

Hamilton – A Neighborhood Landmark

Hamilton was designed by Floyd Naramore, a prominent school architect, and is the prototype for several other Seattle schools. Many of Seattle's historic school buildings were designed by Naramore during his tenure as school Architect for the Seattle School District from 1919 to 1932.

In 1973, the Seattle City Council adopted a Landmarks Preservation Ordinance to safeguard properties of historic and architectural significance around the city. The Seattle School District recently nominated Hamilton as a historic landmark to the Landmarks Preservation Board, based on its contribution to the 1920s character of the neighborhood, its significance as the first intermediate school building in the city, and the architect's contribution to Seattle's architectural history.

June 2008 – Students finish the school year at Hamilton

July 2008 – Construction begins at Hamilton

September 2008 – Hamilton school year begins at Lincoln

September 2010 – Hamilton school year begins in the newly remodeled Hamilton building



Hamilton Library, 1920's



Hamilton Entry, 2006



Rendering of the Hamilton Middle School after renovation



Exterior Elevation of the renovated building and Gym Addition, from Densmore facing West

WALLINGFORD PLAYFIELD

No changes to the open grass playfield, children's playground, or tennis courts of Wallingford Playfield are proposed as part of the Hamilton renovation.

An earlier design for the Hamilton renovation included a proposal to install wells for a ground source heat pump system in the open grass field at Wallingford playfield. However, Seattle Public Schools is no longer pursuing this proposal.

Another previous proposal would have exchanged school property for park property to allow school construction to extend to the edge of the existing asphalt playground. Seattle Public Schools has withdrawn the request for the property exchange, and will build south of the existing property line (the same as the center line of 42nd Street).

The park property north of the school, including a 27' wide strip of the existing asphalt school playground, the retaining wall and fence, and the sloping path and gardens at the south edge of Wallingford playfield will be partly redeveloped on behalf of the Parks Department to provide a better connection between Wallingford playfield and the new Hamilton playground. This work is expected to be completed while Hamilton is under construction.

HAMILTON'S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

Today, Hamilton International Middle School programs integrate international cultures into multiple aspects of the curriculum, and emphasize team teaching and community involvement to develop key concepts within multiple subjects. Coordinated with programs at John Stanford International School (K-5), Hamilton students take at least one foreign language class per day, and immersion programs offer students multiple subjects in a foreign language.

International Education at Hamilton Focuses on:

- Integrating international content into different curriculum areas.
- Emphasis on learning world languages.
- Partnerships that support the international dimension of the school.
- Commitment of leadership and faculty to achieve student learning and continuing professional development.
- Coaching for students in problem solving, empathy & critical thinking

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Innovation in the design of middle schools has led to the creation of small schools within the middle school - clusters of classrooms where students spend most of their day. Hamilton's design concepts will split each grade, 6th, 7th, and 8th, into two "houses" - individual four-classroom learning communities where students will spend most of their day throughout the year.

The learning communities model creates better bonds between students and teachers, allows for more interaction among teachers, and helps students make the transition from elementary school classrooms to a school day with multiple instructors.

COMMUNITY AT THE CORE

Uses and functions common to all students will be housed on the first floor, with a large commons that will function as both lunchroom and auditorium. At the same time, the existing exterior of the building (both the three-story main building and the small gyms to the north) will be preserved during the remodel.

A NEW GYM & PLAYGROUND

School functions for the entire student body, as well as sports competitions, will be accommodated by the new gym. The existing gyms will be reused as a performing arts classroom and a new fitness facility.

The new gymnasium and public gym entry are at the level of Densmore Avenue, and the new playground is at the second floor level, accessed from the second floor and the gym. While the original proposal included a parking garage for school staff and faculty below the playground, the neighborhood worked with the City to modify the design to remove the garage from the final design.

MORE INFORMATION

Information on the design process, as well as copies of the current design, are available online at the Hamilton website:

<http://bex.seattleschools.org/hamilton.html>



Interior Rendering of the Hamilton Entry after renovation



Interior Rendering of the Hamilton Commons after renovation



Interior Rendering of the Hamilton Library Entry after renovation



Exterior Elevation of the renovated building, from 41st facing North



Exterior Elevation of the renovated building, from Wallingford Playfield facing South



Questions, concerns, and comments can be directed to the Hamilton project manager, Michael Romero, at 206.254.7973, or mbromero@heery.com

ALL BUILDING RENDERINGS AND PLANS COURTESY OF BLRB ARCHITECTS