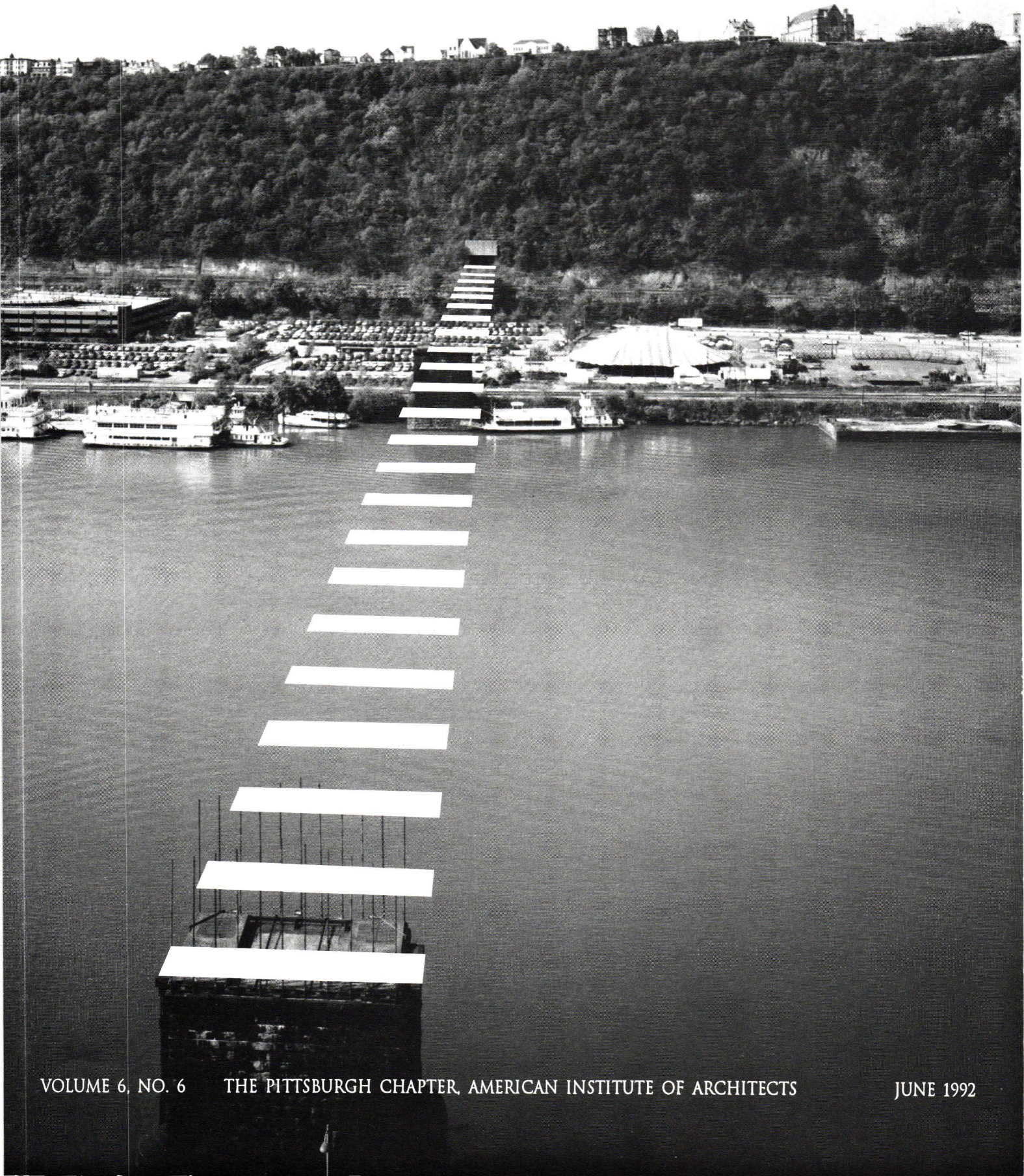


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The Pittsburgh Chapter AIA serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and the Pennsylvania Society of Architects. The objective of the Chapter is to improve, for society, the quality of the built environment by further raising the standards of architectural education, training and practice; fostering design excellence; and promoting the value of architectural services to the public. AIA membership is open to all registered architects, architectural interns, and a limited number of professionals in supporting fields. Chapter Headquarters: CNG Tower, 625 Liberty Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15222 Telephone: 412/471-9548; FAX: 412/471-9501.

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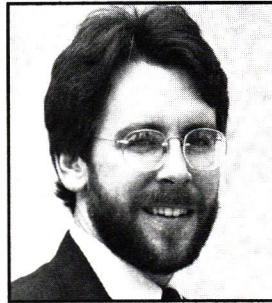
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View Point: Towards an Urban Agenda

Rob Pfaffmann, AIA, President



"We Architects and Planners are not the visible symbols of oppression like the military or the police. We're more sophisticated, more educated, more socially conscious than the generals—We're the soft cops."

—Robert Goodman, "After the Planners" published in 1971.

Every so often an event occurs that causes me to become temporarily quite cynical about the relevance of our profession. This most recent episode consisted of three not-so-disparate events: The AIA Convention, the Commu-

nity Design Center's New Urban Housing Competition and the civil unrest in Los Angeles. As these three events interacted in my mind one evening, I grabbed a musty old copy of a book from my bookshelf entitled "After the Planners" by Robert Goodman. It was required reading in a freshman course at Syracuse called "ARC 145: Social, Economic and Political Factors in Design." Although full of 1960's anti-establishment rhetoric, the book's attack struggled with the same things I had on my mind that evening: the nation's urban policy (in this case, Nixon) and affordable housing (in one case called "Guerrilla Architecture").

Earlier this year at the end of Grassroots (our annual leadership conference in DC), a group of the largest urban chapters gathered to discuss what could be done to focus our collective attention on the critical issues overwhelming our urban areas. Ironically, in light of the events of the last week, it was the Los Angeles' Chapter representatives vocal dominance of the meeting that could be read as a warning in retrospect.

The end result of that meeting was a resolution calling for the adoption of an "urban agenda" by National. That resolution, a general but important list of whereases, has been sponsored by Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The resolution preparation and attendant form work is the work of Alan Greenberger, President of the Philadelphia Chapter.

Last month, the Chapter's Board voted to co-sponsor the resolution (the full text of the resolution and its sponsors appear on the following page).

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On the Cover

An architect's-eye view of the Wabash Tunnel and Bridge site. Article on page 5. Photo by Karl Backus, AIA.