

S. B. Thesis.

A Design for a Civic Center, Dedicated
to the Memory of Those Who Have Devoted
Their Lives to Exploration.

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While the movement in its present recrudescence is recent, the art of city planning is one of the greatest antiquity. The remains of the earliest communal abodes of Man, of however primitive a nature, show a certain definite arrangement. With the development of races, villages became towns and towns cities continually on a larger scale, and it is undoubtedly true that the higher the degree of civilization of a people, the greater will be the size of its cities. The glories of the Ancients were generally reflected by their cities.

Genius has occasionally arisen in the art of city planning and we hear of such men as Merian, Canaletto and Wren. The latter after the great London fire of 1666, had the genius to reconstruct the city on a plan that would have made it one of the most beautiful in the world, but he was ahead of his time and London was allowed to grow up into the disordered mass of streets and lanes that today make it the greatest spot of confusion on the face of the globe.

L'Enfant, who planned the city of Washington, and Baron Haussmann, who rebuilt Paris, enjoyed the good fortune of being ably supported by a generous public.

Today we are beginning great undertakings in civic improvements. In almost every city of the world there are committees and societies, whose purpose it is to carry on these improvements. Even new cities, such as "Canberra" the future capital city of Australia, are laid out on paper before the first building is erected. In 1910 London was the meeting place of a mighty conference on town planning.

In the scope of practical city planning are included the broadest principles and the fullest details. The leading elements are the plan of the city as a whole; the segregation in suitable districts of the different classes of the population and their proper housing in classes of structures suited to their requirements, the arrangements of such classes of structures in groups and district units and the placing of such groups and units in proper relation to the whole; the development of other units, such as civic centers, parks, athletic and recreation fields and cemeteries and their location with reference to their uses and nature; the supplying of the units

with the facilities and the public structures necessary for the business to be transacted in them; the location in civic centers of buildings suited thereto, both as to their uses and their architectural qualities; the arrangements of systems of transportation, the laying out of streams of traffic, location of railway stations and many other units, all in accordance with a settled plan, adapted to fulfil in the best possible way, the purposes intended.

Let us now take up a problem that is directly concerned with this movement for better civic conditions. In a large city a certain section of an unfortunate and disreputable character is to be demolished and a public square created on the site. The land is bounded on the west by a broad slow moving river which is deep enough for navigation. The central part of the city lies to the east and north while southward along the water front the land is reclaimed and awaits improving.

The square is to be dedicated to those brave men whose lives have been devoted to explorations. The inspiration for this dedication came from the recent attempts and discoveries of the North and

South Poles and more especially by the death of Captain Scott at the South Pole. It is desired however to commemorate the deeds of all great explorers such as Eric the Red, Columbus, Balboa, Drake, Magellan, Livingston, Stanley, Lewis, Clark, Franklin, Andre and many others.

The solution:

The principle feature of the square is a large obelisk over 300 feet high placed geometrically in its center. On each of the four sides of the large base is a great niche which houses a group of allegorical figures representing one of the vast regions North, South, East and West. On free standing columns about the base contains other statuary and four fountains, the latter at the corners.

The square is approached from the south by a broad avenue, flanked on each side by gardens which spread out to the river on one side and to the city buildings on the other, making a very beautiful esplanade along the water front, with its statues, fountains, shrubbery and ornamental flower beds.

At the north side of the square and overlooking the parkway is a large museum and auditorium joined together as one building. This makes an admirable termination for the esplanade and serves the double purpose of exhibiting relics of expeditions and literature dwelling on this subject in general, and also giving a large place for social gatherings where lectures may be given on this subject and others. The museum faces the square and the facade is composed of an imposing colonnade terminated by pavillions. The rooms are lighted entirely by sky-lights. The auditorium is circular in plan. It will accomodate 3000 people.

On the east of the square are two buildings designed for municipal purposes. These are identical in plan and elevation and flank the main avenue running in that direction. Broad streets, lined with shade trees and ornamental lamp posts, radiate from the square on the landward side while a stone bridge crosses the river on the axis of the momment.

The accompanying drawings are:-

General elevation	at	$1/32''$	scale
General plan	at	$1/64''$	scale
Elevation of monument	at	$3/32''$	scale
Tranverse section	at	$1/32''$	scale.