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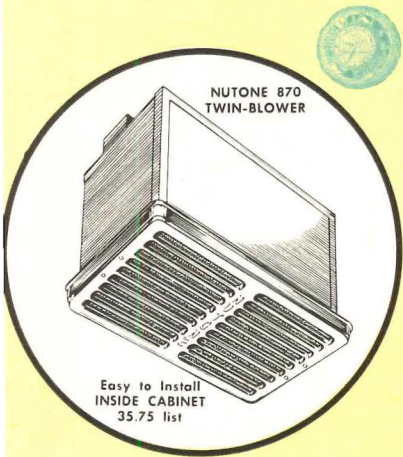
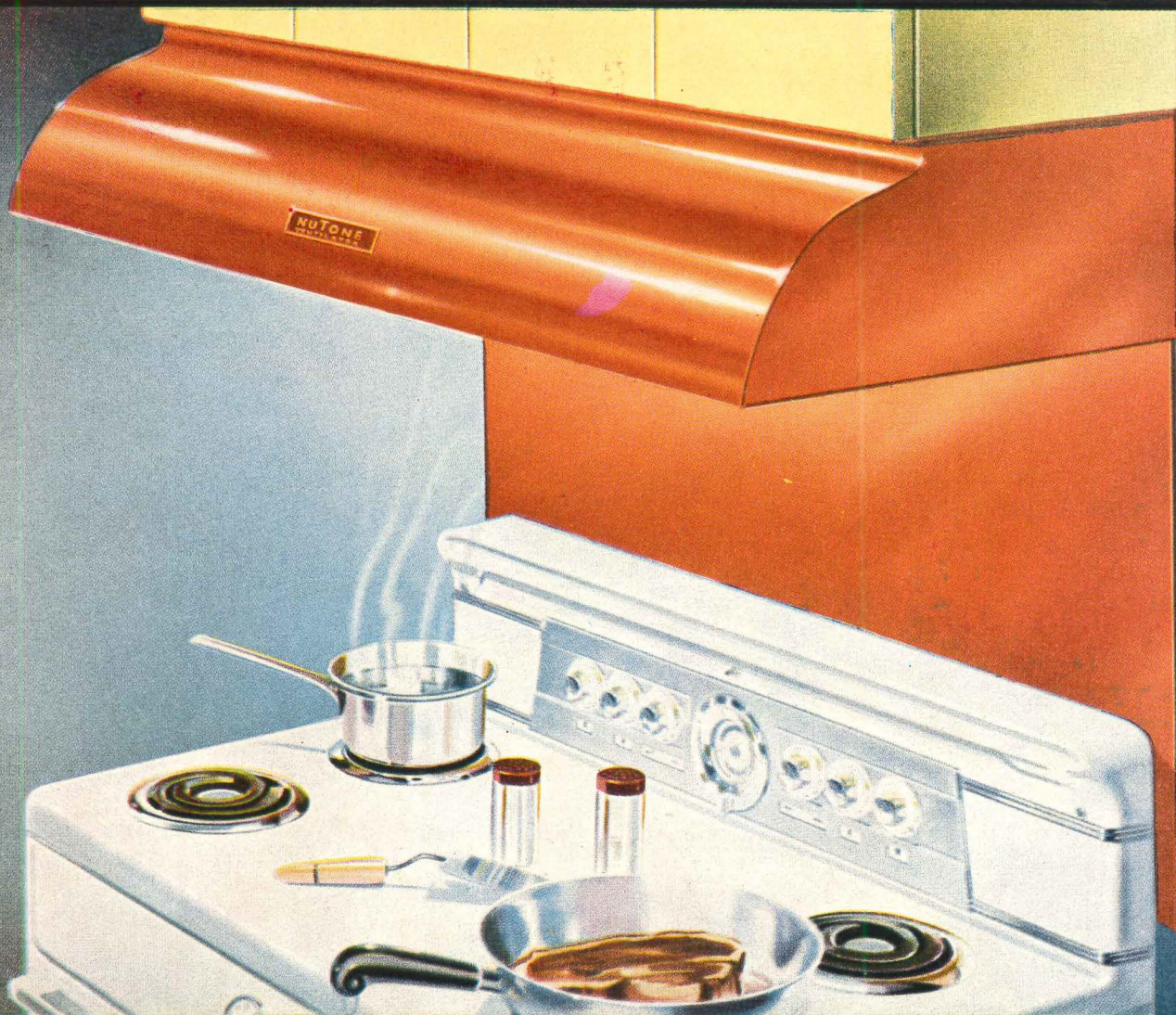
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Senate junks administration housing bill, votes public housing full speed ahead

Upper chamber would end restrictions on subsidized program, including ties to slum clearance, renewal

The housing bill that emerged from the Senate last month was a Fair Dealish concoction of something for everybody, but most of all for public housing.

In several crucial respects, the legislation was a complete reversal of the trend of the 1954 Housing Act. Last year's law set out to encourage local gumption by withholding federal largesse (notably in the form of public housing aid) from cities that do not bestir themselves to prevent as well as clear slums. The Senate bill would undo this. Moreover, it would plunge the government into more and more programs of debatable need, like FHA insurance for trailer parks, a vast new farm housing program and HHFA loans for college cafeterias, student unions and infirmaries.

White House concern. Belatedly, GOP leaders realized what a shambles the upper chamber had made of the President's housing plans. The bill was so bad, some advisers thought, that the only hope was for the House rules committee to bottle it up. This would mean no legislation this year, except for a brief FHA extender.

As the measure went to the House, it included these important changes:

▶ Independence for the *Home Loan Bank Board*, written in by Democrats over administration objections after a campaign by the two savings and loan leagues.

▶ A new kind of *military housing program* devised by Sen. Homer Capehart (R, Ind.) with financing that most experts considered fantastic and Sen. Paul Douglas (D, Ill.) labeled a "Rube Goldberg."

▶ Orders for FHA to switch from estimated value to replacement cost in underwriting mortgages under Sec. 213 (*co-ops*) and Sec. 220 (*urban renewal*). This is the same unsound but politically expedient approach that permitted mortgaging out under the celebrated Sec. 608. Cost certification, however, should prevent promoters from pocketing big profits this time.

▶ Elimination of *cost certification* for FHA Sec. 221 sale housing—the only place in the federal housing setup where certification had been demanded on homes to be sold.

▶ A cut in the stock purchase requirement for sales to *Fanny May* from 3% to 2%. This will make it easier to sell mortgages to the HHFA-operated secondary market, as home builders have been asking. But it will make it harder than ever to substitute private capital for the government investment in FNMA.

Country slicker. The big public housing program—basically 135,000 units a year instead of the 35,000 proposed by President Eisenhower—squeaked through the Senate banking committee when a motion to drop it failed by a 6-6 tie vote. But Republican leaders predicted they would be able to restore the President's plan on the floor. Sen. Homer Capehart (R, Ind.), GOP leader on housing, blandly forecast a Republican victory by about eight votes. Sen. Lyndon Johnson (D, Tex.), the majority leader, sadly agreed he

was licked. But Johnson once again—monotonous as it may be—outslicked the Senate Republicans. Using every parliamentary tactic at his command, Johnson delayed the decisive vote for two hours until the last possible Democratic vote was rounded up. One of these was that of Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, Minn., whose plane had been delayed by bad weather. When he arrived, panting, at 5:30 p.m., Johnson let the roll call begin. The result was a 44-38 defeat for Eisenhower's program of 35,000 public housing units a year for two years. On the showdown, 32 Republicans and six Democrats—all Southerners—sided with the administration. Johnson marshaled 35 Democrats and a surprising nine Republicans, including James M. Duff of Penna., William Purtell and Prescott Bush of Conn. and Clifford Case, N. J.

Actually, the Democratic bill restores the public housing provisions of the Housing Act of 1949. This reinstates the old goal of 810,000 units. Only 247,000 have been built or put under contract. The balance of 562,300 would be authorized at a clip of 135,000 a year. By voice vote, the Senate adopted an amendment giving the President leeway to fluctuate the program from 50,000 to 200,000 a year depending on economic conditions. But any authorization not used one year would carry over to the next until all 810,000 are built.

Money down a rat hole? Newspaper headlines focused on the dramatic floor fight. But the more significant result of the Senate's vote to return to the 1949 law would be to cancel most limitations on public housing adopted since. Inadvertent bloopers may have failed to cancel the Gwinn amendment requiring public housing occupants to certify they do not belong to any organizations on the Attorney General's subversive list. But there was no doubt that the language added last year linking public housing and urban renewal was deleted.

The last limited construction of new subsidized units to those needed to house families displaced by slum clearance and other government action; it also made HHFA approval of a city's workable program prerequisite to new public housing contracts. Mortgage Banker James Rouse, who helped father the concept of urban renewal, had warned the Senate banking committee that even a milder administration proposal for easing the ties between renewal and public housing would mean "throwing money down a rat hole." The committee ignored it. On the Senate floor, the question was not even discussed.

Housing the aged. Not a voice was raised, either, against a Democratic-sponsored plan providing 50,000 units of public housing designed and programmed entirely for elderly persons (65 or over). It would be built at a 10,000-a-year clip in addition to the regular

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public housing program. The Democratic bill also would give elderly persons second preference for all other public housing. First preference would still go to displacees. Under the present law, single elderly persons are ineligible for public housing. Elderly couples stand little chance of getting in on an age basis because both displacees and veterans have priority. The Senate bill makes aged individuals eligible, lets aged couples qualify if one is 65. (For more discussion of housing the aged, see News, p. 136.)

Carve up HHFA? Surprisingly, HHFA administrator Al Cole told the Natl. Housing Conference his agency would "do our utmost" to carry out the big public housing program if Congress votes it. The word from other sources was that Cole had expressed alarm at the White House over the aged housing offshoot. The worry: a foot-in-the-door toward a federal Townsend Plan. Even more important to HHFA was a fight to retain suzerainty over the Home Loan Bank Board. Despite his problems, Cole left at mid-month for a three-week trek to Geneva and Italy for a speech and planning conference plus a short vacation.

Cole was handicapped in his struggle over the HLBB by dissension inside his official family. Chairman Walter McAllister of the HLBB, who is a former president of the US Savings & Loan League, sided with the league instead of the administration on independence.

If HLBB independence stays to become law—as many believe it will—it will raise a serious question over HHFA's future. Can an overall housing agency coordinate housing without control over such a big part of it? Cole argues it cannot. Foes of HHFA can be expected to argue that if HLBB can go its own way, FHA and PHA should be restored to independence, too.

Military monstrosity. The best explanation of why the Senate adopted Capehart's military housing scheme is that the Air Force is so desperate for family housing that the Pentagon is willing to try anything. Defense officials have long argued that the quickest and

cheapest way to get family housing is for the government to build it. (The building industry disagrees.) But the Air Force apparently doubts that Congress can be persuaded to vote the really big money that direct construction would demand. A bill was before the House armed services committee last month, for example, to authorize more than \$329 million for 17,000 housing units for the Air Force, Army and Navy in the US and overseas. The Air Force thinks even this would be too little.

Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, chief of the Strategic Air Command, apparently supplied the testimony that clinched the Capehart scheme. He warned the banking committee that "lack of adequate housing reduces the certainty our combat-ready wings will be fully effective" if war comes. He said "because housing in the vicinity of bases is inadequate" combat airmen sometimes are forced to live 10 to 50 mi. away. Asked LeMay: "What happens in case of a sudden red alert in the middle of the night? Can we be sure my operations personnel, pilots and observers can fight their way to their duty stations along highways and roads that may be choked with evacuating civil populations?" If highways clog, said LeMay, "some of our bombers might never reach their assigned targets."

100% reinsured loans. Despite the general's eloquence, few experts thought the rewrite job Capehart did on the Wherry Act (both Cole and the Pentagon wanted to let it expire) would build much housing.

The bill would force FHA to insure 100% mortgages on any project the Pentagon proposes. FHA would have no discretion to cut down the size of a project. But FHA could require the Defense Dept. to guarantee the loan for any project where it questions the need. (Some Washingtonians think if FHA is smart, it would ask for reinsurance every time.)

The armed forces would design and build the projects, take title on completion and assign their people to quarters in them, withholding quarters allowances to meet payments on the 30-year, 4% mortgages. With no need

for equity capital, builders would be only contractors—on a competitive bid basis. That was the stumbling block.

Capehart had reluctantly decided to drop cost certification. (Military men testified that not a single project had been built since it was imposed on the Wherry Act.) But Capehart had another gimmick. He said the Renegotiation Board had told him the Renegotiation Act—if Congress extends it—would apply to military housing.

Thus a builder would have to take all the risk of loss on military housing, but if he made a big profit, the government would try to renegotiate part of it away. Few builders are so hungry for business that they would be interested in those terms.

More loans for more interests. Most of the rest of the Senate measure would plunge the government deeper and deeper into housing and take it into more related fields. Items:

▶ An expanded program of HHFA loans for college dormitories at 2¾%. HHFA's loan authorization would be upped from \$300 to \$500 million and not only dormitories, but also cafeterias, dining halls, student centers and infirmaries become eligible.

▶ An expanded program of low-interest loans to local governments to finance public works. HHFA would be authorized to borrow up to \$100 million from the Treasury for lending, with preference for water and sewage facilities in smaller cities. The Senate voted this despite HHFA administrator Cole's testimony that the reason communities are having trouble expanding facilities is not that they cannot borrow reasonable rates, but that they are up against statutory debt limits.

▶ Authorization for Fanny May to make advance commitments for FHA 213 co-op mortgages up to \$50 million.

The main-stem programs would get the usual extenders:

▶ A 5-year extension for FHA Title I repair loan program, with an increase in the loan ceiling from \$2,500 to \$3,000.

▶ \$4 billion more insurance authorization for FHA insurance programs—enough for a year.

Realtor attack on public housing backfires; 'fake statistics' charged



TESTIMONY THAT BOOMERANGED was given the Senate housing subcommittee by NAREB President Henry Waltemade and John C. Williamson, secretary-counsel of the Realtors' Washington Committee (backs to camera). When Williamson (l) forecast that builders will shun military housing if low-bid contracts are also subject to profit renegotiation, Sen. Homer Capehart (reading papers) cried: "What kind of fellows are you. . . . You're asking to be set apart

from all other businessmen . . . or you'll pick up your marbles and not play." The dispute with Capehart took so much time that Waltemade never did get to read aloud his accusation that public housing is "politically and morally wrong" and needs a local-level investigation. Sen. John Sparkman (center, presiding) told NAREB to settle for placing its 22-page blast in the record, then let PHA rebut the charges in the printed transcript.

One of the most startling trends of the spring of 1955 has probably also been one of the least noted: the private housing industry's decades-old fight against public housing shows some subtle signs of weakening.

It is not that private housers have decided they like public housing, after all. The industry remains generally agreed that public housing is, as NAREB's new executive vice president, Gene Conser, (see p. 51) feels, "fundamentally wrong."

Two things have happened:

1. The fact that amendments in the 1954 appropriations act hobbled public housing by limiting it to displacees took some of the sense of urgency out of the threat that private housers see in the subsidized program.

2. Working quietly in the grass roots, public housers have made important converts among eastern Republican congressmen and senators. The professed attitude of the White House (for some public housing) makes it increasingly difficult to muster political opposition to it. Many Republican congressmen are indisposed to appear to be fighting the admin-

istration on an issue that commands such doctrinaire support from labor.

In testimony before the Senate and House banking committees this year, more industry groups than usual adopted the course of simply saying they were against public housing and letting it go at that. No real argument.

Home builders correctly figured it was futile to fight public housing before the Senate committee, because the committee was stacked in favor of it. (But NAHB viewed the Senate's vote for a much bigger program as "exploding" the problem into "a major battle of direct and immediate concern to all home builders.")

"The boys are just worn out—tired of the fight," theorizes one Texas mortgage banker. "The public housers outlasted us."

More tenacious or not, public housers had the advantage of undivided ranks. Some Washington pundits have observed that the Senate housing bill contains so many items that they tend to split the cohesiveness of public housing opponents. For instance, independence for the Home Loan Bank Board is so important to savings and loan interests that they are unlikely to imperil it by waging much of a fight against public housing. Over the years, savings and loan men have been some of subsidized housing's most effective opponents.

Lone ranger. All this left NAREB almost by itself in making a heavyweight effort to dissuade the Senate from voting a big program. Moreover, it faced a concerted hostility the like of which it had not faced in recent years. As a result, when some of the realtors' facts and figures proved off base, this is what happened:

▶ Public Housing Commissioner Charles E. Slusser, a NAREB member himself, accused the realtor organization by name of using "distortion and fraud" in its efforts to discredit the program. He asserted NAREB was using "faked or negligent statistics."

▶ HHFA Administrator Cole backed up Slusser's effort to "keep the public housing record straight before the public."

▶ Rep. Abraham J. Multer (D, N.Y.) described both NAREB and the US Chamber of Commerce as "irresponsible lobbyists." He said when they "continue to insist that public housing is socialistic and communistic" they impugn the motives of such public housing supporters as President Eisenhower, ex-President Truman, the late Sen. Robert Taft and "every mayor of New York since Fiorello LaGuardia."

▶ Sen. John J. Sparkman (D, Ala.), chairman of the Senate housing subcommittee, accused "enemies" of public housing of spreading "unjust, unfair and untruthful charges and distortions."

▶ The pro-public housing Natl. Housing Conference, in a bulletin to members, "thanked" NAREB President Henry G. Waltemade and John C. Williamson, secretary-counsel of the Realtors' Washington Committee for their testimony before Sparkman's committee (see photo. "It made votes," said NHC, "for a bigger public housing program.")

Facts & figures. Commissioner Slusser was first to pounce on NAREB's statistical slips. The same day that the realtors appeared before the Senate committee, the pub-

lic housing boss told a Galveston audience that Waltemade was wrong in editorializing (in *Headlines*, May 2) that of the more than 4,000 families receiving welfare aid in Washington only 42 were "permitted" in public housing. The fact, said Slusser, is there are 399 relief families in the capital's housing projects (12½% of the total). Cried Slusser: "There are more than faked statistics in this matter. Washington's welfare load wasn't picked at random as an illustrative case. It was used because it is among the lowest in the country. . . ."

The rest of the outcry was over the Senate testimony. Samples:

▶ NAREB denounced the fact that 38 doctors were living in public housing in Portland, Ore. as against only 32 laborers. Public housers retorted that they comprised 19 interns and externs, 18 resident physicians and one over-income medico on notice to move out. Annual incomes ranged from \$1,200 to \$2,640. "What," asked Slusser in a speech, "have they got against doctors on low salaries?"

▶ NAREB argued that public housing holds out "false hope" to 14 million families earning less than \$4,000 a year. Slusser replied the statistics "do not apply." Using NAREB's yardstick, he said, it is only 5.2 million families. "I'll settle for their being 60% off," he cracked.

So it went. The realtors' valid arguments were lost in the uproar. There is just enough smoke coming from the operations of some local housing authorities to suggest investigators might find fire, too.

Court upholds FHA power to shun deals with alleged windfallers without hearings

Is a blacklisted 608 builder who wants to clear himself with FHA entitled to a hearing?

A US district judge in Washington, D.C., has ruled the answer is no.

Harry K. Madway and his associates at Madway Engineers & Constructors in Wayne, Pa., labeled last year by the Senate banking committee as having made \$400,000 profits-in-excess-of-mortgage on two 608 projects, were denied an injunction to force FHA to resume business with them. Madway charged that FHA had blacklisted their firm and that the agency had no right to reject their applications for mortgage insurance without granting them a hearing. Commissioner Norman Mason retorted that he was not "blacklisting" the builders and that FHA would resume business with them again if they corrected what he called "past irregularities."

What's in a law? Madway based his request for a hearing on provisions of Sec. 512 of the Housing Act of 1954. He had brought the case specifically, he said, to test the applicability of the section. Sec. 512 gives the commissioner the right to refuse a person the benefits of FHA participation if he has "willfully violated any provision of this act," has, while doing government-insured building, "violated any federal or state penal statute" or has "failed materially to properly carry out contractual obligations." Before any person or firm is denied participation, he or it "shall be notified in writing by the commissioner and shall be entitled, upon written request to the commissioner, to a written notice specify-



NHC OFFICIALS ROBBINS (L) AND BARRY (R)

Public housers urge bigger program, with no rent gap

The Natl. Housing Conference, chief public housing lobby group, wants to build 200,000 units a year of public housing.

A resolution asserting that even this big a program would fall "far short of the need" was among the policy pronouncements adopted at NHC's annual meeting in Washington last month. Others called for repeal of the law requiring a 20% gap between public housing rents and lowest rents charged in comparable private housing, and a 500,000 units a year program for middle-income families. Succeeding Ira Robbins of New York as president, the conference elected Edward F. Barry, chairman of the Memphis Housing Authority.

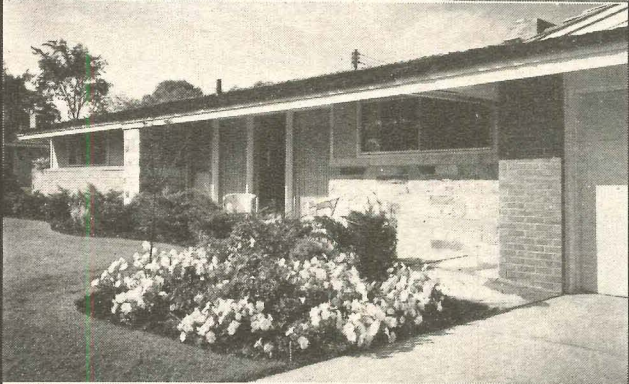
ing charges in reasonable detail and an opportunity to be heard and to be represented by counsel."

Madway's demand for a hearing under this section was turned aside by the court. Judge Burnita S. Matthews ruled that there was no reason to believe that Congress, in enacting Sec. 512, had intended to abrogate "the discretionary powers lodged in the commissioner by Sec. 203." In plain language, this means Judge Matthews held that FHA has an inherent right to classify alleged but unproved windfallers as "bad underwriting risks" and refuse to do business with them, hearing or no. The court accepted FHA's argument that Sec. 512 was intended primarily to cope with Title I repair loan shysters.

Madway appealed. But 608 builders were uneasy. Said one of housing's legal experts: "It looks as if the higher builder-litigants go in court, the more nails in their coffins."

Open season. On the heels of this victory, FHA made another move to recapture alleged windfall profits. It notified five Brooklyn, N.Y. corporations to call meetings of preferred stockholders of Farragut Gardens, a 608 with an asserted \$3.5 million windfall. Aim: to remove present directors and elect new ones because of "charter violations." FHA says the sponsors paid themselves an unauthorized \$3.1 million dividend. FHA General Counsel Frank Meistrell said more such moves were upcoming. FHA's right to replace directors of 608 windfall projects recently was upheld by a federal court.

NEWS continued on p. 45



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Jurisdictional machinery periled by lather-carpenter squabble

Breakdown of Joint Board for Jurisdictional Disputes would cause avalanche of strikes, builders fear

A jurisdictional fight between AFL carpenters and lathers over the jobs of three men is threatening serious labor trouble for the entire building industry.

The danger is that the row may lead to collapse of the industry's machinery for settling jurisdictional squabbles. If that happens, both builders and labor officials fear a wave of strikes.

The crisis revolves around the Natl. Joint Board for Settlement of Jurisdictional Disputes in the Building and Construction Industry. For seven years, the joint board has decided, by arbitration, disputes over which of the 19 AFL building trades shall supply workers for what jobs. Last year, the nine-man panel (four union and four employer members plus neutral Chairman John T. Dunlop of Harvard) coped with 1,500 disputes. A third of them involved strikes. The board settled all but two.

Creature of Taft-Hartley. The board was an indirect result of the Taft-Hartley Act, which Congress passed in 1947. The act made jurisdictional strikes an unfair labor practice and gave the Natl. Labor Relations Board the power to impose settlements. But the law also provided that if the unions settle their disputes or are in the process of settling them, NLRB cannot act.

The prospect of the government dictating which unions should get what work so upset AFL men that they created the joint board machinery to keep the US out of it. One of the board's basic rules is that its decisions are binding, subject to no appeal.

Now, the little (15,000 members) AFL lathers' union has kicked over the traces and is asking NLRB to overthrow a joint board decision. This, says one member of the joint board, is a challenge so fundamental that if it succeeds "it could destroy the board." All sides agree, moreover, that if NLRB has to tackle jurisdictional disputes on its own, it could not move fast enough to prevent an avalanche of work stoppages in building.

Case of hanging tile. The case that triggered the rumpus came about like this:

Last year, the A. W. Lee Co. of Arlington, Va., a plastering contractor, was hired to install acoustical tile in a building for Westinghouse Air Brake Co. in Fairfax County, Va. Under a contract with AFL Lathers' Local 9, Lee hired three lathers to install aluminum bars from which the tile was to be hung on the ceiling. The AFL carpenters' union claimed jurisdiction, took its case to the joint board and won. Lee laid off the lathers, hired three carpenters to install the bars. So the lathers struck. The local claimed it was not a party to the joint board proceedings (the board deals only with national unions), that Lee had violated its contract, and that the joint board was wrong, anyway.

Lee then appealed to NLRB for an injunction. At injunction hearings in US district court in Washington, the lathers agreed to halt the strike, but pressed their demand for government review.

Perils of decision. If NLRB rules on the merits of the row, as Taft-Hartley says it can, then, however, it decides the joint board will lose much of its authority and prestige. The board itself has argued that if NLRB adopts this course it will "encourage violation of the joint board agreement and gradually weaken, if not destroy, the board."

The joint board wants NLRB to make no ruling, but decide that the lathers violated an agreement to accept joint board findings. The Dunlop panel notes that in the past NLRB has declined to set aside joint board findings. To local 9's contention that it was not bound by an agreement signed by its international, the joint board replies that locals of other unions have generally accepted agreements signed by their nationals.

The lathers' local argues that its work assignment contract with Lee should have been

allowed to stand—though in this case it is a moot point since the job has long since been finished. The lathers also note that the joint board ruled on the same carpenter vs. lather situation a year ago and came up with the opposite decision. The union wants NLRB to decide that the joint board must have the consent of parties involved before it can tackle cases.

Support from plumbers. The lathers' stand normally might not give rise to much concern, even though its officers have quit the joint board. But the union has the backing of the powerful AFL plumbers' union, led by ex-Labor Secretary Martin Durkin. This is the second time Durkin has opposed the joint board. Five years ago, in the only other major test of joint board authority, the plumbers led a similar fight before NLRB—and lost.

Recently, at a closed-door meeting of AFL building trades leaders, Durkin made it plain he agrees with the lathers that work assignment contracts should be paramount. Other AFL unions have taken no public stand, except for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers which, along with its industry group (Natl. Electrical Contractors' Assn.), has already bolted the joint board.

The NLRB is obviously aware of the explosive nature of the Lee case. Washington circles are looking for a decision shortly—perhaps this month. Until it comes, the building industry is holding its breath.

Gas appliance makers eye air conditioning market; shortage of room units predicted

The gas industry's integrated plans to take a big piece of the air-conditioning market away from the electric industry were laid on the line at the Southern Gas Assn. convention in New Orleans in late May.

"Today the electric industry is winning," said President Sheldon Coleman of the Coleman Co., Inc. of Wichita, "as evidenced by the fact that over 95% of all air-conditioning equipment being sold is electric, but the very success of the electrical equipment manufacturer is bringing electric utilities severe problems and presenting the gas industry with an unusual opportunity." Coleman figured the electric industry has these weaknesses:

1. Its service connections are usually too small; wiring to the average house will carry about 50 amps.
2. The big demand for power comes at the wrong time of year for the electric utilities; more and more electric companies now have as heavy loads in summer as in winter.
3. "The electric utilities will have great difficulty in maintaining profit operations at present rates in view of the large expenditures necessary in power generating and transmission equipment to take care of high peak loads. . . ."



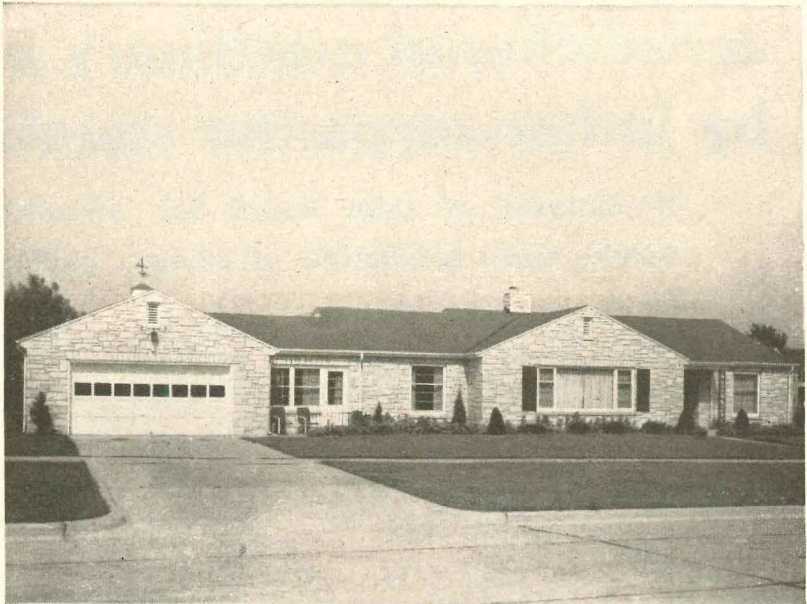
COLEMAN

4. "The electric industry has no established economical and accepted means of heating the American home." This fact no doubt has pushed the industry into development of the heat pump, supplemented by resistance heating, but Coleman asserted such a system is "inherently complicated and expensive as compared to our widely accepted gas furnaces and boilers."

"We have just begun to fight," said Coleman, "and the electric industry is not going to feel too badly if we eventually win this one, for even in gas air conditioning there are some auxiliaries that use electricity. . . . I sincerely believe the gas industry has a chance to get a substantial share of this market with at least a possibility of dominating the market."

Research projects. Coleman Co., working with D. W. Onan & Sons, Minneapolis-Honeywell and the Copeland Refrigeration Corp., will field test a gas-powered air conditioner this summer, expects next year to market it on a limited basis and in 1957 to expand production. The present test model is a remote unit for installation outside the house. Initial installed cost would probably be slightly higher than the cost of an electrical system of comparable capacity, said Coleman, but when operating costs are considered the advantage in most areas would be "spectacular." With natural gas at 70¢ a thousand cu. ft., he established the operating cost

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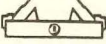
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would be only half that of a typical electric system.

Coleman may become the second gas conditioner. Servel has the only residential gas air-conditioner on the market today, but it has not exploited the sales potential very hard.

Shortage or glut? Room conditioner manufacturers had unloaded at least half of last year's leftover inventory (between 600,000 and 700,000 units) by early spring, but scaled-down production was still not expected to bring this year's total to more than 700,000. The loudest protest that such low output would mean a shortage of room conditioners came from E. A. Tracey, general sales manager of Mitchell Mfg. Co. in Chicago. Tracey, after a three-months tour during which he talked to 3,000 dealers, predicted that sales of room conditioners this year would reach 1.3 million. "What the industry failed to take into consideration [at the beginning of the year] was the number of new customers created by the 'bargain-basement' prices at which the year-old, 1954 units would be sold," said Tracey. He figured possible sales at 1.6 million.

MBA chief urges US to require half-acre lots

FHA and VA should stop backing loans on homes in new subdivisions that have lots smaller than half an acre.

President Wallace Moir of the Mortgage Bankers' Assn. broached that suggestion last month in the association's house organ, *The Mortgage Banker*.

Today's tight-packed subdivisions, "where you can hear your neighbor's plumbing," are potential slums of tomorrow, Moir warned. Highpoints of his argument:

"We have one thing in quantity as well as quality in this country, and that is land. Yet many 40-acre tracts on the outskirts of cities, with orchards or groves or farm land or desert surrounding them, will be packed with houses, four or five to the acre. The closer the pack, the more certain the slum. Such packing is said to be necessary because of the high price of land or because 'we are running out of land.' Both reasons are fallacious. The amount of financing available determines the price of land. A few subdivisions will have two homes to the acre. This spacious development makes a community that will never become a slum.

"Why not require that there be not more than two home sites per acre? Who could accomplish this? Not the mortgage banker. He will and should make and service any loan insured by the government which an investor will buy. Not the investor. He will and should purchase any needed investment which the government will guarantee, a correspondent will service and priced to show a reasonable yield. Not the builder. He will build any house he can finance 100% and on which he can make a profit. Not the local zoning commission. It will not put its community in a less favorable position than another city.

"The only facility that could give the veteran a real break and the community a real lift is the government, through FHA and VA, by requiring that no subdivision shall have more than two home sites per acre" to get FHA or VA backing.

SIDELIGHTS

MPR changes coming

FHA was readying some 15 changes in its minimum property requirements last month. Thermal insulation requirements will be increased, if the agency accepts the advice of its seven-man architectural advisory committee, as expected. But most of the other changes will be relaxations of the rules.

Neil A. Connor, chief of FHA's architectural standards division, predicted the changes would be announced about July 15 after they have been coordinated with the VA. Relaxations would go into effect at once. FHA's 75 field offices have some 60 to 90 days after they receive instructions to impose stiffer requirements.

Other MPR revisions were expected to cover: sills and plates, sill and plate anchoring, gutters and downspouts, concrete composition, corner bracing, setting nails in exterior wood trim, acceptable thickness of plaster, carpeting as finished floor, bituminous fiber for cement-asbestos sewer pipes, guarantee for hot-water heaters, and weight and thickness of coating on heating and air-conditioning ducts.

In time, the committee hopes to rewrite FHA's multitudinous sets of MPRs into a single document. There were once more than 50 different books of MPRs. Consolidations will soon trim this to about 30, says Connor. To speed up the rest of the job, the committee is pondering whether to urge FHA to farm it out to private experts.

Market memos

Prices of home heating equipment are going up, say manufacturers. How much depends principally on how much steel prices rise after wage negotiations now getting started. . . . VA asked its field offices for a new survey of overbuilding by the end of June. Some congressmen are upset over the move, wonder if it indicates administration pressure on VA. . . . The US Chamber of Commerce is readying a national campaign to encourage owners to spend more on fixup. Mid-January is being considered as a kickoff date, because winter is a slack building time. . . . FHA's Dallas office has lifted its March 1 order suspending firm commitments to builders. Director Ellis Charles said: "There is no apparent evidence of an oversupply of housing."

Education for home building

Increasing recognition of home building as a business is coming from the nation's colleges and universities. The University of California at Los Angeles last month announced creation of a two-year curriculum in construction management. The junior-and-senior-year course leads to a B.S. in business administration. It was developed with aid of the NAHB-affiliated Building Contractors Assn. of California. Subjects will include finance, real estate, law, accounting, estimating, surveying, basic structural engineering, design, management and selling. The University of Denver recently announced a four-year course in home building.

Rents level off—officially

BLS' rent index eased off 0.1% from March to April—the first drop in the nation's rent level since 1942. It was the first uncontrolled rent decline since 1938. The reason? "It's just that we have a better housing supply" said Acting BLS Chief Mrs. Aryness Joy Wickens. Smaller cities lead the way, but cities with notable housing booms, like Houston, Los Angeles, Washington, also show declines. Federal statisticians see the change as continuing the leveling-off begun last year. They expect rents to stabilize, not fall more.

Land for Negro housing

Can the redevelopment power to condemn land help get some for Negro housing?

Some of the government's minority housing experts think it can. So far, the idea is just being kicked around inside the housing agencies. If it becomes official policy, it could pack a lot of punch against the No. 1 stumbling block to providing new homes for minorities.

Under redevelopment and urban renewal, cities can get federal help to buy, clear and re-sell vacant land if the aim is predominantly residential development. With "predominantly open land"—the typical dead subdivision—a city can get a capital grant for two-thirds of the land write-down the same as for a regular slum area. For open land projects, only HHFA loans are available. In both cases, the resulting houses would have to produce, directly or indirectly, housing for displaced.

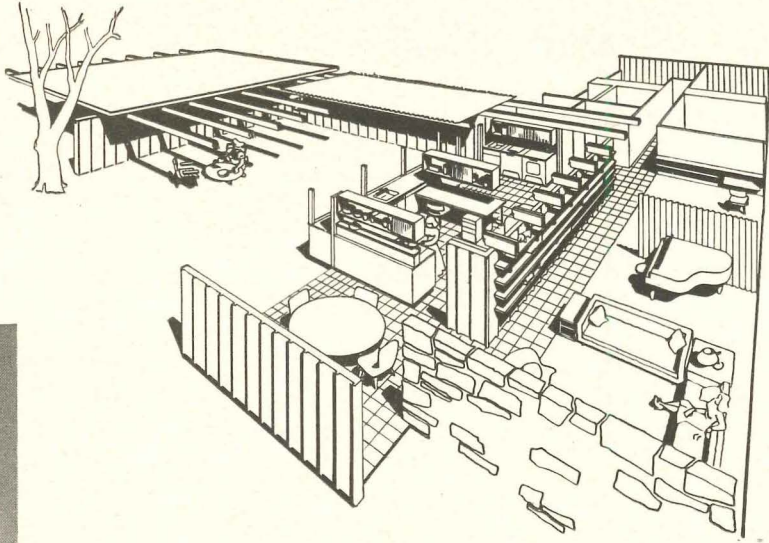
There are questions of state constitutionality which impede such projects in some states. But some officials think the idea is far more workable than FHA Sec. 221.

BRAB research for FHA

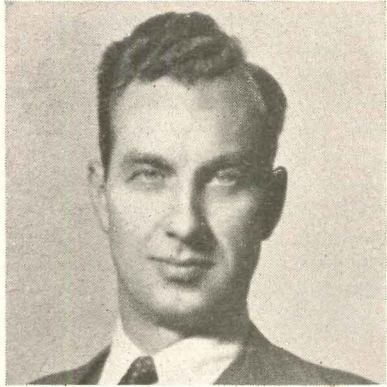
FHA has signed a second research contract with Building Research Advisory Board. BRAB just finished a year-long inquiry into concrete slabs (the big question is whether bank-run gravel fill will work with asphalt sandwich paper under it), and the results should be out next month. The new, \$64,800 inquiry will take until next May 30. FHA expects to use the results to update its MPRs. BRAB will look into:

1. Protection against decay and termites in wood frame homes.
2. Data to establish performance standards for domestic hot-water heating equipment.
3. Anchoring of exterior walls to various types of foundations (the question is do you need it at all?)
4. What effect do automatic sequence washing machines have on individual sewage disposal systems? (It is obvious bigger septic tanks are needed but one question is how much bigger.)
5. Data to establish standards for installing wood block finish flooring.
6. Criteria to develop test procedures so vapor barrier materials may be used under slabs and as ground cover in crawl spaces.
7. How widespread is spalling of face brick? BRAB will try to develop data to establish standards for its manufacture and installation.

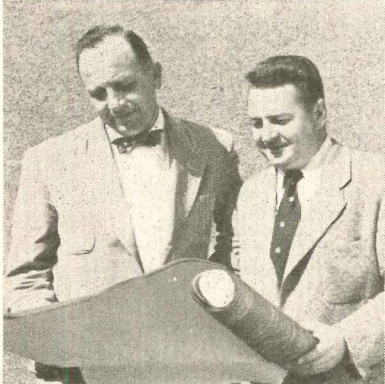
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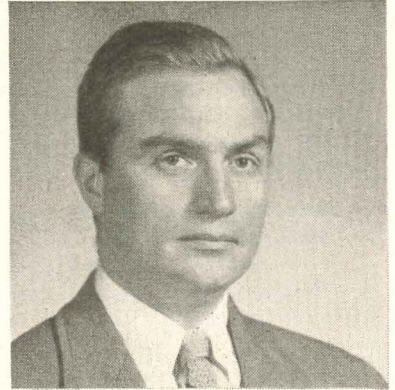
Robert A. Little, Cleveland, Ohio. Harvard graduate, lecturer, award-winner. Mr. Little designed the Better Homes & Gardens' "Home for all America", and McVey House, Chagrin Falls, Ohio, winner of Progressive Architecture award.



Harwell Hamilton Harris, director, School of Architecture, the University of Texas. Designed Pace Setter House for Texas State Fair. Is best known for residential designs of outstanding homes in many sections of the country.



Firm of A. Quincy Jones—Frederick E. Emmons. Jones, from Washington U., and Emmons from Cornell, are a team of Los Angeles architects whose 18 awards since 1950 attest to their skill in designing everything from 500-home projects to churches, plus popularizing the new "California style" home.



Carl Koch, Cambridge, Mass., architect. Harvard graduate, winner of Bacon Traveling Fellowship. Assistant professor of architecture, M. I. T., his work has won many awards.



Rufus Nims, Miami, Fla. U. of North Carolina graduate, architect for a nationally famous restaurant chain, and for the "Retirement Village" development at Jupiter, Florida. Nims has long fought for regional architecture with inherent livability.

**Here are the
first architects
Frigidaire has chosen
to launch its new
"Kitchen Plan" program**

The architects pictured here are all outstanding in the field of residential design and development. They are the first in a group of architects Frigidaire is commissioning to contribute unusual yet practical ideas for kitchen designs. This is a program aimed at fulfilling a long-felt need of project and merchant builders for new ideas in kitchen design.

Frigidaire is making these and other architects' plans available to you for use in whole or in part in your own home building plans—to help you sell the room that sells the house. These plans are the result of much study and design analysis and are available to individual builders as well as the home building industry generally at nominal cost.

Each architect has been carefully selected from widely separated sections of the country

in order to have designs unrelated in concept, yet universal in consumer appeal. Designs include kitchen ideas for homes in popular price classes to meet a variety of tastes. Ease and economy of construction have been emphasized and standard parts, components and materials have been specified throughout. In every plan, Frigidaire's latest, most modern household products are made an integral part of the architect's over-all design.

Send now for the initial design in Frigidaire's "Kitchen Plan" program, by architect Robert A. Little, which appeared in last month's House & Home. Look for the next in the series, in full color, in next month's issue.



FRIGIDAIRE

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that sells the house**

Frigidaire Division, General Motors Corp.
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Gentlemen: I am enclosing \$1.00. Please send me Frigidaire Kitchen Plan BSD-101, which includes floor plans, detailed drawings of the kitchen and related areas, elevations, specifications of materials, equipment and colors.

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Rise in incomes, now and in future, assures continued housing boom, economist predicts

The nation's brick makers have decided to bet expansion money on an ever normal housing boom.

The Structural Clay Products Institute, representing 258 of the country's 500 brick and tile manufacturers, hired Economist Robinson Newcomb to forecast how many new houses the US will absorb in the next decade. They wanted to know how much to step up production.

Newcomb and Douglas Whitlock, SCPI chairman, revealed the results a few weeks ago in New York. They add up to a sweeping endorsement of the belief that the market for low-priced homes is getting smaller while the market for new quality homes is getting bigger (Nov. '54 issue, p. 106).

Newcomb, a former staffer of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, believes the 1.3 million-a-year new house market "is here to stay." SCPI does not go quite that far, but Whitlock announced: "The future expansion and planning of the industry is being geared to sell and service a residential market of over a million new homes annually for at least the next five years."

How many how rich? Here is Newcomb's reasoning behind the decision:

▶ To the conventional sources of housing demand like household formations,* migration and demolitions must be added how much money families have to spend.

▶ Government figures show a significant drop in the number of families with incomes of \$2,000 a year or less (see chart). They show a big jump in the number of families with more than \$4,000 a year. (Only families with \$4,000 a year or more are generally considered likely to be able to afford a new house.) Between 1951 and 1953, for instance, the average increase in new families was only 500,000 a year. But there was an average of 1.6 million families a year with incomes above \$4,000—a ratio of three to one.

▶ "From now on, there will be two new families with incomes over \$4,000 for every one family formed," Newcomb predicts. Looking ahead, he advises: "Don't talk about an increase of 620,000 a year in household formation. Talk about the increase in households with moderate incomes."

▶ Today, there are some 31.9 million US households with incomes of \$4,000 or more, after taxes. This is 67% of the nation's total. By 1960, Newcomb foresees their ranks growing to 38.7 million, or 76% of US households. By 1965 the \$4,000-a-year-and-up group will reach 46 million, or 85% of the national total. The forecast is based on a

* Newcomb says household formation is a better index of demand than family formation. During the last five years there have been some 700,000 more households formed than families. The difference is largely attributable to bachelors, widows retaining separate quarters, and divorcees,

conservative assumption of 2% a year increase in productivity, with about 3 million in the armed forces. It means more and more customers for middle-priced and expensive houses.

Outspoken ex-bureaucrat. Newcomb thinks his projection of the future housing market is, if anything, cautious. "It's their money they will be spending for plant expansion," he observed, "and I don't want to lose my job so we gave them the most conservative figures we could."

Actually, losing his job—or quitting it for good reason—has never been a worry to Robbie Newcomb. He is generally regarded as both independent in his thinking and, especially for a longtime government careerist, uncommonly outspoken. Ohio-born Newcomb, now 53, won his BA and MA at the same time from Oberlin College, added a Ph.D. at Brookings and Washington University in St. Louis, then became a civil servant. During World War II, he directed construction research for the War Production Board. One of his jobs was advising how much critical material building should get, claimant by claimant.

From 1947 to 1951, he was senior staff economist for the President's Council of Economic Advisers. He found himself disagreeing more and more with the theories of Leon Keyserling, then vice chairman. Keyserling is noted as an advocate of government intervention in the economy. Newcomb believes government should get what it wants through incentives, rather than direct action. When Keyserling persuaded the council to advocate government construction of steel plants and other basic production facilities for the expanding US economy, Newcomb quit.

After a stint in the office of undersecretary of commerce for transportation, he went to the Office of Defense Mobilization as the Korean war began. Here he probably did the building industry a major good turn. Some WPB officials wanted to clamp down on use of scarce materials by rationing home building to 600,000 starts a year. Newcomb campaigned for nothing more than materials' rationing, contending that if builders could use ingenuity to put up more homes than WPB thought they should, they should have the chance. Luckily for the housing industry, Newcomb won his point.

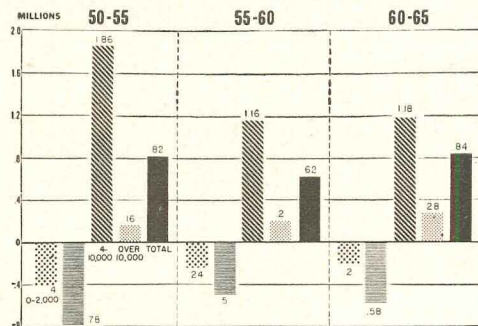
In 1953, he left the government to become a private consultant in Washington.

Building trades winning pay hikes near 9¢ an hour

With negotiations still under way in many cities, successful requests for wage hikes by the building trades were nearly as high as the average 9¢ over-all rise reported during last year's bargaining season by HOUSE & HOME.

New contracts on the East Coast called for an average 7½¢ rise; on the West Coast the average was 10¢. Most contracts contained fringe benefits and most were for one-year terms. There were few escalator clauses.

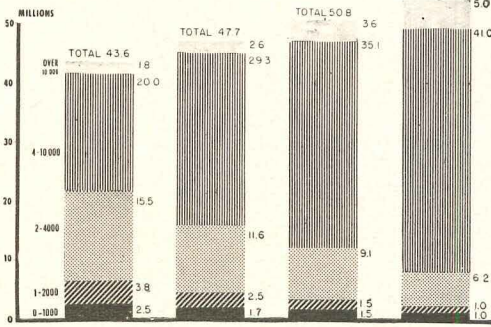
ANNUAL RATE OF CHANGE IN NUMBER IN HOUSEHOLDS BY SIZE INCOME



Source: Newcomb Associates

OVER TWICE AS MANY new households per year moved into the \$4,000-and-up income bracket as the net total of new households during the last five years. The same trend will continue for another decade. This group buys most of the new homes.

A POSSIBLE PROJECTION OF NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BY SIZE AFTER TAX INCOME 1950-1965



Source: Newcomb Associates

INCOME DISTRIBUTION after taxes for total US households shows only 24% will net less than \$4,000 a year by 1960, only 15% by 1965.

West Coast builders were wrestling with demands for a 35-hour week; and carpenters in Rochester, N.Y. had put in for a shorter-week-same-money agreement or 25¢ an hour more. Some developments to date by trade:

Carpenters: Wages were up from 5¢ to 22½¢—the latter effective in Washington, D. C. under a double-jump contract with the second rise due May 1, 1956. Builders in 42 northern California counties had also signed for 12½¢ and 10¢ rises. Eleven counties in southern California had a two-year contract with boosts of 8¢, 4¢ and 10¢ effective through next May.

Painters: A two-year contract had been signed in Kansas City for a 14¢ rise this year (to \$2.80) and 10¢ additional next April. Los Angeles was even higher—17¢ this year and 11¢ next. Chicago painters in three counties won a 5¢ increase; Cleveland painters, 12½¢. In Washington, painters had struck for progressive 15¢ and 10¢ increases; contractors were offering an even 10¢, nothing next year.

Bricklayers: The industry held the line in Elgin County, outside Chicago, at \$3.40 and in Fargo, N.D. at \$3.15. A one-year contract in Pueblo, Colo. contained an increase of 12.5¢. Detroit was up 13¢.

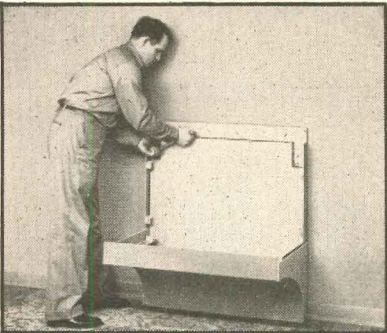
Plumbers: Increases in Rochester, N.Y. of 10¢ and in four Chicago counties of 20¢ to a wage in the latter area of \$3.45.

Laborers: Wages were up in Detroit by 5¢ plus 5¢ for vacations, up in San Francisco by 10¢ plus fringe benefits and in St. Louis by 10¢ immediately and 10¢ Jan. 1, 1956.

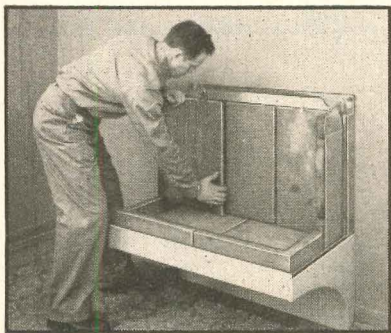
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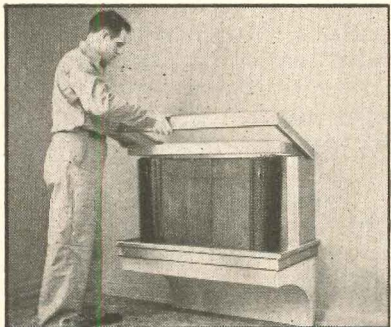
Prefabricated FIREPLACE



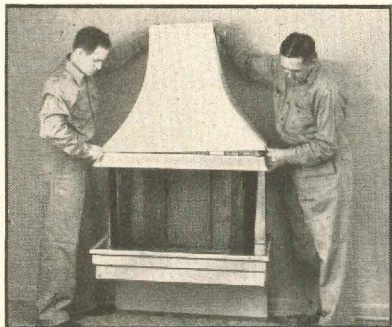
Frame is fastened directly to studs with lag screws.



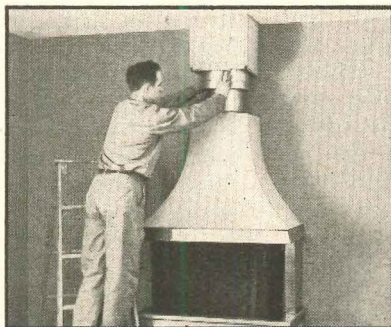
Hearth and firebox are formed of interlocking ceramic sections.



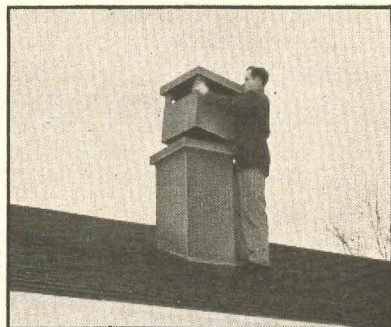
Stainless steel trim and built-in flexible screen are easily installed.



Fireplace hood sets on hood support channel — fits tight to wall.



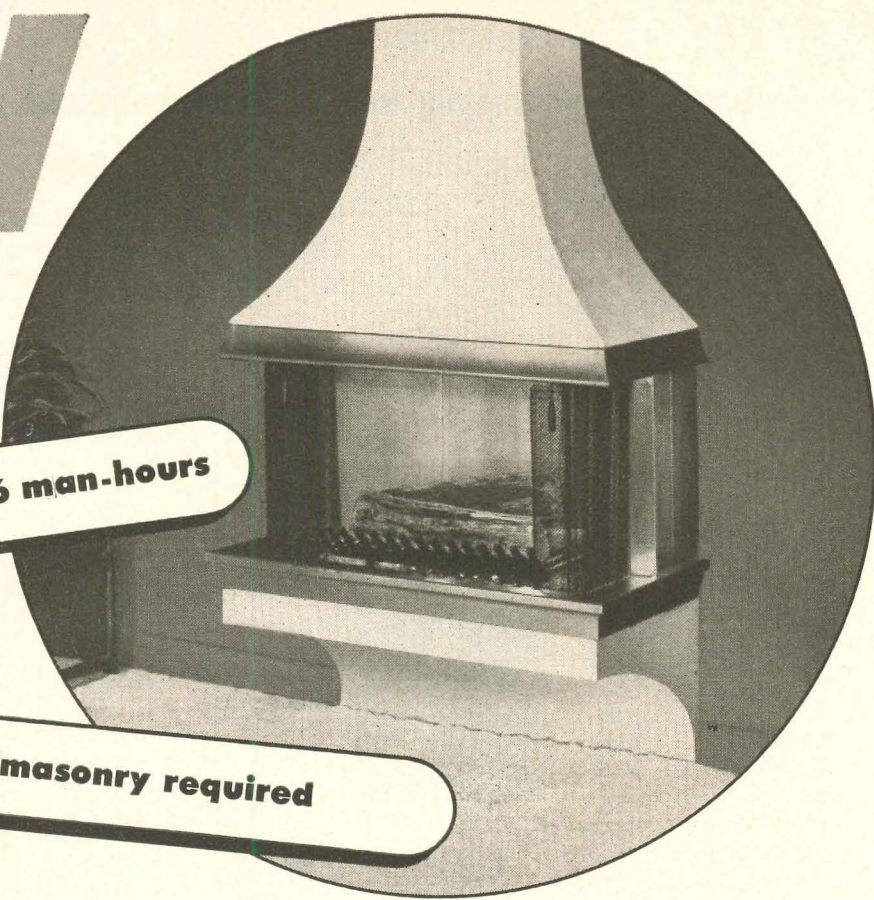
Interior chimney sections are extended through ceiling and roof.



Attractive exterior chimney housing completes the installation.

installs in 4 to 6 man-hours

no masonry required



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PEOPLE

Realtors pick Eugene Conser, a lobbyist legislators admire, as new staff chief

A 51-year-old Californian admired by associates for his "quiet manner of digging up facts and figures that legislators seem to like" was named executive vice president of the National Assn. of Real Estate Boards. **Eugene P. Conser**, secretary of the California Real Estate Assn., was chosen from a field of at least half a dozen prominent figures to take over the top staff job.

Five former presidents of the building industry's biggest trade organization (including Conser's old friend, **Charles B. Shattuck** of Los Angeles, who was chairman of the committee) picked the Minneapolis-born real estate expert to formulate and expedite NAREB policy. The other four were **John Galbreath** of Columbus, Ohio, **Walter Rose** of Orlando, Fla., **Alexander Summer** of Newark and **Ronald Chinnock** of Chicago. Conser replaces the 68-year-old **Herbert Undeen Nelson**, who will retire Sept. 1 after 33 years in office.*

Success in 1932. "He is a quiet, unassuming man who is always serious," said one of Conser's friends recently. "He speaks in a low voice, never shouts, never pounds the table, but gets things done." Conser has done a good bit since he switched from a prelegal course at the University of Minnesota (he came from a family of lawyers) to political science and economics at the University of California at Los Angeles. After getting his degree, he worked as a financial reporter for the Los Angeles *Evening Express*, then for a partnership analyzing and reporting news of West Coast corporations. It was not until 1932 that he got into realty work.

Real estate values were deteriorating fast in Los Angeles at the time and the Apartment Assn. wanted Conser to find a way to reverse the trend. Conser made a survey, and a report. A big meeting was held. He told the owners that they had to stop cutthroat competition to survive. They must expect high vacancies—inevitable under present economic conditions. And stop fighting. It was from this report that the city's Residential Research Committee, still in existence, was formed. Conser became secretary-manager of the Apartment Assn. in 1934, stayed with it until 1947 when he became secretary of the staff Real Estate Assn. It now has 10,965 members, more than a fifth of its 54,000 total, says NAREB. Besides building membership, Conser pioneered in realty education. Now, the University of California spends \$100,000 a year on graduate and undergraduate courses. CREA sponsors annual educational and sales conferences.

*Nelson will retire on his full pay of \$25,000 for one year, half pay for the next ten years and quarter pay thereafter. He remains as a consultant to NAREB.



CONSER

Keeley Studio

Sound lobbyist. Conser began his work with the state legislature in 1937 and has attended every session since. "He's tops," commented Assemblyman **Earl Stanley**, chairman of the municipal and county government committee. "Gene is highly respected by all members of the legislature. He's fair with everyone . . . I regret his leaving, but he'll do a good job for the national association, something which I think is badly needed." Gushed Sen. **Arthur Breed**: ". . . a man of sterling character. Thoroughly reliable . . . a very careful and efficient workman."

Conser's most recent success with the legislators was in persuading the Senate to vote unanimously in favor of licensing California's more-than-100,000 real estate brokers and salesmen for four-year periods instead of one. He has helped in the past to defeat a mass of "screwy bills on taxation," according to **Maurice G. Read** of Mason McDuffie Co. in Berkeley, who describes him as "quite different from a good many lobbyists." Conser credits the Home Builders Council of Northern California with originating the successful 1950 efforts to amend the state's constitution to require future public housing be approved in advance by popular vote. But Conser became a leading worker for the amendment until it was passed.

How does he stand? Some of Conser's views on contemporary housing issues:

► **Overbuilding:** "I'm sure that there is a very extensive market that hasn't been satisfied yet. Builders will move constantly into lower income groups for whom they can build."

► **Urban renewal:** "It will be the most important phase of our real estate work within the next several years. We have to iron out this problem of rebuilding the hearts of our cities. . . . I am convinced we will find the answer."

► **Public housing:** is fundamentally wrong. No government can be landlord to any segment of its people without getting seriously implicated in ward-type politics . . ."

In his new job Conser hopes to expand NAREB's educational program and keep the industry's ethical standards high. He will live in Chicago with his attractive wife (the Consers have a son, 19, and daughter, 14) because he feels that "a trade association should be operated from other than the capital city." He will spend some time in Washington, but wants the present office there to serve only a legislative purpose. His view: "A trade association's primary objective should be the education and improvement in business ethics of its members. When an organization has its headquarters in Washington, it tends to become highly political in nature and becomes involved in matters that can be avoided elsewhere."

Conser has only two minor problems attached to leaving California: 1) he had just gotten around to renewing his membership at a country club, on the chance he might have some time to play golf this year and, 2) he has been besieged by real estate friends in San Marino who want to sell his house for him, has no idea how he can decide which should have the listing.

Frank F. Elliott, 62, senior vice president of sales for Crane Co. in Chicago since 1952, last month became president of the big firm. He succeeds **John L. Holloway**, 47, who resigned because of ill health. Elliott, who started with Crane in Los Angeles 33 years ago, is an affable, gregarious man in demand as a banquet speaker or master of ceremonies.



ELLIOTT

His job will be to stem a two-year decline in sales and earnings at Crane. Elliott hopes to do this by cutting production costs and "developing a more intensive sales coverage" for sanitary ware, valves and fittings.

Crane and American Radiator & Standard Sanitary Corp. jostle around at the top of the field: last year Crane's net sales were \$299.8 million, American Standard's \$303.4 million; the year before they were \$315.7 million and \$298.2 million, respectively. Now Crane has opened a \$25 million titanium sponge plant in Chattanooga from which it expects another \$90 million in annual sales. This is part of a diversification program aimed at leveling the radical curves characteristic of building material supplies.

Elliott's first request of the board of directors was that they fill the long vacant post of chairman of the board. The directors named **Mark W. Lowell**, vice president and executive trust officer of Continental Illinois National Bank & Trust Co. in Chicago.

William L. Slayton, since 1950 assistant director of the Natl. Assn. of Housing & Redevelopment Officials, quit to join big Realtors **Webb & Knapp** as redevelopment coordinator for its Southwest Washington project. **Hugh Miels** of the Milwaukee Housing Authority replaced Slayton.

Gordon Bunshaft, chief of design for Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in New York, was awarded the Arnold W. Brunner memorial prize of the American Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters. Detroit Architect **Minoru Yamasaki** received honorable mention.

The Structural Clay Products Institute in Washington established a new executive post and filled it with a retiring Navy man, Rear Adm. **Joe W.**

Davis Studio



STRYKER

Stryker, a veteran of 34 years active service, was appointed executive director to coordinate the institute's three headquarters departments and the regional offices. The mason relations, promotion and engineering and technology divisions come under his jurisdiction, as well as 17 regional offices and a co-operative program with manufacturers. Adm. Stryker served on a battleship in the Pacific during World War II; his last position (until June 30) was director of the Defense Dept.'s office of armed forces information and education.

CORPORATE CHANGES: **Jesse W. Tapp**, chief administrative officer for the Bank of America in southern California, named chairman of the board to succeed **Fred A. Ferroggiaro**; **Roy H. Glover**, to the chairmanship of Anaconda Copper

continued on p. 52

Mining Co., succeeding **Cornelius F. Kelley**; **Robert A. Muller**, 28 years with Atlas Plywood Corp., elected president, succeeding the late **Elmore I. MacPhie**; **Frank R. Creedon**, former director of installations for the Defense Dept., to an executive job in Merritt-Chapman & Scott Corp.'s heavy construction department.

Changes in college faculties: **Louis B. Wetmore**, visiting professor of city and regional planning at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to head the city planning and landscape architecture department at the University of Illinois; **Emil C. Fisher**

of Ohio State University, to head the department of architecture and allied arts at Kansas State University, succeeding **Paul Weigel**.

Ewan Clague, hard-working chief of the Bureau of Labor Statistics since 1946, was finally renominated for another four-year term. Minor objections in the Senate had kept him on the hook since last summer.

DIED: Louis H. Pink, 72, longtime prominent partisan of slum clearance and public housing (his interest in slums dated from 1904 when he

rented a tenement room in Manhattan's East Side to see what conditions were). former NY state insurance superintendent, onetime chairman of the Natl. Public Housing Conference, ex-member of the NY state housing board and city housing authority, May 18 in New York; **Marshall A. Shaffer**, 55, renowned hospital architect who was largely responsible for establishing design and construction standards for the Hill-Burton hospital program, May 24 in Wheaton, Md.; **Howard B. Thompson**, 57, a pioneer in the air conditioning and refrigeration industry in Louisville, May 28 in Louisville.

Planners worry over vanishing countryside, urge states to act

Exploding suburbs are gobbling up land for homes at such a rate that local zoning and subdivision controls are too weak to prevent destruction of the countryside.

To preserve some greenbelt amenities amid the onrushing waves of urbanization, states should step in now to reserve big areas for parks and open spaces.

Those are the opinions of C. McKim Norton, vice president of New York's Regional Plan Assn. and one of the nation's leading experts on metropolitan planning. He outlined his worries—and solutions—to a session of the American Planning & Civic Assn. recently in Washington.



NORTON

It became quickly apparent that the problem was uppermost in many a planner's mind. And elsewhere across the nation there were unmistakable first signs of rising public concern over the planless asphalt sprawl of the post-war housing boom. For builders and realtors, that means a whole new realm of land problems may be in the offing, to compound their present difficulties with schools and other community facilities.

Overnight to the country? The New York metropolitan area is expanding so fast, Norton pointed out, that by 1970 "we can predict a continuous carpet of urban development stretching 70 mi. east-west and 40 mi. north of New York's city hall." He forecast that a trip to the "countryside" will require "an overnight expedition."

One of the problems is that the auto-age nation is using more and more space to house its people. Norton pointed out that New York's first 9 million people were housed in 300 years on 420 sq. mi. of land. The next 6 million took 580 sq. mi. more during the last 30 years. At today's rate, the next 4 million will spread out over 600 more sq. mi. in only 20 years.

This new kind of auto-age city, said Norton, "requires a new concept of parks and open space reservation as bold as the original city park movement of 100 years ago. . . . Where we thought of city parks in hard-won acres, must we not aim for outer area land reservations in terms of square miles? Should we not make metropolitan plans to acquire many mountain areas, undeveloped water courses, large swamps and, where necessary, ribbons or squares of flat lands so as to keep

some of the metropolitan countryside out of the clutches of the expanding city?

"Our plans must be scaled to the automobile era. Fifteen minutes travel time equals 10 mi. Within 10 mi. of everyone in our great cities there should be a public land reservation large enough to let people escape from the automobile, the bulldozer and the no trespassing sign."

Now or never. It is up to state governments to get this job done, said Norton. "This overwhelming blanket of urbanization cannot be relieved by any other means known to us today short of public acquisition of land. . . . Zoning and subdivision control, between them, may slow down the rate of close development, and may improve the quality of development, but the police power is simply not a constitutional means of reserving large areas of open space for public use." It must be done now, he argued, or it will be too late: "One can redevelop a slum, but one cannot recreate natural countryside once development has passed over it."

Said Norton: "Few municipalities in metropolitan fringe areas have either the understanding, the will or the financial ability to act before great opportunities are lost. . . . If nothing is done before the nonfarming population arrives, it is already too late. The prime mover must be the states themselves or park districts created by the states." He suggested two new methods: 1) buy parks with combined land options and installment payments. 2) reward low-intensity land use with lower taxes. Thus a city might take an option on a 1,000-acre woodland spot and buy it a bit at a time over the years. This might encourage farmers not to sell off key frontages. Norton hoped. The idea of a tax differential to encourage low-density development has been broached by Paul Oppermann, San Francisco planning director, Norton noted. He calls it the "George Henry" tax—the reverse of Henry George's single tax idea—i.e. "if you build, you get hurt."

Ways and means. Elsewhere across the nation, evidence was piling up that thoughtful leaders are waking up to the need for suburban open areas. Items:

▶ Two California cities have adopted ordinances which require subdividers to pay fees ranging from \$25 to \$50 *per lot*. The money goes into a municipal park-purchase fund.

▶ Ledyard Blakeman, executive director of the Detroit Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Commission, suggested withholding utility

services from suburban areas to compel preservation of open land spaces. "We see glimmerings of that in Detroit," he said.

▶ In the fast-growing Chicago suburb of Westchester (pop. 8,600), children now play baseball and fly kites in vacant lots because somebody forgot to lay out parks. A city planning firm recently surveyed the town and predicted a 1965 population of 24,000. By then, it figured, there will be no vacant land left in Westchester. Commented the Chicago *Daily News*: "From a real estate salesman's viewpoint, this is dandy. But to the people of Westchester, it is something else."

▶ Staten Island has 60% of New York City's remaining supply of land available for building and now faces a housing boom because of a bridge projected to link the island with Brooklyn. It recently got a stern warning from Austin J. Tobin, executive director of the Port of New York Authority. He told the Staten Island chamber of commerce: "Population growth can bring increased congestion. It can also mean skyrocketing land values and unbridled speculation. It can mean overbuilding. If nothing is done to guide this growth here, there will be no land left for parks, playgrounds and schools. If you get busy you can discourage the speculator and the cheap builder from cramming as many houses and apartments as physically possible in any given area and from desecrating your main traffic arteries with hot dog and custard stands."

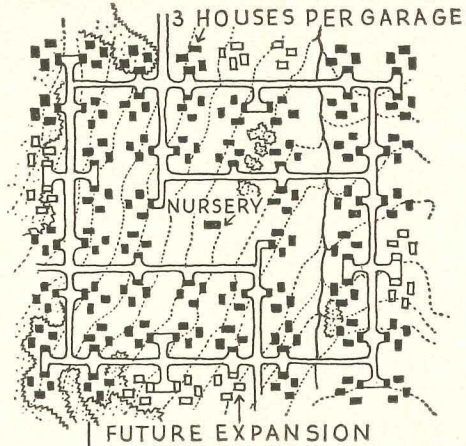
▶ In California, which has 10% of the nation's agriculture, concern also was being expressed over the speed at which subdivisions were swallowing the state's most fertile farmland—400,000 acres of it in the last decade. Despite its phenomenal postwar growth, California still has plenty of open space, especially by eastern standards. But subdividers seem to find the best flat farm and orchard land is also best for homes. Now the California Farm Bureau Federation is beginning to fight back with projected county ordinances freezing choice farm land for its present use.

▶ In Orange County, where the home building rate is highest in southern California, a group of dairymen were circulating petitions to incorporate some 2½ sq. mi. of farms as a city to forestall encroachment by housing. Their problem: as subdivisions creep into dairy country, incoming new residents begin filing complaints because dairies smell like dairies and soon dairymen have to contend with abatement proceedings, annexations and rising tax rates.

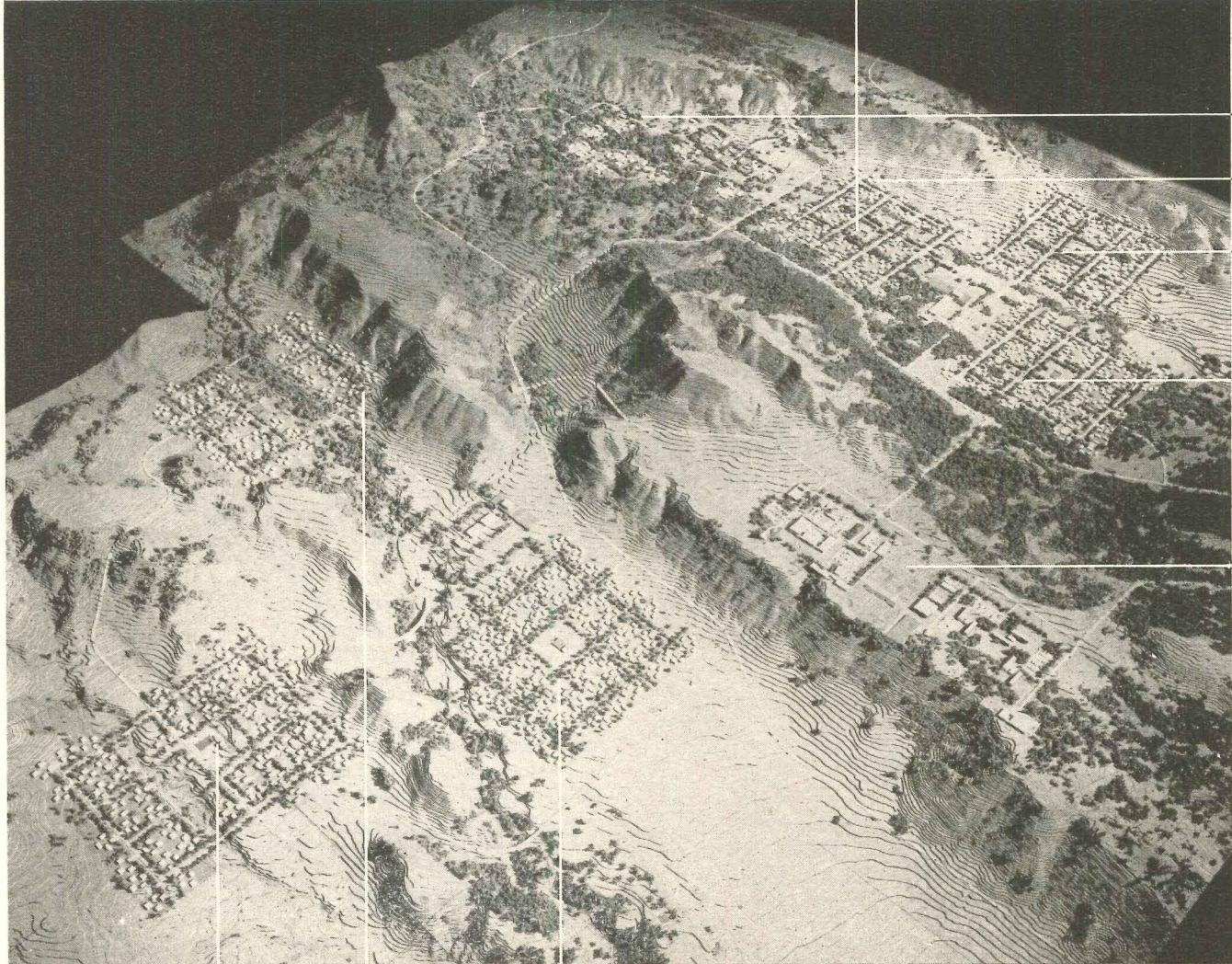
LESSON IN LAND PLANNING

Air Force planners hope to balk 'suburban sprawl'

Housing for Air Academy is laid out in squares of 200 homes, with no through streets



Ezra Stoller



SENIOR OFFICERS

OFFICERS

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NONCOMS

DOUGLAS VALLEY

COMMUNITY CENTER

CHURCH

STORES

THEATER

HIGH SCHOOL

GYMNASIUM, ETC.

MESA

OFFICERS

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PINE VALLEY (FUTURE)

Designers of the new Air Force Academy have adopted an intriguing combination of old and new ideas to prevent suburban sprawl in its residential neighborhoods.

The scheme developed by Architects Skidmore, Owings & Merrill calls for six square communities averaging 200 houses each. They will lie in two valleys separated by a mesa, on which will go a shopping center, chapel, library, high school and theater.

The big surprise is the gridlike road pattern, a radical departure from the winding, free-form design that marked SOM's plans for Oak Ridge, Tenn. The seeming rigidity of the road pattern probably will be tempered by hilly contours of the pine-covered Colorado Springs site. No through streets

cross the individual neighborhoods. Additions to the neighborhoods will be limited to one more strip of homes around the outer streets. "We didn't want suburban sprawl," says Walter A. Netsch Jr., chief SOM designer (under Design Partner Gordon Bunshaft) for the project. Because the neighborhoods are square, such creeping expansion should intrude only slightly on the greenbelt buffers. Each house will be within 3 min. walk of one of these natural parks.

Another item which should help retain some of the rural charm of the 17,500 acre academy site: only one garage is planned for each three houses, which makes for a minimum of asphalt. (This idea was outlined by SOM Partner Nat Owings in a talk to

NAHB's 1953 convention; he suggested group location of houses in small neighborhoods where the "old fashioned concept of a lot" can be abandoned—including one garage per four homes, small private yards and play areas for each house with the greater part of the land area pooled as a park where grass, trees, and shrubs are jointly maintained.) At Colorado Springs, this will work out so that the houses will cluster around garages and service facilities, with open living space flowing from one cluster to another. The idea, says Netsch, was to create the feeling you get from a small New England town, clustered around its church. Only at Colorado Springs, each neighborhood will encircle a nursery school.

NEWS continued on p. 54

HOUSING STATISTICS:

Market researchers seek big study in Philadelphia

Experts at the University of Pennsylvania have figured out how to make what they say will be the most accurate study of housing market potential yet devised. It cost \$10,000 just to plan it. It will cost about \$185,000 to make it in Philadelphia.

The survey is needed there for the \$100 million Eastwick redevelopment project, largest in the US. Eastwick plans call for 12,500 housing units, most of them privately built and sold. That is equal to Philadelphia's three-year housing output. Without convincing figures to show the houses will sell, the redevelopment people would face a rough time finding any mortgage money, or builders.

Prof. William L. C. Wheaton, who directed the team that planned the big inquiry, says it "will tell with reasonable certitude how many houses could be sold in Eastwick a year ahead, to whom and at what price." The method is involved. After pulling together the readily available data on population, incomes, etc., the researchers would make a sample survey to show incomes, family size, age and occupation of recent home purchasers, then a second survey to get a fresh fix on the current characteristics of the whole Philadelphia area population. The second study also will inquire into intentions and ability to buy. A third study will go into the question of how far people will travel to work. A fourth will delve into how much open occupancy will inhibit white buyers.

The big reason it gets so expensive, says Wheaton, is that to be accurate the samples must be big enough to let each characteristic be set up separately on analysts' graphs. He adds: "The study is terrifically important to Eastwick, but it's also an opportunity to gain some real insight into housing markets that would be useful in national policy." Eastwick planners have asked HHFA to foot \$135,000 of the research bill.

If the study indicates private housing will not sell in Eastwick, says Wheaton, the city can juggle plans so as to rebuild one neighborhood as housing and the rest as industry. But Eastwick's 3,000 acres are wonderfully close-in (20 min. from city hall). The trouble is that much of Eastwick is below sea level, protected by dikes but swampy and covered with jerry-built shacks.

MORTGAGE MARKET QUOTATIONS

(Originations quoted at net cost, secondary market sales quoted with servicing by seller) As reported to HOUSE & HOME the week ending June 10th

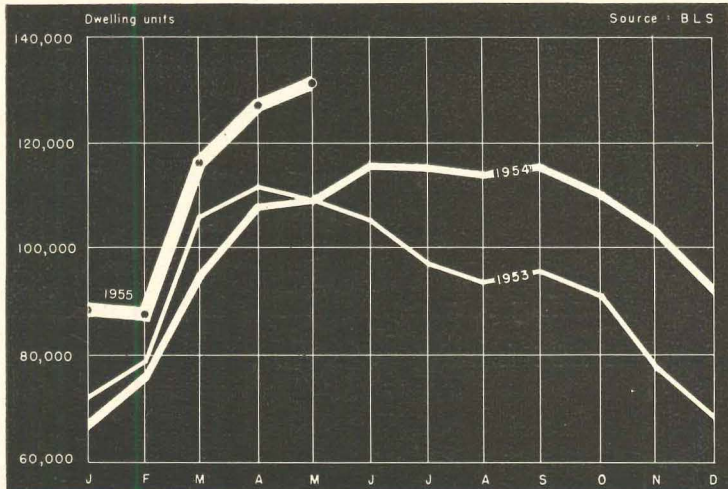
| City | FHA 4 1/2's | | 5% equity or more VA 4 1/2's | | No down payment VA 4 1/2's | |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|
| | Origina-tions | Second-ary | Origina-tions | Second-ary | Origina-tions | Second-ary |
| Boston local | par-101 | a | par-101 | a | par-101 | a |
| Out-of-state | a | 98-99 | a | 98 | a | 95-97 1/2 |
| Chicago | 97-99 | 98-par** | 96-99 | 98-99 1/2 | a | a |
| Denver | 98-par | 98-par | 98-par | 98-par | 96-97 | 96-97 |
| Detroit | 97 1/2-99 | 98-99 | 96-98 | 97-98 | b | b |
| Houston | 99-par | 99-par | 99-par | 99-par | 97-98 | 97-98 |
| Jacksonville† | 98-par | 98-par | 96-par | 96-98 | 96-97†† | 96-97†† |
| New York | 99-99 1/2 | 99-99 1/2 | 99-99 1/2 | 99-99 1/2 | 99-par | 99 |
| Philadelphia | par | par | 99-par | 99-par | 98-99 | 98-99 |
| Portland, Ore. | 99-par | 99-par | 98-99 | 98-99 | 96-98 | 96-98 |
| San Francisco | 99-par | 99-par | 97-99 | 97-99 | 95-96 | 95-96 |
| Washington D.C. | par | 99-par | 99-par | 98-par | 98-98 1/2 | 97-98 1/2* |

† No market.
 †† Extremely limited volume.
 * Typical range; bottom prices slightly lower.
 † Probable prices throughout Florida.
 †† Without closing costs in cash.
 ** Par transactions for immediate delivery.

SOURCES: Boston, Robert M. Morgan, vice pres., Boston Five Cents Savings Bank; Chicago, Maurice A. Pollak, vice pres. & secy., Draper & Kramer Inc.; Denver, C. A. Bacon, vice pres., Mortgage Investments Co.; Detroit, Robert H. Pease, pres., Detroit Mortgage & Realty Co.; Houston, John F. Austin Jr., pres., T. J. Bettes Co.; Jacksonville, Brown

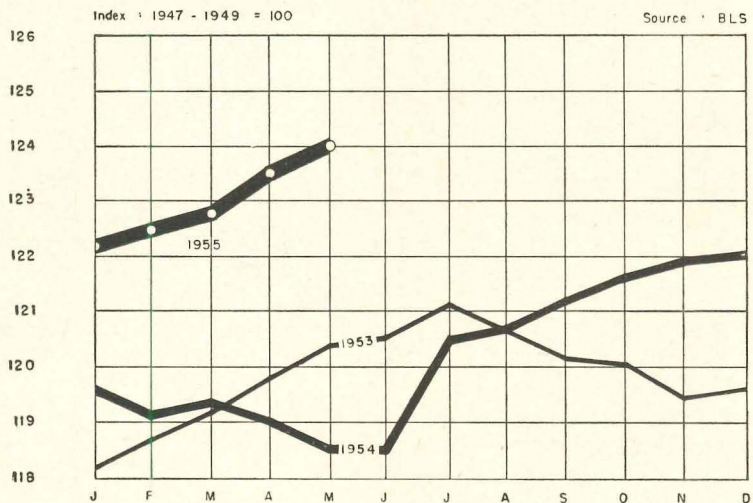
Whatley, pres., Stockton, Whatley, Davin & Co.; New York, John Halperin, pres., J. Halperin & Co.; Philadelphia, W. A. Clarke, pres., W. A. Clarke Mortgage Co.; San Francisco, Raymond H. Lapin, vice president, Bankers Mortgage Co.; Washington, George W. De Franceaux, pres., Frederick W. Berens, Inc.; Portland, Ore., Franklin W. White, pres., Securities, Inc.

NONFARM HOUSING STARTS



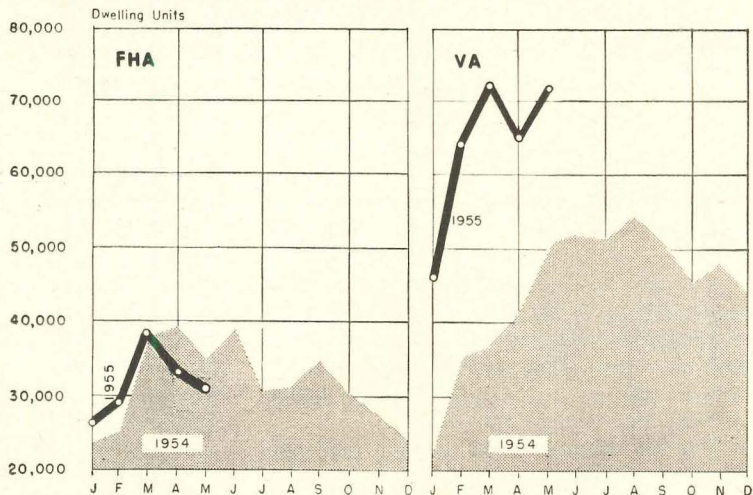
The breakneck pace of the housing boom continued to taper off in May. Starts totaled 132,000 (129,500 private, 2,500 public). This adjusts to an annual output of 1,306,000, down a shade from April's seasonally adjusted rate of 1,309,000. For five months of the year, housing was at near-record 1,362,000-a-year clip.

BUILDING MATERIALS PRICES



Building materials prices, up 3% during the last year, climbed still more in May. BLS' index went up 0.6 point to 124 (1947-49 is 100). Heating equipment and concrete fell fractionally in May, but lumber was up a full point, plywood half a point. All the evidence points to a continued upward trend for materials. Moreover, both building wages and land prices are on the rise. NAHB estimated land costs have zoomed 20% in the last year.

FHA AND VA APPLICATIONS



FHA applications dipped to 31,208 new dwelling units in May, a decline of 2,418 from April and a drop of 5,414 from March. VA appraisal requests for proposed homes rose to 71,467 in May, third highest month on record. The April level was 65,856.

Weakley

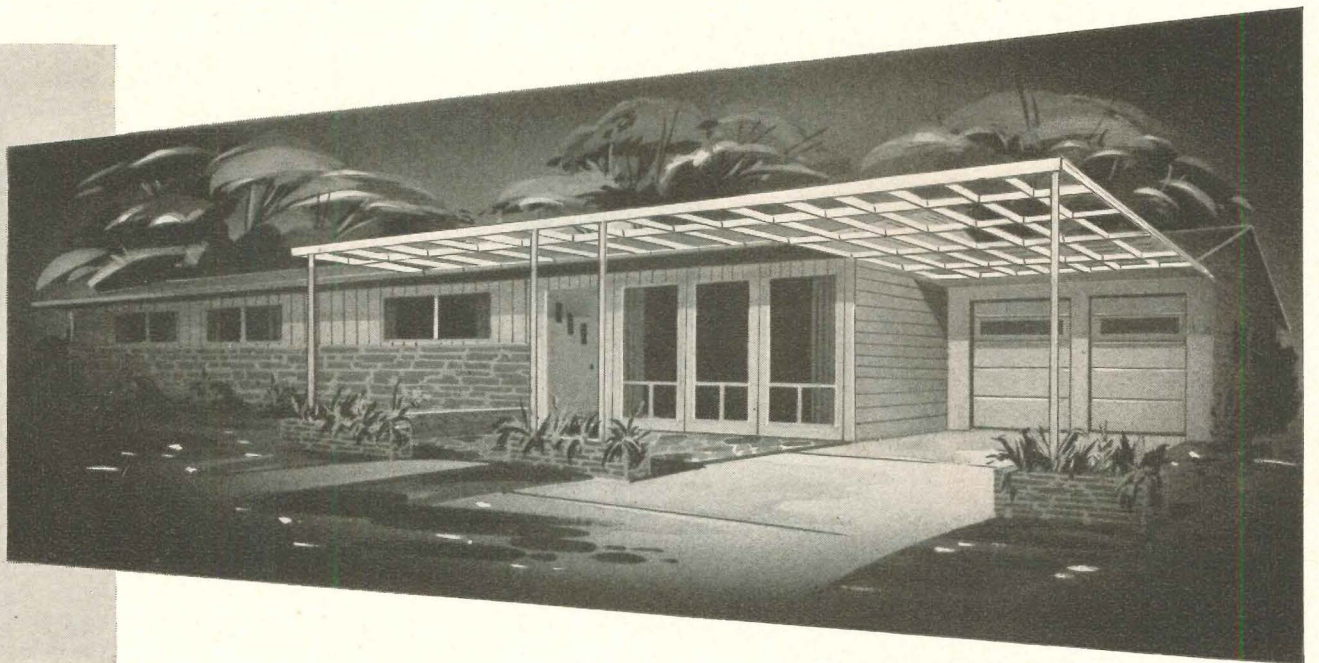
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Shown here is just one of the fine homes in the Weakley Custom Built line — homes that have all the features of color, design and good planning that the home buyer cannot get elsewhere in the same price range. A wide variety of each model assures you a complete line to satisfy all tastes and income groups.




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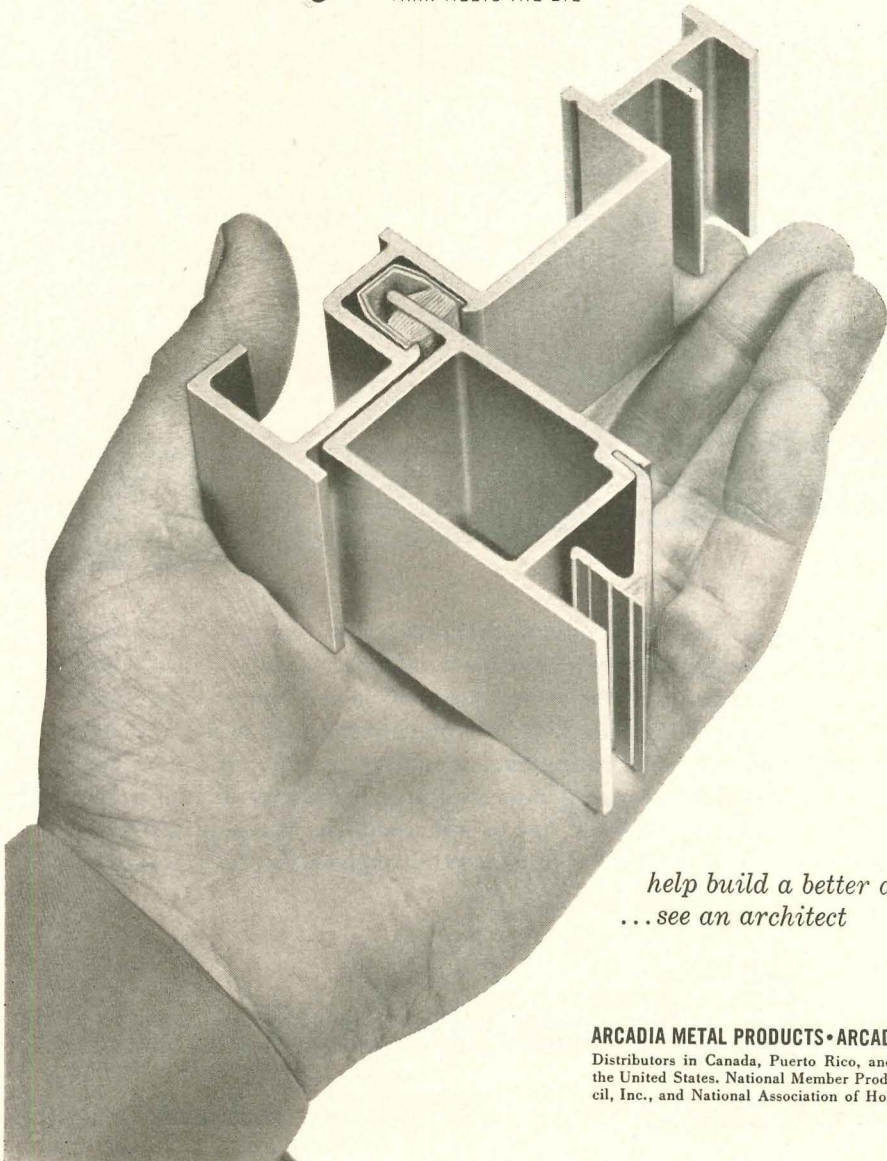
everyone talks about the weather

...But Arcadia solved the weather problem with Twin-Seal Wool Pile Weatherstripping—another important point of difference between Arcadia and other sliding glass doors.

Twin-Seal Weatherstripping on Arcadia's new custom aluminum door is shown below in a section at the latching jamb. A positive weatherseal between jamb and sliding panel is made by a double row of opposing wool pile weatherstrips. Wind, rain, cold and dirt are locked out tightly. Identical wool pile strips at head and interlocker, and a spring-loaded wool pile sill strip complete the four-side weatherseal. Arcadia's aluminum-backed weatherstripping, fully silicoated for moisture and abrasion resistance, is easily replaced without dismantling the sliding panel.

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NEWS

continued from p. 54

OPINIONS

These intellects shed the following light on matters of moment to housing:

Peter F. Drucker, writing in *Harper's* on "Eleven Coming Issues in Politics":



Steve Pierce—Transatlantic

"Housing will be a major political issue—nationally as well as locally. We are at present building in the new industrial areas some of the worst slums this country has ever seen. . . . These new slums are expensive, but the fact that a tar-paper shack costs \$14,000 does not make it any less of a shack.

"The housing need, moreover, will grow mightily before it lessens. As every suburban home owner knows, we live today off the housing inheritance of our grandparents. But [these homes] are rarely to be found, unfortunately, in the areas of maximum population growth, where we will need large numbers of new houses. These had better be reasonably decent, reasonably cheap, and reasonably well-built houses—and we will want to get them without state or federal entry, except for slum clearance, into the housing business."



HHF Administrator **Albert M. Cole**, in talk to Natl. Savings & Loan League:

"In Cleveland I again meet Ernie Bohn . . . who is among your members. . . . Finding Ernie here raises two interesting questions: first, how did a public houser like Bohn ever get admitted to a savings and loan league? Second, how did a savings and loan leaguer like Bohn ever get admitted to the public housing fraternity?"

"Whatever the explanation, I think we should have more of it. It's good for the savings and loan league, good for public housing, and good for housing in general. If more of us mixed around in the different phases of housing activity, perhaps we would be better able to understand one another."



Charles Abrams, New York State rent administrator, in talk to the New York City Welfare & Health Council:

Walter Duman

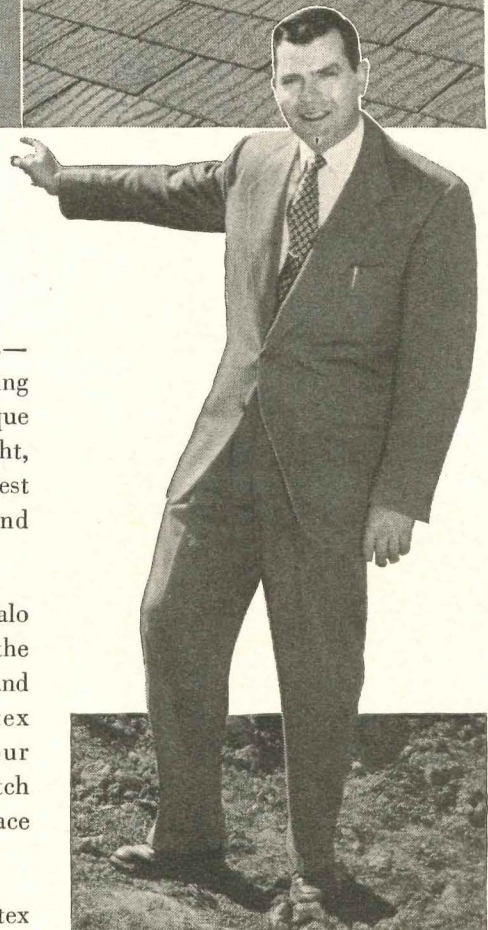
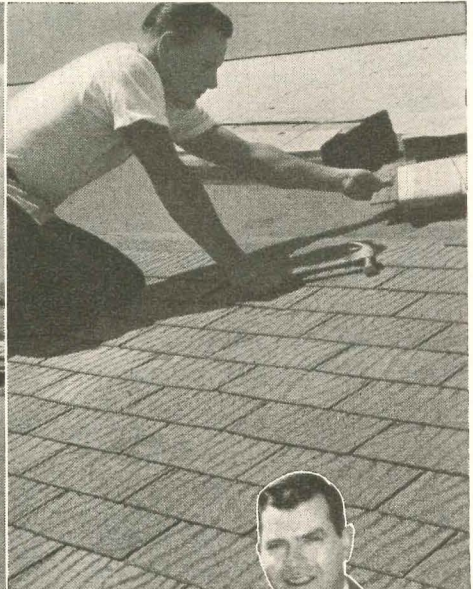
"The word 'slum' is a piece of cant of uncertain origin with a phonetic suggestion of all that is tawdry. By blending the letters 's' and 'l' into a four-letter word, it seems to have embraced all the connotations of insalubrious word formations such as slovenly, slime, slush, slump and sloop denoting the physical aspects of environment coupled with slut, slob and slug, denoting the type of people who live in the environment, namely the prostitute, the filthy and the criminal."

NEWS continued on p. 62

NEW 2400-HOME DEVELOPMENT TO BE ROOFED 100% WITH WOODTEX SHINGLES



Green Acres Development, Buffalo, New York



“Woodtex Shingles Stay Put”

One of the largest home builders in the country, Pearce & Pearce know from experience how much the right roofing can contribute to sound, salable construction. That's why they've used over 14,000 squares of Certain-teed Woodtex Asphalt Shingles in the past three years.

In the giant Green Acres Development more than 2400 new homes are planned—with 600 already completed. Each of these homes will have a Woodtex roof. And this is the third big development in the Buffalo area in which Pearce & Pearce have used Woodtex Shingles *exclusively*.

Certain-teed's Woodtex is considered by many the finest asphalt shingle made. Now available in a brilliant new color range—Certain-teed's beau-

tiful Golden Anniversary Blends—Woodtex is one of the best looking shingles you can use. With its unique raised grain and its extra weight, Woodtex is also one of the strongest and most resistant to wind and weather.

Says Mr. Braun: “Here in the Buffalo area the wind really blows off the lake. On a windy day we can stand outside and watch our Woodtex Shingles stay put. Although our houses are constructed with low-pitch roofs, we have never had to replace a single Woodtex Shingle.”

Reasons enough to give Woodtex Shingles a long, hard look before *your* next roofing job? Write Certain-teed for facts and figures now. We're sure you'll be impressed!

Mr. Peter W. Braun
Vice President
Pearce & Pearce Co., Inc., Builders
Buffalo, New York

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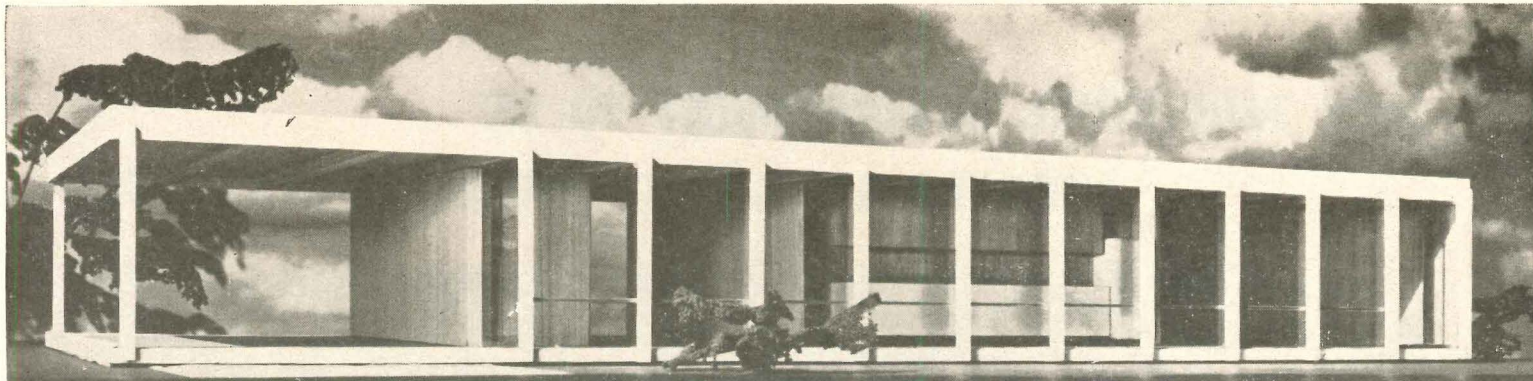


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MODEL OF MIES' BUILDER HOUSE GAINS FEELING OF STRENGTH, DESPITE BIG GLASS AREAS, BY USE OF HEAVY STEEL I-BEAM POSTS

BUILDERS AT WORK:

Mies van der Rohe designs glass house for a Chicago builder

One of the world's top architects last month turned his genius to the development of a suburban builder house.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, whose talents in recent years have helped turn Chicago's lake front into an architectural showplace of apartment skyscrapers, unveiled designs for a modest, three-bedroom glass house which he hopes can eventually be marketed for \$15,000.

This is not the first house that the former head of the famed Bauhaus has designed (he did many in Europe and has done a few here) but it is his first in the medium-priced builder field. Even the price tag of \$35,000 on the first four prototypes of the home (see photo) is well under anything Mies has offered the public to date. They will have 1,500 sq. ft. of open-planned space, are direct descendants of a 2,300 sq. ft. house Mies did for Robert H. McCormick, one of the developers of the new project, for \$45,000. McCormick expects to trim this to \$35,000 by even simpler design; later the team wants to cut costs by half.

Herbert S. Greenwald, the other developer, is convinced that a Mies house can be produced for \$15,000. Greenwald, who worked with Mies on his Promontory Apartments and his famous "glass houses" at 860 and 880 Lakeshore Drive, is a developer who not only has a feeling for culture but does something about making it part of a city. He has not previously worked in the small home field, but the present houses are not—with their typically Miesian handling of

steel and glass—so much different in feeling from the well-known skyscrapers after all.

Greenwald thinks the price of the Mies house can be cut to \$15,000 for two reasons: 1) the size can be trimmed still further to 1,000 sq. ft.; 2) the modular units from which the house is put together will be mass produced. The two longitudinal sides can be hauled to the site intact except for glazing. The walls can be put up, says Greenwald, in two hours. The interior partitions are hung in place in a matter almost of minutes. Installing the single-pane plate glass walls is a simple operation. Once the jigs and other production equipment are set up, Greenwald believes he can turn out houses with such efficiency that conventional methods of building (and even of prefabricating) will be obsolete overnight.

Arthur Siegel



MIES

of an asbestos mineralite covered with wood veneers. Each wall can be made up, complete, and installed almost as simply as a piece of furniture. Mies' original exterior designs called for a rather complex window installation. The present ones, however, provide for simple steel mullions ready-grooved for the glass panels.

Greenwald is not worried about the neighbors. "Wherever Mies goes, people come to scorn and go away to imitate and praise," he observed recently. He points out that people hooted at the

first skyscrapers Mies designed for the lake front. But today there are several similar buildings and almost all new Chicago apartment construction reflects Mies' influence.

So far, FHA has taken a skeptical attitude toward the new Mies design. Greenwald has been in lengthy discussion with the technical staff of FHA's Chicago office. He at first met strong resistance. Plans have been modified somewhat (closet space, doors, etc.) in an effort to meet FHA objections. But the question of whether a single-pane glass house is practical in Chicago's climate is still unsettled, so far as FHA is concerned. Greenwald is still hopeful of approval, but indicated he is prepared to go ahead with the project without it if necessary.

Not the least astonishing thing about the Mies-Greenwald-McCormick venture is its locale. Chicago has long been noted as a stronghold of traditional house design, at least in the speculative realm. Mies' plan ranks with the most severely modern. Time will have to tell how large the market for such shelter will be. But to build such a house at all (except to order) would have seemed unlikely only a few years ago.

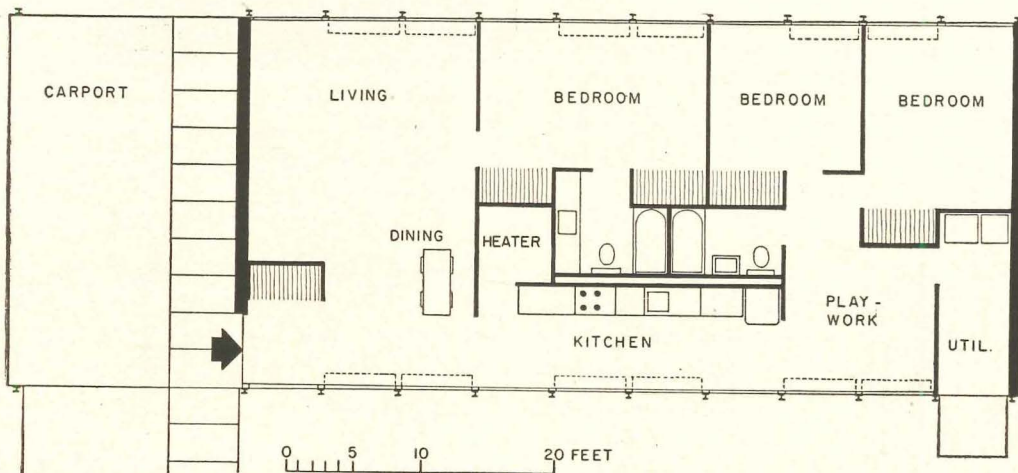
Prefab home shipments up 53% from last year, institute reports

Prefabbers sold a total 23,761 units through the first four months of '55, a 53.3% increase over the same period last year. The Prefabricated Home Manufacturers' Institute reaffirmed its forecast that the year-end total would top last year's—77,000—by a fat margin.

Texas builders push pillars and ornamental grillwork

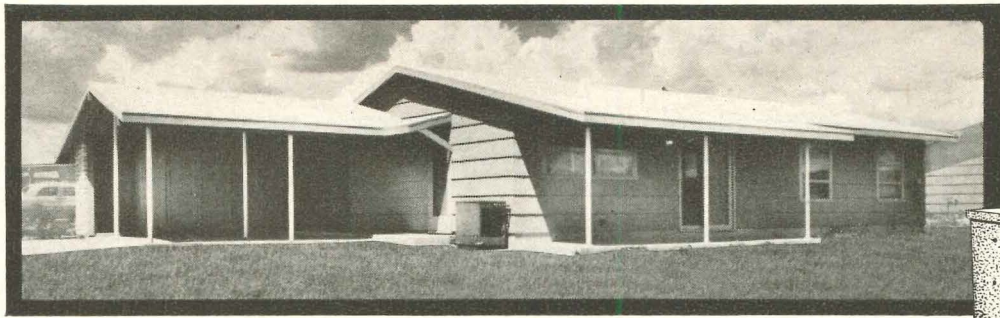
There were additional signs, at least two of them in Texas, that it takes a heap of noncontemporary architecture to keep the housing boom alive. Preston R. Plumb opened his latest addition to Braeburn Valley in Houston (price range: \$27,500 to \$70,000) with heavy emphasis on colonial. Part of the celebration was unveiling of the long-roofed National Brands Home, which boasted incorporation of 21 brand-name products, sliding glass walls and a C-shaped plan by Architect Matt Howard. The front of the house was composed strictly of pillars and shutters. The back view, from a distance of 40 yds. or so through the trees, gave an illusion of a low-pitched semicontemporary. The Brands home was purchased by T. C. "Buddy" Brennan, former Houston NAHB executive vice president now general manager for Developer Frank Sharp.* Dallas Builder Joe Maberry is putting more wrought iron on the outside of his homes in old-style New Orleans fashion.

* Boxscore on progress at Sharpstown in late May showed 600 homes under construction, 225 completed and 270 sold.



MIES' FLOOR PLAN USES KITCHEN AS HALLWAY, PERMITTING CENTRAL UTILITY CORE

In the "Air-Conditioned Research Village"...
the lowest cost-to-operate
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with a Halstead & Mitchell
Residential type Cooling Tower

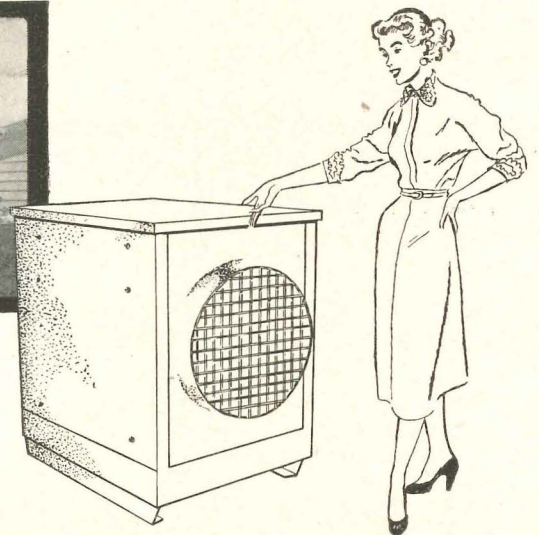


AIR CONDITIONED VILLAGE, AUSTIN, TEXAS

According to cost figures comparing the twenty homes in the Air Conditioned Research Village in Austin, Texas, Halstead & Mitchell Residential Cooling Towers were installed in homes which ranked No. 1 and No. 6. (*Ratings from HOUSE+HOME, March, 1955*).


HOUSE+HOME, reporting results from the project engineers, showed that water costs with cooling towers for the entire five-month Texas-summer season were as low as \$2.00 *per summer*. So small was the cost, indeed, that special meters had to be installed to read the daily consumption.

Certainly house design and air conditioning equipment design were the major factors in the low cost of air-conditioning operation in these homes. But it is a tribute that two of America's leading manufacturers selected Halstead & Mitchell's Residential Cooling Towers with such happy results.



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Halstead & Mitchell

BESSEMER BUILDING • PITTSBURGH 22, PA.

continued from p. 62

"Folks want the New Orleans grillwork," he said, "so I'll give it to them. I'm tired of pioneering." Maberry, who was fortunate enough to get 30-year, no-down money for his \$16,000 homes was building three-bedroom, two-bath houses which he called "smaller versions of the prospect's boss's house—they have everything the boss has but not as much of it."

Yards awash with swimming pools; new licensing class in California

Americans bought 15,000 solid swimming pools last year and another 15,000 vinyl-envelope pools (compared to a total 200 as recently as 1939). Gross for the industry: \$100 million.

In California, building of swimming pools has developed into such a big business that the California contractors' license board set up a special licensing class for pool builders. The new regulation went into effect June 2.

California leads the nation as big developments expand

New subdivisions continued to push total and regional starts figures into record-breaking brackets. In more and more areas the developers were coming up against resistance to zoning changes. But mostly the boom was untrammled.

California led the crowd, with 288 applications for subdivisions filed in April. The figure was just under the all-time March record and over 20% above April, 1954. During the first four months of the year a total of 1,231 subdivisions were started in California, with building in the southern half of the state booming at close to three times the national per capita average, according to the Security First National Bank of Los Angeles. Other activity:

▶ **St. Louis** was in the throes of at least six new subdivision ventures being executed by **Keeney-Toelle Real Estate Co., Contemporary Homes, Inc., Kniffen Subdivision Sales, Inc., Chasda Construction Co., Gerald Hayman** (with promotion by **H. A. Schulenberg Co.**), **Merle S. Wencker** and **Daniel A. Glaser** and **Schuermann Building & Realty Co.**

▶ The first 125 brick homes of a projected 1,229 in **Graceland-Whitehaven Plaza** subdivision about 8½ mi. from downtown **Memphis** opened last month. Some two dozen builders will work there under the direction of **John J. Goodwin**.

▶ **Chicago** was rife with new subdivisions, including projects by **Henning E. Johnson & Sons** (400 homes), **Central Construction** (600 homes), **Tony Ross & Co.** (123 homes), **E. A. Herzog Construction** (490 homes), and **Clearing Realty** (1,000 homes). There were a couple of petitions before zoning authorities: **Monterey Builders, Inc.**, planning a \$4 million project, wanted a zoning variation permitting lots of 8,500 sq. ft. instead of 10,000 sq. ft. (but lots would have a higher-than-required frontage of 75'); **Chicago Title & Trust Co.**, trustee owner of a tract at the east border of **Palatine**, had asked rezoning of 772 farm acres for residential use.

▶ A group of **Houston** investors, headed by **Lester L. Tatum**, purchased 97½ acres from an estate for construction of 250 homes.

▶ In **San Diego**, Big Builders **Walter Bollenbacher** and **Louis L. Kelton** will expand their proposed 2,000-home GI town of **Allied Gardens** to 3,000 houses. About 1,500 homes are now completed or under construction there.



LOW-COST HOUSE: 672 SQ. FT.

Washington builders put out a two-bedroomer for \$7,100

Carson & Greene Co. (**George Carson** and **Fred A. Greene Jr.**, partners), took a crack at the low-cost market in the Washington, D. C., area with a two-bedroom house for \$7,100 (see photo) and came out ahead. They sold 30 houses during the past year, have 11 more planned and another dozen after that.

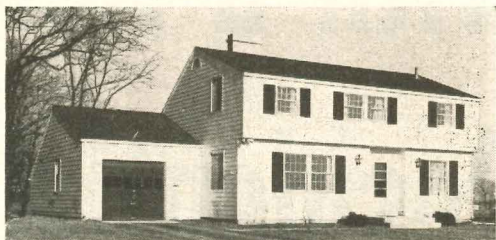
The houses were insured for 30 years under FHA's Sec. 203 (i), successor to the defunct Title I. Sec. 8 program, which lowers the agency's requirements on such matters as kitchen cabinets (the Carson-Greene house comes without wall cabinets or refrigerator), sodding, shrubbery, off-street parking and storage space. Down payments are \$450 and settlement charges about \$300. Total floor area is 672 sq. ft., divided into two bedrooms (12' x 10' and 11' x 9'), a 14' x 14' living room and a 10' x 12' kitchen. The houses are built on a 4" reinforced slab, have conventional framing and roofs of pine sheathing and asphalt shingles. Dry wall is used inside; exterior walls are of 1" sheathing board covered with asbestos shingles.

Forced out of VA building by low valuations, says builder

G. A. Casey of **Casey Construction Co.** in Seattle has notified the VA that he has taken too much of a beating under the CRVs and must quit dealing in VA-guaranteed loans. "This decision was not solely based upon the experiences of one case," wrote Casey, "but on a gross business of \$107,925 of GI homes representing eight units we constructed during 1954." A large loss of \$2,300 on a home with a CRV of \$14,850 reduced Casey's profit on the GI houses to about 1.4% of gross business. Pointing out that his FHA appraisals had averaged \$900 apiece more than the VAs, Casey summed up: "It appears that it is next to impossible for a veteran purchaser to get a custom-built home of his choice through the GI program."

New England salt box becomes a best seller in Ohio

Carl Frye, in charge of building the all-style **Lincoln Village** near Columbus, Ohio (**August News**) for the **Peoples Development Co.**, reports his big salt box model is a sales leader. Frye, a

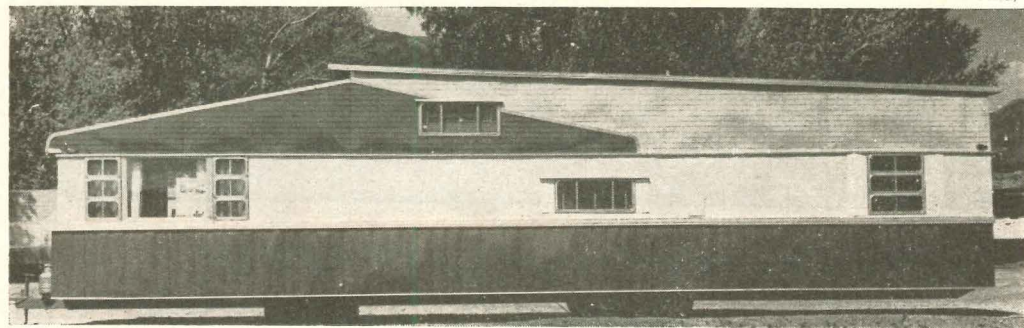


CARL FRYE'S FAST-SELLING SALT BOX

New Englander himself, pitted the two-story houses of 1,627 sq. ft. against low ranches, L-shapes, and contemporaries in a one-man stand

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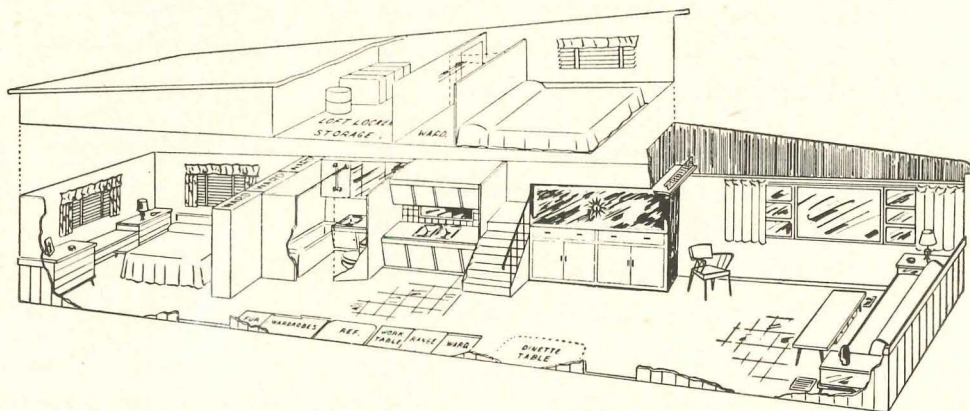
Len Tilley



Now they even make trailers in split-level models

Split level with wheels, spotted by a **House & Home** editor visiting Colorado Springs, turned out to be a two-bedroom trailer equipped with separate dining room, loft-locker storage and tandem axles. The homes away from home—illuminated by vermilion, yellow and pink paint, reading from hubcaps to roof—are manufac-

tured by the **Holan Engineering Co.** of Elwood, Ind. They sell for about \$7,800 apiece. The company made about 1,000 last year, a sales pace that conjures up the possibility of whole subdivisions of rubber-tired split levels crawling lemming-like across the endless desert, westward to the sea.



this home better with Backer System"

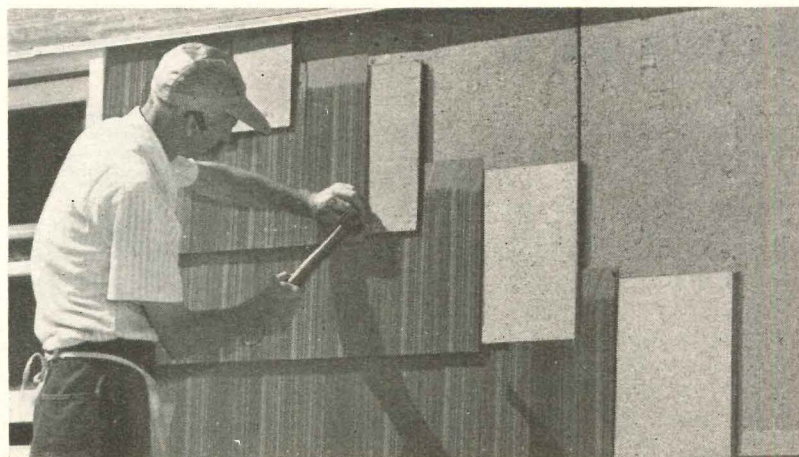
... Lawrence Wanhouse, Jr., president,
L. Wanhouse and Son, Madison, N. J.

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NEWS

continued from p. 66

against what he calls the industry's "monkey see, monkey do" attitude. "I am convinced that a man with a big family can come up with a better deal when we put two floors under one roof," he said recently. "For instance, in the Stowbridge model (see photo) we provide a 13' x 18'-4" living room . . . also a 13' x 16' family room. . . ." Other items: lavatory on the ground floor, three bedrooms and 353 sq. ft. of attic space. Frye thinks the two-story houses (priced at \$19,250) will account for 20% of his sales this year.

'Home' house starts slowly; plans made for fall showing

NBC's televised promotion of the "House that Home Built" was not moving as rapidly as it might have.

The contemporary ranch house designed by Architects **Quincy Jones** and **Frederick Emmons** for the network's 'Home' show (April News) was on exhibition in only nine cities by the time the original June 4 deadline arrived. Some spokesmen put part of the blame on a late spring and lack of adequate time to file for FHA and VA approval. And there was some builder resistance to the contemporary aspect of the plans, as Architect Jones had figured there would be when he appeared on the opening show. (But Jones noted that "almost everything that's in here we've been doing for ten years.")

Some builders who had the house up were enthusiastic and at least three homes had been sold. **Donald Drummond** in Kansas City had sold his and planned to build more. **Irvin Blietz** had sold two in the Chicago area, had four under construction in addition to his exhibition house. NBC pushed what it called the "second phase" of the project up to Sept. 10, when it expected at least 29 more model homes would go on exhibition during National Home Week.

Carol City sold to Chicagoan after weeks of internal rumors

Control of Carol City, the 3,000-acre brainchild of New York publicist **Carl Byoir** and **Ralph Stolkin**, Chicago jack-of-all-trades (News, Sept. '54 *et seq.*), changed hands last month. Less than a year after ambitious plans for the 10,000-home project north of Miami were announced, **John MacArthur**, head of Bankers Life & Casualty Co. in Chicago, purchased a majority of assets of the holding company set up by Byoir, Stolkin and Miami Builder **Julius Gaines**. MacArthur was said to have paid about \$5 million for segments of the others' holdings, with Byoir unloading the most because he had most. But the three still hold small interests in the project's land and utilities. MacArthur said that Gaines would continue to be active in building the city and that other builders would be invited to buy land there and build. He said he hoped to have all 10,000 homes up within three years. Only a few hundred had been completed thus far.

NAHB ex-President Merrion buys a big site in Chicago

Past NAHB President **Joseph E. Merrion** bought one of the few big residential sites left in Chicago (at 83d St. and Dorchester Ave.) from **Prudential Insurance Co. of America**, planned 407 homes. Three basic split-level models will be offered on the 71-acre site, priced from \$18,500 to \$21,000. Sites will have a minimum frontage of 45', with a graded 4' slope to the rear.



A land-drainage installation of perforated Perma-Line pipe on the J. L. Shannon estate near Detroit. Photo Courtesy Superior Tank Company.

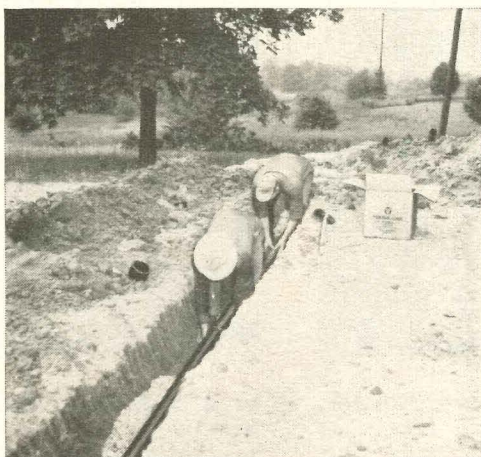
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Winning house is a \$12,990 "Cape Cod" with expandable attic, built by Rosano Bros. on Long Island.

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Builders Stern & Price of Cupertino put it dead center in their Western Family house, which offers 1,284 sq. ft. plus carport for \$12,700.

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Cover: Eichler house, Jones & Emmons, architects. Photo: Ernest Braun

Is land your big new problem?

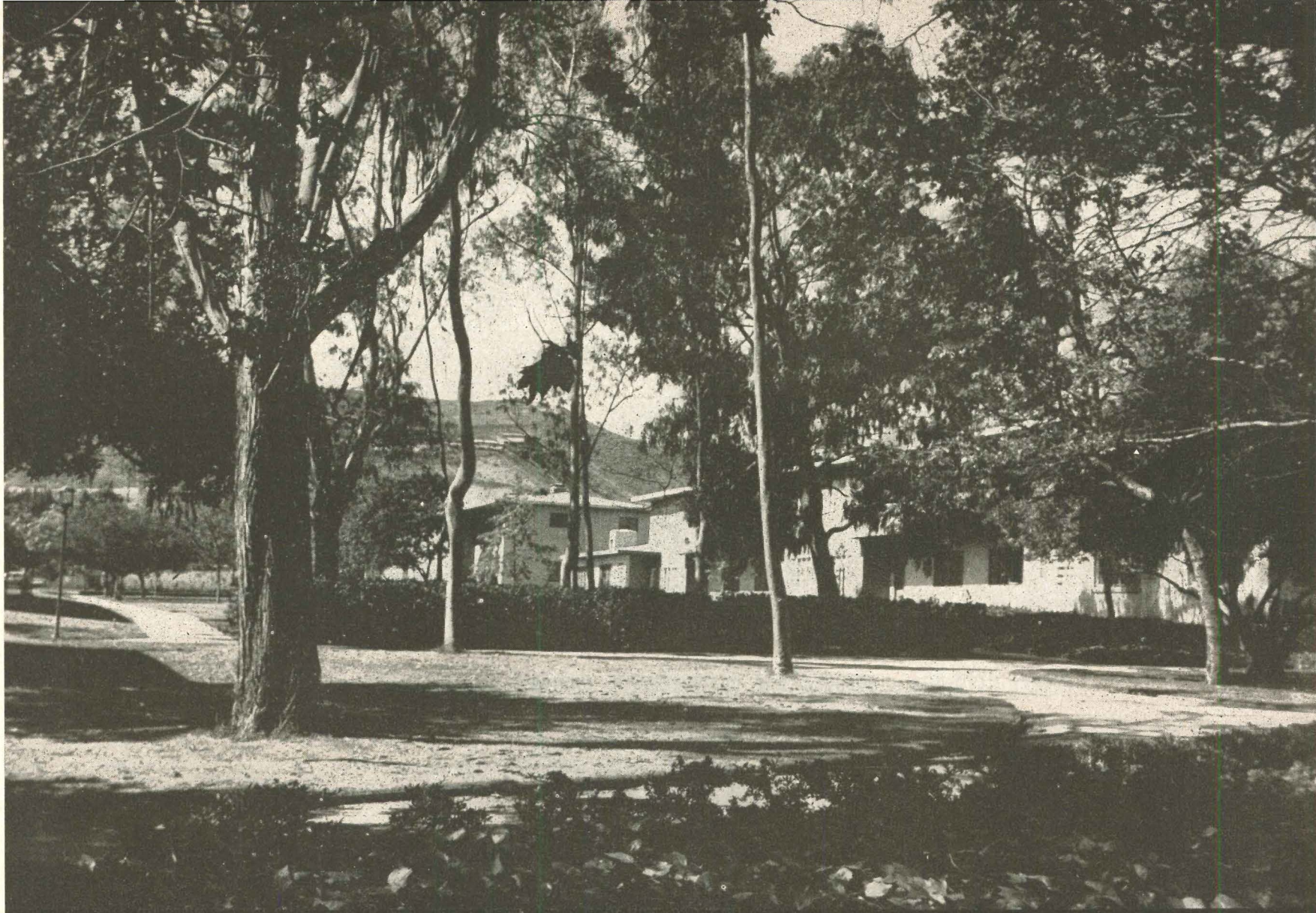
The three things HOUSE & HOME knows for sure about land are these:

- 1.** Good land in the right places is getting more expensive and harder to find every day. In fact, land is now the merchant builder's No. 1 problem.
- 2.** Centering a free-standing house on a too-small lot and thereby cutting the little lot into four smaller pieces is not necessarily the best way to use expensive land.
- 3.** On the contrary, there are several other and better ways you can divide up your acreage: some of these actually permit you to get more families per acre *and yet give each family more land they can actually use and enjoy.*

Because land is the big new problem, HOUSE & HOME will try to report each month on some important aspect of land development. This month's report deals with row houses—and how they can improve the use of land.

below **DETACHED HOUSES: crowding at 5 families per acre**





above **ROW HOUSES: spacious luxury at 8 families per acre**

H&H staff photo

Sometimes row houses make better use of expensive land

Everybody would much rather live in a detached house if he could afford a nice one. But even the millionaires on Chicago's Gold Coast and on New York's Upper Fifth Ave. admitted 50 years ago that land where they wanted to live cost so much that they could not afford grounds on all four sides of their fabulous houses.*

Perforce they built row houses — and often they spent from \$100,000 to \$250,000 for the row houses they built.

So the very first thing to realize about row houses is this:

The row house need not be just a cheaper way to build on a party wall. In fact, the best row-house designs stagger the house fronts to create private patios in front and in the rear, and thus make minimum use of party walls.

So the row house is primarily a thrifty way to use expensive land more economically and more flexibly. How is explained on the next page.

* *Exceptions to prove the rule:
Andrew Carnegie in New York,
Edith Rockefeller McCormick
and Mrs. Potter Palmer in Chicago*

The worst way to plan row houses 24-26 families per acre



FORTUNE: A.S.C.

Can higher density produce more space?

You cannot pack detached one-story houses in tighter than six to the acre. Even that means making the lot only 50' x 100'—so small that neither the front yard nor the back yard nor the two side yards will be very attractive—or very useful.

The advocates of the row house claim that when you have to get above five houses to the acre you can offer much pleasanter living in row houses—*provided* you don't get greedy and try to pack the row houses in like sardines. Row house advocates blame some current Philadelphia and Baltimore tracts (24 families per acre) for giving the row house a bad name. And they point to such superior communities as "Cherokee" in Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia (8.8 families per acre—see opposite) as evidence of the greatly improved land use made possible by sound row-house planning.

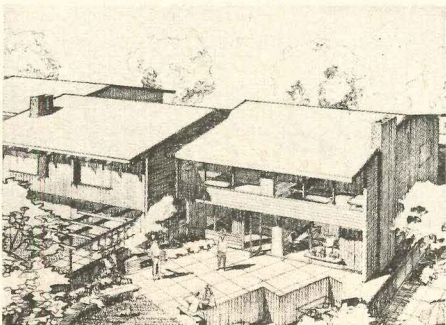
The case for the row house is based upon the answers to a single, simple question:

What kinds of outdoor space do people really want?

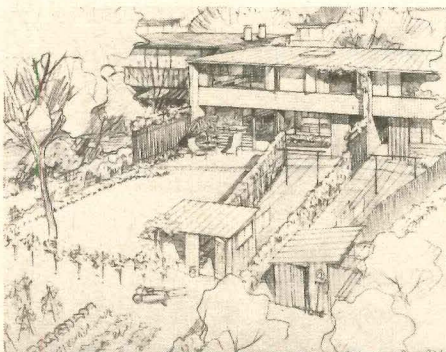
Answer: they probably want four different kinds of outdoor space—

1. They want some private outdoor space. A shielded place to sit and talk and perhaps eat outdoors. Such an outdoor living area should be closely related to corresponding indoor spaces. It should be screened against neighbors, partly paved and partly shaded. It really need not be much larger than about 25' x 35'. (For details of new screening and shading devices, see pp. 122 and 123.)

2. They want some planting areas. Some space for flowers, or vegetables, or a simple lawn. How much garden space is really needed? The answer is probably less than what most builders of detached houses give their customers every day. For these planting areas have to be maintained separately by each family—and such maintenance (in water bills alone) is often far more expensive than home owners (or builders) realize. Chances are that a small planting area of 800 to 1,000 sq. ft. is all a family can really manage. (Proof? One glance at many of the spacious but sadly neglected back yards in many of today's new communities.) These garden areas should be private enough to be safe from intruders, but there is no good reason why neighbors should not enjoy looking at each other's flowers.



Private outdoor space in rear of row houses was provided by Architect Vernon DeMars and associates in this study for redevelopment of area in Bay Region.



Planting areas for each row house were provided in DeMars' 1944 row-house scheme for "Ladies Home Journal." Small sheds for garden tools were part of design. Service yard areas (which tend to look messy) were further screened off from both the garden area and the neighbors.



Photos: (left & bot.) John Ebste

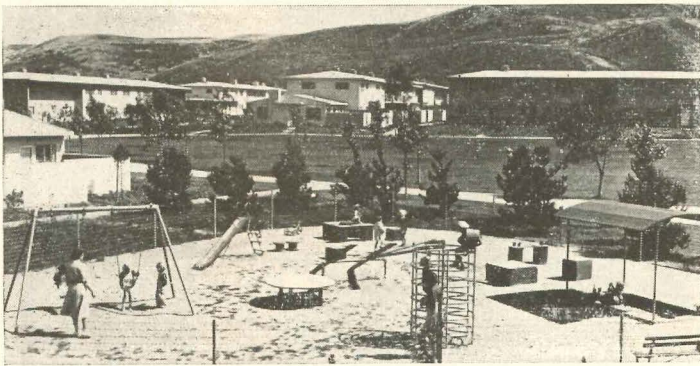
View of trees in an uninterrupted landscape is just outside Architect Oscar Stonorov's new Cherokee row-house community in Philadelphia (see also foot of page). Concentration of row houses kept the acreage from being cut up into little lots.

3. They want a view of trees, grass and flowers. They want a sense of *uninterrupted* landscape around them—rather than carved-up countryside.

4. And they want fairly big spaces for play and recreation. Small children, teenagers and adults alike need more than streets or small back yards for games like soft ball, touch football, and so on. They need real playgrounds—an acre or more in one well-maintained chunk. Such spaces are fast disappearing as the older suburbs fill up, and they are seldom available in today's 60' x 120' lot developments. (How such communal areas might be financed is discussed on pp. 112-113.)

The trouble with most small-lot tracts today—so the planners believe—is that they offer only one type of outdoor space: the privately owned small lot. And the trouble with some of those small lots is that they are sometimes further subdivided into useless or pretentious (and, anyway, wasteful) spaces: a front yard kept up only for show, two side yards kept up only to block out the neighbors, and a back yard kept up only if there is enough money and elbow grease left over to keep it up.

The row house is a land-planning device



M. Lowe courtesy Museum of Modern Art

Big play spaces for children and adults alike are among the most attractive characteristics of Baldwin Hills Village, L.A., designed by a group of architects and planners in 1942. Today Baldwin Hills' planting has turned this community into a wonderfully pleasant park (see also picture on p. 102).

Oddly enough, the row house is not most importantly a house. It is an attitude toward land use which becomes increasingly worth considering as merchant builders find that land is scarce, expensive, or full of built-in problems (such as steep grades, unfavorable soil conditions, etc., etc.).

The big idea in row-house planning is that by concentrating your houses in one area you automatically tend to concentrate your outdoor spaces in another. There are advantages for both house and land in this:

By concentrating houses in one area, you also concentrate (and thus shorten) your roads and utility runs—a major economy. Added advantages: you can pick the best spot for your buildings, leave the rest of your acreage for gardens and playgrounds; you can leave more or less untouched clusters of trees, steep slopes, rocks, or land that is too low for building and put your houses elsewhere.

By concentrating open land in the rest of your acreage, you can create parks, playgrounds or "village greens" large enough really to count for something—as in Baldwin Hills Village, which has eight families to the acre, and yet boasts so much outdoor space that, today, you can hardly see the buildings for the parks.

The advocates of the row house like to make these points in simple, diagrammatic comparisons. For the diagrams, please turn the page ➡

A new and better way to plan row houses 8.8 families per acre



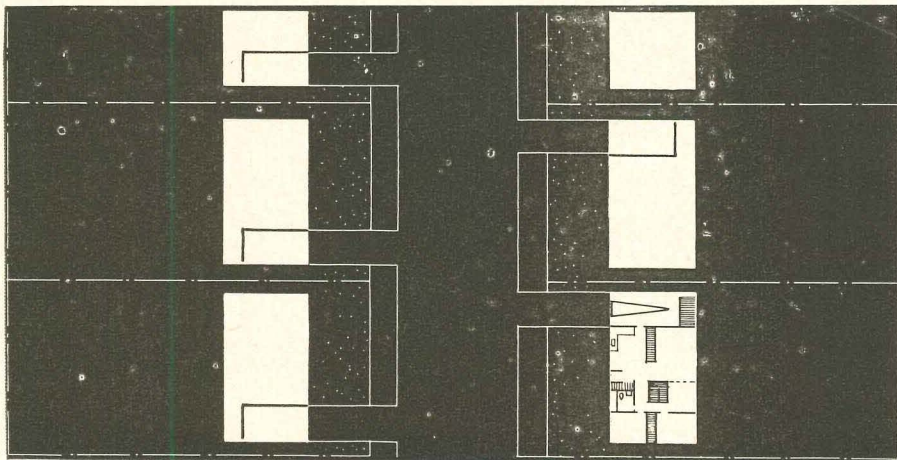
The case for the row house

Greater densities —
but less crowding

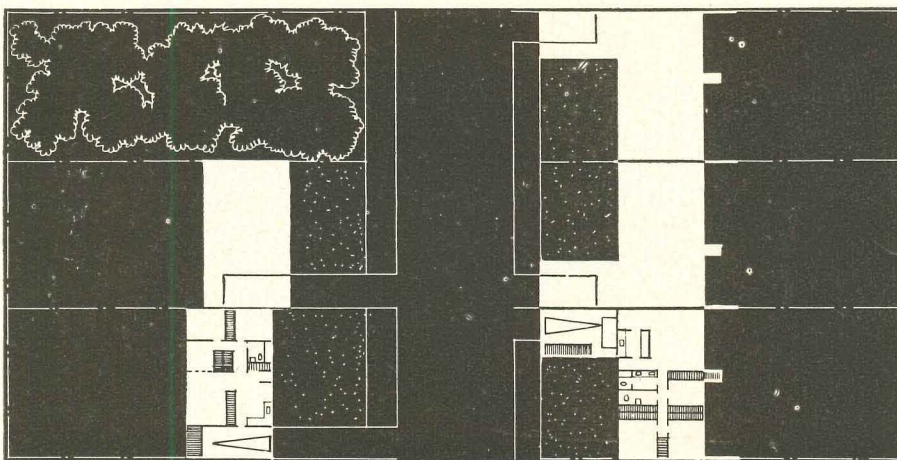
These three sets of diagrams and pictures illustrate the kind of land-planning logic cited by advocates of the row house. Their argument is impressive: by eliminating useless side yards and by reducing individual lots to manageable proportions, the row-house planners can develop higher-density communities that can boast bigger houses, better gardens, and generous communal parks and playgrounds covering as much as 15 per cent of the total acreage!

Impossible? Not at all—take a look at these diagrams.

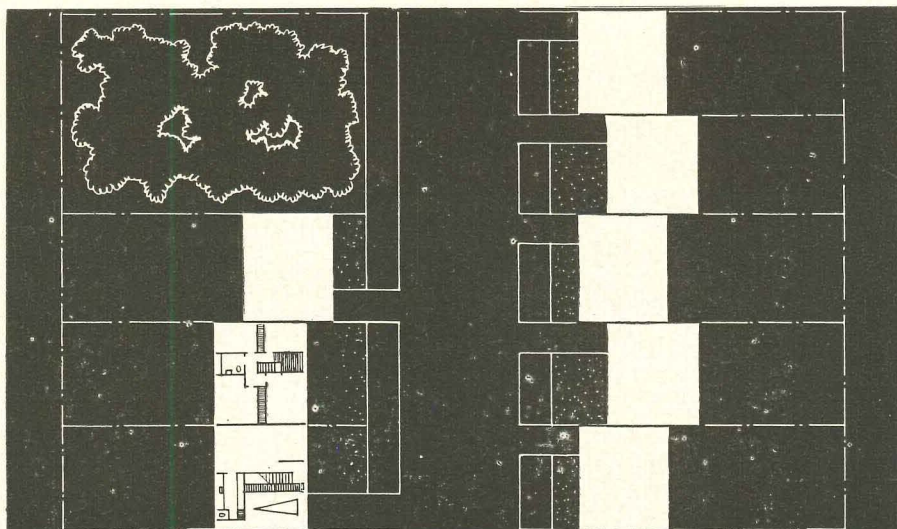
To simplify the argument, the three diagrams were drawn to represent the same schematic one-acre "tract" developed in three different ways: first, in the more or less traditional manner, assuming a low land-price condition and a density of five families per gross acre. Second, using a one-story row-house pattern. And, third, using a generous two-story row house with garage. The diagrams are based on various studies made independently by row-house Architects Vernon DeMars of Berkeley, Calif. (see pp. 114-115) and Bernard Wagner, of Washington, D.C.



1.
Density: 5 families per acre
House: 1,064 sq. ft. plus garage
Lot: 60' x 120'
Land waste: tight side yards and (perhaps) excessive rear gardens
Communal areas: none
Added advantages: each family has its own detached house and fair-sized garden



2.
Density: 5 families per acre
House: 1,064 sq. ft. plus garage
Lot: 50' x 120'
Land waste: none
Communal areas: more than 50,000 sq. ft. for each 10-acre tract
Added advantages: shorter roads, shorter utility runs

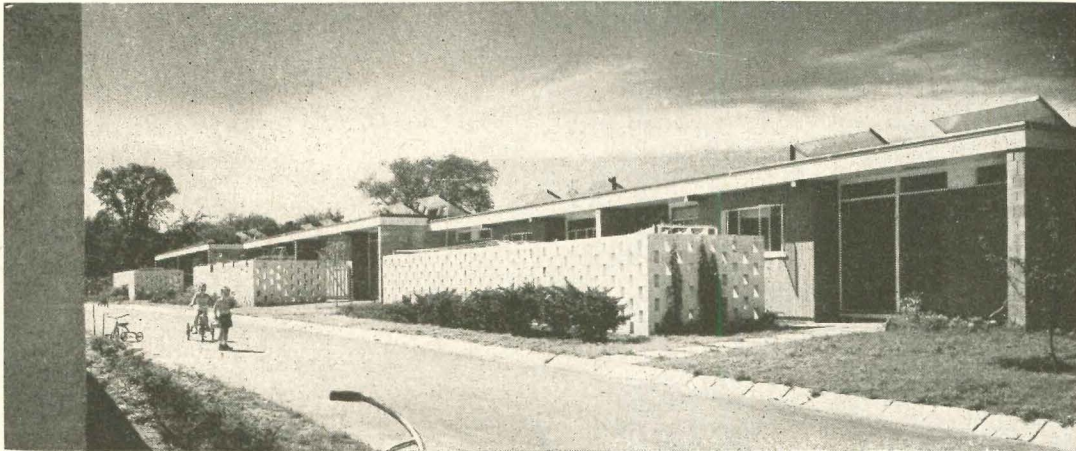


3.
Density: 8 families per acre
House: 1,740 sq. ft. on two levels, plus garage
Lot: 35' x 100'
Land waste: none
Communal areas: more than 60,000 sq. ft. for each 10-acre tract
Added advantages: much shorter roads, much shorter utility runs



FORTUNE: *Todd Webb*

1. Typical, detached, one-story house pattern, where land is cheap: 50' x 28' houses (1,064 sq. ft. plus garage) on 60' x 120' lots. Unless builder has provided additional communal playgrounds (and thus lowered density to below the assumed five families per acre) small children and teenagers will play in street, for all outdoor space has been cut up into front, side, and backyards each too small for many games.



Ezra Stoller

2. One-story row-house pattern, same density: 50' x 28' houses on 50' x 120' lots. Advantage of the one-story row house over the two-story version: somewhat greater privacy for rear patios. In this layout enough land was saved to provide each 50-house tract with a communal playground of about 50,000 sq. ft.—big enough for full-sized softball or touch football fields. Note savings in road lengths and utility runs. Private gardens are almost too large for single families to keep up easily in some climates.



Roger Sturtevant

3. Two-story row-house pattern, increased density. These two-story, four-bedroom row houses measure 35' wide by 28' deep, have about 1,740 sq. ft. of living space on two levels plus garage. Lots have been reduced to 100' depths to maintain reasonable proportions for rear gardens. It was also assumed that 10' setbacks from street would be permissible. In short, these are not minimum houses by any means. (One of the many strikes against the row house has been its frequent popular association with public housing.) Despite eight-families-per-acre densities in this diagram (rather than five), each ten-acre tract would have at least a 60,000 sq. ft. communal park or playground. Private gardens are about 2,000 sq. ft. and thus easy to keep in shape.

Few row-house developments in recent years have illustrated both the advantages and the problems of row housing as clearly as Easter Hill, a public housing project that looks unlike any other public housing project in the country. It is presented on the next six pages.

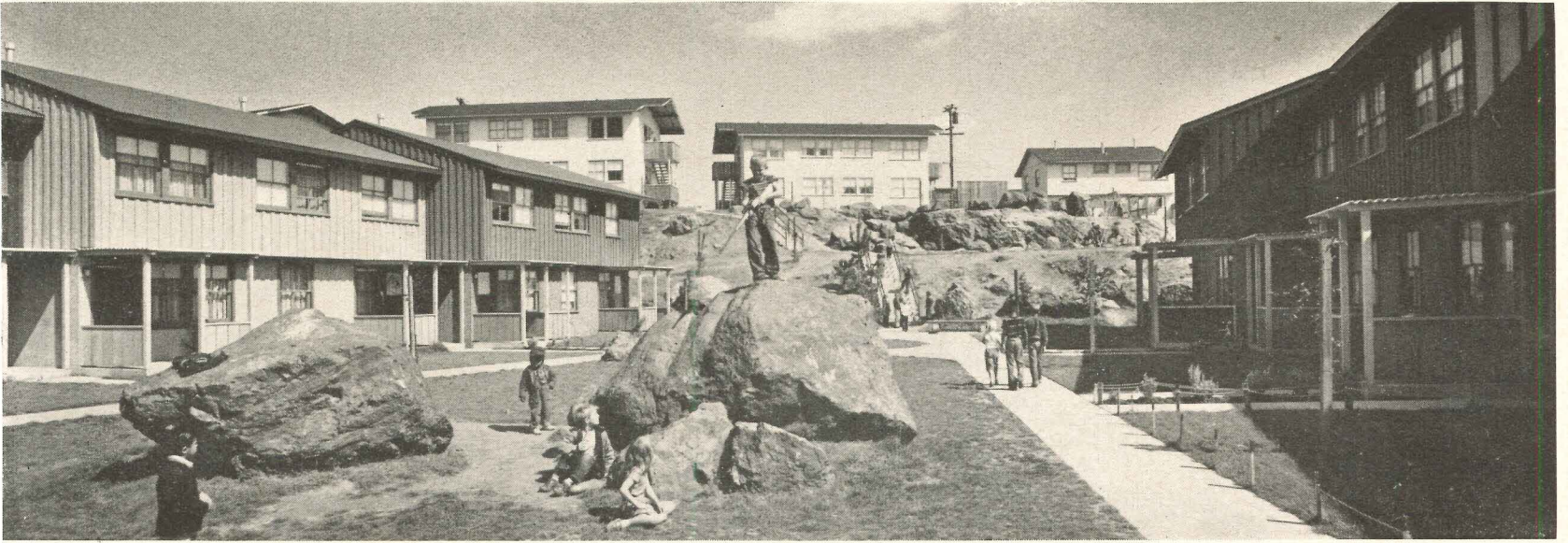


Bad land into good: The site looked like a moon landscape before Easter Hill was built. It used to be a rock quarry, was abandoned after end of World War II. Note piles of large boulders, sharp drops in grade. Careful site planning and landscaping turned both these problems into handsome assets. New village (below) has 300 units, net density of almost 20 families per acre, yet boasts large communal play areas and lawns. Numbers on plan refer to views of village on opposite page.

The case for the row house:

Plenty of space — at 20 families per acre





This is Easter Hill Village, a public housing project in Richmond, Calif. Easter Hill is, by all odds, the most important exercise in row-house planning of the past ten years.

It is important, first, because it demonstrates many of the major advantages and problems in row housing; and, second, because its designers took a fresh look at the *architecture* of row houses, and came up with some unexpected answers (see pp. 114-115).

What does Easter Hill tell about the row house? Three things - - -

1. The row house can cope with problem land. Easter Hill was built on 21½ acres of land so bad that everybody had passed it up for years. The site was a depleted, abandoned rock quarry—desolate, difficult, badly graded and crammed with boulders (see opposite). Solution: by concentrating their 300 dwelling units in row houses placed on only three acres of usable land, and by devoting the remainder to gardens, yards, streets, parking lots and large communal playgrounds, the architects neatly dodged the major site obstacles, created a high-density community and provided more *useful* outdoor space than many an expensive suburb gets.

2. The row house can be given individuality. Because many people picture row houses as long, dreary chains of identical boxes, Easter Hill's architects went to extraordinary lengths to make each house different from its neighbor. Changes in color, materials, fenestration, detail, etc., etc. produced a gay, informal collection of individual houses—a far cry from the row house people associate with Philadelphia's Nicetown—or a public housing project (see pp. 110-111).

3. The row-house community can maintain its playgrounds. Easter Hill is a rental project, of course, but its architects decided to figure out in detail how their community *might* be subdivided for sale and how its communal playgrounds and lawns *might* be maintained by the home owners. Answer: an annual assessment of about \$15 per family would pay for the upkeep of the five acres of community grounds. Even at twice that figure, most home owners might well be delighted to join some kind of "communal country club" boasting a 3½ acre playing field plus innumerable playgrounds for small children, rock-climbing areas, lawns and greens.

For details on Easter Hill Village, see the next four pages. For an analysis of Easter Hill's revolutionary approach to the architecture of row housing, see pp. 114-115).

1. Rock-climbing areas, brilliant solution to a tough problem: what to do with boulders from abandoned quarry. Bulldozers pushed rocks around according to architects' plan. Result: children have natural "play sculpture" to climb.



2. Village greens between rows of houses are free from automobile traffic, form protected play areas for Easter Hill's children. There are more than half a dozen of them in addition to the 3½-acre playing field.



3. Fenced back yards serve as private outdoor living or service areas. Arrangement of row houses creates a series of large courts, each with distinct character of its own. Several open up toward view of hilltop.

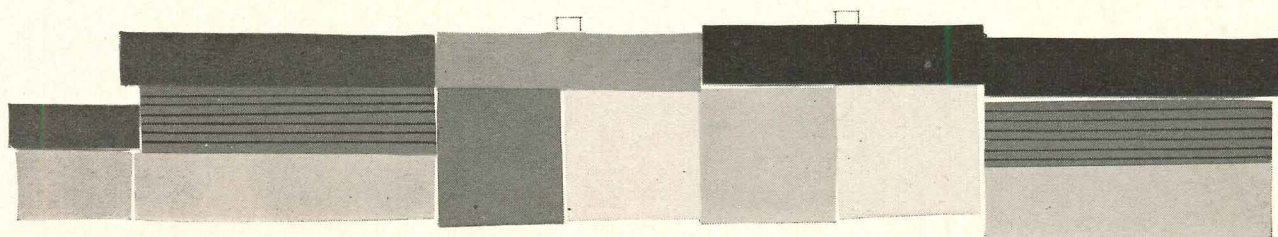


4. Cul-de-sac parking lots reach halfway into groups of houses, bring cars within easy walking distance of all houses. Parking areas act as "space dividers" rather than off-street islands, enlarge distances between rows of houses.

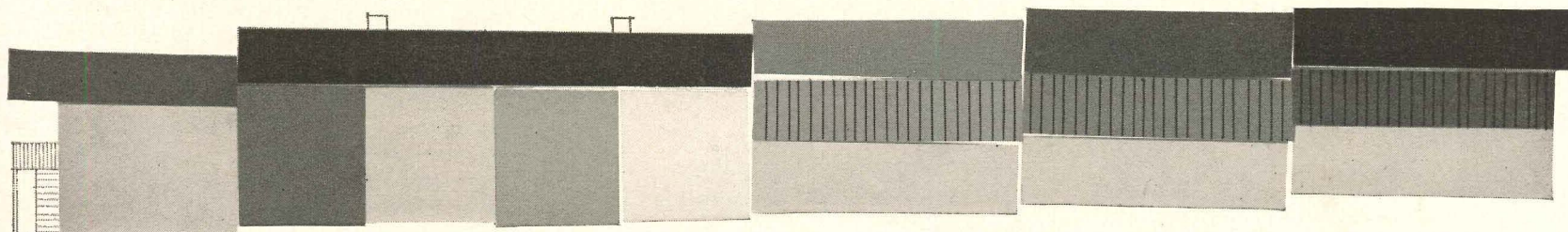


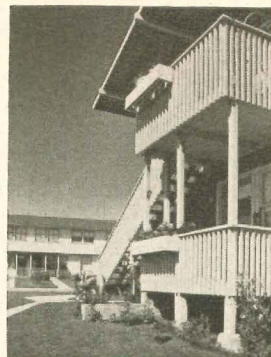
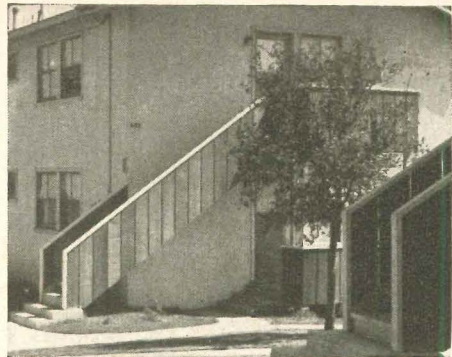
Photos: Roger Sturtevant

Variety: the No. 1 row house need



Variety in colors, materials and textures: Architects prepared exact charts showing variations within each row of houses to get results like those shown in picture at top of this page. Note occasional use of "chimneys" to enclose vents.





Variety in stairs: Different treatment of stair rails in 2-story apartment units creates added architectural effects at ends of some row houses. Note flower boxes, placed there to suggest similar treatment to other tenants.

Easter Hill's architects had only five slightly different house types to play with; yet they managed to create a gay little village of 300 units in which no one house is quite like its neighbors.

To achieve this remarkable effect, they used only three basic devices—and the laws of combinations and permutations did the rest. The three:

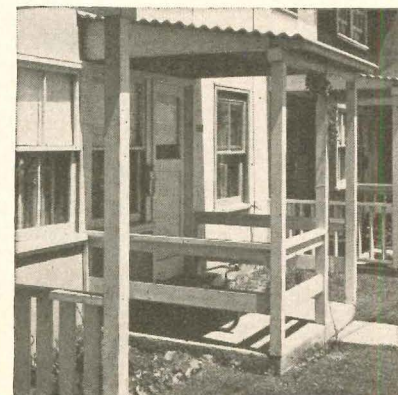
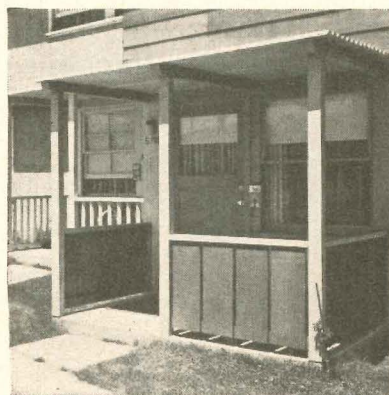
1. They varied their colors, materials, textures. The color range is in bright pastel shades, covers walls as well as roof surfaces. Even within each house there are variations: gray houses with blue doors, white houses with red doors, and so on. Detailed color and materials plans were drawn up for every street in the village.

2. They varied their details. Several different types of porch railing, exterior stair rails, flower boxes etc. were worked out for Easter Hill. In some houses the vent pipes were encased in stucco "chimney stacks" while, elsewhere, they were left exposed.

3. They varied their patterns and forms. Easter Hill's row houses are staggered to create variations in over-all shapes. In addition, there are innumerable minor changes in pattern that all add up to making each row house a personal home. Examples: window spacing was varied in neighboring units; similar, adjoining units with back-to-back plumbing stacks had their front doors relocated so as to avoid the usual "mirror-image" effect that makes many row-house facades look slightly ridiculous; and no house had to share a path from street to the front door with its neighbor—each family has its own, separate approach.

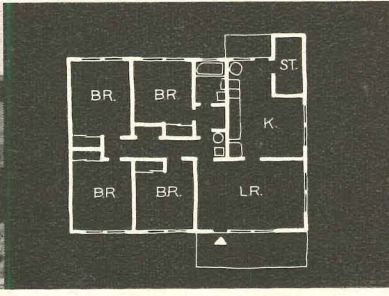
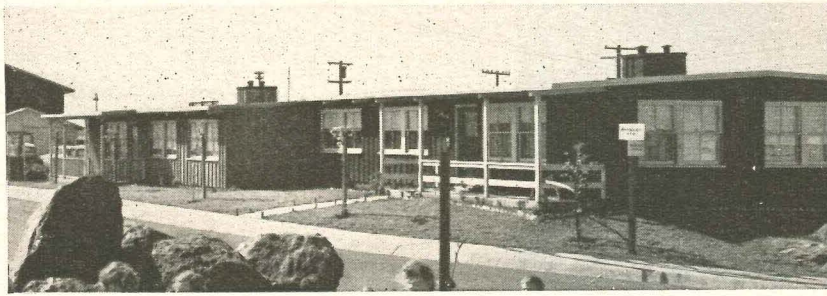
To some, such meticulous attention to details may sound a little excessive, but the results at Easter Hill are startling—and convincing: not only does each house seem to have a "personality" of its own, but the village seems to have acquired a curious and pleasant quality of homogeneous chaos—an ability to absorb, without trouble, some of the esthetically less perfect aspects of everyday living. Like many a charming and colorful Mediterranean town, Easter Hill can "swallow up" without trouble a clutter of children's toys, a splash of laundry fluttering in the wind, or an outburst of spectacular and individualistic landscaping on the part of some tenant with strong views on the subject.*

LOCATION: Richmond, Calif.
DONALD L. HARDISON & VERNON DEMARS,
associated architects
LAWRENCE HALPRIN, landscape architect
GEORGE K. BROKAW, mechanical engineer
PHIL R. JONES, civil engineer
THEO. G. MEYER & SONS, general contractors



Variety in front porches: As in the outside stairs, the railings here were treated in different, simple ways in adjoining houses to give each tenant some individual touch in his house. Porch roofs change from flat to shed.

* Easter Hill's neatest gardeners are its Negro and Nisei tenants, whose houses and yards stand out from the rest. Mortgage bankers and appraisers, please note!



Semidetached four-bedroom houses have 1,200 sq. ft. of living space, are only one story high. Their low silhouette introduces a further variant in Easter Hill's "townscape."

ROW HOUSING

How to subdivide a row-house village



Easter Hill's dwelling units are small (see plans above), in keeping with public housing standards. And Easter Hill's outdoor areas are generous, open, and without much subdivision—again, because this is a rental project maintained as a unit by Richmond's housing authority.

But supposing a merchant builder wanted to build row houses for sale—what would happen then to the size of the individual houses, to the open land, the peripheral roads, the fenceless lots?

Easter Hill's architects considered the problem in detail because they hope to redevelop another area with row houses (and detached houses) built for sale. Their answers:

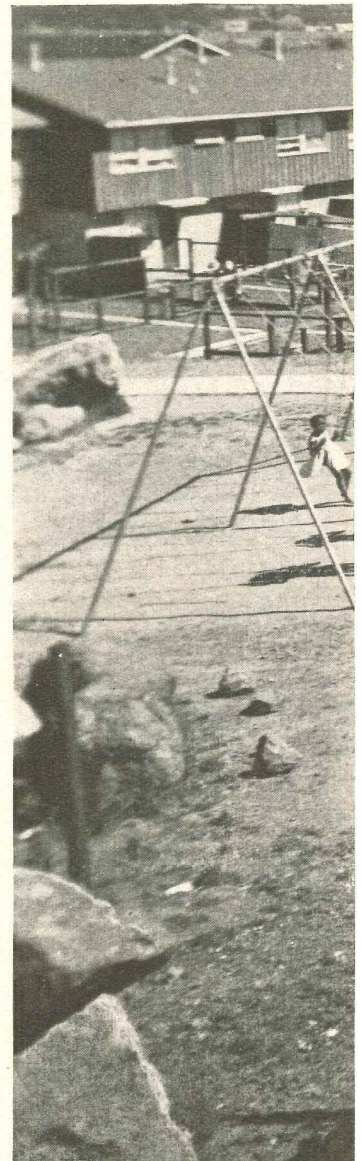
1. Easter Hill could easily be subdivided into individually-owned row houses. Except for one or two house types (which borrow one bedroom from a neighboring unit), all Easter Hill houses can be clearly separated by traditional property lines. Or else, groups of five row houses might well be sold in units to one resident owner-landlord who might find it profitable to lease four houses as income-producing units. Single ownership of such groups of houses has certain land-planning advantages, since land can be more flexibly allocated that way.

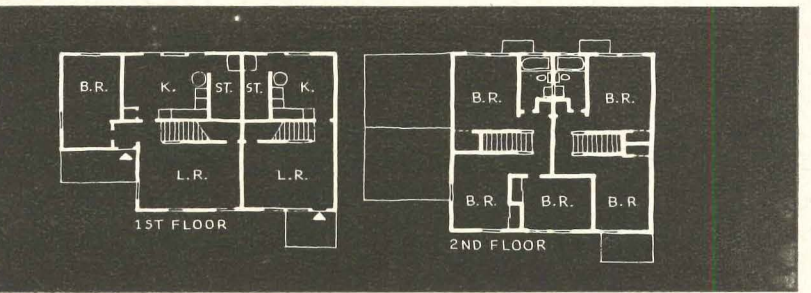
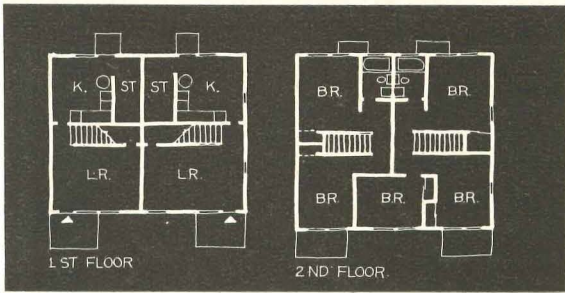
2. The communal space left over after lot subdivision could be maintained for as little as \$15 per family per year. Such communal space could be owned cooperatively as a kind of "country club" area.

3. Row houses built for sale can be designed with their own garages in widths of 30' or even less.

Easter Hill's architects feel that the potentialities of the row house are only just beginning to be understood, point to experiments in Scandinavian countries and elsewhere as proof of the great flexibility inherent in this building type. For examples, see pp. 116-117.

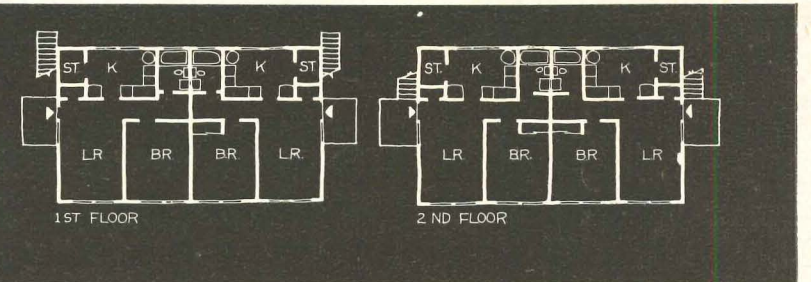
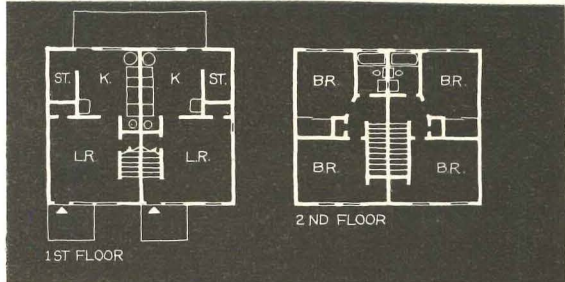
Photo: Roger Sturtevant





Special two-story units borrow third bedrooms from neighboring houses. Result is a further change in fenestration—an effect which the architects welcomed and strove to achieve.

Another four-bedroom unit is two stories high, appears only at the ends of rows of houses. One bedroom is in a one-story lean-to, has more privacy than the other three.



Two-bedroom, two-story units are only 16' wide, have 820 sq. ft. of living space. Architects believe you need variety of dwelling types to attract variety of age groups, types of families.

One-bedroom apartments, one above the other sometimes occur at the end of a row of houses. Upstairs units are reached by way of outside stairs. Below: typical Easter Hill playground.



1938: Chandler Farms, Arizona



Vernon DeMars and the row house: from diagrams

Among architects and planners, Vernon DeMars is recognized as one of the top authorities on row-house design in the US. Ever since 1938 when, as one of the architects for the Farm Security Administration, he designed some of the most advanced row-house communities in the world, DeMars has given as much thought to this building type as any man in the country. He was one of the architects for Easter Hill, and his thinking pervades the entire village. To those who have followed his work in the past, Easter Hill is bound to come as a surprise. No two projects could be more different than DeMars' Yuba City (1940) and his Easter Hill of 15 years later. This is the step-by-step story of his change in thinking and in practice.

"We've got to get rid of 'projectitis,'" Vernon DeMars likes to say when explaining Easter Hill Village to visitors. "It is hard enough for people to make the adjustment that's needed when they move into the economic ghetto of a housing project—or, for that matter, into the social uniformity of the average new suburb. It seems to me that we should not make things still more difficult for them by asking them to live in architectural diagrams. At Easter Hill, we tried to give the houses both individuality and familiarity. They are full of little details that are part of people's experience—porch rails, double-hung windows, pitched roofs, some flower boxes and so on. All this keeps Easter Hill from being set too far apart from neighboring communities—which is particularly important in public housing projects."

Does this mean that DeMars is backtracking from his earlier work?

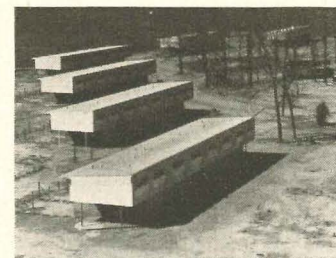
"Not at all," he says. He feels that his early, geometric, even diagrammatic row-house communities were a necessary and dramatic forward step to establish the basic concept of open row housing. Once that concept was established, DeMars felt it was important to apply it to the specific and detailed human needs encountered in most communities. His thinking developed along these lines:

▶ In his early FSA projects, the row-house strips were treated as long units with virtually no differentiation between them. Planting and each family's individual expression was expected to add the "human touch." DeMars discovered, however, that beautiful though these row houses were, their composition could be ruined by such frequent (and intensely human) touches as a display of laundry in the back yard or a tricycle on the front lawn.

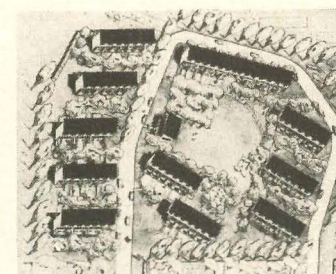
▶ As he developed more FSA communities, DeMars introduced screens, fences, hedges and other divisions between houses, varied the orientation of his row-house slabs and generally moved away from a gridlike pattern.



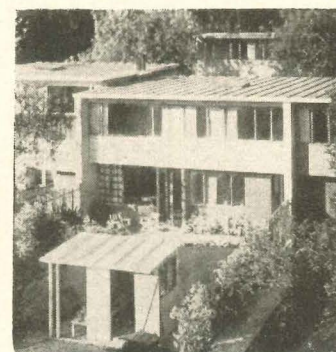
Chandler Farms showed early attempt at individual expression through emphasis on heavy party walls.



1940: Yuba City, Calif.

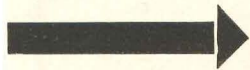


1942: Taft Calif.

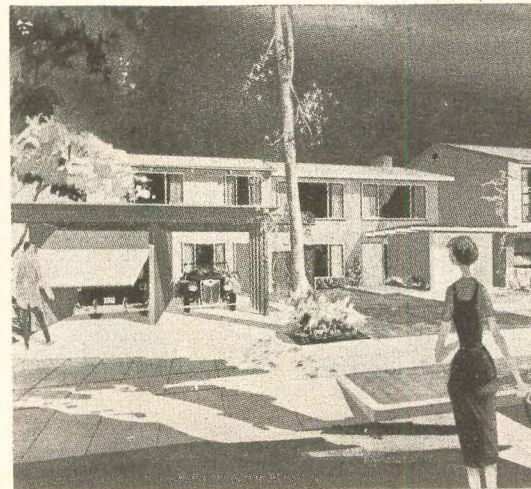


1944: "Ladies Home Journal" row house

Copenhagen's old row houses painted in different bright colors, impressed DeMars as a guide to a more recognizable individual expression.



1955: Row house proposal for San Francisco area



..... to homes

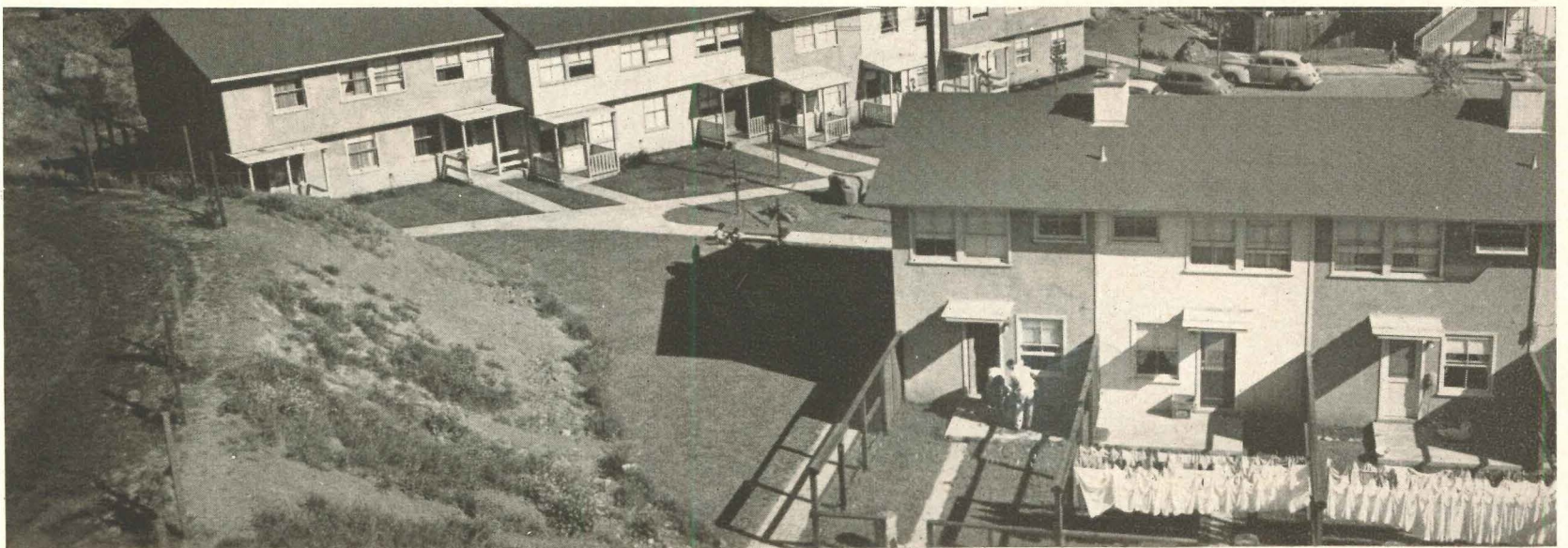
▶ During the war DeMars carried his row-house studies still further, came up (in 1944) with a project commissioned and published by the *Ladies' Home Journal* and exhibited by New York's Museum of Modern Art. It was far removed from Chandler Farms; each house was different in color from its neighbors, all units were staggered, and there were many variations in entrance porches, terraces, and the landscaping of rear gardens.

▶ Easter Hill and various redevelopment studies for Richmond, Calif. complete DeMars' thinking on row houses to date. Each unit is now treated as an individual home (in the Richmond sketches, even the window sizes and the roof pitches vary). DeMars sometimes jokingly admits that this approach may be "corny." But he feels that the basic concept of row housing in open land is so revolutionary in itself—particularly through the West (excepting San Francisco proper)—that it would be a mistake to make it even more unacceptable by being doctrinaire about architectural detail.

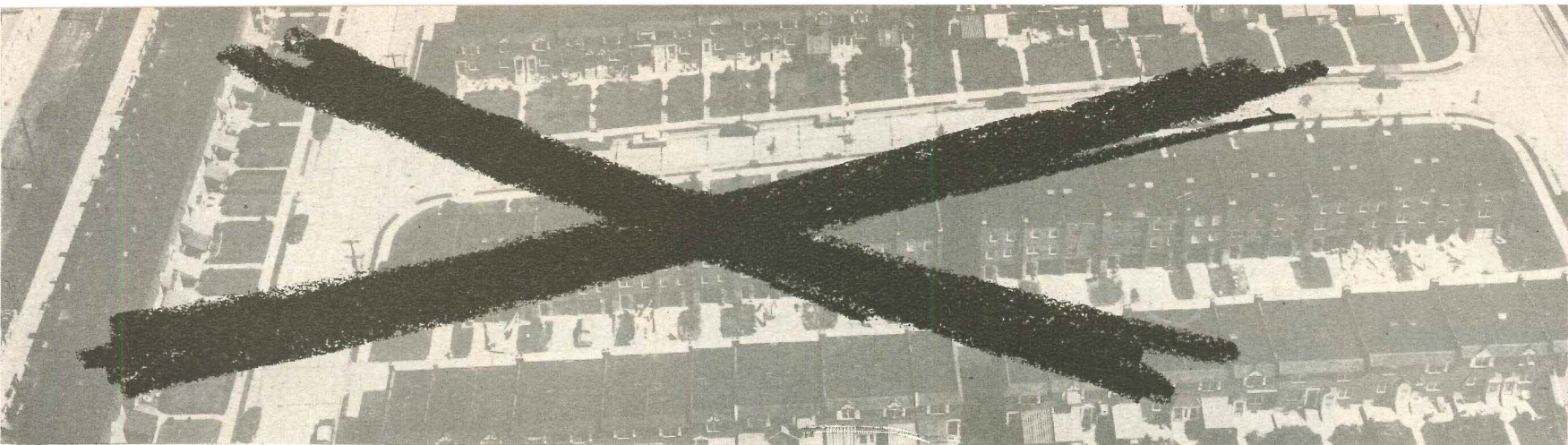
This does not mean that DeMars is not concerned with the architectural possibilities of the row house. He recognizes—as do other architects—that you can create much more interesting forms and outdoor spaces with rows of houses than with detached units. But he is convinced that any row-house solution that does not concern itself with the need for a recognizable, individual expression is simple dodging the real issue. And if he succeeded only in doing this one thing—taking the curse of "projectitis" away from Easter Hill—his rationalization of "corn" may have been worth the effort.

ROW HOUSING

Roger Sturtevant



1954: Easter Hill Village



FORTUNE: A.S.C.

ROW HOUSING

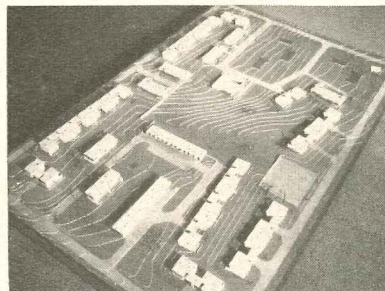
When all is said and done, the term "row house"—to most Americans—still has some highly unattractive connotations. The picture above shows why.

There is some reason to believe that this attitude may be changing in the near future—may, in fact, have changed already in some parts of the country. In many areas, attractive row house communities have been built in recent years, are under construction now, or are being projected. These designs are taking the row house out of the "minimal housing" and "high density" brackets, and are showing how it can be designed both to open up the land around it and to make that land more useful.

Here are just a few examples, in the US and abroad. Many problems still remain, but these advanced designs point to solutions. Is privacy a row house problem? Yes—and so Architect Arne Jacobsen, in Copenhagen, is building patio row houses. Is monotony hard to overcome? Yes again, but Architect Marcel Breuer is overcoming it with a mixture of one and two story units (including some fascinating stilt houses) at Princeton, N.J. Is parking difficult? Well, the problem can be solved as Architect Oscar Stonorov solved it when he put garages into his luxurious Chestnut Hill row houses in Philadelphia (and, incidentally, made 8.8 families per acre look like Fairmount Park—see p. 105).

So it looks as if the row house may be in for a rebirth. And while it is being reborn, how about giving it a new name, too?

Photos: (below) Ben Schnall

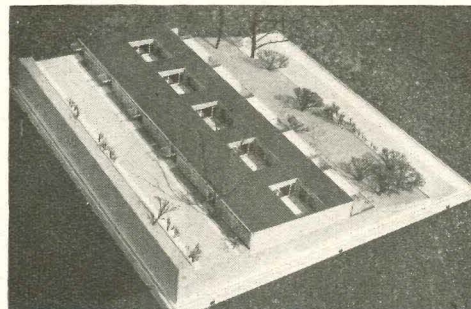


Princeton, N.J. project of 107 dwelling units in 19 row-house blocks was designed by Architect Marcel Breuer for Institute for Advanced Studies. Construction is expected to start this summer. Several house types are on stilts, thus have carport space below.

Klampenborg, Denmark community of large, privately built row houses was designed by Architect Arne Jacobsen in 1949. Each house has its own garage, private dining patio between staggered units. Houses were angled so each catches view of the Sound between Denmark and Sweden.



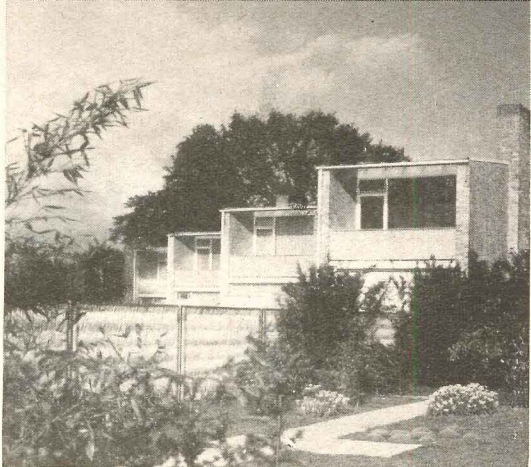
North Kingston, R.I. row-house community was designed for US Navy personnel by The Architects Collaborative. Concentration of dwelling units opened up playgrounds, communal parks. Project was built for \$3.5 million under Wherry Act.



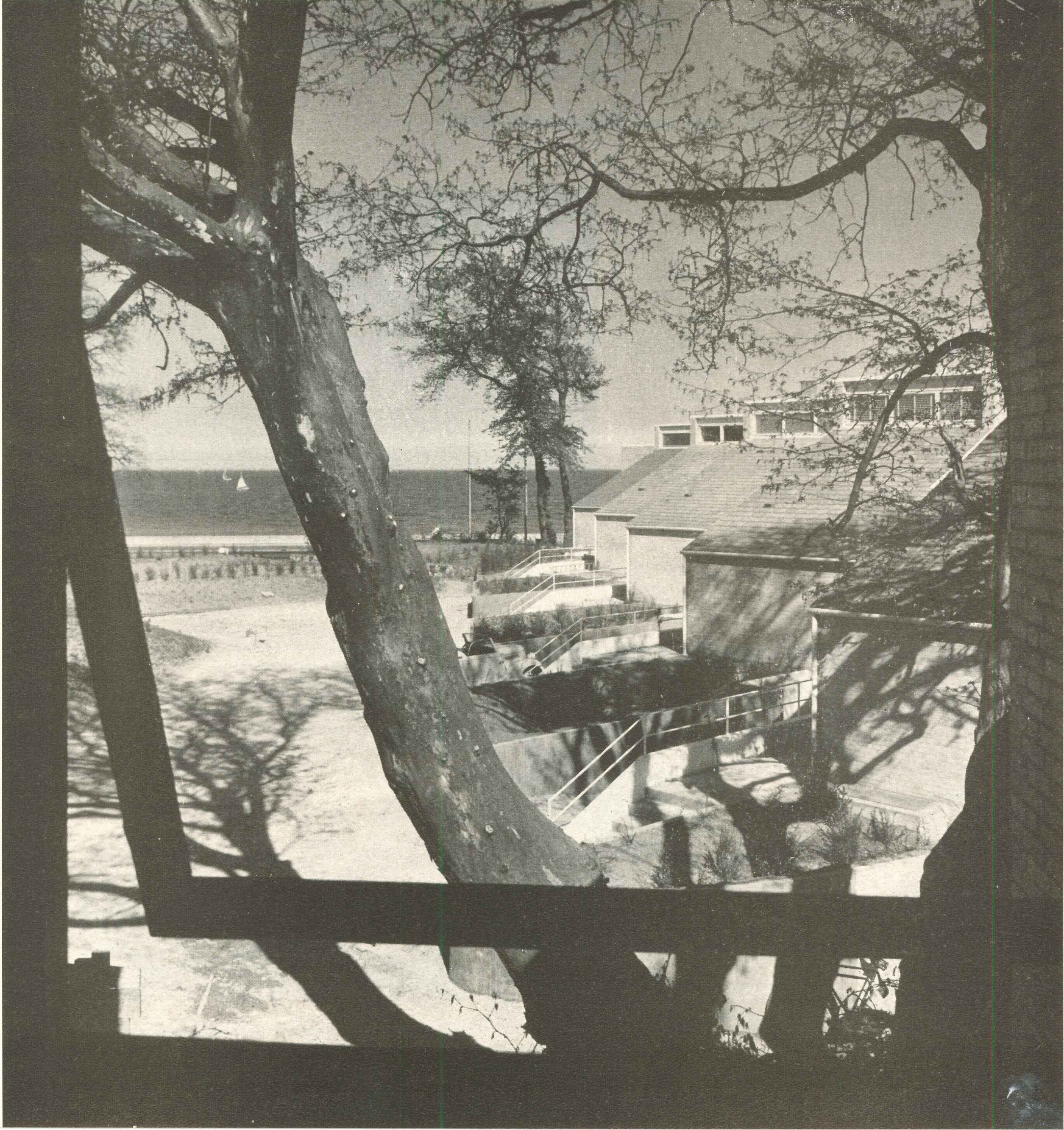
Carlsminde, Denmark project designed by Architect Arne Jacobsen will have row houses with patios for privacy.

**Yesterday's row houses
spelled overcrowding . . .**

**. . . tomorrow's row houses
may open new vistas**



Photos: Strüwing



6 MORE WAYS TO BUILD BETTER FOR LESS

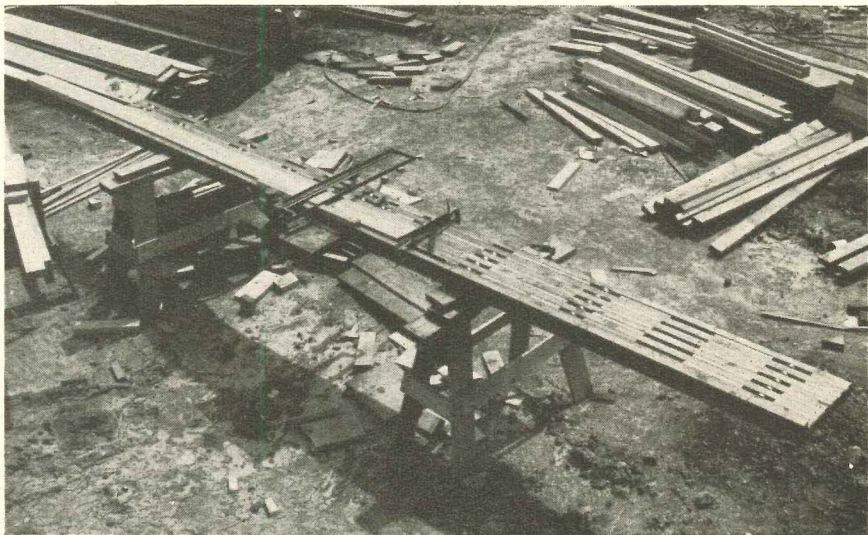
This is the fourth of a series of cost-cutting articles

appearing regularly in HOUSE & HOME

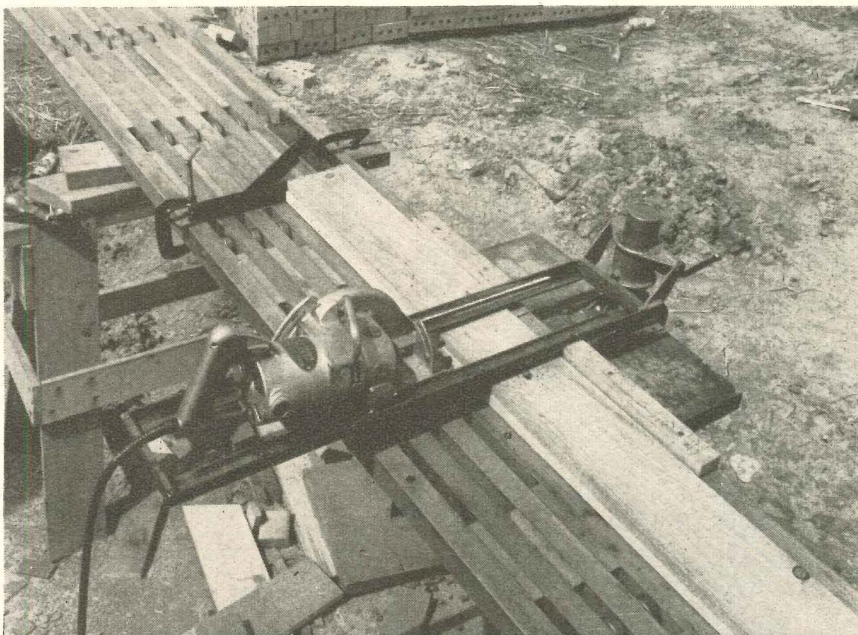
36 Roller-skate table cuts labor costs 25%

The shortest distance between a pile of lumber and the foundation of a house is a roller conveyer.

With a direct labor saving of 25%, Chicago-area Builder Al Kaufman is convinced of it. Kaufman rigged up his own roller conveyer, uses a portable electric saw to cut all his lumber close to the foundation of each house. Seventy-five house-per-year Builder Kaufman checked into prefabrication, decided to mechanize only slightly because "I estimated I would lose any savings I made through prefabbing in extra handling." So Kaufman now cuts each load of lumber (dumped close to foundation) in advance, points his roller conveyer toward the job, thus the pre-cut lumber ends up close to its point of use. "That way handling and sawing are combined into one operation; lumber goes onto the saw table and straight into the building."



Conveyer table is set up on two sawhorses in one minute



Built of roller-skates wheels mounted between 1" x 2"s, table features movable clamp stops for lumber lengths. Portable saw, laid in track, cuts lumber to correct lengths. Entire rig can be picked up and moved to next job in a matter of minutes.



Complete frame at foundation, pre-cut and ready for assembly

37 Locate your furnace anywhere

Continental Photo



Frank Smith Jr.

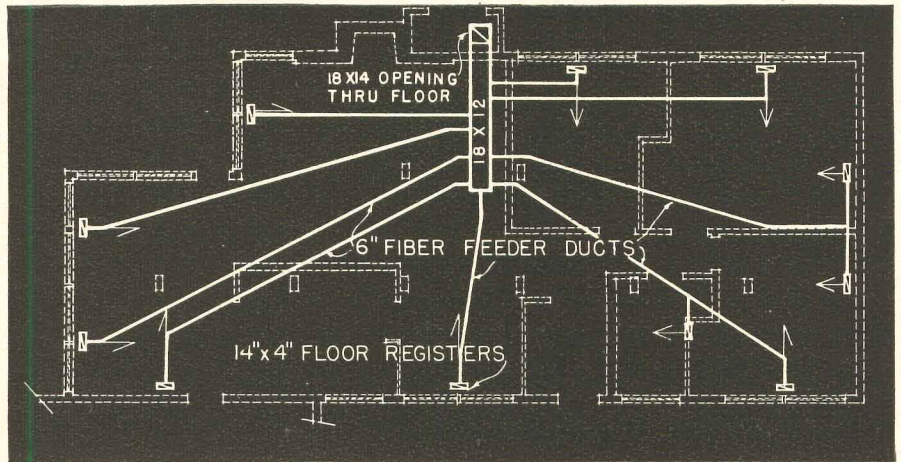


Charles Boardman

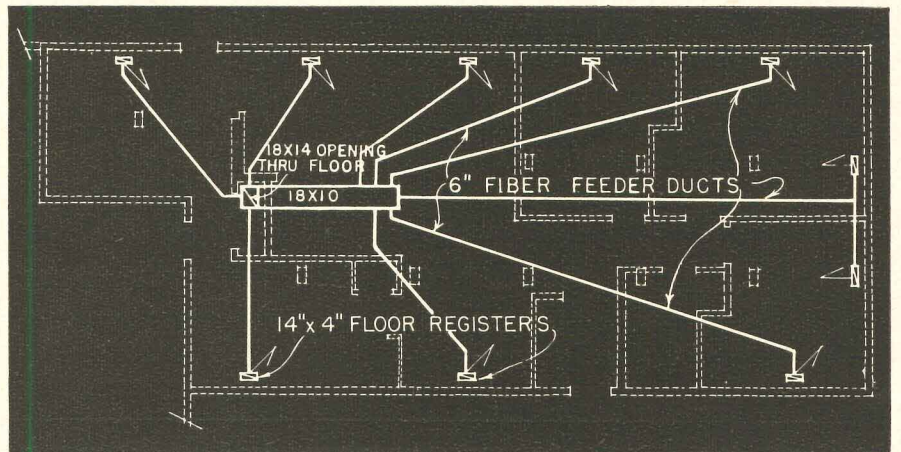
"It doesn't cost a nickel more to put the furnace where you want it" say Philadelphia Builders Frank Smith Jr. and Charles Boardman.

Perimeter heating cramped house plans for Smith & Boardman because the down-draft furnace had to be centrally located. They worked with their heating engineer, came up with a plenum that permitted them to locate the furnace anywhere in the house or even outside the house in a utility closet.

The plenum is nothing more than a 10" x 18" duct, insulated with glass fiber, that carries the heated air to a central point for distribution to the perimeter registers. The duct is set into a shallow excavation, braced slightly on top, and poured into the floor slab. Smith & Boardman feel that the extra cost of the plenum is far offset by the freedom gained in planning.



Furnace outside walls of house is safety feature



Off-center furnace has done excellent heating job

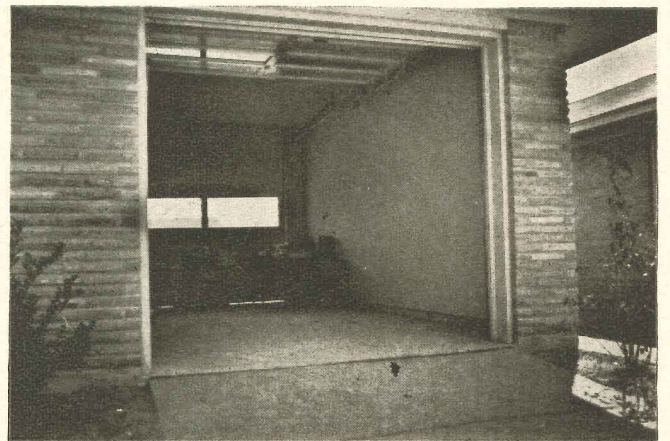
38 An all-weather patio for \$22

Spending an extra \$22, Houston Builder LeMay adds a door to the back of his garages so they can be used as breezeways. The extra door costs LeMay exactly \$21.20 more than his usual brick veneer wall, would cost, little more than the price for frame. Another advantage pleases boat and trailer owners. They are able to push their equipment through the garage into the back yard for storage.

Says LeMay "we find this extra door definitely justifies itself from the standpoint of extra sales. It adds an excellent all-weather patio for entertaining at very little extra cost."



Dick LeMay



Overhead doors open both ends of garage

continued

39 Quick aids for planning and selling

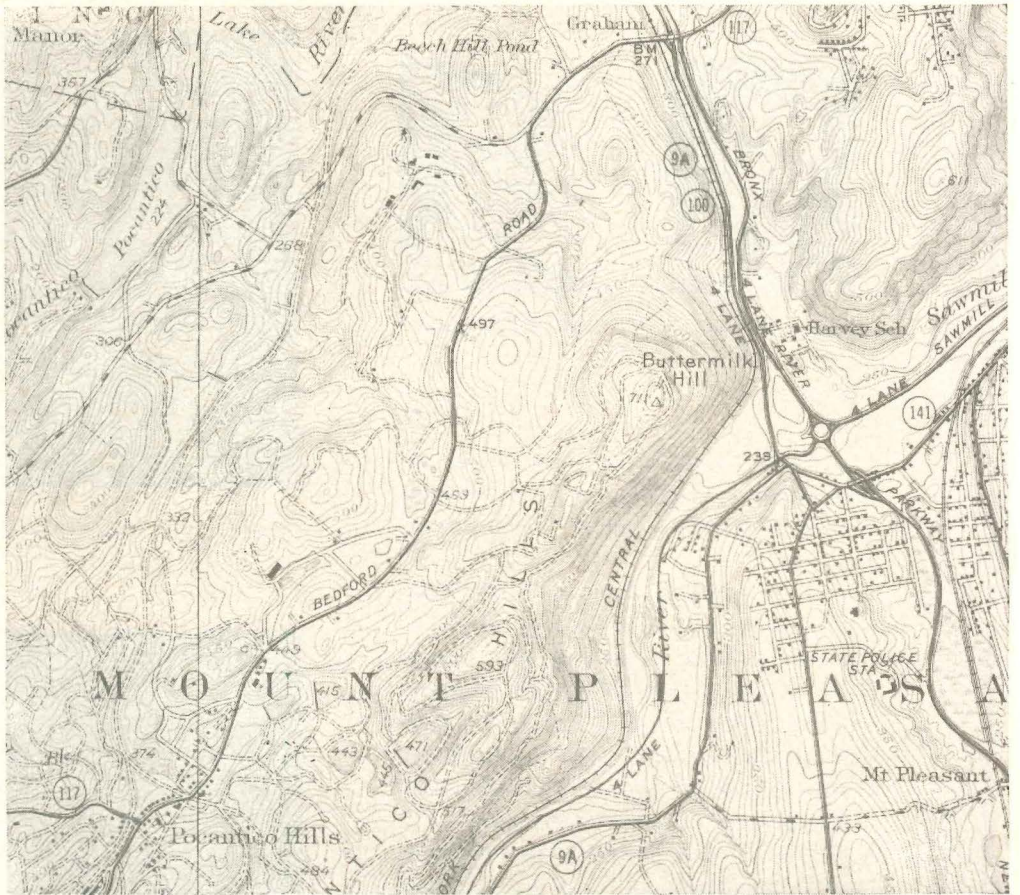


Jerry Collins

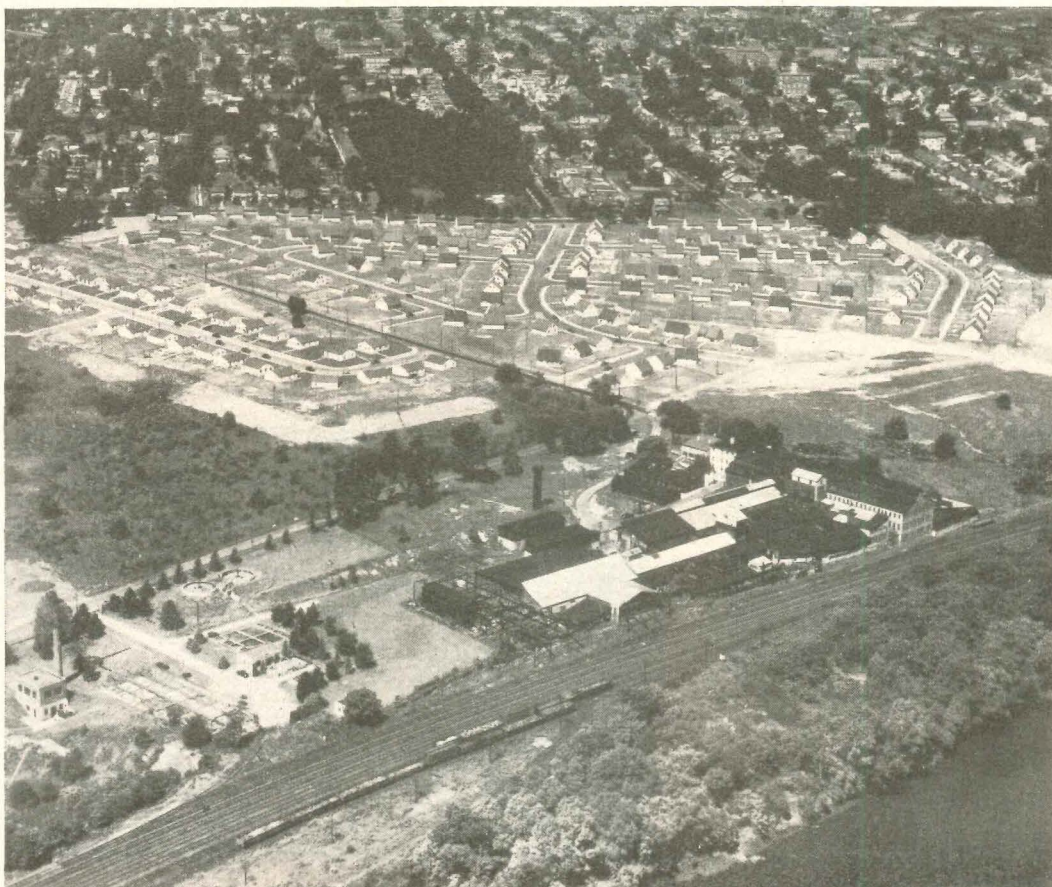
Looking for land? You might take a tip from Jerry Collins who builds in the Philadelphia area.

To start, Collins buys a government map which gives him a good look at land conditions in promising areas. Maps cost anywhere from 35¢ to \$3, are available from state and federal printing offices. There are two types of maps a) geodetic, which show subsoil conditions and land faults; and b) topographic or contour maps which show roads and buildings in the area, as well as wooded areas, swamps, etc. The first type will show the builder what foundation difficulties he will have; the second show access, settlement in the area, storm drainage, grading problems.

Another method Collins uses to evaluate land is the aerial photograph (see below).



Contour increment of 10' shows drainage. US Army Corps of Engineers



Significant land conditions are obvious in aerial photos. Collins hangs such a photo in model house, can point out location of house to prospective buyers. Mammoth photos cost \$25-\$75 for first few, considerably less in quantity.

40 Prehung doors save \$2 per opening

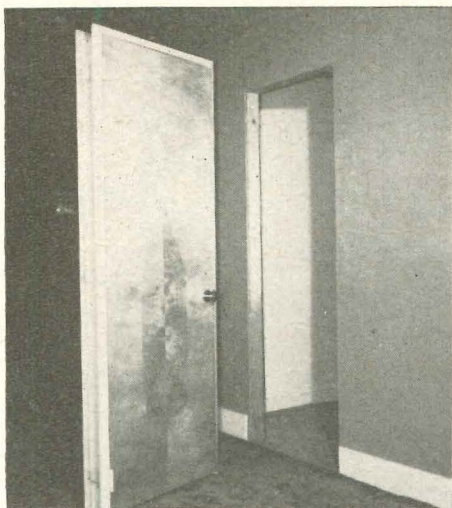


Leo Ludwig

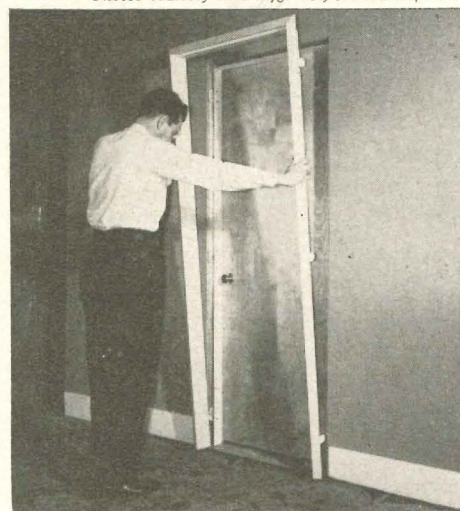
This husky saving was proved by a committee of the Philadelphia NAHB chapter, Jamestown, N. Y. Builder Leo Ludwig reports a saving of several thousand dollars on one project, has had compliments on the trim appearance of his doors and frames.

Chief economy of the units comes from speed of erection—two men can install the frame and door in about 10 minutes, a fraction of conventional erection time. Further savings result from more compact inventories and less painting expense because units can be installed after all finishing is completed.

Units are available in many sizes, come finished or unfinished with all hardware attached. Most have metal frames with flush wood doors; metal doors are also made.



This packaged unit has natural birch door in metal frame. Base is set and walls painted before installation of door begins. Adjustable frame fits walls 3" to 5½" thick, is formed of 20-ga. metal welded at the corners.



Photos courtesy Lott Mfg. Co., Jamestown, N. Y.

Half of frame with door attached is quickly fastened into rough opening. Opposite half is then snapped into place, fastened to first frame with screws. Screwdriver is only tool required for installation.

41 How to simplify back-to-back plumbing

Brant



George Bell



Ted Valdez

Elaborate piping assemblies are required to keep hot and cold supplies in proper relation to faucets in back-to-back installations. Such assemblies usually require 18 fittings and considerable labor. By reducing the fittings required to six and cutting installation time, the faucets shown here are saving builders as much as \$25 per job, it is reported. The hot and cold cross is accomplished by rotating the valve 180°.

The single handle operation of the faucets is an unusual feature. Say Seattle Builders Bell & Valdez, "We feel these faucets are an asset to our houses and a good sales feature."

Simple back-to-back faucet installation is shown at right. Handle is removed, stem turned 180°, and handle reinstalled.

Well designed faucets are available to fit tub, shower, lavatory or kitchen; in single or double wall or deck mounts.

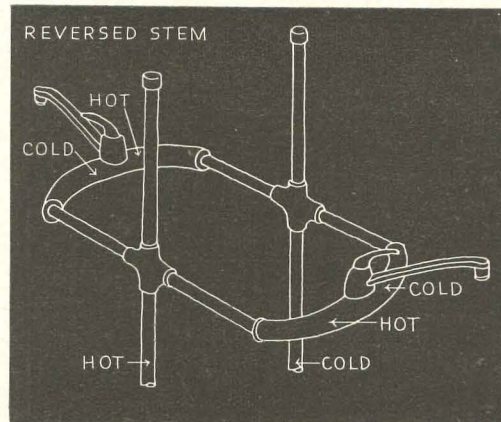
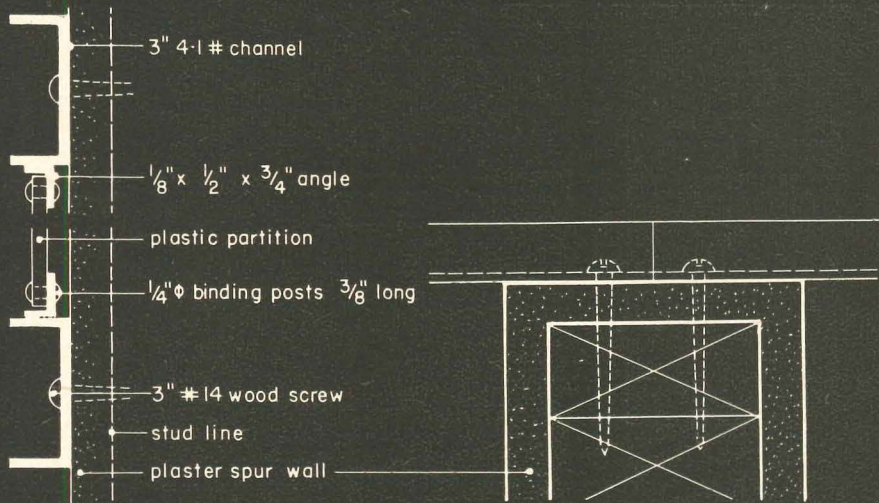


Photo: Bill Stephens, courtesy of Moen Valve Co.



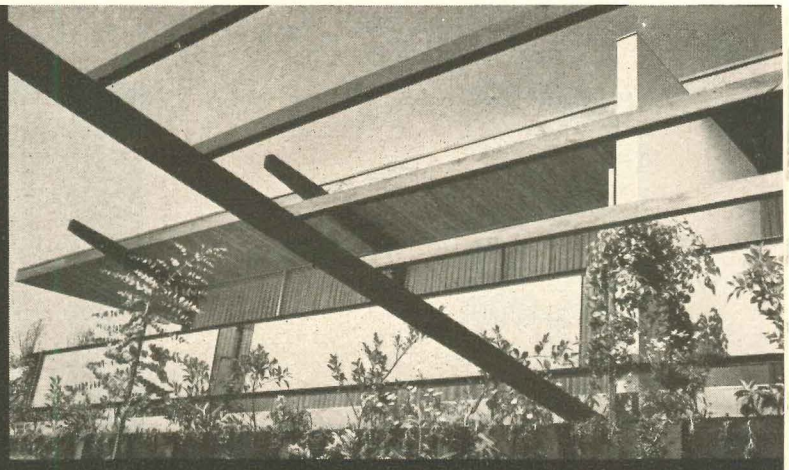
OUTDOOR DIVIDER DETAILS Scale: 3"=1'0"



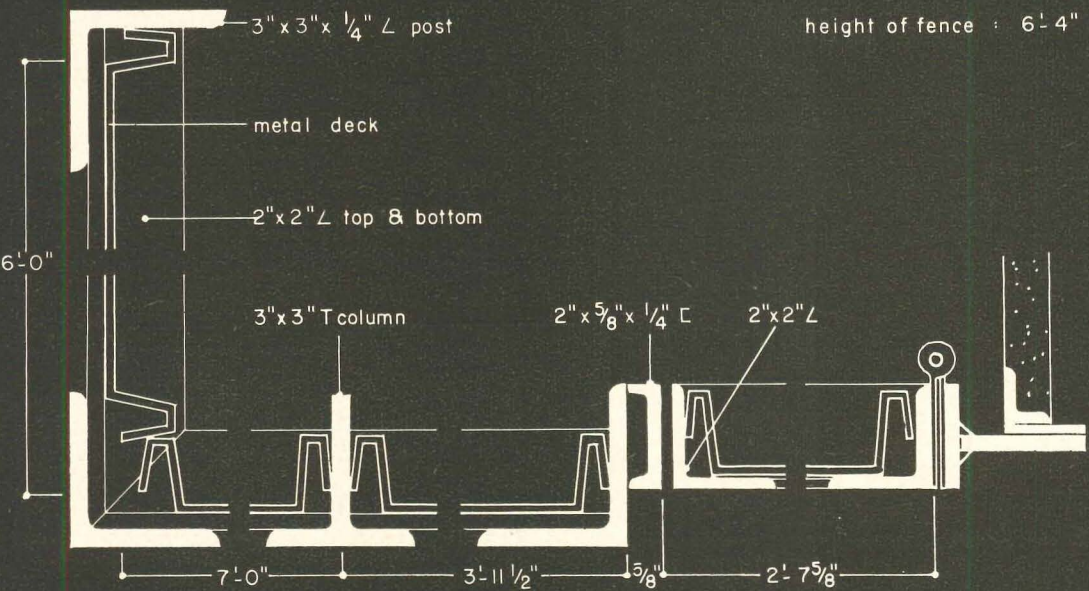
VERTICAL SECTION

PLAN

Photo: Julius Shulman



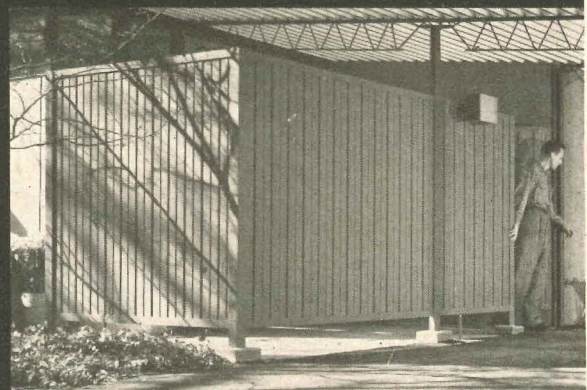
Plastic sheets 8' long are mounted between steel channels to form this balcony parapet. Long sweep of railing is broken only by modular divisions of 1/4" plastic material. These panels require no maintenance. Designed by Architect Richard Neutra; at Malibu Beach, Calif.



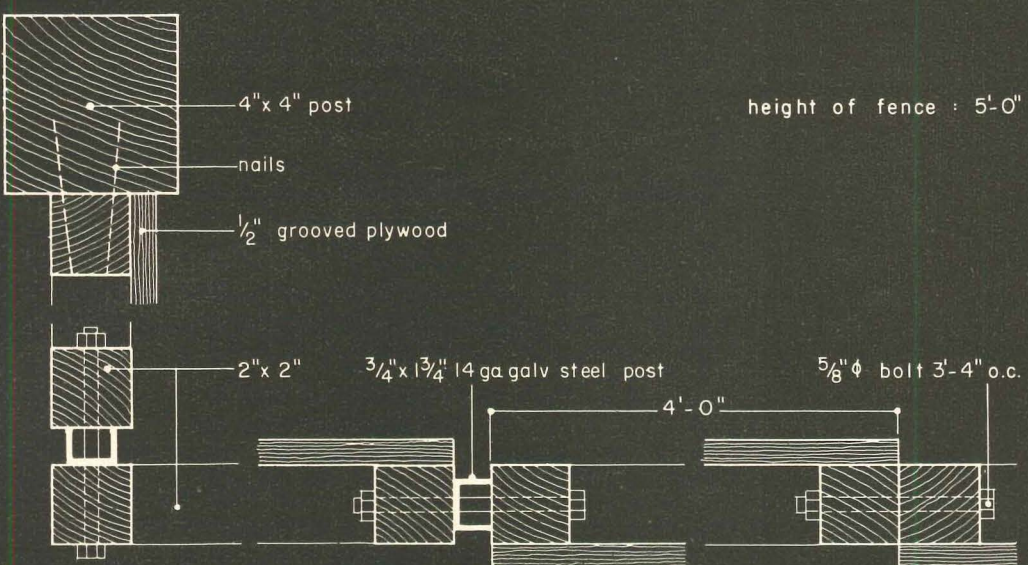
height of fence : 6'-4"

PLAN

Photo: Hedrich-Blessing

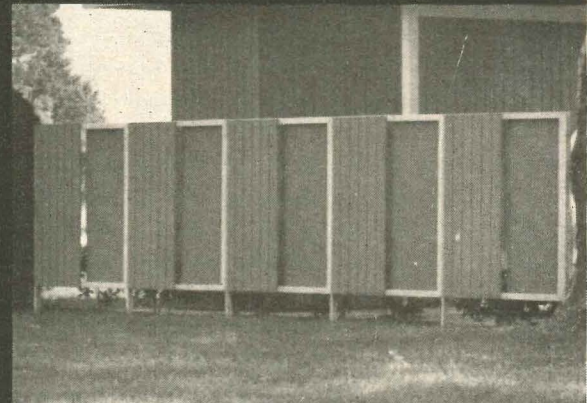


This exterior entrance screen is made of standard steel floor decking welded vertically to metal frames. A. Quincy Jones, architect, for Research Village (see April issue, p. 104).



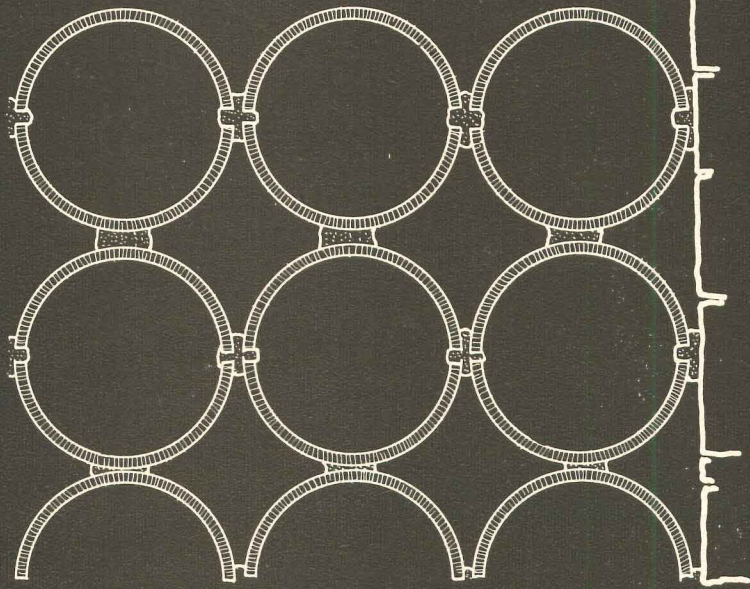
height of fence : 5'-0"

PLAN

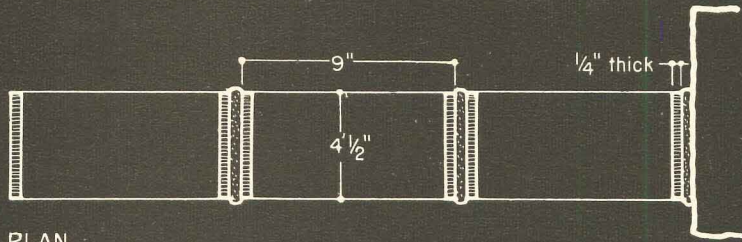


Reversing the grooved face of the plywood panels lends interest to this exterior divider. Wood frame (of 2"x2"s) is painted in bright colors. Charles Goodman, architect, for National Homes.

TILE SCREEN DETAILS Scale: 1 1/2" = 1'0"

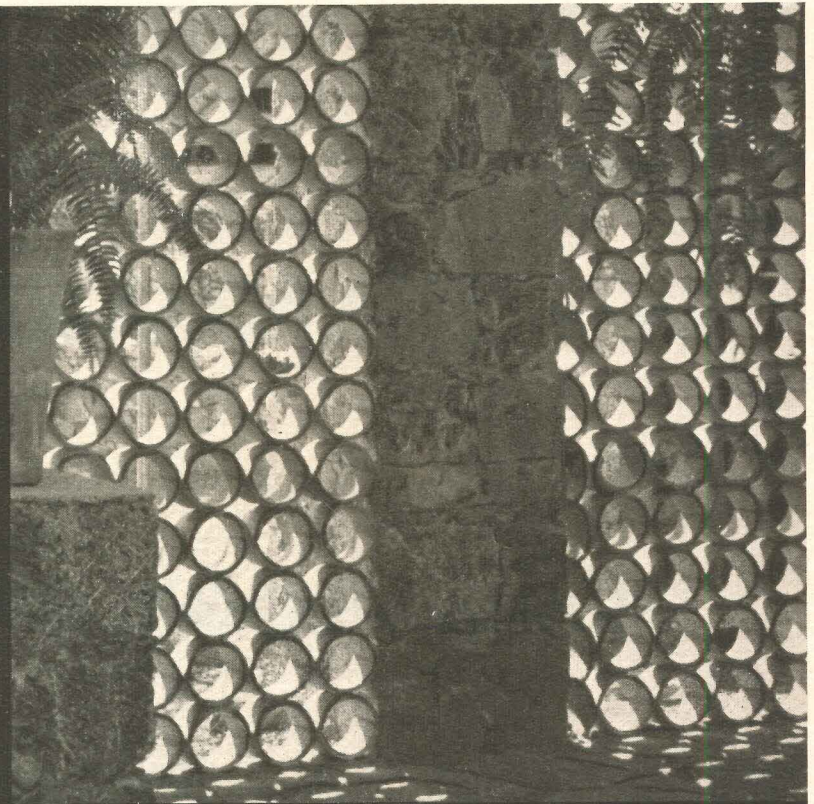


VERTICAL SECTION



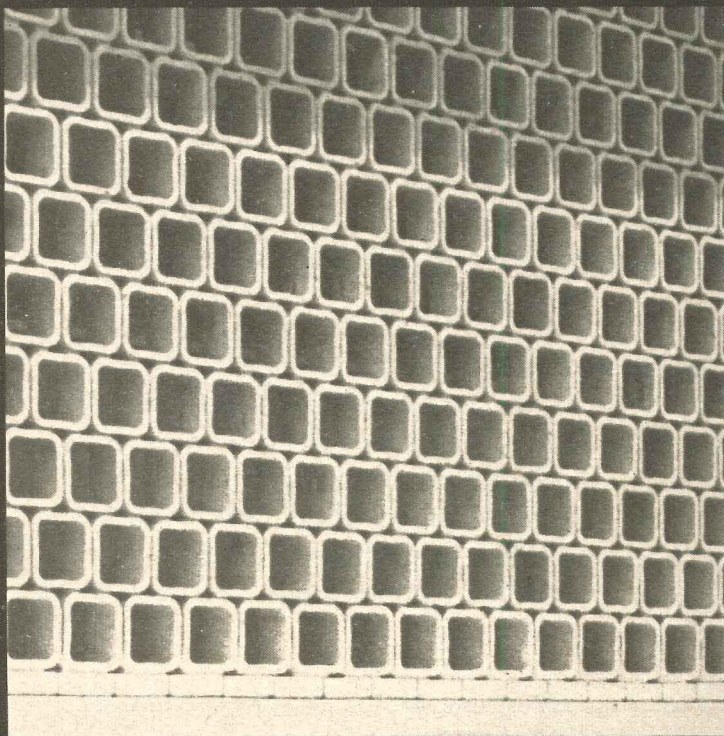
PLAN

Photo: Charles Kasler

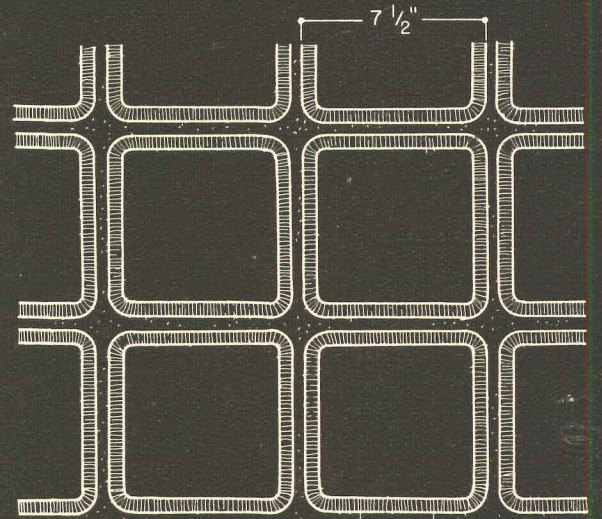


Architects Anshen & Allen used this tile screen detail in a house built in Taxco, Mexico. Called *citroilla*, the tiles are often seen in Mexico used in elaborate patterns for balustrades, cost about one Mexican cent each. Such screens keep sun (and stray glances) out of the house except head-on.

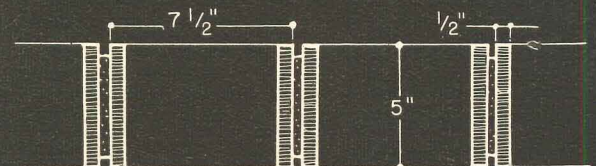
Photo: Frank Lotz Miller



This tile screen is lined with glass to form an exterior wall of house, but would serve as divider without the glass. Architects Curtis and Davis have used many variations of this basic pattern, including some with an occasional tile projecting 2". Pattern shown here was appropriately built in semitropical Louisiana.



VERTICAL SECTION



PLAN

Proposed new STANDARDS for the TERMINOLOGY OF MEASUREMENT

Detailed on the next three pages is the first direct result of the dimensional standardization Round Tables jointly sponsored by HOUSE & HOME, the American Standards Association, and the Research Institute of NAHB.

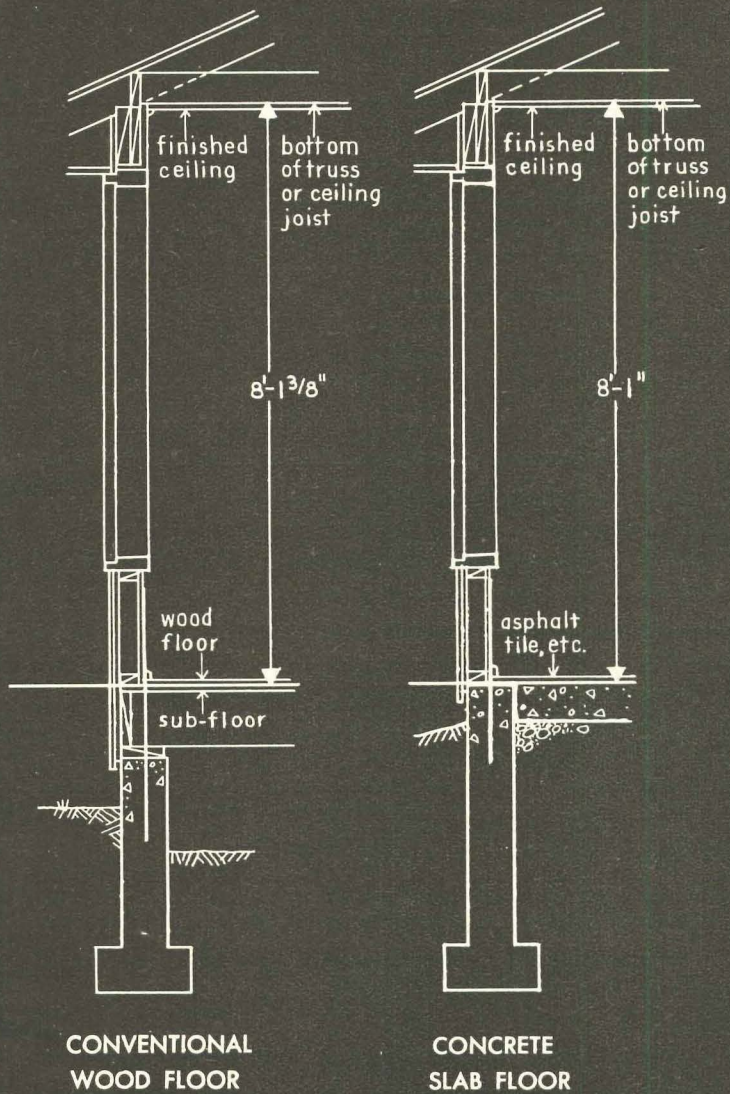
No. 1 recommendation of the first standardization Round Table (April issue) was: "First we must have a standard terminology of measurement."

"When we speak of a house 26' wide," the Round Table asked, "do we mean 26' from outside wall to outside wall, or 26' from the inside wall to inside wall, or 26' from center line of stud to center line of stud? When we talk of wall modules, do we mean inside measurement or outside measurement? When we talk of room heights, do we mean height from finished floor to finished ceiling, or from rough floor to underside of joist?"

"We are unanimous in urging ASA to determine and publish such a standard terminology of housing measurement at the earliest possible moment."

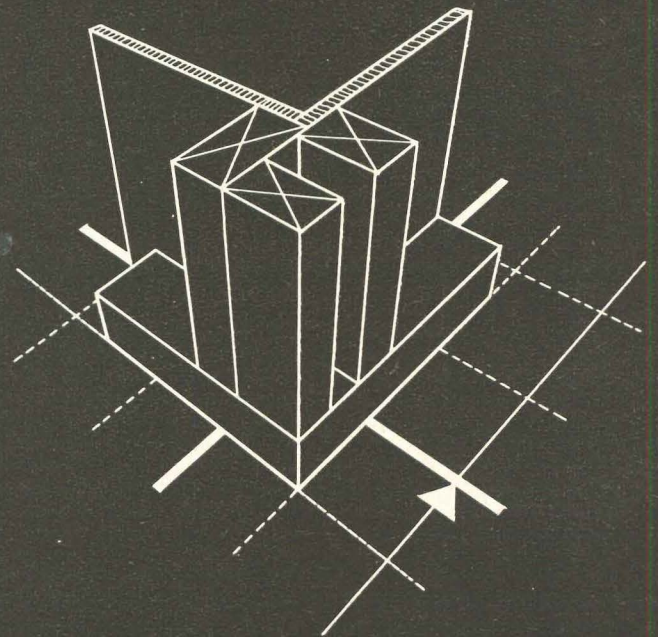
Thus encouraged, the American Standards Association A62 subcommittee 18 on light frame construction, which had been studying dimensional vocabulary for more than a year, speeded up its work and reached unanimous agreement on the dimensioning terminology and details shown on the following pages. Members of this subcommittee are: Architects Leonard Haeger, Carl Koch and James T. Baldwin and Builders W. A. Simms, John L. Morley, Andrew Place and Jack C. Sargent.

Chairman L. Morgan Yost has asked the Home Building Industry Committee of the AIA to accept this same terminology for issuance to all AIA members as recommended AIA practice.



1. For most construction the 8' ceiling height on which more and more builders' houses are standardizing should be dimensioned as 8'-1³/₈" from top of wooden subfloor to underside of joist or 8'-1" from top of slab to underside of joist.

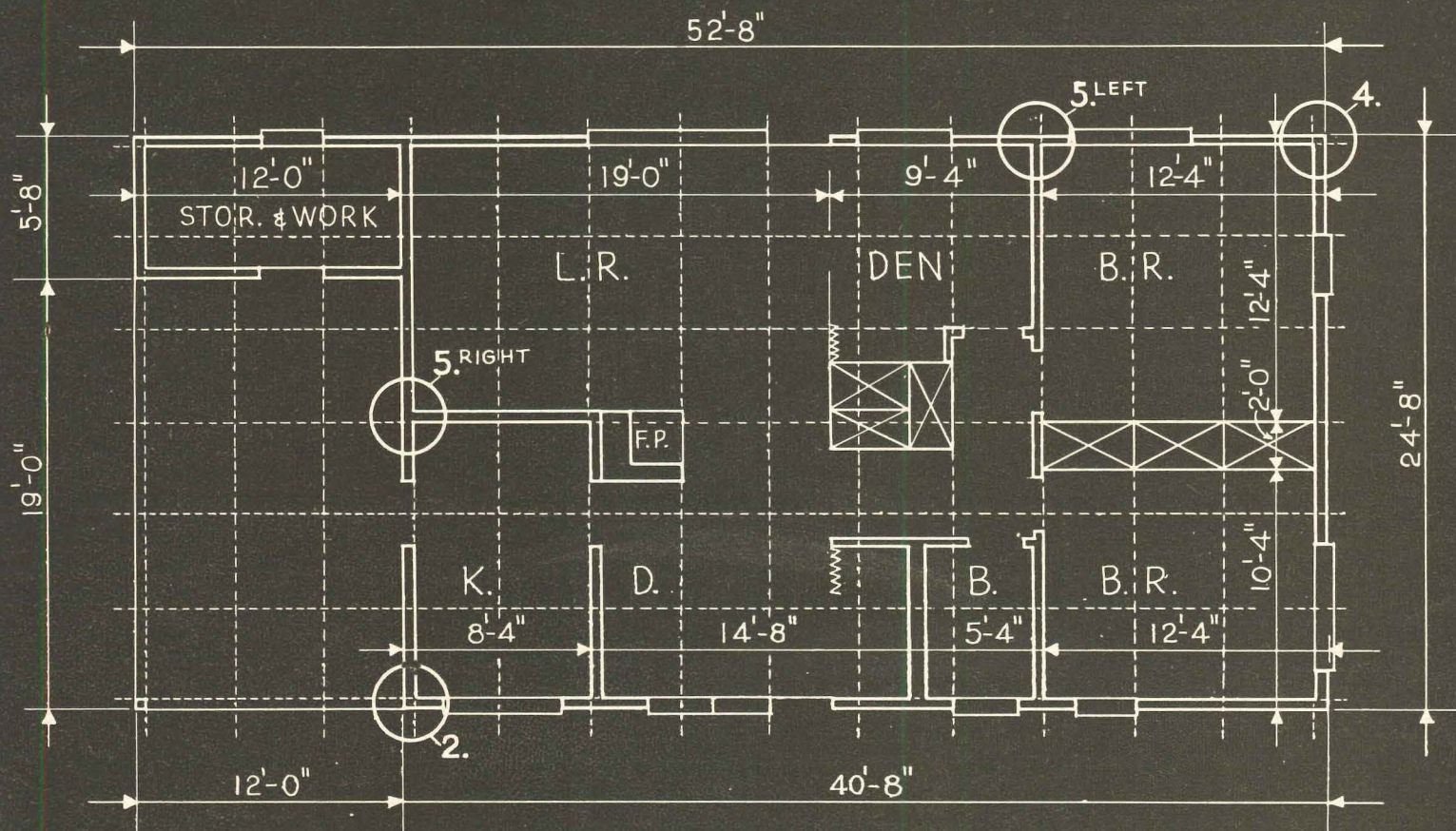
2. Modular grid lines should coincide with the exterior face of the exterior stud and the inside face of 3/8" interior finish material.



EXTERIOR CORNER

continued

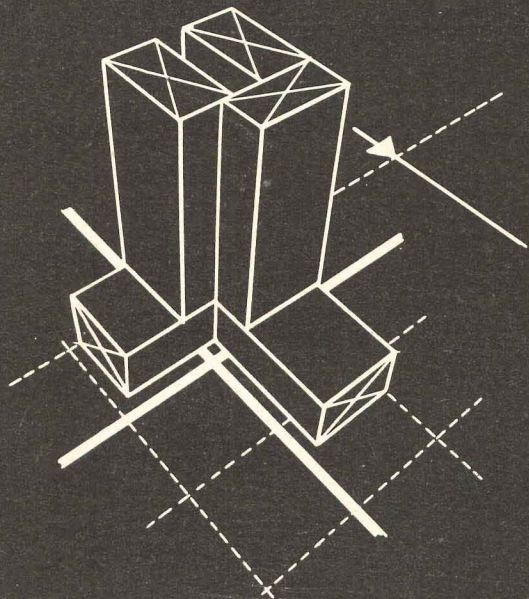
Proposed new standards for the terminology of measurement *continued*



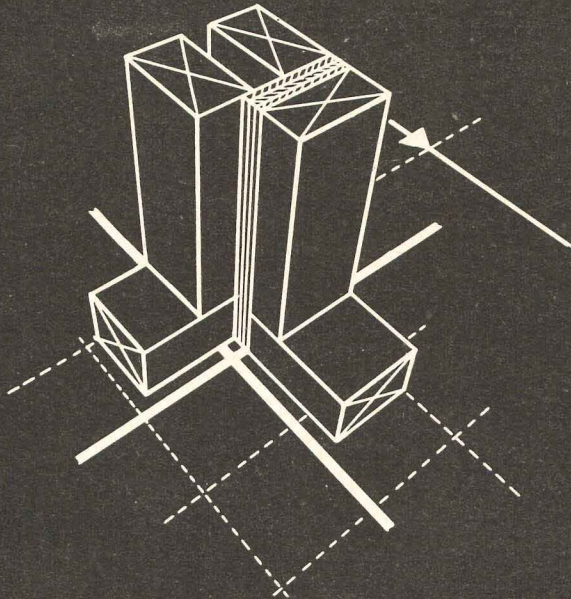
MODULAR FLOOR PLAN (circled numbers refer to details shown on page 125 and opposite)

3. Modular drawings for wood frame construction should locate stud walls and partitions with single arrows each pointing at that face of the stud which coincides with a 4" modular grid line. Room dimensions should be measured and given from grid line to grid line (i.e., they could include the thickness of any partition which falls between the arrows).

Nominal dimensions are commonly understood to mean inside measurement. Thus a house 24' wide spanned by a 24' truss is understood to mean 24' between the interior faces of the interior finish. This would be 24'-8" between the exterior stud faces which are on the grid lines, so on modular drawings a house nominally 24' wide should be dimensioned as 24'-8"

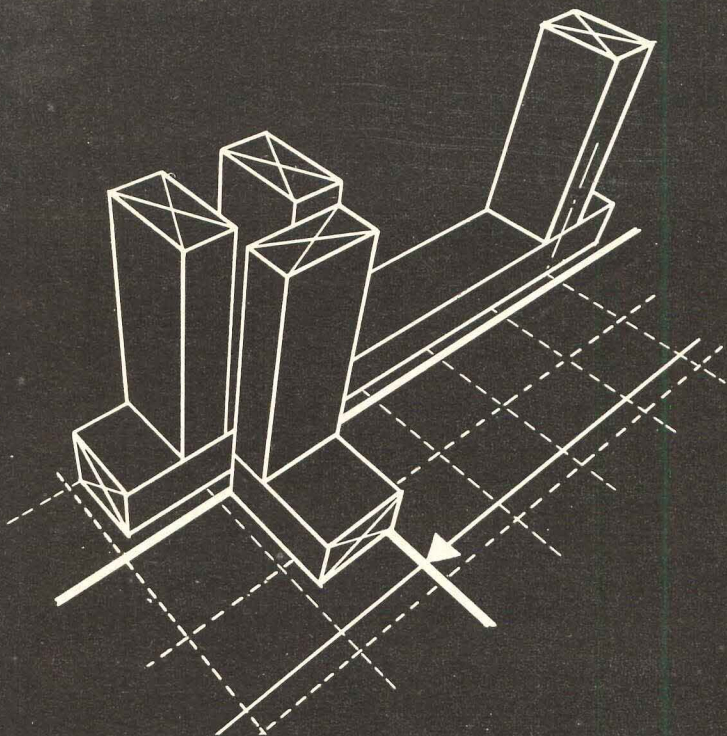


EXTERIOR CORNER, CONVENTIONAL CONSTRUCTION

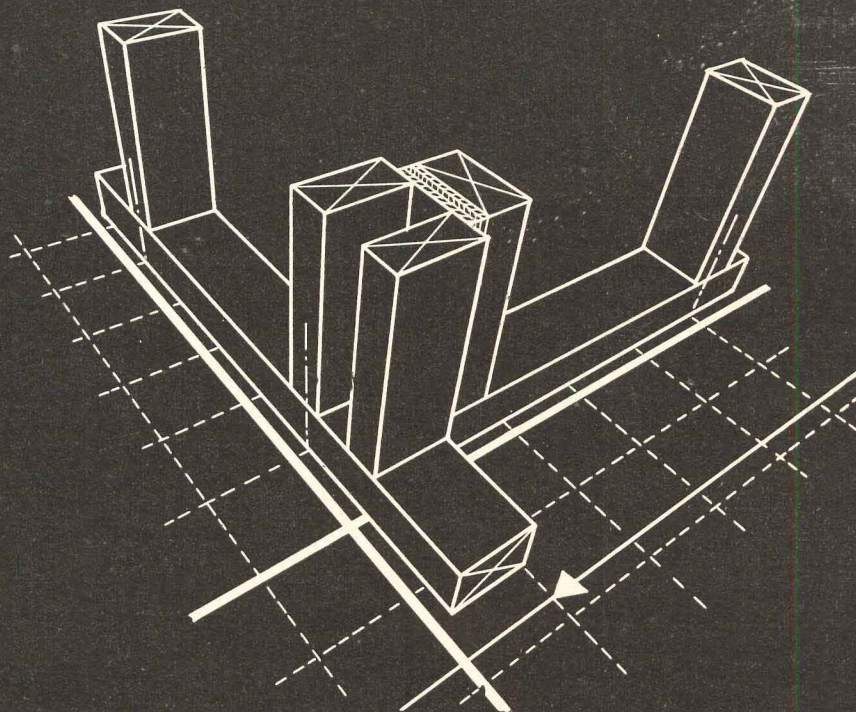


EXTERIOR CORNER, TILT-UP CONSTRUCTION

4. To make the exterior and interior faces of the outside wall work together, the grid of modular multiples should begin at the inside corner. These drawings show how corners can be turned outside this grid.



INTERIOR PARTITION AT ABUTTING EXTERIOR WALL,
TILT-UP CONSTRUCTION



EXTERIOR PARTITION ABUTTING EXTERIOR WALL,
TILT-UP CONSTRUCTION

5. The long axis of the stud should fall on the grid line, with this special condition to conform to normal construction practice where two walls intersect: the end stud of the abutting wall should be moved forward or back as needed to meet nailing requirements, allowing clearance if necessary for tilt-up construction or for finishing the exterior wall before the interior partitions are erected.



Ernest Braun

Most popular Eichler houses have three bedrooms, two baths, handy laundry, all-purpose room and a double garage

Built-in merchandising lifts California

California's Joe Eichler can teach every builder and every architect in the US a score of better ways to sell and build houses. He is the master of built-in merchandising—what Architect Charles Goodman calls the art of “fitting house and land into a package of living so irresistible that people persuade themselves they need it almost against their will.”

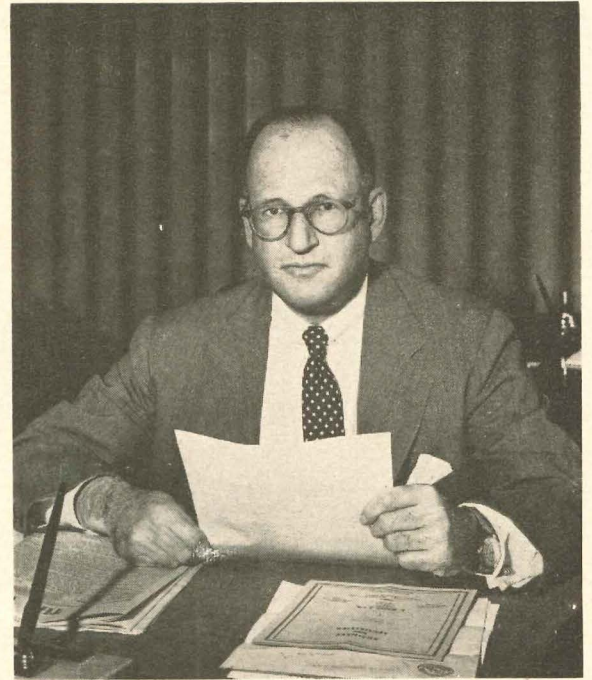
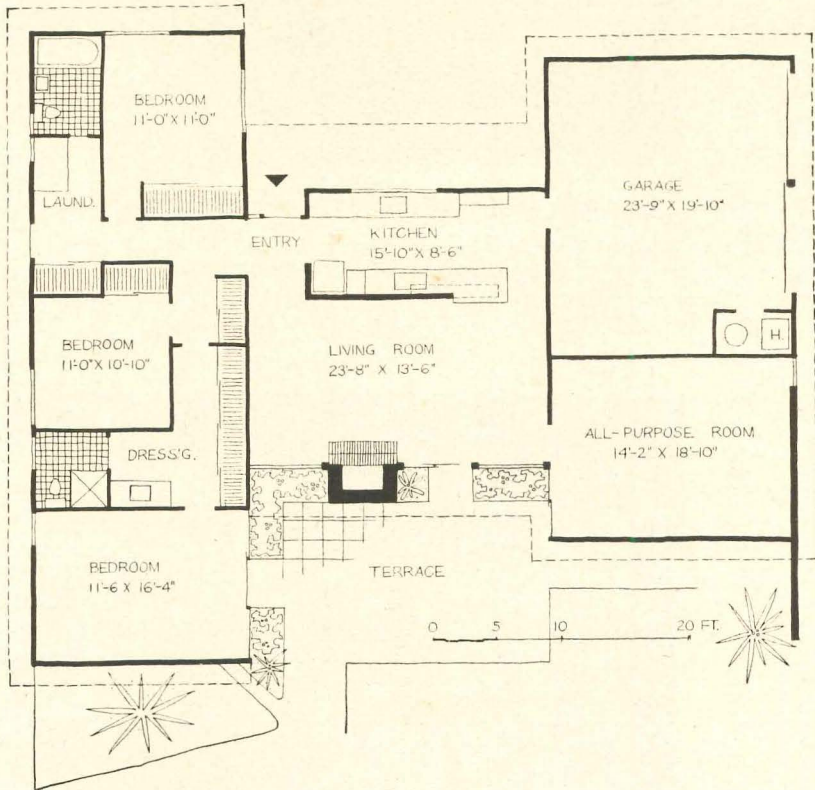
Eichler gets home buyers to put down more cash for his 800 houses a year (average \$3,000) than any other US builder but Levitt. He has created in a big way the quality house market that offers home builders their big new opportunity to increase sales despite the end of the shelter shortage (see Nov. '54, May '55, News, this issue). Fast-growing Eichler is now in the small company of mobile builders (Smith, Coogan, etc.). See map (right).

Eight years ago Eichler was a butter-and-egg man. He started building with just one big idea—that all other home builders must be crazy not to recognize the tremendous sales opportunity modern architects were opening up for them by designing better living into houses and the sales appeal of houses where buyers could live the way they really want to live today.

Eight years later Eichler's big idea proved right. But he needed thousands of little ideas to complete his demonstration. That's why he has his architects design and redesign hundreds of changes each year, paying all their drafting costs, times too, all their expenses, and a per diem for the principals plus \$75 royalty per house sold.

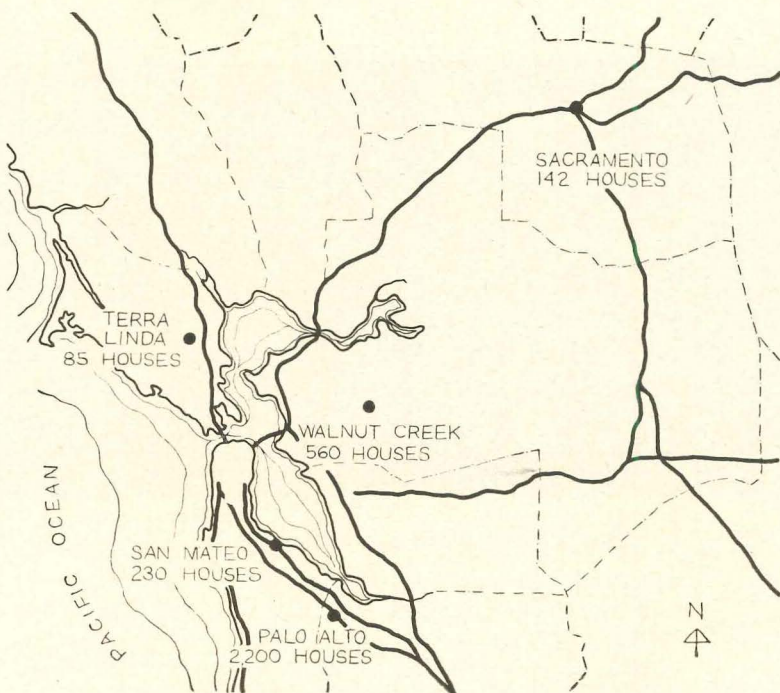
The 1955 model shown here is by far the best Eichler house to date. With it he has quit the lower middle price range for the \$16,000-\$22,000 bracket “where people are more interested in better living than in terms.”

EICHLER HOMES, builder
 JONES & EMMONS, architects
 THOMAS D. CHURCH, landscape architect
 TERMS: FHA, minimum \$2,400 down
 VA, minimum \$500 down
 CONSTRUCTION FINANCING: American Trust Co.
 FINAL MORTGAGE FINANCING: New York and
 Philadelphia savings banks through E. F. Gidley & Co.,
 mortgage broker, and Northwestern Mutual Life,
 Metropolitan Life and John Hancock Mutual Life.



Joseph L. Eichler has cut the widest contemporary swathe of any builder in the business. What's more he's been highly successful at it even when others around him stumbled. He has won more prizes and has been more widely publicized than any other builder in the country (see "Living for Young Homemakers" this month). What does he have that other builders too often lack? Simply this: Eichler stays ahead of competition by keeping pace with his buyers' needs and their pocketbooks. He uses professional designers to do this job well. Like Pennsylvania's Bill Levitt, Eichler keeps close tabs on what features his prospects like or reject and appraises the new quality-conscious buyers with one of the keenest merchandising brains in the country. Result: his sales records are remarkable. Dividend: no trouble getting financing.

Builder Joe Eichler into the big time



Russell Illig

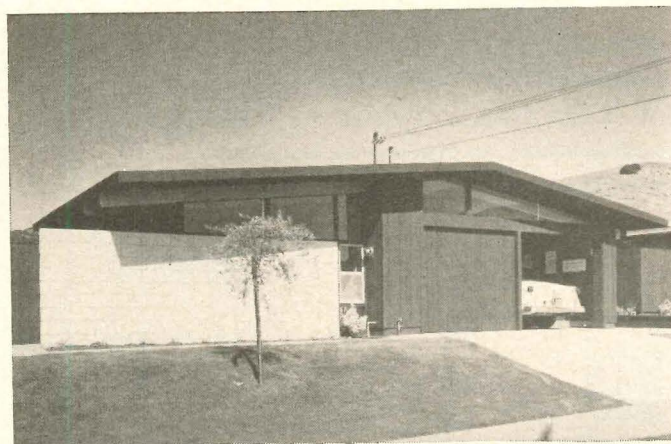
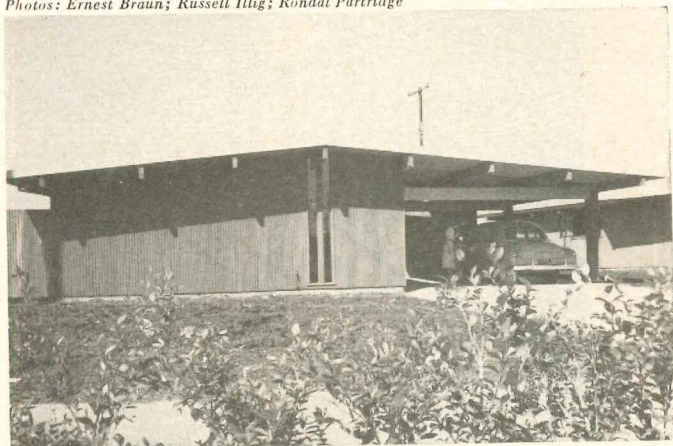


A. Quincy Jones (left) and Frederick E. Emmons with Associate Emiel Becsky have worked for Eichler Homes less than four years, produced over 200 house plans. A month ago, after Jones had completed a new house with a special kitchen arrangement for an appliance manufacturer, Eichler quickly decided to make it his next model. He will be as quick to have it revised if buyers don't like it. Architects retained by Eichler read like a Who's Who among West Coast builder-house architects. Says Jones: "In merchant building, the architect-builder team must work more closely than in any other field: construction, sales, public relations departments are all on the team."

continued

Eichler's design and plan changes interpret or anticipate the growing

Photos: Ernest Braun; Russell Illig; Rondal Partridge



Once an oversized carport now always a double, oversized garage

In 1947-48 some Eichler plans made scanty provisions for car.
 In 1950 houses had single-car garage oversized for laundry.
 In 1954 many houses had double carports but sales slowed down.
 In 1955 all Eichler houses have double (23'-9" x 19'-10") garages.

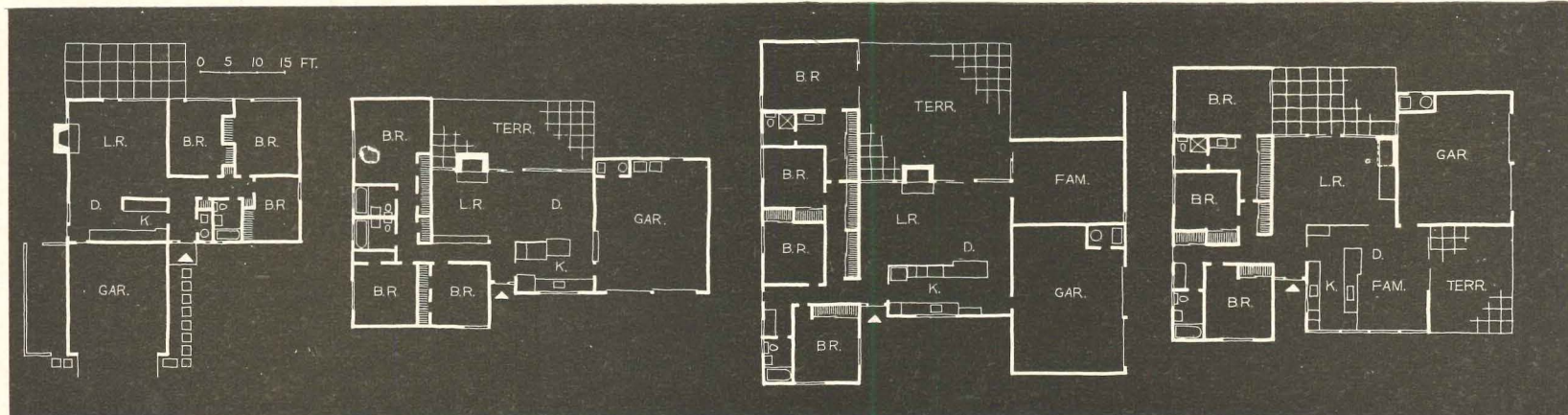
Huge double garage, made roomier because laundry is no longer located in it, has space for deep-freeze appliances, trunks, furniture, and houses furnace and hot-water heater. Salesmen reported buyers want half of garage for do-it-yourself workshop.



The first all-purpose room was open now a room that can be closed off

Little more than an extension of the living room, first all-purpose rooms satisfied demand for more space but did not meet problem of separating such activities as reading and watching TV, entertaining guests and allowing children to play.

Debate on location of family room off living room (as above) or off kitchen (plan below, right) is being decided by buyers while Eichler builds both. Off-kitchen location makes it more a children's area; off-living room location makes it more adult space.

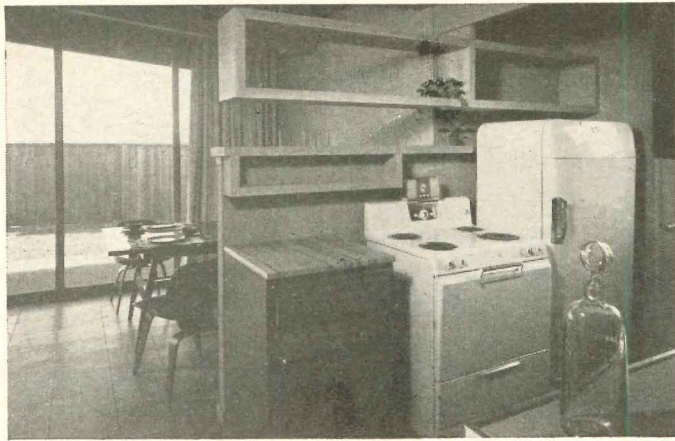


From minimum plumbing and living to more conveniences, more living space

Model progression from 1950 (left, above) to latest two-bath, all-purpose room model (far right) shows how Eichler accurately plotted the changing American market for houses. Note tremendous increase in storage space in second plan, switch to T and H plans that permit better zoning of day- and night-time areas.

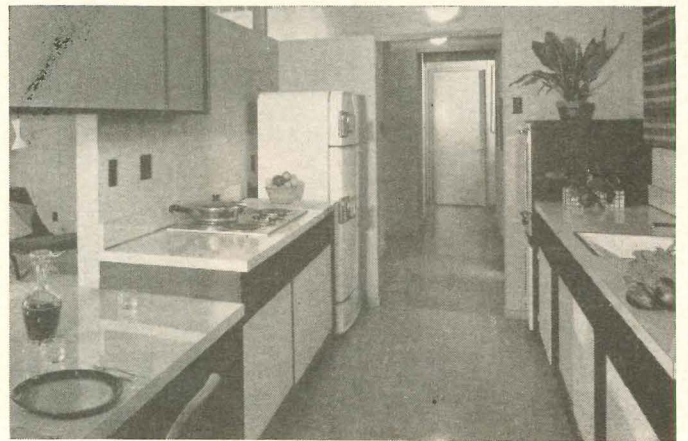
Second-best-selling house is four-bedroom model with an all-purpose room. Eichler will never again build a straight four-bedroom house without added living room: "If a house needs four bedrooms, it needs two living rooms so two generations can live peacefully together." Good floor plans, he finds, are musts in quality houses.

market for quality houses



Once free-standing appliances

An early advocate of the double in-line kitchen, Eichler decided that plans which eliminated steps for the housewife were sure-fire. Women not only liked compact kitchens but wanted them open to dining area. Note free-standing appliances in '54 models.



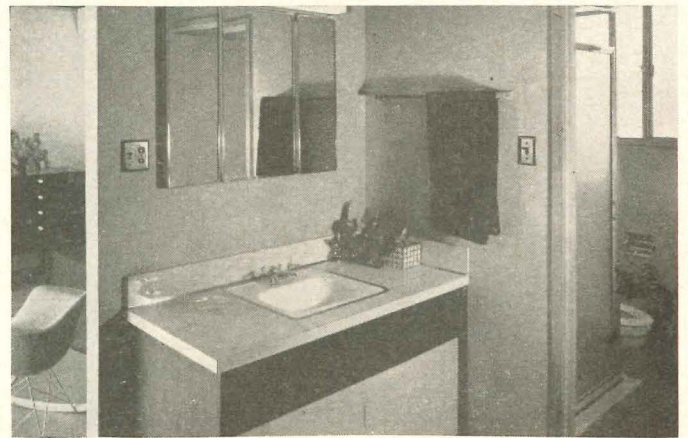
now more built-in appliances

Kitchen off central hall and garage boasts 18 lin. ft. of counter-top, 10 lin. ft. of cabinet space and latest in built-in ranges and ovens. Eichler, manufacturers please note, would be logical customer for built-in refrigerator or complete kitchen utility wall.



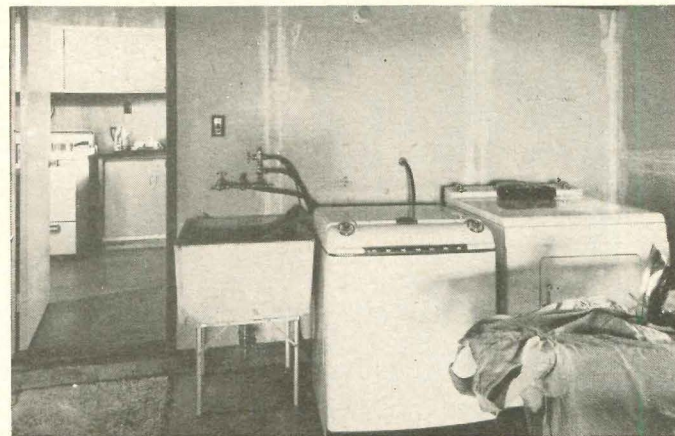
Once an uncompartmented bath

Handsome bathrooms with commodious storage are big appeals in all Eichler homes. Note how tub is handsomely converted into shower stall with sliding glass doors, how big the mirror is, how long the counter. Still Eichler decided this was not enough.



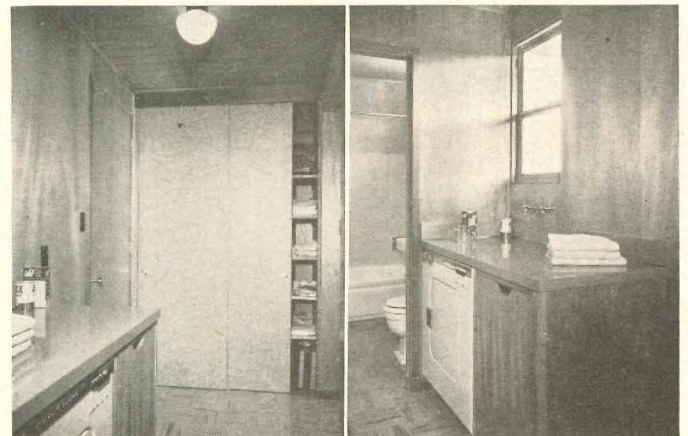
now compartmenting for a dressing room

Bathroom functions are effectively separated to provide privacy where it is needed. Eichler switched from a Pullman-type lavatory and counter in bath to an uncrowded make-up center outside master bedroom, the corridor to which is one long storage wall.



First laundries in out-of-the-way garage

Far from the area where soiled linen generates, laundries till '54 were relegated to the garage for lack of space inside the house. Most architects now agree laundry room is better located in kitchen, utility room or in bedroom corridor. Laundry must be handy since today's housewives wash several times a week, not once.



now in a convenient corridor

In the bathroom-bedroom wing, combination washer-drier is stationed where housewife can reach it readily. Appliance (right) is cased with a clothes hamper and a counter for folding linen. Note huge linen closet across corridor (left). Door to outdoors (photo at left) makes bathroom quickly accessible to children at play.

continued

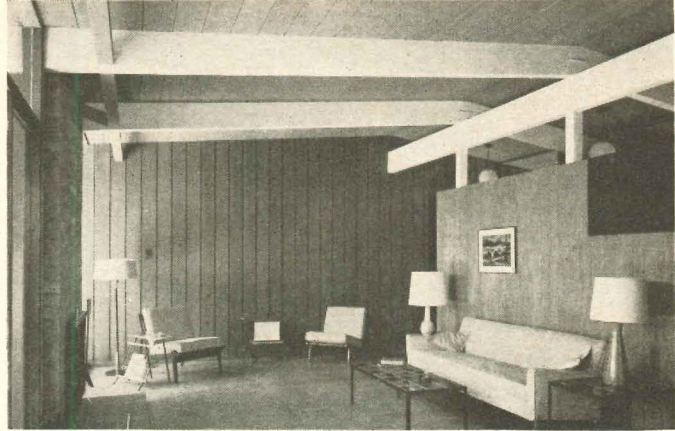
More psychological and honest-to-goodness living space indoors,

Photos: Ernest Braun; Russell Illig; Rondal Partridge



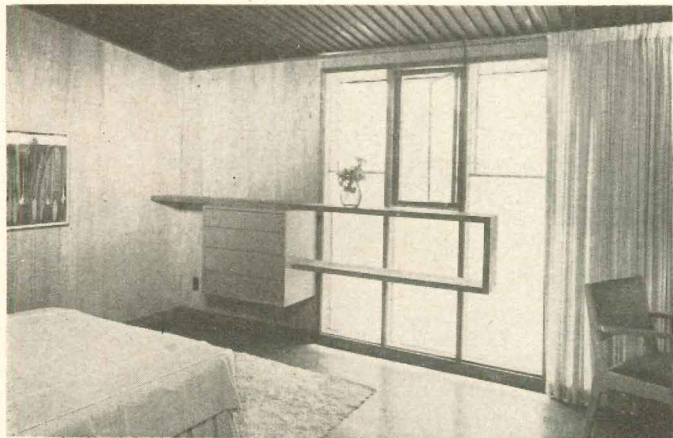
Once dark and heavy-looking ceilings

Although handsome Eichler living rooms featured transparent walls of sliding glass, white block to help lighten interior, tendency in past was to stain all ceilings dark, accent them against frequently lighter-colored beams. Dark ceilings presented finish problems.



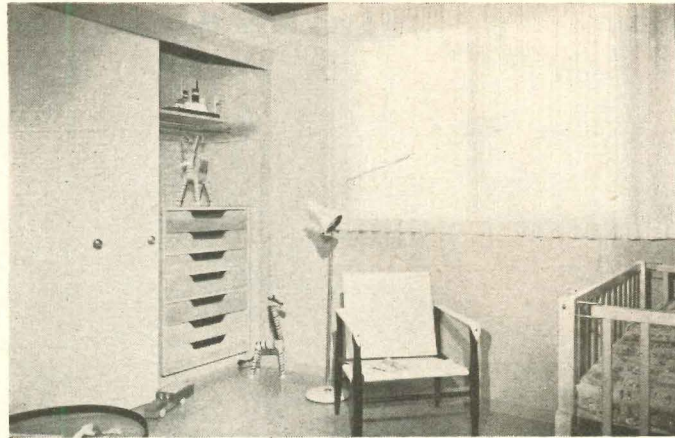
now lighter ceilings, contrasting beams

Buyers predominantly favor light ceilings which are less likely to introduce lighting problems as does any dark ceiling. New Eichler display houses now feature light ceilings with either contrasting darker or lighter beams. Note how wall stops short of ceiling.



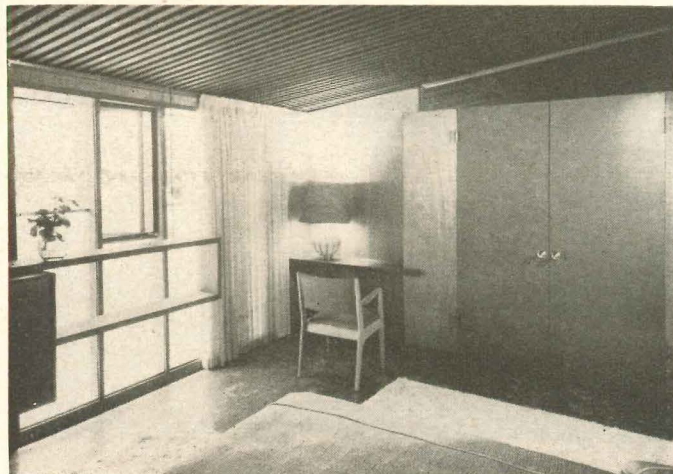
Once built-ins projecting into room

Built-in furniture has been a feature of Eichler Homes for years, but decidedly took up too much valuable room space located where it was. Important architectural changes are created by Eichler's architects. Refinements are often result of customer demand.



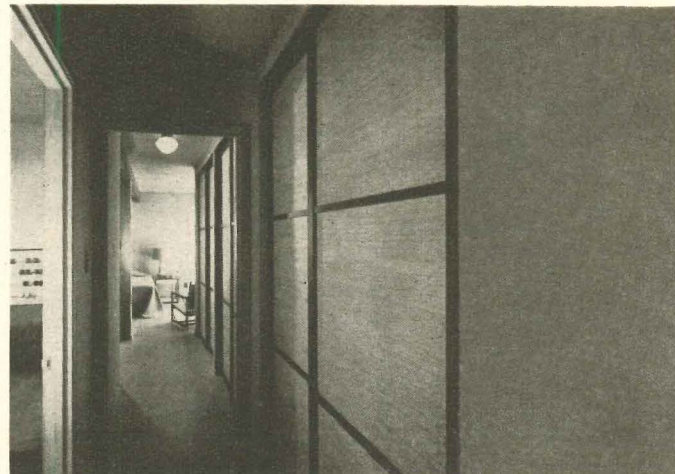
now furniture built into a closet wall

Sliding closet doors in child's bedroom in latest models pay double dividend: furniture placement is not restricted; floor space is not utilized for chest of drawers which multiplies utility of closet. Sill height of windows, once varied, is now standardized at 42".



Once swinging closet doors inside bedroom

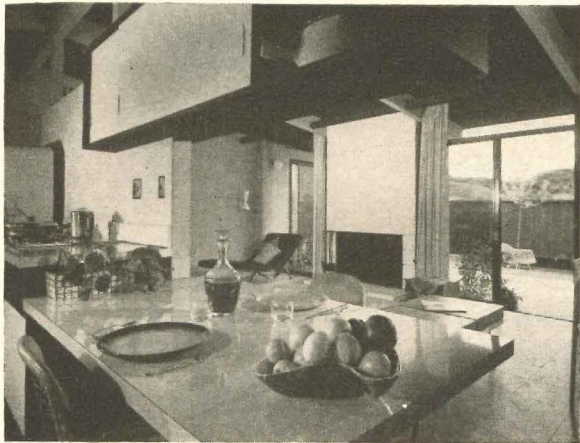
Because space is at a premium everywhere but particularly in bedrooms, swinging doors on a closet projecting into room cuts down usable space. Transom glass above walls was also discontinued because lights from one room flashed into the next.



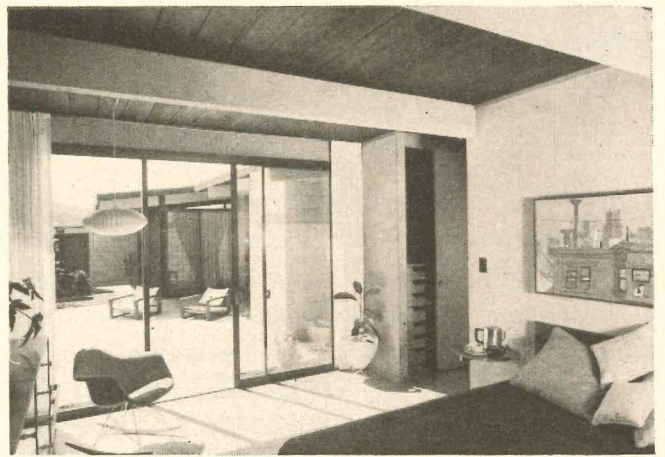
now sliding closets in the corridor

Master bedroom, with connecting bath becomes a suite with addition of hall-long storage wall with sliding doors. Eichler's own idea, "shoji screen" doors, are pressed fiber board ("lighter, cheaper") covered with grass cloth. He will license manufacture.

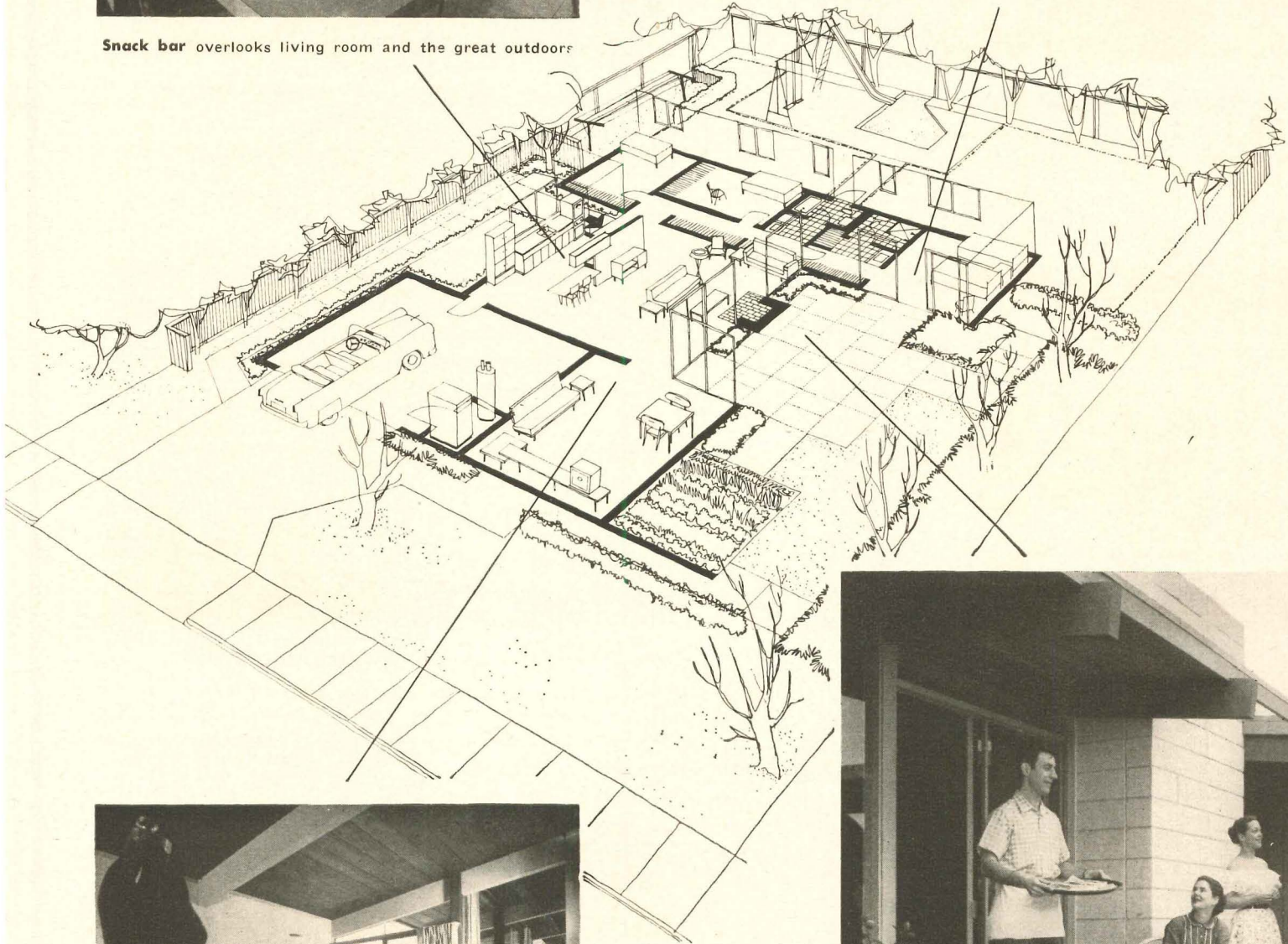
doubled space outdoors



Snack bar overlooks living room and the great outdoors



Master bedroom shares patio through sliding floor-to-ceiling glass doors, gains privacy through H-shaped plan of house.



All-purpose room can be closed off from living room, but like living room has sliding glass access outdoors.



Piece de resistance: a private patio to broil steaks outdoors

Eichler is always looking for better ways to sell better houses

Eichler Homes employs as much acumen in selling a better house as it does in producing one. Although Eichler builds contemporary houses in greater volume than any other single builder, he does not flaunt the word contemporary at prospects. Instead Eichler underscores quality, quality, quality. Real boosters of Eichler Homes are not the 50% of buyers who were presold on the houses through national publicity or by previous buyers. The real boosters are the buyers who a) liked the looks of the houses but didn't care to live in them (then did) or b) objected to some of the looks (then reconsidered). "Once sold," says Sales Manager Ned Eichler, "this kind of buyer is our most enthusiastic seller. There are really many more people who like contemporary design than most builders will believe."

Here are some of the cardinal rules Eichler Homes uses in selling houses:

Put your best foot forward in a display house

Eichler budgets \$50,000 a year for furnishing and landscaping display houses, has part of it returned through sale of furniture he spends \$10,000 on, landscaped lots where he spends \$40,000 for such topnotch landscape architects as Thomas D. Church. Observes Sales Manager Ned Eichler: "Display models are always the best sellers. To get any model to move faster, simply move furniture into it. This way you can keep a balanced variety of design in a community."

Use graphic displays as silent salesmen

"Put up as many colored renderings of elevations, floor plans, roof pitch diagrams and community maps as are within the bounds of good taste," urges Ned Eichler. Location: the garage, "best sales office yet." Eichler gives the garage a finished appearance by installing perforated panels on which display signs are hung. Reason for so much display: "No matter how many salesmen you employ, they can't personally sell everyone on a busy week end." Eichler no longer uses cutaways of construction details ("too rough appearing; we use 3-D diagrams that any technical-minded male can pore over to his heart's delight").

Provide plenty of sales literature

"Customers gobble up every written scrap in houses." Eichler gives buyers a 64-page, \$1 booklet describing his complete operation. Prospects get sales brochures (a separate one for each subdivision, showing plans, community map, biggest sales features like kitchens). Suppliers supplement this literature with sales brochures of their own, liberally sprinkled with Eichler-provided photographs. Eichler's total advertising and promotion expense per house: \$200.

Give buyers a guarantee against defects

"There is no other business in the world where customer relations are as important as in house selling," says Ned Eichler. "We give our customers a lifetime guarantee against defective materials, make good on any faulty workmanship. Sometimes it is difficult to draw the line between defect and abuse but we give the customer the benefit of the doubt." Eichler Homes sets aside \$100 for a repair reserve: "But \$200 wouldn't be too much. Satisfied customers are worth more than advertising. A satisfied corps of homebuyers in any community is a fulcrum for further sales. The builder's name must become an institution."

Use brand-name merchandise to reinforce selling

"Everything else being equal, we'll pick a brand-name product over others to put in our houses," says Ned Eichler. "Brand names register quality and create confidence that a salesman often doesn't have time to build up."

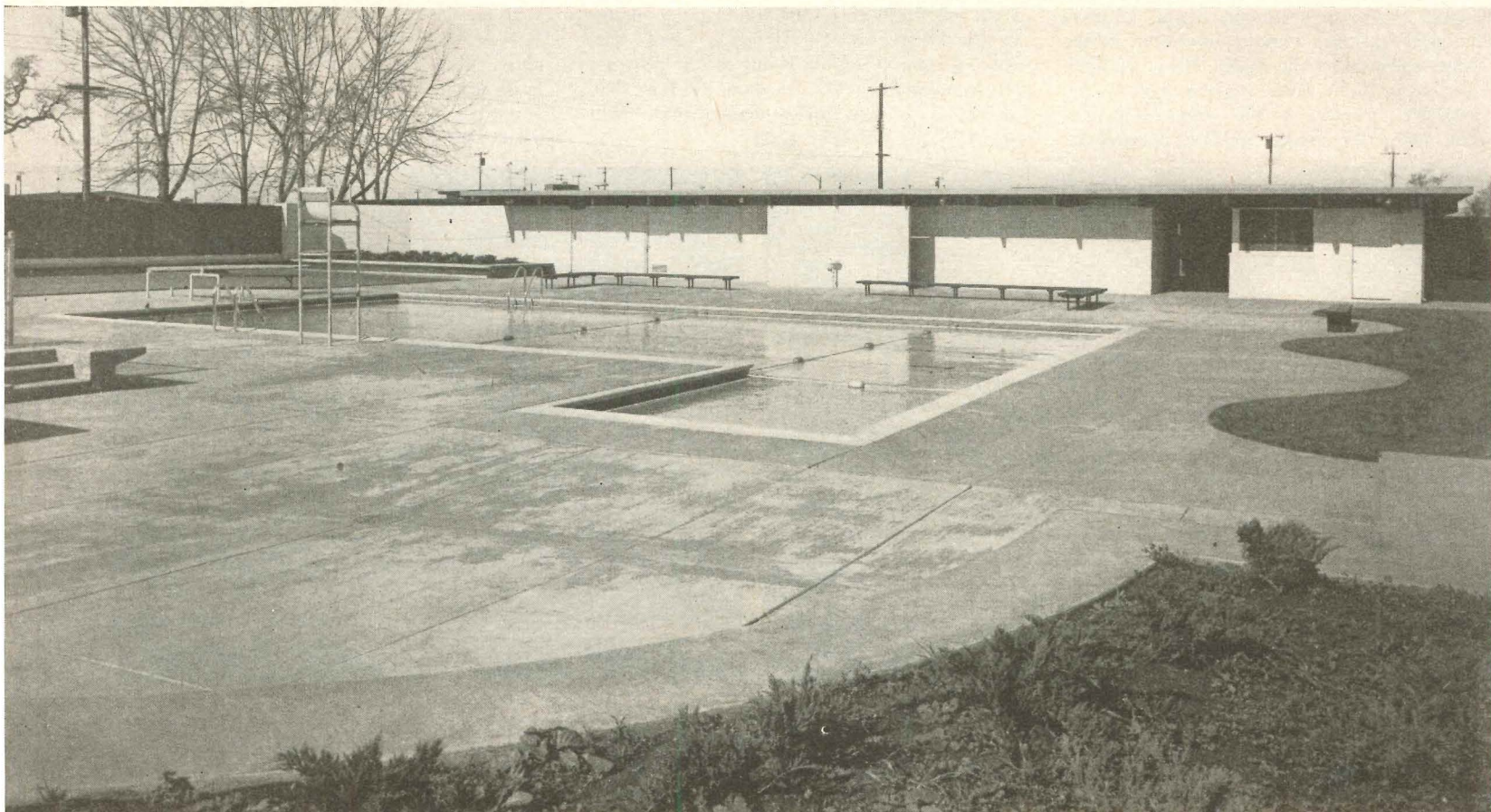
Set up a strict traffic pattern in parading prospects through a house

Prospects are *always* taken through a house via the front door, "even if they find their way in through the garage." Object: to show off the center-hall entrance, handsome front door detail. Salesmen emphasize the floor plan, "the single most important feature of any house." Next, prospects are shown the living and all-purpose rooms with their sliding glass doors, paneled walls. Next, they are steered into the bathroom-bedroom wing, shown the sliding weatherproof windows, the array of storage closets and built-in drawer space, the dressing room off the master bath. Last, they are shown the kitchen. Reason: "To leave a lasting last impression since the kitchen is the most important room in the house." Built-in appliances get special stress. Since a major sales problem is to point up all the quality features of the house, Eichler salesmen often play up just a few. Sample: a single-handle mixing faucet for the kitchen sink, "a \$15 item that is a stand-out." Often salesmen don't have to mention the hot-water heater: "The second-time buyer has had trouble before, asks about it." Sales reply: "This has a ten-year guarantee from the name-brand manufacturer."

Employ salesman on a noncommission basis

Reason for this revolutionary concept, Eichler points out, is: "First sales are always the easiest in every subdivision, last sales the hardest." The best salesmen are stationed in the last houses. Under such a setup, a commission basis wouldn't work since the best salesmen would often produce the smallest sales volume. Eichler pays salesmen a salary plus a profit-sharing bonus on yearly sales "based as much on difficulty of sales as volume." Eichler would rather not have salesmen with real estate experience who only know how to fit house to customer. "In built-for-sale housing it's the other way around. Customers must be fitted to the houses. Why not? The house has been designed by experts." Salesmen report all consumer dissatisfaction at a weekly sales meeting. If comments indicate a trend, Eichler moves into gear, makes changes in upcoming models.

Feature attraction of Eichler Greenmeadow subdivision is swimming pool and nursery school building which residents use evenings and week ends at no charge. Although facilities like this are not absolutely necessary in communities like Palo Alto, Eichler decided to gain experience with big problem of providing community recreation areas which he believes he and other builders will face as they build in communities without such facilities. He hopes answer lies in charging off cost in house prices deeding property to improvement districts.



Russell Illig

Who will build for the nation's aged?

Home builders have not catered to the 14 million aged yet except in a few retirement projects. Public housing moves into the gap. Design of rental units for the aged studied

Passage by the Senate of a 50,000-unit program of public housing for the aged focused attention last month on this forgotten corner of the housing industry. The fact that the aged housing segment of subsidized housing sailed through the Senate without a wrangle was a good indication it may soon become law, despite the traditional antipathy of the House to all kinds of public housing.

Is housing the aged primarily a welfare problem? Or can the private housing industry get in on the act? What should be different about units designed for elderly occupants? Here is some of the latest expert thinking on these questions:

One of the most curious facts emerging from ten years discussion of how to house the aged is that no one has yet definitely ascertained that there is any difference between a house designed for a sexagenarian and one designed for his grandson.

This confusion has come about because of two circumstances: 1) the housing boom, which makes it possible for a builder to sell any decent home with generally-accepted amenities and 2) the fact that the over-65-year-olds who want to buy houses are people who can get about pretty well under their own power and do not have any great need for anything special.

The no-difference school of thought does not apply to apartment design. There have been several analyses of the differences that obtain in this segment of building (notably a report for the Mass. State Housing Board written by Architect Robert Woods Kennedy) and they make for interesting reading for housing authority personnel, rental builders and organizational workers interested in the living problems of the aged. Home builders could also profit from examination of the apartment criteria on the supposition that when and if the private dwelling market for

the elderly opens up they will know what to give their customers.

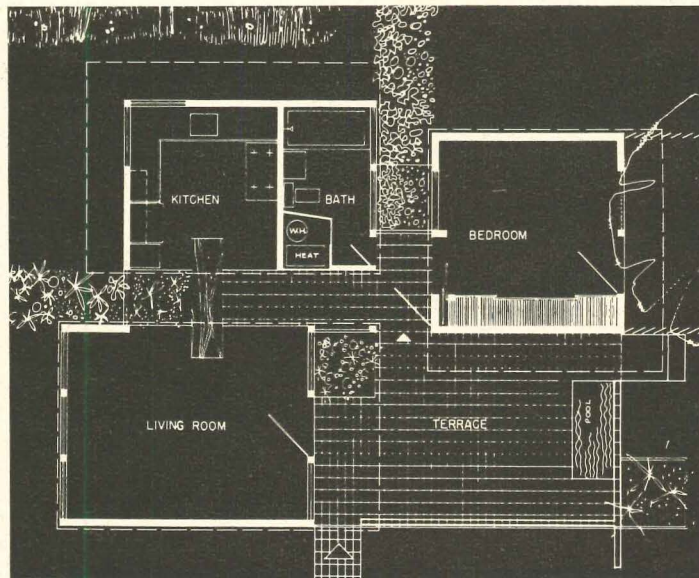
Money and health. The fact that there are close to 14 million persons in the US over 65 and that their ranks are increasing by 1,000 a day has convinced a number of sources that there is a "huge, untapped market" for housing for the elderly. This would seem to be true numerically. Actually it is about as true as the thesis that the number of household formations across the nation governs the number of homes sold in a year. There are other considerations. The two main considerations attached to building for the aged are the customer's bank balance and his state of health.

In 1950 (the last time the figures were clocked) the median income of an American male over 65 was \$986 a year. Older women's incomes were considerably smaller. These figures have not increased by much. A recent study by Dr. Wilma Donahue, a gerontologist at the University of Michigan, shows that 43% of some 5 million heads of families over 65 have yearly cash incomes of less than \$1,500; 30% take in less than \$1,000 a year and 15% get less than \$500.

Reserves on hand. How can these citizens be in a position to buy a home at all? The answer is quite simply that two-thirds of them own their own homes now. Under present market conditions, a home owner can consider his property at least as a semi-liquid asset. He can sell it and buy another house. This turnover technique—plus any cash reserves that the party may have accumulated over the years—makes it possible for him to go south and buy a Floridian flat-top (like the one pictured on the next page) and live in adequate comfort. There are two obstacles in the way of this seemingly pleasant course of action: one is possible difficulty in selling the old house and the other is the owner's poor health. The latter is the more important.

A person suffering from the extreme weakness or illness of old age is not a logical candidate for a private single dwelling. While the trend has recently been away from institutional or hospital segregation of the aged (there will, of course, always be some need for such facilities) this decentralization has so far been applied only to apartment structures. It is a logical application. The practical advantages of constructing small, concentrated rental units are equally recognized by subsidized housing proponents and by those endeavoring to set up fraternal, union or church projects for the aged. It is in this field—whether the apartments be subsidized or endowed—that specific recommendations for the safety and comfort of the occupants are important.

Built to be lived in. In his study for the Mass. State Housing Board, Architect Kennedy has cleared up a good deal of the confusion about whether to build for the sick or the well. "Housing for the elderly must fulfill two functions," he writes. "It must accommodate the healthy. In this respect it is no different from any housing. It must also accommodate the infirm. During



ARCHITECTS SMITH & WILLIAMS of Pasadena did a tasteful, single-bedroom home for a lady over 80 for a construction cost of \$6,000. The 560 sq. ft. home is an example of what could be done on a large scale for older persons with a little money if it were not for prejudices and restrictions. A major one is lot-size zoning. Communities around Pasadena have minimum lot-size rulings as high as 1,200 sq. ft. The house above is built in a commercial zone. Moreover, the architects are not sure that FHA, with its preference for a near-typical family house, would have been enthusiastic about insuring this one. Cost-saving features of the house were a flat roof, concrete slab and a wall furnace. Skylight was the only luxury.

the long lives of these projects, every apartment will be called upon, *many times over*, to house not only the well, but a variety of people with a variety of physical difficulties."

Noting that apartment size has the greatest effect on cost, Kennedy recommends that single-person units not exceed 300 sq. ft. of gross area and that space for couples not exceed 400 sq. ft. He calls for special care in furnishing bathrooms and kitchens; grab bars near tub and water closet, an emergency bell, basins not over 31" high because the elderly, as a group, tend to be slightly shorter than the average population; in the kitchen, counter-level ovens, no storage space over the stove or refrigerator, a safety device to cut off the flow of gas if a pot boils over.

Kennedy also mentions that the elderly take more interest in gardening than others. He feels projects of from 25 to 45 dwelling units are most successful. Ideally, they "should be adjacent to, but somewhat disconnected from, areas where growing families live." It is interesting that he does not come out for ground-level structures or elevator apartments. One flight of stairs is perfectly feasible, he says, as long as the front doors of the upper-story flats are at the top of the stairs, making stair-climbing unnecessary when the doorbell rings.

What price small homes? The successful application of these recommendations to home building for the aged would seem only common sense. It would seem so, at any rate, if there were any home builders doing it. What the situation amounts to is that there are many aged persons who are willing (and able) to live in "ordinary" homes; that at least one-third of the total aged population cannot afford to buy a home, and that lenders have always been a little chary about financing homes for aged applicants.

The lenders' disinclination to handle houses for oldsters is based on a premonition that the mortgagor will die (which he certainly will) or, worse yet, that he will become ill, will fail to meet his payments and will therefore have to be evicted. This is a logical precautionary policy, but it is possible that lenders are not fully aware of the backlog of business that they could do if the solvent aged customer was brought together with the right builder at the right time. FHA does not insure many loans to elderly people, but their policy is variable and in some areas fairly liberal.

Some developments in private housing for the aged across the nation:

▶ Florida Sundeck Homes had 800 homes up 25 miles south of Miami, most of them occupied by retired persons. Thomas Palmer, secretary-treasurer of the company, reported that FHA was insuring 15-year loans, with 30% down, to applicants over 70 but that "most people have money." The builders were putting up larger homes and taking in an increasing number of young families.

▶ George L. Fisher of San Pedro, Calif. formed Retirement, Inc. to serve the aged market. He was initially surprised to find that 70% of 150 houses he put up on a cove south of Los Angeles were snapped up by young people. He was more recently negotiating to build 200 units on Catalina Island to sell outright—no mortgages—from \$11,000 to \$15,400.

▶ In Denver, Economics Professor Byron L.

Johnson had joined with two friends to work out a church-sponsored (all faiths) project which he hoped could be insured as a co-op under FHA Sec. 213. "We are hopeful that we can pioneer through something along the lines of 213," he stated recently. "It may be that there is need for new legislation. . . . We feel that if we wait for charitable activities or for philanthropy to provide it we will never get more than a token of housing for the aged. . . ."

More federal aid. The Senate's vote for a public housing program for the aged of 10,000 units a year for five years seemed a direct response to the numerous proposals before

Mortgage market gives hints of easing; rail car shortage adds to materials' pinch

Mortgage men figured the market was as tight as it was going to get this season.

There were some hints last month that improvement might be in the offing. But nobody was sure enough to be making any firm predictions.

President Thomas P. Coogan of Housing Securities Inc. in New York called the market "soft and spotty with some of the first signs of an undertone of strength." Commented George De Franceaux of Washington: "Last month we sold more mortgages than we ever have. . . . We expect a flurry of buying for the next 30 days." Said a San Francisco broker: "The no-down market is supposed to be dead, but I've been getting money consistently—at a price." An east coast banker saw the market as "just tight enough to keep the stuff at a discount."

Credit expansion. The mortgage picture was not only the result of booming starts. It was part of a general squeeze on money-markets occasioned by 1) rising demand for all kinds of credit as the nation's economy gained momentum after last year's slowdown (bank loans jumped in late spring, for example, when ordinarily they would be declining) and 2) by the Federal Reserve's policy of standing off and letting the market work out its own adjustment through supply and demand.

In the next six months the Fed was going to have to pump about \$2 billion more credit into the economy. The question before the experts was whether the Fed would make the banks borrow most of it or supply it the easy, more inflationary way, by buying securities in the open market. It would take a very great business growth in the next six months to outrun the supply; the Fed, in early summer, did not seem to think that so far the nation's credit was overexpanded.

Housing levels off. The building boom was still on, but residential activity had slowed. Dollar outlays for new dwelling units, which had experienced month-to-month leads of 36-41% over last year during the first four months of '55, led in May by only 26%. HHA Administrator Albert Cole thought that the slowdown "should relieve some of the nervousness expressed in some quarters by the higher figures of recent months."

Perhaps it had. Criticism of wildcat credit



CONCRETE HOME in Florida is a logical place for a 65-year-old to retire if he is well enough to travel and can meet the down payment. The three-bedroom model above is by Florida Sundeck Homes, south of Miami, sells for \$9,800 with \$800 down.

Congress to take action in this field. Most of these have a welfare tinge. The Senate banking committee, recommending the special program, called public housing "a very convenient and desirable vehicle" for meeting part of the housing need of the elderly.

was less than it had been. What caution was expressed about the boom seemed more civilized. Robert J. Hutton, for example, president of the Detroit Mortgage Bankers Assn., called attention to the fact that the tremendous increase in demand for mortgages had not been offset by increases in savings and that "new sources of funds are being sought for the market."

One increasing source was warehousing deals between insurance companies or savings banks and commercial banks. Chase-Manhattan Bank, for instance, was negotiating a plan with several mortgage buyers which other participants indicated would probably resemble the scheme worked out by Prudential Insurance Co. and some 150 banks (Feb. News).

FHA was acting to level off the bulge in starts, too. Commissioner Norman Mason disclosed that the agency was holding up speculative commitments in 26 areas—about one-third of FHA's empire—because of housing surpluses. The type of restraint varied from area to area, FHA said. Officials refused to divulge the identity of the 26 places. A spokesman said one reason was to keep local chambers of commerce off its neck.

Lumber v. wheat. The boom was straining supplies of some materials just a shade more—and in a few more cities. Overall, it was nothing really serious. Shortages, in order of severity, were listed as cement, gypsum, lumber and colored plumbing fixtures.

The lumber business was hard hit at last by an expected shortage of freight cars. With only a 400-car surplus reported by the American Assn. of Railroads, against a normal surplus of 50,000, shipments from the Northwest faced delays. When the annual big wheat movement starts, the prospect was for fancy premiums on boxcars for all types of building materials, notably lumber and plywood.

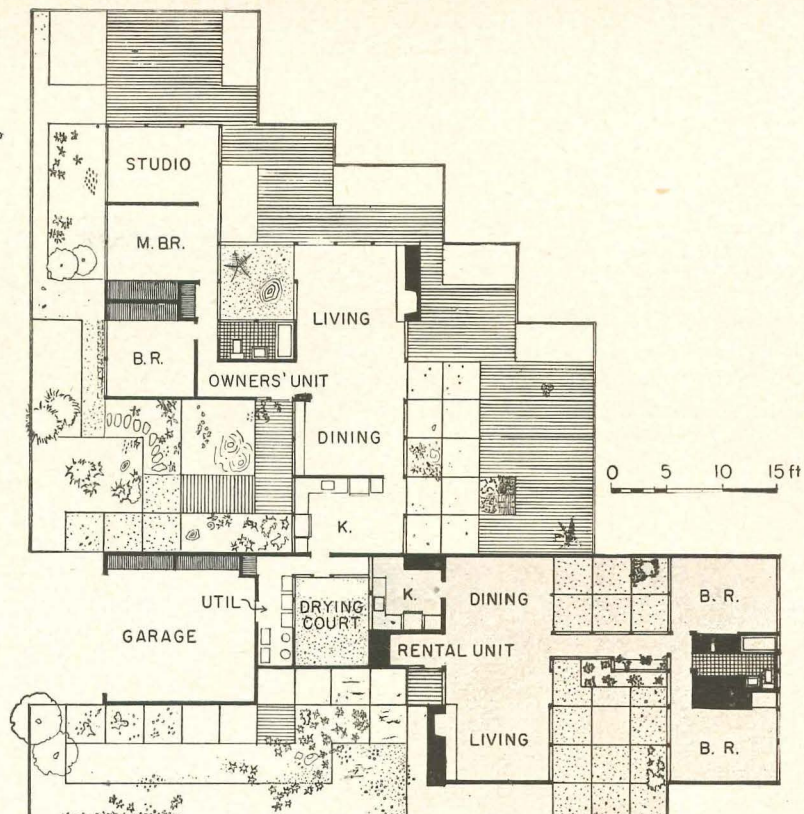
In Chicago, a seasonal shortage of cement led to price increases—5¢ a bag to \$1.23 and 50¢ per cu. yd. for ready-mix concrete to \$12.50. Indiana distributors were rationing cement. Builders blamed highway construction for the midwest pinch.

OTHER NEWS on pp. 41, 42, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 52, 53, 54, 58, 62, 66, 70. Index on p. 41

LIVING
FOR YOUNG HOMEOWNERS

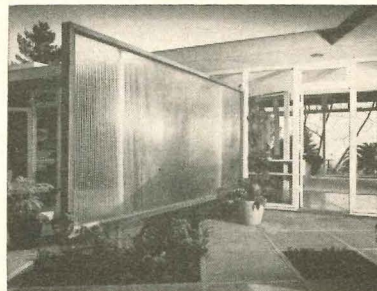
(Circ.: 520,303): "The only solution for the owners was to build a two-family dwelling, the rent from one unit amortizing the mortgage," reports LIVING of this solution by Architect Walter Costa. "The overriding idea was to use an inexpensive structural system and inexpensive materials. When the bills were all in the owners found they had built two houses for \$24,000, about \$8,50 a sq. ft." Area in tone indicates rental unit; its living area is shown opposite.

Photo: Morley Baer



Many consumer magazines this month feature vacation houses, new ideas for country living and outdoor facilities.

- Contemporary materials are prominent. Over six and a half million readers of two top magazines will see plastics in interesting new installations—as exterior space dividers, roofs, and used for a “yard room.” Large glass areas in such dissimilar climates as Connecticut and California also integrate indoor and outdoor living.
- A duplex with an income-producing rental unit is published by a magazine with a half-million readership. Glassed-in patios separate the various areas of the plan and give the two units privacy and independence.
- An all-purpose kitchen (featured to a million and a half readers) just about equals an all-purpose, family room, includes a laundry built into a large workspace.
- Post-and-beam framing gives a vacation house a wide-open plan and glassy walls, continuing up its full story-and-a-half height.
- But most significant may well be the trend to two-story houses. Examples from various parts of the country suggest that two stories may in time supplant split levels (which are more often than not clumsily designed). Two magazines with a total circulation between four and five million are publishing two-story houses this month. This is an indication of a demand which will affect builders all over the US.



House Beautiful

(Circ.: 622 477): Says HB: "This modern, backyard A-frame is a useful and decorative shelter for garden tools and power equipment. A pair of hinged butterfly doors open at front and back. It owes much of its distinction to nonshiny finish of panels. Unit is 7' high, 9' long." Alfred Browning Parker, architect.

Photo: Ezra Stoller

THE AMERICAN HOME

Photo: Julius Shulman

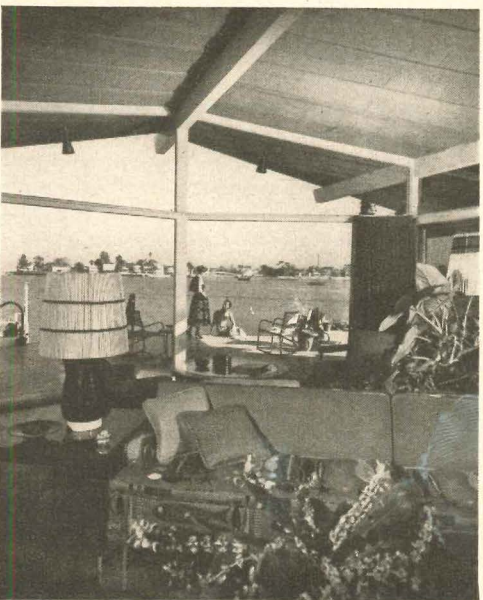
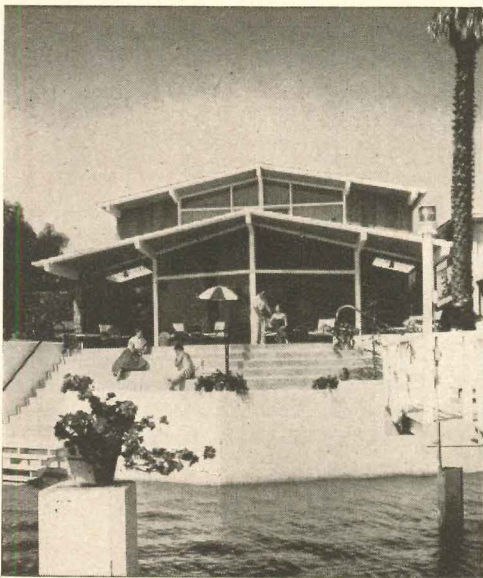
(Circ.: 3,074,666): "Divide a terrace to multiply its usefulness. Screen can serve as windbreak; create a private terrace off a bedroom; form a suntrap; give the youngsters a terrace of their own. Corrugated plastic transmits light but little heat, and comes in a variety of colors." Boyd Georgi is the architect.

House Beautiful

(Circ.: 622,477): "Plastic panels and a great tree create a new kind of interior climate," say House Beautiful's editors about this covered garden. Sunlight is diffused and softened by the panels, which also keep this garden room cool. Architects, Johnson & Perkins, Honolulu.

Photo: Maynard Parker

(Circ.: 4,044,335): This house, termed "a new way to build a two-story house" by BH&G, was published in February's H&H. "A bridge between old and new ways," comments BH&G, "this is an honest two-story house that harks back in feeling and spaciousness to the one you might have grown up in." It was designed by Cyril Farny. Photo: Ezra Stoller



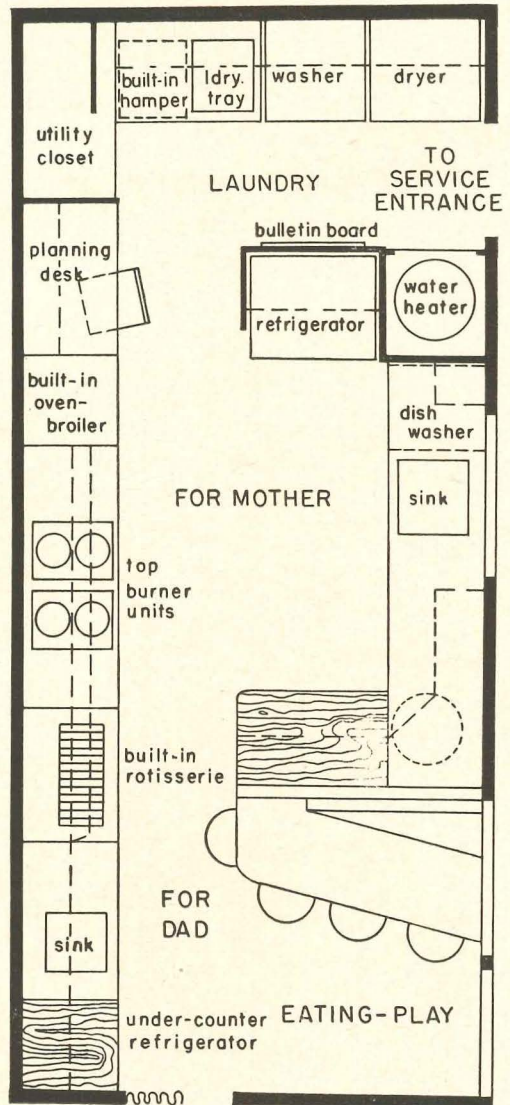
← House & Garden

(Circ.: 517 023): "To capitalize on a narrow (44') waterfront lot, this house at Newport, California, was designed to point out toward the bay like the prow of a ship," says H&G. "The T-shaped living-dining room has three walls of glass for an unobstructed view, and wide overhangs for protection against the sun. Garage and entrance face the street." Philmer J. Ellerbroek, architect.

Photo: Julius Shulman

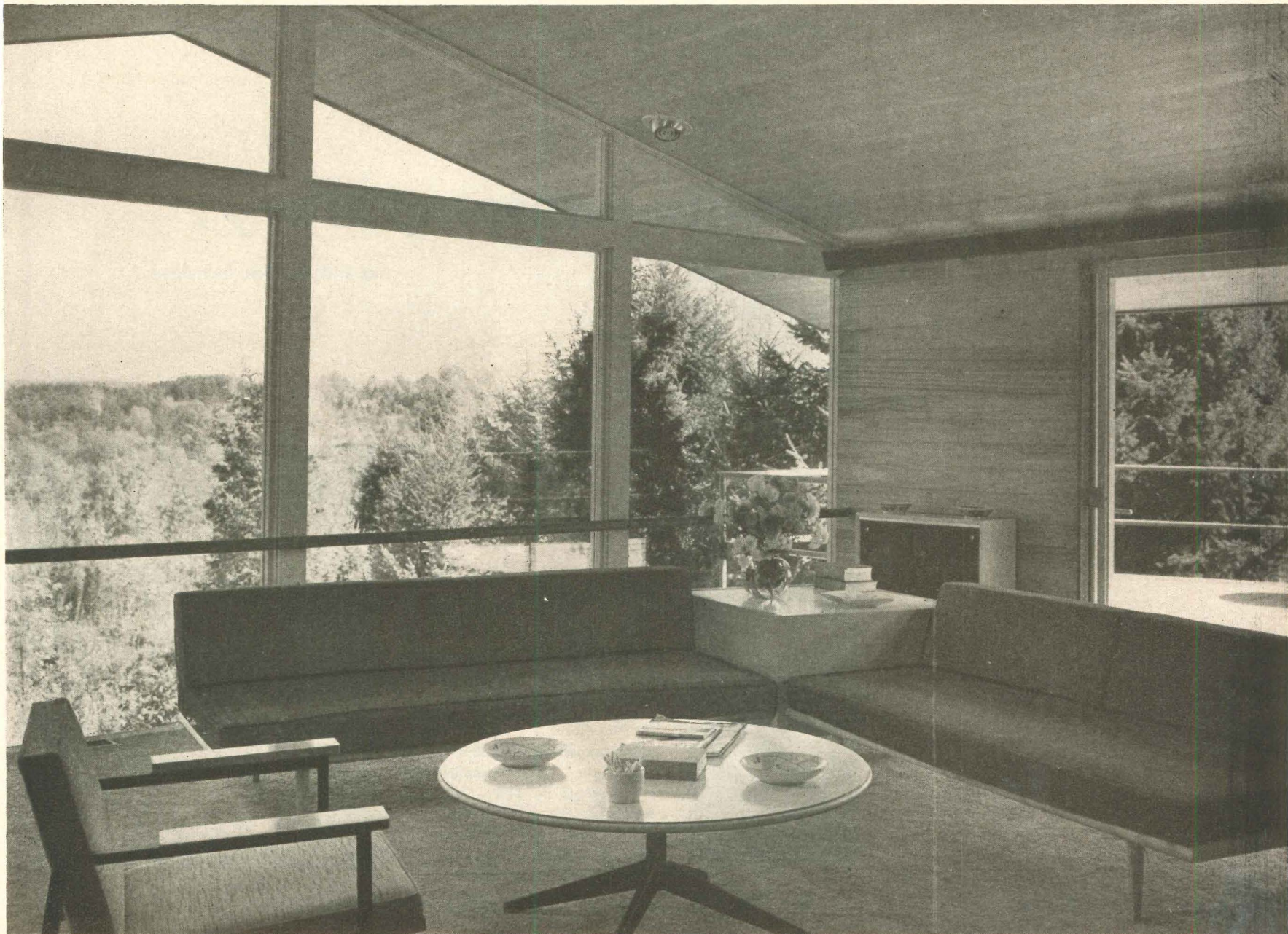
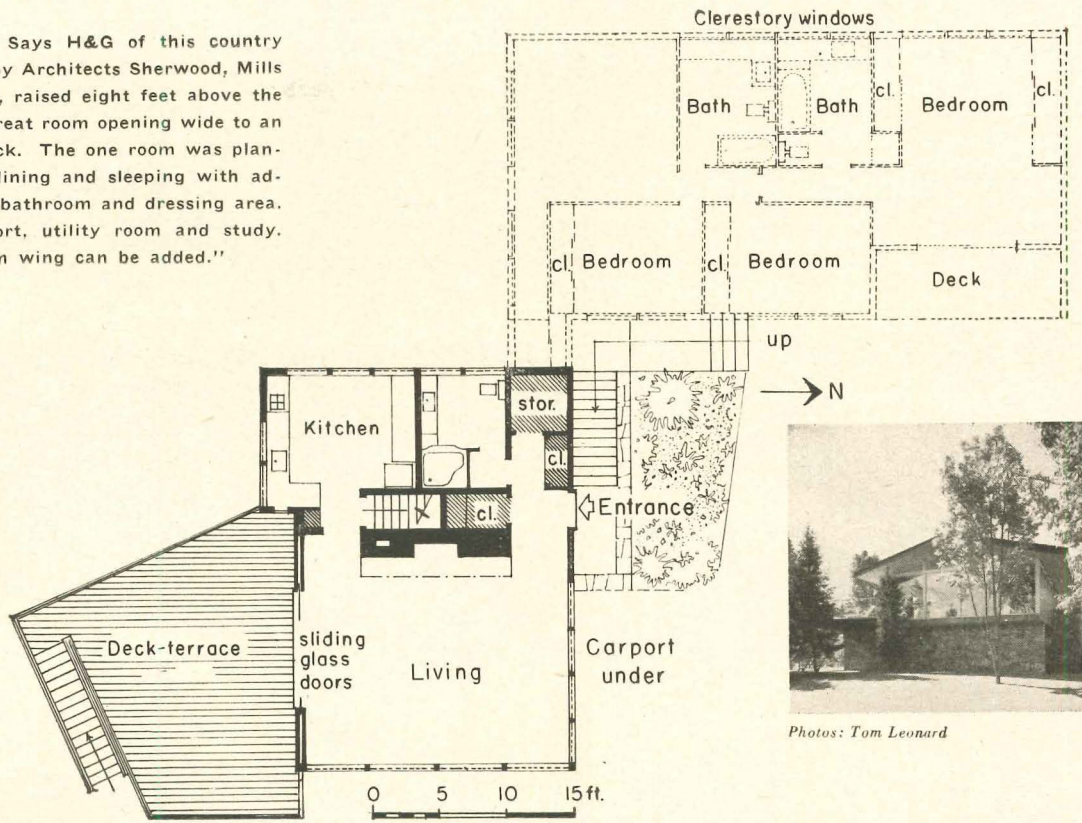
Parents →

(Circ.: 1,700,000: "There is room for the whole family in this kitchen," reports PARENTS. "The whole family enjoys the kitchen-laundry designed with areas for Mother and Dad. Children can amuse themselves at the eating counter while Dad fixes snacks. Eating center is visible from Mother's center and she can talk with children as she works."



House & Garden

(Circ.: 517 023): Says H&G of this country house designed by Architects Sherwood, Mills & Smith: "Here, raised eight feet above the ground, is one great room opening wide to an equally large deck. The one room was planned for living, dining and sleeping with adjoining kitchen, bathroom and dressing area. Below are carport, utility room and study. Later, a bedroom wing can be added."





Photos: Bob McGinniss

This is one of six wholly different models in the Northwoods development outside of Atlanta

Atlanta contemporary:

a lesson for lenders



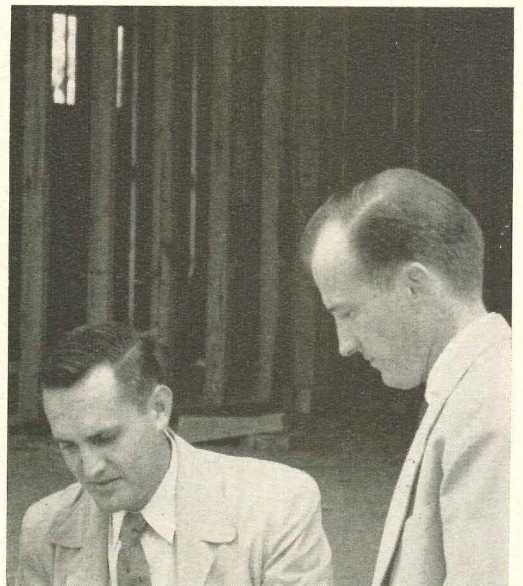
The builder: Walter Tally, who changed from building ranch houses to more modern design in his large development north of Atlanta, once he was able to get permanent mortgage money.



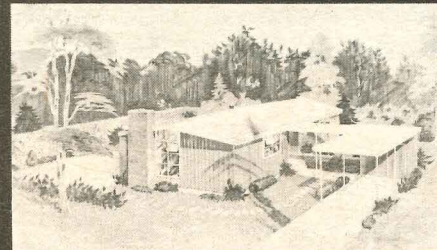
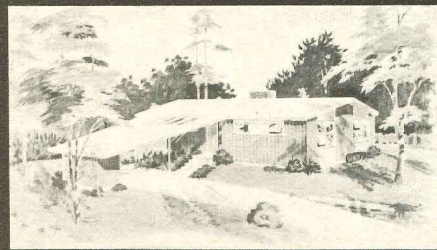
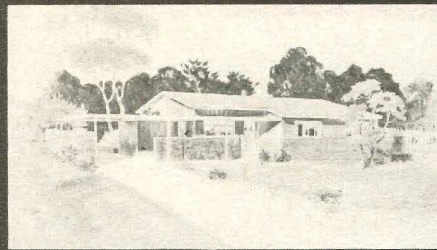
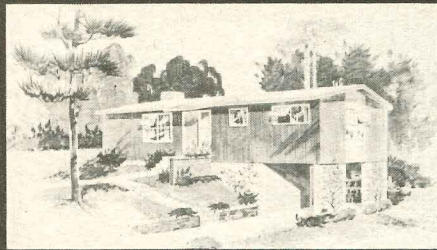
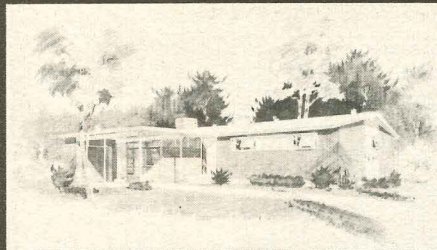
The architects: Ernest Mastin (l) and John Summer who designed six different houses to provide variety without resorting to superficial variations or gimmicks to cover up poor design.



The local mortgage broker: Eugene Harrington, whose company had the courage to back Tally and eventually succeeded in finding an institutional lender to finance the first few houses.



LOCATION: Doraville, Ga.
 WALTER L. TALLY, builder
 MASTIN & SUMMER, architects
 LENDERS: Spratlin-Harrington & Summer
 and Ethridge & Vanneman
 TERMS: standard VA and FHA



ONE builder's persistence has broken the mortgage barrier in Atlanta against contemporary design in the medium-price range.

Two years ago when Walter L. Tally wanted to switch from building ranch houses to more modern design, he walked straight into a solid wall of lender skepticism. Getting permanent financing was simply out of the question, he was told.

But today he is building those contemporary houses—so many of them, in fact, that he has become Atlanta's biggest independent speculative builder. His 250-acre, 700-house wooded development 11 miles north of downtown Atlanta is one of the South's most handsome.

Among the loudest voices praising Tally's accomplishment are local and national lenders'. They have been won over to his view that contemporary design should not be penalized. He has no trouble now getting financing; in fact, he gets his money at better terms than most builders in the area. And other builders with up-to-date houses have an easier time getting mortgages.

The about-face by lenders was not easily effected. Tally first had to sell his local mortgage company on the change. Spratlin-Harrington & Summer then had to convince national lenders, not an easy task. Consider these demands made by one institutional (insurance company) lender:

The vaulted ceilings would have to go. Plumbing stacks should be moved to the rear of the house, which would mean kitchens in the rear. A door would have to be put between entry and cross halls, doing away with the open area. Kitchen and dining rooms or kitchen and family rooms could not be combined. There could be no slab foundations.

A trip to Boston eventually produced a commitment from Providence Institute for Savings to finance five of the new houses—provided Tally would also build five conventional houses. He never had to build the latter. Sales of the new designs have been ahead of construction ever since, and Tally is building exactly what he and his architects planned (except for slab foundations, no longer used, because buyers don't want them).

Northwoods (below) as it looked early in '55. It now includes two sizable parks being developed by garden clubs with county and city aid, a school nearing completion, a 15-store shopping center and a professional building. A tract has been donated for a community church to be built soon. First ranch houses occupy southwestern section. New houses (above left) are now built to the northeastern limit of development.

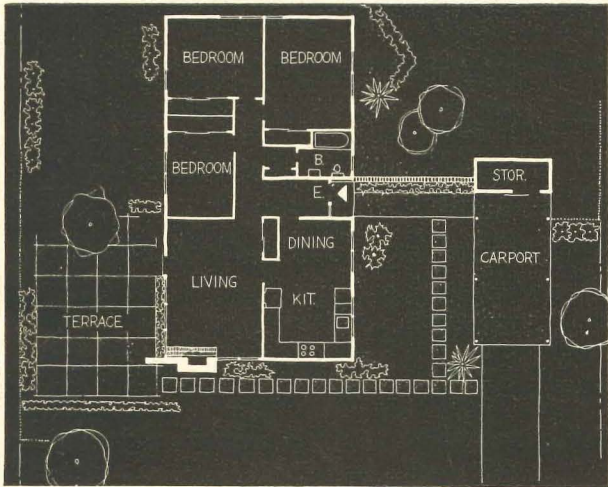
Wray Studio



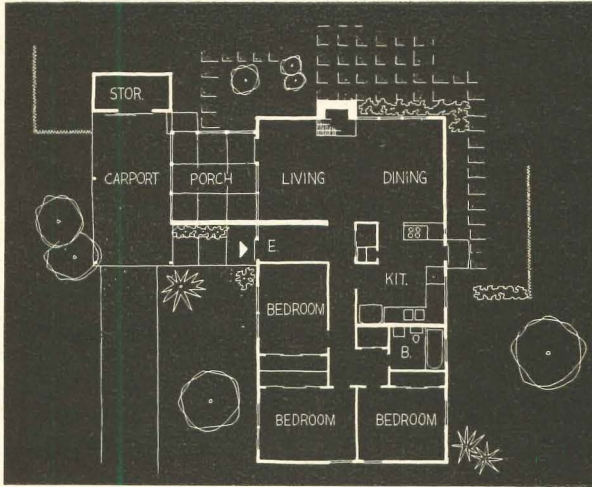
Bob McGinnis



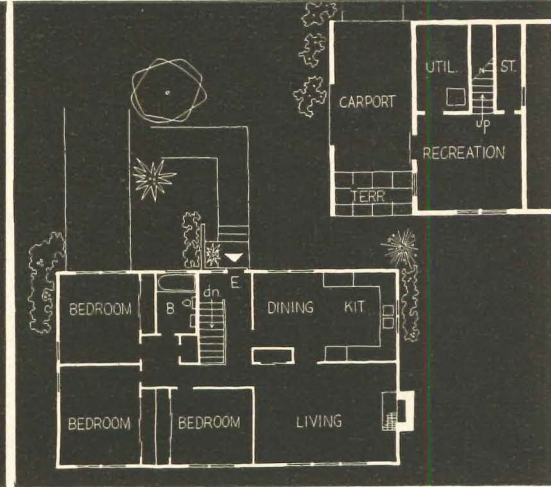
Most popular house (Model 600) has fireplace in outside corner of living room flanked by floor-to-ceiling windows



Model 604: basic price, \$13,600



Model 601, final version will feature built-ins



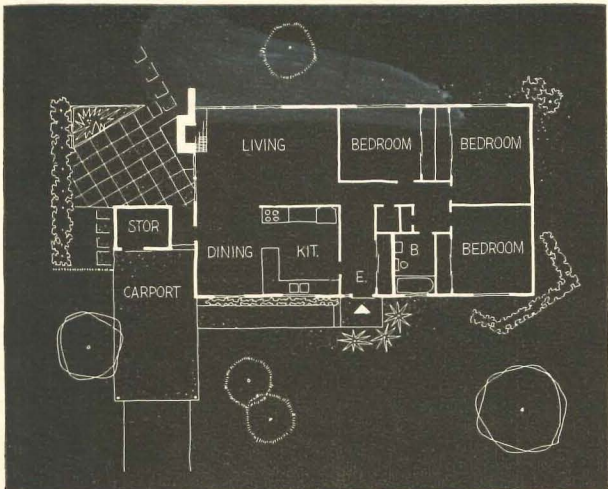
Model 602, basic price, \$13,600

True variety—six floor plans, nothing wasted on frills

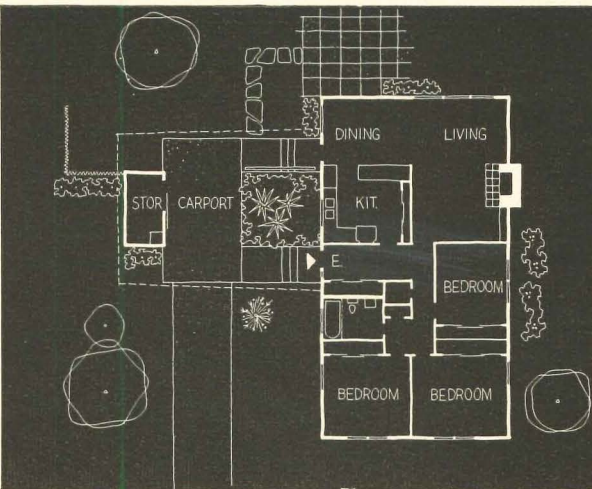
Builder Tally is sold on architects' services at this point.

"I had never used an architect before I went into contemporary design," he points out. "But I felt this was the sensible way to build, and easier. I wanted to bring the costs down out of the roof and put them into the living areas. So I picked Mastin & Summer, who gave me logical designs. These certainly did the trick."

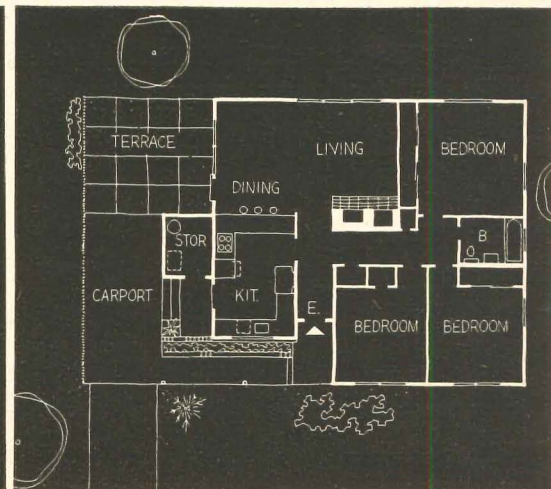
How did he save money to benefit buyers? "We waste no money on extra roof bracing, roof joists, cripple studs, boxing at eaves, flashing and the like. Now our buyers don't have to crawl around in a dark attic storage space. By building this way, we get 50% more closet space and 50 to 75 more square feet of first-floor living area for houses in this price class in our area."



Model 600, most popular house; \$13,800



Model 603, also quite popular; \$13,600

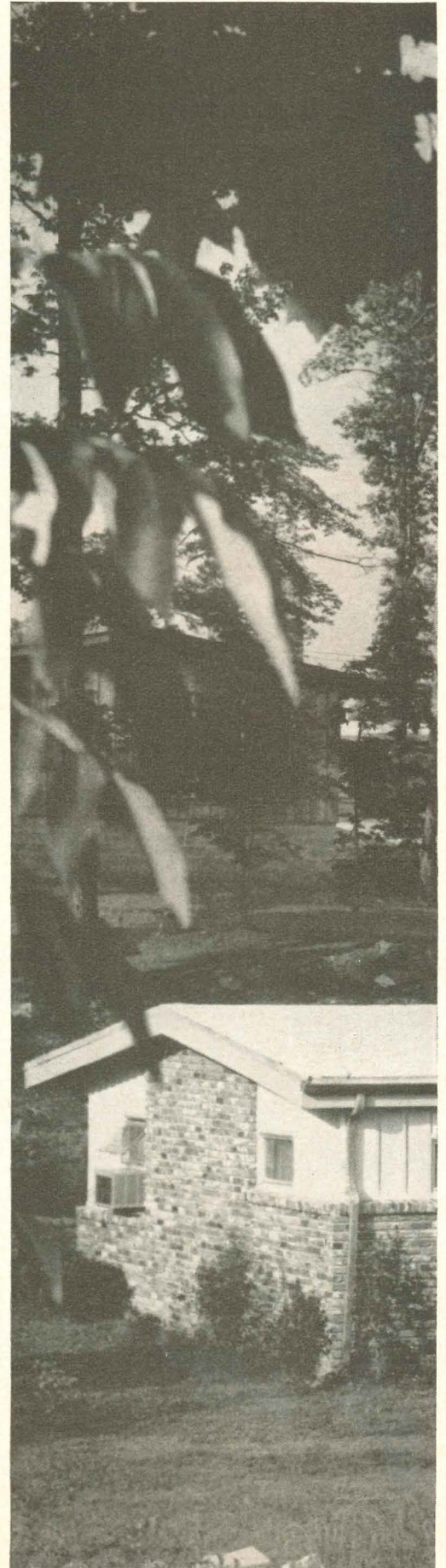


Model 500: \$13,750 includes built-in appliances

Photos: Bob McGinnis

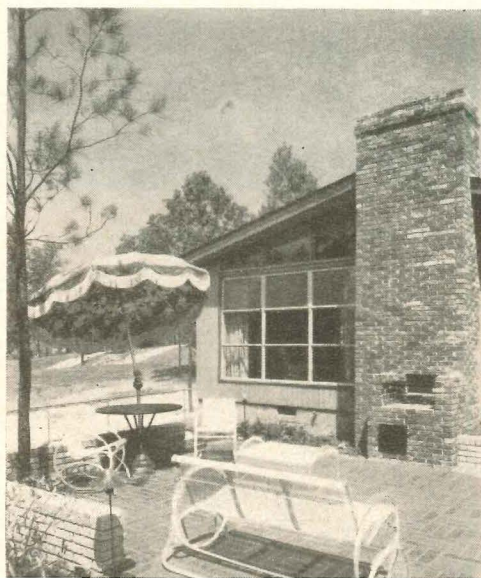


Panoramic view of a group of new



Quality meant quantity: Sales of Builder Tally's ranch houses (above) had slowed down when he switched to the new designs. (He had never used an architect before.) The design quality proved the key to sales quantity. For two years he has generally been 20 sales ahead of production. "And we have got all closing costs and usually 5% down, so people are buying our homes, not our financing," he points out, adding: "Thirty architects and engineers have bought these homes." Two weeks ago he introduced a new model. Basically it is earlier model 601 but with built-in kitchen and washer-drier, plus outdoor patio with barbecue.

Newest model has outdoor patio and barbecue

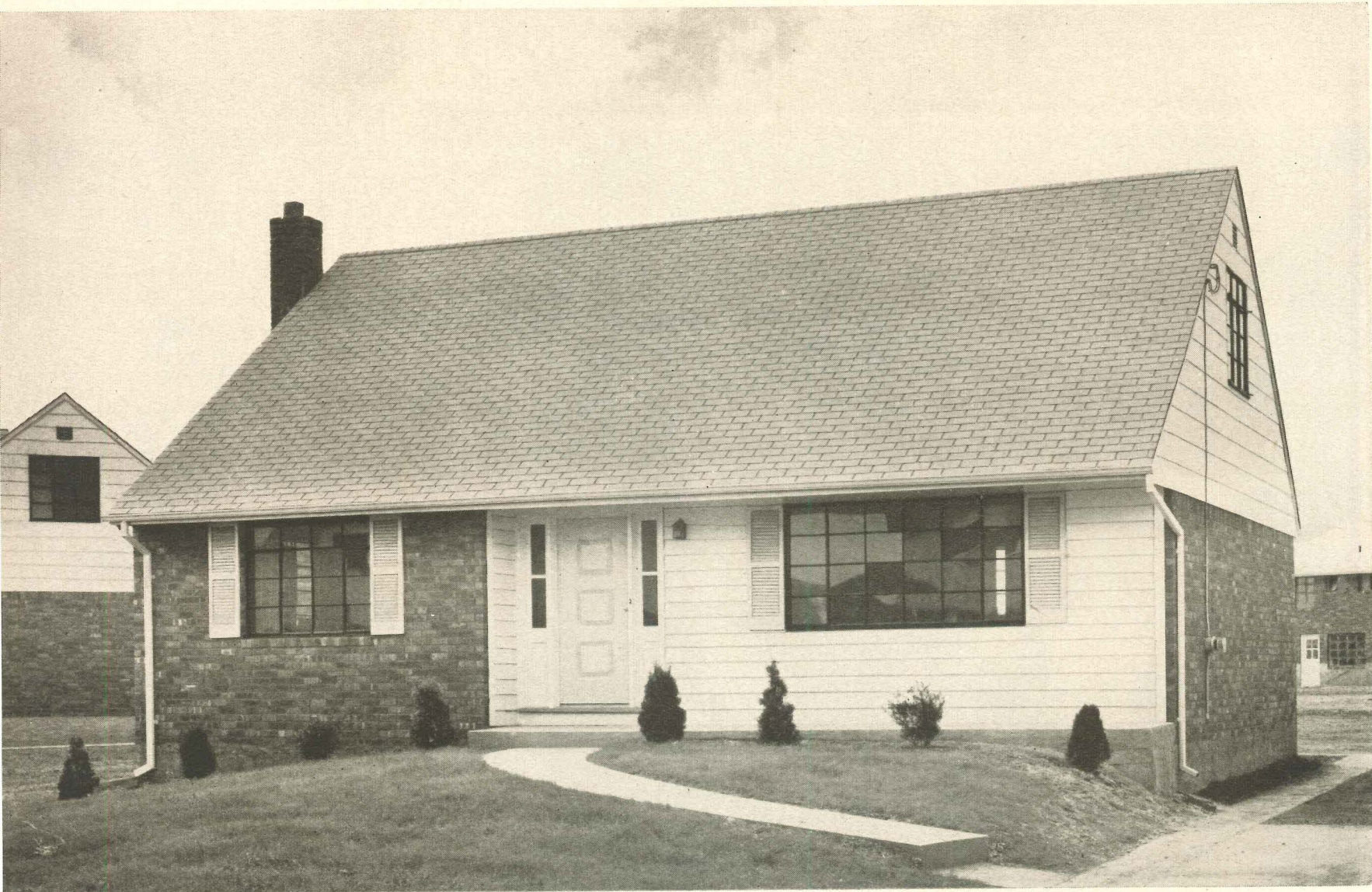


Northwoods houses shows what a wide possibility for living can be offered with six wholly different designs



LOCATION: East Northport, L. I.
ROSANO BROTHERS, builder
SALVATOR S. CALAFATI, architect*
LENDER: Williamsburg Savings Bank
TERMS: standard FHA-VA

Photos: Richard Averill Smith



Nineteen houses like this have been sold over the past year for \$12,990

Can this be the house of the year?

Yes, say New York's appraisers, thereby raising some big questions about what "value" means

Can it be that all the architects, all the builders, all the suppliers of all the 10,000,000 new homes built since the war have not developed even one new feature that should be considered essential to any good house built today?

The house shown above has been chosen as the New York Appraiser's House of the Year. Five conscientious appraisers labored eight months to make the choice, visiting every tract house in Long Island and Westchester to make sure they had not overlooked a deserving candidate.

By 1935 standards the winner is a nice little house. But here is a truly amazing thing: the appraisers' house does not incorporate a single new idea for better living developed since 1935!

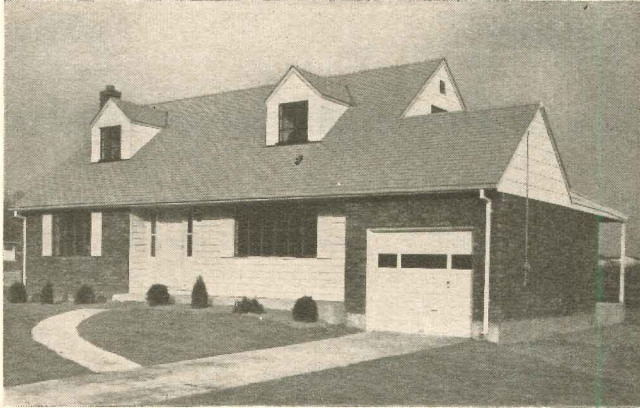
The house scores high by a 1935 yardstick. It scores little better than zero on anything new since 1935.

The New York appraisers said they based their choice on "value," but they defined value in their own terms—terms which dramatize as seldom before the almost tragic split between the appraisers and the more progressive forces in home building.

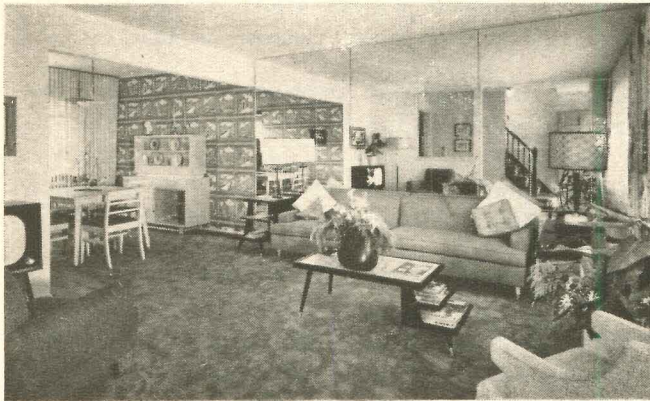
A year ago (March, 1954) a HOUSE & HOME Round Table pointed out that "like the power to tax, the power to appraise is the power to destroy" and charged that backward-looking appraisals were the biggest obstacle to home-building progress. Now the appraisers' choice of this out-of-date cottage as their House of the Year makes clear that too many appraisers still think public taste in homes is static, still think that in 1975 home buyers will go for the kind of house that was the latest thing in 1935.

*The builder says the architect was not consulted on plan design, but just did the engineering and got it through FHA.

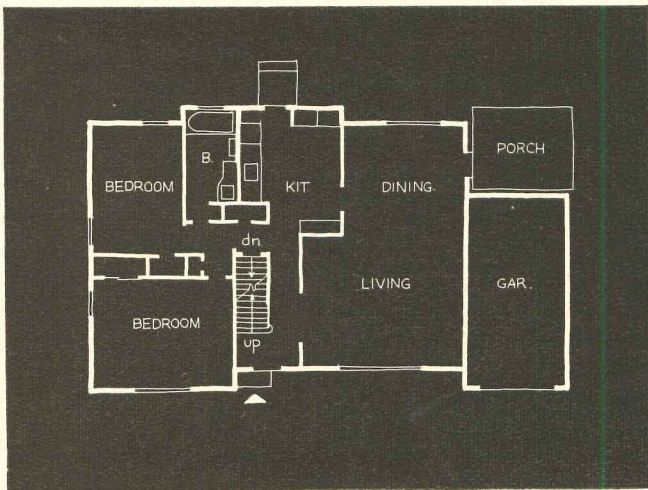
Ray Jacobs Studio



Fifty-four more were sold for \$14,490 with garage, porch and dormers added, eight more for \$16,990 with the attic finished with two more rooms and a second bath. All are 38'-5" x 28'-8", making 1,090 sq. ft. over full basements on 75' x 100' lots.



Mirror on far wall reflects how living room is divided from center hall. On plan below note there is no house door for garage. There are nine exterior corners and five reentrant corners, many costly breaks and jogs inside. Price includes electric range, no other appliances.



Here are the appraisers' reasons to justify picking this house

The jurors based their decision on this rating scale: 20 points for sales price, 20 for location, 15 for material and workmanship, 10 for square feet of living space, 10 for room layout, 10 for design, 5 for size of plot, 5 for landscaping and 5 for extras included in the sales price.

In conversation the judges* called attention to various features that influenced their decision. And they made it seem that the award represents their strong protest against modern design. One jury member put it this way: "Houses have been getting just about every kind of award for chicken-coop modern that won't sell. We wanted to help the builders. We thought an award for outstanding value would make the public think better of builders' houses, and that would help us in our appraising, too."

Here are the things they liked:

Style: "Cape Cods are an American institution. They've been good for 200 years. They'll be good another 200."

Size per \$: The basic house with 1,090 sq. ft. on the first floor sold at \$12 a sq. ft. although the land cost is high. The East Northport location is near shopping centers, a commuter train station, a post office and good beach.

Interior: Center hall; large attic for expansion, with plumbing stack and heat risers installed; bath tiled and with plastic-top vanity lavatory plus open shelves for towels; electric range and dining space in kitchen; large basement, including washtub and an outlet for washer.

Exterior: About \$400 of brick veneer; jogs in the walls—"house is not merely a rectangle"; a fluted front door with side windows and protection of 3' overhang; fully paved driveway rather than two narrow paved lanes; long boards instead of short in front siding.

The newspaper release said the award was for "imaginative use of architecture, site planning, interior layout and decor in the construction of a medium-price house." The judges denied approving such a release.

The jurors said they limited competition to houses selling for \$15,000 or less, partly to cover the majority of houses built in the area "and, of course, a buyer gets more for his money in a smaller house." They considered only tract houses of 25 or more.

But, is this house really a good buy? . . .

continued on page 150

*Samuel F. Holden, East New York Savings Bank; Joseph LoPinto, LoPinto & Kelly; John W. Lane, See Sullivan, Inc.; Joseph Malzo, Union Label Life Insurance Co.; Carl F. Rothleder, independent.

Eight reasons why HOUSE & HOME believes

progressive builders would seriously question

the long-term value of the appraisers' choice

1. Since 1935 we have recognized that one of the things women want most of all is easier housework—and this house makes housework hard. The laundry is in the basement, as far as possible from the bedrooms and without even a clothes chute provided; there are three levels to work on; the kitchen is inconveniently located, is poorly planned and has no labor-saving equipment.

2. Since 1935 we have recognized that people want to get more use of their land—that's why they move to the country. This house does nothing at all to help the family get better use and enjoyment of its land. It doesn't even have picture windows to help them look out. It doesn't even have a door leading to the yard except through the kitchen. And the \$12,990 version that won the award has no porch.

3. Since 1935 we have recognized that people want better storage, conveniently located. This house just doesn't have it. Inside there are only 28 sq. ft. of closet space on the ground floor (and the coat closet is not near the front door). Outside there is no storage space at all in the \$12,990 model, so lawn mowers, wheelbarrows and bicycles will have to be hauled up and down the cellar stairs. Even when the garage is added, outside storage will be minimum because its 10' width is too narrow.

4. Since 1935 we have learned to question the value of the expansion attic, with its low-ceilinged space and the three dormers. This is nowhere nearly as desirable space as the main floor but costs almost as much—\$6.58 a sq. ft. vs. \$9.09 on the main floor. (The unfinished attic added \$445 to the cost of the basic house and the builders charge \$2,515 extra to finish it off with two bedrooms and a bath totaling about 450 sq. ft.) Also the 24 sq. ft. of ground-floor space taken up by the stairs could have been used for much-needed ground-floor storage or to make space for a second bath.

5. Since 1935 we have learned that a below-ground basement, with almost no windows, is hardly worth its \$1,100 added cost.

With only six small windows on two sides, it offers only 1) a place for the oil furnace; 2) an inconvenient place for the laundry tubs; 3) inconvenient storage space; 4) a drab place for the children to play on rainy days. "But no one will buy a house on a slab," the appraisers (and many builders and lenders) protest. The answer is: slabs have a bad reputation simply because 1) too many builders have tried to chisel on the extra cost needed to keep the slabs dry and warm or 2) they have pocketed the great savings from abolishing the basement instead of putting the savings back into a "basement equivalent" above ground.

6. Since 1935 we have recognized more clearly that people who buy a small house hope it will look larger than it really is. This house is made to look smaller than its true size by the way it is divided into two vertical halves by the switch from brick to clapboard facing (and then back to brick for the garage). The house might look much longer if the band of brick veneer ran horizontally under the windows and that would save the costly brick lintels over the garage door and the bedroom window.

7. Since 1935 we have learned many new ways to build better for less (see, for example, "Ten Ways to Cut Costs 10%," Jan. '53 issue). Most of these savings call for more careful advance planning. The appraisers' choice reflects very few of these new methods for increasing value at a profit.

8. Since 1935 the architecture of this house has been going out of style. What builders call Cape Cod is a style developed in the hard times of the thirties. It has very little connection with the way houses were built on Cape Cod 200 years ago, except that both reflect a time when people could not afford a full second story. Styles like this seldom last more than 20 years, and soon builders' Cape Cod will be as out-of-fashion as so-called Dutch colonial (invented about 145 years after the colonial period ended), or Spanish, or English manor.

For the difference between builders' Cape Cod and real Cape Cod, see the house (opposite) by Architect Royal Barry Wills.

Here is the winner's estimated cost breakdown

The initial costs

The builders of the House of the Year would not disclose their costs. But here are the approximate costs of such a house in the same area, according to Norman Hunt, chief cost analyst for the FHA in New York (see Book Review, p. 166):

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Cost of plot at \$5,000 an acre..... | \$1,250 |
| Landscaping | 100 |
| Cost of house, including architect's fee and profit | 11,000 |
| Land development | 550 |
| Total | \$12,900 |
| (Deduct \$569 if for crawl space, \$1,125 for slab) | |
| Added cost for 1½-story house with unfinished attic: | |
| Main stairs | \$ 125 |
| Water and heating lines capped | 103 |
| Added Btu to boiler capacity | 30 |
| Catwalk on attic ceiling beams | 75 |
| Additional lumber and labor to raise roof..... | 115 |
| Added cost | \$ 448 |
| Cost of 240 sq. ft. garage | \$ 994 |
| Cost of 90 sq. ft. patio | 600 |
| Total for expansion-attic house with extras | \$14,942 |

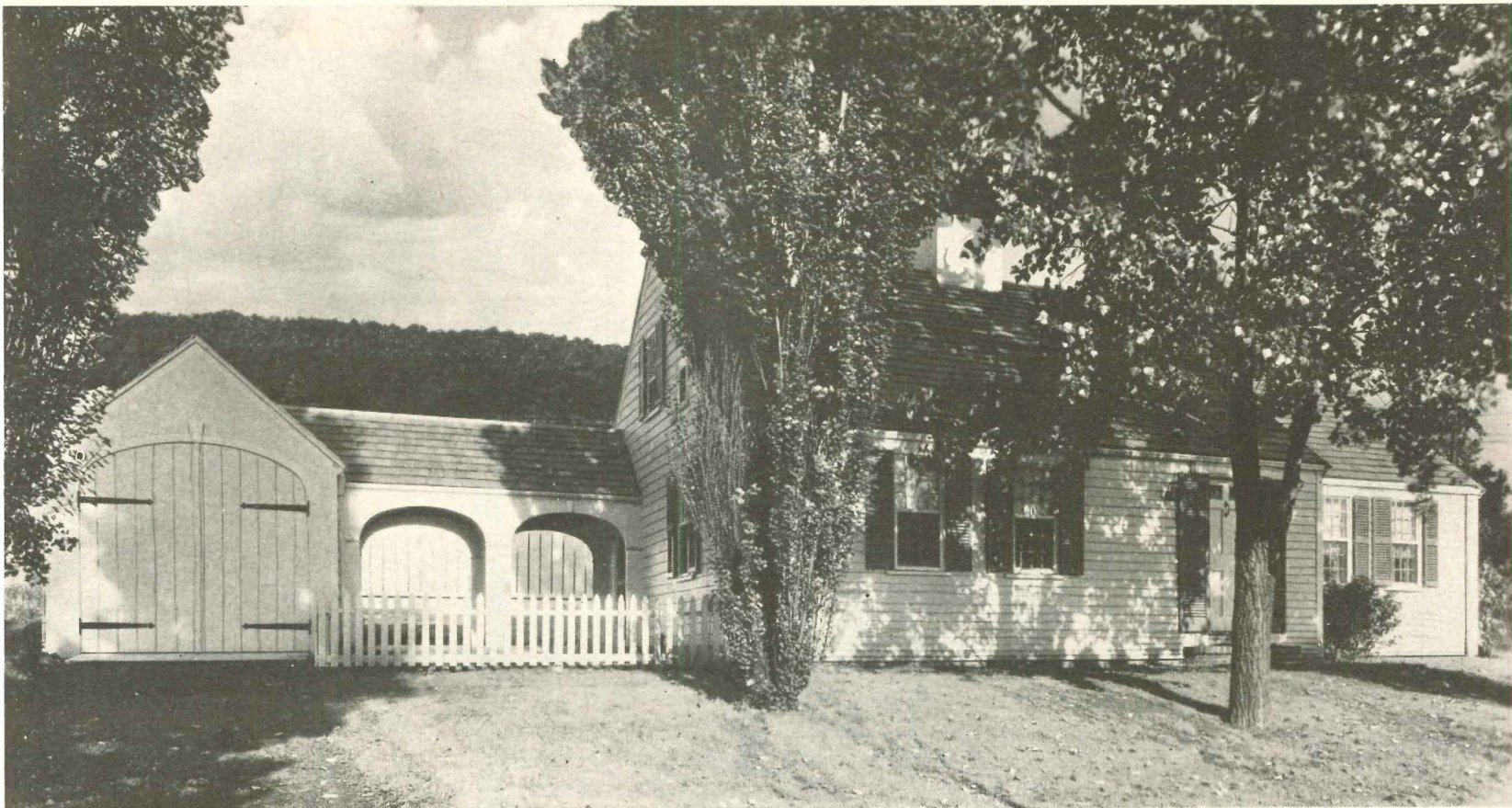
The costs of finishing attic and basement

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Cost of finishing attic and basement: | |
| Pumbing, fixtures and setting | \$ 550 |
| Radiation | 100 |
| Partitions, plastering, closets, etc., for two bedrooms and bathroom..... | 600 |
| Subflooring and finish floor | 250 |
| Electric fixtures | 15 |
| Electric outlets | 75 |
| Tile bathroom | 200 |
| Large dormer for bathroom | 300 |
| Two small front dormers | 300 |
| Painting | 125 |
| Finish basement ceiling, cement plaster | 225 |
| Total for finishing | \$ 2,740 |
| Total cost | \$17,682 |

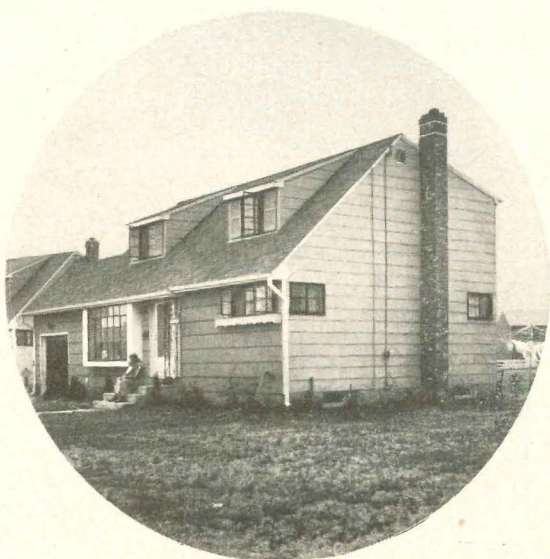
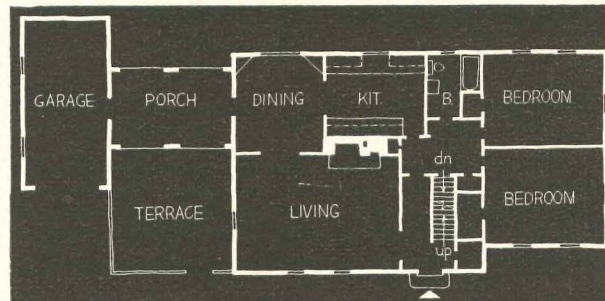
The cost breakdown shows that an expansion-attic house like the one the appraisers honored will—when completed—cost the owner about \$4,000 more than he would have paid for a one-story house on a slab foundation.

This is what a real Cape Cod looks like

Haskell



The handsome Cape Cod house (above) designed by Architect Royal Barry Wills, has a floor plan (right) not unlike the plan of the house chosen by the New York appraisers. But the Wills plan steers clear of the faults of the appraisers' house. Relation of garage to kitchen is good and there is a front hall closet, for example. The two houses are approximately the same size. Today's modified Cape Cods are difficult to design; Wills is one of the few who manage to use this prototype without ruining it. Today's "Capes" must be as much as 3' taller than their predecessors because of foundations, greater ceiling heights. Today's expansion-attic houses have been popular for only 20 or 30 years; "200 years of acceptance" (see p. 149) is too much to claim for them.



Many other Long Island houses offer more

finished space for less money

Among other tract houses the appraisers could have picked is this far from handsome house built by Builder Reginald Watson in Massapequa Park, L.I. About 400 have been sold at \$12,490. They are completed four-bedroom, two-bath houses with large garage and full basement on a 7,000 sq. ft. lot. Even on their own terms, the appraisers may not have made the best selection available to them. This house does not have brick veneer, center hall or several other attributes of the appraiser's house, but it is priced at \$4,500 less than the completed house that won. The winning house was harder to sell, requiring a regular promotion effort over a long period; all 400 of these houses were sold on two weekends.

Family room dominates the house, is located between kitchen at right and living room at left on far side of double fireplace

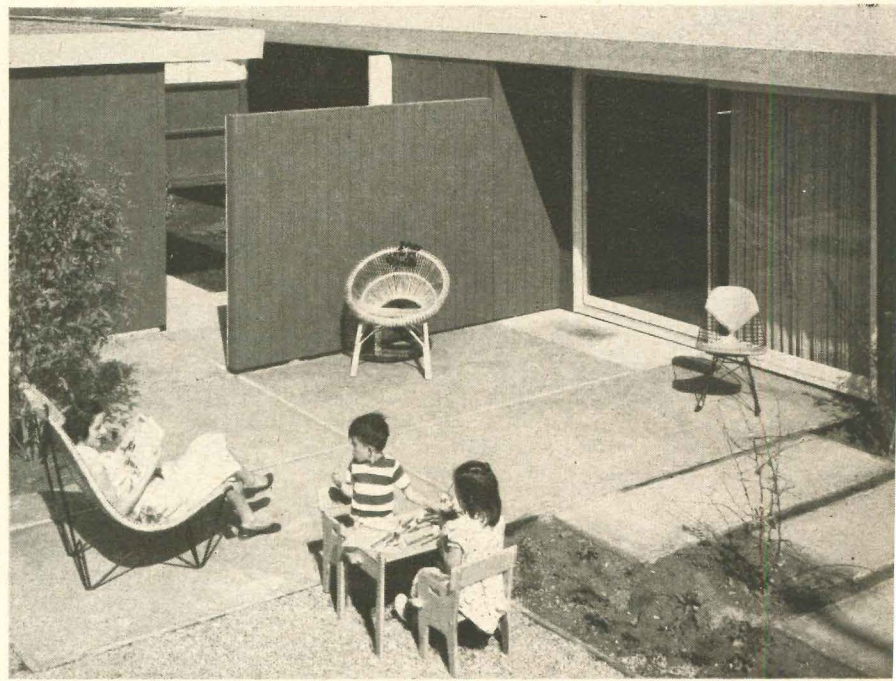


Where should you put a family room?

Del Carlo



Rondal Partridge



Paved terrace is outdoor continuation of family room, beyond glass door

Newest addition to house plans is the family room. Should it be next to the living room—off the kitchen—or tucked away in a remote spot?

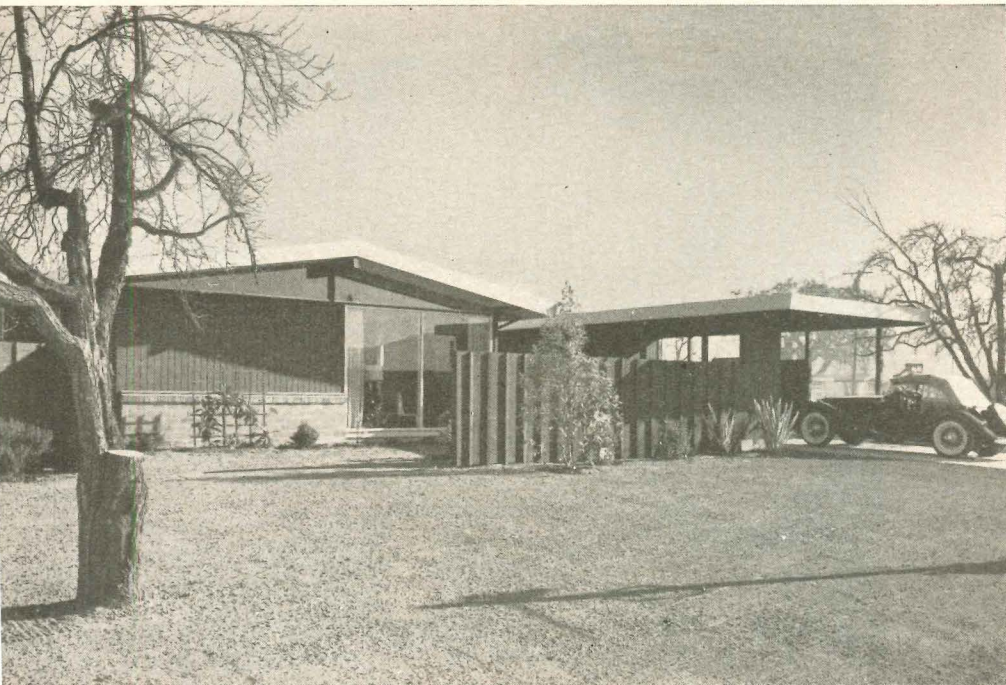
Stern & Price of Cupertino, Calif., believe that in an open-plan house like theirs the family room makes most sense if it is next to the kitchen. Family room is 10'-6" x 15'-6", large enough to serve as a second living room, for TV or hobbies. It is popular with mothers because toys and other playthings accumulate here, not in the living room.

While children are small it is their playroom, easily supervised by a mother working in the kitchen. She can also keep an eye on their outdoor play, because in this plan, sliding glass doors in the family room open to a paved patio (photo above) which she can see from the kitchen. As children grow into 'teen agers, this family room can become the young people's entertainment area, close to the kitchen and convenient for snacks.

For any family the indoor barbecue and rotisserie, built into the back of the living room fireplace, are an entertainment asset. For many families, this room will be the dining room, although the plan (see next page) shows the formal dining area as part of the living room.

Visually the family room makes the kitchen seem larger and also a pleasanter place to work in. While the kitchen expands into the family room, it need not infringe on it. (Continued on next page)

\$12,700 house below has 1 284 sq. ft. plus carport

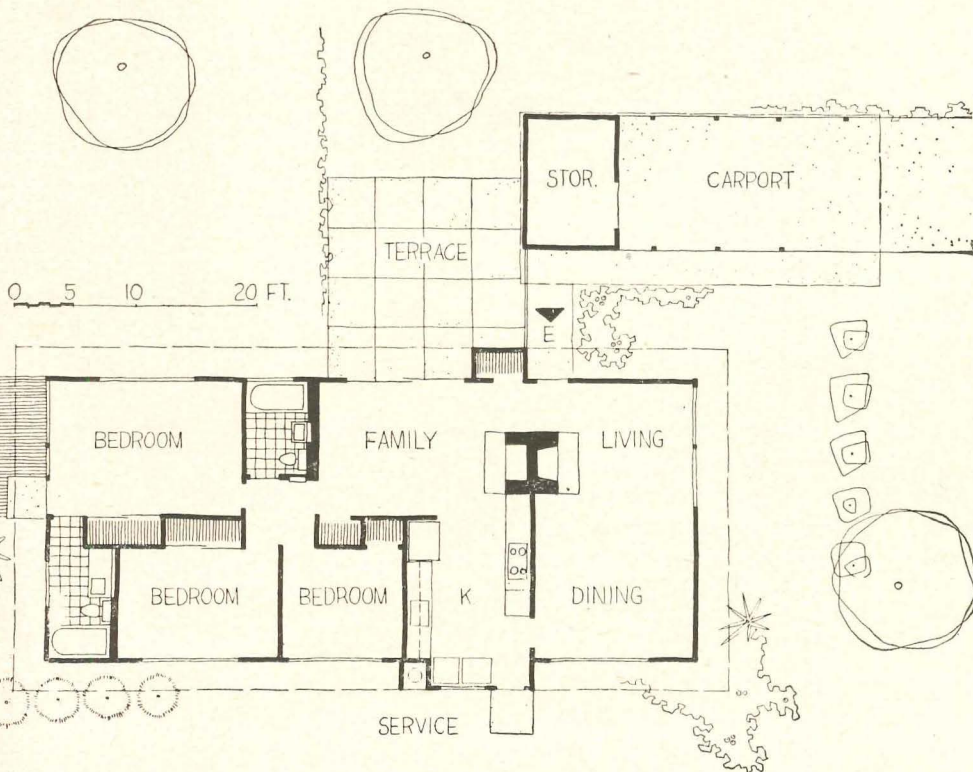


Photos: (above), Don Shapiro; (others) Rondal Partridge

Floor plan (below, left) shows why this family room improves the livability of the entire house. In the center of the house, it is convenient to the living room (large photo, opposite), is between the kitchen and the outdoor patio. But it also is the buffer and the separation between the living areas and the bedroom wing. Children can come into the family room, can hang up their coats or go to the bathroom or their bedrooms without going through the living room. Thus in a modestly priced house, a dead-end living room is achieved, which is a feature not often found. This family room location also overcomes one of the major criticisms of many one-story houses: that the bedrooms are too close to the living room.

The photo at left shows only one of several possible carport locations. The house is turned on the lot to give several orientations. The use of fences (included in sales price) gives privacy to the family room and to the patio whichever way the house may happen to be turned.

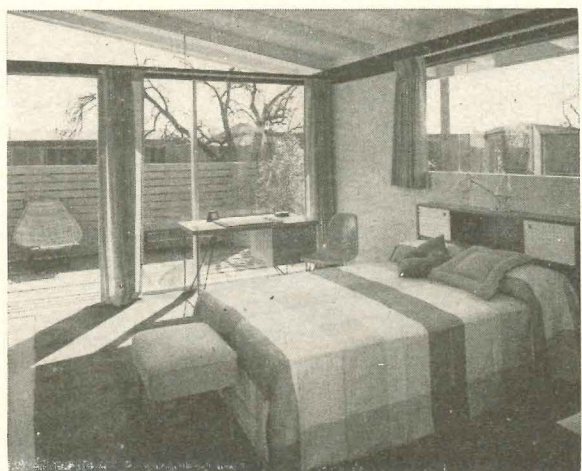
The family room serves both living and sleeping areas



Family room is in center of plan

BUILDERS: Stern & Price
 ARCHITECT: Louis Gerhardt
 LOCATION: Cupertino, Calif.
 SALES PRICES: start at \$12,700

Bedrooms have big windows to private, fenced terrace



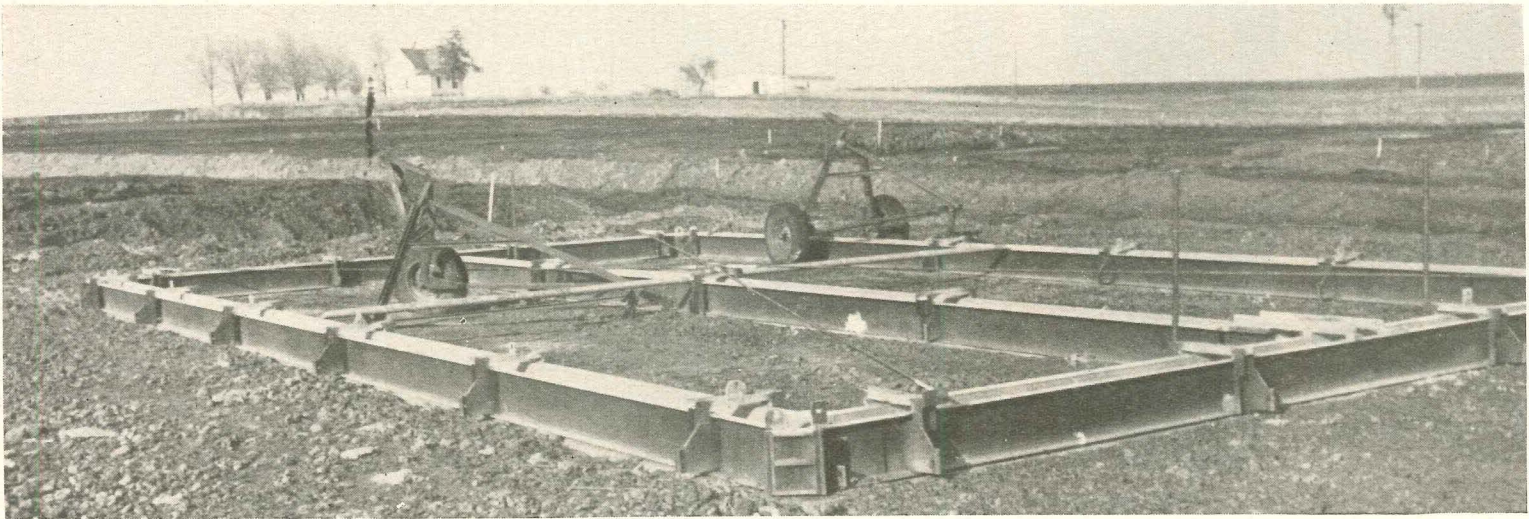
The "Western Family" house

Stern & Price get considerable variation into the "Western Family" house by building it in textured plywood (as in this model), in exterior plywood with various spaced batts, or in stucco. Buyers may have a single or double carport, garage or combination carport-garage. There are three roof materials, two roof pitches, exposed beam ceilings or dry-wall ceiling following roof slope. Floors are slab covered with asphalt tile or cork, or may be hardwood over a 2 x 6 T&G subfloor. Buyers may choose between warm-water radiant heat, perimeter warm air or dual wall furnaces.

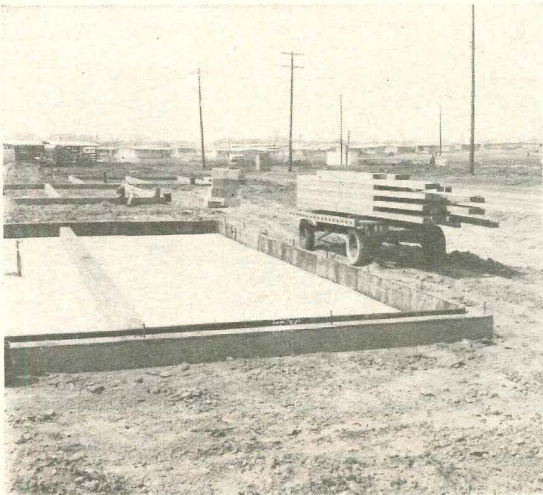
Living room has a view past the double fireplace into the family room beyond



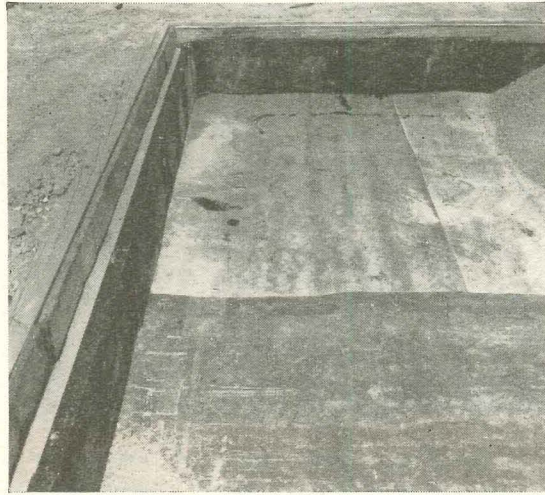
On the site: accuracy and speed



Dead-square steel form is used for foundation walls over pre-poured footings (see June issue, p. 150). Always leveled with a transit, the one-piece form is diagonally braced, never needs adjustment. Form cost \$1,800, paid for itself in a few months. A tractor pulls the form into place after it has been hoisted onto wheeled coffin dollies (rear).



Painstakingly accurate leveling of site is vital for preparation because premolded asphalt membrane, $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 4' x 8', is laid directly on grade inside foundation. Soil is first treated with termite repellent. Crawl space is about 8" deep, from moisture barrier to floor.

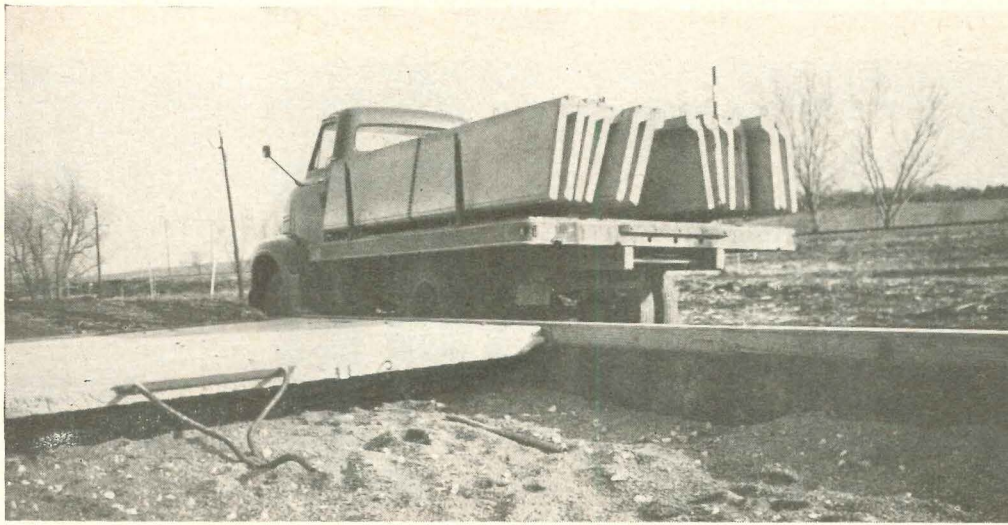


Entire foundation wall above grade is lined with 2" of glass fiber insulation. The 4" x 6" plate is embedded in catalytic asphalt, then bolted to stem. Cork insulation 1" thick acts as buffer between sill and concrete planks. Accurate foundation has only $\frac{1}{16}$ " tolerances.

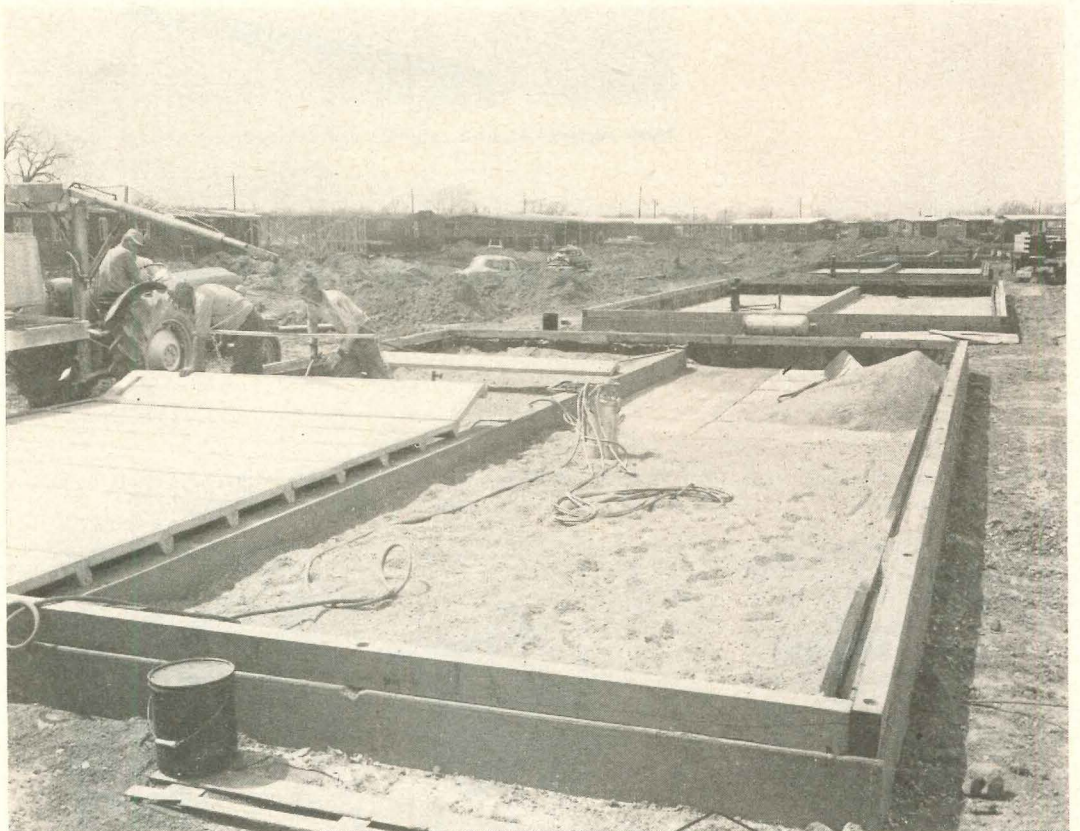
Membrane moisture barrier is well lapped, then covered with 2" of washed gravel to hold it in place. Four-man crew can prepare five foundations per day (spread footings is a separate operation). Chief reason that Strauss is able to move stem wall forms so quickly is stiff slump concrete; 4-to-1 curb mix is well rodded into steel form, takes on initial set in 2 hours.



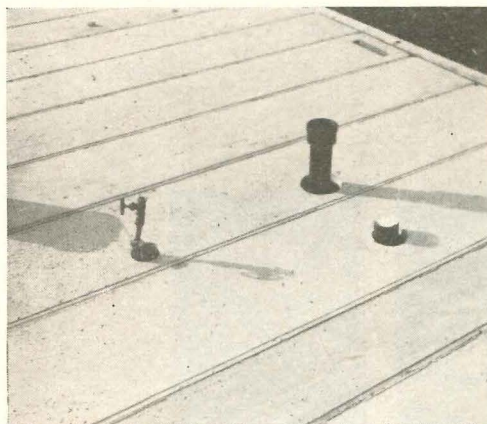
....in the house: a modern heating system



Over a quarter of planks required for house arrive at site on flat-bed truck. Rib (left), approximately 5" deep, runs along edge of plank, making 12' span possible. Remainder of plank is approximately 2" thick.



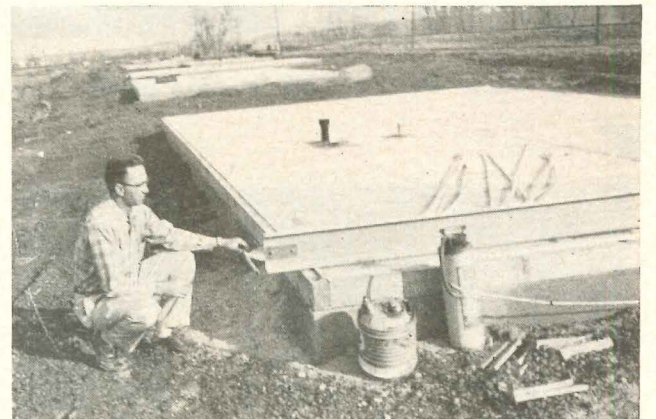
Hydraulic rig lifts planks into place from truck. This speeds operation: three men lay planks for four houses in a day. Undersides of planks are first sprayed with aluminum paint to increase heat reflectivity.



Pumbing fits neatly through precast openings. Slot at rear, for typical 2" x 14" heat diffuser, is located 8" from wall under windows.

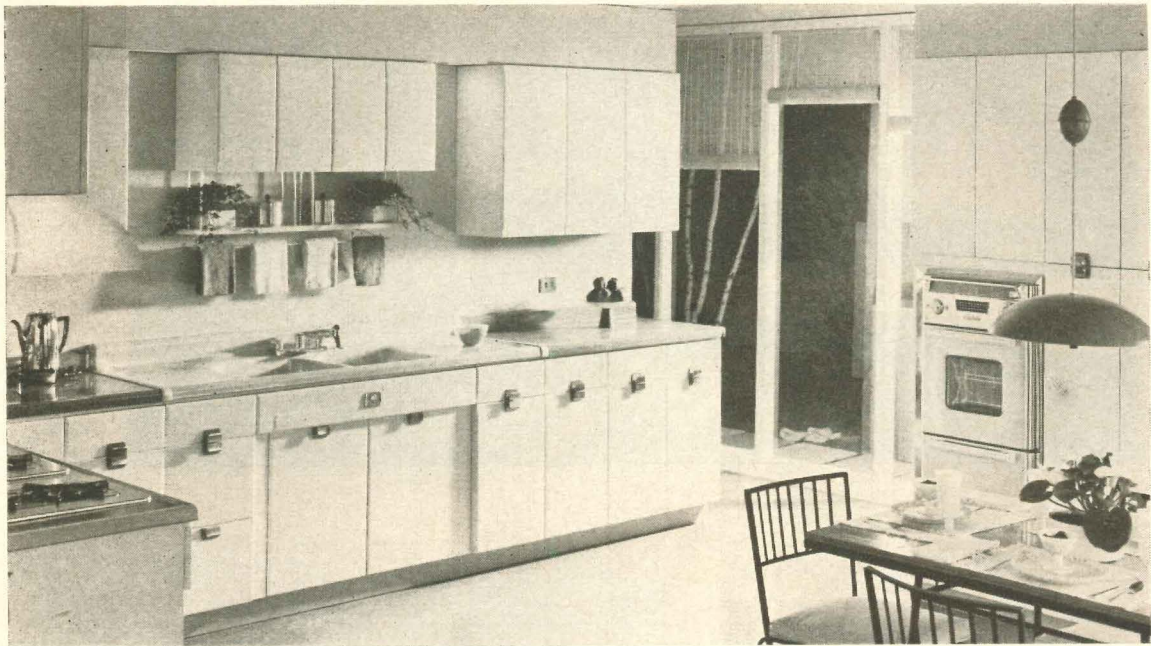


Topping operation using 1/4" concrete over mesh reinforcing was later found necessary.



Aluminum channel is used to level topping coat. Top is then steel troweled to a dense hard surface. After curing and drying, asphalt tile is laid on slab to form finish floor.

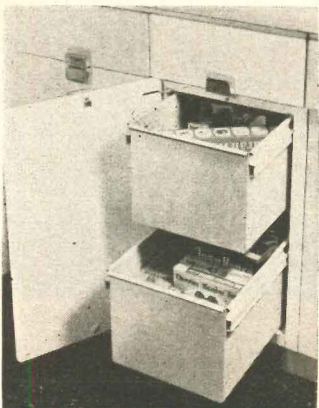
NEW PRODUCTS



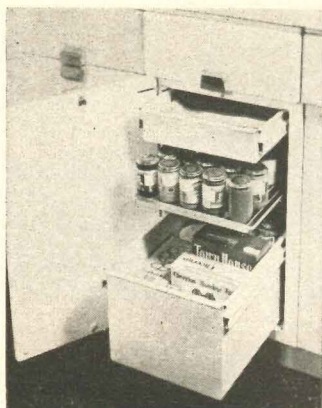
Flush surfaces of wall cabinets are unbroken by exterior hardware. Base units are available for built-ins

Convertible storage in new cabinet line

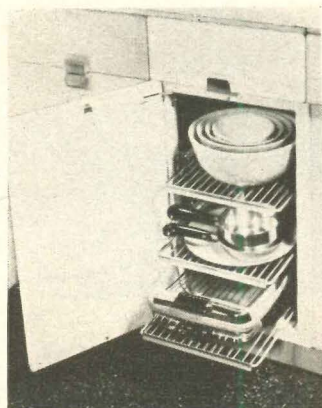
1. Bulky items fit easily into deep sliding drawers.



2. Shallow drawer replaces deep one holds small items.



3. Wire racks, adjustable to 1", replace both drawers.



Drawer and shelf combinations are completely interchangeable in American-Standard's new line of kitchen cabinets. Removable shelf and drawer guides make it possible to add, remove or change the location of any component, and wire shelves in wall units are adjustable at 1" intervals. Wall cabinet doors are identical, top and bottom, and may be changed from right hand opening to left.

Door and drawer fronts are of double steel construction ($\frac{7}{8}$ " thick) with a core of honeycomb sound insulation. Vinyl bumpers and nylon drawer guides and hinges add to quiet operation and long wear.

Construction of undersink cabinets is turned into an assembly-line operation with snap lock construction, which builds any sink arrangement from base cabinets connected by an intermediate assembly. This aligns cabinets, clamps them together, and fastens them to the subbase. Only pliers are needed. The small components mean that one man can assemble a kitchen.

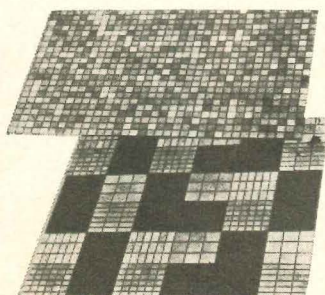
Wall cabinets have no handles, but substitute finger wells to preserve the flush appearance. Corner base cabinets have two independently revolving shelves that make maximum use of this awkward space.

(continued on p. 174)

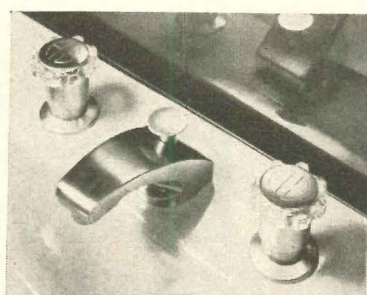
Other NEW PRODUCTS in this issue



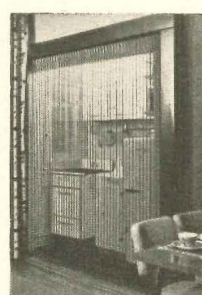
Frameless outdoor screening . . . p. 190



Free-form tile patterns . . . p. 206



Colorful basin fittings . . . p. 182



Venetian draw draperies . . . p. 178