

Oregon Historic Site Form

Peninsula School
8125 Emerald St
Portland, Multnomah County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 8125 N Emerald St apprx. addr

Portland vcnty Multnomah County

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

historic name: Peninsula School

current/
 other names: Peninsula Elementary School

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

PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: Building height (# stories): 1

elig. evaluation: eligible/significant

primary constr date: 1952 (c.) secondary date: 1960 (c.)
 (optional--use for major addns)

primary orig use: School

secondary orig use: _____

primary style: International

secondary style: _____

primary siding: Standard Brick

secondary siding: _____

plan type: School (General)

total # eligible resources: 1 total # ineligible resources: 0

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

orig use comments: _____

prim style comments: _____

sec style comments: _____

siding comments: _____

architect: Freeman, Hayslip & Tuft

builder: _____

comments/notes: _____

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

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

farmstead/cluster name: _____ external site #: 180
 (ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: _____

ILS survey date: 8/22/2009

RLS survey date: 8/22/2009

Gen File date: _____

106 Project(s)



North elevation

ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

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

Description Summary

The Peninsula Elementary School is a one story brick veneer building designed in the International style. The campus consists of a 1952 single story brick-faced building that forms a U-shaped plan. The wings that make up the U-shaped plan are separated by a courtyard and form a variation on a finger plan type school. The building features International style elements such as a linear composition, bands of aluminum windows, flat roofs, overhangs, and a lack of ornamentation. These elements serve to reinforce the ideals of functionalism and minimalism.

Architectural Description

Peninsula Elementary School is situated in the Portsmouth neighborhood of North Portland at 8125 N Emerald. The campus occupies a rectangular parcel between N Emerald Avenue on the east, N Halleck Street on the north, and single family residences on the south and west. The school is located on the north end of the campus, play grounds surround the south and east sides of the building, and play fields are located on the south end of the campus.

The 1952 Peninsula Elementary School features a U-shaped modified finger plan. The two long wings that form the arms of the U are oriented on an east-west axis. The central wing, which forms the base of the U, is sited along N. Emerald Avenue. An exterior courtyard is located between the wings (or individual fingers) of the U-shaped plan.

The single story International style building is clad in a roman brick veneer. The wood frame building structure sits on a concrete foundation. The horizontal emphasis is achieved through the long single story wings that comprise the Peninsula Elementary School, as well as the bands of glass block and metal hopper windows. The only vertical element is the brick smoke stack; however, the two story gymnasium provides variation in the horizontal massing of the building. The wings that make up the building are capped by low sloped gable roofs with a variety of eave widths. The gable ends of the north and south wings are covered in horizontal wood siding. The gymnasium is capped by a hip roof and features metal siding and coping.

The primary entrance, which is located along the east (front) elevation, is recessed beneath the roof of the north wing. The roof, which features textured wood ceiling panels, is supported by metal columns that line the concrete entry porch. The porch is surrounded by a low brick wall. The entrance is marked by three metal doors with transoms and side lights. Secondary entrances, which are located at the end of corridors or building wings, feature copper overhangs.

Glass block is used extensively on the school. Glass block windows with a lower operable hopper are located along the north (front) elevation on the exterior walls of the cafeteria, and are accentuated with rowlock courses. A clerestory of glass block windows is located along the east (side) elevation on the exterior wall of the gymnasium.

The entrance foyer, administrative offices, cafeteria, and kitchen are located along the central wing. Rectangular classrooms are located along the double-loaded corridors within the east and west wings. At the north end of the east wing (and to the south of the north or central wing) is the gymnasium. Doorways located along the central corridors, entrance halls, and classrooms provide access to the expansive school grounds.

The principal entrance opens into a foyer that is located between two corridors. The main corridor extends east-west through the middle of the building and is illuminated by windows that flank the entry doors and are located along exterior walls that open into the courtyard. The foyer, which is flanked by the administrative offices and storage space, features ceramic floor tiles, smooth wood panel walls, and a high ceiling.

The cafeteria and gymnasium are centrally located near the entry foyer. The cafeteria, which is lighted with glass block windows, features fold-down tables and wood ceiling beams. A stage, which facilitates the use of the room as an auditorium, is located at the west end of the cafeteria. The gymnasium, which is also lighted with glass block windows, features plywood wainscoting, molding, and textured wood panels.

The double-loaded corridors feature asphalt tile wainscoting with a rubber cap and rubber moldings. Entry halls along all wings of the building feature ceramic floor tiles. Tubular fluorescent light fixtures are suspended from the acoustic tile clad ceiling. Bathroom entrances are recessed and angled into corridor walls. Flooring throughout the building consists of asphalt tile and carpet. The building is heated by boilers that are located off the north corridor. Metal heating units are located in the hallways and console units are located beneath classroom windows.

Wood doors with center lights provide entry to the classrooms. The classrooms are rectangular in plan with closets, cupboards, and sinks located along one end of the room. Windows line the exterior walls of the classrooms.

Alterations/Integrity

Peninsula Elementary School retains a high degree of integrity. Alterations to the building reflect the changing educational needs of the Portland Public School District. In 1953 a covered play court, which was located at the west end of the north wing, was enclosed to create three additional classrooms. Two classrooms, several restrooms and a covered play area were added to the south end of the west wing in 1960. In 1973, two classrooms were adapted into a library, which was further remodeled in 1990. In 2002, a window was installed in the foyer to provide an opening between the foyer and administrative offices. Other alterations include the replacement of floor tiles (1981, 1985), replacement of composition roof singles with metal (1995), and the addition of carpeting in some of the spaces. (Peninsular Facility Plan, Profile). These alterations have not affected the design, materials, workmanship and feeling associated with the 1952 Peninsula Elementary School.

HISTORY

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

Statement of Significance

Named for the surrounding subdivision, the school was built for \$726,114.14 in 1952 (Snyder 1979: 240; PPS Chronology Binder). Peninsula School was constructed during a period of modernization and new construction initiated by Portland Public Schools (PPS) after World War II. In 1945, the citizens of Portland approved a ballot measure that provided \$5,000,000 over five years to construct, improve, and rehabilitate its public school buildings (Portland Public Schools 1945: 2). The ballot measure enabled PPS to respond to the explosive growth in school-age children that had occurred in the city as a result of the arrival of defense plant workers and their families, as well as the deferred maintenance arising from the lack of funds during the depression (Portland Public Schools 1945: 2-3).

Between 1934 and 1944 the increases in enrollment in the old Peninsula school was noted as significant. As a result of war time housing constructed in the Peninsula neighborhood, the school saw an increase of 47.9% in student enrollment during this period (Portland Public Schools 1945:25). Beginning with the 1945 bond measure, PPS embarked on an effort to improve its school facilities through renovations, additions, and the new construction of over fifty schools between 1945 and 1970. In 1948 the site at N. Emerald was acquired for \$19,037 to replace the older Peninsula School, which was located at N. Lombard, which was located there from 1909 to 1952 (Portland Public Schools Chronology).

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

The architects of Peninsula School, Freeman, Hayslip & Tuft adopted the building program and principles that dominated the discourse for school design during the second half of the twentieth century. In 1942, Freeman established a partnership with Sydney B. Hayslip that was renamed several times, including Freeman, Hayslip & Tuft, as other partners were brought into the practice. Prior to 1942, Freeman established a practice in Portland where he specialized in the design of schools. Sydney B. Hayslip practiced architecture for over forty years in Portland, after attending the University of Oregon's School of Architecture. He worked for several prominent Northwest architects including Floyd A. Naramore, the former district architect for Portland Public Schools, before entering into practice with Freeman. Stewart Tuft, a graduate of the University of Oregon school of Architecture, worked for several firms and the Housing Authority of Portland before joining the firm in 1948. Freeman was recognized throughout Oregon as a specialist in school design (Ritz 2002: 137,169, 395)

Peninsula Elementary School is a modified version of the finger plan type school that became popular in the post-war period. Similar to other schools of this type, Peninsula is a single story U-shaped building with classroom wings separated by an exterior courtyard. The construction, wood frame with brick veneer, allowed for economic building and ease of expansion. Mass produced materials, including aluminum windows and glass block, provide economical decoration.

Peninsula Elementary School retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association with its plan and exterior and interior finishes. The 1952 International style influenced school is recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for its association with the PPS program of post-war construction. The school is a good example of the principles that characterized the design of schools during this era; therefore, it is eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A. The school was designed by Portland architecture firm, Freeman, Hayslip & Tuft; however, Peninsula School is not considered an exceptional example of their work. The character defining floor plan and exterior and interior details of the school provide a good example of the International style influenced finger plan schools constructed during the post-war years. Peninsula Elementary School is therefore eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C.

RESEARCH INFORMATION

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

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

Local Library: Multnomah County Library

University Library: Portland State University Library

Historical Society: Oregon Historical Society

Other Repository: PPS Archives

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Bibliography: Bibliography

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

Perkins, Lawrence B and Walter D. Cocking. *Schools*. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1949.

Portland Public Schools. *School Chronology Binder*. PPS Archives, Portland, Oregon.

_____. *Peninsula Elementary School. Facility Plan*.

_____. *Peninsula Elementary School. Facility Profile*.

Ritz, Richard. E. *Architects of Oregon. A Biographical Dictionary of Architects Deceased – 19th and 20th Centuries*. Portland: Lair Hill Publishing, 2002.

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



Main building (180A), north (front) elevation, looking west.



Main building (180A), south (rear) elevation of building wings, looking northwest.



Main building (180A), north (front) elevation, looking southwest.



Main building (180A), east (side) elevation at the gymnasium, looking northwest.



Main building (180A), west (side) elevation, looking southeast.



Main building (180A), entrance foyer, looking north.



Main building (180A), gymnasium, looking south.



Main building (180A), west wing corridor, looking south.



Main building (180A), restroom entrances, looking northwest.

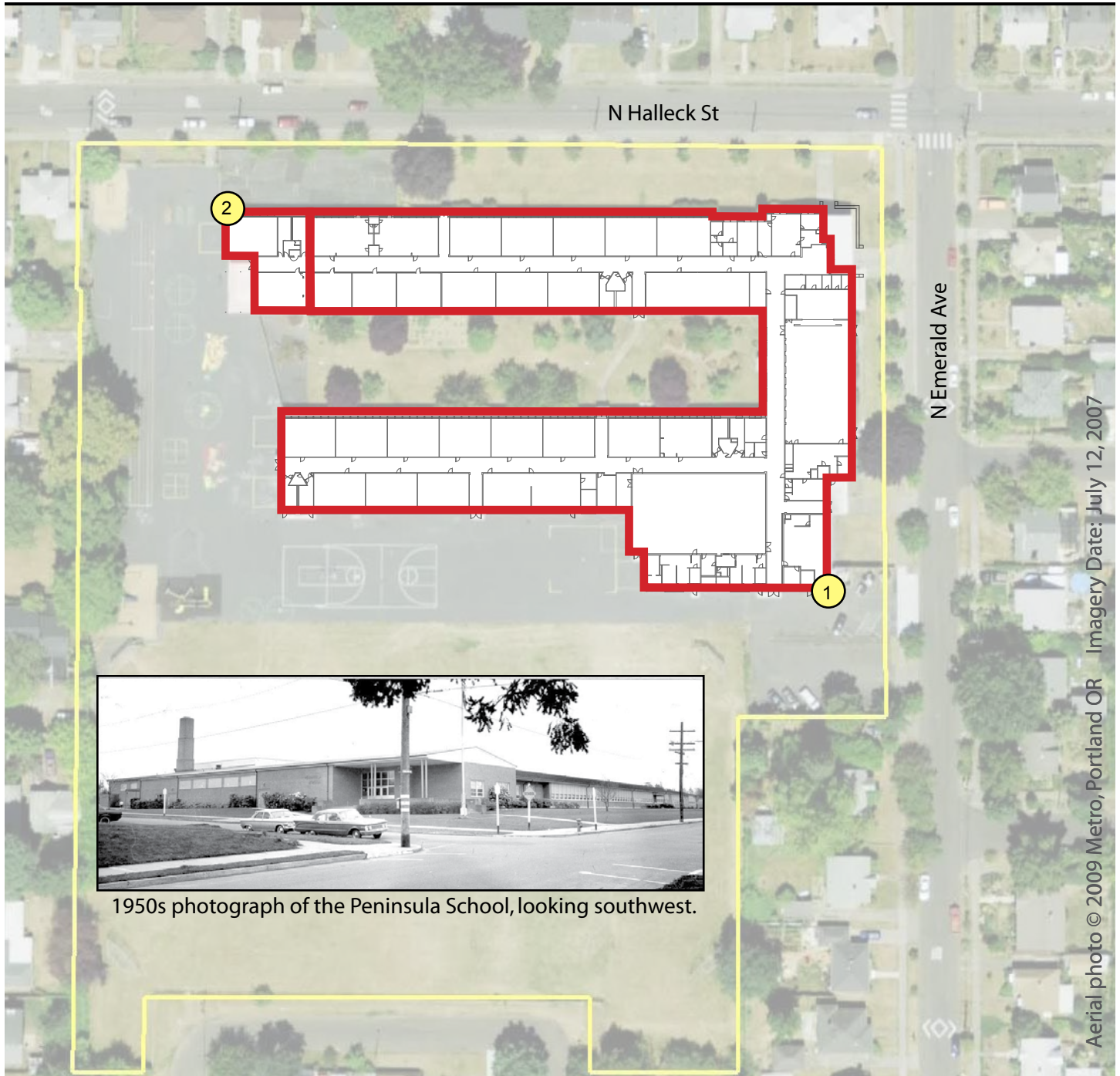


Main building (180A), cafeteria, looking west.

Peninsula School

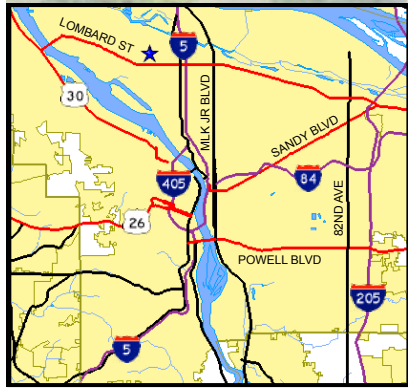
8125 N Emerald Ave, Portland OR, 97217

[View Site in Google Maps](#)






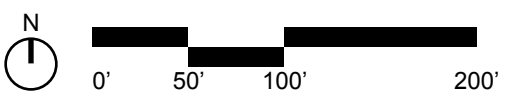
1950s photograph of the Peninsula School, looking southwest.

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



Historical Significance and Building Integrity

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



Building Periods

1. Main Building (180A), 1952
2. Classroom Add (180A), 1960