

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL



DALLAS LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

Dallas Landmark Commission Landmark Nomination Form

1. Name

historic Booker T. Washington High School
and/or common Arts Magnet High School

2. Location

address 2501 Flora land survey Grigsby
location/neighborhood CBD block,lot,tract all 302 tract size

3. Current Zoning

PD-145

4. Classification

Category <input type="checkbox"/> district <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) <input type="checkbox"/> structure <input type="checkbox"/> site <input type="checkbox"/> object	Ownership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public <input type="checkbox"/> private <input type="checkbox"/> both Public Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> in progress <input type="checkbox"/> being considered	Status <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress Accessible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> no	Present Use <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> museum <input type="checkbox"/> park <input type="checkbox"/> residence <input type="checkbox"/> religious <input type="checkbox"/> scientific <input type="checkbox"/> transportation <input type="checkbox"/> other
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5. Ownership

Current Owner Dallas Ind. School District Phone:

Address: City: State: Zip Code:

6. Form Preparation

Name & Title Robert Edison - Researcher Organization Black Dallas Remembered
Contact Ron Emrich - Planning & Devel. Phone 214/670-4121

7. Representation on Existing Surveys

Alexander Survey (citywide) <input type="checkbox"/> local <input type="checkbox"/> state <input type="checkbox"/> national	<input type="checkbox"/> National Register
H.P.L. Survey (CBD) <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded Tx Historic Ldmk
1985 Historic Resource <input type="checkbox"/> high <input type="checkbox"/> medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Tx Archaeological Ldmk
Oak Cliff <input type="checkbox"/>	
Victorian Survey <input type="checkbox"/>	
1987 Historic Resource <input type="checkbox"/> high <input type="checkbox"/> medium Other _____	

For Office Use Only

8. Date Rec'd: 6/88 Survey Verified: Y N by: RE 9. Field Check by: RE

10. Nomination:

<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> District
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure & Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Petitions needed

11. Historic Ownership

original owner Dallas School District
significant later owner(s)

12. Construction Dates

original 1922
alterations/additions 1952, 1974

13. Architect

original construction Lang & Witchell
alterations/additions

14. Site Features

natural Broad front lawn
urban design Large block, bounded on north by elevated freeway

15. Physical Description

Condition	Check One:		Check One:
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved (date: _____)
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance; include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc.). Elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.

Located on the northern edge of the Dallas central business district several blocks from the core of office and retail development, Booker T. Washington High School faces south on Flora Street midway between Routh and Fairmount Streets. Now the home of the Dallas Independent School District's Arts Magnet High School and an important element in the city's Arts District, the Booker T. Washington building is characterized by a series of later, non-contributing additions that extend northward, at the rear of the original building, to near the the Woodall Rogers elevated freeway.

A two story, flat-roofed structure on a slightly raised basement, the Booker T. Washington High School sits in the center of a broad lawn, on a slight terrace, facing south on Flora Street. Constructed of deep red brick in a common bond tapestry pattern, its symmetrical primary elevation reflects Neo-Classical and Georgian architectural influences. The narrow "H" plan of the structure appears at the front as a long, rectangular main body of eleven bays flanked by shallow projecting, windowless wings. Pairs of nine x nine wood windows, divided by heavy wood vertical mullions, extend across the second story, and are surmounted by a smooth cast stone continuous lintel that returns at the corners to serve as a belt course around the entire structure. Above this smooth band and a short course of face brick is a simple cast stone cornice denoting the roofline, topped by a low brick parapet.

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The center bay of the ground floor serves as the entry, reached by two low steps. Double doors, each with eight lites, are surmounted by a fixed transom, also with eight lites. A curved, unbroken pediment is supported by cast stone pilasters, inscribed to appear as dressed, rusticated ashlar, which flank the double doors. The entry, in turn, is flanked on each side by five pairs of windows identical to those in the upper story.

The solid brick of the projecting end wings is decorated with a slightly darker brick in a pattern that creates a large frame with cast stone corner blocks, leaving a large, rectangular brick area in the center with a small, rectangular cast stone garland-motif plaque. Slightly projecting bricks at the building corners suggest quoining.

East and west elevations of the original school building exhibit similar fenestration patterns and detailing. Single door entries in the third bays of each elevation have smooth, undecorated cast stone surrounds. The north (rear) elevation appears as the mirror image in plan of the front. The ends of the projecting rear wings are the areas of attachment for the non-contributing 1952 addition, which itself reflects the center inset in plan, creating an internal courtyard for the building.

16. Historical Significance

Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.

Booker T. Washington High School, constructed in 1922 on the site of the former Wright-Cuney School (Colored School No. 2), served for 17 years as the only high school for African-American students in the then-segregated Dallas school system; it is the oldest remaining, traditionally African-American school in Dallas. Designed by the prolific Dallas architectural firm of Lang and Witchell in a simplified Collegiate Gothic style, the original building (with its later additions) stands as a hallmark of racial progress in the city.

The Dallas public school system was organized in the fall of 1884. At that time, J.W. Ray was elected principal of the colored school, then located in the old city hospital on South Lamar Street, which had ceased operations as a medical facility. Later, a new, four-room, two-story building was erected on the corner of Cockrell and Canton Streets and named Colored School No. 1. John E. Reed, Elizabeth Hall and Martha Smith, to be the first three African-Americans to graduate from a Dallas high school, were enrolled in the new school.

On June 14, 1892, the Dallas Colored High School was established by resolution of the Board of Education: "Wayne Manzilla is to have charge of the higher grades and if his work is satisfactory, when the new building is completed in the Ninth Ward, he is to have charge of same on probation." By 1922, the school was to be replaced, and in April of that year, Superintendent of Schools Justin F. Kimball announced that the passage of a new bond issue, and the approval of a 20-cent school tax, would allow for the possible construction of a new African-American high school building. Architects Lang and Witchell planned the new building, which was to be located on the site of the Booker T. Washington Ward School, which had been enlarged by land purchases to include an entire city block bounded by Flora, Wade, Burford and Fairmount Streets. On May 11, the School Board awarded the construction contract to

17. Bibliography

See continuation page

18. Attachments

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District or Site map | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional descriptive material |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Footnotes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photos (historic & current) | |

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the firm of Hughes and O'Rourke. The new school, to cost \$107,240.75, would be modern in every detail, containing 21 rooms, an auditorium, lunchroom, restrooms and principal's office. The building was to be heated by a special device known as the Johnson Heating Control.

On October 30, 1922 the new Booker T. Washington High School opened with a reception for the students. Newspaper accounts read: "Booker Washington High School...stands second to none in the whole Southwest and is the peer of those in other sections.... It represents the contribution of a truly progressive city to the care and culture of future citizens. It should be valued as such." When the school opened, it attracted students from all over the city. Students came from the African-American communities of Queen City, Wheatley Place, Boggy Bayou, Frogtown, Mill City, Booker T. Addition, the "Prairie," West Dallas and from the "Bottoms," Oak Cliff. By 1931, enrollment had so vastly increased (over 2,100) that a double day session was instituted. In 1952, the word "Technical" was added to the name of the school after a million dollar renovation enlarged the plant. Technical courses were added and Booker T. Washington Technical High School became a five year comprehensive high school, the first African-American high school in the Southwest to receive this status.

In his autobiography, Booker T. Washington wrote: "I think that the whole future of my race hinges on the question as to whether or not it can make itself of such indispensable value that the people in the town and state where we reside will feel that our presence is necessary to the happiness and well-being of the community."

Booker T. Washington Technical High School has been true to the words of its namesake. Of the 29 schools named for African-Americans in Dallas, 11 are named for former teachers or principals of Booker T. Washington: C.F. Carr, Charles Rice, Frannie C. Harris, Julia C. Frazier, Priscilla Tyler, Joseph J. Rhoads, T. D. Marshall, J.L. Patton, N. W. Harllee, J.P. Starks, B.F. Darrell and K. B. Polk. More than 400 past and present teachers and 13 principals in the Dallas Independent School District are graduates of Booker T. Washington. Among the many distinguished alumni of the school are: Dr. Emerson Emory, M.D.; Dr. Thomas Tolbert, Educator; Ernie Banks, former Chicago Cubs baseball player; Curtis Cokes, former lightweight boxing champion; Julia Scott Reed, former Dallas Morning News columnist; Judge Louis Bedford; Dr. Frank Jordan; Dr. William Larkin; Dr. Joseph Williams; Dr. William Flowers; Dr. Perry Flowers, D.D.; and Dr. W.S. Willis, Jr., D.D.

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The school has celebrated many firsts: it was the first Dallas school to have a football game broadcast live on radio, the first on television, and the first to play football under lights. It was the first school in the Southwest to offer an accredited course in Negro Life and History, and in 1943 the first African-American school in the Southwest to organize a chapter of the National Honor Society. Before integration, according to the records of the Texas Inter-Scholastic League of Colored Schools, Booker T. Washington won more championships than any other African-American school in the state of Texas.

Booker T. Washington High School has served the citizens of Dallas honorably for six decades. John Leslie Patton, principal for more than 39 years, wrote in 1957: "We consecrate and dedicate ourselves to the task of making Booker T. Washington Technical High School a house of service to this metropolitan area to which we owe a debt of gratitude. We promise to pay this debt by sending out into the community young people of high ideals who will perpetuate the principals handed down to them, who will put them into action, and who will dedicate themselves to the preservation of our democratic ideals that have made public education possible and profitable."

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Bellerophon Quill Club of Booker T. Washington High School, "A History of the Dallas Colored High School for Negroes, 1938."
Booker T. Washington High School Yearbook, Bulldog, 1957.
"BTW Building Expansion New \$1,000,000 Addition." Dallas Times Herald, 21 April 1952.
"Contract Let for a New Colored School." Dallas Express, 20 May 1922.
Dallas Historical Society. J. L. Patton Collection, 86.50.
"Parents, Pupils and the New High School." Dallas Express, 4 November 1922.
"Plans Drawn for a New Colored School." Dallas Express, 22 April 1922.
Washington, Booker T. Up From Slavery. New York: Doubleday, 1901.

Designation Merit

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>A. Character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas or the United States. <u> X </u></p> | | <p>H. Embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation <u> </u></p> |
| <p>B. Location as the site of a significant historical event <u> </u></p> | | <p>I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural or architectural motif <u> </u></p> |
| <p>C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city. <u> X </u></p> | | <p>J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the city <u> X </u></p> |
| <p>D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social or historical heritage of the city <u> X </u></p> | | <p>K. Archaeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric value <u> </u></p> |
| <p>E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style <u> </u></p> | | <p>L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment or public pride <u> X </u></p> |
| <p>F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen <u> </u></p> | | |
| <p>G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city <u> X </u></p> | | |

Recommendation

The Designation Task Force requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code

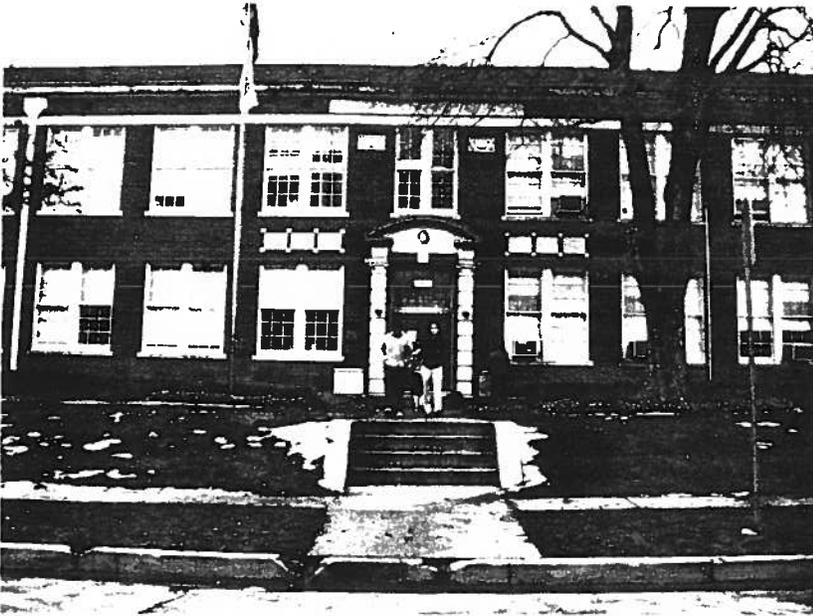
Date: 10/00

Further, the Designation Task Force endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development

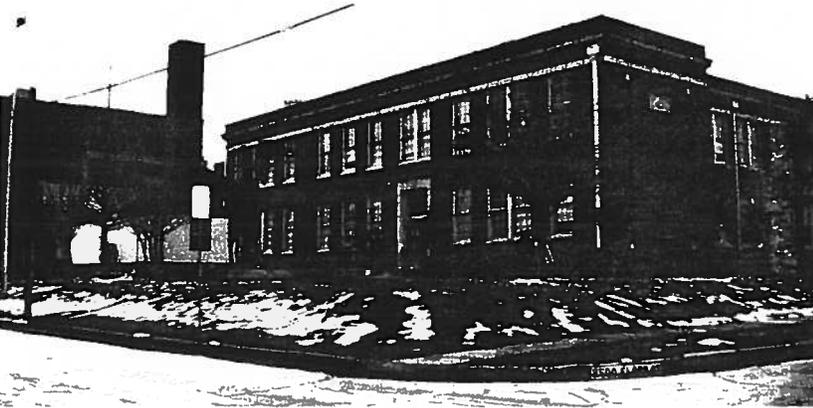
Debra Mitchell
Debra Mitchell, Chairman
Designation Task Force

Ron Emrich
Ron Emrich, Senior Planner
Historic Preservation

Booker T. Washinton- February 27, 2003



Front elevation
2501 Flora Street



Southwest
elevation



Southeast
elevation