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Journal



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URBANISMS

A regular column by our specialist on urban affairs, Matthew Rockwell, Director of Urban Programs

See Dulles Before Its Too Late

We got to Dulles International Airport a little later than the other critics but when we did there was no doubt that they had all been right—it is tremendous, by every measure and nothing further needs to be said about it as architecture. A word or two about that less obvious area of architecture called, by those who can pronounce it, "environmentalism," might still be in order. (There may be those who will say now, is this a reasonable "urbanism"? We hold that any habitable feature—or collection of them—qualifies here.)

Two aspects trouble us about Dulles. The first concerns the effect which it will have on its neighbors. The second which is largely philosophical, relates to the distance factor which separates airports from their market source.

When one first sees Dulles from the end of its twenty-seven-mile umbilical cord, he is conscious of a slightly more than perfect setting. This conscious awareness of setting never leaves the visitor. Whether he is looking inward upon the Saarinen-made site plan, which handles the various circulatory problems with true sophistication, or whether he looks outward upon natural features, the setting—the environment—is omnipotent. It will be some years before the young plant material acquires the maturity of the low Virginia hills to the west, or the artificial lake loses its self-consciousness. But by the time this column is read it will be perfectly possible for a multitude of man-made improvements to intrude upon this perfectness—possibly the only condition which exists in the country today in such a primeval form.

It may be a race between motels and light manufacturing or between the oil and the homebuilding industries. Whether a race or not, there will be strong pressures on the county supervisors to rezone this former country home area to more profitable—excuse us, we mean of course, more compatible uses of land. It is easy to understand the position of the casual county supervisor who happens to sell real estate, travel tours and income tax services when he is confronted with the well-oiled jargon of the advance agents. The FAA, which operates Dulles, long ago showed considerable enlightenment when it interceded with the county supervisor to establish reasonable transitional zones about its property. Every airport authority or commission in the country not only needs support in this or similar actions, but also the creative help of architects to suggest alternate methods to hold the line. Whispers are heard—the research laboratory we know which refused a superb airport-side location because of both noise and vibration; the subdivider we know who actually refused to build on minimum lot sizes adjacent to an airport because he believed *less* rather than *more* densely populated areas should border aircraft centers. Brave man! In any case we suggest you see the Saarinen masterpiece in its pristine state.

As to the second point, next week we fly by jet from Dulles to St Louis, portal-to-portal in 255 minutes, of which 125 are non-flying time. By then we will have "done" it, used the mobile lounge, etc. The next time we think we'll return to Washington National and use the prop-jet. Total time: 237 minutes, with only 90 on the ground. We suggest that our site-selection procedures are something less than perfect—or at least that portion of them which are open to "influence." Moral: Air-minded architects should use their own influence to explain that airports are just another urban land-use which needs inclusion *within* the city. And be sure to explain just how *that* can be accomplished! (By planning, of course.)

Collaborative Design

Last August we reported our attendance at a meeting entitled "Freeways in the Urban Setting." In October the *Journal* published selected papers presented at the Hershey sessions. The recommendations of the conference (copies available at the Octagon) were published separately by the Automotive Safety Conference; they are significant enough to give the following excerpts:

- There is a fundamental need for teamwork in freeway planning and design. This means teamwork during the preliminary planning phase between the state highway departments responsible for the planning and development of highways and the municipal agencies responsible for the planning and development of the city. It also means teamwork during the design phase among highway engineers, architects, city planners, landscape architects and other specialists.

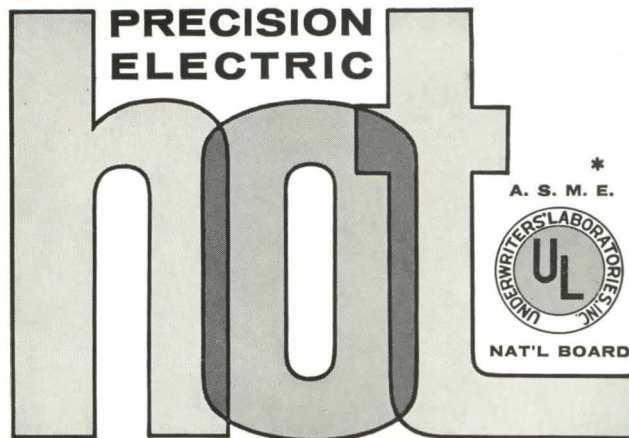
- Effective participation in design by these professions means participation from the very beginning when the first choice as to location, roadway alignments, right-of-way cross sections and structures are being studied.

- In the total concept of urban freeway design, basic principles which must be considered, separately and in relation to one another, include: those pertaining to the amenities which the well-designed freeway offers to its users and to the residents of the areas it traverses, and those pertaining to social and economic community values. Attractive freeways cannot be achieved through superficial treatment; they result from integration of geometric with broad-scale planning and design.

- The number of people who have talent and experience to cope adequately with those problems is limited. Educational and in-service training programs are needed to develop the required personnel.

- The urban center, now the most common habitat of the American people, is a mass of complex and little understood relationships among people, among functions and among parts of the city. Both the urban highway program and city planning today are hindered by imperfect and incomplete knowledge of the desires and needs of the families and individuals who live in cities and of the mechanics of the functioning of the urban complexes. The needs for research extend into the human and social sciences. Larger and more intensive programs of research into all aspects of urban design and urban living are needed.

- The necessity for compromise among conflicting philosophies and design objectives often must be recognized in urban and freeway design. ◀



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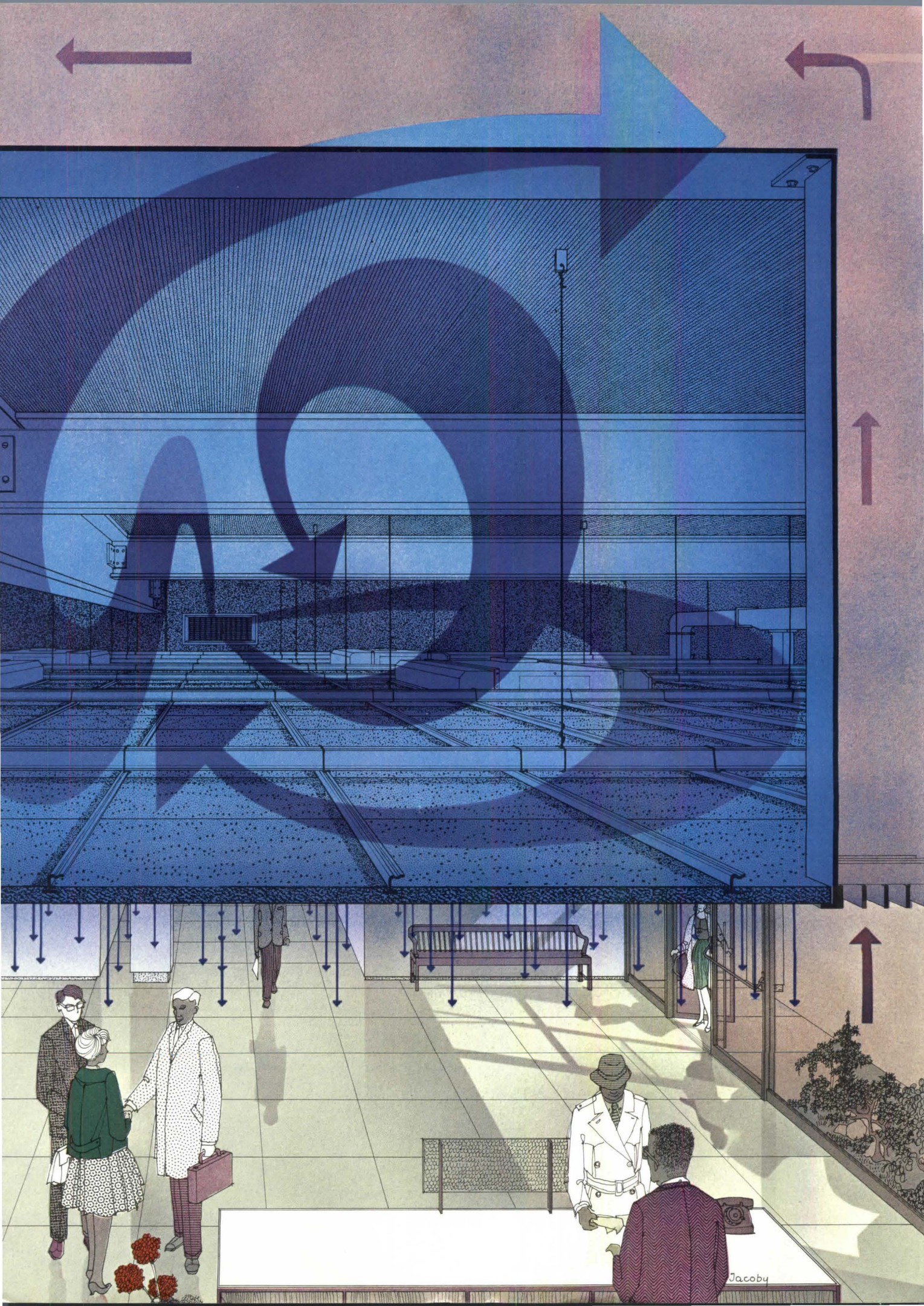
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Letters

Whither Urban Renewal?

EDITOR, *Journal of the AIA*:

Matt Rockwell's "Urbanisms" column focuses needed attention on rehabilitation, a vital aspect of urban renewal. Some passages of the column may have led to misunderstanding. This job is so crucial, harm may result if these are not clarified.

Administrative revisions of urban renewal processes have led to provision for certain architectural advice and service as a step in rehabilitation. Incidentally, this is not part of Section 221 of the Housing Act; that title refers to a special mortgage insurance program administered by FHA to serve relocation and other special housing needs.

The Urban Renewal Administration may not, and does not, advocate the "Georgetown treatment." Matters of architectural style are a local concern.

The column reflects an emphasis on "doorways and shutters," an emphasis which has troubled some rehabilitation efforts. Our concern is to mobilize design attention at the neighborhood scale. Here the battle against blight is to be won.

The AIA can contribute much in leadership and large-scale design thinking in the conservation of declining areas and the preservation of useful older districts. We welcome your help.

WILLIAM L. SLAYTON
Urban Renewal Commissioner
Washington, DC

Another Visit to the Bauhaus

EDITOR, *Journal of the AIA*:

Recently some statements on the Bauhaus, Germany, have been reprinted in your *Journal*. These statements—by omitting decisive facts—end up in misconceptions which need clarification.

Sufficiently detached today from the drama of the Bauhaus, which I have initiated in 1919 and which I have left in 1928, I wish to state—sine ira et studio—what in my own conception has been historically the new contribution of the Bauhaus in the field of education.

The most direct way to do this is to compare the Bauhaus method of education with that of two so venerable masters as van de Velde in Weimar and Frank Lloyd Wright in this country. Both men had before me the idea of the unification of the arts. How did they try to reach this goal? Van de Velde, ingenious, inventive artist of world renown and full of stimulating enthusiasm, followed his conception that a unity of the arts could be achieved by disseminating his own personal vocabulary of form, his "line" as he called it. He considered his school in Weimar to be the proper instrument with which to consolidate his own form pattern into a "style."¹ Almost without exception, the work of his students shows the personal form character of the master.

In order to underline the educational importance of an *objective* method as built up in the Bauhaus in

contrast to the subjective one of van de Velde, I should like to give a second example of the results of an autocratically-run architectural school of fame. Last year I visited Frank Lloyd Wright's school in Taliesin which his widow valiantly carries on after his death. I saw the work of several scores of students turning out without exception designs in the vocabulary of their great master. No independent approach could be found. This experience assured me again that such a method of education cannot be called creative, for it invites imitation and results in training assistants, not independent artists in their own right. Surely the contact of the student with a great radiating artistic personality like Frank Lloyd Wright or van de Velde is, of course, an invaluable and unforgettable human experience, but here I try to compare educational *methods* and *goals* which must not be confounded with the artistic potency of the teacher. A great artist is not off-hand a great educator.

The assertion has been made that the Bauhaus has followed the philosophy and pedagogy of van de Velde. In fact it has established its educational principles in clear and conscious opposition to van de Velde's method.

When I started the Bauhaus as its responsible Director, I had come to the conclusion that an autocratic, subjective approach must block the innate budding expression of differently-gifted students, as the teacher—even with the best intention—imposes the results of his own thought and work on him. I have convinced myself that a good teacher must abstain from handing out his personal vocabulary to his student, but rather let him find his own way even via detours; that he should encourage the growth of independence in the student and vigorously destroy his imitative reactions, or at least make him aware that he tries to harvest on foreign soil. I succeeded in convincing great artists like Kandinsky, Klee, Feininger, Moholy-Nagy, etc, that altogether we should humbly try to find a supraindividual *objective* method, a teachable common denominator for all which would be conducive to creative work. We scoffed at the arrogant idea of establishing a "style." As a basis for the creative process, we tried to study objectively natural phenomena, observing psychological and biological facts, laying the foundation, so to speak, for a science of design and experimenting with the facts we had collected. This approach we found gave an organic and *unifying* background to all our activities. Personal expression thus became, in each individual creative process, related to the same principles recognized by all, while imitative attempts were taboo.

Accordingly, handicraft in the workshops was, right from the start, not an end in itself, but laboratory experiment preparatory to industrial production. If the initial products of the Bauhaus looked like individual craft products, this was a necessary detour for the groping student whom we avoided to prod with a foregone conclusion.²

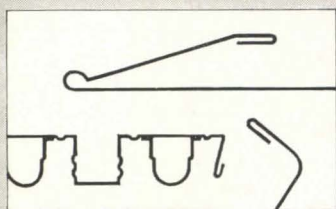
¹ I should like to draw attention to a large documentary publication—recently published—which may become the standard book on the Bauhaus. Its author, Hans M. Wingler, Director of the Bauhaus-Archiv in Darmstadt, Germany, has collected the material in years of careful scholarly work covering 1919 to 1933. The title is "Das Bauhaus, 1919-1933 Weimar Dessau Berlin," Verlag Gebr. Rasch & Co. und M. DuMont Schauberg, 556 pp, 10 colored plates, 650 black and white illustrations plus 102 illustrations in the text. An English edition is planned.

² See his recently-published biography "Geschichte meines Lebens," R. Piper und Co., München.

(Continued on page 12)



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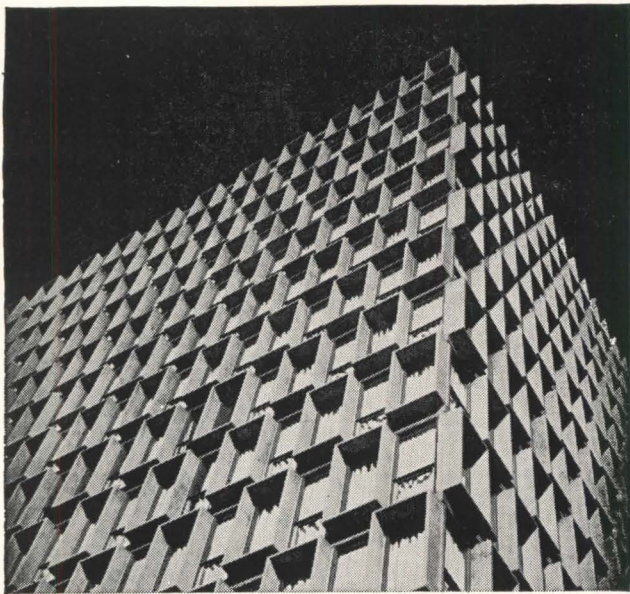


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Since the educational method is as important as the personality of the teacher—a fact which is too little recognized today—I have tried here precisely to outline the different educational aspects and attitudes at stake. Though an objective method—as the one followed in the Bauhaus—has to take a much longer, thornier road than the autocratic one, it protects us against imitation and conformity, it preserves the uniqueness of the creative individual and, simultaneously, the spiritual coherence of the age.

This kind of education we had until now reserved for the artist, but, if we cannot give it to everybody, the gulf between him and the people will remain unbridged. If we congratulate ourselves today on the strides that have been made in releasing the young artist from the bondage in which he was formerly held by having to follow the methods and recipes of his teacher, we must realize that the greater part of the task is still before us: namely, to give to the average young person, right from the beginning of his schooling, a visual training based on objective principles, ie, on the laws of nature and the psychology of man.

Standing on such a sound foundation, the gifted individual will find his personal interpretation, but artists and public alike must start out from the same premises of universal validity; only then will creativity of the maker find the response of the user.

WALTER GROPIUS FAIA
Cambridge, Mass

The "Dilemma" (Cont'd)

EDITOR, *Journal of the AIA*:

I read with alarm Henry Hope Reed's meandering dialectic in the August *Journal*, for the very matter-of-fact placement of it in your distinguished pages gives it an aura of respectability, of official recognition of the "loyal opposition."

A loyal opposition is most necessary in architecture, fully as much as in politics. But this article, although containing in detail phrases and ideas most tempting, is, in the aggregate, rambling, illogical and dangerous as a polemic against something Mr Reed does not understand.

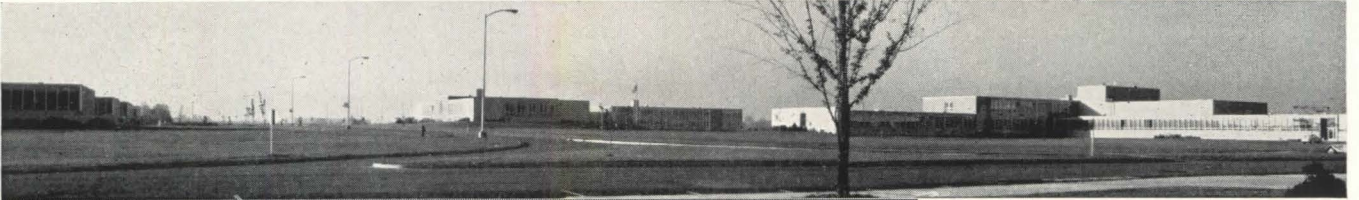
Comparisons with the parallel arts (poetry, fiction, painting, ballet) are used only when this comparison can sustain the dialectic; but the relationship to the problems of architecture of these supposed weaknesses in these respective disciplines remains vague and without substance. In such a category fall the remarks about Jerome Robbins' ballet, "Moves."

Further still, the implication that true modern or "abstract" art is created by undisciplined men, is false: a Picasso or a Pollack is equally as disciplined and skilled a draughtsman as a Piranesi. And the same case can be made for equivalent sculptors, musicians, poets and architects. It is rather the *creative choice* which has brought them beyond the mere technical virtuosity of draughtsmanship and given rise to the abstractions of our time. Don't misunderstand me—much or even most of today's "art" production is shallow, opportunistic and stylish (and

(Continued on p. 14)

ENGINEERED BEAUTY and PERMANENCE

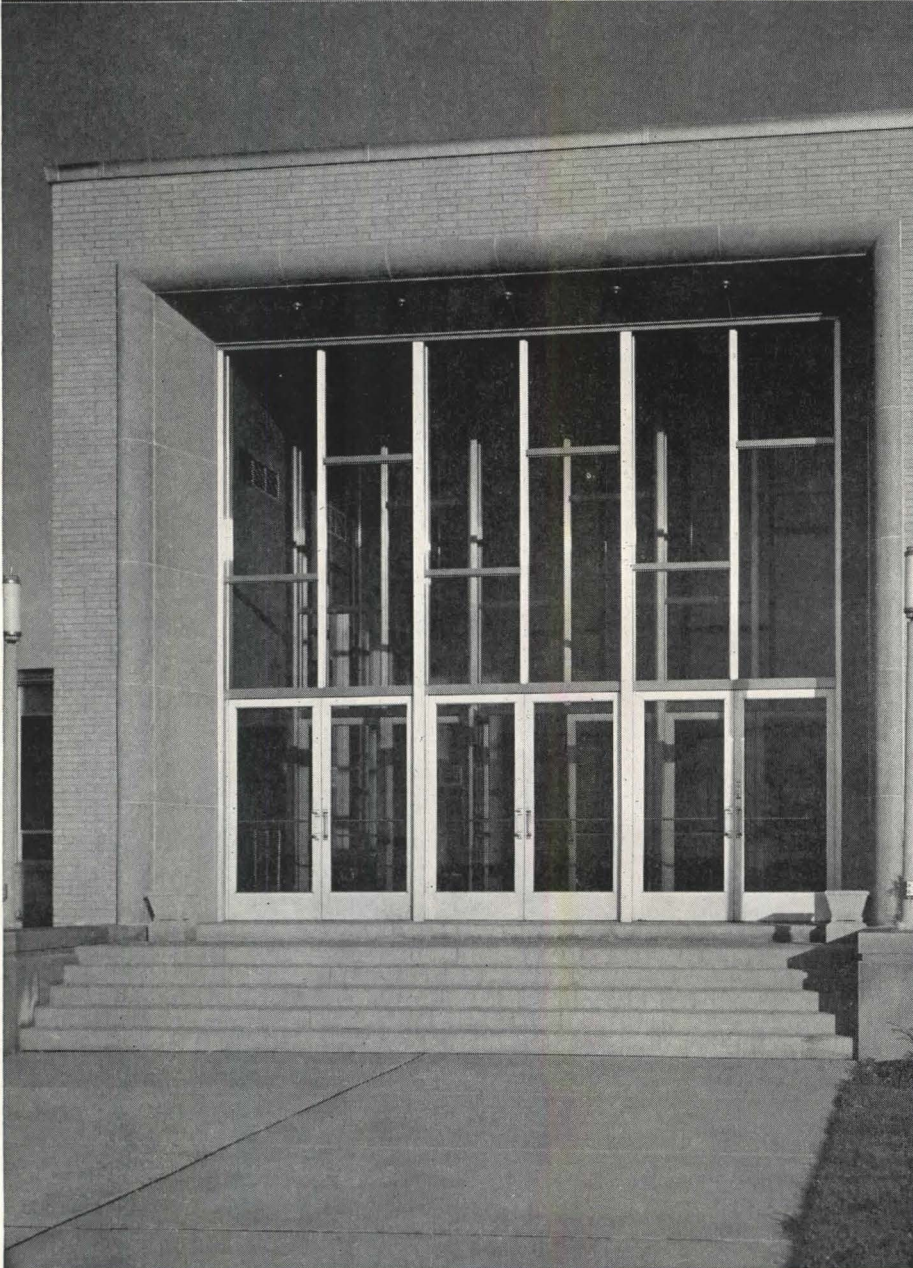
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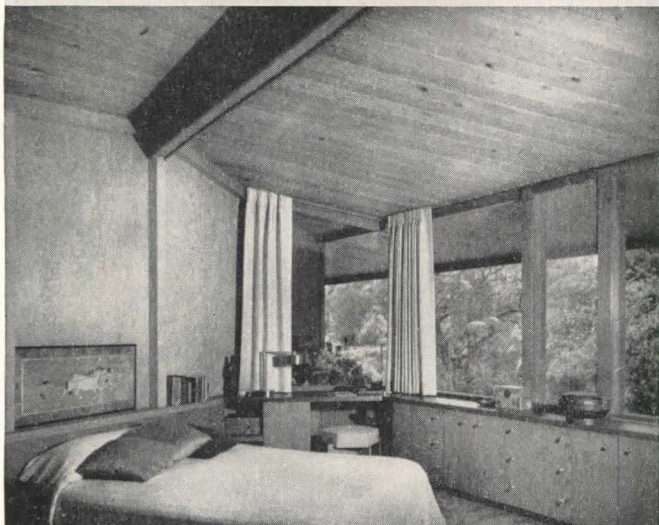


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Letters (Continued)

the same is true of architecture); unfortunately, the current legitimate production of the various "abstract" schools of painting can be parodied mercilessly by its detractors and imitated superficially by its exploiters. In this sense, the challenge of communication in modern painting and sculpture is great for the viewer. The basis of evaluation being no longer prettiness, or realistic likenesses and landscapes, but something both more subtle and more profound to our times, placing a great burden on the viewing public, a public which has never really acknowledged that art is an intellectual experience, and not merely a kind of visual sensualism for touring eyes.

The truly architectural points that Reed presents are these, and I shall answer them point by point:

1 About the defilement of Grand Central Terminal's space:

This is admittedly a horror, and the product of the loss of values in our civilization; all architects are equally indignant about this.

2 Wright hated cities:

Correct. His urban buildings of recent years should have stayed in the country, but this is no indictment of the bulk of the modern profession, who do like cities and build in a more proper urban sense.

3 Mumford hates cities, but is hailed as an expert on them:

Mumford is an exponent of Garden City America, which theory has been rejected by most American architects today, who believe in the more strong urban-rural contrast.

4 Moses echoes modern art historians in his anti-Columbian Fair statements:

Moses' words on architecture are always rather intemperate and childish. His antagonism to the 1893 Fair is, as usual, a proper antagonism, but on the wrong grounds.

5 Fashion in architecture:

This is Reed's most telling point, as it is largely true. Unfortunately, much of modern architecture, from the latest concrete shell to the latest glass tower, from the delicately subdivided box (via the Golden Section) to the newest mosaic bank, is aggressively stylish and shallow. However, to merely find the stylish faults of modern architecture is a negative thing; a new and more valid renaissance must inevitably occur, released from stylish meanderings. But the renaissance should in no wise be that of Mr Reed, which would be the logic of "because communism is bad, let's switch to fascism."

6 Architects have lost stature because they are playing engineer:

False. Architects have lost stature because of their intramural squabbling. Finland, where modern architecture is vital, is apparently immune to stylishness, and the architect is the hero of the land. This can happen here, and must, for the sake of our future environment.

In sum, Mr Reed's argumentation about styles has nothing to do with the current disease of stylishness, and because these two separate ideas are confused in his article, I feel most strongly that this confusion must be sharply pointed out.

NORVAL WHITE AIA
New York, NY

(Continued on p. 16)



A · I · A

Journal

Washington in Transition

*This special issue is devoted to the city of Washington,
prepared in cooperation with the AIA Committee on the National Capital
and under the Guest Editorship of its Chairman, Paul Thiry FAIA*

The United States of America is the world's greatest nation. It is blessed with wealth, rich natural resources and a countryside of extraordinary beauty. Its people believe in an abundant life for themselves and for all others.

As a consequence, throughout the United States, unlimited opportunities exist for the development of the individual, of wealth, of resources, of land and of communities.

Unfortunately these opportunities are not directed to their ultimate. In the face of rapidly-growing population and expanding economy, America's countryside is despoiled and its communities are being dissected unnecessarily.

The principle of expediency infests national thinking on the subject of roadbuilding, housing and the use of open land. The natural countryside, lush farmlands and historic towns stand in the path of indiscriminate encroachment.

This is a national problem. The Capital City is no exception.

Too often the accomplishments of the past are so obvious they are regarded passively and there is failure to appreciate inherent methods of coping with "progress." Perhaps a review of the planning of the city of Washington is timely. P.T.

Paul Thiry FAIA, Chairman

I. M. Pei AIA

David N. Yerkes AIA

Paul Frank Jernegan AIA

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*Alexander C. Robinson III FAIA

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* Corresponding Members

by Henry L. Wright FAIA, President

The American Institute of Architects

Planning for the national capital encompasses a myriad of problems and challenges for architects who must assume the responsibility for guiding programs of development, rehabilitation and restoration to orderly conclusions.

Washington is America's unique metropolis. On the one hand, it must provide a network of housing, commercial and service facilities that are essential to the machinery of a busy city, and on the other, it must function as the national showcase.

What is the architect's responsibility in the area of Capital City design? To what degree does his role as Master Builder affect the ultimate physical shape and psychological impact of a city that has been the seat of government for 162 years? These questions can be approached best from the perspective of a concept that identifies the architect as an environmentalist.

The national capital has a many-faceted personality. A typical tourist pamphlet lists the drop-leaf table on which George and Martha Washington were served their bridal supper, the portable desk on which Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence and the first automobile to be driven across the United States, as examples of the historic relics to be seen and enjoyed by the visitor.

Businessmen see another side of the nation's nerve center in the complex of government buildings, housing hundreds of thousands of Federal employees concerned with services and administrative tasks that reach into and touch the lives of more than 200 million citizens.

The American architect has been well schooled for the responsibilities he must bear in the task of reshaping the Washington image. During the past two decades, he has been directly and personally involved in the growth and development of hundreds of new cities and in the rebirth and redevelopment of hundreds of older ones. He has developed techniques that adroitly remove the scars of poor urban planning and deterioration and a capacity for mobilization, organization and direction that will be greatly needed before the planning and growth problems of Washington are solved.

Washington is the face of America. The architecture of its educational institutions, hospitals, churches and commercial enterprises cannot be expected to do less than express the best we have to offer. The environment of our historic shrines can perform to the public interest when it is conducive to a feeling of patriotism, pride and respect.

Slums and substandard structures are blemishes that must be eradicated if Washington is to stand as the seat of a government that has won and must maintain the regard and respect of every member of the family of nations.

It is doubtful that any redevelopment task has ever reached, or will ever approach, the proportions of the Washington effort. The First City is a treasury of historic buildings, shrines and museums and it is essential that these be preserved in all of their inspirational glory for other generations to see, study and appreciate. It is equally a center of bustling, metropolitan activity and must be regarded and treated as "big business" in its largest sense. When these considerations are commingled with those of concern for housing, for the architectural propriety of government buildings and a development for internal thoroughfares that will provide for a maximum flow of traffic, the Washington task becomes one that will challenge the most vigorous effort of which the architectural profession is capable.

The American Institute of Architects has the duty to dedicate the combined talents and skills of its members and Fellows to whatever purposes the architects, historians and others involved in the work and administration of the Washington project may require. The perspectives projected in this *Journal* are those of the best qualified and best informed people on the subject of the design of the capital. The leadership evidenced in a collation of views that extend into every level of interest in the Washington scene is typical of the public spirit inherent in the attitudes of the members and staff of *The American Institute of Architects*.

The program for designing the Capital City challenges the creative imagination of architects in every corner of America. It holds the promise of becoming one of architecture's most exciting enterprises. It will compel the best sense of leadership our profession can command and a discharge of our responsibilities in our highest traditions. ◀

A Message from the President

A nation's capital should embody the finest in its contemporary architectural thought. Its architectural form should reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor and stability of our national government. In these objectives both public agencies and private builders will need the services of the nation's leading architects.

Washington today is the capital of an urban nation. As a city it should express our highest aspirations for urban life. No less than the more traditional rural environment, urban life is profoundly concerned with human needs. The art and design of changing cities aims not only at providing better homes and community facilities, more efficient transportation and desirable open spaces, but also a setting in which men and women can fully live up to their responsibilities as free citizens.

The expanding partnership between the Federal government and our cities finds common ground in these ideals and much of our effort is devoted to giving them expression. As our Capital City, Washington should lead in this important work. It is a task we must widely share and in which I am confident we shall succeed.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

The L'Enfant Plan for Washington

by Paul D. Spreiregen

Project Head, AIA Urban Design

Many cities had been considered as the permanent site of the Federal capital when the Congress, meeting in Philadelphia in 1791, chose the Potomac site. Several cities had offered attractive inducements—Kingston, NY, and Philadelphia had each offered land. Annapolis had offered land and money. Williamsburg had offered everything. The issue was decided when Philadelphia failed to provide police protection for the Congressmen during a riotous veterans' demonstration. The Federal government needed a city of its own. This decision perfectly suited the plans of George Washington, who saw well beyond the immediate needs of the Federal government.

Although the decision was largely a political compromise between North and South, President Washington envisioned the new Capital City as the emporium of the West. He was fully convinced of the commercial potential of the Potomac site. The river was navigable as far as Georgetown, in those days one of the principal tobacco markets in the country. The new city would need only a canal across the Cumberland Gap to tap the produce of the vast hinterlands beyond, assuring its commercial future as a port. The capital would thus have a strong economic base—trade. Washington had already started a private canal construction company before the Congress made its final decision. He relinquished his interests in it immediately.

It was a beautiful site. One has to recall the view across the Potomac from Mount Vernon to picture the rolling green expanse which Virginia and Maryland ceded in the form of a large square, ten miles on a side.

In the center—the juncture of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers—a relatively flat triangular area was formed by the two rivers to the east and west, and by a steep bluff on the north. There were three towns in the triangle: Georgetown, with its grid-plan; Carrolltown, now the National War College; and Hamburg, now Foggy Bottom. The remainder of the triangle was farm and pasture. All of it was in private hands—Washington's first and most vexing problem.

The Landowners

His course of action was to try to convince the property owners of the imminent appreciation of the value of their lands once the Federal capital was established. He asked them to surrender their lands to the Federal government for subdivision, pointing out that the government would take the choice lots for Federal building sites and then half of the remaining lots for sale to raise Federal revenue. Bolstered by the activity of the Federal government and by trade, the private landowners would stand to make considerable profit on the remaining lots. These they would choose among themselves by the familiar practice of drawing lots. The landowners were not to be alarmed about the relatively few lots which would revert to them. Their scarcity would only increase their value.

So Washington argued. The landowners listened. That kind of land speculation was not unfamiliar to early colonists. Many cities had been formed that way, and many speculators had made their fortunes in it. If the scheme worked the Federal government



Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant

would not only obtain land without cost—it would also raise enough money to pay for the government buildings.

Thomas Jefferson sketched a plan to illustrate how the land could be laid out. He indicated a grid of squares in a north-south-east-west orientation. Each square measured about 600 feet on a side, forming lots of about nine acres each. In the center, on the bluffs above Hamburg, the President's House and the Capitol building would be sited. Less than a mile apart, located on high ground, they would be connected by broad walks. The view from these high walks would have made them fine promenades. From the bluffs there was a superb view down the Potomac. In his sketch the depth of the river was indicated in fathoms, to illustrate that the Hamburg river frontage was a natural harbor.

Jefferson did not expect the Capital City to be very large at the outset—as indeed was the case. A large portion of his plan is labelled “to be laid off in future.” He probably centered his sketch-plan on Hamburg in deference to the principal land-holders who lived there. They were not quite convinced. They felt instead that they should be paid a rather high price for their land.

Pierre Charles L'Enfant

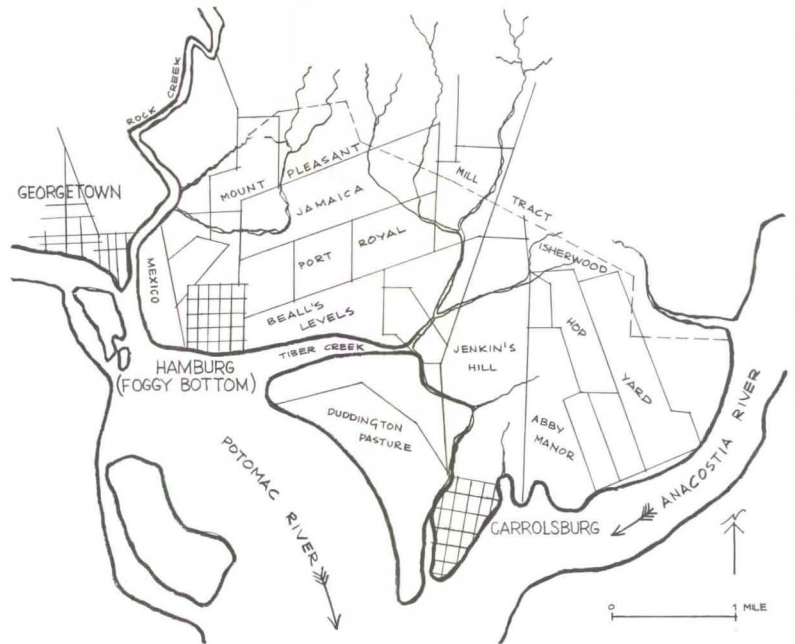
While in Philadelphia Washington had received an offer from a thirty-seven-year-old French engineer officer, Pierre Charles L'Enfant, to lay out the plan of the new Federal city, wherever it might be. L'Enfant had much to recommend him. He had been a volunteer who had become interested in

ideals of political liberty early in life and fought well for American independence. He had been a prisoner, had been wounded, and had been accepted by the American aristocracy of the times—an aristocracy based on accomplishment but not without the gentlemanly polish of the eighteenth century. He was well known as an artist, having made portrait sketches of his fellow officers and numerous landscape drawings during the war. He had designed the scene of President Washington's inaugural in New York, an altar in St Paul's Chapel there, he had made designs and arrangements for pageants and receptions, he had designed the emblem of the Society of the Cincinnati, and had illustrated a book on military science by von Steuben. He was a skilled surveyor. His appeal to Washington must have been received as a refreshing token of interest in a rather frustrating venture. In his own words to President Washington, “. . . nothing will be wanting to compleat my happiness if the remembrance of my former services connected with a variety of peculiar circumstances during fourteen years residence in this Country can plead with your Excellency in Support of the favour I Sollicite.” L'Enfant's offer was accepted.

He arrived in Georgetown on March 9, 1791, with instructions to contact Andrew Ellicott, surveyor, and proceed to survey the land along the Anacostia River, considerably east of the properties of the reluctant land-owners of Hamburg. In preparing his plans he was to work under a Board of Commissioners appointed by President Washington.

L'Enfant's first impressions of the site con-

Land ownership about 1790. Note the three existing towns: George Town, Hamburg (Foggy Bottom), Carrollsburg



vinced him that Jefferson's plan was inappropriate. Jefferson's grid-plan might do for flat land, but this site had a great number of gentle knolls and bluffs. There were some rather fine views of the surrounding landscape from their crests. He noticed, too, that the lower end of the land at the meeting of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers was no less desirable as a harbor site than the shore of Foggy Bottom.

His eye was tuned to seeing these things. His sensitivity to landscape had been nurtured since his childhood in the artistic circles of France.

L'Enfant's Design Principles

L'Enfant's father was an artist in the royal courts of France. As the son of a court painter, L'Enfant grew up in Paris and Versailles where he studied painting and drawing. By L'Enfant's time the art of baroque landscape architecture had reached its zenith. Versailles was completed, grand baroque plans had been drawn up for London a century earlier, and sweeping proposals for reshaping Paris were being produced. The principles of baroque design had been developed for gardens, parks, buildings and landscape. They had been born in Italy and brought to maturity in France.

The long straight pathways produced by these principles rendered a large extent of land visible. Where several roads intersected at one point they produced an effect of visibility in multiple. Baroque landscape architecture began with such realizations, flourished on their developments and refinements, and climaxed in the work of André

le Nôtre, whose principles were copied for centuries after he completed the park and town of Versailles.

The refinements of this art were many. The multiple intersection came to be called a *patte d'oie* or goose-foot intersection. Very simply it amounted to placing three roads at an angle of twenty to twenty-five degrees to each other. The human eye, with its sixty-five-degree horizontal field of vision, can easily embrace a three-road *patte d'oie* whose total field would measure about forty or fifty degrees. Baroque architects—that is to say planners and landscape architects, it was all part of the same mentality—went on to establish principles of proportion, street detail, profile, orientation for sunlight, and the rhythmic accentuation of the long axial avenues. The proper accentuation of an avenue required the careful disposition of a

Map by Ellicott covering the ten-mile square



series of statues, fountains, or commemorative columns, usually in a large cleared space. These accents, disposed at particular intervals along an avenue, in landscape, or in a city, gave character and interest—they maintained a sense of identity to an avenue and a sense of place to a woody or urban setting.

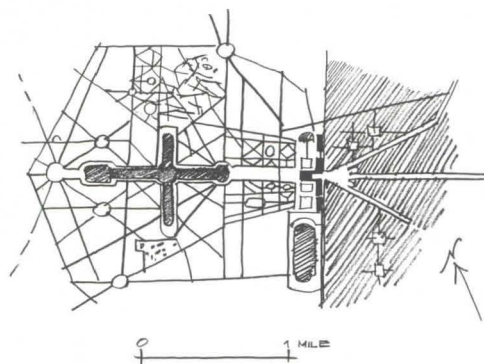
Such was the system brought to perfection by André le Nôtre at Versailles. It was in the garden and park at Versailles where L'Enfant spent much of his childhood.

L'Enfant on the Job

Who can surmise what was going through L'Enfant's mind as he rode on his horse eastward from Georgetown facing an opportunity offered to a bare handful of men in the whole history of city design? Surely he had his store of memories of Versailles. Was he perhaps influenced by the division of the site into numerous property holdings by long north-south-east-west and diagonal lines? Was he recalling the baroque plans of London of 1666 or the ambitious proposals that had been made for Paris? Was he thinking of the earlier Renaissance en-

conjecture. However, it must be remembered that the principles perfected by le Nôtre were highly adaptable to any slightly undulating landscape.

L'Enfant did not have a survey map of the site when he began his work. This was not an obstacle to him. On the contrary,

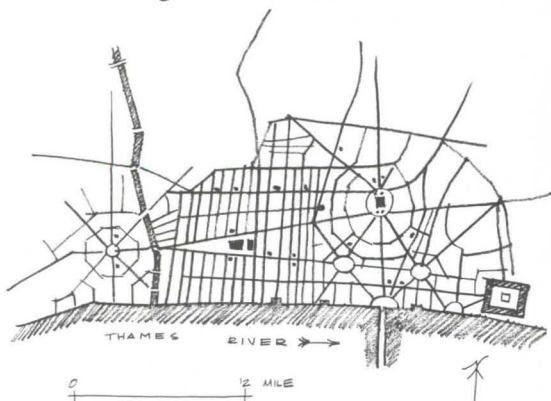


Plan of Versailles

it proved to be an advantage. By climbing trees and standing on knolls, he could take compass bearings of landscape features and vistas, simultaneously recording the bearings to produce a fairly good map. This process gave him a first-hand familiarity with the site. No doubt ideas for the use of the various knolls, bluffs, and vistas occurred to him as he began to know his ground.

One of his first major decisions was to select Jenkins' Hill as the site of the Congress House. To L'Enfant this hill was a podium awaiting a major edifice. It seemed logical and advantageous to L'Enfant to locate the Congress House at the approximate center of the site, about halfway between the rivers. It also seemed logical to him to radiate a series of avenues from this building to all parts of the city, to facilitate movement to the building and to open many vistas to it and from it.

The finest of the vistas from the Congress House was clearly to the west—across low land, across the Potomac River, culminating in the Virginia hills. L'Enfant saw this as



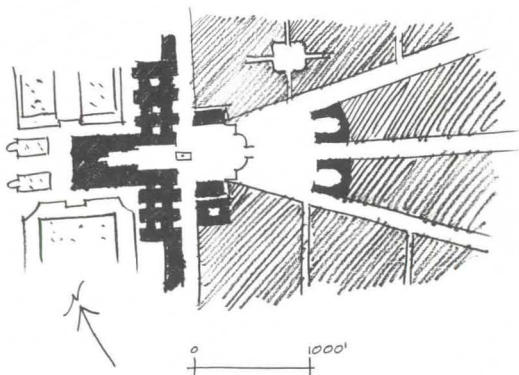
Wren's plan for London, 1666

closed plazas of Paris? Did Jefferson's sketch serve as a first *parti*, to suggest the separated relationship between the Congress House and the President's House?

L'Enfant had a collection of maps showing many of the principal cities of the world together with a book of drawings of many important buildings. He wrote President Washington that he would use the book of maps to avoid chance imitation. The book of models would be used to choose building prototypes. It was quite reasonable for him to do this, since he had been commissioned to draft not only a plan for the city, but also plans for principal buildings. In addition he was to begin to clear avenues, to procure building materials, to construct canals and buildings—and also to manage the workers.

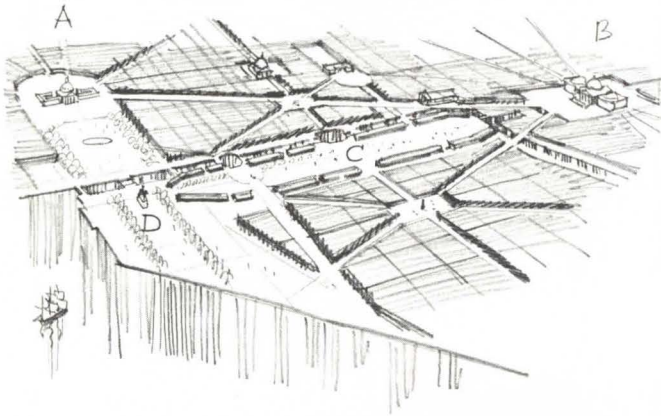
As for the sources of his planning ideas, the resemblances are all there for endless

A patte d'oie—the Place d'Armes at Versailles



the grandest avenue of the city. It has become the Mall.

Where, then, to put the President's House? A gentle ridge ran above Foggy Bottom to the east. As Jefferson had noticed there were some particularly fine views southward down the Potomac from this ridge—views provided ready-made by nature. In Versailles it had been largely necessary to shape the vistas. Here the job was already done. Versailles was approached by three roads which intersect as a *patte d'oie* in the palace forecourt. Proceeding through the palace one came upon a view of the main central axis—a great corridor of light—whose floor was gardens and a long reflecting pool, whose roof was the sky, and whose walls were dark stands of trees.



The central area of L'Enfant's plan: a) President's House, b) Congress House, c) Washington Mall, d) Washington Statue

How simple to achieve this in Washington, not once, but twice—at the Capitol in an east-west orientation directed westward to Virginia and at the President's House in a north-south orientation directed southward down the Potomac. There lay the answer to the siting of the President's House. The axial and focal concept of the Congress House was to be repeated.

Thus two centers of focus took hold of L'Enfant's imagination and the rest of the plan unfolded, released by the genius of a powerful first concept. The stage was nearly all set by nature itself.

From the two centers thus determined, L'Enfant began to radiate a series of main avenues with *patte d'oie* intersections. These he connected to the many knolls whose memory was impressed on his mind and whose location he recorded in his sketch-map. They were to be the location of innumerable sub-accent according to the doctrine of long-avenue design.

Practicality was the essence of L'Enfant's well of ideas. If Hamburg was reluctant to accept President Washington's offer there

was a better site for a harbor—the Anacostia River. It had deep water and the shoreline was neatly tucked out of sight by an escarpment which rose abruptly from it. Thus the tawdry wharf area would be unobtrusive. Visually, it would not mar the character of the Capital City. L'Enfant was familiar with the appearance of the wharf area of Manhattan. His fine rendering of the Anacostia shoreline is almost a duplication of the Manhattan wharves of colonial times.

Canal barges could reach this wharf area by extending the Georgetown canal through the new Capital City down to the Anacostia. Thus the new city could be served by a canal running right through it. The canal sketched by L'Enfant originated in Georgetown and continued west along the line of the present Constitution Avenue. At that time it was a murky inlet from the Potomac called Tiber Creek.

The esthetic value of this water element was not disregarded by L'Enfant. His sketches indicated numerous widenings, suggesting ceremonial accents and treatments at key places. The canal bent south in front of the Congress House, offering an opportunity for a decorative fountain which would be fed by a large drainage creek from the North. It continued south to the Potomac. Today Canal Street and South Capitol Street mark its original course.

The many sub-accent of the plan were to be centers for all of the ancillary activities which would develop in the future Capital City of the promising democratic states. They were to be marked by columns, statues, squares, *rond-points*, markets, ceremonial plazas—landmarks for enshrining the deeds of the nation and, from a very practical standpoint, clustering the first settlements.

L'Enfant wished to establish a distributed settlement of all parts of the city. Like a good gardener, he refrained from planting his seeds too closely. There was no hesitation on his part to mix the grand with the mundane, the market with the town house, the barge landing with the government building. The poise and assurance in the gentlemen of his era was not shaken by marketing in proximity to a palace. After all, where does one best enjoy a good drink or the purchase of a fish but out in the open—simultaneously viewing the splendor of great architecture and a grand vista?

The development of numerous sub-centers within visual distance of each other would also have given the city a greater sense of finish, especially in its first years. One would be in sight of a group of buildings, centering on an accenting column, statue, or foun-

tain—as he looked down an avenue of woods. The sub-centers would be the nuclei of future growth.

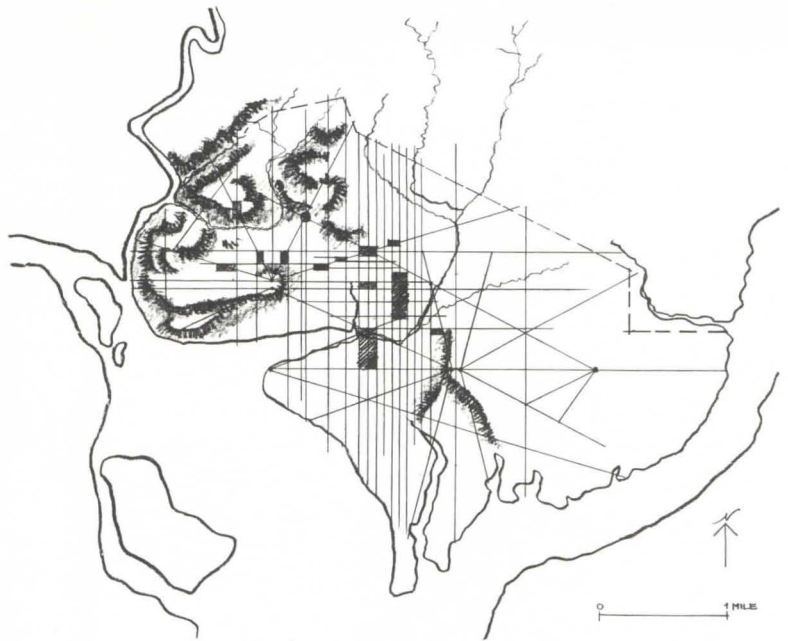
A key to understanding L'Enfant's refined design sense lies in examining the Capitol-Mall-President's House complex. Standing anywhere on Pennsylvania Avenue one would have a view of both the President's House and the Capitol as terminal features of the vista. L'Enfant thought that both buildings would have prominent domes. The President's House never got a dome and was inadvertently blocked by the Treasury Building. L'Enfant's intention here—as throughout the city—was to create “reciprocity of view,” an artful method of terminating vistas which would give a sense of direction and purpose. Of course this would require rather broad avenues, which L'Enfant specified. (The landowners, by this time persuaded, accepted broad avenues because they further restricted the number of marketable lots, thus seeming to boost the market value of private land.)

From the terrace on the west side of the Capitol building one would look out and embrace the vista of these converging avenues—Maryland, the Mall, and Pennsylvania, the three forming a *patte d'oie*. The Mall itself was envisioned as a Champs-Élysées—not the green swath that it has become. Lined with the Embassies of foreign nations it would have become the grand promenade which L'Enfant proposed, the central avenue of the city, the site of great parades, the place to stroll and be seen on Sunday.

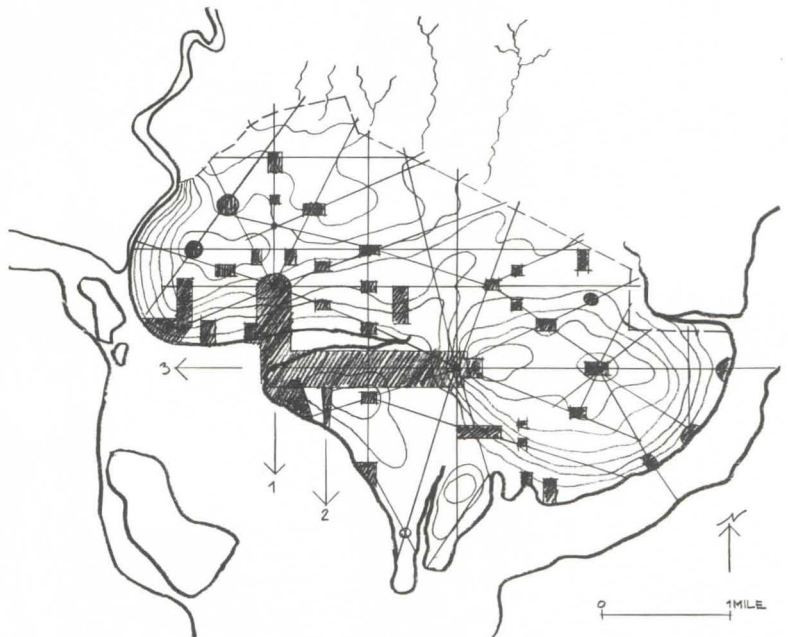
The portico of the President's House would be seen in sharp relief in southern sunlight. It would need all the visual emphasis it could get, being more than a mile and a half from the Capitol.

At the crossing of the north-south axis of the President's House and the east-west axis of the Capitol an equestrian statue of George Washington was to be placed. That spot, slightly relocated because of poor subsoil, became the site of the Washington monument. But the equestrian statue, facing south, would have suggested the directionality of the President's House axis. Such was the nature of L'Enfant's refined artistry.

L'Enfant ended his plan to the north at Florida Avenue. It was a good natural ending, for a steep bluff rose there. The entering traveller would have seen the whole city spread out at his feet. This feature of his plan, the Florida Avenue escarpment, helps dispell the popular notion that L'Enfant's plan is based on defense—the notion that the streets were laid out in order to shoot cannon balls in many directions. The Florida Avenue escarpment would have been a



Redrawn from the only surviving L'Enfant sketch. President's House and Congress House shown by two dots each, representing the porticoes—the visual focal points of the avenues



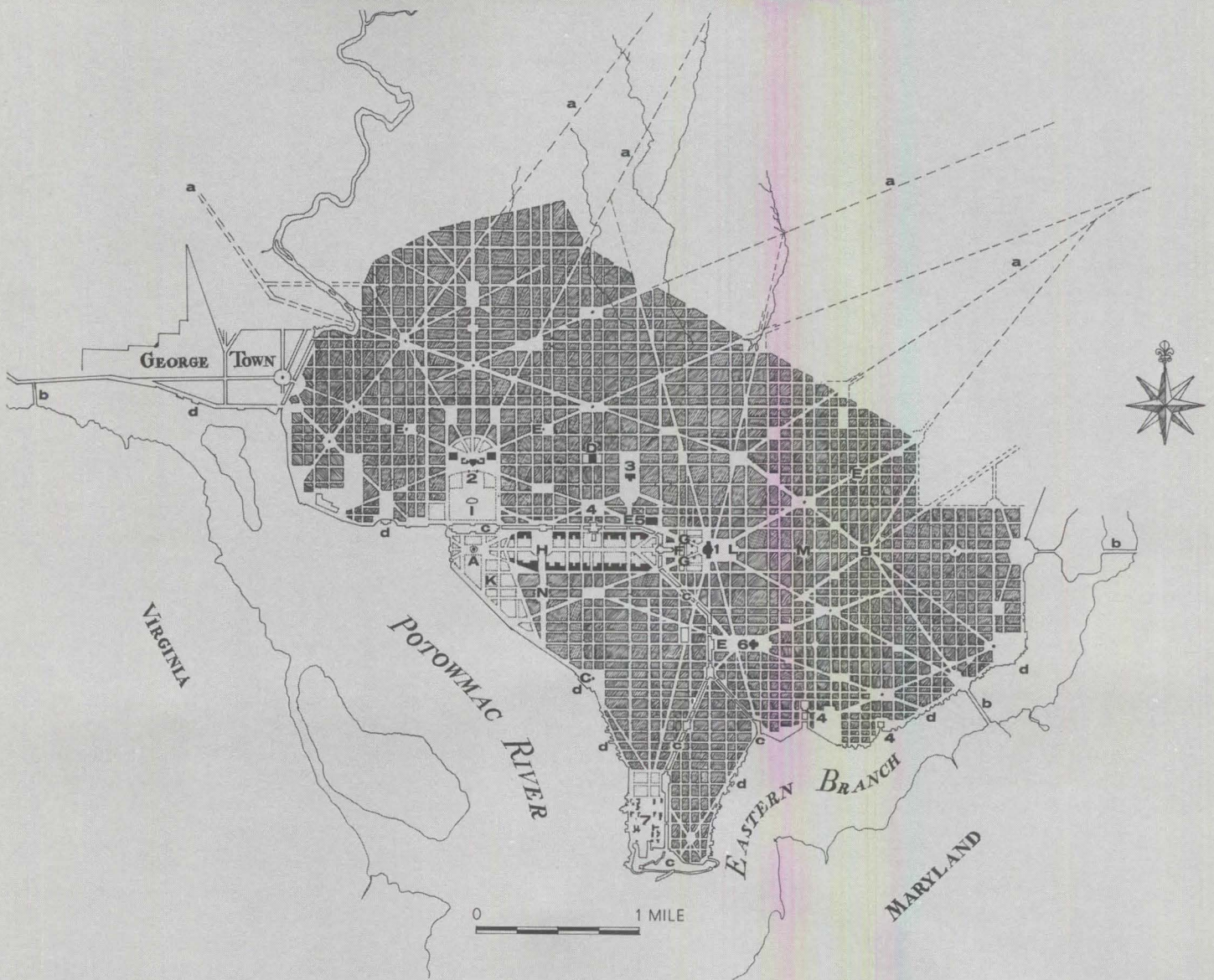
Main lines and features shown in relation to topography: 1 and 2 Vistas down Potomac, 3 Vista across to Virginia hills

superb line of attack for enemy infantry or artillery. There were few cities as vulnerable to attack as Washington.

L'Enfant's job in Washington was anything but easy. He was in constant disagreement with the appointed commissioners, many of whom had private interests in the whole undertaking.

When one of the commissioners, also a prominent landowner, started to erect a house in the middle of Pennsylvania Avenue, L'Enfant asked him to remove it, offering compensation for the work done up to that point. When he continued building it, L'Enfant ordered that it be torn down.

THE L'ENFANT PLAN FOR WASHINGTON



- | | |
|--|---|
| A Equestrian statue of George Washington | N Tapered avenue with vista down Potomac River |
| B Column, one mile from Congress House
—a “zero milestone” for the US | |
| C Memorial naval column | 1 Congress House |
| D National non-sectarian church | 2 President’s House, flanked by Executive Offices |
| E Large fountains—five in number | 3 Supreme Court Building |
| F Grand cascade at the base of Congress House | 4 Markets, served by boats |
| G Broad walks, ascending to Congress House | 5 National Theater |
| H The Mall, with a 400-foot-wide central processional avenue. Houses of the foreign embassies line its sides | 6 City Hall |
| I President’s gardens | 7 Fort |
| K Public gardens below President’s House | a Overland routes to neighboring cities and towns |
| L Square in front of Congress House | b Bridges |
| M Approach avenue for Congress House, lined with arcaded buildings | c Canal through the city |
| | d Docks |

George Washington, always trying to allay controversy, having to support his choice of commissioners, and having to demonstrate in practice his belief in popular government, was regretfully forced to remove L'Enfant from the job. He had done his work in only eleven months.

Indignantly, L'Enfant gathered up his drawings and left. Was it in anger or out of concern that the unfinished plans were unsatisfactory?

An engraver in Philadelphia was already at work producing a presentation plan. It is likely that he distorted L'Enfant's plan to fit his copper plate. This is "the L'Enfant Plan" now so famous. It had earlier been lost, only to be rediscovered in 1887. (This is the plan reproduced on the *Journal's* cover.)

Ellicott took over from L'Enfant and redrew L'Enfant's plan from memory in 1792. From that plan, Washington was laid out.

Critique

A study of either L'Enfant's or Ellicott's plan reveals several flaws in design. Most obvious is the awkward relationship between the diagonal avenues and the grid matrix—particularly at the many intersections. The result was a profusion of poorly-shaped lots and a sequence of broken building lines which have distracted from the vistas they were intended to enframe.

In the only surviving plan that L'Enfant made with his own hand there is no conflict between the diagonals and the grid streets. They were conceived simultaneously. That sketch had too few streets indicated, however, to fully reveal the problem. Jefferson cautioned L'Enfant against the excessive number of diagonal avenues, and L'Enfant obliged by terminating some of them at sub-centers. The later increase in the number of gridiron lots would have cancelled the best of any early intentions, however.

L'Enfant can be justifiably criticized on his poor design of the sub-centers—the squares, *rond-points* and *places* of his plan. They receive far too many streets and avenues to obviate forever the treatment of these elements of urban design as enclosed places. And enclosed places they must be. But L'Enfant was of an age in urban design which had forsaken the enclosure of the renaissance *place* for the sweep of the baroque boulevard. Other designers reconciled this difficulty, but not L'Enfant.

Most of his squares were fated to become awkward accents along avenue routes rather than nodes of urban activity, as he had intended.

On a more philosophical level, the critic may ponder the relevance of baroque planning—conceived largely as an expression of absolutism—in a democratic society. The whole plan of Versailles focussed on the bedroom of Louis XIV. What could that kind of plan mean symbolically in the United States?

There is more to baroque planning than inward focusing. Outward vista is no less important.

The vista-ways of Versailles allowed Louis XIV the vanity of imagining that he controlled the whole natural world by seeing it all embraced in his works, seeing it through his vista-ways.

In Washington L'Enfant adapted these ideas to house the gatherings of an energetic young democracy. If Versailles was a satisfaction to Louis XIV's ego, the plan of Washington was an assertion of a bold new republic in a barely-touched wilderness.

Since L'Enfant's time there have been few efforts in Washington that can rightly be called urban design, when compared with L'Enfant's plan. The work of Calvert Vaux and Alexander Jackson Downing in the mid-nineteenth Century has left the ovals and curlicues around the Capitol and the Ellipse. Rather ironically the tree-planting program of "Boss" Shepherd during the administration of President U. S. Grant, has determined the popular visual image of the city—a city of tree-lined streets—instead of a series of grand vistas which, unfortunately, are obscured, non-existent, or diminished by distracting foreground. Alas for L'Enfant, when the McMillan Commission toured Europe to seek design precedents for the Mall they chose the passive *tapis vert* of Versailles rather than the dynamic Champs Elysées of Paris. These later modifications could not have occurred without the groundwork of L'Enfant's plan.

Whatever the virtues or failings of these subsequent plans we do well to ponder that the scale of design has been so much reduced—particularly in a day when we anticipate an enormous population increase. L'Enfant envisioned a city of 800,000 inhabitants when the population of the entire country was less than five times that number. Opinions will vary as to whether this was foresight or foolhardiness but his practical artistry on so large a scale has not yet been matched. The shortcomings in L'Enfant's plan are opportunities not for scorn, but action. Our generation will do well to add even modestly to the heritage that we have been left by a true genius of town design, Pierre Charles L'Enfant. ◀

Both L'Enfant and Ellicott were eventually dismissed. The design was not finally approved until 1797-1798 when George Washington and John Adams authenticated a plan drawn by James R. Dermott.

For a period of a hundred years, Washington developed more or less haphazardly, there being no one authority responsible for the planning and zoning of districts and control of building design or location. The first step in correcting this situation was the appointing of the McMillan Commission of 1901 to report on existing conditions and what course should be followed later.

AMERICAN ARCHITECT
May 20, 1929

This new plan was the result of concerted efforts by Senator McMillan, then chairman of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia, by The American Institute of Architects, which has ever since been closely connected with Washington improvement.

ARCHITECTURAL RECORD
March 1956



The Washington Plan: Historic Notes

by Paul Thiry FAIA, Chairman, AIA Committee on the National Capital

During the Revolutionary War the principal seat of the Continental Congress was Philadelphia. Because of natural conflicts with municipal functions and activities it was felt an entirely new, specially designed city should be built to serve as the capital of the United States of America. (Act of Congress July 16, 1790—Seat of government transferred 1800)

President Adams opened the second session of the Sixth Congress in the city of Washington on November 21, 1800: 16 states, 32 Senators, 106 Members of the House of Representatives.

Washington was designed as a capital, a "Fiat City":

Singular among major capitals of the world, it was planned from its inception as a permanent seat of government and headquarters for the military forces.

(More recent capitals in this category are Canberra, Brasilia.)

Washington was conceived as a center for international representation. Washington was meant to be the symbol of the nation:

To this end it was planned in an expansive manner with open spaces, tree-lined avenues and with important buildings terminating long vistas.

It represents its citizens—"their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor," "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

Washington, now coterminous with the District of Columbia, was meant to be a vital city:

While its one big industry is logically government, it contains the Embassies of foreign nations, headquarters for national organizations, the residences of its citizens, apartments, hotels, shops, stations and related commercial enterprises.

Washington is an historic place:

Within Washington are located historic sites and buildings, the nation's sacred monuments and art treasures. In the broad sense, every building and every site is important.

Washington reflects the personalities of its founders—Washington and Jefferson. "They thought, they acted and they lived on the grand scale."

Washington is a mecca for the citizens of the nation:

People from all parts of the nation and the world converge on Washington for business, as sightseers and as historically-conscious pilgrims.

It stirs more than ordinary interest in those who daily enter it.

In a monetary way tourism alone accounted for an expenditure of approximately \$352,000,000 in 1957.

Washington, the Federal city, originally was designed to be on the Maryland shore of the Potomac River, within an area ten miles square (100 square miles) annexed from the states of Maryland and Virginia in 1790 and 1789, respectively:

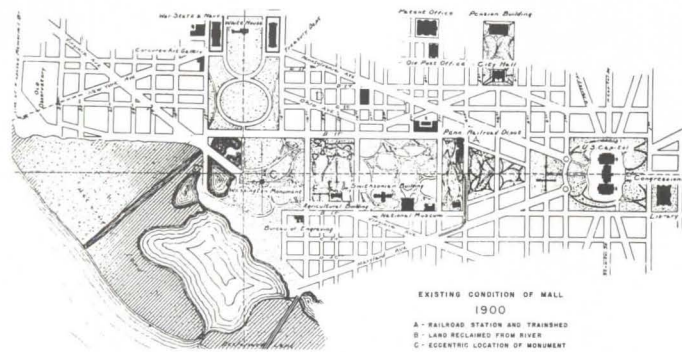
It is situated on land once occupied by the Monohoac and Monocon Indians. The area was called Conocheaque (Roaring Waters). Part of the site of the capital was owned by a man named Pope who gave it the name of Rome, and the central branch of the Potomac River which flowed nearby he called the Tiber.

Washington, the Federal District, now occupies 61 square miles of land plus eight square miles of water, a total of 69 square miles:

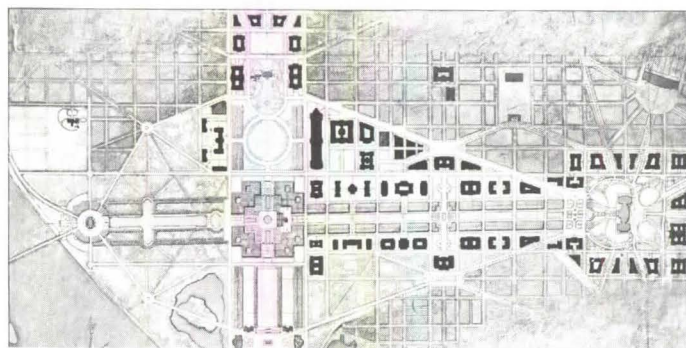
Land on the Virginia side of the Potomac River was returned to the state of Virginia in 1846 at the request of the city of Alexandria which from 1789 to this date was with the District.

The population of the 69 square miles of Federal District has increased:

1800	14,093
1860	75,080
1870	130,700
1900	278,718
1940	663,091
1950	802,178
1960	763,956



The Mall in 1900. Note railroad tracks, station



The McMillan Plan, 1901

Washington, National Capital Region, was rated the 10th largest in population in the United States in 1960 (Pop 2,001,897):

The Metropolitan area encompasses 1500 square miles of rolling countryside.

Washington, National Capital Region, (area 2,053 square miles) includes the District of Columbia and portions of the states of Virginia and Maryland:

District of Columbia included the city of Georgetown and the villages of Anacostia, Brightwood and Tennallyton

MARYLAND:

Prince George's County

Bladensburg, Chillum, Hyattsville, Riverdale, Berwyn, Vansville, Lanham, Kent, Seat Pleasant, Spauldings, Surrattsville, Oxon Hill, and Laurel & Bowie

Montgomery County

Rockville, Colesville, Bethesda, Potomac, Wheaton, Olney, Gaithersburg and Clarksburg

VIRGINIA:

Arlington County

Alexandria, Falls Church

Fairfax County

Falls Church, Mason, Mount Vernon and Providence

Loudoun County

Prince William County

Washington, Federal District, was established by Acts of Congress 1790-1791. Government is by a three-man Commission: From 1802 to 1874 administration was by a mayor (elected by Council 1812-20 and by vote of the people 1820-1871) and by an elective council of two chambers plus a representative in Congress.

A Territorial government was established by Congress in 1871.

Present system of government by Congress through an executive board of Presidential appointees was established in 1879. Board of Commissioners consist of two civilian residents of Washington and a member of the US Corps of Engineers.

The District is governed by the Congress of the United States.

Congress and the Commissioners legislate for the District. The President, the Commissioners and the Supreme Court of the District appoint the administrative officers and boards. District court judges are appointed by the President.

The costs of operating the District are presently shared two-thirds by the District and one-third by the Federal government. Revenues for the District are derived from property taxes, licenses, etc.

Washington, Federal District, planning has been carried on in varying degrees of excellence since its inception in 1791:

1910 Fine Arts Commission (seven members, advisory).

1924 National Capital Planning Commission (re-established 1952, including National Park Commission, est 1924 and National Capital Park & Planning Commission, est 1926); 1934 National Capital Housing Authority; 1938 Zoning Commission (5 members), Advisory Council & Board of Adjustment; 1945 Redevelopment Land Agency (RLA); Washington, National Capital Region, planning is of more recent birth.

1926 Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission to plan for 690 square miles.

1952 National Capital Regional Planning Council, Advisory Commission.

Attempts to coordinate 130 separate planning districts.

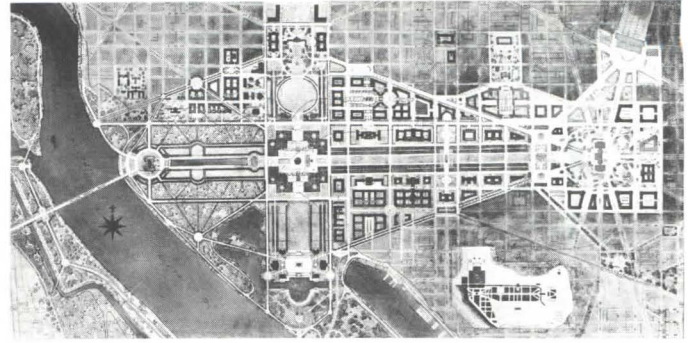
Legislation in support of planning, Acts of Congress, commonly referred to:

1930 Capper-Crampton (develop vehicular parkways, stream valley parks and playgrounds).

1930 Shipstead-Luce, a) enable government to control appearance of private property facing on government property, b) preserve Georgetown, delegate authority to Fine Arts Commission.



The Mall in 1927



Proposals by NCPPC, 1928

1932 Land Transfer (facilitate closing and modification of streets).

1936 Historic Sites (survey authorized, stalled since 1941).

1942 Motor Vehicles Parking Authority.

1948 National Highway (construction of interstate roads).

1949 National Housing, Title I (Federal redevelopment projects).

1950 Old Georgetown (provides for Fine Arts Commission recommendations on exterior design for new and remodelled buildings: authority over razing old buildings).

Washington planning, because of the nature of the capital, is different from most cities and regions. It does, however, require constant alertness to all the general principles and national phenomena involved in comprehensive planning:

1791 Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant (1755-1825) conceived the first plan for the city of Washington.

1792 Andrew Ellicott (1754-1820), surveyor and engineer, prepared the actual layout and survey.

The L'Enfant-Ellicott plan suggests buildings of substantial monumentality as contrasted to the less pretentious characteristics of the original L'Enfant plan.

1792 Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, instituted a program of competition for the Capitol and the President's House.

1797 James R. Dermott prepared a revision of the L'Enfant-Ellicott plan. This was approved by Congress and President John Adams.

1837 President Jackson authorized Robert Mills, architect, to design in the classical style of architecture buildings for the Treasury Department, Patent Office, and Post Office Department.

1848 Cornerstone of the Washington Monument laid.

1851 Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-52), plan for mall, Capitol grounds, White House ellipse (era of Romantic style, construction of the Old Smithsonian).

1871 Alexander Robey Shepherd (1835-1902), Commissioner of the District and Governor of Board of Public Works during term of President Grant, carried out extensive transformations and developments, eg, fill in canals, install sewers, improve streets and walks, plant 60,000 trees, etc.

1898 General Highway Plan and Regulation Controls. (designed to meet rampant developments beyond Florida Avenue, etc. Revisions 1914, 1926, 1932.)

1899 Building Heights Control—establish maximum building height at 130 feet.

1901 McMillan Commission Plan (coincident with Centennial of the Founding of Washington), developed under direction of Daniel Burnham, architect; Charles F. McKim, architect; Frederick Law Olmstead, landscape architect, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens, sculptor.

1910 Act: Bulk-height use by zoning. Limit buildings to 15 stories.

1920 Zoning Plan (revisions 1938, 1954-56, 1958).

1924 Frederick Adams Delano—Committee of 100.

Recommended development of Federal office buildings around Lincoln Square east of the Capitol.

1928 Study for development of the central area of the Mall showing the Triangle Group, Municipal Center and Union Station Plaza (Station completed 1907, Daniel Burnham, architect).

Triangle study made on recommendation Treasury Secretary Andrew W. Mellon. Eight new departmental buildings.

1928 National Capital Park & Planning Commission, John Nolan, Director: comprehensive plan.

Proposed Avenue of the States on East Capitol Street extended east to the Anacostia River.

Locate Washington Airport.

1939 Regional Park Plan. NCPPC, John Nolan, Director.

1950 National Capital Park & Planning Commission, W. W. Wurster, Chairman:

In 1901 L'Enfant's "grand avenue"—the Mall—was a shambles. Disorganized planting, for one thing, had made the territory valueless for any purpose. Crossing the Mall at 6th Street were railroad tracks, and beside it was a railroad station. Obviously the most important accomplishment of the Commission toward the clearing of the Mall section was its persuasion of the Pennsylvania Railroad to join with the Baltimore and Ohio in the building of a joint depot to the northeast of the Capitol—today's Union Station is the result.

HOUSE & GARDEN
July 1940

comprehensive plan for the national capital and its environs. Complete zoning map, 1958. Recommendations: a) ring road system, b) decentralization of government agencies, c) development of East Capitol Street with government buildings.

1951 SW Redevelopment planning studies begin. Expect project completion 1966.

1956 General Services plan and construction program for Federal buildings, Washington DC and vicinity.

1957 Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan.

1959 Joint Committee on Washington Metropolitan Problems. Congress of the United States: "Meeting the Problems of Metropolitan Growth in the National Capital Region."

tional Capital" by National Capital Regional Planning Council.

Recommendations: a) corridor road and transportation system, b) centralization of government agencies, c) development of East Capitol Street with residential usages. 1962 Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission "A General Plan for the Maryland-Washington Regional District," Arthur K. Stellhorn, Director; Harland Bartholomew & Associates, Consultants.

1962 The National Capital Transportation Agency "Recommendations for Transportation in the National Capital Region," C. Darwin Stolzenbach, Administrator.

Washington Planning:

The L'Enfant plan was departed from in its beginnings and many major changes were made with time.

Where the L'Enfant plan area terminated at the Potomac on the west in the vicinity of the Washington Monument, today land-fills extend the Mall beyond to the Lincoln Memorial.

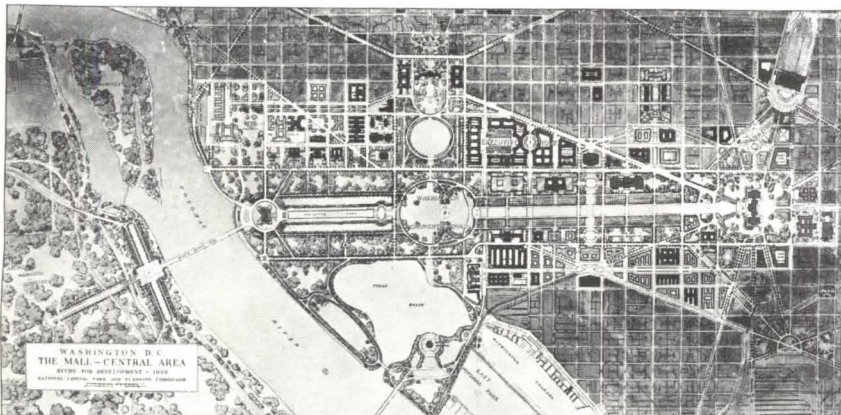
Where it terminated in the vicinity of Florida Avenue to the west the city continues on for miles into the hinterland.

Modern Washington extends over a vast regional area far beyond the bounds of the Federal District.

Bridges across the Potomac and other streams join lands once separated by water. After the inception of the original plan until very recent times little attention has been given to the general disposition of the District but most attention has been centered on the design of the Mall and areas contiguous to it.

As important as the Mall, the Capitol and the White House are to the aspects of Washington, a more general understanding is necessary to correctly appraise the planning of the District of Columbia and its environs. Nonetheless the layout of the L'Enfant plan has been adhered to and it has charted the course for development, and to quote Elbert Peets:

"The City of Washington was planned according to certain established rules of planning. They have turned out well when they were done with a knowledge of the style in which the first plan was made. They have turned out badly when they were done in ignorance of that style. . . ." ◀



The Mall in 1939



Development of the central area west and east of the Capitol, 1941

1959 Mass Transportation Survey Report. Transportation Plan for National Capital Region by National Capital Planning Commission and National Capital Regional Planning Council.

1961 Downtown Progress: Action Plan for Downtown by the National Capital Downtown Committee, Inc.

1961 Potomac River Basin Study, US Army Engineers, Washington District.

1961 National Capital Planning Commission: A Plan for the Year 2000. "The Na-

A PLAN FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION IN

the Year 2000

William E. Finley AIP, Director, National Capital Planning Commission, Presents

An Experiment in Establishing Regional Planning-Development Policy

The National Capital Planning Act of 1952, the legislation reestablishing the National Capital Planning Commission, directed this agency to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan for the nation's capital. At the same time, the Act directed the National Capital Regional Planning Council (an affiliated agency) to prepare a general plan for the development of the region to serve as a general framework or guide for development within which each part of the region may be more precisely planned by the appropriate local planning agency or agencies. Under the terms of this legislation, the Commission and Council working together have prepared a long-range plan for the year 2000 to serve as a guide in the formulation of an intermediate range "1980 Comprehensive Plan."

The prospect of a forty-year plan enabled technicians, lay commissioners and officials, as well as the general public, to think in terms of significant change. The freedom of thought and imagination thus applied to questions of development policy created a proper planning framework. Once established, the policies begin to effect immediate development decisions.

More specifically, the purpose of the joint study conducted by the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Capital Regional Planning Council has been to examine the growth pattern alternatives for this region by which the expected five million population can be accommodated in the year 2000. The presently committed area can absorb the additional 500,000 expected

in the next decade; however, in the following thirty years the population of this region is expected to double to five million. These people will have more money and more leisure time, consequently they will demand a better environment and a wider range of choice within that environment.

The Year 2000 Plan is primarily a series of long-range policies for regional development. It is concerned with four principal components—development densities, employment centers, transportation and open space—the major elements which give form to the region. The metropolitan form diagrams in the report merely suggest the effects various policies can have. It is recognized that the existing regional land-use pattern is so extensive and so persistent it will be several years before these policies could bring about significant changes. The fundamental fact to be faced, however, is that whether or not the region unites around a plan, decisions must continue to be made in the face of rampant growth. It is the Regional Planning Council's responsibility to prepare the twenty-year General Development Plan for the Region; the Year 2000 Plan is an attempt to set forth the general policy directions for such a plan. If this policy plan is adopted, the Council and the planning agencies in the region will have the basis for revising and up-dating the General Development Plan.

The following is a brief description of the seven alternatives examined in this study:

1 *Continued sprawl* (requiring no policy beyond those now operating) would mean

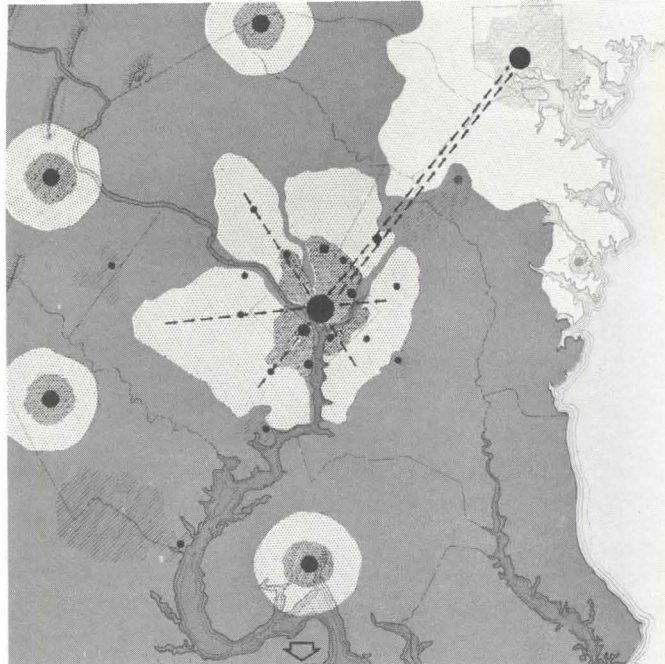
William E. Finley, Washington's chief professional planner for the past 4½ years, is resigning to take a job in private industry.

As staff director of the National Capital Planning Commission, Finley has had a big part in drawing up a number of policy guidelines for the area, including the 1959 Mass Transportation Survey, the Year 2000 Plan and the Downtown Progress design for a revitalized Central City.






He listed several items of unfinished business. One of them is the preparation of a 20-year plan to guide the District's development from 1965 to 1985.

He also cited the District's Community Renewal Program, a three-year project, just getting under way, of cataloguing and acting to meet the District's over-all housing needs. Another major problem, he said, is to draw up a master plan for the provision of adequate parking in the city.

WASHINGTON POST
Oct 28, 1962



New cities

-  new city
-  urbanized area
-  sub-center
-  controlled open space
-  main communication lines

that in order to accommodate five million at present densities the resulting sprawl would cover most of the region's 2300 square miles.

2 *Limited growth* would place a ceiling on population between 3 and 3.5 million and prevent the further extension of the urbanized area. One way in which this might be accomplished is through the creation of a greenbelt.

3 *New cities* developed seventy miles or more from the central city to absorb excess population—all over 3.5 million. The four or five cities proposed would absorb 300,000 to 500,000 people each.

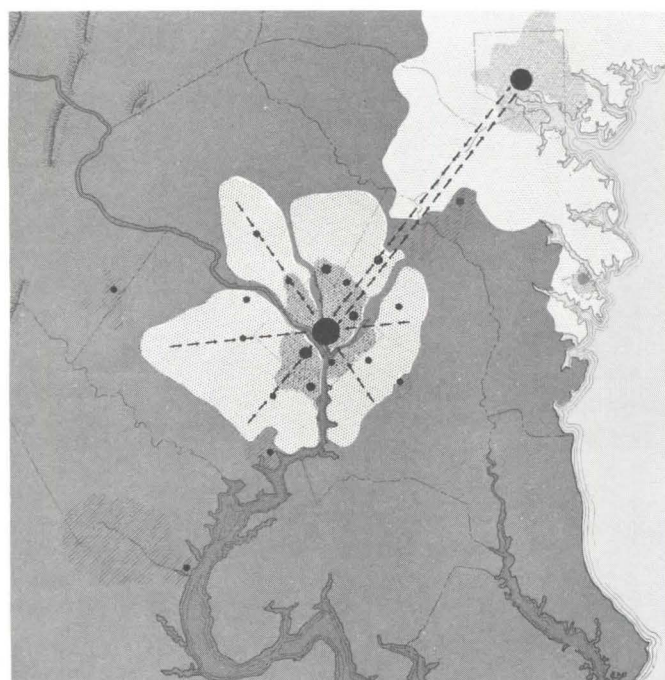
4 *New towns* to absorb between 50,000 and 150,000 each would be distributed at random throughout the region to accommodate up to one million—with four million concentrated in an enlarged central urban mass.

5 *A ring of new towns* in a regular arrangement, possibly along the thirty-mile circumferential, would absorb the second 2.5 million—the present urbanized area would continue to expand at present densities to accommodate the initial growth to 2.5 million.

6 *Suburban clusters* could be arranged in self-sufficient communities of about 100,000 persons each, not separated from the metropolitan mass as in the random new towns concept.

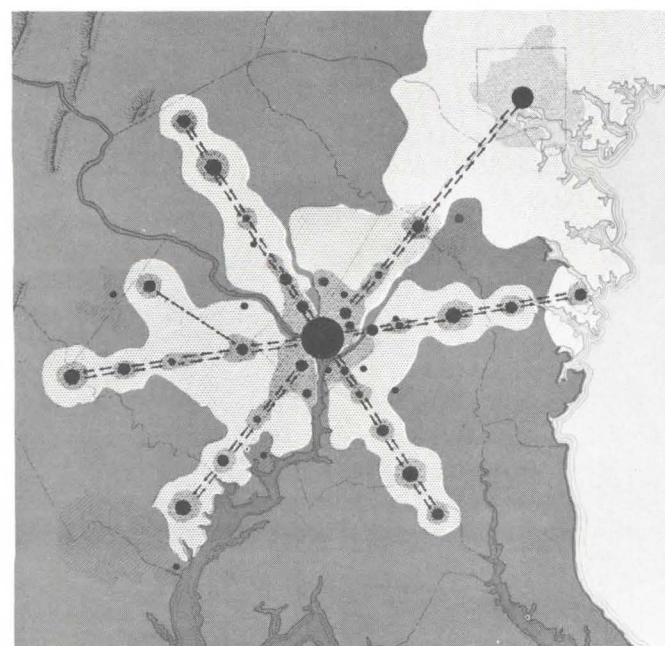
7 *Development corridors* extending out in a star pattern from the present urban core would, with higher densities along the transportation spines, accommodate five million and leave wedges of usable open space penetrating into the urban area. The corridors will be composed of a series of differing communities strung along each of the six radial transit and highway lines. These fingers of development can be four to six miles wide and extend twenty to thirty miles out from the center.

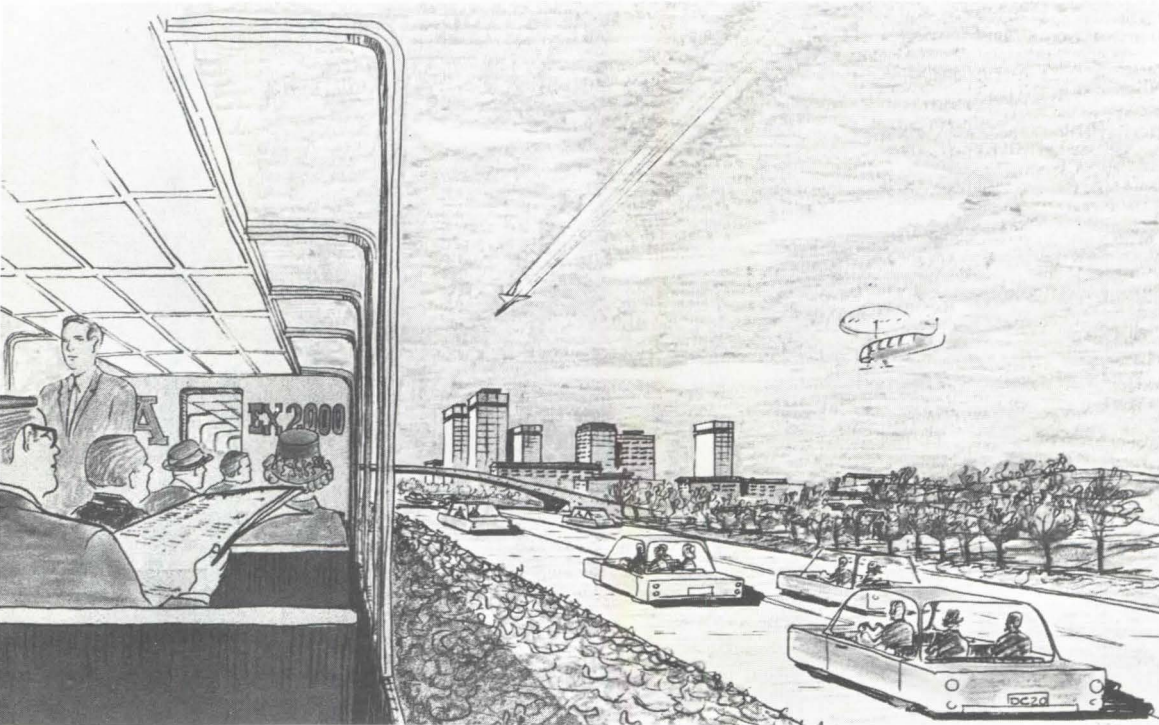
After considerable study the planners have concluded that since this region *must* absorb five million by the year 2000, this last alternative is the most feasible for doing so in an orderly manner and is the only one



Limited growth

Radial corridors





From a distance, the suburban business district would reveal its office towers and high-rise apartments. The transit rider would have alternating views of open space and urban development. The suburban transit station opens into a sunken plaza with shops and restaurants



I have the stereotyped image of the social scientist as a person who can always raise questions as to how valid an approach or decision is, but is seldom capable of giving usable assistance to the planner or decision-maker in the tougher moments of responsibility. It is with this bias in mind that I proceed to point out the very wide range of responsibilities facing the physical planner and to challenge the social planners to arrive at a point where they can effectively influence decision-making in our urban society.

The comprehensive plan quite obviously has three basic functions: first, the determination of policy, of what should go where and when; second, communication with citizens, agencies, other groups; third, co-ordination of a wide range of improvements planned and programmed by many other persons and agencies.

WILLIAM E. FINLEY
 Address to Washington
 Center for Metropolitan
 Studies, Jan 3, 1962

If Mr Finley's career here had been notable for nothing else, he would be remembered as the only man who ever found Washington's distinctive form of government a positive invitation to action. He has brought vigor and vision to an agency that had been traditionally preoccupied with endless little wrangles over public works.

Editorial
 WASHINGTON POST
 Oct 30, 1962

Fairfax Growth Plan Adjusted To Radial Idea

By Edward Messner Staff Writer

A new master plan to channel Fairfax County's booming development into urban corridors similar to those proposed in the Year 2000 Plan for metropolitan Washington is being finished by County planners.

The County's plan has been revised to show the corridors designed in the framework of the metropolitan area.

D.2 Metro-Area

THE SUNDAY STAR
Washington, D. C.
December 10, 1961

County Aide Urges Master Plan Laws

By WILLIAM DUKE Staff Writer

The chairman of the Montgomery County Planning Commission yesterday urged the proposed new master plan for Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties and said he would ask for legislation to "give the plan some teeth."

The chairman, J. State legislation which County Council to set zoning change not in with the master plan, said he would urge approval of a zoning commission could rule on routine change requests, submit appeal to the County.

The plan was presented by the Maryland-Capital Park and Planning Commission. It provides an outline for growth in two counties, adhering to principal ideas embodied in the Year 2000 plan for the region.

Planned With Pleasure
Mr. Brewer said that "very pleased" with the work of the staff and consultants in the plan. The plan will not be the official guide for the counties until a year in the making.

Approved by County Law
The plan was approved by County Law.

New City Is Planned On Beltway

Acquisition of 2,500 acres in a planned suburban city along the Capital Beltway Central avenue in Prince Georges County, Md., was announced yesterday by Irvin Lichtman, president of D. Zec, real estate investment company.

The community, to be developed by the Northampton Corp., a DISC subsidiary, "We hope," Mr. Lichtman said, "to develop on this compact, largely self-sufficient city, consisting of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and civic facilities."

purchase price of the tract is stated to be about \$180 million, Mr. Lichtman said.

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The Washington Post City Life

SECTION D SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1961
OBITUARIES WOMEN'S NEWS
AMUSEMENTS TV-RADIO COMIC

County Future Tied to District Year 2000 Plan

By Alan L. Denstoff Staff Writer

A bold new plan for the future development of Montgomery and Prince Georges counties was unveiled yesterday by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Chosen as the Year 2000 Plan for the Washington area, it is geared to a rapid transit system.

But following yesterday's presentation, Mrs. Stella W. neer, outspoken council member who had opposed the plan, said the new plan "stabilizes the position taken by the majority of the council."

Mrs. Werner said she "the new plan will bring the council and plan commission members closer together in their thinking."

Among the future developments in the area are a "satellite campus planned by the University of Maryland near White O

accommodating five million persons. "Up-town" employment and community centers will be developed and renewed to serve as the cores to these close-in areas.

The heart of the nation's Capital City, Metro-Center, is the subject of further recommendations relative to achieving the high standards of quality befitting a great capital.

These are discussed in another article herein.

The benefits which will accrue to the region if this plan is adopted are several:

1 Preservation of open space in the wedges between the development corridors.

Among those segments designated as open spaces is the Potomac River valley which through the plan could be maintained as an undeveloped area with its recreation potential reserved for the use of all residents of the region.

2 A strong, continuing Metro-Center with expanding employment opportunity in both Federal agencies and private business—of 2,200,000 jobs in this region, only 630,000 jobs will be in Metro-Center.

Much of Metro-Center will be rebuilt. Transit is an essential feature, as well as is up-graded in-town residential development—the demand for which is presently being demonstrated not only by reclamation of Foggy Bottom, Georgetown and Capitol Hill, but by the rebuilding of the Southwest as well.

The "center-oriented" regional plan assures this growth and resultant pressure for up-grading.

3 The Year 2000 Plan, while calling for a strengthened Downtown, at the same time declares that suburban growth must be given a new direction.

This plan recommends that the suburbs become more nearly self-sufficient, as well as better organized physically.

The objective of the report, which took a year to prepare, is to get wide agreement on a grand design for the development of Washington and its environs so that decisions during the next forty years will be made with the design in mind.

Only by a concert of policies among the region's many governmental jurisdictions and agencies can a sound pattern of development be achieved.

Since the publication of this plan one year ago, it has been the focus and reference for planning in all the local planning jurisdictions.

In fact, it seems to have galvanized local planning efforts. After serious evaluation as to local applicability, the surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia have adopted the growth policies promulgated in the Year 2000 Plan.

The headlines above are typical of many planning stories evoked by the leadership role assumed by the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Capital Regional Planning Council. ◀

'Corridor' Concept Set for 2 Counties

Montgomery, Prince Georges Get New Master Plan on Growth

By GILBERT GIMBLE Staff Writer

The corridor concept for development of the entire Washington region has received its first important application in a new master plan for Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties.

Presented yesterday before members of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the Montgomery County Council and the Prince Georges Board of Commissioners, the plan has been a year in the making.

New zoning patterns should be established. One new zone offers the following provisions:

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which maximizes choice by minimizing travel frictions. This pattern is also consistent with the nature of the basic regional employment characteristic, ie, office activity suitable and best-located in clustered high density readily-accessible centers. Many of the ingredients necessary to execute the development corridor plan are already approved projects scheduled for execution in the next ten years. All but one of the freeways indicated in the development corridor scheme are accepted as planned. Four of the six transit lines are recommended in the Mass Transportation Survey Report prepared by the Commission and Council in 1959. The employment centers located along the corridors will include major Federal installations.

Within the context of the study certain specific objectives were recommended for the District of Columbia which recognize and emphasize the unique character of this city as the nation's capital, as well as the center of a rapidly-growing metropolitan region. Policy for the District states that emphasis should be placed on the residential quality of the close-in areas rather than on providing for population growth at the cost of existing cherished values. Achieving this goal through conservation and regeneration of the District's residential neighborhoods should result in a city of distinct communities of a comprehensible human scale within the complex urban environment of a region

If area planners have their way, Washington in the year 2000 will be ringed by a network of "dormitory compounds strung like dead fish along traffic roads," says architectural writer Sibyl Moholy-Nagy.

The first significant test of the Year 2000 Plan's acceptability to suburban authorities will come next week when the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission unveils its own master plan for Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties. It is expected to follow the general recommendations of the Year 2000 proposal.

WASHINGTON POST
Dec 2, 1961

A Metro-Center for the Year 2000

Morton Hoppenfeld AIA, Urban Designer, National Capital Planning Commission, Here Presents a Précis of the Plan Proposals for Metro-Center—the Heart of the Region

Metro-Center is the name we now give to the original area so skilfully laid out by Pierre Charles L'Enfant in 1791. As shown on the map, it covers approximately 7400 acres, 11½ square miles. Its boundaries are naturally prescribed by the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers and the hillside to the north of Florida Avenue. The proposed Inner Loop of the freeway system encircles this area and would serve as an additional psychological definition to Metro-Center.

The title Metro-Center is expressive of the underlying concept proposed in the Year 2000 Plan. Abandoning the idea of the Central Business District as a logical planning unit, "Metro-Center" states that the heart of the metropolis is more than just a center for business, it is in fact the unique formal expression of the composite and essence of all the activities basic to the Capital City-Region. By design, Metro-Center is to be the intricate mix of government in all its institutional forms, private business, unique shopping core, culture, entertainment, housing, recreation and essential industry. The basic plan objective is to carefully combine those activities which support and augment each other while separating others for highest efficiency and amenity.

Washington has long been, and still is, a schizophrenic city. Largely because of its peculiar local government framework, real concern for its environmental and social quality has been confined to only a few select areas; ie, the monumental core and the connection across the White House area and up Connecticut Avenue. The historic lack of interest in the "whole city" has left the rest of Metro-Center in a ragged and decayed state.

One of the basic decisions of the Year 2000 Plan is to strive for centrally-oriented,

radial regional development which would keep Metro-Center as the most accessible, therefore, most desirable place. With an increasing regional population, pressure on Metro-Center would stimulate and necessitate its rebuilding, desire alone on the part of planners would not suffice.

Three characteristics make a city core successful: accessibility, choice (variety, opportunity) and dependability (stability). The Plan attempts to satisfy these criteria. Access is accomplished by a balanced system of radial freeways which converge on an Inner Loop, together with a similar system of rail rapid transit. The rail system would serve the high density employment centers and the retail core. The freeway system would serve primarily to bypass through traffic around the center and secondarily for off-peak access.

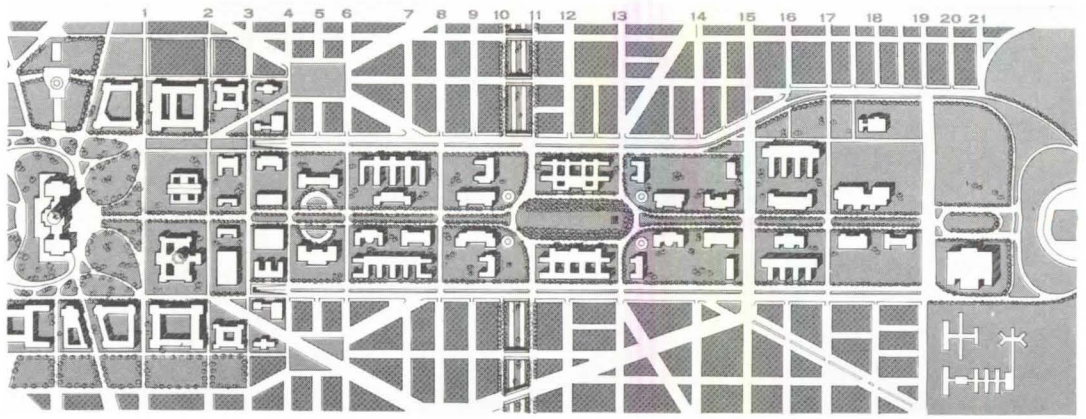
Dependability is in many ways a function of the other two criteria. In order to aid in the creation of a place of utmost choice and opportunity in all regional activities a renaissance of some of the "design principles" of L'Enfant and Jefferson is proposed.

The L'Enfant Plan concept had special uses and buildings dispersed throughout the city at "special places." These were his "pauses" (circles, squares) along the diagonal avenues. These places, given over to churches, states and other institutions, would insure a life and quality to the whole city; they were thus marked on his plan. L'Enfant also suggested that the public squares, mentioning in particular the Capitol Plaza, be lined with arcaded shops and coffee houses—obviously implying a human use and scale for the important areas. These aspects of the plan have failed to survive the passing years of neglect and Beaux-Arts monumentality. Metro-Center has been the product of the

This is needed, he said, "to transform Washington from the old-fashioned centralized city with a single enlarged nucleus, to the more open and varied pattern of the new regional city."

"In such an urban pattern," Lewis Mumford went on to say, "central Washington will be able to recover the beauty and dignity that L'Enfant originally envisioned," restoring a Washington that has been undermined by highway engineers' "bungling attempts" to handle traffic without concern for forces generating traffic.

WASHINGTON POST
Nov 24, 1961



The Downer-Clarke Plan, 1941

“precinct philosophy” which set aside “the capital” (Federal aspects) from “the city.”

The underlying philosophy of the Plan for the Year 2000 is to wed and merge the two into a true “Capital City.”

To that end the following policies have been adopted:

1 Sound growth of Metro-Center’s governmental, cultural and commercial facilities should be encouraged.

2 A mixture of compatible land-uses should be encouraged in Metro-Center (particularly housing at high densities).

As the National Capital Region grows to a projected population of 5 million and an employment of 2.2 million in the year 2000, Metro-Center will likewise grow, reaching an employment of about 650,000. While this will represent a rate of growth only about half as great as that to be experienced within the entire region, Metro-Center will continue to be the dominant center of activity.

The employment growth expected in Metro-Center is to some extent inevitable. In the past decade over one-sixth of the region’s total growth occurred here without rapid transit, without a downtown renewal program—without any of the influences toward expansion that are currently anticipated. As these new programs take hold, further growth will be assured. On the other hand, the continued spread of population at greater and greater distances from the center will undoubtedly result in the decentralization of some functions.

There are, then, a number of opposing influences, tending both to accelerate and to retard the growth of Metro-Center. The problem is to identify and encourage the growth of the many activities appropriate to the national capital which need central locations and minimize the rest.

Greater variety should be one of the most important attributes of the new Metro-Center. This variety will take the form of closely-knit mixtures of different downtown activities and their architectural setting; it

should have both functional and perceptual aspects. Most businesses, government agencies and other activities which locate in the central area do so at least partly because they will be accessible to many other activities with which they have frequent dealings. At the same time the visual variety of the area makes it more stimulating and exciting as a place to shop, do business, or just visit. Both of these aspects of variety are essential to the satisfactory functioning of Metro-Center as the core of a great city.

Once the basic movement systems and related activities are established, the question of appropriate location and form must be resolved. The two viable form-giving elements in Washington were seized upon to establish the design: First was the system of open spaces, dominated by the monumental Mall and appendant areas augmented by the basic diagonal (view) streets, parks, circles and squares. Second is the location and form of Federal buildings (their combination being the symbolic *raison d’être* of Washington). Consistent with the basic objective of creating a new and variegated Capital City, the following policies were adopted:

Every effort should be made to complete and enhance the basic monumental areas of the Mall and Capitol Hill.

New public buildings which should be appropriately monumental, and memorials of unique and monumental character, should be located on sites consistent with their importance.

The monumental areas of central Washington—the Mall and Capitol Hill in particular—are the outstanding physical features of the city, and form the primary image of Washington in the minds of people throughout the world, notwithstanding the fact that these areas are marred by temporary structures and unfinished building complexes. Public effort should be concentrated on the removal of the temporaries and the completion of the monumental

groupings of buildings intended for these settings.

Implicit in this proposed policy is the distinction between monumental public buildings and another type of public structure. As Federal and other public activities have grown in scope and kind, the symbolic or monumental housing of many of these activities has tended to become secondary in importance to their operational requirements. This policy proposes, therefore, that a monumental treatment be reserved for such special functions as the various Courts, the National Archives, and the like, and not extended to such purely operational functions as, for instance, the Internal Revenue Service or the Housing and Home Finance Agency.

New public offices of an operational nature should be housed in non-monumental buildings which will satisfy all of the requirements of efficiency and which will at the same time, by virtue of the highest quality of design and strategic siting, have the dignity and strength to establish their public identity.

This is a necessary complement to the preceding policy. Current estimates of Metro-Center's new growth in Federal employment to the Year 2000 Plan places the increase at about 75,000. A very large proportion of this growth will have to be accommodated in buildings not included in current plans, since those now being planned will house only a few more employees than are now working in temporary and obsolete structures. At current public-building densities (floor-area-ratio 2:3.5), the needed additional public space would occupy over 250 acres of Metro-Center land.

It is inconsistent and often wasteful to house operational activities in monumental buildings. Adopted policy proposes that new public office buildings be designed and constructed using the best of proven contemporary techniques, providing more efficient, flexible space and allowing many economies in construction and operation which would not be possible in monumental structures. These new buildings would make more efficient use of ground area; they could be developed at densities at least twice those of 1960 without necessarily exceeding today's height limitations or reducing the amount of useful open space provided.

It is anticipated that operational public buildings would establish a "new image," different from the conventional "public" (classic monumental) image, which has in any case been weakened through its use by such private activities as banks, insurance companies, and chambers of commerce. The

public character of the new buildings would be expressed both by the quality of the design of structures and by their strategic location in relation to streets, open spaces, and other buildings. Operational public office buildings would be smaller in perimeter (bulk) than is the current practice, and possibly higher, and would create small usable outdoor spaces at pedestrian scale. Their siting would take advantage of the unique prerogatives of the government as a builder: Streets might in some cases be spanned by structures to create a sense of closure, structures might be extended beyond the normal building-line to establish a special prominence, sidewalks could be placed in arcades to broaden pedestrian access, usable open spaces would be created to achieve small parks, plazas, sitting and strolling areas lending prestige and amenity to adjacent areas. These are the techniques which could be used to give the public offices an immediate visual and symbolic distinction from other buildings in the community.

During the development of the Plan, two vitally differing alternatives were posed which would establish the future form Metro-Center. The policy regarding types of structure is basic in the design decision as to where they might appropriately be located. The National Capital Planning Commission adopted this policy:

New public office structures of non-monumental character should be located within the central area of the city in a series of important, relatively small, but strategically-located groupings with a degree of visual continuity.

The alternatives discussed were the old "East Mall" idea vs the new "cellular" pattern.

The idea of an East Mall probably originated in 1929, when an "Avenue of the States" was proposed to replace East Capitol Street. This Avenue would have provided sites for a number of structures, one for each state, containing exhibition and information facilities, offices for Senators and Congressmen, and related offices. This and later East Mall proposals were considered to be extensions of the monumental concepts for central-city areas which had preceded them, although the East Mall itself had no specific precedents in the eighteenth-century plans of L'Enfant or Ellicott, or in the McMillan Plan of 1901.

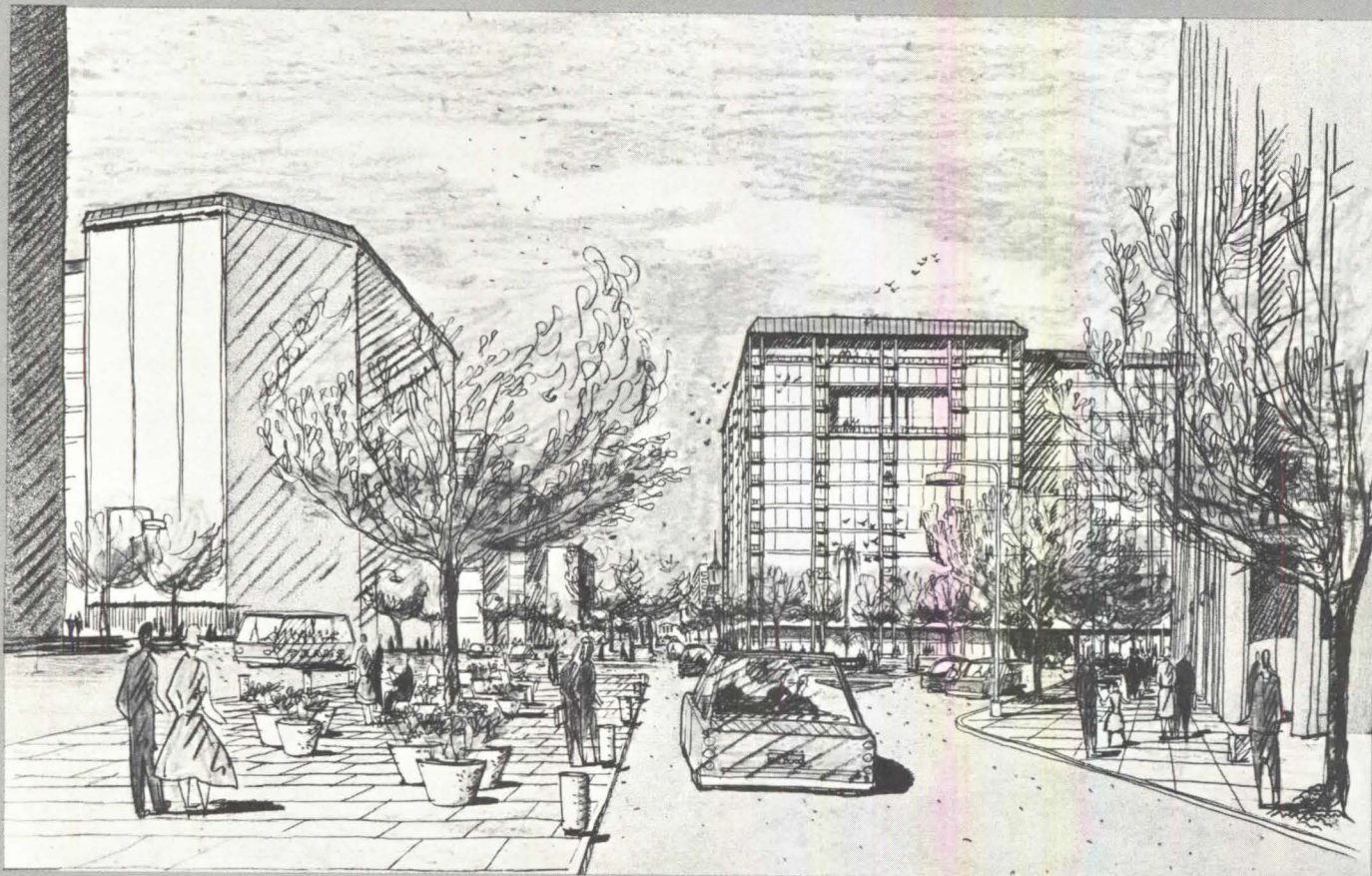
The East Mall concept as it was currently being considered was proposed in the "Downer-Clarke Plan," prepared in 1941 for the Federal Works Agency. This plan proposed public offices and institutional

A military friend once told me of an old Army gamesmanship device to avoid making decisions. If you're assigned a problem, he said, all you have to do is make it so big that everyone finally agrees it's insoluble.

The so-called Year 2000 Plan is being used in just this fashion. It has been grasped by too many of our planning policy-makers and technicians to sidestep painful but necessary controversy. It has been exploited by the philosophers of negativity.

One troublesome aspect of our current Year 2000 planning is that it treats the central city as a sort of hole in the doughnut. Our planning sights must be set in the central city, in the midst of the forces that fashion metropolitan development, rather than at the periphery. How can we intelligently tell where our development spokes should go if we haven't planned the hub of our metropolitan core?

Philip L. Graham
WASHINGTON POST
Oct 11, 1962



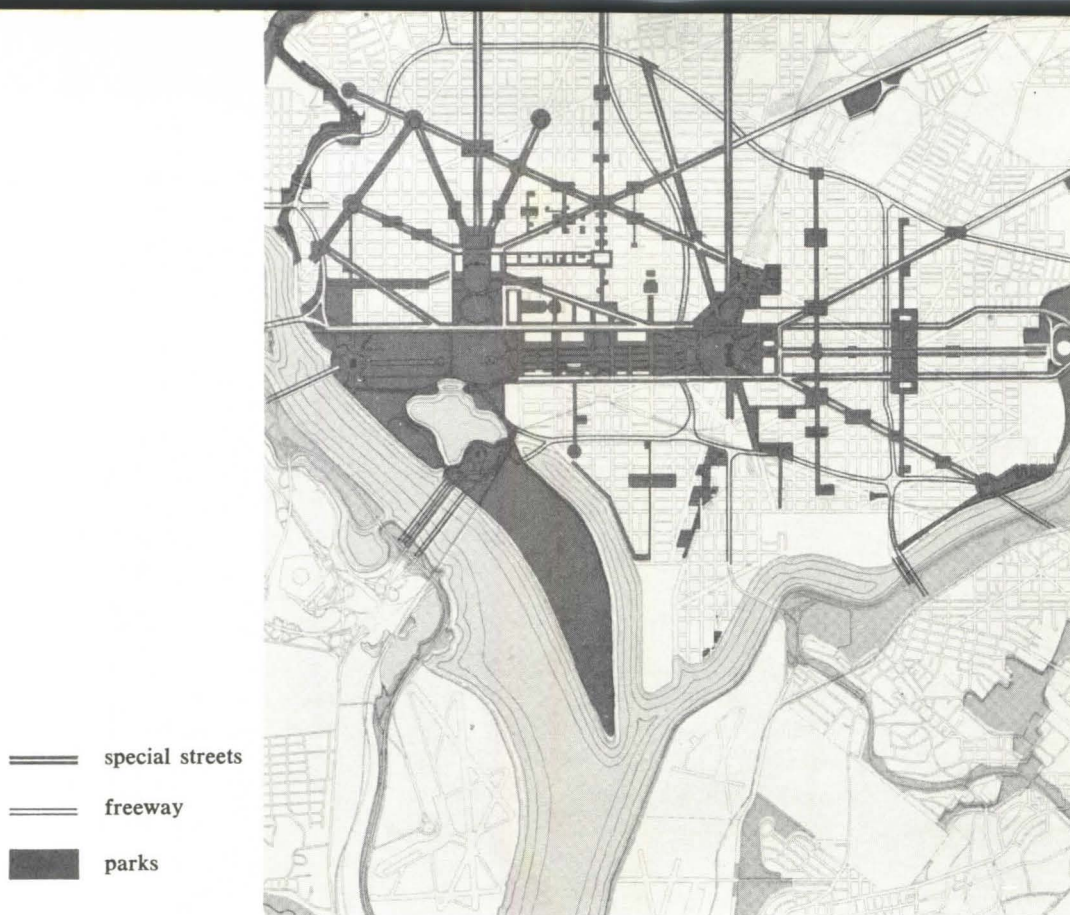
A Sense of Closure (above)—

The unique quality of this new kind of urban space along New York Avenue's diagonal will result from the spanning of certain minor streets by Federal buildings

The Lack of Closure (right)—

The vast openness of the existing street and building. Pattern fails to bring out the potential of this site





facilities in the area between Constitution and Independence Avenues at a density about one-third to one-half that of the Federal Triangle. The development was intended to reduce congestion west of the Capitol, to utilize relatively low-cost land, and to upgrade the declining residential areas east of the Capitol. The Downer-Clarke proposal was included as part of the 1950 Comprehensive Plan of the National Capital Planning Commission. None of the East Mall proposals anticipated the construction of an underground transit system.

Automobile access would be simpler to handle than in more central locations and would thus encourage its use. A subway line might serve the whole development if the line were located along, or within a few blocks of, East Capitol Street. The design does, however, require structures like those of the monumental type located on the present Mall. The idea is, in fact, a miniature "mall" and as such was felt to be detracting from the singular impact of *the* Mall. Furthermore, the beneficial effect of such a development on surrounding residential areas is doubtful.

The alternative to the East Mall concept is "cellular" rather than linear in form, and would consist of a series of relatively small clusters of structures, each of which would seem complete in itself and integral with its immediate environs. These groupings would be used whenever possible to enhance

the wide avenues and small-scale open spaces which were such an important part of L'Enfant's original plan and which continue to offer strong civic design potentials. The scale and character of the non-monumental public structures recommended here would be particularly suited to sites in and near the Central Business Area, where many of the major avenues and open spaces are located.

Central sites for Federal offices would put them at the place of greatest accessibility and would expedite the many necessary day-to-day operational contacts with other central-area activities, both public and private. Their architectural quality, provision of open space, and their volume of business relationships with certain private office activities all should operate to create new prestige centers and attract new private development to nearby locations, this interaction serving to augment the image of the Federal government as a crucial living part of the metropolitan core. The development of these buildings and spaces could displace raggedness at the fringe of the business district, and could serve in the future to provide a stable transition area between the Central Business Area and close-in residential areas.

The accompanying sketch of a probable site on New York Avenue illustrates the idea. The location of these "special sites" was keyed to an expanded system of special streets and park areas to serve as the structuring element of the design plan.

This was the policy eventually adopted:

A comprehensive open-space system should be development throughout Metro-Center, connecting and providing access to parks and other community facilities and serving all other open space needs.

The original L'Enfant Plan of Washington was based largely on a very profound concern for the way people would get around and learn to know the city. In his very brief description, L'Enfant discussed such things as reciprocal vistas, special squares, places and boulevards. He was indeed concerned with the "image" of the Capital City in the minds of its users.

The bare bones of major landmarks and diagonal routes and vistas have served the city well. However, much of the quality of the original conception has been changed or neglected. The sum of today's image of "Metro-Center" is limited almost entirely to the singular statement of the Mall and fragments of the diagonal system which have taken on a design quality consistent with their potential.

The proposed system shown here attempts to establish a visual structure consistent with the complex functional requirements of today's Metro-Center. The connective tissue of "open space" would utilize special design treatment as a means to bring out the important streets to link special areas visually with each other, and generally to add a series of open spaces at scales ranging from the grand monumentality of the Mall to the informality of special shopping or residential streets and places. Such a system should serve as a constant source of orientation and delight.

The scale and size of the elements must be precisely related to the type of activity they serve, to the surrounding buildings, and to the number and kind of users anticipated. This framework would serve also to identify important design responsibilities and opportunities where they exist and to create them where none existed before. Thus, each successive builder would have a meaningful point of departure. It was in this plan that Pennsylvania Avenue was singled out as a design "opportunity."

These other development policies were approved together with the cellular plan:

The major open spaces of a monumental scale in Metro-Center should not be extended or encroached upon.

The development of small urban open spaces available to the public should be encouraged in connection with new governmental, institutional, commercial and high-density residential facilities.

The Mall, stretching from the Capitol

west virtually to the shore of the Potomac, is one of the world's great open spaces. Its scale and character are unique, and make it Washington's most remarkable physical feature. There seems no justification, however, in extending the Mall to other portions of the central area (East Mall?). It is an entity in its present form and comparable spaces elsewhere in Metro-Center could only detract from its effect. Further, attempts to give the Mall a different scale by redesigning it with fountains, outdoor cafes, paved areas, and other "humanizing" ornamentations would also result in a weakening of its unique aspect. Concern for the human scale, while certainly desirable throughout most of the city, should not be extended to the one area where it was never intended and where its presence might be detrimental.

The pedestrian scale, is, on the other hand, quite appropriate in such places as the Central Business Area, government office areas, and high-density residential areas, where land is intensively developed. Relatively small "urban" parks can be located in these areas, normally no more than an acre in extent and often considerably less. They would be developed for passive recreation with fountains, landscaping, benches, and the like, but only in special cases would they contain facilities for the more active pastimes. Public policy should aim at the provision of these urban parks in connection with high-density public and private developments of all kinds.

These further policies were approved:

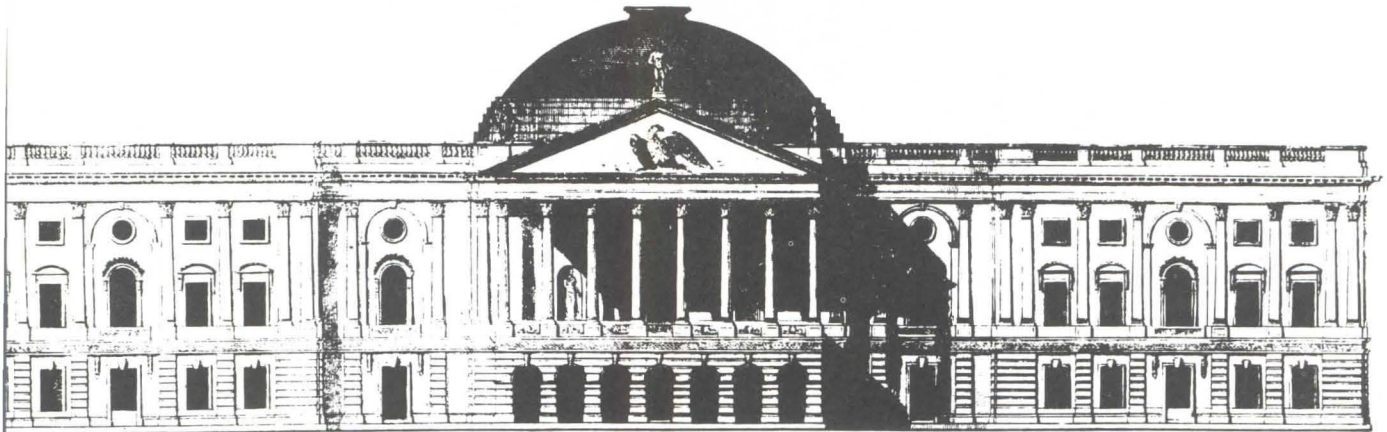
Special architectural design coordination and treatment should be encouraged on streets and avenues in Metro-Center which form important parts of the open-space system.

Special attention should be given to the development and maintenance of sound housing areas at the edges of the Central Business Area and other non-residential areas.

In the interest of limiting the horizontal extension of the Central Business Area, an increase in typical building density should be encouraged throughout the area, to the extent that this is consistent with good design and the provision of services including access and parking.

The Plan has served as a guide and stimulus to more detailed design and development plans and projects.

The Downtown is being refined within its context, Federal building sites are being designated and daily planning-design decisions are being made. The Plan for the Year 2000 tried to look ahead forty years; as a guide it serves for today's actions. ◀



An Historic Review and Current Proposals for the Nation's Capitol

by Mario E. Campioli AIA, Assistant Architect of the Capitol

Toward the end of the eighteenth century when the deliberations over the location of a permanent seat of government had concluded, the founders of the nation were confronted with a situation having no precedent in ancient history, and one in which modern history has shown few parallels. The selection of a place that was almost a wilderness for the capital of a great republic was unique. Ancient capitals were the seat of all that was best in literature and art. These cities were foremost in commerce, population and wealth long before they became the capital of a powerful nation. Our capital was located in the open fields "where trees were yet growing and the streets unsurveyed."

Time has long since shown the wisdom of the choice.

Looking back, it is difficult to understand the bitterness and acrimony of the debate over the location. Once the decision was made, however, to build the new Capital City on the banks of the Potomac, work began at once.

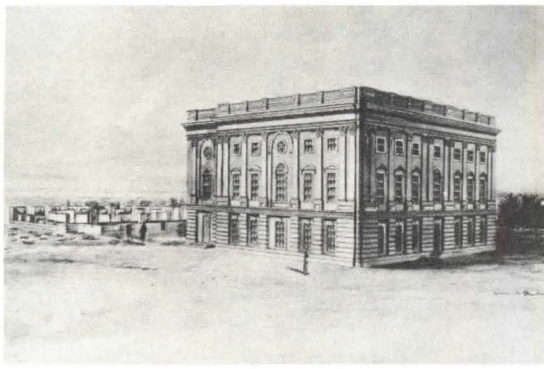
President Washington took a personal hand in the preparation of plans, and his

influence cannot be overemphasized. With fortunate and characteristic vision he and Pierre L'Enfant located the site for the Capitol where the natural elevation was most suitable to provide the great city-to-be a splendid background.

Both Washington and Jefferson were keenly interested in the planning of the Capitol, and they felt that it was the progress of this building that would "inspire or depress confidence in the new nation." They were both determined that the building must have a noble plan, "simple, beautiful, excellently arranged and moderate in size" in the Roman classic style as the best embodiment of the ideals of the Republic—a belief in the liberty of the human spirit, in the rights of man, and in the value of the individual.

The competition for the design of the Capitol brought forth a number of plans, some of which were naive and crude, others indicated a high degree of architectural competence. The winner was Dr William Thornton, a physician and widely-traveled and learned gentleman, of British Tortola in the West Indies.

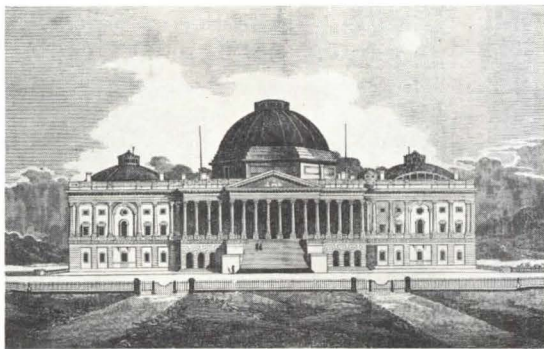
Above:
Dr Thornton's original
winning design,
approved by
President Washington



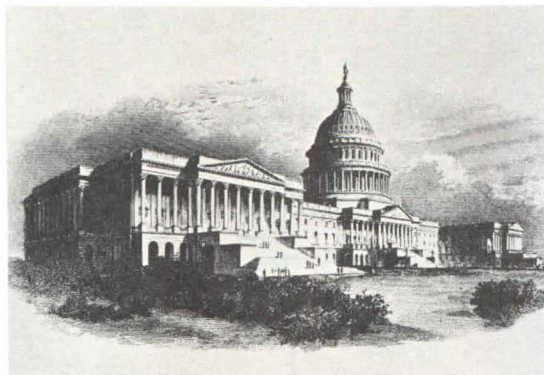
The Capitol when first occupied by the Congress, 1800



The Capitol in Jefferson's day, 1814. Note passage connecting Senate and House chambers



The Capitol in 1827, with completed center section and Bulfinch's dome



Thomas U. Walter added the House and Senate wings

Construction of the Capitol began with the erection of the north section known as the original Senate wing under Dr Thornton's supervision in 1793, with the assistance of the near-winner, Stephen Hallet, and also George Hadfield and James Hoban, who succeeded each other in that order. The cornerstone was laid by President Washington with imposing ceremonies on September 18th of the same year.

The hand and mind of Washington is ever-present in the Capitol. His letters show that he was in constant touch with the architects who worked on the building, guiding them and influencing them until his death in 1799.

In 1800 the original work was completed and the archives, general offices, papers and furniture of the government were moved by water from Philadelphia. President Adams came overland by coach and Congress occupied the building for the first time at the opening of the Second Session of the Sixth Congress.

The capital was then a mere village and poorly prepared to entertain the officers of the government, although their number was small. The employees for the first year numbered only 126 in all and the total sum paid in salaries that year was \$125,881.

Work on the Capitol progressed with the construction of the south section known as the original House wing, which was planned by Thornton, but constructed under Benjamin Henry Latrobe.

Latrobe, considered by some to be the founder of the architectural profession in the United States, came to Washington in 1803, and was put in charge of completing the Capitol. Structurally the building was in a state of confusion. Some walls were completed, others were half-finished. Foundations had been laid and then abandoned. Latrobe managed to carry the Capitol along following Thornton's plan, yet modifying it somewhat to suit his and Jefferson's taste. He finished the original House wing in 1811, and joined it to the Senate wing with a wooden walkway, across the area now occupied by the Rotunda.

After the British burned the building in 1814, Latrobe was entrusted with the rebuilding of the heavily damaged interior. He took great liberties with Thornton's design and completely revised the plan for the Chamber of the House of Representatives, discarding the original elliptical design and constructing a semicircular one instead. Around the perimeter of this chamber he placed a row of marble columns—the first use of marble in the building. Today this room is known as Statuary Hall.

His work may also be seen in the old

Supreme Court Room on the first floor. Legislation was proposed in the 87th Congress to restore this room and the old Senate Chamber on the principal floor to their original grandeur—an accomplishment which would certainly rank as one of the most important restorations in Washington since the renovation of the White House.

Latrobe changed the design of both the east and west central elements, providing a wider east portico than Thornton had designed, and introducing a great flight of steps on the east and omitting them on the west. These changes made the east the important entrance, whereas the original concept was for the principal entrance to face the Mall.

Other interesting examples of Latrobe's work may be seen on the interior columns on the Senate side which have capitals using ears of corn as the decorative form, and in those employing tobacco leaves.

In 1817, Charles Bulfinch, the distinguished architect of Boston, was called to continue work on the Capitol and to carry out Latrobe's designs for the Rotunda section and the east portico and steps. Bulfinch took considerable liberty with Latrobe's details, however, and changed the designs for the west portico. He was responsible for the design of the original low dome although it was similar to an earlier design prepared by Latrobe. In his design of this part of the building, Bulfinch departed completely from the design of William Thornton.

The next additions to the Capitol came between 1851 and 1865 when the present House and Senate wings were built. In 1851, President Fillmore accepted the plans of Thomas U. Walter, one of the founders of the Institute and its second President, and charged him with the responsibility of adding the wings and replacing the low dome with one more in proportion with the expanded structure.

Walter's dome was built of cast iron rather than masonry—an abrupt departure from conventional methods of his time. He found that the existing foundations would not support a masonry dome. This compromise does credit to the architect's ingenuity, particularly at a time when the use of ferrous metal for structural purposes was in its infancy. The splendid outline and majestic peristyle form a magnificent crown to the building—a crown of which Washington, Jefferson and Thornton would undoubtedly be proud.

In 1892, the terraces on the west side of the building were completed after the designs by Frederick Law Olmstead, and this constituted the last addition of space to the

Capitol itself until the extension of the East Central Front Project authorized in 1955.

Under the direction of a Commission, the Architect of the Capitol's Office, with the advice and counsel of a Board of Advisory and Associate Architects, completed the building with the addition of urgently needed working space for Congress by extending the east central facade 32½ feet, and reproducing in marble, and to the most exacting degree, the work of the early architects.

During the course of this work, an investigation was conducted on the condition of the dome. While the structure was found to be basically sound, improvements were recommended and were carried out simultaneously with the extension of the East Central Front. The exterior work on both the dome and the East Front, including the cleaning of the wings, was substantially complete in time for the Inauguration of President Kennedy in 1961.

Now that the dream of the early architects has been realized, it follows that the next consideration must be the future of the building. Studies have been made for its continued preservation and for possible future enlargement to meet the increasing needs of Congress.

The extended East Front emphasizes the need for an appropriate forecourt designed in scale with the composition of the Capitol. This forecourt would close the Plaza to traffic but could be used by automobiles on occasions of state by the President and heads of foreign governments. Decorative paving, graceful balustrades, pylons and fountains would further enhance the Plaza.

Before construction of the forecourt could begin, an underground garage should be built to accommodate the cars now parked on the grounds. Ample preparation was made during the recent extension project to receive such garage construction into the building in the future with a minimum of interference, delay and expense. This garage and its approaches have been carefully studied and in addition to contributing to the appearance of the area, it would eliminate the necessity of conducting commercial deliveries and the removal of trash and restaurant garbage at the sidewalk level directly in front of the building in plain view of the public and adjacent to the entrances of the House and Senate wings used by members of Congress and visitors to the Capitol. The garage would also permit limousines and cabs to discharge their passengers under cover. Each of these changes would add immeasurably to the beauty and dignity of the East Front of the Capitol.

Early this past summer, Members of the

The Capitol workmen marked Election Day today by tearing down part of the Capitol's historic but crumbling East Front.

A spokesman said the operation had no political significance.

"Some workmen are Democrats, some Republicans," the spokesman said. "This project is nonpartisan."

SEATTLE TIMES
Nov 4, 1958

Architect of the Capitol J. George Stewart revealed yesterday that two years ago when the excavation for the extension of the East Front of the Capitol was down 50 feet or more, he yet thought it wise to prepare for a giant four-decker garage someday under the East Front plaza.

With Rayburn's permission, Stewart had installed under the East Front the footings and structural steel frame to tie into the Capitol the four decks of a 2200-car underground garage—just in case.

WASHINGTON POST
Dec 28, 1961

House proposed underground parking garages on the House side, similar to the existing legislative garage on the Senate side. Existing parking lots would be properly landscaped so as not to detract from the area.

Another proposal includes a park-shop complex under the Capitol Plaza which would include a transportation center and accommodation for tourist transit facilities.

Whichever of these plans is finally accepted, the depressing parking situation which now exists on Capitol Hill cannot help but be improved.

The extension of the West Front has also been under consideration. Preliminary studies have been made for the replacement of the sandstone exterior with marble to match the other parts of the building and to increase the office, committee and dining areas of the Capitol.

Legislation is now before Congress which would create a holding area for the Legislative Branch, to provide sites for future buildings to the east, for the improvement of the surroundings of the Capitol and of other present and future Federal buildings. Preliminary studies have also been made for a new Library of Congress building which is proposed for a location east of the present Annex. Legislation has also been sponsored for locating a memorial to James Madison south of the main building of the Library of Congress. Another measure calls for the establishment of a Capitol Hill National Historical Park which has as its purpose the protection and preservation of the historical character and dignity of the area. Of course, none of these proposals or studies will become a reality until approved by the Congress and then the necessary funds appropriated.

Other legislation has recently been passed by Congress requiring the General Services Administration to consult the House Office Building Commission before acquiring land for sites or addition to sites in an area south of Independence Avenue between 3rd Street, SW and 11th Street SE. The same measure provides that the Architect of the Capitol must be consulted before the GSA may acquire land for similar purposes in the area extending from the Capitol Grounds to 11th Street NE and SE and bounded by Independence Avenue on the south and G Street NE on the north.

There are plan studies which have been proposed, but not approved by Congress, which would extend the Mall to the east from the Capitol to the Anacostia River. This plan seems to have been considered as early as 1859, as is shown in a drawing by Thomas U. Walter. It is similar to a later

plan endorsed by the National Capital Planning Commission, prepared in 1950, which did not receive approval. While this plan has no specific precedent in the eighteenth-century plans of L'Enfant, Ellicott, or in the McMillan Plan of 1901, it seems to be a worthwhile proposal, and completely in keeping with the development of the Federal and monumental areas of the city. These areas—and Capitol Hill in particular—are the outstanding physical features of the capital, and form the image of Washington in the minds of people throughout the world. Every effort should be made to complete and enhance these areas with new buildings of appropriate character and memorials located on sites consistent with their importance.

However, no one can presently foretell with certainty what the future will hold for the master plans of present and past generations in relation to the ultimate development of the area of the Legislative Branch. This, after all, will be the responsibility of future generations and their Congresses. Master plans, with any degree of finality, are difficult to accomplish and can serve only as a guide for the future, inasmuch as one Congress cannot bind a future Congress on such matters.

Down through the years the Capitol and its immediate surroundings have undergone almost constant change and, in the last analysis, the needs of Congress have brought about these changes. This is as it should be. The Capitol grows with the nation. It is against the backdrop of the Capitol that the great drama of our political life has been played. The building itself is eloquent evidence that the changes and additions have been thoughtfully made by men in whom respect and admiration for the Capitol were instinctive. The plans for the future have been carefully laid and they will undoubtedly be as successfully achieved.

The dreams of President Washington have been exceeded a hundred times over. He looked forward to a Capitol that was a combination of "grandeur, simplicity and convenience" in a setting of beautiful avenues and stately buildings—classic and grand—worthy of the great Republic. All this has been realized, and we now find that the responsibility rests with us to not only maintain what has been done before, but of seeing that the nation will continue to advance in art, commerce and wealth, and that it will never discard those energies and resources and those unique characteristics which distinguish it from other nations, and which secure and guarantee to us unsurpassed freedom, unrivaled strength and unequalled prosperity. ◀

East Capitol Street: Next, we should carefully review and complete, as soon as we can finance it, the oft-discussed plan for the development of East Capitol Street. There is no question that the plan has considerable merit, and if we can finance it by spreading the cost over a series of years, it will be of great benefit to that part of the city lying to the east of the Capitol. Furthermore, it will give a new eastern entrance to our capital, associated with the great Sports Center on the Anacostia River Parkway to Baltimore and Annapolis.

FREDERICK A. DELANO,
Chairman, NCPPC
HOUSE & GARDEN
1940

The Home of the Federal Government

by Bernard L. Boutin, Administrator, General Services Administration

Over the past two years, the Federal government has taken a long and considered look at the problems involved in meeting its space needs in the nation's capital. It has done more than merely delineate these problems; concrete programs have been undertaken to solve them.

In the summer of 1961, by direction of President Kennedy, an Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Space was organized to study the government's immediate and long-term space needs, particularly in the Washington area. The Committee, in reporting its conclusions last year, commented that "The problem of office space in and around the District of Columbia is acute. With each succeeding year, the needs outpace efforts to catch up." An expanded program for Federal construction in the Washington area was recommended for the next decade, coupled to a plan of action for eliminating temporary and obsolete government-owned buildings. The Committee urged encouragement of excellence in design of Federal buildings, saying that "The belief that good design is optional, or in some way separate from the question of the provision of office space itself, does not bear scrutiny and in fact invites the least efficient use of public money." However, it warned against development of any "official style" and asserted that "Design must flow from the architectural profession to the government, and not vice versa." Among other recommendations by the Committee was that close attention should be given to redevelopment of Pennsylvania Avenue. The Committee said: "Pennsylvania Avenue should be the great thoroughfare of the city of Washington. Instead it remains a vast, unformed, cluttered expanse at the heart of the nation's capital."

As Administrator of General Services, it was my privilege to serve as a member of that Committee along with the Special Assistant to the President for Cabinet and Departmental Relations, the Secretaries of Labor and Commerce and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget. Moreover, since GSA is the construction and space manage-

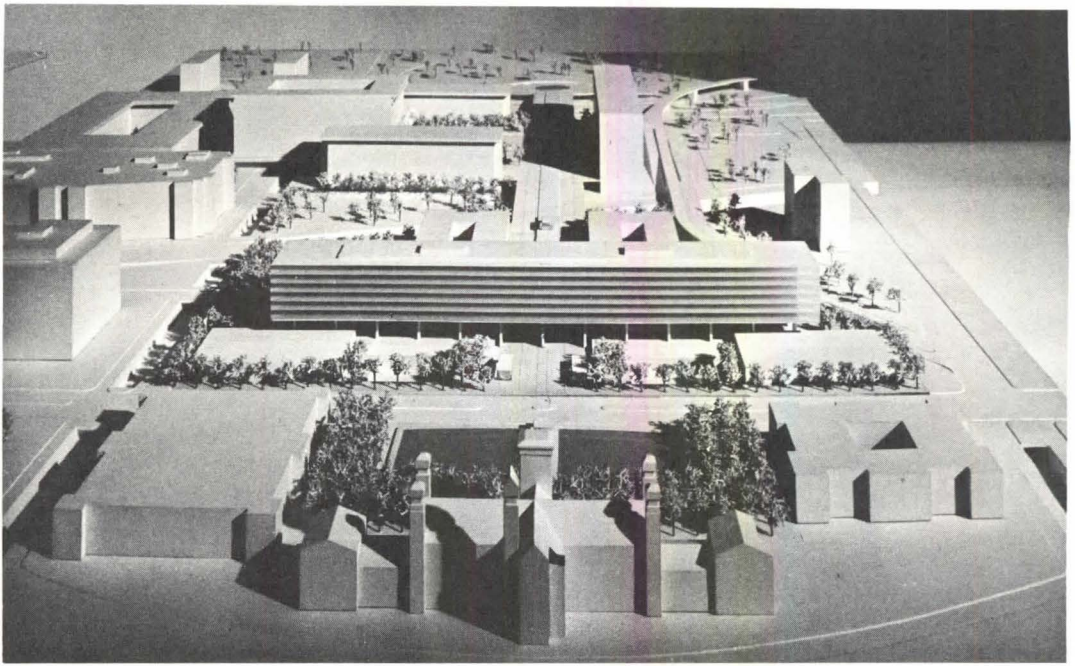
ment arm of the government, it will have a special responsibility in the months and years ahead to insure that the space needs of Federal departments and agencies are met in the Washington area with proper regard to economy, efficiency and esthetic and historical values in keeping with Washington's status as the capital of a great country.

Substantial progress already has been made. President Kennedy, by Executive Order, has given GSA broader authority in assigning space to Federal agencies throughout the country, including, of course, the Capital City. This directive, rightfully, has been recognized widely as of utmost importance. Representative Albert Thomas of Texas, Chairman of the Independent Offices Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, for one, noted that under the Executive Order ". . . the Administrator of General Services is given the authority he needs to direct the assignment and utilization of space," adding that "since GSA is in truth and in fact the government's civil real estate agent, it needed desperately to have its authority strengthened in order to properly perform this necessary function."

The Congress has removed the restriction which limited GSA to a relatively small area in Washington for the acquisition of real property. Removal of this limitation will permit a better distribution of public buildings throughout the capital area.

The Public Works Committees of the Congress approved three more major projects for the Washington area: a building to house the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a Geological Survey building and a GSA Records Center. Funds have been provided for sites and designs for these buildings which will provide some 2.4 million square feet of space.

A new plan has been devised for redevelopment of Lafayette Square, directly across from the White House. It will provide needed space for Federal activities in the area while, at the same time, preserve the residential scale and the early nineteenth-century character of the facades on the east



Federal Office Building No 5 will bridge 10th Street Mall. Preliminary study by Curtis and Davis, Fordyce & Hamby Associates, Frank Grad & Sons, Associated Architects

and west sides of the square which had been threatened with demolition.

The Congress has authorized GSA to use space over and under 10th Street SW in order that a unique building bridging the entrance to the 10th Street Mall may be constructed.

The Pennsylvania Avenue Advisory Council formed as a result of the Ad Hoc Committee's report has been meeting to draft recommendations to the National Capital Planning Commission for improving Pennsylvania Avenue, primary axis of the Capital City as originally envisaged.

The extent of the Federal government's space problem in and around its home city is almost unbelievable. Federal agencies are occupying space at some 300 locations in the Washington metropolitan area and of this number only 49 are permanent public buildings. The arithmetic looks like this:

- 23.3 million square feet in 49 permanent public buildings
- 5.5 million square feet in 41 temporary buildings
- 3.7 million square feet in 63 obsolete government buildings
- 5.2 million square feet of leased space at 150 locations.

In view of the large number of locations, you might imagine that fragmentation of agencies would be a serious problem. It is. For example, the Department of Defense must discharge its responsibilities from some 50 locations, the Department of Commerce from 27, the Department of Labor from 20 locations and the Department of State from

19. Consolidation of related agency functions is an obvious need.

An even more serious facet of the space problem is the fact that more than one-third of the Federal space does not meet reasonable modern standards. Even a large share of the space in the 49 buildings with a permanent role in GSA planning falls short of these standards and must be upgraded for efficient further use. Government activities in temporary or obsolete buildings with incurable deficiencies—whether government-owned or leased—must be relocated.

The future of Washington as a physically attractive Federal city, however, is by no means dark. Later this year, for instance, four new Federal Office Buildings are scheduled for completion: FOB's 8, 9, 10A and 10B—headquarters respectively for the Food and Drug Administration, the Civil Service and Federal Power Commissions, the Federal Aviation Agency and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. They will provide some 3,000,000 square feet of space and will permit demolition of more of the war-spawned temporary buildings which so deface our Capital City. And completion of the new Museum of History and Technology of the Smithsonian Institution will give new luster to the vista provided by the Mall.

Add to these buildings nearing completion the new Federal structures which are planned and the programs being undertaken to improve permanent Federal buildings, to demolish unsightly temporary buildings and to revitalize Pennsylvania Avenue and the future of Washington as the home of the Federal government brightens indeed. ◀

LAFAYETTE SQUARE - THE FINAL WORD

Remarks by Bernard L. Boutin

Lafayette Square is one of the best-known parks in the United States. Directly across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House, it is visited each year by thousands of Americans and by citizens of nations throughout the world. It is a square richly flavored by events and associations from our long history as a nation.

Through the years, there have been plans and programs for changing the historical character of this square. Some have been placed in effect, others have not.

Last year, as the new Administrator of General Services, I was confronted by a plan providing for increased space for Federal activities on the periphery of the square, a plan which called for demolition of many of the buildings fronting upon the square which have had long historical significance. It became a matter of great concern to me. I talked with architects, historians, and many others . . . seeking opinions on how best the need for Federal office space could be met in the Lafayette Square area without doing violence to its simple charm.

The decision was made then that this old square should not be allowed to fade away. Clearly, a new approach was necessary if the square, as generations of Americans

have known it, was to be preserved. An architect—John Carl Warnecke FAIA—was retained to bring this concept to fruition and, as I am sure you will discover, he and his associates have done their work well.

What are the principles behind the new plan? Simply this: We will preserve the residential scale and the early nineteenth-century character of the facades on the east and west sides of the square, while, at the same time, we will provide needed space for Federal activities in the area.

The lines of small residences along both the Jackson Place and Madison Place sides of the square will be kept and improved and the higher-rise buildings—the new Executive Office Building on the west side and a Courts Building on the east side—will be in the background behind the residential-scale facades. Through openings in the facades on either side of the square, entrance to the new buildings will be via garden courts.

I think that this new plan has resolved a dilemma. It preserves the heritage of Lafayette Square and, at the same time, it provides the new space which we need for Federal activities vital to our future.

Reproduced on the next page is a letter I have received from the President.

John Carl Warnecke, the third architect to undertake the project, has now presented a plan that achieves a happy reconciliation of the White House's need for new offices with the Nation's need to preserve its historic buildings. Following the suggestions of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, he puts the two proposed Federal buildings in the centers of the blocks flanking the Square, enabling the GSA to preserve, and even refurbish, the fine old houses along Jackson and Madison Places. The plan promises the preservation of a charming enclave of greenery and good taste at the heart of the city, and provides a precedent for intelligent conservation throughout Washington.

*Editorial,
WASHINGTON POST
Oct 1, 1962*

Lafayette Square, with new Executive Office Building—John Carl Warnecke Associates, Architects





East side of Lafayette Square, showing new Courts Building (above). The Executive Office Building as it will appear on 17th Street (below)



View of model showing landscaped courts between Jackson Place and 17th Street fronts

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 15, 1962

Dear Bernie:

I would like to tell you how pleased Mrs. Kennedy and I are with the preliminary architectural studies of Lafayette Square.

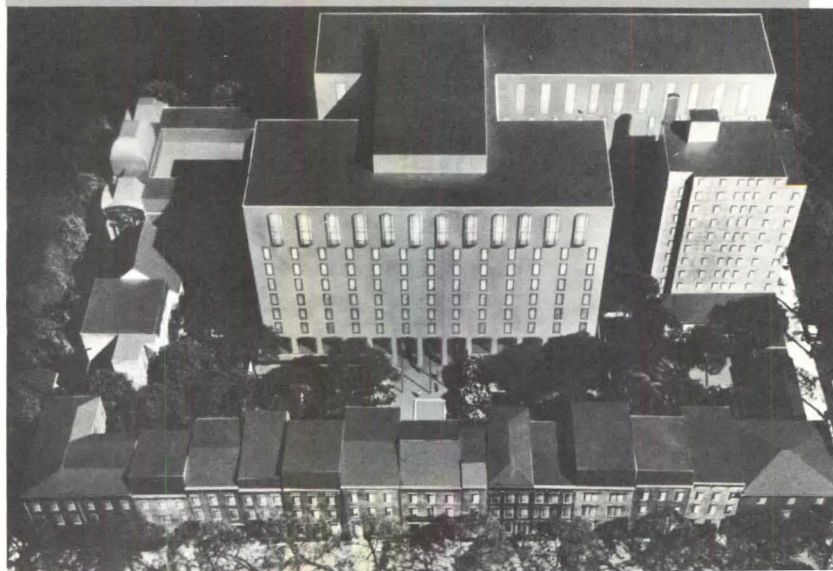
I have been reflecting on the significance of this work, not only in the terms of the importance of it to the environs of the White House and our capital, but to what it means in a broader sense to other cities and communities throughout America.

As you know, I am fully cognizant of the progress made by American Architects and Planners in their contribution to our country in contemporary design. This coupled with equal progress made in our cities by their respective governing bodies in forging ahead with vast programs of urban renewal and redevelopment leads me to comment on the manner in which these plans are actually carried out. There are throughout our land specific areas and specific buildings of historical significance or architectural excellence that are threatened by this onward march of progress. I believe that the importance of Lafayette Square lies in the fact that we were not willing to destroy our cultural and historic heritage but that we were willing to find means of preserving it while still meeting the requirements of growth in government. I hope that the same can be done in other parts of our country.

I am particularly pleased that in this case you and the architects were able to express in the new buildings the architecture of our times in a contemporary manner that harmonizes with the historic buildings.

I congratulate you on this fine start.

The Honorable Bernard L. Boutin
Administrator of General Services Administration
Washington 25, D.C.





mainder being carried out by the permanent staff of the Department. Architects are selected by a panel of five officials in the Department of Buildings and Grounds. There is no apparent policy on design, each architect being allowed a moderate degree of independence—subject to cost limitations and the avoidance of all extremes. Results have been structurally sound but esthetically unexciting.

The list of proposed public buildings consists mainly of schools. The Civic Center, located in the area between D and F and

3rd and 5th Streets NW, is slated to get one addition under the current six-year plan—the West Administration Building, east of 4th Street NW and south of Indiana Avenue.

Throughout its history Washington has had a tremendous asset in the L'Enfant Plan. In spite of this, the city has so far failed to achieve the social equilibrium, cultural vitality and physical distinction which one would expect in the capital of the United States. For this failure the District's cumbersome system of government and administration is in large part responsible. ◀



An Action Plan for Downtown

by Vice Admiral Oswald S. Colclough, USN (Ret), Chairman, Executive Committee
National Capital Downtown Committee, Inc

The Action Plan for Downtown Washington was prepared by a professional staff with training and experience in city planning, engineering and architecture under the supervision of administrators with experience in urban renewal, and with the assistance of consultants from the fields of market and real estate economics, civil engineering, city planning, opinion research, and urban renewal. The staff worked in close cooperation with the National Capital Planning Commission, the National Capital Transportation Agency, the District of Columbia Government, and the Redevelopment Land Agency; it received policy guidance from an executive committee of Washington businessmen and civic leaders; and it sought the advice of representatives of more than ninety private and public organizations concerned with the welfare of the nation's capital.

This train of preparation, supervision, assistance, cooperation, policy guidance, and advice is cited to emphasize the complexity of the task of planning for the revitalization of the Downtown area of a major metropol-

itan city. In Washington, the task is complicated further because, as the nation's capital, it must respond to special requirements in addition to the social, economic, and technological forces that are affecting all of the other great cities of the United States.

The special requirement of esthetics received consideration in the preparation of the Action Plan, as exemplified by the article on the L'Enfant Plan for Washington which appears elsewhere in this issue of the *AIA Journal*, and which was based on studies carried out by the staff of Downtown Progress. A plan and designs for special streets and places, now being prepared by consultants, will spell out specific recommendations for achieving some of the objectives relating to the appearance of Downtown Washington, as development action takes place.

The Action Plan was drawn for an area that contains more than 3,500 properties, owned by more than 3,000 individuals, firms, and estates in trust, and occupied by more than 12,000 business establishments and households under a wide variety of leases and



M. E. Warren

Washington

conditions of occupancy. Firms and families are continually moving in and out of the area, property is being bought and sold, and new structures are continually replacing older structures. A plan for such a dynamic area cannot, therefore, be as detailed as a plan for a single building, or even for a group of related buildings, such as a university campus, for example, for which there are known clients and specific programs. The Action Plan does make specific recommendations for street changes, transit lines, freeways and public works for the clients who *are* known, the public agencies.

For most of the developable area of Downtown which is in private ownership, however, the plan indicates only in terms of land-use, employment distribution, and illustrative buildings what could be accomplished over a fifteen- to twenty-year period, in response to its estimates of development potential. It supplements these indications with sketches of what future development is possible.

Thus, the Action Plan provides a starting point and a framework for action for guid-

ing the development that will be brought about in response to thousands of decisions to be made by thousands of different people over a period of time. Undoubtedly, the plan will be changed in some respects as buildings are erected, as technology changes, and as new factors are recognized which could not be forecast at the time the original plan was prepared. But only with such a plan is it possible to begin to marshal the support and to direct the effort that will be required to achieve a revitalized Downtown.

The officers of Downtown Progress have concluded that the manner in which to achieve the maximum realization of the goals of the Action Plan, in the least possible time, and with the maximum use of private enterprise, is to have Downtown treated under a new concept of urban renewal. Under such an urban renewal program, which would entail a minimum of public acquisition and clearance of private property, there would be assurance that proposed public improvements would be carried out according to agreed-upon plans and on an established schedule. Private interests could then go ahead with new buildings or major renovations, knowing, for example, what the traffic pattern would be for their customers and clients, and knowing when and where new streets, sidewalks, and utility lines would be constructed. They would be working in an improved physical environment where substandard structures would be suitably rehabilitated or removed; and they would have an improved investment climate in which private capital ventures would be encouraged by the physical, functional, and esthetic improvements, by the new "image" of the area, and not least of all, by the broadened availability of FHA mortgage insurance. The urban renewal plan is now being prepared.

The relocation provisions included in the urban renewal program are also advantageous for the District of Columbia. Families and businesses are dislocated every day when property is taken for new roads, new schools, and other public improvements, or for new private buildings. Only under an urban renewal program, however, would assistance be available for such displacees, in the form of help in finding new quarters, payments for moving expenses, and other services.

The key action required to permit application to be made for urban renewal for Downtown Washington is the passage of legislation by the Congress to amend the laws of the District of Columbia so that the commercial Downtown area may be eligible for urban renewal. Of the ten largest cities in the country, only Washington lacks such enabling legislation.

Pressure is quietly building up for a shift in the National Cultural Center site from the banks of the Potomac to downtown Washington.

Nevertheless, some highly placed Administration sources say the odds-on chances are that the expressway-girdled riverside site just north of the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge will be dropped in favor of a more accessible spot in the center of town.

Advocates of the downtown site make these points:

The Cultural Center would introduce more lights, excitement and cultural glitter into the night-life of the central city.

It would serve as a major stimulus for the "Action Plan" of Downtown Progress to help revitalize Washington's blighted commercial district.

It would be within walking distance of restaurants, shops and major public transportation facilities rather than in an isolated enclave separated by lanes of freeway from the rest of the town.

WASHINGTON POST
June 17, 1962

The business leader who makes his living in the District but lives in Bethesda or McLean may be shirking his social responsibilities.

This is the burden of a talk given by Lewis Mumford in Baltimore some months ago but circulated in Washington by the Federal City Council only recently.

In his Baltimore speech he takes business leaders to task for their "absentee citizenship," for their part in the "present mass flight to the green ghettos of suburbia," for their preference for high speculative profits rather than modest returns on urban investments.

WASHINGTON POST
Oct 27, 1961

This demonstrates another one of the special characteristics which set Washington apart from other major cities. In this voteless city, whose "City Council" is the 535-member Congress, there is no single point where effort can be focused to achieve positive action for Downtown revitalization.

In most cities both the authority and the responsibility for such positive action are lodged in the hands of officials, primarily responsible for local decisions, who can come together to get things done in response to the will of the people.

This is not so in the affairs of the District of Columbia where no one can say "yes" finally and effectively, but where hundreds can say "no."

For a program of action to advance, the



F and G Streets, the Downtown core, will offer an improved traffic pattern and appearance

widest possible understanding is required, since people quite often oppose action, not on its merits, but merely because they are uninformed. Downtown Progress has sought to achieve a broad understanding of its program by meeting with advisory groups representing a cross-section of interests in the nation's capital. Many public-spirited members of The American Institute of Architects have participated constructively in these meetings, as representatives of the Washington-Metropolitan Chapter and of the national organization, as members of other organizations, and as individuals personally interested in improving the city.

As development action begins in response to the stimulus of the Action Plan, many architects will participate in the creation of new buildings in Downtown Washington. These structures will form the spaces and house the people and the activities that together will constitute the revitalized Downtown. For this end that we all seek, the Action Plan is a means.

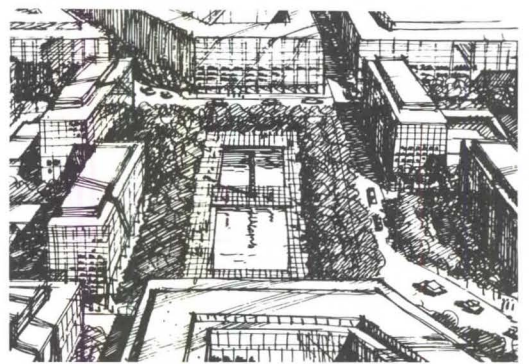
Downtown, for which the Action Plan is drawn, is an area of 632 acres between the White House and the Capitol, bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue on the south, 15th

Street on the west, M Street on the north, and New Jersey Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue, North Capitol Street, and Louisiana Avenue on the east.

1 **The Downtown Core:** A concentration of retail stores, consumer services, entertainment activities, and office space, accessible by subway, rapid transit bus and local bus lines with stations along the F and G Street axis, and served by parking structures, related to the major traffic system, along E and H Streets.

2 **K Street-New York Avenue Area:** An expanded office building area for increased private and government employment, with hotels and entertainment facilities.

3 **Pennsylvania Avenue Area:** Private and government office buildings, hotels, and



At New York Avenue and 11th Street a potential exists for new private and Federal office buildings

special facilities, to be designated in a plan now being prepared by the Advisory Council on Pennsylvania Avenue and the National Capital Planning Commission as directed by President Kennedy.

4 **Municipal Center:** District and Federal government offices, courthouses, and institutions.

5 **Mount Vernon Square Area:** New residential development to meet the increasing demands for Downtown apartments.

6 **Visitor and Student Center Area:** Visitor and Student Center, hotels and motor hotels, interstate bus terminals, private and Federal office space.

7 **Center Leg Freeway:** Part of the Inner Loop freeway system designed to bypass through vehicular traffic around Downtown, and to provide access to Downtown for rapid transit buses. Parking structures and office buildings are proposed above the freeway.

8 An internal circulation system of small vehicles is proposed to link the subway and rapid transit bus stops and parking terminals with the centers of activity in Downtown, and to operate along F and G Streets in the Downtown core which will be predominantly for pedestrians. ◀

The 1962 analysis was pivoted on downtown Washington, the original city laid out by Pierre L'Enfant, which had been left in serious difficulties by the first seven years of postwar growth. But by 1961, it has become impossible to talk about downtown Washington without dealing equally with the problems of the suburbs.

Editorial,
WASHINGTON POST
Aug 29, 1961

Pennsylvania Avenue

by Daniel P. Moynihan, Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Labor
Member, Advisory Council on Pennsylvania Avenue

Lewis Mumford reminds us that the L'Enfant plan for Washington, withal an imaginative adaptation, was based nonetheless on standard baroque principles. ("The design he brought forth for the new capital was in every respect what the architects and servants of despotism had originally conceived.") But history reassures us that, environmental influences to the contrary, we have most emphatically not been a baroque people. It has been a century and a half and more now, and somehow the plan has never quite been finished.

Progress, if that is the word, has invariably been slow. Congress passed a resolution providing for a memorial to Washington in 1783. L'Enfant located it upon one present site but work did not begin until 1848, only to cease after the Pope presented a block of marble and the Know-Nothings seized the Washington National Monument Society to forestall a Papist takeover. Work was finally resumed in 1880 and the Monument, slightly off center, was opened one century after Washington had become President.

With the Monument completed and the second century not far gone, attention turned to the Mall itself, which was then "a common pasture, watered by a canal lined with woodyards" and across which Congress had authorized a railroad. Thus the McMillan Commission was formed, a company of inspired competence, but even greater charm. Having undertaken the development and improvement of the entire park system of the District, the Commission (except Saint Gaudens) promptly embarked for a summer in Europe.

"How else," Daniel Burnham had written McKim, "can we refresh our minds except by seeing . . . all those large things done by others in the same line?" How else, indeed? The Commission returned and drew up its great plan to restore the center of the city to L'Enfant's original conception. But progress was slow.

In the 1920's Andrew Mellon took up the Commission proposal that the Triangle formed by Pennsylvania Avenue, Constitution Avenue and 15th Street be the site of a series of public buildings. Neither did Mellon make any small plans. A truly monumental complex of government offices was planned, known as the Federal Triangle. Commissions were granted to a number of Beaux Arts practitioners of very high quality and construction commenced—but with a speed that ought to have foretold calamity. Alas, the project was eighty-five per cent finished—Washington was at last to have a perfectly balanced, completed project in the purest baroque spirit—when construction ceased.

The result is a shambles, although in truth Washingtonians are not much troubled. On 12th Street a magnificent bisected, arcaded circle sweeps along the facade of the Post Office building, crosses to the Internal Revenue Building, goes on splendidly for another fifty degrees and ends abruptly at the back door of the Old Post Office, a monster Gothic derelict abandoned at midpoint on the most important avenue of the nation. Further up Pennsylvania Avenue the progress of the Post Office Building is abruptly terminated at 13th Street. Instead of Beaux Arts splendor we have an open-air bus terminal, a

brick tempo used by the Coast Guard and the District Building. The civil servants riding to and fro on buses marked "Federal Triangle" appear to have not the least qualms about disembarking in the middle of space very likely intended for the offices of a Deputy Postmaster General. These missing buildings were to provide the fourth side of the Great Court, an expanse worthy of Versailles. There wasn't really a great deal that needed doing as far as the Great Court was concerned, but it has been turned into a parking lot regardless—a parking lot of surpassing ugliness, one might add.

This was the scene that awaited the new administration when it took office in 1960. For a quarter-century work had ceased on the Federal Triangle. But neglect was the least of it: The spirit of the city of Washington can withstand neglect. It is not so clear, however, that it could survive much more of the architectural dishonesty that was making the city, in the words of *Architectural Forum* "a cemetery of neo-classic plaster casts, stacking ennui alongside tedium." Latterly a more sinister note of development could be perceived, as neo-classicism puffed up and there began to appear grandiose marble piles that would have charmed Mussolini, but which have no place in the city of Jefferson.

The administration was hardly commenced before the problem was apparent: Riding in the Inaugural Parade, Secretary of Labor, now Mr Justice, Goldberg was appalled by the appearance of Pennsylvania Avenue. In the words of the Cabinet Committee report on the subject, which was substantially his work, "Pennsylvania Avenue should be *the* great thoroughfare of the city of Washington. Instead it remains a vast, unformed, cluttered expanse at the heart of the nation's capital." On the south side the gaps in the Federal Triangle created a confused and unsettled effect. On the north the street was, and is, in a state in no significant way different from that in which Senator McMillan and his colleagues had found the Mall at the turn of the century, except that the decay was generations more advanced.

In August of 1960 a Cabinet Committee was established to inquire into the general subject of government building construction in Washington, with the understanding that it might branch out to consider any related matters.

The Committee worked steadily and carefully through the following winter, and in due course proposed an extensive ten-year building program to the President, along with an architectural policy for the Federal government, ("Major emphasis should be

placed on the choice of designs that embody the finest contemporary American architectural thought") and a proposal that the Federal government pick up where it left off on the Federal Triangle a quarter-century ago and undertake the comprehensive redevelopment of Pennsylvania Avenue.

"A primary object of the redevelopment of the Avenue should be to emphasize the role of the Capitol itself as the center of the city. For this reason care should be taken not to line the north side with a solid phalanx of public and private office buildings which close down completely at night and on weekends, leaving the Capitol more isolated than ever. Pennsylvania Avenue should be lively, friendly and inviting, as well as dignified and impressive."

At the same time, the prospects for doing something about the situation were considerable. Clearly the north side of the Avenue was about to be rebuilt in some form or another: Try as it will to float up Connecticut Avenue, the center of Washington is anchored to the Capitol, and Pennsylvania Avenue must remain the central thoroughfare. Through one agency or another the Federal government will be supervising and regulating practically every detail of the new buildings. It was possible then to think in terms of the entire Avenue, and not just the individual structures lining it.

In concluding, its report called for the government to work in the closest cooperation with "The American Institute of Architects and the numerous other public and private organizations that will be concerned with this splendid challenge to the creative talents of all those concerned with the beauty and majesty of the Capital City of the United States of America."

The President promptly and vigorously endorsed the proposal, asking for a report from the Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission on the progress of the redevelopment project in a year's time. Thereupon he invited a group of distinguished American architects and planners, headed by Nathaniel Owings, and with William Walton assuming the role of Saint Gaudens, to serve as an Advisory Council. Congress was receptive. Work promptly commenced, and in the course of such matters a proposal will be presented.

The Council works in a right honorable tradition, and all wish the greatest success to its undertaking. The proceedings are properly private for the moment, but there would be no indiscretion to reveal that the Chairman commenced the first working session with the single injunction: Make no little plans. ◀

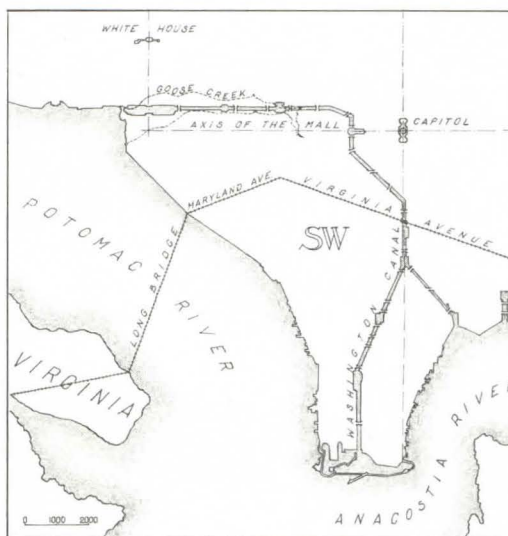
Urban Renewal in Southwest Washington

by I. M. Pei AIA, Member, AIA Committee on the National Capital

When President Washington on June 28, 1791, rode with Major L'Enfant to review the site for the new Federal city, the characteristics of the area which later became known as "the Southwest" were implicit in its geography and topography. The main body of Goose Creek ran some 250 yards north of the present axis of the Mall and parallel to it, emptying into the Potomac just above the site of the Washington Monument. By 1815 the creek had been extended in the form of a canal cutting south across the Mall and slanting off into the Anacostia River near the Navy Yard. By 1873 the canal was filled, but by this time the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, along the line of Maryland and Virginia Avenues, had compressed and further cut off the area. The Southwest was an island, difficult of access to and from the rest of the city, and its characteristics stemmed from this fact.

In the nineteenth century the natural land-uses along the Southwest's borders were second-commercial: transporting and storing of produce and goods. Inside this ring grew up housing for the workers. By the middle of the twentieth century, the disappearance of shipping, decline in importance of rail, the rise of trucking, and the need for new plants had made existing conditions and relationships of land-use and population in the Southwest no longer reasonable. Similar situations exist in almost every American city—situations where close-in and attractive downtown land, very often waterfront, is ill-used by outmoded plants and slum housing. Nevertheless, the first concepts for redevelopment were concerned with whether the Southwest's existing character should be encouraged or changed. In early 1952 two plans appeared which delineated these opposed viewpoints.

The first was prepared by Elbert Peets as



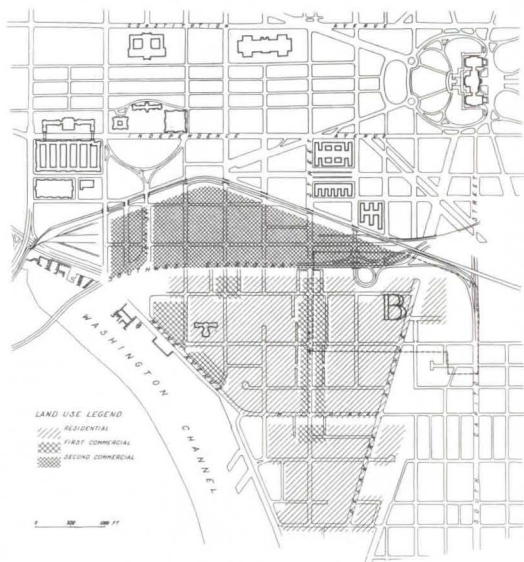
The Southwest and its historic barriers (before creation of the Tidal Basin and Potomac Park)

consultant to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). This plan aimed at a cleaned-up slum, taking advantage of the not uncharming appearance of the seventy-year-old row houses. Private rehabilitation of similar buildings in Georgetown, a fashionable area, had been most successful, but at this time neither private nor public financial procedures were available for rehabilitation of low-income areas. In any case, the time required and costs entailed by projects executed in this manner compared with the net return, both economic and social, to the city and Federal governments made rehabilitation of this sort unjustifiable.

Many felt the Southwest's 427 acres had greater potentiality—especially for residential development. Its intown location, proximity to the Mall, its fine trees, the long waterfront and Potomac Park across the Channel were assets which could not be ignored. Accordingly the Redevelopment Land Agency (RLA), under the direction of John R. Searles Jr, commissioned Harland Bartholomew and Associates of St. Louis and

Louis Justement and Chloethiel Smith, two Washington architects, to study the Southwest with the goal of drastically changing its character. The ensuing plan envisioned almost total clearance and redevelopment into a new residential complex of some 5000 dwelling units. To break through the second commercial ring located along the railroad the plan proposed the transformation of 10th Street into an esplanade starting at the bridge over the tracks and running south to Maine Avenue bordering the Washington Channel. This esplanade was lined with restricted second-commercial, residential and retail uses. It also recommended what was to become the alignment of the Southwest Expressway.

Generalized land-uses of the NCPC "Compromise Plan," 1952



The appearance of these opposed plans at almost the same time led to a third: the so-called "Compromise Plan" prepared by the NCPC. This plan stressed redevelopment rather than rehabilitation and filled the triangle formed by the railroad and the Expressway with second-commercial uses. Tenth Street was widened from Maine Avenue up to the railroad bridge where it narrowed and connected in a U to 12th and 9th Streets at Independence Avenue. The street's main function was to act as a traffic connector between downtown Washington and the Expressway.

The Compromise Plan also included a plan for the first project in the Southwest to go into execution—the 76-acre Area B, to be developed as a 800-unit residential complex. The invitation in November 1952 by the RLA to bidders indicated the character of development desired: the highest land price and the lowest rents would be significant criteria in choosing the developer. This made inevitable a low standard of construction and few amenities and therefore was disappointing. Redevelopment of the Southwest seemed to be started on the wrong road.

Against this background on March 15, 1953, Webb & Knapp Inc, announced its interest in planning and redeveloping the whole of the Southwest. On April 29, RLA said that a Norfolk, Virginia, construction company had been selected successful bidder for Area B.

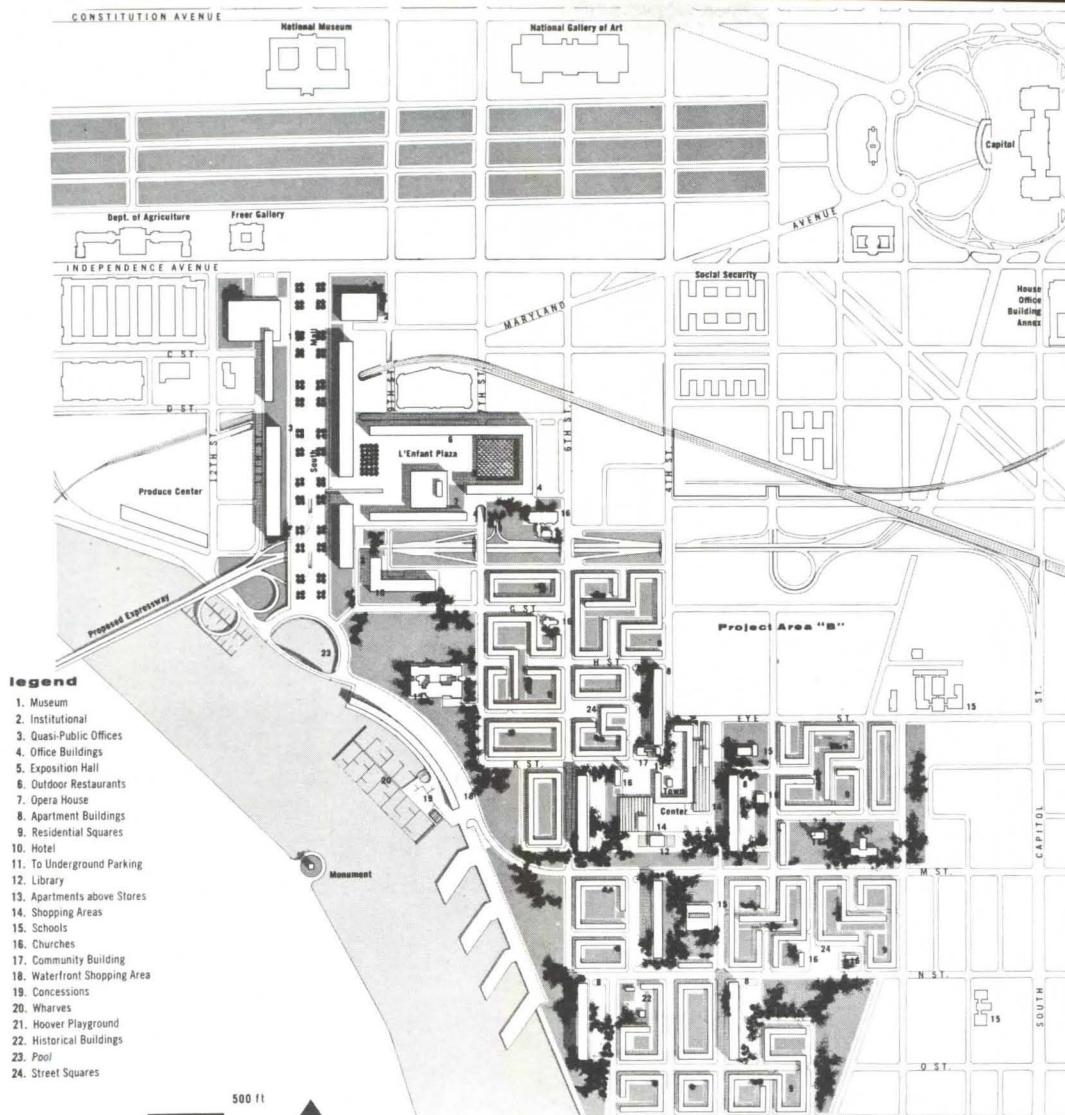
By this time the Webb & Knapp architectural and planning staff (which I then headed) together with Harry Weese, of Chicago, were deeply involved in studying materials for a plan for the Southwest. I would like to say that the vision and courage of the developer—William Zeckendorf—brought economics and planning into basic agreement from the very beginning.

In January and February 1954, the developer's plan was presented to business men and officials of the city of Washington. As in the "Compromise Plan" the land south of the proposed Expressway was to be redeveloped as a residential community—a new town in the city. A Town Center, a centralized pedestrian "downtown" for the whole Southwest, mixed shopping, community, and residential activities in the geographic center of the area. Because all streets, except for Maine Avenue and M, were closed to through traffic, an interlocking pattern of high apartment buildings and town houses could be developed. The existing rights-of-way with their fine trees became local access streets and pedestrian ways. The new waterfront of restaurants and marinas was to be located only along the Channel side of Maine Avenue and a broad park buffered the housing from this public recreational area.

The plan recommended three-story town houses with common cornice lines, the facade closed at the block's corners. Inside these "residential squares" were small yards or patios attached to each house with a large open space common to all the houses in the center. Neither town houses nor common areas were new, historically speaking, but in 1954 they clashed with planning and real estate concepts of what was feasible. Also, the mixing of building types, elevator apartments amongst town houses, was not considered desirable.

These plans for the new community, however, were overshadowed by the more dramatic proposals for, and ensuing discussions about, the land north of the Expressway. 10th Street, widened to 300 feet, crossed the line of the railroad, obliterated the tracks as a visual barrier, and reached 1200 feet north to the Renwick Smithsonian Museum on the Mall—a fitting terminus. This breakthrough* finally made contact between the redevelopment area and the heart of

* This N-S axis connecting the main Mall with the Channel was suggested in the L'Enfant Plan on the present 11th Street right-of-way.



Site plan, Webb and Knapp proposal, 1959

Washington and in the process tapped a strong new re-use for the Southwest—Federal office buildings. Tenth Street became a Mall, a specially designed public street-space. Along this new Mall were arranged public and semi-public office buildings. L'Enfant Plaza was proposed between the railway and the Expressway at right angles to this Mall. It was an enclosed square surrounded by private office buildings and containing, as focal points, a hall for performances and an exhibition building. It was intended to be the cultural center of Washington and was to also include the outdoor cafes and activities seen in the great spaces in Europe. Underneath, adjoining the Expressway, was parking. The new Mall terminated at the channel in a semi-circular reflecting pool surrounded by the waterfront park.

This 10th Street Mall posed a challenge to Washington's planners. Its concept set the course of development for its area and the rest of the Southwest and presented Washington with the first major public space since the McMillan Plan—and one in scale with that great work.

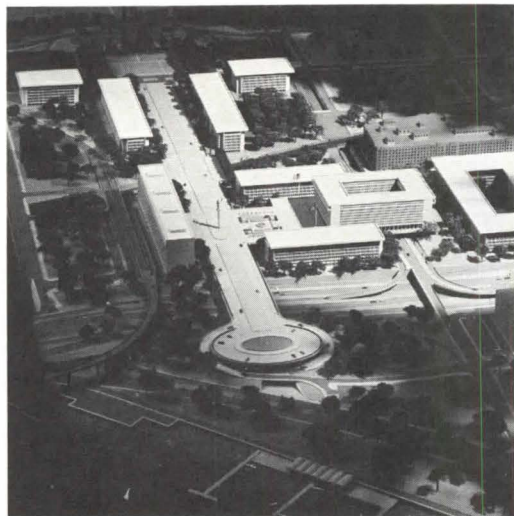
No guiding procedures for redevelopment had been evolved in those days, and the de-

veloper and the RLA had to improvise as they went along. On March 15, 1954, Webb & Knapp and the Agency signed a statement of intentions (called a "Memorandum of Understanding") the purpose of which was to safeguard the interest of each, to commit each to the other to a degree, and to propose the redevelopment of the Southwest, ie, 427 acres called Area C.

In accordance with this memorandum, the Webb & Knapp architects and planners and its redevelopment section, headed by William L. Slayton, now Commissioner of the Urban Renewal Administration, were to do the land, traffic, and site-planning concepts, and the RLA, NCPC, and other agencies, the detailed planning necessary to secure Federal monies to execute the project. RLA, compared with present-day standards, was handicapped by lack of planning personnel but was adequately and ably staffed in its relocation section. The first fact predisposed the Agency to want to combine the efforts of public and private planning technicians; the second lent credibility to success in handling the many relocation problems of Area C. Under the direction of James G. Banks, now Assistant Commissioner for Relocation and Community Or-

ganization of the URA, these problems had been successfully handled in Area B. Heretofore such difficulties in other cities had tended to force changes and cutbacks in redevelopment plans. Proof that relocation if properly handled could turn out to be a social gain helped those working on Area C.

Meantime, all Title I redevelopment was in jeopardy. The estate of a small department store owner in the Southwest had brought suit to test constitutionality of the District Redevelopment Act of 1945. On November 22, 1954, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously (8-0) that the RLA had the right to acquire real estate in a redevelopment project by right of eminent domain. In this historic decision, the Supreme Court



10th Street Mall and L'Enfant Plaza, Webb and Knapp proposal, 1959. Site plan for urban renewal plan of 1956 (far right)

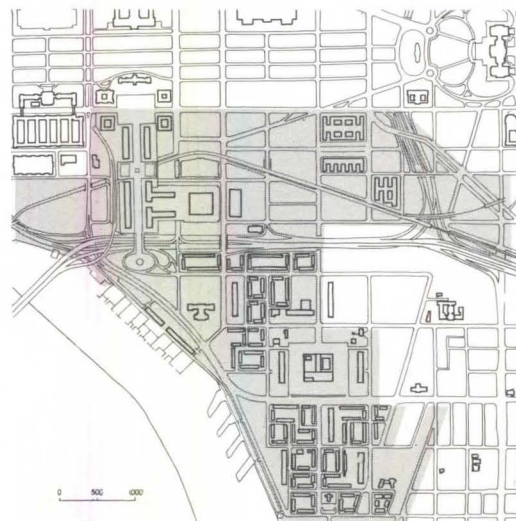
also affirmed that spiritual and esthetic values were as significant for the public welfare as the usual considerations. For all groups the decision was momentous, but for architects and planners especially so; the values with which they were supremely concerned were given a status equal to others and became a legal criterion in planning determinations.

On April 5, 1956, the NCPC approved the Urban Renewal Plan for the 441-acre Project Area C, which incorporated the basic concepts of the Webb & Knapp proposal of 1954. The 10th Street Mall, L'Enfant Plaza, the mixture of town houses in residential squares with commons and elevator apartment buildings, the Town Center, the waterfront development along the Channel were retained. Significant changes in detail were made, however.

Traffic pressures, for example, changed the plan. Many of the local access streets and pedestrian ways in the residential square area were forced open, breaking the structure and texture of the plan into a more typical city block appearance. The Mall as it crossed the Expressway (widened from four lanes to eighteen) became a bridge and

terminated in an elliptical overlook. Prevalent feelings against mixed uses broke up the Town Center into separate parcels of housing, community activities, and shopping. It is noteworthy that today the Town Center's final development calls for a return to mixing housing and shopping uses.

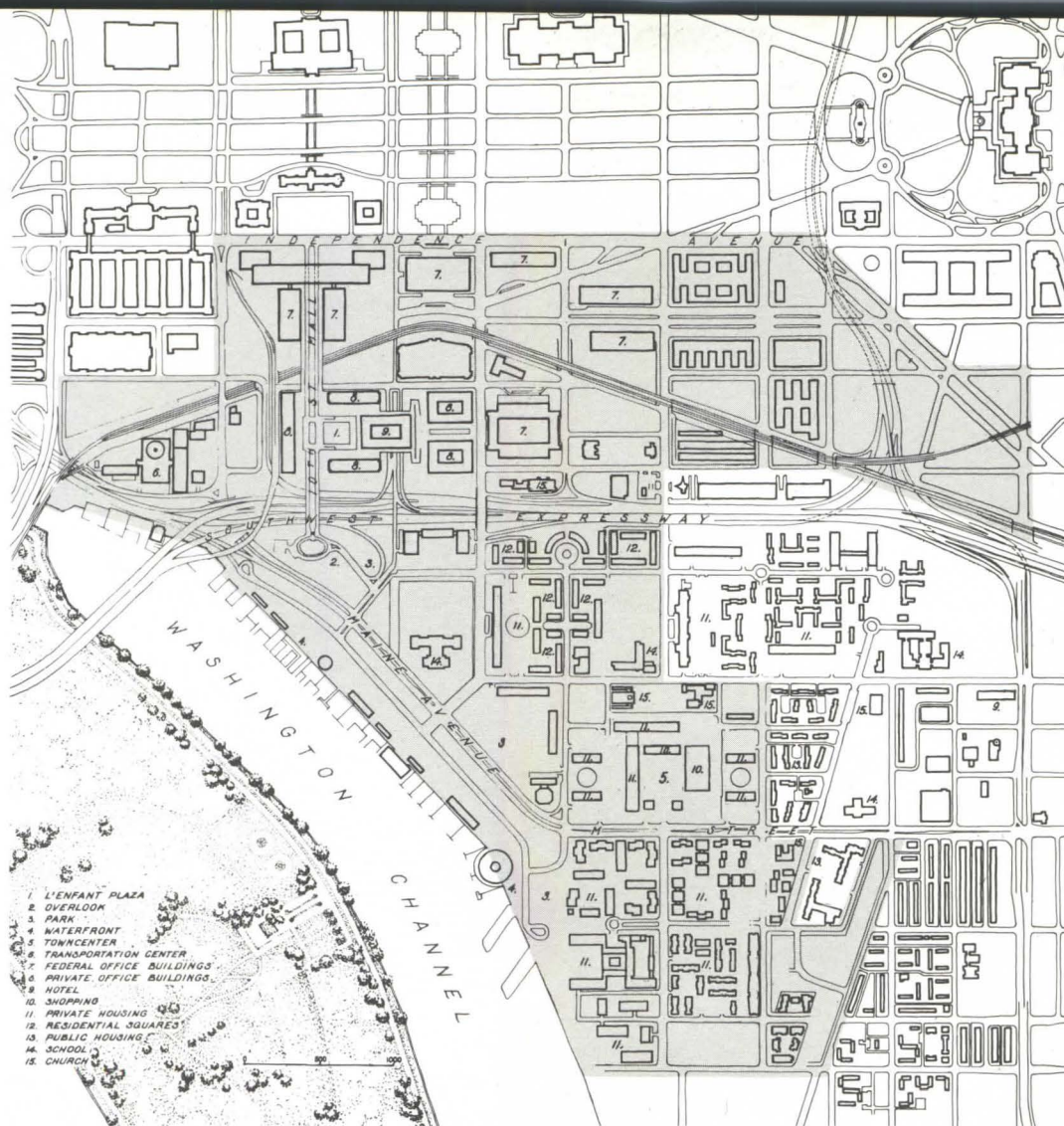
An interesting corollary of the plan, under scrutiny since 1954, already had appeared in Area B. The previous sponsor had withdrawn, and a new developer, Scheuer-Stevens of New York, had been named in the summer of 1955. With their architects, Satterlee and Smith, they had raised the quality of the Area B development and coordinated it with the over-all plan for C. B was not only the first project to be built



in the Southwest but the first Title I project to be acclaimed for design (AIA Award of Merit, 1960)—proof that the redevelopment process could produce a result beyond slum clearance alone.

Upon the approval of a plan by local and Federal agencies certain urban renewal processes leading to disposition took place. In this disposition, Webb & Knapp became developers for L'Enfant's Plaza, the Town Center and the housing north of M Street. This had an important effect on the project's planning from this point on for it removed I. M. Pei and Associates from further work on any other segments of the project.

RLA wished that the land not earmarked for Webb & Knapp or the Federal and district governments be disposed of in many parcels to allow more groups to participate and to achieve variety in appearance. Today, five of the eight parcels south of M Street have been disposed of: two by negotiation and three others by design competition ("beauty contests") where the land price is fixed and an advisory judgment made on the developer's anonymous architectural proposal by an architectural and planning jury.



Site plan showing how Southwest has been and/or will be built

The disposition of these parcels by either negotiation or competition has produced architectural designs of high order. And in the judging of the competitions, the juries have always taken into consideration how well the proposals fitted in with their existing or planned neighbors. In other words, all concerned with this disposition did all they believed was necessary to achieve the best in planning and design.

Today, after nearly ten years of planning action, Southwest Washington is beginning to take form. In retrospect, the case history of this important project is truly representative of many of the urban renewal programs in the United States. It has suffered an inordinate amount of delay in its execution, partly due to a lack of experience in a virgin field and partly due to the multiplicity of agencies and powers so typical of Washington.

In the vital area of planning, Southwest Washington as a project can justly be called the direct result of interaction of social, economic and political forces. From a purely technical point of view, the 1956 Urban Renewal Plan has proven to be a sound plan that shows sufficient flexibility to permit the

inevitable readjustments. In the subsequent years of disposition and execution, it has been compromised for lack of an understanding of the urban design aspect of the original plan and the consequent failure to effectuate a continuity of urban design control (see plans). Without question, the decision on the part of the RLA to dispose of Southwest in many separate parcels with the expressed intention to attract the most qualified developers and the best available talents in the architectural profession was a praiseworthy one. Apparently the urban design objectives were not clearly understood and consequently a maximum "architectural" variety was achieved at the expense of the form and structure of the total plan—a fragmentation of plan has occurred. Despite the most enlightened administrative intentions throughout the history of this project, it would appear that the highest goal of the art of civic design—that of a new urban organism, each part functionally and visually related to the others and to the whole—was not attained. Perhaps this was not possible in those early years of the redevelopment process but it remains a goal for the future. ◀

The Washington Regional Plan

by Paul Frank Jernegan AIA, Member, AIA Committee on the National Capital

"Washington is not just the nation's capital—or just a government city. It is the hub of the tenth largest metropolitan area in the country."—Robert C. Weaver, HHFA Administrator.

WASHINGTON POST
June 17, 1961

The Washington area will have to find room for a half-million new residents by 1970, according to a preliminary population projection prepared for planning agencies.

The expected increase would raise the population to 2,577,000 from the 1960 total of 1,969,536.

The study by Raymond F. Clapp, consultant to the planning agencies, predicts a growth in the District's population from 763,956 to 820,000 and a suburban increase from 1,237,941 to 1,757,000.

WASHINGTON POST
Sept 27, 1961

Nearly two-thirds of the nation's growth in the last decade took place in the suburbs. The rush to suburbia appears to have been directly related to the size of the central city.

It is no secret, however, that many families who have joined in this mammoth migration have been disillusioned.

WASHINGTON POST
Jan 9, 1961

The Washington of L'Enfant with its magnificent distances and grand planning, once a subject of ridicule by the unimaginative, has become in less than two hundred years the pressurized nucleus of a broad urban area extending far beyond the Federal District into the neighboring states of Maryland and Virginia. It is also fast becoming the southern anchor of a vast urbanized sprawl variously described as "Megalopolis," "Strip City," "Linear City" or "East Coast Metro-Region," extending almost continuously along the eastern seaboard north to Boston and including the great metropolitan growths of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore.

In its involvement with this spreading urban flood, Washington is only confronted with the same problem found in varying degrees of intensity throughout the world today. Yet because of its focal position as the capital of the United States and one of history's first planned capital cities, Washington's success or failure in relating its historic planned center to its burgeoning suburban appendages will have a vital impact on the entire future of urban design and city planning in every continent. It is doubly important for these reasons that the Washington urban region should lead the way in showing how to retain the best of the traditional civic values while accommodating to a severe attack of elephantiasis and an avalanche of new urban ideas.

Full recognition of both the difficulties for and the challenge to Washington in this singular situation is found in the Capital City's principal planning and zoning agencies, particularly the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Capital Regional Planning Council.

The Planning Commission and Regional Council have in recent years jointly presented two well-known "Plans." In 1959, as a result of a DC Mass Transportation Survey, a "Transportation Plan, National Capital Region" was submitted to the President of the United States. This thoroughly researched analysis of present and future

transportation problems and suggested solutions, notwithstanding controversial features, suggested the framework for a true regional concept. Subsequently in 1961 another joint Plan was submitted, "A Plan for the Year 2000." In this effort a generally exploratory position was taken which offered various possible solutions to the regional problems of dispersion, open space, transportation, zoning, recreation and land-use in general. It provided much food for serious thought.

Yet plans such as these are advisory and suggestive only. Much more is needed. There remains a lack of unified comprehensive authority to control and direct the massive forces and pressures released by explosive growth patterns. Such plans as these can be implemented, if at all, only after running the almost endless gantlet of countless independent jurisdictions and agencies, and public apathy. There are, to be sure, encouraging signs of bi-state, Federal-state, inter-agency and public cooperation. However, the only substantial assurance that the basic objectives and advantages visualized by such regional programs may actually eventuate over the "long pull" lies in the establishment of a permanent, forceful "Authority." One approach to this problem was skillfully outlined in 1958 by the AIA Committee on the National Capital, chaired by Louis Justement FAIA. This proposal concluded with these words, well worth repeating:

"The problem of metropolitan planning for the nation's capital is urgent, it is baffling, and it will tax our utmost ingenuity in devising suitable political, administrative, financial and planning instrumentalities. . . . We must devise a procedure that will permit and encourage effective leadership and produce plans that stir the imagination of the people and thus create a demand for their adoption."

In its Year 2000 Plan, the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Capital Regional Planning Council have defined the National Capital Region as in-

cluding, in addition to the District of Columbia, the counties of Montgomery and Prince George's in Maryland and Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William in Virginia. Except to the northeast where the urban growth tends to fuse into Baltimore's southward surge in Howard and Anne Arundel Counties, the two Maryland and four Virginia counties surrounding the District can be considered the true Washington Region. It is within this area that far-reaching decisions must soon be made which will spell the difference between a cancerous urban blight, disastrous to both suburban and central city values, and an enlightened, spatially open, organically integrated, regional city worthy of its historic core.

Within this Region there are many governmental jurisdictions, Federal, state and local. In addition to the individual governments there are intergovernmental agencies concerned with planning in one form or another. These include: National Capital Transportation Agency, Washington Metro-Area Transit Commission, Metro-Area Traffic Council, Regional Highway Planning Committee, Washington Metro Regional Sanitary Board, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Northern Virginia Regional Planning Commission, and Washington Metro Regional Conference.

It is obvious that under these multitudinous and overlapping jurisdictions any rapid progress towards a coordinated planning program would be little short of miraculous. Yet the beneficial influence of the Year 2000 Plan has already been sufficient to obtain some positive conforming action from counties in both Maryland and Virginia. It remains to be seen if this initial indication of support can be sustained and reinforced.

Growth projections point to a well-distributed increase in all directions from the core city or "Metro-Center," as it is defined by the National Capital Planning Commission. A slightly greater increase in population is foreseen in the two large Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's. This trend is reinforced by the polar attraction of the nearest large city, Baltimore. At the same time, Fairfax and Arlington Counties in Virginia also seem destined to have a very substantial and comparable growth. Much depends on Federal government policy with respect to decentralization of its vastly expanding personnel. Should it continue to be centered in large measure within the Washington Region, the resulting population increase will be much greater than it would be if employment were distributed more

generally throughout the nation as a whole. Unless there is a marked reversal of the present trend to larger central government with its corresponding concentration of direct government employment which in turn generates a rapid growth of government-oriented private and institutional employment—both in the immediate Washington area—there is every likelihood that the projected metropolitan population of 5,000,000 persons by the year 2000 will be realized. Most of this vast increase would necessarily take place in the suburban counties.

Such a huge population would inevitably place an overwhelming strain on all transportation facilities. Only by a planned decentralization and zoned control of all the urban functions can the historic core city of Washington, itself, be saved from destruction in its present form; nor without such dispersion could any workable transportation system be devised to handle the traffic load in a convenient, non-obtrusive, pleasant manner.

It is generally accepted that decentralization, per se, is mandatory for any well-planned region. The difficulties arise when such decentralization is defined in its particulars; when it must be determined which functions and which activities are to be placed where; which are to be relegated to suburban locations; and which are to be given a designated metropolitan center or regional center importance.

The Year 2000 Plan visualizes the location in the central city core of only those governmental, cultural and commercial activities which for various and impelling reasons can logically be located nowhere else. Even then there will be an inevitable increase in Metro-Center growth but with planned dispersal such growth can be controlled and the fundamental civic character maintained. It also is essential that a cosmopolitan mixture of activities always remain, with the greatest variety in the central city core yet maintaining in kind if in progressively lesser degree a similar mixture in secondary community centers.

Major sub-regional centers and business districts are proposed to service the principal divisions of the total region. In any completely unplanned area such secondary concentrations will naturally and inevitably develop but too often with mutually damaging impact resulting from indiscriminate location. With properly placed sub-centers—regional, district and neighborhood—combined with carefully located industrial, commercial, residential, recreational, and other needed diversified land-uses, there is every reason to believe that basic and vital urban

Loudoun County is anxiously sitting through the calm before an anticipated storm of sudden growth breaks over its eastern edge:

The dairy farmer wondering how his cows will react to the roar of low-flying jets from Dulles International Airport.

Citizens conjecturing on the staggering cost of new schools which may be needed.

A planning commission which has called a halt to all rezoning applications until it can hire its first professional advice.

"The Planning Commission was against it. The Supervisors were against it. The people were against it. But now that it's here, we know that we're getting into an urban-type county," said John E. Kirkpatrick, Chairman of the County Board of Supervisors.

With its rural past—a population increase of 3402 persons during the 1950's—Loudoun County had taken few steps to cope with the rapid expected growth.

It has one sanitary land-fill for refuse disposal. It is policed by a sheriff and a deputy. Only 10 volunteer fire companies have been needed to cover its 517 square miles.

WASHINGTON POST
Aug 6, 1961

General Elwood R. Quesada yesterday called for "intelligent zoning" to protect the Dulles International Airport from encroachment by a jumble of shabby developments.

He appeared to be aiming mainly at Loudoun County, which has provided heavy concentrations of unrestricted industrial and commercial zoning within the past year on its share of the vast new airport's perimeter.

"Unless something is done about it, I would predict that area is going to turn into a honky-tonk," declared Quesada.

WASHINGTON POST
March 1, 1961

LEESBURG, Va.—Town fathers issued a "call to arms" today to prevent this historic community from becoming "a decayed center . . . surrounded by pock markings of shopping centers and apartments."

The Washington metropolitan area already has made its gargantuan force felt with the establishment of Dulles International Airport inside Loudoun borders.

"Within only four years, the life, character and economy of the (Broad Run) District have entirely changed," the report says. "Outside money and speculators poured in to radically change the highly developed agricultural character of the District.

"The fury and suddenness of this impending change defy description," the report continues, "and threatens the little town of Leesburg with identical metamorphosis."

WASHINGTON POST
Aug 14, 1962

values of both concentration and dispersal, of open space and recreation, of residential and commercial, of governmental and industrial, of both large and intimate scale, may all be retained and even enhanced.

Such generalities and pleasant prospects find little disagreement. It is the infinite variety of pressures, the monolithic inertia of the urban agglomeration, the endless bits of resistance, both governmental and private, which conspire to prevent realization of the very advantages that almost everyone desperately wants. The only hope for overcoming these ever-present obstacles to progress in the planned development of our constantly more complicated urban concentrations is through a sequence beginning with a definite statement of the problems faced; followed by specific suggestions for their solution; some form of a "blueprint" visualizing for all to see an actual goal on the most comprehensive scale possible; and, finally, most difficult of all, the development and utilization of the tools—be they governmental, inter-governmental, institutional, business or private—to bring into three-dimensional physical being at least a reasonable facsimile of the belabored plans.

It is exactly this chain of events that the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Capital Regional Planning Council are hoping to activate. The Transportation Plan and the Year 2000 Plan are the first and most important steps in this direction. It is not necessary or even advisable to be in full agreement with every detail, or even all important features of these proposed schematics, to be able to give support to their general direction. Their great value under present circumstances lies in the opportunity and the challenge offered to each responsible citizen and public official to think for himself and to make an intelligent, informed choice of concrete alternatives which could determine the kind of an enlarged city the Washington Region will soon become.

There are obviously many different approaches to be taken in planning a broad area such as the Washington Region. In contemplating various possibilities, the Year 2000 Plan considered seven distinct alternatives, each having merit. There are almost limitless variations but the seven considered cover most of the current schools of planning thought. All involve basic policy decisions by the many governments and the public. All are possible of accomplishment, given the right conditions. (See article by NCPC Director Finley on page 39.)

The regional proposal which is considered to have the most merit by the two planning

organizations sponsoring the Year 2000 Plan is the "Radial Corridor" Plan. This admittedly has very attractive features and can point to historical prototypes in past railroad era growth patterns. The radial concept visualizes, as its name implies, a series of radial "spines" projecting in a generally star fashion from Metro-Center (Washington) along which the various sub-centers and suburban communities would be located. Multi-forms of transportation would utilize these radial ways providing quick, convenient traffic circulation to all parts of the Region. Cross traffic between the interstices would be discouraged, and strongly zoned green wedges would be maintained in each triangular area. The advantages of this proposal are many and it has recently been recognized by both Maryland and Virginia suburban counties as a definite planning objective. The greatest weakness of this corridor plan would seem to be the difficulty in maintaining the open green wedges in the face of the tremendous natural pressures to fill them. Such pressures are, of course, in large measure present in every plan and call for a concerted action to establish iron-clad protective zoning and subsequent strong enforcement. Under those conditions the prospects of success for the radial concept are encouraging.

One long-term consideration in this radial plan seems to have been neglected. In any plan, no matter how large or extensive, it would seem that some ultimate limiting line of demarcation should be established, beyond which even such a great constellation should not be permitted to grow. The radial plan should terminate its tentacles, not in an infinity of endless growth, but in a strongly defined greenbelt hinterland surrounding the entire complex. This automatically brings into consideration even greater areas, more counties, and more governments. Its need, nevertheless, is too important to be set aside as a distant non-essential.

Two of the most difficult of urban planning problems for any large city revolve around transportation and open space. Both are vital urban needs which are also constantly in direct conflict. The spatial appetite of the modern transportation system, particularly for private vehicular traffic, is simply enormous. Examples are becoming more common of literal strangulation of communities by highway "spaghetti." Transportation as a means to an end threatens to obliterate the end itself. This ultimate idiocy can only be prevented through integrated comprehensive planning in which transportation is relegated to its proper importance and relationship with all the many other

diverse community needs. There is literally a crying need for the development of an efficient and attractive public mass transit system, the only rational answer to the basic problem of providing our huge populations with even the minimum travel amenities necessary for city dwelling.

The other great problem, and perhaps the very most important single ingredient in any urban region plan, is the provision for extensive, well-located open spaces. Without the existence of such areas, all other essentials are jeopardized, becoming either extremely difficult and costly or actually impossible of realization. All too often this basic fact of life as it applies to city and regional planning is either ignored in its entirety or is not given the emphasis it deserves. Those cities and regions which have had the foresight, or as in some instances, just the plain good fortune, to obtain in whatever fashion ample open spaces have in every instance profited handsomely. Unfortunately, few good examples of this exist today. In this country, Washington itself, has been, up to now, one of the greatest and most famous beneficiaries of such planning foresight. Or consider Chicago without its splendid chain of lake front parks and beaches, and its forest preserves, and imagine New York's Manhattan Island without its Central Park.

While historic central Washington has been blessed with open planning, still ill-appreciated and abused, no similar provisions have been made for future suburban growth except for recent tentative recognition of the need based on the Year 2000 Plan. Thus, in planning for the expanded Washington Region—*now* and *right now*—is the time to face up to these spatial requirements. Everything humanly possible should be done to quickly delimit, acquire, and permanently protect them. Even poorly located or unimaginative spaces are far better than none at all, for they at least offer a continuing hope and opportunity for future improvement without colossal government or private renewal expenditures.

While land-use planning rigorously protected by sound zoning laws is basic to the success of open space acquisition and disposition, there is also a very large role to be played by the private citizen. Open space to enhance the urban scene comes in many forms, in many sizes, and in many guises.

Regional planning, in contrast to planning for the concentrated central core city, is dealing with less population densities and consequently with more extensive open spaces. Yet even in this area the sensitive use of small private residential and business courts, yards, setbacks and gardens can be

a most important factor in the openness of the urbanized areas.

In addition to the primary legal tool of zoning, there are many ways to encourage or even force open spatial patterns. Agricultural and farm use can be promoted through favorable tax treatment; governments, Federal, state and local, can purchase tracts dedicated to open space purposes; similar institutional activities could be undertaken;



Pattern of decentralized government employment centers, as developed by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. This should be based upon a balanced distribution through the National Capital Region. The centers should be placed so as to be accessible to a planned system of expressways, both radial and circumferential in function. Certain of these centers would form the nucleus for satellite communities

planned limitation of utilities lines and construction in order to free open spaces from adverse use pressures; and perhaps of greatest ultimate importance, is the education of the public to the end that every citizen becomes acutely aware of his or her personal stake in open planning and will not only support but demand the required action.

However, as we review the entire problem of regional planning, and that for the Washington Region is no exception, we are forced

With more than 400 square miles to look around in, Fairfax County is having trouble finding a site for a proposed airport to handle a boom in private air travel.

WASHINGTON POST
Dec 15, 1960

This appealing concept of planned satellite communities will require far more effective tools than mere zoning.

Editorial

WASHINGTON POST
Nov 27, 1960

Who in Virginia or Maryland is going to sit back and take orders from the District Commissioners—those three fellows who are Federal appointees and have never even been through the election process?

"Exactly nobody, that's who," Donald C. Gingery said yesterday.

Gingery is Chairman of the area-wide planning agency, the National Capital Regional Planning Council, and so his remarks at a Council meeting in the Department of Interior building kept the pot boiling in the latest city vs suburbs dispute in the area's planning ranks.

WASHINGTON POST
Feb 21, 1961

Area officials showed signs of rebelling against the planners yesterday.

The chief critic, Herbert Brown of the Arlington County Board, said: "I don't like having the policies of the National Capital Planning Commission shoved down the throats of local bodies. We have plans of our own.

"We are peeved at the NCPC already," Brown continued. "They want to build these radials right through Arlington County to provide park spaces out in Fairfax County and pile up canyons of steel and concrete we don't want.

"Who are those people to tell us we must become a high-density community?" Brown asked.

WASHINGTON POST
Feb 17, 1961

to the conclusion that short of a major miracle, all the private, institutional and governmental cooperation and goodwill, all the "Plans" of various types, and all the professional and agency proposals, will in themselves be largely ineffectual. It seems the bitter truth that only if there is created some all-inclusive legal tool or entity with sufficient authority to force, at the minimum, a coordination of all urban design and planning ingredients, can there be any real hope of achieving even a semblance of a true regional plan. Throughout history right down to the present day, the only outstanding city or area planning, indeed almost the only broad-scale planning of any type, has been possible only through a single, unified controlling authority of some description. Just as surely, even these same relatively few successes have been in varying degrees temporarily or permanently harmed or even destroyed when this same unifying control was reduced or removed. This lesson of history has direct and emphatic application to our similar if greater and more complicated urban problems of today and the immediate future.

It would seem so obvious, then, that all we must do is create some overpowering agency to impose from above a great regional plan and all our difficulties would be solved. Unfortunately, no such simple solution is probably attainable, and even if it were, would not be palatable or compatible with our constitutional and jealously guarded individual liberties and the prerogatives of our sovereign states. Today's multiplying signs of serious dilution and erosion of these self-same rights adds substance to the cautious approach, lest proposed cures do not eventually prove fatal to the patient.

The real problem, then, is two-fold. How to secure a broad-scale, unified, positive, energizing planning catalyst, while at the same time protecting the basic values and principles of our civilization. There surely must be some practical, workable answer to this question of how to handle earthly space in an age which boasts of its ability to explore outer space.

One possible solution for Washington would be a Federal Bi-State Authority with built-in safeguards to prevent abuse of power. Such an Authority could be created as a sort of specialized Supreme Court with appellate jurisdiction over all the physical aspects of the entire Washington Region. All existing or subsequently established governmental, public, institutional or private agencies having any responsibility for or relationship to physical planning or design in the Region would be mandated to submit their plans and proposals for review by this

Authority. A disapproval would have all the force of an absolute veto on any such contemplated action, subject only to normal judicial review by state and Federal courts if appealed within a stipulated time, or by an act of Congress.

In a different manner, however, Authority approval would not mandate action. Rather it would serve as an official green light authorizing the actual development by the respective appellants.

Disapproved plans or proposals could be re-submitted in original or altered forms as often as the initiating agencies desired.

Such an Authority or "Regional Design Court" as here sketchily suggested, with long-term qualified professional appointees representing every major government unit in the region should be able to offer these advantages:

1 Unify and coordinate all regional physical planning and design.

2 Support, retain and utilize the skills and facilities of present agencies.

3 Encourage and publicize varied and local small-scale problems and viewpoints.

4 Protect cherished individual and minority rights.

5 Impose no planning undertaking upon a community or region without majority concurrence.

6 Permit orthodox methods of financing proven successful in the past or devised in the future.

7 Eliminate personally motivated, unfair or minority-instigated land-misuse in whatever guise.

8 Prevent negative, disruptive, ill-advised, inadequate, or unrelated proposals from taking form.

9 Stimulate and channel civic energies, rather than dam and frustrate.

10 Foster an upsurge of creative urban design.

11 Provide veto authority without power to initiate, leaving only the right to influence direction and thereby establishing a pattern of prolonged and relentless pressure to encourage good design while effectively discouraging the bad and incompatible.

The ultimate image, today and in history, which will characterize the United States of America may well be determined by our success or failure in the design and planning of our vast urban agglomerations.

If this be true in any degree, the excellence in conception and speed of implementation of a Regional Plan for our Capital City should be of vital concern to every American. Let us hope that enough interest may be aroused in the degree necessary to force governmental recognition and prompt action. ◀

Transportation in Washington

A History of Change by Matthew L. Rockwell AIA, AIP, Director
Public Services and Urban Programs, AIA

It was three miles from the Capitol to Georgetown and for sixteen years dozens of herdics* traveled this route. Before them came less grand carriages and hacks—after them the automobile. But while the life of the herdic was sixteen years, that of the DuPont tunnel was only twelve years. Much later in time, in fact a modern “innovation,” the DuPont tunnel was built in 1950 for \$4 million to separate streetcars from the other surface vehicles. In 1962 its approaches were barricaded when the Washington streetcars became extinct.

The tunnel was both a folly and a lesson to us that the means by which persons and goods move is as fluid as the movement of traffic itself. Our continuing solutions to this problem should have as their hallmark an ease of adaptability, both to changes of public taste and to advancing technology. If this condition can develop accidentally, as in the case of the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad serving the city from the west-south-west—which changed in turn from steam to diesel power, from passenger to freight to commuter use and now is partially to be used as a highway—then this condition of adaptability can also develop purposefully.

The stranger must understand several generalized characteristics of Washington:

1 Washington in effect stands on the eastern seacoast through which has passed all north-south coastwise traffic for years, and only recently has it been slightly relieved of this pressure by a more easterly highway connection.

2 The L'Enfant plan covers only a small portion of the city areas and almost the only relatively level land in the region, around which exists an enormous jungle of disorganized streets on a hilly topography.

3 The Potomac and Anacostia Rivers have until recently restricted development of much of the metropolitan area because their crossing by vehicles was restricted.

4 Washington is a city of white-collar commuters, whose only industry is service in

type. These commuters served briefly by the B & O and the W & O D Railroads have never had the benefit of organized mass transit facilities.

Mass transit four hundred years ago consisted of the trading Powhatan Confederation, paddling and portaging on the great highway of Indian travel, the Potomac River. The story of Washington transportation well into the nineteenth century was that of travel by water. The Potomac is still “the Capital City’s most priceless asset.”

Accessible to navigable tidewaters, Georgetown and Alexandria grew from customs-house stops into prosperous eighteenth-century towns exporting tobacco, wheat and corn to England and the West Indies. Inland too the story was “by water.” In 1775 when George Washington engineered the Potomack Canal to by-pass the Great Falls, it was the first canal built on the American continent and the first link in a chain of internal transportation connecting the Atlantic with the headwaters of the Ohio. George Washington’s Potomack Company was taken over by the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company which, after considerable litigation with the infant Baltimore and Ohio Railroad over the right-of-way, supplied Cumberland up-river with its freight needs. The B&O ultimately took care of most of the passenger traffic, paralleling the C&O Canal for forty-five miles.

Transportation slowly improved with the arrival of the first steamboat in 1815. By 1830 when the B&O Railroad and the C&O Canal were both in operation, ten four-horse “Omnibuses” were also commuting daily between Baltimore and Washington.

Not until the Civil War, however, was there any real improvement in the national capital’s muddy, unlit streets. The first horse-drawn street car line ran four miles from the Navy Yard to Georgetown along Pennsylvania Avenue. It was followed by a north and south branch and, as the city grew, lines were interconnected, and in 1883 electric cable power replaced other forms of traction. Cable cars and the horse-drawn herdics then competed together until the advent of the automobile in the ‘nineties.

An astronaut orbits the earth, commercial jet flights link continents cutting hours off travel times of a decade ago. Travel of the future, both on the earth and off, has stimulated the imaginations of the general public.

Yet flights across oceans and shots into space have done little to ease the everyday problem of getting to the office or plant. The problem of making a downtown shopping trip isn't a problem of outer space, but simply the problem of a parking place.

ALWEG MONORAIL
BROCHURE
1962

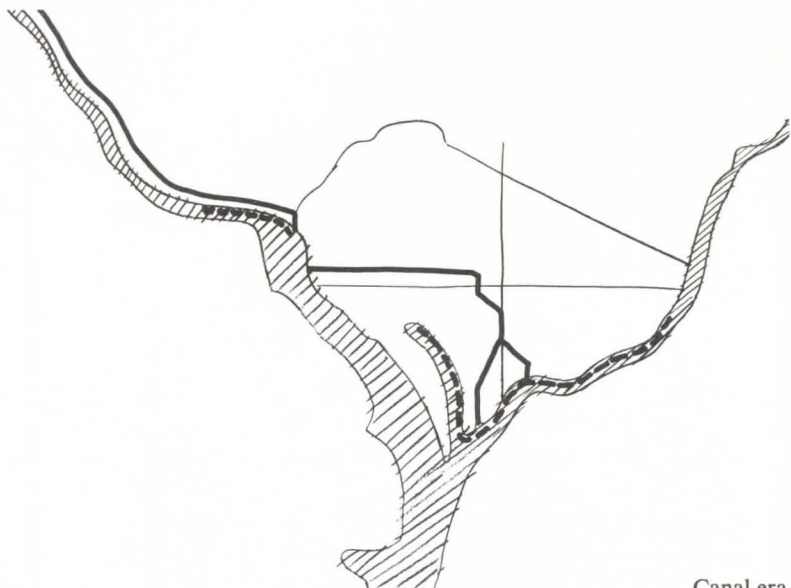
“To authorize parkway use by ever-increasing numbers of commuter buses with their great bulk, truck-like characteristics and odors will disrupt and substantially negate the pleasure and inspiration that such scenic drives are intended to provide,” wrote Wirth.

WASHINGTON POST
Nov 6, 1962

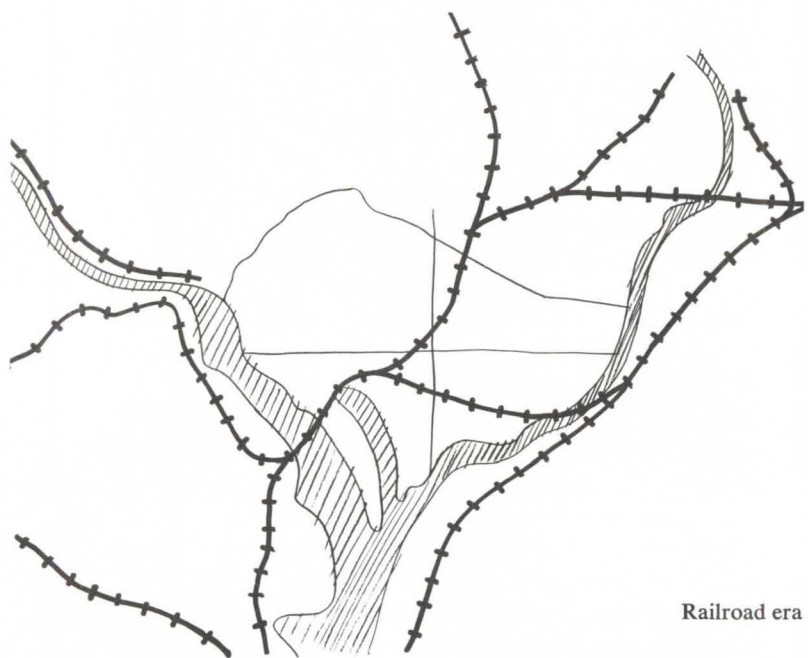
It was inevitable. From the time that those four lanes of concrete were poured through Rock Creek Park in upper Bethesda, no one has ever doubted that, sooner or later, heavy commercial traffic would use them. As the bulldozers arrived, there were many pious promises about the inviolability of park land.

Editorial
WASHINGTON POST
Dec 20, 1961

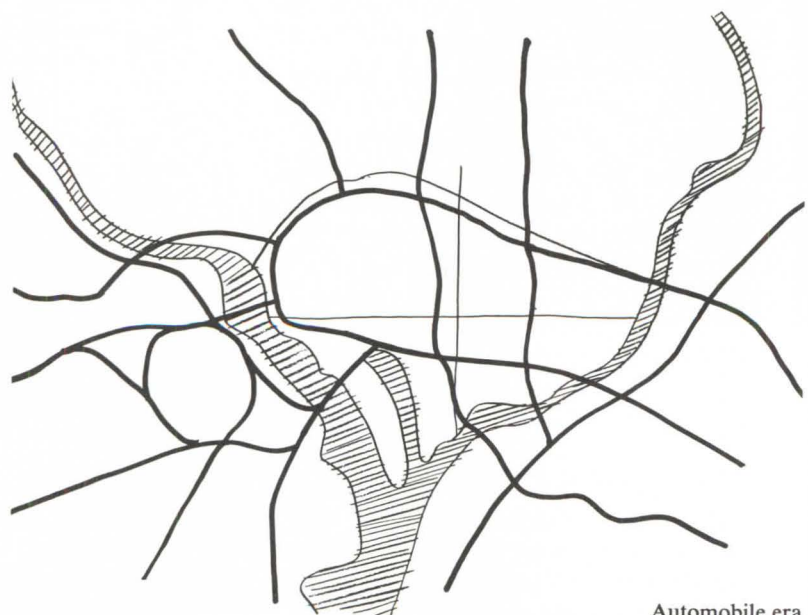
* Herdic: a horse-drawn phaeton of the late 'eighties, named for a Mr Herdic of Philadelphia, its originator



Canal era



Railroad era



Automobile era

In the years following the Civil War, the hilly area lying beyond that covered by the L'Enfant plan, about a sixth of the District, was invaded by developers. A tangle of streets began to take form, particularly along the car lines to the north. At this time there came into being the first of several public bodies to solve the succession of problems which would come with the gasoline motor. Despite an almost total lack of imagination the Highway Commission of 1893 at least caused recognition of the need to extend the main highways of the L'Enfant plan.

Less than a decade later, the McMillan Commission of 1902 was formed to consider plans for the "development and improvement of the entire park system" of the District. While the importance of this Commission is largely measured by the fact that it emphasized the shortcomings of planning, it also recognized L'Enfant's objectives which had been nearly forgotten. It was also responsible for the creation of Rock Creek Park, and further emphasized the importance of a central mall area and its potential for future development. Creation of the Fine Arts Commission in 1910 and the enactment of a zoning ordinance a decade later were both developments of great importance to the physical form of the city but had little bearing upon streets or the movement of people. The first recommendations in this direction were not to come until 1928-30 when the National Park and Planning Commission published the first reports of a correlated and comprehensive nature. Contained in these reports were a major street plan, studies for street traffic, transit, railroads, and parkways paralleling the Potomac and extending to Baltimore.

The study of traffic movement was almost unknown and unrecognized in the formative years of the city. It is a tribute to L'Enfant, and those who followed, that rights-of-way to major streets were ample 150 years after their initial design. Taxpayers were saved thousands of dollars when, as traffic increased, streets did not have to be widened. Despite lack of technical knowledge the character of the metropolitan street plan was extremely useful.

It has been the nature of major street development that some of the more important thoroughfares emerge as a part of park development—in the parkway. Wrong as it may be in concept, the movement of heavy commuter traffic over parkways has saved, at least temporarily, not only dollars but also substantial residential districts. In 1930 the Capper Crampton Act, together with the assistance of the District and the states of Maryland and Virginia, provided funds for



Pennsylvania Avenue from the Treasury during the 1880's

the development of the George Washington Parkway and Rock Creek Parkway, both of which are today prime traffic movers. Additions to the Act in recent years have extended these and created other minor parkways.

The development in 1926, and thereafter, of the vast concentration of public buildings in the "Triangle" area and nearby municipal complex, while helping to stabilize the adjacent commercial district, also placed a concentration of workers in an area difficult either to flush or fill with traffic. But this concentration was to be offset by a more-or-less haphazard decentralization of similar concentrations—such as the Pentagon in Arlington during the Second World War years, and in recent years the Atomic Energy Commission in Germantown, the Central Intelligence Agency in McLean and others to come. These concentrations emerged without much forethought as to effect on traffic, but with the sanguine hope that the impressive highway plans of the future would adapt themselves to meet their impact.

The vast growth which the Second World War brought to Washington required an early reworking of the 1928-30 plans and in 1948-50 a "new" plan was prepared. For improved transportation it proposed three "ring" or "loop" roads, the Inner, Inter-

mediate and Outer Belt Highways. It also proposed a second metropolitan airport in the southwest section of the metropolitan area (the new Dulles Airport is in the northwest section!) and suggested more careful adherence to a plan for dispersal of Federal facilities. As a corollary development came changes in the planning agencies themselves—the most important to transportation being the creation in 1952 of the National Capital Regional Planning Council.

Three major and final developments were to affect the shape of Washington's traffic movement in our time. They were:

First, the passage by Congress in 1948 of the National Highway Act. This program, to connect all major centers in excess of 100,000 persons with interstate highways, had lagged so far that in 1956 the previous matching pattern of Federal and state funds was upped to a 90-10 formula and special emphasis was given to urban areas. This factor gave impetus to the need for a resolution of the main routes through and around Washington, and,

Second, the preparation of the Mass Transportation Survey in 1959 under the direction of the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Capital Regional Planning Council. This survey, itself

It is now to be considered faintly un-American, apparently, to suggest that the ultimate definition of the public welfare may not lie, after all, in the Federal Highway Act.

Editorial

WASHINGTON POST

May 12, 1962

District Highway Director Harold L. Aitken finds it difficult to understand why some people favor freeways between cities but oppose them within cities.

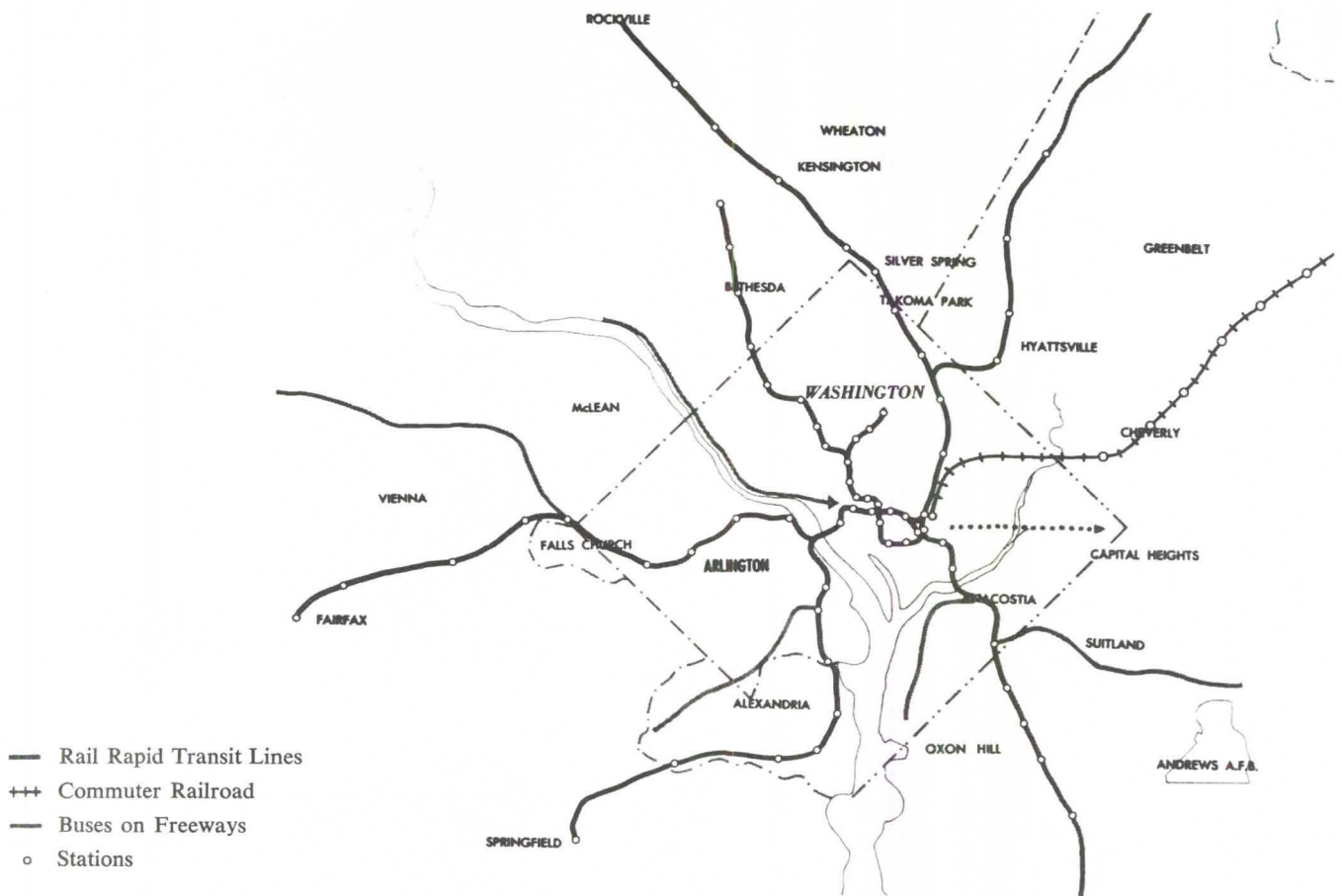
WASHINGTON POST

Nov 29, 1960

America's new freeways permit a journey that is straight, swift, safe and—unfortunately—dull, a Washington land economist declared yesterday. . . . A traveler gets little idea of the culture, history, economy or resources of the region through which he is passing.

WASHINGTON POST

Jan 13, 1961



Public transportation system recommended by the NCTA, November 1962

And each highway requires one or two more highways to connect it properly. And so on until the highway's inventors have exchanged the attractive city of Washington for a field of cement. Instead, let's choose to keep the city a place worth driving to!

Letter to Editor
WASHINGTON POST
Nov 15, 1961

At the base of the immediate dispute lies a broader question: What is the proper mix of freeways and transit facilities that would most adequately serve the transportation needs of a rapidly-growing area of two million population that is beset with serious problems of traffic congestion and urban sprawl?

ENGINEERING
NEWS-RECORD
Sept 13, 1962

costing \$500,000, proposed that for the period 1960-80 a total of \$2.5 billion be spent on new facilities. Of this amount, about \$2 billion was to be spent for expressways—the remainder for four rapid transit radials and facilities for buses on other radials. But in the hearings following the Survey it seemed apparent, 1) that the appeal of a rail transit system had been underestimated and, 2) that there was great local opposition to the effect new highways would have upon the community. It was said that these would “demolish residential neighborhoods, violate parks and playgrounds, desecrate the monumental portions of the nation’s capital, and remove much valuable property from the tax rolls.” It was certainly apparent that the proposed highways would slash through the city, rather than follow established, existing streets which might have been redesigned. On the other hand those who testified in favor of the appeal for rapid transit may have been more concerned with maintaining the status quo than convinced by the amenity of underground travel. As a consequence of the hearings there came,

Third, the enactment in 1960 of the National Capital Transportation Act. The Agency created by this act (the NCTA) was to evaluate the 1959 plan and to consider

“alternative facilities and kinds of services,” such as consideration of a “subway from Union Station capable of rapid dispersal of passengers from the railroad to principal employment centers.” The NCTA’s new plan for rapid transit, just announced, will exceed the 1959 proposal by 50% and the proposed rail network will be more extensive than the ’59 plan. Instead of four rail lines, the seven shown on the accompanying map are proposed.

Curiously, the city of commuters has become divided into two camps, the proponents of the highway and those in favor of rail transit. It would be sad if this problem, hinging so largely upon technical solution, should find itself divided on this issue.

It is always difficult for a stranger to evaluate a city’s traffic pattern. And it would be poor reporting indeed not to give at least a brief picture of Washington’s problems and the solutions most often proposed.

The pattern is relatively typical—the usual spider-web with the three transverse loops already mentioned and with almost two dozen important radials. Of these last, about seven or eight are parkways and are restricted to passenger cars—a feature incidentally which might well work both ways. Surely there will come a time when the

"compact" and the tractor-trailer will be recognized as incompatible types and as parkways are restricted to non-commercial use, so would "truck-ways" be restricted solely to commercial traffic. But not included in such restrictions would be rapid transit or bus traffic which should be provided within the rights-of-way of any highway which could meet the demand for rapid transit.

Only on the outermost loop, the Beltway whose radius from the White House averages ten miles, has there been recent progress. Here the two necessary bridges are complete and fifteen of about sixty miles are usable in spurts. Within the District, except for a block or two recently opened, the Inner Loop awaits the evaluation in early 1963 of rapid transit needs. The Intermediate Loop is no longer popular as a concept and has been dropped at least temporarily. Particularly important is the decision relative to the northwest radial, the so-called Wisconsin Avenue corridor, which ultimately leads to Chicago and points west. Whether or not to extend it from near the District line southerly and downtown, through well-established residential or park areas, is the question. The alternative is to detour it easterly and bring it alongside the Baltimore and Ohio railroad trackage to the center, thus adding somewhat to its length, but taking it through less well-established areas. This solution has certain obvious advantages. However if the highway is built parallel to the B&O tracks, thus serving the same neighborhoods at the same time that railroad commuter traffic is being stimulated, the expectation for the latter should not be overestimated.

The disparity between ten and thirteen routes which exists regarding rapid transit lines and express bus routes in the 1959 and 1962 surveys, ought to be resolved on the sole basis of the fact that densely populated areas produce riders. Factoring this equation realistically for, 1) error in density calculations and, 2) for personal dislikes of rapid transit—or rather for the appeal of automobile flexibility, should produce figures for the technician which will, or will not, justify an enlarged program.

To understand these figures it is necessary to explain that in 1948, 42% of all trips downtown were by private automobile. This figure rose to 67% by 1955 and according to the 1959 report, was expected to reach 75% by 1980. The Planning Commission sought to reduce the percentage to about 63%, slightly better than the 1955 proportion. The central district interests hoped to have this figure reduced to 25%, which appears improbable considering the normal human de-

sire to remain above-ground. Current thinking accepts the 67% to 70% range.

Obviously the key to the solution is a proper balance. A system of all-highways is not the answer in any large city. Here in Washington no reasonable amount of additional freeway lanes could meet future peak-hour demands under the development foreseen for the region. If transit riding were established then, at its present load, there would be a need for sixty additional lanes into the central area!

On the other hand, rapid transit will not do all its proponents maintain. It is poorly named. Seldom rapid, pleasant, or even cheap, if it does not build its patronage securely, its riders will desert. Competitive highways will inevitably be built for other needs. So the solution should be conceived as an integrated one—balance should be created, and flexibility achieved. The NCTA transit plan, it is said, provides for an easy expansion—and we hope, an easy contraction if necessary.

Solutions to traffic movement have more than the usual local interest in this Capital City of the nation. With every citizen a "sidewalk superintendent," the city must work to retain its attraction while accommodating its own regional population growth to four million by the year 2000. Tourists making pilgrimages to the mecca of democracy currently swell the natural population during the vacation season by some seven million persons. Every plan for the future must not only accept these facts but also work to accommodate them. The capital has seldom felt as receptive a climate as it now enjoys with the interest and understanding of the Administration in all the arts, not the least of which is architecture. We have only to witness the program calling for the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue to know how alive is this spirit.

The architect will have an important place in solutions for the future of the capital. Even now the idea of asking for competitive designs for the above-ground structures is being studied. Architects will be taking a vital part in the designing of terminals, platforms and overhead structures which will be integrated in the plans for the new highways eventually and inevitably to emerge. Architects will be needed as well in the design and alignment of the new highways. This design must consider not only the rider, but also the roadside neighbor. The architect has long been involved in roadside embellishment and street furniture. New understanding of the visual effects of the highway will involve the architect even more in the entire design of highway construction. ◀

The National Capital Transportation Agency wants residents of the city of magnificent vistas to become moles.

These men can become troglodytes if they wish, but the rest of us will stay topside and enjoy Washington's air—cleanest of any big city. I'll risk a traffic jam or two along the way. (Will there be a law against subway tie-ups?)

Why go against nature, the passenger car our nation is geared to?

Letter to Editor
WASHINGTON POST
Nov 8, 1962

The District Government should give long and careful consideration to this billion-dollar-plus program before thousands of homes are destroyed to make way for motor traffic to the suburban areas. There is at the present time a serious housing problem in the District and to raze thousands of homes and hundreds of apartment houses would only make conditions chaotic.

The District Federation of Civic Associations strongly opposes the mass destruction of private property for rights-of-way for motor vehicles. Harold Aitken, Director of the DC Highway Department, has stated that he does not want to discuss certain sections of the program at this time because persons to be displaced would be disturbed. Do we have to wait until the bulldozer is at our front door?

Letter to Editor
WASHINGTON POST
Nov 27, 1960



"Woe unto them that join

house to house, that lay

field to field, till there be no place

that they

Washington—Its Parks and Open Spaces

may be placed alone

in the midst of the earth!"

ISAIAH, CH V

by Stewart L. Udall, Secretary of the Interior

More than 170 years ago, a French military engineer surveyed a swamp and wilderness, containing three towns peopled by a handful-size population housed in farmer's cottages—and accepted the assignment to turn it into a world capital.

The future city was Washington, DC. The engineer was Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant. The eighteenth century plan he created could be a twentieth century goal.

"The plan should be drawn on such a scale," said L'Enfant in a letter to General Washington, "as to leave room for that aggrandizement and embellishment which the increase of wealth of the Nation will permit it to pursue at any period, however remote. . . ."

It was the year 1791, and in the nearly two centuries which have ensued, only one major sequel to the L'Enfant Plan has been required to guide Washington builders and planners along the paths of growth and change. The second plan was born in 1901 when the famous McMillan Commission came up with a near-repetition of the L'Enfant planning miracle and supplied a supplementary guidepost for another two-thirds of a century.

There are those in the capital today who feel that time and population have finally outstripped these plans.

It was the passionate concern of both Washington and L'Enfant that the little Potomac settlement should develop into a city primarily Federal in character. Toward this end, the spirited little Frenchman set

aside seventeen areas for use as parks—to be used not primarily for "pleasuring" but to heighten the visual impact of the Federal buildings and national monuments which give the city its uniquely Federal flavor.

Over the years, the preservation of this flavor has been largely the task of the office of National Capital Parks—presently part of the Interior Department's Park Service, but able to trace its continuity back to the original three Federal Commissioners appointed by George Washington in 1791. Their duty was to administer all public grounds and buildings.

In a very real sense, Washington is its parks, and it is upon the solid heritage of these first preserves that Washington is today basing its open spaces program—a program aimed at meeting the changing needs of its mounting populace.

The seventeen areas immediately set aside by L'Enfant for public use included the Mall, the Monument Grounds, the President's Park and the Capitol Grounds. Today, they provide Washington with 301 parks—still the central core of the capital's park system.

The growing pains which followed the Civil War brought many municipal improvements to Washington, but always the exclusively Federal character of the park system and the public buildings was maintained, this singleness of purpose and design resulting largely from the fact that stewardship in this area has been passed on in a smooth, uninterrupted line.

The earth is our home, and we share responsibility for the management of our environment and the preservation of its values.

So great is the power of men and nations to enlarge the machine-dominated portion of the world that it is not an exaggeration to say that few opportunities for conservation projects of grand scope will remain by the year 2000. . . . The unspoiled landscapes, the spacious refuges for wildlife, the nature parks and nature reserves of significant size and grandeur that our generation saves will be all that is preserved. . . . Those who follow will have the mundane tasks of management and house-keeping.

The hour is very late. With each day that passes the natural world shrinks as we exert greater artificial control over our environment.

Stewart L. Udall,
July 1962

1ST WORLD CONFERENCE
ON NATIONAL PARKS

The legal continuity of the duties involved was clearly preserved from the original three Commissioners appointed by Washington in 1791 down to its present office of the National Capital Region. In 1849, with the creation of the Department of the Interior, control of the national capital park system passed from the Commissioner of Public Buildings to the Secretary of the Interior, and it has been the constant goal of this department to maintain this trust as one of the finest park systems in the world.

Photos: Abbie Rowe—Courtesy National Park Service



Press Club outing in Rock Creek Park

McMillan Plan — 1902:

A meticulous study of the existing park system of the District resulted in the naming of 55 distinct areas in Washington to be acquired by the government toward the extension of the park and parkway system. The Anacostia Flats in Southeast Washington should be reclaimed, the Commission conjectured, for a public park; a Fort Drive skirting Washington should connect the forts which had served as the city's defenses in the Civil War and which, themselves, should be made into parks. Various parkways were also projected: one to connect Potomac and Rock Creek Parks, another between Rock Creek and Anacostia Parks, a third between the capital and Mount Vernon.

HOUSE & GARDEN
July 1940

The initial urge to implement the park plan came in the years immediately following the Civil War, and the system underwent extensive development from then through 1925. Visiting dignitaries, itinerant soldiers and sightseeing visitors in 1867 were appalled at the unpaved streets and general “backwoods” nature of the town. They registered strongly their impression that it was completely lacking in the air of an important national capital. Agitation for improvement mounted during this period, culminating in the next great planning step the city was to know—the McMillan Plan of 1901.

Preceding this plan by some thirty years, a Park Commission was organized and planted approximately 60,000 trees along the streets. In the closing decade of the nineteenth century, when Westerners were pushing for establishment of Yellowstone as a national park, an Easterner—Charles Carroll Glover—was advocating acquisition of Rock Creek Park in Washington, DC. He organized civic leaders into a committee that literally hammered the legislation out of Congress. In 1890, harkening to the committee's tireless pamphleteering and buttonholing, Congress “perpetually dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasure ground” the virgin valley, appropriating \$1,174,511.45 for the original purchase of 1,605.9 acres, completed in 1894.

Today this area is one of the largest and

most beautiful natural parks possessed by any city in the world—rivaling New York's Central Park in boldness of concept, setting and varied uses. It embraces 1,800 acres, extending mile-wide from the zoo to nearly downtown thence to the District line, and up Rock Creek northward from the District line on 1,100 acres furnished by Maryland park officials. Early Presidents, such as John Quincy Adams, found the park a serene retreat from the rough-and-tumble of politics. Later, Theodore Roosevelt turned it into a sort of outdoor gymnasium for the physical fitness scrambles on which he led his “tennis cabinet.”

As initially conceived by L'Enfant, the capital's parks had a two-fold purpose. They were to provide suitable settings for the great public buildings, and “enjoyment and inspiration” to the townspeople.

To this twin purpose, the present park department has added a third important concept—recreation. Here again, Rock Creek Park is outstanding in fulfilling its function. The so-called “16th and Kennedy area” of the park is a sharp deviation from the wilderness and historic area. Here, on a concessionaire basis, visitors may see Broadway productions at the Carter Barron Amphitheater, play tennis on any of twenty-two courts, and attend games at three baseball fields. This intensively developed recreational area is considered one of the District's most valuable assets.

As recently as five years ago, this municipal wonderland was seriously threatened by a wide superhighway. The issue seems to be dead as of the moment, but park officials are alert to any renewed effort in this direction.

What remains to be developed in the national capital park domain? Park men have their future sights set on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal scenic wooded area, extending along the Potomac River bank on the Maryland side, from Seneca on up the river to Cumberland. This narrow band spins a mere 5,000 acres into a 160-mile thread of wild, overgrown, abandoned waterway. Its current status is Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Monument. Eventually the National Park Service hopes for as thorough a restoration as currently exists along the twenty-two mile stretch of canal ending at Seneca.

Fifteen miles up the Potomac from Washington, DC, is the dramatic fall-line, where the river tumbles thirty-five feet downward in a space of less than a mile. On the Maryland side, there is the Great Falls Tavern and Canal Museum, and the restored canal. This area has been well developed by the National Park Service.

At this point, just across the Potomac in Virginia, lies the opportunity to create what Park Service officials term "the last significant addition to our Capital Park System." Here the Park Service is leasing 800 acres of wooded land at this site. The land involved is the site of the historic Potomack Canal Company and contains remnants of the stone locks built in the late 1700's. Furladen wood rafts floated down from Indian country, skirted the fall-line through the stone locks, and proceeded on down to coastal trading posts.

The pioneer engineering feat requiring the blasting of a thirty-foot cleft out of sheer rock, the digging of a skirting canal and the construction of lift locks has intrigued both the Army engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers. It remains one of the fondest hopes of these two groups that some day the Park Service will restore these locks, thus preserving the achievement for the admiration of future generations.

The area, owned by the Potomac Electric Power Company and currently on a thirty-year lease to the government, has another historically significant claim to national park status. The organizer and first president of the Potomack Canal Company was George Washington, who relinquished his post only to take one he considered more urgent—the Presidency.

Other areas in which park officials still see growth potential for the Capital Park System include the recommended extension of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. In 1932, the Mount Vernon Highway was built—the first link in the proposed parkway. Eventually, the Parkway will run all the way to Great Falls from Mt Vernon on the Virginia side, and connect with a similar parkway on the Maryland side. The connecting link, now under construction as a Maryland State and Public Roads project, would be the Cabin John Bridge.

Most recent addition slated for the system is forty-six acres of waterfront wasteland surrounding two historic landmarks at Jones Point. The land, at the confluence of Hunting Creek and the Potomac River in southern Alexandria, contains the remains of the Jones Point Lighthouse, completed in 1855, and the southern cornerstone of the District of Columbia, set in place in 1791.

The particular crisis facing park planners and maintainers today in Washington is suburban sprawl. "We have been able to keep abreast of the city's park needs for 170 years with our two planning guides," a park official said, "but now we need another major planning effort."

For a worthy sequel to the McMillan Plan,



Saturday afternoon on the old C & O Canal



Independence Day celebration at the Watergate Theater



Tollgate museum and tavern on the C & O Canal

The main aim has been to encourage more visitors without heed to their effects and often with little realization that the numbers now are destroying the very things that people come to enjoy.

The question poses a real dilemma. A national park without man is without significance to man, but man by his presence alters the attributes we wish to preserve. Compromise is the obvious necessity, and where the line of compromise is drawn will depend only upon the knowledge and wisdom of the interpreter.

M. F. Day
July 1962

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He emphasized that it is the shallow seas near centers of civilization that are most in need of protection, although they are "the most productive areas on earth." Estuaries, inlets, bights, and marshes, the nurseries of the sea, are fast disappearing through development, filling, bulkheading and pollution.

Dr Carleton Ray,
July 1962

1ST WORLD CONFERENCE
ON NATIONAL PARKS

Congress has a special obligation to exercise foresight in the protection of open spaces near to the nation's capital, but the problems of other cities are not essentially different. Urban sprawl is spreading over the countryside at an alarming rate. Unless local governments act quickly to save scenic and historic spots, recreation areas and greenbelts to relieve the monotony of endless suburbs, many of the amenities of urban living will be lost for all time.

Editorial
WASHINGTON POST
Feb 11, 1961

park officials look most hopefully to Congress. They long for a comprehensive "next step" for District parks—a plan forged out of wisdom and research by a group of dedicated planners steeped in the tradition of L'Enfant and McMillan.

The Park Service considers itself the custodian of the beauty and character of the nation's capital. It is a high commitment and one its practitioners take with a high sense of stewardship.

Today in Washington a conscientious group of conservation-minded outdoorsmen are alert to the implications of mounting population and the urgent need to protect public land areas. They are particularly concerned with the problem that is uniquely Washington's—the need not only to retain outdoor areas, but to preserve their historical meaning and flavor.

For example, perhaps as important as the preservation of the actual building and grounds which made up the home of George Washington is the peaceful vista of the Potomac and the opposing shore upon which the father of our nation gazed from the sweeping veranda of Mount Vernon and from which he drew strength and inspiration. It is essentially the same panorama that helped nourish Washington back to strength in the rest periods between the gruelling activities which took him away.

All this, recently threatened by encroaching development, seems likely now to be preserved. Last August in Washington, the Accokeek Foundation, headed by Congresswoman Frances P. Bolton of Ohio, donated to the National Park System a parcel of the Potomac shore opposite Mount Vernon.

Congress has approved funds to acquire an adjoining 133 acres, thus providing the nucleus for a new park—one that is a tribute to the purpose outlined in the Accokeek Foundation's charter: "To preserve the present wooded and open character of the approaches to the city of Washington along the Potomac River opposite Mount Vernon."

The preservation of open spaces, key to the Washington area's Year 2000 Plan, envisions long spokes of concentrated development, separated by open or sparsely settled countryside. Suburban planners now are seeking ways to keep the open spaces in Maryland and Virginia. The need is immediately apparent.

As population pressures mount and Washington suburbs devour an additional 8,000 acres annually of farms, stream, valleys and woodlands, open space is rapidly being pushed out of the reach of those who need it most.

Between 1920 and 1960, more than 250

square miles of Washington countryside has become urbanized, and if present trends continue, over a thousand square miles of land will have been consumed by the turn of the century. Under these circumstances, the preservation of open spaces in the outward development of the city becomes a matter of intense importance now—at the outward planning stage.

Within the core city, Washingtonians may repair to the out-of-doors and walk, from almost any office building, to a trim little park, there to eat their lunches on benches which face a playing fountain, a pool of water lilies, or a graceful statue, in a tiny oasis of loveliness, caught in the surrounding net of urbanity.

At the other end of the "open space" definition is the wilderness area—for hiking, camping, or fishing. Basically, these two ends of open space have one thing in common—they offer city-bound humanity a measure of psychic relief. Where the long spokes of open space currently being promoted in the capital's Year 2000 Plan would provide "intrusion of country" into heavily concentrated suburbia, the small, manicured core city parks offer the "illusion of country."

The case for open spaces can be made in three ways which are particularly applicable to the National Park System—open space for recreation, open space for institutions and open space for esthetics.

It is obvious at a glance that many of these so-called separate cases are overlapping. The institutional use of open spaces would be abused if it were not combined with the esthetic—and in many cases it includes also the recreational function. The Potomac River, while offering acres of water for low-intensity recreational use, also performs the vital, though incidental, function of providing a magnificent and unobstructed view of the Capital City from the Virginia bank. Open space properly located can produce the same effect as the quiet passage before the final movement of a symphony. Just as the musical lull serves to sharpen the impact of the finale, so the open space can heighten the visual impact of a building or group of buildings, such as the Lincoln Memorial or the Federal Triangle.

At the national level, a few opportunities still exist to acquire—by act of Congress, by purchase or by philanthropic gifts—chunks of land to add to our national park and seashore preserves. By the end of this decade these opportunities will largely have been solidified or dissipated.

The city grows—the nation grows—the need grows—the arena of possible action dwindles. ◀

City and Capital

by Frederick Gutheim, President, The Washington Center for Metropolitan Studies

Monumental Washington is a world-famous illustration of civic art. Vernacular Washington has always been the despair of its planners. The buildings were always too low in height. Even the founding fathers attempted to impose minimum height limitations on new buildings erected on the principal avenues. The large public buildings were either too widely scattered to constitute a center, or too weak and isolated to have much impact upon their surroundings. In the early city where there were not vacant lots, one found wooden shacks and temporary structures filling the space between the occasional works of architectural distinction. It became a municipal design formula: "To make a Washington street, take one marble temple or public office, a dozen good houses of brick, and a dozen of wood, and fill in with sheds and fields," as the English visitor, Henry Latham, prescribed. For a century the unfinished city was the target of wits. Their irony was exercised upon the city's open spaces, and their sarcasm found outlet in the contrast with ambitious, large-scale plans. The young Charles Dickens (1842) found "broad avenues that begin in nothing and lead nowhere," in "The City of Magnificent Intentions." With its 160-foot-wide avenues, malls, vistas, axes, civic open spaces and commanding—if still empty—sites for public buildings, the incomplete city with its still dubious future was a perfect punching bag for critics. Not until the end of the nineteenth century was it really decided that Washington was to remain the site of the national capital, and did the Federal government commence to build at an equivalent scale.¹

The planned city was a work of landscape art rather than architecture. Trees filled the wide river meadows, and crowned the surrounding hills. When the first avenues were cut through the trees, the city must indeed have resembled the French hunting rides from which the planner and landscapist L'Enfant, follower of Le Nôtre, took his design. During the long decades of urban unfulfillment, it was trees that alone saved the city from being a village. To redeem Pennsylvania Avenue, Jefferson planted quick-growing poplars. It was the 180,000 shade trees, planted by order of Governor Shepherd as a device to reduce the width of street to be paved, that made the modern city a place of elm-shaded avenues and residential streets bordered by oaks, sycamores and maples. Perhaps the decisive contribution to the 1902 McMillan Plan, which revived the concept of a great formal city, was Olmsted's. His appreciation for the significance of the great planted areas and the tree-bordered streets was no less important than his recovery of the original pattern of open spaces. The natural arcade, as Lewis Mumford remarked, provides a third dimension for L'Enfant's plan, and screened not only the gaps in the building pattern but its unfortunate scale and *gaucherie*.² The novelist Henry James spoke of the as yet bourgeois character of the city being successfully screened and disguised by trees. "The dressing-up, in other words, was complete, and the great park-like aspect gained, and became nobly artificial, by the very

¹ Useful references for the formative period of the city's history and its plan are Wilhelmus Bogart Bryan, "A History of the National Capital," New York: Macmillan, 1914 and 1916, 2 vols.; Constance McLaughlin Green, "Washington, Village and Capital, 1800-1878," Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962; and Frederick Gutheim, "The Potomac," New York: Rinehart, 1949.

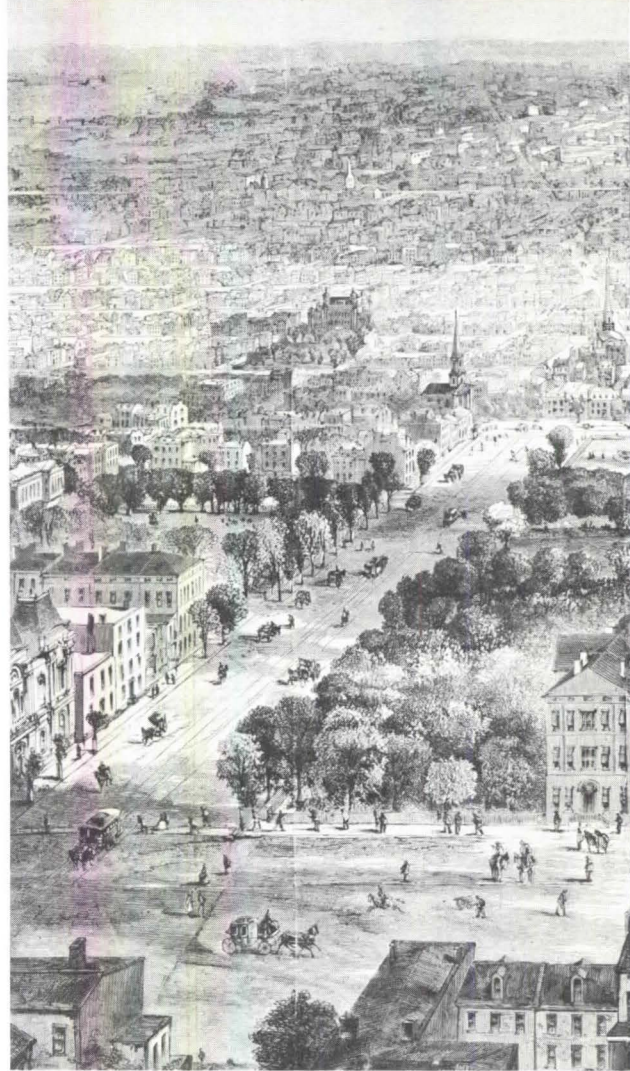
² Lewis Mumford, "The City in History," New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961, pp. 403-409. I should not leave this subject of the importance, in history and today, of the street trees of Washington without mentioning the appalling prospect that they are doomed by the extensive program of widening arterial streets proposed by the 1959 Mass Transportation Survey and adopted by the National Capital Planning Commission. See National Capital Planning Commission/Regional Planning Council, "Transportation Plan, National Capital Region," Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1959, p. 54, Figure 41, "Major Arterials to Complement Freeway System."

complexity of the plan of the place, the perpetual perspectives, the converging, radiating avenues, the frequent circles and crossways. . . .”

When laid out in 1791 Washington was certainly a baroque city. Nevertheless, the door had slammed on the baroque. Its last exponents were disappearing. The baroque spirit as illustrated by the thirty-five-year-old L'Enfant's vast work was not only *retardataire* but, by contrast with a lively if primitive but genuine example like the plan of Annapolis, it was mechanical. After close examination it is hard to agree that L'Enfant was the supreme baroque city planner, “who showed a better grasp of the interrelation of topography, traffic monuments and public buildings.” Rather, like McKim's Plan of 1902 and really also the work of contemporary planning agencies, the L'Enfant Plan dealt with public building sites and open spaces rather than with the living city. It established the white monumental city, in the abstract world of mathematics. As Elbert Peets has shown, the city was laid out on the base of a right-angled triangle, the angles of which lie at the Capitol, the White House and the Washington Monument, with Pennsylvania Avenue forming the hypotenuse. From this “perfect triangle” L'Enfant selected his commanding sites for major buildings, disposed his avenues and their perspectives in *pattes d'oie*, formed by the intersection of three arterials in equal angles, a pattern which Peets has more recently traced to Versailles. Organization through geometrical order was L'Enfant's means of achieving an impressive visual unity for the vast area of the Federal city, an order frequently misunderstood and overlooked by city planners, but one whose strong framework still controls the monumental core.³ Is it enough?

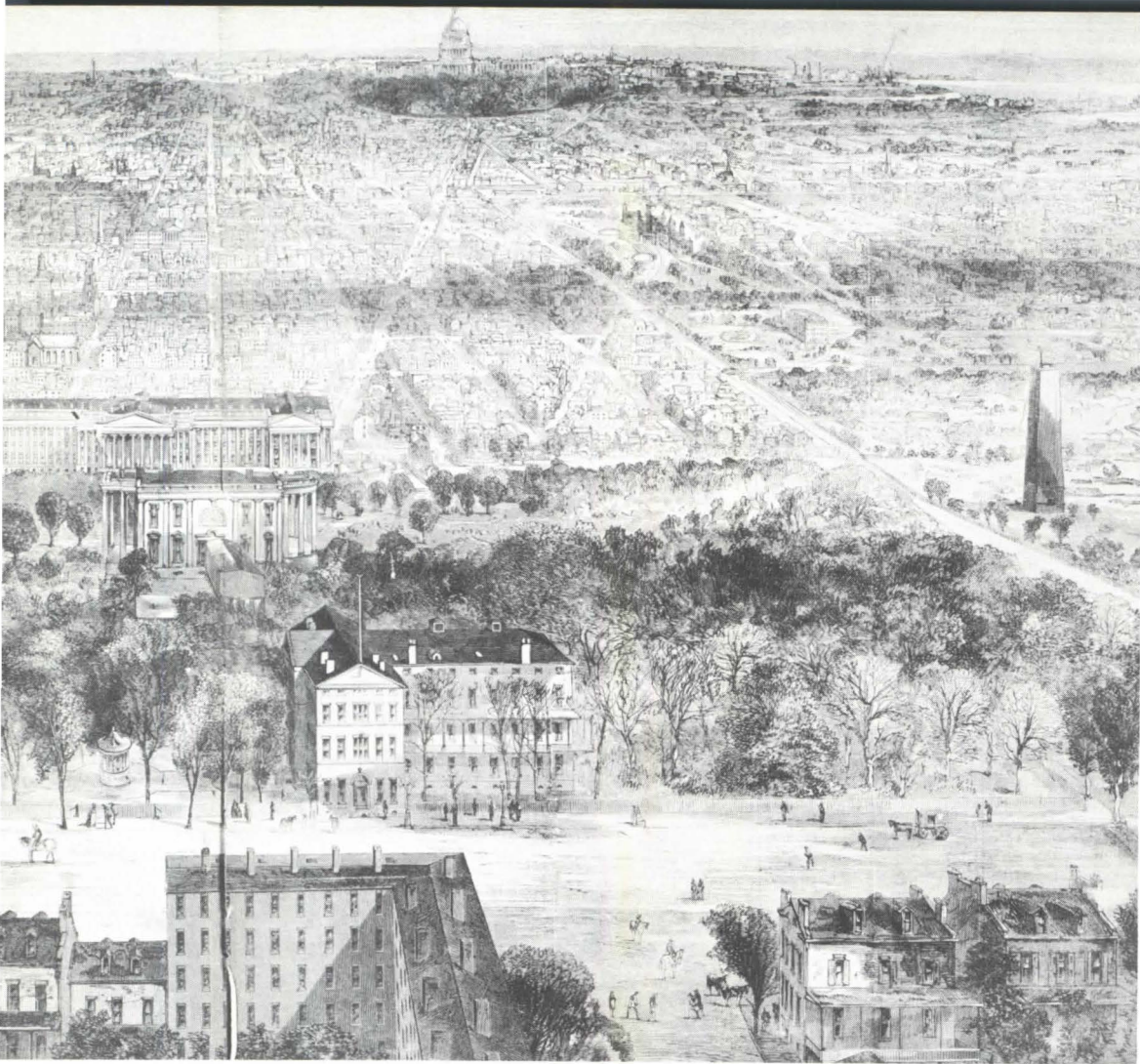
The baroque heritage was neither in landscape nor architecture but in spatial pattern, establishing relationships and forming connections throughout the city. The most meaningful of these spaces were the streets and avenues, the circles and squares, and spacious settings for principal buildings. The great formal Mall had less value. And by contrast the later romantic park systems which Olmsted planned to fill the valley of the Anacostia and the embanked Potomac had almost the quality of a greenbelt around the original city.

³ Elbert Peets has remained the most valuable and steadfast scholar of the city's plan from his first publication with Werner Hegemann, “The American Vitruvius,” New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1922. See especially his analysis of the L'Enfant plan in *The Architectural Record*, September 1932; and most recently his discussion of the reconstructed axes and perspectives of the city in *Informations et Documents*, No. 160, 15 April-1 May 1962, pp. 34-38.



This basic pattern of spaces has lost neither its seminal architectural appeal nor its directing force. A reinterpretation of values has taken place. But it is still to this that Washington owes its distinctive open sites and the image of “a white building in a green park,” as Edward D. Stone has finely said. No other city has such a treasure, to which especially present and future urban design can respond. The challenge is to live up to this heritage, not only in buildings, streets and park design but in the design of urban expressways, transit facilities, bridges and other newer constituent elements of the modern city, especially when the instinct of the city is for the ordinary.

Little of the monumental city has influenced the vernacular town, or rather the successive vernacular towns that have been built over the century and a half. Judiciary Square, as a complex of public buildings and surrounding houses, or residential rows facing an occasional open square, were exceptions. Development was too scattered and sporadic. What the first of these vernacular towns was we can still see today in Alexandria and Georgetown, with their regular plans and rows of brick houses set close to the street. But the row house tradition



Drawing by Theodore R. Davis of Washington in 1869, from *Harper's Weekly*; 17th Street in the foreground, looking east to the Capitol

proliferated in the later nineteenth century to a variety as rich as Baltimore or Philadelphia, with small standardized dwellings for the masses as well as tall, spiky ones for the classes. With the automobile came the suburban vernacular of single-family dwellings, with an equal impartiality to considerations of wealth, and the innumerable changes that have been rung from the Cape Cod to the ranch house. In the fabric of the city, again, not the design of dwellings but the form of areas—like Georgetown, defined by engirdling natural features and open spaces—was determining.

Commercial buildings formed equally a vernacular city. Some charming evidences of mid-nineteenth century commercial streets are to be found (today above the first story, of course) along 7th Street and even on Pennsylvania Avenue. But it is the contemporary office building boom that accompanied the white-collar revolution which illustrates in Washington, as in most vigorously-growing large cities, the modern idiom of curtain-wall and grill, punctuated with parking lots and garages. This has yet to produce great streets, squares or planned areas.

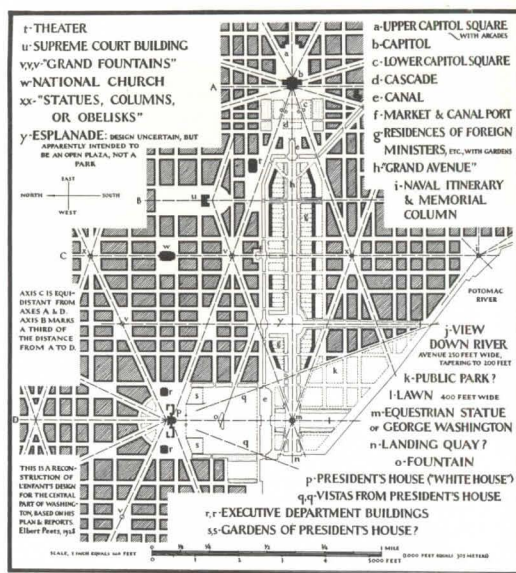
Each of these vernaculars has its own merit, and what was built in Washington

stands up reasonably well when compared to what was being designed elsewhere. And a surprising amount of it has survived. In déclassé parts of the city—the area just east of the now-abandoned baseball park, for example—whole blocks of structurally sound houses nearly a hundred years old form distinctive and attractive parts of the city with a valid claim to preservation.

The early regionalism of brick and field-stone, of plantation houses (like the Octagon) transplanted to the city complete with their stables, smoke houses, and other functional dependencies, was almost immediately replaced by the cornucopia of architectural materials spilled out of steamboats and railroad cars, and a nationally organized building economy.

The regional designs based on climate were invalidated by ventilation and airconditioning. Regional behavior as a source of the design of dwellings and communities, has like the local speech, been nationalized, and its distinctive character is muted.

We are even losing through demolition the inherited examples of regional style. Thus, like official architecture, the vernacular design is also becoming less individual and more absolute.



Elbert Peets' reconstruction of the L'Enfant Plan

The dichotomy of official and vernacular architecture, however, is distinctive. The style of official architecture is fine art, responsive to formal tradition and stylistic evolution. The buildings that are being designed and built today for all their apparent break with tradition respond equally to the general tendency of architecture and the idea of a public building rather than to any regional or general style. If the architect of a building today were to recognize any local conditions, it would undoubtedly be the design of prior buildings near his site. As it all conforms to all these conditions it may perhaps be considered a regional architecture, but one responding to ideas and attitudes rather than to climate, materials or even behavior.

To the city planner, this is cause for frustration. Here, as Henry James wrote, "The great soft fact, as opposed to the little hard ones, is the beauty of the site itself." It is to the site that the plan must respond—to the rivers and their meadows, the terraces and higher elevations reaching back to the piedmont itself, the whole forming part of that great humid stretch of north Atlantic coastal plain where we find the city of Megalopolis. This is a natural framework, made comprehensible and emphatic by parks. In these facts of geography we find others. The leisurely climate, with its brilliant Octobers and its superb Mays, the winters when spring is never out of sight, and the summers which we accept, thankful for the lack of really severe winters and really great heat, the absence of hurricanes and tornadoes, of earthquakes and other natural hazards. We find, too, the Washington light, variable through the year, but capable of truly Venetian brilliance in the early spring, of May's "rare light, half-green, half-golden, of the lovely leafy moment," and of October's softer, russet, watery haze.

It is not to such specifics of the site that Washington's Federal architecture has responded, but to the national call, to the spirit of the times, to what is being done elsewhere, always raised, however, to the higher level demanded by the Federal city. If we owe our architectural museum of past styles and illustrations from Judiciary Square and the Southwest to the Lincoln Memorial and Dulles Airport to the circumstance that government seldom throws things away, what one finds in its galleries is a collection of choice examples of the national culture, not a response to regional conditions or an evolution of local taste. In a word, it is an absolute architecture.

There is little room for satisfaction with either the course of official architecture in the monumental center, or with the vernacular architecture of homes, official buildings or places of business. The fair Federal city has begun to look like every other big city. The images and dreams of yesterday have lost their force and their advocates, and no new ones have yet been born.

In the terminology of Kevin Lynch, the monumental city and its surrounding vernacular meet at "edges."⁴ Should we accept these? Are they a valid theme of design? Or should we try increasingly to treat them as "seams," unifying the two Washingtons?

The National Capital Planning Commission is preaching a doctrine of the more homogeneous city. It wishes not only to mitigate the sterile, daytime monumental white city, and to introduce nongovernmental uses and activities. It wishes also to provide the economic and cultural vitality of governmental employment centers in urban areas that are devoid of such impulses. Both objectives deserve examination.

Illustrative of this policy is the revised plan for the so-called "East Mall," initially conceived as a perpetuation of the design philosophy that gave birth to the Federal Triangle; or proposals for the so-called Northwest Rectangle that have never left the Planning Commission's office. Both express a more homogeneous plan embracing Federal and non-Federal sites, business and residential activities, and other richly diversified elements, a plan equally of high and low, large and small buildings and patterned open space.

The proposed Federal Buildings Sites Feasibility Study shows how strikingly this contrasts with earlier practice, whether by private architects or Federal planning agen-

⁴ Kevin Lynch, "The Image of the City," Cambridge, Mass.: Technology Press, 1960, pp. 62-66.

cies, fairly represented by the 1930 preliminary study of seven buildings forming a War-Navy group by Zantzinger, Borie and Medary. Urban design today is employing urban space in its efforts to unify the city, not merely exploiting elaborate architectural groupings to achieve uniformity through massing of the surrounding areas. In its echoing of the Philadelphia "greenways" there is once again a reliance upon trees in civic design in Washington.

Appealing as this doctrine may be, it has not really been resolved as a problem of design, nor as a business question of "mixed enterprises"; nor do we really know the social and economic consequences of urban homogeneity. Little more solid reason exists to support the conclusion that "urban vitality" will result from a homogeneous mixture of land-uses than that the central city can support extensive "bright areas" of nighttime cultural activities and amusements. Nor do we know much about the pros and cons of a single Downtown area in which government and commercial activities might be blended, as opposed to a moderately decentralized (and specialized) series of such districts. We are equally dim about the relative drawing power of central city activities from distant suburbs. We have not even taken the measure of cultural subcenters now clearly forming in Georgetown and even around the Arena Stage.

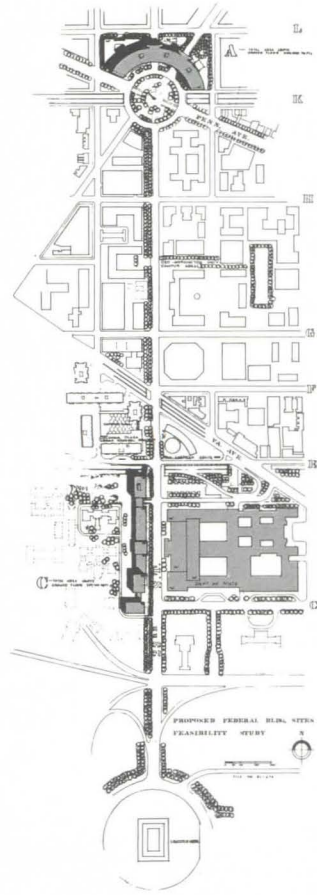
If we but knew how to undergird specific Federal activities with related private activities, and to motivate both toward a greater response to their functional requirements, we might have the master key to the future city. It would then be possible to break down the undiversified mass of Federal activities into some clearly defined elements. What holds this back?

The General Services Administration, flying the banner of standardization as it struggles through the shifting sands of bureaucracy, would like to view these activities as

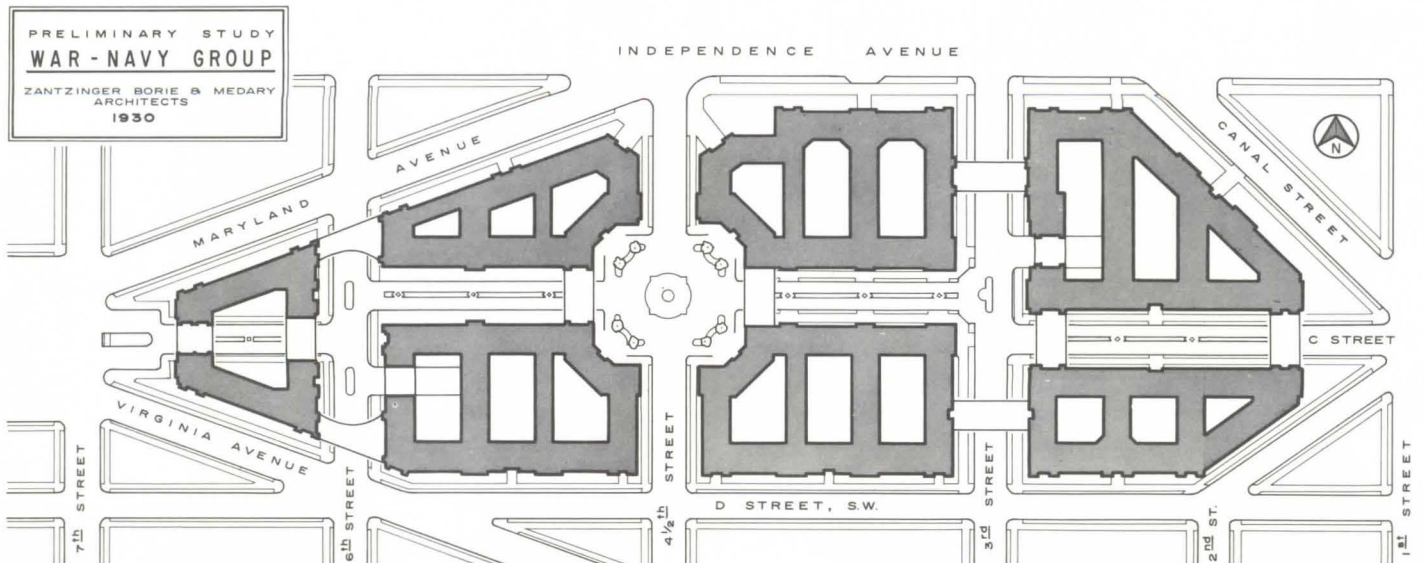
having the same formal building requirements. It denies any need for specialized provisions. But these are constantly striving for recognition, ought to be reflected, and constitute an important design theme and source of individuality.

The distribution of Federal employment throughout the Washington area is an old story. This was initially determined by operating reasons, like the location of the Navy Yard on the Anacostia River or the Naval Torpedo Plant on the Potomac; the location of the Bureau of Standards in what was an outlying part of the city, on Connecticut Avenue, was equally related to the desire to get away from vibration and other interferences with delicate laboratory equipment. What may be learned from these earlier cases is that little direct productive relationship was proposed or has come to exist between the Federal establishment and its surrounding area. (Actually the same is true of an isolated industrial plant, or even a school.) Nor is there much support for the theory that many employees will live in the immediate vicinity of their job location. If we are to believe such a location theory, the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, opposite the concentration of government employees in the Federal Triangle, ought to be one of the busiest parts of town; but instead it is a shabby commercial backwater. Even "Downtown" Federal establishments have generated little economic activity in their immediate vicinity.

Instances of significant relationships between public and private activities can, however, be cited. One finds within a few blocks of each other, hardly by accident, not only the State Department, the Agency for International Development and the US Information Agency, but the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Around this strong nucleus of government activities has already clustered many private activities to accommodate which several large new



Plan for 23rd Street NW by NCPC, showing Federal buildings surrounded by buildings of many other uses. Contrast with plan below—1930 plan for solid massing of War and Navy Department buildings



office buildings have been erected. More are under construction. Here one also finds cosmopolitan restaurants, foreign language films, bookshops, banks with international services, travel bureaus and the other functions that find their customers here. It adds up to a distinctive sector of the city.

The concentrations of government buildings in older Washington must now be matched by dispersed concentrations.⁵ One-third of all Federal employees now work outside the boundaries of the District of Columbia, and the proportion will be increasing. Most of them are in large functional units like the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, or the Pentagon. Unlike the experience just reviewed with older concentrations, some signs of development are discernible in these new areas. The National Institutes of Health, for example, are strengthened by the adjacent Naval Hospital. Together the institutions directed the location here of the combined medical libraries. Hospital-visitor needs have stimulated a substantial growth of motels and restaurants in the immediate area. Some doctors have occupied nearby offices to see patients in their off-hours. A university has started to serve the continuing education needs of NIH employees. An important professional society has located here, where many of its members are concentrated. There is even a slight industrial movement in the establishment of a few specialized pharmaceutical manufacturers. Many of these beginnings could start to grow rapidly in this location, but probably the stimulus to growth would come from outside. These developments have not come about nor are they accommodated as the result of any plan but, in many cases, despite plans. If future Federal establishments are to become important nuclei, we must know more than we do at present about their growth-generating capabilities. Nor is this an impossible question to answer, as we are increasingly finding out in the research and development and area development fields.

A strong functional and sectoral analysis of the Washington metropolitan area would disclose the basis for the unified planning of both Federal and private activities. If such analysis is shrewdly made, if it recognizes not only the needs of vitality but of continuity as well, we may also unlock the future of the monumental city as well as the expanding metropolitan area. It is to be found

not in architectural preferences and styles, nor in conformity to the regulations of planning and zoning, but by a more sensitive response to the living needs of the people who use the city.

Modern planning must be more involved with life. It must discriminate. The conventional categories of public and private, of land-use, of employment, to illustrate, must be used with discretion. There must be a return to social surveys, holistic social theories, unifying perceptions of designers. The research component of such a new approach must help prepare the designer for understanding whole situations and their functional requirements, not merely to supply him with splinters of facts whose value may be only as irritants. Urban design must seek such fundamental understandings of its program from the public and its political leaders that it will not only be supported but strong public demands will oppose fractional solutions. If planning is to serve life, it should certainly do so with style, and this too becomes an objective of design.

It is a tempting theory, to conclude, that the white monumental Washington and the dark vernacular city, as they are growing together in their historic and future aspects, might be further unified through improvements in regional development policy and in planning organization. This theory can be rather soundly rooted in the past separation of Federal and local building decisions, and the concentration of Federal interest in the District of Columbia, the jurisdiction that contains today only one-third of the area's population and in future years will hold progressively less.

A new and more unified Washington architecture would come from the creation of a regional development agency for the Washington Metropolitan area, a governmental entity that would actually direct the design and construction of Federal buildings and public works projects, highways and mass transportation, housing and community facilities, open land and reservations for future public buildings. Such an agency has already been proposed as a logical instrumentality for meeting the needs of this fast-developing area, and as a sound political expression of a concert of Federal and local interests.⁶ If realized, it might be Washington's contribution to other metropolitan areas in search of governmental organization, and not the least of its recommendations would be its ability to specify design. ◀

⁵ I have earlier offered some relevant views on dispersal, viz., "The Mess in Washington," *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, January 1953 (vol. xix, no. 1), pp. 14-19; "Sesquicentennial Washington: The First 150 Years," *Bulletin of the American Institute of Architects*, March 1950 (vol. 4, no. 2), pp. 27-30; hearings on H.R. 8248 before the Government Activities Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations, U. S. House of Representatives, 87th Cong., 1st sess., pp. 38-48.

⁶ See US Congress, Joint Committee on Washington Metropolitan Problems, "Meeting the Problems of Metropolitan Growth in the National Capital Region," Senate Report No. 38, 86th Cong., 1st sess., January 31, 1959, pp. 34 ff.

Federal Architecture

by Roy F. Larson FAIA, Member, AIA Committee on the National Capital

One speculates in writing about Washington on what our national capital might be today had it been established fifty or sixty years later than the end of the eighteenth century. What would have been the nature of its plan and the pattern and character of the architecture of its public buildings? By mid-nineteenth century a stagnation in the arts had set in and men's thoughts and talents were oriented toward other fields. Industrialism and the resulting concentration on production, in mass, of goods and services turned men's minds away from the creation and enjoyment of the arts. Little was done in architecture or planning during the latter part of the century which gives us assurance now that Washington would have been the beautiful city it is had its design and construction been placed in the hands of architects and planners of that period.

The timing of the move and the selection of the site on the banks of the Potomac River were propitious. The influence of the late Renaissance and the new classicism in England on the architecture of the early buildings and the very important inspiration of the French grand design evident in the architect's plan for Washington, were an auspicious combination.

It is difficult to imagine a more felicitous conjunction of circumstances for the founding of a new country and the building of its seat of government. There were many minds in the colonies that shared the European interest in philosophy and the spirit of skepticism and empiricism in social and political thought. Many brought with them to America an acquaintance with and an appreciation of the arts and had the means to cultivate and promote them. Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant, educated as an engineer in France and an officer in the French colonial troops, came to the colonies because of his sym-

pathy with the American cause and served in the Continental Army. It was in this way that General George Washington came to know and have a high regard for his ability and chose him to prepare the plan for the capital.

The architects of that day, professional and amateur, were well-versed in the architecture of the Renaissance, especially that of England and Italy, and skillful in designing in the idiom of the new classicism. If not trained in England they were familiar with the architecture of Sir William Chambers, the brothers Adam, John Soane and others, through publications of their work or books on design. Later the publication of Stuart and Revett's "Antiquities of Athens" inspired the designs of public buildings, banks, residences and churches and the Greek Revival style characterized some of the best of Washington's buildings.

Perhaps the finest of the early buildings in the capital which remain from that period are the White House, the Old City Hall, the Capitol and the Washington Monument. The White House designed by James Hoban heads the list in the opinion of many. It possesses great charm and dignity without ostentation, and it has been spoken of as among the finest of the world's great residences of state. It has elegance without pretense and is a thoroughly satisfying piece of residential architecture. Relatively modest, it is nevertheless appropriate as the residence of the head of a great democracy and free from the trappings and fanfare which the colonists preferred to leave in Europe.

The Capitol, a potpourri concocted by many chefs, is virtually an anthology in stone and marble of the efforts of a half-dozen of the more capable architects of the period and of the middle of the last century. And more recently the revisionists, to their own satisfaction but to others' distress, have

L'Enfant was a far shrewder visionary than any among the generations of his successors. His plan was in fact compelling enough to be revived a full century after it was grudgingly received by our first President and all but torn to pieces by the land speculators of those days.

L'Enfant, luckily for him, started with nothing. Some of our contemporary planners seem to feel that they too are starting from nothing—a strange and delusive way of thinking about the 1960s.

Philip L. Graham
WASHINGTON POST
Oct 11, 1962

Time and time again, the Parthenon, which crowned the heights of ancient Athens in the day of its glory, crops up in whole or in part. The District Court House, the Treasury, the old Patent Office, the new Supreme Court Building, the portico of the National Gallery, the Archives Building, the portico and peristyle of the Capitol, the peristyle of the Lincoln Memorial, the fronts of old St John's Church and the building behind the Arlington Amphitheater—all hark back to Grecian architecture. Even the Lee house was copied from the Athenian Temple of Theseus.

The Greeks were the first free people of our remembered civilization. So there is a definite relation between Parthenons and people.

HOUSE & GARDEN
July 1940

Rep Tom Steed (D-Okla) said yesterday that the West Front of the Capitol should be extended if for no other reason than the inadequacy of new rooms for Congressional committees in the new East Front.

Steed said yesterday that an even better reason is the serious problem of the pressure of the dome on the West Front. "We have shored up the East Front and that is nicely supporting the dome, which weighs 4500 tons, but the west wall is weak. The way the dome moves (about four inches on a hot day) we could wake up some day with it in our laps."

He said the dome settling back on a summer night "snaps and pops like a ship at sea."

WASHINGTON POST
May 3, 1962

moved the east front eastward so that the fringe of the dome no longer teeters over the portico. Although the architecture of the original design has been faithfully duplicated in this latest revision, the change has been one more move to bury the concept of the original designer. There is not much that reveals itself of Dr William Thornton's winning design which impressed President Washington because of its "grandeur, simplicity and convenience," an opinion that just about meets the often-expressed standard of good architecture, "beauty, utility and stability." Washington would not know his approved design today. The many additions in which Benjamin Latrobe and Charles Bulfinch and others had a hand, not to speak of the much later very important construction of the dome, the work of Thomas U. Walter, have changed plan and mass of the Capitol to such an extent that the original conception is unrecognizable.

Critical as one may be of the Capitol as a composite solution, it stands with its massive dome of impressive silhouette as a magnificent terminal of the Mall, a symbol of the power and substance of representative government. Although parts are skilfully designed and detailed, others show a lack of sensitivity to proportion of the classical orders and inter-columniation. The over-ornate dome of cast iron does not seem quite cricket when one recalls that the inspiration was the majestic domes of the Renaissance constructed of masonry and the three tremendous flights of steps to the rotunda and the Senate and House wings are disturbingly insistent. Yet posed solid and broad athwart Jenkins Hill the Capitol gives assurance to all who see it that the legislative branch is not an ephemeral thing likely to be brushed aside but firmly established as one of the three major branches of our government.

The Old City Hall by George Hadfield built about 1820 has great restraint and simplicity. Its porticos of Ionic columns at the entrance and terminating its two wings give this building, otherwise devoid of ornamentation, the right amount of richness. It set an example for future Federal architecture, which unfortunately was not followed in the recent buildings which adjoin it. It is in itself one of the most satisfying structures built during the early period of the new capital.

The Washington Monument is one of two of the country's great monuments about which Americans become emotional. The Lincoln Memorial is the other. Each represents something beyond a mere tribute to a great man. The Washington Monument, rising from a slight elevation of ground on the main axis of the city, in its serenity and

simple dignity truly represents the character of the first President but more than that it is a worthy symbol of the country. This shaft with its noble proportions, its slightly tapered form ending in a pyramidal apex, is beautiful in the changing light of day and the floodlighting at night. It stands incomplete so far as Robert Mills conceived it with a circular colonnade at its base surmounted by Washington as charioteer driving a six-horse chariot. Fortunate it was for posterity that funds were not available to complete this base. Even the circle of flags which now surrounds the shaft seems superfluous.

In 1900 there was an awakening to the haphazard development of the Federal city and the despoliation of the L'Enfant plan. Senator McMillan of Michigan persuaded Congress to set up a Commission to correct the damage that had been done and to fix the pattern of future growth. The appointment of Daniel Burnham and Charles Follen McKim, architects, and Frederick Law Olmsted, landscape architect, as members of the Commission was fortuitous and the Washington we see today is free from the ill-advised ravages of the nineteenth century. While the Commission modified certain areas it adhered religiously to the basic concept.

Where L'Enfant intended that the Mall be a grand avenue to serve as the appropriate setting for "spacious houses and gardens such as to accommodate foreign ministries and other dignitaries," the McMillan plan determined that it should be the great greensward that it is today and the frontage for buildings serving the historical and cultural institutions of the country. It also provided sites for parks and squares to a greater extent than the L'Enfant plan envisioned.

The new interest in the L'Enfant plan was followed by a renewed interest in the architecture of public and semi-public buildings. Again it was fortunate that the talent was available to design with distinction. In the first three decades of this century there were such masters of their craft as Henry Bacon, Carrère and Hastings, Charles Follen McKim, Bertram G. Goodhue, Charles A. Platt and Paul P. Cret, who were commissioned to design Washington buildings.

Bacon's Lincoln Memorial is by common agreement the most admired and stately building in Washington. It stands as a fitting monument to a man who saw this country through a tragic period in its history and as a symbol now of the unity he strove for. With the filling in of the Potomac swamps proposed by the McMillan Commission, a great park was created in which the Memorial Committee wisely decided to build this tribute to Lincoln. None perhaps was more

skilled than Bacon to execute this commission and his solution in the manner of a Greek temple is majestic and restrained. Mounted on a plateau it gives the proper weight to the west end of the Mall as a balance for the Capitol to the east.

Carrère and Hastings as architects for the Old House Office Building, McKim, Mead and White for the Memorial Bridge and Charles A. Platt for the Freer Gallery were classicists who in their structures showed a rather rigid adherence to their Ecole des Beaux Art Influence, and their Roman or Italian preferences. Bertram G. Goodhue with his individual approach to design in the classical idiom for the home of the National Academy of Science and Paul P. Cret in his Pan-American Union Building, a fresh solution for the headquarters of this international organization, showing South and Central American influences, were more imaginative and less bound to style. All of them set the standard of competence to be expected of those who followed.

The next large-scale construction was the Federal Triangle. On this triangle a group of architects worked closely to create a monumental frontage on Constitution Avenue within a framework of uniformity in height reminiscent of Paris. While this was an admirable premise upon which to base their efforts, the individual buildings vary in their revealed competence. Bold and imaginative detailing on one building contrasts with a hesitant over-refinement on another, while strict adherence to its Italian inspiration characterizes a third. The group as a whole has been criticized because of its over-columniation, yet the Archives Building by John Russell Pope achieves interest the others do not have because of the light and shade and depth of color that the colonnade affords. In spite of their deficiencies the buildings on the Triangle do present an imposing facade on the avenue and as Ada Huxtable has written "viewed panoramically in the disarming light of the late afternoon they are singularly impressive." The Triangle stands incomplete today, a condition that should be corrected by carrying out the original plan.

The most notable of the more monumental buildings to be built at the time of the Triangle were the Federal Reserve Board Building and the Folger Library by Paul Cret, and the National Gallery of Art and Jefferson Memorial by John Russell Pope. These were done by masters of detail who could design in the monumental manner with great skill.

There were others who though capable and conscientious in fulfilling their respon-

sibilities made less impact in their architecture for Washington's buildings and in the 'thirties and 'forties there was apparent a retrogression in design. How much of the responsibility for this failure to produce buildings of distinction can be attributed to the establishment during the depression of a bureau to design Federal buildings is a question. Some talented designers were drawn to Washington to staff the bureau, but the results are clear testimony to the fact that bureaucratic architecture has not measured up to that produced by the free and uninhibited architect. In this period were built the War Department Building (now the State Department) seemingly without inspiration, and the original Health, Education and Welfare Building lacking decision as to whether Neo-Grecque or Egyptian inspiration should prevail. One of the better structures produced during that period is the Washington Air Terminal. Inadequate now as a terminal it was a successful, functional solution for its time, of a problem constantly changing in its complexity. Architecturally it is still pleasing in its dignified modern-classical exterior, but like Daniel Burnham's Union Station, its interior filled with ugly advertising and catch-penny commercial installations has an aspect of clutter and confusion unbecoming to the main terminal of a national capital.

The recent flood of new construction to house governmental agencies expanding so rapidly that they outgrow their new quarters before they are finished, has resulted in a field day for architects in Washington. General Services Administration wisely decided against perpetuation of the former architectural bureau and it has been employing architects in private practice and spread its bounty over the entire country. Names attached to the signboards on the new construction show that there has been no partiality for any region in the country. This is of course a good thing for the profession but as one scans the names on the list of architects who have been awarded commissions by the GSA, extremely capable as they may be, one wonders why some of the most imaginative members of the profession today have not also been favored.

It is true that Harrison and Abramovitz are the architects for the large CIA complex, far removed from the Capital, and Eero Saarinen completed the design for Dulles Airport before his untimely death. Now Edward Stone's revised design for the Cultural Center has been released for public review, but where are examples of the work of the three living American AIA Gold Medal winners, or others of equal ability?

In general, the monumental buildings of Washington might be judged intolerable in proportion to their proximity to the Mall. If indeed it were necessary to replace L'Enfant's "border of gardens" with buildings, these might at least have assumed some uniform and quiet progression such as that, for example, of the Carlton Terrace or of the Rue de Rivoli; and if such a scheme is impracticable, a number of simple buildings, low in mass, intimate in scale—such as the Freer Gallery—could have been made at home in the park-like areas at either side of the central axis.

Richard Hudnut
HOUSE & GARDEN
July 1940

The strongest criticism came naturally from those who felt that in the face of the virile Modernistic trend of this age, it showed a lack of understanding to cast this great—if not this greatest—architectural venture in a traditional style.

This is a matter that can be readily and accurately decided upon a hundred and fifty years from now. But not now.

At the present time, however, one must admit wisdom if not certainty for the Classic selection. The Classic style for public buildings to date has stood the test of time better than any other. And the Washington buildings were to be built to last a long while.

ARCHITECTURE
Oct 1933

Not in the bombast of peristyles and pediments resides the genuine spirit of classicism, but rather in a harmony of forms made consonant with that purpose to which they are addressed.

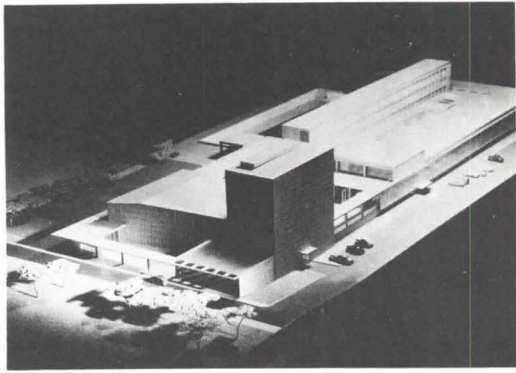
In that sense the proposed building for the Smithsonian Gallery of Art is more truly a classic structure than any yet proposed for Washington. Since its long and flowing lines, its quiet scale, its reticence of ornament and its broad setting of terrace and garden make it wholly congenial to the underlying character of the Mall which it will face, this building may yet recapture the almost-forgotten spirit of L'Enfant.

HOUSE & GARDEN
July 1940

Parking becomes monumental in the irregular open space before the entrance to the Capitol, rows of cars forming the centerpiece of a once-grand plaza. Refusal to plan for automobiles has now degraded [the Triangle] garden court to the level of a parking lot. More than 5,000 automobiles each day transport employees to and from the Triangle buildings, yet they have no garages.

Parked cars encroach even on the sacred lawns which line the reflecting pool in front of the Lincoln Memorial. Thus is the symmetry of the Grand Planners ripped apart by the far more urgent needs of twentieth century life.

HOUSE & GARDEN
July 1940



Smithsonian Institution

Winning design, Smithsonian Gallery of Art. Eliel & Eero Saarinen, Robert Swanson, Architects

Why have they not been called upon to design buildings in Washington? Here is talent that should be used by our government just as the outstanding architects of a generation or two ago were.

Is it because of a timidity on the part of those responsible for selection of architects? Fear that too much originality and ingenuity in design may incur the wrath of the appropriating arm of government? In spite of a few instances which have met with the disapproval of some Congressmen, the Foreign Buildings Office of the State Department has as a result of its enlightened policy of selecting architects succeeded in building some very distinguished structures abroad.

With this hop-skip-and-jump over the years since the city was founded it might be well to pause to consider the competition for the Museum of Modern Art for the Capital. This was a competition open to all the architects of the country, from which six finalists were chosen. It was held at a time when architects were realizing that they must think and design in terms representative of their time and all the finalists were chosen because they digressed from the formal symmetry and classical rigidity that had characterized Washington architecture. As a member of a firm that was one of the finalists it is a matter of regret to me, as well as many others, that we do not have in Washington the building of the premiated design by Eliel and Eero Saarinen. Washington would have been the better for an example of the work of this distinguished father-and-son team. To many in the profession it was an unfortunate decision that the Fine Arts Commission made when it disapproved the design.

Since World War II there has been an explosion of official, semi-public and commercial construction in Washington. It may be that we are too close to it to assess the merit of the accomplishments. The architecture of the recently constructed or planned buildings for the government in Washington has strong similarity and the fact that

they are referred to by number and letter makes them nameless and may be indicative of their lack of individuality. Since they are to house the routine functions and operations of government it may be thought proper that because of their anonymity they should have no distinct character. The pattern generally is a shaft or cube resting on piers in the lowest stories which are faced with granite or marble. The buildings are reasonable facsimiles of the Le Corbusier formula of a superstructure over pilotis, except that they do not have the engaging feature of an open story at the ground level characteristic of his architecture.

These new buildings speak the awful truth in their honest expression of the bureaucratic routine which goes on behind the facades. Too many of them becomes a surfeit and one looks for the daring one who has the boldness to infuse in his design a personality or quality that raises his conception above the security of conformity.

Washington is to have a new Center for culture. All facilities for dispensing this commodity are to be under one roof or in one compact complex, which is the prevalent fashion in planning. Is it desirable and good for the community to build these super-markets of culture where one may acquire in one stop the soup to demi-tasse for his cultural fare? Why not disperse the several elements devoted to the arts and use them as nuclei for groups of buildings, public, semi-public and even commercial? This would make possible the improvement of many areas in the capital which need this type of stimulus. L'Enfant envisioned in his plan for Washington the inclusion of statues and memorials and it is natural that the national capital should be the site chosen by those who wish to erect monuments to famous men. There is a danger in this. It would be most unfortunate if our capital became a Gettysburg with its overabundance of statues and monuments, a veritable quarry dedicated to minor men of history.

Finally, no commentary on Washington is complete without a reference to the automobile. Perhaps as great a concentration as there is in Washington, of travel by vehicular means as opposed to mass transportation, does not exist in any city except Los Angeles. The avenues and the Mall are choked with cars and buses in motion or parked at the curbs. Nothing is more destructive of the setting for a public building than a line-up of cars at its base or an adjoining parking lot. Surely with all the ingenuity that we as a people possess we can solve this problem which is crying for solution in the nation's capital. This is a matter of planning that has been neglected too long. ◀



Memorials and Monuments of Washington

by James N. Faber, Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior

It was entirely predictable that among the issues to slow adjournment of the 87th Congress would be debates on the virtues of the proposed memorials to Presidents Franklin Delano Roosevelt and James Madison.

For ever since L'Enfant urged that each Washington square be equipped with "statues, columns or other ornaments" to honor the nation's great, continuous effort has been made to see that no capital plot suffers from lack of such adornment.

There are approximately 300 memorials and statues of varying size, purpose, and merit within the District of Columbia. Of these, ninety-eight are the administrative responsibility of the Interior Department's National Capital Region. The annual operational and maintenance upkeep cost is almost \$400,000, including replacement of generals' swords at \$100 each.

Best known are the Lincoln Memorial, which last year provided inspiration for al-

most three million Americans and foreign visitors, and the Washington Monument, which drew another 1,500,000.

In addition, there are forty-nine statues, including twelve honoring Civil War generals, nine of which are equestrian, six memorial fountains, and twenty-five others ranging from bridges to armillary spheres, granite shafts, memorial benches, gold-plated horses, a Doric temple and a Japanese pagoda. (The Cuban Friendship Urn is in storage.)

In addition to such well-known historical shrines as the Washington, Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, they honor such major and minor figures as C. F. Hahneman, founder of homeopathy, the Discus Thrower, Rochambeau, Artemus Ward, Edmund Burke and the First Air Mail Flight.

Meridian Hill Park alone encompasses a Duke's mixture that includes a reproduction of the Dubois statue of Joan of Arc keeping

Agreement has been reached between the National Park Service and the District on construction of an \$18 million tunnel and expressway under Lincoln Memorial.

WASHINGTON EVENING
STAR

Oct 18, 1962

company with a monument to President Buchanan and a statue of Dante, all in the setting of an Italian Renaissance garden.

In symbolic splendor, many Washington memorials have no peers this side of the Parthenon. The Grant Memorial contains twelve horses, eleven soldiers, four lions, and eight bronze lamp posts. A bust, two wreaths, a globe and a maiden are the setting for a statue to Daguerre. The memorial to inventor John Ericsson, not far from the Lincoln Memorial, contains, in addition to the statue of the *Monitor's* designer, figures of an iron-moulder, a Viking, and a woman, all placed against the Norse Tree of Life, Yggdrasill.

Elsewhere, the Washington visitor walking the paths of history will find monuments to forty-three military men or events, six to the doers of science and their discoveries, thirty-four to statesmen and public figures and eleven to the men of arts.

And while favorable Congressional consideration was given this year to increasing the monument population by a statue to the Maine Lobsterman and another to Ukrainian poet and national leader, Taras Shevchenko, the lawmakers adjourned without having resolved the dispute over the Franklin Roosevelt and James Madison Memorials.

The long controversy generated by design proposals for the FDR Memorial is illustrative of but one of the problems confronting Washington as it attempts to fittingly honor its great. Hopeful that such dissent could be avoided, an earlier Congress had approved formation of a Commission empowered to conduct a national competition among architects for the winning design.

The now-familiar winning design first came under attack of the Fine Arts Commission, established in 1910 to advise on location and design of memorials. The Commission held that the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial with its eight towering slabs was too large for its twenty-seven-acre setting, lacked repose and did not harmonize with the Jefferson, Lincoln and Washington Memorials, all within vicinity of the site. The Interior Department concurred in these conclusions and just prior to adjournment, the House of Representatives rejected the design and asked the Commission to come back in 1963 with a new plan.

The *Washington Star*, another opponent of the design, summed up the conflict by describing it as "an issue involving taste, where there is no middle ground."

"Critics of the design, and there are many, have left no epithet unturned in expressing their dislike of the towering concrete tables," the *Star* pointed out, adding, "Its champions,



and there are many, have been no less emphatic in their praise—and their disdain for the esthetic illiterates (they feel) who disagree with them.”

Whether the hapless FDR Commission can span this void with a more acceptable design next year (they will carry with them such baffling instructions as to “avoid the modernistic trend in design” on one hand to another admonition to “stop going to Rome and Greece” for inspiration), the monumental subject will not have been exhausted.

The 88th Congress also will be asked to consider a compromise plan that would utilize two blocks of land directly east of the Old House Office Building to erect a memorial to President Madison. The marble structure would include an underground annex to the Library of Congress as well as a library with study rooms for scholars and exhibits for the public.

Unlike the debates over the FDR Memorial, an issue of design, those advanced against the proposed James Madison memorial have been related to cost—an estimated total of 39 million dollars.

This leaves Congress in the position of having to occupy its time with a third area of memorial controversy—that of having to decide who is to be memorialized. For in addition to the FDR and Madison Memorials, another score of proposals are awaiting Congressional action, including installations to honor Pershing, Einstein, John Foster Dulles, the Four Army Chaplains, President Monroe, the Veterans of Civil War and Columbus.

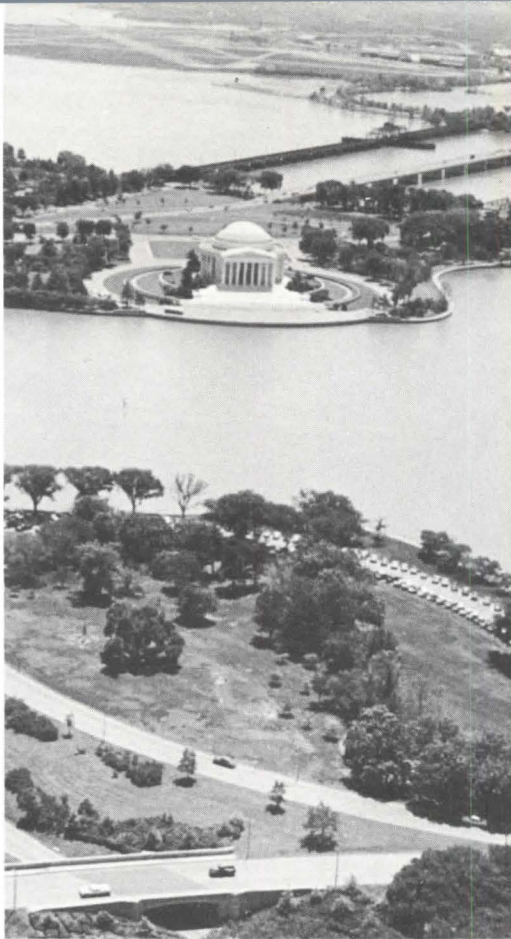
Design and cost apart, there are those who feel the proliferation of Washington statuary is not quite what L’Enfant envisioned when he recommended that our capital’s memorials should “invite the youth of succeeding generations to tread in the paths of those sages or heroes whom their country has thought proper to celebrate.”

Our recognized cause of memorial confusion is that this nation has never stopped to formulate a workable policy concerning the recreation of our history in Washington, although many attempts have been made.

The first constructive step in 1910, establishing the National Commission of Fine Arts, empowered that worthy body with the duty of advising on the location of memorials as well as recommending artists and selecting models of memorials, but gave them no effective voice in who was to be memorialized.

Recently, speaking before an AIA group at the dedication of Octagon House, Secretary of Interior Stewart L. Udall touched on this problem by paying tribute to those who have created some of our great memorials, “ex-





A new proposal for a Theodore Roosevelt Memorial came to light yesterday, but it got a shadowy reception from T. R.'s daughter, Alice Roosevelt Longworth.

The proposal was made by Neill Phillips, Chairman of the influential Committee of 100 on the Federal City, who thinks part of Washington's planned \$75 million Cultural Center could be dedicated as a "living memorial" to the late President.

Informed of the idea, Mrs Longworth, 76, indicated she has scant interest in massive cultural projects.

"The hell with the Cultural Center as a memorial," she said, "I flee from thinking about things like that. It has nothing to do with a memorial to my father."

The act was passed last year when Congress killed a proposal for a huge "celestial sphere" on Roosevelt Island in the Potomac. It died a day after Mrs Longworth called it, with characteristic verve, a "globular jungle-gym."

She thinks Roosevelt Island should be preserved as a wildlife sanctuary, with only a "modest" type of memorial to her father.

WASHINGTON POST
Jan 16, 1961

amples of the rare and treasured talent of a sculptor to illuminate rather than embalm history."

"It would be a strange being who could remain unmoved by a visit to the Lincoln or Jefferson Memorials, or who failed to reach out and there touch the past," he said, "but in other areas the sculptor's chisel has produced mere images that flit uneasily through this capital, looking not unlike some visitor transfixed for all time as he consulted his guidebook."

In a move to end this "monumental confusion" the Department has proposed that a National Capital Parks Memorials Board be authorized to prepare broad criteria for memorializing persons and events on Federal lands in the National Capital Parks System, limiting such memorials to "those persons and events of outstanding national or international importance."

The ten-man board would include six appointed by the President, the Chairman of the Fine Arts Commission, the Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission, the President of the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia and the Director of the National Park Service.

Citing the growing number of memorial proposals submitted to Congress, the Department in its report to Congress stated:

"It is evident that if the concept of open

space and dignity which contribute so much to the beauty of the nation's capital is to be preserved in the face of constant pressures to use the land for memorials . . . each proposal must be carefully evaluated and sound criteria must be followed."

There are those who feel that once the guidelines are firmly fixed as to *who* should be honored (one suggestion—a lapse of fifty years after death before considering historical merit), the *how* will be shaped by changing attitudes and tastes regarding memorials.

The utilization of a wild Potomac island refuge as a memorial to conservationist Theodore Roosevelt and the plan to honor Madison with a library, for instance, has more enthusiastic adherents than proposals to erect just one more grandiose statue.

Keynoting this "living memorial" feeling, one veteran Congressman driving through one of the city's deteriorating neighborhoods mused recently:

"I suppose the logical memorial to Franklin Roosevelt will be something imposing in West Potomac Park. But can you imagine taking thirty acres of this neighborhood, installing the granddaddy of all swimming pools, plus an artificial brook stocked with fish for slum kids to catch, and a hobby shop and library where they could work off all that steam and frustration—wouldn't that come closer to what L'Enfant meant when he suggested our memorials should invite the youths to 'tread in the paths of sages and heroes'?"

There probably will never be a second to that motion. But the trend toward the "living memorial" is unmistakable. It recently was provocatively enunciated by a *Washington Post* editorial comment:

"What is really daring about emulating the rulers of Egypt by suggesting that the only measure of greatness is in cubic feet of useless stones? We continue to think that the proper memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt would be a usable memorial in the form of a school, a library or perhaps an auditorium in the projected Cultural Center. This would represent a break with tradition that comports with the memory of a bold and unconventional political leader. We hope that the Memorial Commission will reconsider its original plan and use its innovative zeal in a cause more worthy of passion than planting another necropolis on the Potomac."

The American who visits his nation's capital is in search of history and inspiration. Today, as never before, the sculptor, the designer, the muralist and architect are being challenged to lend to us a new and real sense of the past. ◀

Public Works

by Chloethiel Woodard Smith FAIA, Washington Architect and Planner

It doesn't mean what it means—that haunting, challenging word “design.” Noun or verb, it has come to mean process that creates beauty or product that has attained it. “A great design” we say, and think we have communicated. For, to the architect, or to anyone who creates visible forms of any kind, it is a word that must substitute for a roomful of books. Stone to sculpture, steel to bridge, concrete to tower, line to paper, paint to canvas, the mysterious process of creation guards its mystery.

Public Works, like any works, are designed, and there are great designs. Like many other works, their design has been neglected in some periods and has challenged the best minds in others. What precisely are Public Works? They are defined as “constructions as roads, dams, post offices, etc, out of government funds for public use.” “Roads, dams, post offices”—and the et ceteras. If one lists under the et cetera all those things that any reference calls Public Works, the list is almost endless, and increasing every day. There are very few parts of any city, above or below the ground, that can be listed separately as non-Public Works, and most of these are dominated or defined by one or another Works in this overwhelming list.

The Capital City—more than most cities—is dominated by Public Works—if we accept *all* construction “out of government funds for public use.” All Federal and municipal building, all streets and sidewalks, all street lights, all buildings and appurtenances of any kind for public utilities—from gas tanks and power plants to telephone poles and manhole covers, all airports, bus terminals, stations, all bridges and culverts, all monuments and fountains, all piers and sea walls, all reservoirs and canals, all pipe lines and power lines, are included.

All that we exclude are private structures—and the parts of parks and squares that aren't “constructions” if trees and lawns and flowers are omitted. Although certainly not “constructions,” they are “out of government funds for public use.”

They are all part of an increasingly dominant part of city rebuilding—at whatever tempo this process takes place. Forced by a recent but powerful drive to make US cities not only healthy but beautiful in the bargain and responsive to the pressures of population expansion coupled with economic expansion, the Public Works being carried out today are both so extensive and accomplished with such speed that there has been little time for stock-taking. “Design” is done by any designers who can get lines on paper fast enough. Critics can't keep up with the flow—and the public has little chance to understand or judge the Works being carried out for its use. Quantity dominates quality, demands for speed sweep all opposition aside. There is never enough of anything. More and more people live in cities and want more and more services and opportunities. The democratic city has no form—*more* is the goal—and no one can stand up against *more* of anything. There isn't time to reject, to review, to evaluate and discard, to select. It is here that the haunting word “design” stands aside and need and speed take over.

In the past forms and functions were quite clearly defined. The Corps of Engineers—for many years the Capital City's substitute for local municipal engineers—operated within clear limits. In a fascinating historical summary of Corps Works from 1852 to 1952, the projects are impressive indeed. With few exceptions, whether designed and built by the Corps, or built only, there was little disagreement as to the need for these projects. From the Washington aqueduct to

A Washington architect's expressway design, intended to please fellow esthetes who look on most new highways through cities as open wounds, has run into criticism from, of all people, other architects.

Her critics today are, significantly, the members of a three-member panel named last month by District Highway Director Harold L. Aitken to advise him on some of the intangibles involved in roadbuilding.

The trio took particular issue with her plan of running part of the four-block-long expressway as an open trench, flanked by decorative stone walls.

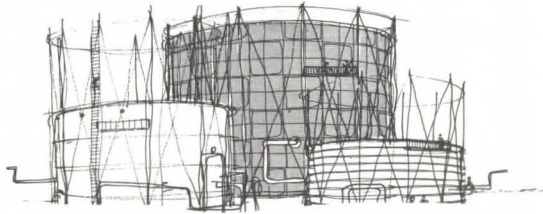
The Fine Arts Commission especially praised this feature as being in contrast to the usual “open cut” roadway.

Appointment of Aitken's “little fine arts commission” was announced November 9 at the height of a controversy over whether the National Capital Planning Commission should approve several Inner Loop projects. . . .

WASHINGTON POST
Dec 31, 1961

an extension of the Capitol, it includes bridges and buildings as well as reclamation and harbor work. Wherever structures were involved, there was a clear response to the esthetic demands of the period. After the turn of the century, architects dressed up those works considered important to the image of the city in forms that Congress and the public could recognize as right, acceptable and in the public interest.

A history of Washington's bridges offers an interesting picture of one of the classic Public Works. The history of Chain Bridge,



District Highway Director Harold L. Aitken last night lamented the use of "catch phrases" like "Chinese walls" to attack the city's and nation's freeway construction program.

WASHINGTON POST
March 12, 1961

District highway officials plan to take a hard look at the social impact of future road planning on all aspects of community life.

This new approach is a reaction to the mounting civic furor over the city's stepped-up freeway program.

"In general our goal will be to plan and design the freeways," said Aitken, "so that they will contribute to the livability of our urban areas."

WASHINGTON POST
May 27, 1962

the aqueduct, Long Bridge and the Highway Bridge, railroad crossings and bridges across Rock Creek (once the Corps of Engineers recommended that it be filled in as it neared Massachusetts Avenue and Georgetown to avoid bridges)—to the Arlington Memorial Bridge designed by McKim, Mead & White, is a history of Washington's attitudes to one of its most important types of Public Works as well as a history of structural materials and techniques. Congress and the public could recognize an important bridge, as long as it was dressed in some known historic style, it became a proud symbol for the great Capital City. Less important structures were permitted to follow the rule that "An advance in construction does not in itself guarantee a beautiful structure." Even here, the public dealt with an historic function that changed the landscape in an accepted form. The comfortable common denominator, esthetics of historic styles, confined public arguments to matters of location and cost. Only recently has there been any questioning of the generally accepted forms of design considered worthy of the expenditure of public funds. And coupled with this, the new geography being developed by highways and new basic forms of bridges that must cross new forms of man-made obstructions, make it difficult to adapt the old familiar historical styles to the new, unfamiliar forms.

Over the years from Shepherd and his major contributions to the District's Public Works (the 60,000 street trees he planted are his most remembered contribution) to

the MacMillan Commission's Plan and the work of individual architects and leaders of the AIA after the turn of the century, the Capital City has tried to become the symbol its founders sought.

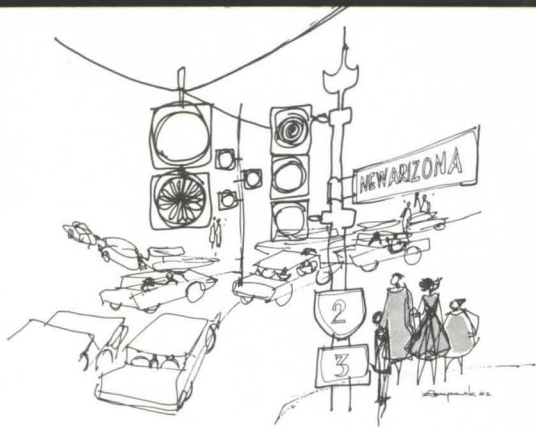
Today's search for the worthy symbol is complicated by today's new problems and directions. Perhaps the most obvious problem lies in the design of streets, for they have always given the city its basic form. L'Enfant's avenues and circles gave Washington its basic form. His plan was not a naturalist expression—but a formal pattern adapted here and there to the land but essentially a pattern laid upon it. Blocks formed by this pattern became the sites for building. The familiar esthetic of his prototype implied buildings that fit the pattern and made it unnecessary for him to express his plan in many three-dimensional studies. But, because it was a plan that lay upon the surface of the land, the site along the Potomac remained familiar. Its slow development since then gave men time to understand the city and even those who doubted that it would ever be complete began to recognize its forms and live comfortably within them.

The internal combustion engine changed these dreams—and the geography of the city—more positively than any other development. Railroads had forced some changes to the land but they did not branch out into an all-encompassing network. We don't know as yet all the new form changes air travel will force. But the car, available to all, became the greatest factor in moulding new patterns of cities. By 1944, it had already become such a dominant factor that



a Federal committee recommended "turning away from elevated routes because of their tendency to divide the city and depreciate abutting property" and recommended depressed routes "pleasing to the eye and in keeping with the urban environment." Since that time, the terrific increase in both numbers of vehicles and speeds have forced the construction of many new forms that "divide the city" and are not "pleasing to the eye."

Longer than most, the Capital City could escape the new geography. It clung to its

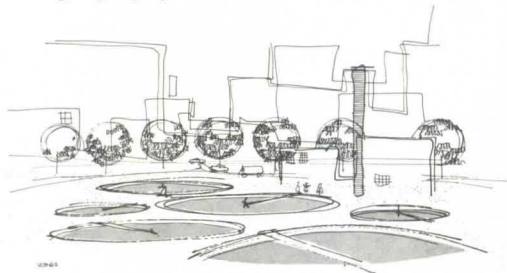


historic plan and let other cities watch man-made hills, valleys and cliffs create unfamiliar forms—curves and ramps and bridges and tunnels that met the demands of the new machines that transported people and goods across and over and into the land. The curve and grade of a ramp for high-speed travel by bus or car is new. A curved bridge or overpass is new. Pedestrian, horse, wagon or train demanded relatively simple, easily understood forms. The characteristics of the speeding car force new forms. Lights that seek to make speed safe, signs that direct a speeding box, all are new and demanding elements which must be designed as an integral part of a city.

As long as these new forms had space around them, few people really objected to the new geography. Until they thrust their new, unfamiliar forms into the heart of the city, few there were who did not acclaim the new mobility man had achieved. Of all the Public Works that need "design"—which includes rejection, the new roads are the dominants. Increasingly, people resist the new geography, yet they are not prepared to reject or control the forces that demand it.

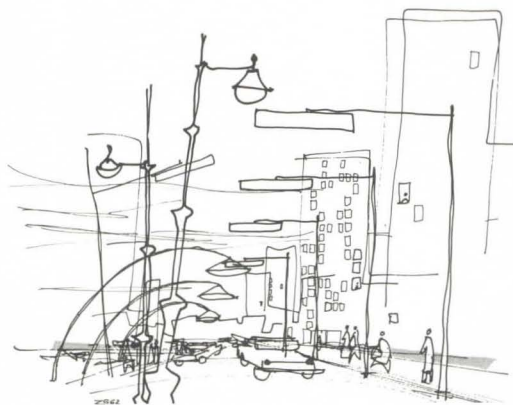
If the old familiar Federal city is to remain and its familiar form as the nation's capital is to be retained, then all of those qualities which contribute to this form must be preserved. It is this desire for preservation combined with a desire for expansion that produces the split personality of the emerging great city. The vision of the "worthy symbol" is clouded.

There is an interesting development now pending. The new Roosevelt Bridge will pour a great volume of traffic into the District. The bridge is nearing completion; the new geography of the Potomac shore from



the Lincoln Memorial to Georgetown is beginning to take form. Great earth-moving machines (magnificent technical achievements) cut and fill and reform the land. Few there are who can visualize this new landscape, or see its new curves and ramps, bridges and tunnels, lights and signs that will form the new setting for the Cultural Center, and is a preview of the future.

One of the exits from this great sorting-out area probes deep into the monumental core of the city via E Street. It is a modest probe—four lanes from 23rd Street to Rawlins Park—only two blocks from the White House. They must pass the State Department, the site for the Pan-American Health Building, the Red Cross, and a new Federal office building. At 23rd Street they are twenty feet below grade and they must surface at some point. One lane climbs up by the State Department to Virginia Avenue—but the others continue under bridge and



tunnel and surface between 20th and 21st in front of the DC Red Cross Building.

The District Highway Department has hired consultants who have a real desire to minimize the impact of this exit, for it comes through an area which for several decades has been planned as a series of parks—a mall of green stretching west from Rawlins Park. The Red Cross is unhappy—a lot of people are unhappy. The consultants are developing a plan that will do much to retain a fine green setting for the major buildings that flank it. Yet this will not, and cannot, resemble an eighteenth-century park. It is a route and an exit for thousands of cars that will cross the new bridge from Virginia. Its forms cannot be dressed in historical styles and by some magic attain an eighteenth-century quality. No amount of stone or granite, balustrades or landscaping can recreate this. Various agencies and advisers have sought to impose the old forms upon it. The consultants are trying to give a new expression to it—but they recognize the problems. The interruption of the surface is the major obstacle. Instead of a mall that connects, it must become a depression

Commission members also made it clear that they don't like the three-deck highway interchange that will connect the Inner Loop Freeway with the E Street Expressway in the area of 25th and E Sts NW, south of Foggy Bottom.

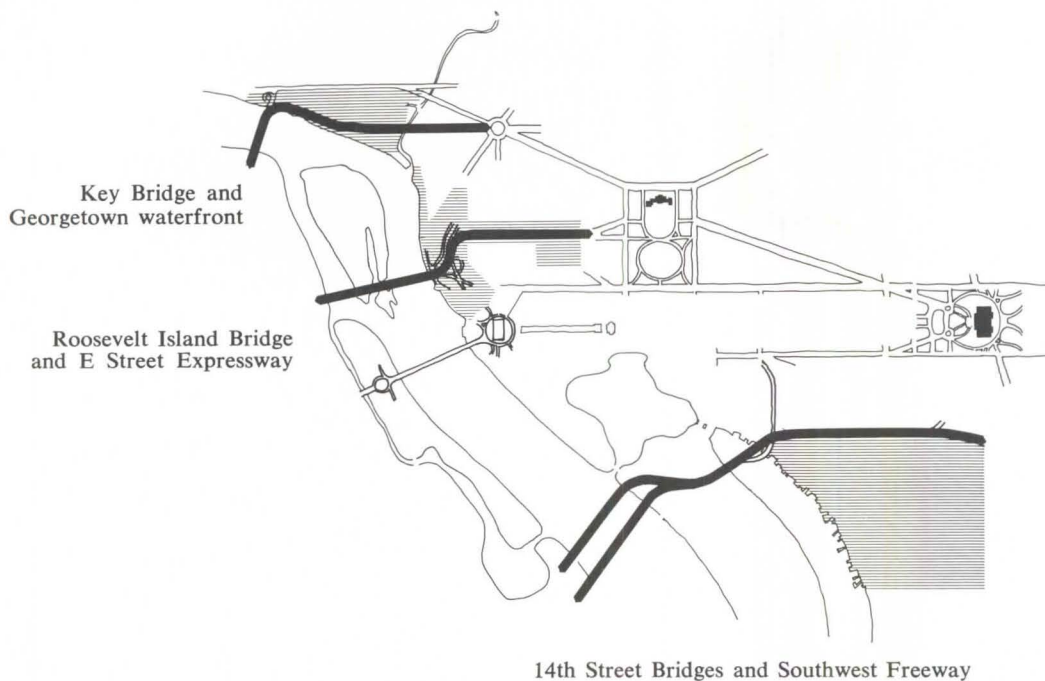
The Commission recalled in a statement that it opposed the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge, now being built to the south, and "has never approved the intrusion of the inner Loop through the park lands at this point . . .

"It will now be impossible to restore the park-like character of the river area that has long been planned there, nor will it be possible to develop the plans for the National Cultural Center in a setting worthy of such an important project."

Commission members pressed Gerard I. Sawyer, a deputy highway director, for assurance that the girders would be painted gray to match the stone work, not green.

"We have good experience with green," Sawyer said. He added that it doesn't show dirt too badly.

WASHINGTON POST
March 16, 1961



14th Street Bridges and Southwest Freeway

that divides—at least at those points where it must surface. The curve of an efficient ramp is a disturbing and unfamiliar form that fights against the familiar geometry of the eighteenth-century pattern of the city.

Even as a relatively minor element in the whole new geography, this poses the problem. Should Washington do what Williamsburg is just now trying—prohibit cars to enter the restored areas from nine to five? A convenient bus system will transport people within the area as well as take them to a fringe parking area and information center a couple of miles away. It seems a fine solution there—and of course, doesn't present a daily problem for commuters. Would Washington residents accept public transportation—below or above ground—in order to retain its essentially eighteenth century core? Should those trying to renew the downtown commercial area that seems to call for extensive use of cars approaching the core abandon it in favor of a "restored area"? But this will not serve the ever-increasing flow of cars that seek a central core of any city that is expanding rapidly. The

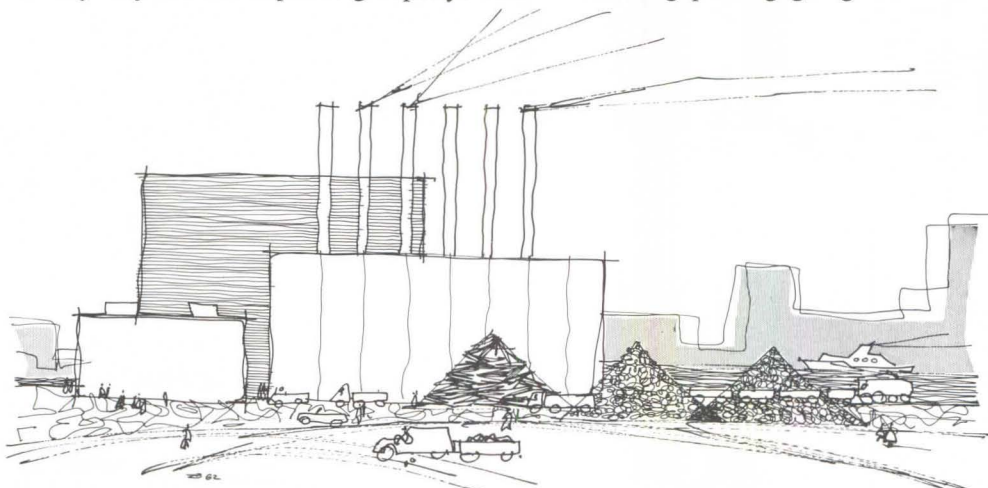
form of speed is the freeway—and it does not fit easily into the old city.

There are two splendid waterfront areas near this monumental core of the capital city—one south of the mall, running from Fort McNair to 14th Street and bordering one of the largest urban renewal developments in the country. The other lies south of the lovely old section of Georgetown, and was once the port for the town which existed long before the new city across Rock Creek was started. It is now a generally obsolete industrial area (most of its businesses could be served better in other locations), and it is traversed by an elevated freeway—a steel structure designed to serve a useful purpose across an industrial area. The waterfront bordering the Washington Channel is being developed under urban renewal and may well be a handsome and interesting combination of marinas, parks and squares, restaurants and other commercial activities related to the waterfront—if the number of cars required to pass through and park in the area do not force the development of a mile-long parking garage. The Georgetown

District highway planners have designed the ultimate in street corners—a quadruple-decked conception known as Southeast Interchange C.

This granddaddy of all intersections is so huge it will take up an area the size of about sixteen city blocks when completed in 1966 at a cost of more than \$15 million.

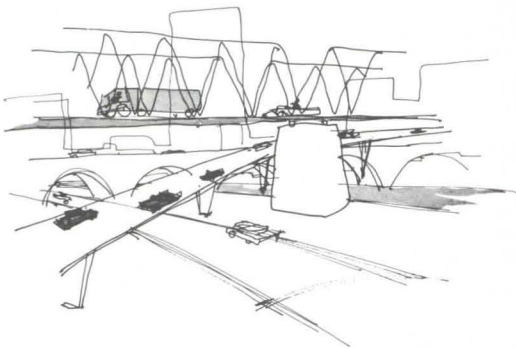
WASHINGTON POST
Nov 26, 1961



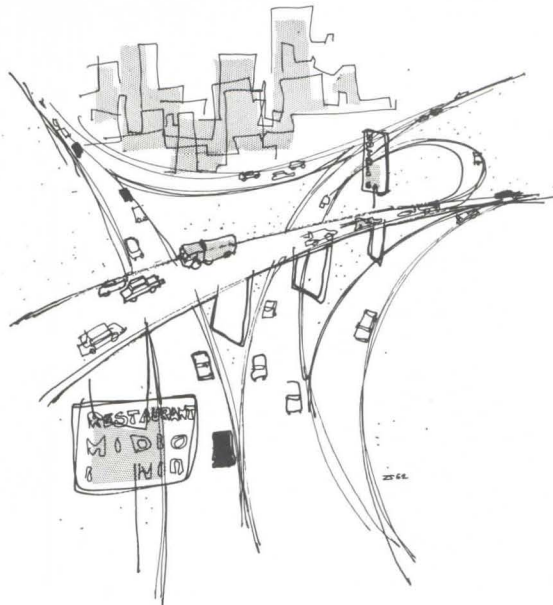
waterfront is currently unplanned and the only apparently established element in its renewal is the doubling of the ugly elevated freeway—which makes the proper use of this important central area impossible. Starting at the Washington Channel waterfront, a nearly completed freeway slashes across a major urban renewal area—sweeping across a new Channel Bridge, riding high across the old fish wharves, sweeping down under a projected mall under a bridge, continuing east in an open cut, rising again to a filled section and onto more ramps and overpasses. It is the dominant element in the landscape.

With all of these elements we are creating a new geography—do we like it, are we going to stop it? Can we design to live with it? Do we know what we want? Do we look at population growth figures and forget what they mean to the city? Or are the problems so complex we can't solve them?

Does Washington, like so many other US cities, say that it cannot exist without cars—and will it have to accept this new geography? Or can it take the lead in developing some form of balanced transportation that will help us to develop cities that we believe will enhance democratic city life, and better serve man's needs and desires?



Washington, Capital City, as conceived in the eighteenth century may not be able to serve as the symbol for a society that has had to respond to developments that no man foresaw. There may be new symbols that cannot be served by white marble temples set in broad green parks—in scale with the carriages that passed them along the tree-lined avenues. Maybe the Capital City—by keeping its scale of the past—will serve well as a reminder of a past that had a human scale we can still understand and respond to. It may be that men wandering among the stars will return to seek new symbols. One mechanism alone, the internal combustion engine, surrounds the temples with new landscapes; cars and even a new geography surround them—or are approaching uncomfortably close.



We are seeing all of our cities with new eyes. We are trying to “renew” them. Sometimes it seems that we are trusting the weavers and refuse to believe that the King has no clothes. Much is being done. Pennsylvania Avenue is to fulfill its destiny. Lafayette Square is to find its appropriate scale as setting for the White House. A long overdue Cultural Center may rise along the Potomac. Many of our efforts look back to the eighteenth-century city—but we are destroying its essential historic form more rapidly than we are restoring it.

The new Public Works, from the new dominant forms of freeways to the old accepted forms of buildings, are changing the Capital City more quickly and more drastically than most men realize. Yet their design is a response to an unformulated program. The future in the “mind's eye” isn't clear. We respond to insistent problems—but we don't examine their sources. We set up commissions and agencies and advisers that, no matter with what beautiful bright hues each flaunts its colors, interact and become the dead gray that mixed paint colors produce. Now and then a voice speaks out, but is soon lost. The Capital City, the worthy symbol, is illusive. Design—that haunting and challenging word—stands aside, maybe until the collective symbol is clear in the collective mind's eye, the reality will elude us. The increasingly dominant Public Works are a direct reflection of public will and aspirations. Unlike productive periods in the past, fewer and fewer spectacular individuals can find a way to bring color back into the mixture that made the gray of the collective mind. We'll have to find new ways to do this—or our Public Works will remain gray. ◀

The Pentagon is not big—it is super. It is the largest office building in the world. Its population is staggering (40,000 capacity).

Perhaps the greatest lesson of the Pentagon is here: as building approaches the scale technically feasible, the distinction between architecture and city planning vanishes. Despite its shortcomings, the Pentagon gives a real foretaste of the future.

ARCHITECTURAL FORUM
Jan 1943

Historic Preservation in the Federal City

by Robert J. Kerr II, Executive Director, Historic Annapolis, Inc

There is now going on a continuous, steady demolition of historic structures in Washington.

The celebrated "Six Buildings" in the 2100 block of Pennsylvania Ave NW, which were erected in 1795 before the seat of the US government was moved to the District of Columbia in 1800, are now a thing of the past. The "Six Buildings" were considered of such historical value that their history is set forth in detail in "Washington, the Nation's Capital" published in 1932 by the US Senate as document No 332, 71st Congress.

Letter to Editor
WASHINGTON POST
Feb 8, 1962

For example, wrecking crews have just torn down the old Peter house on K St NW in Foggy Bottom where George Washington spent his last night in the city, to make way for section of the Inner Loop Freeway.

WASHINGTON POST
Jan 12, 1962

In 1928, Elbert Peets wrote of Washington and the changes which had been made to L'Enfant's grand design for the Federal city: "One weeps because it is not better, but one gives thanks for what it is. . . ."

This, perhaps, in a phrase sums up contemporary reaction to our nation's capital. The effort to keep "what it is" has been the cause for much thought, discussion and, let us admit, controversy in both professional and lay circles. It would seem that little difference of opinion could exist as to what should be kept, and that the method of keeping would generate the greatest disagreement. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. No real unanimity of opinion does, in fact, exist. Dependent on individual and group bias, on the continuing and continuous conflict between the needs of our modern technological and mechanized society and the deeper, human yearning for the retention of cultural and visual values, the lines have been drawn and the battle has been joined.

Our task today is to bring to the process of identification and preservation of the character and uniqueness of our Federal city a new insight and a breadth of understanding of the inherent value of each area, each complex of buildings and each single structure.

There should be little disagreement that our problem is one of design. In the process of determining a preservation program for Washington, matters of historic association, sentimental attachments, architectural excellence and spatial arrangement have been and must be recognized as the basis for judgment of preservable qualities. But too often, in our efforts to be reasonable about what should be preserved, we have lost sight of the integrity of the effort toward preservation. In the case of Washington, the entire city has been touched by the hand

of history. Over the years, the city has assimilated many different architectural styles; buildings, open spaces, avenues and monuments standing today witness the character, quality, aspirations and attitudes which have formed the image of our nation's capital. Each one of these historic periods and each one of these particular styles is only a part of a greater and more important whole.

For our own century to obliterate from conscious visual memory any one of these periods or styles, in favor of another and perhaps earlier quality, would simply amount to rank dishonesty and lack of integrity in historic perspective.

The old State, War and Navy Building, with its Beaux Arts revivalist quality, is as important an evocative element in the streetscape of the three blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue from 15th Street to 17th Street, as is Lafayette Square, the temple form of the Treasury Building, the Federal style of the White House itself. From the Riggs Bank to the Court of Appeals Building, from the Treasury Building to the State, War and Navy Building there exists a unique spatial quality and a true statement of a continuum of architectural styles, esthetic desirables and an arrangement of open and closed spaces which, in small, almost summarizes the general character and atmosphere of the entire city.

It is this total character that we must recognize as worthy of preservation. To try to establish criteria for preservation which would isolate and treat separately single buildings and structures, withdrawn from the characteristics of their environment, could only lead to the kind of visual sterility which we see all too often in projects where such restrictive criteria have been used.

The basis for analysis of preservable qualities must consist of careful consideration of the elementary existing design ele-

ments. Questions of scale, massing, materials, color, texture, fenestration, and the larger concept of the interplay of closed and open vistas should be the building blocks from which a viable, truthful and lasting preservation program can be constructed. This approach will also lead to the creation of the type of climate within which the contemporary designer will be able to approach that most elusive but most desirable end—a compatible contemporary solution for much-needed new construction to service both Federal needs and local civic, residential and business requirements.

Perhaps the best-known instance of an unconscious application of this philosophy is the example which has been so well set by Georgetown, Washington's unique and picturesque historic precinct. Here, the concept of an area, rather than that of a series of individual buildings has led to a proven and viable, but none-the-less controversial private enterprise approach to architectural conservation.

If one were to try to summarize the essence of Georgetown, the single word which comes to mind is "diversity." Diversity of architectural styles, diversity of land-use, diversity of open and closed pictorial vistas, diversity of colors, textures and materials, and a certain diversity of population, all speak of the vitality of this important old quarter. Out of this essential diversity, a true unity of general feeling and atmosphere has been the successful and inevitable result.

If we, in our own age of great and grand concepts, can think of the city and its approaches as a whole, rather than become

embroiled in minute considerations of the quality of each of its parts, the realization of a monumental and yet human projection of our national image is possible for the Capital City.

Certain areas within this grand conception should be established as important enough to require the most careful study and analysis of their particular qualities. The old Naval Gun Factory, the Marine Barracks, Fort McNair, old Embassy Row on 16th Street, Capitol Hill, Georgetown, the important facades of Constitution Avenue, the Mall and its surround of monumental structures, Haines Point, Rock Creek Park, the campus areas of Georgetown and Catholic Universities, the Washington Cathedral and Cleveland Park, Union Station, the important "triangle" formed by New York Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue and 3rd Street, could perhaps be a beginning for the graphic description of important segments of the true and total mosaic of the city.

Within each of these areas, study teams of architects, planners, historians and preservationists must continue the basic investigation of the design elements which make up the characteristic integrity of each unit. These specific summaries should be reviewed and correlated with studies of other areas to determine the considerations which must then be incorporated into workable and meaningful general criteria for development of the action phase of the preservation program.

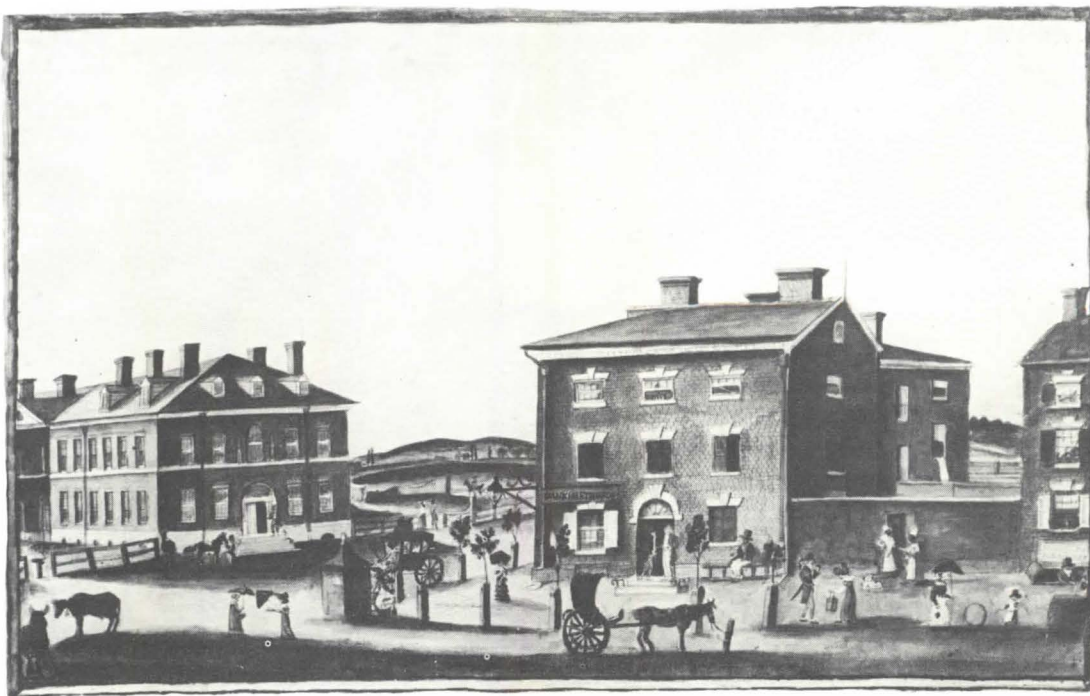
Study teams should consider four basic questions, applicable to the total area, as well as to the separate parts. Three of the considerations have been successfully used

Highway Director Harold L. Aitken said yesterday it might even be cheaper to move the eight-lane highway a block westward to spare the two landmarks.

Until now the department proposed to run the freeway, part of the \$300 million Inner Loop, up the blocks 11th and 12th Sts from the Anacostia River to Florida Ave NE.

The highway would tunnel under the west end of Lincoln Square, but would demolish Philadelphia Row, a group of sixteen homes built just after the Civil War in the 100 block of 11th St SE. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, among others, favors saving the houses as an example of the Philadelphia architectural style of the nineteenth century.

WASHINGTON POST
Dec 25, 1960



"Le coin de F Street Washington vis-à-vis notre maison, etc de 1817." Water-color drawing by Baroness Hyde de Neuville, wife of the French minister. (Original in NY Public Library)

by Wilbur H. Hunter, Director of the Peale Museum, in his study of Baltimore's Mount Vernon Square, and the fourth is the "catch-all" necessary to prevent the creation out of ancient structures of new urban monuments, out of context with the essential and total quality of the study area. Mr Hunter's general tests of the value of structures and areas are, 1) esthetic quality, 2) symbolic importance and, 3) economic utility. To these three should be added, 4) the consideration of the relative value of the part to the general integrity of the whole.

What good does it do to preserve the buildings of Wheat Row, only to isolate them in a landscaped park and surround them with new construction, roadways and strange vistas, out of scale and out of context with the more human spatial environment and nature of materials within which the buildings were originally conceived?

We do not argue for a *retardataire* eclectic design for the nation's capital. What we do argue for is an understanding of what has gone before, a retention of these values, and, moreover, a compatible embellishment upon the original design. New designs, to fill out our own twentieth century sector of the continuum, must be of the best the nation has to offer. And we must be prepared to courageously stand by what our own age is capable of producing. The judges of our sensitivity, of our understanding, of the quality of our dreams and of the strength of our creative force have yet to be born. What they will say of our own age and what they will do in their own time with the heritage which we will pass in trust will be largely dependent upon the example which we set and the paths which we will open for them to follow.

It has been well said that the measure of a society's cultural maturity lies in its attitudes toward the visible elements of its history; in the interest which is expressed for their preservation; and in the willingness to bear sacrifices to accomplish this preservation.

W. Ostrowski has summarized the preservation position in the 1960's in the following succinct terms: "Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the notion of the historic monument has been considerably broadened. Formerly, protection was required only for monuments possessing particular importance from the artistic or historic point of view. With the passage of time, people have become aware of the irreparable mistakes liable to stem from the destruction of the original surroundings of historic monuments, and the demand was made that a like protection should be ex-

tended to the buildings round-about them which, although themselves of lesser value, at any rate give an idea of the milieu amid which the principal object in the architectural group concerned had been erected. Subsequently, the demand was made that this protection should embrace likewise groups of buildings which, while of no particular value, constitute interesting documents from the past and form the characteristic elements of the townscape, or are of special value on account of their picturesque nature. Finally, the list of monuments meriting protection will include whole towns together with open spaces adjoining them."

As a viable basis for approaching the trust which has come down to us from our predecessors and which inevitably we ourselves must accept, these words seem to be the preamble for our approach to the conservation and preservation of Washington's architectural character, its historic integrity and, moreover, its total spatial quality.

The Preservation Committee of The American Institute of Architects has long led in the effort to understand, identify and preserve the important qualities of our national capital. From a fundamental act of preservation through use of the Octagon as national headquarters for the AIA, to leading in the effort to identify that which merits conservation and the means by which a positive rather than a negative approach can be taken, the AIA has set the standard for other communities, attempting to preserve their own uniqueness and special quality.

The AIA has long recognized that the simple act of saying "no" to a proposed demolition of a valuable structure or area will not suffice. A strong and positive approach, pointing out the means by which the building or area may be and must be incorporated in a development proposal has been the method by which the preservation goal has been realized.

There is no substitute for careful thought and investigation of values, and an imaginative and sensitive combination of existing and essential elements will result in a positive design solution to the preservation problem. The recognition of the need to preserve these important qualities, the existence of a demand for their preservation, and an intelligent and understanding proposal for the implementation of the preservation program are the means by which our tears may be saved and by which future generations can give thanks for what the Capital City will be in their own day. This, then, is the mandate which we hold: to pass on in trust the truth of what we ourselves received. ◀

In Athens, the Parthenon survived more than 2000 years of changing empires; even the heathen Turks did not level its majestic columns. In America, an architectural landmark seems to need providential protection if it is to last more than fifty years.

Is it absolutely imperative that Progress must always involve the wanton destruction of the usable past?

Editorial,
WASHINGTON POST
Oct 2, 1962

"Of what importance, then, is the restoration of a small bridge in an old city outside the mainstream of modern history? Of no importance, perhaps, except as a passing reminder of continuity, of the tenacity of man who is not only a destroyer but also a patient retriever of his follies and failures.

"When their hill is crushed and destroyed ants instinctively begin its restoration. Men are not so different from ants in the great scheme of things other than in their capacity for seemingly senseless destruction."

Quote in an Editorial
SEATTLE JOURNAL OF
COMMERCE
Jan 3, 1962

Georgetown

by Walter G. Peter AIA, Vice-Chairman, Committee on the Preservation
of Historic Buildings, Washington-Metropolitan Chapter AIA

In 1751 Georgetown was chartered as a town by the Maryland Legislature. Now as a small part of Washington it still maintains its identity.

As was true with so many of the early cities Georgetown is located at the head of navigable water which gave it importance as a port. The town prospered and with the decision to locate the Federal city here it became the center of social and political life while the city of Washington was developing. The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal was completed in the 1830's with Georgetown as its eastern terminus which added to its commercial importance. In the 1850's with the advent of the railroad and with the city of Washington growing rapidly, Georgetown's continued progress came to a halt.

During this first century the area from the canal to the river had become almost entirely devoted to shipping and its attendant needs, the two main streets, now Wisconsin Avenue and M Street, had continued to develop as commercial streets although there were still residences on them. Earlier, before the canal was built, M Street had been the main residential street as well as having taverns and shops. As one went north uphill and away from the river there were groups of houses forming a row, or individual houses adjoining each other of varying sizes, or then again rather large houses with ample grounds about them. Further up the hill, the top of which is now R Street, larger houses and larger properties.

The period from the Civil War to World War I saw the shipping decline and finally disappear. The area formerly devoted to this use became a purely industrial area served by a spur railroad, tugboats and barges. The city of Washington had become entirely self-sufficient and Georgetown was no longer the fashionable place it had once been.

During this period a number of row houses were built, many of dubious quality, as well as some large houses that were very much in the fashion of the times. While this new construction was going on many of the fine old houses in the commercial area were being "modernized" with new fronts, razed, or allowed to deteriorate through neglect.

So when World War I started Georgetown was in the same position many other towns or parts of towns have found themselves with ever-cheapening "new fronting" of commercial establishments, and speculative ventures of poor quality trying to stay ahead of something they did not begin to understand.

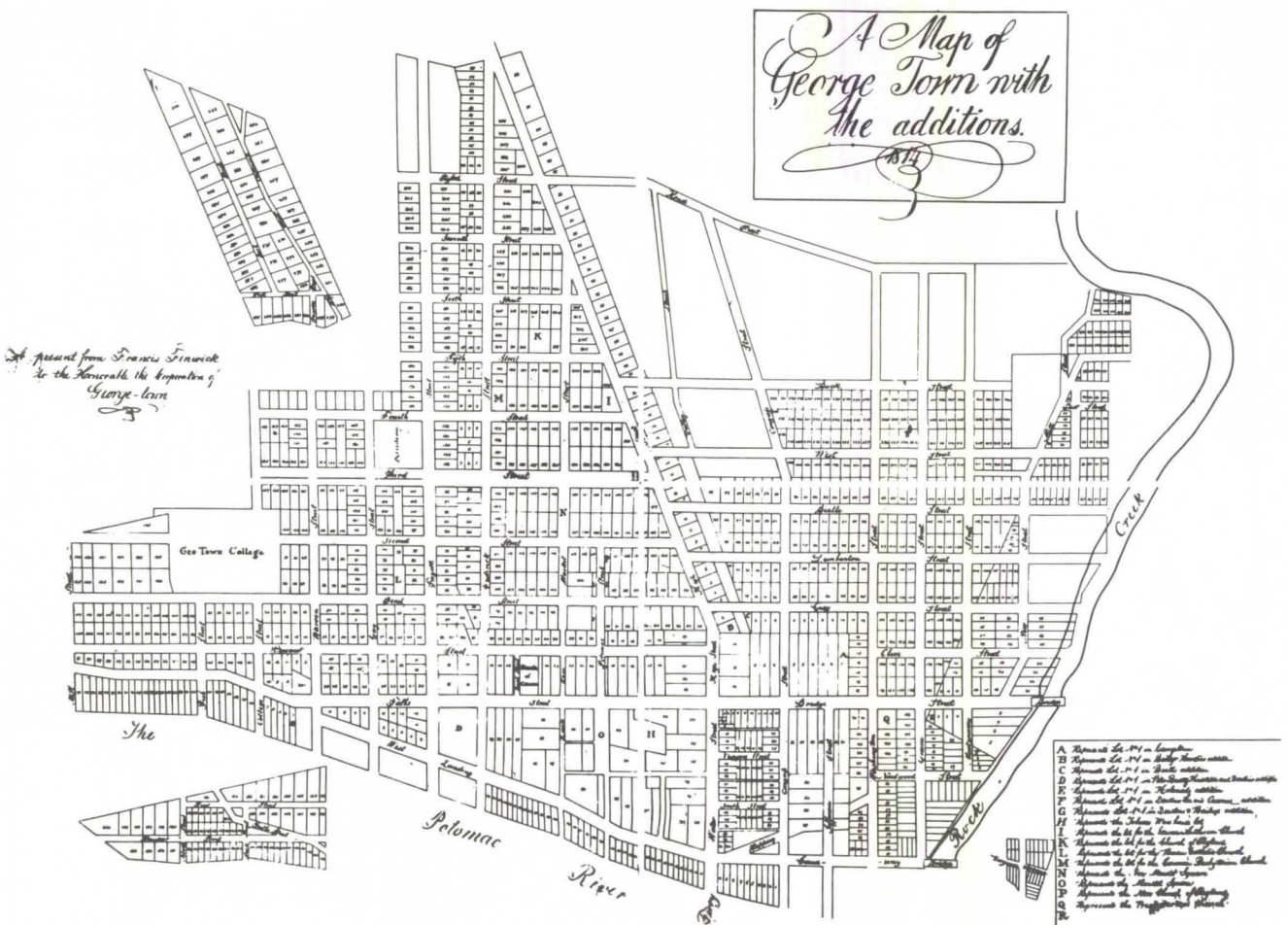
It should be noted that while this was an area that was deteriorating and had its slums,



A Federal row in Georgetown

it was not a slum as a whole. There were those with great wealth, professional people, skilled mechanics, small store owners and others who took pride in their property and formed a stable core.

It was really due to World War I that Georgetown started to become rejuvenated. Knowledgeable people came to crowded



The District Commissioners decided yesterday that they do not have authority to prevent an old Georgetown house from being torn down.

They then voted to award Charles D. Ford, owner of the house at 1046 Wisconsin Ave NW, a permit to raze the building. Ford, who wants the space to provide parking for patrons of his next-door welding shop, said he plans to start immediately.

WASHINGTON POST
Nov 23, 1960

Washington at this time who had no preconceived ideas about the city. They saw some really fine Federal houses being used as tenements and took them over. The fact that almost any place in the center of Washington can be reached from Georgetown within fifteen minutes by public transportation clearly had a tremendous bearing on the desirability of the location.

Aside from its proximity to Downtown there are many other things about Georgetown that have given impetus to its revival and preservation. First and foremost it still has many houses dating from just after the Revolutionary war and on through the Federal and Greek revival eras as a basis for much of its charm. It also has the feeling of a smalltown community in that there are many "corner stores"—grocery, drug, book, etc—that provide warmth and convenience and informality. The fact that there are houses of all sizes and shapes from the very large and formal to the very small and intimate, all in close proximity, give it a unique character.

The vision and knowledge of those who had the courage to move into a declining area can not be overestimated in understanding how the Georgetown of today has come

about. It is the result of strong convictions based on real knowledge and taste that was responsible for the preservation of much of the area. It gradually became apparent to speculators that money was to be made in fixing up old houses and the boom was on. It then became necessary to try to protect the area from uninformed individuals who were unintentionally destroying the good old buildings and unscrupulous persons who were only interested in making a fast buck. As a result an act of Congress known as Public Law 808 was enacted to try to safeguard the area by requiring any work subject to view from a public highway to come before the Fine Arts Commission for review and comment prior to issuance of a permit by the DC government. While the power of the Commission is only advisory it has had a strong influence on the work being done in Georgetown.

The story of Georgetown clearly shows what can be accomplished by strong-minded individuals, militant citizens' groups and the interest of its residents. Here is a case where an area has vigorously preserved itself and in so doing has incurred no public cost but on the contrary the property taxes have risen to be among the highest in the city. ◀

Planning in Washington

by Alexander C. Robinson III FAIA, Member, National Capital Planning Commission

The National Capital Planning Commission was re-created by an Act of Congress in July 1952 together with its related agency, the National Capital Regional Planning Council, which is included in the budget of the Commission. This Commission replaced the previous National Capital Park and Planning Commission which was established in April 1926.

The Planning Commission by the Act of 1952 was "designated as the central planning agency for the Federal and District governments to plan the appropriate and orderly development and redevelopment of the national capital and the conservation of the important natural and historical features thereof." The Act further stated "It shall be among the principal duties of the Commission to, 1) prepare, adopt and amend the comprehensive plan for the national capital and make related recommendations to the appropriate developmental agencies; 2) serve as the central planning agency for the Federal and District governments, within the National Capital Region, and in such capacity to review their development programs in order to advise as to consistency with the comprehensive plan; and 3) to be the representative of the Federal and District governments for collaboration with the Regional Planning Council." It was also instructed to prepare a comprehensive plan for the District.

The Planning Commission under this Act consists of five Presidential appointees—two of whom must be residents of the region and five ex-officio members, 1) the Federal Highway Administrator, Bureau of Public Roads; 2) the Chief of Engineers of the US Army; 3) the Commissioner of Public

Buildings, General Services Administration; 4) the Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia; and 5) the Director of National Park Services. In addition there are two Congressional ex-officio members, the Chairmen of the Senate and House Committees on the District of Columbia. These two Congressional members rarely attend meetings of the Commission.

As an indication of the growing importance of the Planning Commission and the recognition of its functions and duties, its budget has increased from \$231,000 in 1958 to \$531,000 for the fiscal year 1963. Its staff has increased from nineteen to more than sixty authorized positions. Today the staff of the Commission has a nation-wide reputation for being in the forefront in its urban planning field, as an evidence of which they are constantly sought after to go to newer and bigger jobs, as well as to lecture at universities and to advise other agencies.

In terms of reorganization of the staff a District Planning Division has been created, partially in response to the feeling that municipal problems were being ignored in the over-emphasis of Federal and park issues. This division concentrates on zoning, capital budgeting, street openings and closings, and transfers of jurisdiction. There is also a new Division of Technical Services, which includes a transportation planning engineer, an urban designer, an architect and an economist, as well as a model-making shop. This Division gives the staff competence equal to the operating departments with which they work, particularly in traffic engineering. The urban designer in this Division not only offers technical leadership to the other Divisions but at the same time is establishing an

urban design matrix, ie, an image of the city for modern times within which this and other agencies work. An example of this is the abandonment of the East Mall project, as sites for Federal buildings, for a series of clusters in the heart of the city for non-monumental office buildings for Federal use.

This latter concept has been pointed up by the appointment by the President of a Pennsylvania Avenue Advisory Council for the redevelopment of the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue under the direction of the National Capital Planning Commission. In addition there has been formed a joint committee of the NCPC and the Fine Arts Commission to study the skyline of Washington in relation to the heights of buildings not only in Downtown but in other areas in the District. To accomplish these objectives there are included studies on increases of densities in many places so that they may be served by subways, more night-life and daytime activities rather than sprawling meadows; the idea that the city is people and not just monuments and parks. Pennsylvania Avenue offers great opportunities in developing this new concept of the Federal city.

Unfortunately there is some overlapping jurisdiction with the Fine Arts Commission in the field of monuments and Federal buildings over which they have some authority by an Executive Order of many years ago rather than by legislative authority. The Planning Commission has, in lieu of zoning powers for Federal and District buildings, the determination of height, bulk, setback, parking and site planning for these buildings. Only after it decides on such matters, based on urban design considerations, should the Fine Arts Commission take up matters of esthetics regarding architecture.

In other matters of overlapping jurisdictions, some of the Planning Commission's relationships are very clear, as in the case of renewal plans where the Commission shares with the District Commissioners a more or less "bi-cameral" relationship in the approving of these plans. Neither can act without the other. The Redevelopment Land Agency has no approval or adoption powers with regard to renewal plans; it is simply the implementation agency, once the Planning Commission and the District Commissioners decide what the plans should be.

The Zoning Commission is under the jurisdiction of the District Commissioners, with the Director of the Park Service and the Architect of the Capitol sitting in. The Planning Commission has the responsibility for making recommendations to them on larger proposals such as "Watergate Towne." Unfortunately the Zoning Commission seems to

be more interested in legalistic problems and precedent rather than design leadership.

The relationship of the Planning Commission with the General Services Administration in recent years has greatly improved. The Commission has given more emphasis to design leadership and the location of Federal office buildings and the GSA has shown willingness to accept the decisions made by the Commission, and is most helpful in carrying out these objectives. Unfortunately the Public Works Committees in Congress exert pressure on the General Services Administration and for that reason the President's new program for public buildings may fall short of meeting the needs—even to the removal of temporary buildings.

The relations of the Commission with the Architect of the Capitol are distant. He tends, by the very nature of his position, to be imperious and separate. The Commission is not asked an opinion, except when legislation is introduced as to the direction of expansion or long-range policies in the area "on the Hill" under his jurisdiction. This tends to create a separate province in the city which mitigates against considered planning for the Federal city as a whole.

In connection with the National Capital Housing Authority, there has been a very good relationship. The Director of the Planning Commission sits in as a member (ex-officio) and is Vice-Chairman of the Authority. The Planning Commission legally must approve both boundary and site plans for their projects.

Due to the fact that the Planning Commission as now constituted is an outgrowth of the Park and Planning Commissions, there has been some feeling recently by the Park Service that the Commission has tended to cooperate more with the highway program than with the parks in solving transportation problems. The Commission tries to be objective in its review of cases involving park lands and is very conscious of the value of parks and their enhancement of the national capital. To augment this, the services of a landscape architect have been added to the staff to improve this relationship and to see that the importance of open spaces and parks have their proper emphasis.

The National Capital Transportation Agency, which was created by Congress to review and develop the findings of the Mass Transportation Survey prepared by the Planning Commission, has had numerous conferences with the Commission, not only at staff level, but with the Commission as a whole. A recent act of Congress has made the Director of the Transportation Agency an additional ex-officio member of the Plan-

ning Commission. This should create a greater understanding of the problems of transportation in both agencies.

The Planning Commission has been in close relationship with such activities as the Downtown Progress program sponsored by the National Capital Downtown Committee, Inc. Their program has been reviewed and coordinated with the staff of the Commission as well as the Commission itself. An additional evidence of the Commission's cooperation with citizens' groups seeking the revitalization of the city are in such projects as the Adams-Morgan renewal area and the Georgetown waterfront problems.

In conclusion there are some problems that need emphasizing in connection with the composition of the Commission itself.

It must not be forgotten that this is a "National" Capital Planning Commission, not a "District" or "Regional" Planning Commission alone. The great interest in the Capital City and the financial support of every citizen of the United States is most important to remember. The provision in the Act of 1952 that at least two Presidential appointees to the Commission be residents of the District pre-supposes that three appointees come from other parts of the country to represent those vested interests in the Federal city in which every taxpayer and voter in the country has rights. In addition it is assumed that these appointees not only represent the citizens of the United States, but that they have qualifications which especially show interest and knowledge in the planning and development of the national capital. This is equally true of the regional or District appointees.

As the Commission is now constituted, by the very nature of the ex-officio members, who make up more than half of the members, residents of the area are in a preponderance, as there are today only two members of the

Commission who do not live in the Washington area. Planning for such an important city as the national capital should be completely objective and free from personal or prejudiced opinions. It is very difficult for the ex-officio representatives of various Government agencies not to exert their influence in matters which affect their particular fields. Fortunately these members have shown consideration for the larger problems of planning but there is always the danger of local interests outbalancing the larger and more objective needs of our great national capital.

In contrast to the appointments to the Fine Arts Commission, which is made up of architects, painters, sculptors and landscape architects, experts in their fields, there is only one city planner and one architect on the Planning Commission, and for many years there was not even an architect. In all fairness it must be stated that one of the resident Presidential appointees fortunately has had great experience in other cities in city planning and development. It is also true that most of the ex-officio members are experts in their particular fields, and contribute much to the decisions of the Commission.

With the outstanding staff of the Commission today, future appointments to the Commission should be free from political or local interests. It is a great responsibility that the Commission has. It has shown splendid leadership in the last few years and it must continue to do so.

The importance of national representation and interest is paramount, and future appointments to the Commission must bear this in mind. Washington has a heritage of fine disinterested planning from L'Enfant and McMillan on down. It must continue to assure the citizens of the United States that national capital planning will move forward with the best in urban planning as we approach the year 2000. ◀

A noisy and unrealistic debate is now opening between the partisans of the freeways and those of mass transit.

But it is clear that freeways will have to be built, just as transit lines will have to be built, to tie the central city to the suburbs. The heaviest responsibility now lies with the Planning Commission to see that the roads and rail lines are designed to uniformly high esthetic standards, and that they are routed to cause the least possible damage to established and stable neighborhoods of this city. It is possible to improve our street system, to devise a mass transport system and to preserve the charm of this historic city. To those who ask which we wish to do the answer is: "All three!"

Editorial

WASHINGTON POST
Nov 7, 1961

COMING IN THE FEBRUARY JOURNAL

Notes on a French Horn II

Henry S. Churchill FAIA

Mr Churchill resumes his architectural, philosophical and gustatorial ramble in southern France.

An Inexact Business

John A. Carver Jr

The Assistant Secretary of the Interior tells the story of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Illustrated with HABS drawings and photographs.

Some Architectural Peeves of an Ignorant Man

John Hazard Wildman

A not-so-ignorant English professor displays a rather wide background of observing architecture, and comments on it with wit and wisdom.

The Roots and Modern Concepts of Urban Design

The second article in the Institute's series on Urban Design surveys urban planning from the Great Fire of London to the Garden City movement.

Planning Aims in Washington

by Mrs James H. Rowe Jr

Chairman, National Capital Planning Commission

The grand title, "Planning Aims," given by your editor might well have started a long and perhaps sterile philosophical discourse, but he was wise enough to suggest that a number of problems the National Capital Planning Commission has worked on in the past year be covered in this article. This, then, will be an effort to explain some of the Commission's decisions and to fit them into its general purposes and aims.

In the law establishing the Commission, it is charged with promoting the general welfare. The general welfare might be interpreted as the people's welfare or that planning should be for people. The law defines as the purposes of the Commission the planning of the orderly development and redevelopment of the city and the conservation of its natural and historical features.

During the months I have served as Chairman of the Commission, our major preoccupation has been transportation planning. Like many cities throughout the country, Washington's gates are being knocked on by the interstate highway system; and like many other cities, Washington is weighing the advantages and disadvantages of urban freeways. The Commission has been concerned



with meeting the demands of the fastest-growing metropolitan area of the east, with planning the necessary development and with preserving the city's character and beauty.

There must be transportation facilities to accommodate the growth. The welfare of the people who live in the central city as well as the commuting citizens must be considered. Finally, because Washington is the nation's capital and a beautiful city, esthetic considerations must be given great thought.

Several years ago the Congress in its concern for these problems established the National Capital Transportation Agency to

study and report on the area's transportation needs and requirements. Only in the past year has the Agency really been under way. Its report to the President is due some weeks after this is being written, but several months before this article will appear. Since the agency's purpose is to plan a mass transit system for the area, there are bound to be changes in the over-all transportation plan which has in the past relied upon a dominant freeway system.

Another evidence of Congressional concern with the city's transportation problems was the passing of legislation at this session adding the Administrator of the National Capital Transportation Agency to the ex-officio membership of the Planning Commission.

Because a new transportation report was being prepared, there has been hesitation on the part of some of the Commission members to approve highway projects which would freeze the pattern of past thinking. The Commission has also been greatly concerned with the displacement of people in the central city, which the construction of an inner loop freeway and its radials within the city would demand. The disruption of neighborhoods and the changes in the patterns of living have concerned the Commission as well as the actual displacement.

transportation. One action of the Commission might be included, however. It voted to erase from the planned highway system a road through Glover-Archbold Park, a lovely wilderness area in the Northwest section of the city. A majority of the Commission felt that the preservation of the park for the use and enjoyment of the people was of greater importance than providing another road to meet the area's transportation needs; that the maintaining of green open-space within the rapidly growing city was of first importance.

Another place where the Commission has been faced with the choice of preservation or development is the Watergate development in Foggy Bottom. Preliminary plans for this apartment, hotel, office and commercial development on the banks of the Potomac adjacent to the proposed Cultural Center, have been approved by the Commission. The plans require a zoning change permitting extra height. A majority of the Commission felt the extra height was justified so that the over-all design of the project could be achieved. The minority, of which I was a member, felt that the traditional pattern of that part of the waterfront which has been reserved for parkland, required the preservation of minimum heights for monuments and buildings.



The Fine Arts Commission, The American Institute of Architects and other groups concerned with the city's beauty and the maintenance of its essential character have called attention to the esthetic impact of the proposed freeways. The members of the Commission have given careful thought to these expressions. Not unexpectedly, there has been less than unanimity among the members in the response to these various considerations.

This paper will not attempt to review the highway projects considered recently since another article here is devoted exclusively to

In its consideration of the Watergate development, the Commission discussed at some length the existing zoning regulations which set building heights. It was the Commission's feeling that there would be accelerated development pressures to increase height limitations throughout the city. Because Washington's skyline is of such symbolic as well as esthetic importance, the question was discussed with the Fine Arts Commission. As a result there is now a joint study being made with the Fine Arts Commission of the existing skyline. What the skyline would be if buildings were at the

maximum height allowed under present zoning, and what proposals for zoning changes would insure a great skyline for the future will also be studied.

Moving up the Potomac a bit from the Watergate is the Georgetown waterfront, a traditionally industrial area with a residential fringe. Here the Commission's staff had prepared a redevelopment design which stirred up a controversy in that most articulate community. The Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia felt that any renewal of the Georgetown waterfront should have a low priority considering the city's pressing need for redevelopment in other sections. In view of this and the lack of community support of urban renewal, the Planning Commission decided to abandon renewal planning and to concentrate instead on working with the various Georgetown organizations on possible zoning changes and other proposals for the waterfront.

In contrast to the lack of community acceptance of urban renewal in the Georgetown area is the community interest and support of urban renewal in the Adams-Morgan area. This area of 223 acres is named for two of the schools within its boundaries in the northwest section of the city, north of Florida Avenue between Connecticut Avenue and 16th Street. Here the citizens initiated the urban renewal planning and have continued to work closely



with the Redevelopment Land Agency and Planning Commission staffs.

The area includes some of the city's finest houses and apartment buildings; many large single-family houses now converted to rooming houses, apartments and tenements; a run-down commercial area; a shabby light industrial area and some of the city's worst slum dwellings. In fact, it has everything. In contrast to the Southwest redevelopment project, the Adams-Morgan project will be primarily one of rehabilitation with a minimum use of the bulldozer. Members of the Commission have been enthusiastic supporters of this

project and look forward to the adoption of a final plan shortly.

Another urban renewal plan now in its final stages is the first industrial renewal program in the city. This is in the Northeast section of the city adjacent to the Union Station. The Commission too has continued to work on the rapidly rebuilding Southwest with the downtown business group and with the Redevelopment Land Agency on preliminary planning of projects in the blighted and crime-ridden second police precinct in the Northwest.

The Anacostia-Bolling area on the banks of the Anacostia branch of the Potomac in the Southeast will give the Commission an unusual opportunity for renewal planning. This area which includes the site of the Bolling Airfield, now abandoned, will be the first place in Washington to start planning from scratch with no relocation problems. Once the military establishment releases the acreage it will no longer need, planning can start for the building of a new community within the city limits.

During the coming year the Planning Commission will be working on several new programs. Among them is the redesign of Pennsylvania Avenue. The Commission will also be making a study of the city's parking facilities and needs. We hope that this study will bring together the results of various reports recently made on downtown parking requirements, parking for government employees, the use of on-street parking, and others. Parking is so intimately bound to transportation that the Commission feels there should be a comprehensive survey made now so that parking may be correlated with highway and mass transit plans, and with the over-all planning of the central city.

Along with these two development studies, a preservation study is being made. This study is preliminary to making proposals for legislation establishing a Landmarks Commission for the District of Columbia. It is the Commission's hope that not only historic buildings but areas of historic interest or architectural distinction can be protected through such legislation.

From this review of some recent problems and future plans it is apparent that the problems of the National Capital Planning Commission are much the same as those of other planning bodies throughout the country. But in finding solutions, the Commission must consider elements which are uncommon—a beautiful natural setting, an original grand design and architectural symbols of the country's history and government. Washington is a national treasure and the Commission must be its guardian. ◀

Statement by the Committee

L'Enfant's plan for Washington envisioned a total design for the city. It took advantage of the contours of the land; it integrated the natural beauty of the site into the urban environment; it established each element of the city in its proper place, leaving space for green areas and allowing for the natural development of self-contained residential areas, complete with market places, shops and other amenities.

Since L'Enfant drew up his plan, much has happened to alter the face of Washington. So much, indeed, that L'Enfant's intimate scale has been irreversibly altered. Buildings, especially in the Downtown, are more massive; the city's population is infinitely greater; the mode of transportation has changed radically. These conditions have imposed a new scale on Washington, a vastly larger scale which has evolved without proper planning or guidance.

The principles of the L'Enfant plan, with its axial pattern, can and should be preserved, but within that pattern the future development of Washington must be planned in terms of its enlarged scale. At the same time, it must be recognized that this larger scale has its shortcomings as an environment for living. The human scale must be preserved and enhanced wherever possible. Every building cannot be monumental. Some must perform functions that induce people to live in the city.

Much of the charm of Washington's streets can be attributed to the twenty-five-, thirty- and fifty-foot frontages of abutting buildings which present a pleasing pattern of changing facades, beautifully detailed entrances, stairways and marginal gardens. Too often, these buildings are being replaced by new block developments which lack pleasant design features and transform the streets into stretches of monotonous walls. The delightful rhythm of changing facades is giving way to the dull boredom of sameness.

Tourists and visitors to Washington receive a visual impact that is deplorably negative. With few exceptions the major buildings and public areas of the city are shabbily maintained. Union Station, for instance, is essentially a handsome building. But because it is poorly lighted, dirty and dotted with unsightly dispensing machines, its beauty is not apparent to the visitor. Visitors arriving from the airport over the Twin Bridges fare no better. They are greeted by a mass of parked cars in the Great Plaza, an area originally intended as a beautifully landscaped open space. Strollers along the Mall cannot avoid the unsightly "temporary" buildings which degrade that area. Destruction of these buildings is long overdue. Efforts must be made to preserve the environment around Washington's important buildings.

Preservation of historic buildings is a planning consideration of special importance to Washington. There is pressing need for an inventory of buildings of such historic significance that they should be retained at any cost. These buildings should then be made part of any general plan. The historically important sections of Georgetown should be more precisely defined so as not to hinder needed improvements. Some parts of Georgetown have such a strong historic character that they should be preserved intact. But in others, especially where large buildings are to be constructed, a literal and detailed enforcement of the Federal style mitigates against achievement of architectural quality.

The Downtown area must be planned in terms of present and future needs. The Downtown Progress plan errs in setting arbitrary limits on what is called "Downtown." There are, in fact, several "Downtowns" in Washington. All of these predominately commercial areas should be infused with apartments, hotels and other buildings to encourage the twenty-four-hour population essential to a truly successful city. Washington's density standards should be increased to allow this type of development.

Washington's grossly inadequate parking situation requires immediate attention. Parking structures should be constructed as integral parts of new buildings, not as separate

projects or garages which displace street frontages that can be better used for other purposes. Underground parking directly connected to freeways and considered a part of freeway design would do much to alleviate both parking and traffic congestion.

Freeways pose problems which Washington shares with all American centers, but here they are more acutely felt because of the classic order of the city's original plan. The current plan for freeway construction in Washington shows a complete disregard for this pattern. It dispossesses an unnecessarily large number of people; it steals land from parks; it takes valuable property off the tax roll; it creates an unsightly condition that could only be overcome by complete reconstruction. Freeways make poor neighbors. Viaducts, elevated roadways, cloverleaves and interchanges are inherently negative in their effect on the community. Superficial embellishment of bridges and other highway structures is ineffective.

A search for new techniques is required in transportation studies. The old methods have proved inadequate for future needs. In solving Washington's transportation requirements, primary reliance should be placed on an effective rapid transit system. Transportation surveys state that we shall need both a rapid transit system and a system of freeways. But it is of the utmost importance that priority be given, both in time and money, to the rapid transit system. It is time to take note of the fact that if we adopt the rapid transit solution as a first resort instead of a last resort, we may never have to construct the devastating northern portion of the inner loop. Freeways should not encroach upon park land. They should add to, rather than subtract from, the city's open spaces. More consideration needs to be given to planning for the coming development of airborne vehicles.

There are encouraging signs of a renewed interest in the basic principles of civic design and architecture in Washington. President Kennedy's recent directive on Federal architecture, establishing guidelines for design of government buildings which "embody the finest contemporary architectural thought," is a great step forward. This standard of excellence which it points toward should be applied to the environment of the entire Washington region. The President's directive should be implemented not only by Federal agencies, but its goals and spirit should be adopted by the District of Columbia government, the municipalities surrounding Washington, and all of those concerned with private construction.

Preservation of the beauty of the Potomac shoreline must be regarded as a single con-

tinuing concern of the region as a whole. Threats of desecration through construction of high-rise apartment buildings, such as those recently proposed in Fairfax, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, cannot permanently be met one-by-one. If one community yields to pressures for indiscriminate development of the shoreline, the pressures on the next are vastly increased. A unity of purpose and action is required.

There must also be the application of sound professional principles of planning and design. The value of such principles can be seen in the effective program of the National Capital Planning Commission over the past five years. The Commission has vigorously attacked the problems of the Washington Region. The activities of all other agencies concerned with Washington's development, such as the office of the Architect of the Capitol and the District government, should be carefully coordinated with the Commission's planning objectives. In particular, the provisions of the Year 2000 Plan calling for maintenance of open areas deserve the support and cooperation of all other planning bodies involved.

The practice of locating government buildings in surrounding areas outside the District has proved unsatisfactory and should be discontinued. This decentralization intensifies transportation problems, complicates intercommunication, makes public approach difficult and time-consuming, and encourages undesirable land speculation and industrial development.

Washington today is a confusion of planning boards and agencies, each concerned with but one fragment of the total picture. The only coordination of their activities is accomplished by mutual consent. This is not enough to guarantee an orderly, well-planned development of the city. Clearly, a centralized planning authority is needed to see to it that an over-all program, like the Year 2000 Plan, is executed to the benefit of the entire region.

This central authority should, by mandate, act as the coordinating body for all development, both public and private, including sewers, roads and electrical distribution, and it should further initiate *all* preliminary planning. Only after *preliminaries* are completed should assignments be given to individual agencies for working drawings and construction.

If Washington is to develop its fullest potential as a great city and as the capital of the nation, it must return to L'Enfant's spirit of total design and place its confidence in the hands of those who possess both the authority and the breadth of knowledge needed to solve its physical problems. ◀

A Washington Bookshelf

prepared by Mary C. and Francis D. Lethbridge AIA

It is fitting to end this issue of the *Journal* with a guide to some further reading. The following list contains a brief description of some of the more important, interesting and curious books and pamphlets relating to Washington that have been published during the past one hundred and seventy years. It is not limited to books that are predominantly concerned with the planning and architecture of the capital, but includes a sampling of titles that are valuable either as general histories, or as sources of description of the life and appearance of the city during different periods of its development. Because the list had to be kept short, many categories of work have been omitted, or very imperfectly represented. A comprehensive list of publications, including maps, up to the year 1898 may be found in Bryan's "Bibliography of the District of Columbia."

It is only necessary to add that in Washington most of these books may be found in the AIA Library at the Octagon; the Washingtoniana Collection at the District Public Library; the Peabody Collection at the Georgetown Branch Library; and at the Library of Congress. Thanks are due to Miss Edith Ray Saul and George E. Pettengill for their assistance.

ADAMS, HENRY. *The Education of Henry Adams*. 519 pp Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co, 1918 (first trade edition).

A great American autobiography and a book that deserves first place on the list because it has particular associations with both Washington (Adams' home, designed by Richardson, was on Lafayette Square) and the AIA (the copyright of Adams' famous companion volume, "*Mont St. Michel and Chartres*," was given to The American Institute of Architects). The latter part of the book gives a picture of social and political life in the capital soon after the Civil War. See also "Letters of Henry Adams," 2 vol, edited by Ford.

WASHINGTON-METROPOLITAN CHAPTER AIA. *Washington Architecture, 1791-1957*. 96 pp, illus New York, Reinhold, 1957.

One of the convention guide series.

BARNARD, JONATHAN GILBERT. *Report on the Defenses of Washington*. 152 pp, 31 pl, maps. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1871.

Description, diagrams and maps of the defensive forts that surrounded the city during the Civil War, some of which are still standing. Their locations have influenced the subsequent development of roads and parks.

BEALE, MARIE. *Decatur House and Its Inhabitants*. 156 pp, 47 pl, Washington. The National Trust, 1954.

An attractive book about the social history of the famous town house on Lafayette Square, designed by Benjamin Latrobe.

BLODGETT, SAMUEL, JR. *Economica*. A statistical manual of the United States of America. 202 pp. Washington, for the Author, 1806.

The introduction to this volume contains Blodgett's account of his association with the early affairs of the city of Washington. An enthusiastic promoter of the prospects of the capital from the outset, he fell victim to the subsequent collapse of land values.

BOHN, CASSIMIR (publisher). *Hand-Book of Washington*. 98 pp, 18 pl, Washington, Cassimir Bohn and Taylor & Maury, 1852.

The Bohn guides went through many editions between 1852 and 1861.

BROWN, GEORGE ROTHWELL. *Washington, a Not-Too Serious History*. 482 pp, 92 pl, Baltimore, The Norman Publishing Company, 1930.

A volume of leisurely rambles through some of the lesser-known pages of Washington's history.

BROWN, GLENN. *History of the United States Capitol*. Vol I, 114 pp, 141 pl; Vol. II, 115-255 pp, 193 pl, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1900.

A monumental pair of volumes, both in size and content. Up to 1900, at any rate, the Capitol was one of the best-documented buildings anywhere on earth. See also: Brown, Glenn, "Memories 1860-1930," Washington, 1931.

BROWN, GLENN (compiler). *Papers Relating to the Improvement of the City of Washington, District of Columbia*. 91 pp, 63 pl, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1901.

Published in connection with the development of the McMillan Plan.

BRYAN, WILHELMUS BOGART. *Bibliography of the District of Columbia to 1898*. 211 pp. Prepared for the Columbia Historical Society. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1900.

BRYAN, WILHELMUS BOGART. *A History of the National Capital*. Vol I, 1790-1814, 669 pp, illus; Vol II, 1815-1878, 707 pp, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1914-1916.

The most complete and reliable history of the city from its founding to 1878, basic to the study of Washington's beginnings and early history.

BRYCE, JAMES. *The Nation's Capital*. 81 pp, illus. Washington, Byron S. Adams, 1913.

James Bryce, Ambassador to the United States from Great Britain and author of "The American Commonwealth," delivered this most eloquent plea to Washingtonians, to act to preserve the natural advantages of their city.

BUSEY, SAMUEL C. *Pictures of the City of Washington in the Past*. 384 pp, Washington, Wm. Ballantyne & Sons, 1898.

Dr Busey assembled a great amount of early Washington history in this book, some of it very difficult to find elsewhere.

CAEMMERER, H. PAUL. *The Life of Pierre Charles L'Enfant, Planner of the City Beautiful, the City of Washington*. 480 pp, illus, Washington, National Republic Publishing Co, 1950.

A good full biography of L'Enfant still remains unwritten, but as a source for what known information exists in print on his life this volume is unique and indispensable.

CAEMMERER, H. PAUL. *Washington, the National Capital*. 735 pp, illus, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1932.

An immense grab-bag of Washington history, profusely illustrated.

CLARK, ALLEN C. *Greenleaf and Law in the Federal City*. 355 pp, 26 pl, Washington, W. F. Roberts, 1901.

All of Clark's writings read as though they had been badly translated from an original Latin text. This study, nevertheless, is a valuable work, a good source of information on the activities of the early land speculators—Greenleaf, Law, Morris and Nicholson.

COHEN, E. A., & CO. *For 1834, a full directory for Washington city, Georgetown, and Alexandria*. . . . 56, 22, 62, 22 pp, Washington City, Wm. Greer, 1834.

The third Washington directory, and the first to include the neighboring cities.

COLUMBIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, WASHINGTON, DC. *The records*. . . . Vol 1-59, illus, Washington, The Society, 1897 to date.

These publications are a prime source of information about the District of Columbia. An index is available.

CUNNINGHAM, H. F. (and others). *Georgian Architecture in the District of Columbia; Measured Drawings*. 66 pl, New York, Architectural Book Publishing Co, 1914.

Contains St John's Church, Brentwood, The Highlands, and other buildings.

DELANO, JUDAH. *Washington Directory: Showing the name, occupation and residence of each head of a family and person in business*. 148 pp, Washington, J. Duncan, 1822.

The first city directory of Washington.

EBERLEIN, HAROLD D. and C. V. HUBBARD. *Historic Homes of George-Town and Washington City*. 480 pp, illus, Richmond, The Dietz Press, 1958.

A splendid book, one that should be in every Washington library, and in every architect's library.

ECKER, GRACE DUNLOP. *A Portrait of Old George Town*. 324 pp, illus, Richmond, The Dietz Press; 2d ed, rev and enl, 1951.

A delightful history of the area, affectionately told by one who grew up there. A good book for anyone who likes Georgetown.

ELLIOT, JONATHAN. *Historical Sketches of the ten-mile square forming the District of Columbia with a picture of Washington*. 554 pp, Washington, J. Elliot, Jr, 1830.

One of the most important early Washington books, a miniature encyclopedia of facts.

ELLIOT, WILLIAM. *The Washington Guide*. 138 pp, map, Washington, S. A. Elliot, 1822.

The first Washington guide, with notes on the Capitol building by George Hadfield.

A later, much enlarged guide by William Elliot, with a description of the Capitol by Robert Mills, appeared in 1837.

FAIRMAN, CHARLES E. *Art and Artists of the Capitol*. . . . 526 pp, illus, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1927.

A great mine of information on the paintings and sculpture in the Capitol and on the artists whose work is represented.

FORCE, WILLIAM Q. *Picture of Washington and Vicinity*. 188 pp, 38 pl, Washington, William Q. Force, 1850.

Engravings are mostly the same as in Morrison's 1841 guide, with the addition of some woodcuts of statues and public buildings.

GALLAGHER, HELEN. *Robert Mills, Architect of the Washington Monument*. 233 pp, 51 pl, New York, Columbia Univ Press, 1935.

Not entirely satisfactory, but a well-documented biography of Mills.

GREEN, CONSTANCE MCLAUGHLIN. *Washington, Village and Capital, 1800-1878*. 445 pp, 24 pl, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1962.

The first volume of a projected two-volume history of the city compiled from original sources. When completed it will supplement rather than replace Bryan's earlier work. The illustrations are well chosen, but some of the captions seem to be in error. Minor quibbles aside, Miss Green's work promises to stand as the best-written serious history of the capital and will have the obvious advantage of covering the events of the past ninety years.

GUTHEIM, FREDERICK. *The Potomac*. 436 pp, illus ("Rivers of America"), New York, Rinehart & Company, 1949.

To understand Washington one must study the nature and the history of the river that played an important part in its development. This book takes its place on the required reading shelf.

HAAS, P. *Public Buildings and Architectural Ornaments of the Capitol of the United States*. . . . 45 pp, 21 pl, plans, Washington, P. Haas, 1840.

Notable for several of the very attractive lithographed views of the city and the Capitol.

HALLE, LOUIS J., JR. *Spring in Washington*. 227 pp, illus, New York, William Sloane Associates, 1947.

A beautiful book about the natural life and seasonal changes of the Washington area. In the tradition of Gilbert White and Thoreau, it is a classic of its kind.

HAMILTON, A. B. *Maps of the District of Columbia and City of Washington, and Plats of the Squares and Lots*. . . . 159 pl, maps, Washington, A. B. Hamilton, 1852.

Reproduces Ellicott's topographic map of 1793, the Hill engraving of the L'Enfant-Ellicott plan of 1792, and the W. T. Stone Washington map of 1839.

HAMLIN, TALBOT. *Benjamin Henry Latrobe*. 663 pp, illus, 40 pl, New York Oxford University Press, 1955.

A fine biography of the nation's first great architect; a Pulitzer prize award book.

HINES, CHRISTIAN. *Early Recollections of Washington City*. 96 pp, Washington, DC, Chronicle Book and Job Print, 1866.

A unique and valuable little book—the detailed description of the city at the beginning of the nineteenth century by an old gentleman who was blessed with a remarkable memory.

HUTCHINS, STILSON, and MOORE, JOSEPH WEST. *The National Capital, Past and Present*. 351 pp, Washington, The Post Publishing Co, 1886.

JACKSON, RICHARD P. *The Chronicles of Georgetown DC, from 1751 to 1878*. 350 pp, Washington, DC, R. O. Polkinhorn, Printer, 1878.

Local history, containing a considerable amount of first-hand observation and research on the part of Jackson—one of the more important Georgetown books.

KEIM, DE B. RANDOLPH. *Washington and its Environs*. 252 pp, maps, illus, Washington City, for the Compiler, 1874.

KITE, ELIZABETH S. *L'Enfant and Washington, 1791-1792*. Published and unpublished documents now brought together for the first time. 182 pp, 1 pl, Institut Francais de Washington, Cahier III, Baltimore, the Johns Hopkins Press, 1929.

LATROBE, BENJAMIN HENRY. *The Journal of Latrobe*. Being the notes and sketches of an architect, naturalist and traveller in the United States from 1796 to 1820, with an introduction by J. H. B. Latrobe. 269 pp, illus, 26 pl, New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1905.

A selection from Latrobe's magnificent sketch books, journals and letter-books, now in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore.

LATROBE, BENJAMIN HENRY. *A Private Letter to the individual Members of Congress on the subject of the Public Buildings of the United States at Washington*. 32 pp, 1 pl, Washington, Samuel H. Smith, 1806.

This choice bit is in the Octagon library. An informal "letter" to supplement the official report, it is an early example of good "public relations."

LEAR, TOBIAS. *Observations on the River Potomack, the Country Adjacent, and the City of Washington*. 29 pp, plan, NY, S. Loudon & Son, 1793; 2nd ed NY, Loudon and Brower, 1794. 30 pp. Reprinted. Baltimore, S. T. Chambers, 1940, 26 pp.

The first publication, in separate form, of a description of the site and plans for the new capital. Lear was Washington's personal secretary, and published the "Observations" to stimulate the sale of lots in the Federal city.

LEECH, MARGARET. *Reveille in Washington, 1860-1865*. 484 pp, 24 pl, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1941.

The story of the capital during the Civil War. A fine book that won a Pulitzer prize.

MATHEWS, CATHARINE VAN COURTLANDT. *Andrew Ellicott: His Life and Letters*. 247 pp, 23 pl, New York, The Grafton Press, 1908.

The book consists, for the most part, of excerpts from Ellicott's own journals.

MOORE, CHARLES. *Daniel H. Burnham, Architect, Planner of Cities*. 2 vols, illus, Boston and NY, Houghton Mifflin Co, 1921.

Contains material on the development of the Washington plan, including several color reproductions of the beautiful renderings by Jules Guerin.

MOORE, CHARLES (compiler). *Park improvement papers*. 285 pp, 11 pl, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1903.

More material on the important turn of the century changes in the Washington park system.

MORRIS, EDMUND BATEMAN, (editor). *Report of the commission on the renovation of the Executive Mansion*. 109 pp, illus, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1952.

The story of the major reconstruction of the White House during Truman's administration, with some history of the building.

MORRISON, WILLIAM M. *Stranger's Guide to the City of Washington*. 108 pp, 17 pl, Washington, Wm. M. Morrison, 1842.

Many of the engravings are charming views of the city and environs. The Morrison guides went through many editions.

MURDOCK, MYRTLE CHENEY. *Your Memorials in Washington*. 193 pp, illus, Washington, Monumental Press, 1952.

A useful little guide to the more important memorials in the city.

NICOLAY, HELEN. *Our Capital on the Potomac*. 545 pp, 31 pl, New York, The Century Co, 1924.

The best one-volume history of the capital that has been published to date. Written in a lively and entertaining style, it is, nevertheless, a reliable and very informative book.

PADOVER, SAUL K., (editor). *Thomas Jefferson and the National Capital*; containing notes and correspondence exchanged between Jefferson, Washington, L'Enfant, Ellicott, Hallet, Thornton, Latrobe, the Commissioners, and others, relating to the founding, surveying, planning, designing, constructing, and administering of the City of Washington, 1783-1818. 522 pp, 34 pl, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1946.

The full title above needs no further explanation. The principal characters involved in the early planning of the city wrote with more grace, wit and clarity than most of the historians who have since written about them.

PEARCE, MRS JOHN N. *The White House, an Historic Guide*. 132 pp, illus, Washington, White House Historical Assoc, 1962.

Produced by the National Geographic Society, this beautiful guide contains the finest collection of views of the White House in color and black and white.

PHELPS STOKES, I. N., and HASKELL, DANIEL C. *American Historical Prints, Early Views of American Cities*, etc. 235 pp, 118 pl, NY, The New York Public Library, 1933.

Catalogue of the Phelps Stokes collection.

PHILLIPS, P. LEE. *The Beginnings of Washington, as Described in Books, Maps and Views*. 78 pp, illus, Washington, publ for the Author, 1917.

A good and full description of some early Washington publications. See also Frederick R. Goff, "The Federal City in 1793," *Library of Congress Quarterly Journal*, Nov 1951; and "The engraving of L'Enfant's plan of Washington, 1792," *Columbia Historical Soc. Records*, Vol 51-52, 1955.

PLACE, CHARLES A. *Charles Bulfinch, Architect and Citizen*. 295 pp, illus, Boston and NY, Houghton Mifflin Co, 1925.

A good biography of Bulfinch, including his activities in Washington as Architect of the Capitol.

POORE, BEN PERLEY. *Perley's Reminiscences of Sixty Years in the National Metropolis*. Vol I 547 pp, illus; Vol II 543 pp, illus, Philadelphia, Hubbard Bros, 1886.

Anecdotes, politics and local history by a popular Washington newspaperman.

SINGLETON, ESTHER. *The Story of the White House*. Vol I 318 pp, 60 pl; Vol II 340 pp, 59 pl, New York, McClure Co, 1907.

A social history of the White House, but with much description of furniture, etc.

SMITH, MARGARET BAYARD. *The First Forty Years of Washington Society*. Edited by Gaillard Hunt. 424 pp, 24 pl, New York, Chas Scribner's Sons, 1906.

The letters of Mrs Smith are among the finest in American literature. As a source of intimate knowledge of the social and political life in Washington from 1800 to 1840 they are unsurpassed.

TAYLOE, BENJAMIN OGLE. *In Memoriam, Benjamin Ogle Tayloe*. (Compiled from his papers, notebooks, etc by Winslow M. Watson). 364 pp, 3 pl, Washington, 1872.

An important, and very scarce, book that was privately printed for members and friends of the family. Col John Tayloe, father of Benjamin, commissioned Thornton to design the Octagon house.

TOWNSEND, GEORGE ALFRED ("GATH"). *Washington, Outside and Inside*. A picture and a narrative of the origin, growth, excellences, abuses, beauties and personages of our governing city. 751 pp, illus, 18 pl, Hartford, Conn, J. Betts & Co, 1873.

"Gath" was a justly noted author and newspaperman of his day. This is a much better book than others of the same type and period.

TWINING, THOMAS. *Travels in America 100 Years Ago*. 181 pp, New York, Harper & Bros, 1893.

A perishable little book that deserves reprinting, it is one of the most interesting travel journals of its period. (Washington pp 97-111).

US CAPITOL, WASHINGTON, DC. *Documentary history of the construction and development of the United States Capitol building and grounds*. 1312 pp, illus, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1904.

A ponderous volume, supplementing Glenn Brown's "History of the US Capitol."

US NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK COMMISSION. *The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia*. Edited by Charles Moore. 179 pp, illus, 13 maps, 76 pl, (57th Cong, 1st Session, Senate Rept No 166) Washington, Government Printing Office, 1902.

This is the report of the work of the McMillan Senate Committee and of the Park Commission—Burnham, McKim, Saint Gaudens, and F. L. Olmstead, Jr.

US NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION. *Plans and Studies, Washington and Vicinity*. 60 pp, 16 pl, 29 charts, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1929.

Technical data, and a review of planning up to the time of the Federal Triangle project.

US NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION. *Washington, Present and Future*. A general summary of the comprehensive plan for the National Capital and its environs. Monograph No 1. 48 pp, maps, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1950.

The first of a series of six publications on the comprehensive plan of 1950.

US NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION, AND NATIONAL CAPITAL REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL. *A Plan for the Year 2000, the Nation's Capital*. 114 pp, illus, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1961.

The proposed Radial Corridor Plan, and other aspects of the "year 2000" proposal.

US WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION, Federal Writers' Project. *Washington, City and Capital*; American guide series. 1141 pp, illus, maps, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1937.

If you plan to have but one book on your Washington bookshelf it had best be this volume. Although long out of print, it is not too hard to obtain. A new edition is planned, but it is unlikely that it will be as comprehensive as the original.

WARDEN, DAVID BAILLIE. *A Chorographical and Statistical Description of the District of Columbia*. 212 pp, map, pl, Paris, Smith, 1816.

The second published book about Washington, DC, written by a young Irish-born physician who had been acting as US Consul in Paris. Warden's "Description" is a valuable account of the newly built Capital.

WATTERSTON, GEORGE. *A Picture of Washington*. 136 pp, map, plans, Washington, Wm. M. Morrison, 1840.

An interesting little history and guide. Watterston was the first librarian of Congress, editor, and author of several other early Washington imprints.

WELD, ISAAC, JR. *Travels through the States of North America and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada during the Years 1795, 1796 and 1797*. 464 pp, 16 maps and plates, London, John Stockdale, Piccadilly, 1799.

The entertaining and critical, but relatively unbiased, observation of a young intelligent Irish traveller. Among the plates are a plan of Washington and a view of Mt Vernon.

WELLER, C. F. *Neglected neighbors—Stories of Life in the Alleys, Tenements and Shanties of the National Capital*. 342 pp, illus, Philadelphia, John C. Winston Co, 1909.

A pioneer work on the tragic story of Washington's slums. Unfortunately many of these scenes could still be duplicated today.

WILLIAMS, JOHN S. *History of the Invasion and Capture of Washington*. 371 pp, map, New York, Harper & Bros, 1857.

An account of the unhappy events by a participant, written long after the dust had settled and tempers had cooled.

WILTACH, PAUL. *Potomac Landings*. 376 pp, 44 pl, Garden City, NY, Doubleday, Page & Company, 1921.

An informal history of the men who settled on the banks of the Potomac.