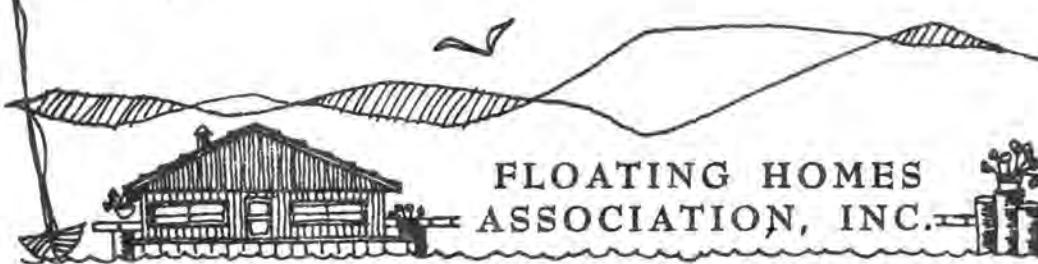


Fair City



2329 Fairview East

Seattle, Washington 98102

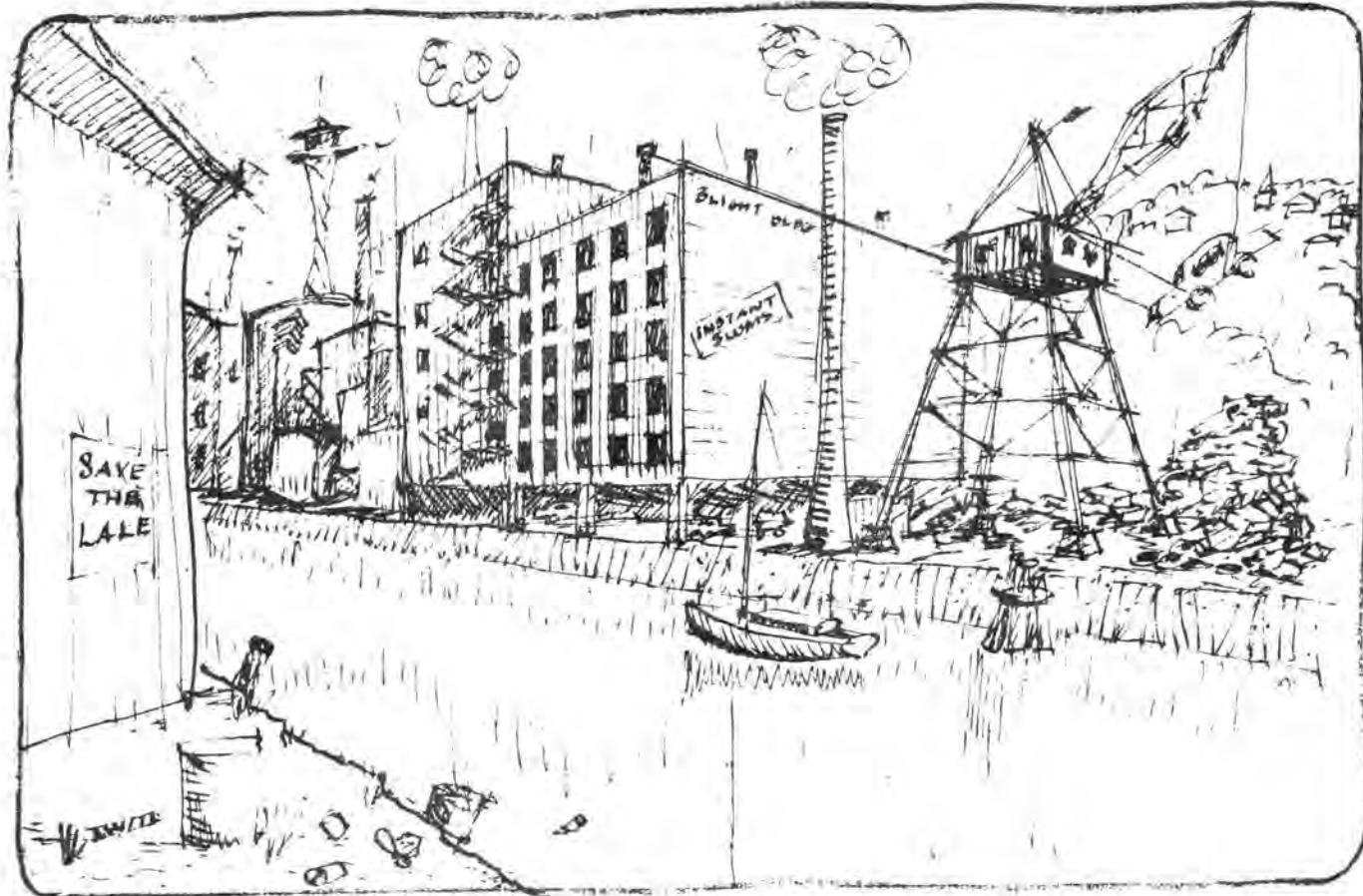
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Number 41

Newsletter

April, 1970

IS THIS THE FUTURE OF LAKE UNION?



"San Francisco Bay is an irreplaceable gift of nature that man can either abuse and ultimately destroy - or improve and protect for future generations . . . The most important uses of the Bay are those providing substantial public benefits and treating the Bay as a body of water, not as real estate."

This declaration is from the monumental "San Francisco Bay Plan" under which the California legislature created a regional zoning authority to meet exactly the kind of crisis which threatens Lake Union as well as other shorelands throughout the state. In California, as here at home, there had been a welter of hand-writing, a series of surveys and considerable finger-pointing as the 276 miles of shoreline shrank and the "irreplaceable gift of nature" was being systematically destroyed. The difference is that California stopped talking and acted.

There are more than 100 miles of shoreland within the Seattle city limits. The remedy for the crisis which threatens Lake Union does not have to await state legislative action. Municipal government - the Planning Commission, the new Department of Community Development, the City Council and the Mayor - have the authority to act now to save our own "irreplaceable gift of nature."

Since the Planning Commission issued its "Lake Union Study" in 1962 (it called for drastic zoning changes) failure to carry through is often blamed on the inability of the private property owners to agree of what should be done. The result has been that those who wanted to speculate in land values have been the winners. There has been little, if any, recognition that the Lake Union problem involves the "rights" of two distinct types of property owners - private owners and public owners. Lake Union does not belong to the owners of private shorelands. It belongs to the public. The reason why the lake cannot be "treated as real estate" is that public property begins where private property leaves off. For far too long any discussion of the future of the lake begins with the assumption that public property owners have no rights that private property owners are bound to respect.

The State of California rejects such an erroneous conception. So did our State Supreme Court in "Wilbour vs. Gallagher", better known as the "Lake Chelan Case" in which a land-fill on private property was ordered removed. As it now stands this high court decision casts a shadow of illegality on over-the-water construction, fills, etc. Some have charged that this deprives the shoreland property owner of all rights. This is not true. The decision cannot be divorced from the significant "Footnote 13" in which the court said:

"We are concerned at the absence of any representation in this action by the Town or County of Chelan, or of the State of Washington, all of whom seem to have some interest and concern in what, if any, and where, if at all, fills and structures are to be permitted (and under what conditions) between the upper and lower levels of Lake Chelan. There undoubtedly are places on the shore of the Lake where developments, such as those of the defendants, would be desirable and appropriate. This presents a problem for the interested public authorities and perhaps could be solved by the establishment of harbor lines in certain areas within which fills could be made together with carefully planned zoning by appropriate authorities to preserve for the people of this state the lake's navigational and recreational possibilities. Otherwise there exists a new type of privately owned shorelands of little value except as a place to pitch a tent when the lands are not submerged." (Our emphasis.)

Some attorneys regard this as a clear-cut command from the high court to local authorities for them to reconcile the rights of public and private owners by "carefully planned zoning". It does not, they say, deprive the private property owner of any legitimate right. But it does say that he is not the owner of "ordinary real estate" and cannot treat shorelands in a manner which inflicts an injury on the public owners.

Creation of the Lake Union Advisory Commission and charging it with drafting a comprehensive, long-range plan for the future of the lake, is a constructive step. Unfortunately at the same time municipal government did not enact any safeguards to prevent the destruction of the lake while the Commission tackles this monumental job. The present "Manufacturing" and "Commercial General" zones were rejected as unsuitable for most of the shorelands eight years ago. They are still in full force and effect. Under them the city will still issue permits for the paving of the entire privately owned perimeter of the lake and for the construction of wall-to-wall commercial structures. Unless something is done the Advisory Commission could labor and bring forth recommendations that could be meaningless.

This constitutes a clear and present danger. On Westlake Avenue the Bartell Drug Co. is burying the lake under a concrete parking platform. The owner of a Fairview Avenue lot has been issued a building permit to construct an apartment over submerged property. The builder of the "monstrous apartment house" at Fairview & Lynn (this description is from the March issue of "Puget Soundings") announces in the Daily Journal of Commerce, (3/23/70) plans for a five story over-the-water office building at 2221 Fairview E. The structure will be 174 feet wide on an 180 foot lot. The architect has left three foot "peep-holes" on either side. The structure is to be crowned by two luxury penthouses. Also a developer is seeking street use permits from the city for a project that would replace one of the Lake's larger Marinas with a 100-unit over-the-water, high-rise apartment. And so it goes.

In its report to Mayor Uhlman, Chairman Winston D. Brown of the Advisory Commission recognizes the fragility of Lake Union's environment. He said: "We consider Lake Union to be a unique and perishable asset of the entire City and we hope to formulate our final recommendations just as soon as a reasonable study of the many problems will permit. We invite all citizens, landowners and citizen groups to submit their thoughts, comments and suggestions to the Commission."

This article is our Association's response to that invitation. It is not in the public interest and it is not fair to the Advisory Commission to ask that they do their important assignment in an atmosphere of crisis. As some appointments are for two year terms it is obvious that the City Council did not expect it to do a slam-bang, rush job. Also the Commission has not been adequately staffed or financed and two positions remain to be filled by Mayor Uhlman. We believe that the Commission should without further delay ask municipal government to take such steps as are necessary to protect our "unique and perishable asset" until such time as a "carefully planned" land-use program can be worked out. Municipal government has the power. It is aware of the problem. Will it act?

CALIFORNIA OFFICIALS INSPECT LOCAL MOORAGES . . .

Headed by Major Donald J. Neary, a delegation of officials from Emeryville, California, came to Seattle to confer with our Association and to inspect our floating home moorages, particularly the new "Portage-At-Bay" development at 1214 E. Hamlin. The party included the City Council, members of the Planning Commission and officers of the Trimont Land Co. of San Francisco. (The Portage-At-Bay moorage was featured in the February 1970 issue of Fortune magazine.)

The Trimont Co. owns some 65 acres of submerged land and a public-private joint venture includes the development of a municipal Marina and a marine community to include some 300 floating homes. The City is preparing a "Planned Marine Community Development" zone for the area. Such a project, the visitors said, is in conformity with the Bay Area's regional zoning code adopted by the legislature and covering the entire 276 miles of Bay Shorelands. Any use, ranging from manufacturing to recreational, must be "water-needing". While local governments may write specific codes, any project must have the final approval of the Bay Area Authority. The visitors were taken on a water tour which included a visit to the Shilshole Marina where considerable interest was expressed in the Corinthian Yacht Club's floating club house.

Regional guide lines, Mayor Neary said, is not only saving the Bay from further deterioration but is stimulating the development of marine oriented uses of all kinds. Such a development as is planned at Emeryville, he said, would be impossible if it were not protected from an incompatible and undesirable development on adjacent land. Among other things the Bay Area Plan says: "Another water oriented type of housing that causes minimum damage to the environment is the houseboat...Houseboat living is an attractive way of life in many water-oriented areas such as Holland. On San Francisco Bay individual houseboats might be feasible in some areas where they could be connected to needed services. Or they could be clustered in houseboat "neighborhoods"; such clusters could constitute a complete community or could be a special part of a new marina or could even be integrated with more conventional waterfront developments."

(Copies of the San Francisco Bay Plan, \$2.00 and the San Francisco Bay Plan Supplement, \$3.00, may be obtained from the Documents & Publications Branch, P.O. Box 20191, Sacramento, California 95820)

PROFESSOR HAAG TO SPEAK AT ANNUAL MEETING MAY 15 . . .

Professor Richard Haag, Founder and Chairman of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Washington, will speak on "Lake Union: Its Problems and Potentials" at the eighth annual business meeting of the Association on Friday, May 15th. The meeting will be held in the Blue Flame Room of the Seattle Gas Company Building, 815 Mercer Street at the south end of the Lake. The meeting will be preceded by a coffee session from 7 to 7:45 p.m. Reports will be given and officers elected. The members will also act on a proposed amendment to the By-Laws increasing family (household) dues from \$10.00 to \$12.00 and Associate dues from \$5.00 to \$6.00 annually. Members will be mailed an official call early in May. Professor Haag is sometimes described as a "premature ecologist" as he was warning of the dangers to our environment years before the present mounting wave of concern.

JOINT OWNERSHIP FLOATING HOME & MARINA PROJECT PLANNED . . .

Construction of a new joint ownership Floating Home Moorage and Boat Marina is planned by an experienced developer and member of our Association. The project calls for an installation to include nine Floating Home sites and 13 pleasure

boat berths. The boat moorages will also be provided with sewer outlets. Cash investment required for participation is \$6,000.00 for a Floating Home site and \$3,000.00 for a boat berth. Those interested should contact the Association for referral to the developer for full information. There are two joint ownership Floating Home Moorages; Flo-Villa on Fairview East and Houseboat Harbor on Portage Bay.

HEY! BILL BOEING BUILT HIS FIRST PLANE ON LAKE UNION . . .

Many a Lake Union buff read with lifted eyebrows the report that the Governor's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation has designed Boeing Plant No. 1, in the south end, as the place "where William E. Boeing's first airplane was built." Just to keep the record reasonably clear Mr. Boeing built his first plane in the building (still in use) on the property now known as the Riviera Marina, at Fairview E. and Roanoke Streets. It is reported that Boeing officials insisted on the switch. We always knew Boeing packs a lot of swat - - but rewriting local history???????

HOW YOU CAN SPEED UP DELIVERY OF YOUR MAIL . . .

Once again we have received tearful pleas from mail carriers (as if they didn't have enough problems) for Floating Home residents to improve on mail box markings. Here is the information that should be on the outside and inside mail box door. The last name, street number and moorage letter or number thusly: JONES
2499-E (or No. ____)

FROM THE OFFICE MAIL BAG: "Time really flies and it is difficult to realize that it has been eight years since the "Lake Union Study" recommended the creation of a marine oriented Waterfront Amenity Zone. If the city had acted then we wouldn't have the threat of more apartments and office buildings hanging out over the surface of the lake". Robert Eyre AIA. . . "Here is twenty bucks for the legal fund. But don't thank me. The Association is entitled to it and much more. Just got billing for my fire insurance. Before the Association negotiated the lowering of rates I paid \$85.40. Now I pay \$54.00 for the same policy. So I am still \$1.40 ahead. I wonder how many members appreciate the fact that the savings on fire insurance alone more than pays their dues? G.R.C., Portage Bay. . ." It was an interesting list of marine establishments replaced by other uses that Terry Pettus compiled in his reply to Bill Boucher. I would like to add the Prothero Ship Building & Repair Co. Now we have the Elks Club. It was a poor trade". C.E., Fairview E. . . . "Had an argument with a neighbor. Are rentors eligible for full membership in the Association? J.C.S., Westlake N. Answer: YES.

WHAT OUR ASSOCIATION IS ALL ABOUT: We were incorporated by the State of Washington in 1962 as a non-profit, mutual benefit society to accomplish the following:

1. To protect the interests of Seattle's old and colorful Houseboat Colony.
2. To establish and work for adequate standards of health, safety and attractiveness for all houseboats and their moorages.
3. To cooperate with all like-minded persons and organizations to perpetuate floating homes as a unique and pleasant way of life.
4. To work with all governmental and civic agencies for the conservation, preservation, multiple-use and beautification of Seattle's inland waters and shorelands.

WHERE HAVE THE MARINAS GONE? The famed Yellow Pages of the new telephone directory lists only two firms under "MARINAS". Are we still the "boating capitol of the world"?

YEI! THAT'S WHAT THE CITY COUNCIL SAID: "The Committee definitely approves of houseboats. It recognizes that houseboats have been a permanent part of Seattle throughout the growth of the City. It hopes that they will remain as a part of its interesting and unique environment." Policy statement adopted on August 19, 1962.

LAKE UNION WAS NAMED 116 YEARS AGO: It was on July 4th, 1854 that Lake Union was officially christened. Prior to that it had the Indian designation "Tenas Chuck". (We not only took the land but the names from the original owners.) The occasion was the historic picnic the pioneers held on the Tom Mercer homestead. Site of the picnic, then on the shore of the lake, is the present site of the Gas Company Building at 8th & Mercer.

AN IDEA FOR CITY PLANNERS TO PONDER: "If 'planning' is to have any real meaning, it very well may require a meat-ax approach to the customary concept of 'property rising to its highest economic value' by giving environmental consideration higher values than dollar domination in the use of property. If the idea is revolting, so is what is being done to the environment revolting." Ross Cunningham, Seattle Times 7/26/69.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST TO CLEAN UP THE MESS? "It will take vast Federal expenditures just to begin an environmental clean-up program. At least 20 billion to 25 billion a year over present expenditures is essential. Even if you estimate the investment to be 275 billion by the year 2000, there is no reason to consider that a staggering sum when you remember it is equivalent to this country's expense expenditures for the next four years, not to mention the billions spent on space adventure. Until this nation makes the same kind of commitment to environmental preservation that it made in building the most massive defense building in history or in sending men to the moon, the battle cannot be won." Senator Gaylord A. Nelson, Democrat, Wisconsin

HOW TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE "We should be acting as careful stewards of the planet's resources for the maximum long term benefit of mankind." David R. Inglis, Professor of Physics, University of Massachusetts

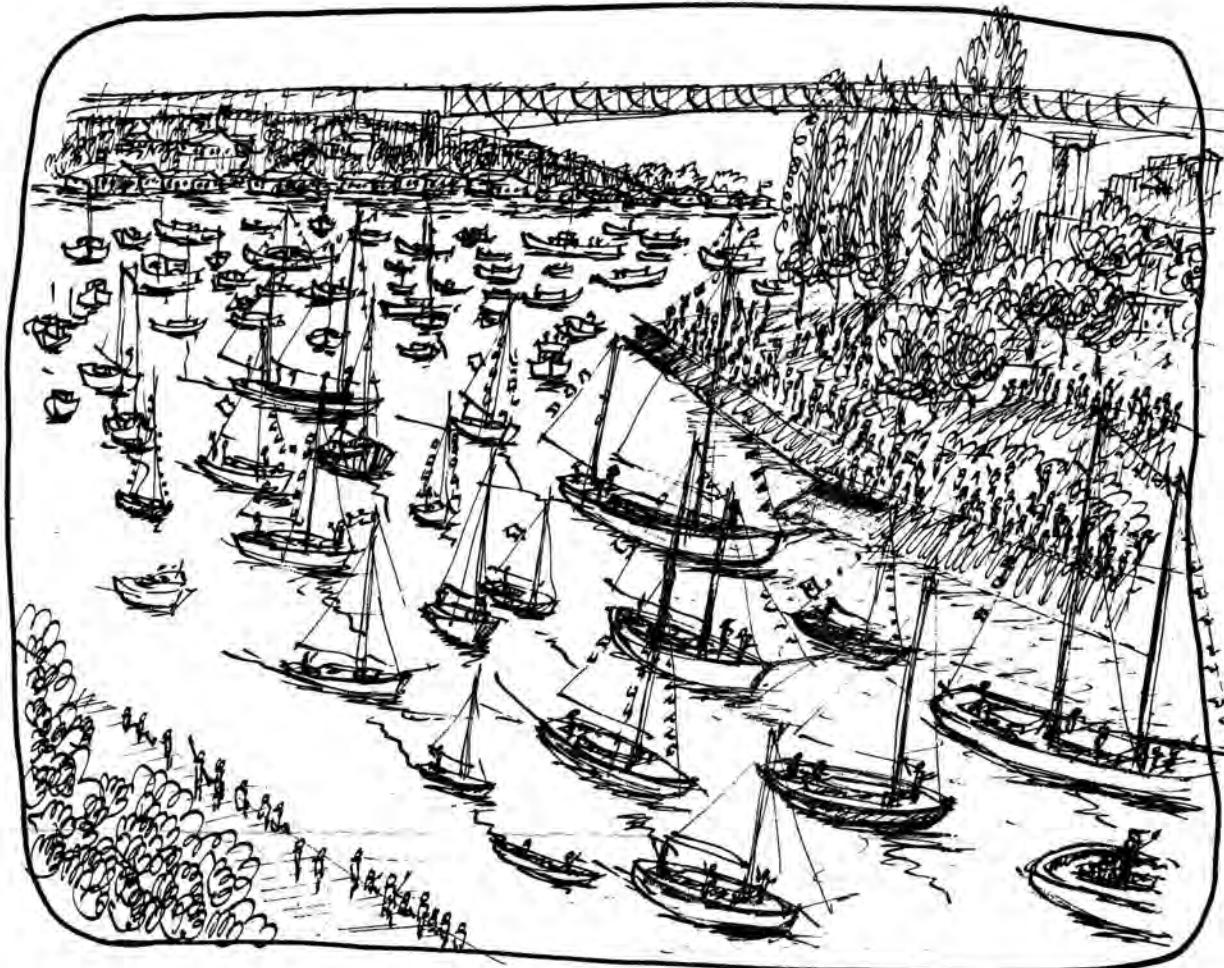
PLEASE NOTIFY OFFICE OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS

THE FLOATING HOMES ASSOCIATION CORDIALLY INVITES YOU ABOARD FOR OUR:

GRAND STAND CRUISE

SATURDAY, MAY 2nd ABOARD THE M.V. SIGHTSEER

You can be both a spectator and participant in the spectacular Parade-Of-Watercraft
which officially "opens" the 1970 boating season.



ENTERTAINMENT BY "THE TALL TIMBER GANG"

MUSIC * * * HOT COFFEE * * * SOFT DRINKS * * * MIXERS (For those who need it)

WE SAIL FROM

The SIGHTSEER'S regular moorage on
Lake Washington at 100 Lakeside (behind)
the HINDQUARTERS RESTAURANT,
foot of Yesler.

TIME: 10 a.m. sharp. We must be in
parade position at 11 a.m.
Return about 2 p.m.

TICKETS & HOW TO GET THEM

\$3.00 Adults. Includes the package.
Nothing to buy.

\$1.50 Children 5 - 12.

Send check to: FLOATING HOMES ASS'n.
2329 Fairview E. Seattle 98102
EA 9-1517 or EA 5-1132 (afternoons, evenings)