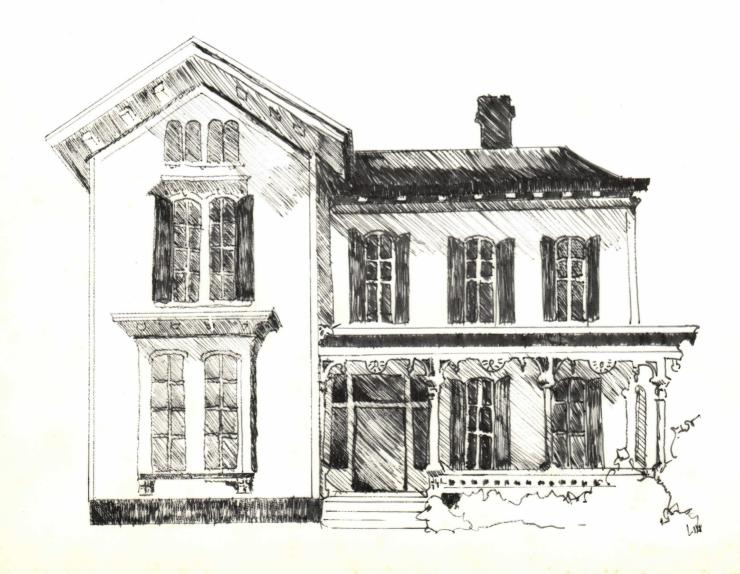
22/4

NC Architect

July August 1975 Published by the North Carolina Chapter of The American Institute of Architects





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22/4

July August 1975 Published by the North Carolina Chapter of The American Institute of Architects



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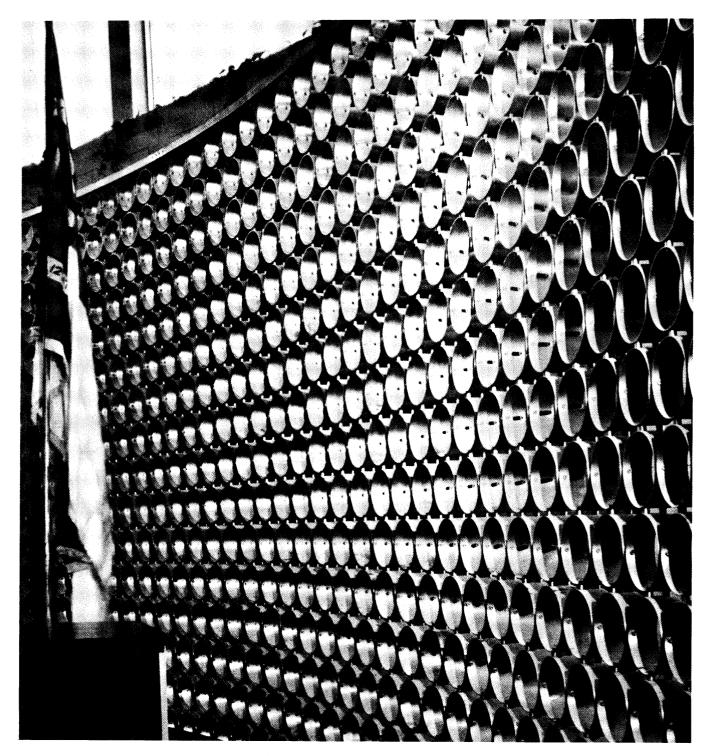
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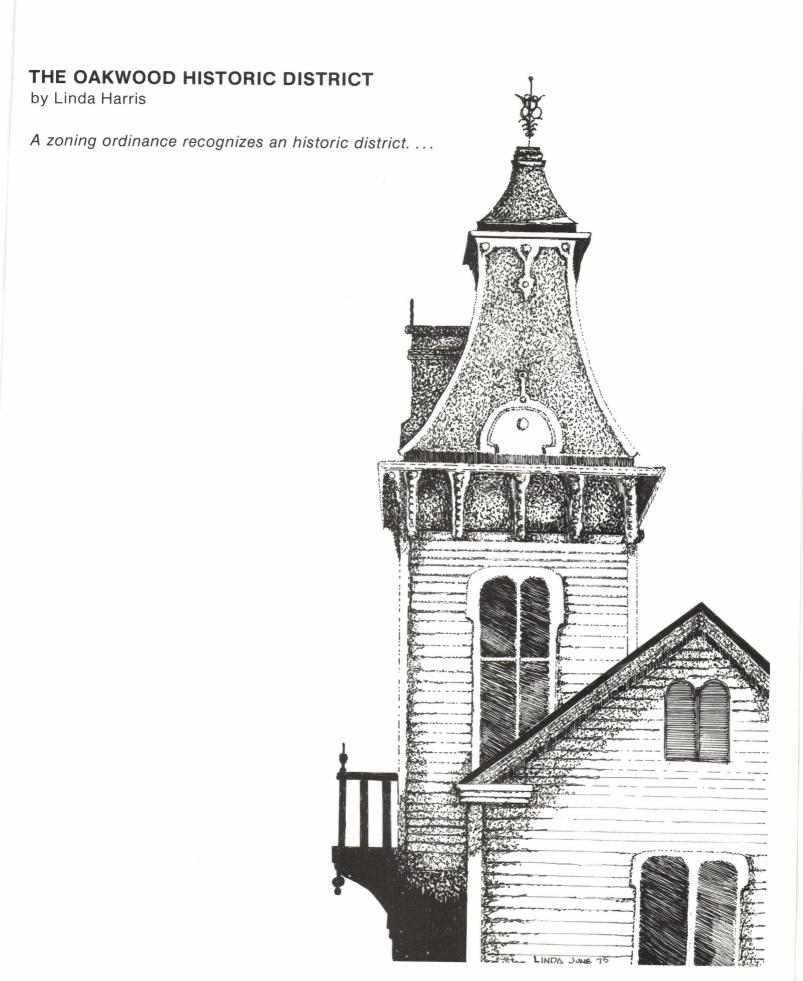
QUALITY METALWORK

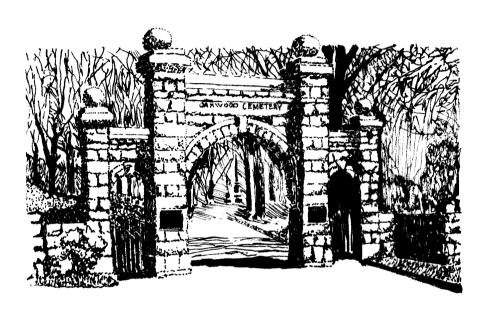
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In June of this year, the Raleigh City Council joined hundreds of other councils in other municipalities in legally recognizing the value of an older, central-city neighborhood, and created the Oakwood Historic District. This is Raleigh's first historic district, and this zoning action represented another victory for the residents of the area who have fought for many years to keep their neighborhood from suffering the sadly typical fates of many Victorian neighborhoods in many cities. The problems faced by Oakwood were universal to older neighborhoods, those being slow decay, over-zoning and an expressway slated to bisect the area. Prior to the creation of the historic district, the proposed expressway was removed from the Raleigh thoroughfare plan, the neighborhood was down-zoned from high-density residential to medium-density residential use, and the neighborhood was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. In view of these actions, it seemed only logical that an existing zoning ordinance allowing the creation of specific historic districts in Raleigh should be implemented in Oakwood.

Oakwood, the oldest still existing neighborhood in Raleigh, began

development as a suburb northeast of the downtown area shortly after the Civil War. The suburb took its name from the Oakwood Cemetery located on the eastern fringes of the area, which was established in 1866 as a resting place for Confederate soldiers. The cemetery, which is included in the National Register site is a beautiful example of the romantic, picturesque style of landscape architecture that was so popular among the Victorians, and gives the neighborhood an added bonus of a lovely and well-kept open space along one boundary. The architectural styles found in the neighborhood are ones that were popular in the Victorian South among the middle class, and include the Eastlake Style, with its heavy, three dimensional trim that was formed with a chisel and lathe, Sawnwork Victorian, featuring flat trim cut out of a plank with a bandsaw, Italianate or Bracketed Victorian, Second Empire and Queen Anne. There are a few examples of late Greek Revival, some Neo-classical Revival and many bungalows that were popular in the 1920's and 30's. The structures are physically close together, facing onto narrow streets laid in a grid pattern with many large shade trees

and gardens, creating quiet, pleasant atmosphere in the neighborhood.

The Oakwood Historic District is an over-lay type of zoning which adds architectural standards to the existing zoning regulations. The ordinance is administered by an Historic District Commission composed of nine members who are appointed by the Raleigh City Council. They are instructed to review any exterior architectural change to be made to any structure within the boundaries of the district, and to issue or deny a certificate of appropriateness for those changes. A certificate of appropriateness must be obtained before any alteration can be made, and it must be issued by the Commission before the City may issue a building permit. The city planning staff, after researching other such arrangements in cities with historic districts, found that many times historic district commissions are accused of being arbitrary and capricious in their decisions as there are no set policies or guidelines by which decisions can be made. So in order to make the job of the commission as straightforward as possible, and make a resident's application for a certificate of appropriateness as expeditious as





possible, the planning staff devised a set of architectural guidelines that were incorporated into the zoning ordinance by reference. These guidelines are based on existing architectural styles found Oakwood and emphasize that the exterior architectural changes to a structure must be in character with the structure and must not attempt to change its particular quality and design. It is a rather delicate procedure to attempt to tell a person what particular changes may or may not be made to the exterior of a structure, but this is a necessary function of the Commission. The restoration and rehabilitation of Victorian houses has become a popular substitute to suburban living, and since we have an obviously limited supply of Victorian neighborhoods, careful consideration of changes must be made lest some of them be altered totally out of context and recognition.

In order to begin writing the architectural guidelines, an in-depth survey of the proposed historic district was made, and the architectural styles found there were identified and catalogued. Using the information gathered from the survey, the staff then proceeded to isolate those structural elements

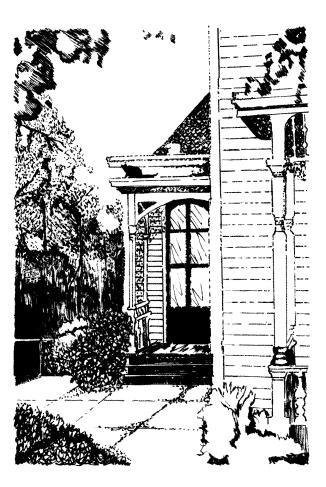
important to Victorian architecture and to analyze their Victorian forms and uses. Acceptable and un-acceptable uses and alterations were described for each element. These structural elements are:

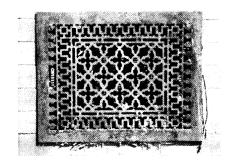
materials
surface textures
colors
basic shape and form
roof form and pitch
fenestration pattern
elements of composition
utilization of characteristic
local forms
expression of detail

The major part of the architectural guidelines are based on the five Victorian styles listed above, but emphasis is placed on the fact that in considering the exterior alteration of a given structure, the original form and character of the structure must be honestly considered, and any changes designed to alter that form into one that is not in character with the original design is specifically discouraged. An example of this would be the intent to alter a 1920's bungalow into an Eastlake-style cottage. It is hoped that

in this manner good examples of the bungalows will continue to exist and poor imitations of Eastlake-style cottages will be forestalled.

Historic districts created by local zoning ordinances have become a very popular method of architectural preservation and encouraging the revitalization of deteriorating neighborhoods. Previous preservation efforts in the United States have been traditionally conscious efforts based on patriotic or nationalistic values. Concern was with the individual sites or structures associated with famous persons and the object was to create a period museum to serve as an educational tool and to reinforce national solidarity and pride. The architectural and aesthetic qualities of the structure were of secondary importance to the patriotic associations of the site, and once the museum was created and all the props and accessories particular to its original function were gathered, the site was frozen in time, to be maintained in perpetuity. Somewhat consecutive with the patriotic preservation projects, concern with preserving buildings of outstanding architectural and aesthetic qualities was evidenced. Here again, the preservation ethic was



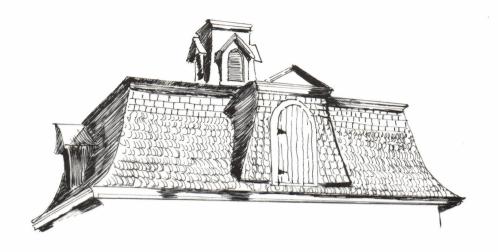


to retain single structures as period museums, arrested in time.

Museum-based preservation fulfills an important function, but it is limited by its very nature. The major limitation is that communities can generally support only one or two such facilities and the passive museum use isolates them from the mainstream of contemporary life. Another, less definable problem is that this method of preservation is selective and elitist. Many times the selection of sites deemed to be worthy of preservation is made by a small minority with a special interest and the result is that the public is presented with spotty, disjointed views of the past which reflect the views and ideals of that group. Many times, in looking around us, our view of the past is littered with monuments to famous men and women, with re-creations of southern plantation life and the homes and estates of rich industrialists. The neighborhoods of ordinary citizens who contributed to the development of their community were considered unimportant and therefore expendable, and in many places have fallen victim to freeways, urban renewal and changing social patterns. This does a great deal of damage to

any single structure in such an area that is deemed worthy of remaining as the structure is isolated from its contemporaries and its environment, losing its meaning.

The creation of the Oakwood Historic District is an attempt to retain a solid, viable neighborhood that will reflect the values and qualities that the Victorians enjoyed in their everyday lives. In recognizing the legal right of such a neighborhood to exist, although it is on the edge of the downtown area and the State Government Complex, the City of Raleigh has taken a major step in neighborhood stabilization and revitalization. The problem of using historic district zoning to reach this objective is recognizing the difference between the static idea of maintaining a neighborhood in perpetuity and the idea of protecting an older neighborhood's qualities, while encouraging appropriate change and new building. The architectural guidelines established for Oakwood address themselves to the problems of substituting contemporary materials for original materials, such as using aluminum siding to replace defective clapboard, and to establishing design standards and criteria for contemporary structures in the district. The formation of standards and design criteria for new structures was divided into three levels, those being zoning questions, architectural questions, and aesthetic questions. The three levels were then further subdivided and analyzed so that every feature of a new structure can be considered on a comparative level with existing structures and with other new structures. The design criteria is based on the contemporary mode, as the staff, the Planning Commission and the City Council thought it would be wiser to encourage good contemporary architectural expression with regard to new structures rather blatant and, all too often, unsuccessful, imitations of past styles. The design criteria attempts to relate the qualities and characteristics of Victorian architecture with those of certain contemporary designs. This is not a new idea. Architectural Record stated in December of 1975 (p. 85) "... in the design of new building we cannot continue to ignore existing context — not only must any new building or complex respect its surroundings, but it often makes sense to make fresh and innovative use of familiar

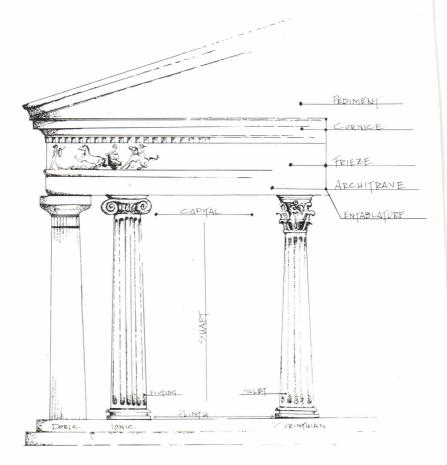




In working toward the creation of the Oakwood Historic District, the staff was occasionally confronted with the question: "Why in the world do you care about preserving that bunch of old houses?" Aside from the main reason that many of the residents had requested the establishment of an historic district, the staff came to realize and appreciate the real and honest value of Victorian building and wanted to see it survive gracefully in our contemporary society. We, as city planners, architects and homeowners seem to just be rediscovering the merits of Victorian architecture and the neighborhoods that have managed to exist up until this date. Those qualities of solid construction, interior roominess, grace and charm that are lacking in the standardized housing of today are drawing people to nineteenth and early twentiethcentury neighborhoods in ever-growing numbers. The demand for homes in

images from the past in the design of new buildings." Of course, the very nature of the historic district is to preserve and maintain what is there, but the standards for new construction help insure that it will not overpower or destroy what is already there.





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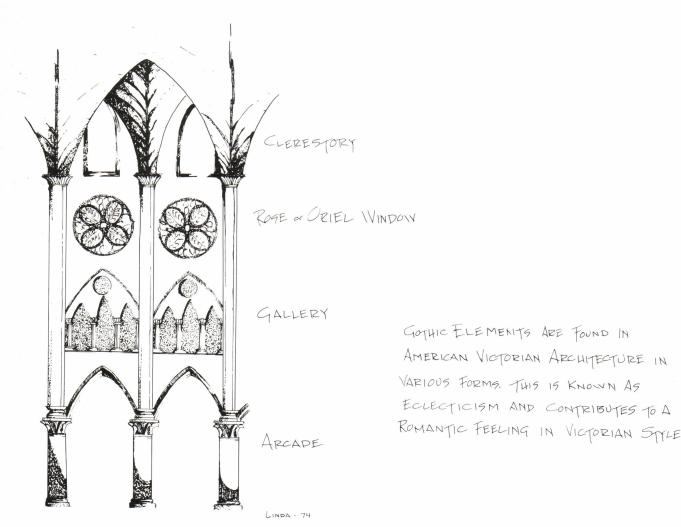
designated historic districts is as great as the supply in this section of the housing market. This is very interesting in view of the fact that a few short years ago anything "Victorian" was a subject for ridicule and certainly not thought to be worth preserving. This follows the natural pattern in which rising generations hold the styles of their parents and grandparents in contempt until that seemingly indefinable point at which those styles become extremely avant-garde again. In becoming "in" and fashionable again, the building must, of course, undergo certain alterations, in order to fit our twentieth-century standard of comfort, but before beginning work on a structure, it is useful as well as interesting to gain a perspective, as well as an insight, into the motives and creative ideas of the Victorian builder and architect.

The term "Victorian" refers to a time-span rather than a single, particular style. This period was named, obviously, after Queen Victoria who ruled the British Empire for 64 years (1837-1901), and it was during her long reign that the greatest changes ever to occur in Western civilization came about. The social, political and technological

changes and advancements changed the way of life for millions of people and laid the foundations of our world today. This was a time of great contrasts; contrasts between the rich and the poor, the industrialized against the agrarian society, and the bourgeois as opposed to the free-thinkers. This was a brash and confident society that was constantly expanding its horizons, both geographically and intellectually, and the effects of its accomplishments, as well as its mistakes, are with us today.

The exuberance of these people is reflected in their building and architecture. The builders of this time were extremely eclectic and were greatly influenced by the art and literature of the times. The Romantic Movement, particularly reflected in the medieval stories of Sir Walter Scott, the romantic naturalism of the Rossettis and the anti-industrialism of William Ruskin, was all-powerful and all-prevalent, and the architects of the day seized upon the aesthetic qualities of the movement and translated them into architectural reality. They took any historic style they fancied and adapted it to their local needs while making use of the products and production methods of the Industrial Revolution. The machine-made nail, factory-fabricated trim and detailing, and the "balloon frame" method of building, all contributed to make production of housing faster than before possible, and in the reach of many more people.

American building reflected a rich variety of styles and indigenous adaptations of those styles. Outside facades reflected a concern for interior arrangements and comfort, the standards for which had loosened up considerably from the rigid, classical forms of the earlier Greek Revival style. There was a great use of fanciful, whimsical forms and shapes in the structure itself, such as towers and any number of decorative, colorful windows, and the shapes of trims and details were exotic and exciting. Contrary to the popular, contemporary view of the Victorians, they indulged in bright, happy colors on the facades of their buildings, and many times it was not unusual to see a house that was painted in contrasting colors with the shapes in the detailing picked out in still different colors. A sense of humor and whimsy went with these ornate buildings, and while some of them may seem pretentious or over-



bearing to us today, they are probably not any more so than the stark, massive modern that so often confronts us now.

In the final analysis, historic preservation is an emotional subject for many people, but it is a subject that needs to be considered in cities that still have sites or neighborhoods that are worth preserving. In most cases, an older neighborhood exists in or near the center of a city, and the creation of an historic district can encourage revitalization and the recycling of good housing stock. It can also offer an alternative life-style to suburban living and commuting, and in bringing families back into a city, it has the cause and effect relationship of the continuing of the services in the center city that make suburban living desirable. But all the practical factors aside, preservation takes on the quality of our recognizing that architectural and aesthetic expressions from our past are left to us for our safekeeping. The builder who arranged the curves and angles, the masses and voids, and the colors and textures of Second Empire style house did so because he thought they were beautiful in those arrangements, and those particular arrangements will never exist again.

If we unthinkingly destroy every evidence of our past and replace it with what we think is the future, our own futurepast will be lacking in validity as there will be no comparison or contrast against which to weigh it. Peter Collins states one of the major concerns in the building of new buildings or complexes in older neighborhoods when he says: "The logic and economy of designing reinforced concrete frames in harmony with eighteenth century masonry has been amply demonstrated, yet the art-architect's urge towards self-expression and originality frequently overrides his sense of duty towards his environment, and towards the past."1 A city that is a homogenized expanse of the architectural expression of our own time or that of a single architect or planner, may look good on the drawing board or in a scale model, but the reality of standing in the midst of that city often gives the viewer a sense of rootlessness and a feeling of being small and insignificant. We need the architecture of the past with its human scale and natural, warm feeling to complement and contrast with the more slick and massive buildings that are filling many cities today. Those com-

munities that are fortunate enough to have evidence of the past still with them today owe it to themselves and to the future citizens to preserve and maintain the buildings of the past as part of the active, living community.

Collins, Peter, Architectural Judgement, McGill, Queens University Press, Montreal 1971, p. 27.

Sketches by the author.
Photographs by Jim Ratchford.
Linda Harris is a graduate of Ohio University and is currently on the staff of the City of Raleigh Planning Department where she has worked on the Historic District Ordinance for Oakwood.

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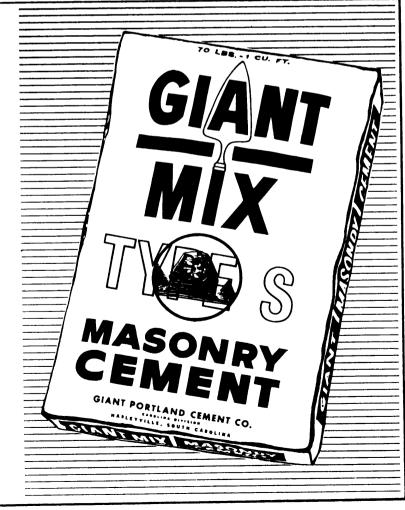
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NC Architect magazine Wins Four Awards

Continuing a trend established in previous years, the State's professional architectural magazine North Carolina Architect has won some significant awards from the Society for Technical Communication in 1975.

Peter Batchelor, AIA, AIP, and Associate Professor of Urban Design at the School of Design at North Carolina State University won the "award for Distinguished Technical Communication" from the Society's International Publications Competition held in April. This award was given for an article which appeared in the July/August issue of North Carolina Architect in 1974 and was entitled "Urban Planning and Design Assistance for Small Communities."

The award is the highest that can be given in the category of Journal Article at the International level.

Mr. Batchelor also received an "award for Distinction" and an "award for Merit" at the Carolina Chapter of the Society for Technical Communications Competition in March 1975. He is Chairman of the N. C. Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Publication Committee and Contributing Editor to the magazine.

Mrs. Betty Silver, Executive Director of the North Carolina Chapter of the A.I.A. and Managing Editor the magazine also received an "award for Merit" for editing the entire journal in which Mr. Batchelor's

article was printed. The award was given by the Carolina Chapter of the Society for Technical Committee.

Mrs. Silver and Mr. Batchelor believe that effective technical communication combines writing and editing skills with graphic design, layout, and illustration skills. In support of the philosophy which says "the medium is the message" both of them believe in a comprehensive approach to the printing of an article. The page is seen as an entity, while the words are viewed as only a system of technical information. Both Mrs. Silver and Mr. Batchelor write, edit and do layout work themselves. Mr. Batchelor also illustrates and does his own photography.

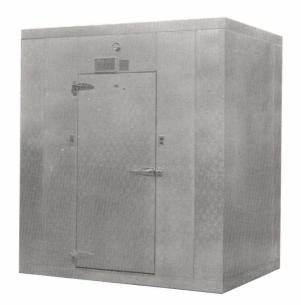
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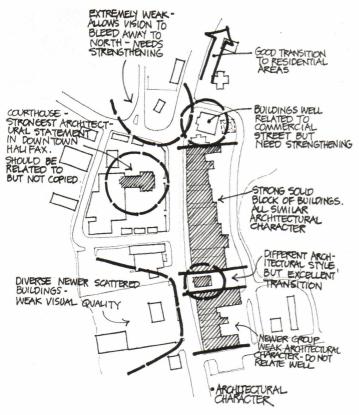
RICHARD C. FRANK, FAIA RICHARD MACIAS, ASLA RICHARD A. NEUMANN, ARCHITECT

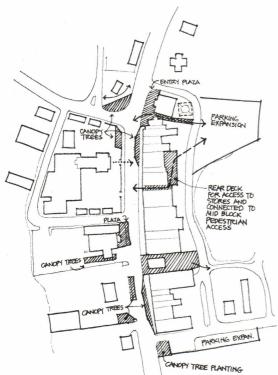
GOALS

TO ESTABLISH A FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH THIS STUDY IS GUIDED. BASIC GOALS MUST BE ESTABLISHED:

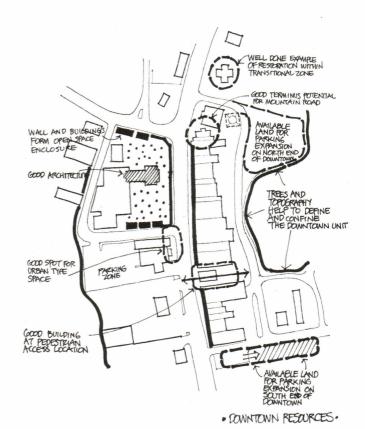
- · REFLECT A SENSE OF THE PAST
- · RESPECT "SMALL TOWN" CHARACTER
- RECOMMEND PROJECTS WITH HIGH IMPACT POTENTIAL WHICH CAN EASILY BE IMPLEMENTED.

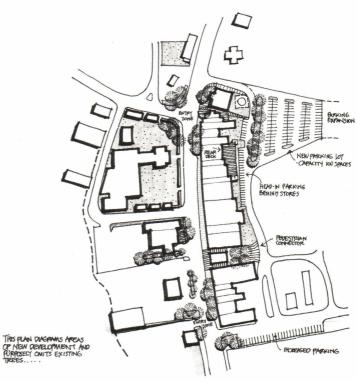
THE PLANS





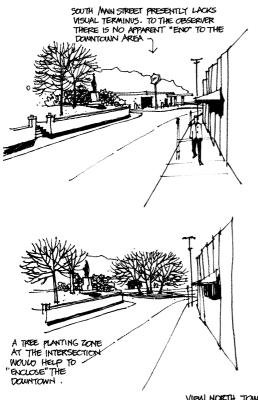
· OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING DOWNTOWN



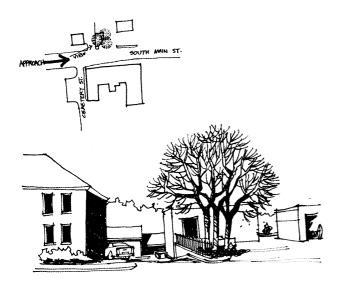


· SUMMARY PLAN

LANDSCAPING

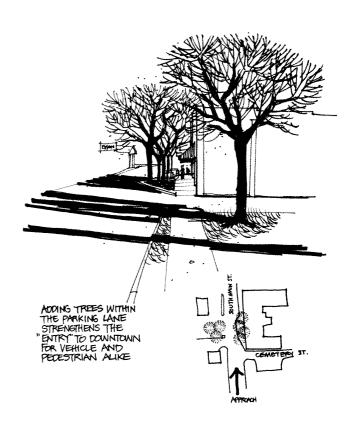


VIEW NORTH TOWARD MOUNTAIN ROAD



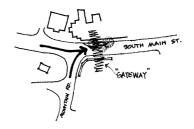
ENTRY TO COMMICUN FROM THE SOUTH IS EXPOSED TO A RELATIVELY OPEN PAVED AREA THAT DETRACTS PROM EAST SIDE OF SOUTH MAIN STREET.

THE OPPORTUNITY EXISTS FOR REDIRECTING THE EYE DOWN MAIN ST. AND EMPHASIZING THE STREETS STRONGER QUALITY.





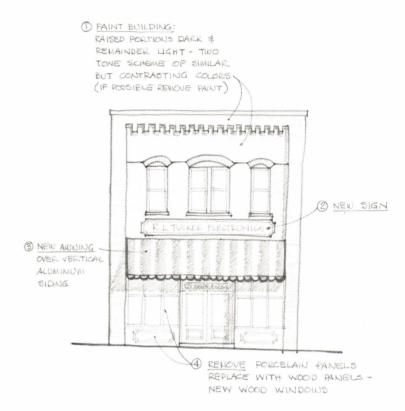
THE ADDITION OF STREET TREE GROUPS WILL TEND TO CREATE A"CATEWAY" INTO DOWNTOWN FOR THOSE APPROACHING FROM THE NORTH OR ALONG MOUNTAIN ROAD



BUILDINGS



7-10 SOUTH MAIN ST



7-10 SOUTH MAIN ST.

PHASE A - CHANGES IN ORDER AS NOTED PHASE B - ENTIRE NEW FRONT



55-65 SOUTH MAIN 57



AIA Convention Notes

The American Institute of Architects elected John M. McGinty, AIA, of Houston, Tex. to the office of first vice president and president-elect. The election was held during AIA's 1975 national convention in Atlanta.

Louis de Moll, FAIA, of Philadelphia, who will succeed to the presidency of the Institute in December, was elected during the 1974 convention in Washington, D. C. McGinty will succeed de Moll as president in December, 1976.

The AIA also elected three vice presidents: Elmer E. Botsai, FAIA, of San Francisco, Calif.; Carl L. Bradley, FAIA, of Fort Wayne, Ind., and Robert L. Wilson, AIA, of Stamford, Conn.

Charles E. Schwing, AIA, of Baton Rouge, La., was elected to a twoyear term as treasurer. Hilliard T.

Smith Jr., FAIA, of Lake Worth, Fla., was elected in 1974 to a two-year term as secretary.

The keynote speaker, physicist Heinz Von Foerster, challenged architects with an "ethical imperative" for the last quarter of the 20th century: "Act always to increase and enhance the number of choices available to people."

"The creative architectural space," he said, "begets creativity, new insights, and new choices. The dialogue of the architect with people is guided not so much by principles of esthetics as by those of ethics."

Von Foerster, professor emeritus in the departments of biophysics, and electrical engineering at the University of Illinois is a specialist in the physics of perception. He compared himself to "the only

squirrel in a convention of beavers." But, he continued, the difference in language between science and architecture can open up new possibilities for creative dialogue.

Referring to the architectural fiasco of the Tower of Babel, Von Foerster said, "It is only a society that speaks just one language that would conceive of such a socially meaningless enterprise as a tower that would reach into heaven. In a pluralistic society—for instance here in the United States—the people would demand that such an enterprise be abandoned as fast as possible."

Von Foerster's address kicked off the convention's professional program whose theme, "Spaces for the Species," focused on how architects can respond to the needs and desires of the people for whom they design the architectural environment.



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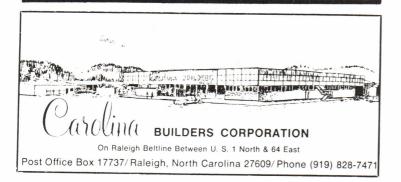
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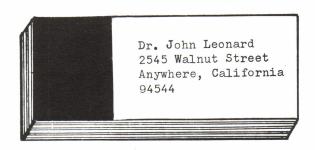
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