June 13, 2022

Jennifer Kreifels  
Associate Planner  
Pierce County [sent via electronic mail]

RE: Pierce County East Campus/Parkland School Demolition (#987284)

Dear Jennifer Kreifels:

On behalf of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, I am writing to encourage Pierce County to issue a Determination of Significance and require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. The Washington Trust is a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving the places that matter in Washington State. In accordance with our mission, we affirm that the Parkland School at 214 121st St S, Tacoma, deemed eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places by the Federal Transit Administration and the WA State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, is worthy of a more thoughtful consideration against de-designation from the Pierce County Landmarks Register and demolition, and that preserving the building through rehabilitation and adaptive reuse can align with the goals of Pacific Lutheran University, prospective developers, Pierce County, and the Parkland community.

Should an EIS be required, it must include a comprehensive, thorough, fact-based alternatives analysis that includes alternatives that avoid demolition of this historic property and that retain, preserve, and rehabilitate the property in a manner that allows it to convey its historical significance. A historic preservation alternative must be exhausted before further consideration of demolition. Policies at the Federal and State level can incentivize these efforts through the Federal Historic Tax Credit: https://dahp.wa.gov/grants-and-funding/federal-historic-tax-credit and Special Tax Valuation: https://dahp.wa.gov/grants-and-funding/special-tax-valuation which the property is both eligible for with specific guidance.

In concurrent consideration of the project’s inevitable climate impact, we must also affirm: while energy-efficient design and renewable materials in new construction generally “work as intended” on vacant lots and the urban sprawl to undeveloped lands, studies have shown that the same climate and environmental calculus do not yield the same results when compared to the demolition-and-replacement of typical historic structures. The National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Preservation Green Lab concludes in their 2016 study, when comparing buildings of equivalent size and function, building reuse almost always offers environmental savings over demolition and new construction:

- It can take between 10 to 80 years for a new energy efficient building to overcome, through efficient operations, the climate change impacts created by its construction.
- Retrofitting rather than demolishing and replacing, just 1% of the city of Portland’s office buildings and single-family homes over the next ten years would help to meet 15% of their county’s total CO2 reduction targets over the next decade.
- The environmental benefits of reuse are maximized by minimizing the input of new construction materials. A 2018 EPA report adds that “construction and demolition projects filled U.S. landfills with almost 145 million tons of waste” contributing on average a quarter of all landfill waste per year.

- Historic rehabilitation has a thirty-two-year track record of creating 2 million jobs and generating $90 billion in private investment. Studies show residential rehabilitation creates 50% more jobs than new construction.

Even with considerations of historic significance and material integrity aside, the preservation of the Parkland School remains congruent with Pierce County’s pursuit for environmental equity, whether by providing and protecting existing housing opportunities or following data-driven and proactive policies that address the climate impacts of carbon emissions and landfill waste related to the built environment.

We look forward to working with Pierce County to affirm a historic preservation ethic that is equity to all communities within the shared built environment.

Sincerely,

Huy Pham
Preservation Programs Director
Here is the Powerpoint.

Marianne Lincoln  
253-847-8000
Please help the Parkland Community save their Historic Parkland School!

Marianne Lincoln | 253-847-8000 | Marianne26435@gmail.com
Early photo of the original portion of the Parkland School
Parkland is rich with history that has gone unnoticed or gone to development.

Brookdale Golf Course was home to the Mahon family and the end of the Oregon Trail (Naches Trail)

Note the wagon ruts

Oregon Trail Monument in front of the Brookdale Golf Course
Exterior of the Parkland School in 2017
2103
Interior of the Parkland School during Winterfest
2103 Interior of the Parkland School during Winterfest
Parts of Parkland School already removed
From Ordinance 86-84 designating the Parkland School as Historic

“...these buildings were often the only ones centrally located and able to hold gatherings of people within a convenient travelling distance. Most of the schools included in this nomination represent communities which evolved around them and are often the only building remaining which suggests early settlement activity.”

“The twenty-four school buildings possess the architectural integrity, design, workmanship, feeling and/or association required to place properties in a historic register. Historically, they symbolize the results of early local control, and the development of the many communities which have evolved in Pierce County over time.

These words reflect that this building is more than blocks, mortar and windows. This building reflects our beginnings, our growth and our collective soul. The 29th Legislative District is the most economically disadvantaged and diverse in the state. There are huge social justice issues here. This is NOT the right place to hurt the community more. This is where organizations and businesses should come out and be there for us, to help us grow, not erase and replace us with richer people. Parkland needs to be in the conversation and helping the solution. When PLU started ignoring the community is when it started struggling too.
We are residents of Parkland, folks who grew up and attended Parkland School, graduated of PLU, and people who are affiliated with PLU programs. PLU is part of our lives and we celebrate their success. But, we need to kill the sale, de-listing and demolition of the Parkland School. PLU will not suffer if the community can help find a more suitable buyer and use. The community, as a non-profit, can get donations, volunteer and funds to bring the building back to par.

This is the business district. We don’t need more apartments tying up the parking. There already is not enough parking. We need a community place to meet, to bring people together, to hold group and organization meetings. We need services for healthcare, mental health, extended child care, activities and senior services.

From the RESOLUTE – PLU magazine
(Using the word INNOVATION to mean “change”)
“PLU innovations is innovation that centers others.” Yes, centered us right back into restarting our community association.
“Innovation is also a new way to use something existing” Good, let’s use what is existing. It was in good enough shape to use when PLU purchased it. They let is go unmaintained.
Innovation – “should be about everyday acts of grace and thoughtfulness that make the world a better place.” Time for PLU to be graceful and thoughtful about it community members, many are grads.
We really have to hope the Landmarks Committee has the strength to give a win to the community and not to the developer or the seller.

There are rumors PLU has turned down other lease opportunities.

This is a beloved building. It is already a landmark. It needs to stay a landmark.

The Community just voted to resurrect the Parkland Community Association. They want to be a viable organization to sit at the table and work with the key players to find a more suitable use a way to bring the building back to code.

The renovations may be extensive, but not all have to happen at one to restore this gem to useful service.

All we ask is you, the Landmarks Commission, to say NO. Then the community will help PLU do what is right for us all.
HISTORIC LANDMARK MEETING: JUNE 21, 2022

Good evening, Commissioner’s and all who are in attendance.
My name is Marlene (Lindgren) Hayden

My personal family history is tied to Parkland and Parkland School since 1949 when we moved into the home my father and grandfather built at 409 123rd St. So. in Parkland.

I attended Parkland School from 1949 through 1955 and later graduated from Franklin Pierce High School in 1961. My parents were involved in the community from 1949 until their passing in 1972 and 1993. I returned to the area in 1991 after college graduation and work in other parts of the State.

I remember hearing my parents talk about “consolidation” of schools when I was in elementary school. I asked what that word meant. They explained to me that all the schools in and around us were going to go together to become a school district, which resulted in the formation of Franklin Pierce School District 402.

As I was growing up in Parkland our family knew of several military families from McChord AFB that had settled in Parkland and bought homes here. Their children attended Parkland School.

Parkland friends and neighbors became aware of PLU’s plans on about May 15th of this year, to demolish the Parkland School. In sharing this information with others in the community and people in the surrounding communities, I and others here tonight have found that many attended or had relatives who attended Parkland School. All I have talked to wish to see Parkland School remain as a Historic Landmark.

I reject the proposal on application # 982635
#pcc 2.88.040 - DEMOLITION of Parkland School
#pcc 2.88.045 7 2.88430 - REMOVAL of Landmark Designation

We request you vote NO to this application.
And to resolve this matter by maintaining Parkland School as an Historic Landmark for present and future generations to see and enjoy.

Thank you,
Marlene R. Hayden
P. O. Box 44402
Parkland, WA 98448