Best wishes for a
Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year.
Francis Gurda Convention Chairman

President Joseph J. Weiler has appointed Francis S. Gurda Chairman of the Wisconsin Architects Association 1953 Convention to be held in Milwaukee February 19, 20, 21. Other members of the Convention Committee are Leigh Hunt, Herbert J. Grassold, Leonard M. Schober and Mark T. Purcell.

* * *

Northeastern Division

The meeting was opened with twelve members and one guest present. Eugene Wasserman, newly elected Corporate member from Sheboygan, was introduced. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. The treasurer’s report was given and accepted. Motion was made and carried that the secretary send a statement to the Secretary of the Wisconsin Architects Association for the expenses for the year.

Upon hearing the recommendations of the nominating committee an unanimous ballot was cast as follows:

President, Noel Safford
Vice President, Donn Hougen
Secretary-Treasurer, Paul Kilp

Directors, Maurey Lee Allen & Julius Sandstedt

Motion was made and carried that the next meeting be held on the first Monday in March at Chilton.

A program followed with an interesting illustrated lecture by a member of the Woodlands Dept. of the Kimberly Clark Corporation which dealt with the vast timber operations in obtaining the wood necessary to supply the paper for the New York Times.

T. H. IRION, Secretary

* * *

Milwaukee Division

At the meeting of the Milwaukee Division of the Wisconsin Architects Association on Friday, December 5 at the Joe Deutsch Cafe, a business meeting preceded the dinner and Civil Defense Program.

Frederick W. Schweitzer was elected President; Francis J. Rose, Vice President, and Leigh Hunt, Secretary-Treasurer.

Leigh Hunt spoke on the proposed zoning code changes making it mandatory for all future, as well as present buildings to provide parking facilities.

Frederick Schweitzer reported that 60 entries had been submitted for the Honor Awards Competition of the Wisconsin Architects Association. He stated that in connection with the exhibition of the photographs at the Milwaukee Art Institute, Beaulah Donahue would sponsor talks by architects on her "Woman's World" WTMJ-TV program as follows: Frederick Schweitzer, December 26; John Brust, January 2; Fritz von Grossmann, January 9; Maynard W. Meyer and William V. Kaeser, January 16; George G. Schneider, January 30.

He reported that the Jury for the Honor Awards included Ambrose Richardson, Professor of Graduate Design, University of Illinois; Architect W. Brooks Cavin, Jn. St. Paul, Minn.; Alfred G. Pelikan, Art Director, Milwaukee Public Schools, and Joseph Sweeney, advertising lay-out man.

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(Continued on Page 8)
1952 Honor Award Competition
Wisconsin Architects Association
List and Winners

I. EDUCATIONAL
FIRST PRIZE
Columbus Grade School — Columbus, Wisconsin.
Weiler and Strang, Architects — Madison, Wis.
SECOND PRIZE
St. Andrew’s Grade School — Rock Falls, Illinois.
MENTION
Franklin Grade School — Appleton, Wisconsin.
Maurey Lee Allen, Architect — Appleton, Wis.
MENTION
Green Lake Elementary School — Green Lake, Wis.
MENTION
Sunset School, Sunset School District #5, Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

II. HOSPITALS
MENTION
Misericordia Hospital Addition — Milwaukee, Wis.
Brust & Brust, Architects — Milwaukee, Wis.

III. MUNICIPAL AND GOVERNMENTAL BUILDINGS
FIRST PRIZE
Alexander Municipal Airport Bldg. for City of Wausau, Wisconsin.
Foster & Yasko, Architects, Wausau, Wisconsin.

IV. INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS
No Awards.

V. COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
FIRST PRIZE
Architects’ Office of Lewis Siberz — Madison, Wis.
Office of Lewis Siberz (Lewis Siberz, Mark Purcell, Alexander Cuthbert) — Madison, Wisconsin.

VI. COMMERCIAL REMODELING
MENTION
Saxony Supper Club — Fox Point, Wisconsin.
Fritz von Grossmann, Architect, Milwaukee.
MENTION
Medical Office for Drs. Owen & Glienke, Milwaukee.
Frederick J. Schweitzer, Architect, Milwaukee, Wis.

VII. ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDINGS
MENTION
St. Ignatius Church, Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin.
MENTION
Chapel for Summerfield Methodist Church — Milwaukee.
Frederick J. Schweitzer, Architect — Milwaukee.
MENTION
William V. Kaeser, Architect — Madison.

VIII. RESIDENTIAL
FIRST AWARD
David Rabinovitz, Residence — Sheboygan, Wis.
Eugene Wasserman, Architect — Sheboygan.
SECOND AWARD
Douglas Osterhold, Residence — Shorewood Hills, Madison, Wisconsin.
William V. Kaeser, Architect — Madison.
MENTION
Fritz von Grossmann, Residence — Fox Point, Wis.
MENTION
Russ Dymond, Residence — Madison.
Weiler and Strang, Architects — Madison.

IX. MULTIPLE HOUSING
MENTION
Westlawn Low Rent Housing Project — H.H.F.A.-Milwaukee Housing Authority, Milwaukee.
Schaefer, Schneider, Schweitzer & Trapp, Architects — Milwaukee.
MENTION
Housing Development - Wis. 2-1 (Federal) 6th Ward, Milwaukee Housing Authority, Milwaukee.
Grassold & Johnson, Architects, Milwaukee.

X. INSTITUTIONAL
MENTION
Babcock Hall, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
Grassold & Johnson, Architects, Milwaukee.
Community Planning Discussed By A.I.A. Committee Members

The following letters received from the Octagon are two of a series of public letters which members of The Institute's Committee on Urban Design and Housing have written in order to share their experience in this field with their fellow architects.

CONRAD & CUMMINGS
99 Collier Street
Binghamton, New York

Dear Mr. Chairman:

You have requested a brief story of my activities in urban design and housing in this up-state of Binghamton, New York, and in the county of which it is the county seat. It is a story of opportunism rather than of crusading. But it is a story of a dedicated interest in the kind of public service an architect is fitted to render to his community.

When I moved from New York to Binghamton in 1920 the city had a meager building code, no zoning ordinance and no city plan. The progress that I have witnessed starts upon that base. A zoning ordinance was adopted in 1922. It was homemade and served usefully until 1932 when replaced by a zoning ordinance prepared by Bartholomew as a part of his city plan, of which I will say more later. It was revised again by Bartholomew in 1949 and the city is well protected in this respect.

Charles Mulford Robinson prepared a city plan for Binghamton in 1911. When I came here it had been forgotten. In 1926 a group of members of the Chamber of Commerce organized what we called the Live Wire Club, to put over desirable projects initiated by the Chamber. I had been urging that the city adopt a plan and when the Live Wire Club cast about for a first project to work upon, I proposed the city plan. We worked in committees for two years, but we were amateurs and the results of our voluntary work languished until a change of administration in City Hall brought into office a mayor who was sold on our objective. In 1930 the city appointed a City Planning Commission and appropriated funds for the employment of Harland Bartholomew and Associates. This organization produced our present city plan which was adopted in 1932. In 1949 Bartholomew was called back to revise it in certain respects. Within the past six months the City Council has engaged the staff of the County Planning Board for technical services relating to our city planning problems, and this work is at last established and staffed adequately.

During this period we had profited by the WPA program of 1934-37, through which we were able to prepare a complete tax map of the country. Also an alert City Engineer contracted for Randall Topo-
graphic maps for the entire city, and these were completed in 1935.

In the meanwhile we campaigned to revise the Binghamton building code, and the City Manager (whom we had lately acquired) steered that to adoption in 1934. Now that the new State building code is available, the present administration is proposing to accept it, which will bring us up-to-date on that score.

In 1937 a County Planning Board was formed and funds were appropriated to provide for its work. Its first report in 1938 was excellent and the work proceeded well until the war. All the facilities and manpower of the Board were put at the disposal of the war effort, and, the executive director having resigned, I was appointed to that post for the year 1944. It was during this period that I proposed and helped create the Broome County Community Council, of which I will say more later. By this device we were able to do a good public relations job of informing people about planning and arousing popular interest in and support for it. After the war, technical staff was again engaged and I went back to my practice. Much valuable staff assistance has been secured for little money by using graduate students in regional planning from the College of Architecture at nearby Cornell University. The master plan for the region is evolving and has already become a controlling element in county development. The County Planning Board has given assistance to the towns and villages in handling their zoning and planning problems, and altogether is splendidly regarded and established in the community. The latest evidence of that lies in the fact that the City of Binghamton, as noted earlier in this letter, has recently contracted with the county agency for service to the City's Planning Commission.

Reference has already been made to zoning and planning progress in the towns and villages. Most of the 16 towns and 7 villages contained within the county have availed themselves of the state enabling acts to set up zoning and planning procedures. The County Planning Board assists both in the preparation of the initial ordinances and in advising as to their administration. Occasional forums are conducted for local officials and administrators to help the general understanding and application of the principles involved. It will not be long before zoning and planning functions will have been extended throughout the entire county. Building regulations exist in the city and in some of the villages. It is anticipated that the villages will follow the lead of the city in accepting the new State building code. This is a matter in which I am presently actively concerned.

I have spoken of the Broome County Community Council, formed in September, 1943. Exactly one year later we published an interesting pamphlet entitled "Broome County — Our Home," in which we discussed twelve segments making up the rounded integrated life of the community, under the headings "What We Want" — "What We Have" — "What We Lack" — "What To Do About It." The Council is loosely organized, is an idea group and not an action group, and stays in the background, suggesting, promoting, helping, applauding, as steps in the betterment of our community are successively taken.

---

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State and Federal housing projects, both temporary (for the post-war emergency) and permanent, have been undertaken here. The most recent move has been toward slum eradication by redevelopment, the city having secured FPHA funds for the preliminary stages of such a project.

The accomplishment of some of the desirable projects of our city plan has been made possible by the State, in its arterial highway program and in its pressure against stream pollution. Street widenings, straightenings, connections, river bridges, an intercepting sewer system, are examples of this kind of aid. Work in flood control by the Army Engineers has also been turned to advantage by the county. It has required patient, intelligent campaigning to secure many of these aids from the upper governmental sources, and similar effort to obtain the required acquiescence and cooperation.

There is always plenty for every citizen to do in improving his community. For the architect-citizen there is not only his normal share, but also responsibility for leadership because of his special training. In my 32 years of effort here I have learned three things:

1. Planning is for people.
2. It makes no difference who gets the credit so long as the job gets done.
3. Patience is of the essence.

Very sincerely yours,
(s) George Bain Cummings
HARRISON, BALLARD & ALLEN
123 East 77th Street
New York 21

Mr. William W. Wurster
1451 LeRoy Avenue
Berkeley, California

Dear Bill:

When we were talking the other day in Philadelphia about the Architect's role in the planning field, you expressed some interest in knowing a bit more about the rezoning proposals which we have just finished here in New York.

As you know, New York City undertook a pioneering zoning job in 1916 which later on became pretty much of a pilot for many hundreds of other cities and communities throughout the country. During the intervening years the New York ordinance was amended more than fourteen hundred times and became, as a legal document, an extremely difficult one for technicians, or for that matter, lawyers to understand. Architects and others were further frustrated by the need of using three separate maps to tell them the use, land coverage and height restrictions of the buildings in which they were interested. Furthermore, it became apparent, particularly in the post-war years, that the original ordinance had not visualized the automobile in its present day role while allowing for a mammoth city with as many as seventy million residents.

The City Planning Commission asked us in 1948 to tackle a two-year rezoning study. Our principal job was to develop a one-map system if possible, and to write a new ordinance in the light of past experience, present conditions, and future considerations. We at once recognized that the job was really one of rezoning five separate cities and we were a bit concerned to be reminded that Queens County is almost as big as Detroit, in both area and population, that Brooklyn with an area comparable to Baltimore has a population one and one-third times as great as Philadelphia, and that Manhattan while covering no more land than Youngstown, Ohio, has as many people in it as Los Angeles. Each of the five Boroughs has its own commercial core and a solidly developed downtown. Each has its characteristic types and mixtures of residential development. Each has its light and heavy manufacturing area with specializations varying from county to county. Each has its cultural pattern and institutions and living habits.

Our first year's work was devoted principally to two major research jobs. The first was the development of a land use map covering eight hundred and fifty-six thousand pieces of real estate on thirty-six thousand City blocks. The second was a series of studies and forecasts of population growth; family characteristics; employment trends; desired location of employment; practical, financial and engineering limitations upon further development of transit — in other words, the pinning down of the framework facts upon which we had to mold our developing City. Two typical facts which emerged were these: (1) Contrary to general conception it is manufacturing that is the life blood of New York City and contrary to many people's thinking it is a proven fact that New York's main manufacturing tends to centralize rather than to decentralize and this, amazingly enough, in the small space on Manhattan Island below 59th Street; (2) the tremendous impact of the smaller family, due mainly to increased longevity. In 1940 the two million families averaged 3.64 persons and occupied 900 sq. ft. of residential floor space. In 1970 we estimate that the 2.8 million families will average 3.1 and require 885 sq. ft. of floor space — an increase of one third.

The retail pattern was carefully studied together with shopping habits which vary tremendously within the City. We had access to interesting figures...
revealing average floor space per employee in different types of industry. Many other facts and figures were developed during that first year.

In the second year we combined the basic facts with fresh concepts into a new and positively written ordinance. It is designed to be used as a dictionary for easy reference and relies heavily on tables. Five separate field teams then applied this ordinance to the actual thirty-six thousand blocks of the City and developed the corollary zoning map.

Of particular interest to architects everywhere are the controls of density, light and air, usable open space, off-street parking and loading berths. These have been very ably reviewed in considerable detail by the New York Chapter, A.I.A., in the booklet developed by Bruno Funaro and Geoffrey Baker, entitled, "A Review of the Proposals for Rezoning New York City." It is available at a cost of fifty cents to cover handling and mailing by writing to the A.I.A. Chapter. Geoffrey Platt and Walter Kilham were principally instrumental in procuring this good public service on the part of the Chapter.

We have recommended a simplified guide to the maximum bulk which may be built on each plot in the City called Floor Area Ratio. This is a simple figure which appears on the map and which is a multiple of the area of the plot itself. Through this device we have effectively reduced the maximum possible residential size of New York City to twelve million as opposed to its presently allowable seventy million. Maximum freedom is given to the Architect who, for instance, subject to other controls, with a Floor Area Ratio of five may build either a ten-story building covering 50% of the lot or a twenty-story building covering 25% of the lot.

To continue to provide light in the City streets and rear yards, but to free the building design from the present rigid "Ziggurat" pattern, designers would be permitted to "average" the angle of light obstruction providing the over-all light remained at an adequate standard. This recommendation will result in simpler shapes for higher bulk buildings more economical to construct.

To improve living and working amenities, more adequate rear and side yards are generally provided, more usable open space accessible to residential tenants would be required, while considerable freedom and coverage on the lower profit-making areas of commercial space are retained.

All windows which are needed to satisfy the ventilation requirements of the New York Building Code and the Multiple Dwelling Law will have to give upon a certain minimum of open space known as the Area for Light Access. This can be easily and quickly measured with a graphic device marked off in a series of wedge shaped sections on plans.

Instead of being permissive, off-street parking would become compulsory on a sliding scale, depending upon the practical availability of space and economical considerations of land values. Off-street loading facilities would be compulsory, even retroactively, in larger commercial and manufacturing buildings of sufficient size to make such facilities practicable.
To preserve the most important space for employment, new residences would be prohibited from all manufacturing districts except the very lightest loft type operations. Deeper zoning for commercial space would be mapped in those blocks where existing conditions and trends show a demand for larger and deeper store depth for more economical modern operation.

This is a brief outline of the proposals which come up for public hearings soon. Naturally we are anxious that the basic proposals be accepted in principle although we recognize that many details will be argued over in the public hearings and modifications made.

Very sincerely yours,
(s) William F. R. Ballard

Milwaukee Division

(Continued from Page 2)

The Jury's selection is published on another page of this issue.

Following, is part of the talk given by Dr. George A. Parkinson, Deputy Administrator, Milwaukee Civil Defense Program:

ADMINISTRATION OF CIVIL DEFENSE

First civil defense in the U.S. is about 300 years old, when pioneers built stockades to defend themselves against the Indians. The outstanding citizen in those days was not the person with the most money or the most education. He was the person with the best squirrel rifle who could knock over an Indian at 300 yards.

Each age in the development of America has produced a different type of outstanding citizen.

In the days of the development of the West, and the great agricultural areas, the outstanding citizen was the one who could grow the most wheat, the most corn, or who invented the best milk tester.

In the great industrial development of the present century, the outstanding citizen is the one who finds it possible to develop an industry which provides employment for the people of the community, and who develops the wealth and opportunities of the community.

The outstanding citizen of the decades ahead of us will be none of these types, but will be the man who helps the community organize its resources and train itself to survive in the atomic age.
I do not know all of the problems which will come to you gentlemen who are sitting here this evening, but I do think that the architects of the world, and particularly of the United States, have cut out for them a series of problems, the solution of which will last far into the end of this century and perhaps even into the beginning of the next. These problems which I submit to you are a proper function for your profession, but at the same time they do not relieve you as individuals of the responsibility for preparing yourselves to be of assistance to your own family, your neighbors, and your community in case disaster should strike, this help to be offered above the duties which you perform as a professional man and for which you are paid.

“Or Equal” Clause Discussed

At the North Central States Regional Conference in St. Paul, the latter part of Friday afternoon, November 7, was given over to a joint session of the A.I.A.-Producers’ Council for general discussion of that ever controversial subject, “The ‘Or Equal’ Clause.”

FROM THE ARCHITECT’S STANDPOINT

In case a product has no equal, the product might be described in its entirety in the specs.

All substitutions should be submitted by a stated date. The season is closed during the bidding time.

There is an apparent conflict between the desires of the contractors, the material men and the architects. The architect wants the best he can get for the least money. The contractor wants as much as he can get.

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Trylon closet is free standing for easy installation, flushes quietly without excessive use of water. Fixtures of pleasing modern design, finest materials — and attractive low cost. Kohler Co., Kohler, Wisconsin.
Strictly speaking, there is no equal material, or at least very seldom, especially in the case of a certain product designed for a specific purpose.

The "Or Equal" carries with it a highly competitive spirit and is strictly American.

FROM THE PRODUCERS' STANDPOINT

The architect wants as many bids as he can get. When the architect's specification permits substitutes, the danger of the long list is that some ingenious bidder can come up with a product containing a combined smattering of all the other products specified.

One of the evils of the "Or Equal" is that it enables a contractor, so inclined, to auction off subcontracts to the detriment of the Client. It's just a case of who is the hungriest.

The Producers' supported their stand against the "Or Equal" clause by citing first, from "Architects Specifications" by Goldwin Goldsmith published by the A.I.A. in 1948, and second the pamphlet issued by Theodore Irving Coe, A.I.A. Technical Secretary.

Chapter 14, from the Goldsmith book, dealing with the "Or Equal Clause," recommends:

1. To list all approved manufacturers and permit no substitutions or
2. Specify by brand name or names and add the following clause in the "Instructions to Bidders" to quote:

"VARIATIONS FROM MATERIALS SPECIFIED

"It is intended that materials or products specified by the name of the Manufacturer or the brand or trade name or catalog reference, shall be the basis of the estimate and furnished under the contract unless changed by mutual agreement before the contract is signed. Where two or more brands are named the choice of these shall be optional with the contractor.

Should the contractor wish to use any material or products other than those specified he must so state with his estimate naming the proposed substitutions clearly and state what difference, if any, will be made in the amount of his estimate for each substitution should it be accepted."

By THEODORE IRVING COE, Technical Secretary

The "Or Equal" Clause

A SPECIFICATION provision which has led to frequent misunderstandings, arguments, and failure to secure the products desired, is the familiar "or equal" clause used in conjunction with particularly named materials, appliances, or items of equipment.

It has no doubt been assumed that the use of this qualifying position tended to apply the competitive price factor to the products named and that the "or equal" would insure substitutes equal in quality and performance to those particularly named.

In effect the specifying, as a standard, of a recognized quality product of a responsible producer places that product at a competitive disadvantage particularly under conditions of competition which encourage the contractor to submit the lowest possible estimate.

Where this optional clause is specified, the architect is usually called upon to approve products submitted as substitutes for those specifically named.

Differences in the responsibility of producers and in the quality and performance of their products for

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the same use are likely to involve differences of opinion with reference to the relative quality of products, as compared with the standard specified.

These factors complicate the problem of the architect when called upon to approve products under the "or equal" option, especially when he has had little or no experience with such products or where they represent new developments which lack a background of time-testing experience.

The Producers' Council, being desirous of determining a specification procedure less prejudicial to the producers of quality products but designed to maintain the principle of competitive bidding and to permit the architect to readily choose between two or more alternate products, referred the problem to The Institute's Committee on Contract Documents which submitted the following proposed solution for the considerating and appropriate action of The Board of Directors of The Institute.

Competitive bids must, so far as practicable, be based upon identical materials and methods as well as quantities in order to permit valid price comparisons. Whenever more than one material is specified or permitted for a particular use, it is desirable that the specification should state clearly which material is to be used as the basis for the estimate. Alternate estimates should be separately submitted, for the substitution of any alternative equivalent materials that may be mentioned or permitted in the specifications, in the form of additions or deductions to be applied to the estimate if such alternative materials are adopted.

This proposed solution of the "or equal" problem was included by The Board in its Report to The 75th Annual Meeting of The Institute and was approved by a Resolution adopted by the meeting.

Under this approved procedure more than one material would be specified as permitted for a particular use, the specification stating clearly which material is to be used as the basis for the estimate, separate alternate estimates being required for the substitution of the alternative equivalent materials in the form of additions or deductions to be applied to the estimate if such alternative materials are adopted.

This procedure of substituting one or more definitely named products for the somewhat ambiguous and frequently controversial "or equal" clause will provide, as a part of the original estimate, definite information showing the difference in cost of alternative materials which will obviate the necessity of determining the quality of "or equal" products and facilitate, without question or controversy, a determination as to the particular products to be approved for the work.

---

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