

APPENDIX D

Historic Schools Task Force Report and Recommendations

APPENDIX D: HISTORIC SCHOOLS TASK FORCE - REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF HISTORIC SCHOOLS TASK FORCE

BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

On October 7, 1996, the Seattle City Council passed Resolution 29435 that directed the Executive to work with affected parties to develop amendments to the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance and other related Code provisions to remedy architectural or other impediments to educational quality and function created by current Landmarks Preservation Ordinance provisions and process.

The Executive responded to that resolution in January, 1997, with a suggested work program that included a proposal to create a task force to investigate the impediments to which the Council referred. The task force would be composed of members of the following organizations: the Seattle School Board, the Seattle School District, the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board, the City Planning Commission, the League of Women Voters and community members, two each appointed by the Department of Neighborhoods and the Seattle School District. Representatives from the City's Department of Construction and Land Use, Planning Commission and Department of Neighborhoods would provide staff support to the task force.

Invitations to serve on the task force were issued by Mayor Norman B. Rice in January, 1997 and all appointments were confirmed by late February, 1997. The Historic Schools Task Force (Task Force) met for the first time on March 20, 1997, and adopted a work program that specified tasks including definition of issues to be the subject of interviews with affected constituencies and a process for identifying recommendations for operational and Code changes.

Appendix D: Historic Schools Task Force, continued

The Task Force identified issues to be discussed at its first meeting on March 20 and refined those issues at its meeting on March 31, 1997. Those issues were any costs associated with the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic buildings, the impact of landmark designation on educational quality, the impact of changing educational needs or standards and the interaction of the landmark process with School District capital projects.

Prior to selecting interview teams and interviewees, the Task Force received a presentation on March 31, 1997 from the Seattle School District Facilities Division about challenges it faces in rehabilitating older buildings as well as an explanation of the educational specifications used by the Seattle School District. At its April 21, 1997 meeting, the Task Force identified interview questions, interview teams and potential interviewees.

Interview questions were categorized as follows:

- Certificate of Approval process;
- cost and maintenance issues;
- educational function issues; and,
- timing and certainty issues.

Interviews were held in May and June of 1997, with the Task Force convening once during that time on June 2, 1997 to review the interviews to date.

On September 15, 1997, the Task Force began to consider specific recommendations to respond to the City Council resolution and other related issued that emerged during the Task Force meetings and interviews. Additional meetings were held on October 6, 1997 and October 28, 1997 to review, discuss and refine the recommendations presented in this report.

