

Standard Header

November 10, 1931

\$100,000 FILL ON WILLOUGHBY IS PROJECTED

Movement is Launched by Chamber to Fill in Tide Flats in That Area

A movement leading to the filling of the flats along Willoughby Ave. from Femmer's Dock [near the foot of Main Street] to Gold Creek was launched today by the Chamber of Commerce

Chamber President Dr. W.W. Council said the project could be completed for a cost of \$100,000 and that the necessary expenditures could be recovered by the sale of property created by the fill. The tentative plans for the work and cost estimates were worked out with L. H. Metzgar, General Superintendent of the Alaska- Juneau Gold Mining Company.

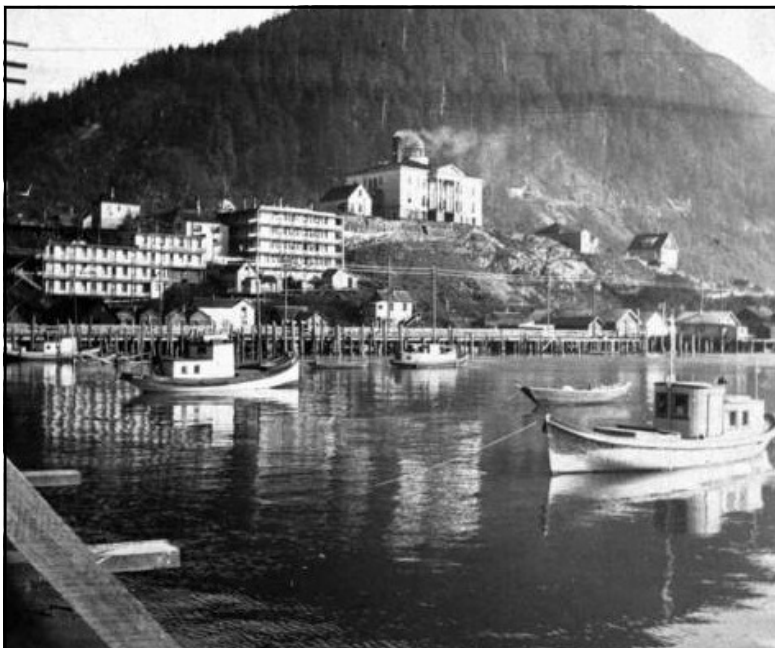
The plans suggested by Dr. Council would entail the construction of a rock wall bordering deep water and extending from Femmer's to Gold Creek. Tailings from the Alaska-Juneau mill would be [used for fill]....

The improvement would have to be undertaken by the municipality if at all. Dr. Council said the fill would make about 100 lots for building purposes. These could be sold at the rate for which other realty is being transferred, for enough money to cover the entire cost of the improvement. In addition there would be enough publicly owned ground left to provide for playgrounds, ballpark, etc.

The city is now expending approximately \$7,000 per year for maintenance and repair of [the timber trestle of] Willoughby Avenue. If permanent improvements were made such as suggested, this sum would be saved to the city each year.

Mr. Metzgar declared Dr. Council is satisfied that the plan is entirely feasible and practicable....

Willoughby Avenue began as a timber trestle along the original shoreline in about 1914. By the 1930s, the timber structure had been replaced by rock fill. This first phase of filling apparently was launched in 1931, according to the above *Daily Alaska Empire* story (abridged).



The Channel, looking from Willoughby, from near today's Salvation Army Building, about 1920. That's the Federal Courthouse on Telephone Hill, and the Cliff and Seaview Apartments to the left.

(ASL-Juneau-Views-Areas-Willoughby-Ave-06)

The controversial project proceeded sporadically. The street itself was filled in the 1930s, but the area inboard of Willoughby (the Village) was not filled until 1941. Note the photos below. The entire 1931 project area, outboard of Willoughby, was not completed until the 1970s, at a total cost somewhat more than the initial estimate of \$100,000.



Civilian Conservation Corps workers working on the fill in the Village, 1941. (JDCM 2004.58.0009D)

The Village, from near Whittier Street, during the 1941 filling project. The Cropley House (358 Willoughby today) is on the far right. (JDCM 2004.58.0009B)



The above photos of filling in the Village are from a collection donated to the Juneau-Douglas City Museum by Brian Wallace. They were taken by his father, Amos Wallace, and may have been compiled into an album by prominent Native attorney William Paul, Jr. Among the notations in the album are the statements that ...”This volume is presented to the Office of Indian Affairs in kind appreciation of their work—May 28, 1941.” and “CCC Rock Fill, Juneau Indian Village, ANB Juneau Camp, Land Protection Committee...”. “Fill began early February, 1941”.

Read more:

Dzantik’i Heeni in Transition: An Interpretive History of the Juneau Indian Village, by Ernestine Hayes: Gastineau Heritage News, February 2006.

FoJDCM History Flash, July 2014. Insert URL