LOUISVILLE WORKSHOP

The "Mobilizing an Olmsted Organization" workshop held in mid-November in Louisville, Kentucky, was a success. The Louisville Friends of Olmsted Parks (LFOP), organized in the spring of 1987, hosted the workshop. Those in attendance were primarily Louisvillians, although there were a few from Indians who crossed the Ohio River to hear the accomplishments of Friends groups from Washington, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.

The Louisville Friends, inspired by the case studies presented, particularly by Betsy Barlow Rodgers' compelling lecture concerning the importance of parks, has been successful in promoting the cause of preservation and restoration of the Louisville Olmsted Legacy since the workshop.

SPRINGTIME IS RENEWAL TIME

Spring is a cheerful season. And for the NAOP, it is time to embark on our spring fundraising efforts. We begin by telling our readers who have not renewed their membership within the past year (since April 1987) that it is time to renew your membership.

In the past NAOP has been sending newsletters to anyone on the mailing list who was once a member, in the hopes that old members would renew. The Spring 1988 newsletter will be the last one mailed out in this fashion. So, if you enjoy keeping in touch with things Olmstedian, you must renew your membership now.

ANNUAL NAOP MEETING AND WORKSHOP
TO BE HELD IN CONNECTICUT APRIL 22 - 23
Workshop Topic: The Olmsted Legacy of Design in Connecticut: Opportunities for Restoration

The NAOP will hold its annual meeting on April 22-24 in New Haven, Connecticut. There will be a work session for Board Members on Friday afternoon and a public workshop on Saturday. The April 23 workshop will be held at the New Haven Colony Historical Society, 114 Whitney Avenue, New Haven and will run from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. There will be lectures in the morning and a workshop and tour in the afternoon. The workshop will concentrate on the identification and evaluation of the restoration potential for historic landscapes in Connecticut designed by Olmsted and other nineteenth-century landscape architects. Cost of the session will be $12.50 which includes lunch. A registration form is on the back of this newsletter.

NOTICE TO OUR READERS

If you have moved within the last year and have not informed the NAOP of your new address, you may not have received the Fall 1987 Newsletter. The post office will not forward bulk mail items, but, instead, returns them to the sender. This costs the NAOP 39¢ per newsletter. If the returned newsletter has the new address, NAOP considers the 39¢ well spent, but that is not always the case. So, if you have moved or have plans to move, please let us know so that you will receive the newsletter on time. In this way you will not miss any news or notices of approaching events.
Tupper Thomas, co-chair of the NAOP, was awarded the Public Service Award from the City of New York for her endeavors as the Administrator for Prospect Park in Brooklyn, New York. Six Public Service Awards are given every year by the City of New York for outstanding public service. A brief quote from the Public Papers Newsletter:

"In sum, she made the park safe, clean and welcoming. She also made it beautiful once again — no mean feat given the terrible devastation that had been allowed to ravage many sections and buildings. Under her leadership the Park is in its seventh year of a 20-year renovation program. Thomas took a classic Brooklyn facility and made it an oasis for all New Yorkers . . . she did this with a combination of savvy public relations and very serious daily ongoing management of the park."

Victoria Post Ranney, associate editor of the Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, received the American Society of Landscape Architects Chapter Service Award from the Illinois Chapter of the ASLA. The award was given to Ms. Ranney for her scholarship which "... has helped preserve the legacy of the historic landscapes of Frederick Law Olmsted." Ms. Ranney is completing the fifth volume of the Olmsted Papers, The California Frontier: 1863-1865.

Seattle, Washington

Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks (FSOP) reported in the Fall 1987 newsletter that a special meeting was held to consider the issue of demolition and reconstruction of bridge railings on six historic park bridges along Lake Washington and Interlaken Boulevard. In March of 1987, the Seattle Engineering Department released a bridge railing study which identified and rated thirty-four bridge structures in the city with deficient railing according to current city standards. As a result of the ratings, six park bridges were identified as in need of improvements. Improvements that would allow the bridge to withstand ten thousand pounds or fifty-five miles per hour impact. The railing would have to be fifty-four inches high to protect pedestrians and bicyclists. Four of the six bridges were designed by Olmsted. The Engineering Department, in a letter to the FSOP written after the meeting, agreed that no further work should be done on the railing designs until the future historic status of the bridges is known and how that status would affect the future application of the AASHTO standards.

On January 18th, William Penn Mott, the Director of the National Park Service, addressed a crowd of over three hundred at a lecture, entitled "The National Park System, Protection and Preservation in the 21st Century," sponsored by the FSOP. Mr. Mott made frequent allusions to the work of F. L. Olmsted and the importance of his work. The FSOP viewed the record-breaking attendance as a sign that interest in parks is very much alive. Those attending left more informed about the Olmsted legacy and the importance of inventorying the projects.

Moscow, Idaho

John C. Olmsted Campus Plan rediscovered. A special issue of the University Magazine published by the University of Idaho at Moscow, will feature the John C. Olmsted plan for the campus prepared in 1907. The original plan included an expansion design which was not executed. The University is
looking at the entire design to see what can be salvaged or adapted. The articles will be produced by the Historical Society of Idaho and the History Department and will contain historical and modern photographs of the campus.

Chicago, Illinois

The Illinois Local American Society of Landscape Architects will be sponsoring a lecture in March. Charles Beveridge will lecture on the public design projects of the Olmsted Firm, the collaborative efforts of the firm and local landscape architects, and Olmsted Sr.'s concept of a regional style for midwestern landscape architecture.

Massachusetts

Massachusetts reported that on November 25, 1987, the State Legislature approved $17 million for the Department of Environmental Management's Olmsted Historic Parks Program.

Louisville, Kentucky

There are two items of interest from the Louisville Friends of Olmsted Parks (LFOP): the Federal Highway Administration vetoed the proposed turning lane for the west side of the 4300 Block of Southern Parkway, one of the three Olmsted designed parkways which link Cherokee, Iroquois, and Shawnee parks, forming part of the Louisville Park System.

The LFOP received $7,000 in grants from the City of Louisville and Jefferson County to undertake an inventory of the public and private works of the Olmsted Firm.

New York

Brooklyn: On August 4, a ground-breaking ceremony for a $60 million renovation for Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, New York, was held. The plan is to resurface the entire 2.2 mile length of road, construct new sidewalks, and add extensive landscaping to restore grassy malls. Curved cast iron and wood benches will replace existing wood and cement seating. Granite curbstones will be placed along the entire length of the sidewalks. Sidewalks will be paved with hexagonal tiles. Funds allocated to the cancelled Westway Project were made available for the renovation. Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux were involved in the design and construction of the Eastern Parkway in the late 1860s.

Buffalo: Buffalo Friends of Olmsted Parks notes that the Delaware Park shoreline restoration project received Environmental Bond Act funding from the State of New York.

Rochester: The centennial of the Rochester Park System will be celebrated throughout 1988. Events of interest to Olmstedians include an exhibit at the International Museum of Photography in the George Eastman House, featuring Rochester's parks and people in the 1920s. The exhibit, "Rochester in Color, the Autochromes of Charles Zoller," contains portraits of the parks in the early years of development.

On March 30, Dr. Blake McElvee will give a lecture on development of the park system. The lecture will be at 7:00 PM at the Strong Museum Auditorium.

In September the Strong Museum will open its exhibit on the work of Frederick Law Olmsted in Rochester.

On October 4th, Dr. Charles Beveridge, the Editor of the Olmsted Papers, will lecture at the Strong Museum on Frederick Law Olmsted's contributions in Rochester.

Utica: On Saturday, September 19, 1987, the New York State Association for Olmsted Parks in co-sponsorship with Landmarks Society of Greater Utica held a seminar, "Utica's Legacy of Historic Landscapes." The seminar marked the fifth meeting of the recently formed statewide Olmsted group. Arleyn Levez, landscape historian, and Executive Board member of the NAOP, was the guest lecturer. Douglas Preston, Director of the Oneida County Historical Society, gave a presentation on the history of the Utica parks and the local family who advocated their development.

The New York State Association has planned a conference. "Goat Island, the Stewardship of Nature's Garden," for the weekend of May 13-15 in Niagara Falls. Goat Island is located at the brink of the falls and was the centerpiece of the 1887 Olmsted and Vaux plan for the Niagara reservation. The conference
will explore issues on preservation and restoration of historical landscapes as they pertain to the contemporary needs of wilderness reservations.

A full weekend is planned with lectures and tours of the reservation. Co-sponsoring groups include the Goat Island Advisory Committee, the Buffalo Friends of Olmsted Parks, the America Society of Landscape Architects, Upstate Chapter, the WAOEP, the Niagara Falls Botanical Society, the Audubon Society, the Erie County Preservation Coalition and the Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier. See Conference Listings for contact person.

Connecticut

New Haven: The Foundation for the New Haven Green, organized eighteen months ago, has raised $4.2 million of the $5 million goal for the restoration of the New Haven Green, according to Sanford Parisky, the fund-raising consultant for the Foundation. The restoration and improvements include renovation of the entrance way, period fixtures, repair of the cast iron and granite fence, transit and pedestrian improvements to the paths and perimeter, and new landscaping. Quennell Rothschild Associates is the consulting landscape architectural firm. The $5 million goal includes a $1 million endowment fund for maintenance and repairs above and beyond that provided by the City of New Haven. $2.8 million was raised from government sources (federal, state, and city), $800,000 from corporations, $370,000 from foundations, with the remainder from individuals.

Hartford: The Bushnell Park Foundation reports that efforts to restore the 135-year-old park include the restoration of four entrances, graffiti removal, repair, and restoration of a Civil War arch, and extensive replanting. Future improvements requiring an additional $1 million include a new play area for children, a "trees in trust" program, and the establishment of an endowment fund for future maintenance.

CONFERENCES:

March 25-26: Landscape Preservation Seminar at University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Topics include, similarities and differences between conservation of natural land areas with preservation of the built and cultural landscapes, current state of scholarship in American Landscape history, natural land conservation and preservation practices, direction and education needs of the landscape preservation movements.

Speakers include Rudy Favretti, Susan Frey, Ann Henderson, Ann Marston, Patricia O'Donnell, Noel Dorsey Vernon. For registration information: Alice Szlosek, Division of Continuing Education, 608 Goodell Building, University of Massachusetts, 413-545-2484. For content information: Dept. of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, 32A Hills North, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003, 413-545-2255.

April 21-23: Symposium: The Adaptive Reuse of Historically Significant Institutional Buildings and Grounds, sponsored by School of Architecture and Environmental Design of the State University of New York, Buffalo, Burchfield Art Center and the Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier. Symposium to be held at the Burchfield Art Center, Rockwell Hall, on the SUNY Campus, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222. For information contact Marcia Feuerstein or Kynda Schneekloth at the Department of Architecture, 716-831-3483, or Barbara Campagna, Director, Landmark Society, 716-842-4338. Tour of the city, including buildings by F. L. Wright, Taylor, Burnham, and the Olmsted Park and Parkway System.

May 13-15: "Coat Island, the Stewardship of Nature's Garden," Niagara Falls, New York. For information contact:
Clyde Eller
New York State
Association for Olmsted Parks
373 Lincoln Parkway
Buffalo, NY 14216
716-875-4713.


August 7-11: North American Prairie Conference at University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Call for papers on topics including prairie restoration and the influence of the prairie on literature and the arts. Dr. Thomas B. Bragg, Department of Biology, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE 68182.

EXHIBITS

April 13-17: San Francisco Landscape Show featuring original drawings and planting plans by Gertrude Jekyll and Beatrix Farrand from the Reef Point Collection at the Univ. of Berkeley. Ann Gregory, McLaren Lodge, Golden Gate Park. SF 94117, 415-221-1310.

UPDATE: Olmsted Historic Landscapes

Bill: HR 17

The Olmsted Historic Landscapes Bill (HR 37) that was introduced in 1985 in the 99th Congress passed the House but failed passage in the Senate in the closing hours of the last session due to a parliamentary maneuver. The bill was reintroduced, as HR 17, in the new Congress and hearings were held on July 28, 1987, by the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, Congressman Bruce Vento (D Minnesota), Chairman. As in the previous Congress, the principal purpose of the bill was to define an Olmsted Heritage Landscape (a design by "Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., his sons and partners, and his associates Calvert Vaux, Charles Eliot, Warren Manning, Jacob Weidenmann, Horace W. S. Cleveland, William Hammond Hall, and George Kessler."

The bill provided for a listing of all such Olmsted Heritage Landscapes, giving a description of the landscape, its location, principal designer, and present status. This was to be followed by a more detailed evaluation of all such landscapes eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and all publicly owned Olmsted Heritage Landscapes. The goal was a comprehensive inventory, to assess the extent and present condition of the Olmsted design legacy. The bill received strong and able support from representatives of numerous organizations and institutions: the American Society of Landscape Architects; National Trust for Historic Preservation; American Planning Association; Office of Technology Assessment; Monmouth County, NJ, Park System; Sugarloaf Regional Trails; Iowa State University; Preservation Action; National Recreation and Park Association; National Parks and Conservation Association; and National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers. Among those opposed was the National Park Service.

The bill that emerged from mark-up in October, and soon after passed the House, was very different from the bill for which so many groups, including the NAOP, had testified in July. In an apparent effort to meet the objections of the present Administration, the revised legislation presented a bill in line with the one that the Park Service had originally asked for in testimony on HR 37 in 1985. This meant the abandonment of the systematic and thorough inventory of Olmsted Heritage Landscapes that was the heart of both HR 37 and HR 17 through the period of hearings in July 1987.

Instead, the bill as it passed the House simply directed the National Park Service to "encourage" states to nominate historic landscapes in general, "and Olmsted heritage landscapes in particular" to the National Register of Historic Places. In doing so it abandoned the educational purposes of the original bill, which went far beyond identifying National Register candidates. Further, it removed the requirement that Olmsted Heritage Landscapes be studied by the National Park Service and state historic preservation officers. All that is now mandated is a general thematic survey of historic landscapes of all kinds by the Secretary of Interior, and development of guidelines for applying to historic
The Overlook at Iroquois Park

Friends of Olmsted Parks

339 Guthrie Green, Room 309
Louisville, Kentucky 40202
(502) 589-0843

and

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR OLMS TED PARKS

invite you to join us for

"MOBILIZING AN OLMS TED CONSTITUENCY"

NOVEMBER 7 and 8, 1987

Spend the weekend with the talented and creative forces behind the national Olmsted movement. Program participants from Boston, Seattle, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, and New York City will be in Louisville to share their special expertise.

SATURDAY'S WORKSHOP AGENDA

9:00 - 9:30 a.m.
Registration

9:30 - 10:15 a.m.
Olmsted's Philosophy on Park Systems

10:30 - Noon
The Purposes, Functions and Goals of a Local Olmsted Organization

Noon - 1 p.m.
Lunch

1:15 - 2:15 p.m.
Update on Louisville Friends of Olmsted Parks Association

2:15 - 3:00 p.m.
Advocacy and Volunteerism

3:00 - 3:45 p.m.
Maximizing Public Awareness

3:45 - 4:30 p.m.
Fund-Raising Techniques

4:30 - 5:00 p.m.
A Plan of Action for Louisville Friends of Olmsted Parks Association

5:30 p.m.
Reception at the Filson Club

SUNDAY'S BUS TOUR

9:00 - 1:30 p.m.
Tour of the Major Olmsted Parks

ACQUISITION DATE      PARK

(1) 1890  Baxter Square
(2) 1888  * Iroquois Park
(3) 1891  * Boone Square
(4) 1891  * Cherokee Park
(5) 1892  * Shawnee Park
(6) 1895  Eastern Parkway
(7) 1900  3rd Street Playground (Triangle)
(8) 1904  Central Park
(9) 1906  Elliott Park
(10) 1906  Tyler Park
(11) 1907  Coldwell Playground (Shelby Park)
(12) 1911  Churchill Park
(13) 1913  Bingham (Clifton Park)
(14) 1919  Victory Park
(15) 1921  Chickasaw Park
(16) 1928  Algonquin Park
(17) 1928  Seneca Park

* Asterisks indicate those designs created by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., in collaboration with his partners before his retirement in the summer of 1895.
Expert on Olmsted works getting to see designer's legacy in Louisville parks

By DANIEL RUBIN
Staff Writer

When Charles Beveridge rode through Cherokee Park on his way from the airport Friday, words almost a century old ran through his mind.

"In 1891, the premier landscape designer of the day had a vision for the more than 400 wooded acres in suburban Louisville. He would create a place to provide "the refreshment that is to be had in the contemplation of supper shade trees, standing singly and in open groups distributed naturally on a gracefully undulating green-sward."

Beveridge knows from memory this description of what would become Cherokee Park. He first came upon it in the early 1960s while working on his dissertation. He has read it countless times since as a historian who specializes in the works of Frederick Law Olmsted, architect of Louisville's park system.

But the editor of "The Frederick Law Olmsted Papers," until this weekend, had never seen the parks Olmsted designed in Louisville - Cherokee, Iroquois and Shawnee, plus Boone Square in Portland - nor the more than 115 other projects Olmsted's firm planned in the city after his retirement in 1895.

Today, Beveridge expects to tour the major landmarks with several dozen members of the National Association for Olmsted Parks, whose board is meeting in Louisville.

If time allows, he will work his way through some of the subdivisions, cemeteries, hospital grounds, parkways and private estates that the Brookline, Mass., firm designed.

"I've been trying to get here for a long time," said Beveridge, a history professor at American University in Washington. "Clearly, Louisville is one of the most impressive cities for the Olmsted firm."

The quick ride through Cherokee Park

See OLMSTED PAGE 3, col. 3, this section
landscapes the Secretary's Standard for Historic Preservation Projects.

The bill retains the title of "Olmsted Heritage Landscapes Act," and the definition of an "Olmsted Heritage Landscape," but gives no special standing to landscapes so defined, and does not mandate an inventory of them, as it did at the time of hearings in July 1987.

The original bill contained provision for a technical committee that would assist the Secretary of Interior in creation of the Olmsted Heritage Landscape inventory. The new version, as passed, creates instead an advisory commission "to advise the Secretary on the preservation of the Olmsted National Historic Site and other historic landscapes." Even earlier versions of the bill, with their much stronger emphasis on Olmsted-firm-designed landscapes, did not give the advisory group a role in the operation of the Olmsted National Historic Site ("Fairstred"). The NAOP is aware of no previous public discussion of the issue, and feels that it is inappropriate for the board created by the new HR 17 to play that role. The NAOP feels that the members of such an Olmsted Site advisory board—should one be found to be desirable—should be drawn from the organizations and institutions most directly involved with Fairstred and the Olmsted archives there.

The NAOP is concerned that such major changes in the Olmsted legislation, with which we have been so closely involved from the beginning, should be made without our having an opportunity to comment on the extensive changes made in the bill between the hearings in July and the mark-up in the Fall. At their meeting in Louisville in November, the trustees of NAOP declared their opposition to the bill in its present form. We still believe in the desirability of a comprehensive inventory of Olmsted Heritage Landscapes, and are not willing to see the present bill passed without mandating such an inventory. We do feel that the National Park Service should carry out a general theme study on historic landscapes, and should facilitate nomination and preservation of such landscapes. The NAOP will be glad to support legislation for that purpose: but we see no reason why the Olmsted Legacy inventory should be sacrificed in the process of securing such legislation.

BOOK REVIEW


After reading Frederick Law Olmsted and the City Planning Movement in the United States, this reader, a city planner, was left with two strong and contrasting feelings. One was the sad recognition of the intellectual, administrative, and political disintegration of planning in the last thirty years. As urban problems have compounded, planning has become fragmented and specialized, losing the important idealism and comprehensiveness which guided early planners like Olmsted. On the other hand, it was exhilarating to learn more of Olmsted's foresight in seeing the benefits of urbanization as well as the possibilities of structuring urban development to serve man's social, economic and aesthetic needs at a time when many of Olmsted's contemporaries spurned the new urbanization.

For Olmsted, the city with its commerce, culture, sociability, and progress could be a wellspring of civilization for all people, if its growth was guided to "serve . . . every legitimate interest of the wide world; not of ordinary commerce only, but of humanity, religion, art, science and scholarship." Indeed, Olmsted's writings, plans and projects provided important inspiration for the City Beautiful Movement and later the planning profession. As the New York Times stated in 1872 "Olmsted is to be credited with the first successful application, in part, of the idea that growth of American cities can be judiciously guided."

As Olmsted's remarkable planning work has not received as much attention as his earlier park projects, Mr. Fisher's book is indeed welcome. Olmsted's plans for suburbs, for example, have not been the focus of much scholarly investigation, and yet they were a major contribution to both American and British planning. The 1869
landmark Riverside Plan and development no doubt influenced Ebenezer Howard, who worked in Chicago at the Ely and Burnham firm in the 1870s before he returned to England to write his famous Garden Cities of Tomorrow.

Mr. Fisher's book focusses on the development of Olmsted's intellectual rationale and how that rationale influenced the progression of his plans from the early parks like Central Park to the later broader park systems like Boston's and suburbs like Riverside and Riverdale. There was disappointingly little analysis of these plans and their impacts on cities and urban living. Fuller discussion of these plans would have been useful illustrations of Mr. Fisher's philosophical thesis.

Mr. Fisher, however, wove together the fascinating intellectual threads of American Transcendentalism, German romantic idealism, and Puritan morality into the philosophy which made it possible for Olmsted to merge beauty, function, and morality. The influence of Bushnell, Emerson, Ruskin, and Coleridge on Olmsted's thinking has long been recognized, but what Fisher had added to that mix is the theory of identity based on the notion of an organic universe and the unconscious developed by the early nineteenth-century German Romantic philosopher, F. W. J. von Schelling. For Schelling, the individual can organize the universe in light of his own experiences and project his own personality into the realm of nature. The purest expression of this philosophy comes from the identity found in works of art. Thus, the planner became "the artistic genius, who, by the infusion of his thought into nature, recreates nature at a higher level of organic unity," according to Fisher.

Olmsted felt the aesthetic experience raised one's mind to a higher level of thought and feeling, "an enlarged sense of freedom." Art could convert the shattered urban or any other psyche to an organic wholeness synthesizing contrary elements. Olmsted "intended the park as a work of art to act," as Fisher states, "as an agency to reconcile art and nature; the rural and the urban; . . . the calculating, rational mind with the irrational processes of perceiving and feeling; the atomized impersonality of mass society in the city streets with the warm

communality of family and neighborly gathering in the park; the rectangularity of the city streets and buildings with the free-flowing, natural lines of the park." Though Olmsted designed the park as an antithesis to the city, his purpose was to integrate the park with the city into a new organic, urban configuration.

Living in an era of reform, it is no surprise that Olmsted's underlying motivation was moral. "Our first duty," Olmsted said, "is that which is the first duty of every man for himself—improvement, restoration and regeneration." Olmsted's parks and later suburbs were vehicles, according to Fisher, for society transforming itself through aesthetic reason. Olmsted "was seeking social reform by achieving individual psychological change through aesthetic impulse," Fisher stated. And this social reform did not involve the radical destruction of existing institutions, but rather accommodation to those institutions.

Fisher does an excellent job showing us how this nineteenth-century moral urge for reform was blended with Olmsted's concern for art and function as well as with his optimism about the potential of man enjoying art and improving his lot to produce the intellectual rational for Olmsted's visionary plans. This intellectually stimulating book is not for light bedside reading. It is a tough-going academic book that helps us understand the genius of Olmsted and his vision of guiding the growth of cities, a vision that has been blurred recently by the return of bald laissez-faire, the compartmentalization of planning, the lack of interest in reform and the aesthetic, and absence of the idealism needed to fire planning as well as the public's acceptance of planning.

Ann Satterthwaite

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS

Paper resulting from Preserved Planned Landscapes and other Outdoor Sites Workshop, Feb 27-28, 1986. The workshop was held in response to the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs request. The Paper identifies and examines the technological issues related to the identification and preservation of historic and prehistoric landscapes.

Betsy Blackmar and Roy Rosenzweig, "The Battle of the Parks," South Street Seaport (Summer 1987): 36-43. An analysis of the competition between the Central Park and Jones Wood sites for park supremacy in New York City during the 1850s. This collaborative effort at a social history of Central Park, supported by an NEH grant, contrasts the design philosophies embodied in the two facilities—the now-familiar "natural" landscape of the Olmsted-Vaux creation vs. the then-preferred "commercial amusements" center for the East River site—as well as the socio-political implications of both conceptualizations. Professors Blackmar and Rosenzweig maintain further that "the creation of Central Park," a "story... so often told exclusively as one involving disinterested men of public interest and public spirit fulfilling the city's natural destiny," actually "revolved around the conflicting interests of real estate developers, politicians, large taxpayers, and ordinary city residents." How the sides for these "Competing interest" aligned themselves and then fought their civic battles makes for a more interesting story than the one "so often told."

Jon C. Teaford, "Landscaping America," Reviews in American History (December 1987): 656-61. An essay review of two new monographs in "the literature on the nation's green infrastructure," which offers the warning to Olmstedians that "it is perhaps time to jostle the pedestal on which the great planner had been placed and challenge some of his beliefs and question the merits of his achievements" in both park and suburban planning.


Suzanne M. Hall, "Progress or Preservation: The Presidential Parkway Controversy, 1946-1986," Atlanta History (Spring-Summer 1987): 22-38. A detailed overview of four decades of transportation planning for the areas adjacent to and including the Olmsted-designed suburb of Druid Hills. Especially noteworthy is its demonstration of official (or institutional) memory: once a highway has been sketched out on the drawing board, generations of public officials will endeavor to etch in concrete—all opposition notwithstanding.

"Architecture and Public Spaces" special issue of The Public Interest (Winter 1984). The two articles in the "American Landscape" section for this journal of the New Right (a.k.a. the Old Left) by J. B. Jackson and Roger Starr are certain to confound confirmed Olmstedians. Jackson provides still another of his provocative populist critiques of "Olmsted's isolated art-works." Starr indulges in yet another semi-informed exercise in "Olmsted bashing," as Frederick Gutheim labeled the sport in the Fall 1987 issue of this Newsletter.

The newsletter is published three times a year with regular issues during the fall and spring; plus a summer supplement devoted to a review of the literature in the field. The Editor welcomes feature articles, news items and announcements, notices of forthcoming events and programs, as well as ideas for topics to be covered and books to be reviewed. The Editor would like to encourage letters which, if of general interest, will be included in our new letter section. All correspondence should be directed to NAOP, 5010 Wisconsin Ave NW, Room 308, Washington, DC 20016. Copies of the newsletter are available at a cost of $3.00 per issue.

Editor: Dana F. White
Production: Piera Weiss.