



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

700 Third Avenue · 4th floor · Seattle, Washington 98104 · (206) 684-0228

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

LPB 181/03

Name and Address of Property: **Golden Gardens Bath House**
8001 Seaview Ave. NW

Legal Description: That part of Government Lot 1, Section 3, Township 25 North, Range 3 East W.M. lying west of the right of way of the Great Northern Railway; The South 1320 feet of Government Lot 1, Section 34, Township 26 North, Range 3 East W.M. lying west of the right of way of the Great Northern Railway; That part of Government Lot 2, Section 34, Township 26 North, Range 3 East W.M. lying west of the right of way of the Great Northern Railway; Blocks 24, 25, 26, Ballard Tidelands; Part of Stanley Mead's Replat of Blocks 22, 23, Ballard Tidelands, as follows: Lots 7, 10, 11, 19, 21, 22, 26, Block 22, all of Lots 4, 5, 21, all those parts of Lots 22, 24, 25, 26 lying west of the right of way of the Great Northern Railway; Together with vacated West 80th Street and West 85th Street lying west of the right of way of the Great Northern Railway.

At the public meeting held on June 18, 2003, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Golden Gardens Bath House as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25. 12.350:

- (D.) *It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.*
- (F.) *Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.*

DESCRIPTION

The site is near the north end of Golden Gardens Park, north of Shilshole Marina and northwest of Northwest 85th Street. The Bath House occupies a footprint of approximately 5,700 square feet on a sandy beach at the edge of the Puget Sound shoreline. The building is sited between a natural area of wetlands, turf meadow and tidelands on the north, and picnic shelters to the south. A large paved parking lot, one of several in the park, is 170' +/- east of the building. The overall building footprint is approximately 146' by 39'. For this nomination, the site of the Bath House is defined as an area

of 170' by 60', which includes the building footprint and approximately 10' in each direction around the building.

A History of the Golden Gardens Bath House

The site of Golden Gardens Park was the location of a late nineteenth century fishing boat facility and skeet shooting range. In 1906, a local real estate investor, Harry Treat purchased the land to develop it as a private amusement park in association with an electric streetcar line. The City acquired the Park in 1923, after considerable lobbying by residents of Ballard, and established Golden Gardens Park.

The Seattle Parks Department designed and constructed the present Bath House in 1929 to serve the recreation needs of residents in Seattle and the region.¹ The building was envisioned as a durable, functional community structure. Its opening was celebrated in July 1929 with a public event that included water sport exhibits and the introduction of a Miss Lois Hockinson as “Miss Golden Gardens.”

The Bath House originally contained a lobby and locker room in the center space. There were shower and changing rooms for men and boys in the south wing, and a similar functioning but single room for women and girls in the north wing. The building originally served sunbathers and swimmers, and is thus associated with early twentieth century ideals of health and physical education.

Construction of the Bath House following an effort by the city and its Parks Department to respond to growing recreation needs during a time of increased economic limitations. In 1928, under the direction of Mayor Bertha Knight Landes, the Department undertook a survey of its neighborhoods, their school aged children, and recreation needs of children and adults. This study may have been inspired by increased information about the benefits of recreation on the health and education of children. The report led to a Ten-Year Plan, forwarded by then Parks Superintendent E. R. Hoffman, for new facilities throughout the cities. Fortunately for Ballard residents, the Golden Gardens Bathhouse was constructed, based on Hoffman’s design, a year before the plan was adopted by the City Council.

The report recommended that additional facilities, specifically a bathhouse, be constructed at Golden Gardens Park, to aid salt-water swimming. After construction of the building it became one of the city’s most popular swimming beaches, aided by Parks-sponsored lifeguard services.

The Bathhouse appears to represent a building type that emerged during this era as one of many shelters, boathouses and camp facilities constructed in national parks during the “Golden Age” of Rustic Design. The bathhouse type was described by architectural consultant Albert H. Good, in a three-volume set of pattern designs originally published in 1938 by the Department of the Interior. The bathhouse design was to follow tenets of simplicity and economy, use of local materials, and crafted (or rustic) detailing.

¹ The historic King County Tax Assessment form cites 1935 as the date of the building’s construction. The date of 1929, however, is cited in many other records and newspaper articles. Note: the two-word name of the building, used in this document, is the historic name. Documents after 1969 are for the Bathhouse.

The buildings were created at this time as the “era of casual swimming within publicly owned parks had passed, with a more progressive or controlled swimming or bathing (encouraged).” The building type design focused on its utilitarian, functional aspects: “The bathhouse in a public area should be efficiently arranged and constructed . . . Here is no place for unnecessary spaciousness, or luxury.”²

The program called for a check-in or key room, changing room, lockers or baskets, dressing spaces, showers, and toilet facilities. Concession spaces were provided in some building. The need for privacy required opaque walls but sunlight and natural ventilation was recommended. In the federal pattern design that resulted we see symmetry, simple room arrangement, and a hierarchical emphasis on the building center, similar to Seattle’s Golden Garden Bathhouse. Typically the buildings are wood or timber-framed, with concrete foundations and slabs, though they may be clad with siding, or may be of bearing masonry or logs. Excerpts from Good’s 1938 publication, of other bath houses of this type are attached at the end of this document.

This research appears to support designation of the Bathhouse based on criterion d., which requires that a building “embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period or method of construction.” It is a representative of a building type, and representative of its period of construction under the Parks Department’s mandate for new recreation facilities in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

The Bath House was built by the Seattle Park Department. Several other “modern” bathhouses had been built by the department in 1928 at Madrona Beach, Seward Park and West Green Lake. However, the Golden Gardens building was a different design in that it featured Colonial Revival stylistic details. In the 1930s other park facilities were constructed in Golden Gardens Park by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) crews. They included a rustic garden pool, pergola, picnic shelters, and trails. In 1940, the Parks Department constructed a miniature yacht basin north of the building, and scheduled regattas in the tidal area north of the Bath House. These facilities were gradually removed.

When the Bath House was first constructed, concession facilities were operated privately by W. H. Osborne in a small, separate wood frame building which was constructed in the early 1930s. In the mid-1950s the Bath House was enlarged with the addition of a small concession stand at its south end. Over time, recreational swimming in the Sound has abated, and in the 1972 lifeguard service ceased, and the changing rooms were closed. The building’s exterior accessed public restrooms were constructed in 1969 and remodeled in 1996.

Community-based development of the park has focused on the natural environment of the beach, wetlands and tide pools. Recent use of the building has included an all-ages music venue; an informal teen center; and art classes for children and youth. The idea of renovating the Bath House began in 1992 – 1993 with creation of the Friends of Golden Gardens Park. Presently the Parks Department is undertaking a project to rehabilitate the building. This project results from grassroots planning initiated in the mid 1990s by a group of individual educators, parents, students, and parks staff. These efforts, funded by a Neighborhood Matching Fund, set the concept for the present project, and led to its funding as a component in the 2000 Pro Parks Levy.

² Good, 1938, p. 127 – 128.

Historic Overview of Golden Gardens Park

The Bath House is located in Golden Gardens Park. The earliest reported use of this site was as a beach used by the native Shilshole people. A small wood shack in the vicinity of the present day Salmon Bay, south of Shilshole Marina, shown in historic 1903 photo, may represent a typical temporary settlement structure. This building, the house of “Salmon Bay Charlie (Hwehichtid),” was still extant long after pioneer settlement and after others of the tribe had left the area.

The following historic timeline helps explain the range of proposals and development that have occurred on the property since the late nineteenth century:

<1894	Seattle & Montana Railroad line constructed (later Burlington Northern)
ca. 1900	Ingvald Heggem’s halibut fishing boat manufacturing facility was located on Meadow Point (the north end of the present beach area)
1906	F. V. Dunham and Harry Whitney Treat acquired the property on behalf of local and eastern investors
1906 - 08	Treat developed the area and opens it in May 1908 as a private amusement park of 30 acres (Treat also brought a streetcar spur line, the “Loyal Railway,” to serve Ballard up to Loyal Heights, and to bring the public to his park in anticipation of real estate interest in areas near the park.)
1907	The name, Golden Gardens Park, reportedly given by Seattle Mayor Fitzgerald
1908	7.5 mile auto “trail” constructed from North 85 th St. (Loyal Way) to the beach
1909	Captain A. W. Lewis appointed as private park supervisor
1910	E. B. Cos, another partner of Treat’s, announced plans for a trout hatchery
1911	Newspaper articles urged the Parks Department to purchase the land (no action)
1913	The Heggem Boatyard, located on the northern half of Meadow Point, closed
1911 - 30	Meadow Point leased by General Petroleum. Two storage tanks installed
1919	A grass fire near railroad tracks was fought by 50 volunteers and a fireboat
1920 - 30s	The Sunset Gun Club, a skeet shooting facility, was located at the north end of Meadow Point
1920s	A dance pavilion was built in upper meadow, just outside of the city limits
1922	Harry Treat died. By this time he owned 52 acres, valued at \$66,000
1923	Harry Treat’s widow sold the land to the city’s Parks Board for \$37,000.
1924 - 25	A wooden bathhouse, comfort station and caretaker house reportedly built
1925	East parking lot and railroad under-crossing constructed
1926	Private concessions opened at the beach, and lifeguards were appointed
1927	Parks began offering swimming lessons at Golden Gardens Park
1929	Parks planned a windbreak at north and a parking lot for 400-500 cars
1929	The Bath House opened in July, built for \$13,535 by W. B. Erskine
1930	General Petroleum Company ceased operations and its lease was cancelled
1930s	The WPA constructed additional facilities in the park
1931	Additional uplands purchased for construction of a new road on park property

The Role of the Seattle Parks Department

The Seattle Parks Department began construction of play fields, gyms and wading pools in 1910 in response to community needs. These facilities represent a modern, twentieth century attitude toward exercise and health. The City's first Inter-Playground Athletic Meet was held in 1910, and league events and athletic use increased after that date. Many play field facilities -- such as the Ballard Play Field, and Hiawatha Play Field in West Seattle -- were constructed cooperatively with and adjacent to city schools. As the surrounding neighborhoods developed and the student populations increased, pressure rose to add recreational facilities in city parks. Newspaper accounts and Park Board meeting minutes reflects an ongoing struggle to balance the pastoral and active recreational components of many early city parks.

Harry Treat's widow sold her husband's 52-acre parcel of the land to the city's Parks Board in May 1923 for \$37,000. The purchase received strong support from Ballard residents, community organizations and *The Ballard News Tribune*. Additional uplands were purchased for road construction, and paths that linked Golden Gardens and Sunset Hill Park. The Parks Department's purchase of these property resulted in new recreation facilities for city residents.

New buildings were constructed in the Golden Gardens park site in the 1920s, beginning with a wooden bath house and comfort station in 1923, a parking lot and railroad under-crossing in 1925, and opening of concession and lifeguard services in 1926. In 1927, the Parks Department began offering swimming lessons at Golden Gardens, and in 1928 - 1929 it made plans for a larger parking lot for 400 to 500 cars. The addition of the new masonry bath house in 1929 drew more people to the site.

Other buildings constructed in Golden Gardens in the mid-1930s included a separate 962 square foot wood frame "refreshment stand," a long, canvas-covered pergola with picnic tables, five separate heavy timber picnic shelters, a small shed and house, and a one-car garage. In 1938, a caretaker's residence was constructed in an upper meadow of the park, at 8339 - 34th Avenue Northwest. (This building, home of the last caretaker, Elmer Bodie, was removed in 1960.)

In 1940, the Parks Department built a miniature yacht basin with support from the community and a local resident, Dr. Theodore Houk. In 1941, a three-day National Model Yacht Regatta was held at the site. However, popular use of the basin decreased, and in 1952 the model boat pool was declared unsanitary and was removed.

The Park's Department continued to upgrade the park in the 1940s with construction of a new separate comfort station constructed in 1948 at a cost of \$6,643, and a new tool building in 1955 at a cost of \$4,867. The concession stand component was added in 1956.

Meanwhile, the Parks Department continued to upgrade the park. It constructed the first fire circles in the park in 1962, and the Bath House was remodeled in 1969 at a cost of \$17,000. In 1970 - 1975 park projects included new utility lines, upgraded walks and play areas.

More recent activities have included site and building repairs, and renovation of the Bath House in 1990 - 1991 at a cost of \$259,700. A boat ramp parking area and shoreline and float repairs were undertaken in the 1990s at a

cost of \$221,970. In 1996, the Parks Department completed a \$1.1 million Beach Enhancement and Shoreline Park Improvement project and a remodel of the Bath House restrooms. Recent passage of the 2000 Pro-Parks Levy in set the stage for the current rehabilitation project of the Golden Gardens Bath House as a teen and community center.

The WPA Era in the Park

The Bath House was constructed by the city's Parks Department. Other facilities were constructed in the park in the 1930s by the Works Progress Administration (WPA, later known as the Work Projects Administration). The WPA was one of the federal government's employment efforts during the Depression. In the 1930s, the federal government worked collaboratively with local municipalities, to fund capital projects and to provide construction crews for a wide variety of building projects including roads and highways, schools, libraries, and recreation facilities.³

In Washington, the role of the WPA was critical to its economic stability. By 1933, unemployment in the state reached over 30%, but the region's economic problems had emerged even earlier.

In rural(areas) agricultural prices began slumping years before the 1929 stock market surprise. In spite of the optimism and opportunities of the 1920s, many former farmers came into Washington's cities looking for work, while their families camped in car parks or on the side streets. For these, the Great Depression came early. But for most Washingtonians, it fell later, even than the crash on Wall Street, partly because projects begun in the late 1920s building boom continued writing pay checks into 1930. By 1931, however matters were generally dismal . . . Statewide unemployment increased by an estimated 7% in 1930 to 25% in 1932 . . . By the fall of 1931, charities, which had traditionally given food and temporary shelters to the unemployed, were overwhelmed by the vast number of destitute.⁴

³There were other WPA projects from this period related to non-construction activities, such as the public mural program and the Federal Writers' Project. Other federal works agencies during the Depression included the Public Building Administration, Public Roads Administration, Public Works Administration, and the U.S. Housing Authority.

⁴Dorpat, 1998. p. 11.

The impact of the WPA and other federal programs was felt throughout the nation. By the end of 1941, when the program ended, the WPA had completed construction of over 28,000 miles of streets and alleys, 1,000 bridges, 550 schools, 26 libraries, 400 recreation buildings, 90 stadiums, grandstands and bleachers, and 190 parks with assistance from towns and local agencies.⁵

Within the city of Seattle the WPA improved three municipal golf courses and facilities in ten of the city's "bathing beaches," including those in Golden Gardens Park. It constructed field houses in Washington Park (the Arboretum), East Green Lake and Rainier Beach, the UW's swimming pool building, and facilities at Woodland Park Zoo and Camp Long in West Seattle.⁶ In 1931, WPA crews constructed a long, 13' by 380' pergola-like windbreak with canvas covering, for 40+ picnic tables in Golden Gardens Park. Other WPA projects in the park included parking lots and roadbeds, landscaping, trails, walks, and a small pool.

Historic Overview of Nearby Neighborhoods

Early development of the Sunset Hill and Loyal Heights areas centered on logging along the water's edge and at the top of the bluff. Sawmills were concentrated further south in Ballard where Salmon Bay offered shelter. The logging activity left a large flat area, well suited for residential development, at the top of the hill. Because of its topography, after the hillside was logged, but it was left to re-establish itself as a somewhat natural area.

The city's northern boundary was set at 85th Street in 1907, but the area remained sparsely populated. Subsequent residential and commercial development was closely linked to transportation. By ca. 1920 trolley lines had reached north to West 85th Street. Streetcars in the neighborhood increased in number and frequency as the years progressed, and residential development quickly followed, and in 1954 the city border was extended northward.

Census data and early maps of the area indicate that Loyal Heights, the area due east of the Bath House, at approximately 300' above the beach, did not develop as a suburban neighborhood until the 1940s. Statistics from that period note that less than 1% of the housing stock predated 1900. Most of the houses in Loyal Heights were constructed in the post-war years of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The neighborhood today is almost completely made up by single family residences for middle-class families.

Seaview Avenue Northwest was not completed until 1933, and there was no road constructed between Loyal Heights and the Golden Gardens Beach until the 1930s. While the park and its Bath House were celebrated by Ballard residents, the facilities may not have been perceived exclusively as a neighborhood facility.

The Shilshole Marina live-aboard community, which currently numbers an estimated 450 people, may be the residential group with the strongest connections to the park because of its close proximity. Throughout its history, however, Golden Gardens Park has attracted visitors from the city and region. It is one of only a few sandy, salt-water beaches in Puget Sound and serves an important regional facility.

⁵ Dorpat, 1998, p. 14.

⁶ Short, 1939, p. 321 and 342.

DESCRIPTION

Site Context

Golden Gardens Park consists of 99.27 acres according to current GIS map data. The site is made up by beach and upland properties. At the lower level, it presently includes parking lots for an estimated 400 cars and 100 small boat trailers, a conservation area, grassy meadow, wetlands, sandy beach, and 3,850 foot shoreline (along the inner harbor line).

Concrete fire circles are provided on the beach, which are used nightly during the milder months. The park also contains a boat ramp, and rustic style heavy timber wood picnic shelters with drinking fountains, water, picnic tables and inside grills. The uplands support eight designated trails of 0.2 to 0.5 miles each, additional picnic areas, and a fenced off-leash dog area.

There are many designated areas throughout the park for children to play with specific areas with slides and play equipment. Summer time usage includes informal and organized volleyball, with nets set on the beach west and south of the Bath House and on the meadow lawn. A small, triangular shaped paved area at the north end of the Bath House is used as an informal half basketball court.

A large parking lot is located approximately 170' to the east. The eastern edge of the lot is defined presently by the present railroad tracks of the current Great Northern/Sante Fe/Amtrak line (originally the Burlington Northern Railroad. The tracks run at the bottom of a steep wooded slope. Upland areas of the park to the east include forest and meadow areas.

The Bath House building sits on the sandy beach approximately 120' from the high tide line of Puget Sound. The building is oriented nearly north-south, with the primary entrance on the west side, facing the beach, Sound and the Olympic Mountains beyond. Immediately to the east is a sandy grass lawn. To the southeast, there are groups of trees parallel to the shoreline.

A small grove of non-native black locust trees has established itself just north of the Bath House building. Presently, a flagpole stands just off the concrete walk on the west side, along with volleyball courts areas in the sand. At the south end of the building, the concrete paths from the beach and parking lot converge near the concession stand addition.

Beach tide pools are located to the far north end of the Park. These tide pools have served as the site of a recent interpretive and education program, sponsored by the Seattle Aquarium, which operates during summer months on low-tide weekends. This program was established five years ago, and provides training to volunteers who assist in the public by identifying sea life and teaching appreciation of tidal pools.

The Building's Structure and Exterior Features

Golden Gardens Bath House is a gable-roofed building constructed of wood roof framing, heavy timber posts and bearing masonry walls. It is a single story structure of 5,755 square feet (5,698 square feet according to current King County Tax Assessor's records). The building expresses itself as a durable, functional building. Its mass is a simple, sheltering form with gable roofs over three sections. Stepped parapets distinguish the three sections. The massing and roof forms reflect the

straight forward, well-organized plan of the original building. This design is very similar to those of bathhouses built in federal parks in the 1930s, which were based on pattern books published by the Department of the Interior.

Building elevations are simple, but embellished by some classical style, Colonial Revival details. Brick masonry is used for bearing structural walls, headers at the openings and projecting window sills. Exterior features include cast stone quoins at the corners, and cast stone voissiors which frame the fan light window above the primary west entry.

The building is made up by a center volume and two side wings. Exterior walls and the interior walls that separate these volumes are constructed of unreinforced bearing brick masonry, in varied red colors, two wythes in thickness with double stretcher courses of Flemish bond. The perimeter walls are not insulated. (The building is unheated as it was planned for only seasonal use.) Header courses delineate window and door openings, including the arched head windows at the end walls, and the arched fan light opening on the west facade. Window sills feature projecting brick courses.

The original structure is characterized by exposed roof rafters on the interior, rising up to exterior heights of approximately 24' and 20.5'. In 1956, a small, flat-roofed, 15' by 22' brick concession area was added to the south end of the original 146' by 36' to 39' structure.

Foundation, stem walls and floor slabs are of poured-in-place concrete. The stem walls typically extend up 9" above the interior slab to form a base below the brick masonry.

The original roofing consisted of wood shingles over skip sheathing and 2x6 wood rafters. A standing seam roof was installed ca. 1996. (No plywood diaphragm or insulation was provided at that time.) The original roof design featured partially exposed rafter tails, corner roof returns, and wood trim and gutters. Downspouts were strapped and bolted to the masonry walls in prominent locations. Currently there are aluminum gutters that obscure the original rafter tails, and simple metal downspouts.

Original window in the building are typically steel frame industrial sash, with 12"x18" glass panes set over the thin glazing profiles. Steel security screens were originally fitted over all windows; their present rusted condition obscures the glass, adding to the present building's vacant appearance. The original windows were located primarily on the east and west facades where they were regularly spaced in "punched" single openings. Window openings into the central space included tall windows with low sills placed at 3' above grade. The openings in the two wings were smaller, with window sills set at 6' above grade to provide greater privacy.

The windows are typically of three sizes: 1'-11" x 3'-2", 3'-2" x 3'-2" and 4'-8" x 3'-2", thus giving an insistent order to the facades. In contrast there are parallelogram-shaped clerestory windows which were placed into the north and south gable dividing walls.

Typical original exterior doors were made up by painted, beveled vertical boards. The pair of doors at the center of the west elevation was an exception to this type. They featured glazed lites within wood frames and an arched fan light window above. This pair of doors and the fanlight remain. However, the original exterior board doors have been replaced by painted hollow metal or flush wood doors.

Changes through time have resulted in masonry infill in a number of original openings, and creation of several new openings. The infill brick and mortar matches original masonry somewhat, and original soldier courses above the earlier openings are evident. These changes to openings are clearly evident on the building's masonry facades.

Building Plan and Interior Features

The Bath House is a simple plan made up by three adjoining sections with interior rooms created to function. Separate Men's Locker Room and Toilet, and Boy's Dressing Room and Toilet were placed in the south wing. Girls and women shared the Women's Dressing Room and Women's Toilet in the north wing. The primary building was on the east through a single opening and door that led into the central "Bag Room," a reception and equipment storage space.

There were no door openings the north and south end walls, and thus the building appeared somewhat impenetrable. In contrast, the west facade, facing the beach, contained many doors. Six separate single doors entered the central space, and separate doors provided access into public restrooms that were placed at the far northwest and southwest corners. An additional pair of doors provided access to an Equipment Room in the north wing.

The original building design appears somewhat similar to other brick recreation buildings of the late 1920s and 1930s in Seattle, such as the field house at the south end of the Arboretum, the West Green Lake Bath House, the Seward Park Bath House, and the Madrona Beach Bath House on the shore of Lake Washington (the present Bath House Theater and Madrona Dance Studio, respectively). Several of these buildings are clad with patterned masonry with cast stone bands. Like the Golden Gardens Bath House they featured a simple arrangement of interior spaces.

Another similar, but more embellished building is the Colman Pool Bath House, located in Lincoln Park in West Seattle. However, Colman Pool, which dates from 1941, resulted from a private donation to the city, and is more detailed and of higher quality construction. Both it and the Golden Gardens building are symmetrical and feature a central reception, checkroom and equipment room and men's and women's dressing rooms and showers to either side. Much like the Golden Gardens Bath House, the "front" of the Colman Pool building faces the park, and the "back" faces onto Puget Sound. (The Colman Pool Bath House complex includes a salt water pool enclosed by a secure wall. Unlike the Golden Gardens Bath House, that Colman building does not have concession facilities.)

The original and present interior of the Golden Gardens Bath House features open volumes with ceilings rising to approximately 23.5' in the center space and 20' in the tallest portions of the wings. The structure is clearly visible with exposed bearing brick walls and framing, wood roof decking and rafters, heavy timber posts, exposed wood collar ties, concrete foundation walls, base and floor slabs.

To aid in draining the original wet rooms, the floor slab was sloped downward from the east and west walls 3.5" to a central, cast iron linear drain trough, which runs longitudinally the entire length of the building. Portions of the original concrete slab have been patched, and other floor areas have been topped with leveling floor surfaces. Square, concrete footings rise from the slab and serve as plinths to support the 8"x8" interior wood posts. Chamfered top edges of several plinths are damaged, perhaps due to wracking of the posts.

Interior doors were wood panel types, and partitions were constructed of hollow clay tile. Original finishes and furniture were simple and functional. Historic tax records the interior was “Not Plastered. Fir Trim. 3 Partitions, Hollow Tile.” According to these and the original design drawings the interior included unfinished hollow-clay tile partitions, six toilets, two basins and one urinal. Photos of the Green Lake Bath House suggest that original furnishings may have included painted wood benches and storage units, expanded metal screening and painted storage lockers. Presently there are no furnishings in the Golden Gardens Bath House to indicate the original use except for some wood benches, which remain fixed in a portion of the south wing.

Original interior lighting was probably provided by a few, utilitarian incandescent fixtures, however, no fixtures remain to verify this. Ceiling-suspended, unshielded fluorescent fixtures and incandescent lamps provide currently artificial lighting with steel shades. There was no heat provided in the original Bath House, as it was open only in the summer months, and presently the building is unheated.

Changes to the Original Building

According to building permit and drawing records, there have been incremental changes to the Golden Gardens Bath House, and one addition. In 1956, a box-like brick clad structure was added at the south end as a concession space. This flat-roofed addition did little to enhance the original building. It appears uninviting and featureless with the exception of a wide roll-up metal door.

Interior doors have been replaced or removed, and several partition walls of various types have been added over the years. Brick masonry walls were added to subdivide storage and equipment spaces, and two shower stalls were added in 1969. Exterior changes included the filling of some door and window openings and installation of new openings and doors to access the Dressing Rooms directly. Openings from the central space to the wings were filled, and restrooms were upgraded with new fixtures. Glazed ceramic tile cladding and new fixtures were provided in the 1996 as part of another renovation of the public accessible restrooms, but no other work was done to the balance of the building at that time.

Over the years, the Bath House has received few upgrades and limited maintenance, but the building was well constructed with durable materials, it remains in relatively fair condition. There have been a number of changes to the interior, and partition walls have been added to add new service spaces. As previously noted, the original roof shingles have been replaced with standing seam roofing, and a number of exterior openings on the west facade have been changed along with replacement of original doors. Original heavy wire security screens are deteriorated and rusted, and some windows are damaged.

A recent investigation by the owner’s current team of architects and engineers has confirmed that the building’s structural, plumbing, and electrical systems are outdated. As noted, the building has no mechanical heating or ventilation. Surfaces are worn, and the structure is in need of a structural/seismic upgrade. The sequence of entry to the building is obscure because of the single door opening on the east facade. Exterior access is poor because of limited exterior paving and uneven sidewalk and floor slab elevations do not meet current accessibility code requirements. It is the intent of the current rehabilitation project to address these conditions.

The Building Designers

E. K. Hoffman, who served as the Park Engineer during a five year period, from 1927 to 1932, designed Golden Gardens Bath House. When the Park Engineering Division was discontinued,

as the result of a budget cut, he transferred to the State to become the Chief Engineer for the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works in Olympia, an agency created to coordinate Depression era efforts of the national, state and local governments. Subsequently Hoffman returned to Seattle where he served as the Superintendent of Seattle City Light until 1953.

During his tenure at the Parks Department Hoffman was responsible for the design of new construction and remodels of other facilities, including those at the Woodland Park Zoo and other Parks Bath Houses. Hoffman also developed the Park Department's 1931 Ten Year Plan, which inventoried the city's existing parks and play fields, and proposed needed improvements and additional land acquisition for community and neighborhood sites. The development of the plan was prompted by the federal government's public works programs to address unemployment problems of the Depression.⁷

Architect A. V. (Aloofness) Peterson designed the 300 square foot concession building addition to the Bath House in 1956. Peterson, like Hoffman, designed other Park Department facilities, and was responsible for the seeming unsympathetic "Modern" upgrade of the Primate House at the Woodland Park Zoo in the early 1950s. Neither Hoffman nor Peterson is cited in Ochsner's Shaping Seattle Architecture – A Historical Guide to the Architects, or in Woodbridge's An Architectural Guide to Washington State. Research has revealed very little other information about their lives, training, or early careers.

Seattle architect Arne Bystrom designed the building's remodel in 1969 that provided the two exterior accessible restrooms at the northwest and southwest ends of the building.

Arne Bystrom is well known for his innovative design work. His noted Seattle projects included the 1976 rehabilitation/addition of the wood and concrete frame Seattle Garden Center/architect office in the Pike Place Market, the 1979 remodel of the two ca. 1900 Bower/Bystrom Houses on Capital Hill (at 1022 Summit Avenue East), and the 1971 remodel of the Madrona Park Bath House/Dance Studio in 1971. Bystrom's residential designs, include a well-publicized and award winning house in Sun Valley, of ca. 1980, which featured extensive solar controls and complex wood framing and details.

In contrast to his other projects, Bystrom's work on the Golden Gardens Bath House in the late 1960s appears consistent with the original building, as a modest and functional design.

The public restrooms were remodeled completely in 1996 by James C. Tsang Architect. As this project is recent, a description of the architect's design and career are not included in this document.

Bibliography and Sources

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Ballard Today, "Golden Gardens improvements discussed," April 17, 1974.

⁷ Sherwood, "Interpretive Essay on the History of Seattle's Parks Playgrounds." 1978, DNS/0814-79.

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The features of the Landmark to be preserved, include: the exterior of the building, and the interior of the centrally located former bag room.

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