

urban concern

(continued from cover)

What is this purpose of the new architecture? I doubt the purpose is abstract sculpture, nor do I believe it to be professional magazine or press headlines (pro or con). Rather, I believe the purpose has to do with the nature of those who indwell our architecture. What is it that motivates both on the simple level of biological performance and on the more complex level of psychological requirements and aspirations?

This suggests that the real client we serve is not the individual, committee, or agency which pays our bills. This client may be more properly termed a sponsor (or a co-sponsor with us). Our client is the folk who will dwell in our structure upon its completion.

The test for success of any structure is not the happenstance sculptural effect or resulting headlines, but rather the reaction of those who must live with what we have created.

I suspect what we are really speaking of is something called "humane architecture." It is not the architecture we see today — an architecture which appears out of scale and unconcerned with the human user. A biologist proposes, and today's architecture suggests, that the logical thing to do is to design the environment, and then adapt the human being to it by genetic manipulation. Human adaptation is possible, yet it appalls me!

What form "new architecture" will take, I do not know. I suggest it will be some form of mega-architecture; in fact, it may even be a non-architecture. Certainly the idea of discrete structures for specialized functions is obsolete, just as the concept of discrete building trades constructing "bits and pieces" of a structure is obsolete (yet it is with us still). If this is the product of "new architecture" one must anticipate in the future, it raises the question of the process required to achieve this product. For this process I employ the term "urban design" without apology, acknowledging that few people, including those on the AIA Committee on Urban Design, really agree upon what constitutes urban design. The Committee tried for several years to define urban design and finally gave up in utter frustration. It appears to me to have eight characteristics.

URBAN DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

First is a question of scale — the geographic scale, the time scale, the scale of complexity. We may not assume that we are able to design a structure which three or four years from now will be admired by ourselves — along with our press. We accept that we may be a lifetime designing an urban area, or a segment of an urban area. It may stretch many miles; it may be a total metropolis such as Greater Stockholm.

The complexities with which we deal may require more than the traditional services of the structural and mechanical engineer and the landscape architect.

The second characteristic is urban planning in the third dimension. This suggests a bridge between planning, as a two-dimensional quasi science, and architecture, as a three-dimensional non-science. A three-dimensional concept is achievable at any scale to enable the level of a region to be conceptualized, even a region embracing several states.

The third is the process of posing and evaluating alternatives against a true scale of cost and benefits. The measuring of a design solely on the basis of first cost and functional pros and cons is too narrow. This limited spectrum of costs and benefits may have been appropriate to our frontier nation twenty years ago; however, it is no longer appropriate for our nation today, the mature leader of western civilization.

I do not believe our recent Presidents have been great aesthetes. I do believe they have been great politicians. For the first time since Thomas Jefferson, a President may speak of the quality of life in this country, of aesthetics as a political issue. I believe he is responding, as a political leader, to a new chord in the electorate. If we desire a true measure of costs and benefits, we have to combine not only first cost and function, but economic benefits created and destroyed, historical values enhanced or diminished, social systems and values — and aesthetics.

Here we see the proper role of systems engineering, the role of the computer, programmed to evaluate design alternatives against this new spectrum of costs and benefits. We see the necessity, therefore, to quantify a number of factors in computer programming which until now have not been quantified.

A fourth characteristic (old for the architect — new for the planner) is urban design operating on a continuum. It commences on the near end with research, programming, evaluation, systems analysis. It concludes on the far end, however far this may be; i. e., twenty years — a lifetime, with the "fait accompli" of the artifact. This is the theme of comprehensive services that the AIA has been fostering for a decade. My experience is that, if this continuum is interrupted, the plan which is left on the shelf for later implementation is, ipso facto, obsolete, whereas the plan which is built on schedule is not obsolete.

This brings me to the fifth characteristic, systems engineering. This is part and parcel of urban design in terms of a "plan for planning." Too often we present ourselves as gifted designers and planners, yet we do not organize ourselves as we would like to organize our clients.

The sixth is the decision-making process which involves design and the hierarchy of decision making. It encompasses the full range of al-



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ternatives which are posed to the decision maker. The decision making process begins with strategic objectives stated as achievable alternatives within the parameters of a reconnaissance. These alternatives are professionally evaluated, recognizing that the client/decision maker controls the final decisions for reasons that may diverge from the technical rationale of the professional evaluator. Throughout this process alternatives are posed and evaluated; tactics of design are introduced, and finally, implemented.

One of the key qualities offered by the architect to this process, one which the decision maker recognizes and inarticulately hungers for, is imagination.

Imagination in its literal sense, not in its bastardized version, implying dreaming and impracticability, is the ability to forecast the image of decision, the ability to synthesize, to describe these images graphically. This is a unique architectural ability.

And the graphic mode of synthesis and illustration of image creates a simultaneity which is not possible in the arithmetic or verbal symbology. There he must review sequentially numbers or words through a step-by-step explanation. The graphic depiction is simultaneous. It synthesizes immediately and is, therefore, a better mode of communication than are words and numbers.

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urban concern

THE NEW ARCHITECTURE was the theme of a recent convention of The American Institute of Architects in New York City. In adopting such a theme the AIA and the architectural profession were I think posing a rather startling proposition, to wit:

1. That, after twenty years of success in "selling" contemporary architecture as a style, something new is now required from the architect.
2. That to be really new that which is required must be more than simply another style.
3. That the purpose of the new architecture relates to the purpose of our troubled society at what may be an historic turning point in our national history and that this purpose will inevitably shape the new architecture.

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The final aspect of decision making is the consideration of alternatives, and the decision taken upon alternatives, in a fish bowl. Thus the community as a whole participates in and understands the process. This is contrary to current procedures where the architect conducts business in a garret and the decision maker operates from behind a desk. The public is only allowed in at the last moment when the silver dish is picked off and the great unchangeable plan is presented.

The seventh characteristic of urban design may be termed "advocacy urban design." This gives articulation to the "fish bowl" aspect mentioned above. This suggests that the community must organize to participate positively in the decision making process for plans that physically affect its own area. Further, decisions not involving the community, aloof from the community, may well turn out to be non-decisions.

The eighth and final characteristic is the "development team," a new mechanism for carrying forward urban design on the scale of which we are speaking. The design team crosses the disciplines; may be headed by architects, but not necessarily so; will include many non-design disciplines (i.e., sociology, economics). A sponsor's team, which signs the checks for the design team, renders the decisions upon its alternatives. This is very different from our current idea of the client to whom we owe prime loyalty. The community team articulates and gives expression to the wishes and aspirations of the community involved in self-improvement.

THE NEW ARCHITECT

If this is the "new architecture," then through deduction we may be able to describe the "new architect."

First, the great need today is for generalists, not for specialists. We have overspecialized, subdivided, and sub-subdivided to the point where the crying need in our profession, in government and industry is for the individual who is capable of synthesizing, comprehending, and motivating all compartmentalized specialties.

Second, design will be performed by a team of peers in which the architect may be in "abrasive" contact with the sociologist, and in which he may discover that the sociologist is better at conceptualization, regardless of label. The team leader in each instance will emerge by virtue of the contributions he will make. This clearly means the day of the design hero is over. No individual architect possesses the inherent capacity to comprehend the complexities of the problem on the scale we are posing. He may be a hero in the sense of offering leadership and motivation to a design team, but he'll very likely be a non-hero on the design level.

We must seek "collaboration" as distinguished from "co-ordination" — in which the decision maker and the decision making team are in-

volved on the same side of the table with the designer and citizens. Horizontally we see collaboration in a literal sense — a bridge for all the specialties we now comprehend.

With this situation, it seems to me, the architect can no longer be an abdicator. He can not simply solve the problem and quit there, nor may he dictate, and impose a personal design solution on every problem. In the end he must stand forth as an artist.

I paraphrase Winston Churchill: The architect is indeed an artist wrapped in a professional and surrounded by a businessman. Yet the center of work for the architect, by whatever label used (urban designer, planner, etc.) is art.

There is a process to artistic creation which is consistent and applicable even to architecture. First the artist must understand (comprehend) his raw materials. Then he must conceive, and this conception is largely intuitive. This is true for the architect, as well as for other artists. Art is born in the void created by a true attempt at understanding. Finally the artist must implement or execute. I suspect a great many of us like to conceive, but not understand. We are unwilling to truly exhaust ourselves in this artistic process.

Architecture follows this process and is an art such as the other arts, distinguishable only in that it utilizes a different raw material. Raw material for the carver is wood and grain which he must respect; raw material for the architect is the practical problem and its practical solution.

The role of the architect is the releasing of forms from the raw material of his problems. He has raw materials which involve "grains" of site and time, of the nature of the sponsor, and more importantly, of the nature of the user. His own personality is involved, certainly, and the nature of our times, for this is a grain that cuts across all problems today.

Art as a thing incarnate, which during eternity is given flesh and speaks to our times and to our posterity — and this has very little to do with beauty and ugliness — including the AIA's "war on ugliness."

The artist is a non-hero; he is a vessel, a conduit, a servant only. He is a humble person. The artist is a "seer," for he must look to the future and must be capable of translating the future to the present. This is his role because the artists are the predictors of the future; they are the leading edge of history. One need only turn to those arts, which had more freedom at the turn of the century than architecture, and see that their prediction has become reality in our time.

But the architect and the artist are more than seers. The architect is also a prophet. He has a mission which requires that he not only interpret, but direct.

We are potentially the directors of our physical environment. If we accept this onerous charge ourselves, our clients will also accept us. AA

Architects Work To Save Valuable Past

Growing citizen concern, new funds and Federal and state programs are helping record and save buildings and places which will give the American future roots to its past. . . and Alabama architects are taking an active role.

The American Institute of Architects' 172 chapters across the nation and a new system of state preservation coordinators are helping spark the effort.

From slums to farm land, architects with a love of the builder's art and what it means to people, are documenting sites with ruler and camera, then often aiding drives to save the measured structures.

In New Orleans the old city hall, Gallier Hall, was salvaged. In Los Angeles the Victorian Rochester House was moved to a safe place. At Boston's Roxbury district the Shirley-Eustis home will become a community center. Add "typical" farm houses in Wisconsin and North Carolina, Indian mounds and forts and the many-gabled Sheridan Hotel once owned by Buffalo Bill and you get the range of effort. In Montgomery, the Shaw House complex is becoming a reality (see p. 9 of this issue).

Nick H. Holmes, Jr., AIA, Mobile architect and member of Alabama's Historical Commission, said architects are delighted at public demand for preservation.

Officials now realize places and structures which contain "patriotic, inspirational and educational values" are needed to retain a sense of belonging in the slums of older cities and to anchor civic spirit in the mobile suburbs and new cities, Holmes pointed out.

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) notes in its guide to historic preservation grants that restored buildings can "spark the redevelopment of a decaying area."

HUD now spends around \$500,000 a year to help safeguard valuable buildings threatened with demolition plus larger amounts through its urban renewal and open space grants to cities, counties, and states.

This Federal outlay is in addition to the longer established protection of the National Park Service through surveys, inclusion in parks and monuments and grants.

Latest AIA instrument in the campaign is the SPC—State Preservation Coordinator. Holmes is State Preservation Coordinator for Alabama.

The SPC's are available for advice on what ought to be saved as well as priorities, methods, documentation, and Federal funds and other resources.

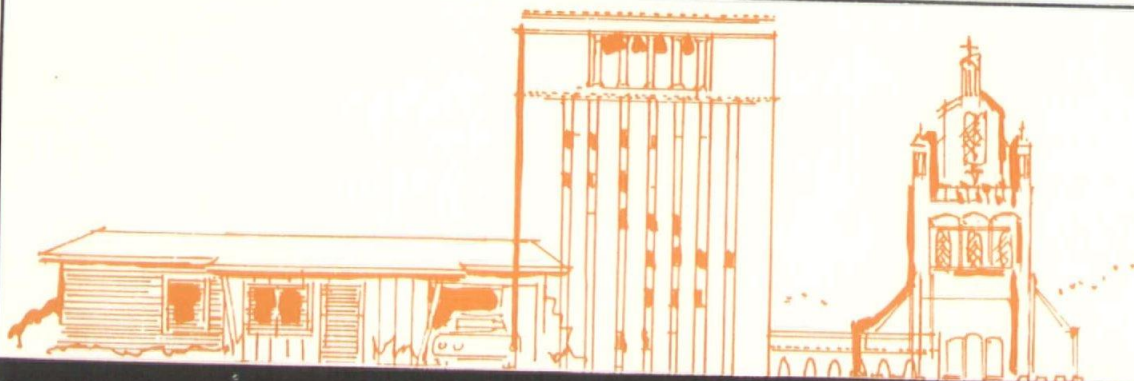
Appointed by AIA's Historic Buildings Committee, SPC's serve without pay.

In Wyoming, Tom B. Muths, AIA, of Jackson helped the Sheridan County Historical Society gain title to the many gabled Sheridan Hotel, once owned by Buffalo Bill Cody. It had been set for destruction as a gas station site.

In Mobile, Holmes and his wife, together with other port city architects, have all taken active roles in establishing the Historic District and other preservation measures.

"Our prime function is to stimulate others but we often have to step in ourselves," said Holmes.

In Alabama, Historic Commission Executive Director Warner Floyd of Montgomery is urging county historical societies to inventory places worth keeping. The five Alabama AIA chapters are being asked to help conduct the work. Also assisting are the Architects Wives Auxiliaries. More help is needed and interested architects should volunteer for this important work through their chapters. AA.



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LEGISLATORS MEET WITH ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS

Left to right: Congressman Jack Edwards; Congressman William L. Dickinson; Congressman John Buchanan; Mr. Ed Ladd, CEC; Congressman Tom Beville; Mr. William L. Williams, AIA; Congressman George Andrews; Mrs. Dee Tubbs; Mr. Robert B. Tubbs, CEC; Senator John Sparkman; Mr. Oscar Pardue, AIA; Congressman Robert E. Jones; Mr. A. B. Jowers, CEC; Mr. Edward J. Bondurant, AIA.

The recent AIA/CEC Legislative Conference held in Washington, D. C., on March 19 and 20 was a well prepared and well attended affair. Architects and Engineers, over 500 in number, came from all across the country. As indicated by the name, this was a joint effort by AIA and CEC with Phil Hutchinson, AIA, and Larry Spiller, CEC, putting the meeting together.

Seven of us attended from Alabama. Representing the CEC were Robert B. Tubbs, State CEC President; A. B. Jowers; Ed Ladd, and Mrs. Dee Tubbs. Other architects attending were Edward J. Bondurant and William L. Williams, both from the Birmingham Chapter.

We had personal contact with both of Alabama's Senators and six of our Representatives. A Congressional Reception held at the Smithsonian Institute gave us our initial contact. The next day, mainly through the efforts of Bob Tubbs, we met in each of the Senator's offices and met the Representatives at a luncheon in the House Dining Room.

The first day was spent in briefing by Larry Spiller and Phil

Hutchinson of Congressmen and Senators on current and pending legislation that would affect our industry and profession. Bills on which we were briefed and which we later discussed with our Congressmen included the "Common Situs Picketing" HR-100, "Union Control of Plans and Specifications" S-1532, and "GAO Competitive Bidding Proposal" which is pending.

Our profession can have a positive effect on pertinent legislation, if, as a group, we become knowledgeable of the facts and then make our feelings known to our representatives in Washington. In particular, our Minute Man program for contacting specific Senators and Congressmen is proving its worth. If you know a particular Senator or Congressman that you would be willing to contact, please give your name and the person's name you will contact to Phil Hutchinson at The Institute so that he can add you to his list of Minute Men.

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OSCAR PARDUE, President
Alabama Council of
Architects AIA

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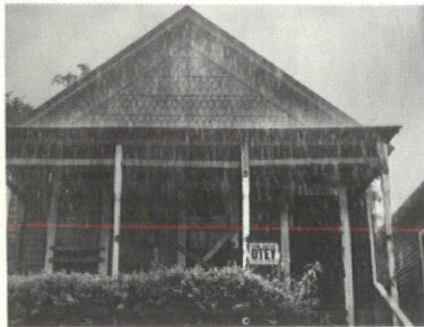
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BIRMINGHAM ARCHITECTS GET INVOLVED



These houses are within three blocks of Birmingham's City Hall. Both are occupied.



Our thanks to Birmingham magazine, who originated this story, kindly gave ALABAMA ARCHITECT permission to adapt, update and reprint it.

Five years ago, Birmingham's Design for Progress was unveiled, containing proposals for a new civic center, plans to revitalize the central downtown business district, and creation of Operation New Birmingham.

ONB has now established its identity, the civic center is becoming a reality, in the downtown business district major buildings are underway everywhere.

And a group of local architects, who fathered the Design for Progress, has been back to the drawing board. They have returned with a new, even greater challenge—The AIA Workshop on Urban Concern.

The scope of the program is not simple, according to the organizers, but the need is desperate. Direct, responsible action may head off the rapid growth of Fountain Heights, North Birmingham, and other similar, changing areas into sprawling ghettos, such as Cleveland, Columbus and Philadelphia now face.

Charles Moss, president of the Birmingham Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, James A. Adams, vice president, William L. Williams, one of the principal organizers of the Design for Progress, and Don Morrison, past president, have been working for several months on the new program.

Through the architects' eyes, the need for action arises from the belief that architecture is responsible for the total physical environment of a community. Yet, historically, the architect has dealt with the monied people—business groups, church groups, and wealthy individuals.

"It takes no great stroke of brilliance to realize what has been overlooked," says Adams.

"Something must be done about the existing and potential slum areas, the rate of development is so rapid," Moss adds. "And we must look at the overall picture to avoid creating more blighted areas."

What is meant by the overall picture?

"We want to get right down into the community and get involved with the people. We want to know what their needs and desires are, so we might act as a catalyst in helping to achieve them," Moss explains.

All involved are quick to explain the difference between this program and the popular concept of "urban renewal."

First, the architects are not offering an area a new "project" such as a housing structure or community park. They are offering their professional knowledge and experience, as well as volunteer time, to help

create a functional organization which can not only learn the needs of a community, but provide a means of putting together the people and money to satisfy these needs.

Secondly, the end result will differ from an urban renewal project in that it will have been accomplished through the involvement of the community itself and funded through private enterprise, not just federal grants.

"In some situations, urban renewal has been a disaster," Adams says. "After a housing unit was built in a community, the crime rate actually increased and unstable family situations resulted."

"There's been a lot of talk in the national AIA and other local AIA groups about urban renewal which indicates we need to take a fresher look at the urban crisis," Adams said.

How do you do this?

"We decided to have a series of information meetings to create a line of communication between the people affected and the sources of money and action," Adams asserts.

"What we want are not just better physical facilities without any concern for the socio-economic problems.

"There are innumerable groups working, but the gains are too small. So our first idea was to find out who would be affected. Then to see if other groups were doing similar work."

Hugh Zimmers, a Philadelphia architect who heads an AIA workshop in that city, addressed the first of the information meetings last September.

His group presently operates primarily through lending architectural and community planning assistance to the more than 350 community organizations involved in working with blighted areas in the city of some 2.5 million people. Zimmers said that his group felt professionally responsible to help deal with Philadelphia's slum and blight problems which are gigantic by Birmingham standards.

The problem was a lack of any vehicle for doing something about it, until the creation of the workshop, which achieved national recognition after only ten months of operation.

After touring Birmingham and making an appraisal of a few of the blighted areas here, Zimmers said the city could accomplish much more than Philadelphia has been able to with only a handful of hardcore workers.

But while Birmingham's problems are similar to Philadelphia's in some



BIRMINGHAM COMMUNITY DESIGN CENTER AND AIA CHAPTER OFFICE

respects, there are many differences, and the local architects feel Birmingham's workshop should be different too, in some respects.

Don Morrison, immediate past president of the local AIA chapter and now a delegate to the national convention, explains why.

"We (the architects) have not been professionally involved before with service to the disenfranchised, whereas other professional groups, such as doctors and lawyers, have.

"We will be more specifically concerned with the physical characteristics of blighted areas."

The difference here with Philadelphia's program is that the architects intend to work with the representatives of other disciplines toward a common goal of an improved total community.

Another difference between Birmingham and the larger Northern and Eastern cities is that population density is so much less here. Moss elaborates.

"Our advantage is low density. Here, we can be concerned with relocation of the inhabitants of a blighted area, and see that they are given something better. We are not going to go in and build something and say 'here it is.'

"The key is real estate. There are slum lords and we're going to step on some toes before this thing is over."

Most of the program is theory right now. What will be the first few concrete steps toward implementing the program after the information programs are completed?

All of the architects agree that the scope of the program is flexible, and general. As the needs of the various communities are determined through more meetings, priorities will be de-

signed and coordinated with what sources of help and funds are available.

Moss explains that the idea now is to pull together the funds, private and federal, as well as the people who can be of assistance, such as real estate men, community planners, sociologists, psychologists, medical personnel, lawyers, and bankers.

Other disciplines have already expressed an interest in the program, through attendance and participation in the first of the information meetings.

The University of Alabama in Birmingham has contributed by providing space for some of the meetings, and has expressed a desire to become involved in any way it can.

Others represented at the meetings are the Chamber of Commerce, the Urban League, Civic Center Authority officials, YMCA, several civic groups, bankers, lawyers, doctors, officials of ONB, Mayor George Seibels and other city officials.

Heading the agenda on the workshop was finding space to set up a conference room, drafting room, and secretarial area. It has now been found in a downtown building on 20th St., across from Board of Education and around corner from the City Hall.

"We have a place where the people of these communities can come and discuss it with us," Adams says. "The moneyed people know how to let their feelings be known. These people can come to us, and we in turn can take the problems to the right people."

Moss asserts, "we now have a nucleus, and we can branch out and set up shop in the communities, for example, at a church."

Within this nucleus will be a secretary, staff of draftsmen and planners and a workshop.

The workshop will select the problems which lend themselves to the more architectural type of solution, Adams says, even though the sociological factors will not be overlooked.

Problems involving family life are not so easily solved, he knows. But through the workshop, perhaps others who would be more adept at tackling a purely sociological problem will find a means of getting the problem channelled to the right people's attention.

Williams, who was employed full time for a year and part-time since on the Design for Progress, says the new AIA program must be accomplished through ONB.

"We can gain a whole lot more by working with ONB because of its connection with the real estate people and various others who can get these things done.

"I can't help but see how it is another step in the right direction."

Adams admits he was not aware of the problems in the city during the old days of demonstrations and bombings, in the early 1960s.

"I read it in the newspapers, but except for that, it might as well have happened on Mars."

"Unless we are willing to see what the people are suffering from you can't expect to know the answers about the black community.

"Why do they say the Negro men are demasculated?

"Why are the families matriarchial?

"Pocket Parks are good, but they are a sop. They don't get to the true problem, the creation of a more satisfying life."

Now, through the AIA workshop on urban concern, Birmingham architects aim to help.

AA

Auburn & Tuskegee Architectural Students Replan A Black Community

Hobson City was a black community of 1,000 persons that needed help. Auburn and Tuskegee 4th year architectural students responded to the call from the mayor. Here is the story.

cerns—typified by monumental results in agriculture—so can the land-grant university meet today's issues. The urban crisis is of contemporary concern, and architects and planners are following the same pattern of instruction, research and extension through community service.

The Hobson City Joint Planning Project resulted after negotiations for a cooperative venture between Auburn and Tuskegee architectural students and faculty architects. The entire project had the support of the Auburn Chapter of Architects AIA. It began when Hobson City found the time limit up on its "workable plan."

Hobson City is a small incorporated town of 1,000 black citizens near Oxford and Anniston. In order to continue to qualify for federal programs, each community is required to update its plan for future development, including maps for zoning and land use every 10 years.

Mose workable plans are developed through the State Planning Agency or through private planning consultants. The state agency, which had prepared Hobson City's last survey, had a waiting list of 50 with Hobson City near the bottom.

There was no money (total annual working budget: \$19,000) to hire a private consultant.

Hobson City's mayor contacted Tuskegee, Tuskegee contacted Auburn, and 14 fourth-year architectural students from both schools began work.

Divided into teams, the students conducted a physical survey of the tiny town which has 300 homes on 983 acres—a town approximately three or four blocks wide and 10 blocks long.

They took pictures of every home, the downtown area with its one industry employing 36, and a model federal housing project. All were assessed based on "standard" housing.

Then the students made a door-to-door survey with a questionnaire developed by them with assistance from Tuskegee's Department of Behavioral Sciences. Answers furnished statistics on population, economic and educational levels, attitudes, and the city's needs.

A final visit to Hobson City included presentation of the students' findings, recommendations, and the workable plan, a neighborhood analysis and comprehensive plan for Hobson City.

Residents had been prepared for the survey and responded to the findings. Assurance had been given by HUD that the study would be accepted, and during the work students were assisted in preliminary development and guidance by members of the Atlanta Regional Office of HUD.

The joint project, as well as rendering community service to Hobson City, has had an educational content for the students in many ways, according to Ed Pickard, Auburn faculty advisor, and William Siembieda, Tuskegee faculty advisor.

Since much of the urban crisis is related to the black community, the project served as a vehicle for insight into the problems of low income and ethnic concentration.

The architects and planners now studying at Auburn and Tuskegee will literally be building the future. The project gave students from both schools an opportunity for dialogue among themselves and with the residents of Hobson City. Each brought his unique talents, training and background into the work.

Equally important, Pickard believes, was the "student sense of involvement and relevance—two major factors in today's campus and academic turmoil." The professor, and architect, sees other areas for involvement and relevance between colleges and universities and the community, taking advantage of "an optimal educational experience impossible to achieve in any other way."

Sharing the urban problem, completing a professional workable plan, and enthusiastic over new communication in areas and issues were James Tanksley of Savannah, Ga., Sylvia Bailey of Birmingham, Jackie McCracken of Birmingham, Ken Anderson of Memphis, Tenn., Thaddeus Ford of Birmingham, Charles Raine of Mobile, Maurice Sturdyvant of Brooklyn N. Y., Delaine Jones of Savannah, Ga., Everett Hatcher of Greenville, N. C., Joe Raburn of Charlotte, N. C., Bill Porter of Mobile, Lannis Kirkland of Slocumb, Ga., John Lawhon of Macon, Ga., and Robert Cain of Birmingham.

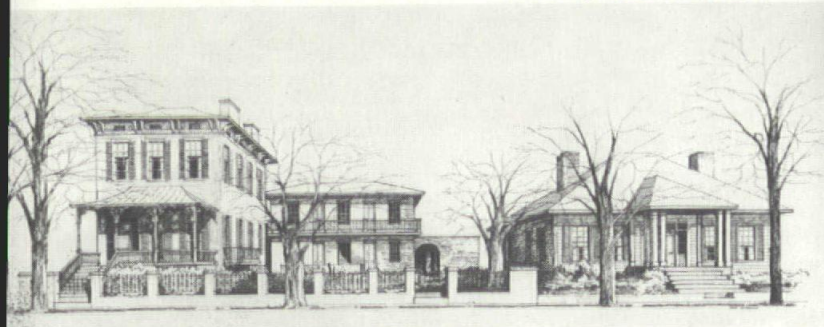
A cooperative project, using the community as an educational laboratory, has provided architectural students at Auburn University and Tuskegee Institute with an insight into one of the most pressing problems of the time in addition to developing a professional analysis acceptable to the Office of Housing and Urban Development for a small town in Alabama.

As land-grant universities responded in the past to farm and rural con-

*The Picture
That Started It*

In late 1967 this photo of the Shaw House appeared on the cover of Alabama Architect. Citizens saw the "For Sale" sign, read into it the loss of a landmark. Efforts began immediately to save it, resulting in success and plan for a restoration (architect's sketch below).

Photo by Paul Robertson



Montgomery architects build the future, restore the past

During this contemporary, and most interesting time in the history of our state when the land is being cleared to make way for new super highways and urban redevelopment programs, Alabama architects must dedicate themselves to an honest interest in our history and our heritage. We must make individual and collective efforts to save those architecturally and historically significant buildings which reflect those influences in our history which moulded the visual traits of our individual towns and cities.

The State of Alabama is fortunate in having a wide spread in variation of historical influences, both in time and nationality of its settlers. What we see as character or personality of a city has been established in a continuing process which began during those days of its earliest settlers. That time in history during which the city was started and was influenced, is a major contributing factor to the appearance and

shape of a city. Williamsburg and Charleston started in the seventeenth century; Mobile, Natchez and New Orleans in the eighteenth century; and Montgomery and Huntsville during the early nineteenth century. All of these cities differ in visual character and all vary in historical values. These values must be preserved.

Here in Montgomery, our historical preservation interests are late in coming. However, the start underway now is intended to overcome past shortcomings as much as possible. Time, location, climate, topography, culture and economy, all, play important parts in the shaping of a city, and all seem to have made significant contributions to Montgomery. Montgomery is young in its history. She has been in existence for only one hundred and fifty years. By comparison, the construction of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris was begun in 1163 and about one

Montgomery architects build the future, restore the past

hundred and fifty years later construction ended (about five hundred years before Montgomery existed).

Much of early Montgomery was built during that architectural era sometimes referred to as "The Romantic Era," an era in which the artisans of the day were beginning to grow a distaste for the Renaissance influence. Out of this revolt, the symmetrical facades and rigid conformity to formality was displaced for a symmetrical and less informal shapes. Much of early Montgomery architecture falls in this category. The picturesque composition replaced rigid symmetry, and the resulting buildings were more comfortable and more serviceable.

Available materials had its impact on the architectural character of all of Alabama just as the availability of quantities of stone influenced ancient Greece. Montgomery had a ready supply of wood and brick and utilized both to the fullest. Just as in other American buildings, much of the design of a building was done by the owner from copies of plates drawn by architects in other countries and much of the detailing had to be developed from materials other than originally intended. Stone columns, quoins, dentils, and other trim were formed from wood or stuccoed brick. From this development of building wooden houses to resemble stone buildings, moulding stucco to resemble a delicately carved column and all the thousands of delicately evolved details have combined to create a form of architecture unique to this area of the world.

This Romantic Era was that time in the South, from just past the turn of the nineteenth century up to the Civil War, when commerce and foreign trade flourished. The world wanted cotton, rice, sugar, indigo, and tobacco. Architects and craftsmen from all over the country and world were drawn to the South to design and build new estate homes, town houses and public buildings to meet all needs.

Montgomery was built on hills which ended with a high bluff overlooking the Alabama River, safe from floods and centered in the rich Black Belt cotton producing area, the location was perfect. First founded as two villages, New Philadelphia and East Alabama, the planned streets of the two villages intersect at odd angles with one set of streets seemingly oriented to the river and the other set oriented north and south.

The abundant production of cotton in the Black Belt made Montgomery an important inland port city. Because of rapids and obstacles in the river upstream from Montgomery, its location provided the central point for trade in this area. With the addition of the political and cultural life generated when Montgomery was declared the capital city, she was on her rapid rise to becoming a cultural and economic center.

Much of Montgomery of that day is gone. Town houses, theatres, villas, and public buildings of the times, built by wealthy landowners of the Black Belt, bankers, merchants and political representatives—



most are gone. Much of Montgomery is demolished as the commercial areas expand, due largely to the general layout of the Montgomery plan, cut off by the river to the north. Preservation of important landmarks has been a problem and promises to become more and more difficult. However, preservation of our historically or architecturally significant buildings is imperative. We must start now in an attempt to "catch up" and stay there. We must be insistent on sound planning, always with the idea in mind that we will encourage better art through and in architecture. Our heritage and culture offers much to us all and we must begin to build the new character of the city. Our churches, libraries, theatres, recreational facilities, schools, colleges, commercial centers, and public buildings offer us any opportunity a person would want. Cattle has replaced cotton to a degree, but the political climate remains; and with the new river development program, once again, Montgomery will become an inland port city. Two interstate highways will intersect in Montgomery at a strategic location. The new convention center and auditorium will be located in the same area. All of this will occur within walking distance of each other in the very heart of urban Montgomery.

The future for urban Montgomery is bright, but our historically and architecturally significant buildings bordering and neighboring these new urban developments must be preserved.

Montgomery's most recent restoration and preservation project is being undertaken by interested local citizens forming "Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery." The project is known as the Shaw House Complex, made up of an Italianate Town House, slave quarters and a small Greek revival cottage. The project architect is Tiller, Butner, McElhaney, Rosa & Seay of Montgomery. The architectural historical consultant is Samuel L. Wilson, Jr., FAIA, of New Orleans, Glenn Little of Alexandria, Virginia, is the restoration archaeologist and has nearly completed his research of the grounds and buildings. Laurence Stevens Brigham, ASLA, of Port Royal, Virginia, has been retained as landscape architect. Marvin D. Schwartz, of the New York Metropolitan Museum will act as the interiors consultant. The complex, when completed will present an example of urban life in Montgomery in the 1850's.

The enthusiasm of landmarks foundations in Montgomery is producing results in historical preservation. We hope all architects throughout the State will join this enthusiasm. **AA**

Shaw House Restoration Fund Drive Begins Here

By FRANKLIN SKINNER
Advertiser Staff Writer

Some 75 Montgomery business and civic leaders gathered at the Museum of Fine Arts here Friday for the kickoff of the \$150,000 Shaw House restoration fund drive. The drive is starting with \$35,000 in contributions.

Mayor Earl James issued the invitations for the luncheon, sponsored by the Montgomery Landmarks Foundation.

The foundation is raising \$150,000 to add to a \$100,000 federal grant to restore four antebellum structures in the Shaw House Historic District at North Hull and Jefferson streets.

The district is being developed as a museum of Montgomery life in the 1850s.

Nimrod T. Fraser, vice president of the foundation, told the group that board members are contributing \$25,000. He also announced that the First National Bank of Montgomery donated \$10,000 to the project Friday.

This article appeared in the Montgomery Advertiser the day after the fund drive began.

James said the project will add to Montgomery's background and heritage, and also add to the city offers as a tourist attraction.

The city purchased the property for \$60,000 last summer, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development granted \$100,000 toward the \$250,000 project.

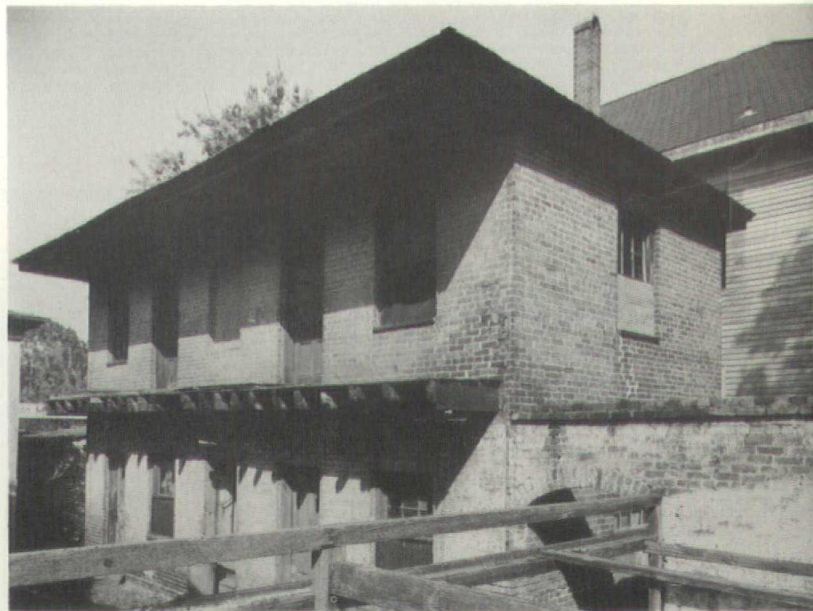
James Loeb, president of the foundation, said the federal grant amounted to one-twentieth of the entire national quota for such projects.

Loeb said that in restoring the house to its original setting, it is planned to "put a cow in a pasture and a chicken in the yard."

Bill Brewbaker, Montgomery businessman, told the group that contributions for the Shaw House will be an investment toward an educational institution and provide additional income for the city — meaning to get the tourist trade.

Mrs. Frank Rosa Jr., executive secretary for the foundation, said it will contact during the next few weeks about 250 firms and individuals in the city asking for contributions.

She said another phase of the drive they will ask for \$7.50 adult membership fees to the foundation, and \$1 membership fees for young people.



HUNTSVILLE'S COURT SQUARE

Object Of Concern For North Alabama Architects

Part of the solution—or the problem?

There are strong barriers to the personal involvement required for effective participation by architects in their community life—the demands of daily office schedules. . . the disturbing reluctance of officials to recognize certain environmental problems and opportunities. . . unrewarded previous efforts by individuals. . . and even among other factors a refusal to recognize the moral responsibility implicit in the relationship of an architect to the community upon whose existence his practice depends. Consider the warning "if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problems!"

The perimeter of the Courthouse Square area in Huntsville is comprised of many hundred-year old victorian buildings that house varied commercial establishments. Most of these buildings were well-designed with many pleasing features but, a hundred years of remodeling "fads and cliches" have all but hidden the good, original designs.

One by one, the property owners, with private financing, are undertaking remodeling and restoration projects that far exceed the usual business motives. This is a tangible example of community, pride and responsibility. The projects include ex-

terior and interior building design, sign and street furniture design, and sidewalk and landscaping design.

The design of these buildings and sidewalks will flow into, and become an integral part of, a future pedestrian mall planned by the Huntsville Housing Authority.

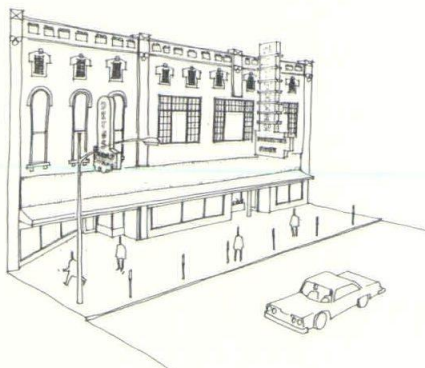
Three buildings on the North side of the Square have already completed construction, and two more buildings are presently under construction. The prime design determinant for all projects was that the buildings are historic, pleasing, well-designed and structurally-sound, and they

should be remodeled or restored to reflect this image.

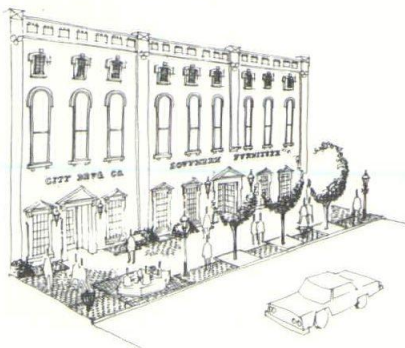
By using the original proportions and materials, the designs project this image by using brick or stucco facades, limestone trim for windows and doors, divided light windows, traditional post and bracket lamps, brick paving, limestone benches, wood waste receptacles, and shrubs and street trees.

The local interest that these projects have generated gives a very positive indication of more private participation in making the downtown area of Huntsville a more pleasant place to work and shop. AA

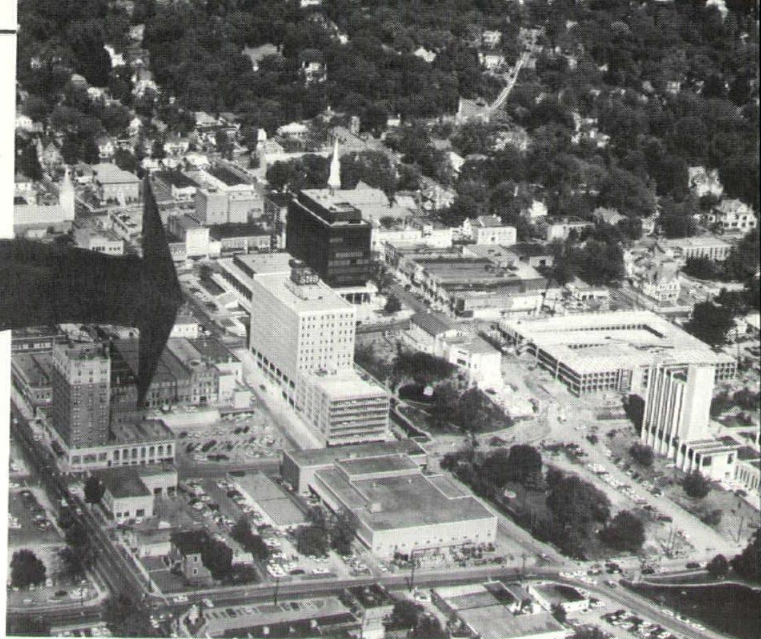
City Drugs and Southern Furniture
PRIOR to remodeling.



City Drugs and Southern Furniture
AFTER remodeling including sidewalk development.

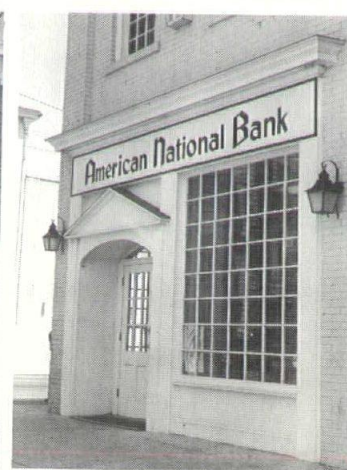
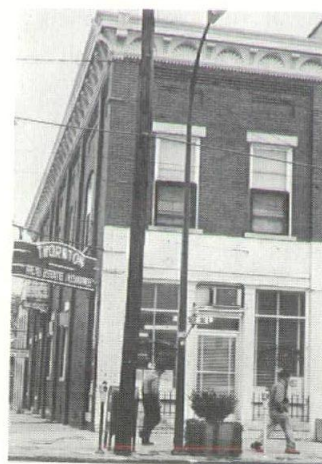


Possible pedestrian mall development in future.



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before
and
after
remodeling



North Alabama Architects Continue Involvement In Urban Life

A genuine concern for the quality of urban life has become increasingly evident in the individual and collective efforts of north Alabama architects. Through some chapter members in Decatur and Florence have found opportunities for expression of this concern, it is in the "Rocket City" that the greatest needs have been evident and the response most effective.

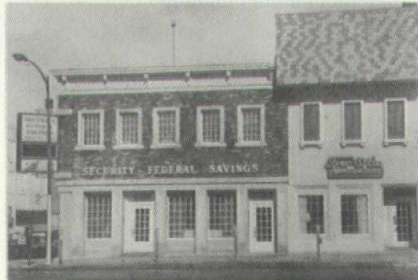
A survey of the activities of the Huntsville architects reveals continued involvement in the Model Cities program, now on the threshold of implementation; architects serve on three M C resource committees—Housing, Beautification and Codes and New Technology. One architect personally compiled the "housing" section of the initial M C application.

By mayoral appointment, three architects serve on the City of Huntsville Beautification Board, one as chairman of the Board's Commercial and Industrial Committee. Recent efforts by the Board in drafting a sign control ordinance, encouraging tasteful rehabilitation of Court Square through slide presentations, and the illumination of a city park are direct by-products of the architects' presence on the Board.

Several chapter members, over the past year, have surveyed and documented residential structures in the historic Twickenham District in Huntsville and the Lauderdale County Courthouse in Florence.

Recent involvement of Huntsville-area firms in graphic design, screening of utility sub-stations and (for the first time) participation in the Homebuilders' Parade of Homes, are encouraging signs of "urban concern" on the part of public officials and builders. Awareness of the problem is not sufficient; there must be concern for the human values—concern that becomes motivation for the appropriate action. AA

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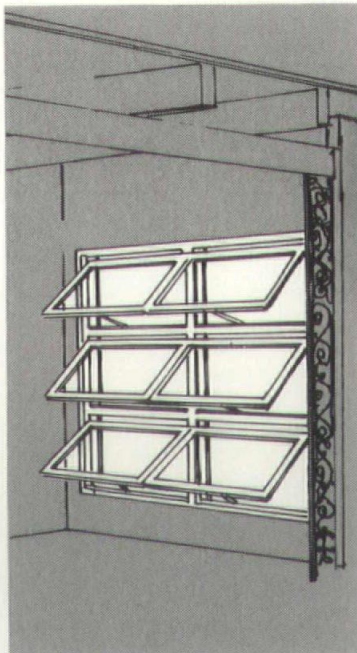
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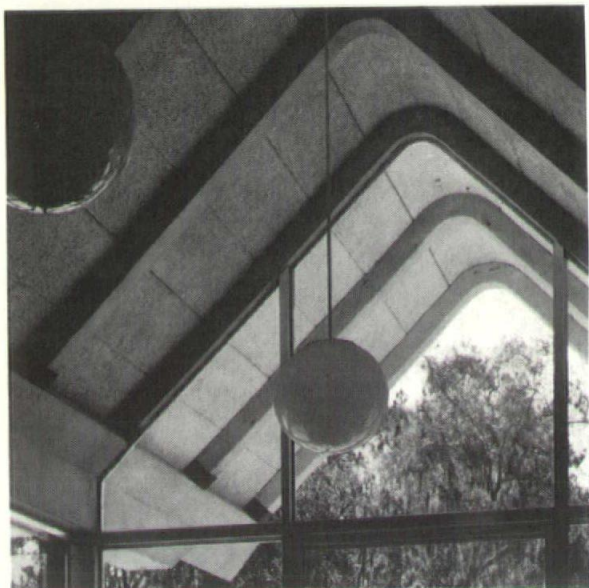
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HUD Makes Federal Grant for Regional Planning Program

A \$56,018 federal grant for a comprehensive planning program by the Central Alabama Regional Planning Commission in Montgomery has been announced by U. S. Senators John Sparkman and Jim Allen.

Donald Horton, regional director, said Thursday he believes the grant covers the first three priorities on a request submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development about two months ago.

The federal grant will cover two-thirds of the total cost of the comprehensive program. The program includes cities in the counties of Montgomery and Elmore and the city of Carrville in Tallapoosa County.

Horton, who is vice-president of the Montgomery Chapter of Architects and past president of the Alabama Council of Architects AIA, said the first priority was for a housing study that will survey the adequacy of housing in the region and what can be done to better it.

The second request calls for a sewer and water study of the rural section of Montgomery County, he said. This survey will show whether there is population in the area large enough to support water, fire protection and sewer systems.

Horton said the cost of a fire protection system will be about double that of a water system, and the sewer system about double in cost of a fire protection system.

The third request is for a preliminary comprehensive development plan. Horton said this includes an inventory of land-use study — what land is being used for, and how it can and cannot be used, such as flood land.

The development plan also includes an inventory of existing community facilities in the counties and what they have to offer at the present.

Another survey will be made of physical growth barriers, such as the types of soil and land surfaces, population distribution and forecasts, and a transportation study, Horton said.

The program will take about one year to complete. **AA**

Book Review . . .

CONSTRUCTION LENDING GUIDE.

A handbook of homebuilding design and construction.

By Schmidt, Olin, and Lewis.

650 pp. McGraw-Hill Book Company. \$26.00.

Reviewed by
Felton Moreland Collier AIA

The three authors of this compendium are architects, John L. Schmidt and Harold Bennett Olin, the director and assistant director, respectively, of the architectural and construction research department of the United States Savings and Loan League, while Walter H. Lewis is an associate professor of architecture at the University of Illinois.

The organization of this single volume reference work is reasonable and helpful with "volumes" devoted to five major subject areas: land planning, design, construction, appraising, and construction loan procedures. Although it was published jointly by the American Savings and Loan Institute and McGraw-Hill, it is clearly intended as a desk top reference for savings and loan executives. It is of particular value to architects because it tends to emphasize areas of particular concern to the many lending agencies. It contains very carefully detailed sections on almost all of the standard construction methods and is very useful in that it contains specific suggestions on the ordinary but often difficult aspects of remodeling projects, such as wall settlement, cracks, and the like.

CONSTRUCTION LENDING GUIDE is an excellent publication to recommend to appraisers, bankers, and owners of investment property. **AA**

NEXT ISSUE —

The May/June issue of ALABAMA ARCHITECT will be designed by architectural students at Auburn, and will feature projects designed by them.

The issue will be compiled under the direction of Richard Millman, head, Department of Architecture.

With students so much in the news, a view of constructive projects should prove "ver-r-y inter-esting".



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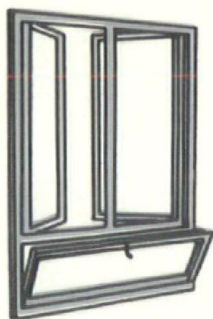
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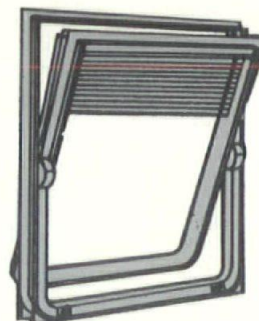
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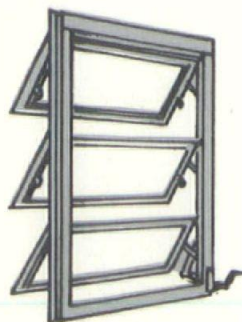
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