

Johnson Annex Historic Resources Addendum

**BOLA Architecture + Planning
October 2008**

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

The University of Washington is undertaking planning for a new Molecular Engineering Building, to be located in the central portion of the University's Seattle campus. The proposed project site is on the east side of Stevens Way West, across from Architecture Hall. It is near several other historic buildings and encompasses the current site of Johnson Annex.

Consistent with its historic preservation policies as outlined in its "University of Washington Master Plan – Seattle Campus" of January 2003 (2003 Seattle Campus Master Plan), the University of Washington has sought historic and urban design information about Johnson Annex in a Historic Resources Addendum (HRA). This type of document is provided for any project that makes exterior alterations to a building over 50 years old, or is adjacent to a building or a significant campus feature older than 50 years, and for public spaces as identified in Fig. III-2 of the 2003 Seattle Campus Master Plan. This report was developed by Sonja Sokol Fürész and Susan Boyle of BOLA Architecture + Planning with assistance from the University. The research was undertaken and the report prepared in September and October 2008. The report provides historical and architectural information about Johnson Annex, originally constructed in 1917 or 1918 for the U.S. Naval Training Corps.

Research Sources

BOLA undertook research to provide historic context and factual data about the development of the campus. Research sources included drawings, maps, and studies provided by the University of Washington and those available from its Facilities Records. Research also included a review of the digitized historic photo collections of the Seattle Municipal Archives, UW Libraries Special Collections, and the Museum of History and Industry. Information about the proposed building is from the 2007 MEB pre-design study.

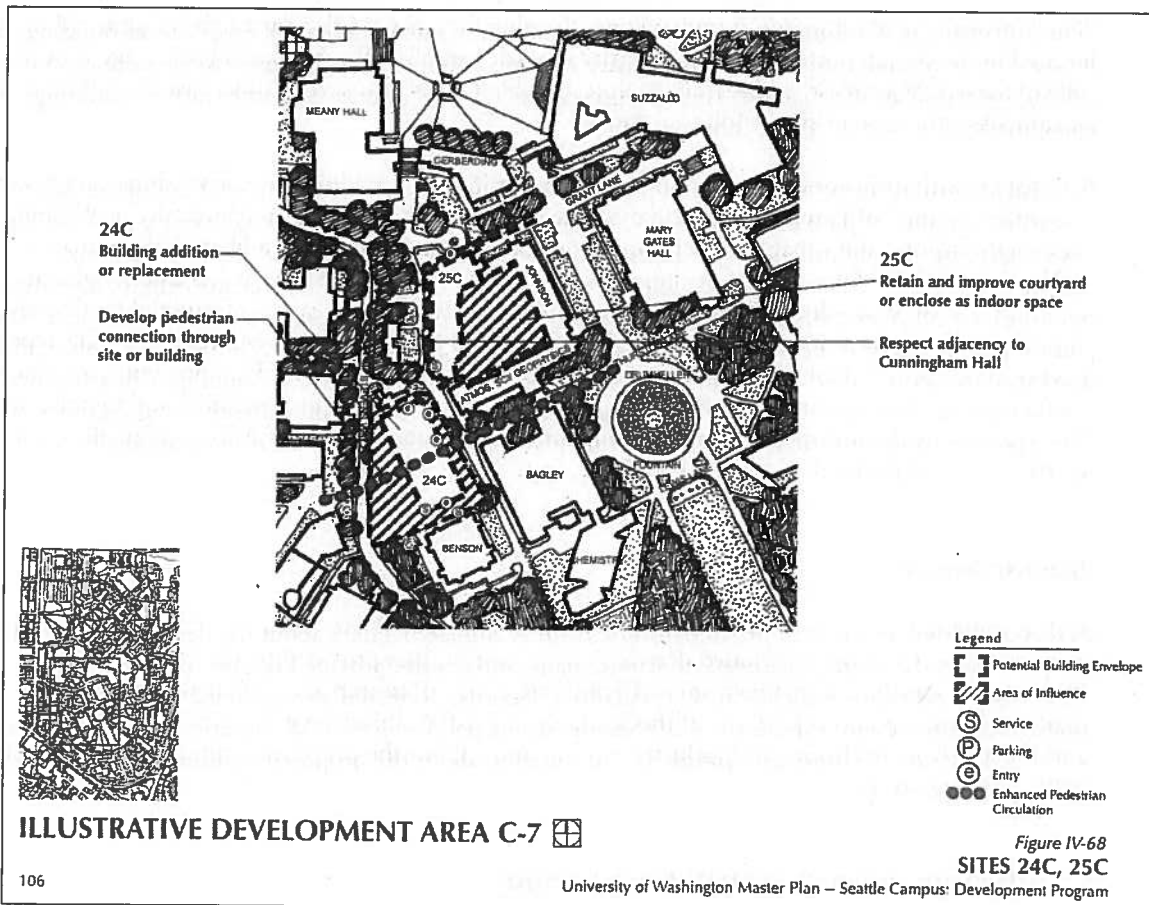
2. HISTORIC PRESERVATION FRAMEWORK

The University Stewardship and Historic Preservation Policies

As noted in the 2003 Seattle Campus Master Plan, the Regents provide stewardship for historic university properties. As part of its development, the University assures that preservation of historic resources is considered through provision of an HRA. This HRA provides the required historic and architectural information for the subject property potentially impacted by the Molecular Engineering Building project. According to the Master Plan, the intent of the HRA is to "provide a context to insure that important elements of the campus, its historical character and value, environmental conditions and landscape context are preserved, enhanced, and valued. [It] further insures that improvements, changes and modifications to the physical environment are analyzed and documented."

Based on historic campus planning documents, the 2003 Seattle Campus Master Plan identified significant buildings that are associated with the early development of the campus and early campus master plans – the 1898 Oval Plan, the 1909 Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition Plan, and the 1915 Regents Plan. The Master Plan also identified significant and unique landscapes on the campus. Johnson Annex is not identified as a significant campus element that was part of an early master plan (Fig. III-2, p. 25).

The site of the Johnson Annex is identified as a potential development site (25C) in the Development Areas section of the Master Plan (p. 106, shown below).

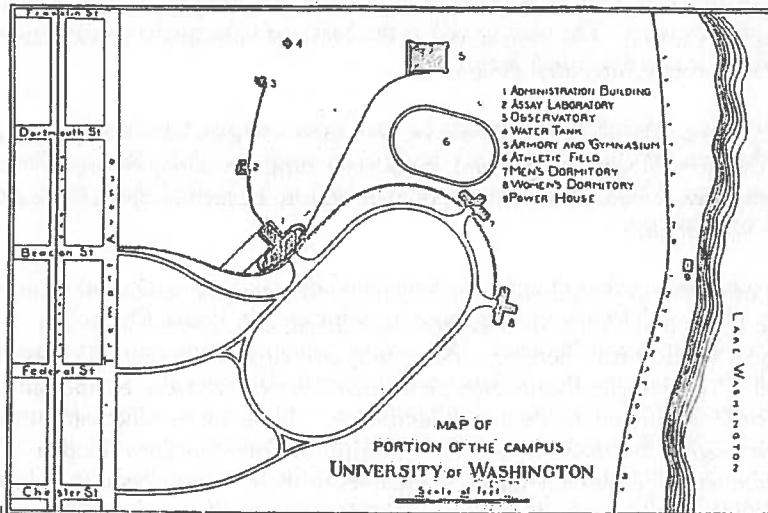


3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

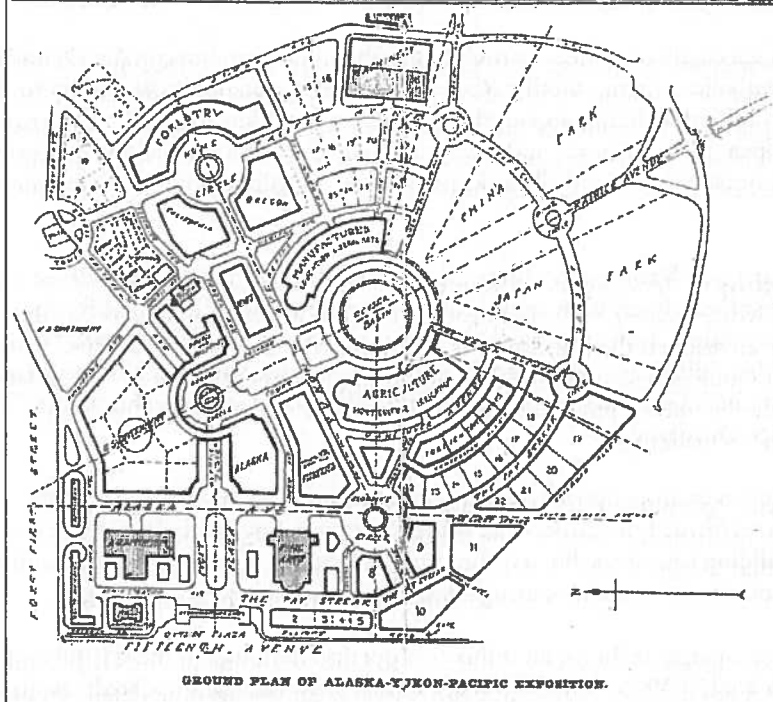
Development of the University of Washington's Campus

The University of Washington was established by the State Legislature in 1861 as the first public university in the state. It was initially sited on a ten-acre parcel of land in what is now downtown Seattle. By the late 1880s, increasing university enrollment and the expanding city made a new campus desirable. In 1891, the University Land and Building Commissioners hired local architect William E. Boone to develop a comprehensive plan for a new campus at its present site, and in 1895 the campus was moved there. Denny Hall, originally known as the Administration Building, was completed that year. The

Observatory was constructed nearby. A drill hall, gymnasium, and two dormitories followed within the next four years.



Meanwhile, the University Regents sought to develop a campus plan to guide the location of future buildings. In 1898, engineering professor A.H. Fuller developed a plan known as the Oval Plan, which included only the northern portion of the university site. Remaining buildings constructed in the 1890s include the two earliest dormitories, later named Lewis and Clark Halls, in addition to Denny Hall and the Observatory. All four of these are in the north campus area.



In 1903, the Board of Regents hired the Olmsted Brothers, renowned landscape architects, to prepare a design for a general campus plan. However, the resulting 1904 Olmsted plan was never realized. When Seattle business interests were planning the AYP Exposition in 1906, they approached the University Regents and asked if the fair could be sited on the undeveloped lower (southern) two-thirds of the campus. The exposition plan was then developed by the Olmsted Brothers, who also provided the landscape design. As a result, the lower campus was cleared of timber. That portion of the campus' present plan descends from the Olmsted's Beaux-Arts design for the 1909 fair.

Top: The Oval Plan, also known as the Fuller Plan, c. 1898. (From Johnston, p. 20.)

Above: Ground plan of the AYP, 1907. (From "Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition" booklet, MOHAI, 2006.3.1.)

on landscaping. Johnson Annex is located east of Cunningham Hall, which was the Washington State Women's Building at the AYP. After the AYP, most of the University's buildings were constructed in the Central and South campus areas.

The AYP grounds reverted back to the University in 1909, providing the central axis of Rainier Vista and an emphasis

The Regents Plan of 1915, designed by the unofficial campus architect, Carl F. Gould and the Seattle architecture firm, Bebb and Gould, became the University's guiding planning document for the subsequent two decades. It reaffirmed the Olmsted's AYP grounds while adapting the symmetry and formality in a design for the upper campus. The plan served as the basis for subsequent construction, and set the Collegiate Gothic character for architectural design.

The Regents Plan proposed grouping Liberal Arts programs on the upper campus, administrative and library facilities at its core on the Central Quadrangle, and the Science programs along Rainier Vista and the southern portion of Stevens Way. Major athletic facilities were later to be located along the eastern edge of the campus near Lake Washington.

This plan was consistent with other Beaux-Arts designs for American civic centers, towns and campuses during the period between the 1880s and 1930s, such as those for Chicago, St. Louis, Columbia University, and the University of California at Berkeley. Borrowing principals from grand European city and villa plans of the 16th and 17th centuries, Beaux-Arts plans included axial systems, balance and symmetry, and a hierarchical order reinforced by the use of landscape. Unlike many other campuses, which have compromised their original Beaux-Arts and City Beautiful campus concepts, the plan of the University of Washington has remained essentially intact. Principles of the plan have been used in recent master plans, guiding contemporary building on the campus and extensions to the south and west.

Collegiate Gothic Revival was selected by architect Carl Gould as the suitable architectural style for the campus buildings due to its symbolic content. Gothic Revival also offered potential adaptability to the sometimes irregular plans that individual buildings and their academic functions required. Colored brick in warm shades of brown, pinkish-gray cast stone, and cream-colored terra cotta were adopted as primary exterior materials. Decorative brick patterns and allegorical sculpture embellished many of the campus' Gothic Revival buildings.

Henry Suzzallo was the University of Washington's fifteenth president, whose tenure lasted eleven years from 1915 to 1926. Suzzallo worked closely with architect Carl Gould in developing plans for the campus and its buildings. He envisioned the institution as "the university of a thousand years," with its library as its heart. Bebb and Gould's Regents Plan, adopted during Suzzallo's first year as president, placed the library clearly beside the intersecting axes from the Liberal Arts Quadrangle and Rainier Vista, and the main axis of the Science Quadrangle.

In 1934, the Regents requested a reexamination and update of Bebb and Gould's 1915 plan. The resulting 1935 Plan essentially reaffirmed the earlier one, while recommending some changes such as the location of a student union building east of the library, the siting of a health sciences complex south of Northeast Pacific Street, and location of student housing along the northeasterly campus ridge.

Following World War II, major changes included an influx of students attending on the GI Bill and establishment of the medical school in 1946. The University's basic plan was again updated, resulting in the 1948 Plan. In addition to supporting the 1935 Plan, the new plan recommended increasing density and acquiring new land in the Northlake area south of campus along Portage Bay.

Buildings on the campus constructed after World War II were designed in a variety of Modern styles that emphasized new materials and expressive structural qualities. Prominent among these is the Faculty Center (1958 - 1960). In the 1950s, a University Architectural Commission was established and a University architect appointed. Collegiate Gothic was replaced by modern architecture as the preferred style for new campus buildings. The present campus is characterized architecturally by the assorted styles of its buildings. This stylistic variation provides visual interest and gives a sense of the campus' development over time.

Constructed during the WWI era, Johnson Annex was originally a low-scale, wood-frame and wood-clad structure with a residential appearance. Likely intended as a temporary building, its design was not guided by the campus plan but rather by simplicity and necessity.

4. THE BUILDING

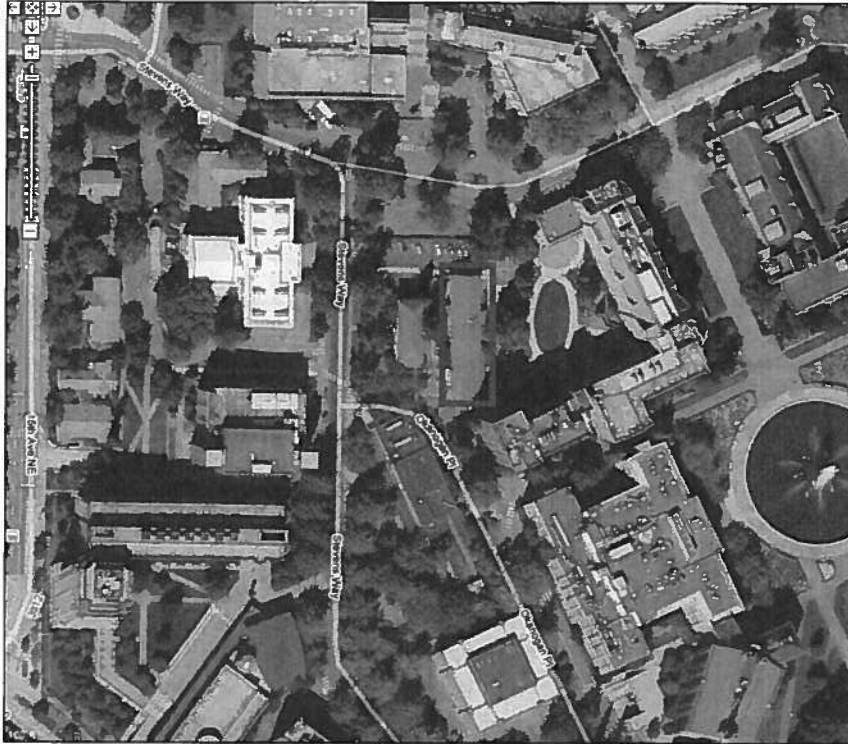
Building History

According to University Facilities Records, the building known as Johnson Annex was constructed in 1917 for the U.S. Naval Training Corps (United States Naval Training Center Building No. 44). An architect for the building has not been identified, and it was a vernacular structure likely built from stock plans for WWI era portable or temporary buildings. It was used as an infirmary until 1920, when it was moved to its present site west of Johnson Hall / east of the former AYP Women's Building (now Cunningham Hall). Its original site has not been identified.

Many additions and alterations have been made over the years. After being moved to its present site in 1920, the building was remodeled to serve as an Anatomy Laboratory. In 1927, an addition was made to the south end of the building. Alterations and additions were made again in 1939, while it was still being used as an Anatomy Laboratory. A west addition was constructed in 1946. Ca. 1948 the building became the Meteorology Building, and in the early 1960s it was used for Atmospheric Sciences. The building name became Johnson Annex A in 1969.



Aerial view of the campus, looking southwest, ca. 1927. A red arrow points to the subject building. (University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, neg. no. UW2169.)



A current aerial shows the location of Johnson Annex in relation to surrounding buildings. The building is outlined in red. (Google Maps, October 2008.)

Architectural Description

Existing Site Features

The building is situated approximately 20' behind (east of) Cunningham Hall and west of Johnson Hall, across an open yard. The site is defined by a paved parking lot on the north, a retaining wall and paved parking lot on the south, and a concrete walk on the east and west. The structure fills most of the site, and landscaping is limited to some turf at the west side as well as foundation plantings and shrubs, primarily around the main east entry.

Several entries serve the building. The original main entry porch, accessed by stairs, is located roughly centrally at the east facade. An accessible ramp runs parallel with the northern portion of the east facade to reach the porch. A lower level entry is also provided at the east facade, slightly south of the main entry and accessed by concrete steps. The west facade contains two building entrances as well.

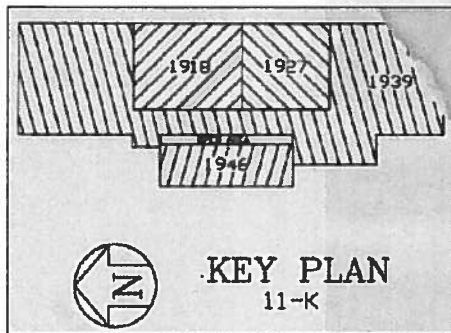
The Building

A photo from ca. 1920 shows the building as originally constructed, a modest residential-looking structure with the following characteristics:

- rectangular massing, approximately 45' wide by 20' deep
- one story structure above daylight basement/lower level
- side gabled roof with exposed rafter tails at open eaves and decorative brackets at gable ends
- wood cladding and trim
- paired, double-hung wood windows
- shed-roofed porch with paired square column supports



Johnson Annex, ca. 1920. (UW Libraries Special Collections, neg. no. UW12988.)



Additions to the building over time, original construction shown as 1918. (From "Johnson Annex A First Floor Plan," UW Facilities, 8-13-1991.)

The building today is much altered. It has been significantly added onto several times, on the south, west, and north sides. The original entry porch on the east facade is the only clear element of the 1917 building. The key plan at left, excerpted from a 1991 drawing, indicates the location of the various additions.

In its current form, Johnson Annex is a two-story wood-frame structure on a concrete foundation with a partial basement (at the south end). It is a long and narrow building, side-gabled with its ridge line running north-south. The roof is composition-shingled. The main mass of the building measures approximately 146'-8" wide by 38'-8" deep, with another addition on the south end of the west side of the building (approximately 70' wide by 10' deep).

The building is clad with painted shiplap, and details consist of corner boards, flat window trim, and simple roof brackets at gable ends. Windows consist primarily of single and paired single-hung non-original windows. The main entry at the east facade features a nine-light glazed wood-paneled door flanked by eight-light sidelights set above a wood panel. The lower, secondary entry on the east facade has a six-light glazed wood-paneled door. Entry/egress is also provided at three points on the west facade and at the basement level of the south facade.

A bicycle rack and shed, measuring 7' deep (east-west) by 33'-6" wide (north-south), was added to the south end of the east side of the building in 1994.

Plan and Interior Features

The interior layout has been changed considerably over the years as additions were made and to provide various classroom and office spaces. The plan consists of a slightly irregular double-loaded corridor serving smaller offices and rooms, with some larger rooms toward the north and south ends of the building. Interior stairs are located at the west side of the building, north of center. An enclosed fire exit stair projects from the east side of the building, closer to the south end.

Original interior finishes are unknown but were likely modest. Typical for the period of construction would have been wood flooring and trim, with painted plaster walls and ceilings. Interior finishes today consist of carpet and resilient flooring, painted walls and ceilings in the corridors, wood base and simple trim in some areas, flush doors, and panel type fluorescent ceiling light fixtures.

The following contemporary photos are by BOLA and date from September 2008.



Two contextual views of Johnson Annex, looking southwest (top) and northwest (bottom) from the yard west of Johnson Hall.



Two views looking southwest at the building, showing the north facade and the northern portion of the primary east facade. Due to the change in grade on the site, the north end of the building appears one-story.



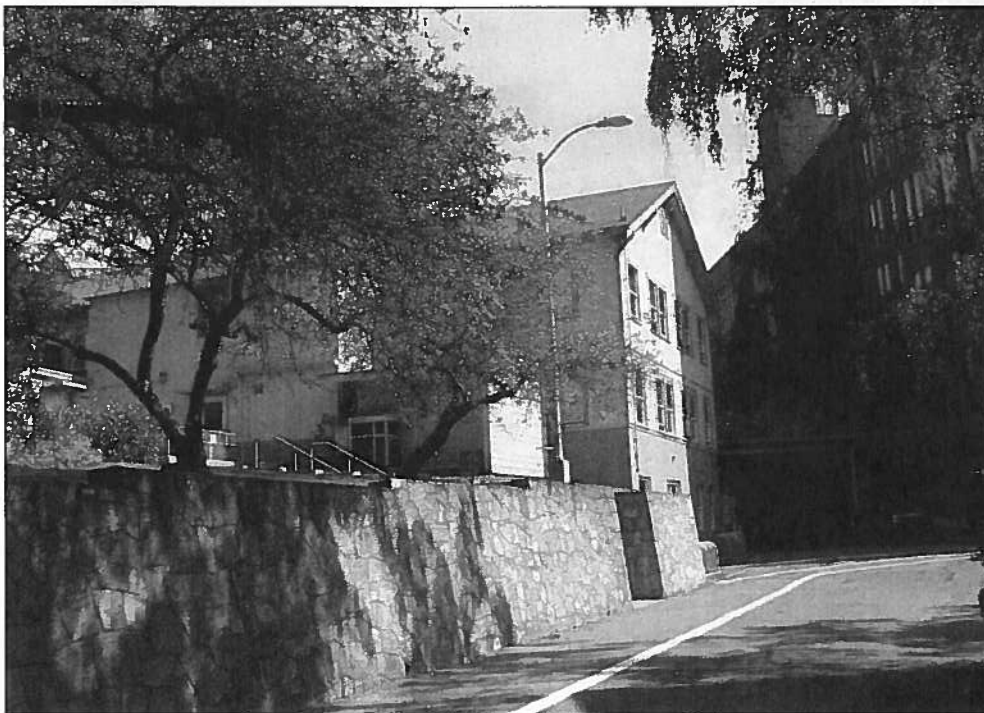
View looking southwest at the southern portion of the primary east facade. The roof of the bicycle shed is visible below the first floor line, south of the retaining wall.



Looking northwest, showing the south facade and southern portion of the east facade.



Looking north from the parking lot south of Johnson Annex, showing a partial view of the south facade. Also note the retaining wall and the close relationship to Cunningham Hall (at left).



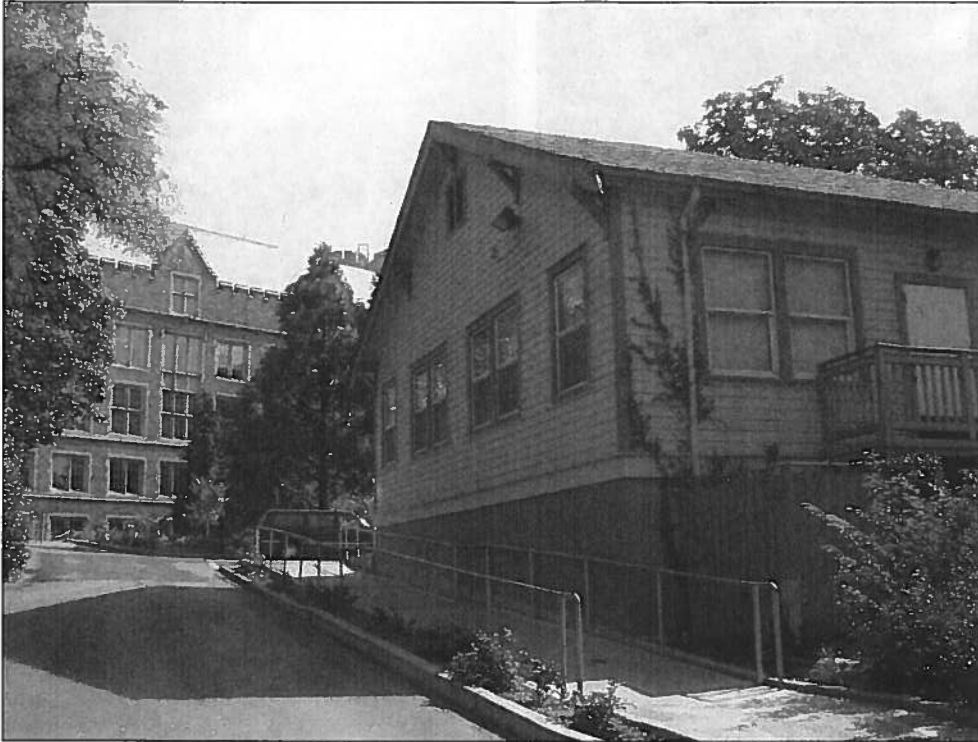
Looking northeast toward the southwest corner of Johnson Annex.



View looking southeast at the southern portion of the west side of the building.



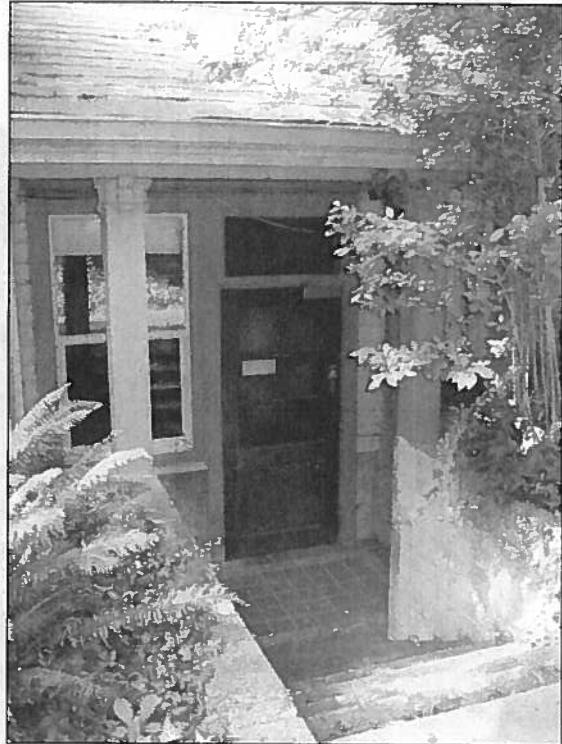
Looking southeast at the northern portion of the west side of the building.



View looking east, showing the north facade and north end of the west facade of Johnson Annex. Johnson Hall is visible in the background.



Detail view of the southeast corner of the building. Note the shiplap cladding, corner boards, simple wood trim, and gable end brackets.



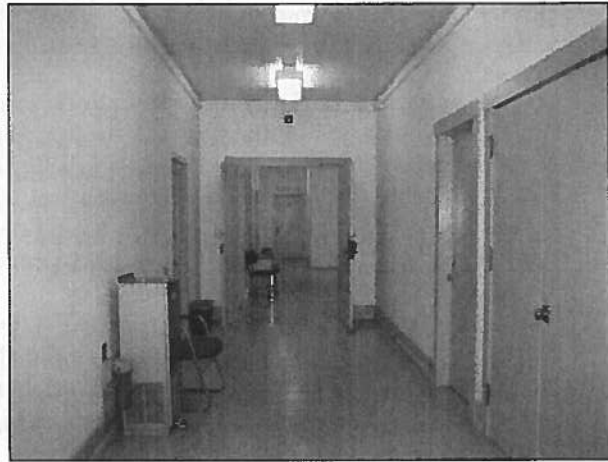
Views of the two entries on the east facade.



Looking southwest toward the lower level entry on the east facade, obscured by the shrubs. The steps at the far right of the photo lead to the main entry porch.



Four interior views, showing typical finishes and double-loaded corridor.



5. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

The Proposed Project

The project will provide a new Institute for Molecular Engineering and Sciences in a two-phase development. Phase 1 includes two components in one structure – the construction of a new, 49,000 gross square foot (GSF) structure on Site 25C, currently occupied by Cunningham Hall and Johnson Annex; and simultaneous construction of 28,000 GSF of shell space. This will be followed by a future Phase 2, to provide an additional approximately 83,000 GSF.

The 2003 Seattle Campus Master Plan calls for conservation of significant buildings and plantings in the historic core. For the Central Campus, the Master Plan also calls for new "structures and open spaces [to] be complementary in scale and character with the Central Campus ... help define open spaces, views and circulation routes to enhance the campus environment [and] ... maintain and protect the value of the University's significant [historical structures and open space]." Specific Master Plan graphics relating to Site 25C indicate that development on the current site of the Johnson Annex is allowable (p. 106).

The MEB "Pre-design Report" of December 20, 2007 indicated that Phase 1 of the new MEB will be a four-story structure above grade, with an additional below grade level to house vibration-sensitive instrumentation. The building will contain flexible laboratory space and related office functions. The preferred option for the project calls for demolition of the Johnson Annex.

Recommended Mitigation

In the preferred option for proposed MEB, the new building is located on the present site of Johnson Annex. However, Johnson Annex has not been identified as a significant structure on the UW Seattle campus. It does not possess historical significance, nor does it retain sufficient integrity to qualify as a historic resource. It is recommended to minimally photo-document the building prior to demolition, for the purposes of recording the history of the campus' built environment. The resulting photographs should be maintained on file with other building records in the UW Facilities Vault.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

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