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- Summasketch 11"x11" digitizing pad
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## ARCHITECT

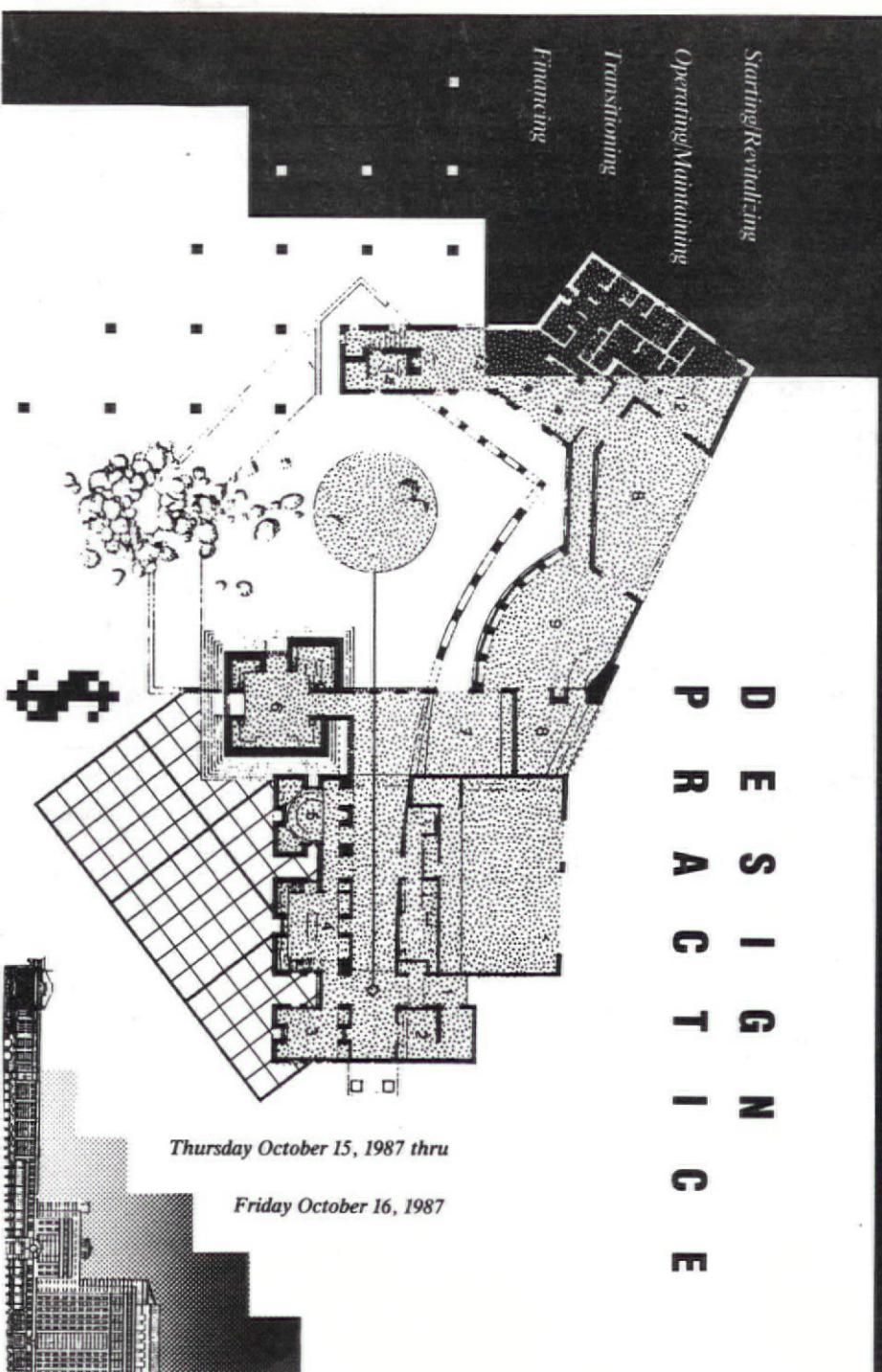
PUBLISHED BY THE LA CHAPTER, AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS  
INCORPORATING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATES NEWS

October 1987 \$2.00

L A / A I A C O N F E R E N C E 8 7

D E S I G N  
P R A C T I C E

Starting/Revitalizing  
Operating/Maintaining  
Transitioning  
Financing



Thursday October 15, 1987 thru

Friday October 16, 1987

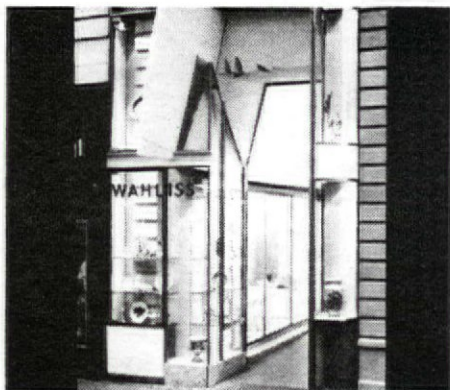
Page 1 LA/AIA Conference 1987

Page 3 Whither Metrorail?

Page 6 Friends of Westwood Decision



# Architect's Calendar



Passage Wahliss, a 1986 jewelry store in Vienna, designed by Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky of Coop Himmelblau, will be among the projects they discuss at their September 30 SCI-ARC lecture.

## MONDAY 5

**Neofuturism: on Architecture and Technology**  
Hal Foster. SCI-ARC Lecture Series, "Regarding Thought and Form." 1800 Berkeley St., Santa Monica, 8 pm. Call (213) 829-3482.

## TUESDAY 6

**Cultural Resources Committee Meeting** LA Conservancy 7:30 pm. Call (213) 623-CITY for location.

**Principles and Practices of Spec. Writing Construction Specifications** Institute course begins, Tuesdays through Nov. 17, 6:30-9 pm. All courses held at Woodbury University. \$91 members/\$112 non-members. Call (213) 660-2191.

**Birthday of**  
Le Corbusier, 1887

## WEDNESDAY 7

## THURSDAY 1

**UCLA Extension Course Begins:** Art & Design Workshop w/The Targa AT&T Truevision Software, Thursdays, through Dec. 17 7-10 pm, UCLA Extension Bldg., Rm. #540 \$595. Call (213) 206-8503.

**"The Late Postmodern: The End of Style"**  
Lecture by Douglas Davis, architectural critic for *Newsweek*. Sponsored by Otis/Parsons School of Design. 8 pm. Call (213) 251-0555.

## FRIDAY 2

## WEEKEND

**Sunday, October 4**  
**Bullock's Wilshire Tour**  
Hosted by LA Conservancy 2 and 3 pm. Call (213) 623-CITY.

**Streamline Moderne House Tour**  
Hosted by LA Conservancy, features tours of homes in Silverlake and Los Feliz Area. Advance tickets required. \$30 LAC Members. Call (213) 623-CITY.

## MONDAY 12

**'50's Task Force Meeting**  
LA Conservancy, 7 pm.  
Call (213) 623-CITY for location.

**Birthday of**  
Charles Green, 1868

## TUESDAY 13

**Metaphors and Metamorphoses**  
Lecture by Hans Hollein, recipient of Pritzker Prize, UCLA School of Architecture, co-sponsored by SCI-ARC, 8 pm 100 Moore Hall. Call (213) 825-3791 or (213) 825-7855.

**Architecture and Democracy: The Phoenix Municipal Government Center Design Competition**  
Wight Art Gallery, UCLA, continuing through Dec. 13. Call (213) 825-3791 or (213) 825-7858.

## WEDNESDAY 14

**LA Architect Editorial Board**  
Chapter Board Room, M-62  
Pacific Design Center, 7:30 am  
Call (213) 659-2282.

**Associate Board Meeting**  
Chapter Board Room, M-62,  
Pacific Design Center, 6:30 pm.  
Call (213) 659-2282.

**Architectural Guild Lecture**  
Harry Cobb, Current Work Sponsored by USC School of Architecture  
Embassy Auditorium, 851 S. Grand, Los Angeles, 7 pm. Call (213) 743-2723.

## THURSDAY 8

**UCLA Lecture Series, Architecture of Democracy**  
Charles Jencks, UCLA Adjunct Professor, Architecture and Critic, 8 pm, 2160 Dickson. Call (213) 825-3791 or (213) 825-7858.

**Design and Construction Contracts**  
2-day seminar co-sponsored by American Bar Association and AIA. Four Seasons Hotel, Beverly Hills. \$425/\$400 ABA member. Call (312) 988-6200.

**LA Architect Task Force Rap Session**  
Pacific Design Center, Haworth Showroom, #193, 6-8 pm

**Architecture and Health Committee**  
PDC, Chapter Board Room, M-62, 3:30 pm

**Pro Practice Committee PDC**  
Conference Center, Room 259, 5 pm

## FRIDAY 9

**Design and Construction Contracts**  
2-day seminar  
(See Thursday, October 8.)

**Chamber Music in Historic Sites**  
Doheny Mansion, Chamber Music Northwest. Call (213) 747-9085 for details.

## WEEKEND

**Saturday, October 10**  
**Schindler Centennial Gala.** Call (213) 651-1510 for details.

**Charles Jencks Book signing and John Nava Exhibition** Koplin Gallery, 8225 1/2 Santa Monica Bl. Call (213) 656-3378.

**Sunday, October 11**  
**Bullocks Wilshire Tours**  
Hosted by LA Conservancy \$5 non LAC Members. Call (213) 623-CITY.

**Architecture, Democracy and Politics**  
One day UCLA Extension symposium featuring design entries to the recent Phoenix Municipal Government Center Competition. Wadsworth Theatre/VA Hospital, 9:30-3 pm \$50 (Students-\$15). Call (213) 825-9061.

**Chamber Music in Historic Sites**  
Cordelia Culbertson House, Mendelsohn String Quartet. Call (213) 747-9085 for details.

## MONDAY 19

**Annual USC Architectural Alumni Exhibition**  
Helen Lindhurst Architecture Gallery, Watt Hall, USC School of Architecture, 10-6 Mon-Fri, 12-5 Sat, continuing through Friday, Nov. 6

## TUESDAY 21

**Lecture by Youri Platonov,** President of USSR Union of Architects and Alexandre Koudryavtsev, Dean of Moscow School of Architecture. UCLA Dickson Auditorium, co-sponsored by SCI-ARC, USC and Cal Poly Pomona Schools of Architecture. UCLA parking \$3. Call (213) 825-6300.

**Birthday of**  
Sir Christopher Wren, 1632

## WEDNESDAY 21

**A Quality Seminar, Especially for Architects**  
Presented by LA Chapter of the Architectural Woodwork Institute (AWI), Los Angeles Hilton, 9-11:30 am. Call (213) 873-2166.

**Birthday of**  
Paul Philippe Cret, 1876.

## THURSDAY 15

**LA/AIA Conference 87**  
Design + Practice, Pacific Design Center. See page 1 for details.

**Helping to Lower your Liability**  
Exposure Construction Specifications Institute course begin Tuesdays through Nov. 12 6:30-9 pm. All courses held at Woodbury University. \$65 members/\$80 non-members. Call (213) 660-2191.

## FRIDAY 16

**LA/AIA Conference 87**

**Chamber Music in Historic Sites**  
Doheny Mansion, Via Nova Quartet. Call (213) 747-9085 for details.

## WEEKEND

**Saturday, October 17**  
**Not Yet Los Angeles Conference**  
Hollywood Entertainment Center. See page 1 for details.

**Designing for Dinosaurs and Others**  
One-Day symposium presented by Otis/Parsons School of Design, 9:30-3:30 pm. Call (213) 251-0555.

**Sunday, October 18**  
**WAL Home Tour**  
See Page 1 for details.

**Chamber Music in Historic Sites**  
Raphael House, Eric Fisk, guitar. Call (213) 747-9085 for details.

**Storer House Tour** LA Conservancy—Members only (incl. new members). Call (213) 623-CITY.

## MONDAY 26

## TUESDAY 27

**Lecture by Youri Platonov,** President of USSR Union of Architects and Alexandre Koudryavtsev, Dean of Moscow School of Architecture. UCLA Dickson Auditorium, co-sponsored by SCI-ARC, USC and Cal Poly Pomona Schools of Architecture. UCLA parking \$3. Call (213) 825-6300.

**Birthday of**  
Sir Christopher Wren, 1632

## WEDNESDAY 28

**Achieving Urban Conservation and Minimizing Earthquake Risk**  
A Seismic Retrofit Seminar, Hosted by Coalition to Preserve Historic Long Beach, Ramada Renaissance Hotel, Long Beach, \$110 (with lunch). Call (213) 430-2790.

**Regarding Thought and Form Lecture**  
by Gae Aulenti, SCI-ARC, 1800 Berkeley St., Santa Monica, 8 pm. Call (213) 829-3482.

**Building Performance and Regulations Committee PDC,** Chapter Board Room, M-62, 5 pm.

## THURSDAY 22

**The Art and Architecture of Venice**  
John Julius Norwich, recognized authority on art and architecture of Venice, 8 pm 2160 Dickson. Call (213) 825-3791 or (213) 825-7858.

**Search for Shelter Submissions Due**  
PDC, Chapter Board Room, M-62.

## FRIDAY 23

**Five Projects: Masters Architecture I Thesis, 1987.**  
UCLA, 1220 Perloff Hall, continuing through Nov. 17. Call (213) 825-3791 or (213) 825-7858.

## WEEKEND

**Sunday, October 25**  
**Chamber Music in Historic Sites**  
George C. Page Museum, Eric Stumacher, piano. Call (213) 747-9085 for details.

**Saturday, October 31**  
**BAD Olympics**  
Builder's, Architects, Designers Competition, Woodbury University, 7500 Glenoaks Bl., Burbank. Call (818) 767-0888.

**Hospitality as Fantasy: Restaurant and Hotel Design Symposium**  
Sponsored by UCLA Extension, Division of Interior and Environmental Design, Beverly Hilton Hotel, 9876 Wilshire Bl., 9-5 pm, \$125. Call (213) 825-9061.

**Woodbury University Open House**  
Community-wide Open House celebrating the school's new location, 11-3 pm. Call (818) 767-0888.

**Birthday of**  
Richard Morris Hunt, 1827



# LA Lost, Not Found

## Books

### L.A. Lost & Found: An Architectural History of Los Angeles

By Sam Hall Kaplan, Crown Books, New York, 1987, \$27.95.

That the richest newspaper in the country, located in what will soon be the largest city in the country, relegates its principal dose of architectural criticism to the second page of a once-a-week section called "Real Estate" speaks volumes about the local entanglement of journalism and development. The *Los Angeles Times* is understandably more comfortable with aggressive investigative reporting in faraway Washington than in the local media-banking-real estate complex to which it has been wedded since its inception (see Halberstam's *The Power and The Glory*). The *Times* has been known to make some pretty abrupt changes of personnel when heated rhetoric scorched a member or two of the architectural establishment, but the exile of regular architectural commentary of journalistic Siberia is an equally effective form of self-censorship. If John Ruskin had been the architecture critic for the *LA Times*, the Gothic Revival would probably never have taken place.

We do not have John Ruskin at the *Times*, but since 1983 we have had Sam Hall Kaplan. As a non-subscriber to the *Times*, I have failed to read Mr. Kaplan's columns with any regularity, but those which come my way invariably leave the afterimage of an untrained marksman with a loaded shotgun. One recent column characterized the current architectural scene as filled with "artistic pretensions, fawning academics, and insecure practitioners," a malicious potshot with no specified targets and no proof, although there is, ironically, plenty of evidence of pretension, fawning, and insecurity in Mr. Kaplan's writing. His cranky and confused contempt for the design profession made me eager to read Mr. Kaplan's new book, *LA Lost & Found: An Architectural History of Los Angeles*, in order to see whether his journalistic recipe of criticism without craft and opinion without insight would improve when the subject matter broadened. The book leaves no doubt, alas, that his newspaper reports Mr. Kaplan is performing at top speed.

In collaboration with well-known architectural photographer Julius Shulman, Mr. Kaplan has staked out as his territory of expertise the 200-year history of Los Angeles, as revealed through its buildings and urban character. It has been pointed out in Tim Street-Porter's review in the July 1987 *LA Style* that this turf has already been patiently and often brilliantly worked by highly qualified and dedicated observers of the visual world, including Esther McCoy, Paul Gleye, and Reyner Banham. While it would be pedantic to insist that all architectural history should be written by architectural historians (Mr. Kaplan's book jacket biography is that of a journalist and critic), the book's claim to be "an architectural history" raises expectations of a performance at a somewhat higher level than a reporter writing a feature article. We might reasonably expect, for example, an understanding of architecture that is sympathetic and profound rather than peevish and superficial; acknowledgement of previous scholarship through careful footnotes rather than lazy declarations of general gratitude; a little generosity to subsequent researchers in the form of an index; and finally—one hopes—the glimmer of fresh interpreta-

tions or critiques which go beyond mere regurgitation of received ideas. On all these counts the book does not live up to the inflated claims of its title. Most historians write because they have something to say; Mr. Kaplan apparently writes because he wants to be heard.

Unfortunately what the reader will hear is a chorus of clichés, served up in the glib hyperbole of advertising copy and unified by the transplanted New Yorker's predictable obsession with the weather. Here is Mr. Kaplan on the city's ethnic mix: "...not a melting pot or stew but, given the climate, more a gazpacho of people and ideas. Exciting." On the ecology: "And then there has been man who, basking in the climate, brought to the land water and technology, along with greed and fear, hopes and dreams. Welcome to LA." On the general situation in 1900: "The sun and publicity served LA well, warming its spirit for the decades ahead." On the Spanish Revival: "...when driving past in the heat of the midday sun, whole blocks seem a blur of white stucco and red-tile roofs." On the city's urban identity: "More than anything else what characterizes LA is its marvelous weather." Rummaging through the city's entire social, ecological, urbanistic and architectural history, Mr. Kaplan apparently finds almost nothing which cannot ultimately be explained by solar influence.

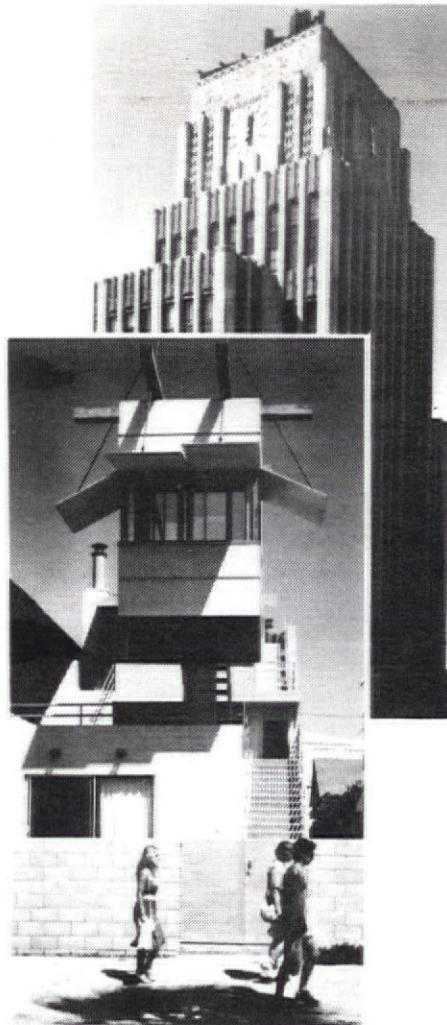
Mr. Kaplan toes a simplistic and obsolete line of historical thought: architecture as a parade of styles. Glossing over technical, typological, cultural and urbanistic considerations, the author obsessively places a stylistic label on each building as if historians were mere stenographers of fashion. Sometimes his label files get a little mixed, as when both the Pasadena City Hall (1927) and the Los Angeles Music Center (1969) emerge with a "neo-Classical" tag. With a certain breathless astonishment the author reports that even though Goodhue's Central Library contains "hints" of Mediterranean, Roman, Islamic, Egyptian and Byzantine "style," it is actually "unique, a style unto itself." That most great architecture transcends the narrow canons of style can be news only to the uninitiated. His strange assertion that twenty years is "a long time for any architectural style" may be true for 20th century Los Angeles, but the authoritative tone leaves you with the distinct impression that the Renaissance must have been a hell of a decade.

When it comes to venturing an opinion rather than labelling, on the rare occasions when he does not defer to the opinions of others, the author reveals himself to be a man of a few words. A house in Malibu House is "sensitive." A Rodeo Drive boutique is done with "sensitivity." A city hall is executed with "sensitivity to materials." Modernist works in the 30's are "sensitively executed," an apartment complex is "sensitively scaled," the Crocker Center is "well-designed, sensitive." Meanwhile, tract housing is—predictably—"insensitive." Nowhere, however, does the author explain how he recognizes sensitivity when he sees it. It seems to me this defies that basic dictum of literary description that you show rather than tell; perhaps if Mr. Kaplan could, he would. When the Bradbury Building is explained as "a delightful experience," Neutra's work as "ultimately reasonable," the Dodge House as a "simple, modern form," we know we are in the presence of a tour guide who's still reading from his notes.

The book is fairly riddled with grammatical errors about which we should probably not waste good paper if they did not distort critical information, as in the

apparently inadvertent assertion that the city of Los Angeles (rather than the Territory of California) declared its independence from Mexico in 1845, or the claim that the secularization of the missions created a "countryside of rancheros"...unless Mr. Kaplan has in mind a surrealist landscape dotted with scarecrows, "ranchos" is the correct word. Meanwhile his description of certain nineteenth century public buildings as works "of brick and Romanesque" breaks new ground in the use of adjectives. All of this may indicate the absence of a good editor, or perhaps the presence of the same editor as at the *Times*.

While an English-language handbook might tidy up the text, nothing short of a complete revision could possibly clean up the messy relationship of text, images, and captions, which are so hopelessly out of synch with each other that confusion is guaranteed: the discussion of the Gamble House takes place on page 53 while the photo and caption appear on page 58, by which time we've left Pasadena for the return trip to Chicago and the City Beautiful movement. Needless to say the author did not consider it worth his effort to key the text to the illustrations. I finally gave up trying to look at it all together and just plowed straight through the text. When that was done I started over and went through all the captions in order. When *that* was done I made a stiff drink, sat back and with an enormous sense of relief thumbed my way through the photographs, many of which were new to me and most of which embarrass the text with



their eloquence. Architects are often accused of only looking at the pictures; for once you can't blame them.

Has irritation blinded me to certain virtues of the book—beyond the photographs—which must be mentioned? We can certainly be thankful to Mr. Kaplan for collecting a very nice set of quotations about Los Angeles from various novels, essays and films. His anecdotes about various historical characters are pleasant, his enthusiasm for the city charming. The extended excerpts from other books on the same subject by Banham and others reassure us that the architecture of Los

Angeles has not stymied the English language. But the book's major achievement, for which we must be regretfully grateful, is to prove that for the foreseeable future, the only urban and architectural enlightenment that professionals are likely to stumble upon in the Real Estate section of the *Times* will be found in its classified ads.

**Douglas R. Suisman**

Mr. Suisman is on the faculty of USC School of Architecture.

### To the Editor:

Never has *LA Architect* misled its readers so badly as in its review of the book *Wallace Neff-Architect of California's Golden Age*, for which I wrote the text. From the giant headline proclaiming California Biography to the end of the piece almost everything is wrong. Although the book contains biographical material it is not primarily a biography but an architectural history book about Wallace Neff's work, sometimes explained in more or less his own words, as I had the good fortune to know him and the opportunity to interview him at length during his lifetime.

I should not have to inform your readers of basic facts about the book, but since Diane Kanner, the reviewer, has not described its contents at all, I am forced to do so. 197 of its 230 pages are devoted to describing and illustrating 71 buildings and unbuilt projects, each with explanatory text, illustrated by 272 photographs (seventy in color especially done for the book) and 70 plans, elevations and sections. The book should be of interest to architects and indeed it has sold well, refuting Kanner's gloomy prediction that it was headed for the remainder shelves.

The reviewer does not even mention the interesting foreword which David Gebhard contributed to the book. Of course I am taken to task for including excerpts from what she calls "trade magazines." Here she is referring to articles by Ralph Adams Cram (Wallace Neff's teacher and in some respects his mentor), Kiske Kimball, Herbert Croly, Rexford Newcomb and others, in such wonderful old-time professional journals as the *American Architect*, the *Architectural Forum*, the *Architectural Record*, the *Pacific Coast Architect* and *California Arts and Architecture*. Some of the quotes put the architect's work in context and others relate directly to Wallace Neff and his work. Apparently Kanner doesn't have much use for architectural history, or, for that matter, for architectural historians, what with her harrumphing about "non-fiction writers" and their "cardinal sins." On the other hand Kanner seems obsessed with trivia—i.e. Wallace Neff's mother, as a girl, participated in the Pasadena Pageant of Roses. She seems to want to create a kind of cheap fiction and Neff: "He might have habituated the Valley Hunt Club, which was directly across South Orange Grove Boulevard from the home of his parents. He elected to devote his life to architecture..." In actuality Neff's parents did not move to South Orange Grove until 1928, some years after Neff had married and established his own home.

And so the review stumbles on, alternating between incomprehension and error. Kanner has written some good pieces for the *Los Angeles Times* Real Estate section, such as one on Laughlin Park. She seems to have a talent for social history.

**Alson Clark**

Mr. Clark, author of *Wallace Neff—Architecture of California Golden Age*, is *Architecture Librarian at USC*.



The term of office for all board positions is one year beginning in January and running through December. Nominations for the board positions mentioned must be received at the following address by November 11, 1987: LA/AIA, 8687 Melrose Avenue, M-72, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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LA ARCHITECT is published monthly except for August by the Los Angeles Chapter, American Institute of Architects, 8687 Melrose Ave., Suite M-72, Los Angeles, CA, 90069. Subscription are \$18 domestic, and \$28 foreign. Editorial submissions should be addressed to the editor and sent to the publisher's address, above. LA ARCHITECT does not assume responsibility for unsolicited material. Address changes should be sent to LA ARCHITECT at the publisher's address, above. Except where noted, the opinions stated are those of the authors only and do not reflect the position of either the AIA or the Los Angeles Chapter. The appearance of names and pictures of products and services, in either editorial or advertising, does not constitute an endorsement by either the AIA or the Los Angeles Chapter.

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\*have played in previous tournaments

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# Chapter News and Notes

## Minutes

### Summary of the Minutes of July 7, 1987 Board of Directors Meeting/AIA

Items on the Agenda were taken up in the following order.

**Minutes** of the May 19, 1987 Board Meeting were approved as submitted.

**New Chapter Executive Director**, Victoria J. Crayne, was introduced and reviewed her background in management and nonprofit positions.

Crayne reviewed her report on the office status and requested closure of the office the week of July 13 for office reorganization. The Board concluded to accomplish the scope listed, the office be closed one week in July and one week in August.

Price Waterhouse was selected to conduct an on-site audit and review of the Chapter financial status.

**AIA National Convention, Orlando Florida.**

#### Committee Reports.

**LA Conference:** Chair Raymond Gaio reviewed the status on the conference. Planning was almost complete, press releases had been sent out conference fees set and speakers confirmed.

**Historic Preservation Committee.** Committee is working with the LA Conservancy to establish the Ambassador Hotel as a National Landmark.

**Health, Housing and Education Committees** will be sponsoring various sessions at the October Conference.

**Board vacancies** will be filled as followed: Pamela Edwards-Kammer was

appointed to fill the unexpired term of Joseph Vaccaro (December 1988).

**Fellowship Nominations.** Chair, Carl Maston recommended Donald C. Axon, AIA and John V. Mutlow, AIA for Fellowship.

The Board unanimously voted to support Fellowship nominations.

**LA Architect.** Barton Phelps, Editorial Board Chair, presented a year-end status report and a mid-year financial report. Plans for 1988 include an improved physical appearance and a hosted symposium on criticism.

President Chern appointed a Task Force to review the current status of *LA Architect*. The Task Force will review all aspects of *LA Architect*, including, but not limited to, financial, editorial content, appearance and relationship to the Board and Chapter.

Task Force members include: Robert A. Reed, Joseph Vaccaro, William Fain, Jr., Fernando Juarez, George Pressler, Robert Harris, Marvin Malecha, Bernard Zimmerman and Barton Phelps, Ex Officio.

**Awards Committee Nominations.** William Hefner, attending for the awards committee co-chairs, presented the proposed nominations for National, CCAIA and Chapter Achievement Awards. They are as follows: The following nominees are approved by the Board: National: AIA Gold Medal, Frank O. Gehry, FAIA; Edward C. Kemper Award, Carl Maston, FAIA; Twenty-Five Year Award, CBS; Architectural Firm Award, Welton Becket Associates; Institute Honors Program, Carlos Diniz; AIA/ASCA Topaz

Medallion for Excellence in Education, Raymond Kappe, FAIA. CCAIA: Distinguished Service Citation, LA Conservancy; Excellence in Education, Robert Mangurian; Public Service Award, Albert C. Martin, FAIA; CCAIA Firm Award, Frank O. Gehry & Associates. Chapter: Distinguished Service Award, John Lautner, FAIA.

**New Members** were approved: 8 AIA, 9 Associates and 2 Students.

**WAL Report:** Glenous Absmeier reported that a party for the newly licensed architects had been held, however, attendance had been very low.

#### 1988 Associate Board Elections

In 1974, the Associates of the LA/AIA made an unprecedented move in forming their own board of directors. Since then, the prestige and influence of the LA/AIA Associates have grown to the point where they hold more resources than entire regions within the AIA.

At 6:30 pm on Wednesday, November 11, the LA/AIA Associates will meet in the chapter office conference room to hold elections for the 1988 Associates' Board of Directors. The board is made up of four officers, nine directors, and at least five student representatives. The following positions are available:

**President-Elect** acts as the Associate representative on the *LA Architect* editorial board; handles communications on behalf of the Associates' board; attends national conferences; and presides over meetings in the absence of the president. President-elect is promoted to president in 1989.

**Secretary** records board meeting minutes; maintains board records; and preserves Associate archives.

**Treasurer** receives all Associate receipts; pays board expenses; maintains financial records; and makes regular budget reports.

**Director of Public Awareness** handles planning of special events; develops community outreach programs; and organizes the Calendar section of the *LA Architect*.

**Director of Professional Development** plans and oversees the annual licensing seminars sponsored by the LA/AIA Associates.

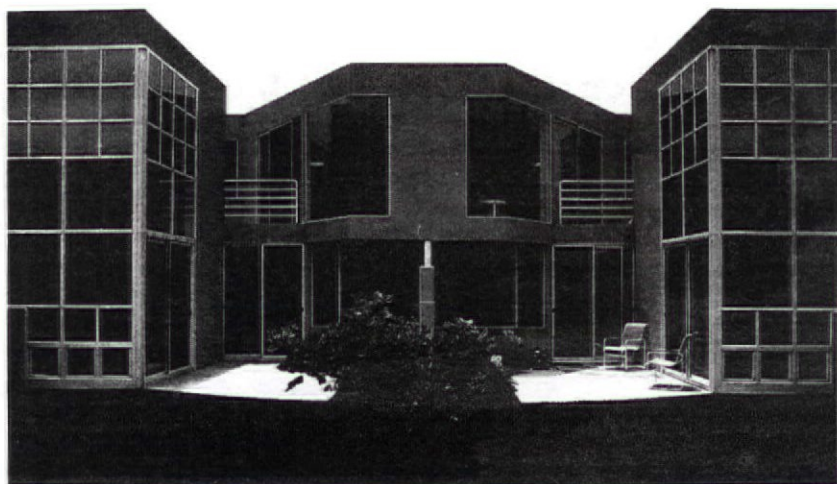
**Director of Membership** promotes membership recruitment; participates in new member orientation; and counsels current members on available AIA programs and committees.

**Director of Technical Services** oversees the Associates' video program through the documentation of seminars, special lectures, AIA sponsored events, and maintenance of the chapter video library.

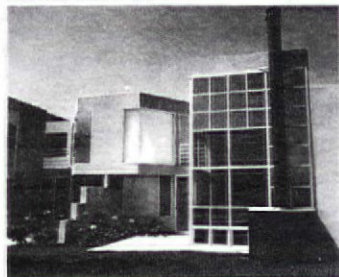
**Director of Professional Affiliates** acts as liaison to the professional affiliate membership of the chapter to the Associates' board. Coordinates Affiliate member functions with the Associates.

**Student Representatives** coordinate Associate programs for students and acts as liaison for their respective schools. Architecture students from USC, UCLA, Cal Poly Pomona, Woodbury University, SCI-ARC, and all junior colleges are needed.

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# Profession or Trade?

## The Listener

Like all other professionals, architects "profess." Whether student, mid-careerist or seasoned oldster; whether skeptic, idealist or cynic, each has committed himself to some version of his profession's ideals and aspirations.

This is an elitist viewpoint, perhaps, but it is firmly grounded in history's demand for individuals who place other's needs ahead of their own. That it has worked well enough to persist in spite of its character flaws is obvious from the centuries-old legacy of buildings which have provided generations of users and observers with comfort and delight.

In our time, however, a threat to professionalism in architecture has arisen which architects in their thoughtful moments fear may be transforming their profession into a trade. School and practitioners alike sense this threat even if in varying ways and degrees. Some of the forces that threaten are normally seen as beneficial but act here in a different guise.

Building technology is one. It has blossomed beyond the wildest dreams of history's architects whose pencils shaped vaulted and chambered sculptures of stone unaided by today's sophisticated calculations. If a Beauvais Cathedral vault collapsed, another 100 years would make it right the second time. Worshippers knelt in winter on cold stone floors forcing pastor and parishioner alike to counter with layered woolen clothes. When today's corrective technology arrived, its passwords were safety and comfort. These considerations immediately challenged the primacy of architectural form. Their

value systems were different: technology's were derived from numbers; architecture's from intuition and creativity. The public bought technology, codified it into sharp-toothed law and formalized it in textbooks comprehensible only to the technicians. Architects retaliated by forcing themselves to study the technology, modify their forms to its needs and to acquire, or claim, equal expertise in all its areas. Now they could proclaim themselves "captain of the building team." But an uneasy concern soon arose that such an effort to be all things to all people would seriously sap energies from creativity. Meantime, creative energies were being even further sapped by other genres of our new society.

Errors and omissions litigation haunts every day's tasks, from the first stroke of the creator's soft pencil to the last printout of the canned (safe) specifications and on from there to every "site observation."

Computers burst through the front door carrying their own spread-sheet programs for controlling production costs, barely digested when the expertise of another corps of technicians had to be assimilated to test the CAD program's promise of creativity-enhancement.

New codes and governing bodies proliferated like virus in a petrie dish and it seemed that the time needed for "permitting" grew almost overnight from two weeks to two years. Creative people found themselves fuming in lines for hours waiting to battle the bureaucrats.

Thoughtful architects don't ask that the clock be turned back but they know that they need help to resist this decline into a "trade" status. Help is unlikely from outside, and hard to preceive even from within. Ideals can be reinforced in one-to-

one contracts between individuals but help on a grand scale must be self-induced, primarily through the AIA and the professional journals.

The national journals bravely and sometimes brilliantly distinguish themselves from the trade journals by their editorial sections, but these sometimes seem a forlornly thin sandwich between the fat inches of advertising front and back. Readers have been known to physically rip off the fat in order to sit quietly with the slender remains—alone.

The journal of a local AIA chapter, however, can reinforce professional aspirations with special immediacy. Its critiques of local design can seek evidence that the efforts of a building's designer were aimed primarily at creating a building worthy of its task to satisfy the physical and emotional needs of its users. And beyond this, the true critic, sensitive to nuances, may perceive, even in a failed effort, evidence of what the designer professed and with thoughtful comments reinforce that designer's next attempt.

Books can be reviewed with a similar purpose in mind: to reinforce the salient concepts of the profession.

New and proven specifics of practice management devised to free principles for creative work can be reported. And even otherwise straight reportage ("nothing but the facts, M'am") can sometimes subordinate statistics to the reinforcement of concepts.

Reinforcement is implicit, of course, in articles of commentary (opinion, essay, human interest). Commentary rides free to roam the whole world of ideas. It can lift us from stifling parochialism. It can resist invasion of the body profession by cliques

and political squabbles. It can open windows, if not always to clean, healthy air, at least to air heavy with the scent of distant and unfamiliar professionals, their ideas and the exotic fruits of their creativity. Good commentary can be spare—only a little is needed to balance the soberness of much reportage. But its absence will leave a journal's cuisine flat and tasteless.

In all these ways the journal can be both a sword and a shield—a rallying point for reformulating old oaths to professional aspirations and for shielding them from the stilettos of cynics and the blandishments of the marketplace.

The forces that would transform the profession into a trade can be overcome.

**Paul Sterling Hoag**

*Continued from page six*

the Braude-Yaroslavsky motion in that it applies to projects of 35 or more dwelling units, and projects taller than 25 feet which are built within 50 feet of single family homes.

Needless to say, the picture concerning the city's response of the Friends of Westwood case is changing even as this article is written. Please watch future columns for further developments in the evolution of this intriguing process.

**Roger J. Holt**

*Mr. Holt, a member of the LA Architect editorial board, is lead attorney in the land use and environmental unit of the real estate law firm Pircher, Nichols & Meeks. This article is the first in a series on land use and environmental issues.*

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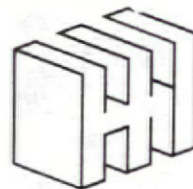
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## Shaping the Urban Environment

A recent decision by the California Court of Appeals has added support to the current "slow-growth" sentiments in Los Angeles. Partly as a result of the "Friends of Westwood" decision, all major structures will be required to undergo environmental assessment before being issued building permits.

Until Friends of Westwood, all building permits were treated as "ministerial." This meant that, whatever the size of the project, there was no automatic requirement for environmental review. The Friends of Westwood case reversed that trend, stating that review would be necessary for the approval process of any project which is "unusual in size, dimension or location."

The environmental impact process, as set out by the California Environmental Quality Act, can significantly inhibit the development process. Review can either result in a negative declaration, which means a permit *can* be issued, in a request for specific revisions, or in a full-blown environmental impact report (EIR.) An EIR involves, among other things, analysis of a project's significant environmental impacts, alternatives to the building proposal including size reduction, and mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the project's adverse environmental impacts.

Friends of Westwood came before the Court of Appeals as a result of an earlier decision by the Superior Court. In that case, the judge denied a motion for a preliminary injunction by a community group, Friends of Westwood, who sought to nullify a building permit issued to Wilshire-Glendon Associates. The proposed build-

ing, on the site of the former Ship's restaurant on Wilshire Bl. and Glendon Avenue, was a 26-story, 363,000 square foot, \$88 million, multi-use tower designed by Mitchell Giurgola Associates. Despite the fact that the project was likely to aggravate traffic and have other adverse effects on the neighborhood, the city had not reviewed its environmental impact. The Appeals Court found the city's lack of concern to be inappropriate.

The Friends of Westwood decision contains a detailed analysis of the building permit process. The court concluded that, in issuing certain building permits, the city imposed conditions, modifications, requirements and financial deposits. This meant that officials were exercising "discretion" in granting the permit. The exercise of discretion is the legal trigger requiring environmental review.

Given the language of the court's opinion, it is very likely that EIRs will be required for both the Wilshire-Glendon Associates building and many other major structures in highly urbanized areas. This is likely to effect at least 100 to 150 buildings which the Department of Building and Safety channels through the major structure plan check process annually. The court distinguished the approval process for major projects from that of single family houses, small apartment buildings, and medium size buildings.

Despite the court's attempt to narrow the impact of its decision in light of the number of building permits issued per year (46,000 in 1986) the opinion gives the city inadequate guidance on how to distinguish

between building permits for large and small structures. The court took a very broad view of the exercise of discretion, and, according to city officials, almost every building permit involves some change in the proposed structural plan.

In the specific case of the Wilshire-Glendon Associates building, the court pointed out the the exact plan submitted to the city clearly would not have complied for a building permit. It stated that "it is readily apparent Wilshire-Glendon was in no position to legally compel issuance of this building permit for the exact plan it submitted to the City." Since granting this permit therefore involved "discretion," it should not have been excepted from environmental review. The court rejected the idea that, in building permit applications, the hands of city staff are tied.

The court also noted that if the city had prepared an environmental assessment, it may have "disclosed patterns, trends and problems which would have led the city to impose different or more rigid standards and modifications and to exact different or later dedications and require greater contributions to the improvement of streets and traffic facilities external to the building." The court emphasized the many areas in the plan check process where city employees were likely to exercise discretion. It concluded that in the plan check process, at least for major projects, city employees had the flexibility to respond to some, if not all, of the adverse consequences which might be addressed by a full environmental review. A thorough environmental assessment might require changes in FAR, bulk, height or other factors to mitigate potential environmental impact.

Obviously, the Friends of Westwood decision flies in the face of the city's tradi-

tional hands-off approach to large-scale development. Until this decision, if a structure fit existing zoning and planning regulations, no change in height, bulk or density could be imposed by city staff.

In June, the Superior Court unanimously rejected the city's attempt to overturn the Court of Appeal's decision. The city is now grappling with its response. The process will involve a number of departments including Building and Safety, Planning, Transportation, the City Attorney and Public Works (Bureau of Engineering.) Although a decision on how major structures will go about obtaining building permits may be several months away, a recent city council motion sheds some light on the process.

Following Proposition U, Zev Yaroslavsky and Marvin Braude proposed a motion creating a new ordinance requiring discretionary review for all commercial projects larger than 40,000 square feet prior to issuance of a conditional use permit. This review would include residential developments of 40,000 square feet, housing projects of 25 units or more, and projects including a change in use which would result in an additional 500 automobile trips per day. It also suggests other factors which could precipitate environmental review, including peak afternoon traffic and the number of additional parking spaces required for change of use.

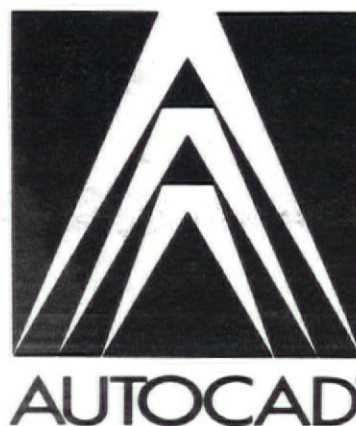
On July 27, Mayor Bradley announced new requirements which would trigger environmental review on large buildings. Similar to the Braude-Yaroslavsky approach, these procedures are now in place in the Building and Safety department. The Mayor's order is different from

Continued on page seven

*ask an expert*

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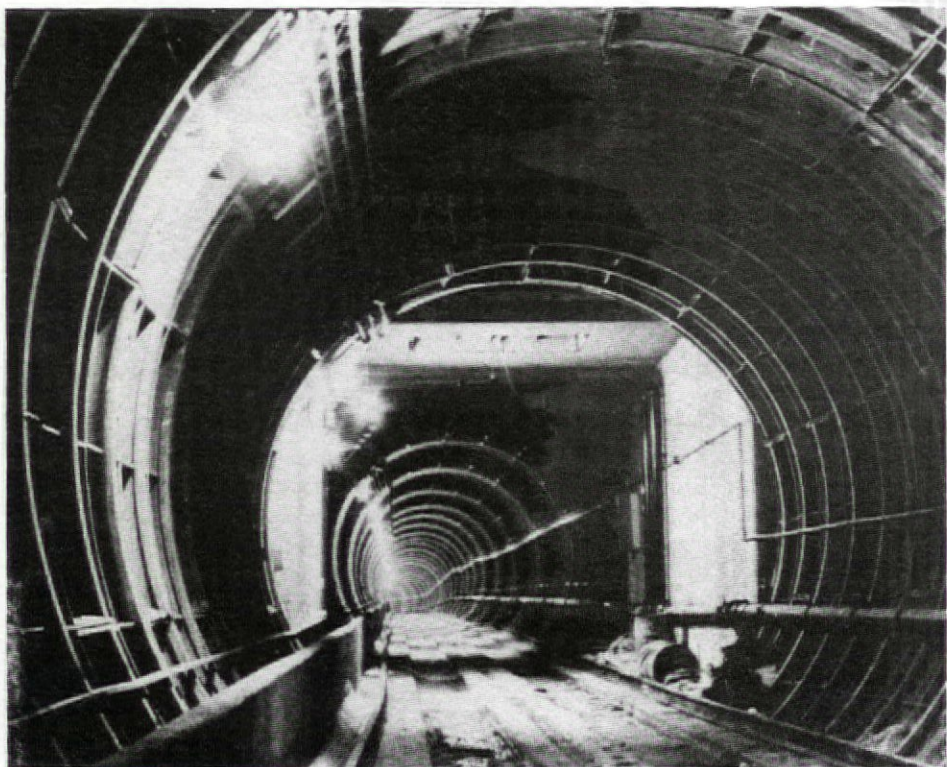
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It should be clear that we are not talking about a "low density" area. Most of the commercial frontage on the Wilshire Corridor has an available FAR of 6 to 1. The adjoining residential lots are pegged at up to 45 units to the acre, which can mean a lot of residents in a very small area. Sure there are low density, single family pockets which will be involved in many growth-related disputes, but the surrounding city is hardly a dainty place. Century City is approaching buildout, Westwood is programmed for even more growth in the wake of the recent revision to the community plan, and Wilshire Center and the Miracle Mile are experiencing a dramatic upsurge in leasing activity. In the Miracle Mile/Beverly-Fairfax area alone, two developers are competing to see who can create the next million-square-foot regional shopping center. And both of them think they can do it well within the recently enacted Prop U limits.

Most experts concur that major public works projects, including Metrorail, will not solve the traffic problems of the city. But Metrorail has never been about reducing traffic congestion. It always has been a myth, for political purposes, that the subway would help traffic flow. Metrorail is about adding capacity to the total transportation network, particularly in relation to the Cahuenga Pass, downtown, and the Wilshire Corridor.

The issue of how to fund that added rail system capacity vs. funding additions to the highway network is the crux of argument over Metrorail. Most discussions begin with the notion of per-mile costs and quickly arrive at the conclusion that Metrorail is too expensive because it will cost more than \$4.5 billion to build, operate at a deficit, and move far fewer people than the consultants claim. True. But on the other hand, a percentage of the cost, admittedly a declining amount, is to be paid from federal dollars. The remainder comes from local, county and state sources, the most controversial being the Prop A funds.

Many observers object to the fact that bus fares are directly affected by the availability of Metrorail funding, arguing that the bus fares should be further subsidized at the expense of rail transit. Yet in the current marketplace, bus fares of 50¢ or 85¢ are already well below the real cost of providing those needed services. Arguing that the "real cost" of Metrorail is too high is only valid if you neglect to calculate the real cost of providing bus service. And Prop A money does more than pay for Metrorail. Over

the period that Metrorail will cost \$4.5 billion to build, Prop A will generate over \$6 billion in revenue, only \$2 billion of which will go to the Metrorail project. The rest goes to fund other transit projects such as buses and busways.

For those who think that's a lot of money to be playing around with, it should be noted that we spend a \$1 billion dollars every year just maintaining our commitment to the existing freeway system. The County Transportation Commission, in a recent report using SCAG's growth projections, estimates that, in the worst case, the average speed of traffic on the freeways will drop by more than 50% by the year 2000 if the present course of highway construction and maintenance is continued. In their best case scenario, traffic flow can be maintained at present rates only if massive amounts of additional money are poured into the highway system. Their short-term hopes lie in all of the usual places: "smart" computer-controlled streets, ridesharing, telecommuting, adding the "missing links" to the freeway system, flex-time, more express buses and, last but not least, mass transit.

All of the management components are designed to squeeze the last drop of capacity out of the existing system and then, reluctantly, given the cost implications, attempt to expand it. All of these approaches are valid, but in limited applications. Buses, for instance, have several inherent problems. First, they are relatively slow compared to even the rest of the stalled traffic, since they travel on the same overcrowded roadway network and must make intermediate stops along the way to a given destination. Second, the same dispersed geography that critics insist works against Metrorail also works against the bus fleet. It simply takes too many buses to cover the county adequately, along with the required maintenance fund and associated labor costs. The result is what has been playing out in the media all year, mismanagement and poor service. And that's not going to change even if a new logo is painted on the same old rolling stock.

To address the underlying question of transportation management, we come full circle to the question of growth management. If growth is going to continue unabated, and the transportation network is going to remain committed to a single mode, namely automobiles and buses, any transit agency is doomed to failure by the pending increase in demand and the refusal to commit the necessary funding to effectively deal with the problem.

While we have to actively pursue all



management alternatives to assist in dealing with the problems of the existing system, the long-term answers to the traffic puzzle lie in two areas: a massive increase in the capacity of the transportation network through construction of an alternative mode of transport, and a massive reduction in the looming demand for transportation capacity.

The choices as to what that alternative mode will be and, to a lesser extent, where it will go are among the choices that we've already made in dealing with our future. Metrorail is a "heavy rail" system, a high-capacity system with a "heavy" guideway. Light rail, where alternative technologies move fewer people and use lighter tracks, are precluded from consideration given the potential ridership over the life of the system. Most of the "state of the art" systems, such as EM-BAHN, are prototypes without a proven track record in revenue-producing service. The RTD made the decision years ago to go with the old reliable steel wheel/steel track and electric induction motor simply because it was a known quantity with several alternative suppliers who can meet proven cost parameters. It is hardly an outmoded technology. Like any good system in long term use, it has been constantly updated to take advantage of the available innovations. As a transportation technology, the automobile, with an internal combustion engine, has been around awhile too, and very few people have been advocating abandoning it, even in light of the questions surrounding the long term availability of petroleum fuels.

The choices which remain are in the area of reducing the overall demand for

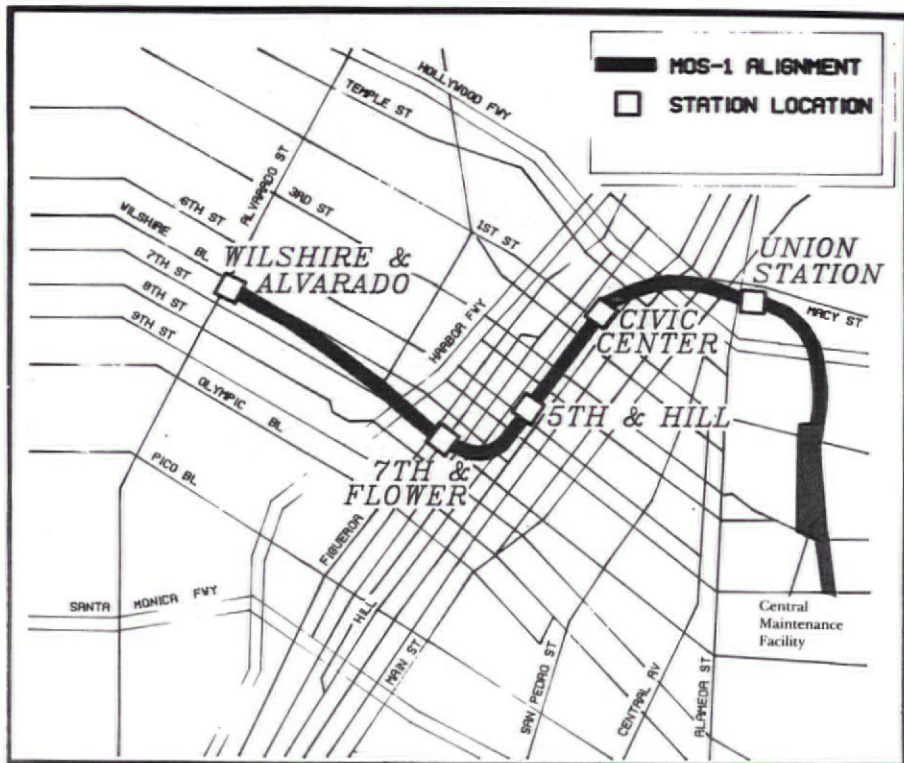
transportation capacity. Region-wide, we have to address the elusive jobs/housing balance as the best available method of attacking the equation. Given the current planning state, the political climate, and the population forecast, the best method of helping that along may very well be the order imposed on the present chaos by the creation of added transportation capacity in the form of Metrorail. Using the alternative mode of Metrorail together with other types of feeder rail lines to connect the dots between Targeted Growth Areas may be the best chance we have to assure that growth actually does happen where it is needed, desired, and planned.

The remaining important choices about the system itself have to do with final routes and station locations, particularly as they relate to the continued development of the Westside. Those choices will have a very real impact on existing communities. Neighborhoods such as the Wilshire area have already expressed their firm opposition to an elevated solution to the underground gas problems encountered along that proposed segment. Much care and thought has to go into final planning, particularly with regard to the localized impacts; but, from a regional perspective, we have to proceed the necessary response to the ongoing urbanization of Los Angeles by planning for the future in real, physical terms such as mass transit.

#### Bill Christopher

Mr. Christopher, CSI, an Associate with Arechaederra/Hong/Treiman Architects, Inc., is President of the Westside Civic Federation and as Coordinator of the NEOW, No El On Wilshire Coalition.





empty. If Metrorail should indeed tempt someone living in the Wilshire Corridor to leave his car home, all that the owners of the parking lots have to do is lower daily parking rates, and someone else will relinquish the bus and use the available stall! Furthermore, if only commercial development is encouraged around the stations (as currently is being proposed to maximize tax revenues) very little benefit will accrue to peak-hour loads, since traffic between commercial areas does not generally occur during peak hours. Indeed, commercial developments generated by the starter line along its route will increase vehicular traffic from outlying residential areas, since a large percentage of employees and visitors will still choose (or need) to use their cars.

#### Myth 2

"Metrorail will improve accessibility to downtown and allow greater intensity of development."

This would be true only if the costs for Metrorail were not subsidized by reducing (or failing to improve) other public transportation services. The starter line will serve less than 20% of the total traffic to downtown—the other 80% come from other corridors. If available funds are substantially diverted to the starter line and other services are affected by the shift of resources, overall accessibility to downtown will be impaired rather than improved.

#### Myth 3

"We need Metrorail or else our road network will choke."

The network will choke, for sure, unless we do something effective, region-wide, and we do it soon. The completion of the starter line is, at best, ten years away. The completion of a Metrorail network will come, at best, by mid-21st century. Too little, too late. Our resources should be spent now on improvements that have promise of fast relief; otherwise, our road network will indeed choke, long before Metrorail will be developed to the point where it can truly contribute to reduction of traffic.

#### Myth 4

"Los Angeles needs the Metro Rail to rate as a world-class metropolis."

This is plain nonsense. Los Angeles is a world class metropolis, and a unique one at that. Los Angeles must continue to stress and nourish its image, its network of freeways, its diffuse low density;

they are the envy of other metropolises of this and other countries. Metrorail would be an out-of-character and wasteful masquerade, not a symbol of greatness.

What, then, should Los Angeles do?

Should Metrorail be abandoned altogether or just postponed? It depends: If Los Angeles truly wants to maintain its low-density, diffuse pattern of settlement, if it continues to reduce the currently allowable development standards of the existing centers, if it does not intend to encourage clusters of high-density housing in the areas that surround potential station sites, then Metrorail—or any other investment in fixed rail transit—should be abandoned. In this case transportation planning and investment should emphasize the reinforcement and enhancement of the only system that can effectively serve the low density city, and that is bus service. The enhancement can take the form of improved stock, establishment of a network of express lines, dedication of exclusive bus lanes, off-line bus stations, subsidized fares, and all the other incentives that can induce people to use public transportation rather than their own cars. In addition, we should increase the efficiency of our existing facilities by encouraging higher car occupancy and car pools. If we should mandate for all commercial and governmental offices the institution of graduated parking rates—very high for single occupancy, free for three or more passengers—this provision alone would, at no cost to the city, do more to reduce traffic congestion than Metrorail ever will.

If, on the other hand, Los Angeles truly wants to have a network of fixed rail public transportation, then it must prepare for such a system, both in terms of physical form and financial resources. It must encourage not only commercial but also residential high density around future stations so that when Metrorail is implemented, not as a single line, but as a network, the city will have provided a substantial patronage, thus making it a worthwhile investment.

This approach would mean postponement of actual implementation of the fixed rail, but early pre-commitment to network route and station locations; it would mean willingness to accept, indeed to induce, significant changes in the density pattern of the city. Los Angeles would have to follow the example of Toronto where land use plans and transportation plans were closely correlated, and where high density apartments in the thousands were built within walking distance of the stations,

and new business development was exempted from parking requirements, rather than the example of Miami that simply overimposed Metrorail on its automobile-oriented pattern of development, only to find that the expected patronage simply did not materialize.

This approach, unlikely as it is of adoption in view of current trends, would lend itself to early implementation strategies. Once commitment to the network and station locations was made, the entire network, and not just a starter line, could be implemented in a very short time by "simulating" the future fixed rail facilities with a system of express bus lines that would follow the adopted routes, stop only at the locations of future Metrorail stations on the main route, but branch off from terminals to provide local bus collecting service to the existing low density residential settlement. Thus, the impact of the commitment to the future system would be operative early, and confidence for private investment consistent with city objectives may be firmly established. Eventually, the routes that exhibit high patronage will be converted to fixed rail service. The system can be progressively enhanced by discrete improvements; exclusive lanes for the express lines can be established early; depressed bypasses at critical intersections can be introduced; the future stations can be constructed and used, initially, by the express buses, and surrounding development can be started. This progressive incentive approach, similar to the process that has created the freeway network, insures that any increment or any improvement is of benefit to the entire network. A further advantage is that the network of express bus lines would complement the existing bus system and that, therefore, the beneficial impact would be felt very early.

Los Angeles is at a crossroad for decision, but neither of the paths lead to the continuation of the program that we have initiated. The Romans had a wise proverb for this predicament: "Errare umanum est; in errorem perseverare stultum est." We may well be forgiven for having made, under past circumstances, a decision that now appears erroneous; but to persevere in that decision when those circumstances are no longer valid would be foolish indeed.

*Edgardo Contini is an urban design and transportation consultant in Los Angeles; Martin Wachs is Professor of Urban Planning at UCLA.*

## Will Metrorail Disappear?

Will Metrorail disappear? It's doubtful. Those who would abandon the city's new subway system before its first mile of tunnel is finished are losing sight of several key factors in the emergence of Los Angeles as a true urban metropolis.

The issue of the subway is tied to the basic question, "are we going to continue to grow at the present rate, and if so, for how long?" The answers from all quarters seem to be "yes, and for the foreseeable future." To underscore the point, the folks over at the Southern California Association of Governments, the chief prognosticators for the region, make the statement that LA is the only post-industrial city on the planet that is experiencing growth on

such a massive scale. Forces beyond local control will bring another 5.5 million people to this region over the next 25 years according to SCAG's latest projections, which they claim are conservative, representing a declining growth rate from today's 2.1% annually, down to 1.2% by the year 2010. That may be the year we make contact with the limits of our resources. We're at an amazing crossroads in the development of our city as an urban form and there are choices to make, some of which we've already made.

Looking at the overall picture of transportation, Don Howery, Director of the city's Transportation Department, was recently asked why the city and other agencies were still loath to tackle extraordinary traffic mitigation measures, such as double-decking freeways, in some of the most highly impacted areas of the city, given the projected increases in traffic demand. The answer was surprising. He felt that, in the larger picture, the present traffic in Los Angeles isn't so bad after all. Mr. Howery replied that "we ain't seen nothing yet." In his view, the street system, while overstressed, was still workable and, if that's the case, there are no real grounds to look at such drastic actions. His basic thesis was that people will put up with conditions that are a whole lot worse than they are now in order to participate in the region's economic dynamo.

In light of the fact that a population increase is inevitable and that conditions, in fact, can get worse, the "no growth" advocates don't seem to have a prayer. The challenge is to regulate and direct the coming growth while protecting the precious environmental resources that remain intact. This is a definition of "slow growth."

During the course of the Planning Commission's Advisory Committee's re-evaluation of the Center's Concept, conflicting viewpoints emerged from the debate over growth. One side advocated the destruction of neighborhoods in the interest of growth and the greater good of the city, while the opposite tack was the preservation of everything in sight in the hope of recapturing a long-lost ambiance.

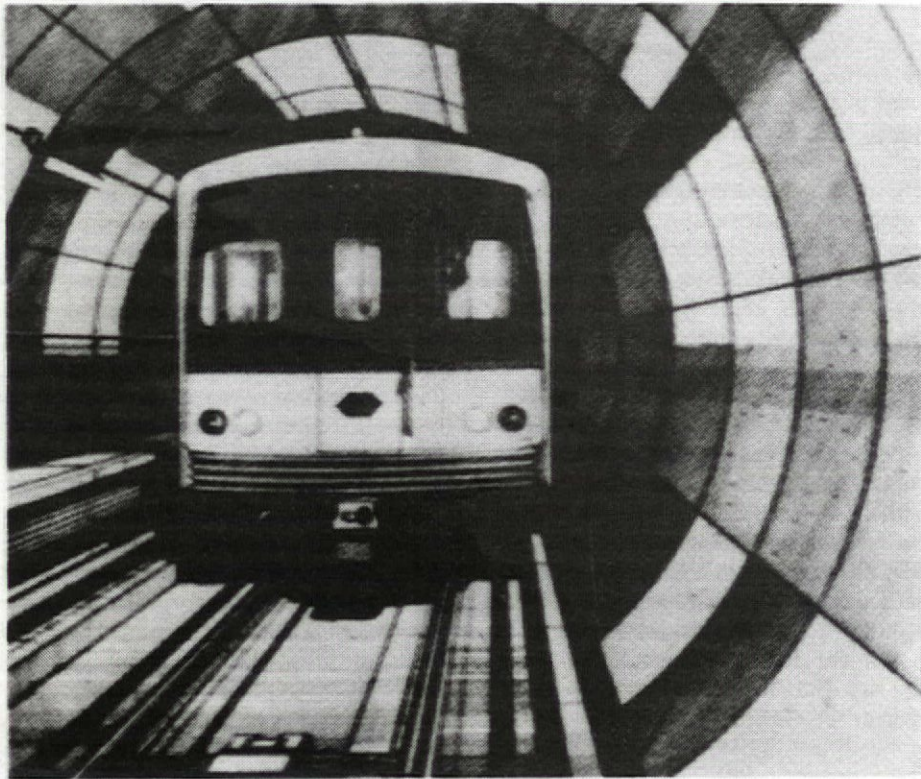
What came out of those sessions was a commitment to balance the two opposing forces, including the recognition of Targeted Growth Areas. While the slow growth elements of the political spectrum are currently in the forefront, many people recognize that wishing the growth away won't make it happen. As Dan Garcia and Dan Shapiro pointed out in a recent newspaper article, the movement has to be sensitive to the need for growth and the need for change in certain areas of the city in order to accomplish the goal of a livable city overall. Therefore, the concept of mass transit cannot be discarded based on the assumption that all of the communities in Los Angeles will band together to completely frustrate change.

Once we get beyond a commitment to change, we are confronted with the harsh realities of the city. Under current trends and policies, the central and western section of the LA Basin are, and seemingly will remain, its most congested areas. And yet, the development pressure on the Westside shows no sign of letting up. The cumulative result is that development and traffic congestion there and elsewhere will continue freely or get worse.

The city doesn't need Metrorail to become a world class city, Los Angeles already has that distinction. But it does need an alternative means of transportation to avoid becoming a third-world class city.



# Whither Metrorail?



## Transportation Policy and Metrorail

by *Edgardo Contini and Martin Wachs*

The citizens of Los Angeles are becoming aware of an impending crisis in traffic congestion of momentous proportions. Gridlock seems to many a real prospect. The media has focused on management problems at the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) and, in response, the legislature has moved to consolidate the SCRTD and the County Transportation Commission.

Citizens of Southern California consider traffic congestion the most important local policy issue of the 1980s, and they expect action. Yet, reorganization of transportation agencies will have little meaning unless the new organization deals differently with the substance of the region's transport problems. The merger will be only a symbolic change, accomplishing little if we continue to pursue misguided transportation policies, and our leaders have yet to indicate that they mean to change direction.

**Congestion will Continue to Increase**  
Rapid growth has increased congestion on the transit and highway systems, while cost increases and funding decreases mean we have failed to expand services and facilities to meet growing demand. In Los Angeles County, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) estimates that we collectively waste 480,000 person hours each work day standing still or moving in traffic at speeds below free-flow conditions. In San Bernadino, Riverside, Orange, and Ventura, commuters put up with another 170,000 person-hours of delay. By the year 2010, SCAG projects these daily totals of wasted time to be as high as four million person-hours in Los Angeles County, and seven million hours in the rest of the region. But congestion will never actually reach that level. Before it does, quality of life will have so deteriorated that the growth which is projected to cause more traffic will itself be curtailed. People will stop migrating to Southern California, companies will locate elsewhere, and declining economic and population growth will make the forecasts wrong.

**Reorganizing Won't Do The Job**  
Transportation planning and management is complex, and the organizations might be streamlined. Unfortunately, previous reorganizations have not solved any prob-

lems because legislators refused to implement the policies really needed to accommodate our rapid growth. Many improvements are needed in transportation policymaking. In the outlying counties, we should build many more miles of roads and freeways. That's where most of the growth will occur and the added traffic will be concentrated. Road building must be coordinated with land use planning in order to locate high density activities where accessibility will be greatest. Roads should be built in advance of residential and commercial development to minimize costs and avoid disruption of communities once they are established. This will cost a great deal of money, and the federal government is likely to decrease rather than increase its contributions. Politicians are afraid to tell us that a local gasoline tax and greater fees charged to real estate developers will be needed. The political costs of higher taxes are similar to the costs of stifled growth and congested streets.

In the regional core, already densely developed, building new freeways and widening streets would destroy cherished neighborhoods and would be prohibitively expensive. Instead, we must concentrate on getting more service out of the street, highway, and transit systems we already have. Automated computer-controlled traffic signal systems should be expanded; they promise to increase street carrying capacity by around ten percent. They also cost money, but less in relation to their benefits than many other possible improvements. We should make greater use of one-way streets, and demand vigorous enforcement of parking violations. We should also use modern communications technology to help clear up freeway incidents more quickly.

### **Bus Improvements Rather Than Metrorail**

We should consider abandoning Metrorail. It takes courage to abandon a commitment so soon after ground has been broken, but it would be in the public interest. Hundreds of millions have already been spent to fulfill a political commitment to an inappropriate transit system. We still face capital costs approaching five billion dollars to build a subway whose route has yet to be determined, but which in the end will serve one or two percent of the region's trips in a single corridor producing less than twenty percent of the trips to and from

downtown. Because Metrorail has such high costs, and saps so much of our transit subsidy budget, it takes higher fares to keep the bus system going. Citizens now complaining about the upcoming dollar fare have a right to ask what the fare would be if the subsidies scheduled for Metrorail construction were used, instead, to lower bus fares.

The concept of Metrorail was formulated and "sold" to the public and the city government by technicians and experts who had a vested interest in the massive engineering endeavor that Metrorail would entail. It was endorsed by the downtown business community which could gain a competitive advantage through increased accessibility to its properties. The mirage of a subway system that would rival and surpass those of the great metropolises of Europe or our eastern cities was not subjected to the scrutiny of objective evaluation.

While perfunctory lip service was given by SCRTD to the formulation and analysis of alternatives, the die was cast from the beginning; the main issues raised were about network alignment, station location, financing and public support, not about the fundamental question: Given the low density and diffusion of Los Angeles, and given the aspirations of its residents to avoid concentration and density in the future, what is the most effective long-term program of investment in public transportation that the city should undertake?

In fairness, it is true that when the commitment to Metrorail was initially made several factors mitigated in its favor.

At the time Metrorail was first planned, it appeared that the federal government would foot a major portion of the bill (80% of construction costs). Metrorail and its massive costs seemed to offer a wonderful opportunity for Los Angeles to recover a fair portion of its citizens' contributions to federal coffers: Why should Los Angelenos' taxes pay for subways in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Atlanta, and Miami, and receive nothing in return?

At that time, the City Planning Department, after an extensive program of community information and participation, had proposed a Centers Concept that favored accommodating new growth in high-density residential and commercial clusters. The Centers Concept and Metrorail shared an attractive congeniality of objectives.

At that time, also, the concept of absorbing population growth by increased density was not seriously challenged; indeed, it was viewed as a welcome device to slow down the historical pattern of outward spread and to preserve agricultural land. The environmental movement, the preservation movement, the Not Yet New York coalition were not yet as much in the forefront as they are now.

How do these mitigating factors stand today?

The federal government spigot has substantially dried up; the \$870 million recently allotted give evidence of stinginess, not of generosity; and no commitment of federal funds has been made for the balance of the starter line, let alone for the balance of the network. A change in the administration is not likely to bring a return to the earlier largesse: federal budget restraints will not go away, and the after-taste of ill-used fundings for Metrorails in Miami and Atlanta is likely to persist. Furthermore, there seems to be evidence that the federal government has a much more realistic appraisal than our

city government of the inappropriateness of fixed rail subways for Los Angeles.

The Centers Concept, while perfunctorily adopted by the city, was never supported by implementation measures that would have insured its success. Indeed, in the intervening years, the Planning Department, faced with the forecast of intolerable automobile congestion due to the delay in the implementation of Metrorail and the cancellation of major components of the freeway master plan, has been forced to reduce development density in several of the Centers. An independent study recently completed by a blue ribbon committee appointed by the City Planning Commission has concluded that Los Angeles growth has, in fact, substantially ignored the Centers Concept; and that, therefore, the concept should be fully reappraised.

As to "growth by increased density" (a prerequisite to the effectiveness of fixed rail systems) the city has, in recent years, spoken clearly and loudly: "no increase." Indeed the emphasis is on decrease of what is currently allowed. The passage of Proposition U, the proposals currently under consideration by the City Council for increased control of building density, all indicate that advocates of lower density in the community will prevail.

If this is what Los Angeles wants for its future, so be it: its unique characteristics of low density will be preserved; but we must acknowledge that low density and fixed rail are antithetic; that a subway network is a very unwise and ineffective investment if it is to serve an essentially low density region.

It should be evident that the major factors that had mitigated in favor of Metrorail have collapsed; that a time for reappraisal has arrived.

The least that city government should be provided with at this time is a realistic projection of future costs and performance. Specifically, we must be apprized of how much—by five year increments—we will have spent; how much of the system will be operating; and to what extent traffic will have been effected. Only if this information is available will it be possible to assess the effectiveness of our investment in Metrorail and to compare it with alternative programs that could be funded by the same or lesser resources. But this information must be prepared by truly independent consultants hired by the city having no vested interest in the adoption of any specific approach to traffic mitigation. It is well to keep in mind that in Miami the actual patronage of the recently constructed Metrorail system is dramatically lower than the amount forecast by the "experts" retained transportation agency, the same "experts" who were retained by SCRTD to prepare the patronage forecast for Metrorail.

If a reassessment is undertaken, it will also be well if we disabuse ourselves of our attachment to certain myths that have been foisted upon us to marshal public support for Metrorail and that, by and large, have remained unchallenged.

### **Myth 1**

*"Metrorail (indeed the starter line all by itself) will relieve vehicular congestion on Wilshire Boulevard and in downtown."*

*It will do nothing of the sort: Vehicular congestion downtown is strictly proportional to the number of parking stalls that are available in the area. As long as we continue to require that new development provide more parking, congestion will continue to increase. Parking stalls will not stay*



# In the News

## Cityside

### Friends of Westwood

City Council has approved a settlement in the Friends of Westwood case involving a proposed building on the Wilshire-Glen-don Ship's restaurant site. The developer has agreed to reduce of the size of the project by 20%, increase parking, and incorporate a new Ship's restaurant into the building. These changes were a response to traffic and community needs. A full discussion of the Friends of Westwood case and its implications for major building projects appears on page 6.

### Pedestrian Zones

In August, City Council unanimously passed an ordinance proposed for the 13th district by Councilman Michael Woo. According to the Councilman, the Pedestrian Overlay Zone ordinance is aimed at "bringing back to life areas besieged by mini-malls and overdevelopment." It requires any new development in a designated area to have 65 percent of the building fronting the street, and to devote 50 percent of its ground floor to pedestrian entrances and displays. It complements the district-wide ban on mini-malls. Now, if we could just turn existing mini-malls inside out. For further information call Bill Chandler at (213) 485-3353.

## Architecture on View

### Modern Redux

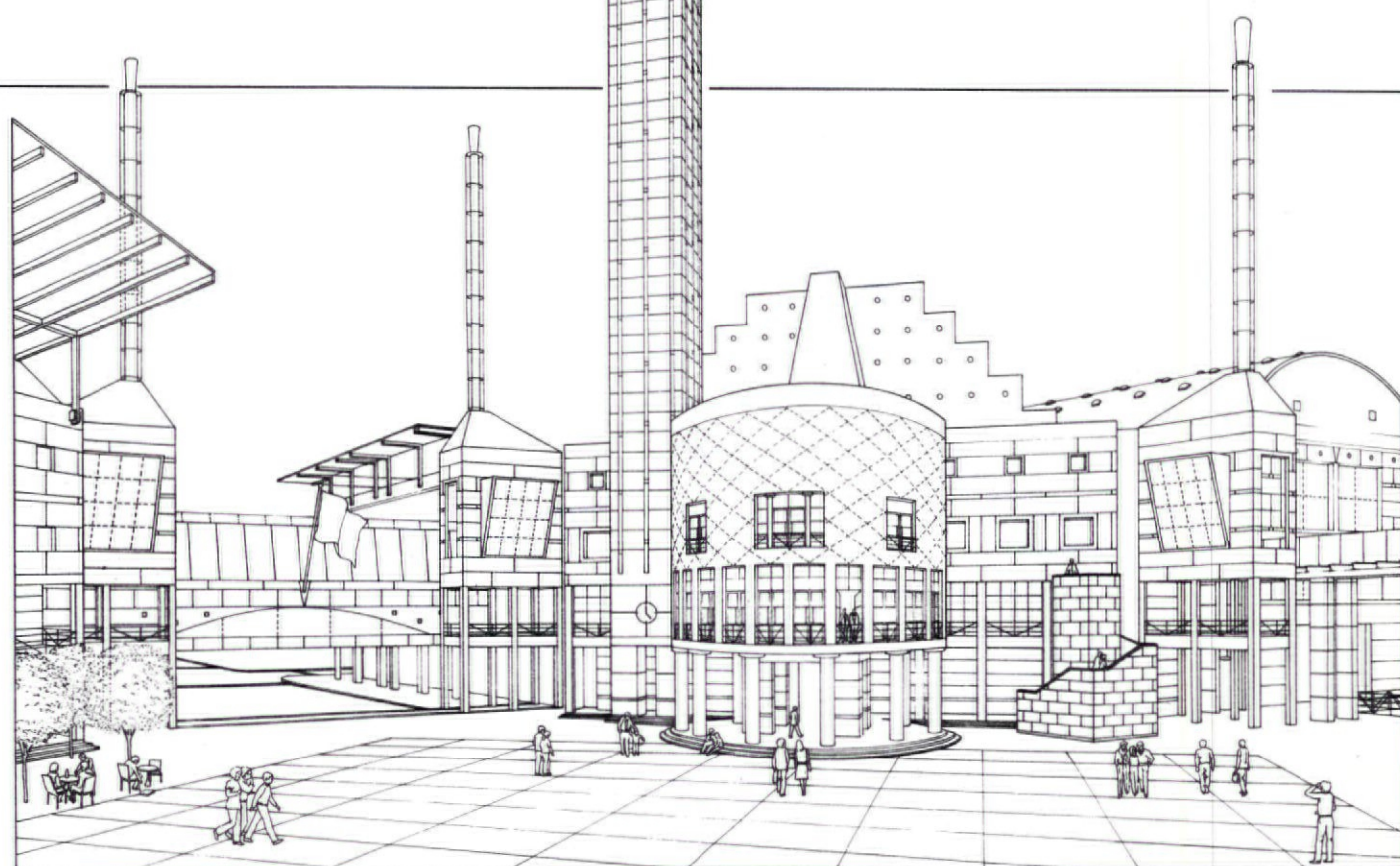
An exhibition analysing the current effort to define a "new modern" alternative to postmodern architecture is on display at the Otis/Parsons exhibition center until October 18. Curated by Douglas Davis, architecture critic for *Newsweek*, the exhibition includes over 100 works by 34 architects, among them Emilio Ambasz, Arquitectonica, Tadao Ando, Mario Botta, Gwathmey, Siegal & Associates, Zaha Hadid, John Hejduk, Stephen Holl, Mark Mack, Renzo Piano, Site, Bernard Tschumi and Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown. The gallery, located at 2401 Wilshire Boulevard, is open 10 am to 5 pm. For further information call (213) 251-0555.

### Phoenix Competition

Entries to the recent Phoenix government center design competition will be presented in an exhibition and symposium. UCLA Extension's "Architecture, Democracy and Politics," is presented on Sunday, October 11 and opens an exhibition on the competition entries at the Frederick S. Wight Gallery. Architects lecturing on their competition entries are Barton Myers, Arata Isozaki, Michael Graves, Robert A.M. Stern. A panel discussion about architectural competitions, including the speakers and Phoenix Mayor Terry Goddard, will be led by Charles Jencks. A summary discussion will be led by Richard S. Weinstein, Dean of the Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning, UCLA. The day-long symposium, which takes place at the Wadsworth Theatre, cost \$50 (student fee \$15.) For details call (213) 825-9061.

### Happy Birthday R.M.S.

Two current exhibitions celebrate R.M. Schindler's Centennial year. "Four Schindler Houses," is on display at the UCLA Architecture Gallery, and features

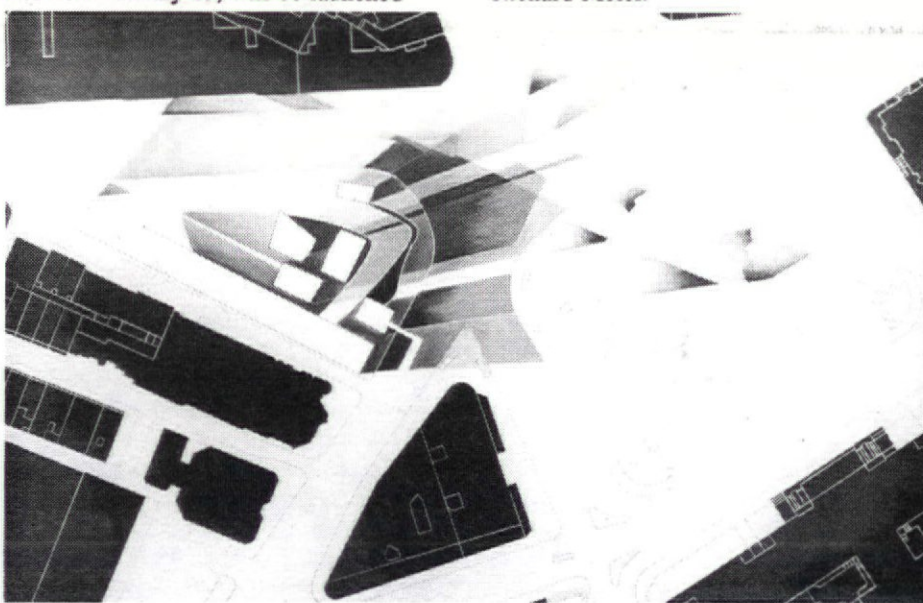


The Phoenix Municipal Government Center competition is the subject of a day-long symposium sponsored by UCLA Extension. Pictured above, winning submission by Barton Myers and Associates.

the Kallis, Lechner, Tischker and Janson houses. The exhibition, which includes some furniture and a model of the Janson House, was curated by David Gebhard. Further information, Call Elaine Marko at 825-8950.

On October 11, the Schindler House opens a major exhibition on the house and its social history. The exhibition, which runs until January 10, will be launched

has a commercial gallery specializing in the exhibition of drawings and other material relating to architecture and design. Kirsten Kiser Gallery for Architecture at 964 North La Brea opens this month with an exhibition of drawings by 1985 Pritzker Prize winner Hans Hollein. This will be followed in December by an exhibition of collages by another Pritzker Prize winner, Richard Meier.



Zaha Hadid's design, Grand Building for Trafalgar Square, is among the many projects represented in "Modern Redux," an exhibition curated by *Newsweek* critic Douglas Davis, currently on view at the Otis/Parsons Gallery.

with a gala benefit celebration the evening of October 10. The Schindler House, located at 835 N. Kings Road, is currently being restored. Further information: (213) 651-1510.

### Woolf Exhibition

The University Art Museum at UC Santa Barbara is currently showing work by John and Robert K. Woolf. These architects are notable for their 1930s-1980s celebrity homes, often based on the 18th Century French manor house. The art museum is the recipient of a \$500,000 gift from Robert K. and Gene O. Woolf of Montecito toward the construction of a new building. The brothers have donated the entire contents of the architectural firm, John and Robert K. Woolf to the gallery. For further information call Mary Lynn Soini (805) 961-2951.

### Architecture As Art

New York has Max Protech, San Francisco had Phillipe Bonafont. Now, Los Angeles

## Docents Wanted

Volunteer docents are wanted at two local historic monuments, Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House and Workman and Temple Homestead. Hollyhock House, completed in 1921, is one of Wright's five Los Angeles houses. There will be special orientation meetings for Hollyhock House docents on Monday, October 5 at 10 am and 7 pm. The training program will take place Mondays, October 12 through December 7. For further information on the Hollyhock House docent program call (213) 485-4580.

Workman and Temple Homestead is the mid-19th century Workman House, the 1920s Temple house, and what is believed to be the oldest private cemetery in Los Angeles. Its 17-week docent training course will take place Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 9:00 pm, and will cover the social, cultural and architectural history of Southern California as well as decorative arts and fashion. For further information on the Workman and Temple Homestead docent program call (818) 968-8492.

## Professional Seminars

### Woodwork

The Architectural Woodwork Institute is holding its annual convention and trade show at the Airport Hilton in Los Angeles October 21 and 22. The program includes speakers, seminars and a large exhibition area.

A seminar geared to California architects and designers will be moderated by Louis B. Dietz, a woodwork quality standards expert. This program will detail AWI's quality standards and local fire-codes. The standards are designed to provide architects with the necessary information to properly specify all elements of architectural woodwork.

The cost of the seminar is \$35. For further information call Andy Moore at (213) 223-4994.

### Conservation and Risk

A seminar on October 28 at the Ramada Inn in Long Beach will explore the issues of risk, liability, and the social implications of historic building code compliance using Long Beach as a case study.

"Achieving Urban Conservation and Minimizing Earthquake Risk" will cover the use of new technology and working within historic building fabric. The program, which includes a number of speakers and technical experts, is sponsored by the Structural Engineers Association of California, the State Office of Historic Preservation and the Coalition to Preserve Historic Long Beach. For further information call Karen Clements at (213) 430-2790.

### Scholarships

The California Building Industry program offers scholarships to future professionals and skilled tradesmen in the building industry. Last year CBIF funded 67 scholarships at 33 colleges and universities throughout the state, ranging from \$250 to \$1000. For further information call CBIF Executive Director Renee McGovern at (916) 443-7933.



# Los Angeles ARCHITECT

## LA/AIA Conference 87 Design + Practice

California State Architect Mike Bocchicchio heads a noteworthy lineup of more than 50 distinguished speakers who will participate in the two days of the Los Angeles Chapter/American Institute of Architects Conference '87, October 15 and 16 at the Pacific Design Center, 8687 Melrose Avenue.

The speaker lineup for the 26-session conference also includes architects and related design professionals, health leaders, city planners, government officials, and marketing and management consultants.

Conference '87 Chairman Raymond L. Gaio, AIA, noted that although programs are directed toward the design professions and construction industry, they are open to the public, and speakers will address issues of public concern.

"We will be discussing topics related to contaminated sites, and educational and health facilities—issues of major concern to the design and planning community," said Gaio. "As architects and related design and construction professionals, we help meet the needs of society through design input. The conference will also be offering sessions on starting, operating and marketing design firms, in addition to other subjects of specific interest to LA/AIA members."

Several sessions will deal with healthcare problems. "Planning and Designing Facilities for AIDS Patients" will feature medical and planning experts and representative of AIDS Project/LA. The program is designed to inform both architects and related healthcare professionals of the built, psychological and emotional factors to consider in providing the built environment for AIDS testing and treatment.

Issues that will be discussed include confidentiality, segregation or integration of care units, and space appropriations for patients and their support groups.

A seminar titled "Housing the Homeless" will address local issues and the AIA's national program titled "The Search for Shelter." Los Angeles Family Housing Director Arnold Stalk will join AIA representatives to discuss challenges in

housing special populations with little means—the homeless, aged, physically handicapped, chronically and mentally ill, and indigent. Speakers will talk about an emergency shelter project in San Francisco and address issues such as quality of life and the need for individual self esteem and control, as they relate to housing and design.

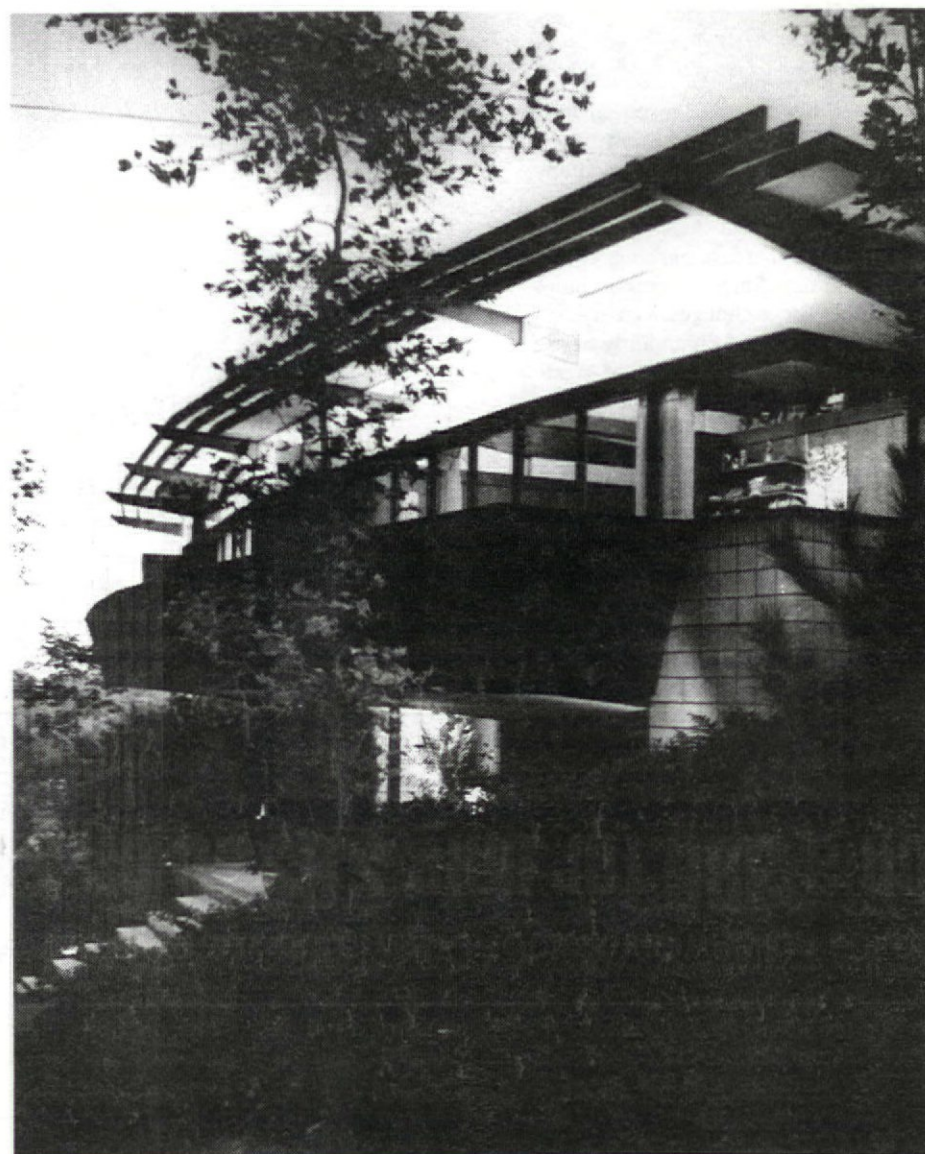
Of particular relevance to the building and real estate industries in Southern California is the session titled "Environmental Concerns when Acquiring and/or Developing Commercial/Industrial Property," which will focus on issues related to contaminated sites. Guido Zemgals, AIA, will review specific points for architectural counsel of clients considering development or investments in industrial segments of the city. He will discuss legal responsibility and liability problems in neighborhoods that house manufacturing, metal, chemical, petroleum and automobile disassembly operations.

The two-days of seminars will conclude on Friday, October 16, with presentations by LA/AIA President Cyril Chern, AIA, Gaio and First District City Councilwoman Gloria Molina, who will discuss "LA & Its Future...The Architect's Role/Responsibility."

At 7:00 pm a reception will be held for participants and the LA/AIA Design Awards jury in the Steelcase Showrooms at Pacific Design Center. Design Awards will be announced following the reception and jury members will lead a panel discussion. Richard C. Keating, FAIA, will moderate for panelists: Thomas H. Beeby, AIA; Henry N. Cobb, FAIA; and Jorge Silvetti, Interior design panelists are: Claude R. Engle; Charles Pfister; and Andree Putnam.

"Not Yet Los Angeles," a one-day conference/workshop to discuss metropolitan Los Angeles urban design issues, will follow on Saturday, October 17.

And on Sunday, October 18, the Los Angeles Women's Architectural League will sponsor their Annual House Tour. For information about conference seminars and weekend activities call the Los Angeles Chapter, AIA at (213) 659-2282.



A multi-level wood, concrete block and glass home designed by Rex Lotery, FAIA, is among the five houses featured on the October 18 WAL Home Tour.

### Search for Shelter

The LA/AIA is organizing a design effort as part of the National AIA Search for Shelter housing the homeless program. The project is intended to stimulate interest, funding and services to construct villages for the homeless locally. The prototype project, serving 50 people, would demonstrated how such a village could be created, depending on need.

The village would serve mid-range housing needs. Due to the nature of this shelter project, cooperation has been pledged by city and county departments, as well as the Mayor's Task Force on the Homeless.

The LA/AIA Housing Committee invites architects to submit designs for a homeless shelter. A complete program has been prepared, and is available through the chapter office. A final scheme will be selected from the submissions for design development, city agency approvals, pricing and fundraising.

Participants in this design effort will be acknowledged during an extensive campaign to educate the public about homelessness. Selected entries will be published in a book and displayed at a national AIA shelter conference in Boston later this year. Further information appears in a flyer along with this issue.

### Conference Schedule Thursday, October 15

**8:00 am**  
Registration, north lobby, Pacific Design Center

**8:30 am**  
Opening remarks LA/AIA President, Cyril Chern  
Conference Chair, Raymond L. Gaio

**8:45 am**  
Success: Blueprint for the Future

**10:35 am**  
Starting a Practice - The First 10 Years  
The Role of Marketing in a New Firm  
The Harper-Schuman CFMS

**12:35 pm**  
Lunch

**1:30 pm**  
Administration: Running Your Practice to Success  
Planning and Designing Facilities for AIDS Patients  
Housing the Homeless

**3:15 pm**  
Keeping Your Overhead Down and Your Profits Up  
Income: Tax Free  
Codes: Health Care Facilities

**5:00 pm**  
Operating Your Business More Effectively  
Marketing's Role in an Existing Firm  
Building Site Investigations

### Friday, October 16

**8:00 am**  
Associates Breakfast

**9:30 am**  
Getting in the Door—and Remaining There!  
Interiors that Work for Health Care Facilities  
Presentation Techniques

**10:45 am**  
Successful Transition: How?

**11:00 am**  
Environmental Concerns When Acquiring and/or Developing Commercial/Industrial Property

**1:30 pm**  
Educational Facilities: Their Needs/Interests

**3:30 pm**  
Meet Mike Bocchicchio, California State Architect  
Intern Development Program  
Analysis of 1987 Building Codes

**5:15 pm**  
Conclusion LA/AIA President, Cyril Chern  
Conference Chair, Raymond L. Gaio

**LA...& Its Future, The Architect's Role and Responsibility** Speaker: Gloria Molina, City Councilwoman, First District, former California State Assembly, 56th District.

**7:00 pm**  
Design Awards Program

**October 17**  
Not Yet Los Angeles  
Evolving the Public Agenda

**9:00 am**  
Welcome: Conference Opening  
Conference Chair, Mark Hall

**9:30 am**  
Improbable Los Angeles  
David L. Clark, historian

**10:30 am**  
Urban Design as Tool and As Politics

**12:00 pm**  
Luncheon Program  
Sam Hall Kaplan, LA Times  
Leon Whiteson, LA Herald Examiner

**1:45 pm**  
Interactive Workshops  
How Things Work and Get Done

**3:15 pm**  
Interactive Workshops  
How Urban Design is Formed

**4:30 pm**  
Closing Observations  
Kenneth Topping, Director of Planning, City of Los Angeles

### October 18

WAL Annual House Tour