

THE TRIBUNE DEMANDS THAT RECREATION PIERS BE MADE



A RECREATION PIER, NEW YORK CITY

GOING TO SPEND THE DAY ON THE PIER

The whole idea is new to me but it is all the more striking because of that fact. I'm for anything that promises more air, sunshine, and lake pleasures to the people. Off hand, I will say that I agree with The Tribune in the position of asking for the recreation pier feature in conjunction with the building of commercial piers.

I don't know the status of the present negotiations with the Pugh Terminal company for the building of the piers north of the river. But I will say that if the Pugh company gets the concession, let the Pugh company build the recreation annex and build it well. The park boards could not afford the appropriation necessary, but the Lincoln park board, in my opinion, should have sole jurisdiction of the pier annex.

HENRY G. FOREMAN,
President South Park Board.

C HICAGO is considering the building of commercial piers into the lake for the accommodation of its shipping.

At the present time it appears that the proposition made by a great corporation for the building of these piers north of the river will have most favorable consideration at the hands of the harbor commission.

The company asking this concession is in a position to pay for it. It can afford to pay for it.

The Tribune believes that no plan for the building of commercial piers should be considered unless it shall provide for recreation piers such as New York, Boston, and half a dozen other cities have established. How to get this water front feature is more than suggested in the following article.

Recreation Feature City's Necessity.

As a resident of Chicago—man, woman, or child—wouldn't it please you now and then if you could promenade half a mile or more into the lake along the broad, deck of a recreation pier freely as you traverse the gravel walks of a public park?

If this pier were in easy walking distance of some of the most congested sections of the city, or if it were to be reached cheaply by a crosstown line of street cars accepting transfers from every direction, wouldn't you be tempted to spend a dime for the round trip on a hot Saturday afternoon or brilliant Sunday morning early to catch the lake wind, see the shimmering horizons of water in contrast to the sky lines of the city, and hear the splash of the whitecaps running in against the foundation piles below you?

It has occurred to THE SUNDAY TRIBUNE that these questions so quickly will be answered in enthusiastic affirmatives that THE TRIBUNE has anticipated them and has prepared to show conclusively that in the present consideration of plans looking to the building of commercial piers into the harbor the city of Chicago must make a tremendous mistake if it enters into any scheme which does not provide this free recreation feature, which shall be in control of the proper park board.

Boston's Pier Attracts Thousands.

Almost twenty years ago Boston made appropriations for building a distinctly recreation pier a full mile out into the bay and for years students from Cambridge, twelve or fourteen miles away, have been attracted to it in season, while South Boston has swarmed over it in countless thousands.

Eight years ago New York's charter creating Greater New York gave to the commissioner of docks the power

to establish one specific recreation pier "at or near the foot of Perry street on the Hudson river." Wisely, however, the same section provided for such other piers in the Hudson and East rivers as the commissioner "shall deem from time to time necessary for the use of the inhabitants of the city of New York." At the present time New York has eight of these recreation piers, all of them in conjunction with the dockage of vessels carrying merchandise on the rivers and canals.

Contrast some of last summer's pictures of the crowds and vistas of New York and Boston's recreation piers with the pictures of Chicago's crowds making their way out to the rough and tumble surfaces of the harbor breakwater merely to catch a bit of air and sunshine above the water of the lake! Shall any one question that Chicago people will crowd to a recreation pier that promises a walk of half a mile out, invited by an artistic structure which shall present suggestions of walking the deck of a giant steamer at sea?

Private Docks Recreation Failures.

At the present time the Chicago harbor commission is considering a proposition of a big corporation looking to that concern's building three great docks half a mile into the lake just south of Indiana street, north of the river's mouth. The tentative scheme is that, with the city's permission, this company will build these docks at a cost of \$3,000,000 or more, agreeing that at the end of twenty years title to these docks shall be made over to the city. At the present time there is no such dock extending into the lake harbor. There are a hundred miles of private docks lining the banks of the Chicago river, but as beauty spots they are distinct, fetid failures for the most part, to say nothing of private watchmen with clubs. To get to a breakwater a boat is an absolute necessity.

James A. Pugh, president of the Pugh Terminal company, with its huge seven story warehouse, 150 feet wide and 2,350 feet long, at the foot of Illinois street, has made the overtures to the city for permission to build these three docks into the lake. Frontage rights from the river to the north line of Indiana street are asked. The piers are to be 2,500 feet long and 200 feet wide. The width of the slips will be 200 feet also.

This north pier at Indiana street has been designed for the use of passenger boats on the lakes, with two floor levels. On the lower level the cargoes of the lake boats will be loaded and unloaded, while on the upper level, about twenty-five feet above the water, passengers

will embark and disembark. The plans submitted to the harbor commission provide for the Indiana street trolley line's making a loop for the entire length of the pier, enabling a passenger to drop from his car or catch it close to the vessel which he would leave or board.

Questions Bring Forth Varied Answers.

It is this proposition which the city, through the harbor commission, at present is considering. At the present time a breakwater resembling an amputated arm lies at an oblique angle off shore to the far northeast of the proposed pier sites. Already the national government has made an appropriation for closing the shore gap from Huron street, which will leave this breakwater arm a full protection to the harbor from Huron street to the harbor light, one mile out from the shore at its southern end. Into this completed harbor it is proposed to extend the commercial piers of the Pugh terminal company for 2,500 feet, and it is into this harbor that at least one recreation pier should be provided.

But how? Where? In connection with one of these freight piers? Or high up over the passenger level of the north pier, which is to be looped by the tracks of the Indiana street line?

"Make it a beautiful bit of architecture, independent of any commercial dockage of any kind," said President Henry G. Foreman of the south park commission. "The terminal company can afford it."

"But isn't the passenger level of the north pier itself something of a recreative ground?" asked President Pugh of the terminal company. "It will be absolutely free to the public. The street cars will occupy only fourteen of the 200 feet width of the pier. The pier will be roofed its entire length, will be half a mile long, and considerably wider than State street."

"A recreation pier exclusively would cost a good deal of money," said Chairman Ewen of the harbor com-

mission. "The cost would be slight, added to the commercial structure, if the recreation feature were put on a level above the traffic portions of the piers."

Explanation Given to Quotations.

These three quotations from three authorities on three sides of a single question involve the necessity of a little explanation.

President Henry G. Foreman of the south park board isn't going to stand for a commercial pier anywhere between Grant park and Jackson park without a fight. As to a distinctive recreation pier running out from the south shore line, half a mile or more, he doesn't think the park revenues can afford it. But if the city is to enter into an agreement with a corporation to build piers off the Lincoln park commissioners' preserves, Mr. Foreman says make the corporation build something beautiful and lasting.

Chairman John M. Ewen of the harbor commissioners hasn't thought for a moment of the beautifying feature, but he's going to do so. He's more than willing to shoulder it in connection with the proposed deal with the terminal company.

As to President James A. Pugh of the Pugh Terminal company, naturally he would like to satisfy any demand of the city for recreation compensation on as close economic lines as may be possible. That's business. But speaking disinterestedly as a private citizen, Attorney James L. Wilson of Chicago probably has more

AT THE PIER ON A SATURDAY-AFTERNOON. LIFE SAVER IN BACKGROUND

No, the city has not taken any thought so far of recreation features for the lake piers. But it is a good idea. To build them, as in New York, above the freight levels of the piers would make the cost almost immaterial when considered above the cost of the commercial piers themselves.

The Tribune's idea is excellent. It ought to be carried out.

JOHN M. EWEN, Chairman Harbor Commission.

accurate information collected from more sources than any other one man in Chicago. He has been read out in written queries in every direction for opinions on recreation piers, and these, in connection with his experiences on the Marine park recreation in Boston, have convinced him that Chicago ought to have a purely recreation pier—if it can afford it. Other means get it. If it can't get the recreation exclusively, then let it have the recreation annex to a commercial pier.

"No one but myself can know how much the recreation pier meant to me in the years that I was a student at Cambridge," said Mr. Woolson. "Those days, when with a bunch of fellow students I break away for the pier when the vast schools of were running, made a kid of me again. The smell, take bait, but we rigged a series of hooks one another on a line and 'jiggered' for them, catching heads or tails."

"Then there was the long promenade of a mile to the sea. The level of the pier was just above tide, and if you had long legs you might dip your into the water at times. There was the bathing, and the brine. At the far end of the pier is a color roofed over, made of it a stationary ship at sea, in the evenings the band concerts, moonlight, and phosphorescent water."

On the recreation piers of New York, however, got an unfavorable impression in comparison. In the smoke from the steamers tied up at the pier, would be unpleasant. Occasionally a vessel unloads, for instance, would cause you to quicken step. They are far better than no piers at all, however, and if Chicago can do no better by all means let get the combination pier. At the most this conclusion is educative.

It should be no hard problem for the harbor commission to bring the lake nearer to Chicago life, have far too little appreciation of the great body of water just at our doorstep. We have been in-