General Correspondence

Annual Report, School District #2, 1917-1932

Safety checklist for older multi-storied buildings

Report of School District Clerk, Districts 2-19, 1889-1951

Report of District Clerk, 1892-1925

Petitions, Notices, Boundary Board and Maps

School District Boundary Maps

Term Reports, 1894-1951

Inventory Books, 1936-1944, Roosevelt School

Administrative Records

Contract Records

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 3

"New Buildings Bring School Relief," Casper Daily Tribune,
February 15, 1925, pp. 1, 10.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps for Casper, Wyoming,
1918, 1921, 1925, copies located in Coe Library, University of
Wyoming, Laramie.

Sessions, E.B., A Study of Public School Building Needs in
Independent School District No. 2 and Natrona County High School
district, Casper, Wyoming (Columbus, Ohio: The Bureau of
Educational Research, The College of Education, The Ohio State
University, 1948). Copy is located in Natrona County School
District No. 2 records, Wyoming Department of Commerce, State
Archives and Historical Research Collections, Cheyenne.

Webb, Frances Seely, Collection, Casper College, Goodstein
Library. This substantial collection includes specific files on
Casper's school system and schools.

Wilking, Jan, Collection, Wyoming Department of Commerce,
State Archives and Historical Research Collections, Cheyenne.
This collection includes original drawings and specifications for
Roosevelt School prepared by Garbutt, Weidner, and Sweeney.

Works Progress Administration Collections, Wyoming
Department of Commerce, State Archives and Historical Research
Collections, Cheyenne. These files include reports prepared in
the 1930s on Wyoming history and social institutions. For this
study the relevant reports are those of Edson Sellers, on
architecture, and Nancy Stebbins, on Casper's school system.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

Roosevelt School
name of property

Natrona County, Wyoming
county and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	13	391870	474606			

Verbal Boundary Description

This building, 135'5" by 70'8", is located on lots 8, 9 and 10 of block 22, Nelson addition. The building dominates the described lots almost entirely. The boundary extends out from the exterior walls of the building approximately 50' on the east, west and south elevations. It extends approximately 25' on the north.

Boundary Justification

The boundary conforms to the historic location of the building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Michael Cassity
organization: High Country Historians date: 7/30/96
street & number: 1714 Mill Street telephone: 307-742-8272

4769 1/4 NW
1815H02

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

106°22'30"
42°52'30"

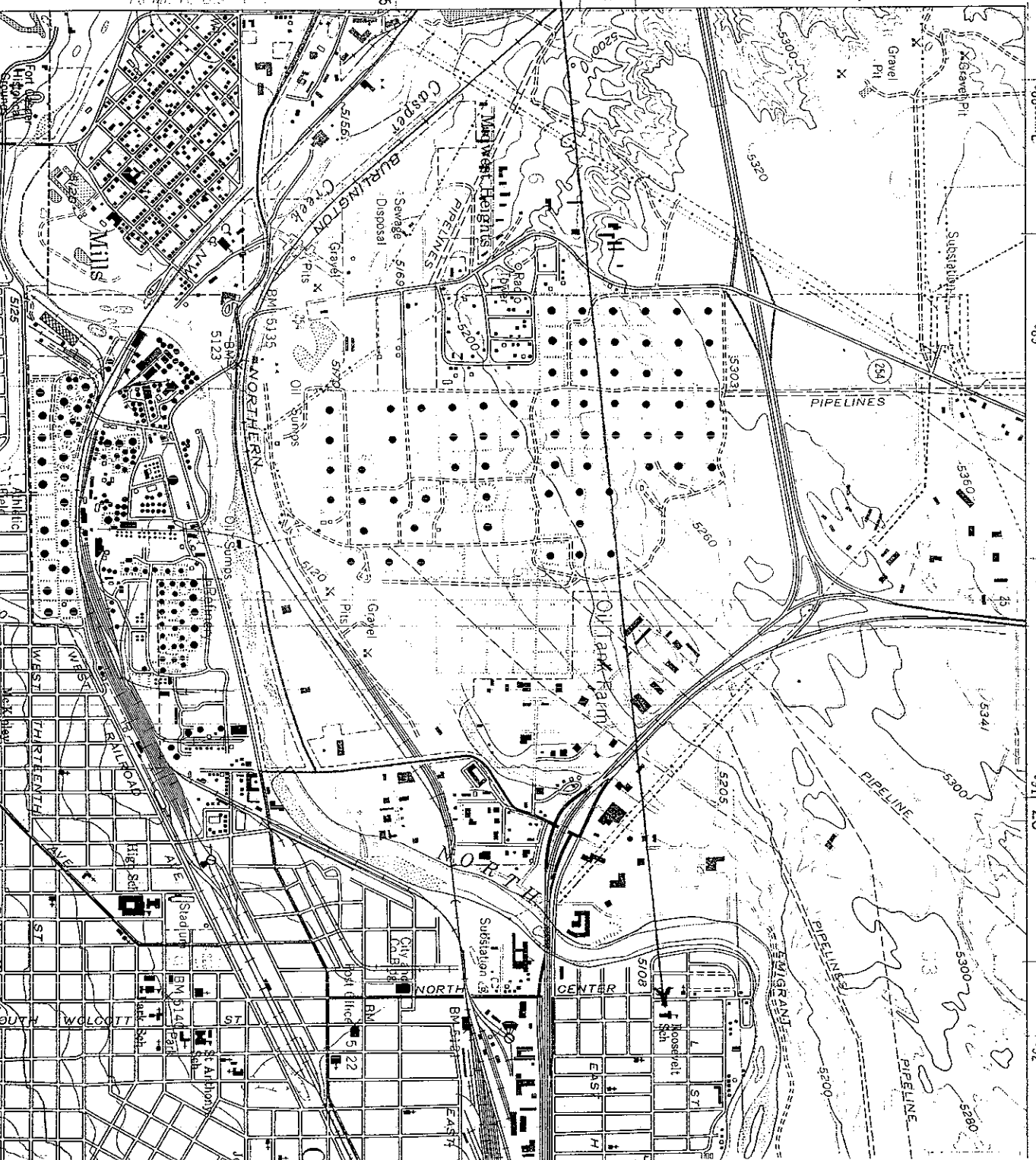
1 388000m. E 389

3911 20'

1 392

4747000m. N.

ROOSEVELT SCHOOL
CASPER OILAD.
391870E
474606N
A



Nomination to the National Register

If your school is more than 50 years old, it may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the official list of buildings and sites important in American history and culture. Please make an initial contact with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office to start the nomination process. It is also a good idea to contact your local historic society or county affiliate (CLG, etc.), if active in your area.



Roosevelt High School (Casper) is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
(photo courtesy Brian Thompson, Ethan James Foundation)



Lessons Learned With Natrona County High School

“I don’t know of anyone who isn’t excited about having the opportunity to teach and learn in a new place,” Kelly Walsh High School Principal Brad Diller said in the Casper Star Tribune when the plans for their new high school were finally announced to the public on February 13, 2013.

This statement reflects the pervasive local attitude that new is somehow better than old. This kind of thinking has dominated school construction in the Natrona County School District since statehood, resulting in a pattern of demolishing older school buildings and replacing them with new buildings.

Natrona County High School was finished in 1927. That fact alone was the single most important criteria for turning the building into something like a senior center, or administrative offices, or perhaps even demolishing it according to some school board members.

Overcoming this prejudice was the first challenge a group of us determined to preserve the school faced. We were lucky in that we had a National Register of Historic Places landmark building located in the heart of the community and an alumni group that actually said they would “chain themselves to the door” if demolition was as much as mentioned. The loyalty of this citizen group cannot be overestimated.

Another major dynamic that favored renovation was the fact infrastructure — street, water, and sewer — as well as land ownership and health and safety issues, were all in place. The most difficult criticism of renovation was ultimately the cost factor. At this point we turned to the State Historic Preservation Office for assistance in obtaining a Historic Architects Assistance Fund (HAAF) grant for a feasibility study of all alternatives. This was the critical turning point for the salvaging of Natrona County High School.

Kurt Dubbe of Dubbe-Moulder, Architects in Jackson accepted the grant and immediately met with all the players including NCHS students and faculty, the Board of Trustees and school district officials. This led to the selection of the architectural firm of Bassetti and Associates in Seattle, a firm with extensive experience in designing historic school renovations. Finally, all of the pieces of the project were in order and the reality that the landmark school would be given a new life was a reality.

**MORE THAN MORTAR**
saving wyoming's historic schools

There is one personal disappointment and that is that the original NCHS student history club that started off with such a flourish is no longer active and though there are still many students interested in architecture, construction, design and historic preservation they are without leadership and consequently inactive.

Of course there have been other bumps in the road to success. One has been the frequent personnel change in the Wyoming School Facilities Department and legislative policy changes that have led to serious differences with the school district. Eventually these differences were and will continue to be resolved. Hopefully actual construction will begin this year.

Barbara Dobos, Past President
Alliance for Historic Wyoming

THE FUTURE OF NATRONA COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL (NCHS) Casper, Wyoming

Position Paper By The Natrona County High School Initiative

Citizens dedicated to renovation and reuse of NCHS

Historic Preservation is important in our cities and state because our lands and significant historic buildings provide a unique, distinct feeling to recall and share memories for future generations and ourselves. Wyoming needs to be watchful that its rapid development respects this heritage through the preservation of historic landscapes and structures. Our group is dedicated to increasing the awareness of three important aspects of historic preservation.

Historic Preservation is

- ✓ **About memory.** We recall our memories when visiting historic places and preserve and share these events with and for future generations.
- ✓ **About a sense of place.** Historic buildings provide a unique, distinct, feeling that identifies a specific place. We know where we are.
- ✓ **About sustainability.** This principle has a double meaning. It is not only about the economics of tearing down and rebuilding, but about the continuity and permanence of our culture and society. It is about community investment -- both financial and emotional.

For these reasons, we have joined together to increase community awareness about the importance of Natrona County High School (NCHS) in Casper, Wyoming. The school has been a community landmark for eight decades. We support renovation of NCHS to create a 21st century learning environment while still preserving the character of the historic school. This will be Wyoming's first historic school renovation project; and serve as a model for the rest of the state. Based on other states' experience, costs to renovate historic schools are as much as **20 percent less** than building a new school.

Benefits of Renovating NCHS

Historic schools serve as landmarks that give communities a sense of identity and cohesiveness, and connect generations. With creativity and flexibility, NCHS can be renovated into a 21st century instructional facility for Wyoming's high school students. Numerous case studies from across the country show that rehabilitated and renovated historic schools create environments that stimulate student achievement, enhance the character and vitality of surrounding neighborhoods, cost less than demolition and replacement with a new building, and play an integral role in sustainability and Smart Growth policies through the reuse of an existing structure. **Renovating NCHS, a National Register of Historic Places site, can achieve all of these benefits, while retaining its role as a community centerpiece that reflects 80-plus years of Casper and Wyoming history.**

Our View on the Future of NCHS

We support retaining NCHS as a fully accredited high school in its present location and building. We support this position because of

- ✓ **The historic significance of NCHS** as a leading high school in the state that has provided secondary education for prominent political, civic and business leaders in Wyoming as well as the United States for over 80 years, and
- ✓ **The community Investment-- both emotional and financial** in this institution. Renovating NCHS retains the community connection with this historic school and provides the best use of resources.

NATRONA COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY SCHOOL

HISTORIC SCHOOLS

Many people equate old schools with substandard schools, but as hundreds of school districts throughout the United States have shown, well-renovated, well-maintained historic schools can support the first-class twenty-first century educational program. Well-renovated historic schools can be combined with top of the line energy efficiency. Moreover, such schools often provide features lacking in newer schools, such as inspiring architecture, grand auditoriums, large windows, and meticulous craftsmanship.



CASPER HIGH SCHOOL
Built in 1913

NCHS was built around the old 1913 Casper High School, above. Once finished the old structure was razed and the area became the courtyard of the new school building. Modified again in 1994 the courtyard is now the school library.

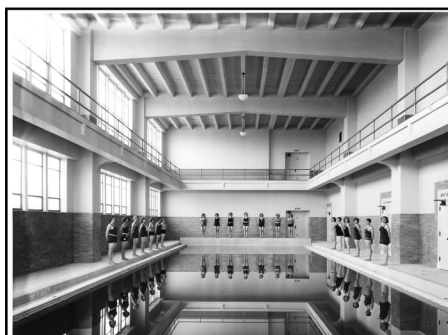


NATRONA COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

Natrona County High School, built between the years 1924 and 1941, is one of the city and state's most distinctive high schools. The architectural style, Collegiate Gothic, is highlighted by a dramatic entry tower and the extensive use of terra cotta that draws attention to the building's memorable facade. Constructed after the 1920s oil boom in Casper, the architectural firm of Garbutt, Weidner and Sweeney designed an educational facility with numerous amenities unknown in Wyoming at that time such as an indoor swimming pool. The physical appearance of Natrona County High School, its conception, and its growth are closely intertwined with the economic growth of Casper and the evolution of progressive ideas about education sweeping the country. The laying of its cornerstone in 1924 coincided with the emergence of the modern high school in America. For decades it was the only high school in Casper, and it also housed Casper College from 1944-1955. The school has been a community centerpiece for over 80 years as well as a leading high school in the state in academics, athletics, and scholarship. Natrona County High School has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1994.



In 1924 construction began for NCHS with the laying of the cornerstone. The bulk of the building was completed in 1927, the auditorium and swimming pool came later.



The indoor swimming pool was an amenity unknown in Wyoming when it was installed in 1930. Pictured here, the girls swim team.



The gym was completed in 1931 with WPA assistance. Above, a ROTC Military Ball held in the decorated gymnasium in the late 1940s.

Additional Resources

Documents included in this section include:

- School Renovation Portfolio, which includes additional case studies and articles, supporting the idea that older schools can be renovated.
- How to design and organize a charette, which typically involves a day-long or multi-day meeting, with school officials, residents, local historians developers, etc. When it comes to saving an historic school building a successful “community design” charette promotes joint ownership of solutions and attempts to defuse typical confrontational attitudes between residents and school officials.
- Roadmap for saving schools document by the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Older and Historic Schools: Restoration vs. Replacement and the Role of a Feasibility Study, National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Upton School Downtown Revitalization Program (article with information on Upton High School in Wyoming)

School Renovation Portfolio

Prepared for Natrona County School District

Superintendent Dr. Joel Dvorak

By

Alliance for Historic Wyoming

April 2009

Alliance for Historic Wyoming

1036 Monte Vista Drive

Casper, WY 82601

www.Historicwyoming.org

info@historicwyoming.org

Contents

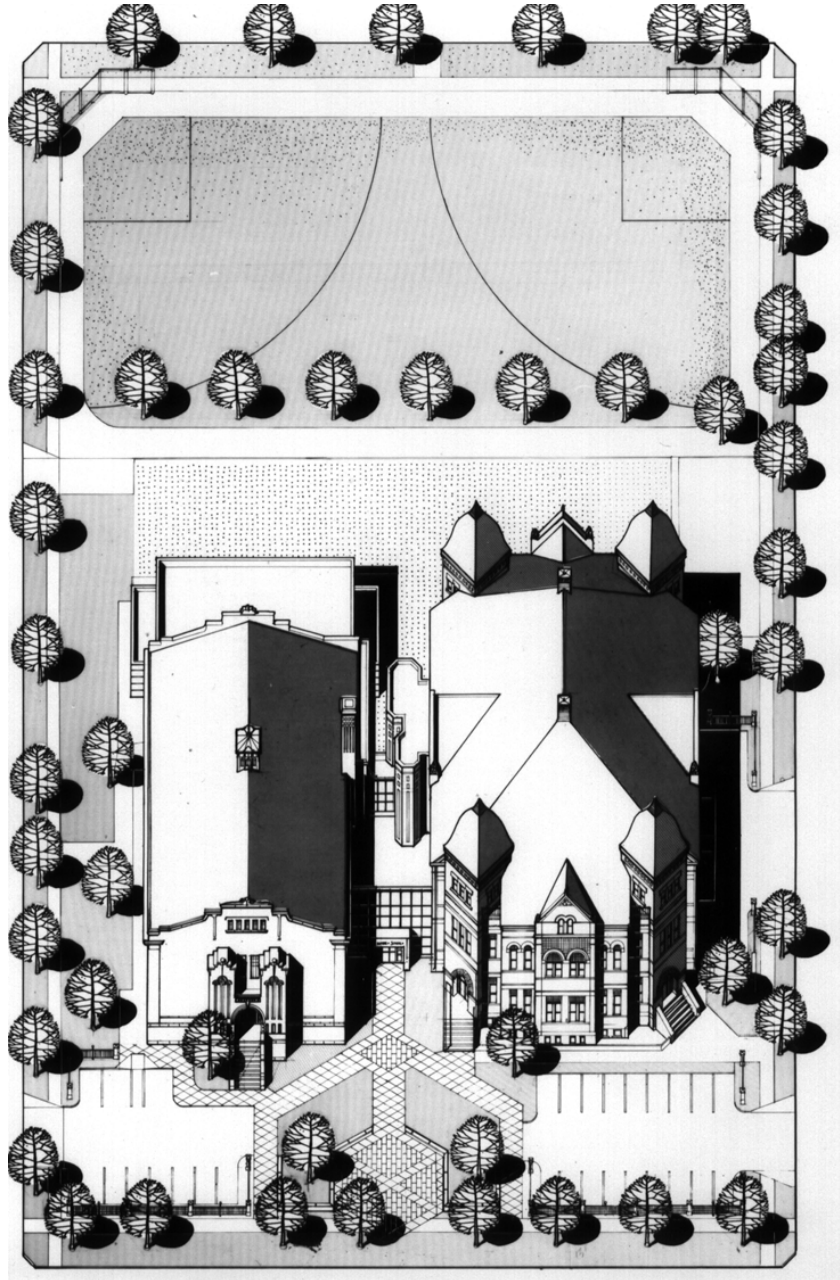
Case Studies of Renovated Historic Schools

- Dora Moore School, Denver, CO (Humphries/Poli Architects)
- North High School, Denver, CO (Humphries/Poli Architects)
- Lake Middle School, Denver, CO (Humphries/Poli Architects)
- Centennial High School, Fort Collins, CO (SlaterPaull Architects)
- Garden Place Academy, Denver, CO (SlaterPaull Architects)
- Boise High School, Boise, ID (from National Trust for Historic Preservation)
- Hazelton High School, Hazelton, PA (from “Renovate or Replace?”)

Articles about Renovation of Historic Schools

- “Well-Constructed Buildings Can Last Indefinitely With Systematic Renovations” (from “Renovate or Replace?”)
- “Design Professionals Can Help School Boards Meet Educational and Community Needs” (from “Renovate or Replace?”)
- “Old Buildings Can Be ‘Green’ Buildings” (from “Renovate or Replace?”)

Historic Preservation - Dora Moore K-8 School



Dora Moore K-8 School, Denver, CO

Dora Moore School was built to last 100 years and it did. Thanks to the exemplary stewardship of Denver Public Schools, an extremely skilled masonry restoration contractor and a committed architectural and engineering team, the cornerstone of the Capital Hill neighborhood will remain in service for another 100 years. In honor of their efforts, the Honorable Governor Bill Owens presented the team with the Second Annual Governor's Award for Historic Preservation in 2004.

Historic Preservation - Dora Moore K-8 School



Historic Preservation - Dora Moore K-8 School



Historic Preservation and Addition - Dora Moore K-8 School



Historic Preservation and Addition - Dora Moore K-8 School



Historic Preservation – North High School



Historic Preservation – North High School



North High School, Master Plan, Historic Preservation, Renovation and Addition Denver, CO

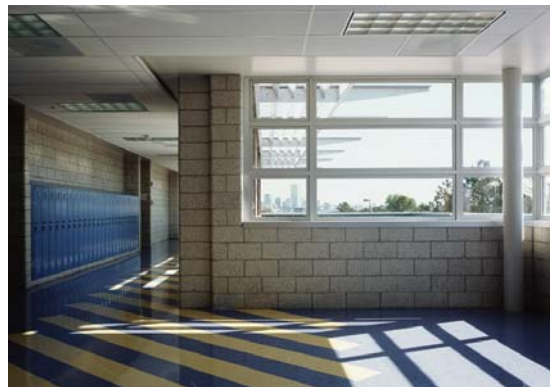
North High School is one of Denver's oldest and grandest public schools. Set at the crest of a hill in Northwest Denver, on a site of approximately 34 acres, the school buildings enjoy a panoramic view of downtown Denver. The challenge of this project was to facilitate the transformation of the current campus to meet the educational needs of the next 100 years and support, through innovative site planning and architecture, the process of academic reform already underway at North High School. The end goal was to make the North/Valdez campus a model of performance for public education in the 21st century.

Addition to Historic School – Lake Middle School

Lake Middle School, Denver, CO

Overlooking Sloans Lake, Lake Middle School has graced Denver's near west side for 75 years. Built in 1926, the school was designed by M.G. and Burnham Hoyt and is listed as a Denver Landmark. The major scope of this project was to design an eight-classroom addition for eighth grade students enrolled in a special program to provide ninth grade credits (the "Eight-Plus Plan").

The new school wing was designed with six general classrooms, a career-exploration area and a flexible technology center that can also be used as a multi-purpose/presentation room (a technology classroom with tiered seating). Support space consists of the necessary lavatory facilities, service rooms (electrical, mechanical, janitorial), and the required circulation space including student lockers.



Middle School Addition – Lake Middle School





*Lake Middle School
Denver, Colorado*

Types of Services:

Architecture
Historic Preservation
Interiors
Landscape Architecture
Programming
Planning
Sustainable Design
Urban Design
Project Management



Registered Staff

Dennis Humphries, AIA - Principal
Joe Poli, AIA – Principal
Tom Klein, ASLA – Associate
Stanley Turner, AIA – Associate
Eric Blase, AIA, LEED-AP – Associate
Adam Ambro, AIA, LEED-AP – Associate
Matt Wilhelm, AIA, LEED-AP - Associate
Rick Escher, AIA – Architect
Ryan Wallace, AIA, LEED-AP - Architect



LEED Accredited Staff

Adam Ambro, AIA, LEED-AP
Eric Blase, AIA, LEED-AP
Jane Crisler, LEED-AP
Ozi Friedrich, LEED-AP
Josh Grote, LEED-AP
Jaime McDonald, LEED-AP
Sarah Murphy, LEED-AP
Ryan Wallace, AIA, LEED-AP
Matt Wilhelm, AIA LEED-AP

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



“Factors such as a small site, school remaining open during construction, as well as the mysteries of remodeling a 1906 building, all added to the challenge of this project. SLATERPAULL met each of these challenges . . . I am happy to recommend SLATERPAULL without reservation.”

— *Mr. Ed Holder, Construction Manager
Planning, Design & Construction
Poudre School District*

2006 Monarch Award

- *Council of Educational Facility Planners International*

Project Description

Centennial High School is an alternative school campus where student population fluctuates between 180 to 225 with future growth expected to reach nearly 245. The project involved a comprehensive master planning and programming study to assess the current and future educational program. Following the master planning and programming, a renovation and addition provided the facilities for the educational program. The program includes 10 general instructional classrooms, three computer classrooms, an activities building house, art studio, science lab, the trade’s workshop, and the gymnasium/cafeteria. It also includes the district’s “Center of Excellence” trades program drawing students from throughout the district.

Poudre School District
Completed August 2004
17,000 square feet (existing)
23,500 square feet (addition)
1.5 acres
245 student capacity
\$5 million



SLATERPAULL
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



New Addition Entry to Multipurpose Space

A unique aspect of the project was its location in the Laurel Street building; a nationally designated historic district. Also known as the Midtown Historic District; the surrounding neighborhood was developed over a 60-year period from the mid 1870s through the 1930s. The school was considered a contributing building to the Midtown Historic District. The staff and students wanted to preserve the original character of the existing building.

References

Mr. Ed Holder
Construction Manager
Poudre School District
2407 LaPorte Avenue
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521
970-490-3412
eholder@psd.k12.co.us

Sinnett Builders, Inc.
4557 Denrose Ct.
Fort Collins, Colorado 80524
970-493-1770



S L A T E R P A U L L
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



New Entry Addition Connected to Historic 1906 School Building



SLATER PAULL
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



Multipurpose Gymnasium / Cafeteria / Special Activities and Events Space



SLATER PAULL
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



New Corridor in the Activities Building



SLATER PAULL
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



New Administration Addition at Tie-in to Existing Historic Building



SLATER PAULL
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



New Science Classroom Featuring Abundant Daylighting with High Performance Windows



SLATER PAULL
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



New Trades Workshop with Solar Tubes and Garage Door Providing Outdoor Connections and Daylighting Opportunities



SLATER PAULL
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



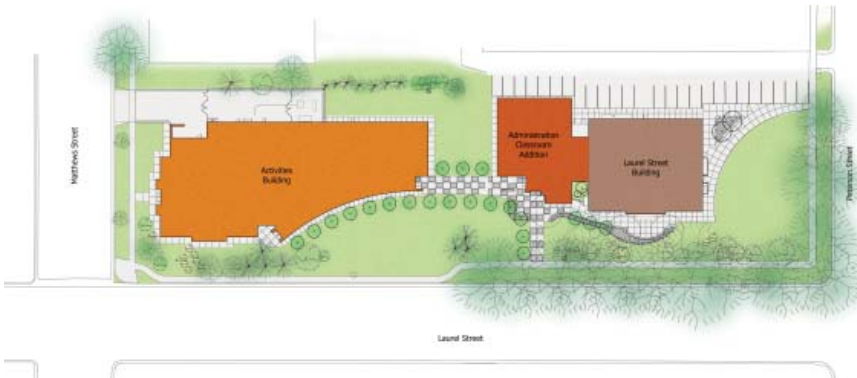
Woodwork in Historic School Building Before Refurbishing



SLATER PAULL
ARCHITECTS

Centennial High School

Renovation and Addition, Poudre School District
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO



SLATER PAUL
ARCHITECTS

Garden Place Academy

Programming, Renovation & Addition

Denver, Colorado



The program for Garden Place Academy included a remodel and addition to the existing school originally built between 1904 and 1924. Renovation work involved converting underutilized space into a new *information media center* and improving the functionality of several other spaces such as the *administration* and *early childhood* areas. The addition includes new spaces for the *cafeteria*, *kitchen*, and *support spaces*. An elevator was added as well as new interior ramps, making the building ADA compliant and accessible for the handicapped. The project also included electrical system upgrades and mechanical system repairs as well as several life safety upgrades.



Library/Information Media Center

Owner:	Denver Public Schools
Completion Date:	August 1995
Building Size:	7,000 square foot addition; 67,000 square feet total
Construction Cost:	\$2.3 million
Student Capacity:	700

Garden Place Academy

Programming, Renovation & Addition
Denver, Colorado



Sketch Depicting Addition Location



Garden Place Academy

Programming, Renovation & Addition
Denver, Colorado



Kitchen & Foodservice



Cafeteria



HISTORIC SCHOOLS

S u c c e s s S t o r i e s

For more information about the National Trust's historic neighborhood schools initiative, contact:

Western Office (AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA): Mike Buhler, 415-956-0610

Mountains/Plains Office (CO, KS, MT, NE, ND, SD, UT, WY): John Mitterholzer, 303-623-1504

Midwest Office (IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI): Royce Yeater, 312-939-5547

Southwest Office (AR, NM, OK, TX): Megan Brown, 817-332-4398

Southern Office (AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC, TN, VI): Mary Ruffin Hanbury, 843-722-8552

Southern Field Office (DC, MD, VA, WV): Rob Nieweg, 202-588-6107

Northeast Field Office (DE, NJ, PA): Adrian Fine, 215-848-8033

Northeast Office (CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT): Marilyn Fenollosa, 617-523-0885

Boise High School

Boise, Idaho

The renovation of Boise High School has re-instilled a sense of pride amongst students, teachers and community members in Boise, Idaho. Prior to 1995 when the Board of Trustees voted to preserve the school, the fate of this 1906-1922 classical style building was unknown.

As a result, a Master Plan was conceived to address numerous renovation issues, among which included reconfiguring the campus, vacating streets, razing three structures, building a new science and technology center and renovating the original school building.

The School Board made the courageous decision to keep Boise High downtown, especially given the growth limitations and lack of parking. Instead of fleeing to the edge of town, the School Board came up with creative solutions. The school has a joint use arrangement with the YMCA across the street.

To relieve parking shortages, the district provided free bus passes and coordinated with nearby churches. Besides overcoming the challenges of keeping the high school downtown, it was a major challenge to upgrade the school to current requirements.



Many of the innovative solutions to growth limitations can be replicated in other communities, such as transit-based initiatives and joint-use arrangements with adjacent property owners. The use of an alternative building code for historic buildings, the Uniform Code for Building Conservation, was necessary to make the project economically feasible. However, the school district had to first convince state building officials to allow the city building department to oversee the project. This could serve as an example to other state education agencies that a historic school can successfully be upgraded using a historic building code. Recognizing the legitimacy of these codes will help overcome the perception that new construction is automatically superior to rehabilitation.

The renovation of Boise High School is a model project, demonstrating how a historic building can be upgraded into a state-of-the-art facility. Keeping the school downtown has also helped keep Boise's historic neighborhoods healthy by stemming flight into the suburbs.

Boise High School is once again a first rate educational facility as well as a showpiece for the entire community.

Architect/Builder

Mr. Skyler Rubel and Mr. Scott Straubhar
Hummel Architects, P.A.
Architects
802 W. Bannock Street Suite 700, Boise,
Idaho 83702
208.343.7523
208.343.0940 (fax)
srubel@hummelarch.com
www.hummelarch.com

School Administrator

Mr. Dan Hollar
Board of Trustees, The Independent School
District of Boise #1
Public Information Specialist
1207 Fort Street, Boise, Idaho 83702
208.338.3400 (x580)
208.384.3145 (fax)
www.boiseschools.org

School Administrator

Mr. Jim Wimer
Boise High School
Vice Principle
1010 West Washington Street, Boise, Idaho
83702
208.338.3575
208.338.3654 (fax)
jim_wimer@boiseschools.org
www.boiseschools.org/schools/boise

Description of Project

Project Address:

1010 West Washington Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Status:

Local, state, national designation: None

Architect:

Hummel Architects

Date of construction:

1906-1922

Date of renovation:

September 1999
Date of previous renovation: In the 1930s,
a new gymnasium was added and the building
was remodeled for energy conservation. A
new music building was also added in 1957.
In the 1950's and 1960's, the building was
further remodeled several times to address
life safety issues.

Use:

High School

Size:

Student/teacher ratio: 15:1

Alternative uses: The school is used for
community concerts, workshops, public
meetings and community education classes.

Location:

Historic district
The school is located between the downtown
area and the historic North End, which is
Boise's oldest neighborhood.

Walking distance:

a. Bussing vs. walking: Since the school is



located in a downtown area, students can
easily walk to school.

Cost

Total renovation cost: \$13.5 million (new
construction) \$4.8 million (renovation)

Per square feet: \$38.00

Per student: \$16,819.85

Source of funding:

Local: The renovation and new construction
costs were made possible through local
funding.

State: None

Federal: None

Private: None

Tax credits: None

Cost estimates for new school construction:

A new school in Boise, Idaho costs roughly
\$20 million.

Problems and/or Threats:

The school was initially plagued by building
code deficiency and safety issues. In addition
to not meeting educational program standards,
the school had faulty wiring, overcrowded
classrooms and an inadequate number of
exits.

Close the school building:

No
**Raze existing building in order to build a
new facility:** The District considered razing
the building due to high prospective
renovation costs.

Policies promoting the construction of school sprawl in outlying areas:

Acree standards: No

State funding biases: No

Inadequate government funding: No

**Acceptance of donated sites for new school
construction:** The District owns land in
various areas of the community, which could
have been used to build a new school.

Inflated school renovation cost estimates:

The initial cost estimates to modernize the
school were very high. The District controlled
the modernization/renovation costs by
entering into fixed-price contracts with the
relevant architects and construction manager.

Poor or bad renovation job: No

Resolution

Strategies or state/local polices utilized to achieve success story:

The School District had a policy in place that
historic significance be considered in school
closure decisions.

Renovation Success

Undertakings:

Classroom size and circulation: Classroom
sizes were increased to enhance the
teaching/learning environment. By
constructing a new building that would serve
as a center for science, math, media and
computer labs, it was possible to reconfigure
existing space in the old building to
accommodate larger classrooms. The new
structure also included a cafeteria, thus
allowing for the conversion of the pre-existing
cafeteria into a new Art Wing. A black box
theater was also created in the basement.

State-of-the-art facility: The school has a
state-of-the-art media center.

Computer technology: Data and telephone
systems were upgraded.

Meets education programmatic needs: In
order to meet educational programmatic
needs, the older building was designated as
a center for humanities classes including art,
drama, language and history. The new building
was built to accommodate computer,
technology, math and science classes.

Building codes: Up to code

Life safety codes:

Asbestos: Up to code

Fire safety: In addition to upgrading electrical
systems, fire alarms, sprinklers and smoke
detectors, more exits were added to the
school during renovation.

Air quality: Up to code

Handicapped accessibility: ADA accessibility
improvements were made.

Parking: In order to resolve evident traffic
and parking problems, the campus was
reconfigured through the use of adjacent
property owned by the District. Furthermore,
the school partnered with the city bus system
to allow students to ride for free as well as
arranged with neighbors, churches and the
YMCA to share parking spaces.

Playing fields: After the renovation, tennis
courts adjacent to the building were redone.

Awards Granted

Achievements/ Recognition: The Frank
Church Technology Building at Boise High
School received a Citation Award from
American School and University Magazine in
November 1999- one of 40 projects across
the nation to receive this award.

Quotes

Future Endeavors

Maintenance plans: In order to accommodate an increased student population, the third floor of the school will be renovated.

Maintenance funding: Not available

Description of Outcome

Community Response:

Neighborhood stability: While residents of Boise were initially divided over the issue of preserving the school or constructing a new building, North End residents rallied for its renovation. The residents recognized the value and importance in preserving the integrity of their neighborhood. The school serves as an anchor in the community.

Safety: No change

Community reinvestment: No change

Economic growth: No change

Community Benefits

Students: Students are pleased to be in an air-conditioned building.

Increased academic achievement: Student performance has increased since the renovation/addition.

Independence: More students ride their bikes to school following the renovation, which included increased bike storage spaces.

Teachers: Teachers are proud and happy of their renovated school.

Parents: The parents were the biggest advocates for renovating the school. They are thrilled with the outcome.

“Now, we’ve got the best of everything. The old building was renovated into something beautiful, and we have a new facility for the kids that we’re really proud of. And the kids are even doing better.”

—Ms. Liz Horn, A Teacher at Boise High School

“There is no question, this fine School will enter the new millennium with a sense of greatness and optimism.”

—“Community Update,” Boise School District, Fall 1999



Hazleton Area School District Saves Its 'Castle' From The Wrecking Ball

Passionate community involvement has saved the former Hazleton High School from the wrecking ball and paved the way for its reincarnation earlier this year as the Hazle Elementary/Middle School.

The 1926 school, known as “the Castle on the Hill” because of its turrets and other Collegiate Gothic elements, was closed in June 1998 and slated to be demolished for a new school. An auction was conducted in which its oak doors, built-in cabinets, brass chandeliers and other fixtures were extracted and carted away.

But after a rally called by citizens determined to save the school, then-Hazleton Mayor Michael Marsicano refused to issue a demolition permit. “A lot of people loved that school,” said Gilbert Degenhart, a 1947 graduate who championed keeping the building during his four years on the Hazleton Area School Board. “After the mayor held up demolition, we had volunteers – we called them the Castle keepers – who patched the roof, cleaned up trash, and checked the building every day to make

sure it was secure.” One Castle keeper even obtained the original auditorium doors and chandeliers so they could eventually be reinstalled.

In 2003, the school board hired architect Vern McKissick, AIA, to evaluate the building. “It was a fantastic structure,” McKissick said. “It was more substantial than anything we would build today. I told the board, I might not be able to renovate the building for less cost than new construction, but I could do it a year faster.”

As it turns out, the project cost about \$3.5 million less than a new school of comparable size, even with the cost of rebuilding the turrets that had been removed from the towers flanking the main entrance.

Some 1,000 people packed the newly refurbished gymnasium for the rededication of the school in January. “This is unbelievable. Every brush of paint was worth it,” one 1948 graduate told the Hazleton Standard-Speaker. Said another, “I think it’s a beautiful monument to the people who graduated here. It’s going to be a step forward for the children who follow.”



After

Thanks to volunteers who loved their alma mater, the original doors and lights were recovered and reinstalled in the main hallway as the building was renovated.



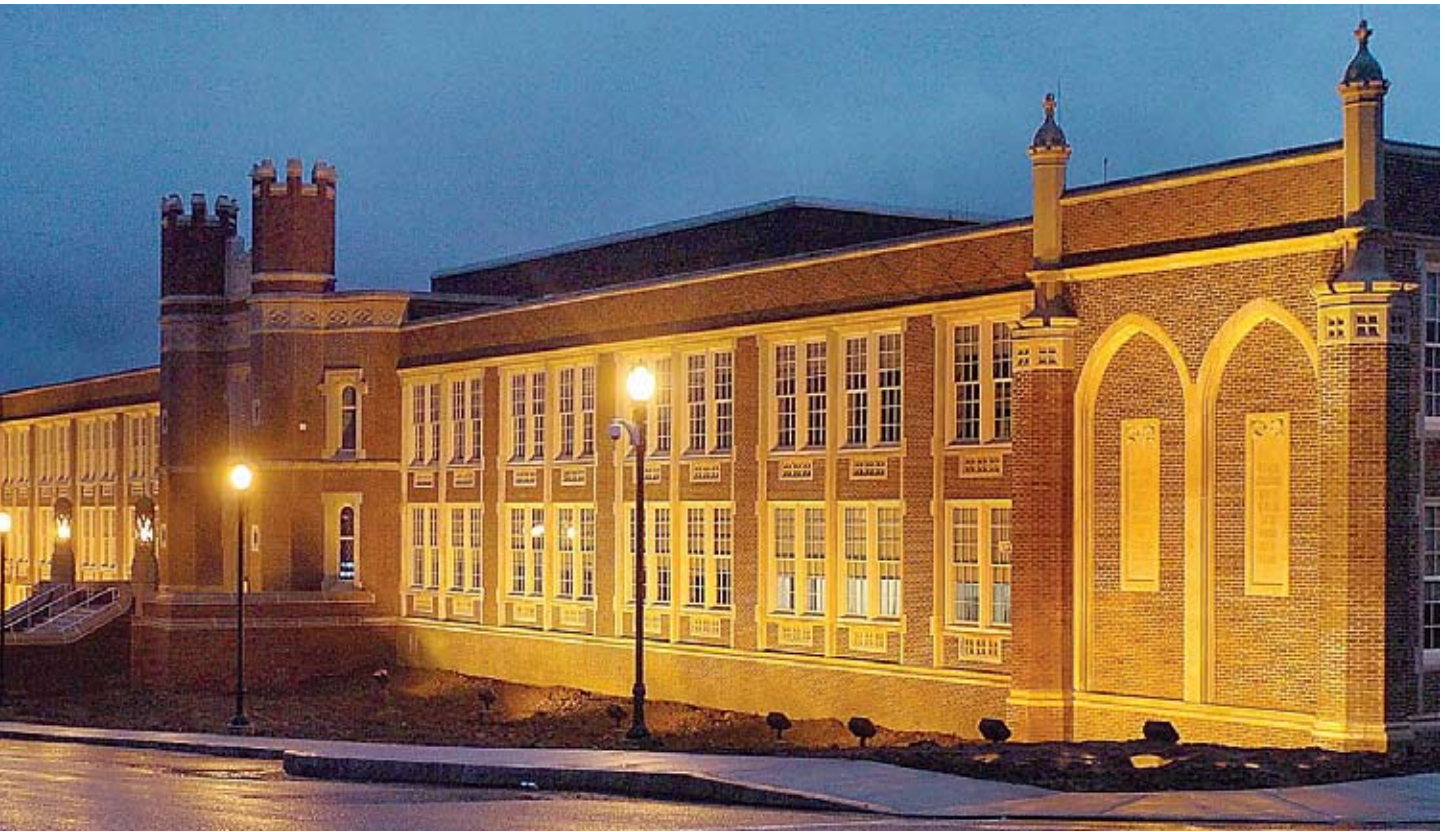
Before

Light fixtures, doors, and cabinets were stripped from the main hallway when the building was slated for demolition.



Photo: Standard Speaker/Blaine Falkema

Photo: Standard Speaker/Matt Grohol



The former Hazleton High School, recently renovated as an elementary/middle school, stands proudly on a hill overlooking the city.



The former cafeteria was remodeled into a new library.

One of the many picturesque classrooms of the refurbished 1926 "Castle."



Photos: Phil Lucella



Some 1,000 people packed the newly renovated gymnasium for rededication ceremonies.

Well-Constructed Buildings Can Last Indefinitely With Systematic Renovations

By David Anstrand
Architect, Board Member,
Council of Educational
Facility Planners International

As America rediscovers the merits of walkable communities, recommended guidelines for the location and design of schools are changing. More and more, school districts are encouraged to renovate and expand existing structures rather than build new schools on virgin fields.

Nothing is more representative of this thinking than the Council of Educational Facility Planners International. For nearly 85 years, this non-profit organization of professional school planners has promulgated standards that many state and local school agencies have adopted.

Consistent with America's suburban culture, the Council until recently encouraged school districts to build new schools on spacious grounds. Three years ago, concerned about the unintended consequences of this policy—suburban sprawl—the Council broadened its perspective. Booklets published by the Council jointly with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Park Service make these points:

- Keeping schools in older neighborhoods is inherently better for the environment because it takes advantage of existing infrastructure and public transportation.
- Compact building design preserves land.
- Rehabilitating older buildings reduces the need to manufacture new steel and other building materials.
- Historic school buildings can usually be renovated to state-of-the-art educational standards at less cost than new construction.

The belief that buildings “wear out” is common but wrong. Of course, building elements like roofs, doors, windows and mechanical systems wear out and need to be replaced, but the foundation, walls and floors of a well-built school may never need to be replaced. A well-constructed school building can last indefinitely with good maintenance and a major renovation every 20 to 30 years.

The chronological age of a school is no indicator of its construction quality. Most schools built between 1900 and 1940, for example, are masonry bearing structures that rely on massive walls to provide structural stability. Many were overdesigned in load-bearing capacity by today's structural standards. Most of these older schools are easier and less costly to renovate than schools built in the postwar suburban era, when cheap materials and inferior construction techniques became common.



Photo: Tom Hylton; Architect: Beers and Hoffman

Creative design can transform outdated spaces to meet today's educational needs. For example, many historic elementary schools feature cloakrooms in every classroom; removing the cloakroom wall expands the classroom. Alternately, removing two walls between three small classrooms creates two with ample space for today's learning activities and computers. Undersized gymnasiums and cafeterias can be reprogrammed as libraries or large group instruction rooms or subdivided for other uses. A new addition can house a modern gymnasium and cafeteria.

Most older schools are well-suited for renovation as “green” buildings. Their compact, multi-story layout is more efficient to heat in the winter and cool in the summer than sprawling one-story buildings. High ceilings provide plenty of room for wiring, ductwork, and piping. Large window openings provide plenty of natural daylight. Contemporary high performance glazing captures plenty of sunlight but retains interior heat.



Bethlehem's 1923 Liberty High School was built for the ages. New windows to match the originals were recently installed as part of a \$65 million renovation project, which also includes a new 50,000 square foot student activity center. Classes will be in session during most of the construction project. The brick and limestone building, an adaptation of the Adams style of architecture, would be cost-prohibitive to replicate today.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The original high ceilings in Lebanon's 1924 Henry Houck Elementary School, like those in most early 20th century schools, allow plenty of room for new piping and ductwork. When completed, the ductwork will be hidden above a new ceiling.

The Manheim Township School District in Lancaster County has renovated four historic schools as “green” buildings. In addition to well-insulated roofs, energy-efficient light fixtures and natural daylighting, the schools employ geo-thermal ground-source heat pumps to provide individual heating and cooling in every classroom. One of these schools was the first geo-thermal heat pump-equipped public school in Pennsylvania. It consumes about 30 percent less energy than the district-wide average.

Handicapped access and code compliance are issues that frequently arise. Creative design and engineering can usually address them. To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, an elevator in a new addition to an older school can be combined with ramps to create accessible routes throughout the building.

All Pennsylvania schools are subject to the Uniform Construction Code, which was adopted statewide in 2003. This code features special provisions for existing buildings, including compliance alternatives for historic buildings. These allow architects and code officials to overcome technical deficiencies. For example, a sprinkler system is a highly effective means of suppressing fire that can and should be installed in any school, including historic schools.

Most older schools contain asbestos. It can—and must—be addressed during the renovation process. But it also must be dealt with if a building is to be demolished.

Housing students during a school renovation is a challenge, but options abound. Some districts can reassign students temporarily to other school buildings. A vacant parochial school might be available. Many churches have excellent classrooms that can

be leased on a short-term basis. Many school districts arrange for the most disruptive renovation work to be done during the summer and segregate students from work areas during the school year. The Houck Elementary School in Lebanon was recently renovated on this basis.

Even vacant commercial space can be used. When Lancaster's new McCaskey East High School had to be closed for a year for emergency repairs, students were relocated to vacant conference rooms in a downtown hotel, two vacant bank buildings, and vacant space in an office park. The students did so well in the smaller settings that one of the “satellite schools” remained open even after repairs were completed in the McCaskey building.

In cases where schools lack space for recreation facilities, a district can use nearby parks and athletic fields. The Palmerton Elementary School, for example, uses the nearby Palmerton Municipal Park as its playground. Reading High School, which is landlocked, shares a new football stadium with nearby Albright College. The stadium, jointly owned and financed, is a better facility than either institution could have provided alone.

Harrisburg's new SciTech High School lacks an auditorium and gymnasium. Its students hold their assemblies at the Whitaker Center across the street. Boys use the downtown YMCA for physical education and girls are enrolled in the nearby Curves.

Renovating an older school may not be as simple as buying virgin land and starting from scratch. But with careful thought and planning, a school district can provide an outstanding educational facility for its students and promote the social, environmental and economic health of the community at the same time.

Design Professionals Can Help School Boards Meet Educational and Community Needs

By John R. Hill, AIA, 2007 President, AIA Pennsylvania, and Vern McKissick, AIA
AIA Pennsylvania, A Society of The American Institute of Architects

When considering the need for a new or renovated facility, school boards would be well-served to look beyond the physical appearance and condition of their existing buildings. Investing valuable time in the search for new building sites may prematurely focus the board's attention on "bricks-and-mortar" issues which may be better addressed at a later time with a design professional.

Instead, board members and administrators should start by considering their educational programming needs. How do they want their school buildings to function? A design professional can help a school district make that determination by interviewing the staff, parent-teacher associations, and community members.

Next, school boards should consider their facilities in the context of the larger community. They should work with local planning commissions to assess demographic trends and the community's plan for growth. In urban areas, a school can often help stabilize a neighborhood or contribute to revitalization efforts. In rural areas, where school districts often comprise several municipalities, the district may be the only entity that can bring these municipalities together to reach common goals. School boards should keep in mind that the location of a school powerfully influences where development will occur.

Once educational programming needs and community development objectives are determined, a design professional should apply those objectives to existing facilities and help the board determine if new ones are needed. It is generally more cost-effective to renovate existing buildings than build new, but doing so will require creative thinking and flexible approaches. For example, many historic elementary schools have been needlessly discarded because the cafeteria was in the basement or the gymnasium was too small. But these existing spaces can be wonderful for other uses like libraries or art rooms. New cafeterias and gymnasiums can be incorporated in an addition to the existing building.

Likewise, retaining the best features of older buildings, like classrooms with ample natural daylight, can be achieved by using creative solutions to keep big windows and high ceilings. Because of security issues, the original entrance to a school may



Photo: Vern McKissick; Architect: Hayes Large/Vern McKissick

When Bedford High School was renovated in 1996, a "farm" of 32 rented modulares was placed on the parking lot for seven months. Students returned to the 1931 building in phases, as work on various sections of the building was completed.



Although the original entrance to the Media Elementary School, top, is no longer used, it remains an integral part of the historic integrity of the school, parts of which were built in 1915, 1929 and 1951. The main entrance was moved to the side during major renovations in 1994.

need to become a ceremonial entrance. A new entrance can ensure visitors go through the main office to enter the building.

Although existing schools are usually located in well-established sites with existing utilities and infrastructure, it is likely there will be considerable car traffic for a short period in the mornings and afternoons, especially on bad-weather days. School districts and local municipalities need to recognize some traffic congestion is inevitable. Non-conventional solutions such as an internal circulation loop may be needed. But creative solutions are more likely to succeed than trying to impose a suburban solution in an older neighborhood by clearing a large site or moving a school out of town altogether.

Even school directors who favor new construction may find it is easier to garner community support for renovating older buildings. For example, Hazleton recently considered building a new middle school against considerable community opposition. But when converting Hazleton's abandoned old high school into an elementary/middle school was proposed, everyone came together to support restoring a community landmark. Recently, a thousand people packed the gymnasium for a rededication of the building, which locals proudly call the "Castle."

Although renovations are more difficult for staff than new construction, school districts can spare themselves many headaches by hiring additional staff and reassigning job responsibilities to ensure problems can be handled as they arise. School boards,

administration and staff will need to be flexible, especially if the building is going to remain open during renovations.

When the 700-student Bedford High School was recently renovated, a "farm" of 32 modulars was created on the parking lot for seven months, gradually opening up pieces of the renovated building during the school year: the gymnasium first, then the cafeteria, and finally the library. In Bedford's case, it was less expensive to compress the schedule and move the kids completely out. Other districts have scheduled critical activities and work in common areas during summer breaks and then isolated portions of the building undergoing renovations during the school year. Of course, it is critical to maintain a safe environment for students and staff throughout the construction process.

School boards should be prepared to pay design professionals more for renovating an existing building than constructing a new school, because renovations involve more planning, research, and coordination. Boards should budget more for contingencies. In the end, experience has shown, it's still likely to cost less for renovations than new construction.

The Pennsylvania chapter of the American Institute of Architects provides a directory of architects in different parts of the state on its website, www.aiapa.org. School board members should also visit older schools that have been renovated. They may be surprised to learn how well a 1920s school can function in the 21st century, and how much value it can add to the community.

Old Buildings Can Be 'Green' Buildings

By Kathleen McGinty
Secretary of Environmental Protection

Earlier this year, Gov. Rendell announced an ambitious plan – the Energy Independence Strategy – to save Pennsylvanians \$10 billion over ten years by reducing energy consumption and seeking alternative forms of energy. Because heating and cooling buildings accounts for 39 percent of the energy used in the United States, school districts can save tax dollars and help the environment by reducing energy consumption in their buildings.

A recent amendment to the school code gives an extra state subsidy to school districts for “green” buildings – those that receive a silver, gold, or platinum certification from the United States Green Building Council’s rating system, called Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). In addition, High Performance Green Schools Planning Grants help defray costs associated with “green” design and are awarded to schools built to a minimum silver LEED standard. Last year, eight school districts were awarded \$200,000 in planning and design grants.

But a “green” school doesn’t have to be a new school. In fact, the No. 1 principle of green building design is to renovate and recycle existing buildings. A “green” building is one whose construction and operation ensures the healthiest possible environment and makes the most efficient and least disruptive use of land, water, energy and resources. Older schools usually boast numerous features that can help them meet the five principles of building “green”:

1. **Sustainable site design.** Make the most efficient use of existing buildings and associated infrastructure. Utilize existing mass transit systems and make schools pedestrian and bike friendly.
2. **Water Quality and Conservation.** Reduce impervious services by keeping the building footprint and parking areas as small as possible. Because average buildings account for 12 percent of the nation’s potable water systems, designs that minimize the use of water by using low-flow plumbing fixtures can have a major environmental impact.
3. **Energy and Environment.** Design buildings and windows to maximize use of controlled daylighting and solar gains. Maximize insulation. Older schools with big windows were usually designed to capture maximum daylight, and their high ceilings provide ample space for insulation.
4. **Indoor Environmental Quality.** Maximize the use of operable windows and natural ventilation. High performance windows and state-of-the-art heating, ventilating and air



Architect: Vern Mc Kissick



Photo: Tom Hylton

St. Stephen's Episcopal School, a K-8 private school in downtown Harrisburg, more than doubled its classroom space by converting a 1928 parking garage behind the church, above, into an addition with classrooms, restrooms, cafeteria, and administrative offices. With recycled building materials, energy-efficient lights, and an innovative heat-exchange system, the school and adjacent 1826 church became the first of its kind in the nation to receive a silver LEED rating from the U.S. Green Building Council.

conditioning systems provide year-round energy savings while helping to provide better indoor air quality.

5. **Materials and Resources.** Reduce the amount of waste generated during construction. Demolishing a building can produce 20 to 30 times as much debris as new construction. New construction accounts for 136 million tons of construction and demolition waste per year in the U.S. and 40 percent of raw material usage globally. Renovating makes maximum use of existing materials. Renovations require more ingenuity and labor than new construction, but human creativity and our abundant labor force is perhaps Pennsylvania’s most valuable renewable resource.

School boards do more than provide a formal education for children and adults. They influence the way their community thinks and how it grows. Renovating and reusing existing schools, building to LEED Existing Building Standards, and reducing urban sprawl whenever possible can help set an outstanding example of resource conservation and sustainable development.

Photos: Tom Hyllow; Architect: Reese Lauer, Patrick & Scott



The John Henry Neff School, originally constructed in 1929 as the Manheim Township High School, was the first public school in Pennsylvania to employ geothermal heat pumps when it was renovated and enlarged in 1996.

Manheim Township School District Goes 'Green' with Historic Schools

The Manheim Township School District in Lancaster County has demonstrated its commitment to the environment by renovating three historic schools as "green" buildings. The schools emphasize natural daylighting with high performance windows and energy-efficient light fixtures.

In addition to well-insulated roofs, the schools employ ground source heat pumps to provide individual heating and cooling in each classroom. The renovations brought a decline in energy consumption, and made the maximum use existing resources .



Photo: David Anstrand

Each classroom in the three schools has its own heat pump in a closet for individual heating and cooling.



The 1929 Brecht Elementary School was renovated and enlarged in 2000.



The 1936 Schaeffer Elementary School was renovated and enlarged in 2002.

Sources for School Renovation Information

“Renovate or Replace? The case for restoring and reusing older school buildings.” Pennsylvania Department of Education and Pennsylvania School Boards Association. <http://www.saveourlandsaveourtowns.org/renovate.html>

"A Primer for the Renovation/Rehabilitation for Older and Historic Schools." The Council of Educational Facilities Planning, International (CEFPI), 2004. <http://www.cefpi.org/i4a/ams/amsstore/category.cfm>

“An Appraisal Guide for Older, historic School Facilities. The Council of Educational Facilities Planning, International (CEFPI), 2005. <http://www.cefpi.org/i4a/ams/amsstore/category.cfm>

“Schools for Successful Communities: An Element of Smart Growth.” The Council of Educational Facilities Planning, International (CEFPI), 2004. <http://www.cefpi.org/i4a/ams/amsstore/category.cfm>

“Neighborhood Schools.” Website of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. <http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/historic-schools/>

“Historic Schools.” Website of the Alliance for Historic Wyoming. <http://historicwyoming.org/index.php?id=39>

Humphries Poli Architects, Denver, CO
<http://www.hparch.com/>

SlaterPaull Architects, Denver, CO
<http://www.slaterpaull.com/>

Historic Pine Bluffs High School Community Design Charette

May 17, 2008
Pine Bluffs, Wyoming



Historic Pine Bluffs High School

Community Design Charette

Report

The Historic Pine Bluffs High School Community Design Charette was planned and presented by the University of Wyoming American Studies Department, with the help of a grant from the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund and with additional support from the Pine Bluffs Heritage Society and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Special thanks to Dr. James Rose of the Wyoming Community College Commission for volunteering his time to plan and help facilitate the charette.

Planning Committee:

Mary Humstone, University of Wyoming American Studies Program (Project Director)

Marcia Britton, Wyoming Humanities Council

Jenny Buddenborg, National Trust for Historic Preservation

Jack Hockersmith, Pine Bluffs Heritage Society

Tom Johnson, Wyoming Business Council

Jim Rose, Wyoming Community College Commission

Eric Sandeen, University of Wyoming American Studies Program

Barbara Talich, Pine Bluffs Heritage Society

Alvin Weiderspahn, National Trust for Historic Preservation

Jessie Nunn, University of Wyoming American Studies (Research Assistant)

Katherine Feiten, University of Wyoming American Studies (Intern)

Report prepared by:

Mary Humstone, Project Director

Kurt Dubbe, Architect, Dubbe-Moulder Architects

Tom Johnson, Financial Advisor, Wyoming Business Council

Introduction



The Historic Pine Bluffs High School in Pine Bluffs, Wyoming, was built in 1929 with subsequent additions built in 1947 and 1949. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is significant both for its prominence in the lives of the citizens of Pine Bluffs and as one of Wyoming’s best examples of progressive 1920s school architecture in the Classical Revival tradition. The school building possesses a high degree of historic integrity. It

features a distinctive domed gymnasium-auditorium which is a source of community pride and has drawn the attention of architects and engineers throughout the region. The many attributes of this fine structure are addressed in detail in a report entitled “A Feasibility Study for the Rehabilitation of the Pine Bluffs High School, Pine Bluffs, Wyoming,” prepared by Long Hoelt Architects, August, 1995 (See Appendix D).

In 1996, the Historic Pine Bluffs High School was saved from demolition by the efforts of local citizens led by the Pine Bluffs Heritage Society. The Heritage Society secured a 50-year lease from Laramie County School District # 2, and assumed responsibility for management and maintenance of the building. The Heritage Society currently rents space to Laramie County Community College, Head Start, and Laramie County School District # 2, and to community groups for special events. Since 1996, the Heritage Society has repaired the roof, tuck pointed the entry, installed new sidewalks, curbs and gutters, replaced innumerable broken window panes and renovated the Little Theater. Although currently in use, the 23,000-square-foot building, which has eleven large classrooms in addition to the gymnasium and small theater, is underutilized and in need of a regular source of funding.

In 2007, the University of Wyoming American Studies Program received a grant from the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund to develop a plan for the preservation and reuse of the Historic Pine Bluffs High School, using the “charette” design process which brings together community members and outside experts in an intensive 1-day workshop. The charette is a dynamic process in which participants are actively engaged in solving design problems.

The charette was held on May 17, 2008. Forty-six people attended, 33 community members and 13 “resource people” who were invited to help the community with ideas for new uses, design solutions and sources of funding (see *List of Participants*, Appendix A). The charette addressed issues such as community needs, allocation of space, use of the second floor, sources of funding and code requirements, as well as the role of the building as a historic and cultural asset in Pine Bluffs.

The goals of the charette were to:

- Explore possible uses for the Historic Pine Bluffs High School
- Determine the best and most likely uses
- Sketch out how the new uses would fit in the school and what upgrades would be needed to accommodate them
- Estimate the expenses and potential income
- Identify sources of funding for rehabilitation

At the start of the day-long charette, participants talked about what the school meant to them, as well as the role the building could play in the future of the community. Following a tour of the building, participants broke into small groups to brainstorm community needs and how those could be accommodated in a renovated Pine Bluffs High School. Ideas ranged from offices for professionals, government programs or community organizations to health services and fitness programs. The possibility of converting the second floor for housing or office use was explored by several groups. The importance of the building, especially the gymnasium, for large community gatherings, conferences and other events was also noted (see *Brainstorming of Potential Uses*, Appendix B).



Following lunch in the gymnasium, participants worked on a plan for the future use of the building, including necessary improvements to accommodate new uses, opportunities for funding and next steps.

The following sections of the report summarize the work done at the charette. The Appendix includes detailed notes taken at the meeting, as well as useful supplemental information.

Why the Historic Pine Bluffs High School Is Important to the Community

Participants at the charette were given note cards and asked to write a few sentences about what the Historic Pine Bluffs High School means to them. Many participants spoke of memories of their own experiences attending school here or that of their parents, children, brothers and sisters. “Third generation graduate – I still hear the greetings in the hallways,” wrote one, and “Just walking through this school brings back so many good memories,” said another.



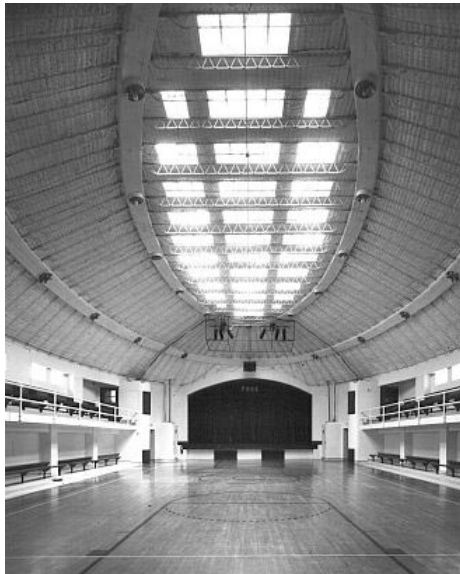
Many wrote of the beautiful architecture and craftsmanship of the building, and its importance as a landmark in the town of Pine Bluffs. “The Old School is one of the last old buildings left. We need to keep something to remember.” “This building is a visual reminder and testament to the community values of striving for excellence, belief in architectural values of strength and permanence, belief in the importance of arts and sports to a well rounded education.” Many noted the unique design of the gymnasium’s roof, as well as its great acoustics and natural light.

Others noted the importance of the Historic Pine Bluffs High School as a community gathering place and place for events, from graduations and high school proms to musical performances, polka dances and funerals. No other place in town can fill this need. Stewardship of public resources was also a theme, and the sense of pride that comes from taking care of something and handing it down to the next generation.

Perhaps the following quote best describes the intangible values of the building:

The feel – this is one of those areas difficult to describe. But it was the feeling that people belonged here. As I walked through the building, I could feel the memories of time past. The question that flooded my mind was this: how do we maintain the “feel” in the renovation? When people walk in, no matter what the purpose, they must feel like they “belong.”

Features of the Building and Architectural Parameters



As mentioned above, most participants at the charette praised the Historic Pine Bluffs High School for its architecture, especially the handsome exterior, large classrooms, high ceilings and generous windows. Some of the architectural features that enhance the National Register-listed historic building also provide challenges in adapting it for contemporary uses. These features were discussed during the charette and include the following:

- **Extensive windows** provide abundant natural light and ventilation and great views, particularly from the second floor. (It was noted that the entire charette took place without the use of electric lighting.) The historic windows are a major character-defining feature of the building. Challenge: Historic steel windows are thermally inefficient.
- Massive **exterior walls** with excellent proportion and massing and unique brickwork provide a durable, beautiful and very pleasing exterior. The masonry is a very important character-defining feature of the building. Challenge: Repairing/replacing older masonry work while maintaining historic integrity in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties*.
- The **gymnasium** with its unique domed roof provides an attractive, naturally lighted, large assembly or activities area. In its design and engineering, the gymnasium roof is the only one of its type in Wyoming and possibly the region. The gymnasium is popular for community events and dances including weddings and proms. The gymnasium, and most notably the roof system, is a very important character-defining feature. Challenge: 1) Repairing/maintaining the unique roof system while maintaining historic integrity in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*; 2) current interior configuration provides limited access to mezzanine level due to several level changes and barriers.

"I value the historic nature of the building – especially the gym."

"The halls and classrooms have a welcome and comforting scale. There is so much natural light and it seems like an ideal learning environment"

- **Diversity of spaces**, both large and small, including classrooms and assembly areas, provides opportunities for multiple use. Challenge: Limited future expansion potential; insufficient access and egress.
- **Vaulted ceilings** in classrooms and the Little Theatre are a unique design and construction feature. Challenge: Ceiling configuration could present challenges when incorporating new mechanical and electrical systems (if needed).
- **Passive energy features**, especially the massive exterior masonry walls, create a stable interior environment with respect to heat loss/gain, natural ventilation, etc. Challenge: Difficult to modify for future mechanical and electrical systems, although the overall mass of the building suggests that fairly simple and efficient systems could be implemented depending on future use and occupancy.
- **Infrastructure configuration** is a unique design and construction feature with perimeter chase for systems access. Existing systems are in place. Challenge: Existing systems may be outdated and inefficient, requiring modification and/or replacement depending on future use. Perimeter systems access may present challenges for future upgrading.



Possible Uses for the Historic Pine Bluffs High School

The Community Design Charette held at the Historic Pine Bluffs High School solicited many ideas for possible future use of the structure. Attendees actively participated in an engaged design exercise intended to evaluate existing conditions, identify possible future uses, and determine the best and most likely use for the Historic Pine Bluffs High School.

Identified possible future uses included, but were not limited to:

- Retain Laramie County Community College (LCCC) and Laramie County School District as anchors
- Mixed use: community service (first floor), housing and/or professional offices (second floor)
- Medical offices for University of Wyoming Clinic
- Combination of non-profit and commercial leases
- Community arts center
- Conference center
- Event center for receptions, reunions, etc
- Additional facility for town/county offices such as recreation department, administrative offices
- Workforce development offices
- Education classrooms and distance learning center (UW, LCCC, others)

(For the complete list of suggested uses, see Appendix B)

“This is such a good, sturdy building and has the amenities to be used in so many ways. It would be unforgivable to ever rid the town of this historic landmark.”

Note: Any future use will require addressing items such as structural stabilization, mechanical and electrical systems upgrades, data networking infrastructure upgrades, and current building and energy code compliance. If housing (including the preparation of food) is considered as a possible future use, careful consideration must be given to code compliance for life safety and egress planning above and beyond day use only. An elevator will most likely be required for second floor access regardless of future use.

Best and Most Likely Uses

Based on our initial evaluation, it is our opinion that the best and most likely use for the Historic Pine Bluffs High School facility is to maintain classroom and office use, including continued and enhanced association with Laramie County Community College and recruitment of additional institutional users (such as University of Wyoming) as facility anchors. An important consideration is to maintain a high degree of flexibility and adaptability when considering future uses. Additional uses must be compatible with existing tenants and should not include users that will require investment of significant funds for specialty features that may require dramatic modification of the existing conditions and potentially compromise the historic fabric of the structure. Many potential future uses have been identified that would be compatible with existing uses such as classrooms, offices, meeting spaces, studio space and assembly areas.

Upgrades Needed to Accommodate New Uses

The overall goals of rehabilitating the Historic Pine Bluffs High School are to reduce future operating expenses, increase energy efficiency, increase accessibility and accommodate new uses, while preserving the character-defining architectural features that qualify the building for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Specific objectives are to:

1. Improve building performance through new and improved mechanical and electrical systems;
2. Improve thermal performance through increased insulation, improved roof system, and improved exterior door and window performance;
3. Improve accessibility and life safety for all occupants by incorporating current building codes for existing buildings;
4. Improve structural integrity by incorporating new building structure stabilization including seismic upgrades; and
5. Reduce long term maintenance needs by addressing deferred maintenance and developing a periodic maintenance program to avoid major repair projects in the future.

Any proposed upgrades and modifications must be evaluated for their potential to impact the existing historic fabric and unique character-defining features of the building as outlined above. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* provide guidance for sensitive rehabilitation of historic buildings, and these guidelines should be followed for any proposed upgrades or modifications. The latest practices in energy-efficient building ("Green Building") should also be incorporated into the rehabilitation. For example, the windows are a major character-defining feature of the building and should not be replaced. Windows are a factor in overall thermal performance, but are relatively insignificant compared to the roof. Removable storm windows do not destroy the character-defining features of the windows, and help with thermal performance. Removing the existing windows is a non-reversible solution (see *Secretary of the Interiors Standards*) that is not justified in terms of energy efficiency, which can be gained through other measures.

The existing building layout will accommodate future classroom and office uses without major modification. Any future use would most likely require remedial repair and minor architectural and cosmetic modification. However, the "big ticket" rehabilitation items would include such upgrades as:

- **New mechanical and electrical systems** to increase efficiency and reduce operation and maintenance costs. Design of systems will depend on future use and occupancy and can only be determined after a detailed assessment of the existing building conditions and future needs conducted by a professional mechanical engineer (estimated cost to remove deficient existing mechanical and electrical systems, and replace with basic new systems: \$350,000).
- **New data network infrastructure** (estimated cost to install new basic data network infrastructure: \$100,000).
- Evaluation and implementation of **structural stabilization** (roof, foundations, exterior and interior walls, floor systems), including new elevator shaft, modifications to stairs, seismic upgrades, etc. (estimated cost to evaluate and implement structural stabilization: \$350,000).
- **Exterior envelope upgrade** (roof, exterior walls, exterior windows and doors), and **energy audit** to determine the most effective solutions for improved performance. This would include new insulation, repair (not replacement) of existing windows, introduction of new energy-efficient removable storm windows, overall masonry repair and clean-up, roof repair, gymnasium skylight repair or replacement in-kind, repair of existing exterior doors with new weatherstripping, and general overall exterior building

clean-up and repair (estimate to evaluate and upgrade thermal performance of exterior envelope: \$400,000).

- Evaluation and implementation of current **building code compliance** (access and egress, fire suppression, ADA compliance). This may include such items as additional ADA restrooms at both floors, modification of existing stairs for code compliance, and installation of an elevator (estimated cost to evaluate and implement code compliant upgrades: \$150,000; cost includes elevator (\$60,000), ADA restrooms (\$30,000), upgrade existing stairs (\$30,000), widen select egress doors if needed (\$5,000), sprinkler system (\$25,000).
- **Site development** including parking, ADA access, emergency access, and landscaping (estimated cost for site development: \$100,000).
- **Overall clean-up, repair**, repainting, new floor, wall and ceiling finishes as required, *depending on future use* (\$75,000). Note: This is a very difficult number to predict without being certain of the specific future uses.



“This building lifts my spirits...it represents optimism, thoughtfulness, quality design, craftsmanship and many people unknown to me who walked its halls, played and danced in the gym, taught and learned. It’s a place where important things happened and continue to happen.”

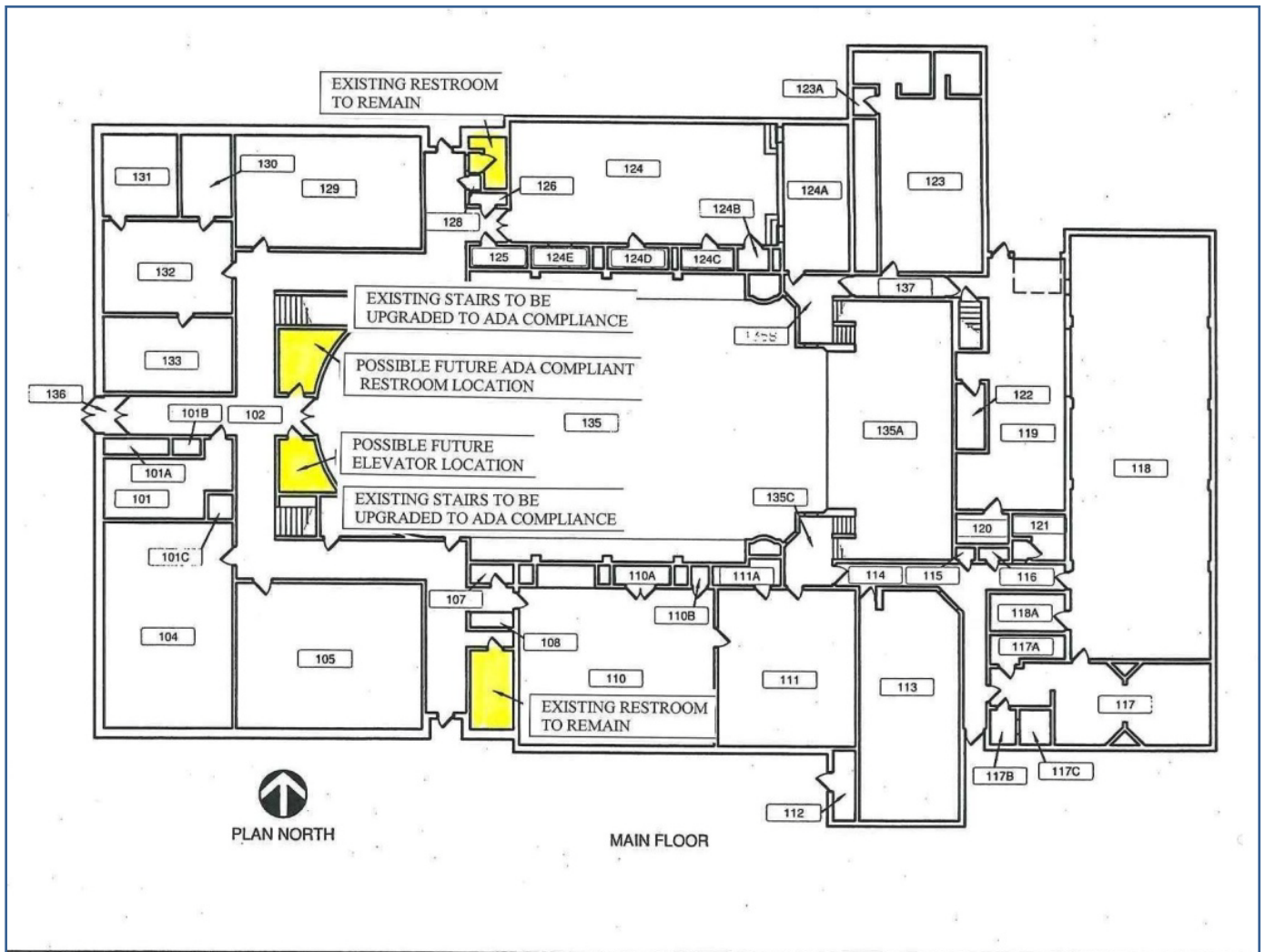
Summary of Estimated Costs


<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Mechanical and electrical systems	350,000
Data network infrastructure	100,000
Structural stabilization	350,000
Exterior envelope	400,000
Accessibility and code compliance	150,000
Overall clean-up	75,000
<u>Site development</u>	<u>100,000</u>
Subtotal	1,525,000
<u>10% Contingency</u>	<u>152,500</u>
TOTAL ESTIMATE	1,677,500

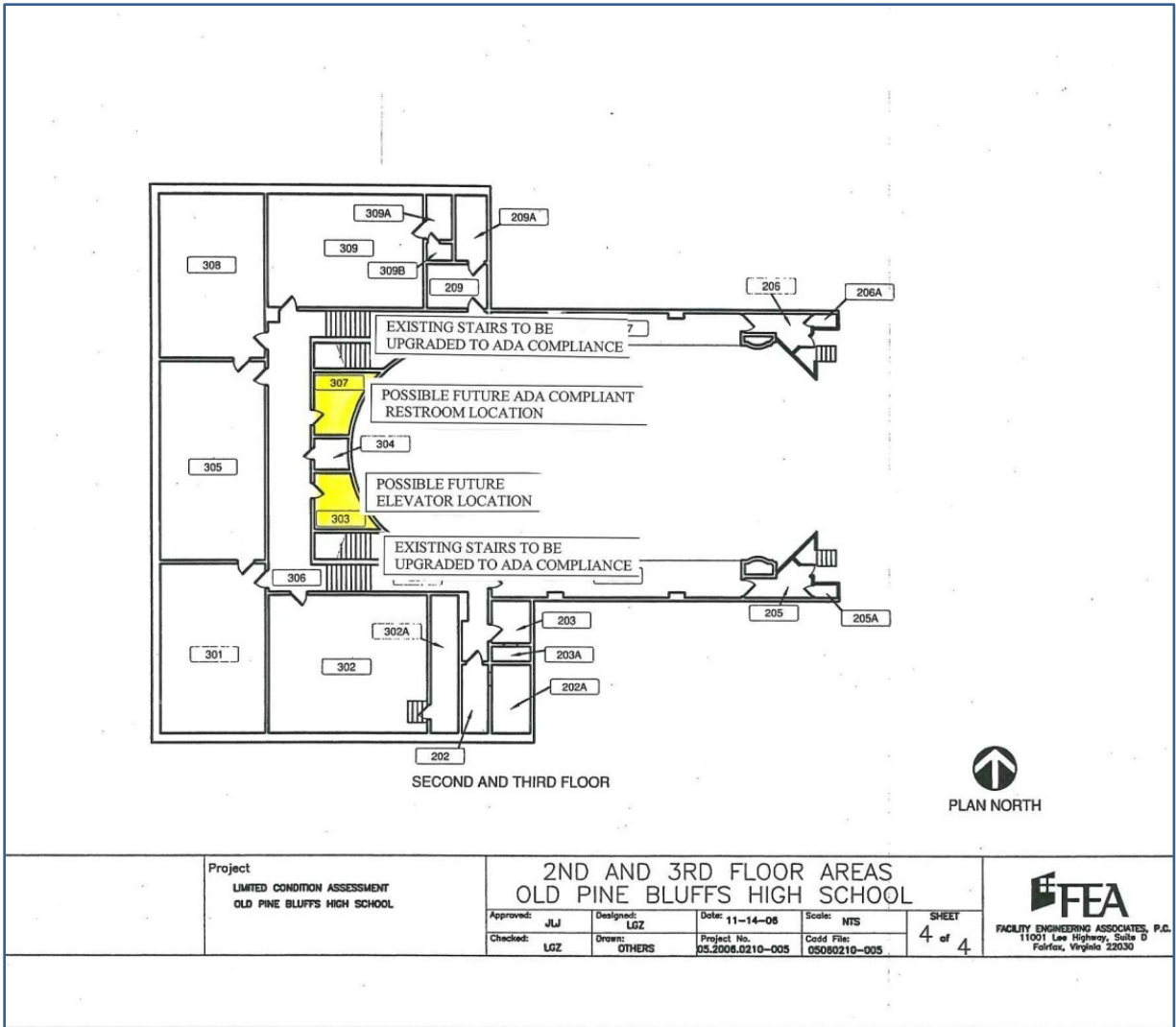
Please note that this is an **estimate only** and should be considered for planning purposes only. These figures are based solely on a single brief site visit to observe visible existing conditions. This estimate does not include any additional items not listed, and may vary depending on solicitation of actual proposals or bids from qualified building contractors. This estimate does not include any professional architectural and/or engineering fees that may be required to complete the work outlined, and does not include any non-fixed items such as furniture, fixtures and equipment, and any special use items unique to the proposed future use.

Conceptual Plans

The existing building layout lends itself very nicely to the identified best and most likely use as classrooms/offices and meeting/assembly areas. With this in mind, the most significant architectural impact would most likely occur where new ADA-compliant restrooms, and modified stairs and elevator are located. Potential locations for these are noted in the floor plans below.



Project LIMITED CONDITION ASSESSMENT OLD PINE BLUFFS HIGH SCHOOL	1ST FLOOR AREAS OLD PINE BLUFFS HIGH SCHOOL				 FACILITY ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, 11001 Lee Highway, Suite D Fairfax, Virginia 22030
	Approved: JLW Checked: LGZ	Designed: LGZ Drawn: OTHERS	Date: 11-14-08 Project No.: 05.2006.0210-005	Scale: NTS Cadd File: 05060210-005	



Business Plan

The business plan for the Historic Pine Bluffs High school is based on operating budgets from the past 10 years. At the charette, Wyoming Business Council Southeast Regional Director Tom Johnson stated that after review of the operating reports of the Pine Bluffs Heritage Society, and based on his experience with other, similar communities, he was confident that the building could be self-sustaining in the future. Johnson prepared the following summary of current and 5-year profit and loss projections.

PINE BLUFFS SCHOOL

Current & 5 Year Profit & Loss Projections

	Current Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<u>Income</u>						
LCCC, Rent	\$13,442	\$13,442	\$13,442	\$13,442	\$13,442	\$13,442
LCSD#2, Rent	\$13,902	\$13,902	\$13,902	\$13,902	\$13,902	\$13,902
Head Start, Rent	\$3,735	\$3,735	\$3,735	\$3,735	\$3,735	\$3,735
Short Term Rentals	\$880	\$880	\$880	\$880	\$880	\$880
TaeKwonDo Rent	\$360	\$360	\$360	\$360	\$360	\$360
Donations	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328	\$328
Reimb. From Cheyenne	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
TOTAL	\$32,657	\$32,657	\$32,657	\$32,657	\$32,657	\$32,657
<u>Expense:</u>						
Janitors	\$8,105	\$8,267	\$8,432	\$8,601	\$8,773	\$8,948
Repairs	\$369	\$376	\$383	\$391	\$399	\$407
Town of Pine Bluffs	\$4,836	\$4,933	\$5,032	\$5,132	\$5,235	\$5,340
Cheyenne Light, Fuel	\$8,244	\$8,408	\$8,577	\$8,748	\$8,923	\$9,102
Hartford, Insurance	\$2,739	\$2,794	\$2,850	\$2,907	\$2,965	\$3,024
Ideal Linen, Paper Products	\$129	\$132	\$134	\$137	\$140	\$143
Chemsearch (Boiler additive)	\$852	\$870	\$887	\$905	\$923	\$941
Contract Services	\$682	\$696	\$710	\$724	\$739	\$753
Equipment - Vacuum Cleaner	\$64	\$65	\$67	\$68	\$69	\$71
IRS- Payroll Taxes	\$1,671	\$1,704	\$1,738	\$1,773	\$1,809	\$1,845
Workmen's Compensation	\$151	\$154	\$157	\$160	\$163	\$167
Rental Deposit Refunds	\$300	\$306	\$312	\$318	\$325	\$331
Ads	\$15	\$15	\$16	\$16	\$16	\$17
Supplies/Misc.	\$324	\$331	\$338	\$344	\$351	\$358
TOTAL	\$28,481	\$29,051	\$29,632	\$30,225	\$30,829	\$31,446
Net Income	\$4,175	\$3,606	\$3,025	\$2,432	\$1,828	\$1,211

Projected Annual Expense Inflation	2%
------------------------------------	-----------

Projected Annual Income Growth Factor	0%
---------------------------------------	-----------

Assumptions

1. Current income levels will remain the same, which implies LCCC & school district remains committed partner
2. Expenses will rise at 2% annually
3. Base Year Financial Statement are based on 2007 year end financial statements

Next Steps

It was determined that the Pine Bluffs Heritage Society, with assistance from the UW American Studies Program, the Wyoming Business Council and the National Trust for Historic Preservation should proceed as follows.

- Form a Joint Powers Board (any combination of School District, City, County, Laramie County Community College).
- Request formal transfer of the Historic Pine Bluffs High School from Laramie County SD#2 to the Joint Powers Board.
- Prepare an application to the Community Facilities Grant Fund (December 1 deadline) for a grant to complete rehabilitation work as recommended in this report, in order to more efficiently use the building for educational purposes, youth services and as a community gathering space, as well as enhancing the historic character of the community of Pine Bluffs.
- Market space in the building to public and private entities

“If you could take this building and move it to our campus, I’d do it in a second.” (Darrel Hammond, President, LCCC)



Appendix

- A. List of Participants
- B. Brainstorming of Potential Uses (from team breakout sessions)
- C. Copy of Notecards
- D. Excerpts from “A Feasibility Study for the Rehabilitation of the Pine Bluffs High School, Pine Bluffs, Wyoming,” prepared by Long Hoeft Architects, August, 1995

APPENDIX A: List of Participants

Last Name	First Name	Affiliation
Acheson	Sherry	Laramie County Community College
Anderson	Jan	Pine Bluffs
Blumenshine	Debbie	Preservationist (Riverton)
Bovee	Renee	Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund
Britton	Marcia	Wyoming Humanities Council
Buddenborg	Jenny	National Trust for Historic Preservation
Culek	John	Pine Bluffs
Conger	Nancy	Pine Bluffs
Crea	Maureen	Pine Bluffs
Curtis	Gail	Pine Bluffs
Daraie	Ken	Wyoming School Facilities Commission
Dubbe	Kurt	Dubbe-Moulder Architects
Filkins	Bill	Pine Bluffs
Fornstrom	Todd	Pine Bluffs
Fornstrom	Richard	Pine Bluffs
Gieber	Clarence "Bub"	Pine Bluffs
Gross	Phyllis	Pine Bluffs
Gross	Colleen	Pine Bluffs
Hammon	Darrell	Laramie County Community College
Herman	Don	Pine Bluffs
Herman	Emil	Pine Bluffs
Herman	Mary	Pine Bluffs
Hockersmith	Jack	Pine Bluffs
Hockersmith	Delores	Pine Bluffs
Humstone	Mary	University of Wyoming
Johnson	Tom	Wyoming Business Council
Lanham	Chuck	Cheyenne Historic Preservation Comm.
Lansden	Ann	Pine Bluffs Town Council
Leemaster	Dale	Pine Bluffs
Leemaster	Shirley	Pine Bluffs
Longfield	Katherine	Preservationist (Jackson)
Martinez	Becky	Pine Bluffs
Nunn	Jessie	University of Wyoming
Ray	Marvilyn	Pine Bluffs
Rose	Jim	Wyoming Community College Commission
Sawyer	Donna	Pine Bluffs
Shandera	Maureen	Pine Bluffs

Smith	Meribeth	Pine Bluffs Post
Talich	Barbara	Pine Bluffs
Talkington	Linda	Pine Bluffs
Tucker	Janeane	Pine Bluffs
Vavra	Frances	Pine Bluffs
Weiderspan	Alvin	National Trust for Historic Preservation
Wilhelm	Bob	Pine Bluffs
Wilkins	Beth	Pine Bluffs
Williams	Larry	Denver Public Schools
Williams	Linda	Denver Public Schools

BRAINSTORMING OF POTENTIAL USES

Team 1—Ideas for Uses

- Children’s Theatre (Movies, Guest Performers, Drama Education)
- Community Needs Facility (e.g. Food Pantry, Thrift Shop)
- Cosmetology Facility/School
- Massage Therapy School
- Shipping Center
- Local Offices for 4-H, Fair, Scouts
- Gateways Needy Animals Office
- Law Office
- Living Quarters Upstairs
- Print Shop Capabilities
- Vocational Training (Electronics)
- Business Incubator Space
- Flower Shop
- Youth (not limited to) Dances
- Educational Displays/Museum
- Health Center/Spa/Tanning
- Dance/Gymnastics/Arts Facility
- Music School, Studio and Recitals

Team 2—Ideas for Uses

- Senior Activities
- Daycare Option
- Community Skills Center: e.g. Cooking, Automotive Training, Child Parenting Skills, Gardening (community members sharing their skills)
- Youth Center
- Dance Studio (Classes and Dance Space for Modern/Ballroom Dancing)
- Community Gathering Area
- Acting/Arts/Music School
- Housing: Possibilities include Low Income, Loft-type, Rental Space, Apartment, Senior, Combination Housing/Work Studio Space, Teacher Residences
- Office Space: Alternative Energy (Perceived Need)
- Mixed Use (Community Use on Lower Level, Business Use Upstairs)
- Events (Receptions, Reunions, Parties)
- Planetarium
- Expanded Archeological Museum

Team 3—Ideas for Uses

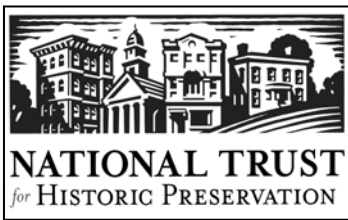
- Wind Farm Education (space for training)
- County Offices
- Professional Offices
- Eastern Laramie County Health Services Center (Health and Other Services)
- Private Childcare Facility
- Rental or Condominium Housing/Lofts
- Arts School

Team 4—Ideas for Uses

- Arts (Painting Studios, Music Studios, Economic/Art, Audition Spaces, Gallery)
- Evening Classes/Adult Education
- Resource Centers
- Weekly Seminars
- Head Start
- Music
- Tri-County (or 3- state?) Training Center for Archives and History; Genealogy
- Corporate Retreat Center
- Conferences and Events
- Strengthen Bond with LCCC and UW
- Heath (Fitness) Center
- Vo-tech School with Dorms

Distillation of Team Brainstorming

- Compatible Uses for Pine Bluffs: Retail Downtown, Offices/Classrooms in Old Pine Bluffs High School
- Anchors are LCCC and School District: need to keep them
- Consider Mixed Use with Community Service (1st Floor) and Housing (2nd Floor); or Offices (2nd Floor)
- Medical Offices for UW Clinic (Current Facility is Unsatisfactory)
- Combination of nonprofit and commercial leases (need to consider compatibility; possibility of using tax credits if there is a for-profit component)
- Arts/Education
- Conference Center
- Receptions, Reunions
- Recreation Department (town offices, programs)
- Workforce Development
- Need to Avoid Financial Burden on School District
- Save Potential for future classroom use



HISTORIC SCHOOLS: A ROADMAP FOR SAVING YOUR SCHOOL

For more information about the National Trust's historic neighborhood schools initiative, contact:

Western Office (AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA): Mike Buhler, 415-956-0610

Mountains/Plains Office (CO, KS, MT, ME, ND, SD, UT, WY): James Lindberg, 303-623-1504

Midwest Office (IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI): Royce Yeater, 312-939-5547

Southwest Office (AR, NM, OK, TX): Daniel Carey, 817-332-4398

Southern Office (AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC, TN, VI): Mary Ruffin Hanbury, 843-722-8552

Southern Field Office (DC, MD, VA, WV): Rob Nieweg, 202-588-6107

Northeast Field Office (DE, NJ, PA): Adrian Scott Fine, 215-848-8033

Northeast Office (CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT): Marilyn Fenollosa, 617-523-0885

All too often, historic schools and options for renovation are routinely dismissed without full consideration of alternatives or community input. Many schools are either abandoned or demolished simply because of their age, as school administrators argue that they cannot be preserved and adapted to meet modern educational program needs. What's a community to do? Many residents feel powerless to intervene or participate in what is often a highly charged political process. It does not have to be this way.

As residents, parents, elected officials, or school board members, there are various ways to get noticed, participate and ultimately advocate for saving your historic neighborhood school. In preparing this fact sheet, we searched for tested methods for building community support. The following strategies serve as a roadmap to help you get started, ask the right questions, follow leads, identify warning signs, and build support.

Get Familiar with the Process

Most state departments of education have created a series of publications, programs and administrative procedures that set out the process for school facility improvements – usually available online. Oftentimes these guide decisions by school districts and their architects in evaluating existing schools, and establish design standards for new construction and for renovation.

Depending on the state, waivers or variances may be allowed. For preservation advocates and neighborhood leaders, it is critical to understand these standards and how best to participate within the process. Be aware that many state departments of education respond primarily to the local school district applicant. They can be unresponsive to local advocacy groups and may have established “hands-off” policies when local disputes arise.

Although it varies by state, funding available for school districts from state departments of education can amount to a large percentage of the total costs for school facility improvements. Funding formulas, often based on existing debt service and real estate valuations, can vary from 0% up to 100% financial support. School districts who are able to access the vast majority of their capital funding from the state see this as a windfall, with little cost to their local constituents, and are thus anxious to take advantage of the opportunity to address their facility needs. Such districts tend to favor new construction, since whatever costs are involved are paid largely by others, making it more difficult to make a case for preservation of older schools. School districts receiving a lesser share tend to be more amenable to renovation options when it can be shown that renovation reduces the cost of the overall building program and thus, the local share.

School facility evaluations: Many school districts hire architect/planning consultants early on to perform school facility evaluations for all the schools in the district. Such evaluations tend to be very superficial and are used to determine the broad outlines of need.

Evaluators that favor new schools tend to place major emphasis on deficiencies related to:

- Questionable structural integrity
- Codes and life safety
- Molds and the “sick building syndrome”
- Lead paint
- Asbestos
- Outdated technology
- Classroom size

While these are often real concerns, they can be overly dramatized by evaluators as irreparable conditions, and then used to promote replacement as the only reasonable response to an irredeemable situation. It is possible to alter the initial judgment by evaluators with further study, and the final decision on the merit or feasibility of renovation of any particular school building lies with the local school board. Yet the first perception of a school documented in the initial evaluation tends to stick in the minds of school board members and the public. That can make it more difficult to later make a case for preservation.

Experience demonstrates that communities who have been able to identify schools considered historic before or during the initial survey tend to focus attention on those selected schools, as the board and consultants are influenced by historic status and/or clearly expressed local sentiment. Experience also suggests that anticipating the negative hype in the evaluation and countering it early with case studies of successful renovation of schools in similar condition helps significantly to bring the decision making process back into balance.

Inflated school renovation cost estimates and prejudices:

As many school boards and their architects may be unfamiliar with, or biased against, renovation alternatives, cost estimates for school renovations are often inflated. School districts should be encouraged to select architects and consultants that are experienced with the renovation of historic schools.

Preservation advocates can also encourage a second, more detailed evaluation of selected schools by a design professional experienced in renovation work, commissioned either by the local school district or hired by the preservation advocates.

Recognize, however, that prejudice against renovation, a process inherently more complex and risk prone than building new, is common throughout the construction industry, and particularly within the large firms which

have been attracted to a statewide building program of this magnitude.

State reimbursement rules: State reimbursement policies can favor the building of new schools against the upgrading of existing schools. Although the percentages vary by state, these are commonly seen as the so-called “60%” or “2/3rd’s” rule.

For instance, if the cost of renovating a school exceeds 60% of the cost of a new school, the school district should build a new school if they want to receive financial reimbursement from the state. There is no real basis for these types of rules. It seems to stem from the false assumption that older schools are somehow so “worn out” that continued investment above a certain level is unwise. In fact, any school which retains its structural integrity in large measure can be renovated by the installation of new systems, finishes, and amenities to produce a useful life commensurate with, and sometimes even exceeding, new construction.

The question is, “at what cost?” Preservation advocates argue for parity. If the cost of renovation exceeds the cost of new construction, replacement should be considered. Until that level of expenditure is reached, renovation is the more frugal course, and thus the wise use of tax resources, whether those dollars come from the local or the state level.

Acreage standards: Many state education departments either mandate or recommend a minimum number of acres for elementary, middle, and secondary schools.

Some states apply guidelines similar to those recommended by the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI), while other states have developed their own formulas. Elementary schools, for instance, are required in some states to have 7 acres, plus 1 acre for each 100 students in enrollment. This prescription has no basis in educational need, and seems to have emerged from suburban standards where broad school playgrounds are often considered community parks.

Since older schools were usually built on restricted sites in neighborhood settings, such standards can easily render them obsolete. The remedy is either to relocate the school on available land outside the neighborhood (if it can be found), or demolish housing to clear adjacent property. Just seven acres for an elementary school requires about 3.5 city blocks.

Understand the Perspective of the Educator and the Community

Find your target audience: Who makes decisions about schools in your community and state? In most instances this is the school board, superintendent, and parents. Instead of trying to reach everyone, concentrate on your target audience. Determine what you'll need to do to persuade the small group of people who can actually change things. Identify your audience's key values and work from there. Think strategically about your audience and the best ways to reach them. It means making your case in a way that will be compelling to your target audience.

Recognize the needs of the children: The community will be focused on the needs of the children. While preservation advocates are rightly concerned about the loss of historic resources and the preservation of the older schools that serve our historic neighborhoods, it is critical that the needs of the children of our state and our community come first.

No one would reasonably argue that our children should be exposed to educationally inadequate facilities in order to preserve the historic integrity of our schools. All pronouncements from the preservation community must begin with a statement of support for state-of-the-art schools for our children and support for the districts' building improvement program. But since state-of-the-art schools do not have to be brand new schools, preservationists can also argue that our children are best educated in high quality architectural environments which evoke a sense of the past, a continuity with earlier generations, and facilities closely linked to their community when those are available.

Agree that one standard should be set for educational facilities and measure the feasibility of adapting our older schools to that standard. Nothing less will be acceptable.

Consider the educator's point of view: It would be naïve to not notice that the process of building all new facilities can be an ego trip for school boards and administrators. But to assume that is the motivation is also simplistic. School boards and administrators face difficult tasks today, with myriad pressures on each and every decision they make. They function in a world dictated by legislative mandates, under intense scrutiny by parents, citizens, employers, and the press. They too often spar with their own labor

source. They strive to educate children whose attention is too often diverted by social problems at home. Facilities are, in many ways the least of their concerns, as they struggle to improve student performance and outcomes under tight budget constraints.

There is a temptation to claim that if existing school facilities were good enough for us when we were in school, they are good enough for the current generation, and blame the school board for letting them go to ruin. Instead, recognize that the expectations of our schools have risen dramatically over the last 30 years, as schools have assumed an ever-widening role in our society.

Today our schools teach values, enforce behaviors, and offer an array of programs unimagined in earlier generations, from Title IX sports gender equity, to English as a second language, to inclusion of those with various physical and mental disabilities. All of these programs and expectations really have made many of our older schools unresponsive to today's educational needs.

Be sensitive to socio-economic and racial issues: Because schools have been used as a vehicle of social conformity and the suppression of minorities, and later as instruments of social engineering, all school issues can be charged with residual resentment. In many inner city neighborhoods, years of dis-investment in public facilities and particularly the schools has created bitterness and an air of rightful suspicion. Advocating preservation can be interpreted as either the latest tool by which the majority will maintain the status quo. Preservation can also be seen as a prelude to gentrification that drives the economically disadvantaged from their homes.

Make an extra effort in such neighborhoods and groups to clarify a commitment to improving school facilities and to school equity. Language can be important. Making a case for "renovation of schools" and not "preservation" may help avoid negative implications of historic preservation.

Maintain civility: Understand and acknowledge that school board and professional educators are trying to do the right thing. Articulate a case for preservation in support of their efforts, without denigrating their performance. Maintain a civil and polite demeanor at all meetings and in all conversations. "Hysterical Preservationists" will not win favor.

Anticipate the process: Plan for the best and worst-case scenarios. To avoid the crisis that leads to emotional confrontations, get proactive early. In many instances, state agencies and departments of education provide timetables and schedules for facility projects online.

Local papers regularly cover school board meetings, so if not before, tune in at the earliest conversations about school facility planning. Know deadlines, how to get on agendas, and ultimately be invited to the table and become a player. Then, in the order appropriate to your situation:

- ❑ Organize preservation and neighborhood advocates to discuss how you will reach out to be a constructive player in school facility planning decisions.
- ❑ Educate all local preservation leaders with the materials referenced here from published sources and online.
- ❑ Inventory local schools to identify those potentially eligible for designation as local landmarks or listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Few communities have surveyed their schools for historic significance, so this will likely require some primary research. Contact your State Historic Preservation Office for criteria and advice.
- ❑ Document the history and unique qualities of your best schools and publish your work, online or in print, to gain credibility and widen awareness. Include visuals.
- ❑ Create a public forum to present your research as a slide show of your best historic schools and those supporting historic neighborhoods. Visuals are critical to illustrate quality and diversity.
- ❑ Launch a School History Project through local PTA's or neighborhood groups to get kids and their families to know the story of their school and the role it has played in the life of the neighborhood and community.
- ❑ Rank and prioritize schools to identify the importance of each.
- ❑ Approach the school board to offer your work to the local school administration to guide their planning work. At the same time, request an opportunity to participate in any committees that will study options or guide the facility planning process.
- ❑ Remain flexible through the process. Expect to lose some schools; one cannot be a team player and expect to get your way on every issue.

Organize Stakeholders

Engage the school community: Involve everyone you can think of who has a stake in the schools issue. Begin with parents and teachers, either individually, or if possible, through their organizational entities like PTA, unions, etc.

Form alliances: Reach out to neighbors and neighborhood associations who naturally understand the importance of a neighborhood school but may need to be educated on the value and potential of the existing school building. For newly formed groups with little credibility or track record, enlist help from more established partners, through letters of support, site visits, presentations, news articles and testimonials.

Remember that many lack the vision to be able to see the potential of a facility they know only as a deteriorated property. Conduct a tour to point out the school's extant charm and recite history to help them see the potential. Similarly approach City and County elected and planning officials whom often understand the importance of the linkage between neighborhood and school. Seek out alumni groups, retired teachers, school reform advocates, and smart growth advocates, all of who should have some affinity for the cause. Even anti-tax advocates can be partners, since they are often concerned about the impact of a massive construction program on tax levies and often see the economies of renovation as an alternative to wholesale replacement.

With each group, state your concerns, share some outline of your position if possible, and invite them to join you in a constructive dialog. Explore common interests, and listen carefully to their concerns. Universal agreement is not necessary, as long as the common ground is well defined.

Bring in the experts: The outside expert can often say the same thing as you but know that their credentials can sometimes get more attention from the school district and the media. They might also find an outside expert more persuasive and trustworthy. Strategically call on the National Trust for Historic Preservation, your statewide preservation organization and state historic preservation office for help. At key times, such as a large public meeting, experts can provide testimony and bolster your local efforts. They can also meet with school officials, talk with the media, or write letters of support.

Plan for Obstacles and Success

Seek funding to support your effort:

Seek financial support from supporters throughout the process. Rarely is such an advocacy program fundable from outside the constituency. Make it clear to all who share concerns for older schools that it will take a financial commitment as well as a personal commitment to make a difference.

Use such funds to defray out of pocket expenses of the advocacy effort. Some funding may be available from philanthropic sources to publish surveys and to help explore alternative feasibility studies if the school district is not approaching that process evenhandedly. But the schools are part of the heritage of each community alone, and the responsibility for their preservation lies in the concerned citizenry of that community.

Recognize the human factor: Know that “burnout” is likely, especially considering that many efforts to save historic schools take time to settle. Avoid burnout and loss of momentum by shifting roles and responsibilities.

Over time, leaders will come and go, impacting your group’s enthusiasm, commitment and general effectiveness. Tag team members as group leaders and continually rotate members. Find your talent pools and plug into the needed roles (ex. graphic designer to help with the newsletter, fliers). Put team together and start by identifying the roles of who will do what in the process.

Confront the Challenge

Understand the case for replacement:

Listen carefully to the case for replacement of older schools. Since there is no inherently positive argument, advocates of replacement must almost always state their case in terms of negatives or inadequacies of the existing schools. Use this to advantage by documenting the arguments and then addressing them one by one.

They will likely begin with a litany of maintenance concerns. Acknowledge that older schools need maintenance but point out that the older buildings have received only band aids in recent years and that a major renovation would renew the systems to last

another 50-70 years with no more maintenance than new building require.

Another common argument is that the facility is too small, either in whole or in part. Point out that renovation often involves sensitive additions and that remodeling often reallocates existing space to meet today’s needs. Individual classrooms that are too small can be used for the many small group functions now a part of school programming, or reconfigured at minimal cost by moving non-bearing party walls.

Inadequate technology is often cited as a concern with older schools. Since older schools commonly have high ceilings and/or tunnel systems, routing communication cable throughout the building is not difficult, and costs no more than in new construction.

A leaky envelope is another commonly cited deficiency warranting replacement. Leaks almost always relate to roofing and windows. Both are chronic when maintenance has been spotty or of poor quality. A substantial renovation will address these matters with new roofs, and often new windows at a quality level at least comparable to new construction. And ask if the maintenance staff has ever had a chronic roof leak on a new building. It is all too common.

Safety is another major area of deficiency commonly used to discredit historic schools. Agree that compliance with critical life safety issues is important and that only detailed analysis can test the feasibility of remodeling to meet safety concerns. Safety arguments against renovating an historic school are often made in an overly dramatic way to create a scare effect. Below are some examples:

- ❑ Structural integrity is often questioned and stories told of a gymnasium roof collapse in some other community. Getting professional engineers to attest to the soundness of any existing structural element can be difficult in today’s litigious world, and even their qualifying statements on perfectly sound buildings can cast aspersion. If the integrity of structural elements is impugned, demand the elements be exposed with selective demolition and fully evaluated in situ.
- ❑ Code violations are often cited as endangering student safety. Remember that there are different codes for existing buildings and new construction and that the critical element of any code is the life safety section (NFPA 101). Other sections of the building code are prescriptive based on current construction technology so evaluators can often find numerous technical violations. Focus on the real threat to safety and the “spirit” or intent of the code rather than its miniscule details.

- ❑ Molds are often cited as an indication of a “sick building”. Remember that mold abatement from selected walls in chronically damp areas is not that difficult or expensive. The extensive presence of molds in ventilations systems is serious and likely requires the replacement of much of the system, but know that new buildings are often experiencing molds in ventilation systems within a few years of construction, so a new school offers no assurance that the district will not face this challenge anyway.
- ❑ Lead paint poses a threat if consumed or inhaled by children. Options include complete abatement or containment where it is exposed to such intake. These treatments are not exotic or particularly difficult. They can add some expense that must be factored into the cost equation, but beware the tendency to overly dramatize the risk and the cost.
- ❑ Asbestos must have already been documented and abated or contained with a regular documented inspection management plan under the AHERA law applying to all school facilities. Still, its presence can frighten parents and teachers. Shortly after the passage of AHERA in the 1980’s, when all school districts suddenly needed to address asbestos abatement to be in compliance, the small industry that did such work was overwhelmed and costs skyrocketed. Today, the field in competitive and the costs reasonable. It is now a routine aspect of building renovation.

Secure and offer technical assistance from pro bono design professionals sympathetic to and experienced in preservation to offset the bias often found in school architects and construction managers with a vested interest in new construction.

The other common argument for replacement is that renovating a building in use is disruptive to education. Point out that schools can often be renovated in phases over the summer and that watching the process of renovation can also be an educational experience for students.

There is often an abiding skepticism of the feasibility of renovation and an assumption of inflexibility of older facilities. This is born of limited truth but each building is unique, and as preservationists know, older buildings are usually far more flexible than is commonly understood.

Use success stories as case studies to illustrate how older schools can meet 21st Century educational needs at reasonable cost and show illustrations of those schools to help those without vision or imagination see the potential of their older schools.

But it is still true that some schools can be feasibly renovated and others not. Argue that an objective analysis by an experienced design professional is the only way to test the feasibility of renovation, and indicate your preparedness to accept such a study.

Make a Case for Renovation

Be prepared to debate renovation vs. replacement options: A feasibility study of the issues involved in renovation is the only tested way to evaluate the fit of an old building to contemporary educational uses (see the National Trust’s publication, “Historic Schools: Renovation vs. Replacement & the Role of a Feasibility Study”).

It is critical this study be executed with great objectivity and fairness, and given the prejudices within the construction industry for new construction, select a design team with experience in renovating historic schools.

Also as indicated above, a fair evaluation requires a level playing field in which the less expensive option is the preferred option and no arbitrary cost standards are imposed. This means that the preservation community must accept the results if fairly executed, with one potential exception. That exception relates to the value inherent in some older schools that are just not available in new construction:

- ❑ Large and handsome windows, a common feature of older schools rarely available today
- ❑ Decorative woodwork and tile
- ❑ Terrazzo or wood floors, available but rarely afforded in new schools today
- ❑ High ceilings and grand spaces
- ❑ Artwork in the form of murals or other special features
- ❑ By focusing not just on cost but on value, some extraordinary schools may warrant expenditures for renovation that exceeds the cost of new construction.

Also note that renovation commonly generates more jobs in the immediate community, because it is more labor intensive, so there is an economic benefit to preservation. And also make the case that renovation is recycling, and conveys an ethic to students and the community that we care about the natural environment enough to avoid the waste of good resources

There is a common perception that new construction is maintenance free. While maintenance costs may diminish for a year or two after a major construction project (new or renovated), deferral of maintenance is how all buildings deteriorate. The more chronic the deferral, the more geometric the rate of deterioration.

Most new school buildings actually require more maintenance over time, since they lack the quality construction of an earlier era (plaster rather than wallboard, mortar rather than caulk, terrazzo rather than carpet). Also challenge the life expectancy of new construction. Will the new school last 25 or 50 years?

Appeal to the heart and mind: Motivating people often starts with an emotional chord. It is essential to engage peoples' passion, whether the issue is saving a historic school or their children's education. Reach them emotionally first and then concentrate on the facts. These values are usually subjective and intangible, but can be discussed as issues without placing a dollar value upon them. These include the sentimental arguments, the linkages historic schools make to earlier generations, the people that have come and gone, and the value a sense of tradition, and continuity within the community.

Ask alumni groups, retired teachers, and others so inclined to make the case for renovation publicly, and create opportunities for them to do so. Summarize by pointing out that new has its value of being fresh and bright, but renovation can be both new and historic.

While good to emphasize, don't rely on the heritage or "feel good" stories to make the save. You will still need other back ups, like economics where it will be easier to gain attention of the decision-makers who are more likely to listen to the bottom line.

Anticipate being opposed: Based on your audience's key values – such as quality education, new sports facilities, up-to-date technology – you will also have an idea where your effort may be vulnerable from your opponents. Be ready for this to prevent or preempt those attacks.

Set aside personalities – from both the opposition and internally within your organization – and stick to issues. Don't stoop to opposition's level, become involved in altercations or be "baited" into making your group look foolish.

From the start, send a clear message on what you want. Don't be wishy-washy or go back and forth on the goal. Otherwise you'll lose credibility and respect

and will be less likely to be taken serious. Don't be bullied by false arguments, heated debates or intimidated by authority figures or the opposition's own outside experts.

Become an advisor: Request that the school board form an advisory committee to evaluate consultant's feasibility reports and recommendations. Ensure that committee membership represents all historic neighborhood schools being studied within the community. This will provide effective representation, division of labor, and recognition of the importance of consensus recommendations. Work with the committee to create written reports outlining recommendations to be presented to the school board.

Use success stories: To help people envision the potential of their old schools thoroughly renovated, research success stories and identify historic schools that work. Present examples of these through good photographs and data demonstrating the way in which the older facility meets contemporary standards. The closer these examples are to your community, the better. Find them in the community or within the state. National examples are being collected by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and are available on line (www.nthp.org/issues/schools/studies_intro.html). If examples are available within travel distance, arrange a bus tour of interested parties and photograph and video for display and presentation back home. Have ready for discussion comparable success stories for each deficiency and issue raised by replacement advocates.

Work all angles: Where possible, buy time and identify ways to delay the process to build support and explore renovation alternatives. Determine if there is any other review or approval process required for project, such as local land use or zoning variances.

Consider the indirect cost of sprawl schools: If the location of a replacement school involves an outlying, undeveloped site, it can also be argued that the related costs of sprawl should be considered in the cost equation, even if those costs are borne by other governmental budgets. These include:

- Land acquisition and preparation
- Roadway and utility extensions
- Busing costs
- Fire and police service extensions

Issues related to the effects of school policies on historic neighborhood schools and the way in which

school location can facilitate sprawl are detailed in the National Trust's publication, "Why Johnny Can't Walk to School: Historic Neighborhood Schools in the Age of Sprawl" available on line at

www.nthp.org/issues/schoolsSum.pdf

Know that size matters: There is an intuitive understanding, substantiated by a growing body of research literature, that small schools are more effective. In a small school, studies show that students perform better academically because everyone tends to know one another and it's tougher for kids to slip through the cracks. Additional studies show that students in smaller schools have better attendance, drop out less and take part in more extracurricular activities than those in larger schools. (see www.edfacilities.org/rl/size.cfm#journals).

Teachers also tend to collaborate more in small schools and are better able to personalize instruction to meet individual students' needs. Another benefit of small schools is the ability of staff to keep an eye on students so kids get into less trouble resulting in fewer instances of violence overall.

Michael Carr, a spokesman for the National Association of Secondary School Principals says "what you get (with fewer students) is more attention, a safer climate, and a school that can be more unified." In a comparison of large schools of 1,000 or more students with small schools of fewer than 300 students, the U.S. Department of Education found the larger schools had more violent crime, vandalism and fights and assaults. The Chicago-based Small Schools Coalition (www.smallschools.org) recommends no more than 350 students at the elementary level and 500 students at the secondary.

Since older schools tend to be small, make the case that research now indicates that test performance is consistently higher in small schools. Small schools not only improve academic performance, but they improve management of behaviors, social maturity, and participation in extracurricular activities.

Don't forget that pedestrian friendly neighborhood schools increase the activity level of students and help address growing concerns about juvenile obesity. And since small schools are most commonly neighborhood schools, their presence also supports property values and continued investment in established neighborhoods, reinforcing the tax base available to the schools for ongoing operational levies.

Develop a Communications Campaign

Create a clear, simple and concise message: Successful campaigns have clear goals and messages. Your message should be designed to achieve the goal of renovating your historic school. The message should resonate with your target audience. As school boards are comprised of people with busy schedules and they often resist change, connect with them by plugging in to their belief system to get their attention and support.

As soon as possible, develop a clear case statement of goals and arguments to support those goals. Supplement it with supporting documents as the issue develops but maintain consistency in the basic case.

Help your target audience and the public understand why saving your historic school is important. Why is it important now? The public wants to understand this, what they can do, and how to do it.

Pursue communications activities that move you closer to your goal of renovation. Ask yourself with each strategy and decision: does this move me closer to my stated goal?

Form a communications committee: Integrate a communications committee to continually communicate and reinforce the message. Recruit experienced communications professional or community activists familiar with the techniques of public advocacy, and maintain them as a standing resource to respond to shifting issues and unexpected turns.

Clear up misconceptions: As historic school buildings are being considered for closing, demolition and replacement, be ready to respond to a variety of myths regarding their inability to be retrofitted and adapted for continued use. Misconceptions and mis-truths can be very harmful and distract from the real issues. Some common myths include:

- Myth: The State will not reimburse communities for the renovation of school buildings.
- Fact: Most state departments of education do provide funding for renovation, often at equal levels to new construction.
- Myth: Historic school buildings don't meet state Department of Education requirements.
- Fact: Facility guidelines are often just recommendations, not law.

Myth: It costs more to renovate a historic school than to build a new one.

Fact: Renovation often saves money compared to the cost of building a new school. The cost per square foot for new construction should also factor in the 1) costs of new site acquisition and preparation; 2) old site demolition and disposal of construction waste or stabilization; 3) the costs of creating a new infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) at the new site; and 4) the cost of transporting the children to the new site once the school is completed.

Myth: Historic schools can't meet the needs of today's students.

Fact: Needs for modern libraries, state-of-the-art technology, science labs, "cafeteriums," and special needs rooms can be met within historic schools. In addition, older schools may offer additional amenities usually sparred in new schools, including classrooms with abundant natural light with operable windows providing fresh air.

Myth: Historic school buildings have classrooms that are too small and cannot be enlarged.

Fact: Many historic schools can be adapted to meet modern requirements for classroom size.

Myth: Historic schools cannot accommodate acreage standards required for modern schools.

Fact: Small school sites can be creatively and effectively designed to accommodate the needs of the school without consuming any new land. Optimal acreage standards are also often guidelines, not law. There also may be opportunities for sharing other facilities within the same community.

Acknowledge the positive and challenge the negative:

Use the communications committee and other opportunities to highlight any positive turn of events. Begin with an offering of kudos to the school district for any constructive action, such as a recent renovation project, honest open dialogs, participatory decision making etc. when it is sincere. Politely but firmly challenge insincere activities by the schools.

Get the word out: Ideally, participation in the planning process as outlined above will yield a school board proposal which integrates preservation as an integral part of the plan. Either way -- either in support of the plan, or in opposition to provisions which ignored preservation -- as the issue comes to a head on a

ballot for the local funding share, be prepared to get the word out by all the means:

- Op Ed case statement
- Letters to the editor
- Mailing lists of stakeholders/partners
- Door to door visits
- Yard signs
- Talk radio and radio advertising
- Host or organize participation in town meetings

Cultivate a relationship with the

media: Media coverage can either help or hurt efforts to save your historic school building. Do not be intimidated by the media and instead cultivate relationships with reporters.

Designate a good media spokesperson from your organization. Select someone who is articulate, up to speed on the issues and available when the media calls. Make it easy for the media by feeding them facts and information and working around their deadlines.

Be sure to thank the media, recognize their efforts when they write favorable articles and invite them to your meetings. Timing is everything. Know what will get the media's attention (ex. stage a protest/march, create posters for visual effect, etc.)

Use technology to build support: Develop phone and e-mail "trees" with a variety of individuals to support your effort. Create a list-serv to keep everyone "in the loop" on the latest news and upcoming events to avoid time-consuming meetings. Use e-mail strategically to rally and involve more people. Focus on up-to-the minute updates and briefs to advocates stressing why right now is important, why their support important, what they can do, and how they can do it. Use your talents and do a quick scan of your group to see who is "computer friendly" and can help with designing a web page, e-mail network, desk-top publishing, etc.

Maintain a web site: To make the case for renovation, and keep your supporters informed throughout the process, maintain a simple web site. Invite others to join the cause.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's Historic Neighborhood Schools Initiative is aimed at leveling the playing field and putting renovation of historic neighborhood schools on an equal footing with construction of new schools. We believe that preserving historic neighborhood schools is of great importance not only to the historic preservation community, but also to advocates of better schools and better environments for school children. The National Trust has developed a multi-year strategic plan to promote the continued use of historic neighborhood school buildings as schools. This fact sheet cites information from various sources, including National Trust publications, [A Community Guide to Saving Older Schools](#), and [Why Johnny Can't Walk to School](#) www.nationaltrust.org/issues/schools.

Older and Historic Schools: Restoration vs. Replacement and the Role of a Feasibility Study



Introduction

Weighing the pros and cons of renovating an older school or building a new one takes preservation “know-how,” experience and creativity. Prevailing assumptions—that a newer school will result in a better education or misperceptions that older school buildings have unfixable flaws—place these schools at risk. The potential for renovation is sometimes dismissed without full consideration of the facts and long-term implications.

Central to this decision-making process is the feasibility study, often conducted by an architectural consultant hired by a school district. A feasibility study of the issues involved in renovation is the only tested way to evaluate the fit of an old building for contemporary educational uses. In its most basic form, a feasibility study helps establish if renovation of a historic school is possible, practical and whether it can meet the proposed educational needs. Not simply a cost-benefit analysis, a feasibility study evaluates technology needs and barriers, scheduling to complete a school construction project from start to finish, options and alternatives, and potential implications of decisions to the surrounding neighborhood and community.

Potential problems include studies being conducted by architects unfamiliar with renovation, inflated cost estimates for renovation, limited or no community input, a bias against historic, hidden costs not accounted for, and minimal consideration of community impacts.

A biased or incomplete feasibility study will not fully inform the general public or school district about all of their options. The checklist below can help identify the factors involved in making the best decision and assuring that a feasibility study is fair, objective and reasonable. It will also assist in identifying “warning signs,” questions to ask, and knowing what to look for when challenging the results and projected cost estimates of a feasibility study.

Consultants

More often than not, school districts hire architects and professionals who know a lot more about designing new buildings than renovating older ones. Not all architects have training, experience or an interest in the subspecialty of rehabilitation. Many architects are unfamiliar with, or sometimes even biased against, renovation options.

- Does the consulting architect have experience with renovation and/or specialize in older school renovations? If so, can you review previous work? If not, has the architect consulted with historic preservation agencies and/or specialists?
- Are there any inherent conflicts of interest? Is the consultant the likely architect for the new or rehabilitated school?
- How was the architect selected? Was it an open-bid process, request for proposals (RFP), or pre-selection?

- Is part of any funding assistance from the State and, if so, is there a review or approval process prior to selection of the architect?

Full Cost Accounting

In addition to the known costs for designing and constructing a new school, there may be other costs to the taxpayers that haven't been calculated. What are the full costs of building on a new site? Often these figures are omitted from the final cost estimate.

- If the new school will be built on an undeveloped site, there will be added costs to purchase and develop the land and to build roads, sewers and other infrastructure. Are these figures included in the study?
- What is the availability and cost of additional transportation to the new site (i.e. busing)? Will more children be bused to the new school? If so, what are the added costs? Does the centrally-located site offer more options (e.g., walking, biking, transit for upper grade students, etc.)?
- If the existing school is planned for demolition, there will be costs to demolish it, abate hazardous materials, and dispose of debris (often 4 to 5% of the overall replacement costs). Were these costs included in the final estimates?
- Renovating an existing building general saves 20 to 25% of the cost of new construction as the building shell is retained. Do cost estimates reflect this savings?
- If the school is already scheduled for abandonment, are costs to stabilize, maintain and upkeep, secure and dispose of the building included?
- What are the indirect costs to the community? How will a vacant, boarded-up school impact the surrounding neighborhood, influence marketability, stability and affect the area's property values? Has a Health Impact Assessment been conducted to see what the impacts will be on students? Have they computed the loss of recreational facilities to local residents (e.g., those who walk around the school's track, use ballfields, etc.)?
- If a school is proposed for a remote, outlying area, what are the additional costs of sprawl that usually follow, i.e. increased transportation costs, infrastructure (roads, sewer, sidewalks, etc.)?
- Do cost estimates for a building contingency (cushion) accurately reflect unknown or anticipated cost overruns for both rehabilitation and new construction?

Building Codes

Most existing and even recently built school buildings will not comply with every code provision at the local and state levels. Despite the flexibility of many codes and the potential for waivers, often studies rigidly interpret this compliance, declaring a building unsafe or cost prohibitive to retrofit.

- Did the feasibility study investigate and address code compliance options or alternate codes for older buildings in your jurisdiction, such as early warning systems?
- If seismic retrofit is applicable and proposed in the study, was an engineer familiar with older and historic buildings consulted?
- Can a new addition to an existing school preclude the need for a proposed demolition by meeting programmatic objectives and satisfying modern code requirements?
- Have important character defining and historic elements of the school been adversely impacted to satisfy code requirements? If so, were alternatives considered?

Public Participation and Community Planning

A study conducted behind closed doors does not consider all viewpoints or build trust and support from within the community.

- Were there public meetings or charrettes asking what the community wanted? If so, did they allow for community input? For example, were educational specification meetings held so that design professionals could create or update a facility that meets the community's needs?
- Was a citizens' or advisory committee formed to help explore the options and issues?
- Does the feasibility study consider the community use of the school, such as after-school programs or public meeting space?
- Are public meetings inclusive and involve those interested in broad community goals of health, transportation efficiency, and community vitality?
- Did the study consider a community's local planning program, zoning, comprehensive or master plan? Did the study take into account the state's concerns as outlined in their overall plan for the state's growth?
- Does the study take into account local or state goals of reducing carbon emissions and addressing climate change?
- Does the study address review or approval process at the state or federal levels?
- Were site visits made to other successfully rehabilitated schools? If so, did this involve a cross-representation of citizens?
- Who reviews the feasibility study results and what are their qualifications? Is anyone involved with an expertise or interest in preservation of communities?

Cultural and Historic Significance

Historic designation will often invoke environmental review requirements that help ensure alternatives to demolition are adequately considered. Conversely, designation could make the project eligible for alternative building code requirements and additional funding sources.

- What is the school's significance? Was this accurately reflected within the study?
- What is the cultural significance within the community?
- Does the study consider the implications of any local, state or national designation, such as any mandatory review process?
- Has a district-wide survey been done to assess the most important schools in the community? If so, was this information considered in the study?

Funding Considerations

The addition or omission of certain expenses may skew the analysis in favor of new construction. For example, the estimate for a new school might not include demolition or site development costs. An accurate and comprehensive cost comparison between renovation and new construction helps level the playing field.

- Does the funding source tie the feasibility study to any reviews or requirements?

- Is the study accurately considering life-cycle costs and forecasting future costs for both new construction and rehabilitation? Building components deteriorate at different levels and costs fluctuate year by year. A life-cycle analysis that uses a fixed rate of deterioration will lead to inaccurate results. What is the life expectancy of the new facility? What is the life expectancy of the renovated school?
- Are funding opportunities, such as matching-grants, associated with historic designation taken into consideration in the final cost estimate?
- Does the locality or state have arbitrary formulas mandating or recommending new construction as a certain threshold of spending? If so, is this indicated within the study? Did the study offer information about ways to obtain a waiver from the state if this is a requirement? State recommendations for size considerations are not the same as legal requirements.

Site Plan and Building

The abandonment of older or historic schools is often justified in terms of their incompatibility with modern educational specifications, such as minimum acreage and classroom size standards. More often than not, these specifications are merely guidelines that can be accommodated by adopting creative solutions. –

- Are proposed playing fields or new athletic guidelines influencing the decision? Are these requirements or preferences? Has shared use of athletic facilities (e.g., Parks and Recreation departments, etc.) been fully explored? Have multiple-use options been considered (e.g., middle school and high school share same ballfields?)
- Does the study consider creative partnerships with city park agencies, nearby churches, public transit agencies and other institutions to share playing fields, parking spaces, or transportation services?
- How will the new land be acquired? If donated by a developer, what are the implications and have the pros and cons and overall suitability of the site been considered in the study?
- Have local or state variances been considered, such as for expansive parking lots or acreage standards?
- Does the study account for the relocation of walls or use of hallway square footage to enlarge classrooms?
- Have spaces been considered for new uses, such as former libraries for media centers?
- Do you have first-hand information? Meaning is the information presented second-hand, and therefore potentially misunderstood or misrepresented?

Scheduling

Timing is another critical factor when considering any option. Can work be accomplished during the summer months, phased over several years or students housed in temporary quarters? These decisions often impact the viability of rehabilitating a school.

- Does the study outline logistics and potential for disruption to students for both rehabilitation and new construction?
- What is the total timetable proposed for all options, from start to finish?
- Does the study consider creative alternatives such as phasing work?
- Measuring building conditions can be a subjective process where older schools are often ranked as “poor” without any objective and quantifiable indicator of measure. An objective rating system and criteria that allow for comparisons between the subject school and others within the same district would be more reliable.

What criteria are used for the building conditions evaluation?

- Do they reflect age, type of construction, apparent condition and design adequacy, life expectancy, feasibility of renovation, mechanical adequacy?
- If school buildings were ranked by excellent, very good, good, fair, poor (or a similar system), does the study provide definitions for each?
- What are the credentials of the evaluator? Was the opinion of local administrators, teachers, and students taken into consideration?

Educational Programming

Standards for school facilities are set by the education agency of each state and vary from state to state. Local school districts also set standards. Sometimes these favor new construction over renovation.

- Are educational specifications influencing the outcome of the feasibility study and driving the decision to abandon the historic school? If so, do any state or federal guidelines mandate these or are they produced locally?
- Who wrote the program and does it have any inherent biases?
- What are requirements versus desirables? Must an elementary school be one-story or is that a preference?
- What is the current and projected enrollment for a school? Is overcrowding an issue and will a new school solve this problem?
- Can the older school be adapted to accommodate the needed educational programs? If not, does the study outline why and what sorts of spaces are needed.

Components of Feasibility Study

Before undertaking a study or hiring an architect, determining the scope of a feasibility study is a key step. As each school, community and region is unique, there is no one size fits all approach to conceiving a feasibility study. Instead, on a case-by-case basis, design the feasibility study to reflect your particular needs. A feasibility study has three parts:

- **Programmatic Fit by Schematic Analysis.** Using the same architectural program developed for a new school, a design professional explores ways in which the existing building can be modified to meet the educational needs of the curriculum. The work product is typically a schematic diagram of spaces and rooms overlaid to the current floor plan of the school, by which the extent of change necessary is self evident. Additions that do not fit within existing space are also shown.
- **Technical Conditions Assessment.** An architect and engineering team conducts a system by system analysis of the age, nature, and condition of each component of the existing school (and each episode of construction of that school) to identify systems with sufficient remaining useful life to warrant retention and continued use. The team then recommends which system will require replacement in whole or in part and which type of system is most appropriate to projected use.
- **Synthesis and Comparative Cost Estimates.** Based on the above two analyses, the design team then prepares an estimate of the cost of renovation and compares that to the cost of new construction from pre-established or published sources. Care must be taken in this cost summary to include even the hidden costs of both options.

Common Steps of a Feasibility Study

Document existing conditions of building(s) and site against proposed use and programming needs.

- Structural systems (including seismic, where applicable).
- Building envelope (windows, roof, gutters, etc.).
- Compliance with building codes.
- Plans and site (ADA accessibility/compliance, parking, transportation, etc.).
- Materials and finishes.
- Health and life safety (fire systems, lighting, alarm, egress, sprinklers).
- Hazardous materials (asbestos, lead paint, contaminated soil, etc.).
- HVAC, mechanical, electrical, plumbing.

Identify site-specific education specifications.

- Sq. ft. analysis for each component of the school.
- All classrooms (size, configuration).
- Support systems (office, conference, etc.).
- Gymnasium/auditorium (capacity, acoustics).
- Athletic/recreation needs.
- Cafeteria/"cafetorium."

Identify technology specifications.

- Whiteboards, TV, intercoms, telephone, internet access, network cabling.

Identify security specifications.

- Surveillance cameras, controlled/points of access.

Identify community needs/interest.

- Community outreach and public input.
- Role of school in adjacent area/community.
- Ability to walk or bike to school.

Evaluate cultural and historic significance/importance to community.

- Eligibility criteria.
- Local, state or national historic designation(s).
- Physical integrity.
- Period of significance for school.

Prepare physical feasibility drawings.

- Schematic or existing floor plans.
- Façade renderings.

Present full range of options/alternatives with pros and cons of each.

- Renovate?
- Renovate with additions?
- Replacement onsite with demolition?

- New construction on new site with abandonment?
- Adaptive use of an existing building for school use?

Define scheduling.

- Schedule of construction and timing for bringing school back online.
- Any phasing.
- Need to house students temporarily.

Present cost estimates and economic analysis.

- Broken down by each option (including initial cost, present value, operating cost, real estate value, and life cycle cost analysis).

Make recommendations.

- Quantifiable with rationale.

Last updated January 2010

About the National Trust for Historic Preservation

The National Trust for Historic Preservation works to put renovation of older and historic neighborhood schools on an equal footing with the construction of new schools as an option. We believe that preserving such schools offer numerous benefits to the community including the continued vitality of its older neighborhoods. The National Trust has developed resources to promote the continued use of older and historic schools over the past decade. This fact sheet cites information from various sources, including National Trust publications, *A Community Guide to Saving Older Schools*, and *Why Johnny Can't Walk to School: Neighborhood Schools in the Age of Sprawl*, and *Helping Johnny Walk to School: Policy Recommendations for Removing Barriers to Community-Centered Schools*. For more information, call 202-588-6167, e-mail policy@nthp.org, or visit <http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/historic-schools/>.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.PreservationNation.org) is a non-profit membership organization bringing people together to protect, enhance and enjoy the places that matter to them. By saving the places where great moments from history—and the important moments of everyday life—took place, the National Trust for Historic Preservation helps revitalize neighborhoods and communities, spark economic development and promote environmental sustainability. With headquarters in Washington, DC, eight regional and field offices, 29 historic sites, and partner organizations in 50 states, territories, and the District of Columbia, the National Trust for Historic Preservation provides leadership, education, advocacy and resources to a national network of people, organizations and local communities committed to saving places, connecting us to our history and collectively shaping the future of America's stories.

**NATIONAL
TRUST
FOR
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION®**

1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
www.PreservationNation.org

Weston County Museum District

Upton,
Wyoming

October 09, 2002



Submitted To:

Weston County Museum District
Sam Haptonstall, Chairman
Box 698
401 Delaware
Newcastle, Wyoming 82701

Submitted By:

Dubbe ~ Moulder Architects, PC
1160 Alpine Lane, Suite 2A
P.O. Box 9227
Jackson, Wyoming 83002
Tel: 307-733-9551
Fax: 307-733-4302

Upton Downtown Revitalization Program

Upton Downtown Revitalization Program

Calendars are good places to find pictures of regional images. For the summer months calendar pictures are of fishing or picnics or beach scenes. In winter, skiing and skating and snow shots tend to dominate. In the fall, photos of brilliantly colored leaves in New England forests and images of white-spired churches or a typical covered bridge on a country lane are the norm. The idea is that these images conjure in the mind of the viewer a sense of that place and /or time. For lack of a better term, the iconography of the picture is a representation of commonly associated characteristics of a particular place. As another example, it is hard to think of Paris without including an image of the Eiffel Tower in the mental picture. For many of the good citizens of Upton, Wyoming, the icon that most represents their community is a 1920's-era brick school building, known locally as the Mansion.



Original wooden school house (above) which burned in 1920 and replaced by the mansion. (top) The Mansion, Pine street elevation prior to the 1951 addition.



Built to replace the wooden school that burned in 1920, the Mansion is, literally and figuratively, in the heart of the community. Many of the town's citizens received their education in the Mansion, and few of the town's populace are unaware of the role the old building has played in the life and history of the community. Construction of a new school on the edge of town has relegated the old building to the status of obsolete in the minds of some. The question before the community at this time is whether or not the Mansion should be adapted for some form of re-use, or whether it should be demolished and the land on which it sits turned to some other purpose.

While there is evidence to support either side of the question, by far the most compelling argument is in favor of the Mansion's stabilization, conservation, and re-use. A cursory examination of the situation in Upton reveals not only a demonstrated need for the Mansion, but identifies areas in the community's life where the Mansion's adaptation and re-use may make more sense than any of the alternatives presented in other studies or reports.

The Mansion inhabits a significant parcel of land located within easy walking distance of most of Upton's service providers and amenities.

The Mansion and the Red Onion Museum

The Red Onion Museum is currently housed in a small space owned and administered by the Town of Upton. There is limited space for the collection, all of which is displayed, as there is little or no room for storage and curatorial activities. Many important pieces of the Red Onion collection are on loan to the Anna Miller Museum in Newcastle, or are stored in other locations and are unavailable for public viewing.

The main floor of the Mansion offers some 6,200-square feet of usable space for museum purposes. Four high-ceilinged classrooms flank a wide hallway, two on each side. The rooms, classic examples of period schoolrooms, have tall windows, wood floors and slate blackboards. The building lends itself to education and interpretation within a period education setting and there is sufficient space and volume to house not only the active collection but to accommodate the administrative and curatorial functions of the museum. As the current facility lacks sufficient storage space or an area for preparation, it may be possible to incorporate these functions into the additional spaces that are available within the Mansion as future growth of the collection dictates. The preliminary plan, attached as Exhibit B, indicates how and where these various functions might occur.

Qualified historic preservation architects who are conversant with and sympathetic to the special needs that are identified should undertake this type of project. The sheer scope of the issues identified in a project of this type, while not insurmountable, do at least reflect the need for competent professional leadership. Major areas that must be addressed include the following:

- 1] Accessibility to all members of the general public under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- 2] Historic building code compliance within tenets of the Uniform Code for Building Conservation;
- 3] Assessment of existing condition of structure, mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems;
- 4] Parking, infrastructure and site issues;
- 5] Long-term operation and maintenance considerations;

- 6] Energy conservation issues and strategies;
- 7] Sustainable design considerations; and,
- 8] Enhancement of the overall visitor experience.

Some of these items are obvious; others may require more detailed explanation. For example, code compliance and accessibility in historic structures are subject to rules promulgated by federal agencies and building code organizations. Sustainable design considerations are less regulated but, in an era of diminishing resources and limited capital, are important for getting the maximum mileage from funds available. For every brick and board that is recycled due to preservation activity there is one less brick and board being carted to a landfill and one less brick and board being purchased at today's prices. Reuse is the ultimate efficient recycling of resources, and this project is a prime example of the wisdom of that strategy.

The Mansion is over 80-years old and that fact is readily acknowledged. It is, however, similar to the analogy of the family car with a broken fan belt; replacement of the fan belt and a little routine maintenance makes more sense than hauling it off to the junkyard and buying a new one.

One result of the events of September 11, 2001, has been a shift in the travel patterns of the American public. Fewer people are flying away to remote locations for two or three weeks of vacation. Instead travelers are taking shorter trips by car, staying closer to home and visiting recreational, cultural and historical sites as family groups. Given the location of Upton and Weston County relative to the major attractions of Mount Rushmore and Yellowstone, a strategy for the enhancement of the visitor experience should be of prime importance. A well-run and interesting museum can and will attract tourists. As tourism is a valuable industry in Wyoming, its revenue and employment benefits can only improve the economic performance of the Upton business community.

The Mansion and the Community

In a report prepared for the North East Wyoming Economic Development Coalition, it is suggested that the site of the now-vacant 1951 school and the Mansion be cleared and made ready as a "marketing opportunity for the community." In other words, the site could be made available as an industrial site should an appropriate or acceptable plan for the reuse of the old structures not be submitted. This type of thinking, while understandable in the narrow focus of that study, does not address the larger needs or issues that confront Upton. From any number of points of view, the Mansion and the possibilities its reuse represent are of more value to the community than a vacant site.

The Mansion inhabits a significant parcel of land located within easy walking distance of most of Upton's service providers and amenities. The medical clinic is across the street; the drugstore and the bank are down the block. The US Post Office is nearby, as are the public library and Town Hall. The community pool is within a few yards of the Mansion, and the gymnasium complex of the 1951 school is immediately adjacent. Churches and beauty shops are within a one-block walk. There are mature trees on the parcel as well as access from two city streets. The Mansion is centrally located within the town in the area that represents the transition zone from the central business district into the surrounding established residential districts. Please see Exhibit A, attached, for a demonstration of the relationship of the Mansion to the services of the community.



The Upton Senior Center (above), the Mansion (top) and the Red Onion Museum (left) as they are seen today.

By contrast, the existing community center is located in an anonymous metal building on the edge of town, on a treeless site which fronts a state secondary highway. From a land use perspective, the site of the existing community center and its building are better suited as a potential industrial development site and as a marketing opportunity for the community. The Mansion and its site are better suited to uses that are more in keeping with the residential nature of its location. Sites located on major transportation routes better serve industrial development, with its concomitant truck traffic and activity. Off-street parking, loading, shipping and receiving are better carried out on areas removed from residential neighborhoods. Noises, dust, off-site impacts of industrial activity are incompatible within the center of a town; access and availability are better served by a fringe location.

It is not hard to envision the seniors of Upton serving as docents in the Red Onion Museum in the building where many of them attended school

It is not a radical notion to suggest that the Community Center be located in the center of the community. The Mansion, and its site, is the geographic center of Upton; through careful adaptation and reuse, it can become the center of community activities as well. Rather than spend the money that has been earmarked for the demolition of the 1951-vintage classroom wings and the Mansion, divert that money into a program of preparing the Mansion to accommodate the Red Onion Museum and to adapting the classroom wings to the use of the community at large and the delivery of essential services to its citizens. The Senior Center of Upton, while always *de minimus*, is clearly insufficient to satisfy the service requirements of a population that is aging. It is not hard to envision the seniors of Upton serving as docents in the Red Onion Museum in the building where many of them attended school, teaching about the history of the community in the first person.

By focusing activity into the center of the community rather than always expanding the fringes, the economic and physical health of the central business district is improved. With off-street parking at the Mansion site within walking distance of such essential services as clinic, bank, druggist and municipal offices, the presence of pedestrians in the downtown restores a measure of vitality to the community. Businesses locate where their ability to attract and serve their customers is positively reinforced by the scale and amenity value of the landscape. In short, conscious efforts at historic preservation and reuse can increase property values and revitalize a community's heart.

Pedestrian-friendly access under a canopy of mature trees in a small town where neighbors meet and interact is, in fact, about as close to the American ideal of a hometown as one can get. The opportunity to achieve this ideal in Upton should not be ignored without some examination of how it can be brought about.

The Town of Upton, as a municipal organization, has expressed interest in centralizing its offices and departments into portions of the 1951-era building. The shop portions of the old school would be used as motor pool and city shops and, the old classrooms would become administrative space and meeting space for the Town Council, police and fire departments. In an era when capital construction costs are high and the availability of outside revenues are low, it would seem to make sense to consolidate as many service delivery systems as possible into one site. Under an umbrella organization of governmental and non-governmental organizations similar to a joint powers council of governments, the costs of maintaining and operating offices and facilities for the various participating entities could be shared and a certain amount of efficiency realized. No one single agency, whether it is the Town, museum, senior center, meals on wheels program, community recreation program or any other, has the financial ability to completely plan, acquire land, construct, administer and operate separate and equal facilities. The only barrier to effective cooperation between agencies is the unwillingness of one or more of the parties involved to forfeit a little bit of sovereignty. A committed and dedicated group of decision-makers acting in the best interests of their agencies and the community can find within the campus of the old school and the Mansion the potential home of those entities and more.

The Mansion and the Future

Whether the Mansion serves a larger role than the one as home to the Red Onion Museum, its continued existence is an issue of great importance to a number of people. The Upton History and Preservation group has received nearly \$14,000 in cash and pledges from 90 former students and residents of the area who wish to see the Mansion saved. Responses to the appeal for help came from all over the country and from Europe, where the sense of history and respect for old structures seems to be more pronounced than it is here. As one donor put it, "I cannot understand why Americans are so quick to destroy their own short history."

Donovan Rypkema, a Washington, DC-based consultant in the economics of historic preservation, believes that historic preservation does not cost as much as it pays. He speaks of the value of preserved structures as symbols of the community in which they exist, as opposed to the cost of the bricks and mortar of which they are built. Preservation through rehabilitation is less expensive on average than new construction. The more historic fabric saved, the less hauled off to landfills and the less expensive the rehabilitation. These little known facts are more than borne out by documentation of federal tax credits that are associated with historic preservation projects in other parts of the country.

Historic preservation promotes heritage tourism, the fastest growing segment of America's fast growing tourist industry. Historic sites rank high in every survey of tourist preferences and heritage tourism travelers spend more money and stay longer than the average U.S. traveler. As part of a program of sustainable economic growth, historic preservation is one of the incentives in the quality of life of a community provides. Historic buildings are an important element of the sense of ownership and the sense of evolution of a community; they are a tangible link to and expression of the past.

The Mansion and the Money

As with any project, there are costs associated with achieving the final result. What these costs are, and how they will be borne, depend upon the course of action of the various entities involved. Suffice it to say that the costs of adaptation and reuse are significantly less than the new construction of an equivalent amount of square footage whether it is in a new location or not. At the very least, the following list includes a cursory group of items that should be accomplished to ensure the further use and enjoyment of the Mansion by the citizens of Upton and Weston County:

- 1] Stabilize and renovate the roof of the Mansion to prevent and avoid continued damage by leakage and natural accretion;
- 2] Repair and renovate such existing doors and windows as to secure the integrity of the building and its contents;
- 3] Provide for an audit of the mechanical and

electrical systems to determine the extent to which further uses will require reworking, enlargement or replacement;

- 4] Provide for an analysis and recommendations from a structural engineer familiar with historic preservation considerations;
- 5] Prepare site and building plans which delineate future uses, parking, accessibility, landscaping, infrastructure and site appurtenances that are in keeping with sound planning principles appropriate to historic preservation projects; and,
- 6] Secure long-term fee interest or clear title to the site and structure so as to have an asset base from which to acquire and leverage capital investment funding.

Selective demolition of various structures that inhabit the site occupied by the Mansion and the 1951 school addition may or may not make the site more or less usable or desirable. Certainly the demolition of the 1951 school addition changes the character and nature of the site. In no case, however, is that demolition counter to the continued use of the Mansion. The infrastructure issues alluded to in previous discussions merely rise in importance of resolution; whereas formerly the boiler plant served the entire complex, its destruction would require an alternate source be developed. Conversely, the removal of the 1951 addition allows the restoration of the original façade of the Mansion that faced Pine Street.

Depending upon the status of the asbestos-abatement work accomplished thus far, and the steps identified to avoid a repeat of the leaking pipes that flooded the basement of the Mansion earlier this year, the above-mentioned items 1 through 5 should be able to be accomplished for expenditure in the range from \$30,000 to \$50,000. Item 6, the acquisition of the site and structures should be the subject of negotiation between the Weston County Museum District and Weston County School District No. 7. While there are no guarantees about the extent to which any and all of these considerations will secure the Mansion from further deterioration or need for amelioration, at the minimum these actions will remove the Mansion from a state of limbo and give the community of Upton and Weston County a sense of direction in their drive to use and enjoy the Mansion for many generations to come.