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NIAGARA CITY PLANNING CONF.

Helpful Addresses Delivered.

City planners from all parts of the United States, from Canada, and from far off New Zealand assembled yesterday in Niagara Falls and opened the eleventh national conference on city planning. The conference is being held under the auspices of the cities of the Niagara river front. On Wednesday the conference will come to Buffalo and the closing sessions will be held here. About 150 delegates took part in the opening session yesterday afternoon in the Niagara Falls chamber of Commerce. Most of the large cities of the United States were represented, many of them by their city planners. Canada was represented by Thomas Adams of Ottawa and W.A. McLean, deputy commissioner of highways of Ontario. City Engineer Bush of Auckland, New Zealand, was an interested listener. Charles H. Cheney of San Francisco, and A.L. White of Spokane were others who came from a great distance to attend the conference.

The convention is one of the best and largest of the kind ever held, both in point of numbers and in the general distribution of the delegates. The liveliest interest was displayed by those in attendance yesterday. The subject of city planning has come to occupy a large portion of civic attention at the present time and delegates from Buffalo, whose civic planning commission is now preparing plans for a civic center and some systematic city planning took special notice as the city planning activities of other municipalities were unfolded by the speakers.

Delegates Tour Falls
Previous to the afternoon session which formerly opened the conference, the delegates were taken on an auto tour of Niagara Falls and were shown what efforts in civic planning are being made there. The best and the worst sides of the Cretaceous city were unfolded to them, and after their trained eyes had observed the beauties of the parks and public squares of the city, they were taken to other sections where there is need for betterment.

After luncheon which was served at the chamber of commerce rooms, the conference got down to rest business, and during the afternoon heard speeches on city planning by John Nolan, who described the scheme of city planning which was accepted by Niagara Falls; W.H. Manning, city planner of Boston, and George A. Ross of Montreal.

Mr. Nolan discussed the city plans of Niagara Falls and Akron, O. He pointed out that the average city is an industrial city, with the shadow of smokestacks falling on rows of ugly houses, to the consequent sacrifice of human values. Realizing this, he said that modern industrial cities are beginning to grow seriously with their planning problems, seeking to preserve some beauty in the midst of their cities.

Health a consideration
He pointed out that the health and happiness of the civic population increases with proper city planning and showed charts from Liverpool, England, where children in a nearby so-called garden town were taller and weighed far more than children of corresponding social level in the city.

What do we mean by an industrial city? He said that it is exclusively industrial—few cities are that—but a city that is primarily industrial, a city whose growth depends mainly on manufacturing.

He pointed out that this same Bridgeport, Akron, Niagara Falls and many other American cities which are now beginning to grapple seriously with their planning problems, are industrial cities. "What are the planning problems of industrial cities? There are two broad divisions, not mutually exclusive by any means, but the one, with advantage, he considered separately—those that have to do directly with the economy or efficiency of manufacturing; those that have to do directly with the contentment and welfare of the wage earner, and indirectly (some would say) with the economy and efficiency of manufacturing.

"The requirements of manufacturing cities are level land, cheap land, few streets (large blocks), room for extension, railroad or water facilities, proper zones, main thoroughfares for handling two grade crossings, proximity of factory sites to good housing, trolley or motor bus transportation for employees. If homes are not within walking distance, location of factories with due consideration to prevailing winds, public utilities (water, gas, electricity and sewer), and water or other power.

Homes for workers...
"Equally important are homes for workmen. Consideration must be given to the home itself, the garden, the protected residential zone, local streets, recreation areas, schools and part-time schools, churches and other social institutions and main streets, the factory, to low cost housing districts, and the down town district to shops, commercial amusement, public institutions of higher life, civic buildings (government buildings, leisure time buildings, such as library, are museum, community building, for social recreation and discussion, etc.) Consideration must also be given to cost in reference to wages, cost of the home itself, living costs and local taxes.

"Among the city planning features of industrial cities may be mentioned especially main thoroughfares, provision in regard to which are conditions for goods (factory to freight stations, water terminals etc.) grade width, alignment and freedom from railroad crossings.

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and ability of wage earners. There is also the difference in cost of planning and developing an industrial city (the same difference of relation that cost of factory building bears to the cost of church public building or better class residences; that is, cost is justified or fails of justification according to the return).

Field in small cities.
"It would be profitable to discuss large vs. small industrial cities. It is difficult to replan existing large cities. There are advantages in replanning small cities, but there are ever greater advantages in planning laying out and developing entirely new industrial cities. They permit deliberate choice of location, based upon regional survey the development of an efficient plan, and the limitation of area and population.

Some of the economic effects of planning are: proximity to raw material; the elimination of unnecessary cost of hauling and shipping; reduction in labor turnover; and decent living and working conditions both in homes and in factories.

A study of industrial cities discloses the fact that the power growth and progress of a city are limited only by the initiative of its leaders and the united civic interest of its people.

"The challenge of the members of the National Conference on City Planning is 'Do you know of a single industrial city that can claim a reasonable mastery of its planning problems, if tested by the topics here enumerated? If such cities cannot be named, 'What are the reasons?'

Rebuilding Halifax.
Speaking of his work in connection with Niagara Falls, Mr. Nolan said that to obtain an orderly and attractive development as a resort and an industrial city involves the relocation of railway rights of way and union station the elimination of all grade crossings the planning of a major street system, the provision of suitable sites for public buildings and the adoption of an ordinance providing for the separation of city areas for various city needs.

Mr. Ross told of the Halifax disaster and the rebuilding efforts which are being made in that city. He described the difficulties of the devastation of the city which followed. He described the difficulties of terrain which confronted the city planners but said that now the city has been apportioned off into various areas of construction, definite areas being set aside for residence building, and other areas for business construction.

Various building restrictions which are in force there were described by the speaker including restrictions on residence building, the building of semidetached houses, governing size and height, and the construction of service lanes in the rear of houses.

Due to the immediate necessity for housing large groups of people, Mr. Ross told of the group development which purpose was to give shelter to as many families as possible. This development consists of groups of six dwellings each on each side of a series of wide grass courts.

Birmingham's plans.
W.H. Manning described the civic development of Birmingham, Ala., where an intensive effort in city planning is being carried out. He described the civic center which is in the making and the efforts which are being made to restrict building of stores, factories and dwellings to certain defined areas.

There will be three sessions of the conference today. The morning session will begin at 10 o'clock; the afternoon session at 2 o'clock and after a dinner at the chamber of commerce there will be an evening session.

Tomorrow the conference will move on to Buffalo where sessions will be held at the Hotel Statler. Edward M. Bossett chairman of the zoning commission in New York city will be the speaker at the Wednesday morning session. Following his talk there will be open discussion of some planning in different cities of the United States.

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Nebraska State trapshooting tournament, at Columbus, Neb.

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