

... But Nobody Does

Community planning is a little like the weather. In the case of the planning, everybody says, "sure, we ought to plan"—but nobody does.

We probably won't till one of two things happens—till either we become convinced it will pay off in dollars and cents or till conditions force us to, at terrific cost because it wasn't done sooner.

Since becoming convinced it would pay off in dollars and cents would save the useless expenditure of a lot of dollars and cents that delay would necessitate, we present, at the bottom of this page, some rather strong evidence that planning, now, is just plain good business.

"A motorist is not a shopper until he becomes a pedestrian," says a study of the Town of Mooresville, quoted by Popular-Government. And because it waited too long to do it, the town of Albemarle "has been forced to spend sizable sums of money in recent years to widen some of the uptown streets", and will be forced to spend other sizable sums later, points out that town's Stanly News and Press.

Except for minor details, you could write "Franklin" instead of "Mooresville" into the first piece, and "Franklin" instead of "Albemarle" into the second, and find what is said fits us snugly.

Today, lack of planning is costing uptown merchants in Franklin thousands of dollars; because "a motorist is not a shopper until he becomes a pedestrian"—and the parking situation sometimes makes it almost impossible to become a pedestrian.

And with the town growing, and traffic growing even faster, it's obvious the time is coming when we'll be forced to broaden the ox-cart width streets of Franklin. When is the best time to start? Well, the more buildings there are, the more it would cost to push 'em back out of the way of a widened street. It would cost two or three times as much now as it would have five or ten years ago; it probably would cost six or seven times as much five or ten years from now as it would today.

While something could be done now about the narrow residential streets, it would be virtually a financial impossibility to widen an uptown street overnight. The only practical way is to set a building line, and require that new buildings be set back of that line; thus, after a while, most of the buildings would be back far enough to permit street widening. But the longer that is put off, the more it will cost—and the longer it will take to get those buildings back.

And of course street widening is only one phase of the many-sided need for planning. At the moment, for example, parking space is the crying need.

Has Franklin good enough business leadership to start doing something about what someday it will be forced to do, and to start now, when it will cost far less?

Toward Better Teaching

It is a truism that the education provided by a school is only as good as the teaching in the school.

It is good news, therefore, that this year Macon County school people will make a conscious, concerted effort to improve the quality of the instruction in this county's schools. And Supt. H. Bueck, at the teachers' meeting on the eve of the opening of schools, wisely came up with specific, definite suggestions on how it can be done.

He proposed in-service training. That is, the teachers will carry on an organized campaign for professional improvement. They will exchange experiences and ideas, and share discoveries of better ways to do certain things. In that way, they will learn from each other—the way most of us acquire whatever knowledge we have.

Out of this development of better techniques of teaching will surely come more professional pride;



Franklin's Indian Mound, said to be the largest one remaining in North Carolina, offers an opportunity to combine an interesting phenomenon of the past with present-day beauty. Various ways of making the mound, which stands near the site of the ancient Cherokee village of

Nikwasi, an attraction to visitors have been suggested. One plan, to which the topography lends itself, is a water-filled "moat" around the mound, planted with water lilies; a rustic bridge across from highway to mound; and flowers, and possibly a small museum, on the mound itself.

and out of that undoubtedly will come better attitudes. That is at the heart of the problem, because, as Mr. Bueck suggested: What counts is "not the degrees we hold, but our attitude toward the work we do".

Bouquet

Many of us criticize the Post Office Department. Sometimes the criticism isn't justified, but often it is. For there has been a growing tendency in Washington to give not the most service possible, but the least. Post office employes and carriers, over the nation, for example, have been forbidden to continue performing certain little services they had become accustomed to perform, just as a matter of accommodation.

As so often happens, though, all the regulations fail to eliminate the kindly, human element, especially at the local level.

A case in point is the air mail envelopes at the Franklin post office. Air mail postage went up August 1 from 6 to 7 cents, and the local office hasn't received the new 7-cent envelopes. So the folks in the local post office have affixed extra 1-cent stamps to the old envelopes. They easily might have required every customer to buy and affix the extra stamps—but they didn't.

There's still a lot of thoughtful courtesy in the world—even in the Post Office Department.

So Monday was Labor Day? Heck! what day isn't?

A one-way street, with a downhill grade, is an invitation to speeding. That's just what is offered on the eastern section of Palmer Street. And so they're driving faster and faster along Palmer. But if there's ever a police officer on that street checking speeds, it's when we aren't around.

REVITALIZING A TOWN

'A MOTORIST IS NOT A SHOPPER UNTIL HE BECOMES A PEDESTRIAN'

The proposal for the physical improvement of Mooresville's central business district, which has been labeled the "Mooresville Plan," is aimed to fill only part of the total need—but a vital part—that of building convenience and attractiveness into a revitalized downtown. This is the way the proposal was set forth in the consultants' report to the town board of commissioners.

"How can convenience be improved? By improving accessibility. A motorist is not a shopper until he becomes a pedestrian. Make it easy for the motorist to become a pedestrian. Provide adequate off-street parking in the business district.

"After the motorist becomes a pedestrian, make it easy, enjoyable, attractive, and safe for him to become a shopper. How can this be done? Sheltered, tree-lined pedestrian ways, readily accessible to parking areas, separated from vehicular traffic; and attractive stores and display areas. Make those changes which will give the old Business District the characteristics of a new modern regional shopping and service center."

To accomplish this proposal, the following specific program was outlined.

1. That the four block central portion of the present business district be redesigned as a single large block.
2. That through traffic eventually be routed around the new superblock.

3. That shoppers' cars and service vehicles be directed into off-street parking and loading facilities.
4. That a central mall eventually replace a portion of Main Street, uniting the new superblock, and providing for safe, attractive and efficient pedestrian circulation. The mall will be park-like, with planted islands of trees and flowering shrubs. It will be reserved for pedestrians and prohibited to all except emergency vehicles. For the convenience of shoppers, pedestrian walks will connect parking areas with the mall and other store frontages. It is anticipated that new stores, and perhaps some of the old stores, facing a street or the mall on one side and a parking area in the rear, will utilize double fronts in their construction or remodeling.

Planned Towns Don't Just Happen

STANLEY NEWS AND PRESS

Well planned cities and towns don't just happen. They are the results of years of study and planning by far-sighted individuals and groups.

Relatively few cities and towns today reveal anything like adequate planning in the years gone by. Most of them, however, are well enough planned that they

New Psychiatric Technique

(Frederick, Colo., Farmer & Miner)

The best way to forget all your troubles is to wear a pair of tight shoes.

Too Good For Too Much

(Campbellsville, Ky., News)

Under the present day economic system, too many people's credit is too good for too much.

... And Waynesville And Franklin

(Waynesville Mountaineer)

J. A. Gray, Sr., publisher of The Sylva Herald, and president of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, is spear-heading a program for dedicating the new highway from Balsam to Sylva. The date and final plans are dependent upon completion of the bridge across Scott's Creek, the railroad and Dark Ridge Road.

Gray, an avid enthusiast of the road, timed himself from the city limits of Sylva to the first traffic light at Allens Creek road—15 minutes—and not once over 55 miles an hour.

This is going to make Waynesville and Sylva closer neighbors than ever.

Language Training

(Suffolk County, N. Y., News)

Most U. S. public schools fall down badly when it comes to teaching foreign languages. The situation is often compared with that in European schools, which as a rule provide early and prolonged training in languages other than the native tongue.

The obvious retort generally is not long in coming; Europeans have much greater need of other languages, because various countries and language groups are close together. This retort makes sense. Europeans have had to be multilingual to get along and do business with one another.

The thing that lessens the good sense of the retort is our old friend global shrinkage. Flight makes Europeans—and Africans and Asians, for that matter—our neighbors. When today's kindergarteners take their places in the adult world trips abroad may be as commonplace as trips to a neighboring state are today.

All this serves as background for a U. S. Office of Education report which notes that not even 15 per cent of our high school students are enrolled in modern language courses. The study began as a survey of language teaching in the nation's high schools, but the experts wound up recommending that language instruction should begin in the grade schools and go on for at least four years.

Marion B. Folsom, then secretary of health, education and welfare, said when the study began that the United States is "the most backward nation in the world in the vital field of language competence." We need not develop any inferiority complex about this; we have not had the compelling historical reasons for language training that Europe has had. But the shrinking world makes it clearly time, now, for U. S. schools to begin catching up in this vital field.

Popular Government

In any planning program for this or any other city are:

Careful attention to zoning requests, so that property values may be maintained and property utilized to its best advantage.

Subdivisions should be laid out carefully, with special attention to making streets sufficiently wide and trying them in with existing street patterns.

Plans included for neighborhood shopping centers in appropriate locations to be convenient to the most people.

Adequate playground and park space in each area of the city. Ample parking area in all business areas.

Planners should think in terms of long range development. Most of the time we plan for five or 10 years. We should seek to project our plans into the future and judge them on the basis of what we believe will be the situation 25, or even 50, years hence. In the light of past experience we will even then fall short somewhat.

Albemarle is considered about an average city, as past planning goes. The city has been forced to spend sizable sums of money in recent years to widen some of the uptown streets. Others must be widened in the years to come. It does have rather well defined shopping, industrial, and residential sections, and has a great deal of natural beauty.

The city is still growing, and we hope that it continues to grow. However, it should not be allowed to just make "happen-so" growth. There should be some Planning Commission whose responsibility it is to try to direct the growth of the city and the development of its perimeter areas in the wisest possible manner.

Some of the things which should come in for consideration

STRICTLY PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

The other night, I had occasion to telephone a man in Birmingham, Ala.

Now telephoning, long distance, has ceased to be unusual. So this time I gave it no special consideration; it would be just another long distance call, a purely routine affair.

Well, I was wrong! For what happened was extraordinary indeed.

I called the long distance operator and gave her the usual information, my name and number and the name of the person I wanted in Birmingham. (For convenience, we'll call him John Smith.)

O, yes; and I gave her his number. For the time has long passed when you could tell "Central" you wanted John Smith in Birmingham; "I think he lives about a mile out from town, and he may not have a telephone, but maybe you can get him on the phone next door"—and leave it to the operator to find him for you. No! nowadays you must have the other fellow's number, and I had it. (At our house, there's a whole wall, beside the telephone, literally "papered" with telephone numbers.)

I heard the local operator place the call in Asheville, and a moment later I heard the Birmingham number being rung.

Then I heard something else, something brand new. Said a voice:

"This is a recorded announcement. The number you are calling is not a working number . . ."

And that voice went on and on, a voice incredibly smooth, and incredibly devoid of any note of human understanding.

On and on it went, telling me what I had done and had not done and what I should do and should not do; never hesitating, never pausing for a comment from me. No! that recorded announcement had the floor.

And as I listened, I felt myself increasingly trapped. I couldn't talk back. I couldn't ask for a repetition of something I hadn't caught. I couldn't even inquire what kind of a number a "not a working number" was. I could only listen . . . and feel more and more helpless in the face of that unintermittent, inhuman voice, way down in Alabama.

Just as I was ready to explode, the local operator asked me to give her the Birmingham number again. I gave it. She had Asheville ring it again. And again I heard that you-can't-answer-back voice saying again, with never a change in tone, "This is a recorded announcement. The number you are calling is not a working number . . ." and on and on and on.

The local operator came to my rescue once more, and I asked what a "not a working number"

was. She laughed good-naturedly, and commented, "you learn something new every day, don't you?" Then she suggested maybe John Smith's number had been changed; so she got Birmingham information on the line and was given a different number. I heard it ring, and a wholly strange voice answered; it was the wrong John Smith!

So I gave the local operator the street address of my John Smith, and asked that she request Birmingham information to give her the correct number of the John Smith at that address. She suggested maybe I'd like to talk to Birmingham information, and I repeated the request to her. Said she:

"If you'll have your operator ring back on the number you gave in the first place, and if you'll listen to the recording, twice, a special operator will answer."

So I braced myself to be frustrated, twice, by that already memorized recording. I listened. And then, sure enough, a special operator did answer.

Once more I repeated my story. It, too, was so memorized by that time it sounded like a recording. And here's what I was told:

"That telephone has been discontinued."

I know I shouldn't have done it; I'm sure it was rude. But here at last was a voice I could talk back to. And so I shouted at her:

"Well, why in heck wasn't I told that in the first place?"

I shouted that, and then I was seized with terror. I slammed up the receiver and rushed out of earshot of the phone. For, undoubtedly, they had a recording all ready to spring on me for that question, too.

Automation? It is here! And I don't like it worth a darn.

I don't like it because I don't like efficiency for the phone company at the expense of the customer. I don't like it because it destroys human relationships; half the fun of doing things in this world comes from the friendly, joking interchanges between person and person. And I don't like it because I resent being put at the mercy of a "recorded announcement"—being made the slave of a machine.

P.S. I've found the local long distance operators uniformly courteous, obliging and efficient; and besides, I was a little ashamed of my outburst. So I tried to make up for that show of bad manners by calling the local operator back and thanking her for her efforts.

I couldn't have thanked that darn recording; it wouldn't have listened. And besides, it hadn't tried!

TENTING TONIGHT

Are Americans Becoming Citified?

Are Americans becoming "city-sites"?

Definitely, yes, reports the Washington Post. And it cites figures on camping out during the summer holiday season just ended; the big rush to sleep under the stars.

No nation of farmers, it comments, would have such a yen for primitive outing.

In many cities, continues the Washington newspaper, boys and girls with camping equipment took over railway and bus stations. In New York it is estimated that between 4,000 and 8,000 juvenile campers departed daily. The month of July found about 500,000 youngsters in regular camps throughout the country, while thousands of others were on camping trips with parents.

The zeal for camping out has become so great both among children and adults that makers of tents and sleeping bags have been doing a booming business. Some Western states are engaged in programs to promote their camps.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press

65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

(1893)

St. Agnes' school will open next Monday.
P. Howard, Esq., of Smith's Bridge, was in town Monday. Peaches are more plentiful than they have been for several years past.
Mr. R. L. Porter has sent off his bond as brandy gauger, and will get his commission in a few days.

25 YEARS AGO

(1933)

The Franklin branch of the Carolina Provision Company, which has headquarters in Cornelia, Ga., has been purchased by M. L. Dowdle, local business man, and the name of the concern changed to the Dowdle Wholesale Company, Inc.

At a meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Highlands, the tax rate was placed at \$3, instead of \$2.95 as last year.

Miss Hazel V. Penland and Charles C. Sutton were married at the Methodist parsonage on Bonny Crest September 2, the Rev. G. N. Dulin officiating.

10 YEARS AGO

Macon County dries won a better than 10-to-1 victory in Saturday's special election. The vote to outlaw legal sale of beer was just under 10 to 1, while the vote against wine was more than 12 to 1.

A new \$411 fire siren of the latest type arrived this week, and installation started yesterday.