

THE
FREE VENICE

BEACHHEAD

Number 6, April

1969

FREE TO VENICE RESIDENTS

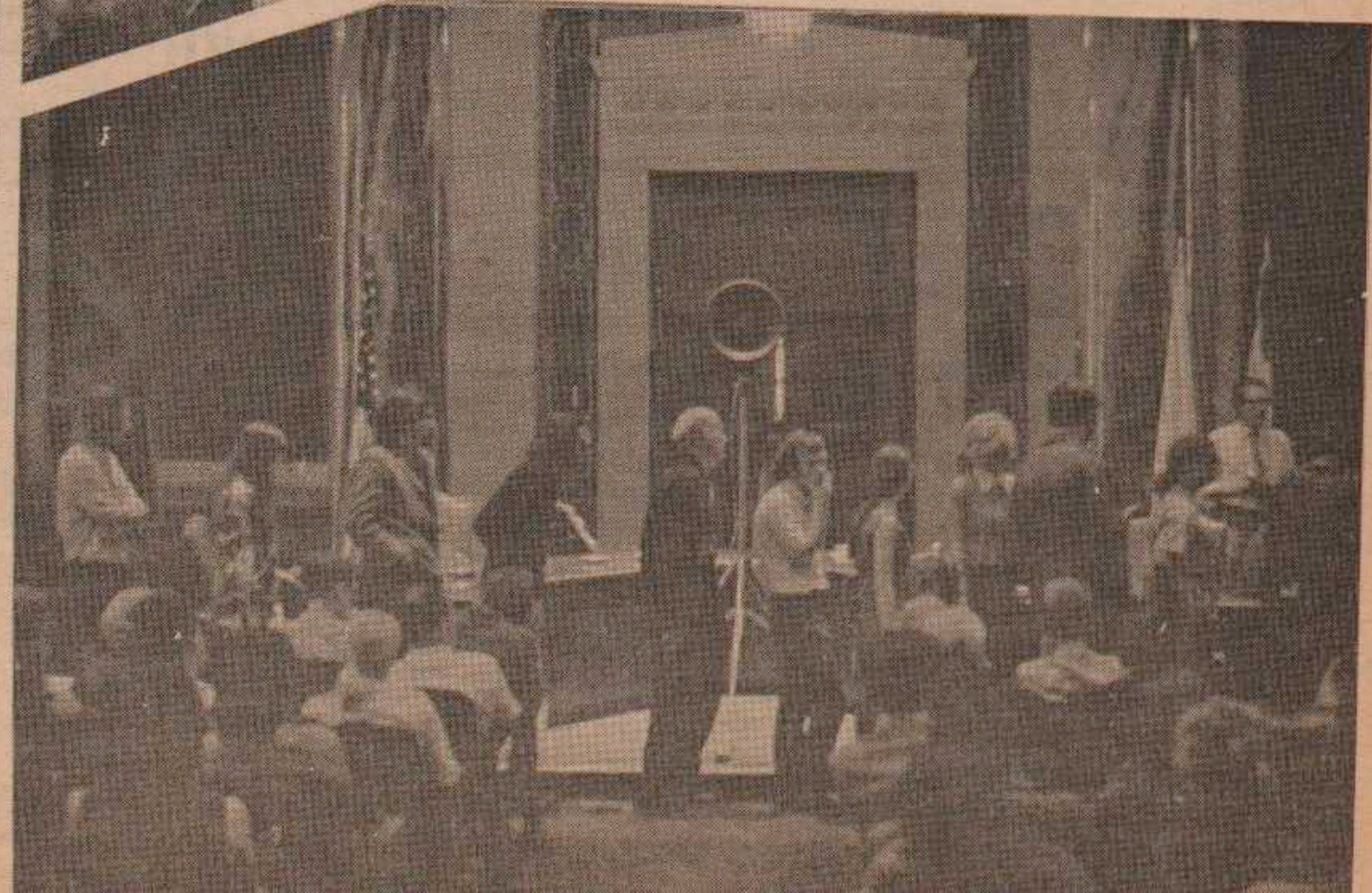
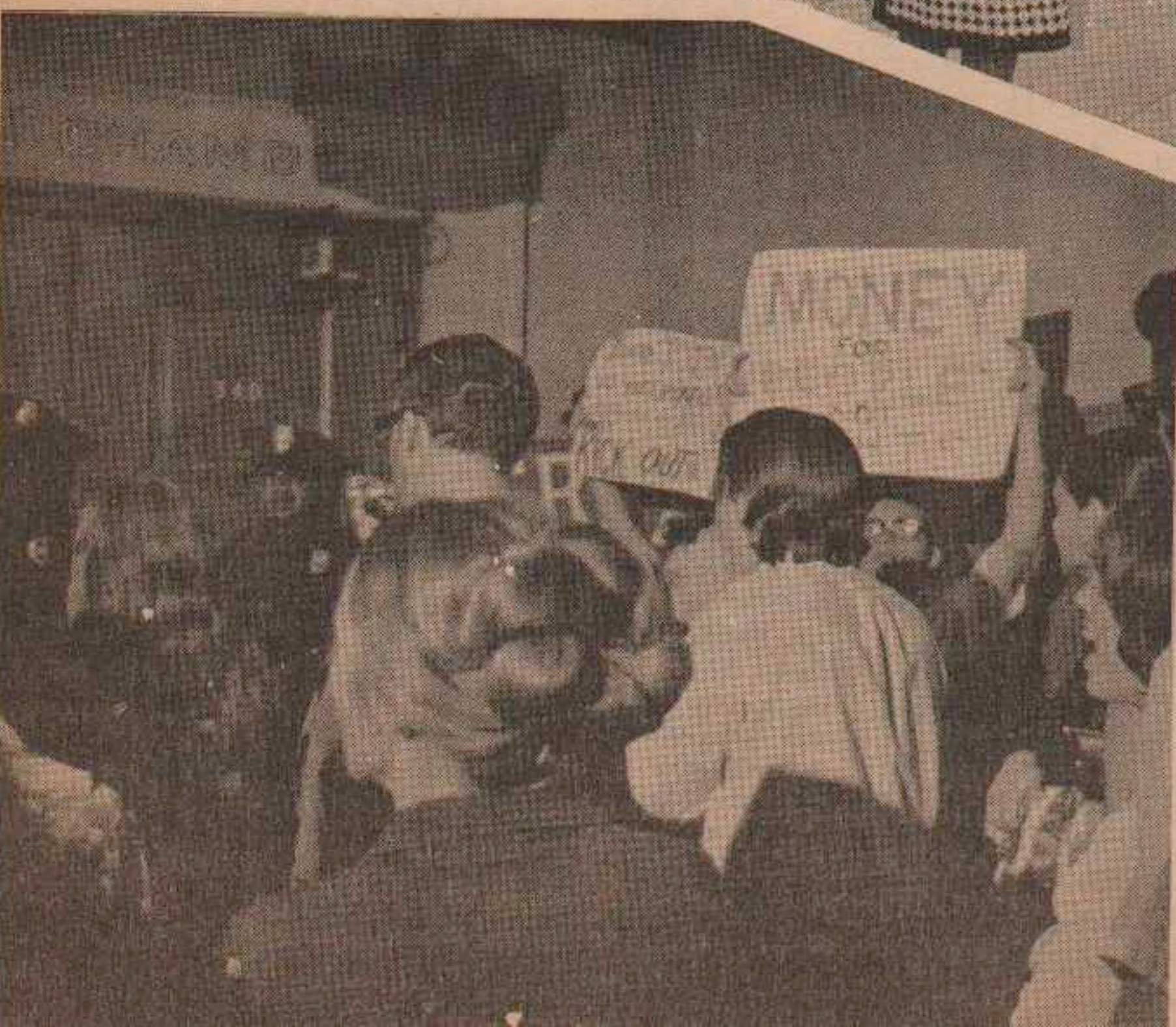
VENICE RESIDENTS CARRY CANAL PROTEST TO L.A. CITY HALL

On March 27, more than 300 Venice homeowners and renters traveled downtown to L.A. City Hall to protest the proposed Canal Assessment District. Photos by NEWSREEL show protesters at the site of the proposed Washington Street bridge over Grand Canal as they prepare to board a borrowed bus. The bus was greeted by vigilers who had arrived at 7:30 a.m. The protesters then displayed their signs before entering City Hall.



Venice residents (below) were locked out of the City Council Chamber (See story on back page).

While listening to City Council over loudspeaker in overflow hall, protesters (below) sign list of those wishing to speak at the April 17 hearing.





THE COURSE OF HUMAN EVENTS

◆ The FREE VENICE Art Festival has moved to a new location under the last remaining colonnade on the Ocean Front Walk at Horizon. The festival is held every Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to sunset. Any artist or craftsman may exhibit without charge. For information call Ken Havens, 396-9161.

The move was caused by Mrs. Eleanor Lally, manager of the Scharff properties in Venice, who erected a "no trespassing" sign on the lot containing the public sculpture by Jim Cayton. The sculpture is designed to involve persons who move through it. It is now a misdemeanor to move through the Venice artist's work, thanks to Mrs. Lally.

The Scharff properties include the Beach House, 1101 Ocean Front Walk, the Beach Comber, 1007 Ocean Front Walk, Casa de la Playa, 901 Ocean Front Walk, Knickerbocker Apartments, 431 Ocean Front Walk and Gondolier Apartments, 24 Avenue 17. Venice residents pay Manager Lally's salary with their rent, but the police enforce her decisions, not ours.

◆ Anna Haag will stand trial on April 21 on a charge of providing live entertainment without a police permit at a private party to benefit BEACHHEAD. Anna is chairman of the FREE VENICE Art Festival Committee and a member of the Venice Health Council board of directors. Witnesses and supporters are urged to attend the trial at 8:30 a.m. in Division 63, 1633 Purdue Ave., West L.A.

◆ A FREE VENICE Legal Committee was formed on March 16 to handle increasing legal work due to the Canal Assessment District, L.A.'s master plan, hostile L.A. police and the expected effort to free Venice from Los Angeles. John Ciampa is coordinator for the committee. Paul Abram, who has handled many cases for the Venice Survival Committee, is in charge of criminal cases. Al Rosen of the Western Center on Law and Poverty is in charge of civil cases. Several other attorneys have offered to work with the committee.

◆ The Venice Health Council will hold a public meeting on Monday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m. in the library of the Broadway School, 1015 Lincoln Blvd. One new member of the Council's board of directors and a new president will be elected to replace members who resigned recently.

◆ After a full investigation of the Broadway School, the L.A. Board of Education followed demands of the Venice Education Cadre and on March 10 resumed the Physical Education and Music classes previously dropped. Cadre, the BEACHHEAD says thanks.

◆ L.A. cops were observed tearing down public notices of the March 27 protest hearing at City Hall. The notices were posted by the Canal Emergency Action Committee, BEACHHEAD FREE VENICE Organizing Committee, Venice Peace and Freedom Party and Venice Survival Committee.

◆ "Damn it, we'd rather do it ourselves" is the theme of a long and sympathetic article called "Venice vs City Planning" in the April 1969 issue of Los Angeles magazine. Get it, by any means necessary.

◆ Neighborhood meetings on Clubhouse, Wavecrest, Ocean Front Walk, Venezia, Park and Thornton have indicated general agreement with the FREE VENICE Organizing Committee's rejection of L.A.'s master plan for the Venice community and with its proposal for an alternate concept in urban planning to produce a plan from the present residents of the Venice community. Also the Venice Community Improvement Union has rejected L.A.'s plan for the Oakwood area. To help with a meeting in your block or neighborhood, call 399-7681 any day between noon and midnight.

◆ The Penmar Neighborhood Association, after a loud and lengthy meeting with representatives of the State Highway Department on April 1, showed its disapproval of the proposed freeway plan. In a straw vote, all but two of about 150 persons present were against any freeway through Venice. Mr. Kurt Simon, one of the two voters for a freeway, is an absentee landowner. Thank you for your concern for our homes, Mr. Simon.

Representatives from the FREE VENICE Organizing Committee reminded the Penmar group that there is no freeway through Beverly Hills and that we, all of us, by working together can keep Venice free of freeways.

◆ NEWSREEL, the Los Angeles branch of the group which has produced the movement's side of such stories as the Chicago Democratic Convention, Yippie Festival of Life and the Black Panther Party, has set up a new headquarters in Venice at 1431 West Washington Blvd. They filmed parts of the Canal Assessment protest at City Hall on March 27 and plan to make a documentary on Free Venice activities. Their phone is 392-8511.

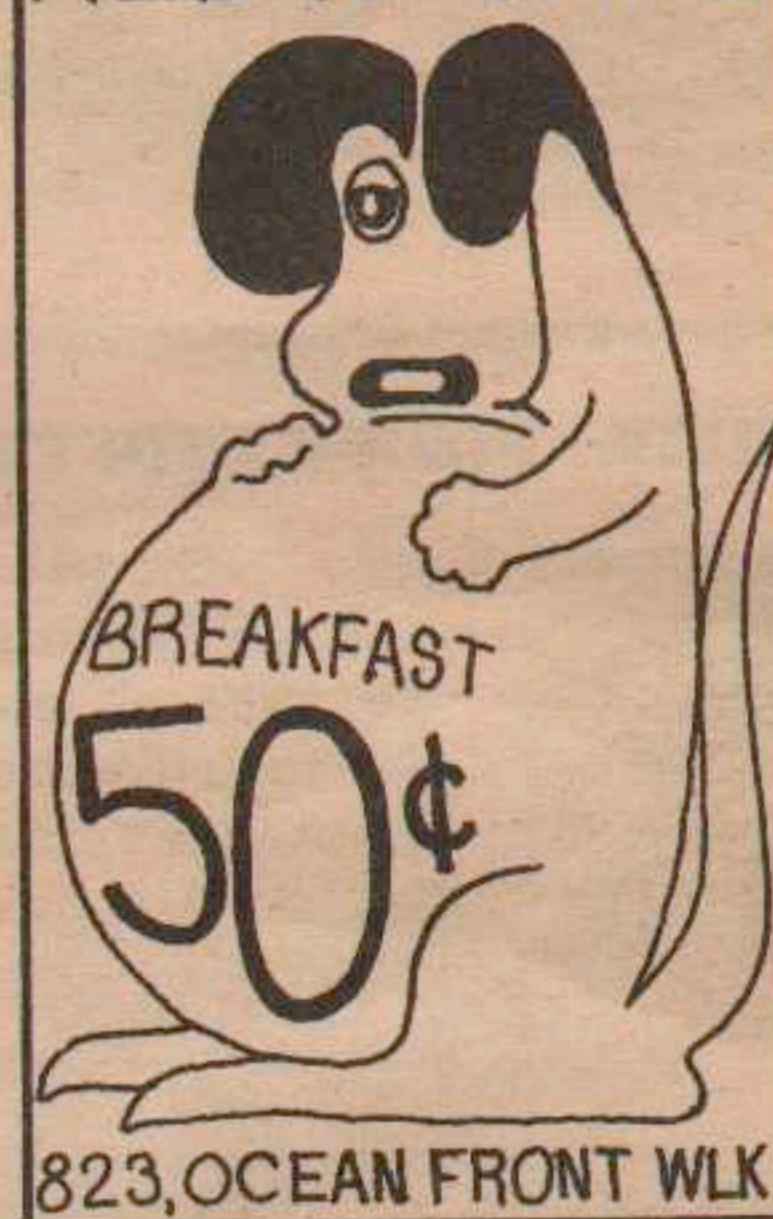
◆ The Venice Film Group, a newly formed filmmakers cooperative, presented a program of short films at the Cinematheque-16 Theater beginning March 20. Half of the 12 movies shown were filmed on locations in Venice. The group, which is open to any interested student or filmmaker, has cutting and screening facilities near Linnie Canal. For information call James Bryan at 392-5644.

◆ At a meeting of the Venice Civic Union on March 25, VCU President Stan Roberts took credit for calling the cops on a party for BEACHHEAD, calling building inspectors in a vain attempt to close the Reredos theater, delaying a poverty grant applied for by the Venice Community Improvement Union in the Oakwood area, and for getting rid of two "bums" from the Venice Health Council. The VCU meets every fourth Tuesday at 8 p.m. at the American Legion Hall, 1500 Main Street.

In and out of Venice



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April 18 - 20:
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radical film dialogues:
mondays 8pm

April 25 - May 4:
Lightnin' Hopkins

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SPONSOR: FRIENDS of the BLACK PANTHERS
SUNDAY APRIL 13 1 PM
TO THE PEOPLE

BEACHHEAD staff for this issue:
Virginia Bohannon, Rick Davidson, Carol Fondiller, Jane Gordon, Anna Haag, John Haag, Ken Havens, John Heller, David Hirschman, Phil Melnick, Bill Olive, Jerry Wells.

MY PROPERTY'S VALUE

(Statement to the L.A. City Planning Commission)

by Helene Wolff

The City's study seems based on the idea that it is desirable that property values go up and that everything else is incidental to that.

I believe that it is not necessary or desirable to many homeowners in Venice. We have bought homes--on lots we consider "just right" not "sub-standard" -- in neighborhoods we consider varied, interesting, challenging, loving, and changing. Varied -- Venice may be unique in the whole world -- neighborhoods that are truly integrated. My block has homeowners and renters, old people and kids, hip and square, young families and middle aged families, married and unmarried, schizophrenics, trouble makers, peace makers, recluses, busybodies, cats, a St. Bernard dog, beautifully kept gardens, unkempt yards, at least one racially mixed couple, a millionaire, welfare recipients -- and many people I don't know. I am speaking of one block. Interesting -- like many streets in my neighborhood, mine is a walk -- you cannot drive on it. We tend to live in the front and back of our houses -- the front is not just a facade. With a variety of people, a variety of things happen and when they happen most neighbors will help, or hinder, or at least watch. Loving -- phone calls: "your car was home -- are you all right -- you are usually at work." "I smell smoke" "where did the fire engines stop" "Bill died -- has his cat been taken in by anyone" "--borrow just one cup of rice" "the battery is dead?take my car" "go ahead, I'll watch the kids" "would you like some coffee? it is so cold" Christmas Day: a young man with a flute stopping by the gate to serenade the cats. Changing -- the average age of the block was 80 when I moved in 6 years ago. Many friends have died. Many new people have moved in -- some for a day or week. It would be lonely and dull without these transient friends..

With Washington Boulevard as a gateway there is a chance of understanding between black and white communities -- a chance for more blacks to move from Oakwood (into other parts of Venice if they want to) and for whites to move into Oakwood (many do). Change Washington's zoning and stop an art renaissance.

Challenging -- challenged to open up Oakwood, challenged to live with people different from ones self -- perhaps difficult people -- old, alcoholic, mean, rebellious -- whatever -- still, people. Challenged to learn from them, challenged to teach them. Venice challenged to decide its own fate -- make its own plan.

"Property value" is relative. You cannot raise my property's value to me -- only lower it. Lower it by forcing my neighborhood to reflect one social or economic or moral or racial strata of society. Lower it by raising its monetary value so that I am forced out by developers. Lower it by buying it to build a freeway or parking lot. Lower it by a freeway as a wall dividing Venice -- or dividing the ocean.

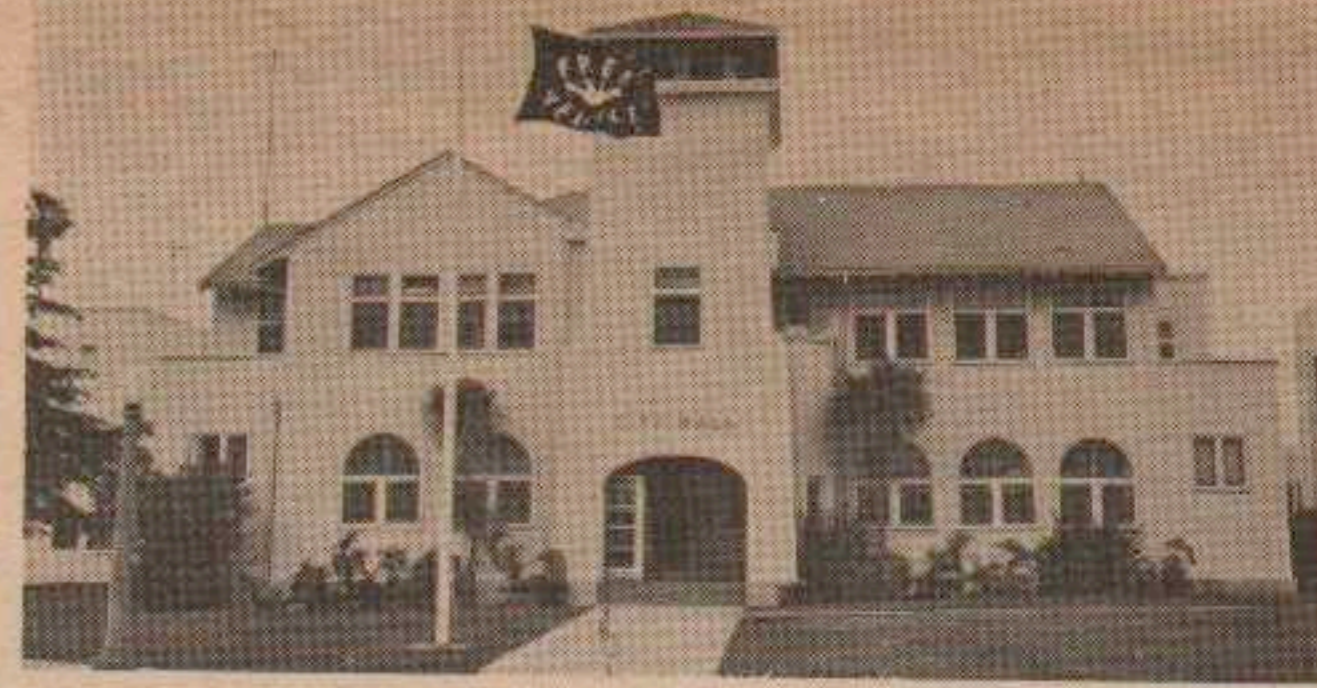
THE PEACE MONGER SAYS

VOTING AGE: The young people of this nation are well equipped to vote; better than most adults. Those who oppose the young voting are being fascists, by taking away one of the greatest rights of this nation -- the right to vote. The age limit should be the young unique age of 15.

IMPROVEMENTS OF SUBURBS: One law could improve all growing suburban areas -- that is, to build all streets underground. If enacted, this law would save a lot of people from car accidents and would give a lot of playing room for children. In addition, it would probably provide more than enough room for urban improvement. Individual underground parking places could double as shelter areas.

You might not agree with the things that we say in this small space but these are truths which must be brought out to the public. If you want to do something about these truths, write to your congressman, stage protests, or do the best thing - join my party.

Ed Luna
Peace Monger Party
399-2992



Despite plans to construct a new police building, at this time there is no plan to demolish Venice's City Hall at 681 Venice Blvd., according to Councilman Braude's office.

(Photo by Phil Melnick)

SCHOOL-DUGGERY

by Carol Fondiller

An estimated 2,000 persons filled Venice High's auditorium on Monday evening, March 14. Robert Bosanko, the school's principal called the meeting to explain the violence and disorder of the previous week which had resulted in 60 suspensions, 16 arrests and 2 students brutally beaten by LAPD officers.

Two plainclothesmen at the door of the auditorium were observed asking black and brown residents if they were parents of Venice High students. It seemed an obvious attempt at screening out potential opposition to Bosanko's viewpoint since the arrested and suspended students were from these minority groups.

The audience was largely white. Many black and brown families had experienced the administration's unwillingness to deal fairly with complaints and explained that they did not want to participate in Bosanko's whitewash job of the incidents. One example of this unfair treatment occurred when a group of parents asked for the reasons behind (and procedure to correct) unfair suspensions of some of their children. Bosanko is reported to have told them that he would attend to first things first: first he'd see about some broken windows, then he'd get around to the suspended students.

Many participants came away from the meeting dissatisfied. They had gone to understand what really happened at Venice High, but felt they heard just one side of the story, the administration's side.

Why didn't Mr. Bosanko want the audience to hear the contents of a letter from Julian Nava presented by a Mexican-American?

Why did Mr. Bosanko dismiss most complaints by labeling them invalid and vague? Why is his judgment more valid than another's?

Why was there an attempt to silence a Chicano student who wanted to explain to the audience an example of unfair treatment (the principal had refused to excuse 3 days of absence which were due to a mistaken arrest warrant)?

Why was it necessary to have police present at this meeting?

Black and brown participants walked out when Bosanko dismissed one questioner by saying he had no intention of settling personal problems at this meeting.

No softening of Bosanko's hard-line approach to the disturbances is in the offing. No attempt was made to involve the dissenting faction in any kind of investigation. The administration prefers to close its eyes and blunder along until the next time -- and there will be a next time.

The Venice Educational Center needs tutors. Volunteers tutor on a one-to-one basis with children experiencing difficulty in school. If you can spare two hours a week and are at least sixteen years old, call Mrs. Delores Frankel at 451-9747 before 3pm or Mrs. Virgie Smith at 399-4276 after 3:30 pm Monday through Thursday.

The Black Sisters of Venice will meet Monday April 14, 7:30 p.m. at 1101 W. Washington Blvd. All sisters who love Venice are invited to attend the meeting which will deal with such issues as housing, welfare, schools, black awareness.

For further information, call Connie Bell at 399-7737.

SAVE OUR CANALS LA City Hall-April 17

PROTEST HIGHER RENTS,
HIGHER TAXES, CONDEMNATION
OF HOMES, LOSS OF CANALS!

PROTEST ILLEGAL TREAT-
MENT OF VENICE RESIDENTS AT
LAST HEARING - DEMAND YOUR
RIGHT TO BE HEARD!

LA City Hall- April 17

We will have a bus. For details call
399-7681.

SAVE OUR CANALS

City Hall Lock-Out!

by John Haag

On Thursday, March 27, more than 300 Venice homeowners and renters were deliberately locked out of a meeting of the Los Angeles City Council. City officials collaborated with land speculators to pack the Council Chamber before the scheduled meeting time at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was an official protest hearing to consider objections to the Venice Canal Assessment District, but the Council Chamber was filled with property owners favorable to the canal scheme, many of whom are not and never have been residents of Venice. Only four homeowners opposing the project managed to get in; others ended up in a separate hall where the Council proceedings could be heard over a loudspeaker.

By law, any meeting of the City Council is open to the public. The discriminatory admission of persons to the March 27 hearing was an illegal act performed by security guards and L.A. police on instruction of city officials. When challenged, guards explained that they were just following orders.

Besides homeowners in the canal area, many renters went to City Hall to protest use of public funds to support a project that would force them out of the community and raise rents and taxes throughout Venice. (Renters, after all, pay their landlords' taxes. When taxes go up, so do rents.) They hoped to present an alternative proposal to rebuild the existing canals without the proposed Washington Street bridge over Grand Canal and other "improvements" to be paid for by city taxes.

No renter was allowed into the hearing. Their attorney, Al Rosen of the Western Center on Law and Poverty and the FREE VENICE Legal Committee, was not allowed to complete his statement. Other attorneys from the FREE VENICE Legal Committee were excluded from the hearing.

Because there were more protesting homeowners than could be heard on the 27th, the hearing was postponed three weeks until April 17. The Canal Emergency Action Committee, BEACHHEAD, the FREE VENICE Organizing Committee, Venice Peace and Freedom Party and Venice Survival Committee are urging all Venice residents, renters and homeowners to attend the April 17 hearing.

Legal steps are being taken to insure that the meeting will be open to the public as required by law. Political pressure is being applied to increase the number of City Councilmen in favor of letting non-property owners speak. On March 27 only Councilmen Bradley, Braude and Edelman were in favor.

Besides the right of Venice residents to remain in our chosen community and our desire to keep Venice a low-to-medium income area, also at stake now is the right of any citizen to speak on matters of public interest and to participate in discussion of questions that directly affect his life.

All renters in Venice will be affected by higher rents. All homeowners will be affected by higher taxes. All residents will be affected by making a millionaires' colony out of the existing canals, and by having to pay taxes for a development which will be closed to public use.

This is a fight for all of us. You can help by calling or writing your City Councilman at City Hall, 200 N. Spring St., by planning to attend the April 17 hearing at City Hall, encouraging others to join us and by joining in the court actions to be taken if the assessment district is passed.

For information call 399-7681.

VENICE & THE MASTER'S PLAN

RICK DAVIDSON

Since beginning this series, the question I hear most is, "Why are you against the Proposed Venice Plan?" My answer: I'm against Venice being planned by non-Venice residents - especially since they and their plans fail to reflect the Spirit of Venice. While they do reflect the desires of some property owners -- many of whom are absentee landlords - they do not reflect the Venice I have known the past eight years. If forced to label the Spirit of Venice, I would call it a Spirit of Anarchy. I mean this in a positive and beautiful sense. Venice people for the most part live their lives and are willing to let others, whom they may or may not agree with, live theirs. Having no written rules, individuals and groups sometimes bump into one another....step on one another's toes. At such times tempers fly, words run out of order, tension builds accordingly, but the Spirit of Venice blows in from the sea, cooling the Venice soul -- perhaps not completely, but sufficiently so that anarchy is allowed to continue. Yes, I'm an anarchist....one that knows that for anarchy to be positive and beautiful, man must be responsible....responsible from within, not due to external laws, rules, regulations or what have you.

But back to non-Venice residents planning someone else's community.

A good example of why this approach is ill-conceived can be seen when looking at the proposed zone change for West Washington Blvd. Part of this commercial area is to be re-zoned residential. Anyone who has wandered along West Washington this past year has enjoyed the activity. That's where the action is. It's a great happening (even the L. A. TIMES has to admit it). Yet, our planners from Downtown L.A. consider it a dead or dying area; therefore: re-zone it. NO! Let's bring our plans home. We can do better than regulated bureaucrats who only relate to Venice through lines on maps where "funny looking people run around doing funny things."

Can the concept of community design fit into the overall plan for a city such as L. A. or even more, fit into the needed coordination for the Megalopolis that extends from Santa Barbara to San Diego? It's the only way. I see it working something like this: the Southern California area being continually planned by a board of local planners (each representing a local community). When the board decides that such and such should happen to such and such community, a freeway for example, then the local representative goes to his community, explains the problems and reasons, and asks for their O.K. If they say NO, then the bargaining begins....maybe such and such will give in if this and that community gives in on something else (airport, harbor, etc.). And so it begins a give and take between equals.

Is that a little too democratic?

SHOWDOWN

REJECT Los Angeles' MASTER PLAN TO DESTROY OUR COMMUNITY BLOCK BY BLOCK LA CITY HALL, ROOM 561-A MAY 8 - 9 AM

What's in it for You?

by Jerry Brown

Many Venice residents do not seem to feel much threat from the Master Plan. They know that a freeway is being proposed, but generally that doesn't seem to affect them directly. I want to make it clear that the Planning Commission desires nothing less than the complete re-vamping of our community to meet their criteria, that is, to absorb Venice into the middle-class suburban cancer which Los Angeles is spreading all over Southern California. Virtually every person now living here will have his existence drastically altered if the plan goes through.

Do you live near the beach? Don't plan on staying there. All of Ocean Front Walk north of Venice Blvd. is going to become parking lots except those areas in commercial use. In addition they want to build more parking lots on the beach itself at Brooks and Westminster. They are also going to continue their program of "landscaping" the beach. That's not all. They plan commercial centers at Rose and Brooks and expansion of the Windward area into a tourist oriented mall. Finally, if you're ready, they will rezone the strip east of Ocean Front Walk to Main and Strong's Drive to "high density residential" -- translation: High rise, i.e., Santa Monica Shores. In the central portion this zoning extends as far east as West Washington Blvd. Pacific Ave. is slated to be widened to "divided major highway standards," about twice its present width. Where will you move to when all this comes about? There won't be room in the rest of Venice either. Don't plan on Oakwood. When they rezone it down to "low-medium density" there will be a freeze on all housing construction except for one or two family dwellings. This will eliminate new low cost housing and serve to force up rents on remaining units. At least you will have company on the street. Venice Blvd. and Washington St. east of Washington Blvd. will go to high density, more high rise. By now you know their plans for the canals, more low medium density and more friends homeless. And where will our senior citizens go when rents and taxes all over Venice soar with the buildings? Those of you living east of Lincoln are in trouble too. That area seems to be in the way of the most likely freeway route, "the only interruption to this neighborhood's continuity!" Since they haven't settled on a final route, no one in the area can feel any certainty of his future in Venice. Had enough? They haven't. Not content with uprooting most of our residents, they also want to destroy our business complexion. In addition to those commercial areas already mentioned, they want to expand the Lincoln Blvd. strip and the area at the end of Washington St. With a couple of exceptions the industrial area between Main and Fourth will be completely removed only to reappear south of Venice Blvd. The commercial strip along West Washington Blvd. is "having a blighting influence on the adjoining neighborhoods," so this street of groovy shops and intimate places is being completely restructured. The north end will be high rise and the rest will become a commercial manufacturing zone.

Have I touched you yet? If none of these changes physically involves you, remember that Venice will no longer be a low to medium income community. Rents, taxes and prices will go sky-high. If you can afford it, you're lucky, but most of your friends and neighbors can't. We'll hate to leave