

**APPLICATION TO:**

X designate  
amend  
summary of amendments \_\_\_\_\_

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name of Property: JOSEPH GALES, JR. SCHOOL BUILDING

Address: 65 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

Square and Lot Number(s): Square 625, lot 806

Present Owners: District of Columbia Public Schools

Address: 825 North Capitol Street, N. E. / Washington, D.C. 20002

Original Use: School

Present Use: Vacant

Date of Construction: 1881

Date of Major Alteration: N/A

Architect: Edward Clark, Architect of the Capitol

Architectural Style/Period: Romanesque Revival

**NAME OF APPLICANT: D. C. Preservation League**

(If applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.)

Address and Telephone of Applicant: 1815 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.,  
Suite 200 Washington, D. C. 20006 (202) 955-5616

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant or Authorized Representative

15 November 2000

Jerry Maronek, Co-Chairman, Landmarks Committee,  
D. C. Preservation League

Date

Title of Authorized Representative

310.21 A statement of the prehistoric, historic, architectural and/or cultural significance of the property proposed for designation.

The Gales School is an important example of D. C. Public Schools property type II, *The Office of the Building Inspector, 1874-1897*, as discussed in the National Register multiple property documentation for the *Public School Buildings of Washington, D. C., 1864-1945*. It is one of the few three-story school buildings in this property type and one of the few without a tower. It is a rare documented example of a school building designed by Edward Clark, Architect of the Capitol, and illustrates the interaction of the U. S. Congress, the Architect of the Capitol, the D. C. School Board, and the Office of the Building Inspector in this crucial period of the history of the District of Columbia. Although vacant, it fully retains its integrity of design, materials and workmanship. It is a remnant of the thriving blue-collar residential area that once existed near North Capitol Street. In form and color, it forms a compatible neighbor to the Government Printing Office and is a significant historical and visual presence on Massachusetts Avenue as it approaches the United States Capitol. Its importance is accentuated by the nearby early residential neighborhood devastation, including the demolition of Adolf Cluss' Seaton School, caused by freeway construction and expansion of the judicial center and other high-rise office use.

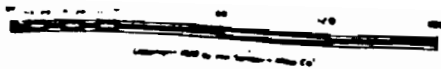
Named in honor of the eighth mayor of the Washington City and one of the proprietors of the *National Intelligencer*, the Joseph Gales, Jr. School served white students in the once dense residential area surrounding lower North Capitol Street, N. W. Confronted with an expanded commercial and governmental core and a dwindling school age population, it was closed for school purposes in 1944. Located near Union Station, it was turned over to the War Hospitality Committee for the duration of World War II. It served as temporary lodging for servicemen in transit, and accommodated nearly 300 on cots in the classrooms. Subsequently, it housed an eye clinic of the D. C. Health Department, offices of the Rent Control Board, and the Transportation Systems Administration of the D. C. Department of Public Works.

310.22 If property is proposed for designation principally for its architectural significance, a detailed architectural description of the property, including where possible its original and present appearance.

In design and in massing, the Gales school is similar to the Webster School at 10<sup>th</sup> & H Streets, N. W. Both schools were designed by the Architect of the Capitol and erected under a Congressional appropriations act, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, 46<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1881. The 12,764 sq. ft. site is roughly trapezoidal, bounded by G Street on the north, Massachusetts Avenue on the south and U. S. Reservation 77B and New Jersey Avenue on the west. Five bays long, eight bays wide, the three-story with basement red brick building is rectangular and slightly T-shaped in plan. The main elevation on the west is composed of a central bay with the entrance door at the first story, with wide double windows above. It is defined by a bold stone lintel with the name of the school crowning the main entrance. Granite stairs lead up to this entrance. Two bays of double windows are located on either side. The vertical lines of windows are balanced by the horizontal lines of string courses at the sill and spring lines. It is decorated with molded and corbeled brick and sparse use of stone at the watertable, main entrance, and window sills. Blackened stringcourses at the spring and sill lines join together the segmental arch molded brick lintels at the first and second stories. At the third story, only the sills are joined together. Window surrounds are segmentally arched with molded brick lintels and stone sills. The double windows are composed of 9/9 sash under multi-light transoms. The original wooden doors, now sealed, are in place, designed with twelve panes of glass in each leaf and with multi-light transom and side lights. The original slate roof has been covered with asphalt shingles. The cornice line is composed of vertical strips of corbeled brick, resembling brackets, supporting a galvanized iron cornice. In building material and style, the Gales school is a worthy companion to the Government Printing Office across the street. The interior is arranged in a U-shaped floor plan, typical of the three story schools of this period. Parking lots exist to the west, south, and north, with a triangular park to the southeast.

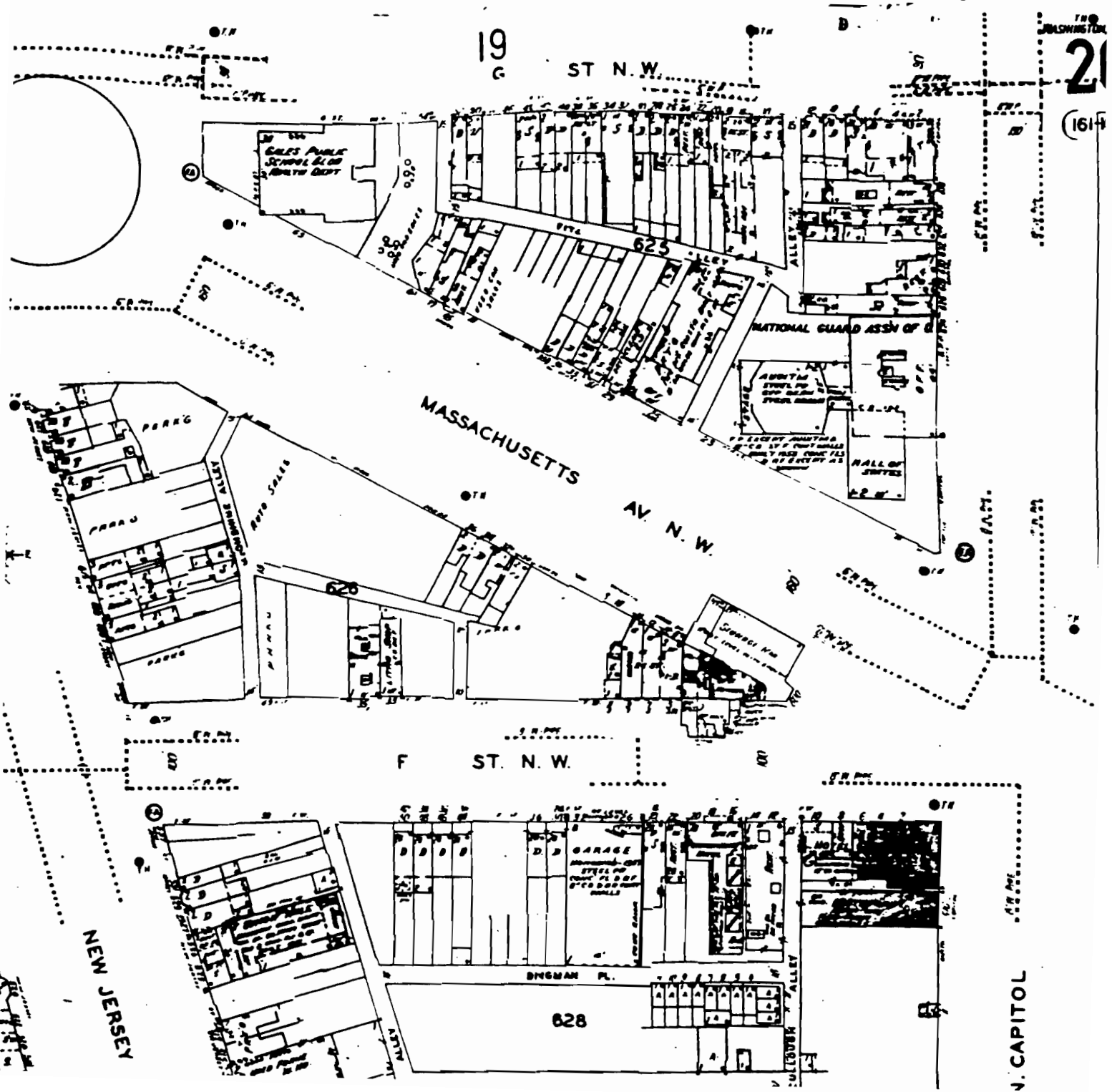
310.24 A map showing the exact boundaries of the property proposed for designation; the square and lot number(s) or parcel number; square footage of property proposed for designation; north arrow; and contiguous streets, if any.

See attached.



Site Plan —

Gales School  
Sq. 625, lot 806  
Sanborn Insurance Map  
12,764 sq. ft.



310.25 Contemporary good quality photograph (s) of the property proposed for designation which provide a clear and accurate visual representation of the property and its setting: specify view, date of photograph and list credits, if any. 8" x 10" glossy photographs are preferred. In addition, applicant may supply slides (Applicant shall submit two copies of each photograph or slide.)

Photographs attached.

*PHOTOGRAPHS*

Jerry Maronek, photographer.  
November 2000  
D.C. Preservation League  
1815 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20006

310.26 A list of bibliographic and other sources used to prepare the application: indicate where the reference material is archived.

#### SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Acts of Congress Affecting the District of Columbia.* 46<sup>th</sup> Congress, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, vol. 1b.

*Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Schools of Washington, D. C., 1878-83.*

*Annual Report of the Trustees of the Public Schools, 1878-83.*

Clark, Edward. *Correspondence of the Architect of the Capitol.* Letter Books, 1880-1883. Archives of the Architect of the Capitol.

Clark, Edward. "Specifications for the Construction of a Public School Building for the District of Columbia on Square No. 375." Archives of the Architect of the Capitol.

"Gales School Going to War; Soldiers' Haven After Today." *Washington Post*, 17 March 1944.

"Hospitality Group Gets Gales School for Use as Service Lodging." *Evening Star*. 16 March 1944.

Lee, Antoinette J. "Public School Buildings of the District of Columbia, 1804-1930" and survey of existing buildings, 1864-1930. D. C. Historic Preservation Office, 1987-88.

*Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Public Schools in and for the District of Columbia, 1875.*

*Report of the Commission Appointed by Resolution of the House of Representatives of February 20, 1882, for the Purpose of Investigating the Public School Buildings of the District of Columbia.* House of Representatives, 47<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session. Misc. Doc. No. 35.

*Report of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, 1881.*

"Servicemen Occupy Gales School Bunks." *Evening Star*. 2 April 1944.

Wilson, J. Ormand, "Eighty Years of the Public Schools of Washington--1805-1885," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, Vol. 1, 1896, pp. 119-170.





