

THE
OCTAGON

A Journal of The American Institute of Architects



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THE 1936 CONVENTION IN WILLIAMSBURG?

AT the meeting of the Board of Directors which followed the Milwaukee Convention, Director William G. Nolting, of the Middle Atlantic Division, suggested that the 1936 Convention be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, provided, of course, that arrangements could be made with the Williamsburg authorities.

The proposal met with the unanimous approval of the Directors and a special Committee on Convention Program was appointed, with Mr. Nolting as Chairman.

A preliminary investigation was made in Williamsburg, on October 22 and 23, by Chairman Nolting, Secretary Charles T. Ingham, and Messrs. Merrill C. Lee and Charles J. Calrow. These representatives of the Convention Committee received cordial hospitality and encouraging support from Mr. Kenneth Chorley, President of the Williamsburg Restoration Corporation, and William G. Perry, A. I. A., of Perry, Shaw and Hepburn, Architects of the Restoration, and also a member of the Committee.

Attention was given to certain major items, such as hotel accommodations—perhaps in Old Point Comfort; arrangements for the Convention sessions in Williamsburg and in Old Point Comfort; the inspection of the restoration in Williamsburg; and the possibility of visits to some of the early plantations on the James River.

It is understood that the Convention Committee, on the basis of a report by those named above, will recommend to the Board of Directors of the Institute, at its meeting in Washington on December 3, that the Sixty-eighth Convention be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, during the first week of May.

It is hoped that the Board will find it possible to select Williamsburg as the place of the next Convention, and to arrange an appropriate program.

Further information on this matter will be sent to the members in that number of THE OCTAGON to be issued after the December meeting of the Board.

STEPHEN F. VOORHEES,
President.

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Architectural Competitions

THE Chairman of the Institute's Committee on Competitions states that the document printed below was prepared by the Committee for dissemination among members of the Institute Committee and of all Chapter Sub-committees.

But the matters herein contained are, or should be, of interest to all members of the Institute. Therefore, it has been decided to publish this document in THE OCTAGON with the request that it be read, and then saved for reference purposes.

CHARLES T. INGHAM,
Secretary.

A Statement of the Duties, Precedents and Rulings of the Committee On Competitions, A. I. A

ISSUED BY THE INSTITUTE COMMITTEE ON COMPETITIONS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 1935.

Duties of the Committee on Competitions.

The only reference in the By-laws to the Committee on Competitions is contained in Chapter 12, Article 1, which merely lists the Committee on Competitions as a Standing Committee, there being no mention of its duties or make-up.

In A. I. A. Document 213, entitled "Architectural Competitions—A Circular of Information," paragraph 13 reads as follows:

In order that the advice of the Institute may be given to those who seek it and that its approval may be given to programs in consonance with its principles, the Institute maintains the following committees:

(a) The Standing Committee on Competitions, representing the Institute in its relation to competitions generally. This Committee advises the Sub-Committees and directs their work and they report to it.

(b) A Sub-Committee for the territory of each Chapter, representing the Institute in its relation to competitions for work to be erected within such territory.

The president of the Chapter is ex-officio chairman of the Sub-Committee, the other members of which he appoints. The Sub-Committees derive their authority from the Institute and not from the Chapters.

An appeal from the decision of a Sub-Committee may be made to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee may approve, modify or annul the decision of a Sub-Committee.

The second paragraph of item (b) above quoted, has been changed to read as follows:

The President of the Chapter is ex-officio chairman of the Sub-Committee, one member of which he appoints. The third member is appointed by the President of the Institute to serve until his successor is appointed. The Sub-Committees derive their authority from the Institute and not from the Chapter.

Duties as Interpreted by the Board of Directors and by The Committee itself.

Composition of Institute Committee.

As at present composed the Committee consists of twelve members, one from each of the nine Regional Divisions, and three additional members chosen because of their special experience or for geographical location. It is possible that this composition of the Committee may be changed by the Board of Directors from time to time.

Architectural Competitions—Continued.

The Committee is appointed by the President of the Institute, who also appoints, from the membership of the Committee, a chairman and a vice-chairman.

Duties of the Chairman.

The Chairman handles all official communications.

He prepares a progress report to the Board of Directors in the fall and a yearly report prior to the Annual Convention of the Institute, these reports containing a brief account of the activities of the Committee, approval or disapproval of competitions submitted to it, rulings made or precedents established, and recommendations to the Board of Directors.

All important questions of policy, rulings and precedents, or proposed recommendations to the Board of Directors are transmitted by letter to the entire committee for their concurrence or advice prior to a final decision.

All important communications from the Institute sent directly to the Chairman are forwarded to members of the Committee.

All routine work, approval of competition programs submitted to it, etc., are handled through a Sub-Committee.

Sub-Committee.

The Chairman appoints a Sub-Committee composed of Committee members, who are geographically available for meetings, to consult with him as to the approval or disapproval of programs submitted to the Committee, and on such other matters that require prompt action.

Note: Delegation of authority to this Sub-Committee intends no reflection upon the other members of the Committee, but owing to its wide geographical make-up, it is manifestly impossible to secure prompt action by letter, and it is equally impossible to forward competition programs or requests for information to all members of the Committee. It is to provide for the personnel of this Sub-Committee that the Board of Directors are accustomed to appoint several members from one Division. The Sub-Committee may seek advice from local competent authorities.

Duties of the Vice-Chairman.

In the absence of the Chairman the above duties will be performed by the Vice-Chairman.

Make-up of Chapter Sub-Committees.

The make-up of the Chapter Sub-Committees is described in A. I. A. Document 213, paragraph 13, with a revision of item (b) as hereinbefore noted.

Note: This revision, which was approved by the Board of Directors in 1934, was for the purpose of insuring continuity in the Sub-Committees. Prior to this revision the entire Sub-Committee was appointed by the President of the Chapter, and was subject to change when a new President was elected, which usually occurs every two years. Thus it generally happened that the personnel of the Sub-Committee was continually changing, and more often than not there would be no member of this Committee with any previous experience in competitions or knowledge of competition procedure. Under the revision, the President of the Chapter retains his ex-officio chairmanship and appoints one member, the third member being appointed by the President of the Institute from the membership of the Chapter. This third member is to serve until his successor is appointed, which liberally interpreted means that he will be a fixture on the Committee as long as he wants to, and is able to hold the position. In reality, he would be the most important member of the Committee, and it would be his duty to familiarize himself thoroughly with competition procedure, and constantly keep in touch with any revisions or rulings that might be made by the Institute Committee.

Duties of the Sub-Committee.

Programs of all competitions proposed to be held for work in the territory under the jurisdiction of the Chapter must be submitted to the Sub-Committee on Competitions of the Chapter, and the Sub-Committee has power to approve or disapprove these programs and to demand changes in the program to meet the requirements of the Code, but the Sub-Committee can only approve programs which are in exact accord with the Circular of Information. Any variations from the Code proposed or necessary can only be approved by the Institute Committee. The Sub-Committee can, if they so desire for any valid reason, refer competition programs to the Institute Committee for action, or they can refer any points at issue with the professional advisor to the Institute Committee, and if necessary can obtain the assistance of the Institute Committee in their dealings with the professional advisor or with the owner. The Institute Committee will not take any action unless such action is requested

by the Sub-Committee through its chairman or through a majority of members of the Committee, but any member of any Chapter is at liberty to bring to the attention of the Institute Committee any protest in regard to any decision of the Sub-Committee, provided that he has first taken up the matter, without success, with the Sub-Committee itself.

It is the duty of the Sub-Committee to report to the Institute Committee and to The Octagon the approval or disapproval of any competition program submitted to it. This duty, though clearly mentioned in item (a) of paragraph 3, Document 213, is seldom considered. The Sub-Committee should realize that The Octagon and the Institute Committee receive very frequent inquiries as to whether certain competitions throughout the country have been approved or not, and the lack of such information is apt to cause criticism of the Institute's methods.

Limitations of Committees' Actions.

Neither the Institute Committee nor the Sub-Committees can advise officially as to the necessity of holding a competition, nor as to the appointment of a professional advisor or members of the jury, nor in general as to any action taken by the owner prior to the production of a program, but it may advise the professional advisor as to the details of his program when so requested, and discuss with him the preliminary draft of the program, which must be submitted prior to its submission to the owner.

The Executive Committee, in 1933, concurred in the position of the Committee on Competitions that "the Institute has no jurisdiction of a competition held in a foreign country." This refers only to the participation of Institute members in such a competition.

Preliminary Submission of Program.

A. I. A. Document 238, entitled "The Duties of the Professional Advisor and of the Jury," as amended April, 1932, article 2, paragraph 2, reads as follows:

Approval of Program Procedure. The program must have the approval of the Institute,—see paragraph 14, A. I. A. Document 213, entitled "Architectural Competitions—A Circular of Information." A preliminary draft of the program *must* be submitted for its comment to the Sub-Committee on Competitions of the Chapter in whose district the competition is held, prior to submission to the owner. After securing the owner's approval the program must be resubmitted to the Sub-Committee for its final approval, which approval should be printed as part of the program. No Institute member can participate in any competition not so approved.

The Digest of the Competition Code, A. I. A. Document 263, published in 1934, paragraph 5, reads:

"A preliminary draft of the program *should* be submitted," etc. This discrepancy was called to the attention of the Board of Directors and it was decided that the word "*must*" should be used instead of "*should*" in both documents.

NOTE: This is a very important and far-reaching change in competition procedure, its object being to simplify the approval of competitions by obliging the professional advisor to make a preliminary submission, of the important features of the program at least, to the Sub-Committee prior to the submission of the program to the owner, thus avoiding a condition which often exists in which the owner is inclined to resent an important change in a program that he has already approved.

Competitions in Two Stages.

In A. I. A. Document 213, entitled "Architectural Competitions—A Circular of Information," the last two paragraphs on page 3 state that a competition may be held in two stages, but that "this method is apt to prove cumbersome and expensive, and it differs but little from the second type of limited competition."

These two paragraphs amount practically to a discouragement of two-stage competitions. The Committee has held, and the Executive Committee has agreed, that under certain circumstances two-stage competitions are desirable in an open competition, this opinion being based on the fact that if an important open public competition is held in one stage, there probably will be a very large number of submissions, with a very large number of carefully finished drawings and a consequent excessive expenditure of time and money on the part of the competing architects; and it also puts a great burden upon the jury. In such cases it is preferable to hold a two-stage competition, limiting the submissions in the first stage to a few simply presented drawings; and as a result of this preliminary competition, a limited number of contestants may be selected for the final competition, in which the submissions would consist of a larger number and more complete sets of drawings. In the judgment of the first competition it is advisable to give some consideration to the previous experience of the competitors. This would lead to a disclosure of identity to the professional advisor at least, but would be preferable to the inclusion in the final competition of competitors who are not qualified by experience to handle a complicated proposition. Another method might be the consideration of qualifications of applicants by the professional advisor before

Architectural Competitions—Continued.

approval of applications to compete. In the former case, on account of the disclosure of anonymity, it would be advisable to have two different juries for the two stages. In the latter case one jury would be sufficient.

Competition Documents.**The Duties of the Professional Advisor and of the Jury—Institute Document No. 238.**

There are relatively few practicing architects qualified by experience to accept the position of professional advisor, but unfortunately the majority accept with alacrity such a position, thinking little, or not at all, of the great responsibilities attached to it, and the experience necessary to write a really good program. Also unfortunately, as a rule they fail to realize this lack of experience and make no effort at all to consult with the Competition Committees or with those who have the requisite experience. Nine-tenths of the troubles that come before the Committee are caused by well-meaning but absolutely inexperienced professional advisors, and there are undoubtedly hundreds of cases that do not come to the notice of the Committee on Competitions, in which this inexperience on the part of the professional advisor has caused considerable misunderstanding as to the position of the Institute, and has caused prejudice against the Institute in the eyes of the client.

It was to meet this condition that the Committee on Competitions in 1928 decided to formulate a series of instructions, or advice, to the professional advisor. This document took over a year to prepare, and in its preparation the Committee had the co-operation of various distinguished architects who were thoroughly familiar with competition practice. This document was presented to and approved by the Board of Directors of the Institute and published in 1930 as Institute Document No. 238. With it was incorporated some advice as to the duties of the jury.

There is nothing in this document that is contrary to the Competition Code or to the Institute's form of contract, but it naturally goes more into detail than either of the above documents and is, the Committee hopes, of distinct value to the inexperienced professional advisor, and can be read with profit by those having had considerable experience in the past. The Committee feels that all the important points have been covered, but it may well be that it can be

improved or added to from time to time. Announcements concerning it have been made in THE OCTAGON, but it is questionable whether all professional advisors are familiar with it, and it should be the duty of all Committee members to see to it that it is in the hands of the professional advisors of all competitions that come to their knowledge.

The Digest of the Competition Code—Institute Document No. 263.

The original Code was formulated and published by the Institute in 1910 to correct the evils attendant upon the then universal practice of submission of voluntary and often unsolicited free sketches for prospective work by several architects at the same time. In a few cases competitions by invitation were held in which a more or less complete program was prepared, and in some cases the advice of impartial and experienced architects was asked. But the great bulk of submissions was made without such safeguards, and without anonymity or similarity of presentation, and in many cases it was afterwards found that the so-called competition, or submission of sketches, was a mere farce and that the work had already been privately awarded.

At first the Institute's Code made obligatory a fee of six per cent, and this provision was very valuable, for it, more than anything else, insured the general nation-wide adoption of the six per cent rate instead of five per cent, which was prevalent in many parts of the country. There was, however, objection to this rate, because of the difficulty of obtaining it in smaller work, such as schools, and after much discussion in convention, this obligatory rate was omitted from the Code.

The Code was revised in form from time to time and was finally published as Institute Document No. 213, entitled "Architectural Competitions—A Circular of Information," and there was also published Institute Document No. 219, entitled "A Standard Form of Competition Program."

There had been considerable criticism for some time about the length of the Circular of Information. Professional advisors, and others interested in promoting competitions, found that the client, or the building commission, was appalled by the formidable appearance of this document, and that there was, in some cases, difficulty in explaining it in a simple manner, this being due probably to the inexperience of the professional advisors or proposers of competitions; and it seemed advisable to the Institute Committee to

prepare a simplified form or Digest of the Code which could be printed on one page, and yet contain in a few words all the essentials of the larger document. Accordingly, in 1931, such a simplified form was prepared by the Committee in consultation with architects of prominence who were thoroughly familiar with competition work. This was incorporated in the Committee's report of February 1932, and was approved, with slight modifications, by the Executive Committee in November, 1932. It was printed in its present form as Institute Document No. 263 in 1934. This document should be in the hands of all members of the Institute Committee and of the various Sub-Committees. It should be noted that this document does not supersede the other larger documents and contains nothing that is not in them.

RULINGS

Ruling in the Case of Competitions Proposed to be Held Under the Auspices of Manufacturers or Material Dealers.

Such competitions customarily do not contemplate the erection of any structure according to the accepted submissions, and generally are of interest only to draftsmen for the sake of the prizes offered and the experience gained. In the past many of these competitions have had the approval of various Sub-Committees, the approval being based on a previous ruling that competitions of an educational nature are not subject to all the requirements of the Competition Code, the term "educational" being stretched to, or beyond, its limits. In a case in the West the approval of such a competition was referred to the Committee on Competitions, and after consultation with the President of the Institute and various members of the Committee, the following ruling was made, namely, that it is not the policy of the Institute to grant its official approval to competitions of this type, but the Institute does not oppose participancy of Institute members in such a competition.

The above is an extract from the report of the Competitions Committee, dated November 13, 1931.

The Committee calls attention to the ruling of this Committee in consultation with the President of the Institute "that it was not the policy of the Institute to grant its official approval to competitions of this type, but the Institute does not oppose participation of Institute members in such a competition."

The Committee points out that such competitions customarily do not contemplate the erection of a structure and generally are of interest only to draftsmen.

The above is an extract from the Report of the Board of Directors to the Sixty-Fifth Annual Convention, as printed in *THE OCTAGON* of May, 1932.

Ruling in the Case of "Tandem" Competitions.

In April, 1935, the Executive Committee of the Institute submitted to the Competitions Committee the following hypothetical question:

Is it, or is it not, a competition when two, three, or more architects submit drawings for the same project at the invitation of an owner or building committee, with the understanding that no one of the architects shall present or work upon his documents until the prospective client has received and paid for the work of his immediate predecessor, performing like duties?

The reply of the Committee on Competitions was:

There can be no question that this is a palpable attempt to evade the requirements of the Competition Code for reasons which may or may not be of particular importance to the owner.

The Board took action as follows:

Resolved, That in the opinion of the Board of Directors the form of so-called tandem competitions as reported by the Committee on Competitions in a letter of April 8, 1935, violates the principles of the competition code of the Institute, and therefore is not approved.

PRECEDENTS

ATTEMPTS TO USE THE PRESTIGE OF THE INSTITUTE IN FURTHERING VISIONARY COMPETITIONS OFTEN CONCEIVED FOR THE PURPOSE OF RAISING FUNDS.

Proposed Competition for Atlantic University:

"On August 13, 1931, someone, who appears to be a promotor, called on the Chairman and explained that the Atlantic University, which is a small university now in existence at Atlantic Beach, Virginia, near Old Point Comfort, was planning to hold a nation-wide competition for a complete university layout, and it was hoped that ten million dollars could be raised. The object of the visit was to ask advice on the best method of holding such a competition, which was given. A month or so later one of the editors of a local architectural magazine telephoned the Chairman and read a notice which was to be run in the next issue to the effect that this competition was to be held and that the committee in charge was working in collaboration with the Institute Committee on Competitions, or words to that effect. The editor was instructed that this notice could not be published as written and that while the Institute Committee on Competitions was very glad to give what information and advice they could to any project, it would seem from the article that the Committee had a special

Architectural Competitions—Continued.

interest in this competition and was collaborating with the committee, whereas this Committee, or any Sub-Committee, has no official connection with any competition other than its approval or disapproval after the program is written. It seems that this was another case in which an endeavor was made to use the prestige of the Institute to further a rather vague competition."

Proposed Competition for the George Washington Free Library:

"On August 13, 1931, a letter was received by the Chairman asking for a conference with the writer and with the professional advisor. At this conference, the Chairman was informed that the proposed building would cost ten million dollars, which was to be obtained, they

hoped, from the Board of Aldermen of the City of New York. The matter was referred to the President, ex-officio Chairman of the New York Chapter Sub-Committee on Competitions. This is evidently one of many competitions which are proposed throughout the country on the vaguest foundation and is only included here because it seems that the promulgators of these competitions feel that their case will be made more important by being able to announce that the competition will be held in accordance with the Code and under the direction, or by sanction of, The American Institute of Architects."

The above are extracts from the report of the Competitions Committee, dated November 13, 1931.

NOTE: Nothing further has been heard from these competitions.

A Plea for Cooperation

ADDRESS TO THE CHICAGO CHAPTER—BY EMERY STANFORD HALL

THE success of any organization such as this depends on the mobilization of its collective ability into coordinated service. Service accomplishes results when it is intelligently cooperative. This world is a big place and the persistent soloist is generally lost in the shuffle.

That president is a failure who attempts to do everything himself. It is the job of the Society executive to organize his constituency into specialized groups—call them commissions, committees or what not. The effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of the several committees constitutes the barometer of society achievement.

As your President, it is my job to seek out the talents of the men who make up this organization and to exercise good judgment in grouping them according to their several abilities under selected leadership. In order to discharge this function intelligently, it is important that I know the preparation and experience of the individuals that make up this Chapter. With this in mind, I asked each member of the Chapter to fill out a card giving his case history. Some have responded in a fine way, while others in a spirit of prudish modesty, have failed to reply to our repeated requests. To such as have not replied, may I be pardoned for saying there is such a thing as being arrogantly proud of one's humble modesty.

Perhaps you do not understand that the President of your Chapter is frequently called

upon to make recommendations concerning the qualifications of architects for various Government positions. To discharge this duty, if he is conscientious, he must know something about the technical training and record qualifications of those whom he recommends. For illustration, within the last two weeks I have been required to submit information concerning fifty architects, most of whom are members of this Chapter. For those who had returned the cards, the information was readily available so that a reply could be made within twenty-four hours of the receipt of the request.

Aside from the need incident to the peculiarities of the times, your President needs this information to assist him in Committee assignments, and every Chapter of the Institute ought to have in its files for the benefit of future historians, adequate record of "Who is Who" in the Chapter—a record which should contain facts which only the individual members can supply. The flowers and the effulgence can be left to the histrionic talents of our Ponds, our Woltersdorfs, and our Holsmans.

All architects are crying for public understanding. Some are even blaming the officers of the Institute and the local chapter for not getting them jobs. To such, may I be forgiven for suggesting that the alibi be cut out and that they get to work and do their part? The American Institute of Architects cannot serve you effectively in high places on its present revenue of either

money or contributed effort. Its membership dues have been temporarily reduced to less than half of what they formerly were—yet fewer men are paying these reduced dues than formerly paid the higher dues. Every organization has to have a certain amount of overhead expense before it can function effectively. The members of the Institute are now contributing only about enough service on committee work and in money to barely keep the wheels turning, with nothing left for a forward aggressive program. Locally, the members of the Chicago Chapter are doing but little more.

If every member of this Chapter would attend at least one meeting of the Chapter during the year; write one short carefully worded, appealing news article on some architectural subject; be ready and willing to vicariously seek out and render one community service where his peculiar training would add special value to that service; be always competent, fair, and impartial in his decisions; and diligent in the work entrusted to him, the public could not be prevented from employing architects in connection with their building projects.

We say that the public serves itself best when it employs an architect to advise it on its building problems. We are sure that art in architecture pays. We know that the building industry needs a talented, trained and fair umpire. We think we

are "he" but are we? Let each man ask himself:

Do I have peculiar natural talents for my job?

Am I sufficiently trained and experienced?

Is equity the controlling factor in the administration of my job?

Do I know how to go after and get the controlling facts?

Do I have the patience, integrity and skill to assemble to logical conclusion?

In other words, are we always good architects?

Is an architect's certificate as to the cost of a building ample guarantee on which to predicate a bond issue?

Does such a certificate amply protect the public as to value?

I am bold enough to make the assertion that we must keep architectural practice on the highest plane of competency and integrity; that every architect must realize his personal inescapable responsibility to contribute to the support of the organizations in his profession—both financially and by personal service on committees; and that then and only then is he entitled to demand of those organizations that they carry on an effective well-defined program of public education.

As we undertake our job for the coming year, I trust that I may safely call upon any one of you to do your bit—in committee work or otherwise—to the end that this Chapter may perform its proper function to you and to the community.

Increase In P.W.A. Allocations

IT is apparent that the many communications addressed to President Roosevelt protesting the Administration's rejections of worthwhile P.W.A. projects, (one of the most vigorous of which was Secretary Ingham's telegram addressed to the President, quoted in full in the September OCTAGON), have caused the P.W.A. to increase the effectual apportionment from \$127,000,000 to \$450,000,000.

This apportionment, while falling far short of being sufficient to insure the increase in employment of building trades labor as promised by the Administration, is gratifying, in that it indicates that the ear of the President has been reached.

A statement by the Construction League of the United States, of which the Institute is a constituent member, to the Useful Employment Committee, Member Associations and State Groups, is as follows:

You will remember that on September 12 at a conference in Hyde Park the President apportioned \$200,000,000 from

the Work Relief Fund to the Public Works Administration. This action was taken after a series of vigorous protests to the White House against the conduct of the program; a great part of these protests was due to your excellent efforts; prior to that time only \$127,000,000 of PWA projects had been approved.

The \$200,000,000 allotted on September 12 was to be used for grants representing 45% of the cost of the projects. Accordingly, it would support \$450,000,000 of various types of construction. However, the President insisted that the program average not more than \$850 per man per year on the federal grant portion. We were very fearful at the time that such a limitation would throttle building projects because of their relatively high cost of construction per man per year. However, the Public Works Administration has done an excellent job in selecting projects, with the result that a well rounded program will be conducted.

The League staff has taken all press releases on state programs issued by PWA and analyzed them to determine the amounts of each type of project nationally and in the individual states.

Copies of this analysis may be had from the League, The Press Building, Washington, D. C.

Public Information

ONE of the most difficult problems confronting the architectural profession is that of making the public conscious of the existence and functions of the architect.

Methods of accomplishing this extremely difficult task have been the subjects of major discussions among both national and chapter officers of the Institute.

The success of an undertaking of such wide scope and importance lies in the complete cooperation of every member of the Institute. As has often been said "the trouble with architecture today is the architect himself." It is incumbent on each member to give unstintingly of his talents and his time in cooperating fully with his chapter committee on public information to the end that the public at large will eventually be awakened to the benefits to be derived from competent architectural service.

F. Charles Starr, Chairman of the Public Information Committee of the Chicago Chapter, has prepared a most comprehensive report which was presented to the Chicago Chapter on September 10. THE OCTAGON presents that report, in part, as follows:

Function.

The function of a Public Information Committee is to publicize the architect, i.e. to educate the public to the value of qualified architectural service. The Chicago Chapter has long had a Public Information Committee, for many years having done excellent service for the local profession. Recently the committee has not been so active. During the years of the depression the incentive of hope of accomplishment was largely lacking due to the utter absence of activity in the entire construction industry.

Outlook.

Now the scene is changing. Economists and hard headed business observers have assembled ample facts to show that there is now ample reason for hope to displace despair—and confidence, lack of faith.

For two months and more that impersonal business barometer, the stock-market, has experienced a steady, healthy rise. Commercial banks with vaults bursting with ready funds are actually seeking construction loans, so that with no new construction of consequence for several years the stage now seems to be properly set for a very definite and intensive period of construction activity.

Present Activity.

In fact more building construction is now actually going on than many realize. As is to be expected after a depression, smaller work starts first. A study just completed by the Dodge Statistical Service of the building records in thirty-seven states east of the Mississippi, shows that there was just *double* the number of private houses constructed in the first seven months of this year as in the corresponding period last year; and the value of such construction was 90% increased. People are becoming home-building conscious!

Last Sunday's Tribune listed some hundred local industrial building projects either under way or contemplated for the immediate future. Hardly a day passes but what you hear of some such encouraging news.

Psychological Time.

These facts are not cited merely to try to paint a rosy picture. Of course we have a long way to go yet before normal conditions will be fully restored to our profession. They are mentioned however to show that now is the psychological

time for architects to take an active, aggressive position. Now is the time for concerted, effective effort to impress on the public the propriety and sanity of their securing architectural advice and counsel on all their building problems, be they large or small.

Group Activity.

The old slogan "in union there is strength" can never be more applicable than to the architectural profession. Singly, one architect may accomplish little in influencing the public mind, but as a group effective results may be attained.

Milwaukee Convention.

The American Institute of Architects as a national body has been doing some serious thinking along this line recently. At the May Convention in Milwaukee this was a major subject of discussion. Since the Resolution passed at the Convention regarding the Public Relations Program states the case so well I wish to quote it.

Resolutions Re A Public Relations Program.

That it be the sense of the meeting that the Convention recognizes the importance of a program of publicity of the architectural functions in the construction industry, and that the following resolution offered on the floor of the Convention, be referred to the Board of Directors for further consideration:

Whereas, Widespread education of the public regarding the value, type, extent and costs of architectural services is the most effective means of creating a demand for the services of architects on every type of building; and

Whereas, The most generally effective method of educating the public along these lines implies the vigorous conduct of a nationally planned public relations program sponsored by the architectural profession itself, supported by individuals and directed by a professional committee of trustees; and

Whereas, There is ample evidence to support the belief that the time is now ripe for instituting such a public relations program; and

Whereas, The results of such a program would benefit every architect in the country, regardless of his professional affiliations or the type of his architectural practice; therefore, be it

Resolved, That The American Institute of Architects, through its delegates to the 67th annual convention, here assembled, approves in principle the proposal that a nationally planned public relations program be sponsored by and conducted for all the architects in these United States, regardless of professional affiliations of individuals; and be it further

Resolved, That this convention approves in principle also the proposal that such a program be directed by a committee of trustees, selected from the architectural profession, but that in all technical details the program be actively conducted by a professional public relations counsel, chosen specifically for his experience, ability and resourcefulness in public relations work.

National Committee.

As you all know the Institute has a national Public Information Committee—also that this committee employs a paid Publicist, Mr. James T. Grady of New York. While this committee naturally deals with the problem of public relations primarily from a national angle it carries on most of its activity thru the Chapter Committees. It is now studying the possibility of making its work more effective.

Committee Plan.

In the meantime your Chapter Committee on Public Information has instituted its own plan of activity on which it invites your suggestions and support. We believe now is the time for some serious work by the Chapter. We have already had two general organization meetings and some fifteen luncheon meetings of smaller groups.

Objectives.

We have set ourselves the five following objectives:

- (1) To distribute the work so no one will be imposed upon.
- (2) To publicize the architectural profession, by informing the public, and keeping it informed of the proper sphere and practical worth to them of qualified architectural counsel.
- (3) To stress service to the public.
- (4) To keep all public contacts on a high professional plane, and
- (5) Having determined on a program, to give it a fair trial.

Organization.

In order to better carry out our work we have formed the following subcommittees:

Cooperation:

Contact with other architectural and professional societies, banks, trade associations etc.

After the reading of this report, pledges were distributed among the members, for indication to what extent they would lend their talents in the movement to publicize the architect: in answering architectural questions in the "Questions and Answers" column of the press; writing articles on selected subjects suitable for publication in newspapers and periodicals; or talking on architectural subjects before schools, clubs, or on the radio.

The vigor and scope of this public information program developed by the Public Information Committee of the Chicago Chapter are commended to each and every one of the other 67 Chapters of the A. I. A.

Press:

Editorial:

Special Articles
Contact with other Committee Chairmen
Washington Correspondent
Current Architectural Magazines

Outlets:

Chicago Papers—"News"
"Tribune"
"Herald Examiner" and "American"
"Real Estate"

THE OCTAGON
I. S. A. "Bulletin"

Advertising
Small House Practice
Radio Talks

Contacts to Date.

As to just what has been accomplished to date by our committee and our specific aspirations, I am going to ask each subcommittee chairman to discuss his particular activity.

Regarding cooperation I have had considerable correspondence with the Washington office of the Institute, Mr. Beers, chairman, National Committee on Public Information, and the Publicist, Mr. Grady, and have contacted several professional societies and groups.

* * * *

"Gentlemen you have heard of the program of your Public Information Committee. Each subcommittee chairman has discussed his particular activity, but permit me to emphasize that no one knows better than ourselves that the program will die aborning if every architect does not lend a hand. You would not ask the committee to do all the work! We are working for the good of the group. And frankly we don't intend to do it all!

"We are willing to plan and lead. Each of you will be called on to assist in some manner—answer some question in the 'Questions and Answers' Column; write a few short articles on some familiar architectural subject; or give a talk. When asked it should be considered a compliment, for the best man will be invited. But don't wait to be asked—Volunteer! The result will be up to you.

"As an indication of your pleasure in the matter please sign the ballot distributed showing your preference and any suggestion."

Without Benefit of Architect

AN interesting case, involving a nation-wide organization, which at one time combined the functions of both architect and contractor, has recently come to the notice of the Institute. We are informed the case is considered of sufficient importance to be published by at least one law publishing company which takes cognizance of only those cases which it considers tend to establish principles of law.

The Institute is of the opinion that a summary of the case will be of value to architects whose clients may be considering the services of any organization functioning as both architect and contractor.

The case referred to is one in which the owner, Charles C. Dobie, of Alexandria, Virginia, in September, 1931, contracted with Sears, Roebuck & Co., for the erection of a brick bungalow on his lot, valued at \$1,800.00, the contract price of the house being \$11,050.00. By the terms of the contract, the owner gave the organization a trust (known as a mortgage in other jurisdictions) on his lot and a down payment of \$1,450.00, and the organization accepted the owner's note for the unpaid balance of \$9,600.00. It was expected that the house would be ready for occupancy by January 15, 1932, but being dissatisfied with the workmanship and materials, the owner refused to accept the house and thereupon filed suit against the organization. The following are the faults alleged in the bill of complaint:

1. Face bricks chipped.
2. Two colors of mortar used in exterior brick courses instead of one-fourth white stainless cement joint.
3. Brick on edge of sills unsightly on account of chipping uneven lower edges.
4. Stairway to basement objectionable on account of lack of head space.
5. Mantle in living room objectionable on account of design and quality.
6. Arch facings irregular.
7. Plaster on arches cracked and uneven.
8. Open spaces in side of dormer window.
9. Front step buttresses not in accordance with plans and not as wide as provided for by the said plans.
10. B-X cable used throughout basement instead of black pipe.
11. Basement window frames insecurely placed.
12. Basement door frame is not properly attached to jams. Laths tacked on side of door frame.
13. Basement door is narrower than provided for by contract.
14. Kitchen cabinets not in accordance with contract.

15. Doors and drawers thereof set in place by careless workmanship.
16. Dome light fixture omitted from porch.
17. "La Tosca" design hardware not used as provided for by contract.
18. Plumbing fixtures in bathroom do not operate satisfactorily.
19. Porch flooring is not marked in squares as provided for by contract.
20. Mortar courses in front steps do not match in color with mortar courses of the house.
21. Electrical fixtures and switches carelessly installed.
22. Basement ceiling unfinished at junction of sidewalls.
23. Roof slate insecurely laid, chipped and broken in places.
24. Basement wet at all times.
25. Plaster angles not true.
26. Weather strips nailed to outside of window near the bottom thereof.
27. Telephone cabinet not in accordance with plans.
28. Pipe rails around areaway to basement should be two-inch galvanized pipe.
29. Concrete coping on porch chipped.
30. Back hall door sprung.
31. Concrete walks cracked.
32. Drain in basement floor contrary to D. C. Building Code.

After the taking of voluminous testimony, the trial court (being a court of Equity) inspected the premises and ordered the following to be done by the contractor:

First: To make the cellar dry by such treatment as may be necessary.

Second: To replace the brick work with $\frac{3}{4}$ inch white stainless cement joints, the color of cement to be uniform throughout building, and to cause the sills to be properly and evenly laid.

Third: To properly correct the carpenter work around the dormer windows.

Fourth: To encase the B-X cable in the cellar and place it under the ceiling.

Fifth: To properly install the door frame in the cellar or basement.

Sixth: To cause the plaster work around the openings for electric light fixtures to be properly done or repaired.

Seventh: To carry out the basement ceiling to the side walls.

Eighth: To replace all defective roofing slate.

(The true scope of the second item can best be appreciated by understanding that this actually meant tearing down all of the exterior brick work on the building, including the four walls, large brick front porch and outside chimney. This work was then required to be re-executed with all new materials.)

The organization then attempted to carry out the orders of the court, after which further

testimony was taken to determine whether the house was then acceptable. The court, after a further inspection of the premises, held that the contract even then had not been substantially performed, and ordered the organization to deduct the sum of \$1,700.00, representing damages, from the note for \$9,600.00, held by them. At the same time the organization was ordered to pay the costs of the suit and to pay the accumulated taxes on the property, etc.

From these decrees of the trial court the owner, not being satisfied with the adequacy of the verdict in respect to several items, appealed to the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia, and on June 13, 1935, almost four years after work was started on the house, the Supreme Court of Appeals rendered its opinion which is reported in 180 *Southeastern Reporter*, page 289. The opinion reversed the lower court on question of

practice with directions that the owner be permitted to have a jury determine the amount of unliquidated damages on account of the alleged breach of contract on the part of the organization. In its mandate to the lower court, the Supreme Court of Appeals also directed that the organization pay the entire costs of the appeal amounting to \$787.43.

The record of the case furthermore indicates that the house has never been occupied during the entire period of litigation.

The complete printed record of this case, No. 1517, Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia, Charles C. Dobie, Appellant v. Sears, Roebuck & Co., Appellee; and advance sheets of the *Southeastern Reporter*, Vol.180—No. 4, July 18, 1935, reporting the decision of the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals are on file at The Octagon, available for review by any member of the Institute who may be interested.

Members Elected—July 16 to October 15, 1935

<i>Arkansas Chapter</i> - - - - -	H. RAY BURKS
<i>Boston Chapter</i> - - - - -	GEORGE STEPHEN LEWIS, STEWART A. LYFORD, ARNOLD PERRETON, LAURENT CHARLES ROY, WILLIAM BRADFORD SPROUT, JR., GEORGE R. THOMAS
<i>Buffalo Chapter</i> - - - - -	JOSEPH E. FRONCZAK
<i>Chicago Chapter</i> - - - - -	B. D. ANDY ANDERSON, WILLIAM P. DOERR
<i>Cleveland Chapter</i> - - - - -	RUSSELL SIMPSON
<i>Delaware Chapter</i> - - - - -	WESTON HOLT BLAKE, WILLIAM REYNOLDS MANNING
<i>Detroit Chapter</i> - - - - -	JEAN HÉBRARD
<i>Florida Central Chapter</i> - - - - -	NORMAN FRANK SIX, THEODORE H. SKINNER
<i>Florida North Chapter</i> - - - - -	HARRY MILTON GRIFFIN
<i>Florida South Chapter</i> - - - - -	HAROLD D. STEWARD
<i>Kansas City Chapter</i> - - - - -	GEORGE JACKSON DAVIDSON, E. M. ROBISON
<i>Northern California Chapter</i> - - - - -	ROBERT STANTON
<i>New Jersey Chapter</i> - - - - -	SETH HARRISON ELY, JR., HARRY MASLOW
<i>Philadelphia Chapter</i> - - - - -	JOHN ARNOLD BOWER
<i>St. Louis Chapter</i> - - - - -	JOHN M. DUNHAM, JULIUS E. TARLING
<i>South Carolina Chapter</i> - - - - -	WILLIAM WALLACE BAKER, G. THOMAS HARMON, III, FRANK VINCENT HOPKINS
<i>South Georgia Chapter</i> - - - - -	STEPHEN P. BOND
<i>Virginia Chapter</i> - - - - -	FLEMING R. HURT, JR.
<i>Washington, D. C. Chapter</i> - - - - -	C. JEROME PILLOW, MAGNUS THOMPSON
<i>Wisconsin Chapter</i> - - - - -	WILLIAM CASPER SCHNEIDER

Meeting of the Board of Directors

THE next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Institute will be held at The Octagon, in Washington, on December 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Members and Chapters having matters for the attention of the Board may address communications to the Secretary of the Institute, at The Octagon, for delivery there not later than November 30—as the agenda will be closed as of that date.

With the Chapters and State Associations

(Excerpts from Minutes, Bulletins and Reports)

New York.

At a recent Chapter and Executive Committee meeting the Treasurer's reports were presented, and Mr. Upjohn requested a special report on Chapter investments. Mr. Higgins explained the steps which had been taken during his term as Treasurer to place the financial affairs of the Chapter in order, first by having a regular system of bookkeeping installed, second by placing all securities in Custody Accounts in the Irving Trust Company—one for the Reserve Fund securities and one for those of the Le Brun Fund, and third by engaging the services of a financial counsel to handle all investments.

Mr. Upjohn stated that he wished to report for the Committee of Eight. He explained that by a process of elimination the thirty to forty names suggested by the representatives of the various societies had been reduced to eight or nine. He then wrote to each of these men asking them to serve on the Jury. The four who accepted and were appointed were Ralph Walker, Phelps Stokes, Kenneth Murchison and William Sanders. This Jury was appointed by the Mayor and has started work compiling the list of fifty architects for city work. Mr. Upjohn stated that the question whether the members of the Jury or their firms should appear on the list during their year's incumbency had come up again. It was the attitude of the Executive Committee that the Jury members should not be eligible to appear on the list at the time of their appointment, even though this might work a hardship. Mr. Gehron questioned whether the whole idea was a good one and whether it was not better to hold competitions. Mr. Holmes mentioned that the New York Chapter would have liked to see the Jury have the power to use its judgment and recommend competitions if it saw fit, but that the whole matter was now closed. Mr. Frost again questioned whether the names previously submitted to the Mayor had been withdrawn. Mr. Upjohn explained that he had received no answer from the Mayor to his letter, but that he had talked with Commissioner Ordway and was advised that this original list submitted by the Chapter had no official standing.

The difficulty which the Chapter has had in determining standards for (1) Institute and (2) Associate membership on which the Institute agreed was brought up by Mr. Upjohn. Mr.

Williams, as chairman of the Committee on Admissions, was instructed to talk with Mr. Butler, and to report at the next meeting. It was also suggested that Mr. Shreve be made aware of the situation at that meeting.

* * *

Mr. Frost read two replies to his protest to the Institute against the government's policy on architectural work at West Point. Mr. Sullivan, Chairman of the Institute Public Works Committee, had replied that he was taking the matter up with the government. Mr. Gehron reported unofficially that the Chapter's protest had been effective, and that Mr. Cret had been appointed architect of the project. The Secretary was instructed to write Mr. Sullivan for confirmation, and the correspondence was considered of sufficient importance to be attached to the file copy of the minutes of this meeting.

Chicago.

At a recent meeting of the Chicago Chapter held at the Architects Club of Chicago, dinner was served to 65 members and guests prior to the business session.

President Hall presided at the meeting and requested the Secretary to give a resume of the minutes of the last regular Chapter meeting, which was the annual meeting in June.

Following the review by the Secretary, the minutes were approved as prepared and sent to members of the Executive Committee.

The next order of business was the reading of a communication from The Octagon acknowledging the receipt of the Chicago Chapter's Recommendations to A. I. A. Directors. Also the acknowledgment of the gift of \$100.00 to the Institute by this Chapter.

Following the above, President Hall then announced the Chapter's program for the coming year.

President Hall then introduced Col. F. Chas. Starr who was the presiding officer for the balance of the program.

Col. Starr presented the Public Information Committee program and introduced the following members of the Chapter who spoke on the subjects designated:

George A. Chapman, "Press Program"
Elmer C. Roberts, "Should Architects Advertise?"

Melville C. Chatten, "Present status of architects' attempts to solve the Small House Problem"
 F. Chas. Starr, "The Public Information Committee and Programs."

During the presentation of one paper, the possibility of establishing a service bureau, acting in the small house field was mentioned.

Following the program of the evening, Carl E. Heimbrodt, speaking as President of the Central Division of the Architects' Small House Service Bureau, offered the facilities of that organization to the Chicago Chapter, in the promotion of this program. No formal action on this offer was taken.

Mr. Matteson regularly moved that the Chapter extend a vote of thanks to the Public Information Committee for the splendid program it had prepared for the coming year. The motion was adopted.

Oregon.

The regular meeting was held on September 17, 1935 at the Rathskeller, in Portland.

After dinner the meeting was called to order for business with President Aandahl presiding.

It was announced that a lecture on acoustical treatment will be given at the Multnomah Hotel on November 11th.

Regional Director Crowell spoke briefly.

President Aandahl reported for the Executive Committee.

Treasurer Brookman reported that the treasury is solvent to the extent of \$63.00.

It was moved by Doty, seconded and carried that the Chapter sell 100 tickets at 50c to hear Mr. LeCorbusier, French architect, speak in Portland in December. Belluchi was appointed Chairman of a Committee to handle this matter.

Parker, Chairman of the Public Works Committee, made a report on the Capitol building situation, and read that part of the State Planning Board's report to the Governor recommending a competition and method of procedure.

An extended discussion followed, concerned chiefly with the recommendation of the Planning Board relative to competitors, which report—previously endorsed by the Chapter—if adopted, would probably eliminate from the competition, younger men of a limited experience.

Johnston moved that, inasmuch as the Chapter has endorsed the recommendation for a compe-

tion, the Chapter demands that all members of the Chapter refrain from taking individual action to solicit the job until the Legislature has disapproved the recommendation of the Planning Board for a competition.

* * *

Jones moved that the Chapter go on record as favoring a competition for the Capitol building, limited to architects who were registered in Oregon and were residents of Oregon at the date of the burning of the old Capitol building. Seconded by Whitney. Jacobberger moved an amendment that the competition be conducted in accordance with A. I. A. requirements. The motion as amended was carried.

Applications for Associateships were received from H. Abbott Lawrence, Robert W. Turner and Sidney B. Hayslip. Privileged communications will be received by Secretary Wallwork until Oct. 17th.

Kentucky.

A recent meeting followed the custom that has been adopted for about a year, of having a dinner meeting and an open meeting afterward to which all the architects of Louisville are invited, in order that matters of interest and problems that concern all the architects may be discussed.

After dinner, the members and guests repaired to the club room on the second floor where the meeting was called to order. Minutes of the meeting of May 9th were read and approved.

President Epping read a letter from Stephen F. Voorhees, President of the Institute, asking the Kentucky Chapter to contribute \$50.00, if possible, to the Institute to enable some of the functions and services of the Institute to be resumed that have been curtailed of necessity on account of the financial stress brought about by the depression. Motion was made by Baldez and seconded by Wischmeyer that such a sum be sent by the Kentucky Chapter to the Institute, as suggested. Motion carried.

* * *

Julian Oberwarth then made a motion that the Kentucky Chapter instruct President Epping to write a letter to Governor Ruby Laffoon asking that B. T. Wisenall of Covington, and O. P. Ward, of Louisville, whose terms as members of the State Board of Examiners and Registration of Architects have expired, be reappointed to said Board. Motion was carried.

As of Interest

Architects Award Trophy.

At the Model Home Dinner given at the Essex House in Newark for the FHA by the realtors, Mr. Kenneth W. Dalzell, President of the New Jersey Chapter, announced that the Chapter would award at the 1936 Annual State Convention of the New Jersey Association of Real Estate Boards, a silver trophy to the real estate development where the best architecture prevails; and that the N. J. Society of Architects would award a similar trophy to the development showing the greatest improvement beginning September 30, 1935. The developments with which any of the officers of the Chapter or Society are interested, will not be permitted to compete. Judging will be by three architects, a representative of the FHA, and an editor of one of the leading architectural journals.

This has been done to stimulate further interest in better design and construction. The announcement was very well received, and the Chapter has already received requests for the competition program.

Small House Plan Service.

Much has been written relative to the activities of various chapters in effecting closer cooperation with the Federal bureaus and chapter efforts in respect to publicizing architecture and the architect.

The pages of THE OCTAGON have carried, at various times, detailed reports of the Baltimore Plan, Buffalo Plan, and others; all directed to a

better understanding between the architect and the public and looking to ways and means of making architectural service available to the small home owner.

Some of these plans are operating successfully while others are still in the formative stage. It is to the interest of every chapter to investigate the relative merits of all plans so far reported as a matter of inspiration and guidance in the formation of their individual programs.

The program adopted by the Virginia Chapter is interesting. Mr. Merrill C. Lee, President of the Virginia Chapter, reports as follows:

I am greatly interested in the Institute's attitude towards the design of small homes, and following the passing of the National Housing Act, recommended to our Board that every Architect in the Chapter, together with every qualified Architect in the State, submit three or four designs on small houses with the idea in mind of having these put in book form and distributed throughout the State. It may be interesting to you who have undertaken similar programs, to know that the University of Virginia has promised to pay all expenses of this publication as well as the cost of the travelling exhibits in the interest of advancing this program throughout the State. This program likewise fell short of its goal because of the horrible conditions in which Architects found themselves, and I am now delighted that the Institute is recognizing this excellent thought throughout the nation. Several of the State Architects followed my suggestion and submitted sketches to their local lending Institutions for the advancement of our Federal Housing Program, and one Architect alone reported that he sold one of his designs twelve times and in addition, gained the good will of that lending Institution to such an extent that he gained twenty-four additional commissions on larger constructions through them.

Important Notice

IT is necessary to publish a new edition of the HANDBOOK OF ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE and the Board of Directors desires to make such changes therein as will bring it up-to-date.

Therefore, the Board requests every member who is using or is familiar with this Handbook to send:

- (a) Notice of any error therein;
- (b) Notice of text, plates, figures, or forms that are unsatisfactory or obsolete;
- (c) Suggested changes in text, plates, figures, or forms;
- (d) New subjects, plates, figures or forms that should be included.

The Board will appreciate a prompt response to this appeal, for it desires to make this handbook of the greatest possible benefit to the profession.

Please send your suggestions to the Secretary at The Octagon *before the close of this year*, in order that proposed changes may be assembled and submitted to the Board at its pre-Convention meeting in 1936.

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