A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Over the past decade readers of the NAOP newsletter - and the national press have seen articles on the controversies of the proposed expressway to President Carter’s Library in Atlanta and the proposed construction of a mega-commercial development at New York Hospital’s Psychiatric Hospital in White Plains, New York. Both controversies threatened Olmsted landscapes, challenged procedures for protecting historic landscapes, and involved NAOP and a coalition of preservation, resource and planning groups.

The White Plains case, while basically a local zoning issue, was elevated by the lawyers for New York Hospital to national proportions in their Herculean effort to block passage of NAOP-sponsored federal legislation to record and document historic landscapes and specifically prevent the White Plains site from being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Likewise in Atlanta, a local expressway issue was propelled into national attention because of President Carter’s involvement with the highway to his library.

Both of these controversies have been resolved recently. Since their resolutions did not receive as extensive coverage as their battle scenes, the following discussions of the exact terms of their resolutions and the processes by which they were reached are presented for they provide some insights for historic landscape work.

Perservance and politics were the critical factors in determining the course and the solution of both situations. Although difficult to compare, the New York Hospital case was more lopsided politically and financially than the Atlanta case and the results showed that imbalance. Certainly both brought to the attention of their immediate communities, as well as their states, the importance that citizens place in historic landscapes and in local self-determination.

ATLANTA

August 28, 1991 was “a new day for Atlanta”, according to Atlanta Mayor Maynard H. Jackson and indeed it was for all the neighborhood groups and Atlanta’s Olmsted Parks Society, who have been in and out of court the last nine years trying to limit the destruction and disruption of the proposed Presidential Parkway to the Carter Presidential Library.

WHITE PLAINS

On September 9, 1991, seven years after the Concerned Citizens Committee submitted its nomination of New York Hospital’s White Plains Psychiatric Division for listing on the National Register of Historic Places to the State Historic Preservation Office in Albany, the National Park Service declared the site eligible for listing on the National Register.
(Atlanta cont.)

On that historic Wednesday in August, Georgia’s state highway builders, the concerned neighborhood groups in Atlanta, and the City of Atlanta agreed on a scaled down parkway, which is shorter, cheaper, narrower, and less consumptive of land than the original high speed, limited access freeway proposal. The compromise, which has been welcomed by all the neighborhood groups and politicians including President Carter will be a winding four lane road with stop lights and even an artificial hill to slow down traffic leaving the Interstate. Druid Hills, the Olmsted designed suburb, and 8 acres of parkland have been spared in this new plan crafted by Leon Eplan, Atlanta’s Planning Director. The reduced right-of-way has also provided a dividend of 93 acres, which can now be used for much needed parks and housing.

The Olmsted Parks Society of Atlanta and NAOP board member, Sally Harbaugh, who have been in the thick of this lengthy and expensive battle, shared with Mayor Jackson his thought that, “This is truly a dream come true”. Atlanta’s Olmstedians and neighborhood advocates recognized the critical role that Mayor Jackson has played in resolving this controversy. Without his strong campaign and mayoral commitments to scale down the expressway and protect the neighborhoods, this resolution might not have evolved. It was Mayor Jackson’s planning director who worked out the compromise—which all goes to prove once again that we need the politicians on our team.

(White Plains cont.)

In this David and Goliath situation the Concerned Committee, headed initially by Karen Lucas and more recently by Dr. Ann Appelbaum, kept on persevering. When Albany did not act on the nomination after 6 years, the Concerned Committee requested the file be sent to the National Park Service in Washington for review and action. That was done and the Park Service determined the nomination was eligible for the National Register. But that was not the end as the state’s concurrence with the Park Service decision was needed. So it was back to Albany and yet another hearing and a repeat of Hospital/law firm pressure and collapse of the State Historic Preservation Officer. The SHPO recommended shrinking the size of the land in the nomination in line with the Hospital’s position. Jerry Rogers, the Keeper of the National Register in Washington, made a site inspection and agreed to “modify” the boundaries due to "changes in historical integrity".

So after these many years the National Park Service did determine the White Plains site, though shrunk, eligible for the National Register; New York Hospital was saved from developing an economic albatross in the current real estate downturn; the Hospital team of Chauncey Walker, Esq. and Gina Luria, PhD, were married; and the White Plains low density, residential zoning holds.
WOODLANDS IN URBAN PARKS

Conference Notes

Nearly 180 landscape architects, park managers and planners, community activists and concerned citizens from across the United States and Canada convened in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on October 4th and 5th, 1991 to attend the conference on Woodlands in Urban Parks. This event was co-sponsored by the National Association for Olmsted Parks and the Fairmount Park Commission. Professionals and volunteers alike came together to learn about restoration, protection, maintenance, and public education techniques to help save our nation's urban wilderness areas.

NAOP Trustee Peter Odell, of Philadelphia's Fairmount Park Commission, served as chairman of the conference. NAOP co-chairs Eleanor G. Ames and Nicholas Quennell, with the executive director of the Fairmount Park Commission William F. Mifflin, welcomed the conference participants. Mr. Mifflin opened with these welcoming remarks:

"On behalf of the Fairmount Park Commission, its president, F. Eugene Dixon, Jr., Mayor W. Wilson Goode, the City of Philadelphia, and all of its citizens, I want to officially welcome you to our city for this conference on Woodlands in Urban Parks.

Philadelphia is an old and historic city. It is known as the Quaker City, the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection, the City of Homes, the City of Trees, the City of Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson and the others who drafted and signed the Declaration of Independence and Framed the Constitution. Philadelphia, of course, is also known for its rich horticultural and arboricultural heritage.

Since its founding by William Penn more than 300 years ago, Philadelphia has had a love affair with the trees. Penn, and his survivor Thomas Holme, laid out their planned city, between the Delaware and the Schuylkill Rivers, in a checkerboard pattern with tree-lined streets, parks and squares where people could rest under a canopy of trees.

Penn's dream has survived until today. Fully ten percent of the City's land mass is preserved as public parkland. The Fairmount Park system covers more than 8,700 acres. Much of this parkland, particularly in the Wissahickon and Pennypack areas, is natural woodland.

As the park's Executive Director, I often find myself thinking about the future of our urban Woodlands. I am proud of what has been accomplished in this country's fifth largest city, but so much more needs to be done to ensure that future generations will enjoy the beauty and benefits our urban woodlands provide.

Urban woodlands are important assets that require care and maintenance just as other public property. A well managed urban woodland or forest contributes to the quality of life for our citizens. Specifically, urban woodlands play important roles in reducing air pollution, fighting the atmospheric greenhouse effect, conserving water and reducing soil erosion, saving energy, modifying local climate, increasing economic stability, reducing noise pollution, creating wildlife and plant diversity, and increasing the property value of urban areas.

Here in Philadelphia, those challenges facing our ability to maintain urban woodlands include: the need to begin a major reforestation project to replace those trees lost to maturity, storms or neglect, encroachment by developers, effects of severe insect and disease infestations, uncontrolled deer populations, unrestricted recreational activities and the invasion of non-native or exotic-native plants into our woodlands.

I am encouraged, however, by the increased public awareness of the importance of urban woodlands. Now if I could only get City Council to understand! In preparation for this presentation, I came across this quote in an 1897 report to the Boston Park Commission, 'There has always been money for construction, but never sufficient for maintenance.'

...continued
Conference Notes continued...

At a recent Urban Forestry conference here in Philadelphia, I attended a panel discussion. Panelists presented an overview of their organizations' efforts in urban forestry. I was truly impressed with the number of agencies now interested in and dedicated to improving and protecting our urban woodlands. These agencies included:

American Forestry Association
National Arborist Association
International Society of Arboriculture
National Tree Trust
National Arbor Day Association
United States Forest Service
National Association of State Foresters

Collectively, they provide a wide range of resources, from technical assistance and funding support to research. So I am very pleased with the potential of improving our woodlands in the future.

In conclusion, I am excited about this conference. I am pleased that so many professionals would come together to discuss the critical issue of preserving and improving our woodlands in the future.

I hope that you will enjoy your stay in our great city."

Mr. Mifflin then presented a Mayoral proclamation offered by the Mayor of Philadelphia, W. Wilson Goode:

"Even before Frederick Law Olmsted there was William Penn. In 1682 Penn, and his pioneer city planner Thomas Holme, planned for a city and an entire state with parks and woodlands throughout. Their plan for Philadelphia called for square blocks set aside for neighborhood parks and streets named for and lined with trees.

Penn's "Green Country Towne" grew large over the years and so did its parks. Hundreds of acres of city land were permanently dedicated to parks. The larger tracts were laid out as Olmsted suggested, to retain the natural beauty and terrain of God's good hand.

Today the city's Fairmount Park system covers more than 8,700 acres, much of it woodland and all of it bearing witness to the foresight and legacy of Penn, Holme, and Olmsted.

Therefore, W. Wilson Goode, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, do hereby proclaim October 4th and 5th, 1991 as WOODLANDS IN URBAN PARKS DAYS in Philadelphia, and remind all citizens to be thankful for the wonderful gifts left to us by these men of vision who could see the forest for the trees."

This proclamation was followed by the Keynote Address "Planning for the next Hundred Years", delivered by Ralph O. Cobham of Cobham Resource Consultants, England. Mr. Cobham is a landscape architect at Bienenheim, the great palace of the Duke of Marlborough. He is also successor to Frederick Law Olmsted at Biltmore, the George Vanderbilt Estate in North Carolina. The Welcome and the Keynote Address were delivered at the Harold Prince Theater at the Annenberg Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

Conference sessions, focused on the protection of the urban forest ecosystems, were led by experts from across the country in various areas of urban forestry and public policy. All "break-out" sessions were held at the Faculty Club of the University of Pennsylvania. The topics included Forest Restoration Projects, Funding and Public Involvement, Volunteerism and Education, Real World Plantings, Woodland Management Issues, Design for People, Pressures on the Ecosystem, and Woodland Surveys. Some of the participants also enjoyed guided tours through the woodlands of Pennypack Park, and the Wissahickon Valley, two of Philadelphia's great urban forests.

NAOP is now preparing a Workbook on Woodland Design and Restoration Issues presented at the Philadelphia Woodlands Conference. The Workbook will be available in January 1992.
FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED, JR.
IN THE NEWS

"Efficiency, Economy, Beauty: The City Planning Reports of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., 1905-1915" is the title of a very informative, well written and illustrated article by NAOP board member, Susan L. Klaus, and appears in the Autumn 1991 Journal of the American Planning Association, Volume 57, Number 4. Olmsted's theories and practise, based on his concept of comprehensive and regional planning are discussed as well as his institutionalization of the planning process, which helped provide the foundation for the new planning profession. Ms. Klaus is continuing her research on his early suburban work which was buttressed by Olmsted's strong interest in regional planning.

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. was also the topic of a talk Ms. Klaus gave at the 75th anniversary of the All Hallows Guild at the Washington National Cathedral on November 1, 1991. Olmsted prepared the master plan for the Cathedral grounds and worked over twenty years on the Cathedral, producing 255 plans.

In conjunction with the dedication of the plaque to FLO, Jr. at Rancho de los Palos Verdes, CA (discussed in regional news), Dwight L. Oliver has written a booklet, Landscape Architects Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., Extraordinary Careers. The booklet sketches the lives and work of the Olmsted son and father and some memories of Charlotte Olmsted Kursh, FLO, Jr's only child, with particular emphasis on their work and times in Palos Verdes.

The National Park Service, in celebrating its 75th anniversary, is publicizing Olmsted's critical participation in the formation of the Park Service. FLO, Jr's contribution of the basic statement of purpose is considered "next to the establishment of the Service,... the most vital aspect of the Organic

Act", according to a recent NPS flyer. That statement is: "To conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Olmsted Island in the Potomac River near Washington, DC, discussed in an earlier NAOP Newsletter, has been researched recently by the National Park Service. Its original name, Falls Island, was changed in 1960 when Conrad Wirth, then Director of the Park Service, recommended it be called Olmsted Island to honor both FLO, Sr. and FLO, Jr. "whose influence...contributed greatly to the orderly expansion of Washington and its parks". Thus, a small island near the dramatic Great Falls on the Potomac River was named for the Olmsteds.

YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions to NAOP are 100% tax deductible. Please remember the Association's needs when you are writing those last checks in 1991.
REGIONAL NEWS

CALIFORNIA

Rancho de los Palos Verdes Historical Society dedicated a plaque to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. on September 28, 1991. Due to ongoing restoration at the Olmsted site, the plaque was unveiled at the Malaga Library and will be installed later at the Olmsted home, Casa Felicita, built by architect Myron Hunt in 1925. FLO, Jr. was the landscape architect for the original Palos Verdes project in 1925-28 and Casa Felicita was one of the first houses to be built on the bluff site.

The ceremony, attended by Charlotte Olmsted Kursch, daughter of FLO, Jr. and her son, Dr. Stephen P. Gill and his wife, included a showing of the film, "The Story of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr." and a talk by Dwight Oliver. Oliver is one of the founders of the Rancho de los Palos Verdes Historical Society and author of a booklet, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.: Extraordinary Careers. (See FLO, Jr. column.)

FLORIDA

Jacksonville

Memorial Park, designed by the Olmsted firm in 1921-1923, has received two matching grants from Florida's Historic Advisory Council. The first grant covered the cost of restoration plans for the park, undertaken by a Jacksonville architectural firm, "following Olmsted's original design as closely as practical", according to Mrs. Judson Freeman, former president of Memorial Park Association. Below is the artist's sketch of the entrance to the park.

The second grant was approved this summer for the restoration of the bronze statue, "Life", the focal point of the park.

The Memorial Park Association, Mrs. Freeman reports, has found the lack of funding and the community's lack of understanding of the need to preserve and restore historic sites to be continuing problems, problems which beset most community organizations. The Memorial Park Association should be proud of its success in having a completed restoration plan for Memorial Park, the critical first step in landscape restoration work.

KENTUCKY

Louisville

The six month centennial celebration of Louisville's Olmsted parks ended with a day-long jamboree of a 100th birthday party attended by thousands in the Olmsted designed Central Park on September 7th. Louisville Friends of Olmsted Parks sponsored an "I Remember When" display asking people to write down their memories of Louisville parks to be published later. A play, "Birth of our Parks", was presented. The play recreated the 1891 town meeting when FLO, Sr. tried to convince the city of the need to develop a park system. Mayor Jerry Abramson, a strong Olmsted park supporter, and FLO (David Palmer of the University of Louisville
Drama Department) cut the birthday cake. No other city in this country has undertaken as long and as varied a celebration of its Olmsted parks as Louisville. Congratulations, Louisville!

It is not, however, all play in Louisville. NAOP Advisors, Charles E. Beveridge and Arleyn Levee, are collecting references and working on a history of the Olmsted designed Louisville park system.

**MAINE**

The Maine Alliance for Parks and Landscapes was awarded a $7,000 grant. The grant was awarded by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to prepare the first phase of a comprehensive survey of the state’s historic designed landscapes.

During the spring and summer, the Alliance held a series of lectures on landscape topics. In March Charles Beveridge spoke on FILO, Sr’s urban planning career. Later, as part of the Maine State Horticultural Show, the Alliance presented other lectures by Virginia Chisolm on Celia Thaxter's Appledore gardens on the Isle of Shoals, Rolf Diamant on Fairstede, the Olmsted National Historic Site, and Helen Rollins on the Archives of American Gardens. In July, the Alliance, together with the Friends of Acadia, offered lectures by NAOP co-chairman Eleanor Ames and Charles Beveridge on the Olmsted legacy at Acadia National Park. At its annual meeting held in Rockport in October, the Alliance presented yet another lecture, this one on Fletcher Steel, designer of the Bok Amphitheatre in Camden, by Robin Karson of Amherst, MA. The fall issue of the Alliance’s newsletter features articles on Hans Heistad, Acadia’s Motor Roads, Portland’s cemeteries, and Dickinson Road in Wiscasset. All rather impressive for a young organization, not yet two years old.

**MARYLAND**

*Baltimore*


**NEW YORK**

*Buffalo*

The Buffalo Friends of Olmsted Parks was awarded a $35,000 Design Advancement Program grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and a $10,000 grant from the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation to develop the conceptual design and design criteria for the Buffalo Greenways project. These grants, along with several other foundation and NY State Council on the Arts grants, have helped the Buffalo Friends launch this important greenway planning project. According to Gretchen Toles, chairman of the Buffalo Friends, it can be "a model for cities all across the country seeking to restore and expand their historic parks and park systems". For Buffalo's, world renowned first Olmsted park system, battered with encroachments and threats, this comprehensive master plan will be the participation of city, county, and state officials should provide the planning tools to protect and enhance this important urban park and parkway system.

An exhibit, "Frederick Law Olmsted: Designs for Buffalo’s Parks and Parkways: 1869-1898", was opened on November 8th at the Burchfield Art Center. A catalogue, "The Best Planned City: The Olmsted Legacy in Buffalo" was published for the occasion with articles by NAOP Advisors Arleyn Levee and Charles Beveridge, NAOP board member David Schuyler, Francis Kowsky of Buffalo State, and Jack Quinan. The catalogue (priced at $6.00) and a video of the show are available from the Burchfield Art Center. The exhibition continues through January 5, 1992.

*Rochester*

It is not often when landscape historians are called in as consultants to park departments. It is even more unusual when the reports of landscape historians are heeded by park departments in their development plans and projects. However, for
several years Rochester has been not only using landscape historians as consultants, but has incorporated their advice in several on-the-ground construction projects in Genesee Valley and Seneca Parks.

Charles Beveridge, editor of the Olmsted Papers and NAOP Advisor, and landscape architect, Patricia O’Donnell, have prepared the historic component of the master plan for the parks in conjunction with the Syracuse firm of EDR. As a result of their work, construction in the northern part of Genesee Park, including the reconfiguration of the drive and the siting of a picnic area, has followed the advice of the Beveridge-O’Donnell team. In Seneca Park where there has been a long-standing controversy over the expansion of the zoo, the County also heeded the historic landscape work for the master plan in planning a new drive and parking area and reducing the amount of land for the zoo expansion. In the northern part of Seneca Park, the restoration of the original Olmsted landscape concept is being undertaken.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

The Friends of Seattle’s Olmsted Parks is undertaking, with the full support of Seattle’s Department of Parks and Recreation and Water Department, the development of an interpretive display of the history of Seattle’s park system at the Water Tower in Volunteer Park. The exhibit will provide information about the Olmsted Brothers and Seattle’s park system, as well as an orientation of the views visible from the observation level of the Tower.

On October 21, 1991 the Friends of Seattle’s Olmsted Parks with 20 other organizations sponsored an Open Space Candidates Forum to find out where the City Council candidates stood on environmental issues, including parks. There was also an information fair where local organizations provided material on their activities. The Open Space Candidates Forum sounds like a program which should be held in cities all over the country on election years.

The 1991 Professional Award for Excellence in Community Service of the Washington Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects was given to the Friends of Seattle’s Olmsted Parks.

After the severe ice storm last March which destroyed thousands of trees in Rochester and its parks, Congresswoman Louise Slaughter succeeded in obtaining an emergency $4 million appropriation for the restoration of the Olmsted parks in Monroe, Genesee, Livingston and Ontario Counties. The funds were from the state and private forestry section of the Department of Interior’s budget. Such an appropriation will not only help restore trees in the parks, but will aid the overall restoration of the parks.
CALENDAR

May 15-16, 1992

Mark May 15-16, 1992 on your calendar for NAOP’s next conference which will be held in conjunction with Historic Denver, Inc.’s National Historic Preservation Week in Denver. NAOP’s annual meeting will be held at that time. Denver’s extraordinary Olmsted legacy is reflected in an extensive park and parkway system which is listed on the National Register. Included in Denver’s park system is a 14,000 acre mountain park system established in 1913.

April 1993

NAOP will meet in Atlanta in the spring of 1993. 1993 marks the 100th anniversary of FLO, Sr’s original design of the suburb of Druid Hills and the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Olmsted Parks Society of Atlanta.

NAOP WORKBOOK SERIES

Volume 2, An Ecosystem Approach to Woodland Management, by Director of Landscape Management for Prospect Park, Edward Toth, has been published and may be ordered from NAOP for $5.00.

Volume 3, Woodland Design & Restoration Issues presented at the NAOP October Conference in Philadelphia, will be available in early winter for $5.00. Not only will this volume summarize the conference sessions, but it will contain an analysis of several case studies by Charles Birnbaum, landscape architect with Walmsley & Co. in New York who has specialized in historic landscape restoration.

This Newsletter was edited by Ann Satterthwaite and Phyllis Knowles and prepared by Eunice Meek. The Woodlands Conference Notes were written by Kate Lapszynski and graphically designed by NAOP board member, Janet Olmsted Cross.

WHOSE PARK IS THIS?

In Essex County, New Jersey.
South Mountain Reservation