

Historic Significance and Integrity Assessment Report for Listing Scottsdale Grammar School #2 on the Scottsdale Historic Register

Scottsdale Grammar School #2
3720 Marshall Way, Scottsdale, Arizona
Scottsdale Historic Register No. SHR-00-5
Resolution No. 5550

Background

In July of 1999 the City Council adopted Resolution No. 5324 and Ordinance No. 3242 which established the Scottsdale Historic Register, the City's official list of historic and archaeological resources with special significance in the United States, Arizona and Scottsdale history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture. The first group of properties to be considered for designation were those properties that had previously received HP overlay zoning under an earlier City Historic Preservation (HP) program. The building originally named Scottsdale Grammar School #2, then Loloma School, was zoned HP in May of 1982. It is a City-owned property leased to the Scottsdale Artists School.

Historic Context: Early Town Building, 1908 – 1933

Scottsdale's historic development followed a pattern typically found in Western communities. Like other Arizona cities and towns, the provision of a reliable water supply was critical to sustaining the community's viability after its initial settlement in the late 1800s. With the construction of Granite Reef Dam in 1908, followed by Roosevelt Dam in 1911, Scottsdale shared in the population boom that transformed the Salt River Valley. A main line rail connection to the national railway system completed into the Valley in 1924 provided further impetus for growth and development. During this period Scottsdale grew slowly, but steadily, as a small market town principally providing services for families involved in agricultural pursuits.

Within the core of the original Scottsdale town site are several extant buildings that represent this early period of the community's development. The dates of their construction, the types of buildings, their uses as well as their locations illustrate the traditional pattern of community development which occurred in Scottsdale, Arizona and throughout the nation in the early twentieth century.

Description

The structure is a one-story, stucco building designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The address is 3720 North Marshall Way and the school is located on a lot that is now 1.74 acres, approximately 230' wide along 2nd Street by 330' long on N. Marshall Way, parcel no. 130-13-074C. The original layout was symmetrical with a central rectangular main building with projecting bays and wings. The primary façade consists of a prominent central archway with molded concrete trim. The doorway is recessed with double doors capped with a decorated pediment and sidelights. On each side of the doorway on the main building and each of the north and south projecting wings are sets of five large rectangular windows. The windows are metal and divided into five equal-sized horizontal panels of glazing with plain concrete slip sills. Wings also project from the main building to the northwest and southwest. Originally the main building and the wings on the rear of the building were connected with an exterior arcaded walkway. Typically of its architectural styling, low-pitched red tile gable roofs cover the main building and its various projecting elements.

A number of changes have been made to the building in the course of its use. Shortly after its construction the south wing was extended to add three additional classrooms and a basement area. Additional classrooms, restrooms and support facilities were on the school site in November of 1948.

These wooden structures were replaced in the early 1950s when the main building again was expanded. The exterior arcade has been enclosed with modern windows to create an interior hall.

History

The 1920s saw prosperity and steady growth for communities throughout the Valley and Scottsdale was no exception. The 1920 census reported a population of 1,047 within the Scottsdale precinct excluding the Salt River Indian Reservation inhabitant. By 1922 the town could boast 18 miles of paved roads. In 1924 a mainline railroad connection to Phoenix expanded the markets for local agricultural production nationwide. Demand for cotton and cattle also continued to grow and a number of local businesses were established in Scottsdale to provide support services for the farming operations. By mid-decade the town's population had doubled to reach 2,000 and the need for additional school facilities became apparent.

To finance this construction, in January of 1928 the Scottsdale School Board proposed a \$50,000 bond to purchase land and construct a new elementary school building. The election was held on February 9, 1928 and the measure passed with a vote of 105 in favor and 9 opposed. Another election was held on March 22 to allow the electors of the Scottsdale School District an opportunity to select the site for the new school. Three proposed sites were on the ballot and the H.R. bland tract southwest of the town received a majority of the votes.

Ten acres of land were purchased for \$5,000 and the prominent local architectural firm of Lescher and Mahoney was retained to design a facility to house eight classrooms, administrative office and a nurse and teacher's room. On June 7, 1928 the *Arizona Republican* reported that work had begun on the new grade school building. The Spanish Colonial Revival style building was completed in September of 1928 at a cost of \$35,069. The parents of the school children were invited to attend a program and inspection of the school the following month. An October 18, 1928 article in the newspaper reported that a large crowd had attended.

In 1935 Leshner and Mahoney designed an expansion of the south wing of the grade school and in 1936 a cafeteria was established. The building was expanded again in the 1950s. The City of Scottsdale purchased the property in 1992.

Significance

Historically in the development of western communities, schools were some of the finest buildings within the town. They were often designed by well-known architects in the most popular styles of the day with quality materials and up-to-date appurtenances. They were considered expressions of a community's prospects for its future and legacy for future generations. The Scottsdale Grammar School is both historically and architecturally significant for its representation of this historic pattern of building. Substantial funding for the building's construction was provided, ten times the amount approved by the voters twenty years earlier for the first Grammar School. The community was involved in all aspects of the building's siting and construction. Its Spanish Colonial Revival architecture was one of the most popular styles of the era representing an interest in building that reflected southwest regional influences. The design, materials and workmanship incorporated in the school's construction were of a quality above most other buildings in the town. Despite changes in the building's use over time, it still retains a high degree of integrity.