

BY PAUL DORPAT



COURTESY OF WARREN WING

Three riders risk the curbside traffic at Fremont Avenue and 34th Street — the van on the left is not parked — while waiting to board Car 569 of the Phinney Line, most likely for a ride downtown.

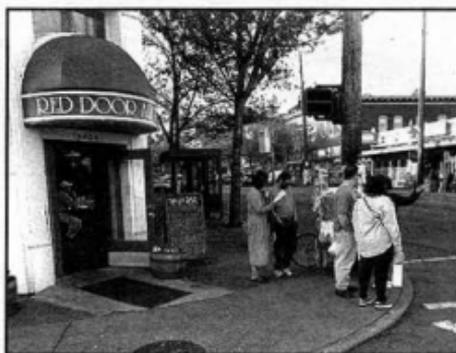
Fremont, spring 1940

THIS VIEW NORTH on Fremont Avenue from its intersection with 34th Street was photographed on Tuesday afternoon, April 2, 1940. It is another image that trolley motorman James Lee recorded of neighborhood streetcars in the last months of their operation. Gas-powered buses already were in operation on some routes close to downtown; by the end of the month, trackless trolleys would join in the revolution to replace streetcars.

Car 569, however, had a reprieve still of one year and three days. Phinney Line 21 was the next-to-last rail service to be shut down and torn up. On April 5, 1941, the last car made its last turn on the track showing here in the lower right corner, for the final leg west to the old Fremont Car Barn. Built in St. Louis in 1898 or 1899, it would soon be scrapped in Georgetown.

Losing the stimulant of commuters to the Aurora Bridge in 1932 and its lumber mill the same year, Fremont was hit especially hard by the Great Depression of the 1930s. In 1941, there were seven vacancies among the 31 addresses listed in this block between 34th and 35th streets. Among the open businesses were three candy shops, three taverns, a paint and hardware store, a grocer, a drugstore (at the far corner behind the trolley) and the second-floor clubhouse (above the streetcar's roofline) for The Fraternal Brotherhood.

In spite of the recent nearby developments by Fremont's new money, all of these



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In the intervening 60 years, the architecture along Fremont's main business block has changed little, suggesting the eternity of a neighborhood that claims to be "the center of the universe."

1940 rooflines are still familiar, including the slice of the Fremont Baptist church, the highest structure in the scene.

The "now" scene has been widened to include the landmark Red Door Alehouse at the northwest corner of the intersection. On the same corner in 1940 are a bubbling fountain beside a trash can signed "Your Streets are Washed Regularly / Help Beautify Your City by Keeping Them Clean." **P**

Paul Dorpat's two-hour videotape on Seattle's early history, "Seattle Chronicle," is \$29.95 from Tartu Publications, P.O. Box 85208, Seattle, WA 98145.

TURNER NOT LEE