

# FIRST STEPS TOWARD CONSTRUCTION OF SEA WALL ARE TAKEN AT MEETING OF CITY'S LEADING PROPERTY OWNERS

**Second Meeting Is to Be Held Tuesday Night for Formulating More Complete Plan of Procedure.**

**President of Seattle Company Tells of Results Accomplished on the Sound and Discusses With Business Men the Local Situation, With Reference to Requirements and Probable Cost of Work.**

All property owners who have the interests of the city of Astoria at heart are urged to attend the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday night at 7:30.

At this meeting the matter of the construction of a sea wall along the city front will be discussed.

The property owners, especially those owning land in McCune's and Shively's Astoria, are directly interested, and all should turn out.

At this meeting steps will be taken to determine whether or not the undertaking shall be attempted.

The very great importance of the matter demands the presence of every person owning property in the city.

If you are a loyal Astorian, be on hand promptly at 7:30.

A mass meeting of property owners was held at the city hall last night for the purpose of consulting ex-Governor Semple, of Washington, relative to the construction of a sea wall along the Astoria water front. About 75 representative business men and property owners were present, and the meeting was presided over by President James W. Welch, of the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Welch presented Colonel John Adair, who interested Mr. Semple in the Astoria proposition. Colonel Adair stated that his interest in the matter of a sea wall had been aroused during a recent visit to Seattle, where Mr. Semple's company is now engaged in a monster engineering feat. The company is not only reclaiming much of the tide land along the Seattle water front, but is as well digging a ship canal to Lake Washington.

"The land thus reclaimed is unsurpassed for building purposes," Colonel Adair said, "and great manufacturing concerns are being erected on it. Astoria's situation is identical with that of Seattle, and I believe the solution of the problem of our commercial greatness rests with improvement of the

lowed. Replying to a question propounded by F. R. Stokes, Mr. Semple said he believed the cost of a sea wall at Astoria would be much less than the cost at Seattle, because the distances here were not so great and conditions were more favorable generally. The general scheme, he said, replying to a question put by J. N. Griffin, would be to build a sea wall and fill in behind it, using the deposit taken from the river bottom outside as well as the earth from the hills, which would be sluiced down to a gentle slope. A stone bulkhead would cost many thousands of dollars, he said, and he thought the only feasible scheme at present would be a less permanent wall, of piling and brush. "The wall built at Seattle has stood the test," Mr. Semple stated. "Here at Astoria you do not have to contend with the terebo, and you could build a much better wall at a much lower cost than has been built at Seattle."

Answering F. L. Parker's query, Mr. Semple explained that there was a very swift current at Seattle, running much more swiftly than the June freshet of the Columbia, and causing much annoyance and entailing much additional expense. The fill above high water mark at Seattle is two feet. The deepest fill made at Seattle was 19 feet.

## How To Start The Ball.

G. A. Coolidge asked Mr. Semple what plan he would suggest to get matters started. Mr. Semple replied that he believed a committee should be appointed to wait upon the property owners and determine whether or not they would be favorable to the scheme. It was his idea that the property should be bonded to pay for the improvement. At Seattle the land owners had been given 10 years in which to make payment, and the value of their holdings had been so greatly increased that they were clamoring for the opportunity to make immediate settlement. If the business interests of Astoria were favorable to the plan, the company could formulate its scheme for the betterment of the township and submit it to the Chamber of Commerce, or such other organization as the citizens might designate.

## The Meat of the Nut.

Mr. Elmore went back to first principles. He wanted to know how all the conflicting interests of the city could be got together. "I'm a cannery man, and I want to know how you will convince me that a sea wall will be a good thing for me, when it will mean that I will have to go over to Washington for net rack room. I'm in the coal business, and I want to know where I can land my ships when they come here from Australia. Every one else has interests which he will seek to protect or advance, and it seems to me we should first take up the matter of bringing our business interests together. The cost of the improvement is a secondary consideration. I am satisfied the commercial future of Astoria depends upon just such a scheme as has been proposed here tonight, and I want to see the different interests reconciled so there will be no obstacle in the way of the undertaking."

Mr. Semple said just such difficulties had been encountered at Seattle, but that when patriotic appeal had been made to the citizens they agreed to temporary sacrifices for the greater benefit of future permanency in commercial matters. As to dockage facilities, he said the platting here would doubtless require revision, so as to provide such slips as may be necessary to the accommodation of shipping. He suggested that he believed Astoria was anxious to emerge from its previous historical position and enter upon its commercial life, and that, if this was really the case, it would be necessary to get together and discount the future.

Mr. Elmore said he believed most Astorians were progressive. He recalled that the utmost enthusiasm had been shown at the time of the building of the railroad, when a large subsidy was raised, and yet the building of the railroad was hardly as important a matter as the construction of the sea wall. He expressed the confidence that the people of the city would carry the proposal to a successful issue if they were properly enthused, and that there would be no lack of enthusiasm when the matter was fully explained and understood.

Mr. Elmore moved that adjournment be taken until Tuesday night to meet with the Chamber of Commerce. He stipulated that the chairman should cause personal notice to be given to all property owners to attend the meeting, and offered to donate the services of a clerical assistant. Mr. Parker and Mr. Coolidge made similar donations, and President Welch will have

at least three clerks to assist him in sending out his notices. Mr. Elmore's motion prevailed.

During the discussion which followed Chairman Welch said it was his idea that a wall should be built from the foot of Ninth street to the Clatsop mills. Such wall, he explained, would not interfere with any of the manufacturing concerns of the city. This prompted Mr. Dyer, of the Clatsop Mill Company, to say that when the wall got as far as the mill he would be included in the improvement district. "I'm just looking for a chance to move," he said.

A vote of thanks was tendered Mr. Semple for his presence and the meeting adjourned. Much deep interest was manifested, and it is the belief that good results will come of the meeting.

## Commission Is Out of Business

**Sailor Boarding House Has Lost Its Authority and Will Give It Up.**

S. M. Mears, one of the two remaining members of the sailor boarding-house commission, has tendered his resignation to Governor Chamberlain. It has not yet been acted on. Herbert Holman, who individually represents that body, will resign in about two weeks. Asked what actuated his determination to leave the board at this time, Mr. Mears said:

"I thought some one could be appointed who had more time and took more interest in the affairs of the commission than myself."

Mr. Holman declined to discuss the new phase of the situation, further than to say he had been unofficially informed of the action taken by Mr. Mears, and he felt there was nothing for him to do but follow suit.

"We had the sailor boarding house masters scared for once since the port attained any commercial prominence," was the substance of his remarks. "They agreed to conduct their business as provided by law and promised in a short time to reduce the price of seamen from \$55 to \$40; but the case of White brothers had to be dragged through the court, and the result was we were practically left without power, further than to issue licenses to whoever applied."

Some complaint has been made that the board did not prosecute Sullivan for alleged infringements, such as enticing sailors from vessels here. The law plainly says that it shall be the duty of police officers, harbor masters, constables, justices of the peace, district attorneys and like officials to prosecute cases of that character and make complaint against the offenders, and after the matter is decided in the courts the commission could revoke the license. The idea of having a commission, as we understood it, was to better the boarding house business in this harbor, and every move the board made of consequence was after the prominent shippers had been consulted. No license was issued to White brothers because of the feeling against them as a result of the alleged attack made on a seaman not long before the commission was created, and Sullivan was the only other one to apply for the privilege."

Nothing could be learned regarding the probable successors of Messrs. Mears and Wright, but it is thought they will be announced shortly. The power of appointment, according to the bill, lies with the state board. All of the commissioners have been asked to hold their places and reconsider their resignations, but the consensus of opinion among them is that their work is of no benefit, and that the sailor boarding house commission has faded into insignificance.

## PERSONAL MENTION.

Mrs. W. N. Meserve, of Grays river, is in the city.

J. J. Hoffman, a Portland cigar man is in the city.

Mrs. I. H. Clark, of Oysterville, is visiting in the city.

B. A. Seaborg came down from Eagle Cliff last evening.

H. A. Haseltine, representing a Portland cigar firm, is in the city.

Joseph Massey, representing the Portland Cracker Company, is in Astoria.

Mr. and Mrs. M. P. Callender are down from Portland on a visit to friends.

F. R. Stokes has returned from Spokane, where he attended a meeting of lumbermen.

Paul Wessinger, general manager for the Weinhard brewery, was down from Portland yesterday.

John F. Kerrigan, the Portland detective, came down last night. The object of his visit was not learned.

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