

The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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

LPB-103/77

REPORT ON DESIGNATION/REPEALER/120 DAY PROPERTIES

NAME OF PROPERTIES: Montlake Bridge & Montlake Cut
Seattle, Washington

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The Montlake Cut of the Lake Washington Ship Canal is located in the south $\frac{1}{2}$ sect 16, T. 25 N., R. 4 E of the Willamette Meridian. The engineering feature of the cut is bordered by the University of Washington tract on the north shore and on the south shore by the Montlake Park Addition to the plat of Seattle. The boundaries of the United States Reservation area are as shown on United States Corps of Engineers Aerial Photo, File Number C-2-4-178, Plate 7.

The Montlake Bridge is specifically defined as Bridge #513/12 Montlake Bridge; Structure Identification #0000HH @ State Mile Post 0.19.

OWNERS: Montlake Bridge - Washington State Department
of Highways
Montlake Cut - Department of Army - Corps
of Engineers

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DESIGNATION:

On January 19, 1977 the Landmarks Preservation Board conducted a Public Hearing to consider the nomination of the Montlake Bridge as a Seattle Landmark. After reviewing the nomination and hearing testimony (see also Seattle Historic Data Sheet, copy attache) the Board voted to recommend designation to the Seattle City Council based on satisfaction of the following criteria of Ordinance 102229:

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DESIGNATION (cont.):

- Section 6(4) - portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or
- Section 6(5) - embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type or engineering specimen; or
- Section 6(6) - is the work of a designer whose individual work has significantly influenced the development of Seattle, or
- Section 6(8) - by being part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area, should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural or architectural motif; or
- Section 6(9) - owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or city.

On April 20, 1977, the Board conducted another Public Hearing to consider the nomination of the Montlake Cut as a Seattle Landmark, and after reviewing the nomination and hearing testimony the Board voted to recommend designation to the Seattle City Council based on satisfaction of the following criteria of Ordinance 102229:

- Section 6(1) - has significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State or Nation; or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or
- Section 6(2) - is the site of an historic event with a significant effect upon society; or
- Section 6(5) - embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type or engineering specimen; or
- Section 6(8) - by being part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area, should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural or architectural motif; or

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DESIGNATION (cont.)

Section 6(9) - owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or city.

In addition at their hearing on April 20, 1977, the Board voted to combine the Montlake Bridge and the Montlake Cut as an inter-related landmarks complex.

PROTECTIONS:

In recommending designation on the basis of the above enumerated criteria, the following specific features were recognized which would require Certificates of Approval prior to implementation of any proposed work or changes or issuance of a building permit:


a. Montlake Bridge.-

1. the entire bridge structure including approach plazas and all elements in those approach areas;

b. Montlake Cut -

1. the waterway embankments and all portions thereof contained within the boundaries of the United States Reservation extending from Union Bay to Portage Bay.

Review of any changes or improvements to the above elements of the complex other than in-kind maintenance and repair would require review by the Board and either issuance of endorsements or Certificates of Approval prior to the granting of applicable permits by the City.


Earl D. Layman
City Historic Preservation Officer

/hg

SEATTLE HISTORIC BUILDING DATA SHEET

1. Name (common or present and/or historic) MONTLAKS-3TADIUM BRIDGE (Montlake Bridge)

2. Street and Number, 24th Ave. E. at Ship Canal Block Lot Year Built 1924-25

3. Present Owner State of Washington Present Use auto/pedestrian bridge
also public transit

4. Interim Owner(s) Interim Use(s)

5. Original Owner same Original Use same

6. Architect advisory architects Edgar Blair, Harlan Thomas, A. H. Albertson Builder City Engineering Dept.

7. Assessed Value: Building Land Assessors File No.

8. Classification:

<input type="checkbox"/> Building	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied	Open to Public: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Hours <u> </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input type="checkbox"/> Threatened by demolition	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	

9. Neighborhood Information:

A. Compatibility With Neighborhood Structure Yes ☒ No

Use Yes ☒ No

B. Importance to Neighborhood
Great ☒
Moderate
Minor

C. Architecturally Strong Neighborhood

Comments Designed specifically
to echo the architecture of the
University of Washington, and to
relieve traffic problems of area
and new stadium.

10. Special Research Sources (Be Specific, list name or item and where found)

University of Washington, School of Architecture, Library

Hummer, Randall, Bridges in Seattle. U. of W. study for Arch. 452 class. on
microfilm, #A4524, 1972. photo study.

Seattle, City of, Engineering Department blueprints and files, 1925.

Seattle, City of, Photo lab, photographs, 1913 on.

Seattle Times, article January 27, 1924, p. 8.

Seattle Times, article on dedication and opening, June 28, 1925, p. 3.

Doherty, C. H., Bridges. New York: Meredith Press, 1969. (for general reference)

11. Cross Street Reference
Gates, Charles, The First Century, at the U. of W., 1861-1961. Seattle, U.W. Press, 1961
(for general reference)

24th Avenue E.

Ship
Canal

N

12. Photos Attached & Photographer Seattle Engineering Department

13. Physical Description: (second sheet attached)

14. Significance: (Third sheet attached)

13. Physical Description
double leaf trunion bascule bridge

A. Style of Architecture
Gothic styling

B. Construction Material
concrete piers, concrete approaches,
steel rail and grating on bascules

C. No. of Stories

D. Condition
Excellent _____
Good x _____
Fair _____
Poor _____

E. Exterior Description of
Original Design

lamp posts and lanterns are damaged
none or little
Moderate amount
considerable

F. Architectural worth as
Example of Its Style

Exceptional _____
Excellent x _____
Good _____
Fair _____
Poor _____

G. Notable Features: (Be specific, i.e., detailing, craftsmanship, proportions, materials, colors, interior, etc. Refer to Guidelines of Landmarks Preservation Board).

NUMBERS RELATE TO CRITERIA NUMBERS

(4) The Montlake Bridge was designed to echo the Gothic style of architecture used on the adjoining University of Washington campus, especially those of the upper quad, Hydraulic and Mining Engineering, the Anderson forestry building, the Suzzallo Library and the Henry Art Gallery, all constructed with the encouragement of President Suzzallo. That building period of the tens and into the early twenties, was the greatest and most unified of the developments of the University campus. Gothic architecture was seen as most fitting for educational institutions, striving to model their importance on that of the great European institutions. Carl Gould designed many of those buildings.

(5) The Montlake Bridge is a fine example of a double leaf trunion bascule bridge. It was a sturdy solution to spanning of a man-made canal cut, with concrete piers supporting the 208' 3" span. The bridge is 61' wide with the roadway 40' wide. Vertical clearance from the water is 46' at center. There is a 19' 8" clearance from deck to transit wire supports. The original design for the towers was changed from pre cast stone to terra cotta. The heavy concrete approaches are contrasted by the seemingly light steel grating bascule section, with its correspondingly airy steel rail with detail of arches and four-leaf "clovers".

The control towers are brick at the base, have a gunite mid section, terra cotta headers with hollow tile, and have hinged sash windows which swing in at the top. Towers are diagonally placed, but similarly shaped viewing platforms are placed directly across the bridge deck from each tower. These viewing platforms protrude from the side deck in the same shape and depth below the deck of the bridge as do the control towers. These sections below the bridge deck are of the gunite material.

Total length of the bridge and approaches is 344'. The State of Washington has always owned the bridge. The bridge has always had trolley wire supports. The bascules have concrete counterweights. The concrete approaches, with brick and concrete railings have entry tall posts of brick and gunite subtly introducing the Gothic control towers. ~~Of the latter~~, it was noted in early publicity "The Gothic type towers which will top the reinforced concrete approaches will be most attractive and lend a proper setting to the architectural design of university buildings". A further note added that such ornamental

14. Significance

A. Major Significance

- ☐ Historical
- ☒ Architectural
- ☒ Engineering
- ☐ Cultural
- ☐ Geographic
- ☐ Archaeological

B. Level of Significance

- ☐ National
- ☒ State
- ☒ Community

C. Statement of Significance (Be specific, history, personages, events, etc.)

(6) The Montlake Bridge was designed under the combined consultation of the City and well-known architects Edgar Blair, Harlan Thomas, and A. H. Albertson. These three architects designed the towers and railings of the new bridge to echo and compliment the Gothic structures visible on the University of Washington campus. The Gothic treatment was also chosen in the light fixtures, even though they were a standard catalog item: "Novalux ornamental lantern, octagonal, G. E. Co."

(8) The Montlake Bridge is a visual entry to the lower campus side of the University of Washington. It was also designed (and its original name so indicates) to be used as the major transit entry to the University stadium, which had been completed in 1920.

(9) The Montlake Bridge remains a component in the design of the Montlake cut, Montlake District area. The residents of the Montlake district are proud of this structure, and jealous of any changes considered. While they often seem more concerned with traffic than movement of traffic, they subconsciously recognize the value visually and traditionally of the bridge.

Historically attempts to span the muddy gulch between Montlake and the stadium area dated from the turn of the century. Canal alignment was begun in 1912 and ~~the next~~ two piers paid for by County and Federal funds in 1914. This was before construction of the 4th pier in 1916. prior to the opening of the cut, and it was noted that such construction was timely as "substantial saving can be effected if the fourth pier is built in the dry at the present time instead of in the wet at a later date." But subsequently three financing ordinances failed, so it was not until 1923 that financial plans were approved. There was a loan from the General Fund of \$7000 to prepare plans, this to be repaid from Bridge Bonds series D, of 1923 Construction Fund. Construction of the bridge was again a loan, repaid by sale of bonds of \$500,000.

City Engineer J. B. Blackwell supervised construction for the City, with the assistance of A. Munster, and coordinator D. W. McMorris.

Work on the bridge was pressed in the spring of 1925, so that the bridge would be ready for the influx of a large Knights Templar convention to be held in the Stadium

Surveyor Signature

Margaret A. Corley

Date

10/8/76

REVIEWED:

Historic Preservation Officer

Date

in early July. The bridge was completed in time, and opened Saturday, June 27. The mayor acted as conductor on the trolley which proceeded people across the span. Citizens immediately after the opening petitioned the City for better trolley service to the University and Laurelhurst. and the latter service promptly