

Anderson Steamboat Co. (REFER: Leschi Park) . "The old hotel building on the waterfront (was) removed" in 1910 and "the reclaiming by filling of some of the Lake frontage" in 1912 included the replacement of the trestle along the park shoreline although the trestle north of the park (from Spring Street) remained until at least 1925. Lakeside Avenue had been changed from street to boulevard purposes in 1910 and named Blaine Boulevard (from Madison Street to Yesler Way). The boulevard was located along the shoreline, on the new fill, approximately where the trestle had been along the Madrona beach-piling and a bulkhead was required to stop the settling and potential sliding of the roadway in 1916. Two tennis courts were built in 1914-15. In 1917 lowering of the lake level caused the "new fill" to be sloped downward and extended.

Correspondence from Supt. J. W. Thompson: in 1915 "the walk from the car line to the park is at present on private property" suggests that a turnaround loop track must have been built at the foot of Madrona Way, rather than the wharf/warehouse and track adjacent to the new north boundary, even though the trolley company owned the property; also the loop must have been on a new fill, too. The 1915 letter also notes the importance of building dressing rooms. A 1920 memo cites "the demand for . . . the erection of a neat little refectory building at Madrona Park" together with a counter proposal from the owner of a confectionery between the park and the end of the carline. "We feel that we could give the park business better service (but) if you think . . . a concession . . . is necessary . . . kindly file my application . . ." A concession contract was awarded in 1922 but the confectioner was outbid. A frame bathhouse was built in 1919 and before long the police reported complaints that "knotholes in the board walls have been opened by boys who are . . . peeking at the girls."

The presence of Blaine Boulevard along the Madrona beach shoreline compelled bathers and picnickers to cross the ever-increasing "stream" of traffic to reach the beach or bathhouse, from the lawn area at the foot of the park slope. After "numerous discussions" resulting in the same conclusion, the problem was resolved in 1925 when the Supt. of Streets began a project of "retopping" portions of the Boulevard. Endorsed by the City Engineer, the Boulevard through Madrona Park was relocated alongside the base of the hill, causing an "old" (1911) comfort station to be relocated. At this same time, the area north of the park and to the trolley loop was improved by the Department while the Municipal Street Railway built a passenger loading platform on the south side of the loop for the convenience of park patrons.

Increased patronage of the beach not only caused traffic congestion but the replacement of the "knothole" bathhouse in 1928 that provided all the latest conveniences; in that day it meant large dressing-and-clothes-checking rooms, for it was not "decent" to wear a bathing suit to the beach (the bikini was still the dream of the knothole gang!)

By this year the Annual Reports indicate that the grand boulevard from Seward Park to Montlake Bridge was being renamed "Lake Washington Boulevard" absorbing the old names of Frink, Blaine and Washington Park Boulevards. Montlake, University and Ravenna Boulevards retained their identities for obvious reasons.

The need to replace the 1911 comfort station to serve year round park-beach users was met in 1941 by the Federal Works Progress Administration (a nation-wide and city-wide program of public work). A 1932 rebuilt concession building was falling into a state of disrepair (improvements were included in the contract but maintenance was by the Department). Finally, in 1959, the concession and comfort station were combined into a new building.

Meanwhile, the rustic shelters and benches on the park slope had disappeared as had some of the less-used paths. The WPA did some path restoration and clearing of underbrush. J. L. Anderson, of the pioneer Steamboat-Ferry Co., recommended that a parking area be cut into this hillside "as there is ample room and it is not being used for any other purpose."

MADRONA PARK

over

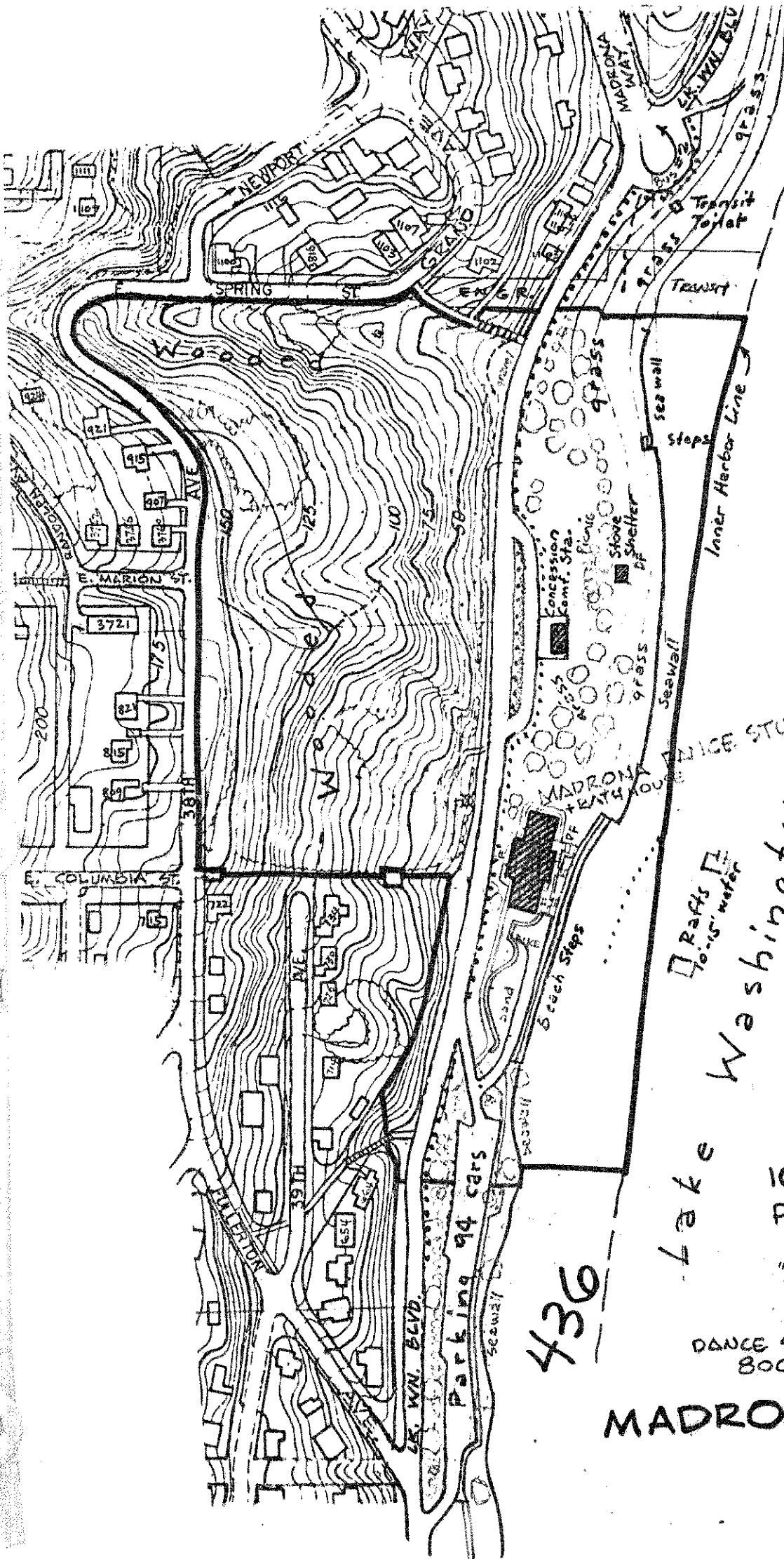
The Park Board sought to retain both the slope with its madrona and other trees and meadow area along the lakefront, so a parking area was graded along the narrow beach south of the bathhouse, but this soon brought complaints about its dusty condition (letter from J. L. Anderson et al); periodic oiling was applied until 1953 when funding became available for asphaltting.

The 1916 timber bulkhead along the shoreline was replaced in part with beach steps and a concrete seawall in front of the new bathhouse. It was extended to the north some 25 years later, to clean up the ragged waterfront along the picnic meadow.

Responding to the needs of the boating enthusiasts, the new Superintendent and the Board planned a "Flattie Haven and Sailboat Moorage" adjacent to the Madrona Beach. The Madrona community put together a large petition of protest and the resultant hearing was "heated" (P.I. 10/1/48). Each side mounted a good case, so the project was relocated and developed at Leschi Park.

Community mores change, so that by the 1960's there was no longer a need for the large rooms for bathers to change clothes and check street clothes in the bag room; it was quite acceptable to wear swim suits to the beach or under street clothes. So the big bathhouse was mostly empty, dark and dusty, as were the three other bathhouses in the park system. The recreation demands of the public had changed as well, so more emphasis was placed upon cultural arts. Facilities were not available - or suitable - for these specialized activities, until Mildred Noble, Cultural Arts Director, looked at the empty bathhouses. Some Forward Thrust bond funds were available and the Federal Model City program found that a dance studio fulfilled a need - so major funding came to support the conversion of the unused portion of the bathhouse, plus a new second story addition, into the Madrona Dance Studio, dedicated in 1971. The studio describes its service as a "halfway house between the introductory courses offered at various recreation centers and the private dance studios." Two large studios were built for beginning and intermediate students and as a dance space for touring groups. A dance library was installed, including a teacher referral list. A Dance Specialist directed the studio and coordinated activities in the dance community in a program described as "unique in the nation." (Trends 1973). Stella Mortensen was the initial Director.

12/3/74



Blvd. maintained by Eng. Dept. (1942)

Bathhouse 1927 - \$9,427 =
 Addn. 1928 - 16,063 = 248
 Dance Studio remodel. 1977
 \$121,000 =
 Mod. Cities \$77,000 =

Concession 1959: \$20,789 =
 820 Lk. Wn. Blvd.

16.3 Acres (Incl. 3.4 water
 (Incl. 0.3 Engr.)
 Purch. 1908
 (\$14,296 = '08 B.F.)
 "...for park, drive + blvd. purp."

DANCE STUDIO: 625-4303
 800 LK. WN. BVD.

MADRONA PARK

436

Lake Washington
 Rafts 10-15' water

110176

HISTORY: Madrona Park

L. M. Blanchard
P. I. 1927

When this lakefront property was first platted about 1889, the streets and lots were drawn on a right-angle grid system which did not relate to the contours of the land. This practice was fairly typical and may have been because some realtors were not development-minded, leaving that worry up to the new homeowners. However, the realtors were forced into one development because their real estate was so far from town: the new public attraction was the trolley-cable car. The plan was to build a car line from town, terminating in an attractive park in the real estate, combining a realty sales pitch with a "Sunday Outing". So, J. D. Lowman, president of this land company, immediately developed a park on the lakefront and a trolley car line from the north side of the park up through the "deep wild canyon" (Madrona Way) that came to be described as "one of the most scenic trolley rides to be had in the city", twisting and turning its way to Broadway and Jefferson, meeting the Hames Street cable car line that continued the ride to downtown. The park area was not dedicated as such, but was made up of lots "contributed" by some property owners. The company proceeded to develop the waterfront park with a boat dock, wooden bench swings, rustic benches, paths along the lake, and up through the park, with rustic shelters along the way. The plat had been named the "Cascade Addition" and upon completion of the park a proper name was sought. J. E. Ayer, one of the "contributors", suggested MADRONA, based upon the presence of a few trees in the community - but scarcely more than a "few little (Madrona) sprouts" in the park area. However, the name caught on and soon became the District name as well.

T. Conover

(MADRONA is from the Spanish - madrono, meaning "strawberry" and was given to the tree in 1769 because it reminded Fr. Crespi of a similar tree in Europe and South America (Columbia and Ecuador). COLUMBIA STREET was named by Denny and Boren to honor the proposed name for the Territory (REFER: Columbia Park). MARION STREET honors the brother of Arthur and David Denny, James Marion Denny, named for General Francis Marion "swamp fox" of the Revolution. SPRING STREET named by A. Denny because of the spring at its 'foot' on Elliott Bay, an Indian camp site.)

Private development of Madrona Park continued, and a boathouse, hotel and refreshment stand were added by 1892 to the narrow beach area and, to make the trolley line profitable during weekdays and winter, a wharf and warehouse with service tracks for freight cars was built adjacent to the north side of the park. (Evidently all the trackage from the foot of Madrona Way was on a trestle and the original park boundary was 220' south of Spring Street; the 1906 Replat shows that Lakeside Avenue (now Lake Washington Boulevard) was mostly under water.)

The trolley-park was a successful real estate venture. But, typical of all realtor-built trolley/cable car lines, they were hastily and flimsily built, intended only as a novelty. The new homeowners served by the little cars depended upon the service, so the realtor sold out, both trolley line and park. The car lines were consolidated for better operation and service as a transportation system; eventually "trolley parks" became an "unessential burden of transportation" and disposed of; Madrona Park was sold to the city in 1908. Two years earlier portions of Cascade Addition were replatted "in accordance with topographical requirements." The property bought by the City included the trolley wharf and warehouse just south of Spring Street. So a trade was made: the trolley company bought property just north of Spring Street and the city was to replace the warehouse/wharf and trackage "on land to be designated by said company."

The Olmsted Bros. of Mass., Landscape Arch., had develop a System of Parkways (boulevards) for Seattle in 1903, one parkway proposed along Lake Washington from Bailey Peninsula (Seward Park) to the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Expo and on to Green Lake. The Expo was in 1909 and by 1908 various portions of this boulevard had been accomplished. So the Park Board lost no time in developing the boulevard through this area, but it necessitated a pile trestle, for the roadway curved outward along the shoreline to avoid the hotel and refreshment stand at the base of the hill. Jacob Furth of The Seattle Electric (trolley) Co offered to move the hotel from the park but the Park Board took over management of the hotel, boat house and dock, probably as a facility to serve the nearby Expo with visitor housing and boating recreation, including docking privilege to the excursion fleet of The