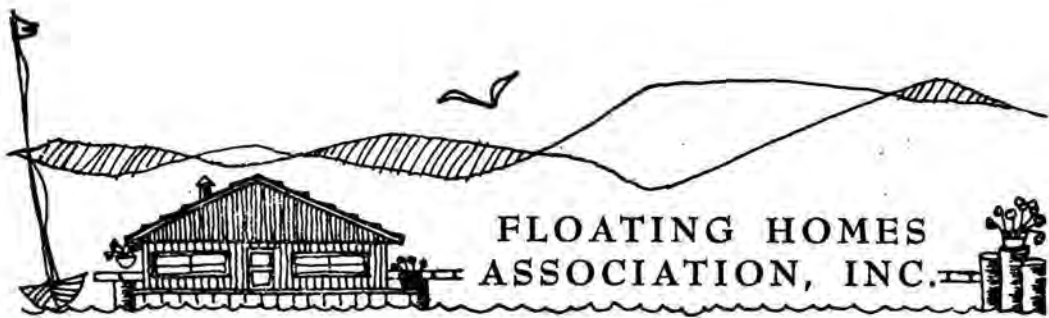


File copy



FLOATING HOMES ASSOCIATION, INC.

1329 Fairview East

Seattle, Washington 98102

Phones: EA 5-1132 or EA 9-1517

Number 24

Newsletter

April 1967

VARIANCE PAVES WAY FOR NEW 14-UNIT FLOATING HOME MOORAGE: The Seattle Board of Adjustment April 14th unanimously granted the Flo-Villa Corp. variances which pave the way for the installation of Seattle's (and perhaps the world's) first houseboat moorage meeting sewage disposal and other sanitation requirements. The all-new project will replace the present moorage owned and operated by Mrs. Ruth Foss at 2207-2209-2215 Fairview Avenue East. Terry Pettus, Administrative Secretary, represented the petitioners at the hearing.

The Foss property has a lake frontage of 120 feet and a lot depth of 162 feet. The developers are leasing an additional 150 feet of state tidelands. The new single walk moorage will be 312 feet in length and provide 14-houseboat moorage sites. Each moorage space will contain substantially more than the 2,000 square feet required in the 1957 Zoning Code.

Standing as a barrier to this and other new installations is the peculiar and ambiguous language of the 1957 Code which says: "each houseboat shall abut upon open water at least 40 feet wide and open continuously to navigable waters." In 1962-63 the Association sought and obtained a series of variances from the City Council in order that several existing moorages could be enlarged. However, this action by the Board of Adjustment goes a long way in removing the discriminatory features of the present regulation. Another variance, subject to the approval of the Board of Public Works, would give the Flo-Villa Corp. permission to meet off-street parking requirements through a bulk-head fill. This would provide 14 parking places and greatly relieve the congestion in the neighborhood.

The Floating Home Association is seeking to have the "40-foot" requirement replaced by a realistic and desirable spacing formula which would result in open water channels at least 20-foot wide between rows of houseboats as well as open water in addition to 10-foot wall-to-wall spacing between adjacent houseboats. It is expected that these proposals will be formally discussed with the Seattle Planning Commission this Spring.

President Kenneth Kennedy points out that the Association's special "Joint Ownership Committee" assisted in the formation of the Flo-Villa Corporation to develop the Foss property. This Committee will work with and assist individuals or groups of members interested in investing in and upgrading floating home moorage property. Officers of the Flo-Villa Corp. are: Cameron King, president; John Southern, vice-president, and Mrs. Muriel Eklund, secretary-treasurer.

* * *

OUR FIRST ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP "ROLL CALL" SET FOR SUNDAY, MAY 27TH: Projected and approved at the annual business meeting March 30th, the first membership "Roll Call" will be held Sunday, May 27th. The proposed hours for the membership check-up is between 2 and 4 p.m. with the results to be phoned in by 6 p.m. The objective of this special event, the Executive Committee points out, is simple: to call on all non-members and invite them to join. A special communication will soon be mailed to all Moorage Representatives who will be asked to form a small committee to conduct the roll call. (Some moorages have 100% membership. Is yours one of them?)

This will be a neighbor calling on neighbor event. Non-members will be given an application blank and other information material. There are many reasons for joining our ranks and not the least of these is the sombre fact that had not the Association come into being floating homes would now be on their way out.

The Executive Committee has never felt that formal, high-pressure membership "Drives" are either necessary or desirable. Our unusual organizational strength (compared to most voluntary groups) is due to the fact that floating home owners are blessed with a lively sense of enlightened self-interest. However, we do live in a highly mobile society. In saying goodbye to those who leave we must also welcome the newcomers aboard if we are to maintain organizational health. The cooperation of all is needed to make May 27th a success. It will be interesting to see what happens.

* * *

ENTHUSIASTIC ANNUAL MEETING SETS ATTENDANCE RECORD: The Association's best attended and most enthusiastic membership meeting was held Thursday, March 30th, in the beautiful "Blue Flame" room of the Seattle Gas Company building. It was standing room only before the session adjourned at 10 p.m. Reports were heard and adopted and all

officers were unanimously elected for another one-year term. They are: Kenneth Kennedy, president; Robert Brown, vice-president; and Clara Kennedy, secretary. Others elected were: Mrs. Gladys Mattson, trustee, and Mrs. Merla Jones and David Rarey, Executive Committee members. (The Executive Committee elects the Treasurer and Administrative Secretary, positions held by Mrs. Jo Windus and Terry Pettus, respectively.)

Mrs. Gladys Reid, chairman of the Improvement & Beautification Committee, along with Clara Kennedy and Robert Brown, presented an unusual illustrated report. Color slides dramatically revealed the contrasts in our neighborhoods ranging from the shoddy to the delightful. With the coming of spring, the Committee again urges that we pay more attention to exteriors (including roofs) and has many suggestions for pleasing effects through the uses of lighting, flowers and shrubs. The meeting ended with a coffee session.

* * *

FLOATING HOMES DO NOT TAKE FREE RIDE AT EXPENSE OF THE COMMUNITY: A question asked at the annual meeting - "When we hook up to the sewer, will we have to start paying into Metro?" - reveals a lack of information, even amongst ourselves, as to the economic role of floating homes and moorage property in contributing toward the costs of government and civic improvements. The answer, of course, is that WE DO PAY INTO METRO and have since the assessments were first levied in May, 1962. As single family dwellings we have also paid the monthly sewer assessment levied by the City of Seattle since September 1955. These charges along with water and (in most instances) the garbage collection fee, are included in our monthly moorage payment. Floating home payments to Metro and the City Sewer Utility probably exceed \$150,000.00. While on this fascinating subject, it be well to point out moorage owners pay taxes on the real property and improvements and each floating home owner (as we all know) pays personal property taxes. We are definitely NOT free loaders. We do not want to be.

* * *

CITY HAS FLEXIBLE POSITION ON MOORAGE SEWER INSTALLATIONS: The City of Seattle's flexible position on the kinds of sewer collection systems suitable for floating home moorages is outlined in detail in a special memorandum sent to owners and operators by the Association on March 17th. This information was elaborated upon in the comprehensive report given at the annual business meeting March 30th by President Kenneth Kennedy. This policy was also officially stated in a joint communication issued on March 21 by Mr. Roy W. Morse, City Engineer, and Dr. Sanford P. Lehman, Director of Public Health.

This joint statement says in part: "The preferred system for sewage disposal from floating homes is a gravity collector system owned and operated by the owner or lessee of the land occupied by the moorage from which sewage is pumped to the City's sewer system." Where such installations are not feasible, the statement says: "individually owned pumps operated from the individual floating homes will be accepted."

The Association has prepared sample plans and worked out installation techniques. This information is available to members and contractors on request. The Association started discussions with the City Engineering Department on this problem as early as 1963. We will cooperate in every way to facilitate the early installation of suitable systems and complete the job of getting individual houseboats plumbed. Within the framework of the City's flexible policy, the Association feels that it will be to the economic interests of both the moorage owner and individual floating home owner to see that the system installed is in keeping with the residential nature of our moorages and contributes towards our efforts to improve appearances.

FLOATING HOMES ASSOCIATION
2329 Fairview Avenue East
Seattle, Washington 98102