



September 9, 2020

Investigate the illegal double-sale of the historic Colman School

Dear Mayor Durkan, Executive Constantine, Seattle Councilmembers, and King County Councilmembers,

The authentic African American Heritage Museum & Cultural Center (AAHM&CC)¹ calls on Seattle and King County to 1) launch a formal investigation into the corruption behind the illegal double sale of the historic Colman School to the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle / Urban League Village LLC; and 2) support our Community Audit of transactions pertaining to the Colman School property.

Since Juneteenth, elder Omari Tahir along with a growing number of community members, including original AAHM&CC artist-in-residence Earl Debnam, have been asserting the AAHM&CC's property rights by hosting an outdoor museum with exhibits and programming from 10am-8pm, that is guarded at night by 74-year-old Baba Omari and museum volunteers.

The AAHM&CC's outdoor museum is drawing attention to how the Urban League colluded with the FBI, the family of Bill Gates, and corrupt officials within the Seattle School District to steal Colman School from the AAHM&CC, who are the rightful owners of the property according to a signed purchase and sale agreement with Seattle School District, a publicly received \$50,000 down payment, and filings made by the AAHM&CC to the WA Secretary of State — all of which predate the Urban League's documents.

¹ <https://africanamericanheritagemuseumandculturalcenter.org/synopsis/>

The AAHM&CC proves that they had the resources to actualize their vision, exhibiting their receipt of an approved loan for the full purchase amount stated in the agreement, in addition to the federal block grant money that was secured by the AAHM&CC, but ended up being co-opted by the Urban League. No one from the Urban League, nor the police that have been called on Omari & museum volunteers, have shown a single document refuting the property rights of the AAHM&CC.

Available public records as to who owns the Colman School are contradictory and inconclusive. Chicago Title Insurance Company has two different owners on record for each of the two units, totaling four different potential owners. One of the four potential owners, Urban League Village Apartments at Colman School LP, includes at least one limited partner that is not an Urban League entity and has significant rights to influence what happens to the building; the public has a right to know all of the partners and eligible mortgagees who have been receiving or otherwise benefiting from public funds. Northwest African American Museum (NAAM) prepaid over half a million dollars in rent, while NAAM has granted US Bank “a security interest in and to all … advance rentals”. More information is needed to detail the corruption and racketeering that appears to be taking place. Please see our attached report, facilitate our public records request, and launch your own investigations.

After refusing to honor the 1998 purchase and sale agreement that the Seattle School District had signed with the AAHM&CC, the Seattle School District entered into a number of contracts with the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle and Urban League Village LLC between the years 2003 and 2009. These include multiple real estate contracts for the sale of Colman School — as well as contracts that made the Urban League the largest beneficiary of the Seattle School District small business program, which was riddled with corruption. The Seattle PI reports that according to auditors, “The Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle … received about one-third of the payments considered ‘questionable’ or complete losses to the district.”

It is time that Seattle and King County investigate the corruption behind the 1998 SWAT team raid that stole Colman School from the AAHM&CC, Seattle School District’s double sale of Colman School to the Urban League, as well as the normalized

corruption and racketeering of the banks profiteering off of low-income housing and community development projects.²

It is time that the property is returned to its rightful owners for the sake of repair-ation, Black empowerment and community healing.

Signed,
African American Heritage Museum & Cultural Center

² Of course, none of the studies conducted by the City with the AAHM&CC ever considered that the Colman School project would include housing.