

Handouts to Capital Budget Committee relating to Proposed Ordinance 2006-0051

1. Final Recommendations of the North Lake Union Stakeholder Working Group
2. Water/Shed Aquatic and Education Center Project Proposal in the South Wallingford Amendment to the Neighborhood Plan
3. Renderings of IC-45 envelope overlaid on existing Tank Farm buildings

North Lake Union Stakeholder Working Group

Final Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

The North Lake Union Working Group was convened by the King County Department of Transportation in response to a King County Council budget proviso to study and make recommendations for the long-term use or disposition of King County Metro properties on North Lake Union in the South Wallingford neighborhood of Seattle. Members of the working group were selected to reflect the diversity of interests and perspectives of the area and included:

- Community residents
- Property and business owners
- Waterborne transportation advocates

The working group reviewed the possible uses for three properties on North Lake Union: the two Metro Transit properties (the upland or "tank farm" parcel and the waterfront parcel across the street); and the pier at the foot of Stone Way North owned by King County's current expenditure fund. The stakeholders were also asked to review possible linkages between the three properties. The group heard presentations on King County real estate procedures, site contamination status and waterborne transportation issues, and considered possible linkages of the various properties.

Given the range of perspectives within the working group, the group did not come to a consensus on all the issues. While the recommendations were agreed upon by a significant majority of the working group members, there is also a minority report reflecting the interests of some property and business owners and waterborne transportation advocates in the group.

RECOMMENDATION

The stakeholder working group determined that the King County Metro Transit properties on North Lake Union are currently underutilized community resources that could better serve the long-term goals of both King County Metro Transit and the community. The working group presents recommendations for each of the Metro Transit properties as well as for the Stone Way pier, waterborne transportation and possible linkages.

Upland parcel

The stakeholder working group recommends that Metro's "tank farm" property be preserved for the development of a public community facility that could:

- Fulfill unmet local community needs while serving as a resource for the wider region;
- Preserve the historic character of the site with its ties to Gas Works Park and to both the current maritime uses and industrial history of the area;
- Support a variety of uses on a scale that is pedestrian-friendly and consistent with the feel of the neighborhood;
- Relate to the North Lake Union waterfront through use and by capitalizing on and interpreting the viewscape of contemporary and historic marine industry and other water-dependent uses such as the Harbor Patrol;
- Preserve public territorial views of the Lake Union basin and the working waterfront;
- Employ and promote environmentally sound development and activities;
- Provide recreation opportunities, community meeting space, education and interpretive activities, aquatic uses;
- Blend in small-scale commercial and retail development serving the neighborhood in the existing buildings at the north end of the parcel along North 34th Street;
- Allow historic preservation of the buildings on the site; and
- Demonstrate and educate about water resource stewardship practices.

It is believed that these uses are consistent with neighborhood plans and would neither conflict with nor discourage the maritime industrial development along North Lake Union. Rather, it is believed that this development would celebrate, promote, and preserve the historic maritime and industrial nature of North Lake Union.

To allow time for further study, planning, and resource development to take place for this type of facility on this unique public site, the stakeholder working group recommends that Metro continue its current use of the site as a transit maintenance facility. This would allow time for the neighborhood plan stewardship group to explore potential funding possibilities for the project, such as:

- the renewal of the City of Seattle's Pro Parks Levy, which expires in 2008, or a special bond issue;
- a demonstration grant from the City of Seattle's Office of Sustainability & Environment;
- a water resources model-program grant from Seattle Public Utilities; and
- a variety of city, county, state and federal funding sources.

If successful in securing this funding, King County Metro Transit could be reimbursed for the fair market value for the upland parcel. In addition, the stakeholder working group also supports the following recommendations, believing these could generate revenue for Metro Transit in the near future from the use or sale of the upland parcel:

- explore the possibility of developing and leasing commercial and retail space in the existing "tank farm" building which fronts North 34th Street; and
- allow the sale of the property at fair market value to Seattle Public Utility, if interested, for them to use or swap as part of the expansion of their transfer station in South Wallingford with conditions for preservation and eventual public use consistent with the recommendations outlined above.

The stakeholder working group offers the following comments and recommendations relating to the Metro Transit budget and to the potential disposition process:

- Selling property to address short-term financial difficulties is shortsighted.
- It was an irresponsible fiduciary action to include projected revenues from the potential sale of the property in King County/Metro Transit's current budget.
- The budget timeline and RFP process drove the working group schedule and has precluded the pursuit of creative alternative funding sources for development of the parcels for a community facility.
- If in the future the property is to be sold, it should happen through a process that is better planned and in an atmosphere that will attract the greatest number of qualified bidders. Sale of the property should be conditioned to require mandatory participation in the City of Seattle's design review process.
- More time is needed to clarify the goals and costs of the King County Metro Transit Maintenance Facility relocation. This is best accomplished separate from the rush for sale and re-use.
- Some members felt that the County's requirement for surplussing had not been adequately met, and some others felt that the surplussing process was unclear.

Minority report on the upland parcel

Some of the stakeholder working group members recommend that King County Metro Transit explore the sale of the property to yield significant revenue for Metro along with relocation to a newly built transit maintenance facility. This disposition would provide Metro with revenue and a new, efficient facility. Private development of the parcel consistent with current zoning could also build new industrial facilities and increase the tax base and would not require the City of Seattle's design review process.

To that end, some members also felt that King County Metro Transit should move forward now with issuing a request for proposals for the upland parcel that would allow public or private development that would yield revenue and a new maintenance facility for Metro Transit in the near term.

Project Proposals

A. WATER/SHED AQUATIC AND EDUCATION CENTER

Envision a state-of-the art water recreation and learning center where the people of Seattle can exercise, soothe aches, talk with friends over a cup of coffee, and learn how to collect rainwater, all while enjoying spectacular views of Lake Union and the downtown. The Water/Shed Aquatic and Education Center will be a multi-purpose community facility that is centered around water, our use and enjoyment of it, and how we can better steward our water resources. Swimming and soaking pools might be warm water, salt water, indoor and outdoor, suited for seniors as well as children. The Center's location on the south-facing flank of the Wallingford hill overlooking the Lake Union watershed makes it a prime candidate for demonstrating how solar energy can be efficiently and economically used for heating, and how stormwater can be collected and cleaned in water features that create a healthy and aesthetically pleasing urban environment.

The "Metro Tank Farm" site on North 34th Street and Densmore Avenue N is an ideal facility for the Water/Shed Center, with its central proximity between Fremont and the University District, easy access from the Burke-Gilman Trail and future water transit on Lake Union, and to north and south Wallingford via Wallingford Avenue N, and the Wallingford Steps. The facility will be appreciated by the scores of new families moving into the extensive multi-unit housing developments being constructed in the blocks immediately to the east. This location also benefits from its adjacency to Gas Works Park, and with the potential expansion of the Gas Works shoreline there would be contiguous parkland and waterfront with the Water/Shed Center.

MASTER PLAN & PROGRAM

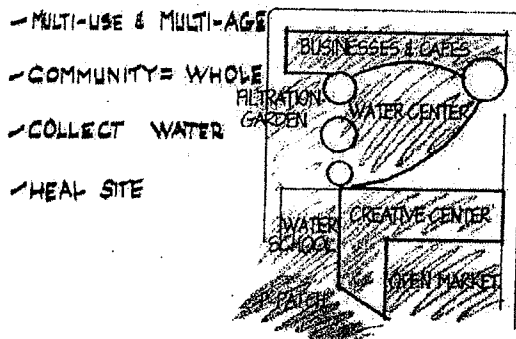


Figure Os4: Master Plan and program.

Incorporating the existing historic buildings preserves a local cultural landmark and establishes an affordable scale to the project, while simultaneously protecting the precious and fast-disappearing views from North 34th Street to Lake Union. Preserving and making the spectacular views available to the public from the new facility will be a legacy that will be enjoyed by the citizens of Seattle for generations to come. There is sufficient space on this site for pools, classrooms and meeting rooms as well as demonstration gardens, and the transition from the "old power" of historic Standard Oil and the Gas Works to "new

power" of sun and wind gives resonance to the sustainability theme. Integrating education and daily pleasures is an efficient strategy for teaching and practicing sustainable living strategies.

The community is supportive of creating a facility such as Water/Shed center, ranking the need for a community center 4th in open space priorities, with a swimming pool ranked 6th. Over 80% supported use of the upland Metro Tank Farm site for a "community center with swimming pools and recreational facilities". Development of such a facility for the neighborhood is also supported by the Comprehensive Plan for Wallingford: "Encourage agencies

responsible for public facilities to maintain and rehabilitate existing public facilities as necessary to make them assets to the neighborhood and to preserve their historic value." (W-P28).

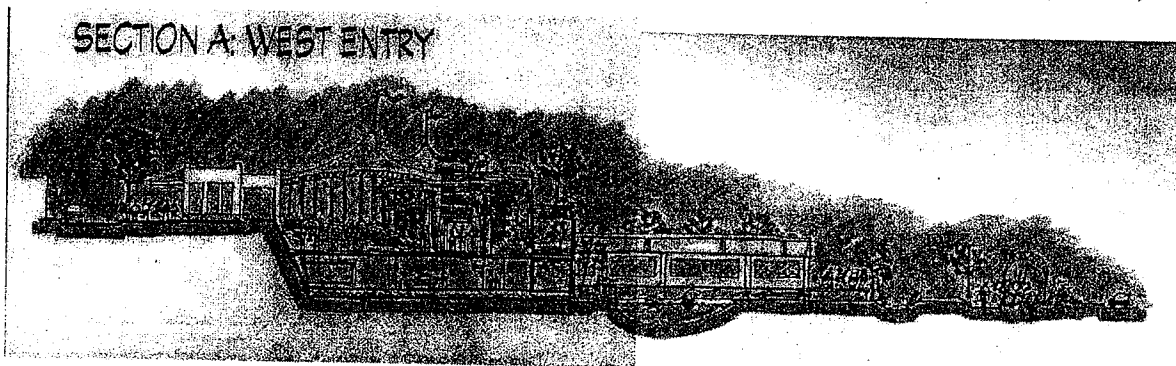


Figure Os5: Possible development scenario of the Upland "Tank Farm" site as a Water/Shed Aquatic and Education Center.

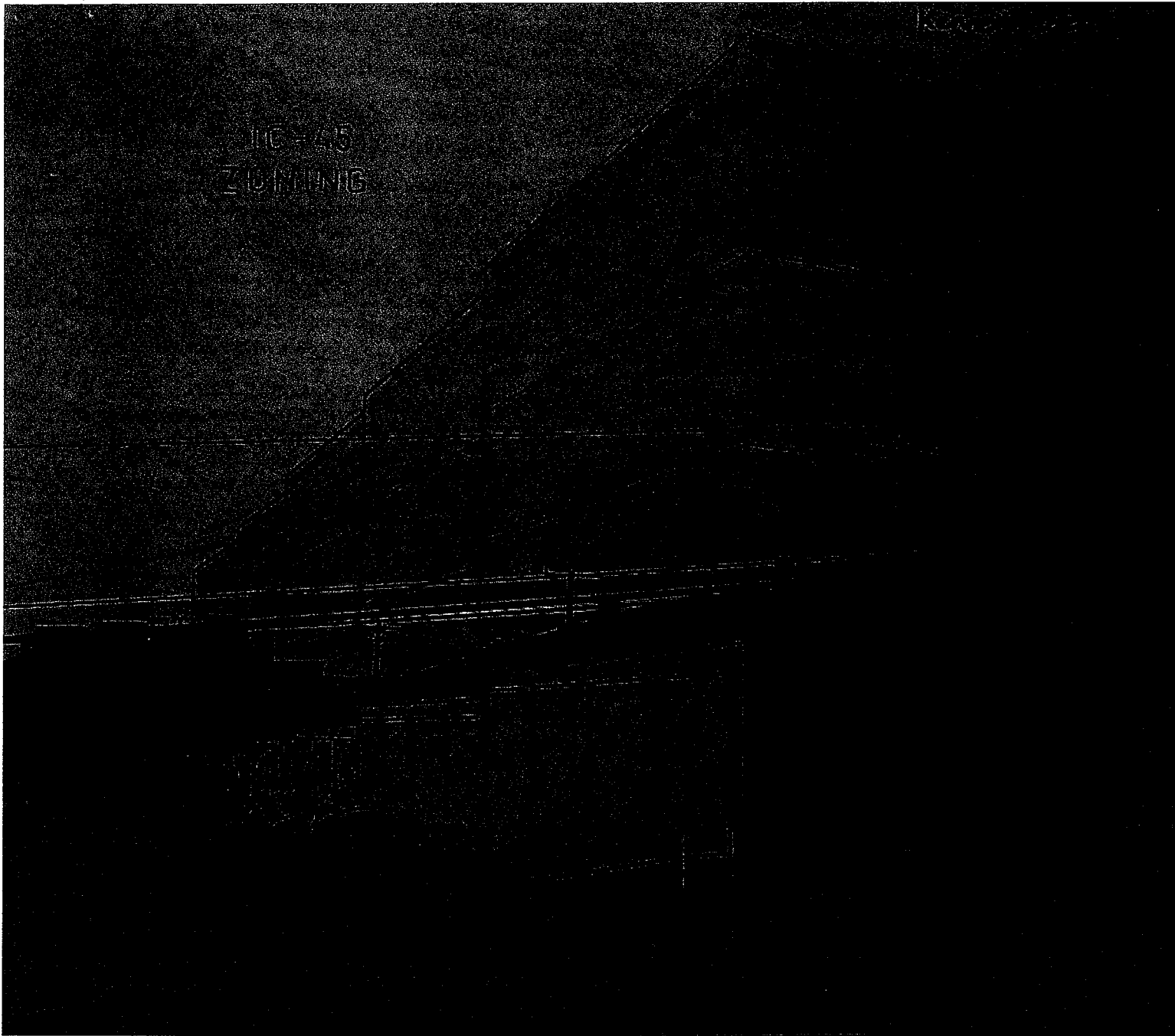
Implementation of the Water/Shed center could be a public/private partnership, collaborating with organizations such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, and local health clubs. Acquisition of the property could be facilitated through a land trade if the City has lands that would be better suited to the needs of Metro's maintenance facility (who now use the Tank Farm property) such as City Light's transformer site at Pacific Street under I-5. Alternatively, if proceeds of the sale of city properties such as the transformer site are maintained in a fund to purchase lands equal in size, these funds could be used to purchase the property from King County-Metro when they relocate.*

NOTE: While Metro has not indicated they intend to relocate, the agency is considering alternative development of the property. The site has undergone hazardous waste clean-up; while still in process, the Department of Ecology has indicated that development for such a use is possible.

B. SOUTH WALLINGFORD SHORELINE GREENWAY (Policies Os7, Os12, Os14, and Os15)

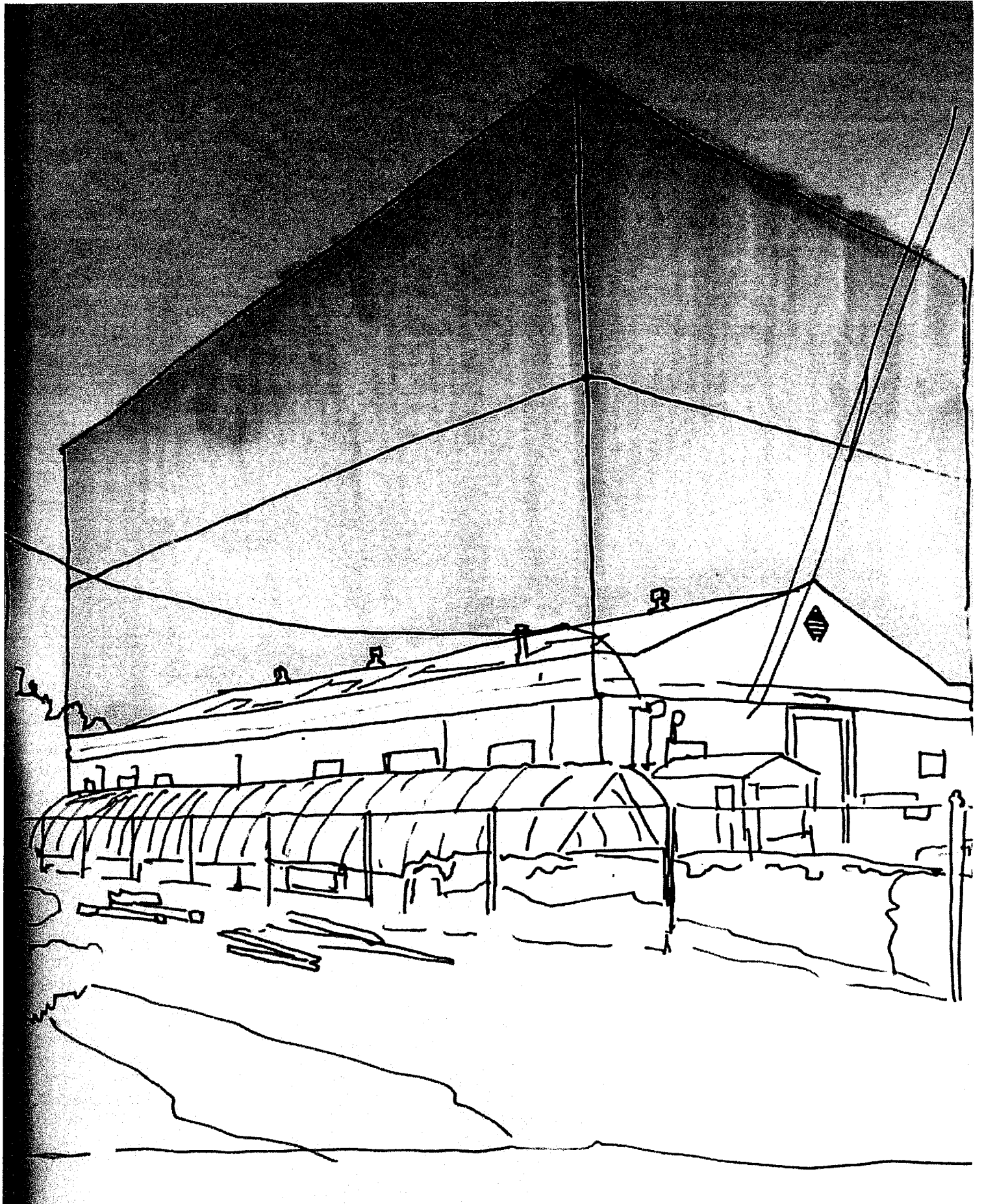
South Wallingford's southern and southeastern Lake Union waterfront boundaries are a unique neighborhood and city resource. A majority of the neighborhood's shoreline area is public right-of-way in the form of streets and trail (Pacific Street and Northlake Way and the Burke-Gilman Trail) and public waterways and street-ends. This shoreline is unique on Lake Union, in that it gives public access to the waterfront, offers cyclists, pedestrians and vehicle passengers spectacular views to the lake, hills and downtown skyline, and provides a critical linkage between Wallingford, the University of Washington, Gas Works Park and other city neighborhoods. The trail currently connects to Lake Washington and eventually can link to Puget Sound. In these lands is the opportunity to create a set of park and open spaces that are linked together as well as linked to other elements of Seattle's park system and neighborhoods, much as the Olmsted Brothers conceived Lake Washington Boulevard and the continuous open space and boulevard system they proposed for Seattle early in the 20th century.

Support for development of a "Shoreline Greenway" was nearly unanimous in our second Open Space Survey, with only one person opposed. The Shoreline Greenway is in accord with goals of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, which aim to create an urban trail system that also serve as linear greenways (Goal L302) and to make connections between recreational and natural areas (Goal L304).

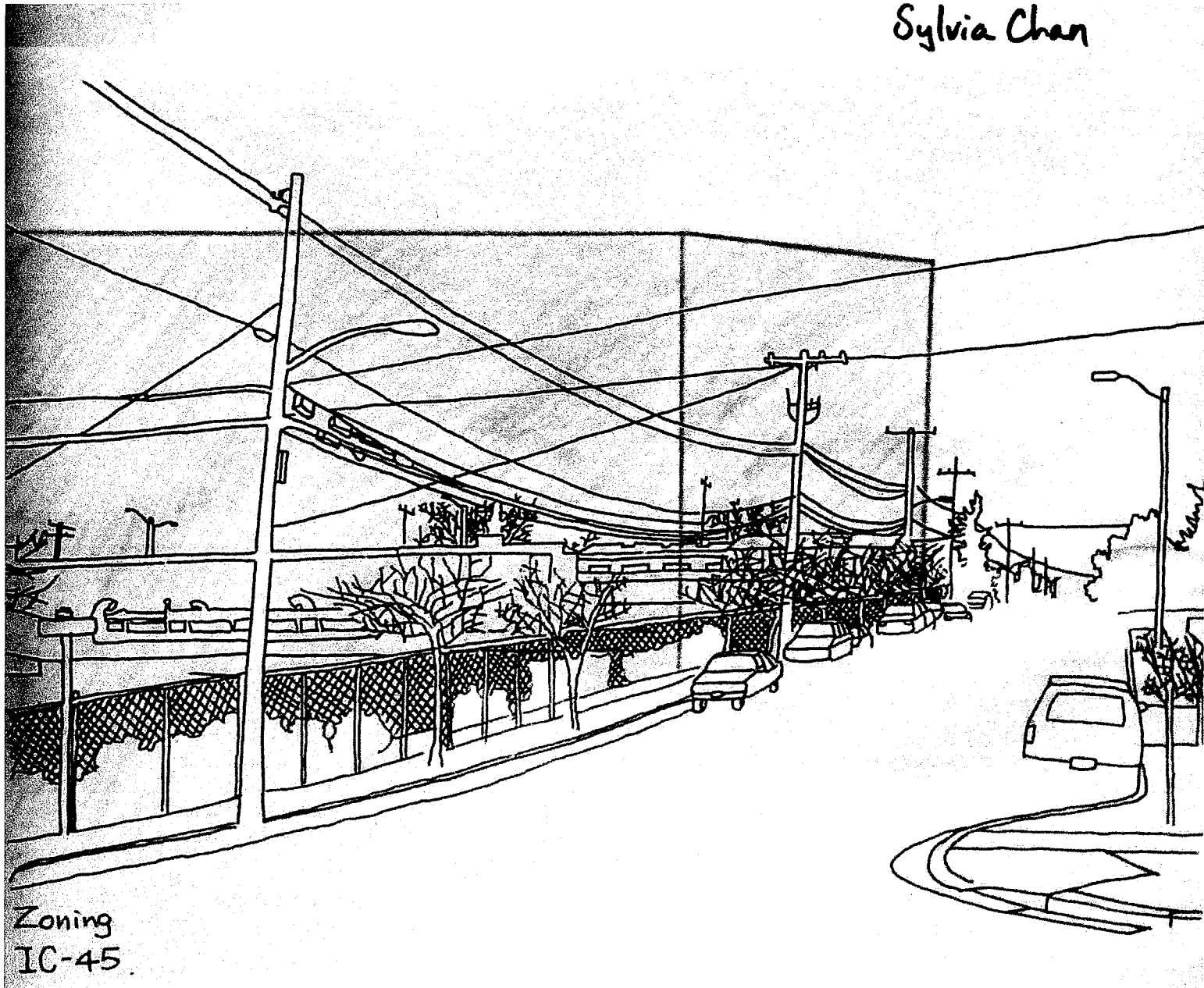


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Sylvia Chan



Zoning
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