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THE OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

At the start of a new year it may be well to outline what I believe should be the course of the New York Chapter for the coming term. There can be no doubt that unprecedented opportunity lies ahead, but likewise work and thought and dedication.

We in the Chapter must continue the process of organizing the profession into a common Institute. We must increase in every way possible our technical competence. We must take a constructive part in the critical problems of our time and community. And we must constantly improve the effectiveness of architectural service as well as public awareness of its value.

This is business enough to occupy our Committees. These have, in many cases, been enlarged, especially by the addition of new members of the Chapter. I hope they will be prepared to hold open meetings on urgent matters in their field as they arise, so that we may have full expression of opinion and sound conclusions on which the Chapter may then take prompt and effective action.

We can only expect public recognition as we are equipped to give forceful and intelligent leadership. If we can take a few steps in that direction during the year ahead we will have made an important start.

ROBERT B. O'CONNOR

CIVIL SERVICE vs. PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS

The opposition of the bureaus against architects and engineers in private practice has grown apace since our last issue of OCULUS, in which we reported the suit brought by the Civil Service Technical Guild against the Board of Education to prevent the award of school contracts.

The Guild has now filed suit against the Board of Estimate and other city officials to restrain them from awarding any contracts whatsoever to private architects or engineers, from fulfilling current contracts and from paying any moneys now due under them.

Our Legislative Committee lost no time in calling together all architects

and engineers concerned, with the result that the Committee was charged with the responsibility of engaging counsel to defend the private practitioners' interests, and collecting the necessary funds to defray expenses.

The Committee has retained Messrs. Eidlitz, French & Sullivan, the attorneys who are already defending the school award suit, and who so successfully defended a similar suit brought some three years ago by Civil Service.

Expenses have for the present been pro-rated among all the architects and engineers involved (with the exception of certain engineering firms who were already committed individually to other attorneys), at the rate of \$2 per \$1,000 of contract fees, a modest enough sum, when one considers the future stakes involved. To date about one-half of the fund has been subscribed.

The suit against the Board of Education will be heard in September when the Appellate Division reconvenes. Hearings on the second suit are scheduled for this month in the Supreme Court, and our attorneys are working closely with Mr. Charles Platt, Chairman of the Legislative Committee, and President Robert O'Connor, in the preparation of affidavits and other material necessary for the defense.

As announced in the last OCULUS, herewith are excerpts from some of the reports and comments of our Committee Chairmen made at the Annual Meeting.

LEGISLATION

CHARLES C. PLATT, *Chairman*

In New York City our local legislative problems are handled through the Joint Metropolitan Committee of Architectural Societies, giving us a city-wide representation. State legislative matters are handled by the Legislative Committee of the New York State Association of Architects. Your Chairman is an active member of both these committees, in fact Chairman of one, and that has given the Chapter adequate representation and protection.

The main problems we have had to face in both the State Legislature and the City Council are the repeated attempts of the Civil Service organiza-

tions to exclude the private architect from public works.

Our Committee from time to time is asked to take a stand publicly on highly specialized social and civic measures, such as Zoning Laws or questions arising out of such projects as "Stuyvesant Town." However, it has not seemed wise to enter into any controversies and commit the Chapter, particularly as the Legislative Committee does not pretend to qualify as experts in economics, sociology, politics, etc. Moreover, those members, presumably expert in such matters, who seek Chapter action, have failed to present a complete case before our Committee or in some instances to signify their willingness to carry on, though invited to do so.

The Legislative Committee is geared to function with dispatch when measures are introduced affecting the scope of our professional work or the procedure under which we conduct our practice; but controversial items of a broad civic import require special handling and the proponents or the opponents, as the case may be, must do their part to prepare the case and take the firing line.

EDUCATION

LEOPOLD ARNAUD, *Chairman*

Because of existing conditions the activities of the Committee on Education have been somewhat curtailed during the past year.

It was thought advisable to discontinue the visits to high schools and preparatory schools for the present.

However, the Brunner scholarship was announced as usual; the response was very poor, making it evident that instead of awarding the scholarship in the usual way, some means should be found to use it for the better service of the profession as a whole. A suggestion that the Architectural League and the Chapter pool their Brunner Scholarships was therefore accepted and a special Committee was formed.

This Joint Committee issued a letter to the members of the League and of the Chapter calling for submissions to be considered for the award. After careful examination of all submissions the Brunner Scholarship for 1943 was awarded to Mr. Harold R. Sleeper, to

study the development of the East Harlem District of Manhattan Island, an area extending approximately from 96th to 125th Streets and from Fifth Avenue to the East River.

Since many of the submissions were of great interest it was felt that their study should be continued; they were therefore accepted by the Committee on Civic Design and incorporated in a comprehensive program which is being given much study by that Committee.

The Committee on Education has also followed the progress of the Brunner Scholar for 1942, Mr. Hobart Upjohn, who is writing a history of the American Institute of Architects from its founding to the end of the nineteenth century. Mr. Upjohn has carried his work along in good fashion and will make his final submission about July 1, 1943.

MEMBERSHIP AND UNIFICATION

WILLIAM LAWRENCE BOTTOMLEY,
Chairman

The Committee on Membership acted to invite certain Registered Architects of good standing, who were personally known to members of this Committee, to join our ranks. As a result of these invitations, already thirty-eight men have joined, and more will probably do so. Directly and indirectly forty-three new members have been added to our Roster this year.

It is the recommendation of this Committee that the same system be continued with unabated effort this coming year.

Owing to the difficulty, due to war conditions, of getting representation from the various societies with whom the question of unification has been taken up, little formal action has been possible. Our successful efforts in getting new members will, however, greatly simplify the work of unification, as many key men in other Societies have joined this Chapter, thus forming closer bonds with these Societies.

CIVIC DESIGN

GROSVENOR ATTERBURY, *Chairman*

This Committee assembled a group of nearly twenty members of the New York Chapter and the Architectural League who had, in response to a circular letter, shown interest in redevelopment work by submitting briefs of projects in which they were interested.

This group was invited to meet with the Committee on Civic Design with the idea of working together on

the various projects submitted, without compensation, in pursuance of a program which your Committee had formulated and which they believed might be productive of important results.

Its objects were:—

a. The mutual education of the members of the group so as to increase their competency in the planning of neighborhoods, communities and cities, in place of the individual buildings which had previously constituted the greater part of their professional work as architects.

b. To call public attention to the fact that architects were prepared to take an active and leading part in the planning and replanning problems which the communities and cities of this country are facing today.

c. To make a definite contribution toward the solution of problems which face New York City and its adjacency in the work of post-war reconstruction.

The submissions were of two classes, case studies of specific areas, and general studies of factors and conditions that might apply to the great majority of cases, such as zoning, traffic distribution, methods of analysis, etc.

This group has met with the Committee on Civic Design every week or so and at these meetings each project has been considered and developed through criticism and suggestions.

The plan as above outlined has worked surprisingly well and your Committee hopes that the final results will be of value not only to the local profession but to the City.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

ARTHUR C. HOLDEN, *Chairman*

This Committee has been somewhat handicapped during the past year by changes in personnel, due to calls into the Service.

We have handled several special cases of complaints against architects and in one of these cases we initiated the policy of nominating an architect to act in the interim in behalf of the client, thus establishing the policy that the profession as a whole stands behind the services of its individual members and will not allow work to suffer because of a disagreement between client and architect.

The Committee also answered queries for information on the publication of a monograph and defined the conditions under which a monograph of an individual architect's work might be published without reflection upon the ethical standards of the profession.

MEMBERSHIP

The following names have been submitted for Institute membership:

1. Ernest Mauritz Anderson

Sponsors:

Louis Ayres

Philip Sawyer

2. Aaron Nathan Kiff

Sponsors:

Louis Ayres

Philip Sawyer

3. Lester Storms La Pierre

Sponsors:

John A. Frank

Rosario Candela

4. Clarence Bushnell Litchfield

Sponsors:

John A. Frank

E. James Gambaro

5. Allan Gordon Lorimer

Sponsors:

Lorimer Rich

George A. Boehm

NEW MEMBERS

Elected to Associateship:

1. Carl Beck

Elected to A.I.A. Membership:

1. Ronald R. Allwork

2. Simon Breines

3. Clinton B. F. Brill

4. M. Milton Glass

5. Percival Goodman

6. Caleb Hornbostel

7. Ralph Moreland Karger

8. Sidney Leon Katz

9. William Welles Knowles

10. Othmar Kraus

11. Charles L. Macchi

12. Herbert Magoon

13. Alexander Morgan

14. Lloyd Morgan

15. John Edward Muddell

16. William Muschenheim

17. Robert J. Reiley

18. Francis W. Roudebush

19. George Cooper Rudolph

20. Maurice Reinholt Salo

21. Nunzio Joseph Sapienza

22. Esmond Shaw

23. George Jeremiah Sole

24. Richard George Stein

25. Morris H. Sugarman

26. Bradford Sargent Tilney

27. William C. Vladeck

Transferred:

1. Howard Major (from Florida South Chapter)

Losses:

Richard Bennett, transferred to Chicago Chapter.

Thomas Dunn, deceased

Edgar A. Josselyn, deceased

Richard McCaffery, dropped

William Rixford, dropped

Charles Volz, deceased

Wakefield Worcester, transferred to Connecticut Chapter.