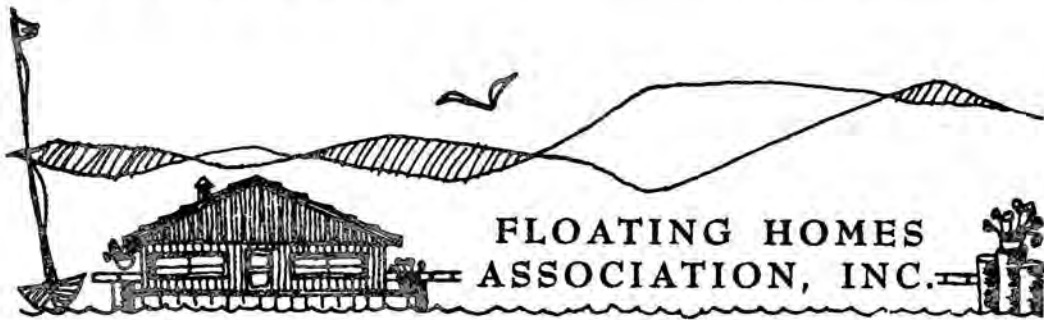


QUESTIONS:

"WHAT KIND OF A CITY DO YOU WANT?"
"WHAT KIND OF A LAKE DO YOU WANT?"



2329 Fairview East

Seattle, Washington 98102

Phones: EA 5-1132 or EA 9-1517

Number 50

Newsletter

May, 1972

HOW'S THIS FOR NOSTALGIA? WAGNER FLOATING HOME, 1912



Finding an historic photograph of your own floating home in the files of the Museum of History & Industry can hardly be described as an everyday occurrence. But it happened to Pauline Wagner, who with her husband Richard, have an intense interest in the history of our inland waters in general and houseboats in particular.

Pauline was at the Museum on such a search when the librarian found a file with but a single photograph. At first glance Pauline passed it by. Then she took another look. It was not only familiar but was a 1912 picture

(cont. pg. 2)

OFFICIAL NOTICE

TENTH ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING & ELECTION OF OFFICERS
7:45 - 10:00 p. m. Wednesday, May 31st. 1972
MONTLAKE RECREATIONAL CENTER, 16th East & East Calhoun St.

I.

A "WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND" OPEN FORUM: John Miller, Chairman, City Council Planning & Urban Development Committee, will be a guest participant.

II.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: See story elsewhere on nominations to date. Nominations can be made from the floor. Any member is eligible for nomination and election.

of their prized "vintage" floating home now moored at 2770 Westlake Ave. N. On the back of the photo was the date "Summer, 1912", when obviously canoes and middy blouses were very much the thing.

The Wagners have spent considerable time tracing the origin of the four bedroom home which has, (of all things) a huge brick fireplace. The two upper bedrooms, with magnificent views, have come in handy as the Wagner family now includes Michael, 5 and David, 18 months

Old timers whom they have contacted say their floating home was built in 1909. When this photograph was taken it was moored at the foot of Madison St. on Lake Washington. Besides a few houseboats the property was used for boat rentals and an ice cream concession. The moorage fees were \$20.00 a year. The actual site has long since been dry land as the lake level was lowered with the opening of the General Chittenden (Ballard) Locks in 1916.

Dick Wagner is an architect by profession and a boat buff by avocation. At their moorage the Wagners also operate "The Old Boathouse", specializing in the sale and rental of what they accurately describe as "wood boats of quality and character". Specifically this means the famed Rana sailboats (Sloops and Prams) handcrafted in Norway and the sleek "Whitebear" skiffs.

Because of their interest in historic preservation the Wagners, with a friend, Robert Flynn, sculptor, bought the "Leschi Boathouse" long a landmark on Lake Washington and believed to be the oldest lake structure. Two years were spent in restoration work and just when it was about to meet City Codes their dreams went up in the flames of an arson fire in January, 1971. The crime remains unsolved. The Wagners, understandably, do not like to talk about it.

Another historic floating structure is being painstakingly restored by Ken and Clara Kennedy at their moorage on Portage Bay. It was the "Hostess House" at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition on the grounds of the University of Washington in 1909. When the Exposition closed it was put on a raft and has been used continuously as a floating home.

Owners of other "vintage" structures are sniffing down the historic trail. One such is owned by Merla M. Jones and Mildred Nobel at 2207 Fairview Ave. E. Their beautiful, two-story floating home, they have been told, was used as a "night spot and bootleg joint" during prohibition days. They have not, for understandable reasons, been able to verify this fascinating story but there is some evidence - a trap door in a closet once used, the legend says, to dispose of evidence. Anyway it makes for an interesting conversation peice.

As to the Wagner photograph. All we need now is for some of these young women to come forward and identify themselves.

COUNCIL APPROVES REASONABLE FIRE REGULATIONS 7-2:

By a vote of 7-2 the Seattle City Council May 15th approved the fire regulations for floating homes supported by the Floating Homes Association. The action of the Council was taken on a petition from our Association and clarifies a matter which was held in abeyance when our comprehensive Ordinance was adopted in June, 1968.

For existing moorages the Ordinance provides: A 2½ gallon water-filled or equivalent type fire extinguisher along the moorage in sufficient quantity that the maximum travel distance from any point within the moorage to an extinguisher does not exceed 75 feet or, as an alternative that every floating home be equipped with a "Class A" fire extinguisher or its equivalent.

The Council did not enact a provision, advocated by Chief Gordon Vickery, that moorages 300 feet or more in length have either (1) an insulated 2-inch wet-standpipe or (2) a four-inch dry standpipe. The Association contended that our fire record shows that these are unnecessary and would be excessively expensive. (The cost would run somewhere between \$120,000 and \$140,000 and would mean even higher moorage fees). At present only some 36 units are more than 300 feet from shore and all are within 350 feet.

The standpipes will be required on new installations or replacement of piers or floats at existing moorages. This will not be an economic burden as the new floats will be built with conduits not only for the larger water lines (which can also serve as the domestic water supply) but also for power and telephone lines and TV Cables.

The Association is discussing with the Fire Department the application of the Ordinance and will keep members informed.



Council members voting for the Association's proposals were: Bruce Chapman, George Cooley, Tim Hill, Phyllis Lamphere, John Miller, Sam Smith and Jeannette Williams.

Voting against: Lem Tuai and Wayne Larkin

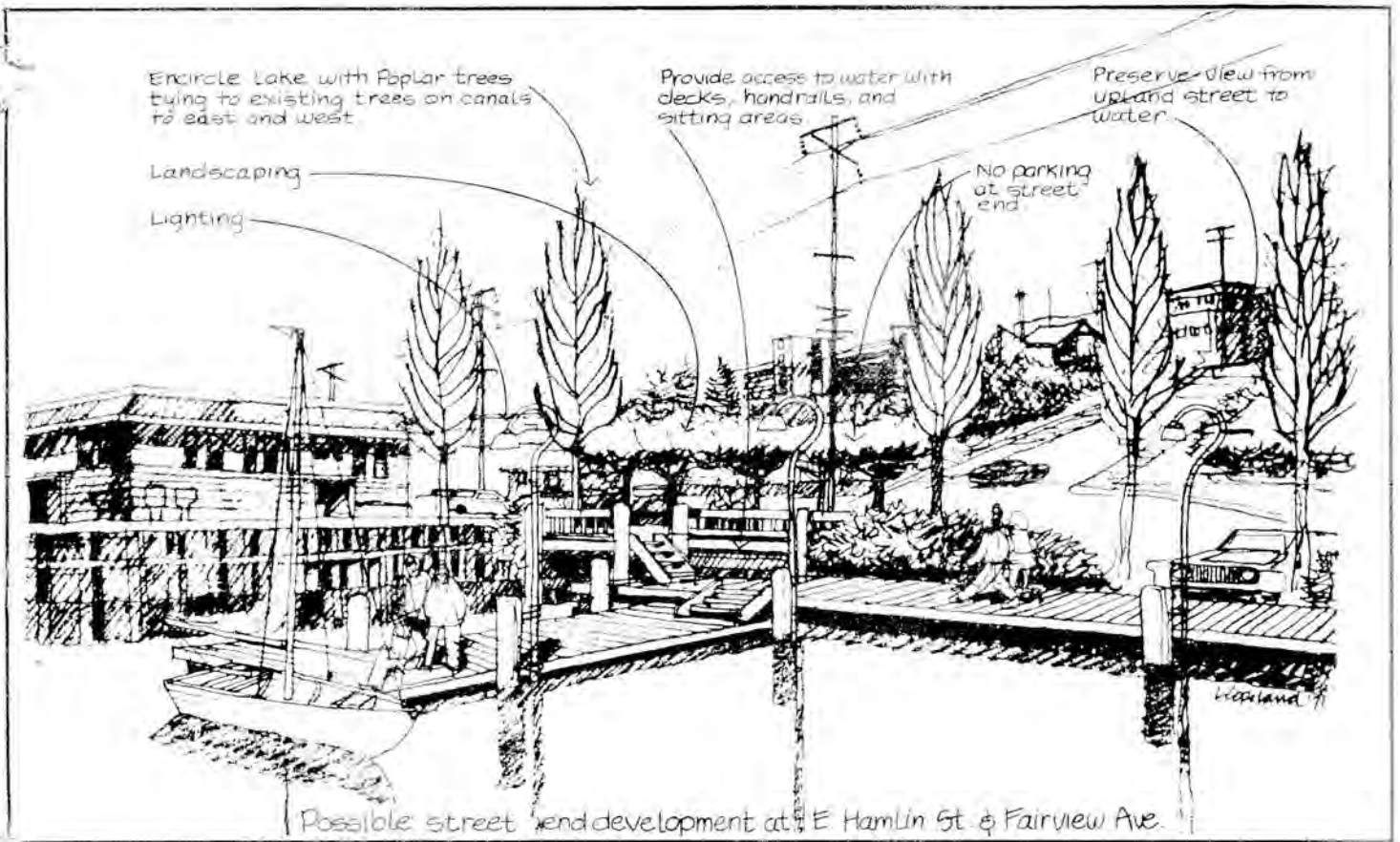
APPEAL FILED IN "ROANOKE REEF" CONDOMINIUM LAW SUIT

A joint appeal has been filed in the State Supreme Court against the proposed luxury 112 unit "Roanoke Reef" condominium planned for a "steel and concrete island", in Lake Union, by the State of Washington, the Eastlake Community Council and the Floating Homes Association.

The appeal is being taken against the ruling of Judge W. R. Cole of Ellensburg, following a nine day trial in the King County Superior Court last February. Judge Cole ruled in favor of the developers. At the heart of the case is the validity of permits which the developers claim exempts them from present federal, state and municipal regulations, forbidding such structures.

This is the first law suit involving the Shorelands Management Act which went into effect June 1, 1971. The Department of Ecology contends that construction of the building is in violation of state law which prohibits structures of more than 35 feet in height. (Cont. page 3)

PROPOSED MINI-PARK FOR HAMLIN ST.



Immediate development by the city of the proposed mini-park and public transient boat moorage (see above) as proposed in the Joyce, Copeland and Vaughn report on Lake Union, is being urged by the Floating Homes Association and the Eastlake Community Council.

This attractive lake front area at the foot of Fairview Ave. E. and Hamlin is but one of 33 street waterways around the perimeter of Lake Union and Portage Bay listed in the report for various types of public use.

Both organizations have expressed the hope that possibly Forward Thrust park funds could be found to bear the relatively small cost as nothing is required for land acquisition. Public funding of the project, with volunteer help from the community, could be a "demonstration project". The site is directly across the lake from the Gas Plant property where construction on the Myrtle Edwards Park will start early next year.

Members of both organizations and residents of the community have demonstrated what can be done to open up Lake Union for more public enjoyment with two-mini parks now a reality. They are the "Lynn St. Park", on 120 foot of frontage abutting State Waterway No. 10, at Fairview & Lynn Sts. and the "People's Park" at the foot of Newton St. on Fairview.

Many also joined with residents of the Wallingford community on April 22nd in a clean-up of what can be a lovely park site on Waterway 18 on North Northlake Way. The city providing an Engineering Department crew and trucks to assist the cleanup and Mayor Wes Uhlman donned coveralls and joined the work crew. The site has 210 feet of lake frontage and has trees and a grassy area. A sunken boat, a barge, the remains of what was once a houseboat and other assorted floating debris almost fills the channel but the City, under the revised Harbor Code, has the legal instrument to bring about their removal.

Waterway 18 is one of 20 such waterways over which the new Harbor Code gives the city jurisdiction. Their use henceforth for any private use will be regulated by permits which can be issued by the Board of Public Works but with safeguards to protect the public interest. The State Waterways have a total of more than 3,500 feet of lake frontage, with enormous potential for public use and to keep open "windows on the lake".

East Martin St. on Portage Bay with a view of the University has a steep wooded bank and has been cleaned up in an attractive fashion by the abutting floating home owners, Kenneth and Clara Kennedy and Robert and Joyce Brown. Besides Newton and East Martin the Joyce, Copeland & Vaughn report lists the possibilities of 28 other Street Waterways and their abutting shorelands.



APPEAL FILED IN "ROANOKE REEF" CONDOMINIUM LAW SUIT (Cont.)

Also being challenged is Judge Cole's ruling that non-profit community organizations do not have the right to bring law suits on behalf of their members. If it is allowed to stand this rule would deal a crippling blow to community and similar organizations.

Since the appeal was filed the City of Kirkland has petitioned the supreme court for permission to intervene on behalf of the appellants. Support for the appeal has come from a number of organizations including Allied Arts, Montlake Community Club, Ravenna Community Council, Wallingford Community Council, CHEEC, and the Sierra Club.

The Eastlake Community Council and the Floating Homes Association are well on their way to raising the \$7,500.00 cost for the appeal. More funds are needed. Contributions and pledges of support can be sent to the Floating Homes Association, 2329 Fairview Ave. E. and to the Eastlake Community Council, c/o Anita Klapper, 2019 Fairview E., 98102.

TEN YEARS OF ACTIVITY ADDS UP TO SURVIVAL FOR FLOATING HOMES

Because knowing where we have been may be helpful in charting a course for the future the Executive Committee believes a brief outline of the past decade should become the property of the membership. So here are some highlights of a turbulent and interesting period.

Thanks to the dedication of George Neale (our president emeritus) the painfully slow job of organization began in 1961 with storm clouds on the horizon. The storm broke in 1962 with the acquisitions of a right-of-way for the approach to the Evergreen Point Bridge which knocked out two Portage Bay moorages with some 55 units. Shortly after this blow fell the General Services Administration took over the property on Fairview E. for the Coast and Geodetic Survey Base. This left 75 houseboats homeless. To say then panic set in is to put it mildly. To many this was the beginning of an inevitable end for floating homes in Seattle.

On August 31, 1964, in response to our anguished plea, the Seattle City Council Public Safety Committee Adopted an important policy statement which read in part: "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 a permanent part of its interesting and unique environment." This brought cooperation from the Contractor and the Houseboats on Fairview were moved out over a period of months instead of the 30 day notice. The City government cooperated with special permits for dry storage areas and during the next year or so getting old moorages enlarged and new ones established. We pledged to the City that we fully intended to carry out one of our statement of purposes which reads: "To establish and work for adequate standards of health, safety and attractiveness for all houseboats and their moorages."

In June, 1963 we kept this promise by supporting the Health Department's request to the City Council for the establishment of a Local Improvement District for a lateral sewer around the perimeter of Lake Union and Portage Bay. At the time there were 540 floating homes, scores of other establishments and 13 City combination storm and sanitary sewers polluting the Lake. Contrary to widespread belief this was not a "Metro" project. The cost (except for pumping stations) is being borne by property assessments. The cost of this sewer is reflected in monthly moorage fees.

On August 31, 1964 the City Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 19958 stating: "That there is hereby established a special Committee to review and recommend to the City Council possible amendments to Ordinances and/or Codes regulating houseboats in the City of Seattle. . . ." Our Association supported this measure which was sponsored by the late Wing Luke and Lud Kramer, now Secretary of State. Membership of this Committee consists of the Chairman of the Council Planning Committee, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, two representatives of our Association, and representatives of the Engineering, Health, Building and Fire Departments. Since its inception Terry Pettus has served as chairman and Kaun Onodera, Code Research Director, as secretary.

The work of this Committee resulted in the adoption by the City Council on June 29, 1968 of Ordinance No. 96821 of the City (and the nation's) first comprehensive Ordinance establishing floating homes as a legitimate part of the Seattle housing scene. With the cooperation of the Health Dept. plumbing standards were worked out (this expense was borne by the individual owners). With the cooperation of the Engineering Dept. the first standards for under-water sewerage collection systems were worked out. The cost of these expensive systems as well as the regular side sewers is reflected in moorage fees. We have had the cooperation of the City Council, the Department of Community Development and the Building Department in the upgrading of some run-down moorages and the installation of several all new ones. Only one moorage (Ship Canal) went out of business rather than comply with the sewer connection requirements. We were able to relocate the good quality floating homes. We also cooperated with the Building Department in a fair but firm enforcement of the Minimum Housing Code. Over the years some 140 sub-standard structures were eliminated and with a minimum of hardship. While our Ordinance was being drafted the Fire Department failed to participate. This matter was unresolved but rather than delay the Association held the question of regulations in abeyance. These were not settled until May 15 when the Council acted on our proposals.

During this period many floating homes were remodeled and improved and new ones built. Our community has supported Local Improvement District assessments on Fairview E. and Portage Bay Place for fire hydrants every 300 feet. Also Fairview is supporting a street improvement assessment. We believe that it can be said that no community in Seattle has done more, with its own resources, to bring about such an extensive improvement program. Credit for this belongs to every member of the Association.

★ ★ ★

*"Since Adam and Eve ate the apple, man has never refrained from any folly of which he is capable."
Lord Bertrand Russell*

"The tyranny of a Prince in an oligarchy is not so dangerous to the public welfare as the apathy of a citizen in a democracy." ("Spirit of the Laws" 1748.) Baron de Montesquieu

FLOATING HOMES ASSOCIATION
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