

**2003 CASCADE HISTORIC SURVEY  
BUILDINGS, OBJECTS & ARTIFACTS**

Revised 1/12/2004

**CONTEXT STATEMENT**

**Cascade Neighborhood Boundaries and Definitions**

The Cascade Neighborhood, as defined for this study, includes the area bounded by the eastern side of Fairview Avenue to Interstate 5 and from the Roy Street to Denny Street.

In previous studies and in general discussions over at least the past 30 years, the Cascade Neighborhood has often been described as encompassing a larger area, with varying boundaries; for instance, according to a 1986 Post-Intelligencer neighborhood profile, the U.S. Census' definition of the Cascade's boundaries was much more complicated :“Interstate 5 to the east and a southern border that follows Olive Way southwest to Sixth Avenue, then northwest on Sixth to Denny Way.. Its western border travels along the eastern boundary of the Seattle Center to Mercer Street, then goes east on Mercer to Aurora Avenue North, then north on Aurora to Crockett Street, with the exception of a small jog east to Dexter Avenue North between Prospect and Comstock Streets.”

In other discussions, the area was often described as bounded by Aurora to the west, I-5 to the East with the inclusion of what is now more commonly described as the Denny Triangle.

Most recently the area from Aurora to Fairview East, with a southern boundary at Denny Street has been described as “Westlake,” with “Cascade” as defined in our study. Whether we are speaking of the presently defined Cascade neighborhood or previously described versions of it, all of these areas share many common characteristics and history. The history of the Cascade area is inextricably tied to the history and development of the southern shore of Lake Union and to what is now called the “Westlake” area. In addition, historically, Cascade's development has been influenced by its proximity to western Capitol Hill and Denny Hill and then the Denny Regrade.

## **Original Geological Formations and Early Physical Appearance**

The South Lake Union area of which Cascade is a part, was once heavily forested sloping land.

Geological studies suggest that glaciers formed the area about 12,000 to 15,000 years ago. When the glaciers retreated, they left a basin of organic peat, which was to become Lake Union, and glacial till on the nearby Denny, Capitol and Queen Anne Hills. Not much is known about the area from geological times until the 1850s.

## **Native Americans**

When the early Pioneers first explored the South Lake Union area around the 1850s, they found several Native American camps, particularly on the shoreline, near what is now Westlake and at 8<sup>th</sup> and Thomas Street, by a stream. There was also a stream near Boren Street. The tribes in question have been variously identified as including the Duwamish and Southern Coast Salish tribes. The name for Lake Union in Chinook was “Tenass Chuck,” from the word “Tenass,” meaning “fluid” or “water” and “chuck”, a word for “small” or “child.” In other words, the “Little Water.” The Chinook expression for Lake Washington was “Hyas Chuck” or “Big Water.” In Duwamish, Lake Union was called “meman hartshu,” meaning “Little Lake.” The Native Americans used a trail that connected the south end of the lake to what became known as Elliott Bay. There are descriptions by early settlers of Native Americans hunting for deer and elk and drying fish and clams by their huts. They are also described gathering root vegetables as well as plants such as camas, bracken and wapato and berries to supplement their fish and meat diet. It is also said that the Native American encampments in what is now the Cascade area disbanded in 1875, when a tree destroyed their longhouse during a windstorm.

## **David Denny, Thomas Mercer and Early Industries**

David Denny, one of Seattle’s original pioneers and one of the first white settlers near Lake Union, staked his claim in 1853. The claim ran from the southern shore of Lake Union to what is now Denny Street and includes the present Seattle Center grounds. Thomas Mercer, another original Seattle Pioneer, claimed the land north and west of Denny’s property. He is mainly important in the context of this study, because as early as 1854, he is supposed to have given Lake Union its name, in hopeful anticipation that someday “Lake Union” would join Lake Washington and Puget Sound.

In general, one of Seattle's first industries was logging. David Denny's contribution to the area around present day Cascade, as well and to the development of early Seattle industry, was to clear land near the shore of Lake Union. In 1885, he also cut a weir, described by Clarence Bagley, as a "wooden lock," at Montlake to float logs between Lake Union and Lake Washington. In 1882, the Lake Union and Lumber Company had been established at the intersection of what is now Mercer and Westlake. Denny bought the mill in 1884 and renamed it the Western Mill. He operated it for the next 11 years. The Western Mill had a fair number of employees, who lived in its vicinity. Photographs from the 1880s, show not only wooden mill structures near the shore of the Lake, but by around 1885, a whole series of gabled roof one story wood buildings, including a schoolhouse, farther inland from the shore. Since Denny's sawmill created much wood debris, it was used to create landfill on the southern shore of the Lake. It is reported that before the arrival of David Denny, Lake Union was about one third larger than it is today. By the 1880s, other mills began to spring up as well along Lake Union's shores.

By the 1870s, another important Seattle industry was coal and also involved its transportation, across or near the present Cascade area to such ultimate destinations, as California. Coal had been discovered near Issaquah. Initially, transport of coal from Issaquah to a ships on Elliott Bay was cumbersome and difficult: It was brought by barge from Issaquah across Lake Washington to Portage Bay, then put on wagons to be delivered to the shore of Lake Union, then barged across Lake Union, then delivered by wagon from the southern Lake Union shore to Elliott Bay. As a result, by 1872, to facilitate the leg of the trip from the shore of South Lake Union, it was decided to lay track for a narrow gauge railroad that would deliver the coal directly to a newly built coal dock on Pike Street. By 1877, however, the rail line, which ran along modern day Westlake, had been abandoned.

In general, whether transportation of logs or coal or other goods was involved, the distinct bodies of water, separated by land, caused definite problems. In addition to Thomas Mercer, many others, including writers for the Seattle Gazette in 1864, would continue to discuss the possible joining of Lake Union and Lake Washington. Clarence Bagley even credits General George McLellan and Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War with taking an interest in this idea as early as 1853. That union, however, would have to wait until

the early Twentieth Century. In any case, the South Lake Union area, including Cascade played, an early role as an industrial and transportation hub for Seattle.

### **Early “urban development”–1880s to 1900s**

While the early attempt to have a rail line devoted to coal transportation failed in the 1870s, in the 1880s, passenger ferries, with names like ‘David T. Denny’ and “Latona,” (the former name for the Wallingford area), carried riders to more remote communities like Fremont. There were also streetcars running north, such as the Eastlake Avenue, Cowen Park and Ravenna Park Lines. Unfortunately, the lines were not always economically successful. David Denny, the seemingly undaunted early Seattle Pioneer, who had successfully staked his claim on South Lake Union, was to lose a fortune on his investment in the Ravenna Avenue line. He never regained his wealth.

By 1885, another fearless early settler, Margaret Pontius and her husband, had staked a claim and built a house in Cascade. A cursory look at many of the plat names in Cascade indicates that many properties were part of the original Pontius plat. Even though Margaret was the wife of Rezius Pontius, of the two she seems to have left the most lasting impression. A photograph of Margaret Pontius standing in front of her home was taken by photographer Theodore Peiser around 1890. Peiser, at the time, was a known Seattle photographer, part of whose previous work, had been destroyed during the Seattle Fire of 1889. The main house itself seems to be stylistically simple. It was a wood and gable roofed building, two stories high with a porch and surrounded by several one story shed like buildings. In 1885, it is also known that Margaret Pontius took in first six, and then up to ten children, in need of shelter, at the suggestion of the Ladies Relief Society, who founded what later became the Seattle Children’s Home on Queen Anne Hill.

By 1889, there was also a “Pontius Mansion,” designed by architect John Parkinson at Denny Way near what is now Yale Avenue. It was a much more ornate Queen Anne house, with at least one turret, a wrap around porch and landscaping.

As the area welcomed more people, an official school building was necessary. In 1894, the Cascade School, a stately masonry pile, to which several additions were later made, was built. Renowned as an

early Seattle school, it gave its name to the Cascade neighborhood. The architect of the building was again John Parkinson, who had also designed many Seattle buildings, including the Interurban Building (present name) in Pioneer Square as well the B.F. Day School in Fremont. Parkinson, by the way, went on to an even more successful practice in Los Angeles, where his firm designed many Richardsonian Romanesque Buildings on the UCLA Campus as well as the Art Deco Bullock's Department Store. The Cascade School served 200 students in 1894. Its student body continued to grow. By 1908, the Cascade school employed 26 teachers.

While there were stately and elegant buildings like the Cascade Building and the Pontius Mansion, many workingman's cottages were also built in the 1890s and 1900s. The neighborhood now has just a few remnants of the single family houses from this early period of settlement in Cascade: the more workmanlike 1206 and 1210 Republican Street (1890) to the striking 1172 Republican Street, built somewhat later in 1898. Also in the 1900s, apartment buildings, some of entirely of wood and others with masonry exteriors were built. Until recently, the two-story wood Lillian Apartments, which dated from 1908, stood at the corner of Pontius Avenue North and John Street. 425 Eastlake Avenue (near the corner of Republican Street) is a striking wooden building detailed in the Queen Anne style. Built in 1910 as an apartment building, it has since been converted to offices. Period photos show similar wooden apartment buildings in the area. Also remaining on Eastlake from this period are two buildings with brick veneer exteriors: the Jensen Block, an early mixed use building from 1906, located at the corner of Mercer Street and the Grandview, from 1907, near the corner of Harrison Street.

### **Early Religious Buildings and Populations –1880s –1900s**

The Cascade area also welcomed recent immigrants, especially from Greece, Russia (some via Alaska), as well as Norway and Sweden. Several religious structures in the Cascade area or in its close vicinity reflected characteristics of Cascade's social fabric.

In 1895, an ensemble of wooden buildings was erected at 817 Lakeview Avenue to house St. Spiridon church (Since this is before the building of I-5, these buildings would have been fairly close to present day Cascade). The Church's congregation included Serbs, Russians and Greeks. Early photos show that the

Church itself was a simple gabled wood building, with a low steeple, topped by one onion dome. Because, according to Orthodox Christian tradition, the altar had to be built on the Eastern end of the building, the church entrance, positioned to the West, was only precariously accessible by a trestle that hung over a ravine. Eventually, in later years, offshoots of this original congregation, would build churches in Cascade.

In 1892, the original Immanuel Lutheran Church was built slightly outside present day Cascade at “Minor Avenue and Olive Street.” At the time, the congregants were mostly recent Norwegian arrivals. Several additions were made to the “Old Church” building, but by 1907, a new church site was bought, this time at the corner of Pontius Avenue North and Thomas Street. The church that was erected and completed in 1912, is now one of the more visible structures in Cascade. It is an example of early wooden Gothic revival church buildings, of which there are now very few in Seattle. There is also evidence that a Swedish landscape painter, Jonas Olaf Grafstrom, did a painting for an altarpiece for Immanuel Lutheran Church in Seattle around 1915. He apparently did many religious paintings for churches in Western America, before returning to Sweden in the late 1910s. Originally, Immanuel Lutheran Church mainly served the local Norwegian population, living in or close to Cascade. By the 1940s, however, according to a commemorative pamphlet, it prided itself on a wide membership living in various parts of the city of Seattle. Another remnant of the neighborhood around Immanuel Lutheran is the house at 223 Pontius Avenue N., which dates from around 1910. The ensemble created by this building in addition to Immanuel Lutheran and the 1917 portion of the Metropolitan/ New Richmond Laundry across the street, as well as the originally clapboard sided apartment building at 215 Pontius Avenue N., gives a good sense of what the immediate neighborhood around Immanuel Lutheran must have been in the 1910s.

Other churches would have also served the local population. Swedish Gethsemane Lutheran Church, slightly outside our study area, would have mainly served Swedish Lutherans living in Cascade. Formed in 1885, the church structure had relocated to 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Stewart by 1901. It was a typical wooden Gothic revival building of the period. Not far was the Swedish Baptist Church, first located at 8<sup>th</sup> and Bell Street. It was moved several times and finally relocated to 9<sup>th</sup> and Pine Street. Also at 6<sup>th</sup> and Virginia was the Norwegian-Danish Baptist Church, shown in many early photos, including one by the photographer

Frank LaRoche, dating from ca. 1891. This was another striking wooden vernacular church building with Gothic revival detailing.

While the nature and number of churches give some idea of the religious concerns and backgrounds of Cascade residents and the remaining buildings gives some sense of the feel of the neighborhood the 1910s, other studies give further information about the local populations. For instance, a Masters Thesis dating from 1915 (Nellie Roe, "Italian Immigrants in Seattle," Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Washington, 1915) established that before 1910, Italian immigrants in the South Lake Union area were employed by a garbage collection firm. The group dispersed after 1910, when City sponsored garbage collection went into effect.

We also know that in this period, local businesses included not only sawmills, shingle mills and boat yards near Lake Union, but also cabinetry and furniture shops, grocery stores, laundries and boarding houses. Some businesses prospered for many years, others were less successful. The Washington Broom Works moved to Lake Union in 1889, but closed in 1890. There were several brickyards near Lake Union. As early as 1876, Frazier and Moon had a brickyard which in one year produced 750,000 bricks. In 1882, J.C. McAllister's brickyard was supplying most of the brick used in Seattle; when the brickyard's business expanded further, it was moved to the Duwamish area. The Lake Union Furniture Company, established on the upper floor of Denny's mill building in 1883 was a prosperous business, but finally closed in 1895. By 1895, David Denny had sold the Western Mill to J.S. Brace and Frank Hergert, who operated it as the Brace /Hergert Mill until the 1920s. (Bagley, 622). By 1900, not only was the area changing economically, but there were serious challenges, because of its relation to other parts of the city.

### **Urban Challenges and Designs Unbuilt – 1901-1911**

Beginning in the 1900s, the nature of the entire South Lake Union area was challenged by several plans. Thankfully, one that was not put into effect was a 1901 plan for the U.S. Navy to use Lake Union as a storage basin for inactive ships, once the proposed Lake Washington Ship Canal was completed. (Buetow) In fact, the Locks Scheme, which would finally unite Lake Washington and Lake Union and allow a passage to Puget Sound was not completed until 1917 and the entire canal project not until the

1930s. Another bad idea, proposed by Mayor Hiram Gill, and also dropped, was to sluice Queen Anne Hill into Lake Union.

By 1911, one major phase of the scheme to flatten Denny Hill was complete. The operation had changed the topography of a major part of the city as well as Cascade. Cascade was now more accessible from downtown, as a result of the Denny Regrade. Socially, it must also have been a significant change. Former inhabitants of Denny Hill had to relocate and earlier places of worship and other social and public centers, such as major hotels, were removed or displaced. As it turns out, Belltown became mainly a working class neighborhood, that tended to have a lot in common with the Cascade area. In Cascade, there is now at least an oral tradition which concerns several extant buildings in the Cascade neighborhood, which may have been moved there as a result of the Denny Regrade. Chief among the buildings mentioned are 224, 224-1/2 and 226-1/2 Minor Avenue N., multi-family wooden houses from the 1900s, which are now part of the Shelter Project.

Meanwhile, in 1911, Virgil Bogue, a civil engineer, proposed a complete redesign of Seattle's downtown business district. The Bogue Plan would have had far reaching effects on South Lake Union. At the time, other interests wanted to keep the center of the business district farther south, close to James Street, in the present day Pioneer Square. Bogue's plan would have moved the center of the business district to about Blanchard Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The scheme is a typical "City Beautiful" plan, with boulevards radiating north and diagonally east and west from Blanchard and 4<sup>th</sup>. Drawings also show a grouping of Beaux Arts buildings, including a train station and ferry terminal near South Lake Union. In fact, Blanchard Street would have been extended as one of the radiating diagonal boulevards cutting through the eastern part of South Lake Union and into present day Cascade. Voters rejected the plan, just as the University of Washington Metropolitan Tract was being developed. As a result, the center of the business district was located north of the old heart of Seattle, but south of Bogue's proposed Blanchard and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue center. This would have much less of an effect on the South Lake Union area.

### **Housing, Building and Other Trends around the 1910s**



While the Bogue Plan and other schemes were rejected, in 1909, the Northern Pacific Railroad was allowed to build a railroad line around Lake Union. It served local businesses from a freight station built on Terry Avenue in 1913.

Individual buildings in or near the Cascade area also represented new trends. Just north of the Cascade area, Seattle City Light's Lake Union Steam Plant was built in 1914. This marked a real victory over a privately financed competitor, Seattle Electric, owned by Stone & Webster. It also meant that the Lake Union area had easy and cheaper access to electricity. (Berner)

In the same year, the Ford Motor Plant, designed by John Graham Sr. was the first Ford factory built West of the Mississippi. Ford Motors felt that the site near South Lake Union was a good one, because of the imminent completion of the Ballard Locks and Montlake Cut. The new motorcar plant foretold future businesses in South Lake Union, devoted to the manufacture and/or sale of motorcars.

In the Cascade area, two major buildings, the Metropolitan Laundry Building (now called the New Richmond Laundry, first extant building, 1917) at Thomas and Pontius Avenue North and the Supply Laundry (first building, 1912) at Republican and Yale Avenue North, represented Cascade's involvement with the laundries. Laundries were then a major industry in Seattle. They also played an important role in Seattle's labor history. Labor unions became increasingly important in Seattle, particularly in the late 1910s. 1917 had seen the Great Strike of 1917. In particular, there had been major demonstration and a strike by the "laundry girls," at the Supply Laundry, known as one of several laundries, where working conditions were especially unpleasant. In 1918, the 8 hour workweek, for which labor had fought hard, was written into law. Labor strikes continued to occur. The General Strike of 1919 is even more famous for the way it polarized Seattle citizens. (Berner)

Dave Beck, later the President of the Teamsters, grew up in and around Cascade. He attended the Cascade School and had a paper route that included Cascade and part of Capitol Hill. His mother worked in a laundry at 8<sup>th</sup> and Olive Street for a time. Later, he himself worked at several laundries, the Central and Mutual Laundries, before becoming the Secretary-Treasurer of the Laundry Drivers' Union in 1924 at

about age 30. (McCallum, 56). He gave his impressions of the neighborhood to Roger Sale, author of Seattle, Past to Present. While the inhabitants of Cascade were mainly “artisans and working class people,” the area was not strictly working class. It was an interesting mix. Workers and artisans lived side by side with more affluent residents whose local businesses had often been very successful. It was not uncommon for several related people, with occupations that might have differing class associations, to live in the same house. Sale concluded: “It was an area where populist and progressive ideas grew, ranging from middle-class causes like women’s suffrage and prohibition to trade unionism of various shades of radicalism and militancy.” (Sale, 57)

World War I,(1914-1918), also further stimulated Cascade’s economy. There was an increased demand for ships and marine related goods, all produced in the South Lake Union area. Bill Boeing founded the Boeing Airplane Company on Lake Union in 1916. As C.H. Hanford, one of Boeing’s contemporaries related, his company aided the war effort by the construction of seaplanes, as well as service boats, but the “principal business of the corporation has been constructing airplanes for the navy and the army, and it has produced a number of excellent types for both branches of the service.”(Hanford, 477)

In the meantime, by 1917, the much disputed and long awaited scheme to create a “locks” at Salmon Bay as well as the “Montlake Cut” between Lake Union and Lake Washington, was finally completed under the leadership of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Hiram Chittenden. Shipping from Lake Washington via Lake Union to Puget Sound was now a great deal easier. This also furthered South Lake Union’s commercial importance. (Hanford, Bagley, Historylink)

These trends reinforced the attractiveness of the entire South Lake Union area to further commercial and industrial development. Cascade, situated to the east of the South Lake Union area and still tied to the western flank of Capitol Hill still retained its residential quality.

### **The 1920s – Industrial Buildings and Population Movements**

During the post World War I period, South Lake Union developed, not surprisingly as a more commercial area.

The presence of the Ford Motor Plant at Valley Street was one of several influences on the South Lake Union area. By the 1920s, several elaborate automobile showrooms, decorated in terra cotta, were built along Westlake Avenue, as well as warehouse buildings throughout the South Lake Union area, which often combine the vernacular with interesting high style elements. In The Industrial Shed: An Architectural View (joint M.Arch. Thesis, University of Washington, 1979), Susan Boyle and Katrina Deines identify 5 basic types of industrial shed in Seattle. Category 2 consists of “brick sheds with heavy timber or steel frame.” In this period, most of the industrial buildings in South Lake Union are of this variety. They appear most frequently to have masonry walls with an interior structure of timber.

Several similar warehouse buildings, dating from the 1920s, are still extant in the Cascade area. A warehouse building, 1275 Mercer, dating from 1928, is located at the corner of Mercer and Yale Avenue North. This building was built for the Kenworth Motor Trucking Company and was also later used to produce bomber planes for the war effort during World War II. 401-405 Yale Avenue North at the NW corner of Yale and Harrison appears to have been an early mixed use building, with a grocery store, other shops as well as apartments, all on one level. It dates from 1927. An addition to the 1917 Metropolitan/ New Richmond Laundry, at Thomas Street and Pontius Avenue North, dates from 1927. The beautifully tiled 117 Yale North, which now houses the 911 Gallery and “Feathered Friends,” was originally the home of the Rodgers Tile Company and dates from 1927. Also, on the west side of Fairview, slightly outside the present study area, the Troy Laundry Building, distinguished by its intricate brick veneer and designed by Victor W. Voorhees, was also built in 1927. Clearly, the trend toward industrialization of the neighborhood started to make itself felt in the built environment by the end of the 1920s.

Once again, the location or relocation of religious institutions in the area describes changes in the demographics and social relations between local ethnic groups. St. Demetrios, a wooden structure, was built on the present REI site, in 1921/ 1922. St. Demetrios was founded by Greek speaking parishioners who had originally worshipped at St. Spiridon. The formerly very polyglot St. Spiridon, where priests had spoken, at the very least, Greek, Russian and English, now mainly served the Russian speaking population. Also, as a result of the Russian Revolution, there was an influx of Russian émigrés. In 1923, 6,000 refugees

are said to have passed through Seattle. St. Spiridon, still located on Lakeview Avenue, now had a new mission and provided needed assistance in resettling the refugees. In 1938, St. Spiridon built the current church building at 400 Yale Avenue North, bringing the congregation well within the current Cascade neighborhood. (Historylink, “St.Spiridon’s Orthodox Church.”).

With the coming of the Depression in 1929, not surprisingly building stopped. South Lake Union and Cascade went into an economic decline, and the national economy was in a shambles. With the exception of the 1938 St. Spiridon, it appears that there are no extant buildings in Cascade proper from the 1930s. One major contribution in the 1930s, however, was the building of Cascade Park, then known as Cascade Playground. The playground was to adjoin the Cascade School, and provide recreational facilities for local Cascade students and other neighborhood children. It was a contested issue, even a few years after the remaining houses on the land allocated for the playground, had been removed (The land had been cleared by 1931. There is some question as to whether the basements of the razed houses are still there). Scoffers maintained that since Cascade School was an old building, and an industrial area such as Cascade was not a good place to teach children, therefore the school would and should soon be razed ; therefore there would soon be no need for continued improvements for a playground. (President of the Fairview Stewart Improvement Club, Letter to the Seattle Park Board, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1937- Sherwood History Files, Seattle Municipal Archives). The building of the playground had already begun, however, in 1934, thanks to Works Progress Administration labor. The land was already cleared and regraded. A perimeter retaining wall, some of which is left, including the brick clad exterior wall of what became the “comfort station,” was built in 1936-37. The “comfort station” or bathrooms came in 1937-38, followed by the wading pool in 1938-39. (Don Sherwood Files, Seattle Municipal Archives)

### **Businesses, Buildings and People in the 1930s**

In 1930, the Seattle Times’ new main building, located on the west side of Fairview Avenue North was completed. It was a striking Art Deco building, designed by architect R.C. Reamer. The Times also built a “mechanical wing” for the building. Like the nearby laundry buildings, the Times’ buildings were designed to accommodate machinery and specific functions. The Times presence in South Lake Union and near Cascade was to have an increasing influence on the development of these areas.

Another important influence was the founding of Pemco Financial Services, this time along Eastlake Avenue. Franklin High School instructor Robert J. Handy was its founder. He originally founded the Seattle Teachers' Credit Union in 1936. The presence of Pemco also continued to have an influence on the development of Cascade.

While there appear to be few buildings from the 1930s in Cascade proper, we have a fairly good idea of the kind of neighborhood it was. The 1938 Polk's indicates fairly large groupings of single residences. There appears to have been a "business district" on Eastlake, between the 300 and 600 blocks. Residences were interspersed with small businesses: a grocery store at 317, the Pontius Garage Auto Repairs and Gas Station at 421 (the building is still there), William Rainwater & Company at 431, Ben Odegard Furniture Repair at 433. A grocery store was located at 511, a meat shop and a "beverage company" at 515, "Dimitry Nixon," barber and a beauty shop at 519. All on the ground floor of the Jensen Block, 601 Eastlake was the location of the Eastlake Pharmacy; 605 housed the Eastlake Tavern, a 'beer parlor' and Michael Betritsky owned a barbershop at 609 next to the "Eastlake Dye Works" at 611. On the other side of the street, the businesses were less frequent : 508 1/2 housed David Barker, Cabinetmaker. "Motorola Distributing Radios Wholesale" was at 620 Eastlake.

In 1938, there were fewer small businesses in the rest of Cascade; however, there were several grocers and auto repair shops, "Roscoe Manufacturers of Oil Burners" was at 413 Fairview, "Bay Construction Inc. Excavation Contractors" at 309 Pontius , "Ball Fuel Co. Coal and Wood," at 531 Minor, as well the laundries that we have previously mentioned. In general, the names do not seem all that "international." There were, however, three people with Japanese names (including a married couple) on Minor Avenue, as well as Mitsuo Komoriya, the owner of a grocery at 500, the "Perfection Bakery Co. Wholesaler" at 516, and a music teacher named Nicolas Oeconomacos, made famous in an article by Paul Dorpat. We also know that Howard Wright General Contractors were operating out of 409 Yale Avenue N., but that part of the same building may also have housed the Fuller Brush Company (at the 407 entry to the building).

## **World War II and the 1940s**

Once again, Lake Union supplied ships and other materiel for the war effort. As a result, South Lake Union saw an upturn in its economy. Cascade also was in the process of being more seriously industrialized. This is evident from the nature of extant building stock from that period. There are several warehouse buildings dating from after World War II, including, on Yale Avenue North, 231 (1947), 221 (1947), 434(1948) and 420 (1946) and 414 Pontius Avenue North, which dates from 1948.

The Earthquake of 1949, responsible for destroying cornices on many Pioneer Square buildings, for instance, and raining down debris in all parts of Seattle, is generally held responsible for the destruction of the Cascade School. The school was described by many as being beyond repair. Other historians have speculated that since the Cascade area was becoming increasingly industrial, it was not considered a proper place to educate children and that it may have been salvageable. This argument suggests that the effects of the earthquake on the Cascade School may well have been exaggerated, so that the School District could be easily rid of it. Obviously, judging from the extant letter written by the President of the Fairview Stewart Improvement Club in 1937 voicing his objections to “improvements to the playground,” and the need to do away with the Cascade School, there seems to have been some impetus to demolish the school well before the earthquake of 1949. The Cascade School was demolished in the early 1950s.

### **The 1950s - Rezoning and Interstate 5**

The two most far reaching events in the 1950s took place at the end of that decade. In 1957, the entire South Lake Union area, including Cascade was rezoned for manufacturing. The South Lake Union area had been moving in this direction for some time, but Cascade still had a significant stock of some of Seattle’s oldest residential buildings.

In 1959, it was decided to cut a swath along Eastlake and build the Interstate-5. Its completion in 1962 coincided with the preparations for the 1962 World’s Fair. Cascade found itself cut off from Capitol Hill. Many local businesses along Eastlake, including the grocery stores, the pharmacy and other necessary neighborhood stores, mostly disappeared and were never really replaced. In many parts of Seattle, some more affluent homeowners even tried to pay the city to divert I-5 away from the site of their homes. These attempts were mostly unsuccessful. Several noted local civically minded architects, such as Victor

Steinbrueck and Paul Thiry, decried the whole scheme. There were several gracious stairclimbs that had allowed pedestrian access from Cascade up the western flank of Capitol Hill. These were either demolished or now do not progress far out of Capitol Hill, since Interstate 5 intervenes.

The construction of I-5 has had a permanent effect on Cascade. Not only were local businesses along Eastlake demolished, but Cascade was more isolated than it had ever been. In addition, the rezoning to “General Manufacturing” caused the area to become more industrialized, but it was still an interesting mix of industrial buildings and older houses.

A whole series of warehouse buildings were also constructed in the 1950s in Cascade. Of these, the most striking is the Evergreen Wholesale Florist Building. It was previously the Seattle School District Supplies Warehouse, and built on the site of the old Cascade School. It is a large industrial shed with precast concrete tilt up walls, a precast concrete barrel shelf roof and strip windows. It is particular type of industrial shed building, identified by Boyle and Deines. Designed by the architect John Maloney in 1955, it is similar to one designed by Concrete Technology Corporation, Tacoma.

### **The 1960s to the 1980s**

By the 1960s, the Cascade area was in decline and considered “blighted,” particularly as indicated by captions on slides of the University of Washington’s College of Architecture and Urban Planning. The 1970s saw a fair amount of activism and concern on the part of residents and friends of the neighborhood. Activists feared that proposed city zoning changes would lead to further loss of housing. In 1977, TRA, then one of Seattle’s most influential architecture and planning firms, produced a study of available housing in Cascade for the City of Seattle. It reported that 240 residential units had been lost between 1970 and 1975. (Cecil) The Cascade Community Council was also formed. Robert Fisher, a student at the University of Washington, worked with the Council. His research, produced for a sociology class in 1974, explored the background, history and social trends in Cascade and is still cited.

The Seattle Times owned and still owns several properties in the western part of Cascade. In the late 1970s and 1980s, they demolished groups of older homes as well as the masonry Seattle Concert Theater,

located on their properties. In the late 1970s, the Seattle Concert Theater was frequently used as an informal venue for meetings and performances and Friday night presentations of the Seattle Film Society. Most sites became parking lots and still provide parking to Seattle Times employees. The relationship between the Seattle Times and the Cascade neighborhood is still considered problematic. There were further development pressures in the 1990s.

### **The 1990s to the Present**

In the South Lake Union area, the major event of the 1990s was the Commons proposal, spurred by an initial suggestion of former Seattle Times food columnist John Hinterberger. It proposed to clear whole blocks of buildings near South Lake Union, in and around Westlake Avenue and replace them with a park as well as nearby office buildings and condominium/apartment buildings. The University of Washington and Zymogenetics, among others were going to locate facilities near the Park. Paul Allen, one of the main backers of the plan, bought up whole blocks of South Lake Union, ostensibly in preparation for the demolition of the old warehouses. The issue was hotly contested. Those in favor of the park invoked the Olmsted tradition and claimed it was the last chance for “a park in downtown Seattle.” Others saw it as an echo of 1960s urban renewal projects, and clearly insensitive to local business owners and residents. Furthermore, the noted landscape architect and Olmsted historian David Streatfield clearly stated, the proposed park design was a far cry from anything the Olmsteds might have designed. Some voters simply feared increased local taxes. The proposal was voted down in 1995.

The Commons proposal, while defeated, has brought attention to the Cascade neighborhood and to South Lake Union. Local activists, architects, urban designers and landscape architects are concerned that historical and housing resources as well as urban quality are in jeopardy. In Cascade, historic warehouse properties have recently been bought by Vulcan Northwest. There have been several housing developments in place of Cascade’s older historic houses and older apartments. Some have upset members of the community. Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research recently tore down a beloved historic apartment building to replace it with the Peter Gross House, scorned by many longtime residents. The old St. Demetrios’ church, sold to the Overall Laundry Service in 1963, then lost its two towers and dome. In the 1990s, the nomination presented to the Landmarks Board sealed its fate. It was torn down and the new



REI building was built on the block where it had been. In 2002, the Seattle Housing Displacement Coalition and the Low Income Housing Institute unsuccessfully battled to save the Lillian Apartments, originally built in 1907. To Vulcan Northwest who had bought the property, the Lillian was a badly deteriorated building and not salvageable. To others, it was one of the oldest wooden apartment buildings of its kind left in Seattle and could have been restored. To low income housing advocates, it provided affordable rental housing and its destruction meant further displacement of low income residents in Seattle.

Cascade's urban quality and character have been continually buffeted by pressures from outside and within, by large urban design schemes, major engineering feats, and development pressures. It has lost many of its historic housing stock, some of the oldest houses in Seattle, prized public buildings and apartment buildings. In the midst of all of these pressures, a few buildings have been made landmarks. Immanuel Lutheran Church was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. St. Spiridon Orthodox Cathedral became a City Landmark in the mid 1970s. More recently the Jensen Block on Eastlake and the New Richmond Laundry Building were also made City of Seattle landmarks. At the same time there is a proposal to raze part of the landmarked New Richmond Laundry and put up an office tower designed by NBBJ. In the meantime, yet another rezone, passed recently and heartily disliked by many Cascade residents, is about to put new pressures on the character and remaining historic resources of Cascade. Many local residents and neighbors, especially on Capitol Hill and the Downtown Core, hope that the essential urban fabric and the historic resources of Cascade will prevail.

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