

# Westport Middle

300 E. 39<sup>th</sup> Street

Kansas City, Missouri 64111

## PHYSICAL BUILDING ASSESSMENT

### ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY:

Rosin Preservation and SWD conducted a site visit to Westport Middle School on April 16, 2011. The site visit examined the school grounds, the exterior, and all floors on the interior of the building. The roof was not accessible for review. 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 11/16/2006 - dialogue was incomplete; building conditions are still similar to those noted in 2006.
- CADD floor plans. Basically accurate, but noted with numerous missing items including windows, door, etc.
- Kansas City Historic Inventory Form (dated 3/89)



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

The building is structurally sound. The exterior envelop is in fair condition with some remaining usable life of the envelop components including the masonry and windows. Interior finishes are in generally fair condition with typical wear from use. The mechanical and electrical systems appear to be sufficient and in fair condition for immediate building use. The exterior site requires repairs to damaged areas, including parking.

### HISTORIC RATING: \*\*\*\*

Building is a good example of a Progressive Era junior high school designed in the Jacobethan/Tudor Revival style. The original plan and many of the original finishes and fixtures remain intact. The first floor corridor and auditorium retain a very high level of ornate historic finishes. East of the original building is an addition (1992) that connects to the second floor via an elevated walkway. The placement, size and materials of the addition are compatible with the design of the historic school building. Its location at the rear of the building diminishes its visual prominence. Westport Middle School appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

### PHYSICAL OBSTACLES TO REUSE:

- Extremely large square footage.
- Lack of windows and configuration of spaces within the addition limit easy conversions of this building component.

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

#### Building Structure

- Foundation: Stone and concrete, generally in good condition. (*Original Building*)
- Floor Framing: Undetermined, assumed to be concrete, generally in good condition. (*Original Building*)
- Roof Framing: Concrete, generally in good condition. (*Original Building*)

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

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## Exterior Envelope

- Exterior Wall Construction: Red brick walls with rusticated limestone water table. Ornament includes patterned brick work and cut stone and terra cotta trim. Cracks in some terra cotta lintels have been repaired. Hard mortar used in 2007 repointing may be causing deterioration to the stone water table, particularly on the south elevation. Masonry is otherwise in generally good condition with limited areas requiring repointing.
- Exterior Windows: Single-glazed hung aluminum sashes are arranged singly and in pairs on all elevations. First story windows have fixed screens attached to the brick mold. The 5<sup>th</sup> story has arched openings filled with pairs of windows and fanlights. A few historic multi-light wood sashes are extant in the stair well. The windows are generally in good to fair condition.
- Exterior Entrances: Paired non-historic aluminum doors with small glazed panels. Interior vestibule has marble-clad walls and tall multi-light wood transom. Entrances are generally in fair condition with the doors in need of repainting.
- Roof: Flat roof. The condition is unknown.

## Building Interior

- Corridors: U-shaped double-loaded corridors on all floors. The main north-south corridor is wider than the corridors in the wings. The corridors wrap around the auditorium, the two gymnasiums, and the cafeteria located at the center of the building mass. The first-floor corridor is highly ornate. It has marble floors, wood panel wainscoting, plaster walls with a wood chair rail, vaulted plaster ceilings with ornate plaster molding, and ornate wood display cases. The suspended fluorescent light fixtures are not historic. The upper and lower floors have polished concrete floors with integral baseboards, plaster walls with wood chair rails, and dropped ceilings with lay-in acoustical tile and fluorescent tube fixtures. Materials and finishes are generally in fair condition with typical signs of wear.
- Classroom Entries: Non-historic wood doors with small glazed panels fill the historic wood door frames. Materials and finishes are generally in fair condition.
- Classrooms: VCT floors; plaster walls with wood chair rails and wood baseboards. Wood floors are exposed in a few classrooms. Some classrooms have dropped ceilings with lay-in acoustical tiles and fluorescent tube lighting. Others, particularly on the upper floors, have plaster ceilings with simple picture rail molding. Most classrooms retain historic wood-framed chalkboards. Materials and finishes are generally in fair condition.
- Walls: Painted plaster; drywall in the addition; glazed brown brick in gym. Materials are generally in good to fair condition.
- Ceilings: Plaster and dropped grids with lay-in acoustical tiles in main building; addition has grid ceiling with lay-in acoustical panels. Plaster ceilings are exposed in gym, some upper floor classrooms, 1<sup>st</sup> floor corridor and auditorium. The latter two spaces have ornate plaster details. Materials are generally in good to fair condition. Peeling paint and damaged tiles were noted in several areas.
- Trim: Varnished wood trim is found throughout the building -- chair rails in corridors and classrooms; door and window casings; display cases; chalkboard frames. First floor corridors have marble stairs and flooring and vaulted ornamental plaster ceiling. Ornamental plaster in auditorium also. Materials and finishes are in good to fair condition.
- Floors: Polished concrete in corridors. Vinyl composition tile over wood in classrooms. Original wood floors are exposed in a few locations. Marble tiles in 1<sup>st</sup> floor corridor. Carpet in library and office. Materials are generally in fair condition.
- Stairwells/Egress: The main building has three double-width stairwells. The primary stair is centered on the north side of the building; secondary stairwells are located at the east end of north and south corridors. The stairs are concrete with solid concrete baluster walls and wood handrails. Metal handrails divide the center run of stairs.
- Restrooms: Modern finishes and fixtures, generally in fair condition.

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## Conveying System

- There are two elevators in the original building plus a chairlift and one elevator in the addition. These were not operational for review during the site visit.

## Fire Protection Systems (Information from the 2006 Building Dialog)

- Fire Alarm system appears to be a simple manual system with horns, strobes, smoke detectors and pulls located in corridors.
- Fire sprinklers are not provided.

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

- Two low pressure steam boilers provide heating throughout the building. Five fan units located in the fan room provide recirculated air to all classrooms and other areas. These units have steam coils which produce heating for most of the building, including some classrooms. Some rooms have steam radiators on the perimeter walls for heating. Fourteen water source heat pumps provide partial air-conditioning in the original building and the addition. These heat pumps heat and cool the spaces they serve. Other portions of the building are air-conditioned by window units.
- Electrical system consists of a 2,500A 480Y/277V with 300 KVA step down transformer.

## Site

- Sidewalks: Concrete, generally in fair conditions. Sidewalk along the east side is damaged and should be replaced. City-owned sidewalks surrounding the site are generally in fair condition, except along the south side which is in poor condition.
- Parking Lots: Asphalt approach to upper parking deck is in fair condition. It is in need of plant removal, resealing and striping. The concrete paving in the garage and upper deck is in good to fair condition. Several areas are damaged along the east side of the garage.
- Retaining Walls: Cast in place concrete retaining walls along the west and east sides of the playing fields are in good condition with areas of damage noted where the metal railings are embedded on the top of the walls. Steel guards on top of the wall are in fair condition. Typically in need of rust removal and painting.
- Playground: Asphalt track is in good condition.
- Playground Equipment: There is no playground equipment on site.
- Lawn and Landscaping: Fair condition, with a significant amount of weeds in the lawn. Decorative landscaping is minimal and is located on the north side of the building. It is in fair condition.
- Exterior railings: Steel pipe rails generally in poor condition. Recommend repairs and repainting.

## Key Public Spaces

- Auditorium – The three-story auditorium has a main floor and two balconies. It has polished concrete floors, plaster walls with ornate plaster ornament, a plaster ceiling with suspended acoustical clouds, and historic chandeliers. The fixed wood seats have metal frames and attached writing surfaces for the seat behind.
- Gymnasium – The building has two gymnasiums and a swimming pool. The basement gym has historic wood flooring, glazed brick and plaster walls, and plaster ceiling with exposed steel beams. The sub-basement gym has similar finishes but was flooded at the time of the site visit. The cause of the flooding was unknown. The swimming pool is also in the basement. The empty pool is a narrow, rectangular concrete structure with shallow and deep ends. The floors and the lower walls in the pool room are tile. The upper walls are plaster. Acoustic tiles cover the ceiling between the plaster box beams in this space.
- Cafeteria – The cafeteria and kitchen are on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. The cafeteria has terrazzo floor, plaster walls with a painted wood chair rail, and a dropped ceiling with acoustical tiles. The room has arched window

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openings filled with non-historic windows. A glazed opening between the cafeteria and the stairwell has multiple fixed panes in a wood frame. The kitchen has plaster walls and polished concrete and tile floors.

- Library – non-historic finishes include carpet and dropped ceiling grid.
- Office – non-historic finishes and partitions.