

Lake Anne  
Village Center  
Opening

December 4, 1965

# The Washington Post

## Cityscape

### That Reston Sure Turned the Tide

By Wolf Von Eckardt

HERE IS HOW, with luck, Reston, whose first village center was dedicated yesterday, might be described 20 years from now in the "1985 Guide to Metropolitan Washington":

• • • RESTON, Va. (pop.: 75,006; elev.: 250 to 460 feet), is a three-star attraction because of its considerable historic interest as America's first 20th century New Town. The dedication Dec. 4, 1965, of its first village center is widely regarded as the turning point in the country's urban development and community architecture.

Along with historic Williamsburg, a much earlier example of comprehensive urban planning in America, Reston is one of the few communities that did not require rehabilitation or removal under SLURP (the Suburban Land Utilization and Reclamation Program launched by President John V. Lindsay in 1974).

[Reston is reached from Washington's Union Station Visitors Center in 11 minutes by rapid rail (Green Line, change to Local at Dulles Airport) or in 17 minutes by private transportation (connect to Radarmatic Speedway Rte. 7 at Three Sisters Tunnel and disconnect at Reston exit.)]

Begin your visit at the observation deck of the 240-foot Reston Administration Tower (built in 1969) in the heart of the town center. It affords a marvelous view over much of the Capital Region, one of the Nation's most magnificent cultural and recreational parks. On a clear day, you may be able to see the Capitol and count the 16 towers which, like Reston's, mark the compact satellite New Towns that, clearly defined by greenbelts, surround the Capital city.

TODAY IT IS hard to believe that only 15 years ago, much of this area was urbanized by monotonous subdivisions, sprawling roadside establishments and other ugly structures. The first "beautification" efforts began under the Johnson Administration (1965-72) but soon exhausted themselves in mere details and academic studies.

It was not until the Great Urban Crisis of 1973, with its tragic death of thousands from air pollution and its dramatic three-day total traffic standstill which jammed nearly four million automobiles on the freeways and

streets, that the urban problem was at last comprehensively attacked. The discovery that there was nothing on the moon worth going to also contributed. For now the Nation's skills, energies and riches could at last be brought to bear on the terrestrial human environment.

TEA, the Transportation Emergency Authority, completed the rapid rail system in less than two years (1973-5). RIP, the Roads-Into-Parks program launched in 1981 under President Lynda Byrd Johnson, converted the barely completed urban freeways into charming and useful outdoor recreation spaces.

People could again hike, swim in the Potomac and spend their leisure time at creative pursuits rather than at commuting. And children could play on supervised playgrounds instead of being dragged and nagged along on their mothers' shopping expeditions.

IT WAS Reston that first pointed the way to many of these improvements. Until the small town, almost hidden under the trees and surrounding two lakes, became a popular success, the idea of a planned community was considered alien to the American Way of Life.

At first, people thought Reston's careful design of everything from separate pedestrian walkways to barber-shop poles a somewhat eccentric luxury. The idea slowly caught on, however, that playgrounds for children might be as vital to a flourishing civilization as electric carving knives and that time gained by living close to one's work is more beneficial to family life than private barbecue pits.

In the end, it was generally agreed that much as Williamsburg had demonstrated the blessings of urban culture to a pioneer society, Reston had demonstrated the validity of human values to a technological society.

This acceptance was illustrated by the famous Watergold decision of Reston's citizens' association. Berry Watergold, a professional conservative, had stoutly opposed what he called the town's "built-in paternalism." In 1981, he professed his conversion to the concept that there is more personal choice and freedom in an orderly environment than a chaotic one.

He suddenly insisted on living in Reston. The association finally admitted him and his family even though the population had reached the planned limit of 75,000.

That is why Reston now has 75,006 inhabitants.

Architecturally, too, Reston marks the beginning of a new era. By midcentury, it had become clear that "modern" architecture had failed. People still applied the International Style to office buildings and their furnishings, but for their private homes they resorted to imitations of past styles, mainly colonial.

The incompatibility of consumer tastes and rational design helped to make industrial production of building components all but impossible. Reston's individually built single-family houses on individually purchased lots are remnants of this esthetic confusion and functional inefficiency.

Critics deplored the lack of effective architectural control at the time they were built in the 1960s. But today historians are grateful that these ugly specimens of suburban "dream houses" have here survived the sium clearance and public distaste that forced their removal elsewhere.

RESTON'S townhouses and Lake Anne Village Center, however, are of more than historic interest. They were the first ones to prove that a truly modern residential architecture can also be popularly appealing.

To do so, Charles M. Goodman's houses still borrow heavily from the early 20th century vernacular of LeCorbusier, both in their cubic forms and stiff, formal sitting. As a group, however, they provide color and variety.

Chloethiel Smith also borrowed from past associations by introducing a touch of cuteness, though a pleasing one. The great strength of her cluster is the way it hugs the hillside and lake not as an imposition but as part of a gently romantic landscape.

Whittlesey and Corklin seem best to have captured the spirit of the times. Their houses are a candid expression of modern living. And this includes man's desire for continuity in his surroundings and for warmth and friendliness.

Though these architects would never resort to faking balustrades, sash windows or fanlights, their row of houses captures the true "feel" and spirit of the Georgian terraces at Bath far better than any of the countless Georgetown phoney built in their time.

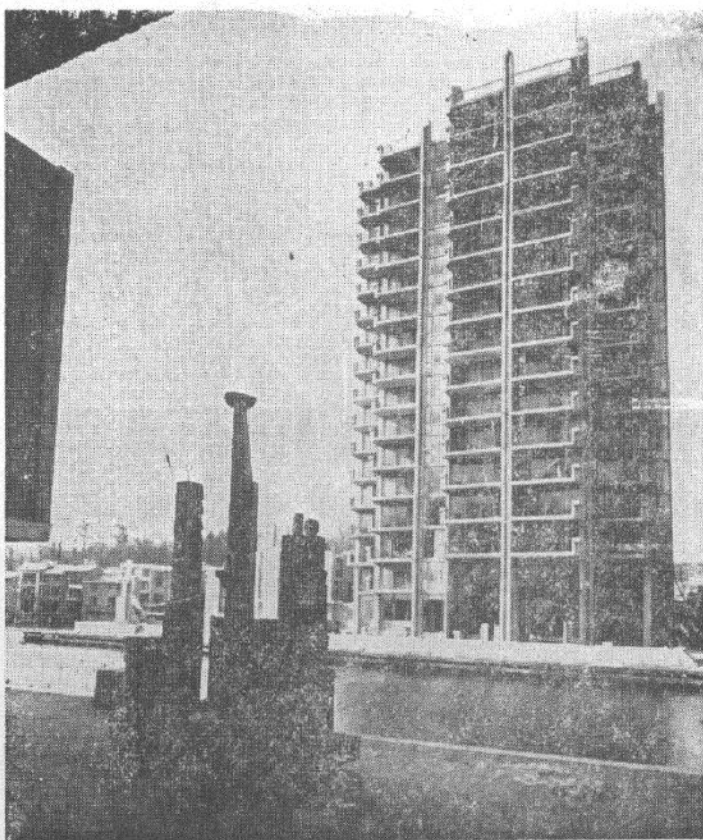
THE FACT that people took to these houses and the community they formed eventually assured big industry that production not of prefabricated houses but of standardized building components

was worth undertaking.

Here was a basic style that industrial production could settle on, much as the automobile industry could settle on the basic form and design of the automobile in the 1930s. As a result, large corporations could now move into the housing field and overcome the rigid and costly separation of independently working architects, building product manufacturers and contractors that made housing so costly and inefficient at the time Lake Anne Village was built.

Once they had tooled up, these housing corporations could rationally design, produce and construct entire communities of great variety in one quarter of the time and at one tenth of the cost in 1965.

As the 20th century draws to a close, Reston seems perhaps a bit quaint and almost oversolicitous in its careful attention to details and cultivated prettiness. But both the town's design and the atmosphere this design has created have not only helped to show us the way to overcome the urban crisis. They have also stood up remarkably well.



By Harry Nalchayan, Staff Photographer

Reston's first village center was "widely regarded (in 1985) as the turning point in the country's urban development and community architecture."



# A salute to the Arts

B4 Sunday, Dec. 5, 1965 THE WASHINGTON POST

## First Village Center Opened by Reston In 'Salute to Arts'

By Leroy F. Aarons  
Washington Post Staff Writer

An unusual mixture of carnival and culture opened the first village center yesterday of the satellite city of Reston, Va.

Even the youngsters, hanging on tightly to multi-colored clown balloons, stood transfixed during a day-long program of ballet, folk dancing, poetry reading and handbell ringing.

The "Salute to the Arts" took place in a gaily colored tent, a small auditorium and the outdoor plaza of Lake Anne Village Center, the first of seven such centers to be completed in Reston.

Not even the chilly weather could dampen the enthusiasm of the audience. The house was packed, no matter where the performers were on stage.

The performers, themselves were undeterred by the chill air. Explained Claudine Kamoun, Paris ballerina dancing with the National Ballet:

"I never played a tent show before, but we are so cold that we can't be nervous." Then she doffed her mink cape to go on stage in a Degas-like ballet costume in the unheated tent.

Besides the National Ballet, there were the Potomac English Handbell Ringers, the Wilkerson Foundation Choir, the Lywen String Quartet and the David Rosenberg Folk Dancers.

And there was Stephen Spender, poetry consultant to the Library of Congress, who held the audience, young and old, in the palm of his hand.

Although he said he hadn't been told he was to read a poem he managed to come up with a volume of his works and leafing through it found "In Attica," a 1950 poem describing the Greek landscape.

"Reston isn't quite an Athens yet," he told the audience, "but a reminder of the landscape of Athens might be a sort of way of putting a blessing on Reston."

Of the concept of Reston itself, the main speaker at yesterday's affair, August Heckscher, director of the Twentieth Century Fund and for-

mer consultant on the arts to President Kennedy, said:

"... We are recapturing here something which the modern world tends to erode and dissipate; the sense of place, the feeling that men's lives exist within a frame which helps give meaning to what they do and plan."

"The world around us becomes increasingly vague, homogenous, baseless and placeless. The older cities sprawl and dribble until it becomes difficult to know where one begins and where the other ends—even more difficult to say where the city gives way to the countryside."

"Modern man, as a result, doesn't really know where he is or where he is going. In the end, he isn't sure who he is." Most important, he added, is "the symbolic fact that in this new city, the human individual is recognized as being—where he should always be—in top place, the king of the walk."

Reston is being built on a wooded tract about 17 miles from Washington in Fairfax County. It is planned as an entity with detached houses, town houses and high rise apartments.

Schools, recreation areas and parks are included in the plans, as are some light industry and government offices. The seven village centers will serve as a focal point for shopping and community life.

Lake Anne Village Center, which opened yesterday, is built around a man-made lake. It has a pier and a plaza, reminding one of St. Mark's Square in Venice, Italy. In the plaza's center stands a stone fountain.

Three of the plaza's sides are bordered by shops with apartments above them. For those who found the fare insufficient at the outdoor chuck wagon near the tent, there was a restaurant in operation yesterday on the plaza.

Also open for business were a dry cleaners, barber shop, hardware store and hair stylist, with a private key club also on the plaza.



One on the Aisle

## Carnegie Hall To Reston, Va.

By Richard L. Coe

IT MIGHT SEEM that Reston's developer, Robert E. Simon Jr. is jumping on the fashionable cultural bandwagon—or might be just fresh from *Changing Times'* current piece on "The Culture Boom." No, Simon's always been with it.

A week from today Virginia's "new town" will be inaugurating the opening of its first village center with a "Salute to the Arts," employing such fancy luminaries as August Heckscher, Stephen Spender and a covey of the area's performing arts groups.

A jaundiced observer might excusably suspect that this is but another play in the currently raging Arts Game, affluence's outgrowth of the old Shell Game.

But in this case, I suspect not. Fortyish, Simon is a scion of the Simon and Schuster publishing firm, for some years was president of Carnegie Hall and keeps up with Upper Culture intrigues by maintaining a Manhattan base while implementing our local City of the Future.

"We will have 1200 residents by January," observes the soft-spoken realtor, "and a city of 75,000 within 20 years. Besides having to plan where to park cars, we are building for special events."

"Lake Anne Village Center, our first of several," he explains, "will have a Thursday night series of special films I've had the pleasure of picking out myself. Our Community Center will be fine for music and its first offering will be one of those opening day events, a 2 o'clock concert by

the Werner Lywen String Quartet. Our Festival tent is heated and our 'Salute to the Arts' will draw some accomplished performers there when we start the day's events next Saturday at 10:20."

Among the attractions: Fredric Franklin, Claudine Kamoun and Ivan Navy of the National Ballet, the Evelyn Davis Dance Playhouse, There Greffe's and Stephan Mucci's McLean Ballet, the Backus Puppets, Dave Rosenberg's Washington Folk Dance Group, the Wilkerson Foundation Choir, the Washington Press Quartet, the Potomac English Handbell Ringers and a slice of "The Boy Friend" by Catholic University's speech and drama dept.

Now poetry consultant of the Library of Congress, Stephen Spender will read from his own works at 3 in the Community Center and, at 4, Heckscher, formerly consultant on the arts to President Kennedy, will be principal speaker at the area's official dedication.



PAS DE TROIS: Ready for the Salute to the Arts program at Reston, Va., next Saturday are (from left) Nancy Miller,

Rory Woodmansee and Maureen McGuire, students at the McLean School of Ballet, one of the participating groups.

# The Evening Star

## A New Village Springs to Life

By DANIEL POOLE  
Star Real Estate Editor

New ideas and the arts often go together. But it isn't every day that it happens in real estate.

At Reston, however, the land planning and community development represent the latest ideas in "new town" construction. And the first village center will be opened tomorrow with a "Salute to the Arts."

Known as Lake Anne Village Center, it is the first of seven similar centers planned at the huge Reston site off Route 7 in Fairfax County.

The new village center is located on the shore of Lake Anne. It contains the J-shaped Washington Plaza shopping center, above which are the Plaza Apartments. Other apartments are in the 15-story Heron House and at Quayside House along the lake's boardwalk.

The shopping center contains a Safeway Store, Lakeside Pharmacy, Mooring Restaurant, Quay Club, community center, Rathskeller, Vienna Trust Co., McLean Youngland and Variety Children's Shop, Jules Hair-stylists, Gudrun Scandinavian Furniture, Cardright, Western and Southern Life Insurance

Co., Gallagher Dry Cleaners, Dyer Brothers Art Suppliers, Tom's Barber Shop, Meenehan's Hardware, the office of attorney Paul Scanlon and a branch of the Fairfax County Library.

The Lake Anne Village Center also has three groups of town houses, an 18-hole golf course, a swimming pool and other recreation facilities. Single-family homes on individual lots also are being built throughout the community.

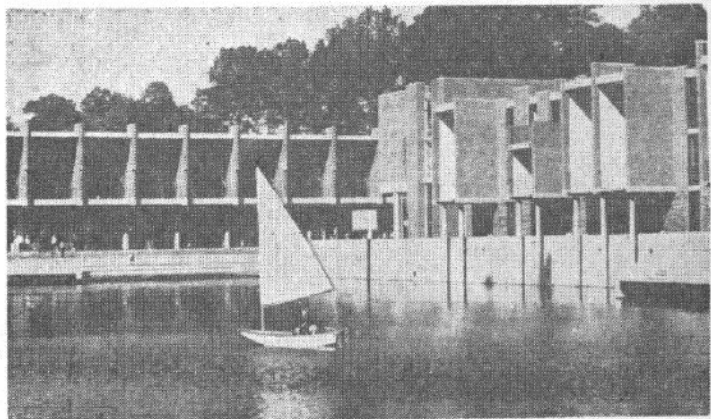
Reston's "Salute to the Arts" will begin at 10 a.m. tomorrow and will conclude at 4 p.m. with the formal dedication. Performances during the day, all of which are free, will be given by the McLean Ballet, Backus Puppets, Dave Rosenberg folk dancers, Wilkerson Foundation Choir, Washington Brass Quartet, Catholic University drama group, Potomac English Handbell Ringers, Evelyn Davis Dance Playhouse, Lywen String Quartet, members of the National Ballet, and a reading by British poet Stephen Spender.

Performances will be held in a festival tent, in the community center and in the lakeside plaza.

Robert E. Simon Jr., developer of Reston and former president of Carnegie Hall in New York City, said of the event:

"This is the first time in my knowledge that a village center has been opened with a tribute to the arts. We are doing this because one of the concepts underlying the

creation of Reston is that its residents should be provided with the opportunity for a good life and the enjoyment of the finer things of life. Moreover, the residents of Reston intend the arts to play a prominent role in community life."



The Lake Anne Village Center contains many town houses located at lakeside. The "new town" has other groups of town houses, as well as single-family homes and a variety of recreation facilities.

The New Washington Plaza shopping center opens tomorrow at Reston as the village center is dedicated.





# Arts Festival Opening Reston Center Attracts 12,000

By JOHN SHERWOOD  
Star Staff Writer

The opening of Reston's first village center, which blossoms in an idyllic, dreamlike setting in Northern Virginia, attracted more than 12,000 visitors yesterday.

At first glance, the new town is a bit awesome in its dramatic promise as a prototype city of the future. Everywhere one turns there's more a feeling of creation than of bulldozers, and August Heckscher, former presidential adviser on the arts, was almost poetic about what he saw laid out before him around a 30-acre lake.

Fittingly, since Reston residents intend the arts to play a prominent role in community life, the dedication of the village in Fairfax County's fox-hunting countryside not only attracted Heckscher but British poet Stephen Spender as well.

## Fitting Ceremonies

Spender, consultant in poetry at the Library of Congress, recited his poetry while Heckscher observed later at the opening of the Lake Anne Village Center. "It seems wonderfully fitting that this opening should be accompanied by the sound of bells and take place amid music, plays and poetry readings."

Speaking at the lakeside plaza under a bright October sky filled with wind, he noted: "The

square where we are gathered, all traffic excluded, the lake penetrating to its heart, the shops and apartments clustered closely round while a little beyond, the strict urban architecture gives way to houses more informally sited... is the epitome of what men and women have conceived as a fit setting for community life."

Heckscher, director of the Twentieth Century Fund, said Lake Anne Village will play its part in the making of the next America; "Something of Reston will carry over into all the experiments in better living which men undertake henceforth."

## Auto Is Domesticated

Here, he added, "the automobile is domesticated and put where it belongs. That is no small thing in itself. But even more important is the symbolic fact that in this new city the human being is recognized as being—where always he should be—in top place, the king of the walk."

An estimated 12,000 persons came and went during a day that brought the modern village to life with a unique "Salute to the Arts" staged in a peppermint-striped festival tent.

The program included the McLean Ballet, the Backus Puppets and Santa Claus, the Dave Rosenberg Folk Dancers who

danced everything from a Polish polka to a Tanko Bushi, the Washington Brass Quartet who serenaded the crowds with "Music for Queen Mary II" while balloons popped, and the Catholic University Drama Group preferring "The Boy Friend" Charleston to the ballet numbers of Paris ballerina Claudine Kamoun and Ivan Nagy, premier danseur of the National Ballet.

Other entertainment included the Potomac English Handbell Ringers, the Evelyn Davis Dance Theater, the Lywen String Quartet and the Wilkerson Foundation Choir.

The developer of the huge site, Robert E. Simon Jr., former president of Carnegie Hall, guided some visitors through the village center that houses a library, shops, a community center, and an outdoor bandstand.

## 6 Other Centers Set

Homes range in price from \$25,000 to \$60,000, with apartments available from \$125 a month to \$280. Six other village centers are planned for Virginia's "new town" which Interior Secretary Stewart Udall has called "the most exciting thing in city development in a generation."

Among the community programs to begin as Reston attempts to fulfill its promise as



August Heckscher, former presidential adviser on the arts (left), strolls through Reston with its developer, Robert E. Simon, Jr.



Couples from the David Rosenberg Folk Dancers of Washington, perform on the bricks of a lakeside plaza at yesterday's opening of

the first of seven planned village centers at Reston.

a city of the future will be the "Lake Anne Center Film Series."

Starting next month, the series will be at 8 p.m. on Thursdays and divided into classics of the English language, foreign language, English language comedy and "Music of the World."

Among the pictures will be "Treasure of the Sierra Madre," "Cry the Beloved Country," "The Bicycle Thief," "Rashomon," "Golden Age of Comedy," "A Night at the Opera," and "The Grand Concert."

Other activities at Reston's Lake Anne Village includes an 18-hole golf course, tennis, swimming, boating and fishing.

# The sound of bells...

Address by **August Heckscher**

Director, The Twentieth Century Fund

At the Opening of the Lake Anne Village Center

Reston, Virginia, December 4, 1965

It seems wonderfully fitting that this opening of the first village center of Reston should be accompanied by the sound of bells and take place amid music, plays and poetry readings. What we have been celebrating today is the beginning of a community. And the true community cannot exist without experiences which give delight to the spirit.

Cities have their beginning in different ways. Some grow up because a juncture of two modes of transportation requires special services and activities. Some grow because they are close to a source of raw materials. But at the heart of all cities there must be a dream; and the crown upon every good city is the practice and enjoyment of the arts.

Reston has had its dream. It was largely the dream of one man—Mr. Robert Simon. But from today on, others weave the dream into the fabric of their lives, making the vision their own and sharing hope for its future. And now, as we see, Reston has as well its crown of music and poetry.

"From harmony, from heavenly harmony, The universal frame began."

If we cannot claim angelic strains as the origin of this little village nestled in the Virginia countryside, we can at least say that its opening day was marked by many pleasurable sights and sounds.

What shall we add about Reston and its meaning for our land and times? Let me say three things very briefly.

First, we see here a brave and deliberate design to create a community out of whole cloth. That is not an easy or a commonplace thing. There is a mystery at the heart of it, and I dare say no one, not even Mr. Simon, is quite sure of all the answers. You take good land, and the power of wealth brought together from diverse sources, and many skills, and toil, and a sense of beauty: you add people, and you sit by hoping that the result will be the marvelously complex and subtle creation of a living organism.

Indeed I hazard the opinion that the miracle of common life is almost as strange as that other miracle which scientists hope one day to achieve—the miracle of individual life wrought in a test tube.

Here, to an extraordinary degree, are the things that should make city life rewarding. This square where we are gathered, all traffic excluded, the lake penetrating to its

heart, the shops and apartments clustered closely around while a little beyond, the strict urban architecture gives way to houses more informally sited; this square with its happy crowding and with the sense of open countryside not too far off—it is the epitome of what men and women have conceived as a fit setting for community life. Will it work? Does it represent in its fulfillment what men and women have really desired?

We can believe today that the miracle has been pulled off—that the stones of this place have in fact become alive. And if our belief proves justified as the months and years go by, the fact will be of immense significance to the country as a whole.

Men to come will build differently, according to different tastes and to the varying demands which land and climate make upon them. Other sparks will light other fires. But this Lake Anne Village will play its part in the making of the next America; something of Reston will carry over into all the experiments in better living which men undertake henceforth.

So the first point I want to make is that we are learning to create new life in new towns. The second is that we are recapturing here something which the modern world tends to erode and dissipate: the sense of pace, the feeling that men's lives exist within a frame which helps give meaning to what they do and plan.

The world around us becomes increasingly vague, homogeneous, faceless and placeless. The older cities sprawl and dribble, until it becomes difficult to know where one begins and where the other ends—even more difficult to say where the city gives way to the countryside. Modern man, as a result, doesn't really know where he is or where he is going. In the end he isn't sure who he is.

And now look about you: Is there any doubt but that this is Reston, that we stand in Lake Anne Village? It is a place with its own character and identity. No man coming here will ever doubt but that he has arrived. That tall building across the way marks the spot, as surely as the church steeple of the New England village told the traveller when he was coming near his destination. As Reston grows, it will keep its scale, its sense of bounds and limits. Within it will be the villages which a child shall call his own, which a man or woman shall know as home.

It is just possible that this feeling for a recognizable place will seem an anachronism in tomorrow's world. Perhaps Los Angeles is the pattern of the future. Perhaps men and women will grow so used to drifting about, their antennae tuned to omnipresent sounds and impulses, that the sense

of something rooted, something fixed and defined, will pass from them. I do not think this will happen. My own belief is that Reston stands for a quality which men will long reaffirm as necessary to the communities they live in.

Finally, I would say that Reston stands for the ascendancy of the human element over the technological. This is a place; it is a place made for men and women—shaped to satisfy their needs and desires. Opportunities for employment will develop here, of course. But "ours is no workaday city merely." It is Pericles speaking about another community, in another age of man. So Reston is not for work only, but for the growth of the human personality in its variety and fullness—through recreation, through the arts, through civic activities, through contact with an unspoiled environment.

Let me give you just one point of contrast between a community made for men and one made to appease the machine. It is the way the automobile is treated. The average community of today is subservient to the automobile; all the vital choices are made in its interest, not the interest of human beings.

The car moves—when it moves at all—at the price of mortal danger to the pedestrian.

The car is parked at the price of tearing holes in the closely woven fabric of urban life—leaving dead spaces where there should be life and trade.

The car is provisioned at the price of creating the eyesore of the contemporary gas station—

And sold at the price of down-grading whole neighborhoods—

And finally disposed of at the hideous cost of making junkyards the very sight of which is enough to crush the spirit.

Here, by contrast, the automobile is domesticated and put where it belongs. That is no small thing in itself. But even more important is the symbolic fact that in this new city the human being is recognized as being—where always he should be—in top place, the king of the walk.

And so I close. The light of this day fades. But Lake Anne Village will have many days: let us hope that for all who come here, and all who live here, they may be good days.