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Expedite Bancroft modernization

Resolved, that ANC1D advises the Historic Preservation Review Board to permit the demolition of the Bancroft Elementary School gymnasium/auditorium, as not inconsistent with the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act.

Why: Historically, Mount Pleasant is a row-house neighborhood, and that style defines the historic character of the neighborhood. Bancroft, and specifically the auditorium/gymnasium structure, is not part of that fundamental architectural style. ANC1D endorses the judgment by Historic Mount Pleasant that this Depression-era auditorium and gymnasium "do not in themselves hold any significant historic value to either the property or the community". The only question at hand should be whether the replacement is compatible with the historic neighborhood.

It is clear that the replacement of the auditorium and gymnasium is essential to the plan for modernization of Bancroft Elementary. As the HPO report states, "no viable option appears to exist that could meet ADA requirements, reinforce the central entrance and address the critically important need to improve circulation" in the school. But modernization of this decrepit school is utterly indispensable to the development of Mount Pleasant as a neighborhood attractive to waves of incoming residents, new to the city, and wanting schools that are suitable for their children. For years residents of Mount Pleasant have sent their children to schools outside the neighborhood, disdaining the shabby, unappealing school in the neighborhood. Many parents have moved out of the neighborhood in search of better schools. While there is more to a good school than attractive architecture, the modernization of Bancroft will be an essential step in the upgrading of our neighborhood school to meet the needs of the many young people moving into this neighborhood, and to end the flight from Mount Pleasant by residents discouraged by our neighborhood school.

The neighborhood's priority is clearly the enhancement of the neighborhood school to meet the needs and standards of modern times. The demolition of the old gymnasium and auditorium is an essential element in the modernization of Bancroft, and should be viewed, and approved, as necessary for adaptation of the overall structure to current use.

Passed by 5 to 0 vote at the legally noticed, public meeting of ANC1D on May 26, 2015, with a quorum present. Voting "yes": Commissioners Hoey, McKay, Rivas, Agbro, Griffiths. A quorum for this commission is three; five commissioners were present.