

Historic Property Olympia Substation
Inventory Report for 712 Legion Olympia, Thurston, 98501

LOCATION SECTION

Historic Name: Olympia Substation Field Site No.: 833
Common Name: Plum St. Substation (#34-730) OAHP No.:
Property Address: 712 Legion Olympia, Thurston, 98501
Comments: OLYMPIA

County	Township/Range/EW	Section	1/4 Sec	1/4 1/4 Sec	Quadrangle
<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>T18R02W</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>SW</u>		<u>TUMWATER</u>

UTM Reference

Zone: 10 Spatial Type: Point Acquisition Code: TopoZone.com
Sequence: 0 Easting: 508220 Northing: 5209830

Tax No./Parcel No. Plat/Block/Lot
78201400800 Swan L8 - 10 Blk 14

Supplemental Map(s) Acreage
City of Olympia Planning Department .52

IDENTIFICATION SECTION

Field Recorder: Shanna Stevenson/Tom C Date Recorded: 10/17/1985 Survey Name: OLYMPIA

Owner's Name: Puget Sound Energy/Electric Owner Address: PO Box 90868 City/State/Zip: Bellevue, WA 98009

Classification: Building Resource Status: Survey/Inventory Comments:
Within a District? No

Contributing?

National Register Nomination: 0

Local District:

National Register District/Thematic Nomination Name:

DESCRIPTION SECTION

Historic Use: Industry/Processing/Extraction - Energy Facility
Current Use: Industry/Processing/Extraction - Energy Facility

Plan: Rectangle No. of Stories: 1

Structural System: Brick

Changes to plan: Intact Changes to interior: Intact

Changes to original cladding: Intact Changes to other:

Changes to windows: Intact Other (specify):

Cladding Brick Foundation Concrete - Poured

Concrete

Style French - French Eclectic Form/Type

Roof Material Asphalt / Composition Roof Type Hip

NARRATIVE SECTION

Study Unit	Other	Date Of Construction:	<u>1927</u>
Science & Engineering		Architect:	
		Builder:	
		Engineer:	

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: No
Property is located in a historic district (National and/or local): No
Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local):

Statement of Significance The uniquely designed substation was built in 1927-28 for Puget Sound Power and Light and was described in a company report as "a modern outdoor substation of attractive design. " A substation is used to step up or own transmitted voltage. Originally called, "Olympia Substation," the facility is now known as the "Plum Street Substation. " The structure is an especially attractive one for a utilitarian use and Puget Power sources identified it as being unique. Puget Sound Power and Light took over its predecessor in Olympia Light and Power Company in 1919. Olympia Light and Power Company was organized in 1890 utilizing the power from the falls of the Deschutes at Budd Inlet. The company was promoted by Hazard Stevens, son of first Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens who sold bonds for the undertaking in the east. They took over an existing gas and electric facility and installed generators at Tumwater Falls and replaced old arc lighting with an incandescent system. Olympia Light and Power also operated the electric street railway beginning in 1892 which was the pride of Olympia. The street car system was four miles of standard gauge track running from the eastern limits of the city to the business center and then south through Olympia to Tumwater. Regular service was at fifteen minute intervals. Stevens even established an Elk Park at the Tumwater terminus of the line to attract patrons on the railway. The first power house was built at the middle falls in 1890 and later moved to the lower falls. There, flumes from the upper falls group brought extra water power to the more than 90 foot combined drop of the three falls. The stone powerhouse built there in 1905 served Olympia and Tumwater with electric light and power as well as street service. Inside the lower power house, two 800-horsepower turbine wheels were directly connected to 500-kilowatt generators. Transmission lines carried the generated power across Puget Sound where manufacturers used the wattage, replacing gasoline and steam production. The streetcars burned in 1898 but were replaced and augmented with motor bus-street car service in 1915. After the consolidation with Puget Sound Power and Light in 1919, the trolleys operated on electricity until 1933.

Description of Physical Appearance This is a small, rectangular one-and-one-half-story structure, built of brick masonry in the French Eclectic style, resting on a poured concrete foundation. Its hip roof is covered with variegated slate, has two arched dormers on the front (south) facade with cooper roofs, and a small gable on the rear. Centered on the front facade, the wood plank entry door with its decorative strap hinges is located in a recessed architrave with a brick lintel and quoins. Fenestration is metal casements. The rear wall is of poured concrete. The building remains in use and is maintained in good condition.

Major Bibliographic References Information from Puget Power.
Newell, Gordon, Rogues Buffoons and Statesmen, Superior Publishing, Seattle, 1975.
Stevenson, Shanna, Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater: A Pictorial History, Donning, 1985.

PHOTOS



View of South Facade
taken 10/17/1985
Photography Neg. No. (Roll No./Frame No.):
27-9A
Comments: