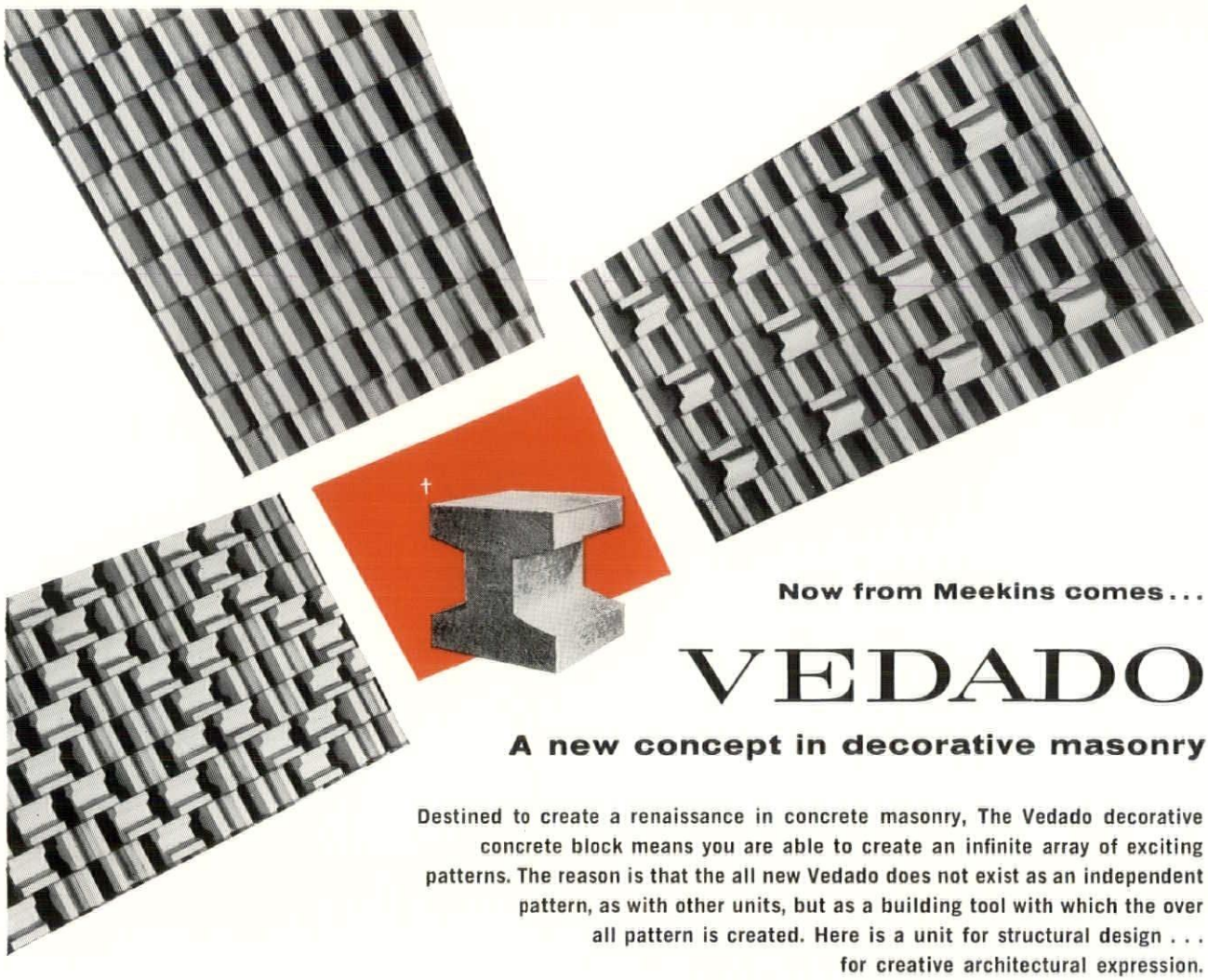
May 1961

the Florida Architect

OFFICIAL JOURNAL of the FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS of the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS, INC.



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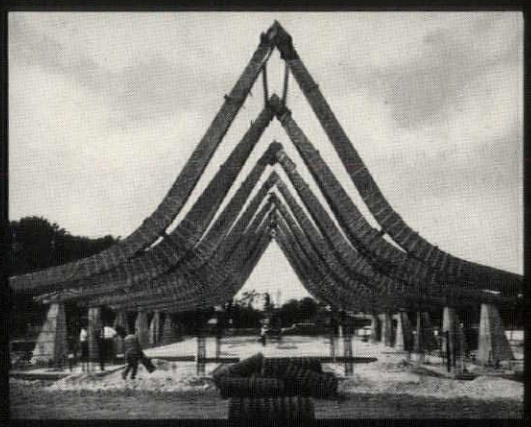

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The

Florida Architect

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS

In This Issue ---

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VOLUME 11
NUMBER 5
1961

Curves of canopy and wall panels
show design versatility of

MABIE-BELL MO-SAI

The unique design for the First Federal Savings and Loan Association in Sarasota, Florida is beautifully executed in genuine Mo-Sai.
The repetitive curves of the canopy over the front entrance project through the facade to repeat in the lobby.
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rchitect: Dean Parmelee
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Policy Comes To the Grass Roots . . .

AIA's Executive Director Forecasts The Profession's Future . . .

As a high point of his first official visit to the Florida District since assuming the duties of AIA Executive Director in January of this year, WILLIAM H. SCHIECK, AIA, spoke before a meeting of the Florida South Chapter, AIA, in Miami on April 11. Introduced by Regional Director ROBERT M. LITTLE, FAIA, the new AIA administrator's talk was an informal discussion of what he called "some challenges ahead for the profession". He keyed most of his comments to results of the recent meeting of the AIA Committee on the Profession, chairmanned by JAMES A. HUNTER, FAIA, of which he is the staff secretary.

His talk was prefaced by a sketch of the attitude of AIA officers, directors and administrative staff directors as a background for the Institute's policies, plans and programs.

"America", he said, "has become an urban civilization. Cities are going to grow tremendously; and anything that is complex about a city now will be all the more complex in the next twenty-five years.

"It's going to mean a lot of building. The F. W. Dodge Corp in an economic report said that even with two recessions there would be a trillion dollars worth of building in the sixties."

But he warned his audience about complacency relative to expanded building activity. He stated his belief that there will be". . . the greatest competition for goods and services to build this America that you have ever seen."

"The plastics people and the chemical people and the aluminum people regard the building market as theirs as much as the people of traditional materials as brick, wood, and stone. And I think there are other people who believe that the business of designing and providing professional services is as much their business as the architects. So you're going to see them in the picture."

The AIA executive touched on the concern of the Federal Government with the increasing urbanization of the country as indicated by President Kennedy's housing message and his statements about a Department of Urban Affairs. But he forecast changes in the traditional architect-client relationship.

"There will be new kinds of clients," he declared. "A big corporation that wants to build a $50-million facility will not be the kind of client the architect has classically dealt with. I believe we have a situation affecting architecture which is occuring for the first time in history.

"We pride ourselves that historically our profession has served the design needs of successive civilizations. That opportunity remains for us, not in terms of buildings on a site, but

(Continued on Page 6)

FLORIDA'S FINEST HOMES OFTEN HAVE YEAR 'ROUND *Climate by Chrysler*

EXAMPLE: O'BRIEN RESIDENCE

Henry K. Harding — Architect

Installation by Air Conditioning Designers, Inc.

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The Profession's Future . . .

(Continued from Page 4)

buildings in a community. But in addition to that opportunity, we have the problem — for the first time— of the *means* for providing these design services. That's because our new urban society and economy is the most complicated in all history—and we face this newness and these complications for the first time in history."

The remainder of the AIA executive's talk dealt largely with Octagon plans for amplified future services to the Institute membership. Work and studies of the Committee on The Profession was submitted as a prominent example. He stated that "the package deal" was of great concern to this Committee and outlined three kinds of package dealers as the subject of the Committee's specific interest.

The first kind was characterized as ". . . rather small outfits that build motels, small clinics, bank buildings and that sort of thing. They sell design and construction as a part of a package in order to control the sale of equipment in which they are primarily interested. Their interest is strictly commercial, but they are invading the field of architecture. They cannot, and do not, think like architects or intend to serve their clients professionally as an architect does."

Another was described as ". . . the giant engineering firm," the type of organization which, though not commercially interested in product sales, has for some time served heavy industry with a package of design and construction. Now, however, ". . . these people are quite willing to do a college campus or a complex for a manufacturing company which may not be heavy industry at all, but office buildings, research laboratories and other such things. So they are stepping into the field of architecture."

The speaker characterized the third type as the entrepreneur—who, in notable instances, has teamed up with prominent Institute members for the design development and the promotion of large projects. He quoted one prominent member of the building industry as saying ". . . a great deal of building in the future will only come to pass if somebody promotes it"; and he asked his audience the question ". . . So where are we going to fit in that picture?"

"The answer we're aiming toward," he continued, "is to expand the architect's services and to find ways of doing this ethically and professionally."

He cited the work of land assembly, the arrangement of financing programs and—after completion of the building—the provision of equipment and furnishings as logical extensions of the architect's traditional professional services of design and supervision of construction. Such "extra services" would be undertaken for additional fees and under an agreement similar to that now covering "classical architectural services." In undertaking such expanded services, the architect would still operate in his traditional role as the owner's agent.

In emphasizing the interest of the Committee on The Profession rela-

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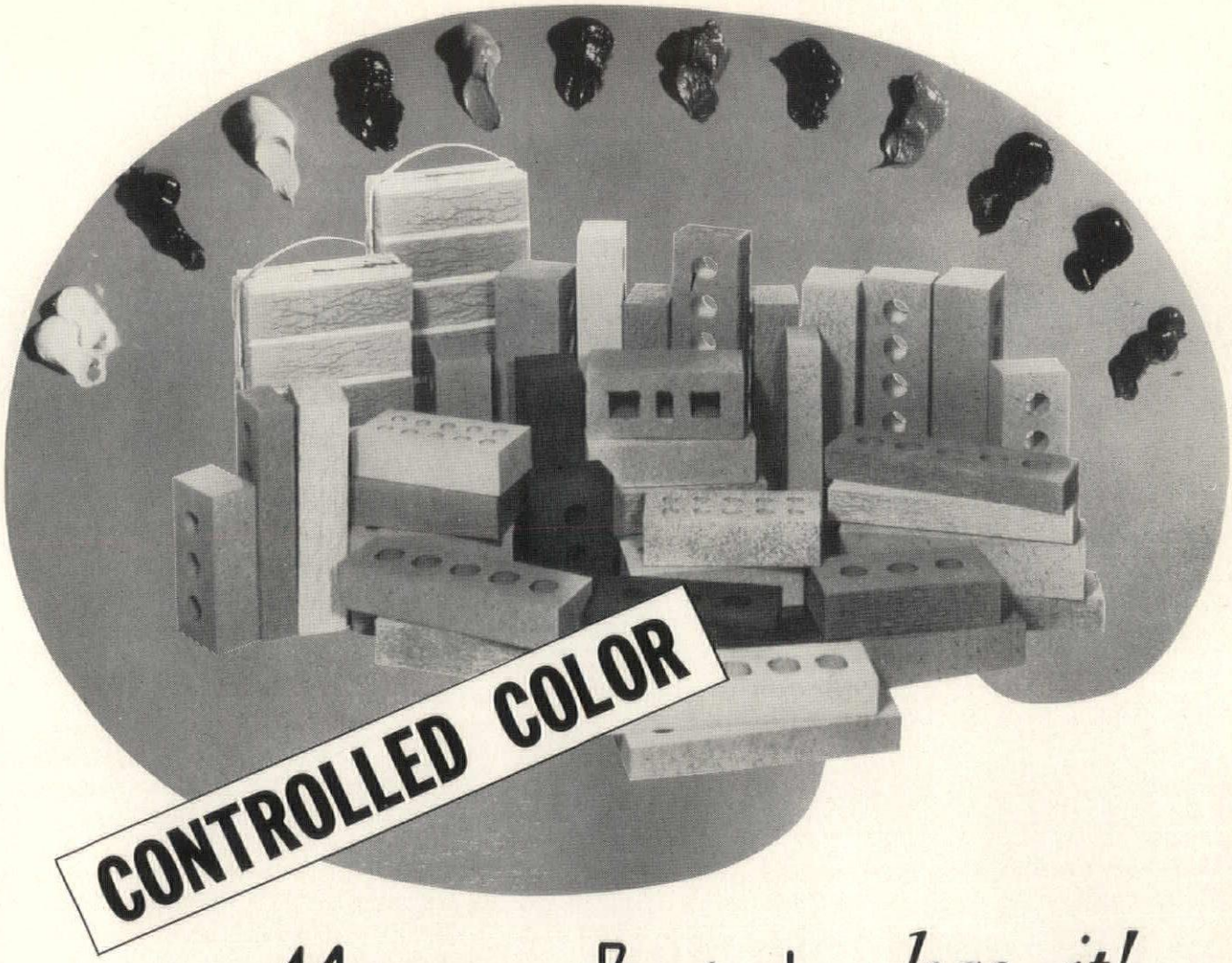

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The Federal Building — Richmond, Virginia

Our Changing Skyline

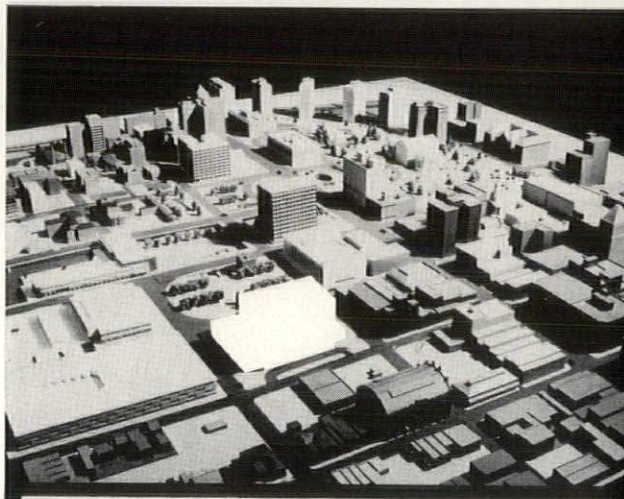
Utilizing the latest construction techniques and materials, the new 12-story Federal Building employs lightweight aggregate for structural concrete, masonry units, and pre-cast spandrel panels. The result: Greater design versatility and a deadweight saving of more than 8,000 tons.

The basic structure of the building is Solite reinforced concrete frame, using flat plate construction without column capitals or sheer heads. The plates are a uniform 9″ thickness throughout and, since they are completely flat, are left exposed as finished ceilings in many areas.

Solite lightweight structural concrete was used for the pre-cast panels that predominate in the exterior walls of the building, and for exterior walls below grade. The panels, one of the project's most striking features, are faced with mosaic ceramic tile in a distinctive shade of green. Self-insulative, sound-absorbent Solite lightweight masonry units were employed for interior partitions and to back up the limestone face that complements the tile-faced panels.

The use of lightweight aggregate in these many applications effected a tremendous deadweight saving—resulting, of course, in important economies in time and construction costs.

Fresh in concept, sophisticated in design, the new Federal Building will indeed be a wonderful place to work—and a distinct contribution to Richmond's "changing skyline."



This scale model of the proposed Richmond Civic Center shows the location of the new Federal Building. The building occupies one entire block; will overlook the mall of the completed center.

FEDERAL BUILDING

ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS
Marcellus Wright & Son, Merrill C. Lee

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
William T. St. Clair

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Wise Construction Company, Inc.

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ZONING...

Cause or Cure of Urban Blight?

By VERNER JOHNSON, AIA,
Secretary, FAA

Need for some sort of control over the indiscriminate use of land is generally recognized by those who take the best interests of their communities to heart. Zoning has been widely accepted as the most practical means for establishing such control. But many thoughtful citizens have come to feel that the current type of zoning ordinance does not offer a complete or even adequate answer to the problem . . . Here is a new concept of zoning—a concept that puts people before property and seems to promise wider and more stable ultimate values than under our present system . . . It is worthy, we think, of the most thoughtful consideration.

Widespread need for urban renewal is almost too obvious for comment. But a serious question exists as to whether many of the renewal projects now under way or proposed will prove to be the unmitigated civic blessings their sponsors regard them to be. To put it even more bluntly, it seems highly probable that the social and economic forces which have generated the need for such renewal projects will continue to operate and thus forge a new complex of blight and decay in the very areas where "renewal" has been so bravely developed.

The foundation for such statements is the pattern of much of our present thinking. We have put the neighborhood improvement cart before the community development horse. We are projecting grandiose ideas for curing the physical cancers of our cities without seeking the elimination of their cause. In too many instances we have permitted these ideas to grow without first completing the necessary urban planning on which they can be soundly based. In the business of revamping the character of our cities and towns we have lost sight of what lies in the root and core of our current civic problems—the germ that has generated the spread of the decay and blight we are now so feverishly attempting to halt and eliminate.

This germ is our current attitude toward zoning. Not zoning itself. But the *kind* of zoning that is generally empoyed as a civic planning tool. This is arbitrary. It is not flexible. It is static and takes little account of the dynamic character of city growth. Above all, our present concept of zoning is concerned entirely with the *use* of land—not the *users* of the land. These are people. And until our attitude toward zoning has been shifted to focus primarily on the rights and needs of *people*, rather than on the arbitrary improvement of *land*, the germ of urban decay and blight will continue to grow and the need for a continual process of urban renewal will be with us.

Have our current zoning laws enabled us to shape and control the character of our cities—or have they proved an instrument of corrosive destruction?

The need for planned growth and proper use of land has long been recognized. But where have our present zoning laws produced communities pleasant to live in and sound in both social and economic values? Nationally we are facing the problems of bankrupt "mill towns"; of highway "strip towns"; of virtually unregulated "suburban sprawl"; of urban "slum pockets"; of downtown "blighted areas". And as the nation's population swells, these problems are becoming more complex, more difficult of solution, more influential as factors con-

(Continued on Page 10)

ZONING--Cause or Cure of Urban Blight...?

(Continued from Page 9)

trolling the social and economic values of increasingly large areas of both urban and surburban organization.

Arbitrary zoning has not proved a satisfactory solution either to cure these conditions or to prevent their reoccurence. The "single family" zone has too often developed into a crowded desert of mediocrity. Zones for "business" have produced a motley of dismal advertising ribbons that threaten to destroy our highways and thorofares. Multi-family housing, largely relegated to the fringe of business areas, only increase the chaos of an already unsupportable congestion of traffic.

No, our current concept of zoning with its complex and detailed rules and regulations, has failed — and is failing — to create cities of charm, beauty, convenience and utility. Our zoning ordinances are not accomplishing their implied purpose for a number of reasons. First, they are so highly restrictive of design that a building becomes little more, architecturally, than a physical expression of setback dimensions, height limitations, area stipulations and surface exposure requirements. Second, they are too rigid in their attempt to regulate, in minute detail, each use to which a building can be put. So, within an area of a certain zoning classification the deadliness of monotony is evident — in close-packed gridirons of small houses, in squares crowded with commercial structures, in traffic-congested blocks of office buildings.

Thirdly, our zoning ordinances lack consideration of appropriate land use. Thus, they are one chief cause of our increasing traffic problems that result from undesirable concentration and overbuilding. Finally, they are inflexible and seldom, if ever, changed. Nor are they easily subject to change —with the result that areas no longer suited to their original use become blighted urban slums before the ordinances can be adjusted in pace with the city's growth and developing character.

Is it not time to change all this? Now, when the matter of urban renewal has everywhere become of such pressing importance, can we not free ourselves of the rigid, detailed, burdensome and confusing restrictions that zoning regulations have imposed? Once this has been done, the barrier of legal technicalities will have been removed from the field of intelligent, long-range urban planning.

Some sort of control is, of course, necessary. But what we need in zoning is similar to what is needed in modern building codes — performance standards instead of specification requirements. Therefore, instead of regulations on setbacks, heights and all the other technical curbs that clutter our present ordinances, let us frame a series of minimum standards in terms of human safety. It should not be difficult to establish criteria for light and air, for protection against fire and hurricane, and structural soundness in terms of building use.

Let us also free ourselves from all the arbitrary patterns of land use to which we are now bound. The present system of area zoning in terms of building classifications must be replaced by some control that is not only more flexible but is also geared to human safety and convenience and the orderly, long-range development of the community. The only factor that meets this two-fold requirement is *density*—the control of land use in terms of the number of people who are going to use it.

The relative concentration of land *users* marks the difference between congestion and ordered convenience. Land planners have already demonstrated the value of the density factor as a measurement for certain types of neighborhood developments. Is it not reasonable to extend this measurement to include more than just a neighborhood? Once density factors are established in relation to an essential variety of human needs, there will exist a basic planning tool which can be flexible and widely used.

Buildings to serve all human needs can be classified into four broad categories. These are: (1) *Residential*—where people live in small or large houses, or in multi-family structures; 2) *Service*—including stores, offices, restaurants, hotels, and any other building type that houses a commercial or service activity; 3) *Community* —embracing a range of public and institutional buildings, recreational structures, hospitals, churches, etc.; 4) *Production*—meaning manufacturing of all types with all related facilities for warehousing, research, administration and transportation.

Research could discover what density factors would be properly applicable to these building categories. Thus provision for them could be easily made on an area planning basis—with relative locations flexibly determinable according to a variety of such local conditions as topography, natural resources, transportation and traffic routes.

With such a background, every element of planning and design — from the broadest regional viewpoint through all segments of community organization to individual buildings themselves — would enjoy a new freedom. The basis for this freedom would be flexible ratios — one, a true and proper land coverage as a percentage of total land area; and, two, a proper total allowable floor area in keeping with the land density factors established for the site.

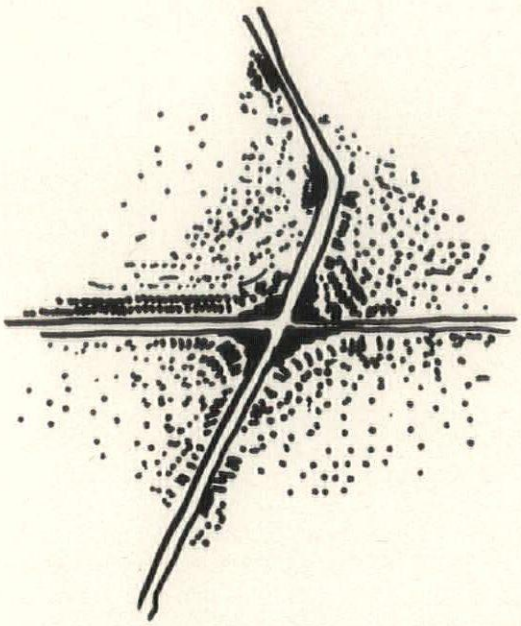
A new system of zoning embodying these principles could have far-reaching effects. It could channel growth in a vastly more orderly fashion than is now possible. It might well prove the means for eliminating civic congestion by controlling the cause of such congestion. And it would be flexible enough to permit changes in land use consistent with urban growth and development — and this notably without recourse to law.

Furthermore, if imaginatively employed, this *density factor zoning* would go far to preserve the greenbelts and the buffer strips that planning and housing experts have long been calling for. As an illustration, let's consider a typical urban plat, undeveloped. At an accepted density of four families per acre, and with a reasonable allowance for streets, a unit building plot would contain about 7,500 suqare feet. On this plat could be built a variety of housing units. Each single-family small house would occupy a single plot. But a ten-unit row house project would require a full two and one-half acres; and a 100-unit cooperative apartment would sit on a site of 25 acres providing ample opportunity for landscaping and for recreational facilities.

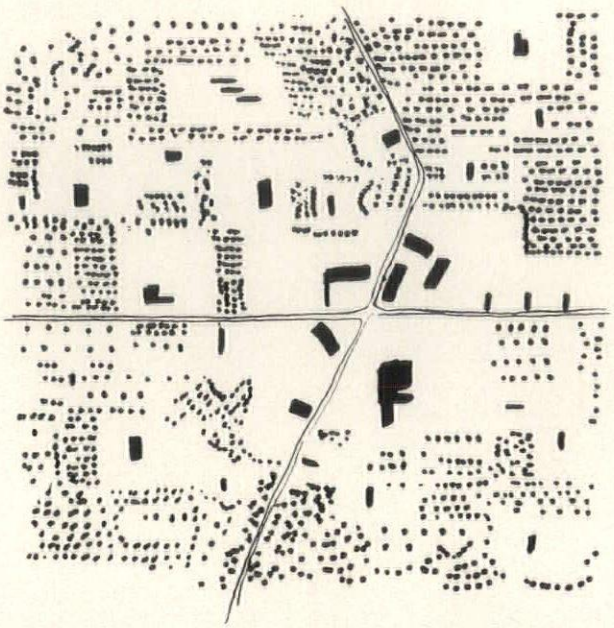
The same density factor would apply to allocation and development of service or business buildings. As an

What's Best--Urban Renewal or Urban Planning?

Must this continue . . .



When we could have this . . . ?



Here is a diagramatic comparison of results that might be expected from the land development about a typical cross-road site — left, from our present zoning regulations and, right, from zoning by density factors. Under present custom, areas are zoned according to building type and activity. So business buildings line the roads, creating an automatic congestion and a mounting traffic problem. Apartments fringe the business area with residential areas behind them. Density factor zoning would prevent heavy concentration near roads, provide adequate parking facilities, open and landscaped buffer strips, and opportunity for change as the area developed.

example, if 1000 families can support 1,000,000 square feet of neighborhood stores and offices, the required service space per family becomes 1000. Multiplied by the density factor of 4 families per acre, it is clear that the area is zoned for 4,000 square feet of service building per acre. Thus, a neighbodhood shopping and business center requiring 80,000 square feet would command a building site of 20 acres —ample to provide necessary parking and to provide also a spread of open, landscaped land as a desirable buffer strip between the bustle of commercial activities and the privacy of home living.

Thus the variety of land use in every sort of neighborhood would do much to induce more imaginative and better integrated use of the land. In this concept of density zoning, control could be achieved through regulation of lot coverage and floor areas only. Through this is provided an automatic assurance of ample free ground about every building. This appears to offer a solution to many of our parking problems — and, as an additional bonus, would assure maintenance of free and open ground, thus eliminating the congestion and over-crowding that are the root stocks of blight, urban decay and slums.

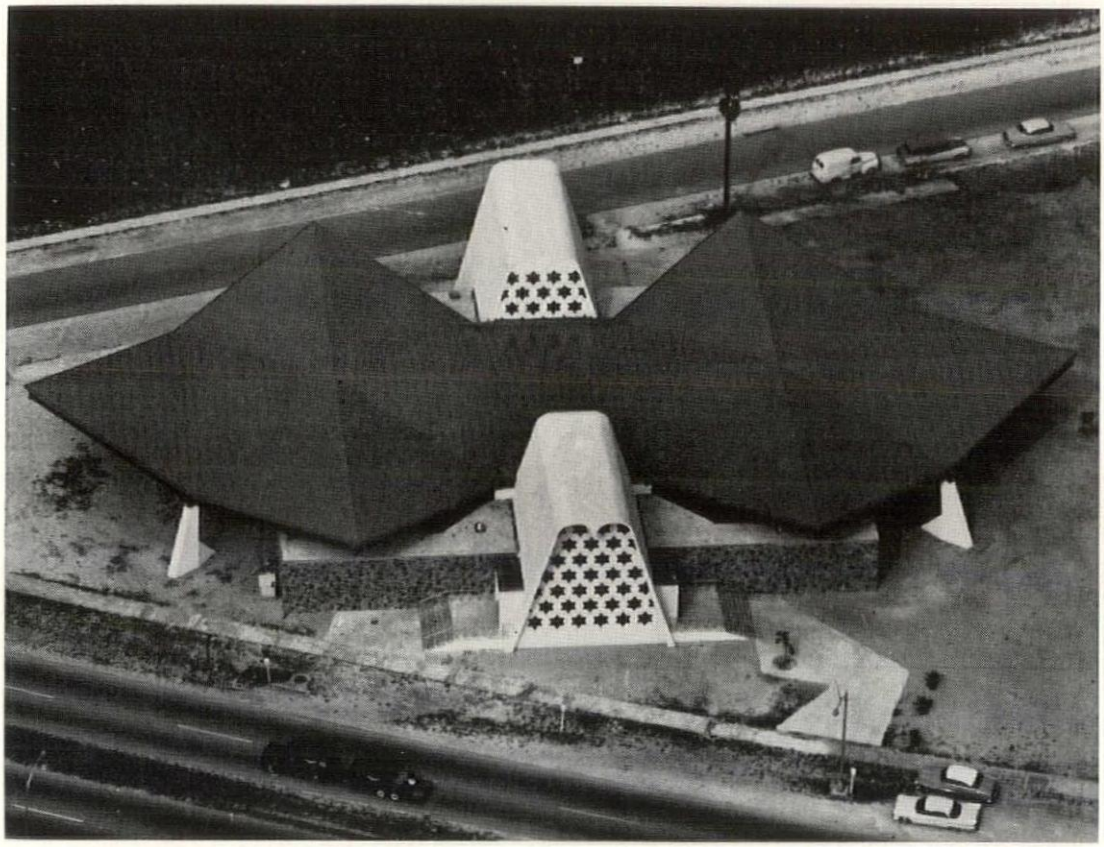
Density factors would naturally vary according to concentration requirements in various parts of the urban complex. And as the city grew, density zones of certain areas could be adjusted to permit re-development in line with changing civic needs. These are important points. Cities live, breathe, expand, change. They are dynamic, constantly shifting. Uncontrolled they sprawl, exhaust themselves, finally die. Under tight and static controls — like our current zoning rules and regulations — they become stifled, congested, pressured. They become sick from overcrowding, plummetted values, sliding social standards. Then blight takes over, decay sets in, slums develop, downtown becomes an economic and transportation nightmare.

We are living in such cities now. If we are now, finally, willing to spend the huge sums necessary to remake our cities, let us now also make such changes in our laws and set up such standards as may be necessary to assure ourselves that another rebuilding will not be necessary in another 25 years. The concept of density factor zoning may well be one long step to that goal.

Saluting:

Architect: Philip Pearlman.

Engineers: Gerald Spolter, Structural.
Weiss & Hertz, Mechanical and Electrical.



The Beth Torah Congregation

Museum of Science and Natural History
of Dade County

James Forney

PANCOAST, FERENDINO, SKEELS and BURNHAM
Architects

This is a noteworthy building in more ways than one. First, it is the fruition of plans which were only vaguely formed when the Junior League of Miami first opened a museum for youngsters in 1949. The project was immediately successful; and growth—which means increasing public acceptance—was so rapid that in 1959 it had outgrown its title as the Junior Museum Guild and was ready for a full-fledged educational program for Miamians of all ages. At that time the Museum assumed its present name; and at that time too plans were developed for the building that now houses its exhibits and activities. It was first opened to visitors late in September last year — and counted more than 100,000 of them during its first month of operation.

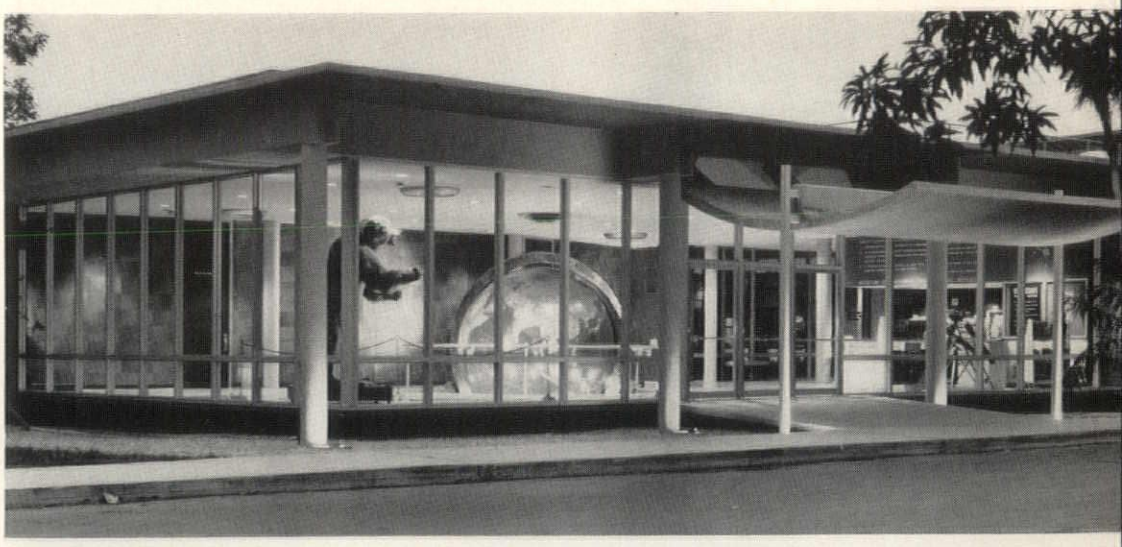
Location is on a 10-acre, mango-planted site that was formerly part

(Continued on Page 14)

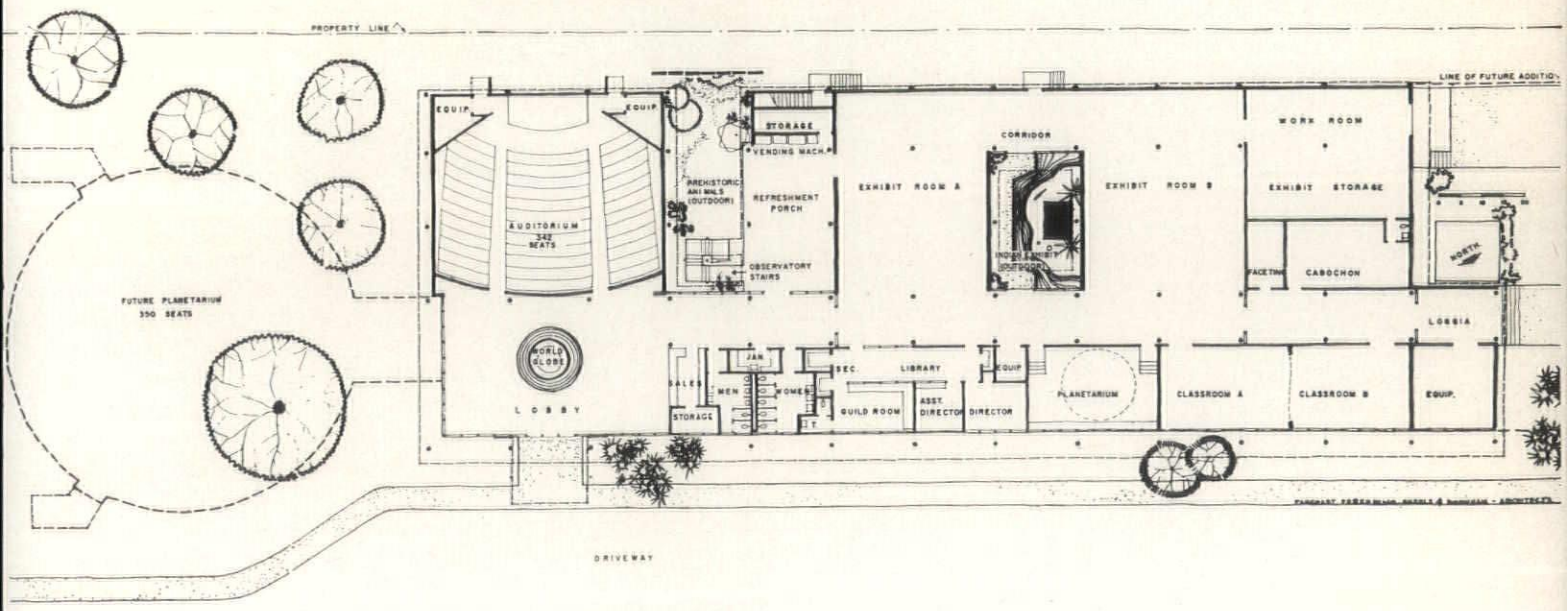
Photos by James Forney

of the famed Deering estate and is now owned by Dade County as part of Vizcaya, the Dade County Art Museum. The present building is only a portion of what will ultimately become one of the country's most important institutions of its type. The window walls of its long entrance facade faces north; and future additions are planned for both east and west walls. Plans already have been developed for a planetarium at the east end. Additions to the west end will serve to provide the Museum with needed work and storage areas as well as additional exhibit and educational activity spaces.

When the planetarium is completed—a financing program is now under way—it will rank as one of the country's largest and most technically complete. It will seat approximately 320 people under a dome 60 feet in diameter. Main and auxiliary projectors will reproduce the entire celestial sphere and will be able to demonstrate a processional cycle of 25,800 years in either past or future time. The equipment will not only be such as to provide the fascinating entertainment for which planetaria have become famous. It will be equally as well adapted to educational uses in such fields as geography, astronomy, mathematics and celestial navigation.



As might be expected, the majority of exhibits in the Museum relate to the life, resources and history of Florida. But there are many non-Florida exhibits also, including one on energy and light — and, near the world globe in the lobby, one of the ten largest Kodiak bears ever shot . . . The plan below indicates that some of the exhibtis are outdoors; and the picture on the opposite page suggests how outdoors and indoors have been merged to produce a sense of informality and freedom seldom encountered in a museum of this kind. The stairs lead to an observatory on the roof; and the picture was taken from the refreshment porch adjacent to the outdoor exhibit of prehistoric animals . . . The world globe has a special history of its own. For many years it was a center of attraction to passengers when the PAA terminal was located in what is now the Miami City Hall at Dinner Key. The old globe, refurbished and reinstalled, now serves visitors to the Museum as a graphic reference for many of the exhibits.



Good Landscape Design Proves Stimulus For Small House Sales

The art of the architect should be extended to include the design of the land as well as the house — whether the design is that of a large, custom built home or involves the comparatively complicated treatment of a project house site, That is the conviction of CHARLES B. GOLDSMITH, AIA, who has abundantly proved his theory in working with ARTHUR RUTENBERG, west coast builder of small project homes.

Shown here are two views of model homes in the Clearwater area. Their builder has given much credit to the landscaping treatment for his highly successful record of sales—even in the face of a marked slow-up in real estate and house construction activity. He reported that 90 percent of the buyers were attracted as much by the design of the site as by the houses themselves.

Although the landscaping becomes part of the home buyers "package" it is by no means standardized. In each case the architect consults with the buyer, obtains an idea of preferences in landscape treatment and then develops the grounds plan accordly. When such a plan is developed, costs, including compensation for the architect, range from $600 to $1,000. No charge is made the buyer for advice on landscaping that does not involve actual design development.

This appears to be a modest example of the "expanded service" now being advocated by the Institute. And it may suggest to other architects working with construction firms or realtors in the design of project houses that a full development of the site is a logical part of the design process. From the strictly professional point of view this extension of design service may prove not only an extra source of income, but an opportunity for the architect to do a better all-over job of site development. From the sales viewpoint, it permits the builder to "sell the sizzle instead of the steak." Here the "sizzle" is Florida living—as opposed to merely a house on a barren Florida lot.

News & Notes

Florida North Central Has Model Chapter Program

There are those in the Institute who look askance at the small, local Chapter. But one of the best arguments against the theory that only a a large chapter can be an effective element of professional organization is right now in very active operation in Tallahassee. It is the North Central Chapter. President is CHESTER LEE CRAFT; and what he and his various committeemen are doing to improve both internal and external public relations and to make Tallahassee architect-conscious through the medium of community service could well be taken as a model by many chapters of the AIA throughout the country — large ones as well as small.

The Chapter (14 corporates, 11 associates) has a long history of interest in community affairs and problems. Some years ago it was instrumental in urging authorization of a regional planning and urban renewal study; and its most recent activity was the conduct of a limited competition for the design of a proposed Tallahassee Junior Museum to be built by the Junior League of Tallahassee, Inc., on a recently acquired 10-acre tract on Lake Bradford.

Former Chapter president PRENTISS HUDDLESTON acted as professional advisor for the competition which drew 11 entries and which was won by the collaborating team of JAMES D. BULLARD and DAN P. BRANCH, both of whom are associates of the Tallahassee firm of Barrett, Daffin and Bishop. Tied for First Mention were LAWRENCE B. EVANS, JR., and CHARLES BENDA. Second Mention — also a tie — was shared by LEROY GRAY and CARLTON LILLIE.

As drawn up and administered by the competition's professional advisor, the program contemplated the winner as the architect for the Junior Museum project. Cost limitations were set at $75,000, with a sq, ft. cost pegged at $10. Results of the competition were widely publicized; and drawings of the winning design were

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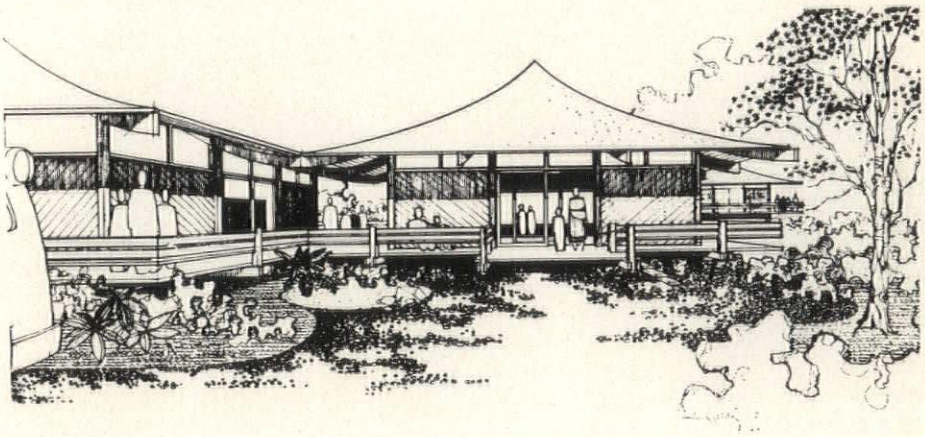
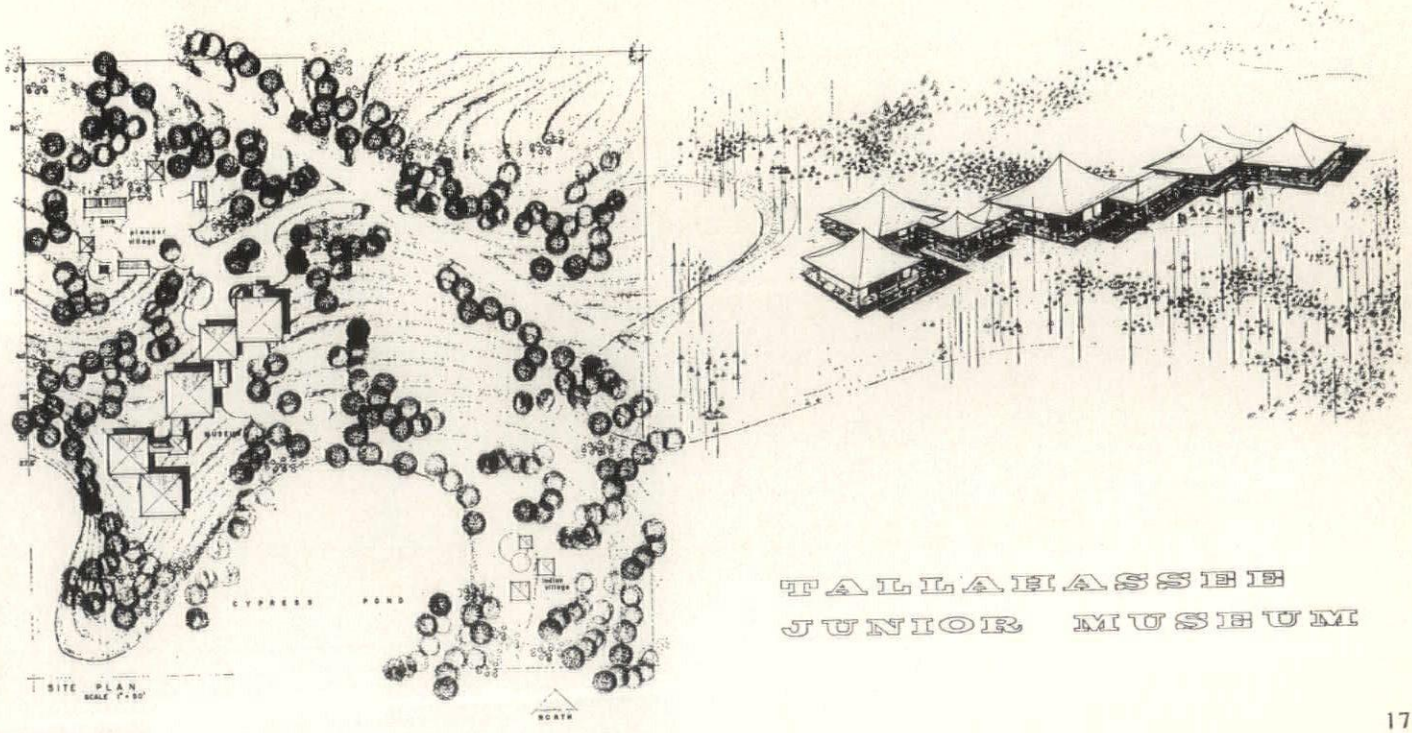
COMPETITION WINNER

This design, submitted by James Bullard and Dan Branch, was chosen the winning design for the Junior Museum project by a jury that included Chester L. Craft and Edward M. Fearney, Chapter members and architects with the Board of Control. The competition was held late last year under the professional guidance of Prentiss Huddleston, past president of the Florida North Central Chapter. The program stipulated that the competition winner would be commissioned as architect for the museum.





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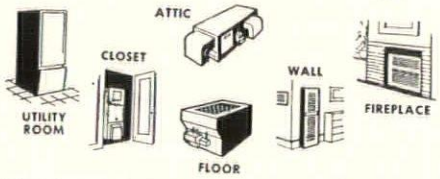

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News & Notes

(Continued from Page 17)

extensively used as an aid in raising funds needed for the immediate construction of the museum. Completion of the building is scheduled for early summer.

Thus far this year the Chapter has had three meetings; and a brief review of the programs indicates the extent to which these Tallahassee architects are making their professional influence felt. In January, for example, the subject was planning for the growth and development of Florida State University. Speaker was Dr. Milton W. Carothers, V.P. of F/S/U, who discussed with Chapter members a 10-year plan for the University to coordinate its development with provisions of the Tallahassee master plan and the programs of both county and state road departments. The program was sponsored by the Chapter's Committee on Community Development.

The February meeting — held at Randall House, one of Tallahassee's historic mansions — was sponsored by the Chapter committee on historic buildings. Among Chapter guests were Dr. Adolph Karl, associate professor of art at F/S/U, James Messer, Jr., Tallahassee city attorney and chairman of the joint city-county committee for the preservation of historic monuments, and Malcolm B. Johnson, executive editor of the Tallahassee *Democrat*.

The Chapter has been working closely with civic officials to preserve some of Leon County's notable old buildings. Both groups have had full cooperation from editors of the *Democrat*.

The meeting in March was concerned largely with the Chapter's cooperation with the program of the FAA's committee on Government Relations. It was in charge of Forrest R. Coxen, a committee member at both state and chapter levels. Attending and speaking briefly were State Senator F. Wilson Carraway and State Representatives Mallory E. Horne and Richard O. Mitchell. FAA President Robert H. Levison and Anthony L. Pullara, chairman of the FAA committee on Government Relations, were also special guests of the Chapter. Both spoke on the FAA's legislative year program.

Straws in the Wind . . .

"Improvement, *Si*; Recession *No!*" This could be a new rallying cry for construction activity in Florida. Two capsule indications come from the Miami area — but items appearing in other parts of the state bear out the fact that Florida's building industry is well back on the road and starting to roll in high gear.

One such indication is a release from the F. W. Dodge Corp., stating that February building contracts in the Miami area ran a whopping 78 percent *above* the February 1960 dollar volume. Non-residential contracts were up 50 percent. And residential contracts soared to 92 percent ahead of the year-ago figure.

The other indication is more psychological — though none the less real. It's the new slogan adopted by the Seaview Awning Company. The symbol of the slogan is "BIBA"—

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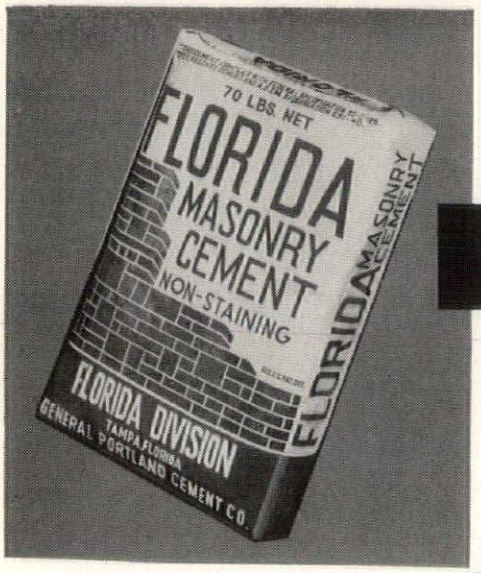
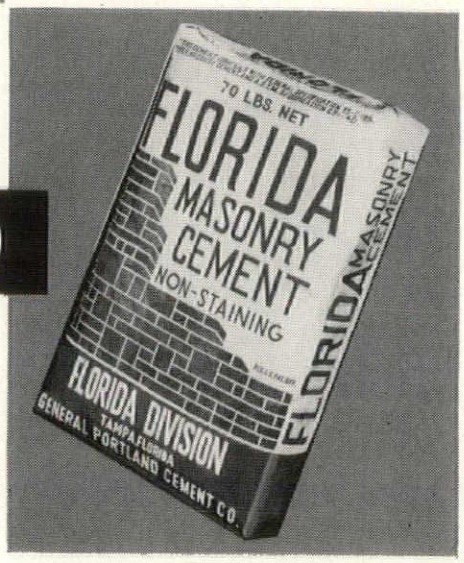
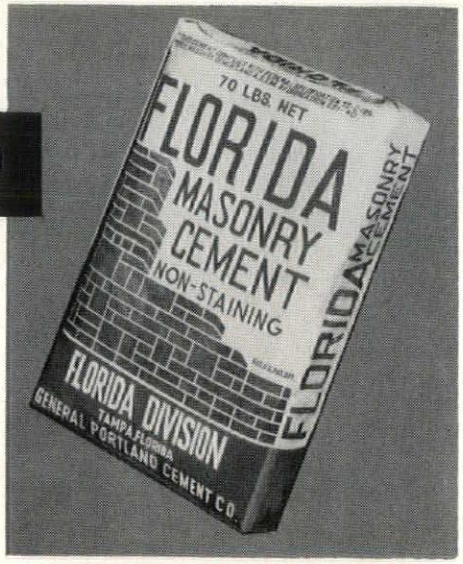


TIME-TESTED

JOB-TESTED



PERFORMANCE-PROVED



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News & Notes

(Continued from Page 19)

and the meaning expresses the conviction of Seaview as well as the level of their activity. The initials mean, "*Business Is Better Already.*"

Cuban Architects' Project . .

Some 200 architects have emigrated from Cuba and have formed an Association of Cuban Architects in Exile. Through cooperation of the School of Architectural Engineering of the University of Miami — and with some promised assistance from the AIA — a project of building code research has been started that may obtain the backing of the Department of Health and Welfare in Washington. GUSTAVO MORENO, president of the Cuban architects group, spoke before the members of the Florida South Chapter last month. He was introduced by ALFRED B. PARKER, FAIA; and approval of the research code project was expressed by AIA Executive Director Schieck — who noted that the Cuban building code dated from 1902 and needed modernizing.

Mexican Tour Again . . .

Another seminar tour of Mexico is scheduled for September of this year. As last year, this will be a 14-day study trip of Mexican architecture and interior design. The tour will be conducted in cooperation with the Mexican Society of Architects. Information regarding it is available from T. H. HEWITT, 2413 Driscoll, Houston, 19, Texas.

Personals . . .

NORMAN M. GILLER, Florida South Chapter, has been elected president of the South Florida Council, BSA — the first time in 47 years that an architect has held this office.

WILLIAM H. PECK announces the opening of his own office at 1990 Sunrise Boulevard, Ft. Lauderdale.

GEORGE L. BENNETT announces the opening of his ofifce for the practice of architecture at 3215 North Ocean Blvd., Fort Lauderdale.

JOHN E. MAY announces removal of his office to 500 West Hallandale Beach Blvd., Hallandale.

MATTERS OF HIGH POLICY . . . ? This group, caught by the cameraman at the Robert Meyer Hotel in Jacksonville, include, left to right, Roy M. Pooley, Jr., FAA Treasurer; Robert H. Levison, FAA President; Turpin C. Bannister, FAIA, FAA Director and Dean, College of Architecture and Fine Arts, U/F; and Robert M. Little, FAIA, Director, Florida Region, AIA . . . They and other members of the FAA Board were in Jacksonville for the FAA Board Meeting April 1. Board members were guests of the Jacksonville Chapter at the Chapter's monthly dinner meeting on March 31. During their day-long session April 1, Board members discussed plans for growth of the Florida Region and State Association relative to the educational faciliies and program of the U/F. The Office Practice Seminar to be held in Tampa June 10, was also a subject of Board concern . . . Subject of the particular conference pictured here wasn't recorded. Could have been any one of these subjects — or even the recipe for a brand new cocktail!

Already in The Legislature...

That Stock School Plan Again

The June, 1960, issue of The Florida Architect *carried an item, in* F/A Panorama, *entitled* "Stock School Plans Again Next Year . . .?" *This forecast an economy legislature; and it forecast also the probability of another proposal to use stock school plans. The item concluded,* ". . .Porkchop county representatives aren't the only ones to flirt with this fallacy. Chances seem good that the construction industry will have to re-fight the same old battle next spring on the same old grounds."

On April 17, beginning the Legislature's third week, Sarasota County Representative G. M. Nelson introduced House Bill No. 1039. It proposed the use of stock school plans and was referred for study to two important House committees. One was Education, Public Schools; the other was Appropriations.

The following might help deliberations of both committees. It has been adapted, with grateful appreciation, from the February, 1961, issue of The Northern Illinois Architect, *a publication sponsored and copyrighted by the Northern Illinois Chapter, AIA.*

Proposals for use of stock school plans bob up during periods of financial pinch and when attention is focused on the cost of public education. Yet a national survey disclosed that not one state school system recommended use of stock plans to another state. Fifteen states reported having tried stock plans only to abandon them. Results of a new survey show that only *two* states now use stock plans — and such use is limited to small rural schools.

Why have so many states repudiated the stock plan idea? The obvious reason is that stock plans can't and don't produce either good or economical schools. Not only that. Stock plans are expensive. One state disclosed in a survey report that it has wasted $40,000 on just the preparation of two unusuable stock plans.

(The latest Florida proposal specifies that a number of stock plans shall be prepared for various types of school classifications. On the basis of other states' experience, this would multiply dollar-waste by many times.)

Stock plans won't work, first, because soil conditions, land contours, drainage characteristics, and utility facilities and connections of sites vary greatly. You can't stockpile school sites. So no stock plan can be drawn for foundations.

Second, because every site is different, every design problem is different. Orientation of any building can have great effect on cost — not only initially, but relative to both efficient operation and maintenance. With varying land characteristics even a stock plan would have to be radically changed to assure orientation that would minimize solar heat loads, take maximum advantage of prevailing winds and the protective characteristics of each site.

Engineering and mechanical requirements vary widely on every school job. The number of rooms, their size, location, shape and orientation all have direct bearing on plumbing and drainage facilities, on heating and ventilation systems, on electrical loads, circuit distribution and metering within the building. Further, even the structural details of a stock plan may require change to meet varying requirements—not only of site character, but of a variety of building codes and regulations that often differ widely from one community to another.

So, little but the mere shell of the building is left as a stock plan possibility. The walls of a building seldom cost more than 15 percent of the building budget. But even here the savings are highly questionable.

For example, on identical, flat sites, standardization might seem feasible. But these are rare. If the site is rolling, it will often cost more to bulldoze it flat than to design and build a structure that takes advantage of the land contours. It might well be economically advantageous to design a school in several separate buildings to avoid blasting away a rocky hill or filling a low-level swamp.

Again, what's the *ultimate* layout

(Continued on Page 24)

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Stock School Plans...

(Continued from Page 22)

for the school plant? If community growth is probable, the school must grow accordingly. And this often may require units of varying size and facilities to be built at different times according to a master schedule. Long-range planning like this can save many dollars in bond repayments—but it requires a flexibility of design inherently lacking in a stock plan.

Third, what will be the educational program for which the school is to be built? Teaching methods vary widely; and facilities required are not the same for each method. Even seemingly small differences in educational policies and teaching methods will affect a plant design — not only in general layout but in many detailed aspects of classroom planning and equipment.

Fourth, can any school system *afford* to freeze its school plant design? Present materials, equipment and structural technology may meet today's needs. But improvements in all phases of design and construction are being constantly developed. What might prove good today may well be obsolete and inordinately expensive tomorrow. Educators, competent builders, engineers and architects all agree that such standardization is economically dangerous and impractical.

What do school buildings really cost? Our public education program accounts for from one-half to two-thirds of our community budgets. But the new school building portion of that overall program takes only ten to twenty cents of the local tax dollar. Most of the education budget is spent for teaching and administrative staffs, for educational supplies and equipment, for interest on borrowed funds. The surprising truth is that if we were to get our school buildings for *nothing*, it would still make little difference on our local tax bills.

And what will school buildings cost tomorrow? Is a stock plan any guarantee of economy in an uncertain cost future? The reverse might well be true. There is no way to make certain that materials and products which seem economical today will not become inefficient, technically obsolete and expensive tomorrow. So, the specification for a stock school plan becomes nothing more than a basis for future changes.

There *is* a way to get well-designed, well-built, economical schools suited to the community and geared to its educational requirements. This is through the cooperative actions of a team — informed citizens, able educators, professional architects, and competent builders hired under contract by competitive bidding. Nothing else will do the job.

The Profession's Future...

(Continued from Page 6)

tive to this matter of expanded service the speaker said,

"The Committee has already started a study of re-writing the Mandatory Standards; so that if this is undertaken — and is spelled out clearly enough—it will, at the same time, become an ethical form of practice.

"Looking beyond this, we are thinking of an extension service from AIA headquarters in the form of educational material on such things as financing and land assembly written by experts in these fields."

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

Books

THE ARCHITECTURE OF AMERICA. By John Burchard, FAIA, and Albert Bush-Brown, FAIA. Published by Little, Brown and Company, Boston, with the sponsorship of the American Institute of Architects. 6¼" x 9½". Illustrated from photographs. 595 pages. $15.00

In the foreword to this long-awaited book—originally planned for publication as part of the AIA Centennial Program in 1957—EDMUND R. PURVES, FAIA, expresses his conviction that it will ". . . prove to be *the* major work on American architecture of the past century." Emphatic as it is, his expression might well turn out to be the under-statement of his distinguished professional career. For this book, to any individual with even the least interest in architecture beyond its mere function as shelter, would seem to have everything.

The title page contains a sub-title —"A Social and Cultural History." It is a bit misleading, for it sounds forbidding, slightly dull, somewhat pedantic. The book itself is anything but that. It is scholarly, yes—and from this point of view approaches the stature of a minor miracle in tremendously broad, meticulously documented research. But it is rolling, surging, tempestuous, exciting history. Innumerable passages read like a novel instead of a documentary; and by some fortunate legerdemain of collaborative editing, its two authors have achieved a style that is crisp and crackling—as lusty as the breeze of a March lion and as keenly edged with clear meaning as well-honed steel.

This is a well-organized book. It contains a prologue — a 40-page treatise on "The Nature of Architecture," which as an interpretive exposition of an almost intangible, many-faceted social art, ranks as superior in concept and expression to anything similar this reviewer has ever read. Thereafter, in five parts, the architecture of America passes in review from 1600 to 1960. All parts do not span an equal number of years. The authors have recognized certain cut-off points, certain surges of industrial and social development —here and elsewhere—which mark transition, the starting thread of a new pattern in the nation's architectural tapestry.

Unquestionably this book will stand years-firm as a work of reference. But unlike many such, it has about it the re-readable quality of a well-loved classic. The book has yet another quality of which even its authors might not have been initially aware. This is a two-edged, sly sharpness. For the public this work brings architecture clearly into focus with its times. And in it the architect is pitilessly exposed to the glaring floodlight of his own ego.

THE MASTER BUILDERS. By Peter Blake. Published by Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 7" x 9⅝". Illustrated from sketches and photographs. 399 pages. $6.50.

In one sense this book is a collection of personality profiles—of LE CORBUSIER, of MIES VAN DER ROHE, and of FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT. As such it is written in the best NEW YORKER profile technique—complete with personal background, anecdotes and analytical commentary. But is is much more than just that. In highlighting the careers and contributions of these three creative personalities, the author—himself an architect and a sensitive writer of no mean ability—has produced one of the most literate expositions of modern architecture that has yet been published.

He writes of Corbu as the master of *Form;* of Mies as the master of *Structure,* and of Wright as the master of *Space.* Here is the triangular basis for all architecture. Upon this basis has been built a critical evaluation of each man's work—notably against the background of personality. The threads of analysis and interpretation run continuously through the book, weaving the three componentent profiles into a rich tapestry of architectural appreciation. The book may have been written to clarify modern architecture to those who profess to practice it. Or it may have been directed at the public as an invitation to understanding. In either case it has been written with sensitivity, an admirable craftsmanship and with an obvious enthusiasm

Relative to interest in and contact with government and government agencies, the speaker noted the Institute's continuing activity with such organizations as the Public Housing Administration, the Post Office Department — reportedly now seeking improvement in the architectural services furnished under the Department's present lease arrangement—the Federal Housing Administration and the General Services Administration. He also expressed the AIA staff's increasing interest in governmental affairs at the state level. At present, various chapters and state organizations, each engrossed in local legislative matters, have little knowledge of what others may be doing—or how others may have solved problems similar to their own. He outlined a plan to improve this current situation.

"I propose," he said, "that we sharpen our mechanism at AIA headquarters to set up a fully documented file of state legislative activities in which chapters and state organizations may have been involved. We will need your help. But if we can learn to what extent state architectural organizations have won or lost their legislative battles, we can then furnish information as may be needed to help win other battles."

He noted the AIA's continuing contact with other national associations and specifically mentioned a current controversy with the American Bar Association. The lawyers' committee on the illegal practice of law has now taken the position that architects' contact with contracts between the owner and contractor constitutes the practice of law.

"Extremists of this group," said the Executive Director, "would like to take over, make it impossible for us to print the standard document for that contract, and see to it that a lawyer was retained to draw up the contract and write the general conditions. We will fight this right through the courts; and I don't think the extremists will prevail."

His talk closed with a brief review of the new organization at AIA headquarters. As part of this he mentioned the study now being made on the problem of improved professional education and outlined movements underway on workshops for public relations and design activities.

for its subject matter that some readers may consider just a bit unbridled.

But when the last page has been turned, most readers probably agree that the enthusiasm is justified. Mr. Blake sketches his three Masters as beacon lights in an era that is already coming to an end. In a final small section—a sort of epilogue that the author calls "Prospect"—he sums-up the present influence of these three architectural giants in terms of the possible future. One gathers that he has high hopes but it not at all certain about their realizatiion. And he has chosen to close this really excellent work with this quotation from Le Corbusier—"*What makes our dreams so daring is that they can be realized.*"

CREATIVE COLOR. By Faber Birren. Publshed by Reinhold, New York. 8¼" x 10½". Illustrated in color with drawings, charts and diagrams. 128 pages. $10.00.

This latest work by the nation's leading expert on color has been directed primarily — says the dust jacket—at artists and designers. Thus it is somewhat technical in character. But it will undoubtedly be found useful beyond the reference information on the composition and use of color contained in the first section. For the second section deals with theories of color perception and suggests some of the almost infinitely various effects that can be achieved through an understanding of the practical meaning of perception psychology.

RETIREMENT VILLAGES. Edited by Ernest W. Burgess. Published by the Division of Gerontology of The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich. 6¾" x 10". Illustrated from drawings, charts and photographs. 156 pages. $3.50.

This is a paper-bound report of The Conference on Retirement Villages held last year at Palm Beach under the sponsorship of the American Society of the Aged. The subject is one of increasing importance; and information contained in this book provides basic reference material on such subjects as Location and Design, Operation and Services and Financing. Included are a series of papers and a list of recommendations for additional research.

Low Cost Does Not Always Mean Fair Value

Years ago a Danish architect who had become an American protagonist of LE CORBUSIER's efforts to bring a new architecture out of Nouveau Art made this declaration:

"Architecture is the art of total design. The process of architectural design starts with the first conception of a structure. It does not end until the structure is demolished."

At one quick reading this may seem like a far-fetched attitude toward the architect's overall responsibility — as well as an impractical suggestion that architects should somehow arrange to outlive their buildings. But it is neither. Actually, it is as practical a bit of professional philosophy as we have ever encountered. And, as a guiding principle of architectural practice it is as sound today as when it was first issued as the conclusion of a searching effort to place the architect and his work in proper relationship with his society and times.

Let's touch briefly on only one of the many professional implications contained in that terse, inclusive statement. This is the *value* of a building; and in the sense we use it, the meaning of the word is very broad indeed.

Consider the worth of a building from the community's viewpoint. Does it add to the stature of its neighborhood? Does it provide a needed facility in such a fashion as to minimize — if not actually help solve — such problems as traffic congestion and land-crowding that hinder the orderly progress of urban development?

Does it fully serve the needs of its owner well? Are the various elements of its plan organized for convenience, flexibility and economy? Is its design such as to — like Lever House in New York — provide its owner with a public relations "image" of his interests and activities?

Finally, for our present purpose, is the building a good investment for its owner — not only in terms of initial cost, but in terms of its total cost over the period of its financial lifetime? This, we think, is one of the most important implications in the statement that " . . . *architectural design . . . does not end until the structure is demolished.*" Total cost means the continuing cost of maintenance in addition to the cost of first construction. Maintenance costs can be high or low; and the level of such costs depends largely on the specifications that control the character of the finished building.

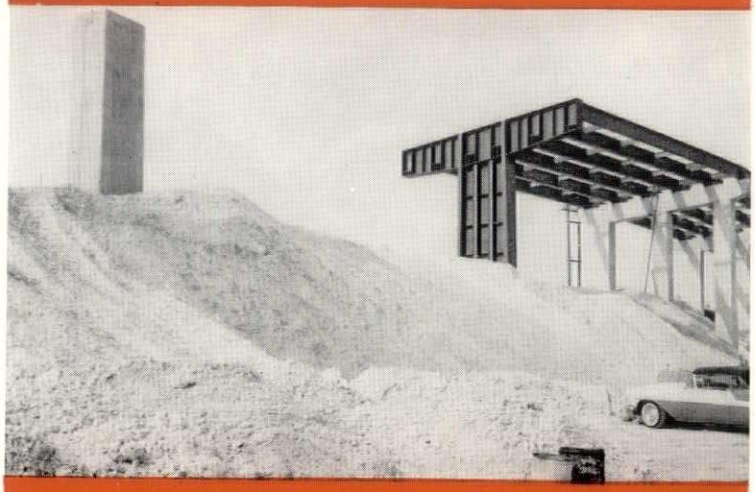
Specifications are an essential part of the architect's "total design" job. The inference is — or certainly should be — obvious. Specifications that call for cheap construction cannot help but produce a building that, over the full period of its financially useful life, will prove expensive. Conversely, specifications that call for quality products for every element of construction and equipment will pay for themselves times over by savings in the progressive costs of maintenance. There's only one qualification to this last statement. It will hold true in direct proportion to the extent an architect permits deviation from the standard of quality his specifications have established. If he holds firm against attempts at substitution and does sufficient product research to make "or equal" clauses unnecessary, he can assure his client a building which will have fair value initially and throughout its useful life.

And this, we submit, is one of the chief justifications for the architect's existence. "Total design" directly involves the professional integrity of the architect. The logical result is "total value". If the architectural profession feels impelled to do some collective soul-searching, let it be done in such terms as these. Total design, total value, total integrity — these apply with equal force to every segment and member of the profession, from the one-man, one-job-at-a-time studio to the 1000-man organization with a billion dollar volume.

If the soul-searching will result in better building values, let's get on with it. For in such better values lies the salvation of the architectural profession and the continuing livelihood of all its members.

—ROGER W. SHERMAN, AIA.

It's Progress-Not A Chinese Wall



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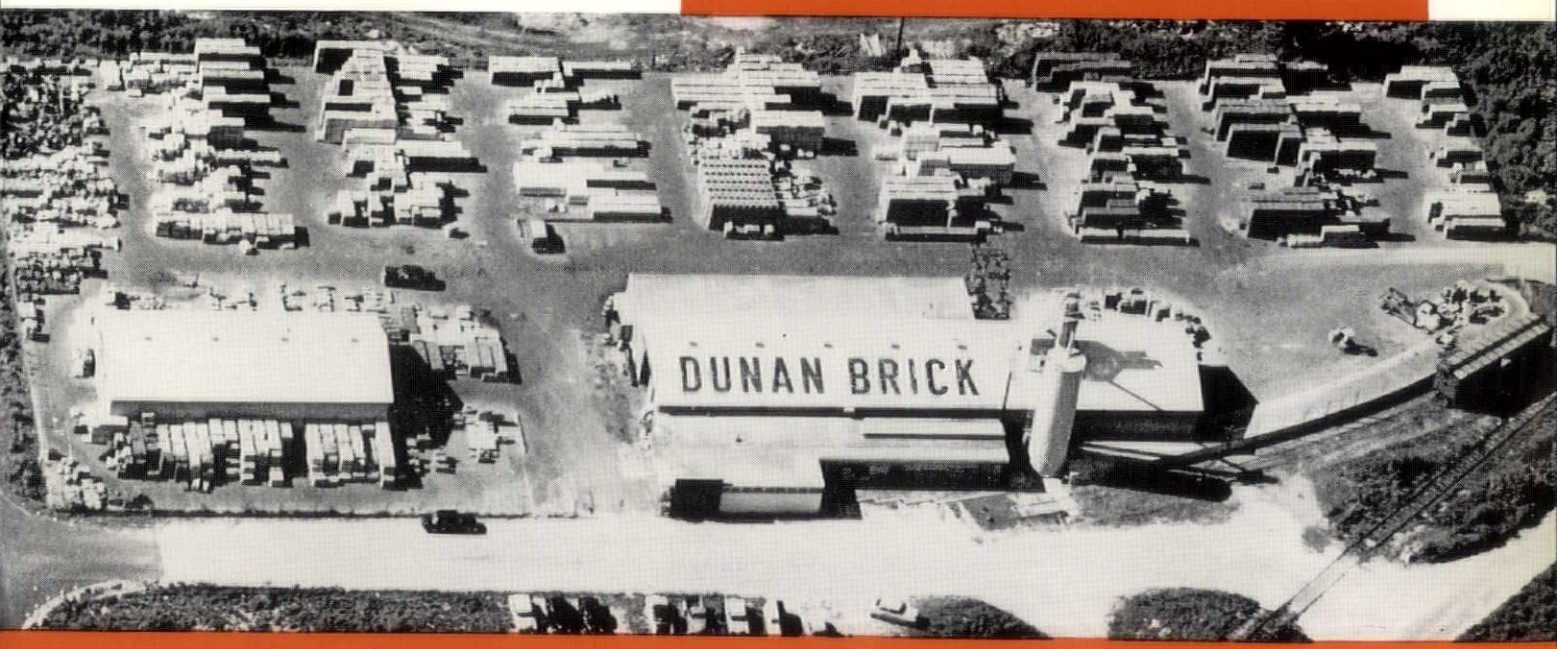
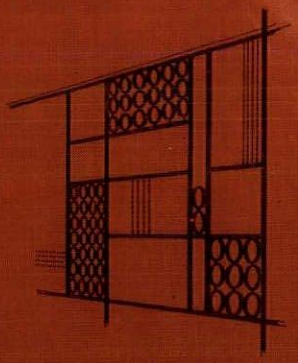
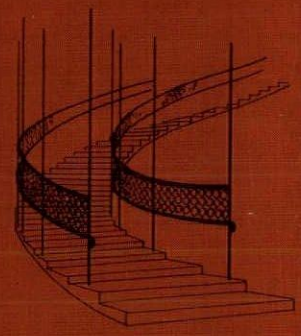
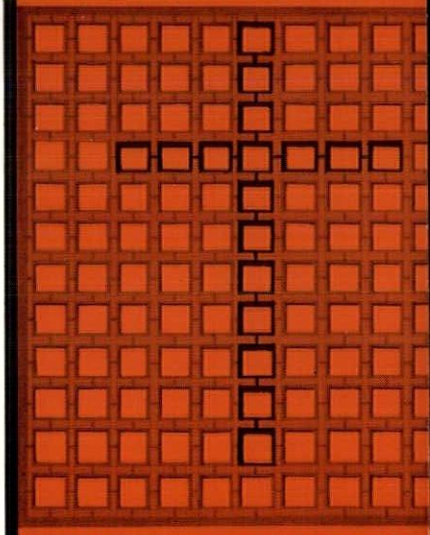


Three Ingredients—Concrete, Imagination, and Know-How







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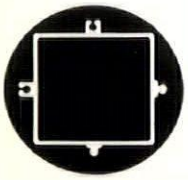

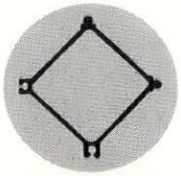

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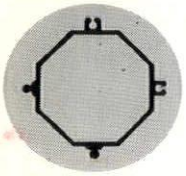

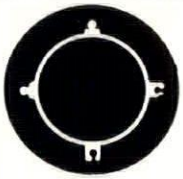

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