



March 13, 2012

Dr. Christine J. Anderson, Superintendent
Palm Springs Unified School District
980 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite 101
Palm Springs, California 92262

Dear Dr. Anderson,

We're sure you would agree that the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD) has an obligation to the community to be a good steward of the architectural resources under its purview.

The highly-intact Palm Springs High School (PSHS) Administration Building (1957) at 2248 East Ramon Road (which now houses the Ramon Alternative School administrative offices) was designed by the architectural firm of Williams, Williams & Williams in collaboration with the firm of Clark, Frey & Chambers. The PSUSD has scheduled this architecturally important modernist building for demolition this summer.

It appears that the PSUSD did not fully appreciate the architectural provenance of the building at issue. Accordingly, we recommend you immediately consult with an architectural historian or architect with preservation experience to better understand this historic resource. Alternatively, we are fortunate to have three highly-regarded architects on our board of directors. Each has significant preservation experience and any one of them would be happy to advise you, *pro bono*, on the proper rehabilitation of the building in accordance with U.S. Department of Interior standards. In the coming weeks the foundation will be researching the buildings on the Palm Springs High School campus so that a more informed strategy can be developed to preserve and adaptively reuse the other historic resources on the site. PSPF board member Patrick McGrew has already completed a preliminary survey of some of those historic resources (attached).

With sustainability and "green" principles at the forefront of construction and development strategies, it was an oversight not to more aggressively pursue the adaptive reuse of the PSHS Administration Building. Our experience has shown that there is rarely a good reason (either from an energy-consumption, financial or even programmatic standpoint) to demolish a solid and perfectly serviceable building only to replace it with an unremarkable substitute. This simple truth is one of the reasons the adage "The greenest building is the one already built" has gained so much credence in recent years.

We regret that we did not bring this matter to your attention sooner as we were only made aware of the scheduled demolition last week by a concerned school employee. (The only publicly-available record we were able to unearth on the proposed demolition was buried on page 165 of the 282-page minutes of the October 13, 2009 PSUSD Governing Board Agenda).

We are asking our membership and other concerned citizens to contact you to express their support for the preservation and adaptive reuse of the PSHS Administration Building. We are confident that there is sufficient time to forestall this ill-advised demolition should you and the PSUSD be sincerely committed to doing so.

We look forward to discussing this matter with you in more detail. The foundation can be contacted at (760) 837-7117 or info@pspreservationfoundation.org.

Respectfully,



Ron Marshall
President

Attachment 1:
Potential Historic Resources on Palm Springs High School Campus

Copy to:
Executive Director of Facilities Planning, PSUSD (Ms. Julie Arthur)
Palm Springs High School (Mr. Ricky Wright)
Historic Site Preservation Board, City of Palm Springs (Attn: Mr. John Gilmer)
Desert Sun (Attn: Ms. Maricar Mendoza)

POTENTIAL HISTORIC RESOURCES ON PALM SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS



1. Adult School, 333 S Farrell (E S Williams)

2. Stadium (Wexler & Harrison)

3. Auditorium (Williams; Clark Frey & Chambers)

4. Administration Building (Williams; Clark Frey & Chambers)

5. Ramon Academy

6. Cafeteria (Williams, Williams & Williams)

7. Music Building (Williams, Williams & Williams)

8. Library (Williams, Williams & Williams)