

The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

400 Yesler Bldg.

~~919 First Building~~ Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206) 625-4501

April 5, 1979

LPB-123/79

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

NAME OF PROPERTY
& ADDRESS:

Queen Anne Boulevard

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Public Right-of-Way of Streets
comprising Boulevard. (See attached
map)

OWNERS:

City of Seattle:
Department of Parks & Recreation
&
Engineering Department

On February 21, 1979, the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve nomination of the subject property. On April 4, 1979, the Board held a Public Hearing and voted to approve designation of the subject property specifying the following features to be preserved:

- a.) the continuity of the boulevard street system;
- b.) existing street trees (as identified on attached map);
- c.) existing granite curbs and brick gutters;
- d.) major structural elements (street lights, bridges, walls);
- e.) triangles.

The action is based upon satisfaction of the following criteria of Ordinance 106348, Section 3.01:

CRITERION #3: *It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation;*

Queen Anne Boulevard is significant to the Queen Anne community since it figures prominently in the early development of the hill.

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CRITERION #3 (cont.)

The physiography of Queen Anne Hill, which rises 450 feet, creates a sense of removal from downtown. This combined with spacious views and a central location made the hill a preferred residential community at the turn of the century.

A Queen Anne Club was developed and, under its auspices, various matters of community concern were dealt with. One of these concerns was a scenic touring boulevard surrounding Queen Anne Hill. A number of meetings were held in 1902 and considerable community input favored such a system.

As a result, Queen Anne residents were sorely disappointed to find, in 1903, that their hill had been excluded from the newly completed Olmsted Plan of Parks and Boulevards for Seattle. Community feeling was such, however, that soon the Queen Anne Club, the precursor of the present Queen Anne Community Council, brought pressure to bear on the city, which eventually relented, and in 1906 undertook to build Queen Anne Boulevard.

CRITERION #6: *Because of its prominence of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the city;*

The style of design of Queen Anne Boulevard is distinctive and unique basically for two reasons: Firstly, the Olmsted Plan for Seattle specified 150 foot minimum rights-of-ways for scenic drives. Queen Anne Boulevard was proposed to follow a much narrower right-of-way and was eventually implemented in this fashion. Additionally there was never one unifying plan for the entire boulevard, but rather six (6) different phases of construction took place from 1911 to 1916 with somewhat varying degrees of coordination. This was the result of different expectations on the part of residents at separate locations on the hill, and disagreements between the community and the city.

As a result the planting plan varies tree by street, which lends itself to a distinctive inconsistency as contrasted to a more typical boulevard which would be planted in one or two species of trees. In some areas trees are found which are not at all typical of species planted as street trees, and create a very unique setting. Throughout time, maintenance of the boulevard has been inconsistent and, in some cases as trees

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CRITERION #6 (cont.)

have been felled other species have been planted in their place.

All in all there are unique "character zones" on the boulevard, which can roughly be described as follows:

- 1) WILCOX WALLS (WEST QUEEN ANNE WALLS): designed by W.R.B. Wilcox, are comprised of concrete and brick retaining walls and connecting stairways, that in addition to being an impressive engineering achievement were also handsomely designed as symbols of city beautification. These walls have been designated a Seattle Landmark. (Found on 7th & 8th Avenue West)
- 2) HIGHLAND DRIVE: typified by spacious views, impressive residential structures along the boulevard, and few trees.
- 3) RESIDENTIAL DRIVE WITH TREE CANOPY: comprising the rest of the boulevard. Several different species of trees are found on the various streets.

When Queen Anne residents proposed a boulevard to surround Queen Anne Hill in 1906, they were likely thinking in terms of the status a boulevard would bring to their neighborhood. It was the fashion of the day to embark upon a stroll on Sundays, in which the object was to see and be seen.

Times have changed, but the amenity a boulevard, such as Queen Anne Boulevard can bestow on the neighborhood has not. The boulevard is still the main route on Queen Anne Hill for strollers, joggers, bicyclists, sunset and fireworks watchers, tour buses and Sunday drivers. Additionally the boulevard was the beginning of an extensive public open space system on Queen Anne Hill.

The street trees, combined with the structural elements of the retaining walls, stairs, and occasional cobble streets as well as the spacious views afforded by parts of the boulevard have been a landmark of the Queen Anne Hill neighborhood.

The effects of this historic green belt have been far reaching. Through time, individuals have been encouraged to donate adjoining land to the city for development as parks and view points. Examples of these include Bhy Kracke Park, Reginald Parson's Garden, Marshall Viewpoint and Kerry Viewpoint.

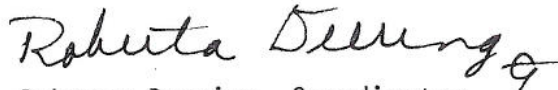
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CRITERION #6 (cont.)

The Queen Anne neighborhood is unique in its endowment of greenbelts and public open space. It is safe to assume that this trend began with the building of Queen Anne Boulevard.

REPORT ISSUED: 05 April 1979

Earl D. Layman
City Historic Preservation Officer

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Roberta Deering", followed by a small circular mark.

By: Roberta Deering, Coordinator

/hg

cc: William Justen
Property Owners
Queen Anne Community Council
Queen Anne Historical Society

Attachments