D.C. HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC LANDMARK

APPLICATION TO:

X New Designation
______ Amend a Designation

Summary of Amendments

Describe in text.

Property Name Randall Junior High School (original name: Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School)

If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.

Address 651 Street (aka 850 Half Street), S.W., Washington, D.C. 20024

Square and Lot Number(s) Square S 643, Lot 801 Affected ANC 6-D

Architect (s) Marsh & Peter (main block); Albert L. Harris (1927 east and west wings)

Date of Construction 1906

Date of Major Alteration (s) 1927 (east and west wings to main block)

Non contributing additions: 1932 (addition to east wing), 1936 (addition to west wing), 1940 (addition to central section), 1949 (northwest addition), 1973 (northeast addition)

Architectural Style/Period Georgian Revival; Colonial Revival

Original Use Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School (1906-1926); Randall Junior High School (1926-1982); D.C. Community for Social Services (1982-c. 2004)

Present Use Vacant

Property Owner The Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art

Legal Address of Property Owner 500 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006

NAME OF APPLICANT: The Corcoran Gallery of Art

(If applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.)

Address/Telephone of Applicant(s) 500 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006 (202) 639-1736

Name and Title of Authorized Representative Paul Greenhalgh

Signature ___________________________ Date 11/19/2007

Signature ___________________________ Date

Author of Application and Telephone E.H.T. Traceries, Inc., (202) 393-1199
GENERAL STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The historic Randall Junior High School at 65 I, S.W., consisting of the original 1906 building and its 1927 flanking wings, is significant for its contribution to the understanding of the development of public schools in the District of Columbia. Despite the numerous noncontributing additions constructed between 1932 and 1973, the historic main block and wings continue to convey their original appearance along I Street, and act as a historic focal point in a community otherwise remade by urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s.

Randall Junior High School was built in 1906 to serve the African-American public school students in southwest Washington, D.C. Originally named the Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School, after the celebrated African-American educator (1836-1907), the school adhered to the policy of racial and gender segregation in the District of Columbia school system. The Georgian Revival-style building was designed by the prominent architectural firm of Marsh & Peter as part of a District-wide educational design program that featured the two-story, eight-room, brick schoolhouse. In 1927, three years after the newly established Randall Junior High School, located nearby on the triangular-shaped Square E590 (at I Street, S.W., between Delaware Avenue and First Street, S.W.), switched places with the Francis L. Cardozo School in a strategic move to accommodate its growing student body, two wings were constructed on the 1906 building. Designed by Municipal Architect L. Harris, the wings added space for classrooms and a combined auditorium and gymnasium. This expansion was part of the nation-wide trend in the 1920s to convert elementary schools to junior high schools. Thus, the building serves as a tangible expression of the educational shift in pedagogy and the change in public sentiment favoring junior high schools.

The Randall Junior High School stands as one of the few extant buildings associated with the pre-urban renewal history of southwest Washington. Although no longer functioning as a school, the original building and its 1927 wings illustrate an important aspect of the history of African-American education. The school is an excellent example of a twentieth-century African-American school that continuously served the African-American community of southwest Washington during its years of operation. The Randall Junior High School was not the first junior high school to be constructed for black students in the District of Columbia; however, it is believed to be the earliest extant junior high school for the southwest section of Washington, D.C.1 In addition, the building serves as a reminder of the cultural and social role that schools played in the twentieth-century development of African-American communities. The building not only exemplifies early design standards for school buildings, but it also reflects the transition in the school system from elementary schools to junior high schools.

The main block and east and west wings of the Randall Junior High School were identified as historically significant through the comprehensive survey entitled “Public School Buildings of the District of Columbia, 1804-1930,” sponsored by the District of Columbia Public Schools and

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1 The first junior high school established in the District of Columbia was the Columbia Junior High School (white) in 1919. It was followed shortly thereafter by Shaw Junior High School (black), also in 1919. The first junior high school building to be constructed as such was the MacFarland and Langley Junior High Schools (both white), both designed by Municipal Architect Albert L. Harris and completed in 1923. The first junior high school building to be constructed as such for black students was the John R. Francis High School, around 1924-1925.
dated August 29, 1986. The property was also identified as historically significant in the 1991 District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan for Historic Preservation: Historic Contexts for the District of Columbia under the “Public Schools (E1)” theme and subheading “The Architects in Private Practice, 1897-1910.”

The Randall Junior High School, consisting of the main block (1906) and east and west wings (1927), qualifies for landmark status in the District of Columbia because it meets the following criteria as established by the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board and exemplifies the following historic contexts for the District of Columbia, as outlined in the 1991 District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan for Historic Preservation: Historic Contexts for the District of Columbia:

Criteria (2): The property exemplifies the significant military, political, economic, social, scientific, technical, educational, historical, archaeological, architectural, or artistic heritage of the Nation’s Capitol or the Nation;

Criteria (3): The property embodies the distinguishing characteristics of architectural styles, building types, types of methods of construction, landscape architecture, urban design or other architectural, aesthetic or engineering expressions significant to the appearance and development of the National Capital or the Nation.

Historic Context EI: Public Schools (1804-1945)

Historic Context S1: Ethnic Communities (1800-1945)

Furthermore, the property also meets the National Register Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places and is being nominated under the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960 under the associated historic context of the “Development of Public Education in the District of Columbia, 1804-1960.”

An intact example of an early twentieth-century African-American urban school designed by the private firm of Marsh & Peter in 1906, the school is a significant element of Washington’s architectural and cultural heritage. The 1927 construction of the east and west wings, designed by Municipal Architect Albert L. Harris in his preferred Colonial Revival style, illustrates the national change in teaching pedagogy which occurred during the 1920s that resulted in the junior high school movement and the transition away from elementary schools. Even though the original 1906 building of the Randall Junior High School today forms the centerpiece to a large complex, the essential massing and ornamentation of the Marsh & Peter Georgian Revival design remains intact. In addition, the 1927 Harris Colonial Revival-style wings serve to augment the original design of the main block and effectively complement the design aesthetic of the 1906 building.

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2 This document outlined thematic units for the study of historic resources in the District of Columbia and was prepared in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, under provision of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.
In light of the significance of the 1906 building and the 1927 wings, this application is requesting listing in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites only for those sections of the building that historically stood as a defined unit and that are significantly associated with the District of Columbia’s historic themes. The 1912 addition that was constructed as a free-standing building to the northwest of the property and later incorporated into the school in 1927 no longer retains its integrity because it is no longer able to convey any significance it might have had as a freestanding building dating to 1912, nor does it contribute to the significance of the portions of the building this application seeks to designate. The subsequent five additions, spanning the years from 1932 to 1973, are prosaic in nature, add little architectural or cultural merit, and do not have additional significant association with historic themes. Despite so many additions, the integrity of the original main block and its east and west wings is remarkably intact and the building continues to read on I Street as it has since 1927 when it was converted into the Randall Junior High School.
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The Randall Junior High School is located on I Street, between First and Half streets in southwest Washington, D.C. (Square S643, Lot 801). The main block of the building, originally constructed as the Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School in 1906, currently stands as the centerpiece of the Randall Junior High School complex. Two hyphenated wings constructed in 1927 flank the central block. These three sections of the current complex retain their appearance to the building’s 1927 conversion into a junior high school. A formerly freestanding 1912 building set to the northwest was subsumed within later additions and is no longer distinguishable. The later additions, ranging in construction dates from 1932 to 1973, are attached to the main I Street buildings, but do not contribute to the historic significance of the school. The contributing I Street buildings and the non-contributing additions comprise almost the entirety of the lot; the former street rights-of-way at First and H streets, however, are still unimproved. Several of the non-contributing additions extend perpendicular from the rear of each of the I Street buildings. A 1949 addition along H Street connects two of the three perpendicular extensions. Real estate plats showing the progression of additions are included with this nomination.

Along I Street, in front of the main block and wings, a low, wrought-iron fence, replaced in places with chain-link sections, sits atop a brick retaining wall. This retaining wall rises from the sidewalk at street level and breaks in three places to allow concrete steps to lead up to the entrances into the main block, the west wing, and the east wing. Along H Street, at the rear of the property, a chain-link fence runs along the north property line. All sides of the complex feature a narrow strip of grassy lawn abutting the sidewalk. The primary entries are located in the original main block and west wing on I Street, S.W., with a secondary vehicular entry at the rear of the property, along H Street, S.W.

The original main block of the Randall Junior High School is sited on property purchased in 1905 by the District of Columbia that encompassed 40 lots in Square S643. Today, this main block stands on a level parcel of land at the northeastern edge of Southwest Washington. Located in one of the areas to be first affected by the Redevelopment Land Agency’s Southwest urban redevelopment program of the 1950s and 1960s, the surrounding site retains little of its nineteenth-century fabric. The streets on three sides of the school property have been closed or partially closed as a result of urban redevelopment efforts. Directly to the west is First Street, S.W. - a L’Enfant street – which is currently used as a parking lot. Across the former street bed is the triangular-shaped Square E590. To the south across I Street is a three-story, brick building, currently used as the Southwest Community Health Center. Directly to the east and northeast of the school is the Randall Recreational Center and Playground, a large parcel containing approximately 87,390-square feet of land that runs north along South Capitol Street and extends west at the Southwest Expressway, another vestige of Southwest urban renewal initiatives. Once owned by the District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency, the Department of the Interior acquired the property in 1961, but jurisdiction over the property was vested in the District for recreational purposes.

At the northeast intersection of H and First streets, N.W., stands a vacant, late-nineteenth-century Romanesque Revival church, owned since 1982 by the Redeemed Temple of Jesus Christ and it is one of the two historic churches left standing in Southwest Washington. Two
other churches occupying land along I Street, S.W. to the south of the school include the Bethel Pentecostal Tabernacle of the Assemblies of God (directly across the street) and the 1960s Friendship Baptist Church (southeast corner of Delaware and I streets, S.W.). Nearby, the large-scale private residential project of Capitol Park prominently stands as the first development of this 1950s experiment in urban renewal.

**EXTERIOR**

**1906 Main Block**

The Georgian Revival-style Randall Junior High School is a two-story masonry structure that stands as the central core of an interconnected complex consisting of two hyphenated wings and six additions. Built in 1906, it is the earliest extant construction on the site. The main block has a square form set upon a solid masonry foundation. The structure is clad in red brick set in Flemish bond. Seven bays wide and deep, the building has brick and limestone detailing on its facades. Brick quoins at the corners run into brick rustication at the foundation level. A low-pitched mansard roof, clad in slate shingles, covers the building. The wooden boxed cornice, embellished with modillions and dentils, mark the slight eave overhang of the roof. The roof is pierced by gabled dormers flanked by small segmental-arched dormers on either side. A single, stone-capped interior chimney rises from the roof, offset slightly to the east. The roof features a large ventilating skylight in the center, several gate-iron ventilators, and a metal exhaust hood on the eastern slope. Although original architectural drawings of the building depict a masonry balustrade encircling the roof with a central insignia on the south elevation, and a 1908 photograph of the building confirms its construction, today’s structure does not have this element.

The primary façade, facing south, stands two stories in height with granite steps leading to a central entry opening. The façade is symmetrically fenestrated around a Colonial Revival-style entry. The entry is deeply recessed within the plane of the wall and leads to modern, replacement-glass, double-leaf doors topped by a large transom window. A one-story Colonial Revival-style surround marks the central entry. The carved limestone surround is composed of pilasters that support the entablature and a projecting segmental-arched pediment. The encircling cornice of the enclosed pediment has raked molding and a recessed tympanum. Just below the pediment, a limestone keystone marks the overhead frame. A limestone plaque that reads “Randall Junior High School” sits above the pediment. Flanking the central entry to each side are three equally spaced openings, each holding an 8/2 double-hung wood-sash window. The windows, set slightly within the plane of the wall, have wood surrounds, jack-arched brick lintels, and limestone keystones. The limestone sills are

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supported by brackets of the same material. Raised rectangular panels of brick are centered between the first- and second-story windows. At the foundation level, on either side of the entry, three 4/4 double-hung wood-sash windows, with limestone sills, illuminate the basement. These windows sit under jack-arched brick lintels and behind wrought-iron grills.

The second story of the façade is pierced by seven window openings, all equally spaced. A wrought-iron balcony is attached to the base of the central window. As on the first story, all the openings have 8/2 double-hung wood-sash windows, with applied wood surrounds, jack-arched brick lintels, and limestone keystones. A molded brick stringcourse that encircles the building extends from the window’s bracketed limestone sills.

At the time of the building’s construction in 1906, the east and west elevations of the building were similar in massing, fenestration, and ornamentation to the primary façade. Only the central entry and second-story window differed in style. According to original architectural drawings of the building, the central entry openings in these facades were simpler in design, each featuring a prominent flat arch and oversized limestone keystone. Directly above, a large 16-light window with fanlight sits beneath a pedimented keystone arch. Fixed at the base of the window opening is an ornamental wrought-iron balcony. In 1927, two hyphenated wings were built to the east and west of the central block, augmenting the original composition and symmetry of the facades.

Today, the east elevation of the original 1906 section features a one-story brick hyphen that leads to the adjoining wing. The hyphen partially covers the central fanlight window, leaving only the top portion visible. Punctuated with north and south entry openings, the hyphen has a recessed six-paneled door on both sides. Concrete steps lead up the hyphen’s entries. Both entry openings feature double-leaf metal doors topped with a painted horizontal panel. The painted wood surround is composed of pilasters supporting a simple entablature. The roof of the entablature’s cornice is sheathed in sheets of metal. A beltcourse of soldier bricks extends from either side of the entablature’s cornice and runs the width of the hyphen. Metal coping is at the roof line.

The building’s west elevation currently includes a two-story hyphen, connecting the main block to a shorter, two-story west wing. The altered elevation of the main block no longer features the original fanlight window or central entry. Also constructed in 1927, the brick hyphen is one bay wide with a window at the first and second stories. The window openings have 8/8 double-hung wood-sash windows, with wood surrounds, jack-arch brick lintels, limestone keystones and sills.

The rear elevation, facing northward, is seven bays wide. Originally, the elevation presented a less-adorned façade than the building’s other three elevations, although it was stylistically similar. Two rows of seven window openings lined the façade, with a row of smaller window openings at the basement level. At the western portion of the building, concrete steps with a metal handrail lead to the basement. In 1940, a two-story hyphenated addition was constructed in the middle of the elevation, altering the appearance of this elevation.
1927 East and West Wings
The 1927 east wing was built to house the school’s auditorium. The one-story brick addition, laid in Flemish bond, is seven bays long, with a shorter three-bay extension to the east. Set back from the main block’s front building line, the wing features a wall that projects slightly in the middle on both the north and south elevations. The south elevation is pierced with seven window openings, evenly spaced. The two outer window openings are smaller in size and each holds an 8/8 double-hung wood-sash window. These windows have jack-arched brick lintels with limestone keystones and sills. Decorative limestone panels accent the plane of the wall above these outer windows. The five window openings in the middle hold 15/15 double-hung wood-sash windows, capped with fanlights and keystoned segmental arches. The keystones, accents, and sills are of limestone. The north elevation is similar in style to the wing’s south elevation, but an addition to the eastern portion of the wing disrupts the original fenestration of the facade, leaving only four window openings visible. A limestone stringcourse wraps around the wing just below the cornice line. A brick water table, delineates the masonry foundation. The bricks are arranged in a single soldier course for the water table and in stretcher bond for the foundation. At the top of the wing, a boxed cornice marks the slight eave overhang with narrow bedmolding. A painted round cupola rises from the center of the low-pitched hipped roof.

The east extension of the wing has a flat roof, parapet with boxed cornice, and a simple stringcourse at the foundation level. The south elevation has three window openings, with 6/6 double-hung wood-sash windows, jack-arched brick lintels, and limestone keystones and sills. The east elevation, which faces the neighboring park, has two paired door and window openings towards the south and north ends of the addition, respectfully. Concrete steps lead up to double-leaf metal doors. The windows are similar in style to the three on the extension’s south elevation.

A tall, brick cylindrical smokestack stands near the northwest corner of the wing. The tapering smokestack rises prominently from the center of the complex and marks the east interior courtyard, accessible by automobile.

1927 West Wing
To the west of the 1906 main block is a two-story hyphenated wing that was also constructed in 1927. Twelve bays long and seven bays wide, the wing has a low-pitched roof and is stylistically similar to the original school building. The primary façade, facing south, has an asymmetrically placed Colonial Revival-style entry opening. The entry, deeply recessed within the plane of the wall and embellished with soffit panels, leads to modern replacement glass double-leaf doors topped by a large transom window. A modern light fixture hangs over the door. A one-story Colonial Revival-style surround marks the central entry. The painted wood surround is composed of pilasters and a keystoned architrave trim that support a projecting pediment. The boxed cornice of the enclosed pediment has raked molding and a recessed tympanum. Flanking the entry to the west are three window openings and to the east are eight window openings, all evenly spaced. Each opening holds an 8/8 double-hung, wood-sash window. The windows, set slightly within the plane of the wall, have wood surrounds, jack-arched brick lintels, and limestone keystones. The west elevation has two rows of seven window openings, similar in style those on the south façade. The window openings at the basement level are boarded-up.
Non Contributing Additions

The following sections of the Randall Junior High School, which were added from 1932 through 1973, do not contribute to the historic significance of the building as they lack association with the historic themes as defined by the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960* and the D.C. Historic Preservation Division’s statement of historic context, as outlined in the *District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan for Historic Preservation: Historic Contexts for the District of Columbia*, and they lack the integrity necessary for the conveyance of any significance.

1912 and 1936 Additions
Adjoining the 1927 west wing, and fronting First Street, S.W., is another brick, two-story addition. Built originally in 1912 as a freestanding structure to house the Francis L. Cardozo Vocational School, the building today is integrated into the Randall Junior High School complex. It was originally seven bays wide and deep, and stylistically similar to the main block and west wing. The 1912 addition was extended in 1936, but neither is considered to be contributing features of the school.

1940 Addition
To the north of the 1906 main block extends a hyphenated brick addition, two stories in height. Constructed in 1940, the ten-room addition is fourteen bays long, three bays wide, and covered with a flat roof.

1949 Addition
In 1949, a three-story, sixteen-room, brick addition was built to the north of the property. This addition separately connects to both the 1940 and 1936 additions, bridging the two additions at their north ends and forming an enclosed interior courtyard on the western half of the property. Three bays deep and twenty-six bays long, the addition runs along H Street, N.W.. The addition features a flat roof, brick quoining at the corners, and a brick water table.

1932 and 1973 Additions
The east side of the Randall Junior High School complex is composed of two additions that adjoin the 1927 east wing. One story in height and of brick construction with little ornamentation, the additions form a rectangular block along the east border of the property. The addition directly adjoining the 1927 wing was constructed in 1932 to house a gymnasium.

In 1973, a second addition was added to the 1932 wing on the complex’s east side. This addition features two closely spaced door openings on the plain east façade. Neither of these additions contributes to the significance of the school.
STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Randall Junior High School (1906 main block and 1927 east and west wings) is being nominated under the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960*, prepared on September 30, 2001 by Tanya Edwards Beauchamp, architectural historian, under the associated historic context of the “Development of Public Education in the District of Columbia, 1804-1960.” The form, adopted by the District of Columbia on May 23, 2002 and adopted by the National Register on July 21, 2003, incorporates in part the survey entitled “Public School Buildings of the District of Columbia, 1804-1930,” prepared by Antoinette E. Lee, historian for the District of Columbia Public Schools, and dated August 29, 1986. Undertaken during the years 1986-1987 with grant funds from the National Park Service to the D.C. Historic Preservation Division and with matching funds and in kind services from the D.C. Public Schools, the two-year survey of public schools identified and documented ninety public school buildings constructed from the period of 1864 to 1930. Through this comprehensive survey sponsored by the District of Columbia Public Schools, the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Division identified as a potential landmark the Randall School on August 19, 1986. The historic context, developed as a product of the survey effort and outlined in the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property listing *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960* not only provides a basis for evaluating individual public school buildings, but also gives the opportunity to assess their merits for listing in the National Register.

The original Randall School building (main block) fits into the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property listing *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960* under property sub-type III: “The Architects in Private Practice, 1897-1910.” Georgia Revival in style, the original 1906 building of the Randall School was designed by the renowned architectural firm of Marsh & Peter. Although this building now stands as the central core of an interconnected complex consisting of two hyphenated wings and six additions, the 1906 main block retains the essential massing and details of the original building design.

The original building and the two wings added in 1927 when the building was converted into the Randall Junior High School also fit into the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property listing *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960* under property sub-types V: “The Office of the Municipal Architect, Albert L. Harris, 1921-1934.” In 1927, two wings were built to either side of the original building. Designed by Municipal Architect Albert L. Harris, the additions conform to the design aesthetic of the 1906 central block, complementing the original design.

The Randall Junior High School reflects two historical themes outlined in the historic context of the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property listing *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960*. First, and most importantly, the 1906 school was built as a “colored school,” representing the policy of racial segregation that permeated the D.C. Public School system until the Supreme Court of the United States outlawed separate educational facilities in 1954.\(^5\)

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The Randall Junior High School also represents the second historical theme of the separation of the sexes. Although during the early phase of the system’s development, schools were exclusively male or female, in the first half of the twentieth century, a limited form of separation of the sexes endured. Its vestiges can be seen in separate boys’ and girls’ entrances. According to the architectural drawings of March & Peter, the building now known as the Randall Junior High School featured separate boys’ and girls’ entrances on the east and west elevations, as well as separate corresponding stairs to the second floor.

Furthermore, the Randall Junior High School fits in the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property listing Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960 under the historic context called “Planning for the Twentieth Century Public School, 1900-1910.” As explained by Beauchamp, in 1900, the U.S. Congress enacted legislation that returned complete authority of the public schools to the Board of Education. The law also abolished a separate and independent superintendent of the black schools, combining both groups under a single superintendent. One of the two assistant superintendents was in charge of white schools and the other oversaw the black schools. Thus, the autonomy enjoyed by the black school system was abridged. Also in 1900, the entire school system was divided into eleven divisions. Divisions 1 and 6 included white schools in the City of Washington. Divisions 7 and 8 included both black and white schools in the County of Washington and Divisions 9 through 11 embraced black schools in the City of Washington. By 1906, the division of the school system had been adjusted to include up to fifteen schools arranged geographically. Divisions 1 through 9 were assigned to white schools, while Divisions 10 to 13 were assigned to the black students. The assignment of white and black schools to separate divisions continued up to the integration of the school system in 1954, when new jurisdictions were established. At the time of construction, the Randall School, then known as the Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School, was located in Division 13.

While the school continued to operate and expand beyond these periods of significance, these later operations and additions do not contribute to the two historical themes adopted under the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property listing for Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960: the policy of racial separation and the policy of the separation of the sexes. As such, the Randall Junior High School is representative of the early segregated educational period and is limited to the 1906 main building and 1927 wings.
History of the Randall Junior High School (Square S643)

The original building known as Randall School stood at the intersection of Delaware Avenue, and H and First streets, S.W. in southwest Washington, D.C. Located on a 9,088-foot, triangular-shaped lot on Square E590, the one-story frame building, formerly a barrack, was enlarged and improved in 1869. The school building had five small schoolrooms and seating capacity for 280 students. First known as the Delaware Avenue School, the school served “colored” children in southwest Washington. In 1874, the school was renamed the “Randall School” in honor of the school’s principal Eliza G. Randall who died that same year. A white woman from Vermont dedicated to the education of African Americans, Eliza G. Randall served as the principal of the Delaware Avenue School from 1867 until her death. Through her efforts and dedication, the school grew until four rooms were added to the “original shanty.” An 1876 Report of the Board of Trustees of Public Schools for the District of Columbia called Miss Randall one of that “noble band of pioneers…who should be honored especially by those of us who in the past were deprived of every educational advantage.” In 1876, the Randall School was demolished and a new Randall School was built on Square E590.

In 1905, the District of Columbia purchased 40 lots in neighboring Square S643 for the construction of the Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School. Designed by the architects March & Peter, this building forms the original core of the current Randall Junior High School complex. When completed in 1907 at a cost of $46,328.67 dollars, the building demonstrated the most “advanced ideas in heating and ventilation.” The new school building was named by the District Commissioners after the prominent Washington scholar and advocate for the education of African Americans. Hailing from South Carolina, Francis L. Cardozo (1836-1907) was the first African American to hold an administrative office in the state of South Carolina, first as the Secretary of State (1868-1871) and then as Secretary of Treasury. Later in 1891, Cardozo served as the principal of the “colored” M Street School in Washington, D.C.

The two-story, brick school building served the African-American children in southwest Washington, D.C. and featured attached playgrounds and land reserved for school gardening. Designed in what was known as the “eight-room cartwheel plan,” the Francis L. Cardozo School exemplified the eight-room school building type. In this type, the building plan organized separate play rooms and bathrooms for girls and boys at the basement level, including mechanical (heating and ventilating) and storage (wood and fuel) rooms. Both the first and second floors of the building had four classrooms, symmetrically arranged around a central hall. Each room had “bilateral light and a cloakroom opening into the classrooms and into the

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9 Report of the Board of Trustees, 1876, p. 143.
10 Report of the Board of Trustees, 1876, p. 143.
11 According to the 1906-1907 “Report of the Board of Trustees of Public Schools of the District of Columbia to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia,” the size of the lot was 43,375 square feet and originally valued at $13,500.00.
corridor.”13 On the first floor, a principal’s office was located to the north of the building, opposite the main south entrance. Directly above the principal’s office and the main entrance, respectfully, were located the teacher’s lounge and a small library. Two stairwells located to the east and west of the building provided access between the floors.

According to a 1908 Report of the United States Schoolhouse Commission, the cartwheel type of school building was used in design plans where there was no intention of enlarging the building, except by the possible erection of a second eight-room building on the same site. In addition, the report recommended “the abandonment of the eight-room school building as a type, except as the first half of an ultimate sixteen-room building.”14

Following along these lines, the Cardozo Manual Training School was constructed to the west of the Francis L. Cardozo School building in 1912. Also designed by March & Peter, the vocational school opened on January 18, 1912, offering two trades: carpentry for boys and sewing for girls. Gradually, courses in metal work, cookery, housework management, brick masonry, plastering, and ladies’ tailoring were added, ultimately offering enough coursework to cover two years of education.15

In 1923, the Randall Junior High School was initially established in the Randall School building on Square E590. The African-American junior high school opened with around 260 enrolled students under the supervision of Principal G. Smith Wormley.

However, four years later in 1927, the Randall Junior High School traded locations with the neighboring Francis L. Cardozo School to the east, in a strategic move to maximize space. The conversion of the Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School into the new Randall Junior High School included plans to connect the original 1906 school with the 1912 Cardozo Manual Training School, located slightly to the northwest. The plans included designs for eight new classrooms, corridors, a gymnasium, and an assembly hall. The winning bid, submitted by the King Lumber Company of Charlottesville, Virginia, estimated the cost of the school conversion to be $192,000.16

These plans were part of the five-year school building plan enacted by Congress for the District on February 26, 1925 (effective July 1, 1925) authorizing appropriations for school building through 1930. Funding of $225,000 for Randall Junior High was included in the second deficiency act, fiscal 1925, approved March 4, 1925.17

In 1927, an east and west wing were constructed on the original 1906 school building. Designed by Municipal Architect Albert L. Harris in 1925, the wings allowed for new classroom space and a “combination auditorium and gymnasium and all modern equipment.” The west wing integrated the freestanding 1912 Cardozo Manual Training School into the 1906 elementary school. The wings’ construction also illustrated the national movement to create junior high schools in the 1920s, combining the last two years of elementary school and the first year of high school. The five-year school building program included four new junior high school additions and eight new junior high schools in Washington, D.C., of which the Randall Junior High School may have been the only African American junior high school in southwest Washington.

In 1930, the Board of Education requested the addition of two gymnasiums for the Randall Junior High School. The Bureau of the Budget reduced the estimate to provide for only one. Congress appropriated $40,000 which became available February 23, 1931 for its construction. The Report of the Board of Education, 1931-1932, which described the construction timetable, noted that a contract for a total of $45,777 was executed on September 1, 1931, and that the addition was occupied on April 11, 1932. This addition was constructed to the north of the original school’s east wing.

In 1936, an addition to the west wing of the 1906 school building continued the school’s expansion. Four years later, in 1940, another addition was built to the north of the school’s central main block. That same year, the Cardozo School on Square E590 was demolished and replaced by the Southwest Health Center.

In the 1940s, Randall Junior High School entered a period plagued by inadequate and dilapidating facilities. An influx of war workers in the Southwest led to overcrowded conditions. Having facilities to accommodate only 1,010 students, the school operated with the enrollment of 1,680 students. The overcrowded conditions of the school, heightened by the fact that it was the only junior high school serving the students of the southwest and southeast sections of Washington, D.C., eventually led to the handling of the student body in two shifts. In this arrangement, the students experienced an abbreviated school day, with only half-days of instruction. The school operated for two years in shifts, in addition to having the ratio of one teacher for each thirty-three and a half students. In an effort to help the school’s overcrowded and congested facilities, another addition was built in 1949 to the northwest of the property.

However, in the 1950s, the opposite problem threatened the Randall Junior High School, when mass removal of Southwest families in preparation for urban renewal left the population so depleted that the need for a junior high school in the area was in doubt. Eventually, the urban

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renewal program displaced and relocated 1,050 of the 1,300 families living in southwest Washington from about 1953 to 1955.\textsuperscript{22}

Yet, throughout this time, the Randall Junior High School remained a defining element to the Southwest neighborhood and an integral part to the community. Although urban renewal legislation and efforts by the Redevelopment Land Agency (RLA) to redevelop the Southwest threatened the traditional social and community structure of the African-American neighborhood, the Randall Junior High School was always recognized as an important and essential contributor to the area. In an article of the Washington Afro-American, this role was outlined. The article quoted the Reverend Benjamin H. Whiting of nearby Friendship Baptist Church as saying: “Friendship is one corner of the triangle that serves the people of Southwest. Randall Junior High School and the Southwest Health Center make up the other two corners, one serves the mind, one serves the body, and we serve the soul.”\textsuperscript{23} With the Friendship Baptist Church originally located at First and H streets, S.W. and the Southwest Health Center at the northwest intersection of First and I streets, S.W. (on Square E590), the Randall Junior High School completed the triangle to the east.

Although legislation was enacted in 1954 to desegregate District of Columbia schools, the Randall Junior High School remained primarily African American. Four years later, in 1958, the Boys’ Junior-Senior High School was established in one wing of the complex. Authorized by the Board of Education, the purpose of this program was to prepare boys with severe disciplinary problems for a “return to the regular classroom or for employment.”\textsuperscript{24}

This additional civic role of the school added to the school’s defining mark upon the cultural and social fabric of the neighborhood. At the fiftieth celebration of the Randall Junior High School in 1973, the alumni reminisced about the “good old days” and the strong influence that the school had on the surrounding community. One former teacher remarked that it “became not only a school, but a foster home and parents for the students. The parents worked all day and were not home to prepare dinner, so the school lunch often was the only hot meal they had for the day.”\textsuperscript{25}

In 1982, the Department of Human Resources Commission on Social Services moved into the Randall Junior High School complex where it operated a men’s shelter in a section of the complex until November 2004.\textsuperscript{26} In addition to the shelter, the complex also housed local artists who leased studio space, arts education programs and various community organizations. In November 2006, the Corcoran Gallery of Art purchased the property from the District for $6.2 million dollars, as part of their expansion plan.\textsuperscript{27} The property is now vacant.

The Randall Junior High School was constructed in 1906 on Square S643, utilizing designs produced by the architectural firm of Marsh & Peter. In 1912, the firm designed the Cardozo Elementary School to the north of the property.

William Johnston Marsh (1863-1926) and Walter Gibson Peter (1869-1945) established the architectural firm of Marsh & Peter in 1898. Both architects were born in Washington, D.C. and most likely met while working at the prominent architectural firm Hornblower & Marshall. The firm remained in business until the death of Marsh in 1926, although Peter continued to practice architecture.

William J. Marsh attended D.C. public schools and, subsequently, studied under private instructors in Boston, as well as with the artist E.C. Messer in Washington, D.C. Marsh gained experience in architecture and construction in the offices of Hornblower & Marshall where he served as the heads draftsman for eight years.

Walter G. Peter was a descendent of Thomas Peter, a Scottish tobacco merchant, and Martha Parke Custis (1777-1854), granddaughter of Martha Washington (1732-1802). After he graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1890 where he studied architecture, Peter worked in the offices of Smithmeyer & Pelz, A.B. Bibb and, later, Hornblower & Marshall. Peter formed a brief partnership with Edward W. Donn, Jr. during the years of 1892-1895.

One of Marsh & Peter’s earliest commissions, The Evening Star building (1899) at 1101 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., was also one of its most notable commissions. The pair also designed numerous school buildings in the District of Columbia between 1900 and 1910, including the William Syphax School (1901), the Edmonds School (1903), the Mount Pleasant School (1908), the Henry D. Cooke School (1909), the Strong John Thomson School (1910), and the Georgetown Preparatory School (1916).

The William Syphax School is one of Marsh & Peter’s earliest school buildings. The two-story, Colonial-Revival school is located at 1360 Half Street, S.W. The school was named for William Syphax, a prominent African American who lobbied to create equal educational opportunities for African Americans in the District of Columbia. In 1999, the school was listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2003.

The Edmonds School, located at 9th and G streets, N.E., was dedicated in 1903, and was built to alleviate overcrowded school rooms at other area schools.

Both the Cooke and Mount Pleasant Schools are similar in design and utility. The Cooke School, located at 2525 17th Street, N.W., and the Mount Pleasant School, located in the Mount

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28 Tudor Place Foundation, Inc., Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, Georgetown, Washington, DC, pamphlet.
31 EHT Traceries, 1618 21st Street, N.W. History, EHT Traceries, 1999.
Pleasant neighborhood, were both designed as substantial two-story structures with sixteen school rooms each, including an assembly hall for large gatherings. The Mount Pleasant School featured a red brick exterior atop a granite base, with terracotta features.

Marsh & Peter designed the Elizabethan Revival-style Strong John Thomson School, located on the corner of 12th and L streets, N.W. When the twelve-room schoolhouse was constructed in 1910, the elementary school was regarded as a model for elementary education in the District of Columbia. The school was listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites in 2001.

One other commission included designs for the private Georgetown Preparatory School, located at 10900 Rockville Pike in Rockville, Maryland. The cornerstone for this Colonial Revival, red-brick school was laid in 1917 and it served as a preparatory school for Georgetown University.  

Albert L. Harris

In 1927, Municipal Architect Albert L. Harris designed the hyphenated east and west wings to the original 1906 school building. These wings allowed the school to expand by adding classroom space and a combined gymnasium and auditorium, effectively transforming the school from an eight-room school building fit for an elementary school into a large, technologically-advanced junior high school.

Albert L. Harris had a career that did not follow the usual line of artistic development. A native of Wales, he accompanied his family to Pittsburgh in 1893. He served an architectural apprenticeship in Chicago with the office of Henry Ives Cobb, a designer of national significance. Harris may have returned to the Washington area to set up an architectural practice as early as 1897. It is known that he went to work for the Washington architectural firm of Hornblower and Marshall in 1900, becoming first the chief draftsman and then a partner of the firm. In 1912, at the age of 43, he received his bachelor of architecture degree from George Washington University and left Hornblower and Marshall to enter private practice. Also in that year, he was appointed to the faculty of George Washington’s School of Architecture, a position he held until his death in 1933. From 1914 through 1921, Harris took on similar academic responsibilities at Catholic University, as well. Throughout the 1920s, he worked with Arthur B. Heaton on the design of new buildings for George Washington University.

In 1921, Harris was named Municipal Architect for the District of Columbia and in that position he was responsible for supervising a five year building program for the district’s public schools. As part of this plan, Harris abandoned the eight-room pinwheel-type of school building, popular since the 1880s, in favor of schools with sixteen to twenty classrooms. As Municipal Architect, Harris preferred the Renaissance and Colonial Revival styles for public school buildings. He designed several schools in the district, most notably the McKinley High School and the McFarland and Langley Stuart Junior High Schools.

34 Beauchamp, p. 19.
Conclusion

The Randall Junior High School (1906 main block and 1927 wings) should be listed in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites because of its architectural, historical, and cultural significance. Although part of seven building campaigns that expanded the school, the original 1906 building and its 1927 wings remain remarkably intact and retain a high degree of integrity. The Georgian Revival-style main building is a strong representation of an elementary school designed in a style that exemplifies the two-story, eight-room brick school building type that was adopted by the District of Columbia school system. Designed by the prominent architectural firm of Marsh & Peter, the 1906 main block illustrates the federal government’s movement during the years 1897 to 1910 to institute an architectural program that placed greater involvement in the design process by architects in private practice. The 1927 east and west wings, designed by Municipal Architect Albert L. Harris in a complimentary design displaying his commitment to Colonial Revival architecture, represent the shift in the school system away from elementary schools towards junior high schools and effectively illustrate the national educational program and building campaigns of the 1920s. The Randall Junior High School is an important heritage site that not only recognizes the African-American community that lived in southwest Washington, D.C., but also celebrates the educational history of African Americans. The building and adjoining wings stand as one of the few remaining pre-urban renewal community structures in Southwest and warrants protection.
Randall Junior High School Building Chronology; Square S643, Lot 801
EHT Traceries, Inc.
(The red and yellow highlights outline the 1906 original school building and the 1927 hyphenated wings, respectively.)
Proposed Historic Landmark Designation (highlighted red) for the Randall Junior High School Square S643, Lot 801
1999 Sanborn Building and Property Atlas of Washington, D.C; Book 1, Volume 2, Sheet 239
First American Real Estate Solutions; 1999
Detail showing the current Randall Junior High School property (red highlighted) at Square S643, Lot 801
1909 Baist’s Real Estate Atlas Surveys of Washington, District of Columbia; Volume 2, Plan 7
Detail showing Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School at Square S643 (red highlighted) and the original Randall School at Square E590 to the left (at the intersection of Eye I Street, S.W. with Delaware Avenue and First Street, S.W.)
1913 Baist’s Real Estate Atlas Surveys of Washington, District of Columbia; Volume 2, Plan 7
Detail showing the Francis L. Cardozo Elementary School at Square S643 (red highlighted) and the nearby Cardozo Manual Training School (1912)
Detail of the Randall Junior High School on Square S643 showing the original 1906 main block (highlighted red) and the 1927 east and west wings (highlighted yellow)

(The 1927 west wing connected the original 1906 school building with the nearby Cardozo Manual Training School. The once freestanding structure, constructed in 1912, is now incorporated into the Randall Junior High School.)
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Public Schools of the District of Columbia Archives, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, D.C., Vertical files related to Chain Bridge Road School attendance and construction.


Evening Star Collection.

General Photographic Collection.

Vertical Files.

All photographs are of:
The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C.
EHT Traceries, Inc., photographer

All negatives are in the possession of EHT Traceries, Inc.

1) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   South Elevation of the Randall Junior High School - main 1906 block, looking north from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 1 of 22

2) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   South Elevation of the Randall Junior High School - main 1906 block and 1927 west wing, looking northwest from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 2 of 22

3) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   South Elevation of the Randall Junior High School, looking northeast from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 3 of 22

4) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   South Elevation of the 1927 west wing, looking north from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 4 of 22
5) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   South and West Elevations of the 1927 west wing, looking northeast from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 5 of 22

6) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   Detail of annex to 1927 east wing, looking north
   Photo 6 of 22

7) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   Detail of South Elevation showing annex to 1927 east wing, looking north
   Photo 7 of 22

8) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   South Elevation of 1927 east wing, looking northwest from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 8 of 22

9) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   South Elevation of 1927 east wing, looking northeast from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 9 of 22

10) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
    Washington, D.C.
    EHT Traceries, Inc.
    November 2006
    EHT Traceries, Inc.
    East elevation of 1927 east wing, looking west
    Photo 10 of 22
11) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   East Elevation of the Randall Junior High School, looking northwest
   Photo 11 of 22

12) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
    Washington, D.C.
    EHT Traceries, Inc.
    November 2006
    South portion of the East Elevation of the Randall Junior High School, looking southwest
    Photo 12 of 22

13) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
    Washington, D.C.
    EHT Traceries, Inc.
    November 2006
    North portion of the East Elevation of the Randall Junior High School complex, looking northwest
    Photo 13 of 22

14) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
    Washington, D.C.
    EHT Traceries, Inc.
    November 2006
    North Elevation of the 1973 addition to the Randall Junior High School, looking southwest
    Photo 14 of 22

15) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
    Washington, D.C.
    EHT Traceries, Inc.
    November 2006
    Detail of West Elevations of the 1973 and 1932 additions to the Randall Junior High School, with view of North Elevation of the 1927 east wing, looking southeast
    Photo 15 of 22
16) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.  
   Washington, D.C.  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   November 2006  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   Detail of East Elevation of the 1940 addition to the Randall Junior High School, with view of  
   east interior courtyard and vehicular access, looking southwest  
   Photo 16 of 22

17) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.  
   Washington, D.C.  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   November 2006  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   North Elevation of 1949 addition to the Randall Junior High School, looking southwest  
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18) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.  
   Washington, D.C.  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   November 2006  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   Detail of North Elevation of 1949 addition to the Randall Junior High School, looking  
   southeast from H Street, S.W.  
   Photo 18 of 22

19) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.  
   Washington, D.C.  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   November 2006  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   West Elevation of the Randall Junior High School, looking southeast from H Street, S.W.  
   Photo 19 of 22

20) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.  
   Washington, D.C.  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   November 2006  
   EHT Traceries, Inc.  
   Detail of West Elevation of the Randall Junior High School, showing West Elevations of the  
   1936 and 1912 additions, and 1927 west wing, looking southeast from First Street, S.W.  
   Photo 20 of 22
21) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   West Elevation of the Randall Junior High School, looking northeast, from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 21 of 22

22) The Randall Junior High School/65 I Street, S.W.
   Washington, D.C.
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   November 2006
   EHT Traceries, Inc.
   South and West Elevations of the Randall Junior High School, looking northeast from I Street, S.W.
   Photo 22 of 22