

# Swinney

1106 West 47<sup>th</sup> Street

Kansas City, Missouri 64112-1215

## PHYSICAL BUILDING ASSESSMENT

### ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY:

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Rosin Preservation and SWD conducted a site visit to the building on May 26, 2011. The site visit examined the school grounds, the exterior and all interior floors of the building. The roof was not accessible for review, and mechanical and electrical systems were not reviewed. No invasive or destructive review techniques were employed.

The team also reviewed written information provided by the owner. These documents included:

- 2006 Building Dialogue (dated 11/9/2006) - dialogue was incomplete; building conditions remain similar to those noted in 2006.
- CADD floor plans -- basically accurate.
- Kansas City Historic Inventory Form (dated 3/89)



### CONDITION RATING: \*\*\*\* 1/2

The building is structurally sound. The exterior envelop is in good condition with remaining usable life of the envelop components. Building envelop requires only minor repairs. Interior finishes are in fair condition with typical wear from use. The mechanical and electrical systems appear to be sufficient and in fair to good condition for immediate building use. The exterior site requires repairs of damaged areas, including parking and playground areas and stone retaining walls.

### HISTORIC RATING: \*\*

Good example of a Progressive Era elementary school. Much of its original plan and fabric remain intact. Some finishes have been updated and small number of partitions has been altered or added. While the addition on the front of the building improved internal circulation and egress, it does not respect the materials or character of the original design and would be difficult and costly to remove. Its placement on the primary façade compounds the effect. The building does not appear eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. However, if the addition was removed and the original façade was restored, the building would likely qualify for Register listing.

### PHYSICAL OBSTACLES TO REUSE:

- No circulation between east and west wings on 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

### DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING BUILDING ELEMENTS/FEATURES AND VISIBLE ISSUES

#### Building Structure

- Foundation: Limestone, generally in good condition
- Floor Framing: Undetermined.

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- Roof Framing: Undetermined.

*Note: No items were noted for further in-depth review by structural consultant.*

## **Exterior Envelope**

- Exterior Wall Construction: Red brick with rusticated limestone foundation/water table and terra cotta trim. Patterned brick cornice. Ornament exhibits Sullivan-esque influences. Masonry is generally in good condition, although some bricks are beginning to spall and crack. Limited areas require repointing.
- Exterior Windows: Single-hung one-over-one aluminum sashes topped by fixed transoms. Windows have terracotta sills. Steel lintels show signs of deterioration. On the interior, the windows sit deep in plaster openings framed by thin non-historic wood trim and wood mullion caps.
- Exterior Entrances: Non-historic aluminum doors have multiple lights. Transoms at entrances on primary façade. Entrance in addition projects forward from wall of school. Original terra cotta trim is preserved in situ within new vestibule. East interior vestibule is wood-framed and has tile floor.
- Roof: Flat roof, condition unknown.

## **Building Interior**

- Corridors: Double-loaded corridors echo the U-shaped footprint of the building on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. The 1<sup>st</sup> Floor has east and west corridors that exit to the south but that do not connect to each other. Vinyl composition tile covers the concrete floors. The concrete rises to form an integral baseboard; plaster walls have a varnished wood chair rail; a grid with lay-in acoustical tiles hangs below the plaster ceiling. In some locations the dropped ceilings are configured as "clouds" that float in the middle of the space, particularly above the stair wells. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor corridor has a simple picture rail molding below the dropped ceiling. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Classroom Entries: Glazed wood doors with operable transoms. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Classrooms: Plaster walls with varnished chair rails. Wood floors are covered with carpet or vinyl composition tile in some rooms. Dropped grid ceilings have lay-in acoustical tiles. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Walls: Mostly painted plaster. Painted CMU in addition. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Ceilings: Lay-in grid ceilings in corridors and classrooms. Materials are generally in good to fair condition.
- Floors: Carpet and VCT over wood in the classrooms. VCT over concrete in the corridors and addition. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Trim: Varnished wood chair rails are found throughout the building (corridors and classrooms). Classrooms also have wood baseboards, framed chalkboards, cabinets with leaded glass doors, and coat closets with pull-up doors or sliding doors. First floor classrooms have minimal historic trim. The addition is trimmed to mimic the corridors with concrete base and wood chair rail. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Stairwells/Egress: Original building has wide concrete stairs with solid plaster knee wall railings separating runs. Railings have wood caps. Wood handrails are attached to both flanking walls. The addition contains an elevator and a concrete-filled metal pan stair structure. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Restrooms: Modern finishes and fixtures, generally in fair condition.

## **Conveying System**

- The building has an elevator. It was not operational for review during the site visit.

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## Fire Protection Systems

- Fire Alarm system is a simple manual system with horns, strobes, smoke detectors and pulls located in corridors. Smoke detectors are also located in the library and classrooms.
- Fire sprinklers are provided in the kitchen and in the building corridors.

## Mechanical / Electrical Systems (Information from the 2006 Building Dialog)

- Two low pressure steam boilers provide heating A 150 ton reciprocating chiller provides cooling. The entire building is air conditioned. Equipment appears to be in fair condition.
- Electrical system consists of a 1600A 208Y/120V service.

## Site

- Retaining Walls: Stone retaining walls at the north parking lot, east stair wing walls and main south entrance are in fair to poor condition. Damaged and missing stones were noted at each location.
- Sidewalks: Concrete, generally in fair condition. Stairs at the north parking lot are damaged and the southeast sidewalk is broken and settling. City-owned sidewalks surrounding the site are generally in fair condition except for the west side and northeast side, which were noted in poor condition.
- Parking Lots: Asphalt is in fair to poor condition. The lower parking lot on the north and the asphalt area at the south entry are in need of plant removal, milling, topping and resealing and striping. The upper parking lot on the north is in need of plant removal, resealing and striping.
- Playground: Asphalt is in fair condition. In need of plant removal, some patching, resealing and striping. The PVC pipe edging surround the soft play area is in need of repair.
- Playground Equipment: Only two basketball goals remain. These are in fair condition.
- Lawn and Landscaping: Fair condition, with a significant amount of weeds in the lawn areas.
- Fencing: Chain link in good to fair condition.
- Exterior railings: Steel tube railings are in good to fair condition.

## Key Public Spaces

- Auditorium: Open room has a raised stage at one end framed by a simple plaster proscenium. Fixed wood seats. Carpet runners on aisles of wood floor. Plaster walls with wood chair rail and baseboard. Dropped ceiling stops just above tops of window openings. Water staining on east wall, below 3<sup>rd</sup> floor bathroom.
- Library: Large open space along west side of building. Finishes similar to classrooms. Cubbies in bay window suggest that it may have been a kindergarten room.
- Gym: Glazed brown brick and plaster walls. Wood floor. High ceiling with plastered beams and acoustical tile attached to ceiling between beams. No bleachers.
- Office: Historic entrance surround with newer door. Wood cabinets along one wall. Wood desk. Single-user restroom.
- Cafeteria: On west side of building. All modern finishes and fixtures. VCT floor and dropped acoustical grid ceiling.

## Other Special/Distinct Features

- Separate power plant block sits just north of school. Matching exterior finishes and trim. Similar in form and placement to mechanical block at Moore, which originally housed a pool.

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- Lower level originally housed public library branch (see exterior trim). Entrance was in-filled to create additional classrooms.
- Third floor "sleeping porch" has stylized concrete columns, a low concrete railing and wide modillioned eaves. Windows infill original openings. May have been an outdoor play space that was later enclosed to create two classrooms.