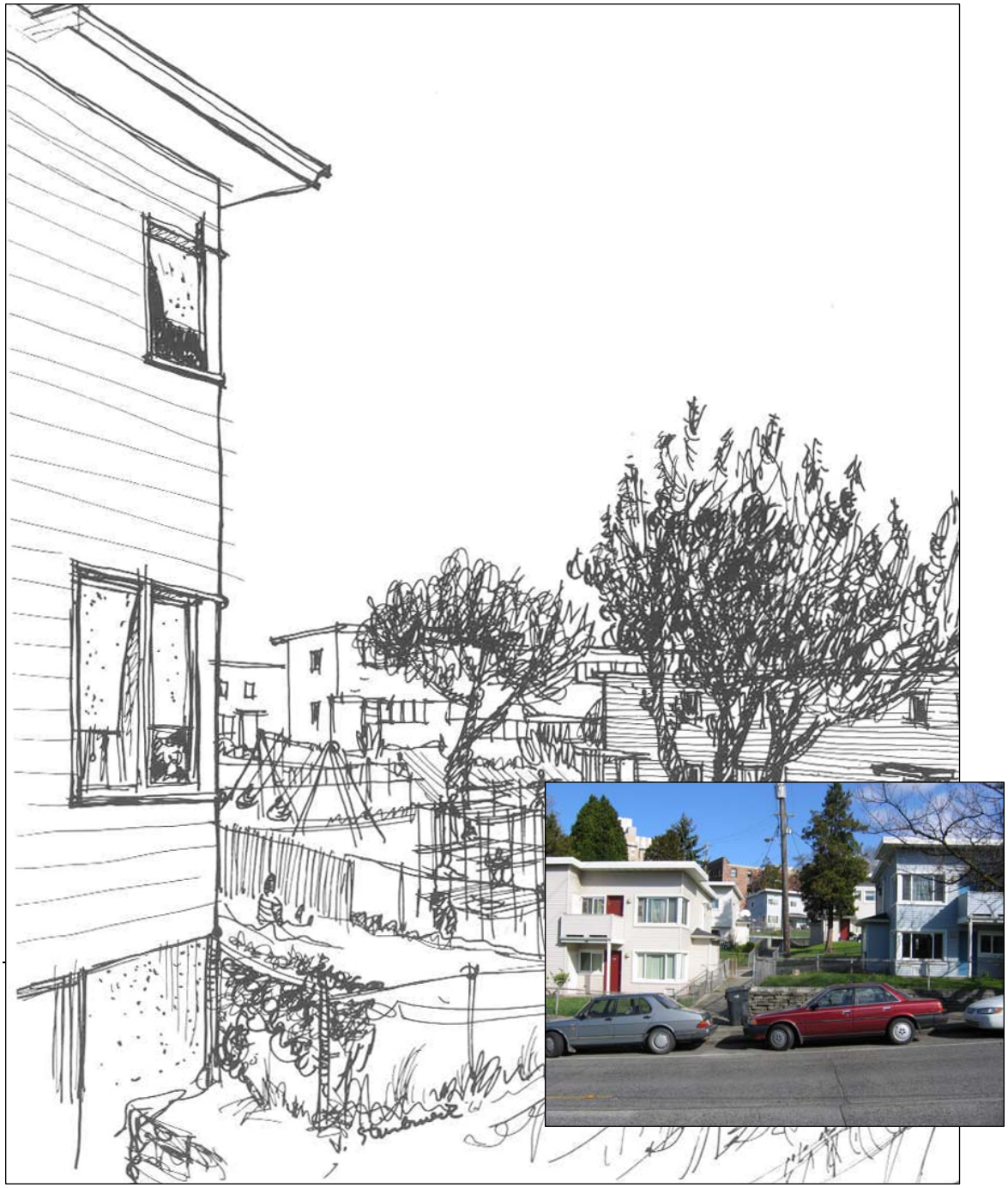
Landmark Nomination
Yesler Terrace
Seattle



BOLA Architecture + Planning
159 Western Avenue West, Suite 486
Seattle, WA 98119

June 14, 2010

Landmark Nomination
Yesler Terrace, Seattle

CONTENTS

Cover: 1962 sketch from Victor Steinbrueck, *Seattle Cityscape*, and a contemporary photo (BOLA)

The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

Landmark NOMINATION Application

Name (common, present, or historic): Yesler Terrace

Year built: 1941-1943 (original Yesler Terrace project)
1909 and 1979 (Kenyon Apts/Jesse Epstein Building)

Street and number: 825–903 Yesler Way and 905 Spruce Street

Assessor's file no.: 859090-0290 (A), 859090-0400 (B), 982170-0005 (D), 982170-0007 (E), 859090-0330 (F), 104400-0005 (G), and 104400-0045 (H). **(See the attached map citing properties by the letter designations inserted into the list above.)**

Legal description/ Plat, Block & Lot:
See p. 12 of the attached Title Report, by First American Title Insurance Company for the legal description of the property.

Present owner: The Seattle Housing Authority (SHA)

Present use: Housing complex, Apartments
Offices, multi-purpose room, and auditorium/gym (Community Building)
Offices (Jesse Epstein Building)
Head Start child care facility (Neighborhood House and Child Center)
Facilities & storage (Steam Plant)

Owner's address: 120 Sixth Avenue North
Seattle, WA 98109

Original owner: The Seattle Housing Authority (SHA)

Original use: Housing complex, Apartments
Offices and work spaces, nursery, and auditorium (in Community Building)
Child care facility (in Neighborhood House and Child Center)
Steam Plant

Offices (Jesse Epstein Building)

Architects: Architects J. Lister Holmes, William Bain, Sr., George W. Stoddard, John T. Jacobsen, and William Aitkin

Builder: J. C. Boespflug Construction Co.

The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

Landmark NOMINATION Application

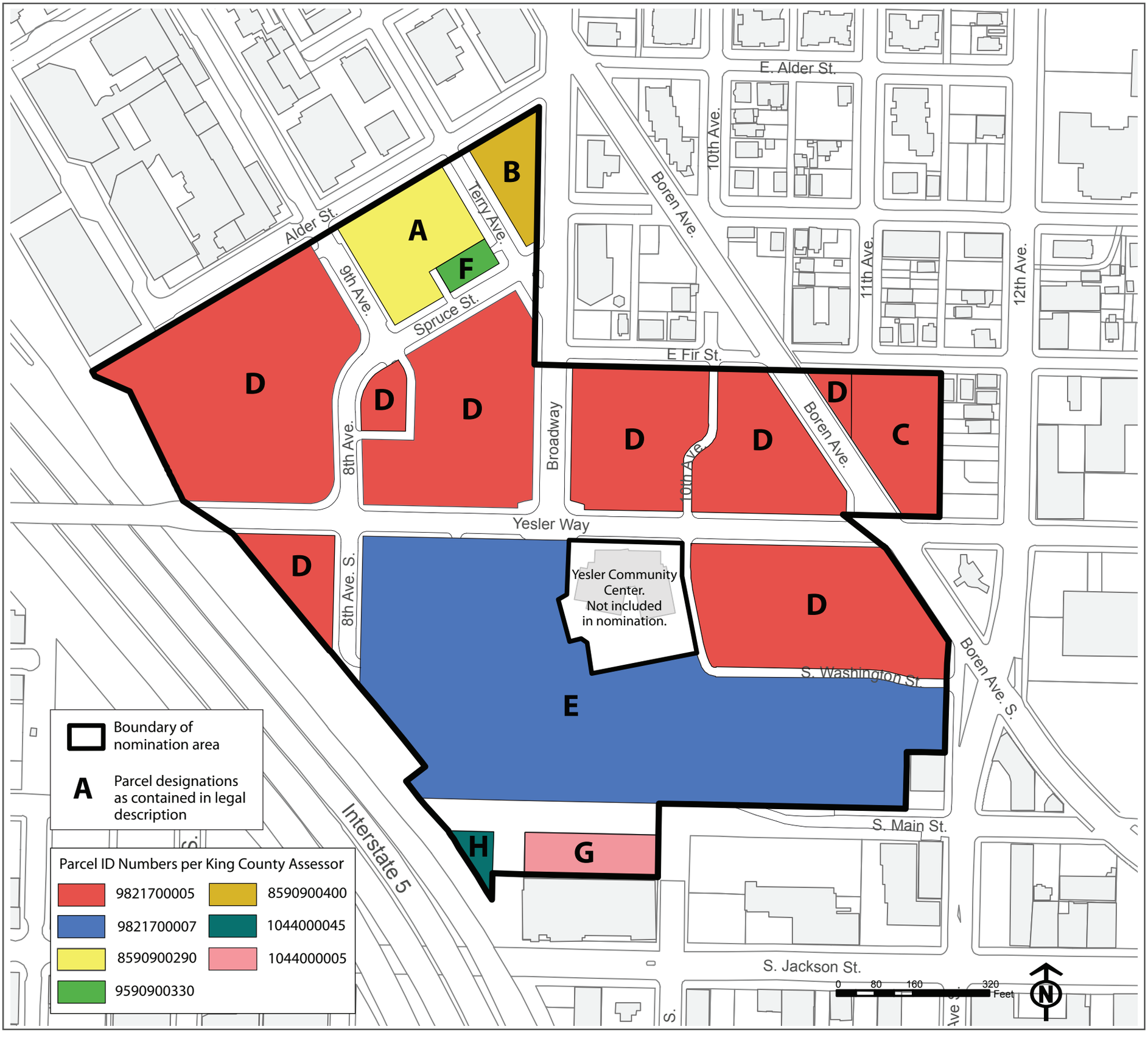
Submitted by: Ryan Moore, Senior Housing Developer, Seattle Housing Authority

Address: 120 Sixth Avenue North/PO Box 19028
Seattle, WA 98109

Phone: (206) 615-3548 Date: June 14, 2010

The attached landmark nomination report contains a physical description, statement of significance, bibliography and images. Three appendices contain copies of tax record photographs, additional description about each extant residential buildings, and illustrations of other work by the architects that originally designed Yesler Terrace.

Reviewed (Historic Preservation Officer): _____ Date: _____


E. Alder St.
10th Ave.
Boren Ave.
11th Ave.
12th Ave.
Alder St.
Terry Ave.
9th Ave.
Spruce St.
E Fir St.
8th Ave.
Broadway
10th Ave.
Boren Ave.
Yesler Way
8th Ave. S.
Yesler Community Center. Not included in nomination.
S. Washington St.
Boren Ave. S.
S. Main St.
Interstate 5
S. Jackson St.
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
Boundary of nomination area
A Parcel designations as contained in legal description
Parcel ID Numbers per King County Assessor
9821700005
8590900400
9821700007
1044000045
8590900290
1044000005
9590900330
0 80 160 320 Feet
N

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Yesler Terrace
Seattle

BOLA Architecture + Planning
June 14, 2010

> Housing people, food, (and) clothing … (are) some of the basic needs of people and the role of the architect is (to) produce the buildings to meet the needs. We do it in a simple manner.
>
> - Architect William T. Bain (*Daily Journal of Commerce*, Dec. 3, 1980)

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

This landmark nomination report on the Yesler Terrace housing complex was undertaken at the request of the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA), the property owner. The original low-income housing development was built on the southwest edge of First Hill, just east of the city's downtown. The original project was on a 22-block site that was reconfigured with new grading, streets, cul de sacs and courtyards. Constructed in two phases, in 1941-1942, it contained 863 dwelling units in 97 multi-family residences, along with community buildings and a steam plant. The property was reduced by the early 1960s for construction of the nearby Interstate 5 freeway, which resulted in a loss of 25 buildings and 256 dwelling units. In 2003 additional land was taken and three residential buildings with 21 dwellings were removed for construction of a new community center by the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation.

Yesler Terrace presently consists of approximately 28 acres with 68 original residential buildings and a later duplex dating from 1964. It contains 561 dwelling units, along with the original community building/gymnasium, childcare facility, and steam plant. The present property also includes the Jesse Epstein Building, a former 1909 apartment house that was acquired by SHA in 1979 and remodeled to provide office and administrative spaces for health and social service agencies.

Yesler Terrace was the first project undertaken by SHA and the first public housing project in Washington State constructed to house eligible low-income families and workers in defense industries. It was conceived of by Jesse Epstein, a local lawyer and specialist in federal housing law, who served as the first director of the SHA. Upon its completion, the project was lauded for its progressive social goals and its Modern design.

This nomination report includes data about the property, a historic context statement, and a description of the site and buildings. The City of Seattle's landmarks ordinance requires a property to be at least 25 years old and meet specific criteria in order to be designated a landmark. Thus the context statement focuses primarily on historic themes and events that occurred prior to the mid-1980s. The architectural description cites the planning and design features of Yesler Terrace and changes that have been made to the project over time. A bibliography is provided at the end of the report text, followed by historic and contemporary maps, photographs, and drawings, and a current site plan.

Separate documents accompany this nomination report. Appendix A contains the King County Tax Assessor's property record card photos. Appendix B has individual descriptions and current photographs

of each of the remaining residential buildings, and Appendix C contains photographs of other projects by the five original architects who designed and oversaw the construction of Yesler Terrace. These are accompanied by an index of all images and figures, and an excerpted title report provided by SHA.

One building within the general area of Yesler Terrace is not included in this nomination. The Yesler Community Center was built in 2005 on a site that previously was part of Yesler Terrace. It contained three residential buildings, which were demolished for the new facility. The Community Center, which is owned and operated by Seattle's Department of Parks and Recreation, is situated on a separate legal parcel and it is excluded from this nomination report.

Note also that SHA has acquired five nearby properties, situated on the east side of 12th Avenue and directly east of a part of Yesler Terrace, and north of Yesler Way (identified by Tax Parcel No. 982670-0265, 982670-0270, 982670-75, 982670-0295 and 982670-0305). These properties are not included in this landmark nomination.

Research

Sources for historic materials included:

- The Seattle Housing Authority building records and archives
- City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) microfilm permit and drawing records, and the Department of Neighborhoods historical site inventory forms
- A 1979 National Register Nomination of Yesler Terrace, which led to the property's listing in the Washington State Heritage Register in 1981
- A 2002 report on the former part of the Yesler Terrace property, which was taken for construction of the Park's Department Community Center. Upon its review of this report, the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP, currently DAHP or the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation) determined in 2003 that the property was ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places
- Property information from King County Parcel Viewer and historic property records from Puget Sound Regional Archives for the subject property and those on surrounding blocks
- Records in the Jesse Epstein collection and historic photos from the University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, including the Dearborn Massar Photography collection
- Digital photography collections of the City of Seattle Municipal Archives and the Museum of History and Industry
- Publications and unpublished reports / theses on the development and history of public housing, as well as the development of the First Hill and International District areas surrounding Yesler Terrace
- Polk Directories, Kroll maps, the Northwest index, and articles in architectural scrapbooks from the Seattle Room of Seattle's Central Public Library

- Biographic information about the original architects from architectural history publications and websites of DocomomoWeWa, the AIA, and University of Washington Special Collections Pacific Coast Architects Database (PCAD)

- Discussions with members of the Association of Washington Housing Authorities about the historic development of other public housing projects in the state dating from the 1940s and postwar period

- Essays from digital newsletters of Historic Seattle and HistoryLink.org, the Online Encyclopedia of Washington state history

Research included examination of the permit records, tax records, historic maps and photos, and visits to view the site, buildings, and structures that make up Yesler Terrace and its neighborhood context. The site visits included interior tours of several typical apartment units, the community buildings and the steam plant. These tours resulted in photographs that document remaining original design features and current building conditions.

Research was undertaken in November 2009 through April 2010. This nomination report was developed by Principal Susan Boyle, Associate Sonja Sokol Fürész, and Intern Architect Abby Inpanbutr of BOLA Architecture + Planning. The current site plan was provided by Collins Woerman.

Local and National Landmarks

Designated historic landmarks are those properties that have been recognized locally, regionally, or nationally as important resources to the community, city, state or nation. Official recognition may be provided by listing in the State Heritage Register or the National Register of Historic Places or locally by the City's designation of the property as a historic landmark.

The City of Seattle's landmark process is a multi-part proceeding of three sequential steps involving the Landmarks Preservation Board:

1) Submission of a nomination and its review and approval by the Board,

2) A designation by the Board, and

3) Negotiation of controls and incentives by the property owner and the Board staff.

A final step in Seattle's landmark process is approval of the designation by an ordinance passed by the City Council. These steps occur with public hearings that allow for input from the property owner, the applicant, the public, and other interested parties. Seattle's landmark process is quasi-judicial, with the Board making a ruling rather than serving as an advisory body to another commission, department or agency.

Under the city's ordinance, an estimated 400 individual properties have become designated landmarks in the City of Seattle. Several hundred other properties are designated by their presence within one of the City's special review districts or historic districts, which include the Harvard-Belmont, Ballard, Pioneer Square, Columbia City, Pike Place Market, and International Districts. Designated landmark properties in Seattle include individual buildings and structures, building assemblies, landscapes, and objects. In contrast to the National Register or landmark designation in some jurisdictions, the City of Seattle's process does not require owner consent.

Seattle's Landmarks Designation Process

The City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (SMC 25.12.350) requires a property to be more than 25 years old and *"have significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State or Nation."* The standard calling for significant character may be described as a standard of integrity. Integrity is a term used to indicate that sufficient original building fabric is present to convey the historical and architectural significance of the property.

Seattle's landmarks ordinance also requires a property meet one or more of six designation criteria:

Criterion A. It is associated in a significant way with an historic event, which has had a significant effect on the community, city, state or nation.

Criterion B. It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the city, state, or nation.

Criterion C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.

Criterion D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period or method of construction.

Criterion E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder.

Criterion F. It is an easily identifiable feature of its neighborhood or the city due to the prominence of its spatial location; contrasts of siting, age or scale; and it contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of its neighborhood or the city.

2. PROPERTY DATA

Historic / Present Name:	Yesler Terrace
Original / Present Use:	Housing Complex Apartments / Apartments Community Building with offices, work spaces, nursery, auditorium, multi-purpose room, and auditorium/gym Neighborhood House and Child Center / Head Start facility Steam Plant / Facilities and storage Apartment Hotel / Offices (Kenyon Apts. / Jesse Epstein Building)
Address:	825–903 Yesler Way (Yesler Terrace) 905 Spruce Street (Jesse Epstein Building) Seattle, WA 98104
Location:	Just east of I-5, north of South Main St. and South Jackson St, southeast of Alder St., south of East Fir St., and southwest of Boren Ave. and Boren Av. South. The eastern edge extends a half-block east side of Boren Avenue between East Fir Street and Yesler Way.
Tax ID No.:	9821700005, 9821700007, 8590900290, 8590900330, 8590900400, 1044000045, 1044000005
Legal Description:	See Exhibit A, which follows, and page 12 of the attached Title Report by First American Title Insurance Company for the legal description. These documents are provided by SHA. Yesler Terrace is made up by seven legal parcels, identified by the Parcel Number (APN) cited above.
Original Construction Date:	1941–1943 (Yesler Terrace development) 1909 and 1979 (Jesse Epstein Building)
Original Designers:	Architects J. Lister Holmes, William Bain, Sr., George W. Stoddard, John T. Jacobsen, and William Aitkin; with Landscape Architects Butler Sturtevant and E. Clair Heilman
Original Builder:	J. C. Boespflug Construction Co.
Later Planners & Designers:	Burke and Associates (1967, planning study) Kirk Wallace McKinley (1973, 1996) Arai Jackson (1978) Bumgardner Architects (1996–1999)
Total Area of Buildings:	488,523 gross square feet, 561 apartment units with an average size of 810 sq. ft. (per King County Parcel Viewer)
Original / Present Owner:	Seattle Housing Authority (SHA)
Owner's Representative:	Ryan Moore, Senior Housing Developer 120 Sixth Avenue North / PO Box 19028 Seattle, WA 98109 Tel. (206) 615-3548

Form WA-5 (6/76) File No.: NCS-409375-WA1
Commitment Page No. 2

EXHIBIT 'A'

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

PARCEL A:

LOTS 1 THROUGH 6, INCLUSIVE, AND LOT 8, BLOCK 84, TERRY'S SECOND ADDITION TO THE TOWN OF SEATTLE, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 1 OF PLATS, PAGE 87, IN KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON;

TOGETHER WITH THE VACATED NORTH 180 FEET OF ALLEY IN SAID BLOCK 2 AS VACATED UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 71850 OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, WHICH ATTACHED BY OPERATION OF LAW.

PARCEL B:

LOTS 1, 2 AND 3, BLOCK 87, TERRY'S SECOND ADDITION TO THE TOWN OF SEATTLE, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 1 OF PLATS, PAGE 87, IN KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON.

PARCEL C:

LOTS 1 THROUGH 5, INCLUSIVE, BLOCK 5, H.L. YESLER'S 1ST ADDITION TO THE CITY OF SEATTLE, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 1 OF PLATS, PAGE 215, IN KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON;

EXCEPT THAT PORTION OF LOTS 4 AND 5 CONVEYED TO THE CITY OF SEATTLE FOR GENERAL MUNICIPAL PURPOSES BY DEED RECORDED UNDER RECORDING NO. 3288643;

TOGETHER WITH THAT PORTION OF VACATED 11TH AVENUE AS VACATED UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 71751 OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE WHICH ATTACHED BY OPERATION OF LAW.

PARCEL D:

BLOCKS 2 THROUGH 6 AND 8, INCLUSIVE, YESLER TERRACE ADDITION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 37 OF PLATS, PAGE 21 THROUGH 22A, IN KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON;

EXCEPT THAT PORTION OF SAID BLOCKS 2 AND 8, THEREOF, CONDEMNED IN UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CAUSE NO. 6189 FOR PRIMARY STATE HIGHWAY NO. 1;

AND EXCEPT THAT PORTION OF SAID BLOCK 4 CONVEYED TO THE CITY OF SEATTLE FOR STREET PURPOSES BY DEED RECORDED UNDER RECORDING NO. 420237;

AND BLOCK A, YESLER TERRACE ADDITION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 37 OF PLATS, PAGES 21 THROUGH 22A, IN KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON;

TOGETHER WITH THAT PORTION OF VACATED 11TH AVENUE AS VACATED UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 71751 OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, WHICH ATTACHED BY OPERATION OF LAW;

AND LOT 1, BLOCK 85, TERRY'S SECOND ADDITION TO THE TOWN OF SEATTLE, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 1 OF PLATS, PAGE 87, IN KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON;

Form WA-5 (6/76) File No.: NCS-409375-WA1
Commitment Page No. 3

AND THAT PORTION OF VACATED 9TH AVENUE AND THAT PORTION VACATED ALLEY BETWEEN LOT 1, BLOCK 85, OF SAID PLAT OF TERRY'S SECOND ADDITION TO THE TOWN OF SEATTLE, AND BLOCK 4 OF SAID YESLER TERRACE ADDITION, AS VACATED UNDER ORDINANCE NO. 109446 OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE.

PARCEL E:

PARCEL A OF KING COUNTY SHORT SUBDIVISION NO. 2207828, ACCORDING TO SHORT PLAT RECORDED JUNE 12, 2003 UNDER RECORDING NO. 20030612900016, IN KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON.

3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Surrounding First Hill Neighborhood

Yesler Terrace is located on the southern edge of the First Hill neighborhood and north of the easternmost part of the International District. This area is defined by its topography and major transportation corridors, which include the I-5 freeway on the west and Broadway Avenue, Boren Avenue South, and 12th Avenue South on the east.

The site of Yesler Terrace was prominent from Seattle's beginnings as a city. At its western shoreline, Yesler Way was first the site of Yesler's mill—the first mill in Seattle—and the city's first center of development. The original King County Courthouse was located on this part of First Hill, situated between 7th and 8th Avenues and Terrace and Alder Streets. The Yesler Terrace property extended to 12th Avenue, to an area of Jewish settlement in the late 19th century. Its southernmost edge was part of what was known then as "Japantown," later the International District. Also known as "Profanity Hill," because of the steepness of street grades, the surrounding area was developed up through the first decade of the 20th century with dense, wood-frame multi-family townhouses, apartment hotels, and boarding houses. By the 1930s much of the area was considered blighted. (Berner, p. 185.)

There were many benefits to the site selected for Yesler Terrace: The original development would replace deteriorated housing stock. Furthermore, it offered residents close proximity to the nearby County Hospital and several public schools, and to downtown, which was easily accessible by foot or streetcar. The original site also offered "an enviable view which included Mt. Rainier to the south and Elliot Bay and the Olympic Mountains to the west. This view, among other things, was an important factor in offering the eventual residents of Yesler Terrace pride of place." (Sale, p. 165)

Buildings in the surrounding area that recall its history include the following, which were cited in the Nyberg/Steinbrueck Urban Survey of 1975. Several of these (noted by *) are listed in the National Register of Historic Places or are designated as local landmarks.

- Fire Station No. 3, 301 Terry Avenue at Alder Street (1903) *
- Harborview Hospital Central Wing, 9th Avenue (1929) *
- Washington Hall, East Fir at 14th Avenue (1908) *
- Victorian Residence, 318-11th Avenue East (ca. 1900, demolished))
- Victorian Residence, 1411 East Fir (ca. 1898, demolished)
- Victorian Residence, 1415 East Fir (ca. 1898)
- St. George Building / Urban League, 105 14th Avenue (1909)
- Victorian Residences, 208 and 210 13th Avenue (ca. 1890, demolished, street vacated)
- Seattle Buddhist Church, 1427 S. Main (1947 and 1963-1964)
- Victorian Apartments, 1238 King Street (ca. 1890) *
- Seattle Japanese Baptist Church, 106 Broadway (1922, 1958, 1984, 1997)

In addition to these, there are other single-family and multi-family residences, apartment buildings, and garages to the north and east of Yesler Terrace, which date primarily from ca. 1900-1930.

Early Federal Housing Initiatives

Provision of adequate housing for all was recognized as a social problem in the United States beginning in the mid-19th century. Even during periods of economic stability and growth, there remained a significant number of people living in substandard conditions in both urban and rural areas. In the 1920s "the housing question" came to the forefront as a major social and political issue, a cause championed by such personages as Catherine Bauer, Lewis Mumford, and Walter Stabler, head of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (Aranovici, Radford). Stabler, speaking to a Senate committee in 1920, noted that the "housing question" was the most serious problem "that this country has ever seen" (Radford p. 7). Historically, the Federal government had not played a role in the provision of housing for the American people, but many prominent figures began to call for action (Aranovici, Radford).

During World War I the Federal government undertook the provision of housing for "industrial workers as are engaged in … industries connected with and essential to the national defense, and their families" (Radford, p. 16). To do this the United States Housing Corporation was created. The USHC relied largely upon existing housing stock but also built some new, efficient housing. The newly constructed housing demonstrated the latest in site planning and design in large-scale housing, and inspired leaders in the field. The Housing Corporation only completed about one-fifth of its originally projected units before the end of the war, when the program was dismantled. The Federal government dealt with the issue tentatively as there were concerns that war-era program would lead to continued provision of socialized housing after the war ended.

During the Great Depression, housing became a critical issue as rampant foreclosures caused many people to lose their homes. At the same time, the construction industry was brought to a standstill and new homes were not being constructed; there was a general lack of decent and affordable housing for working families. To address these needs, the Roosevelt administration established a series of "New Deal" programs in order to bring relief to struggling people and the struggling market.

The short-lived Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), established in 1933, provided low-interest, long-term home loans and mortgages to home-owners who were in danger of being foreclosed upon. The focus of the HOLC Housing Division was not solely on low-income housing, but it nonetheless faced significant opposition. Major criticism was due to the Division's reliance on eminent domain and slum clearance to gain land for new housing projects and limit competition with private construction companies. Despite this, the HOLC financed or constructed 58 developments containing a total of 25,000 dwellings across the U.S. during the 1930s (Ranford, p. 91). These projects were greatly influenced by European public housing projects and they demonstrated novel ways to develop housing and new design approaches.

The Public Works Administration (PWA) was established with a Housing Division organized in 1934 to construct new public housing, raise housing standards, and provide jobs. The Housing Division constructed seven projects financed with low-interest loans. It worked closely with local architects and builders to produce innovative plans and designs. To keep costs low, the Housing Division often obtained land through slum clearance, which brought public opposition and division among some supporters of public housing. (The projects were typically racially exclusive; for African American or whites residents.) Between 1934 and 1935 approximately 25,000 homes were constructed by the Housing Division. Perhaps more significant, its projects created an estimated 5,000,000,000 hours of much-needed work throughout the country for architects, engineers, and construction workers.

The Federal Housing Authority (FHA) was established one year after the HOLC, and became one of the most enduring and successful of the New Deal programs. Its goal was to stimulate the building industry, which had become stagnant. The scope of the FHA was much broader than that of the HOLC; it

restructured the way people obtained loans to build homes, regulated loans and mortgages, and provided insurance. Because of it more people could afford to build a home, and more people could be employed building homes. FHA programs were very successful, and it won support from the middle class and the housing industry for it and for other New Deal programs.

The U.S. Housing Act of 1937 and the Lanham Act of 1940

The FHA was not focused on building new public housing, but it stimulated an impressive amount of residential construction by private builders in a restricted economy (Mason). While the FHA brought assistance to many, and set standards for design and planning in new construction, it did not provide aid to low-income people.

Meanwhile a Kentucky court ruling declared the PWA's Housing Division's use of eminent domain unconstitutional. In response, housing officials adopted a new approach, brought before Congress in a bill sponsored by Senator Robert Wagner of New York. In 1937 the United States Housing Authority (USHA) was created with passage of the Wagner Act. The legislation was strongly supported by labor, but faced significant opposition due to the perceived socialist nature of government-sponsored housing. Unlike the WPA Housing Division, the USHA was structured as a financial manager to provide loans to local housing authorities, placing the responsibility for construction and management of the housing projects at the local level. This enabled the USHA to fund many more projects, over than 370 in total. The USHA also placed the federal government in a more indirect role. New projects required local initiation and legislation.

Creation of the U.S. Housing Authority was based on its meeting three goals: elimination of slum housing; provision of quality housing to low-income families; and creation of jobs (Lord, p. 10). (The USHA was handicapped by an amendment that limited funds spent for each unit the agency constructed. This limitation led to many developments being designed more for cost than quality.)

Low-income limits resulted in general disinterest or opposition by the middle-class citizens and led to public housing efforts directed at the poor, in contrast to the original goal of proponents and the legislation, which sought to address housing needs of working and middle-class tenants. America's model for public housing—the lauded public housing of Europe—had successfully accommodated people of a range of income levels, but this approach was not successful on America soil. Despite difficulties, administrators and designers of public projects sought innovation and quality in housing developments, although in many cases financial limitations contributed to the perception of lower-quality housing for lower income levels.

The USHA was organized to loan federal funds to local housing authorities, created by special legislation in each state, to finance the development of low-income housing. The establishment of local authorities allowed the USHA to remain outside such decisions as site selection and project design and management, acting solely as a money lender. This approach also encouraged the construction of a great variety of housing projects across the United States in a short amount of time.

By the end of June 1940 over 73,100 dwelling units in 240 separate developments constructed in Washington had opened under federal programs (Dorpat, 1998, p. 384). By early 1941 the USHA had enabled funding for over 350 projects in the state, completed or under construction (Boyle Wagoner).

In 1939 Congress denied USHA's continuation beyond its initial three-years. By this date the country had stabilized, and war was now the most pressing concern. There was a mass influx of workers to locations of defense industries, and housing for these migrated workers became a primary concern. Low-

income housing sites, which were already established, were assessed for possible contributions to defense worker housing, and new public housing construction was dedicated to that need. Between 1940 and 1942 more than 65,000 public housing units that had originally been intended as low-rent housing had been converted to housing for defense workers and their families. This quick action was made possible by the Lanham Act, passed by Congress in 1940, which provided $150,000,000 for housing in overcrowded defense industry centers. After the war most of this housing was reverted back to low-income programs.

Seattle, as a major center of defense industry, experienced a vast influx of workers at the start of WWII. The housing developments of Holly Park, Rainier Vista and High Point were all built using funding from the Lanham Act, which allowed for them to be built as defense housing during the war and then converted to low-income housing.

The Yesler Terrace housing development was completed before the beginning of WWII and the passing of the Lanham Act. The original project remained low-income housing throughout the war, but the addition to the site, which was originally approved to be built as low-income housing, was turned over to defense housing for the duration of WWII.

Although the SHA was the first housing authority in the state, other local housing authorities were quickly formed to take advantage of the new federal programs and deliver needed low-income and defense worker housing projects. A Housing Authorities were established in King County in 1939, which constructed ten low-income and defense worker housing projects, including complexes in Auburn, Black Diamond, White Center, and the Park Lane Homes in Kirkland, designed in part by architect Ted Jacobsen). Other Housing Authorities were established in Walla Walla, Bremerton, and Tacoma in ca. 1940,in Vancouver and Grant County in 1942, and in Everett in 1943. Examples of early housing developments include the following notable projects:

- Salishan, Lincoln Heights and American Lake Gardens were constructed by the Tacoma Housing Authority in the early 1940s. The largest of these projects, Salishan, housed approximately 2,000 families of shipyard workers on a site of 465 acres. The project included a school and community center along with low-scale, single-family dwellings, duplexes and four-plexes. In 1951 the Tacoma City Council sold Lincoln Heights and American lake Gardens, and converted the remaining 900 units at Salishan to low-income housing. These dwellings were demolished in 2002 for redevelopment of a new, traditional style, mixed-income housing project funded by a $35,000,000 Hope IV grant. Site plan drawings of Salishan indicate it was similar to Yesler Housing with a dispersal of rectangular buildings with considerable open space between the units.

- The Bremerton Housing Authority constructed two large war-era developments, Eastpark and Westpark, in 1941. These two projects provided over 6,240 units of housing in low-scale duplex, triplex, and fourplex dwellings, with the first 600 opened in 1941. The two war-era developments included temporary and permanent buildings, and community facilities. The layout of the two Bremerton projects appeared more modest than Yesler Terrace or Salishan, with greater density and modest, one-story multiplex dwellings. Both Westpark and Eastpark have been replaced recently by new mixed-income projects.

- Vanport, built near Vancouver, Washington by the Portland Housing Authority was one of the largest of the projects in the northwest, built to house up to 40,000 residents near the Kaiser Shipyard, which employed 38,000 workers, a quarter of them women, by 1942. Vanport was converted to veterans housing for approximately 18,500 residents after the war, with the addition of Vanport College established to meet demands rising from the GI Bill. The development was destroyed by a flood in 1948.

Post War Public Housing Programs

After the end of World War II significant deterioration of urban neighborhoods led to the National Housing Act of 1949 (NHA). President Harry Truman set the national goal of this program as "decent home and suitable living environment for every American family" (Howe, p. 88). By this time the USHA had become the Public Housing Administration (PHA).

The NHA greatly expanded the scope of government involvement in public housing, and resulted in construction of over 810,000 units. Projecting this many dwellings over a full six years, it took the NHA over two decades to reach this number. This legislation inspired the Urban Renewal effort of the following decades, which was intended to aid the redevelopment of large city areas. However, because the law creating urban renewal programs did not call for "equivalent elimination" as early slum clearance acts required, it allowed real estate developers to use federal subsidies to purchase cleared land without the mandate to rebuild housing. As a result both the NHA and the 1956 Federal Highway Act that followed it, contributed to the loss of inner-city housing.

Programs with more positive impacts on urban housing in the 1960s included President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society legislation with the Housing and Urban Development Act and creation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Model Cities programs of the late 1960s. The Fair Housing Act of 1968 eliminated racial discrimination in public housing and promoted integration.

Other programs during this period extended housing programs to include rehabilitation of existing housing, rent subsidies (the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program) and tax breaks for low income homeowners. Programs such as these created semi-private alternatives to public housing. President Richard M. Nixon discontinued federal support for urban renewal and the model cities programs and ended funding for public housing through an executive order, passing in their place the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act, which moved authority to state and local governments, and addressed housing within the context of jobs, public safety and health through Community Development Block Grant programs. In the late 1980s Congress established low-income housing tax credits, which subsidized private investment in low-income housing with federal tax credits awarded on a competitive basis by state housing authorities.

In the 1970s and 1980s local housing authorities in Washington instituted new programs and undertook efforts to subsidize home ownership by low-income families or housing cooperatives. Through block grant programs a number of local housing projects for the low-income elderly were built, and historic buildings were rehabilitated for low-income housing. Seattle's Morrison Hotel and Ravenna School Senior Housing programs exemplify these programs.

Another innovation in low income housing of the time was the scattered site program. In Seattle this resulted in contextual style, low-scale, multiplex housing for families dispersed throughout the city, in neighborhoods other than the central and southeast areas of the city. In 1981 Seattle voters approved a $48 million bond issue to locally fund low-rise buildings for the elderly and disabled.

HUD's Hope IV program was established in 1993 to allow lower density projects following traditional, "New Urbanism" planning principles, and a mix of tenants with varied incomes. This program led to SHA's redevelopment of Holly Park in 1995 with NewHolly, a $47 million project providing 1,400 housing units and 100 percent replacement of low-income housing on and off-site; redevelopment in 1998 of the $17 million Roxbury House and Village project; and redevelopment in 1999 of the $35 million Rainier Vista (with 850 affordable and market-rate housing units (including 500 units of

replacement low income housing on and off site). In 2000 SHA undertook a similar redevelopment of the Highpoint project in West Seattle.

Low-Income Housing in Seattle

The beginning of the 20th century brought periods of rapid growth to Seattle. During this time the residential population consistently spread out from the city center. The city's residential numbers ballooned during the earliest decades and then eased during the Depression, growing from 80,671 in 1900 to 237,194 in 1910; 321,931 in 1920; 363,426 in 1930; and just 368,302 in 1940.

Detached, wood-frame houses, multiplexes and apartment-hotels served as typical dwelling types for service and professional workers and their families. Low income and seasonally-employed workers tended to live in boarding houses or single-room occupancy hotels, near the city center or in semi-industrial areas such as the central waterfront or shorelines of Lake Union, Lake Washington, and the Ship Canal. Low income families typically resided in modest houses, or in small rental units.

Significant population growth during the period preceding WWI can be attributed primarily to annexations up until 1910, but growth in the second decade of the 20th century represents an actual increase in Seattle's population, and it resulted in a sharp need for housing. The city's population in the early 1930 stabilized in the early 1930s up until the 1940s brought an influx of World War II defense workers. In the meanwhile, the lack of affordable housing left many poor and working-class people living in substandard conditions.

These conditions were described in depth in a published analysis by Seattle demographer Calvin Schmid using 1940 and 1900 census data. His analysis provided the following profile for the census tracts that made up Yesler Terrace in 1940 (Schmid, p. 216–255 and 295):

- Fewer than 25% were single-family detached houses while 75% were in structures with five or more dwellings.
- Over 25% of dwellings dated from 1899 or earlier, and 5% and 9% needed major repairs.
- Fewer than 4% were owner-occupied, and the mean monthly rent was one of the lowest in the city at $15 to $19/month per unit (The median rent in the city was $22.25).
- The area was one of the city's densest. 7% or more of available dwellings had more than 1.5 occupants per room.
- Only 50–59% of the dwellings had central heat, and 50–74% of dwellings had no private flush toilet or private bath facilities. Mechanical refrigeration was available in fewer than 30% of the occupied dwellings.

It appears that some of these same conditions remained in the surrounding neighborhood after construction of Yesler Terrace. In a ca. 1943 map, Yesler Terrace is cited as "government housing." The area to the north and east of it was cited as "working class dwellings" while a "slum" was cited to the southeast, and "transitional residences and rooming houses" to the northwest. The "pre-war center of the Japanese community, 1920-1949" was cited to the south of Yesler Terrace (Schmid, p. 135.)

Creation of the Seattle Housing Authority

Creation of a public housing authority in the Seattle was initiated when a young Seattle attorney, Jesse Epstein, approached Mayor Arthur Langlie in 1937 for assistance in realizing local housing reforms. Epstein explained to Langlie how the new federal legislation worked and how Seattle could obtain federal funds for slum clearance projects and new low-income housing. The mayor was not enthusiastic, but Epstein formed a committee to write legislation to enable the city to create a housing authority and thus receive government assistance (Sale, p. 164).

Epstein also approached the members of the City Council with his proposal and secured support from three of its five members. A city ordinance was passed in 1937 creating a Local Advisory Housing Commission; Epstein was made the committee chairman, and $25,000 was granted to it to begin its work. The words of the ordinance stated the goals of the new committee: "Thousands are unemployed in Seattle, among them hundreds of members of the building trades who will share directly in the benefits derived by the whole community from a well-conceived local municipal low-cost housing program" (Berner, p. 184).

The Committee sponsored a Real Property Survey a Works Project Administration study in 1937. This survey examined low-income housing in Seattle and revealed that 28.5% of residential structures were substandard. It reported that more than 17,000 units were lacking a private bath and toilet (SHA First Annual Report).

In 1938 the City Council declared intent to establish a housing authority eligible for federal assistance (Sale). Epstein's comprehensive knowledge of enabling legislation and new federal funding programs qualified him to draft the bill allowing a housing authority in every city and county in the state. The legislation was passed in 1939, making Washington the 34th state to pass such laws. Meanwhile, in March of that year the Seattle Housing Authority was established and Epstein was named director (Berner). Other members of the Seattle Housing Authority Board included prominent citizens George W. Coplen, Kenneth J. Morford, Charles W. Doyle, and Mrs. Frank D. Henderson (SHA First Annual Report).

During this process Epstein did his best to persuade the public of the importance of public housing. In a July 1938 article, he outlined the principles and purposes of the U.S. Housing Authority: "to provide financial assistance to the States and political subdivisions thereof for the elimination of unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions, for the eradication of slums, for the provisions of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for families of low-income, and for the reduction of unemployment and the stimulation of business activity." He highlighted the fact that many other states were ahead of Washington in creating local housing authorities and using federal aid for low-income housing projects, and also emphasized the jobs that construction of these projects would provide (Epstein, "Here's How").

Shortly after its organization, SHA received $3,000,000 from the federal government for low-income public housing and slum clearance (Sale, p. 164). This action raised Epstein's profile in Seattle along with public interest in the funds and how they would be used. The idea of public housing and housing authorities was new, and people were curious, while some were hostile. The Apartment Operators Association and owners of buildings destined to be demolished by slum clearance raised protects. This opposition appears to have been overruled by the evidence presented in the exhaustive study sponsored by the Housing Advisory Commission, which documented existing substandard living conditions and the need for a low-income housing program ("Seattle Votes Housing Plan").

Construction of Yesler Terrace

Yesler Terrace was the first project undertaken by the Seattle Housing Authority and was the first low-income housing development in Washington State. The project's siting resulted from the 1937 Real Property Survey, which led to the selection of "Profanity Hill" as the preferred location for the planned public housing development. The site selection had direct relationship to slum clearance as required to meet the requirement of the U. S. Housing Act of 1937, that "for every new home that a local housing authority builds, one substandard unit must be eliminated" (Nelson, p. 2).

SHA Director Jesse Epstein and his board carefully chose several blocks adjacent to King County's Harborview Hospital based on specific criteria: its high percentage of substandard housing and its location high on a hill with commanding views of Mt. Rainier, Elliot Bay, and the Olympic Mountains (Sale). Their choice was lauded by local civic groups, including the Seattle Real Estate Board and the Women's Federated Clubs ("Choice for Housing wins Acclaim").

Before the site could be developed, existing buildings had to be cleared and their tenants relocated. The area designated for the Yesler Terrace development was inhabited by a diverse range of people, most with low incomes. In contrast to the prevailing poverty there was also a thriving Japanese community made up by about a third of the families in the neighborhood, many of whom had operating businesses in the area. The 158 existing buildings on the site contained 471 dwelling units, mostly rented out by absentee landlords. 1,021 residents of these buildings were notified of the plans for development, offered relocation assistance, and counseled on their eligibility as tenants of Yesler Terrace. With exception of foreign-born nationals, who were excluded from the project, the original low-income tenants of the site were given preference in application for new housing (Miller, p. 8).

The construction of Yesler Terrace's new dwellings created an estimated 2,000 jobs; 800 directly on the site and 1,200 in mills and factories ("Yesler Work to Create 2000 Jobs"). The U.S. Housing Authority provided examples of building plans to expedite the design process and limit construction costs, but Epstein gave the design work wholly over to a selected team of local architects. In the end the construction cost was more than 10% less than recommended by the USHA, at $2,500/unit, rather than $2,772/unit (Nelson, p. 4).

The SHA First Annual Report of 1940 noted that the City Council had approved an addition to the Yesler Terrace site, construction of which commenced almost immediately upon completion of the original phase in 1942. The addition was constructed on three sites adjacent to the original development: on a half-block area west of 7th Avenue, two blocks between Broadway and 9th to the north of Spruce Street, and on a half-block east of 11th Avenue and north of Yesler Way. This second phase added 13 residential buildings to the original 84, and an additional 178 units for housing 600 residents (Cooper, SHA Annual Report 1943). The apartment buildings of the addition were similar in design to the earlier buildings, although reportedly they were not built to the same construction standards.

Yesler Terrace was dedicated to families, with a stated goal of providing "an opportunity to improve their economic status and the incentive someday to have a home of their own" (SHA Brochure). It did not accept individual residents. A tenant's rent was determined by three factors: family size, number of children, and income. The percent of a family's income required for rent decreased with its number of children. Families who reached an income higher than the limit set by SHA were given notice to leave so that others with less income could be housed.

Although Yesler Terrace housing was not completed until 1942, the first tenant moved in during November 1941 (SHA Second Annual Report). Upon its completion, the project provided new dwellings with individual outdoor spaces, views, and community amenities resulting from a careful

arrangement of the buildings on the sloping site (Steinbrueck, p. 159). According to the 1943 SHA Annual Report the two-phase development resulted in a total of 97 low-rise residential structures, with 3 to 22 units each, a community building that housed a gymnasium-auditorium and SHA management offices, a child center building, and a steam plant that provided central hot water heating in lieu of individual building systems. The site was developed with central courtyards and a playfield. Additionally, the Seattle Parks Department ran an on-site program for boys and girls.

Social activities and organizations had been part of Yesler Terrace upon its completion, but in the post-war era their presence increased. Nursing classes, Girl Scout troop meetings, sock hops, and a children's circus were scheduled events, and residents were involved in the development of community social programs. Many of these were documented by the staff of *The Projector*, a journal published monthly by the tenants of the SHA. Medical services such as a traveling x-ray trucks and tuberculosis tests were made available to the tenants on a regular basis (SHA Seventh Annual Report). The long-term success of the development was affirmed in 1966, when the Seattle Municipal Art Commission awarded it with a Citation of Excellence for environmental compatibility and design excellence.

Civil Rights at Yesler Terrace

Epstein was adamant that Yesler Terrace be racially integrated, and it became the first such public housing project in the country (Berner, p. 186). In a 1973 interview he stated,

> So far as racial considerations were concerned, I made the decision administratively, early, that there would be no discrimination, no segregation, and, to me, that particular approach or way of handling the matter was so obvious that I did not ask the Board to declare a policy in writing. I felt that it could be handled administratively and I was also a little concerned that if I raised the question there might be some consideration given to such matters as quotas, even segregation.

Epstein avoided making desegregation a policy issue with the United States Housing Authority (Droker). USHA did not oppose this decision, despite the fact its housing developments at the time were specifically for white, low-income families; and those that were not, were segregated.

Before the completion of Yesler Terrace, Epstein was questioned by members of Seattle's black community about the development's racial policy. He spoke at a public meeting to over 1,000 people at an African American church. The meeting was heated and some attending demanded that African Americans be given their own assigned sections or buildings. There was also talk of setting quotas. Epstein disagreed and emphasized that all applicants would be evaluated by the same criteria: income and living situation, not race (Droker, p. 2).

Yesler Terrace remained Seattle's first racially integrated public housing development. Epstein recalled in a later interview that there were public meetings to encourage integrated rather than segregated housing, but due to pressures integration was more difficult to achieve in other SHA housing developments. (Droker, p. 2)

Despite the non-discriminatory residency practice that Epstein established for the Yesler Terrace development, non-citizens were not allowed to live in SHA housing. Construction of Yesler Terrace resulted in the demolition and removal of an estimated 395 Japanese American businesses, residences, and institutions. Because of this and due also to the internment of Japanese-Americans and Japanese following Pearl Harbor, these existing residents were not resettled within the project, regardless of their income levels or other needs. In addition, there were three Japanese churches and four Japanese grocery stores

from the area. (The original Japanese Baptist Church at 901 East Spruce Street was one of the buildings removed for Yesler Terrace. This church presently is located north of Yesler Terrace at 106 Broadway Avenue. It was remodeled and expanded with accessory facilities in 1958, 1984, and 1997.)

Defense War-Worker Housing and Veterans' Housing in Seattle

During World War II Seattle experienced a population influx of people who came to work in its wartime industries, including the Boeing Company, which recruited workers from the South. Existing housing was insufficient to meet the rising demand. With the federal government's approval through the Lanham Act of 1940, existing State legislation was amended that allow SHA to construct defense housing and waive the typical requirements of income level and replacement of substandard housing.

The 1942 residential addition to Yesler Terrace initially was not designated for defense housing, but was turned over to this purpose to address housing needs of war-workers. SHA subsequently gained funding for more defense housing projects, and its development built at Sand Point in northeast Seattle was one of the first defense housing projects in the nation. Rainier Vista, Holly Park, and High Point were built with funding provided by the Lanham Act, which allowed them to be used as defense housing during the war but operated as permanent low-income housing after the war's end (Droker). By 1943 SHA had built five housing projects in the city. Yesler Terrace was the only one near downtown Seattle, with the others located in outlying neighborhoods.

In 1946 the SHA shifted its focus to another pressing need: post-war housing for veterans. The census that year revealed that 20% of returning veterans were unable to find housing or were living in crowded conditions or in trailers. New houses were being constructed to meet demands, but SHA chose to provide interim veteran housing (SHA Seventh Annual Report). A February 27 article in the *Seattle Times* stated,

> The Authority is concerned daily with the immense task of providing homes for veterans … Public housing mushroomed in Seattle during the war years to meet the crisis of providing wartime houses to the workers in Seattle's industries. It was an emergency program. But when the war was over, and the greatest housing shortage in American history benumbed Seattle and every other city in the nation, the (war) housing program was versatile enough to become almost overnight a veteran's emergency housing program.

To help returning veterans, SHA began placing them in defense housing units as war workers moved out (SHA Seventh Annual Report, 1946). Eventually most of the housing needs of returning veterans were met with market housing in the city's growing suburbs, and SHA returned to focus primarily on low-income housing.

Jesse Epstein, First Director of the Seattle Housing Authority

The histories of both the Seattle Housing Authority and Yesler Terrace are closely interwoven with the life of Jesse Epstein, whose vision, expertise and perseverance directly resulted in the creation of SHA and its early projects (Sale).

Born in 1910 to a Jewish family, Jesse Epstein was two years old when the Epstein family moved from Russia to the United States in 1912 (Epstein Papers). The Epstein family settled in Great Falls, Montana, where Jesse's father ran a general store (Plank). As a young man Epstein moved from Montana to Seattle to attend the University of Washington, graduating in 1931 with a bachelor's degree in political

science. He continued on to law school where he studied constitutional and administrative law, anticipating a career in government or public service (Sale). As a research assistant and teaching fellow, Epstein was involved with the Washington State Research Council, a municipal service organization where he provided information and assistance to cities encouraging the implementation of federal New Deal legislation (Berner, Sale).

After graduating from law school and passing the State Bar in August 1935, Epstein was offered a position as research consultant to the Association of Washington Cities, where he worked for four years until 1939 (Western City). Through the course of this work, Epstein learned about funds available from the newly formed U. S. Housing Authority. He became aware of the need for low-income housing and educated in the new programs, and eventually lobbied for a local housing authority in the City of Seattle in order to gain federal funds for these projects. Epstein wrote legislation and campaigned to inform the public of low-income housing needs and the benefits of new federal programs. His work resulted in the creation of the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA). At the age of 29 Epstein became its first director.

SHA's first project, Yesler Terrace, was successful on many levels. Within a few years after its completion, SHA had constructed and was managing four additional housing developments at Holly Park, Rainier Vista, and High Point and Sand Point, largely the result of Epstein's efforts. Epstein was a highly skilled and efficient bureaucrat, and it was this skill that brought these projects to fruition. As described by Seattle historian Roger Sale, "during its heyday the Seattle Housing Authority consisted of one office with enough space for Epstein, an assistant, and a secretary" (Sale, p. 167).

Epstein was appointed the director of Region no. 7 of the Federal Housing Authority in 1945 after six years leading of SHA. This position put him in charge of operations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Alaska. Two years later, he moved from Seattle to San Francisco to become director of Housing Authorities for the West Coast region. (Droker).

Epstein's civil service was ended prematurely by accusations that he was associated with Communist activity as student. Epstein denied the charges and demanded a full investigation. A hearing was held in Seattle in April 1948, in which three individuals testified against him while more than 100 others testified personally or by written statement in support of Epstein's loyalty. He was cleared of all charges but left public service permanently. Resigning from his post in San Francisco, he accepted a Littauer Fellowship at Harvard University where he earned a Master's degree in Public Administration in 1949. Epstein eventually moved back to Seattle where he established a law practice, which continued until his retirement at the age of 74. Throughout his life Epstein was active in community service and efforts against segregation. He was involved in the Mountaineers Club, serving as its president for a time; the Seattle Indian Center; Neighborhood House; and REI. Epstein died in Seattle on June 18, 1989, at the age of 78 (Plank).

The Original Architects and Landscape Architects

Prior to World War II, most architects in Seattle practiced alone or in small partnerships of two or four male partners with staff architects and drafters. In an effort to undertake larger projects, architects would join together by contract into larger, temporary organizations capable of the required production. The Depression of the 1930s resulted in closure of many of the city's older architectural firms and retirement of their founders. Some designers left the city to travel and/or work abroad. Architects in this period appear to have focused on private residential commissions or on public employment. Some obtained work from New Deal programs, such as the buildings in Moran State Park on Orcas Island, designed by Ellsworth Storey. The Seattle Housing Authority, beginning with Yesler Terrace, was one of the earliest local agencies to employ a group of architects on a large public project.

SHA selected five architects from different firms to design Yesler Terrace. Director Jesse Epstein was deliberate in this decision, choosing primarily architects who were prominent figures in their profession to work in a new joint venture. The architects included J. Lister Holmes, who served as the project's chief architect, William Aitken, George W. Stoddard, William T. Bain, and John T. Jacobsen.

Local landscape architects Butler Sturtevant and E. Clair Heilman were chosen to provide the landscape design, which was an important part of the comprehensive plan. Engineering services and the early demolition contracts were given to multiple firms, to help spread the work and gain broader support for the project (Berner, Sale). Engineers for the project included structural engineers John H. Stevenson and De Witt C. Griffin, mechanical engineer Edwin L. Weber, and civil engineers Parker, Hill & H. W. Rutherford. The construction contract was awarded to J. C. Boespflug Construction Co. in January 1941 (SHA Second Annual Report).

The original drawings for Yesler Terrace do not cite individual attribution, but each architect brought different expertise to the project. Reportedly Holmes, Stoddard, and Jacobsen were the primary designers for the site layout and buildings; Bain was largely responsible for specifications and procurement; and Aitken undertook construction administration (Adekanbi, p. 101). Brief biographic profiles for each of the architects and landscape architects follow. Appendix C. provides images of other design projects by the architects.

J. Lister Holmes (1891–1986)

J. Lister Holmes was born in Seattle July 6, 1891. He studied civil engineering at the University of Washington from 1909–1911, and earned a Bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1913. Holmes worked in Philadelphia, New York, and Montana before returning to Seattle in 1916. In Seattle he worked initially for several important firms, including Bebb & Gould; B. Marcus Priteca; and Schack, Young & Myers.

Holmes established his own firm in Seattle in 1922. His projects included commercial buildings, small hotels and apartment blocks, and single-family residences. He also earned a reputation as a residential architect, and designed houses in a range of styles, drawing upon his classic Beaux Arts education. Holmes is notable for his successful transition from the Beaux Arts school of thought to the design philosophies of the International Style and the Modern Movement. This is exemplified by his designs of the 1930s; particular examples are the Seattle Weiner Dental Clinic (1936), the Arnold Dessau House (1939), and the Washington State Pavilion for the 1939 New York World's Fair.

In 1941 Holmes was selected by the Seattle Housing Authority to serve as the chief architect for the planning and design of the Yesler Terrace housing project (1941–1943). Holmes also worked on SHA's Gatewood Heights and Seward Park projects (both dating from 1941–1943).

After WWII, Holmes worked for a variety of public and institutional clients. He designed the Seattle Public Schools Administration Building (1946–1948), facilities for the Seattle Goodwill Industries (1948), the Ida Culver Residence (1948–1949, a multi-family project), the State Library on the Washington State Capitol campus (1950), the Seattle Public Schools Administrative and Service Center (1951), Catherine Blaine Junior High School (1952), and the Ancient Order of United Workmen Building (1952). In 1950–1952 he worked on the largest planning project of his career, the Fort Lewis Peacetime Development Master Plan, which included retail, housing, recreational and religious facilities.

Holmes was appointed to the Seattle Planning Commission from 1947–1955, serving as its chair from 1948–1950, and was on the National Board of the American Society of Planning Officials from 1948–

1951. He was elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1955. He continued to work through the 1960s, with his later work including several west coast distribution buildings for the United Parcel Service. Holmes' career lasted five decades. He remained in Seattle until his death on July 18, 1986 at the age of 95.

William Aitken (1889–1961)

William Aitken was born in Kingarth, Scotland in 1889. He attended Glasgow Technical College from 1903 to 1907 and worked as a draftsman in the city. During this period he also travelled to Great Britain, Ireland, France, Belgium, and Norway. By 1914 he had moved to the U.S. and was practicing architecture in Washington. (In April 1931 a William Aitken filed his naturalization papers in Whatcom County. This record has been attributed to the architect Aitken.)

As an architect, Aitken primarily worked as a sole practioner, although he sometimes collaborated with other firms for larger projects. The earliest citation of his work was in a brief partnership with a Canadian residential designer, Elmer Ellsworth Green (1861–1928), who worked in Seattle in 1908–1909. Aitken was a young man at this time, and may have worked in Canada before his arrival in the US. Green's Seattle projects included mansions in the Mount Baker neighborhood and the five-story Ben Lomond Apartments on north Capitol Hill (Luxton, p. 341).

Aitken began working as a sole designer in 1913, and was licensed by the State of Washington in 1921. His was one of the earliest licenses, No. 4, and it was granted to him on the basis of his work experience rather than education. The 1923 Polk Directory notes that Aitken then had an office in the Lyon Building in downtown Seattle. Aitken's most important early project was the Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon, Washington (1925–1926). The theatre building included attached retail stores and cost $100,000, including $22,500 for a Wurlitzer organ.

Both the original Rainier Brewery in Georgetown and the former Sicks Stadium on Rainier Avenue South in the Mount Baker neighborhood have been attributed to Aitken. Two projects that Aitken cited in an application for AIA membership are the Olympic Pie Company and the Western Warehouse Co. buildings, both in Seattle. (Aitken's 1939 membership application was sponsored by William Bain, another member of the Yesler Terrace design team. This application reveals little about his career or work, and Aitken resigned from the AIA in 1945.)

In 1953 Aitken associated with Seattle architects Fred Bassetti and John Morse to design Lakeview Elementary School for the Mercer Island School District. It appears that the partnership of Bassetti, Morse and Aitken was short-lived, and formed strictly for this project (PCAD). Additional information about Aitken's late career and life has not been discovered. He died in 1961 at the age of 72.

George W. Stoddard (1895–1967)

George Wellington Stoddard was born in Detroit, Michigan on September 30, 1895. He attended the University of Illinois to earn his Bachelor of Science in architectural engineering in 1917. He was drafted into the military immediately after graduating. Upon his return home from WWI, Stoddard joined his father's (Lewis M. Stoddard) architectural practice in Seattle; the firm was renamed Stoddard & Son. Lewis Stoddard died in 1929, and George W. Stoddard then established his own practice as George Wellington Stoddard & Associates.

The firm worked on a variety of public and commercial projects, including schools, colleges, medical clinics, hospitals, and banks. Stoddard's firm embraced the Modern style early, as evidenced in the design of the Harlan Fairbanks Company in Seattle (1931). Some of his notable works include Overlake High

School in Bellevue (1946), Memorial Stadium (1947, eventually incorporated into Seattle Center), Green Lake Aqua Theater (1950), University of Washington Stadium South Stands (1950), National Bank of Commerce at 4th Avenue and Olive Street in downtown Seattle (1956), and the Chapel at Veterans Hospital on American Lake, south of Tacoma (1958). In 1959 Stoddard formed a new partnership, George W. Stoddard-Haggard & Associates, Architects and Engineers, with Francis E. Haggard. He retired shortly afterward in 1960, after an active career of 40 years.

Stoddard was active in Seattle civic and social life. He served on the State Hospital Advisory Council Committee (1948–1949); Seattle Civic Arts Committee (chairman, 1947); King County Educational Advisory Committee (1950–1951) and King County Juvenile Advisory Committee (1952); and was a member of the Rainier Club, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Municipal League, and the Seattle Symphony, for which he served as a board member for many years. Stoddard was a member of the Washington State Chapter of the AIA from 1922 and was its president in 1946–1947. He died in 1967 at the age of 71.

William T. Bain (1896–1985)

William T. Bain was born in New Westminster, British Columbia on March 27, 1896. He moved to Seattle with his family at the age of seven, and attended the Los Angeles Architecture Club Atelier in 1914 and 1915. Bain began his architectural education as an apprentice in 1915, working for Seattle architects W. B. Wilcox, and Arthur Loveless for a short period. He left Seattle left to serve in France during WWI. After the war he enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania, where the architecture program was based on the Beaux Arts tradition. He graduated with an architecture degree in 1921. For the next several years Bain worked in the Los Angeles office of Johnson, Kaufmann & Coated.

Bain returned to Seattle and opened his own practice in 1924. His early work was primarily residential, with designs that reflected traditional elements and French Provincial, Colonial Revival and Georgian Revival styles common in the 1920s. In 1928-1932 he partnered with Seattle architect Lionel Pries, a practice that resulted in several sorority houses near the University of Washington. During this time he designed the Belroy Apartment at 703 Bellevue Avenue on Capitol Hill (1931), an early Modern style building with some Art Deco features. For the duration of the Depression there was little demand for architectural services, and Bain continued to focus on residential commissions. By the late 1930s he began a broader range of commercial projects, and his designs began to express more of a Modern vocabulary. Bain's Royal Crown Cola Bottling Plant (1940–1941) demonstrates his command of streamlined Moderne style architecture.

Bain served on the design and planning team for the Yesler Terrace Housing Project with J. Lister Holmes. The two men subsequently collaborated on the design of the Rainier Vista Elementary School (1942–1943). During the war he served as the State Camouflage Director, in charge of the mock residences on the roof of the Boeing Plant 2 in south Seattle.

Many architectural associations established during WWII to undertake large government projects were short-lived businesses. The firm of Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, organized in 1943, was formed in this way initially, but the partnership thrived and survived to become one of the largest firms in the U.S. As a founding principal of NBBJ, Bain designed and supervised numerous projects including the firm's former First Hill office building (1950–1951), Boeing Pre-Flight Facilities in Renton and Moses Lake (1956–1958), the Scottish Rite Temple (1958–1962) and Susan B. Henry Library (1954) on Seattle's Capitol Hill, and the First Presbyterian Church (1965–1970) on First Hill. Bain also worked on the designs for the Seattle World's Fair Science Center and Coliseum along with his son, William Bain, Jr., and his partner Floyd Naramore and others (1960–1962).

Bain was an active member of the American Institute of Architects throughout his life and served as the Washington State AIA president in 1941–1943. In 1947 Bain was elected a Fellow of the AIA. He retired in 1975, but continued to undertake design work. Bain died at the age of 89 on January 22, 1985 after a prolific and influential career.

John "Ted" Jacobsen (1903 – 1998)

Ted Jacobsen was born in 1903 in Seattle. He received his undergraduate degree in architecture at the University of Washington and then moved east to attend the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a Master's degree in 1926. Upon finishing his academic studies, Jacobsen spent time in Russia, where he designed several community schools, and traveled throughout Europe, South America, and Africa.

It is reported that he worked in New York City as a site architect for restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, a multi-phased project that began in the mid-1920s. However, this involvement must have been short-lived; by 1924 Jacobsen had returned to Seattle to study and teach in the University of Washington's Architecture Department. He taught in the department for several years during a period when its curriculum transitioned from Beaux Arts to Modern design training (Johnston, p. 27). Jacobsen was employed in the Seattle firm McClelland and Jones, Architects in 1942–1946 and had a partnership with Victor N. Jones from 1946–1955. This partnership, known as Victor N. Jones & Associates, was also called Jones & Jacobsen, Associated Architects in 1947–1948 (PCAD).

Jacobsen is a recognized figure in the modernist architectural legacy of the Pacific Northwest. Although he worked with Jones for several years, he also took work as a sole practitioner and was reportedly the resident architect for the Seattle Trust Bank. He designed several well-received and early Modern style houses in Seattle, including his own (1936), the George P. Norton House in View Ridge (1938), and the Andrew Gumby House in Seattle (1939). In 1949 Jacobsen designed the University of Washington's Administration Building/Gerberding Hall.

Jacobsen reportedly served as the principal building designer for Yesler Terrace, although he neither stamped nor signed the drawings. Several of the community buildings at Yesler Terrace share formal design aspects with Jacobsen's Stewart Heights housing project in Kirkland (unknown date), and the Bush School in Seattle (ca. 1930).

In later years Jacobsen worked with Lloyd Martin, a Seattle developer, to design several of Honolulu's earliest high-rise buildings. Jacobsen eventually moved to Hawaii with his family and worked there as an architect for John Graham & Co. He ultimately set up his own practice in the state. Prominent projects include Sea Life Park and research facilities in Oahu (unknown date) and a residence designed for Charles Lindbergh (1971). While living in Hawaii, Jacobsen also undertook a survey of historic churches in Maui and became a local expert on historic buildings. In 1969 he created the Lahaina Architectural Style book for the Lahaina County Historic Commission (Docomomo WEWA).

Jacobsen died in Hawaii on March 5, 1998 at the age of 95.

Butler Sturtevant (1899–1970)

Butler Sturtevant was born in Delevan, Wisconsin on September 1, 1899. He received undergraduate training in horticulture in Southern California in 1921, at what is now UCLA, and completed coursework for a Masters in Landscape Architecture at Harvard in the early 1920s. He worked in a series of Los Angeles offices before opening his own firm in Seattle in 1928 to develop the Master Plan of the Normandy Park Subdivision with architects Bebb and Gould. Other public projects followed at Butchart

Gardens in Victoria, B.C.; Children's' Orthopedic Hospital in Seattle; and campus grounds of Principia College in Elsah, Illinois (1931–1938, with Bernard Maybeck, architect).

Sturtevant practiced on his own until 1938. By the late 1930s, Sturtevant's wide-ranging practice encompassed planning as well as landscape architecture. His private work included several domestic gardens and landscapes in the Highlands, including the Paul Piggot Residence; Frederick Remington garden; Arnold Dessau house and garden, on which Sturtevant worked on with architect J. Lister Holmes; and the Ambrose and Viola Patterson Garden in Seattle (Ochsner).

At the recommendation of University Architect Carl Gould, Sturtevant was selected to serve as the University of Washington's landscape architect from 1931 to 1939. He worked on multiple campus design projects on the Seattle campus including the Medicinal Herb Garden (1934–1936), the grounds of Anderson Hall, and the development of Rainier Vista and the Drumheller Fountain.

In 1941 Sturtevant joined the Army Air Corps and at the same time formed a partnership with Edwin Grohs, an action that allowed him to maintain his professional practice in Seattle while in military service during WWII. Sturtevant received commissions for both Yesler Terrace and Holly Park in Seattle. Other defense-related projects followed, including Westpark, Eastpark, and Bremerton Gardens in Bremerton and the design of airfields throughout the southern U. S. At the end of the war Sturtevant opened an office in San Francisco specializing in airport design, where he continued to work on larger planning projects. In the 1950s he moved his practice to St. Louis, where he designed a number of large-scale private developments and school and campus plans through the late 1960s. (Dietz, in Ochsner, p. 234–239.)

Sturtevant's career exemplifies the development of landscape architecture as a profession distinctly different from garden design and horticulture. Sturtevant was a Seattle landscape architect whose career, like that of J. Lister Holmes, spanned from the Beaux Arts era to Modernism. Sturtevant died in St. Louis in February 1970.

E. Clair Heilman (n.d.)

Research has revealed little information about E. Clair Heilman.

Heilman, a landscape architect, collaborated with Butler Sturtevant to design the landscape for the Yesler Terrace Housing Project in 1939–1941. After the completion of Yesler Terrace, Heilman worked with landscape architect Noble Hoggson on the landscape design for the Sand Point Housing Project, which was built by SHA as defense worker housing in 1943 (PCAD, and Ochsner, p. 208).

Original Design Features of Yesler Terrace

In the 1920s, residential design in Seattle was dominated by eclectic styles that reflected the Arts and Crafts movement, as well as Classical and English Revival designs. Some Art Deco and Moderne style apartment buildings were constructed around 1930 prior to and during the onset of the Depression. However, the economic conditions of the period resulted in stagnation of the design market. Construction was at to a virtual standstill throughout the 1930s, with the exception of war-related projects. During this period a struggle ensued between Beaux-Arts traditions and Modernist tenets at the University of Washington's Department of Architecture. This struggle spread to local architectural practices, while Modernism dominated with few exceptions in academic institutions.

Federal low-income housing programs did not dictate design or call for specific design guidelines, rather they set limits to unit construction cost. In the design of low-income housing and war-era housing projects, economical use of materials and speed of construction was emphasized. Functionalist designs resulted in many cases.

After World War II, Modern style architecture ascended in the Puget Sound region, as it did nationally, as the preferred commercial and institutional style. The post-war decades of the 1950s and 1960s saw the emergence of a distinctly Northwest Regional style of residential design.

Stylistically, the residential buildings of Yesler Terrace share qualities with other residential work by architects such as Paul Hyden Kirk, John R. Sproule, and Victor Steinbrueck of Seattle; John Yeon and Pietro Belluschi of Oregon; and William Wuster and Joseph Ecsherick of California. Their designs explored ideas of informal living and the close relation between buildings and natural site features. These architects tended to use flat or low-sloping shed roof forms and straightforward wood framing, often with post and beam techniques. Cladding was typically wood — clapboard siding, board and batten or shingles — that emphasized the mass and use of local materials. Horizontal bands of glazing and corner windows that provided ample daylight were common features of the emerging Modern design.

Yesler Terrace followed some of these same design principles. The development was somewhat similar to other defense housing projects in the Northwest, notably the Westpark, Eastpark, and Bremerton Garden projects in Bremerton and Stewart Heights in Kirkland. Streets and paths that separated vehicles and pedestrians; low, horizontal building massing; and modest wood-frame, Modern-style buildings were typical in each of these projects. A comparison of Yesler Terrace with other low-income housing projects in Seattle reveals similarities in the low-density layout of buildings (*Pencil Points*).

SHA's wartime public housing projects in garden apartment style include Rainier Vista and Holly Park in the Rainier Valley, and High Point in West Seattle. Holly Park was constructed on 108 acres in 1942, and served as emergency housing for defense workers employed at Seattle's Boeing Plant. After World War II, it housed veterans and their families. During the Korean War, defense workers again took up residence at Holly Park. In 1953, the property was transformed into low-income housing by SHA.

Holly Park was designed by associated Seattle architects John Paul Jones, Frederick T. Ahlson, and Paul Thiry, along with landscape architect Butler Sturtevant, who was one of the landscape architects for Yesler Terrace. A review of the designs of Yesler Terrace and Holly Park shows that both projects used common materials and expeditious standard construction methods. Holly Park differed from Yesler Terrace in that its 339 one- and two-story buildings were set in a more picturesque fashion with mature trees, greater open space, and curvilinear roadways and cul-de-sacs that recall the Garden City movement. Also in contrast to Yesler Terrace, the buildings had low-sloped roofs and simpler window placement. The 900 dwellings in Holly Park had a separate covered exterior entry doors that led directly into the living and/or kitchen space. Holly Park, like Yesler Terrace, had a community center that housed a day nursery and community meeting space, and a medical social service center beginning in the early 1970s.

Nationally it appears that war-era housing developments typically were designed with more modesty and functionality than Yesler Terrace. They were made up largely by numerous low-rise buildings set on flat sites. Some residential projects, and especially those that appear to have been more temporary, were very simple barracks-like buildings set in efficient linear arrangments. Others, designed for greater permanence, featured some of the same Modern features of Yesler Terrace: flat roofs, horizontal groups of windows and corner windows, separate entries with simple porches. Massing was typically simple and common materials were used with few decorative details. (*Architectural Record*.)

Research has not revealed the specific design guidelines for public housing developments, such as Yesler Terrace, which appear to utilize elements of the garden apartment complex, a type of American housing that emerged in the early 20th century. City planners Clarence Stein and Henry Wright introduced solutions for affordable housing to the U.S. in the 1920s, drawing principles from Ebenezer Howard's late 19th-century Garden City Movement and European design solutions. Howard aimed to combine "the best of the city and country" by incorporating open space into urban developments with elements such as curvilinear streets and individual gardens to emphasized self-sufficiency and communal values.

While these features are visible in late 19th-century and early 20th-century suburban developments designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and others, Stein and Wright applied these Garden City forms to lower- and middle-class developments in the 1930s. They also conceived of the so-called super block, which clustered living units in duplexes and multifamily buildings on small cul de sacs around a central communal area. (A super block was much larger than a traditional city block. It allowed for greater building setbacks and the quiet block interiors.) To accommodate automobiles without weakening the Garden City concept, major vehicular thoroughfares were relegated to the periphery of a garden apartment complex and intersecting streets were eliminated. Pedestrian and vehicle roads were separated, and open spaces retained to provide a residential atmosphere.

Low-rise, middle-class garden apartment buildings are found in many Seattle neighborhoods, such as Capitol Hill, Ballard, Magnolia, and Wedgewood. Those dating from the same period as Yesler Terrace are limited, however, as most garden complexes were built in the post-war era. Two comparable properties include the Edgewater Apartments (1939-1940) at 2411 42nd Avenue East in Madison Park, and the Stoddard Terrace/Aloha Apartments,(1944) at East Aloha Street and Broadway. Both of these were conceived of and built as private developments.

The Edgewater Apartments complex, designed by John Graham Jr., provided two-story multi-family buildings organized in regular, uniformly-spaced patterns around spacious and well landscaped interior courtyards, with multi-car garages arranged near the perimeter. Stoddard Terrace was designed by one of Yesler Terrace's architects, George Wellington Stoddard. This half-block site contains nine groups of two-story, multi-family buildings organized in a dense, H-shaped layout with interior driveways and surface parking, interspersed with courtyard gardens, lawns, and footpaths. In contrast with the more utilitarian, Modern style of Yesler Terrace both of these other complexes are characterized by Colonial Revival style buildings with low-pitched gabled roofs, roof overhangs, individual covered porchlets, traditionally composed wood sash windows, and brick or painted siding.

During the Depression years and World War II, American design focused on function and the use of new technologies and building materials. In public projects, the federal government encouraged some Garden City concepts through the combination of open space and simple building forms. The PWA funded low-income housing projects consisting of blocks of housing with specific, quantified requirements for space, light, and air.

When America suffered a housing shortage following WWII, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) actively provided financing for housing. Veterans Administration and FHA mortgage insurance programs made single-family houses affordable to many middle-class families for the first time. Thus the predominant national and local trends in the post-war era were developments of "freestanding" single-family homes for the middle class and the development of increasingly dense towers in public housing for the poor. Under the direction of SHA, however, Seattle's low-rise housing developments stood in contrast to this national trend; the agency's first high-rise apartment for low-income residents was Jefferson Terrace, constructed in 1967.

The Kenyon Apartment Building / Jesse Epstein Building

Property History

The original Kenyon Apartment Building, at 905 Spruce Street, was acquired by the Seattle Housing Authority ca. 1977. In 1978-1979 it was converted by SHA for use as an office building housing social and medical service agencies serving low-income residents in the surrounding Yesler Terrace development and First Hill neighborhood.

The parcel on which this building is located was originally identified as: Terry's 2nd Addition, Block 85, Lot 1 and the northwesterly 3' of Lot 4 and a portion of vacated street & alley adjacent. The building was not part of the original Yesler Terrace site plan, although it is physically located centrally in the Yesler Terrace property. The building is included in this nomination because it is legally a part of the existing complex and located on tax parcel No. 9821700005. It appears that, because the property was considered part of Yesler Terrace after the late 1970s, the Jesse Epstein Building was not identified as a discrete property in the current City of Seattle historic resources surveys. (The building was also not cited in an earlier, 1975 urban survey and inventory of First Hill by Nyberg and Steinbrueck.)

There are no early permit records for the Kenyon, but according to the King County Tax Assessor's property record card it was constructed in 1909. This date corresponds to a period of sizable population growth in the city. The earliest citation of the building in a local Polk Directory was in 1910, where it is listed as a hotel, "The Kenyon, 9th Ave SE cor Spruce … Mr. and Mrs. E.D. Benson, proprietors." Similar bearing brick masonry apartments and apartment-hotels were built in the city's downtown and on parts of First Hill, Queen Anne Hill, and Capitol Hill in the period from 1900 to World War I, and especially in 1909 in response to the demand of visitors to Seattle's Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of that year.

The Kenyon Hotel was the subject of an advertisement in the May 1909 issue of a local tourist publication, *The Westerner,* "For Exposition Visitors," which touted it as middle class apartment-hotel for visiting families. As a hotel it provided 100 rooms, arranged in suites of two, three and four rooms, on three floors. The article extolled the building's features: hot and cold water, electric lights, and units fitted with gas ranges and other furnishings for light housekeeping. It noted also that the hotel was located near streetcar lines that linked it to the city's downtown by a 3.5 minute ride. The daily room rate, $1.50, was described as "exceptionally reasonable," and special rates were indicated for week or month-long stays.

Ownership and Occupancy History

Polk Directory listings from 1912 through 1975 and King County tax assessor's record indicate patterns of use and occupancy. The Kenyon was an apartment building with small rental dwellings and on-site managers rather than on-site owners. It was owned and/or managed by a number of Japanese or Japanese Americans during the 1920s through the 1950s:

- In 1912 the Kenyon Apartment was cited as a "new 300-room brick apartment" with Central WA Inv. (Investment) & Power Co. as proprietor (presumably the owner) and J.P. Parker as on-site manager.
- In 1915 the manager was cited as Fred Rogers.
- In 1916 the building was listed simply as the Kenyon Apts.
- In 1923 there were two occupants with telephones – S. Sasmura and A. Yvard – in the Kenyon Apts.

- The 1930 directory cited Minoru Okajaki as the owner. Okajaki resided off-site at 1029 Sturgus Avenue South. The directory also listed Minoru Konatsu as the building's on-site manager.
- The fee owner on 12-11-1937 was Equitable Realty Corp., cited by the County Tax Assessor
- The 1940 directory cited Kazuo Takemoto as the on-site manager, and listed the tenants.
- In the 1951 directory J.S. Okamoto was cited as the on-site manager. This Directory listed 38 tenants, which suggests that each resident occupied two or three rooms.
- The 1960 directory noted Mrs. Haruye Okamoto as on-site manger and listed 43 tenants. The assessor records indicate that Edward Oyshito and others purchased it for $85,000 on July 23, 1962.
- In 1968 the property was purchased for $140,000 by Rooke & Associates.
- By 1970 the directory cited Joe Johnson as on-site manager and noted 39 tenants.
- Byron O. Calhoun and others were cited by assessor records in June 1971 as owners. In March 1972 Northern Pacific Enterprises, Inc. purchased the building. Both parties paid $148,000 for the property.
- The 1975 directory noted Gordon Hess as the on-site manager. By this date building had 40 apartments but the reverse directory indicated that 19 were vacant.

The original brick masonry Kenyon Apartment building appears to have been of a better quality than many of the nearby wood-framed and-clad apartment buildings, boarding houses, and hotels of ca. 1890–1920 on the southernmost slope of First Hill. The Kenyon property was not acquired by SHA as part of the original Yesler Terrace planning, and the building remained in private ownership to the mid-1970s. Its retention during the period from ca. 1940 through the late 1970s may have been due to its construction quality or its market-rate moderate-income apartments.

The building has been used as an office for social and medical services agencies for the past three decades. In 1978, SHA applied for a permit to convert the building from residential to commercial use with 19,000 square feet of offices and a 1,200 square foot meeting room according to Building Department correspondence and DPD permit records from that year. The project was funded in part by $300,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds.

Original building occupants in the Jesse Epstein Building included offices of the Yesler Terrace Community Center and Head Start. Since ca. 1990 it has housed the offices of the Puget Sound Neighborhood Housing Coalition (SNHC), and Seattle Environmental Health Services (SEHS) administrative staff and medical clinic; Neighborhood House Early Childhood Education Center staff, administrative offices; and offices of *The Voice,* a monthly newspaper distributed to public housing residents in King County and Seattle. Current occupants include the Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Center, Neighborhood house and the YMCA Seattle Emergency Housing offices.

4. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Historic Urban Context

Yesler Terrace is located on the southwestern edge of Seattle's First Hill neighborhood, on 20 separately platted full blocks and 5 partial or truncated blocks. These blocks were primarily rectangular, but some were truncated parcels due to the street grid shift in the area north of Yesler Way and west of Broadway Avenue. The current property is situated just east of I-5, north of South Main and South Jackson Streets, and south of Alder Street. Its eastern edge extends to a half-block on the east side of Boren Avenue between East Fir Street and Yesler Way. (Note: For reference in this document orientation of north will be consistent with the street grid south of Yesler, even when describing the blocks to the north.)

Originally the property extended west to Maynard Street and 7th Avenue, and north to include several blocks between 7th and 8th Avenues to the west of Harborview Hospital. It was expanded to the north and east in 1942. The additional site included the adjacent half-block area west of 7th Avenue and Harborview Hospital, two blocks between Broadway and 9th to the north of Spruce Street, and a half-block between 11th and 12th Avenues and north of Yesler Way.

The resulting property had a north boundary along Alder Street, west of Broadway Avenue to 8th Avenue, and extending north to encompass a half-block between Jefferson Street and James Street, along the present site of Jefferson Terrace. The west boundary was along 7th Avenue north of Yesler Way (in the present I-5 right-of-way), and along Maynard Avenue to the south of Yesler. The south boundary was along Main Street, while the western edges extended to a stepped line along 12th Avenue South from Main north to encompass the half-block south of Fir Street; from there west to Broadway Avenue and north along Broadway Avenue to where it met Alder Street. (See the site plan, p. 45.)

Only portions of this property remain as part of Yesler Terrace due to reductions resulting from construction of I-5 and the new Yesler Community Center. The freeway project removed the blocks west of Harborview Hospital's garage, separating the sites of Yesler Terrace and Jefferson Terrace, and also portions of Yesler Terrace west of 8th Avenue, and resulted in demolition of 28 residential buildings and modification of several others that remained. (An additional 3 residential buildings were removed for the 2003–2005 construction of the new Yesler Terrace Community Center.)

Boren Avenue, a major arterial, terminated at Broadway—North of Yesler Terrace—until 1949–1950, when it was broadened and extended south to meet Jackson Street, where it intersects Rainier Avenue South and 14th Avenue South. Although this "channelization" project post-dates the original development of Yesler Terrace, the extension of Boren was anticipated at the time Yesler Terrace was designed. No Yesler Terrace buildings were demolished to make way for this street project, but the residences on the east side of Boren Avenue were effectively divided from the primary complex by the highly-congested road.

The Original Site

Pre-existing buildings on the Yesler Terrace site were demolished in 1940 to allow for construction of the complex. With the exception of a few mature trees and the Kenyon Apartments/Jesse Epstein Building, at 905 Spruce Street, the land was completely cleared.

The original property was an irregular shape, due in part to a shift in street grids, the presence of Harborview County Hospital, and the site's steep topography along the east and west sides. Slopes on the Yesler Terrace site prior to grading varied, as it encompassed both the west and south edges of First Hill.

As indicated on a Site Plan of November 9, 1940, elevations ranged from the high point of 320' near 8th Avenue and Terrace Street, down 45' to an elevation 275' one block west; and from an elevation of 300' near the intersection of Alder Street and 9th Avenue, to an elevation of 115', with a grade change of 185' in approximately four blocks.

Yesler Way, the primary east-west street at the center of the project, sloped downward in two directions from a relatively level area at an elevation of 245' between Broadway and 10th Avenue, to elevation 205' at Maynard Avenue on west edge and at 12th Avenue South on the east edge. The steepest grade changes were near the southwestern portions of the site, north of Main Street between Maynard Avenue and 10th Avenue South, and in the northern portions between Alder Street and Yesler Way.

In planning the layout of the complex, designers divided the site into seven sectors, Q through W, with sector Z added in the 1942 phase. Placement of the new buildings on the site was dictated by the designers' understanding of the topography. The linear residential structures were typically set in long rows along topographic lines, placed with 40' to 50' of open space between them. Community buildings were constructed near the center of the project, on the south side of Yesler Way. This location accommodated access to main and basement levels due to the grade change, and overlooked a level area for the playfield. The steam plant was sited at a high elevation of 275', at the curving corner of Spruce Street and 8th Avenue. Paved pathways and exterior stairs traversed the grades within each sector, and paved sidewalks were constructed along the streets.

An original site plan from 1940 shows an unrealized development: the southern termination of Broadway Avenue at the western end of Fir Street, with a symmetrical open space on the block north of Yesler Way. This open space was envisioned as lined with sidewalks and ending at a curvilinear inset at the roadbed, with a layout that recalls Beaux Arts design principles. A "Project Building" is identified in one of the site plans to be placed in the center of this space. Historic Kroll maps and photographs indicate that the open space design was never realized. Instead, Broadway continued south from Fir Street through the former space to terminate in a three-way intersection at Yesler Way. This termination emphasized the location of the original community building, which was built on the south side of Yesler Way.

The 1940 site plan shows other changes in the pre-existing street grid that were made for the project: the western termination of Spruce Street at 9th Avenue, and the curving of 8th Avenue south of this intersection. The north-south alleys in new buildings in the western and southwestern blocks were eliminated; Washington Street, and portions of 7th, 8th and 10th Avenues South, were narrowed. The changes in the street grid and street widths appears to have been carried out to create more open space between the residential buildings and to limit through-traffic.

Another change in the street grid appears to have been anticipated. Shown on the original site plan for Yesler Terrace was the future southern extension or "channelization" of Boren Avenue from Broadway to South Jackson Street. The four Yesler Terrace buildings on the east side of Boren Avenue were situated on the north and east side of the half-block parcel to allow for this shift.

Landscape Features

Historic photographs and real estate maps indicate that many of the pre-existing blocks were developed with wood-frame housing, transient and residential hotels, and a few commercial and institutional buildings. All of this was changed with the removal of nearly all construction, including light poles and utilities.

The November 9, 1940 landscape plan for Yesler Terrace shows proposed locations of two laundry yards near a badminton court and paved play yard with a sand box in the northwest portion of the complex in the center of Sector Q. Similar laundry yards and play areas were located in the center of each of the other sectors, accessed by paved paths and steps. There were no discrete washing facilities or laundries cited on this plan, and residents presumably washed within their dwelling units or in the laundries located in partial basements in several buildings. Individual laundry buildings were subsequently constructed, typically within courtyard spaces between the residential buildings (dates unknown).

Grass lawns and paved walkways were cited on the original landscape plan, along with a few identified deciduous trees within the sectors—maple, cherry, locust, and plum—and street trees. There are symbols and caliper sizes noted for some trees (a 30" locust and 18" maple in Sector R, 18" and 24" cherries in Sector S, a 30" maple in Sector T, a 30" maple and 10" and 18" cherry in Sector U, and two 30" poplars and two maples in Sector V, and others), which seem to indicate their pre-existence on the Yesler Terrace site. Original landscaping (as indicated by landscape plans dating from 1940) included 10 types of trees as well as various shrubs, vines, and groundcover. The present site contains a number of mature trees that, because of their size, are defined as exceptional by DPD.

Low walls, constructed of broken concrete slabs, make up non-original retaining walls. Wood picket fencing, approximately 3' tall, is visible in an early photograph but few wood fences remain. Low chain-link fences are visible in tax record photos dating from 1960. The present fencing that encloses individual back yard and courtyard spaces is chain link. Some of the current, individual back yards are surrounded by taller fences that indicate that the dwelling is or was used recently for licensed home childcare. Regardless, most of the Yesler Terrace property remains visually open with similar turf areas, trees, paved walks, and parking lots that characterized the original site design.

Individual garden spaces were not graded into terraces as part of the original project. Photos from the 1950s and 1960s show abundant plantings and gardens in some yards. It appears that the steep sloped yards have been difficult to plant or maintain by dwellers. Currently there are some residential buildings with individually terraced gardens. In addition there is a playfield behind and south of the community buildings, and an active P-Patch for residents situated at the southwest corner of the site.

The Original Residential Buildings

84 low-rise structures, containing from 3 to 22 units each, made up the initial Yesler Terrace project. Each of the Phase 1 residential building featured two-stories in linear arrangements with flats or townhouses units. The individual dwelling were full depth in the townhouses, with daylight orientation on at least two sides. Phase 2 buildings, which contained apartments in the five, three-story buildings that made up the original defense-industry workers housing in Z Sector. Upon completion of this phase in 1942, Yesler Terrace contained a total 97 residential buildings and a total of 863 dwelling units.

The smallest of the original buildings was located primarily along the western edge, and contained four to six dwellings. The largest ones Phase 1 buildings contain 14 and 16 units (and in one case, 24 units), while more typical buildings contained 7 to 12 units. The Phase 2 construction consisted of two buildings on a partial block west of 7th Avenue between Alder and Jefferson Streets (containing 16 units), four buildings east of Boren Avenue (with 40 units), and five, three-story buildings on the two blocks north of Spruce Street and east of 9th Avenue (with 72 units). The latter are the only three-story buildings within the project.

Original residential buildings were wood framed with cast-in-place, 6"-wide reinforced concrete foundation walls and reinforced concrete piers. A few were constructed with basements. Framing

consisted of 2x8 joists at 16" on center for floor construction, which was bridged at the ceiling joists for roof framing. Floor-to-ceiling heights were modest, at 7'-6". Built-up roofing was used to clad the flat roofs, and exterior walls were finished with cedar lap or rustic V-groove siding. Some areas, such as balconies, had cedar board and batten cladding. Historic photographs indicate that at least some of the cedar siding was left unpainted, but by the mid-1970s all of the residential building exteriors were painted. Front and back doors were similar three-panel wood types.

The buildings were generally rectangular in mass, with depths of 20' to 24'. Building lengths originally varied due to the number of units ranging, for example, from 42' in the four-unit Building No. 48, to 64' in No. 14, 21, 22, and 26; 86.5' in No. 30 and 39; 149'-8" in No. 28; and 191'-7" in No. 74. The longest buildings, No. 97 and 97, were 227'-6" in length and contained 20 units. (Appendix A to this report contains 1950 to 1971 tax record photographs of the buildings. Appendix B provides additional descriptions and current photographs of each of the extant residential buildings.)

While some of the buildings are simple rectangles, most featured shifts of approximately 4' in the plans and the massing of longitudinal facades. Several buildings have "L" shaped footprints with end projections of up to 12' on one or both ends. In these, the projection corresponds to an individual unit. Despite this variation in massing, there does not appear to be affectation or modeling to create visual interest by facade modulation. Instead the Yesler Terrace buildings directly responded to the site topography while the internal unit plans remained relatively consistent.

All of the residential buildings originally featured flat roofs. Those set on seep sloped areas of the site featured stepped roof heights and corresponding stepped floor levels. Roofs were treated with overhangs on some elevations, and detailed with crisp, minimal trim to emphasize horizontality. (Horizontality in the design was emphasized in perspective sketch by architect J. Lister Holmes, printed in the February 1941 *Pencil Points*. The drawing, for example, shows a low band of contrasting cladding, an exterior detail that was not constructed.)

Longitudinal building facades are cited in the 1964-era record drawings as "Garden Elevations" or "Service Elevations." The service entries often were placed on the higher grade levels, affording each dweller a more private view down into the back yard and over adjacent buildings. Also with this orientation, there was more daylight due to the larger number and sizes of windows on the garden side.

Most of the windows faced south or west, toward the back yard areas. Original windows were wood framed types, typically 2' by 4' or 2' by 3'. Original wood-framed windows were of standard widths, and head heights were aligned on all facades. Windows on the backs or garden façades were typically the taller size, and set with slightly lower but consistent sill heights of approximately 3' from finished floor level. The windows were set in single or paired openings, or in groups of three or four in larger openings. The service side facades and ends contained some smaller window openings, with 1.5' by 2.5' rectangular windows set individually or in pairs. Typical window sash contained a single glass panel without divided lights. (Some drawings show a single horizontal muntin in the bottom quarter sash, but this element does not appear in early construction photos.)

Special corner fenestration, made up by assemblies on the longitudinal facade that met a single window on an adjoining wall, occur on some buildings. This type of window composition, a typical feature in Modern style designs, emphasized the corner and different floor planes. It sought to abstract solids and voids, and called attention to the contrast between building's cubic mass and the finer scale linear elements, such as window frames and roof edges.

Window types included fixed or casement single units; paired windows with a fixed and a casement unit; or three or four-window assemblies with casements flanking fixed center unit. Operating windows were

an important feature of the design as there was no air conditioning in the units or vented attics to dissipate heat gain within the buildings. To provide shading, flat roofs were extended with deep overhangs over the building's garden facades and corner window assemblies.

Original Plans and Dwelling Layouts

SHA records indicate that there were 33 floor plans used for residential buildings of different capacities:

- Four 4-plex buildings based on three plan types for Buildings No. 29, 30 and 39, and 53.
- Three 5-unit buildings with two plan types for No. 14 and 26, and No. 33.
- Fourteen 6-unit buildings with three plan types for No. 27, 35, 37, 69, 72 and 73; 40, 62, 63, 79 and 86; and 36, 85 and 87.
- Two 7-unit buildings, each a different plan type, for No. 28 and 67.
- Sixteen 8-unit buildings with six plan types for No. 6, 11 and 58; 38, 47, 48, 52, 57 and 68; 43 and 75; 34, 71 and 81; and 78; and 92.
- Seventeen 9-unit buildings with five plan types for No. 15–20, 80, 82, 83 and 84 (and for the similar 7-unit No. 80) and 74; 64, 70, 76 and 77; and 98
- Three 10-unit buildings with two plan types for No. 31; and in Buildings 12 and 25;
- Six 12-unit buildings with four plan types for No. 60 and 61; and 93 and 94; 95; and 99
- Twelve 14-unit buildings with four plan types for No. 21 and 22; 59; 32, 40, 41, 62, 63, 79 and 86; and 21 and 22.
- Two 16-unit buildings with two plan types for No. 42, and 45 and 46.
- Three 24-unit, three-story buildings with two plan types for No. 96 and 97; and Building 100.

Original plans and elevations on pages 98-102 in this report show representative building designs. Several are described below. In addition, Appendix A contains a tax assessor's record photo of each of Yesler Terrace's residential and community buildings, and Appendix B contains a description and current photos all extant residential buildings.

Building No. 27 was a typical six-unit building with two-story townhouse units. It was 127'-7"by 23'. It featured a projecting end section and a main mass 106' in length. Its flat roof and floor levels feature a single longitudinal step. The exterior building height averaged an estimated 20', though this varied with the grade level. Each unit was approximately 21'-3" wide, including framing, and contained an estimated 940 Square feet. The first-floor of each unit contained a private stairwell, a kitchen on the service/entry side, and full-width living/dining rooms along the garden side, accessing the back yard through a private door. The second floor held a bathroom and two similar-sized bedrooms, with access from one onto a narrow balcony. (A large, shared laundry room was originally located in the basement's west end, with an exterior side entry placed on the short end façade.)

Building No. 33 was a somewhat similar, two-story building with no basement. Within overall dimensions of 127'-4" by 30'-10" it provided five units – three 2-bedrooms, one 1-bedroom and one large 4-bedroom townhouses. Because of its site it had to accommodate a greater longitudinal slope, resulting in three changes in floor and roof levels. These steps on the west and east elevations were emphasized by two, stepped by continuous cantilevered porch roofs above garden side doors. In this building, each townhouse had a private entry landing and service porch, and one end wall contained windows to illuminate the larger living room of the 4-bedroom unit.

Building No. 22 contained a different dwelling type with stacked flats rather than townhouses. Upper floor units accessed shared balconies, while those on the lower floor had small yards set above

a retaining wall. In the 1960s this long, 14-unit building was modified in response to the nearby I-5 freeway construction. Approximately 90' of its original 175' length was removed and it was reduced in size to seven units.

Building 31, a 107'-10" by 27'-8" structure, contained flats, with four studios and six 1-bedrooms. Floor plans for these units were similar on both floors, and each unit shared an interior entry or stairwell. Two long balconies off the second floor were also shared. The relatively small, 107'-10" by 27'-8" structure has a single step in the center of the floor plans and roof. (Single-level flats were typical in Buildings 96, 97, 98 and 99, the three story buildings that have standardized placement of windows in exterior walls rather than at corners.)

(In ca.1964, a single-story duplex with two studios, Building No. 106, was built on the site of an original, eight-unit residential building, No. 52, which had been removed for the freeway construction. This concrete frame building was a prototype for SHA's Jefferson Terrace and not based on original plans.)

Original Interior Features

Typically, the first floor of each building was accessed from the semi-private walkway by a paved landing, shared by two exterior entries on the service side. This entry led into an interior stairwell. On the garden side of the building (often the south or west side) the back door of each unit was shaded by a flat porch roof. Porch roofs were set directly above door and window trim levels. Some front porch roofs were supported by posts and screen walls of vertical wood elements.

In the design of all the apartments, there were clear efforts at economy. Interior wood stud walls and ceilings were finished with painted plasterboard, and floors with fir and oak flooring and linoleum. Interior painted fir trim was limited to window, closet, door and base trim. Doors and kitchen cabinets were of similar materials. Closets were small recesses or subdivided portions of inner walls, each with a single shelf and rod but no door. An original bathroom contained a toilet, lavatory sink, bathtub, and a surface-mounted medicine cabinet with mirror. (The baths were the only rooms fitted originally with a door.) A single ceiling-mounted fixture provided lighting in each room. Each room also contained a single radiator with steam heat provided from the on-site power plant. Electrical outlets were limited and placed prominently at mid-wall level.

Typical kitchens were small. They contained cabinets along only one wall, presumably to allow for freestanding furniture, ranges, and refrigerators to be placed on the opposite wall. (Historic photos show some kitchens with domestic touches, such as scalloped curtains and knick-knack shelves, and the original stained wood cabinets.) In units with more bedrooms, there were larger kitchens, but they were of a similar arrangement, but allowed for more furniture. Interior finishes were simple with linoleum flooring, stained or painted wood base and trim, and painted plaster walls and ceilings.

Changes to the Residential Buildings

(As described later in this report, a total of 28 residential buildings have been removed from the original Yesler Terrace site, and seven other residential buildings were reduced in size and dwelling capacity. Changes to each residential building are cited in the accompanying Appendix B.)

In the past nearly six decades, many modifications have been made to the remaining original residential buildings that have impacted their architectural significance. Permit records and bid drawing sets indicate the following:

11.10.1941	Addition to Yesler Terrace (Phase 2), Sector X Buildings, by J. Lister Holmes, William T. Bain, John T. Jacobsen, William Aitken, George W. Stoddard
8.14.64	Repairs to Site & Buildings Affected by Freeway at Yesler Terrace (structural, roof parapets, stair, exterior stucco and cladding revisions), Kirk Wallace McKinley, AIA & Associates
May 1966	Yesler Terrace Exterior Modifications (Plans & Elevations of Existing Buildings only)
1980	Modernization (play shelter and care, mechanical, electrical site work, laundries, fire alarms), Bittman Sanders Hanson Architects
1980	Modernization of Buildings No. 10, 11, 12, 13, 65 and 66
2.19.1981	New Play Areas, permit #590093
June 1981	Day Care Occupancy, #590093
1988	Modernization of Buildings 92, 93, 94 & 95 (Z Sector) and No. 96, 97, 98, 99 & 100 (Y Sector)
1995	Roof Replacement, Building No. 11
1996	Roof Replacement, Sector R, S, T, U & W Buildings, Bumgardner Architects

Permit citations and drawings do not document all modifications, but changes are evident in the field or apparent when comparing historic and contemporary photographs:

- The addition of covered porch roofs over the main entries on the service and garden sides
- Replacement of cantilevered flat porch entry roofs with post-supported hipped roofs or low-sloped roofs
- Addition of paved patio slabs
- Construction of storage towers (enclosed outdoor closets) on the garden sides of most of the residential buildings
- Changes to exterior colors, with differentiation of the original dwellings and the defense worker housing, and user of more contrasting trim and door colors
- Replacement of interior light fixtures, addition of exterior lighting
- The addition of laundry buildings and removal of laundries from some buildings
- Most of the original floor plans and room layouts and uses have been retained, while cabinets and fixtures and cabinets upgraded.
- Finishes were modified in 1964 along with upgraded kitchens and bathroom.

Roofs of all the remaining original Phase 1 1941 buildings have been reframed to create low sloping roof forms. The nine, two and three-story Phase 2 buildings (No. 96–100), dating from 1942, have been changed more dramatically with the addition of gable and cross-gable roofed attics, and gabled wall dormers. These buildings no longer appear to have been part of the original project, and the original continuity of the development as a whole has been impacted as a result.

The original cedar siding remained stained on some buildings up to the early 1970s according to tax assessment photos from that period, although all buildings were painted later. By the 1970s some balconies were clad with various corrugated metal or other types of vertical cladding. Exterior flashing and metal reinforcing edging was replaced with larger-scaled prefabricated galvanized metal after the 1970s. The present vinyl cladding, dating from the 1990s, is made up by horizontal lap type siding, detailed with vertical corner boards, wide window trim, and perforated soffit cladding. Roof overhangs are treated with a tall edge trim and coping, which gives a heavy scale to the roof edge similar to the heavy-scale of the vinyl-framed windows. The original sense of horizontality and crispness, provided by flat and cantilevered roof forms, massing, cladding, and window details, has been changed and the

resulting overall impression is blocky. The buildings are no longer expressive of their original Northwest Modern designs.

Non-Residential Buildings

Within Yesler Terrace are a steam plant and several other buildings that were constructed in the early 1940s, as part of the development. A small complex of community facilities were constructed at the foot of Broadway Avenue, just south of the intersection of Broadway and Yesler Way. A portion of this community center, along with three residential structures, was demolished in 2003 to allow for construction of a new Seattle Parks Department facility—the Yesler Community Center.

The Steam Plant (1941)

Yesler Terrace was the first low-income housing project in the West to provide heat from a central plant. J. Lister Holmes, in a November 1941 article, notes that:

> The architects did not like the thought of having small chimneys popping out of the roofs to throw smoke into the windows of the buildings above. With this in mind they investigated other possibilities and found that, because of the length of the buildings, it was feasible to design an economical central heating plant with forced hot water circulation. Estimates showed the operation of this plant would cost $2.50 less a unit per month than the next most economical method of heating. (*Pencil Points*.)

The steam plant is located where 8th Avenue, 9th Avenue, and Spruce Street intersect, on a site that slopes steeply down from north to south. The building has an irregular footprint and features a curving facade at the northwest corner, where it follows the curvilinear roadbed of 8th Avenue. The southern portion of the building has a more rectilinear footprint. On the northwest and west sides, typical narrow strips of grass separate the building from the sidewalk along 8th Avenue. An 18'-wide paved concrete alley is located along the northeast, east, and south sides of the building, serving a small parking area along the southern two-thirds of the east side of the building. At the building's north end, a ramp up from the street provides vehicular access to a service drive on a portion of the flat roof. (Originally, coal delivery trucks used this ramp to access and unload into hoppers.)

Architectural drawings for the building have not been discovered. The following description is derived from visual observation as well as 1960 tax assessor's records. The one- and two-story building has a concrete foundation and is constructed of reinforced, poured-in-place concrete. The massing features several different roof levels, with projecting eaves. Together with the horizontally striated texture on the board-form concrete facades, the eaves provide a strong horizontality to the building that balances the tall concrete stack rising from its center. Tax records indicate the roof construction as frame and reinforced concrete.

Overall dimensions of the steam plant are approximately 77'-6" (east-west) by 130' (north-south). A recess on the east side of the building provides a service court approximately 18' wide by 25' deep. The southern 82'+/- of the building is rectilinear, while the northern portion features the curving northwest façade as well as another curving exterior wall on the north side of the service court. Due to the topography, the northern portion of the building is a single story, while the southern portion is two-story. Original windows are primarily multiple-light steel sash, set into openings with a slightly projecting concrete sill. Both overhead doors and person doors are located on the south and east façades of the building. A number of the wood overhead doors appear to be original. The large overhead metal coiling door on the south façade is a non-original door in an original opening.

The original boiler room at the southwest side of the building constitutes the main volume of the steam plant—a 28'-tall open volume approximately 51' by 66'. This room has been recently divided by a metal- framed, gypsum wallboard-clad partition. To the east of it, at the southeast corner of the building, is an approximately 25'-wide, two-story office portion. The northern one-story portion of the plant contains an office, shop, and storage space. Tax records indicate wood-framed interior partitions with painted plaster; hollow clay tile interior infill walls are also visible. Interior finishes are utilitarian, consisting of concrete floors and walls, some painted plaster or hollow clay tile, and wood doors with metal trim.

Tax records indicate that vehicular roof access originally served coal hoppers to feed the boiler. A partial subbasement provides storage area as well as chimney access. A metal door to the chimney is stamped "Alphons Custodis Chimney Const. Co., Chicago, Ill."

The steam plant was constructed in 1941 as an original part of the Yesler Terrace project. Revisions to the boiler were undertaken in late 1974, according to a permit date 11.7.1974, for "Monitoring Boiler #2, permit #37106; Boiler #3, 37107," and in mid 1975 a 10,000 gallon service tank was installed in the boiler room according to a 7.21.1975 permit, #558428. It steam plant provided steam heat to the residential units until it was decommissioned in 1989-1990. At that time the boiler was removed and hazardous materials abated. Currently, a portion of the building is used for Yesler Terrace facilities storage, while other portions, including the upper floor area and the majority of the boiler room, are leased to Harborview Hospital and used as its cabinet shop and grounds shop.

A series of stepped garages were constructed to the east of the steam plant in 1955. This concrete-block structure measured approximately 105' (north-south) by 23' deep (east-west) and provided five parking bays. It was demolished after 1998, and presently there is surface parking on the former garage area.

While the steam plant is a utilitarian service structure, it exhibits some clearly Modern design features, in contrast to the traditional designs of earlier power plants in the city. These features include the simple curvilinear massing, the flat roof and overhang over a horizontal bands of windows along the northwest facade, and the expressive use of architecturally finished concrete as both structure and finish.

The Community Building (1942)

A community building was included as part of the original Yesler Terrace complex. Located on the south side of Yesler Way, at the foot of Broadway Avenue, this one- and two-story structure is a combination of wood-frame and brick masonry construction. Architectural drawings dated October 23, 1941 show the community building as an L-shaped office portion to the west of a basically rectangular auditorium portion, with an open court and loggia between. Historic photos, 1960 tax records, and a 1993 Kroll Map indicate there was also a second small L-shaped building east of the auditorium. This building housed the Yesler Terrace management office, but it was demolished sometime in the recent past.

The overall footprint of the community building is approximately 204' (east-west) by 83' (north-south). The L-shaped western portion originally served as the main office of the Seattle Housing Authority, while the eastern portion contains a lobby, auditorium, and associated service spaces. The building has a concrete foundation and partial basement along the south side. This is a daylight basement, as the site slopes down from north to south. The auditorium portion is approximately 24' tall from Yesler Way sidewalk level to the parapet coping, while the office portion is approximately 11' tall. The building has flat roofs with projecting eaves.

All four facades of the eastern portion are clad in brick veneer, while the western portion is primarily clad with non-original plywood and batten (with the exception of the northwest corner, which is clad with brick veneer). Original drawings indicate vertical board cedar siding, while the newer plywood and batten has a wider profile.

The main entries are located off the open court and loggia. The office portion has a main door located at the north end of the east facade. This entry was set into a corner feature consisting of large glazed panels set into a wood grid. The wood entry door had three square lights, vertically stacked. This original door has been replaced with a flush metal door. The glazed grid surround appears to have been either altered or replaced, and the lowest panels are now solid. Original drawings indicate three pairs of entry doors on the west (court) façade of the auditorium portion, each set into a glazed grid similar to the office portion. These three openings led into the lobby, while a fourth pair of doors to the south led into an adjacent space. The lobby entry assemblies have been altered—currently the northernmost opening has glazed panels but no doors, and the two remaining lobby entries have glazed aluminum door assemblies. The southernmost opening has been infilled with brick, selected to match the original masonry.

Drawings and historic photographs indicate that original wood windows were typically set in groups of three. On the north and south façades of the auditorium, four tripled windows (awning flanking fixed windows) formed a horizontal strip. These upper auditorium windows have all been removed and the openings infilled. The office portion windows consisted of a casement on either side of a fixed window. Most original wood windows have been replaced with vinyl framed windows, and some window openings have been infilled or covered. This modification has impacted the original Modern design which featured more strip or clustered glazing.

At the basement level on the south façade, non-original plywood and batten has been added at the western portion. There are two non-original metal doors and a series of single windows, each covered with a metal mesh. Original drawings show glazed wood grids with four individual office entries in this location; all of this material has been covered or removed. At the eastern portion of the building, the main level of the auditorium forms an overhang that projects beyond the exposed concrete wall of the basement. The overhang is supported by concrete pilotis. An approximately 10'-wide concrete exterior staircase, roughly centered along the south facade, descends from the main level to the basement grade. A multi-light window grid in the wall along the stair has been removed and replaced with newer single windows and plywood and batten siding.

Original drawings identify interiors spaces in the community center. The western portion contained offices, a drafting room, a vault, work spaces, and restrooms at the first story, with a nursery, craft room, and "yard station," and men's restroom below at the basement level. The eastern portion consisted primarily of the auditorium space, with a lobby at the west end, a coat room and kitchen, a storage area at the northeast corner, and a tenant relations office located centrally at the south side. In the basement there was storage, a dressing room, another yard station, and a women's restroom. Some partitions and finishes have been changed in the western portion—typical interior finishes presently consist of carpet, resilient base, wood trim, and acoustical ceiling tile, with resilient flooring in a larger multi-purpose room. In the auditorium, the original wood flooring has been replaced in-kind, and the brick walls are painted.

Drawings dating from 1978 and 1979 by Arai Jackson Architects & Designers for “Yesler Terrace Community Center, Phase Two,” and “Yesler Terrace Community Center, Phase 2 Demolition” seemed to have anticipated construction of the Parks and Recreation Department Community Center in 2003-2005. This latter project resulted in demolition of the former Yesler Terrace Management Office. (The present community center is not owner or operated by SHA and is not part of this nomination report.)

Neighborhood House and Child Center (1943)

A 1942 building permit cites, "Addition to Community Building." Tax records indicate the former Neighborhood House and Child Center was constructed in 1943 to the south of the original community building. No drawings or permit records have been discovered for this structure. It is presently occupied by Head Start. The following description is derived from visual observation as well as 1960 tax records. The interior of the building was not viewed.

The 1960 tax record notes a one-story building with no basement, concrete post and pier foundation, 2x10 floor joists at 16" on-center, double frame construction, and "siding." The flat roof has slightly overhanging eaves. Windows and doors were wood. The building's original, irregular footprint appears intact, with the addition of an attached, covered open play area to the north. Non-original plywood siding with battens has been installed, and all windows have been replaced with non-original aluminum sash. Original window configuration has been modified, with the removal of original corner windows, strip windows, and larger window groupings.

Storage Building (ca. 1995)

A large utilitarian storage building is located south of the original auditorium and east of the Head Start building. It has a rectangular footprint and a gabled roof. The building is clad with painted lapped wood siding and has two corrugated metal overhead doors on the east side. No building permit records or drawings were identified for this structure, and it is not depicted on a 1993 Kroll map. Construction of this building was likely within the last 15 years, and is thus cannot be considered as historic.

Laundry Buildings (unknown dates)

At present there are five small, non-original laundry buildings on the site. Historic tax records cite only one laundry facility—a 30' by 47', 1,410 square foot concrete block, building with a flat roof. Located in Sector Y, the building (No. 101) contained six washers, six dryers, and six laundry trays. Records do not indicate when this building was demolished, but it remained until at least 1971.

The current laundry buildings are situated typically in the center of a group of buildings and surrounded by open space and/or play areas, with paved outdoor space formerly fitted with metal clotheslines. These buildings appear neither on the original site plan nor on the May 1996 site plan by Kirk Wallace McKinley, "Yesler Terrace Exterior Renovations," which contains as-built plan and elevation drawings. The floor plans for some of the four- and five-unit buildings showed laundry rooms in partial basements. Construction dates of the existing laundry buildings have not been verified. Regardless, they do not appear original.

Changes over Time to the Site and Complex

Impacts of the I-5 Freeway

Changes to Yesler Terrace have been made to both the property and individual buildings. Originally there were 863 individual dwellings in 97 residential buildings constructed in 1941–1942, including the Phase 2 residences. The original site, at this time, was reportedly over 60 acres.

In the 1950s, plans were made to place an interstate highway through the city of Seattle. I-5 was built eventually through the western portion of Yesler Terrace. An overpass on Yesler Way was constructed that spanned nearly two blocks between 6th and 8th Avenues to link the southern part of First Hill with

downtown Seattle. The freeway's construction required the demolition of 28 of the original buildings with an estimated loss of 256 units and modifications that reduced the sizes of five other buildings (Sheridan, p. 2). In total the freeway construction took away six blocks of the original 22-block site.

The residential buildings that were lost to the freeway included four of the smallest ones among the dozen buildings that were sited west of 8th Avenue and south of Yesler Way, along with five buildings along the west edge of the project between Yesler Way and Alder Street, and ten buildings on property west of 8th Avenue. Two of these buildings had been built as part of the Phase 2 defense/veterans housing. Notably, most of the residences that were demolished at this time were those that provided commanding territorial views of the city's downtown and the bay and the Olympic Mountains to the west. After the freeway was constructed, trees were planted along its edge, which further obscured views to the west. Of the remaining residences, only an estimated 20% of the units have views (according to the King County Assessor records). The remaining residences with territorial views primarily face south.

One of the removed buildings was replaced in ca. 1964 by a small, concrete-frame duplex containing two small studio units. This newer residence was constructed as a prototype by SHA for the nearby Jefferson Terrace project.

After the I-5 freeway was built, the open space along its east side, north of Alder Street, remained relatively undeveloped. This 3.6 acre former SHA parcel, once a part of Yesler Terrace, was conceived of as Harborview Park in the early 1960, and in 1973 the parties resolved to a maintenance agreement for the proposed public park. The property, owned by the State Highway Department, was leased later to King County for construction of the hospital garage. In the late 1990s the large multi-story parking garage with a roof-top terrace was built to serve Harborview Hospital.

The original Yesler Terrace property had extended north of Alder and Terrace Streets to include the south half-block between Jefferson and James Street. By the 1970s, 8th Avenue between Jefferson and James Streets, and Terrace Street west of 9th Avenue had been vacated. SHA constructed Jefferson Terrace on the northernmost half-block of this property—the Plat of Yesler Terrace, Housing Authority of the City of Seattle. Jefferson Terrace is a high-rise apartment building with over 280 apartments for low-income residents.

Recent Loss of Property and Buildings

In addition to the loss or property for construction of I-5, land and an additional three buildings with 21 units were removed from the Yesler Terrace property to allow for construction of the Community Center in 2003–2005. Presently there are 561 units in 69 one, two and three-story residential buildings within SHA's Yesler Terrace. They comprise a total of 488,523 gross square feet or 454,632 net square feet of building. Current SHA data indicates that the average apartment unit is 810 square feet. This figure suggests that the remaining housing units are relatively consistent with the original dwelling size.

The reductions in the site and the building losses, and the resulting impact on the property's integrity were cited in a 2002 report on the historic and architectural significance of Yesler Terrace (Sheridan, 2002). Loss of integrity was considered also by DAHP in its 2003 review of the buildings removed for construction of the community center, which resulted in a determination of the property's ineligibility to meet the National Register of Historic Places listing criteria. (Yesler Terrace had been placed on the Washington Heritage Register in 1980 based on a 1979 NRHP nomination.)

The Kenyon Apartment Building / Jesse Epstein Building

The present Jesse Epstein Building is located in the upper or northern part of Yesler Terrace, where it is surrounded by two- and three-story multi-family dwellings on the east, south and north, and by the original project's steam plant on the west. It is situated one block southwest of Broadway Avenue, southeast of the intersection of 9th Avenue and Spruce Street. Prior to the filing of the plat for Yesler Terrace, the subject property was legally described as Lot 1 in Block 83 of Terry's Second Addition to the town of Seattle. The building, which was constructed in 1909 as the Kenyon Apartment Building, was acquired by SHA and converted into an office building and renamed in 1979. It is presently a part of the legal parcel that makes up Yesler Terrace.

The Jesse Epstein Building is noted on the tax records as having an approximately 59' by 120' footprint. Its lot along Spruce Street was 140' wide. Sidewalks and planting strips run along the north and west sides. The building is situated with a minimal front setback of 2' between the north facade and the north property line and an estimated 16' between it and the curb line.

The flat-roofed, three-story unreinforced masonry structure was built with 12"-13" solid brick walls, wood floor and roof framing, with a reinforced concrete foundation and concrete basement slab. Its present rectangular mass is set on the northern portion of what was its original lot, and there is open space on the back or south side. The building contains a total of approximately 20,200 square feet with 6,700 square feet on each of its three upper floors, and a partial basement of 4,560 square feet. (The 1936 tax assessor records cite 6,558 sq. ft. per floor, and a full basement. However, according to recent drawings, there is a crawlspace located below the eastern third of the building.) Typical floor-to-floor heights are 7'-11" at the basement, and 10' on the three upper floors. Ceiling heights are set at 7' in the basement and 9' in the upper floor levels.

Exterior masonry walls on the primary north and west facades are finished with varied texture, dark red-colored, clinker bricks over a cast stone concrete base (emulating ashlar stone) that encloses the basement. In contrast, the masonry walls of the secondary south and east facades have lighter-colored common brick over a cast concrete base. Cast concrete was used for window sills and trim, and sheet metal for coping.

The two 31'-wide outermost bays on the primary north facade project approximately 2' from the 58'-wide central mass, and are defined by neoclassical style, buff-colored brick quoins at their corners. The main entry is emphasized by a slightly projecting, two-story surround of smooth-faced, orange-colored brick, and also detailed with quoining. An original denticulated masonry band above the uppermost window heads recalls the original projecting cornice. The cornice was finished with decorative geometric patterns on its sloped upper surface, a detail with the building's original neoclassical style. The cornice was removed more than 30 years ago.

The building underwent a major upgrade and adaptive use after SHA acquired it in 1979, with a design by Arai Jackson Architects of Seattle. Drawings dating from August 1978 indicate the work included seismic upgrading with the addition of plywood diaphragms added at the roofs and floors, with masonry ties inserted into the thick masonry walls. Wood-framed bearing walls at the two upper floors were removed and replaced by glu-lam beams, supported by wood-framed, glu-lam, and steel columns.

The original building was constructed in three nearly equal sections divided by two deep, narrow light courts, each 7' by 28', which resulted in an E-shaped plan. The back wings measured 34' at the outer bays and 38' at the central one. The original light courts were infilled as part of the 1979 project. The resulting south facade is characterized by insertions of Modern style grids of window frames set at the exterior wall plane of the original facade.

Ca. 1937 tax records indicate the Kenyon was a "Class 1" apartment building with 40 units with 18 two-room units, 15 three-room units, and 6 four-room units, and 13 basement service rooms. It contained 150 fixtures, and boiler-fed hot water heat. Original finishes included a tile floor in the lobby and fir floors and trim and painted plaster in 105 rooms. While no original plans for the building have been discovered, it likely featured a central, double-loaded corridor linking the central stairwell and metal fire escapes on the east and west ends. 1979 drawings indicate that the current interior layout dates largely from that period. All vestiges of the original interior were demolished and new partitions and finishes installed. A partial basement, located below the western two-thirds of the building, contains storage and service rooms. The building was renamed at that time by SHA in honor of its first director, Jesse Epstein.

The fire escapes were removed and replaced by interior stairs in 1979. Presently a central stair leads from the main entry on the north facade, and two enclosed stairwells are provided on the east and west ends. The central stair is now blocked off at the second floor and does not continue to the third floor. The entry, which may have contained a typical pair of original entry doors below a transom window, presently consists of an aluminum-framed glazed door with a single sidelight. A new elevator lobby and restrooms was situated near the building's center, accessed off a double-loaded corridor, which also lead to workrooms and to private and open offices along the perimeter walls and the new stairwells at the east and west ends. All the doors were replaced on the interior by solid-core wood flush types.

DPD records and SHA documents indicate changes made to the building in the past three decades:

08.03.1978	Drawings: Arai Jackson Architects, "Renovation, Yesler Terrace Phase 2
08.03.1979	Drawings: 1st & 2nd Floor Power Upgrade, Sparling, Electrical Engineer
1998	Environment Works. "Assessment of Communtiy Facilities in SHA Public Housing"
ca. 2000	Drawing: Space Plan for Neighborhood House, 3rd Floor, SD2-0, Selkirk Miller Hayashi
07.19.2000	Drawings: Jesse Epstein Building, Seismic/Structural Upgrade, WJE, Seattle
08.17.2000	Drawings: Epstein Building Phase 1, Roof/Structural Upgrade, GGLO Architects
8.17.2000	Permit: Alter roof and structural repairs (expired permit).
8.29.2000	Drawings: Epstein Building Phase 1, FSI Consulting, HVAC Upgrade
11.06.2000	Permit: Electrical Circuits for HVAC.
12.19.2000	Permit: Tenant improvements, storage room, restrooms (costing $45,000)
02.08.2000.1	Permit: Tenant improvements to 3rd floor office ($158,908 construction cost)
03.27.2001	Permit: HVAC controls.
04.03,2001	Permit: New rooftop mechanical units.
05.29.2001	Permit: New power and lights on 3rd floor, Suite #301 for P.S. Neighborhood Health
06.20.2001	Permit: Voice and Data Cabling, 3rd floor, for P.S. Neighborhood House
01.10.2001	Permit: Non-structural alterations to 1st and 2nd floor offices (costing $75,000)
03.07.2003	Permit: Upgrade lighting, add outlets and switches
07.09.2003	Permit: Install CCTV and intercom systems, extend wiring, for SHA General
06.22.2009	Permit: Install A/V system in a large classroom and office, for Neighborhood House

In the late 1990s SHA undertook another substantial rehabilitation of the Jesse Epstein Building. The project involved new roofing, insulation, lighting, signage, and electric baseboard heaters; modification of exit corridors and restrooms; additional seismic upgrading; ADA-access upgrades at the front entry and modification of tenant spaces, including provision of a kitchen within a meeting room. New finishes included textured GWB, carpet, resilient flooring and dropped ceiling systems. Exterior changes to the building at this time were minimal and the windows, dating from 1979, were retained. Initial plans for the $475,000 project were by Environmental Works, and the design was by GGLO Architects.

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