



PDHonline Course C610 (8 PDH)

Town & Country: A Garden City for America

Instructor: Jeffrey Syken

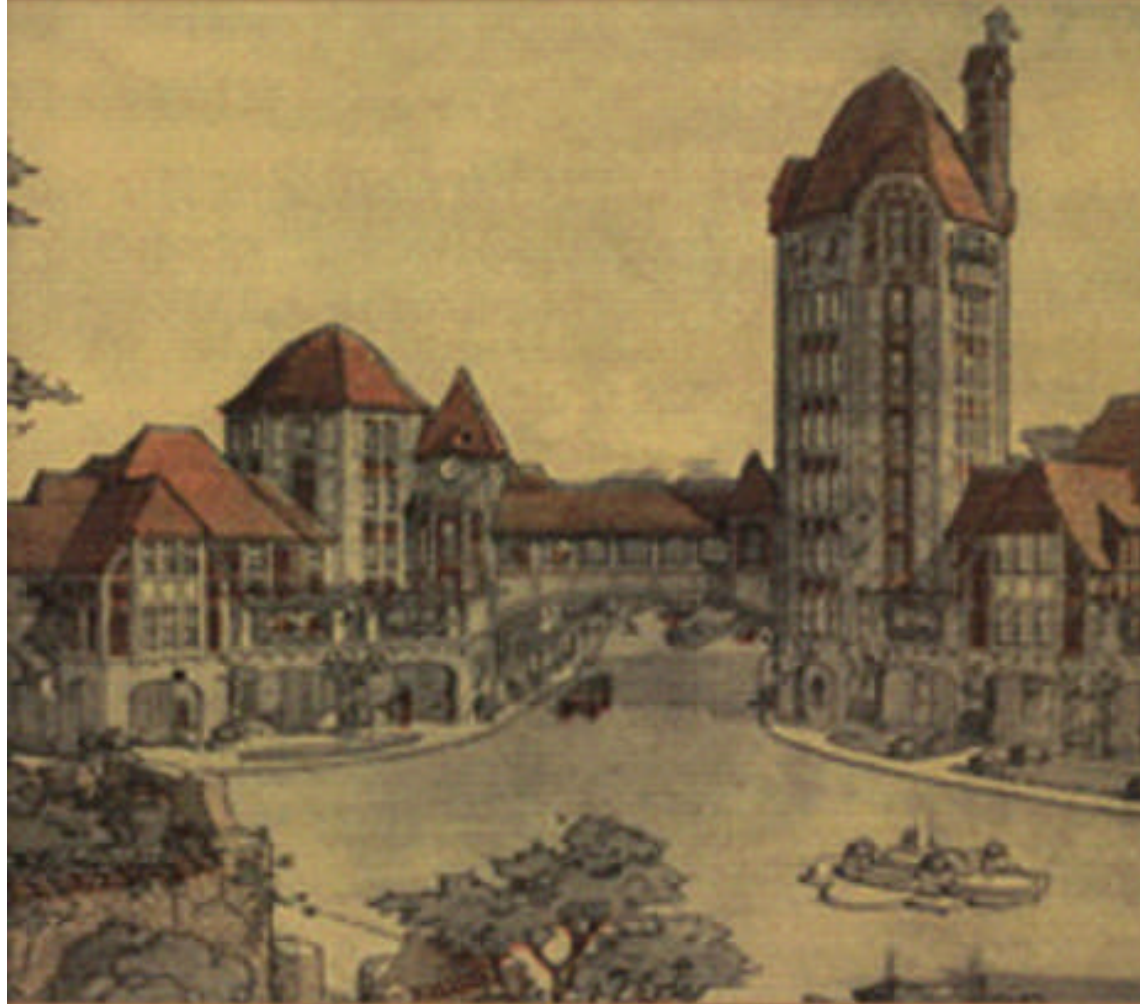
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Town & Country



A Garden City for America

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Part 1

Praise & Damnation

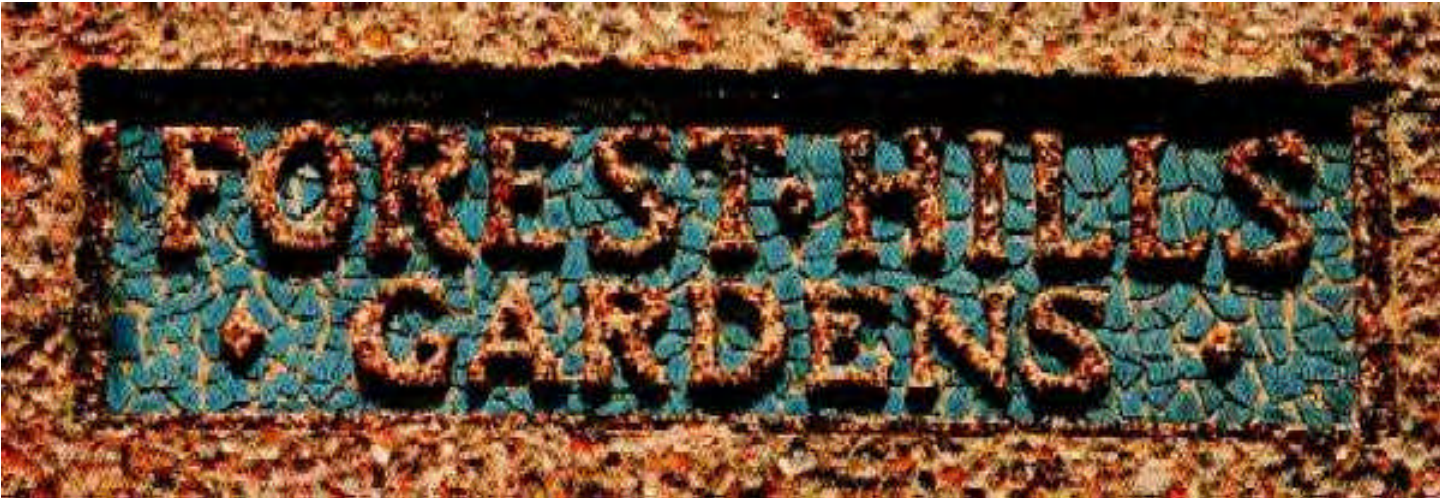
In November 1910, the *Russell Sage Foundation for Social Betterment* announced its plans to build a model suburban community along the lines of a European Garden City - then in vogue, in “the suburban district of New York.” Nationwide, over 150 newspapers carried the story. The *New York Sun* praised it as: “A Garden City for America” while its rival; the *New York Tribune*, dubbed it: “Sageville.” Forest Hills Gardens would be conceived and built at the height of the *Progressive Era* – those early years of the 20th century before the outbreak of WWI. It would also be part of both the *City Beautiful* and *Arts & Crafts* movements. The former evidenced by Frederic Law Olmsted Junior’s street plan and landscaping for the Gardens and the latter in the architecture of Grosvenor Atterbury, particularly in the houses and ornamentation he designed for Forest Hills Gardens (FHG).

“Its unique combination of city planning and architecture made Forest Hills Gardens the preeminent expression of the suburban ideal and the most important suburb built in New York, the only one to assume international importance.”

Robert A.M. Stern, Architect







“It smashes all the convention of commonplace suburban building...So surprised is the newcomer at first view that the whole outlay seems a trifle bizarre...when you have barely settled down to reading your magazine, when the golden-haired heroine is just on the dint of climbing down a rope ladder from the topmost window of a lofty tower - the conductor...emits a jumble of sounds that are supposed to represent ‘Forest Hills Gardens!’ Where upon you jump from your seat, rush out upon the station platform, and what do you see? Nothing less than that same medieval tower from which the heroine was preparing to descend to eager lover. Can this be just 15 minutes from Broadway?, you ask yourself...No, it cannot. It is somewhere near the Rhine, and it’s not new at all, because you have been transferred back a few centuries like Mark Twain’s Connecticut Yankee.”

Louis Graves - reporter for *Building Progress*



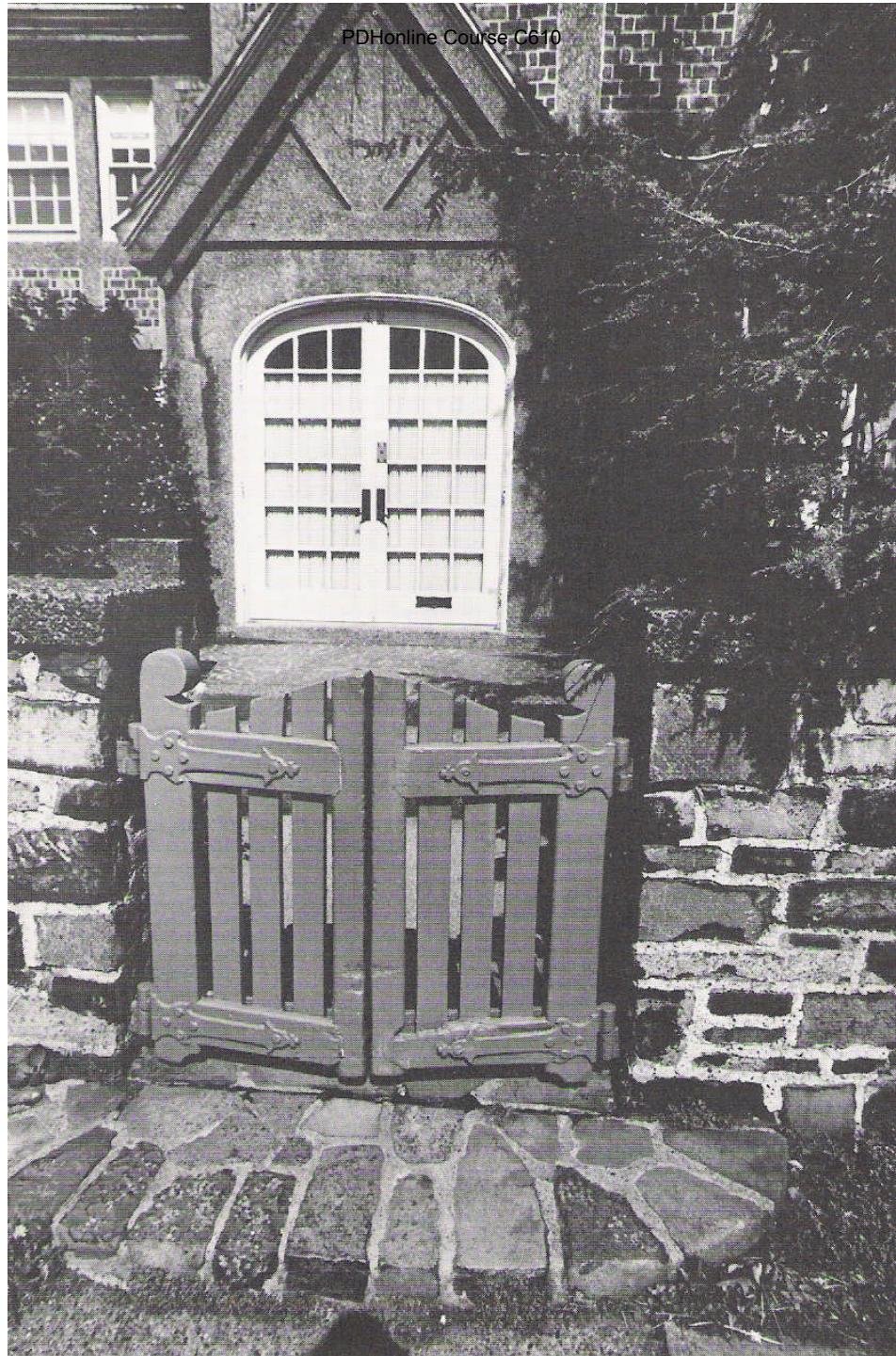
“It would scarcely be possible for a person strolling through Forest Hills to remain unstirred by the loveliness of the houses and the streets, by the beauty of the trees, by the striking tidiness and neatness of its general appearance. These things are ineffable. They do not always lend themselves to a mere utterance in words, however graceful. But the atmosphere is palpable. One feels it and one is grateful for it.”

RE: visitor's impression of FHG – late 1920s





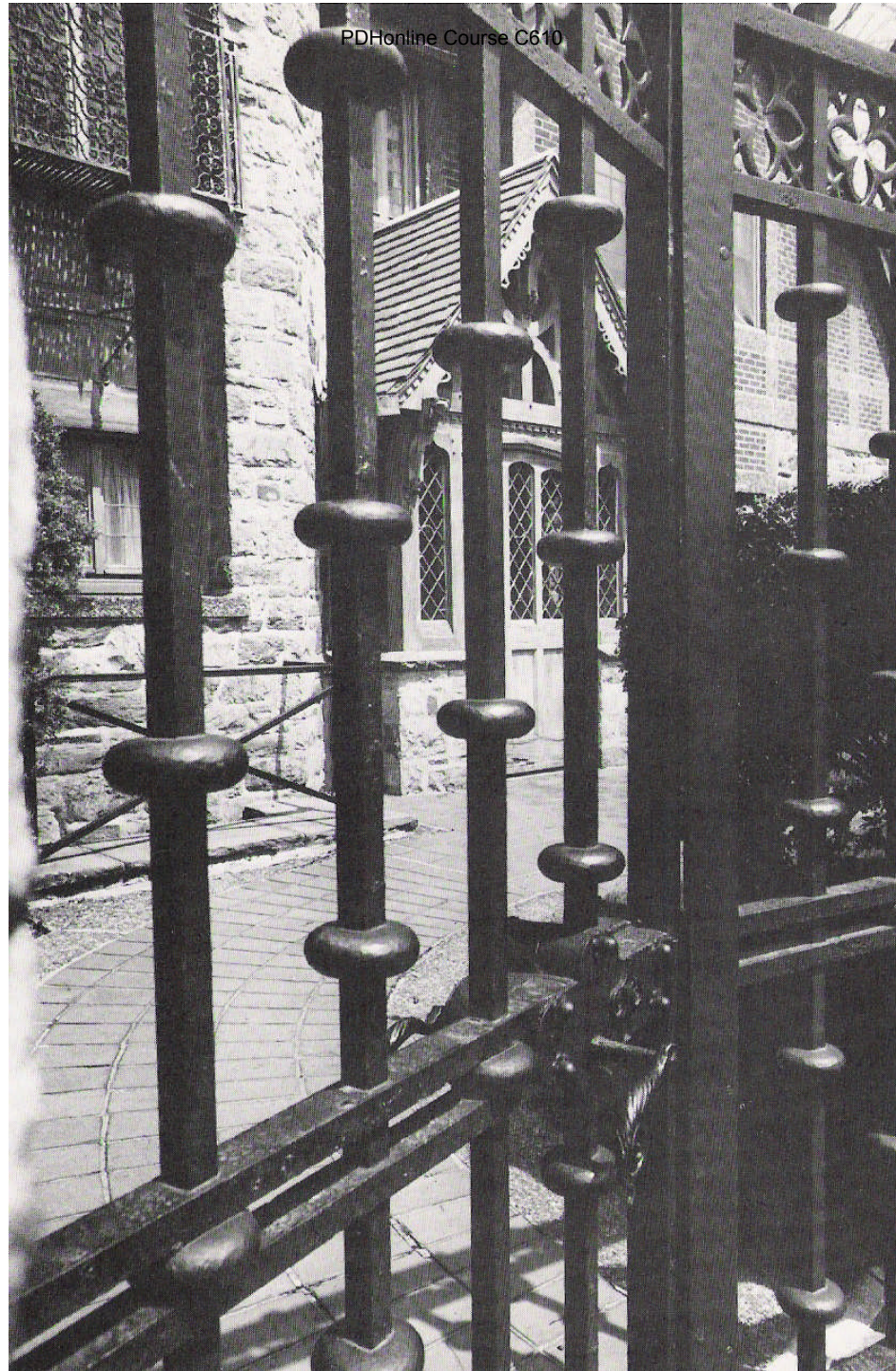


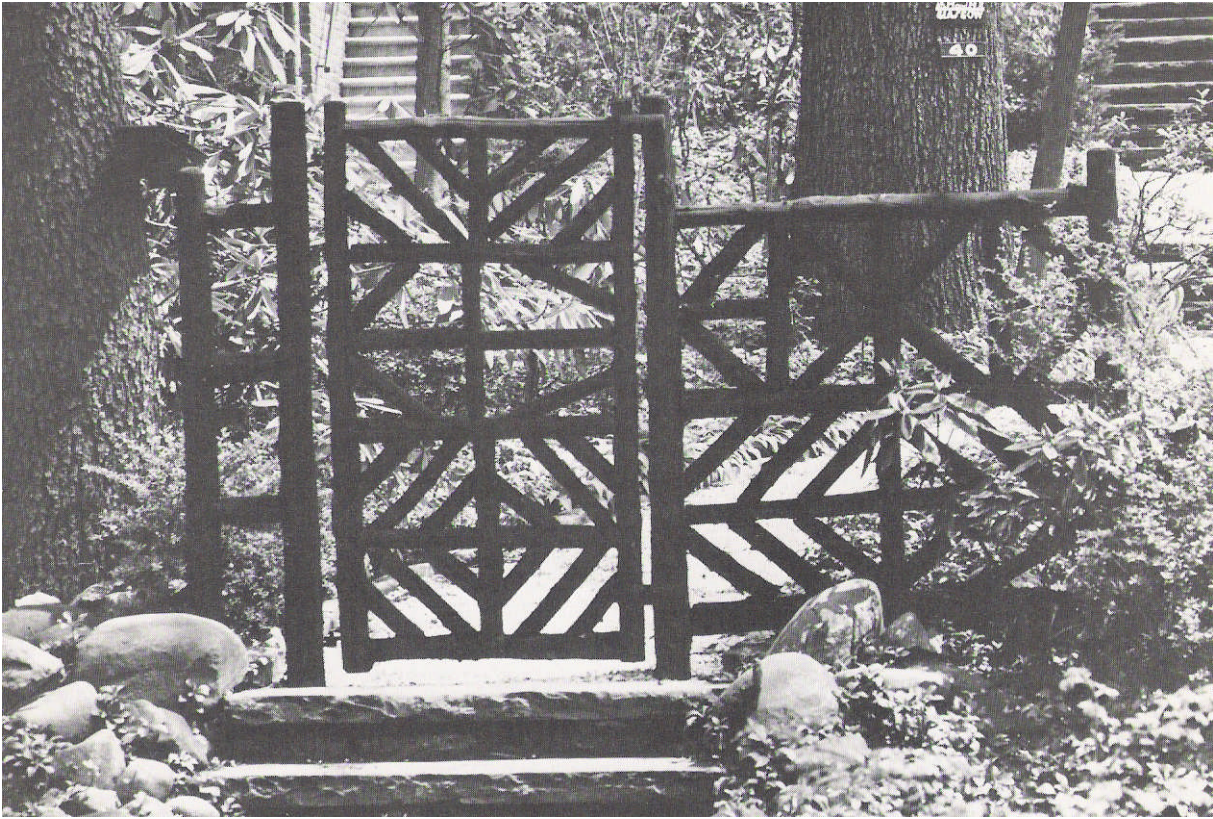










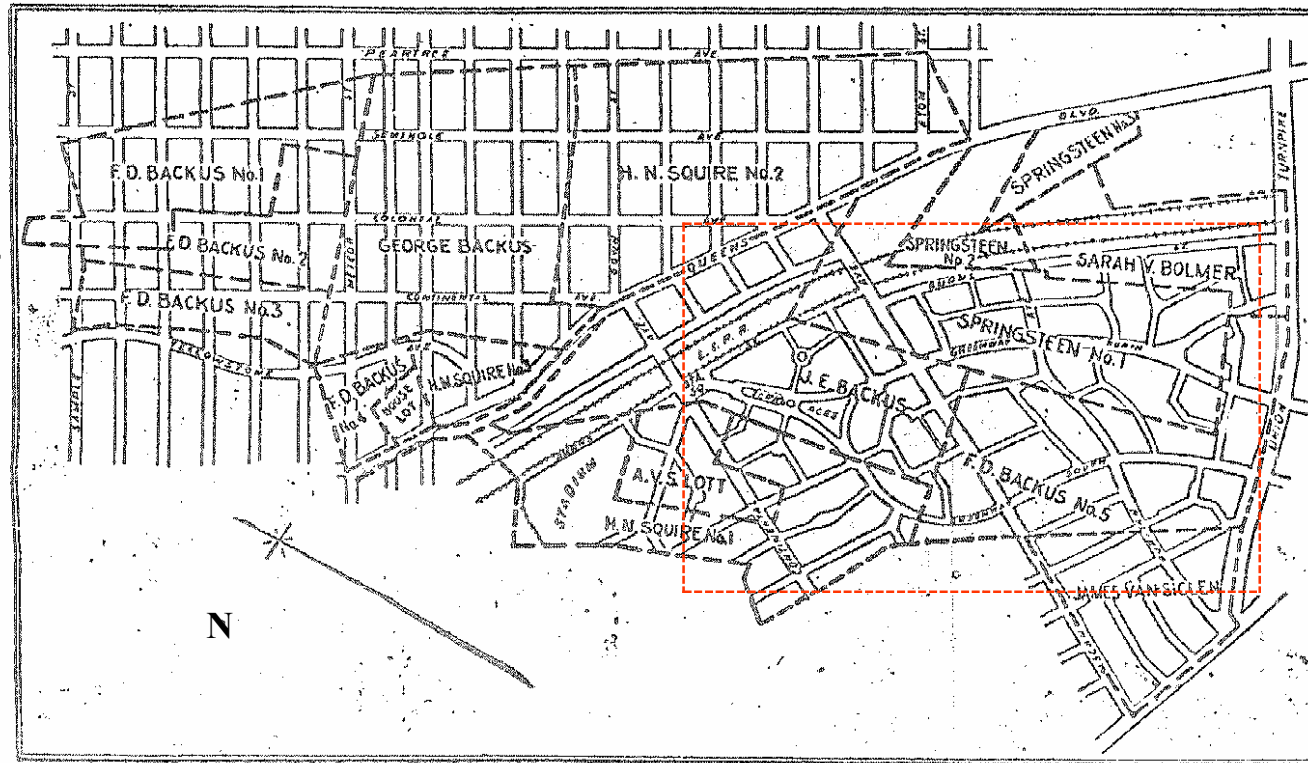


“Perhaps the first example in America where a barren site has been treated along the lines of modern methods of town planning”

The American Architect, 1910



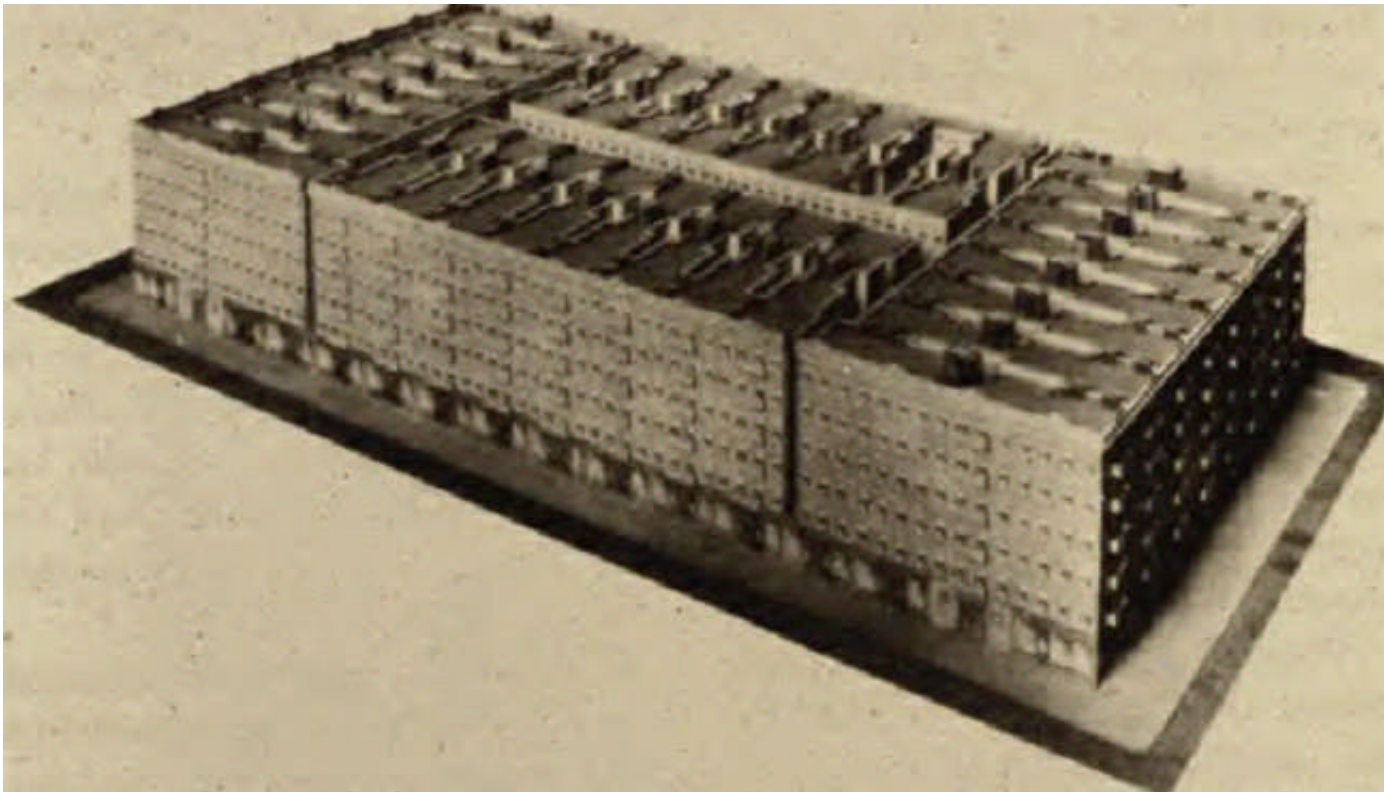
**Station Square under construction
(ca. 1911)**



Map of Forest Hills with original farms overlaid. The six farms that would become Forest Hills Gardens are located south of the LIRR. The Backus family were the main farmers in the area. Ascan Avenue – a major north-south thoroughfare in FHG, is named in honor of *Ascan Backus*.

“There is no more important problem than housing, not only for the working class, but all classes...I regard as the most important effort at proper housing in America the one conducted by the Russell Sage Foundation at Forest Hills Gardens, Long Island...The harmony of Architecture, the winding streets, the tasteful street furniture, the Railroad entrance to the town, the use of flowers and vines, the quiet taste and dignity would certainly impress and have an influence in solving the housing problem”

Professor S.E.W. Bedford, Chair – Department of Municipal Sociology at the University of Chicago
RE: Prof. Bedford was a champion of the *Progressive Movement*



Tenement Housing Block



**Worker Housing
Bridgeport, CT.**



**“Triple-Decker” Worker Housing
Boston, Mass.**



Middle-Class Detached House



**Upper Middle-Class Housing
St. Louis, Mo.**



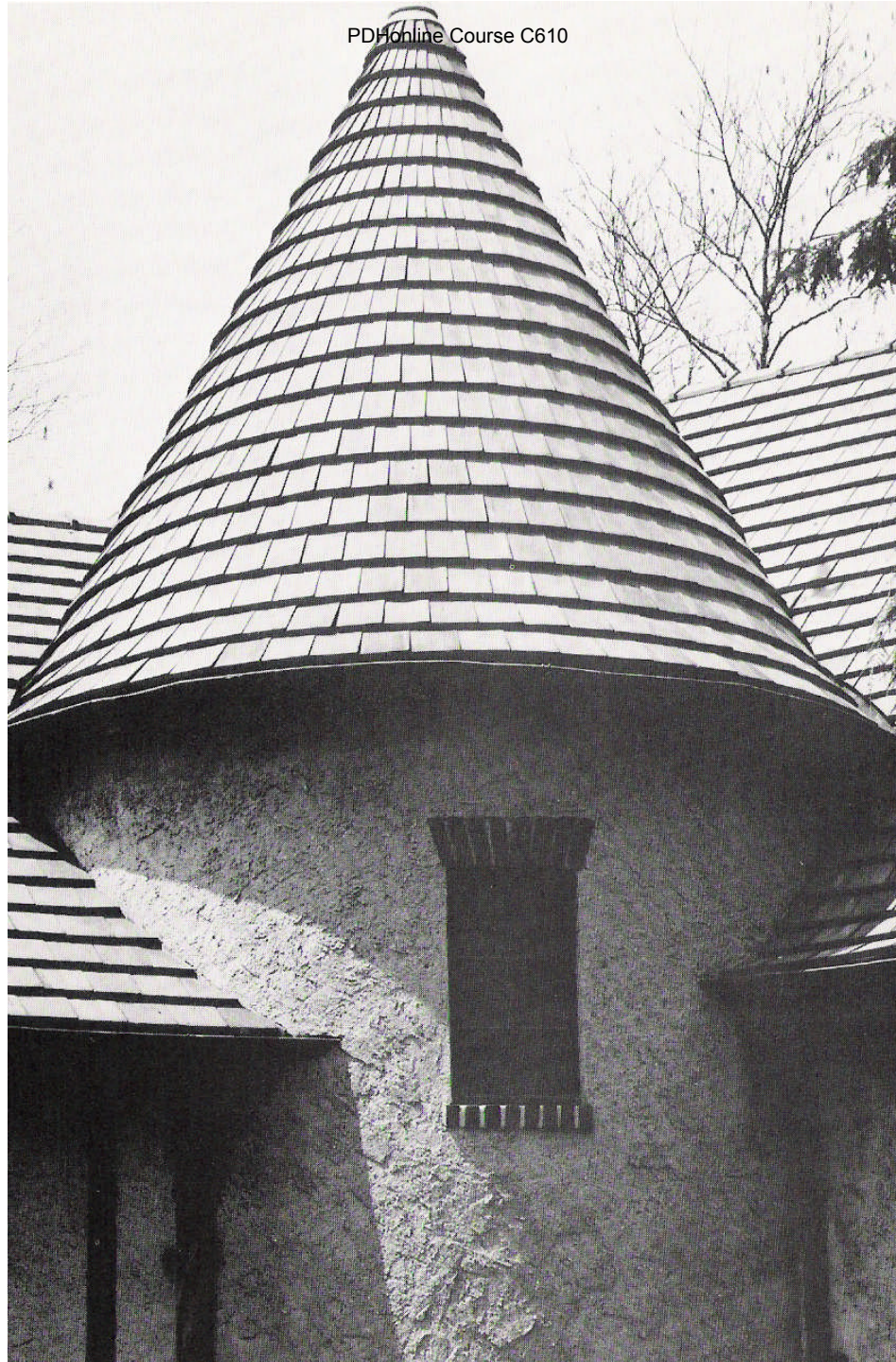
Clock Tower









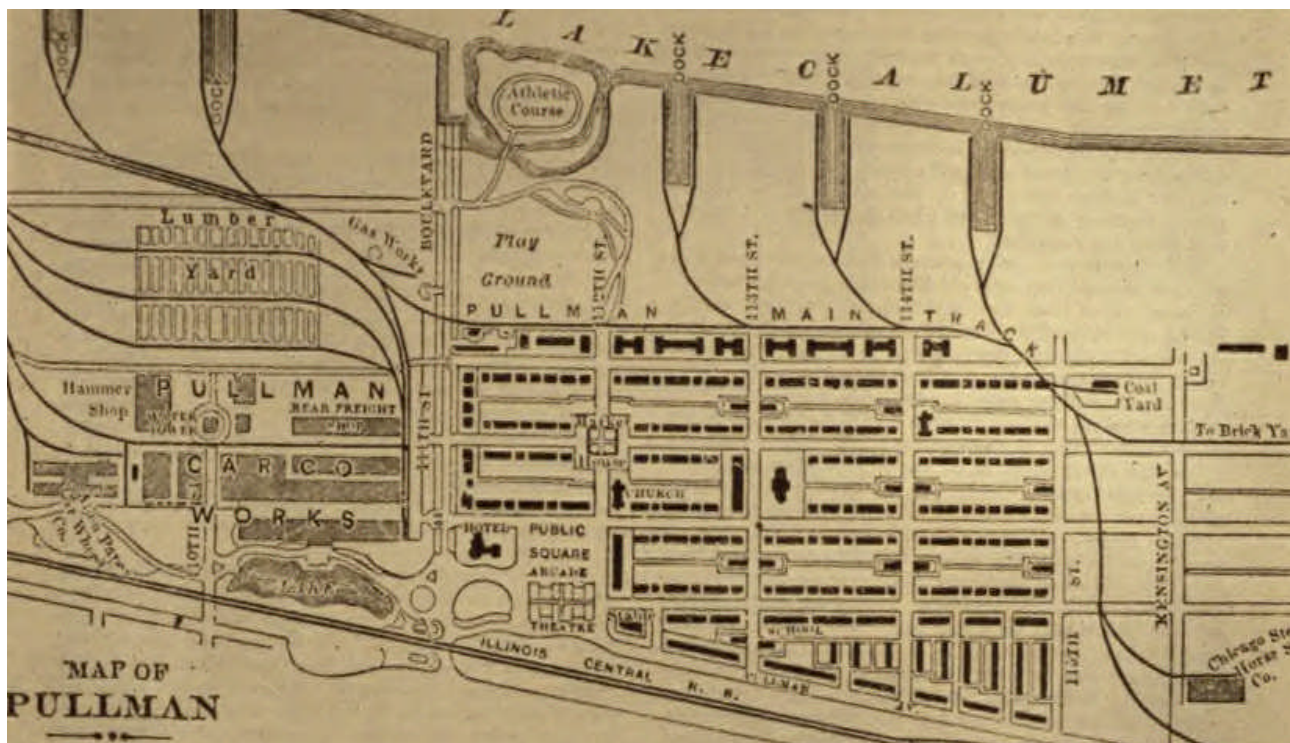




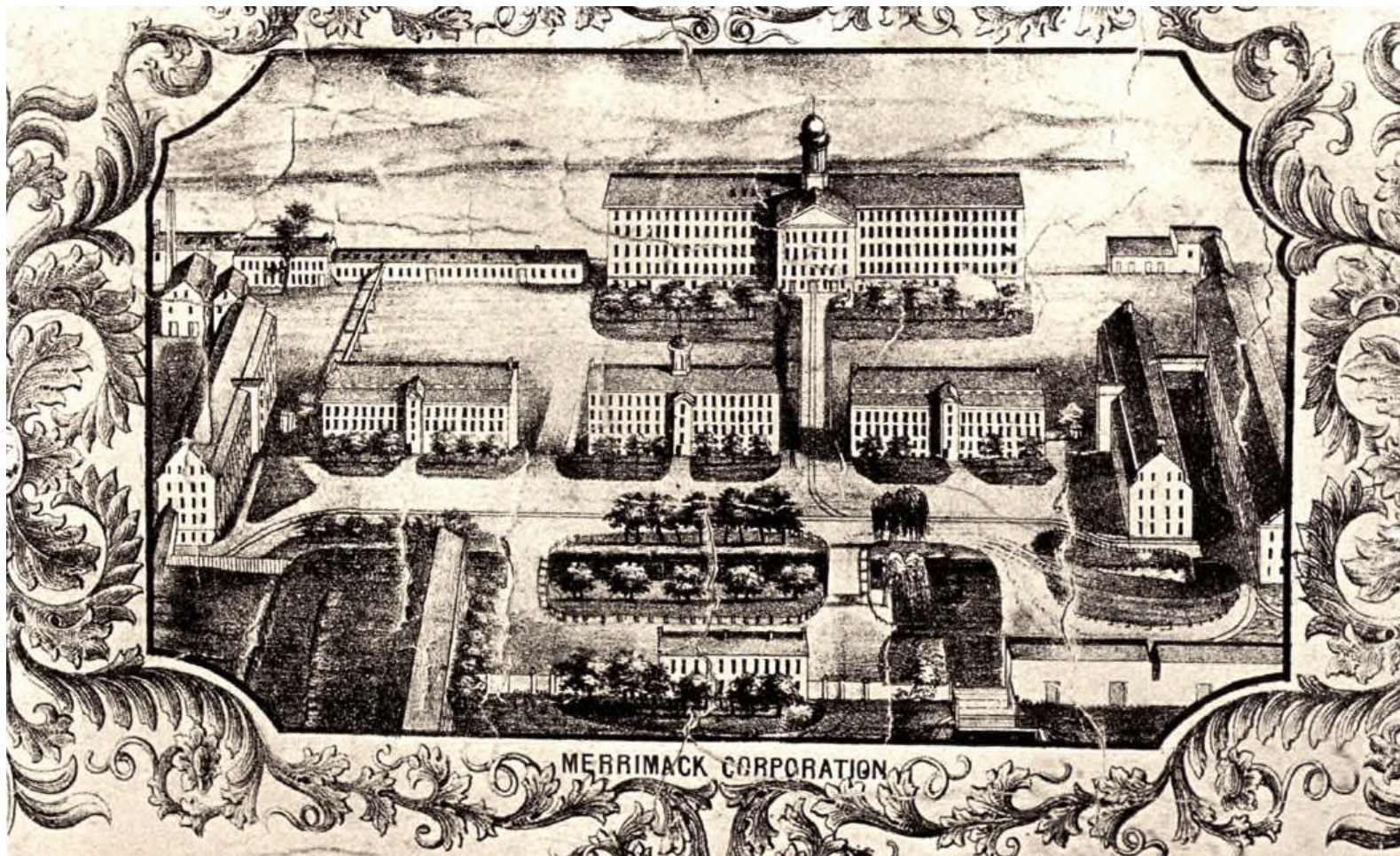


“The plaything of a wealthy widow...destined to be more enduring but less heroic than Brook Farm, more wisely conceived and more practical than the Helicon of Upton Sinclair, and more carefully planned than the City of Pullman, but like all of them: foredoomed”

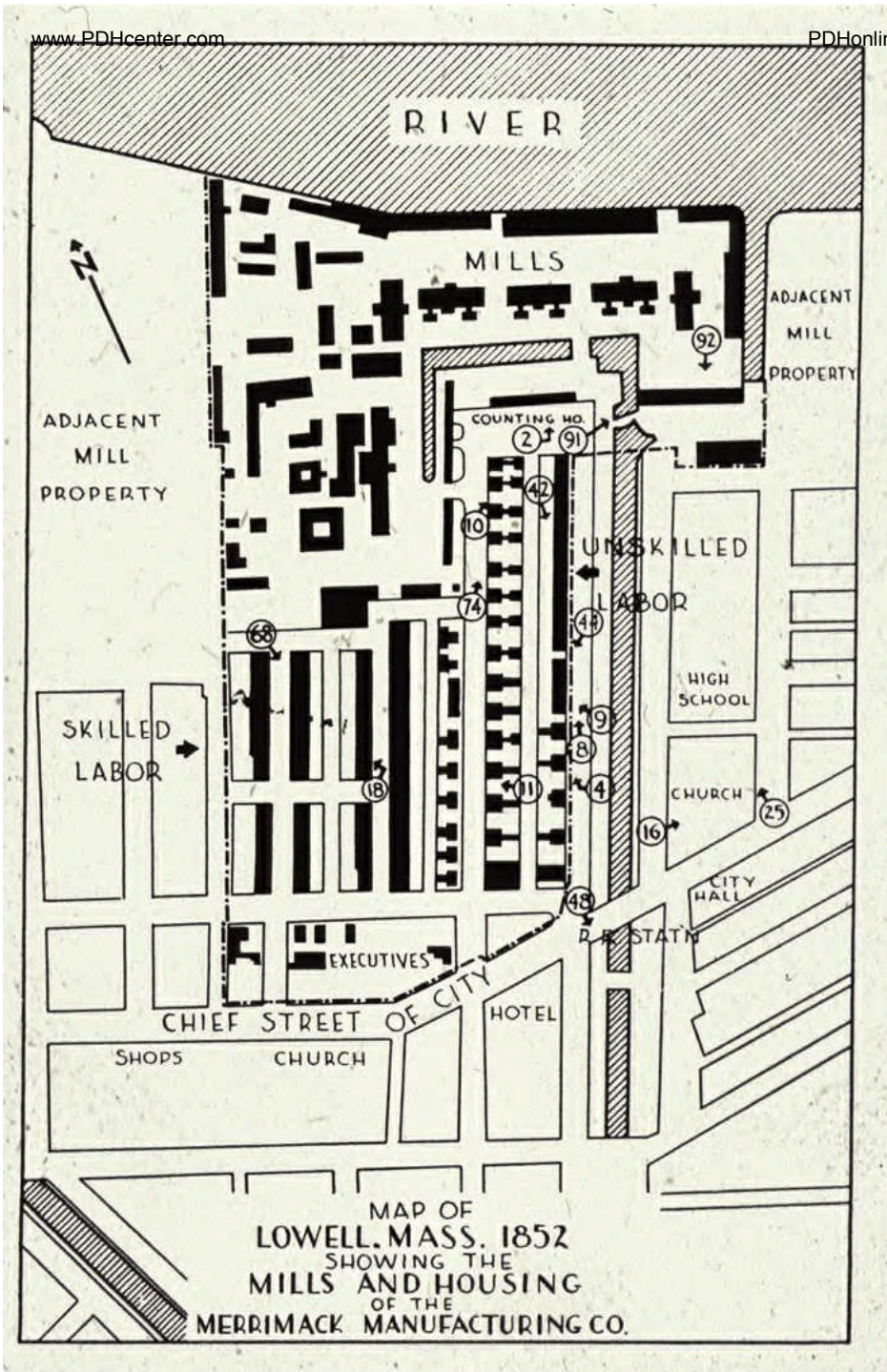
RE: critic’s opinion of the fate of all planned communities – real or imagined, including FHG



Map of Pullman, Illinois



New England Mill Town



**Map of Lowell, Massachusetts (1852)
(New England Mill Town)**

FROM H. H. PENHALLOW'S
PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT,

WYMAN'S EXCHANGE, COR.
MERRIMACK & CENTRAL STS.

TIME TABLE

1868.

OF THE LOWELL MILLS,

Arranged to make the working time 66 hours per week. The
STANDARD TIME will be marked at noon, by the BELL of the
MERRIMACK MANUFACTURING COMPANY.

Breakfast,.....at..... 6. A. M.
Commence Work,.....“..... 6.30 A. M.
Dinner,..... 12 M.
Commence Work, after Dinner, at.....12.45 P. M.
Stop Work, except on Saturday Evenings, at.... 6.30 P. M.

BELLS.

Morning Bells.	Dinner Bells.
First Bell,.....4.30 A. M.	Ring Out,.....12.00 M.
Second Bell,.....5.30 A. M.	Ring in,.....12.35 P. M.
Third Bell,.....6.30 A. M.	

Evening Bells.
Ring Out,.....6.30 P. M.....Except on Saturday Evenings.

SATURDAY EVENING BELL, 5 P. M.

YARD GATES will be opened at the first stroke of the bells for entering or
leaving the Mills.

Speed Gates commence hoisting three minutes before commencing work.







“Philanthropy with a brain...to establish near New York City a ‘Spotless Town’ where people of small means may buy homes within reach of their pockets...the growing conjection of Manhattan Island, ascending rents and the extreme difficulty under which adults, no less than children, may live in a sanitary fashion will make the Sage project a Godsend to even the limited number able to avail themselves of its provisions”

Atlanta Constitution - November, 1910



**Pre-suburban housing of the central middle class
(ca. 1850)**



“Treeless city streets reinforced the love of commuters for the sylvan delights awaiting them at the opposite end of their daily lives”

RE: the suburban ideal (caption from photograph above)

“The great cities of the earth, loathsome centers of fornication and covetousness – the smoke of their sin going up into the face of heaven like the furnace of Sodom; and the pollution of it rotting and raging the bones and souls of the peasant peoples round them, as if they were each a volcano whose ashes broke out in blains upon man and upon beast”

John Ruskin, 1880







Slum Outhouses





“A place where people of moderate income and good taste might find some country air and country life within striking distance of the active centers of New York”

Journalist, 1910



“First Garden City in America...not going to be a town where a low-paid mechanic or day laborer can afford to live...In view of the ill-advised and unauthorized announcement that it was to be a workingman’s colony there may be some regret or disappointment at this...Those of moderate means seeking the peace and comfort of a model village without great expense and in charming homes within easy commuting distance of New York”

Edward Hale Brush, *The Craftsman*

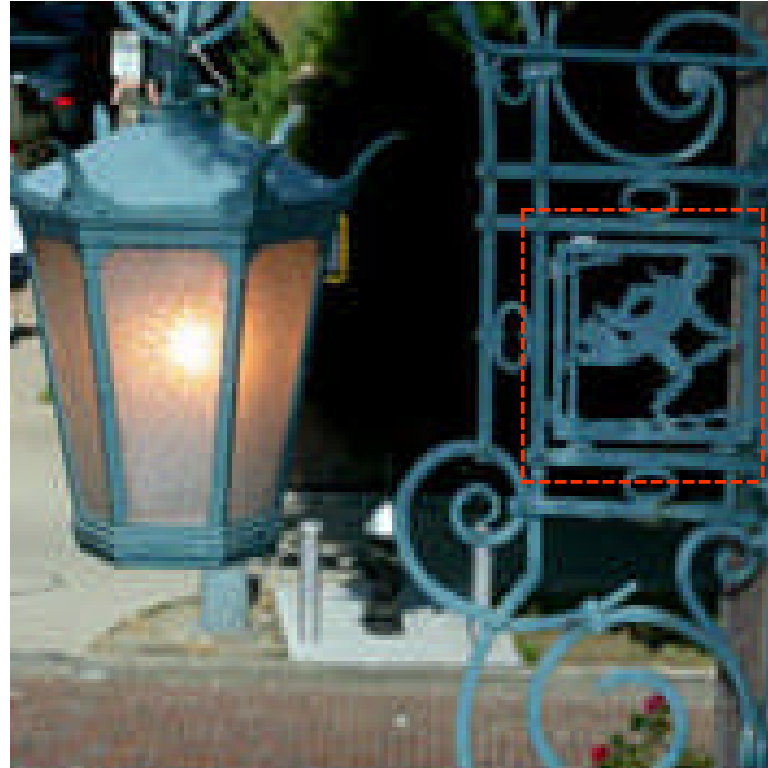
RE: The Craftsman was the main journal popularizing the *Arts & Crafts* movement



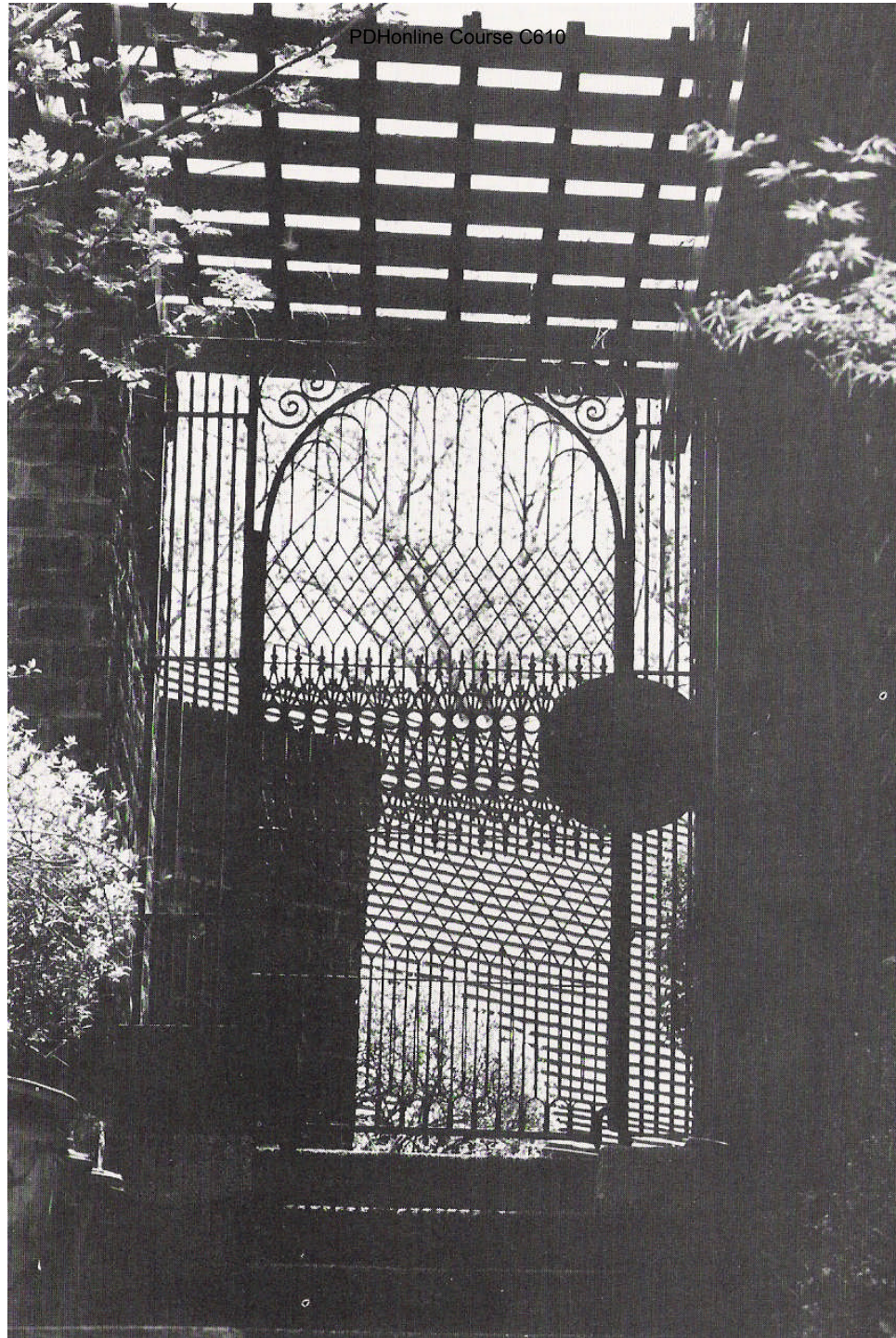
Industrial Workers



The *Arts & Crafts* movement in FHG as evidenced by a “Peacock Blue” ornate street lamp with the letters “F” & “H” (for “Forest Hills”) entwined in a strong tree (right): the FHG logo. Other street lamps - as the one at left, feature the Goudy’s printing press. Frederic and Bertha Goudy were prominent early FHG residents and founders of the *The Village Press*.

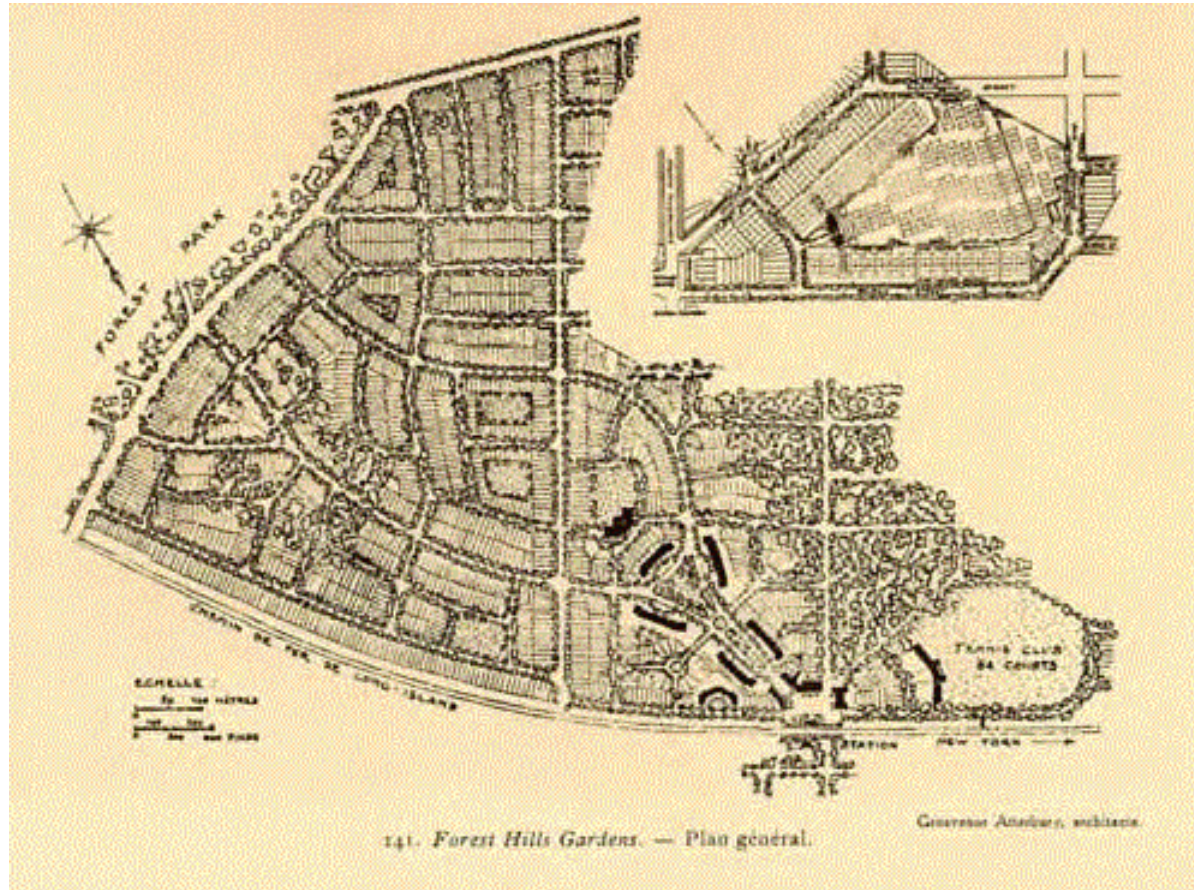


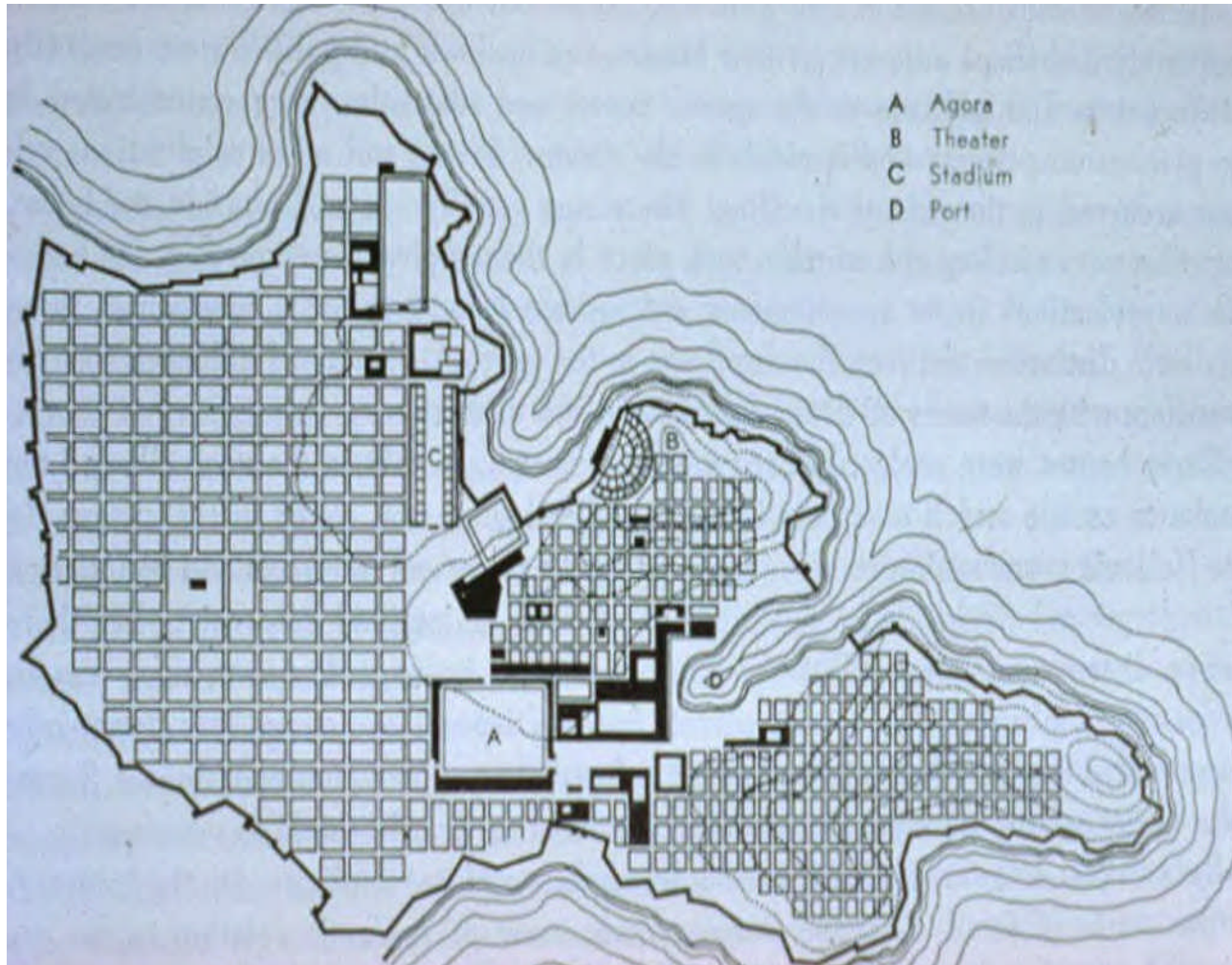
A commuter running to catch his train with umbrella & briefcase in hand *Arts & Crafts* ornamental lamp on the facade of the renovated LIRR station



“It is the plan that naturally first invites attention...there is nothing haphazard. It is thoughtfully studied.

RE: FHG Street Plan

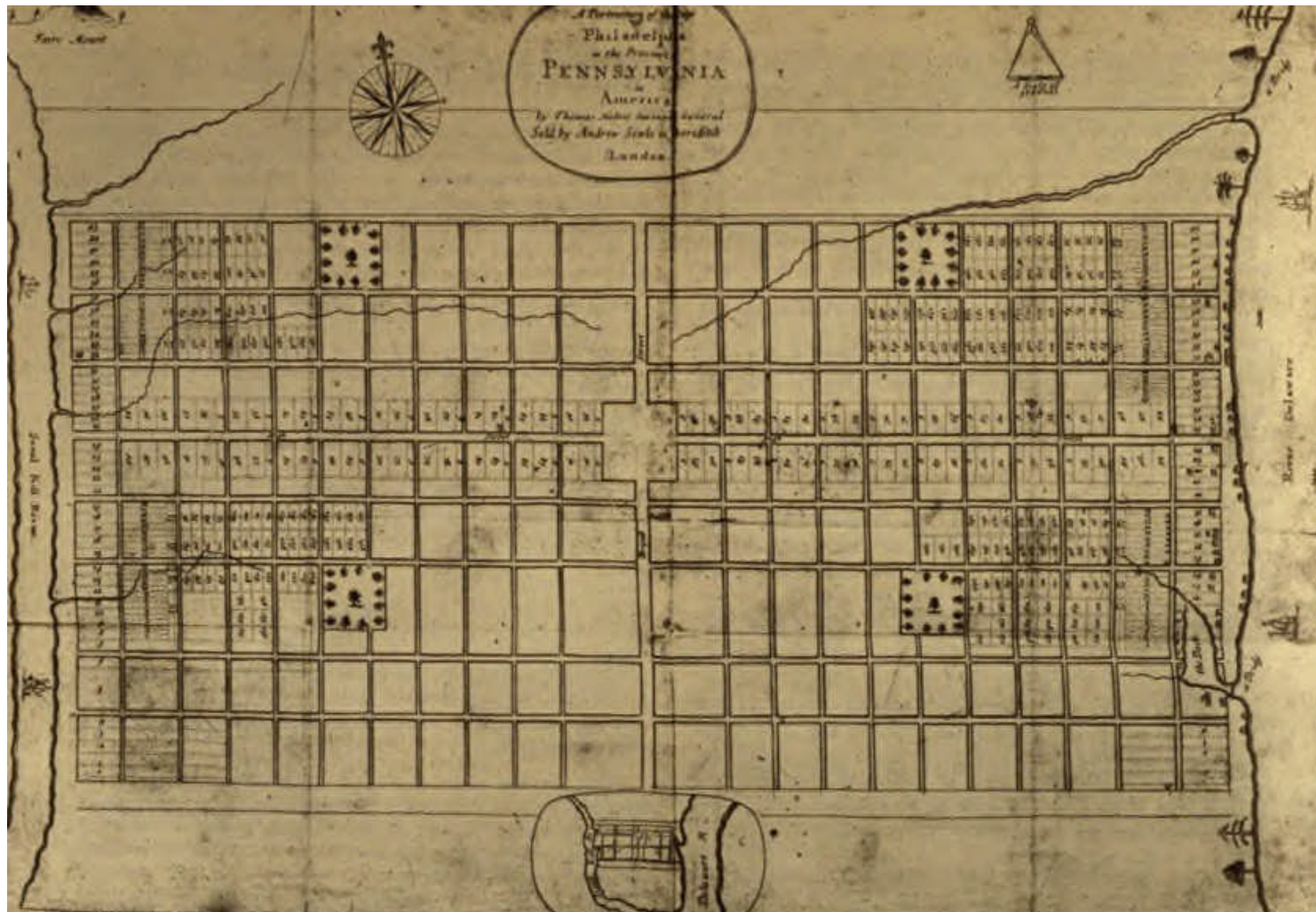




**Milos, Greece
(ca. 500 BC)**



**Plan of New Amsterdam (NYC)
(1660)**



**William Penn's Plan for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
(1682)**



**Plan of New Orleans, Louisiana
(1764)**



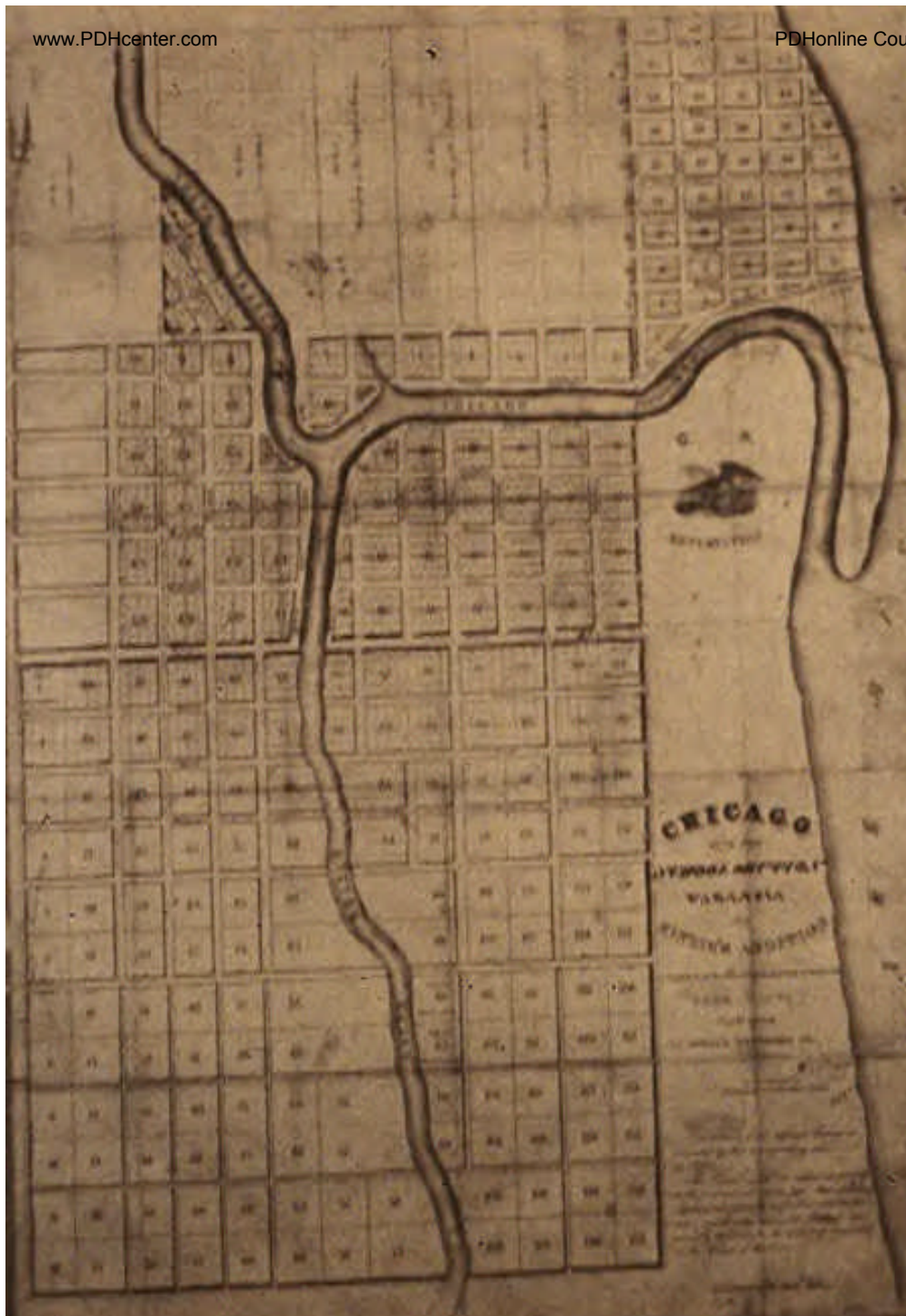
Plan of Fort Detroit



Plan of Saint Augustine, Florida



Plan of Indianapolis, Indiana



**Plan of Chicago, Illinois
(1834)**

“With the building of a Garden City in America we are brought to a consideration of the value of such a movement in combating our nation-wide cry for individuality of expression. Probably our inane attitude toward individuality, our absurd national egotism has been made more manifest in architecture than in any of the other arts, and yet, as a matter of fact, since we have given up imitating good architecture we have very largely devoted ourselves to designing bad buildings. We have seemed to regard startling eccentricity as genius and whimsicality as originality, at the very least, and so going about our undisciplined individual ways we have dotted our pleasant country landscapes with houses showing so little thought in construction or adaptation or appropriateness that the result is embarrassing to contemplate”

Edward Hale Brush - *The Craftsman*, February, 1911

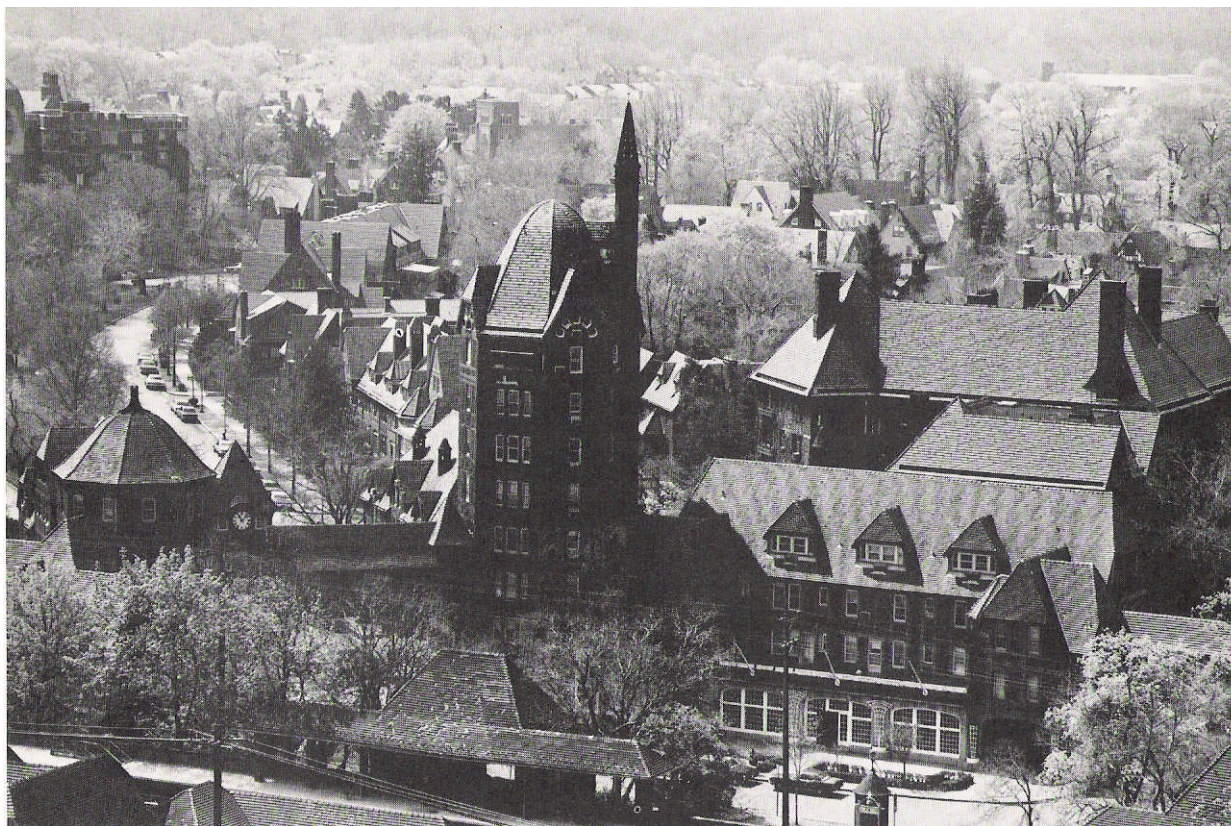


**Suburban house of the central middle class
(ca. 1885)**



Suburban Street ca. 1920s

“Thomas Hardy country...Only here, along with some aspect of the middle ages, there is combined the comforts of the 20th Century...scarcely 17 miles from the Great White Way!”





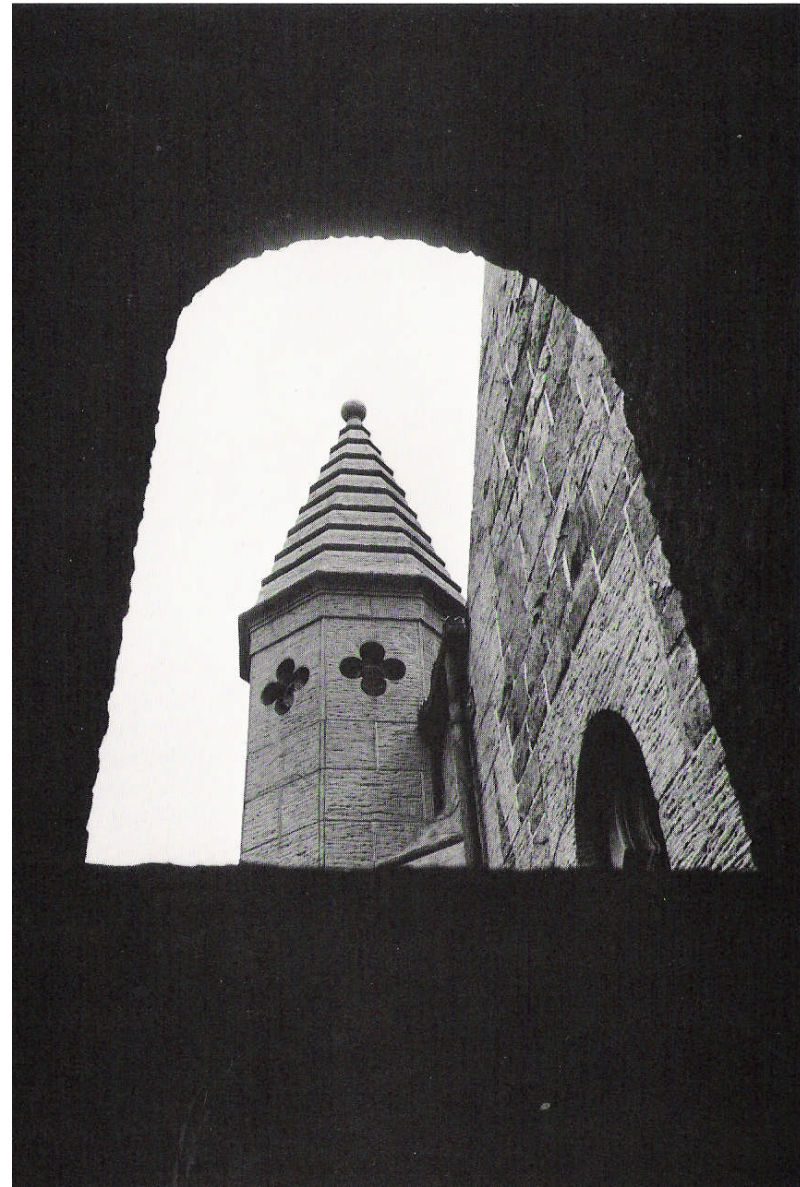
**“Grotesque” atop masonry pier
(Rockrose Place - Upper Gardens)**



Tudor rules in FHG







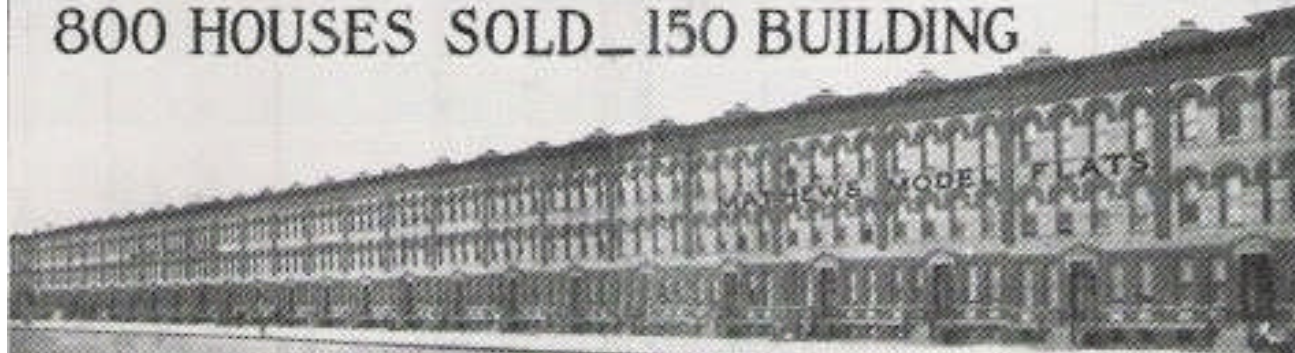


“There is a vast difference between the individualist and the egotist, and by their works shall ye know them apart. Of the individual conception of real beauty we cannot have too much in architecture. On the other hand, we must welcome most heartily an attempt like the Garden City at Forest Hills, Long Island, to prove the importance of establishing a standard of beauty in town building, and of guaranteeing that standard to the public by placing the building in the hands of artists of imagination and training. This most significant, if not the first, garden city in America was born of the desire of Mrs. Russell Sage to devote a part of her large fortune left her”

Edward Hale Brush - *The Craftsman*, February, 1911

LOWEST RENTS IN GREATER NEW YORK HERE

800 HOUSES SOLD_150 BUILDING



MATHEWS MODEL FLATS
JACKSON AVE. & 13TH AVE., L.I. CITY

One of Our Latest Developments—Over 25,000 People Live in Mathews Model Flats Now

The houses built by us in Queens County if set side by side would make a line about 4 miles long

A. F. MATHEWS, PRES.

GERBE'S ELMHURST HOMES



These new wonderful type large 2-family, 11-room houses consist of 2 sun parlors and all high-class improvements that makes **A HOME A HOME**. Every room has a comfortable lay-out. My years of experience enables me to offer you a home that I can safely guarantee on renting a floor, it relieves a burden off your shoulders. \$2,000 cash is all that is required on the first payment, the balance on terms that will bring your carrying charges less than your present rent and at the same time you **OWN YOUR OWN HOME**.

The outdoor improvements consist of a driveway, sewer, sidewalks and curbs.

The property is 3-minutes' walk to all subway lines for Grand Central or Times Square.

PRICE \$14,500
ALSO 2-FAMILY HOUSES AT \$11,000

WM. GERBE

OWNER AND BUILDER

Office on premises, 70th and Santa Sts., 1 block west and 1 block south of Junction Ave.
subway station, Elmhurst
PHONE HAVEMEYER 8295





“Bright cheerful houses, well arranged, well trimmed lawns, hedging carefully cut... distinctly joyous”

Herbert Croly, Architectural Critic - 1914







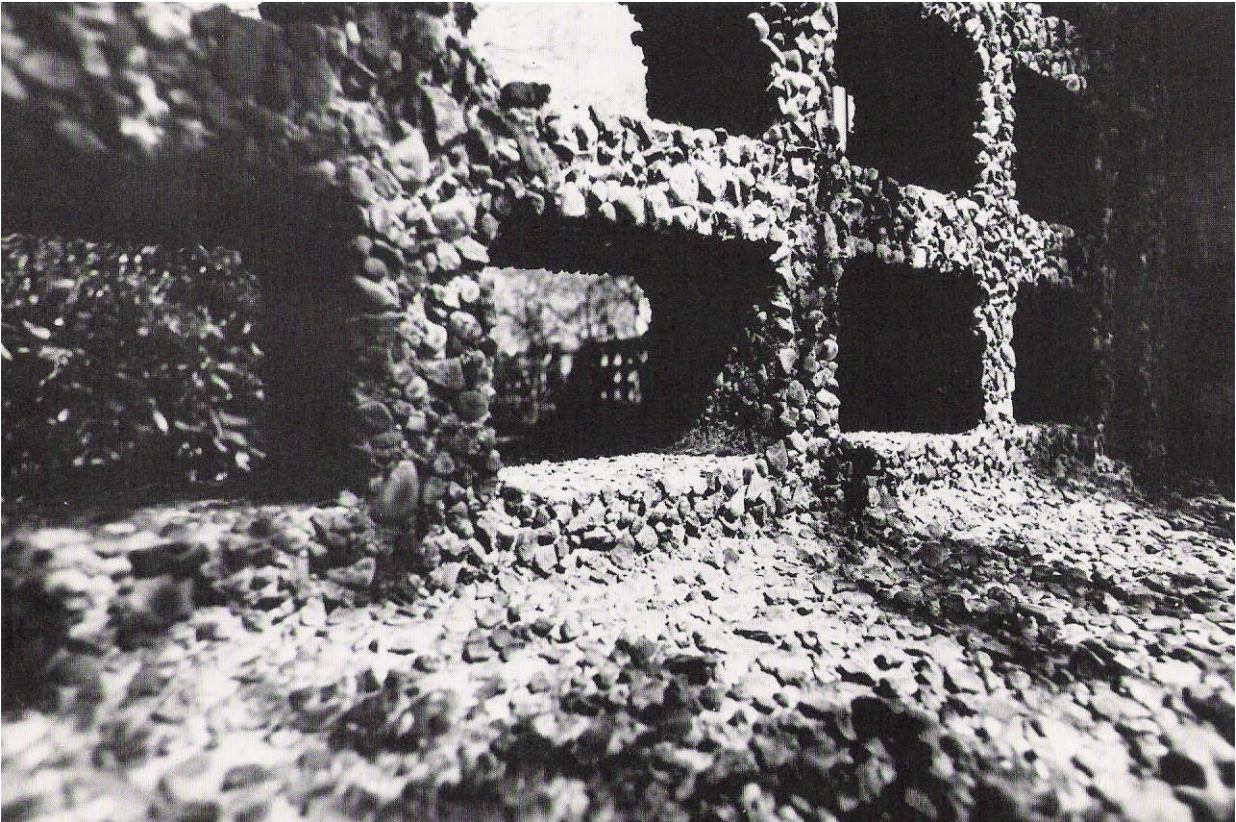


(Seasongood Road)









“Jolly villagers should be approaching under the arch, left center, singing the opening chorus”

RE: critique of FHG as a “stage-setting for an operetta”



**The Village Players performing in Olivia Park
(ca. 1915)**

“The aesthetic and practical values of a carefully planned real estate development, at a period when such planning was almost unique...the many imitators and the fame of the Gardens themselves are eloquent testimony”

John Glenn, Russell Sage Foundation President & FHG resident

One hundred and forty-two acres in the first tract bought in 1909. 32 acres in the second tract where the Gardens Club is located. 31 acres in the third tract, 10 acres of which are now owned by the West Side Tennis Club.

TRACT ONE, 1910 to 1914

142 acres divided as follows:

2,000 lots	92 acres
6 1/4 miles streets	45 acres
Parks	<u>5 acres</u>
	142 acres

DEVELOPMENT COSTS

GRADING STREETS	\$ 80,000
PAVING	200,000
WATERMAINS	70,000
SANITARY SEWERS	40,000
STORM DRAINS	62,000
CURBS	73,000
GAS	68,000
CONDUITS	70,000
SIDEWALKS	66,000
PARKING PLACES	90,000
Decorative features:	
LAMP POSTS	} 100,000
FOUNTAINS	
POOLS, PARKS	



THE GARDENS CLUB

“That’s what I’ll do after college! I’ll get my hands on one of those prairie towns and make it beautiful!...why should they have all the garden suburbs on Long Island?”

Carol Kennicott in Sinclair Lewis’ *Main Street* (1920)

***“A modern Garden of Eden, a fairy tale too good to
be true”***

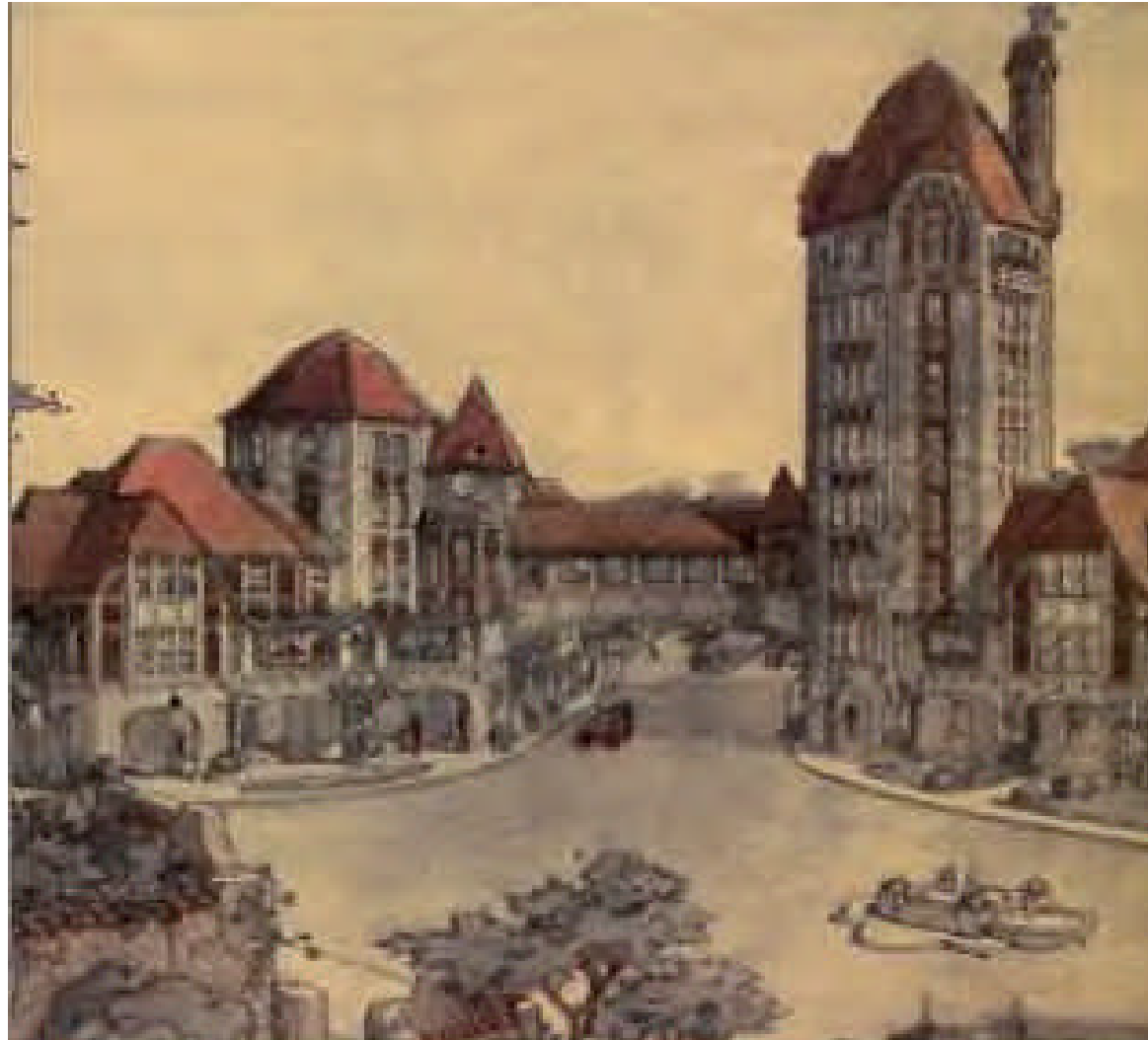
Herbert Croly, Architectural Critic - 1914

“...the like of which is not to be found at all in America...a modern Arcadia, a place that smashes all the convention of commonplace suburban building”

Journalist, 1910



FOREST HILLS GARDENS



Part 2

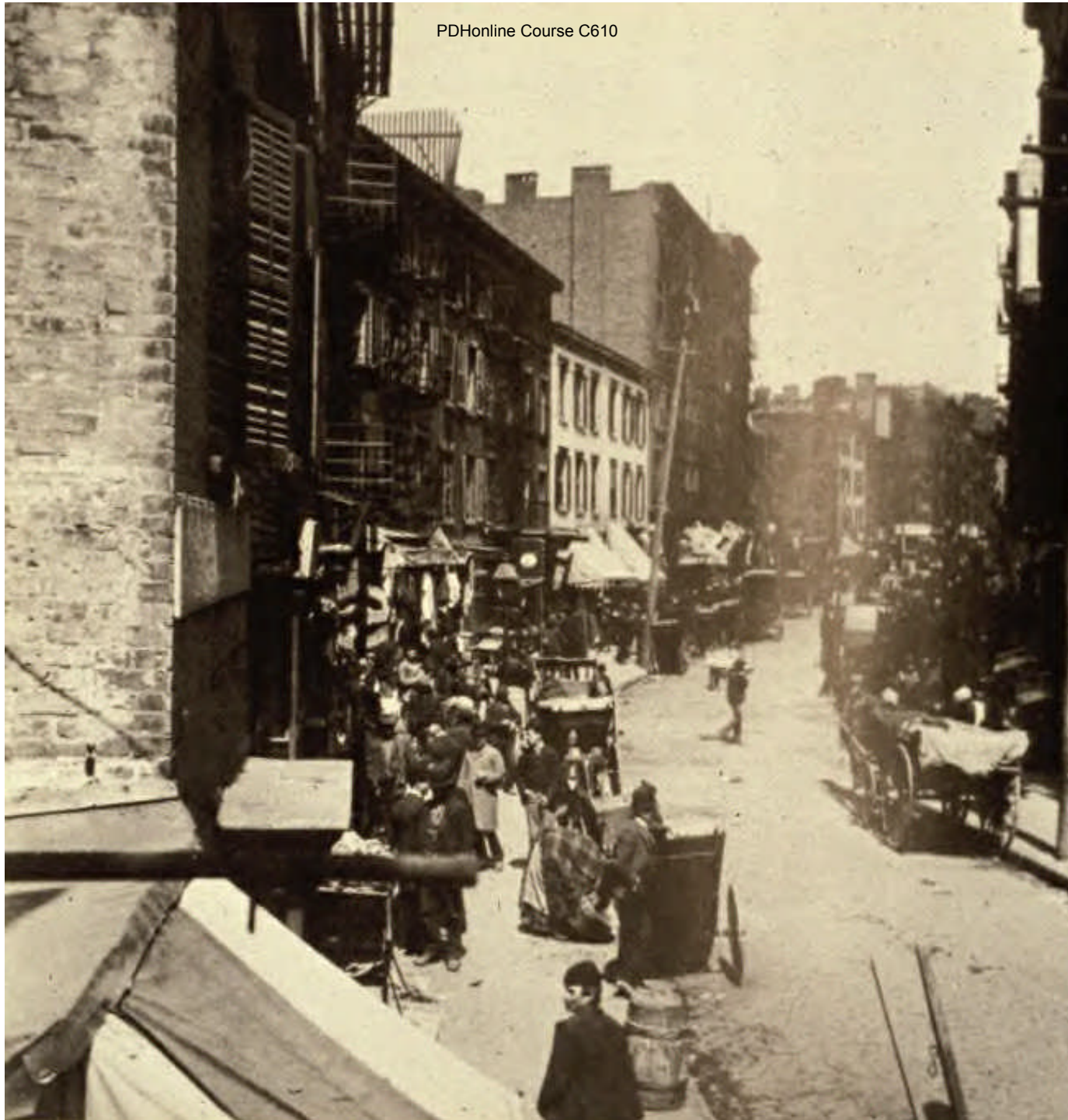
Arcadia For Everyone

Ar-ca'di-a (Ar'ca-dy), *n.* mountainous country (Switzerland of Greece) in the heart of the Peloponnessus, anciently inhabited by a primitive pastoral people; any region of simple pastoral pleasure and quietness

MacMillan's Modern Dictionary

“...would benefit those who are struggling but who are still able to secure something more than the bare necessities of life...This does not constitute the most serious problems of great cities...far more important work among those who both through ignorance and through actual inability to secure more sanitary homes are now quartered in filthy, vastly overpopulated and destructive tenements”

Saginaw Michigan *Herald*, November 1910





Street Children



Evicted tenants living in an alley











“The seekers after their own heart’s desire; a perfect place to live and enjoy life, too often meet the same experience. Seeking the places most attractive by nature, piling into them thousands after thousands without constructive forethought...their very numbers begin to distill the poison that blights the paradise they seek”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr. - 1922

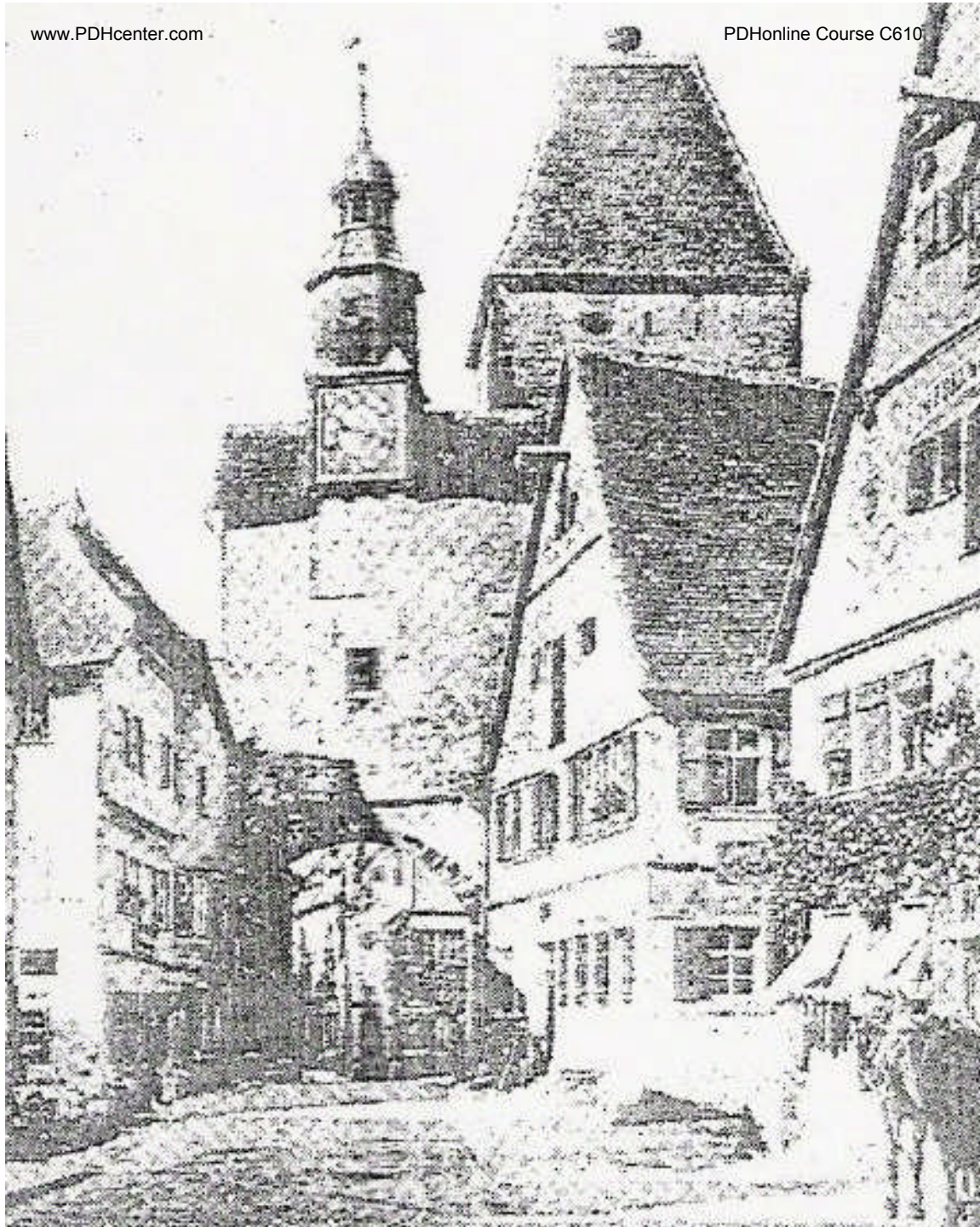


***Fairsted* (Olmsted Residence)
Brookline, Massachusetts**



Camillo Sitte

Sitte espoused to his many followers in Europe his belief that medieval town architecture was natural and beautiful in its eclectic mix and worthy of imitation



Rothenberg, Germany
One of the Bavarian hill towns which inspired Camillo Sitte and later, Raymond Unwin. In Forest Hills Gardens, the influence of the “Bavarian Style” architecture is most evident in *Grosvenor Atterbury’s* buildings in Station Square.

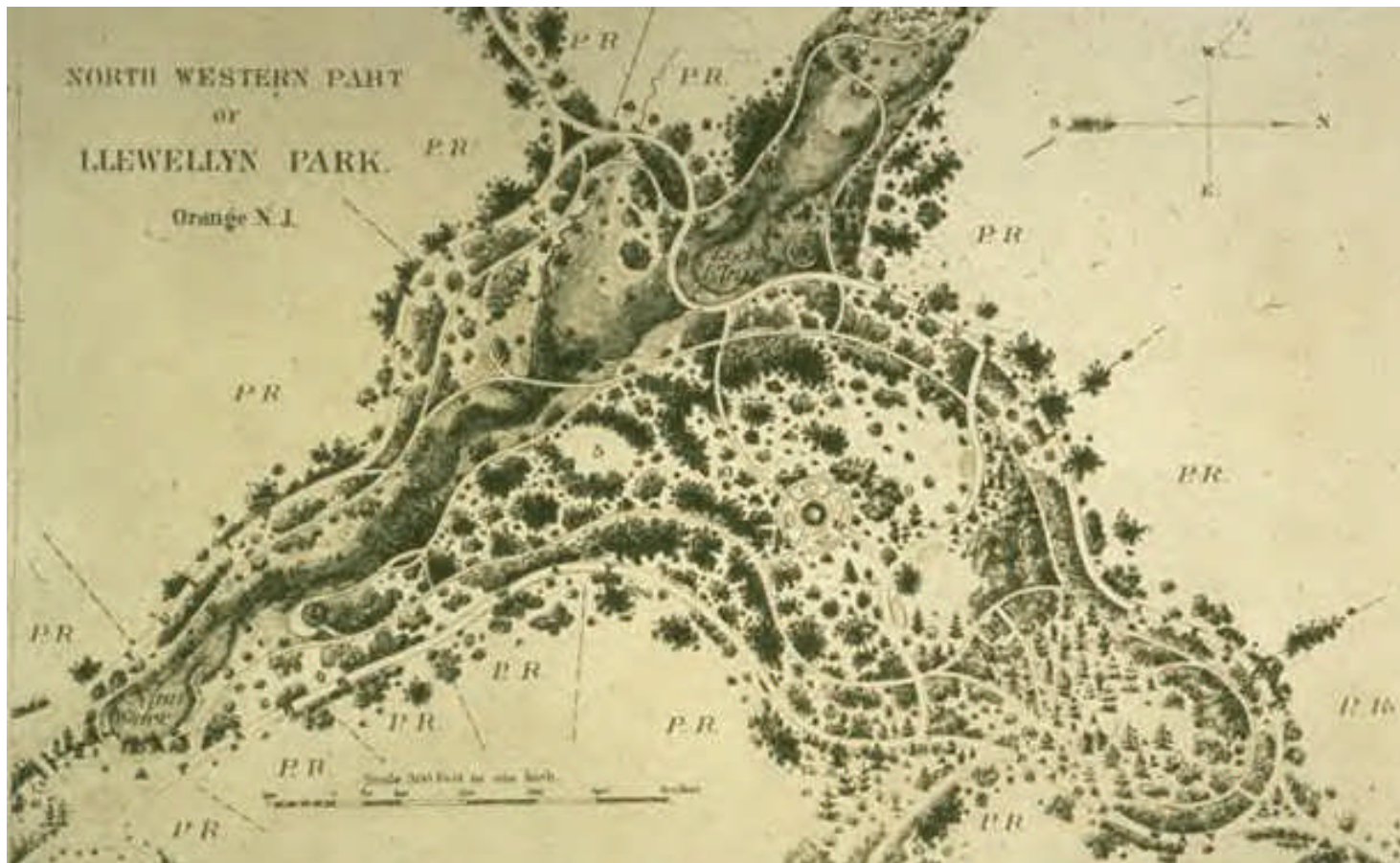


Tower of the Forest Hills Inn as seen from Greenway Terrace (ca. 1915)



Clock Tower (10 Station Square)

“Country homes for city people”
RE: *Llewellyn Park, NJ - 1855*



Partial-Plan of Llewellyn Park, New Jersey



Llewellyn Park Gate House



Castle-like Estate Llewellyn Park

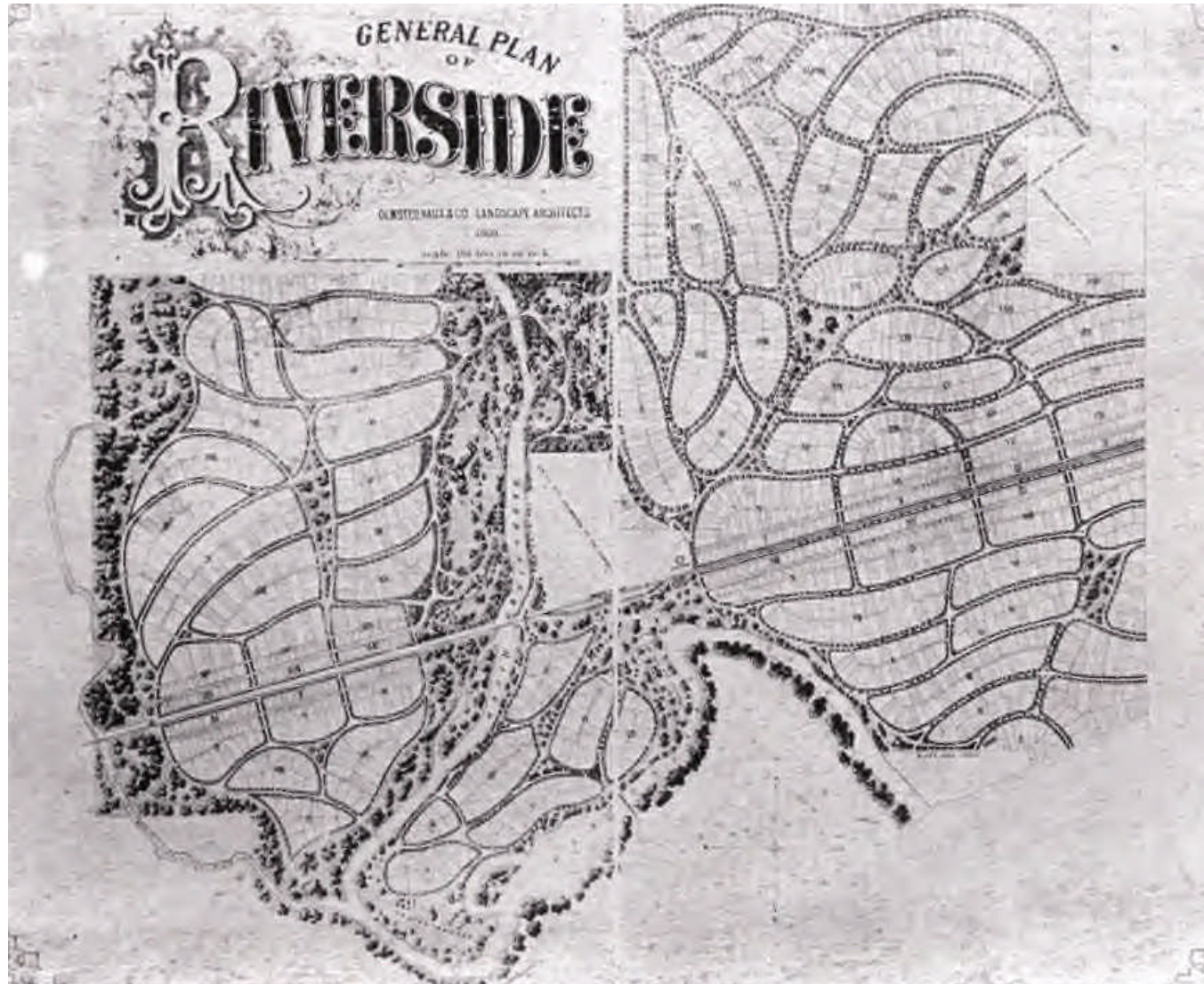
“No great town can long exist without great suburbs...the strong tendency of people to flock together in great towns... the special charms and substantial advantages of rural conditions...the most refined and the most soundly wholesome forms of domestic life, the best application of the arts of civilization to which mankind has yet attained”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Sr.

“Leisure, contemplativeness and happy tranquility”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Sr.

RE: Riverside, Illinois



**General Plan for Riverside, Illinois (1869)
(by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.)**



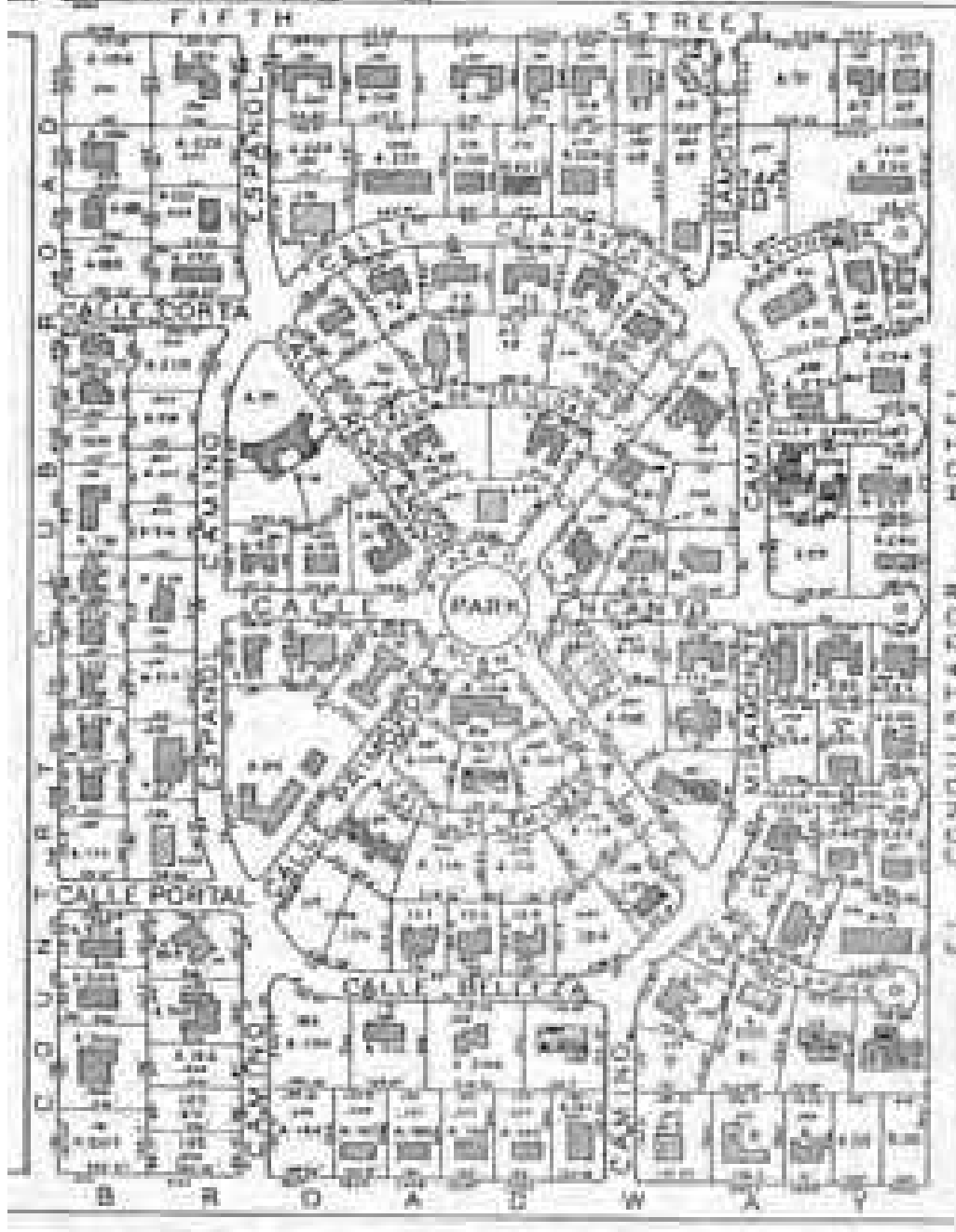
Commuter rail station – Riverside, Illinois



**Typical Street
Riverside, Illinois**

***“A stage, a theater for the good life...a varied life,
a convenient life, a beautiful life; where they will
grow and change, and their surroundings can also
change with them”***

**Clarence Stein, Architect & Planner
RE: Community Planning**



“Planned Community”



“The misfortune of most existing suburbs...lack of any general plan or any intelligent design...the happy combination of conveniences, comforts and luxuries, which have been heretofore gained by close congregation”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Sr.



“Cookie-cutter” suburban housing

“There are in reality not only, as is so constantly assumed, two alternatives – town life and country life – but a third alternative, in which the advantages of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country, may be secured in perfect combination. Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together.”

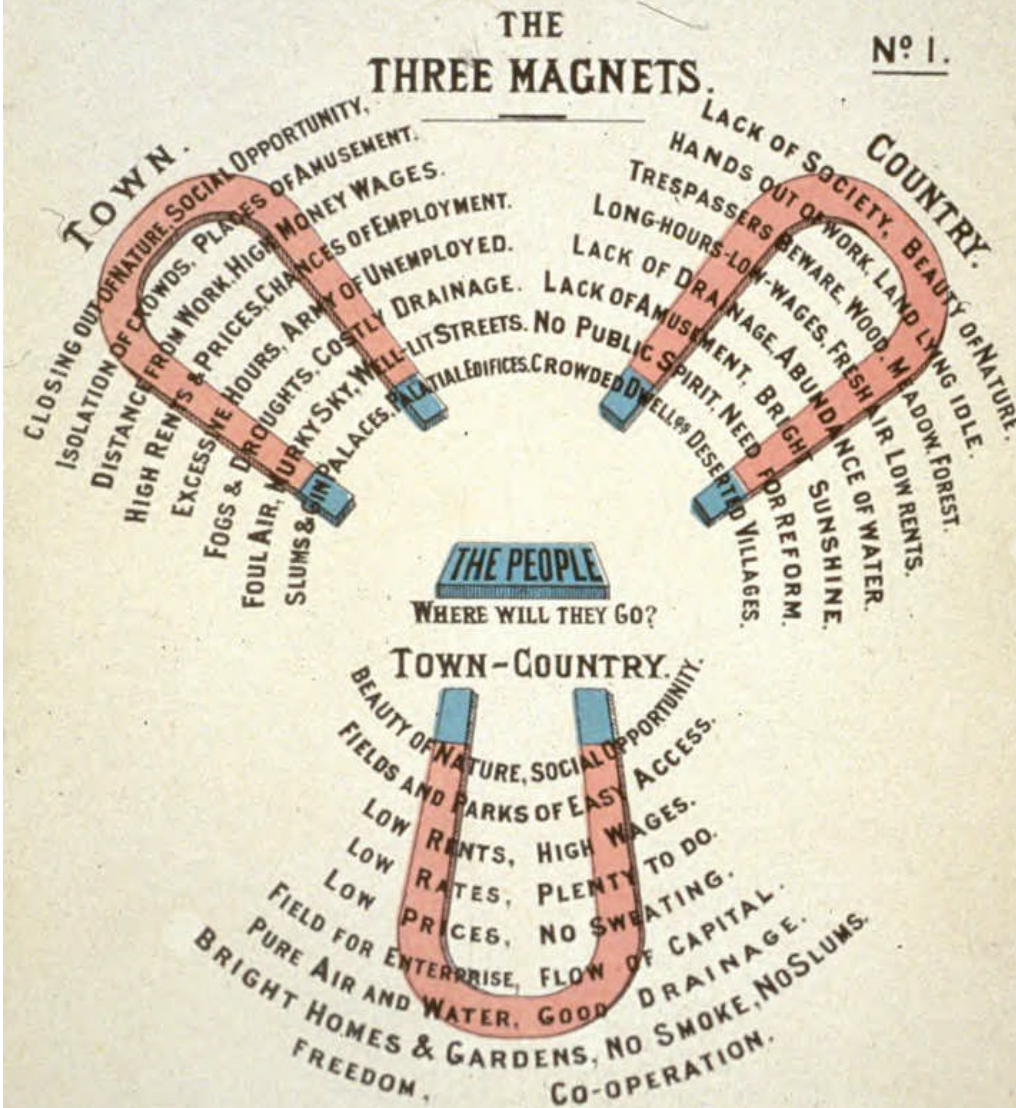
Ebenezer Howard, English urban theorist and father of the garden city movement - 1902

Garden Cities of Tomorrow



By
Ebenezer Howard

In his book: *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1898), Ebenezer Howard – a self-styled urban theorist, outlined a bold and highly influential proposal to halt the growth of overcrowded industrial cities and relieve their crushing density. Howard saw governance by economically disinterested agencies as a means of checking free-market tendencies and neutralizing political corruption. In fact, the joint planning and administrative bodies Howard proposed were the conceptual forerunners of the New York region's Port Authority.



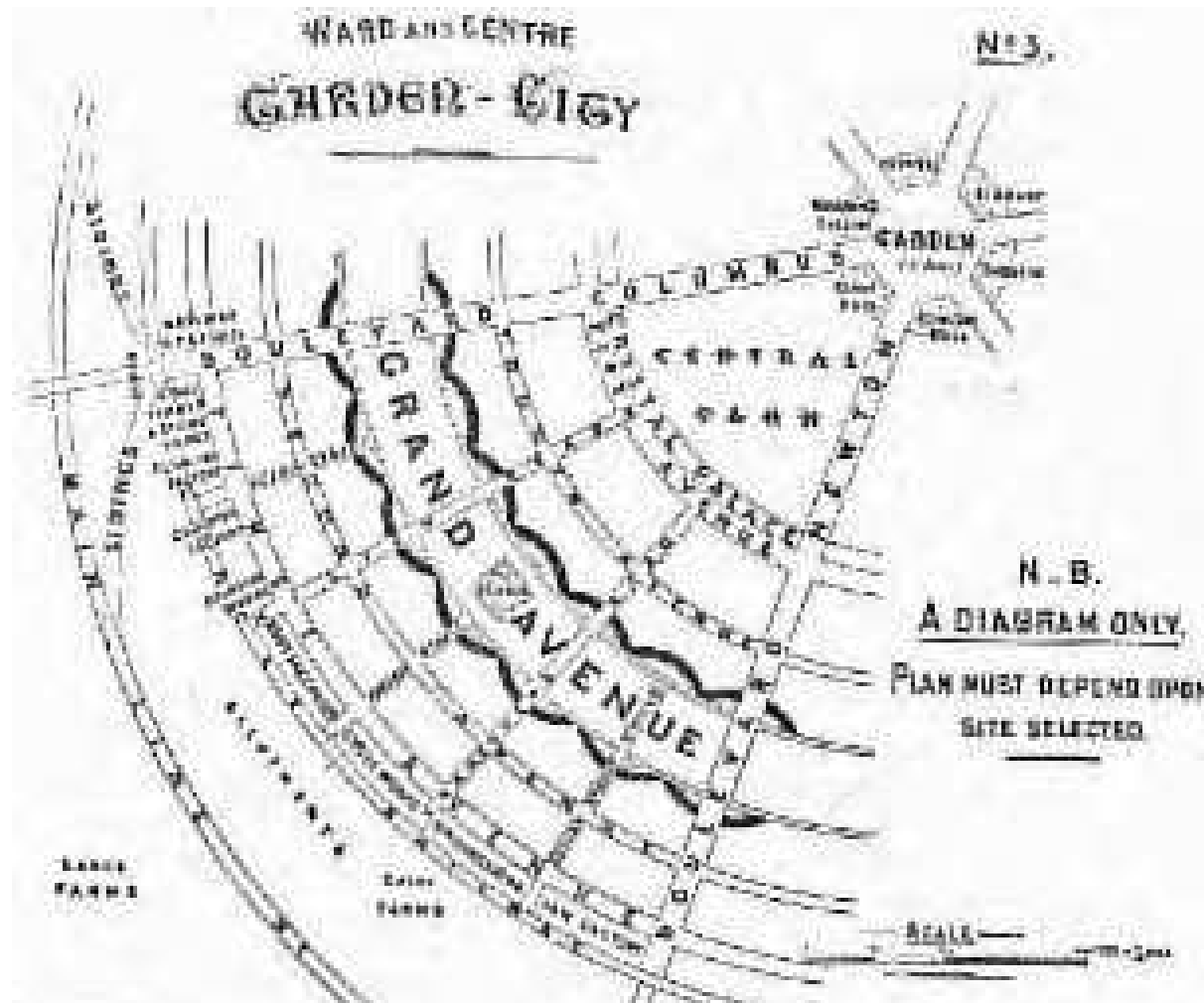
“This can be illustrated with a diagram of three magnets where the main advantages of the city and the country are expressed alongside the corresponding drawbacks, while the pulses of the garden city appear free from the shortcomings of both...the principle of always maintaining a belt of countryside around our cities will be kept in mind forever”

Ebenezer Howard

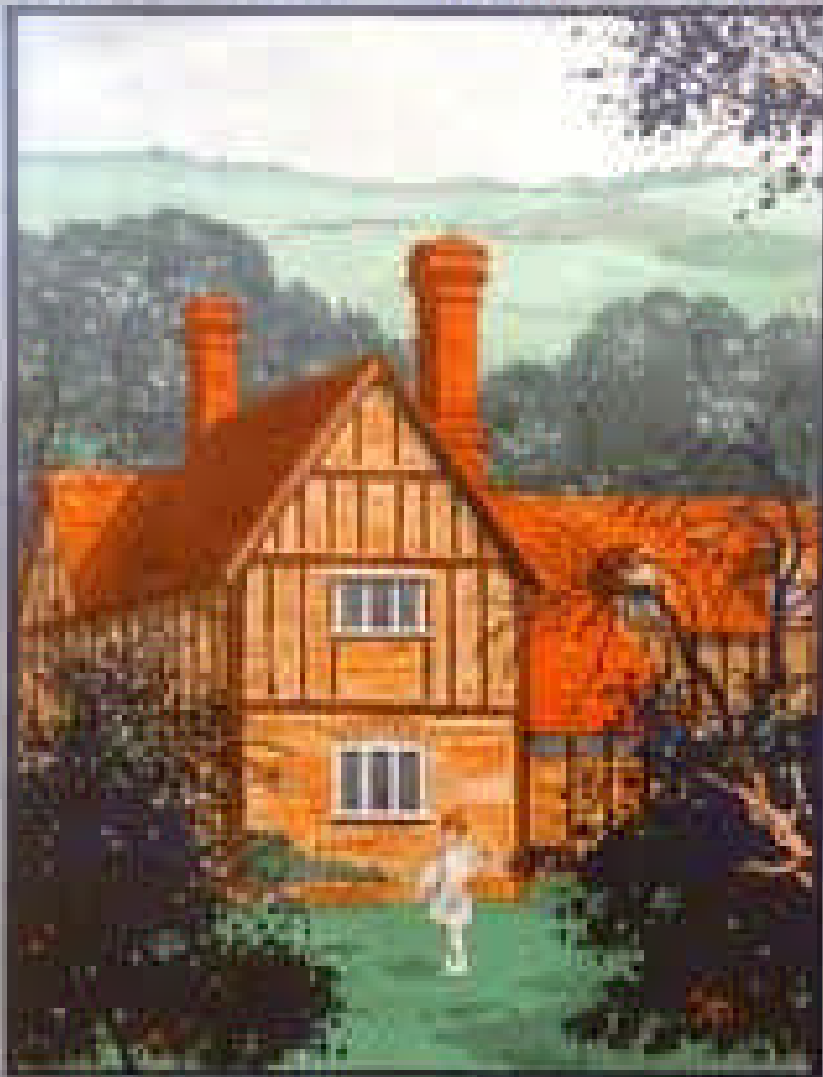


“Circling the metropolis, a series of new, linked, semiautonomous satellite cities, each populated by no more than 30,000 residents, built within a wide swath of agriculture and forest”

Ebenezer Howard
 RE: excerpt from: *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*



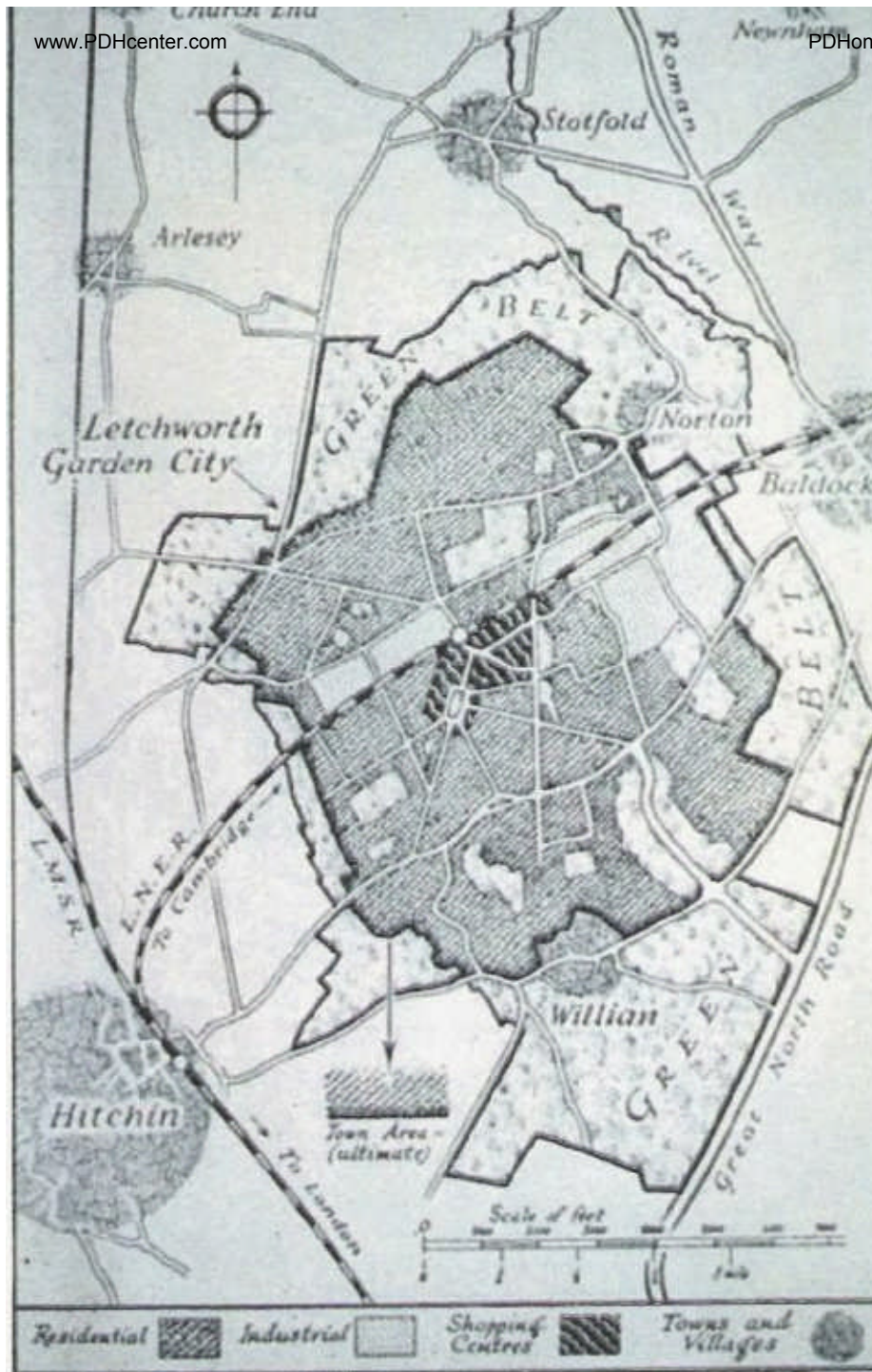
**HEALTH of the COUNTRY
COMFORTS of the TOWN**



LETCHWORTH
THE FIRST GARDEN CITY



Letchworth, England
“First Garden City”

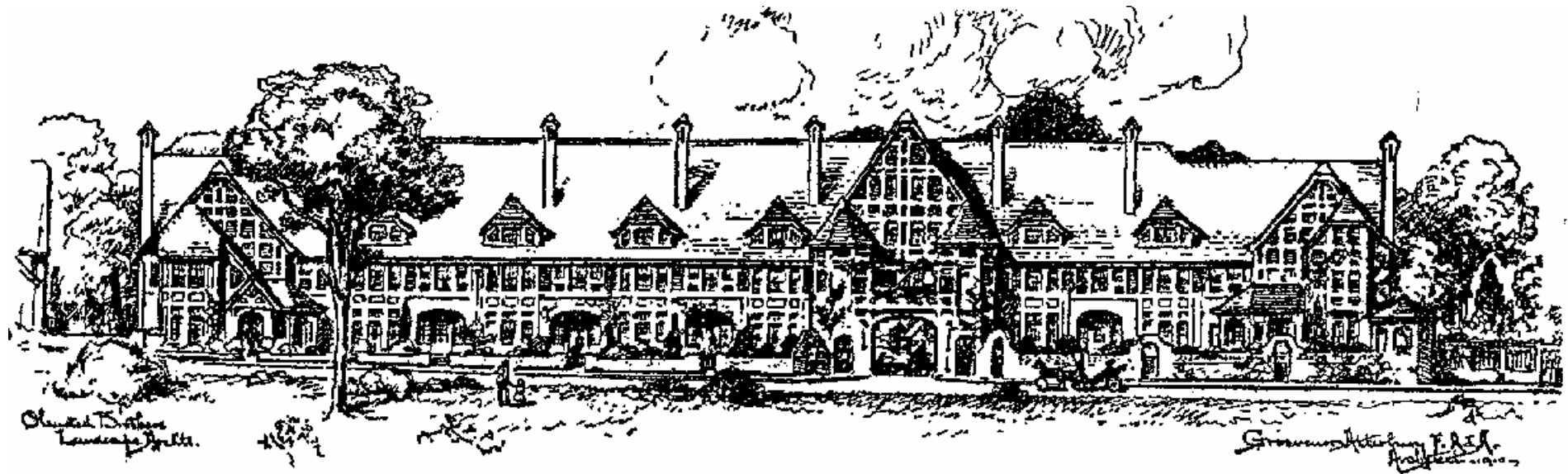


Decentralization of industry and dispersed populations would allow for plenty of breathing room. Administration of the new garden cities would be carried out by public authorities: popularly elected bodies whose function would be to regulate land use and prevent speculation.

**Letchworth, England
Garden City Plan, 1902**



Letchworth



**Original rendering of “Terrace Houses” (Greenway Terrace, FHG)
(by *Grosvenor Atterbury*, Architect)**



**Archway Place (FHG)
(entry from Greenway South)**



**Archway Place
(FHG)**



Greenway Terrace (FHG)



Letchworth

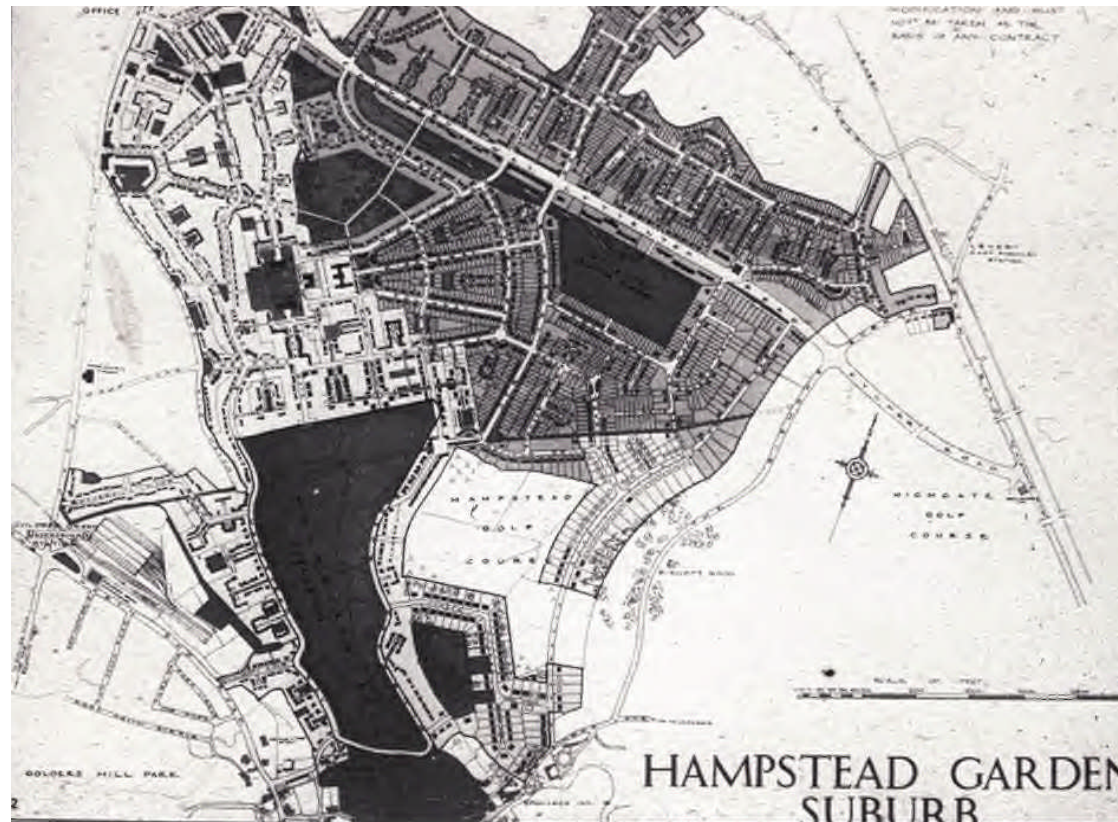


Forest Hills Gardens

“The outskirts of the city, where the major part of the city’s growth is bound to occur, and where the city plan is daily taking shape out of nothing, whether it is intelligently designed or not”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr. - ca. 1910

Hampstead Garden Suburb (HGS) is located just seven miles northwest of central London. Founded by *Dame Henrietta Barnett* – a cosmetics heiress turned social worker, and *Sir Raymond Unwin* - a mining engineer turned architect/planner, it is recognized as one of the finest examples of early twentieth century architecture and town planning. Some famous residents include PM *Harold Wilson*, *Elizabeth Taylor* and the *King & Queen of Greece*. Henrietta Barnett and her husband *Canon Barnett* were responsible for starting a series of charitable and educational institutions in London at the turn of the 20th century which included *Whitechapel Art Gallery* and *Toynbee Hall*. Although it is a suburb and not a self-sufficient community, Sir Raymond Unwin intended to give HGS a distinct identity as vivid as medieval villages. His study of medieval German cities led him to place his buildings in such a way that they grew out of the contours of the ground, almost as naturally as the hedgerow trees which he was so careful to preserve. *Frederick Law Olmstead Jr.* visited HGS in 1907 and was greatly influenced by it. He considered it a soaring example of a new social, political and spiritual creation: a joint co-operative endeavor by a group of like-minded citizens. No wonder then that FHG and HGS consider themselves to be “sister communities.”



Henrietta Barnett wanted to create a neighborhood in which: *“thousands of people, of all classes of society, of all sorts of opinions, and all standards of income can live in helpful neighbourliness”*, and that this was to be achieved in such a way that: *“from every part there shall be good views or glimpses of distant country.”*



Aerial view – Hampstead Garden Suburb (ca. 1920)

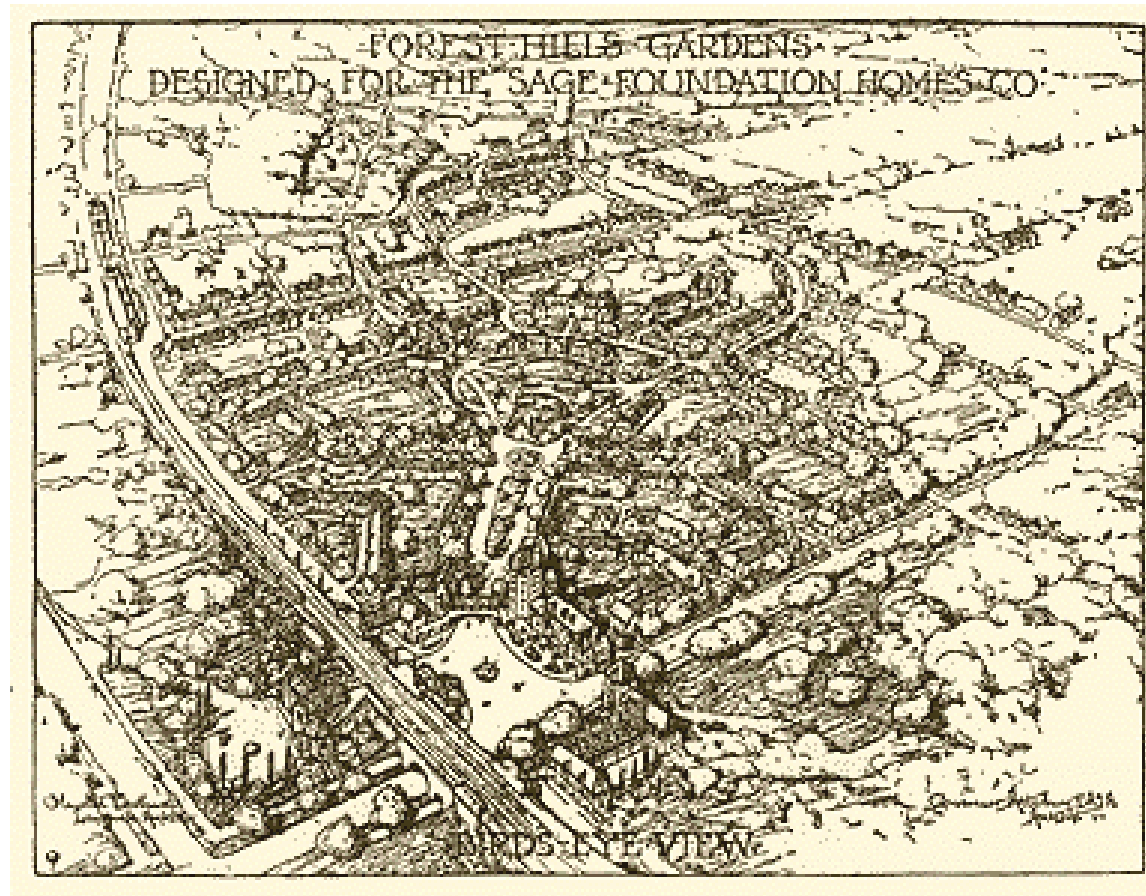
HGS Guiding Principles;

- *persons of all classes of society and standards of income should be accommodated and the handicapped be welcomed*
- *cottages and houses should be limited on an average to eight to an acre*
- *roads should be 40-feet wide, and the fronts of the houses should be at least 50-feet apart, gardens occupying the intervening space*
- *plot divisions should not be walls but hedges or trellis*
- *every road should be lined with trees, making a color scheme with the hedges*
- *woods and public gardens should be free to all the tenants without regard to the amount of their ground rent*
- *noise should be avoided, even to the prohibition of church bells*
- *lower ground rents should be charged in certain areas to enable weekly wage-earners to live on the estate*

Many of these “guiding principles” would be adapted for use in FHG

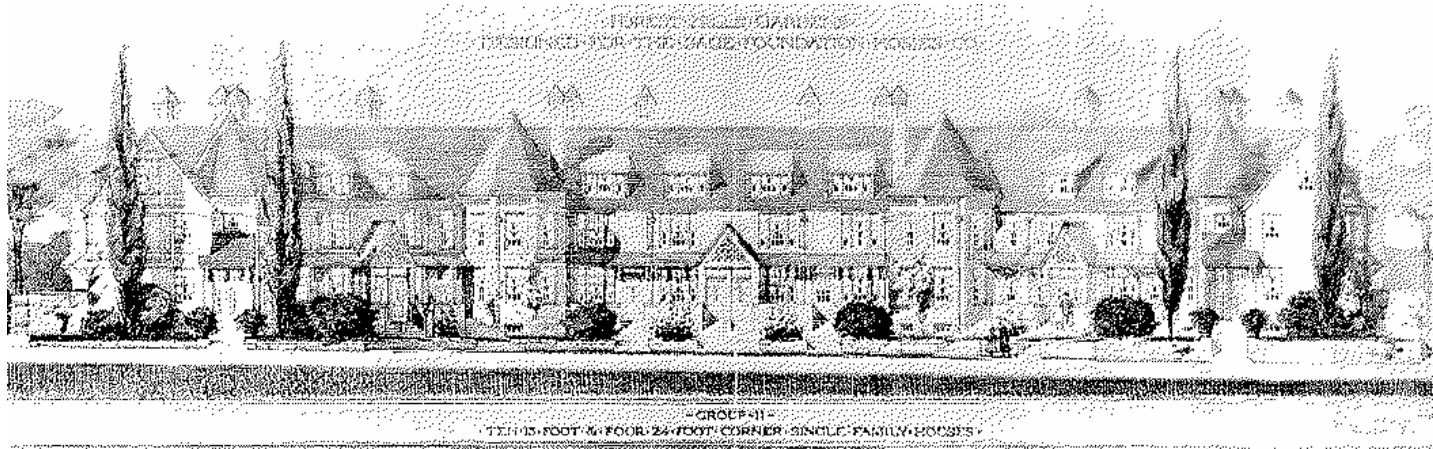


**FHG – aerial view
(ca. mid-1920s)**





HGS



FHG
(smallest attached/semi-attached houses)



HGS



FHG



FHG



FHG



FHG



Etched Glass Door Panel FHG



FHG
(large house on small lot – near P.S. 101)



**HGS
Town Square**



FHG
Station Square



HGS
Apartments above stores in square



**“Housekeeping Apartments” (FHG)
(above stores in Station Square)**



HGS
Arched & Gated Entry



FHG
Arched & Gated Entry
(near Archway Place)



FHG
Double Arched & Gated Entry
(Greenway Terrace)



HGS
(*Pebbledash* finish)



**Close-up view of
Pebbledash finish on
face of balcony –
FHG (LIRR) station
(Station Square)**



**West (left) & East (right) Kiosks, Station Square Island (Pebbledash finish)
FHG**



Pebbledash finish on bridge – Station Square



Pebbledash “half-timbering” (on pre-cast panels) Clock Tower - 10 Station Square

“With belching chimneys, soot-laden air, clanging noises and landscapes blighted with flaming billboards”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: warning of urban blights affecting suburbs

Yesterday



Living and Working in the Smoke

To-day

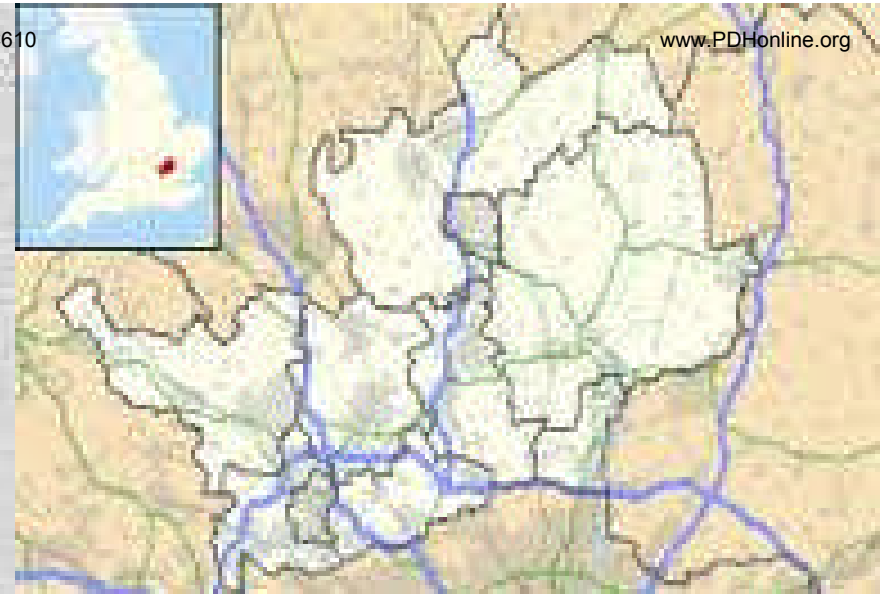


Living in the Suburbs - Working in the Smoke

To-morrow



Living & Working in the Sun at WELWYN GARDEN CITY



**Welwyn Garden City
(post-WWI)**



Welwyn Garden City Plan (ca. 1920)



Welwyn Garden City, England
Louis De Soissons Memorial

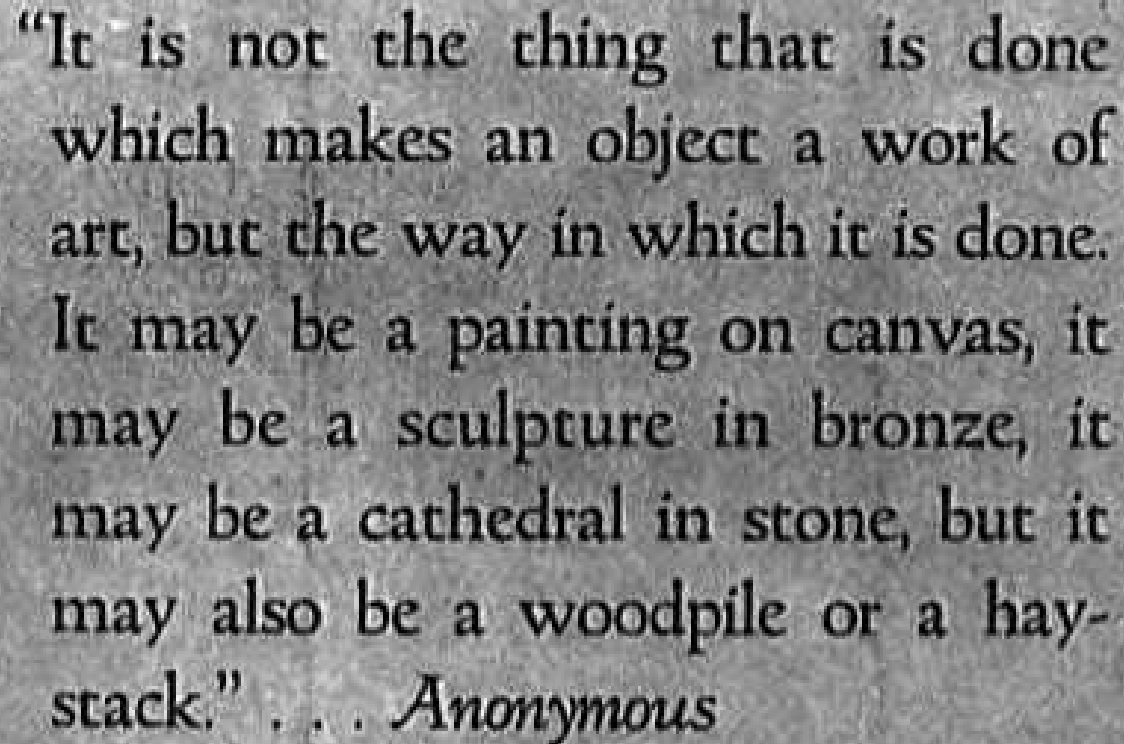
“Show that those who work in the big cities need not live in their ugliness and grime, but may secure beauty, fresh air and the healthful benefits of the open spaces in the suburbs”

Grand Rapids Press, November 1910



“To provide more healthful and attractive homes for many people and to demonstrate that careful planning, convenient thoroughfares, quiet domestic local streets and ample public spaces would make a satisfactory suburban development and encourage imitation”

RE: Russell Sage Foundation’s stated purpose for developing FHG



“It is not the thing that is done
which makes an object a work of
art, but the way in which it is done.
It may be a painting on canvas, it
may be a sculpture in bronze, it
may be a cathedral in stone, but it
may also be a woodpile or a hay-
stack.” . . . *Anonymous*

Plaque in the Russell Sage Foundation’s NYC HQ



Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage
Russell Sage Foundation Founder and Benefactor

Part 3

Queens Rising



Glacial movement formed the “Terminal Moraine” (where the glacier stopped) along the north shore of Long Island



The Terminal Moraine

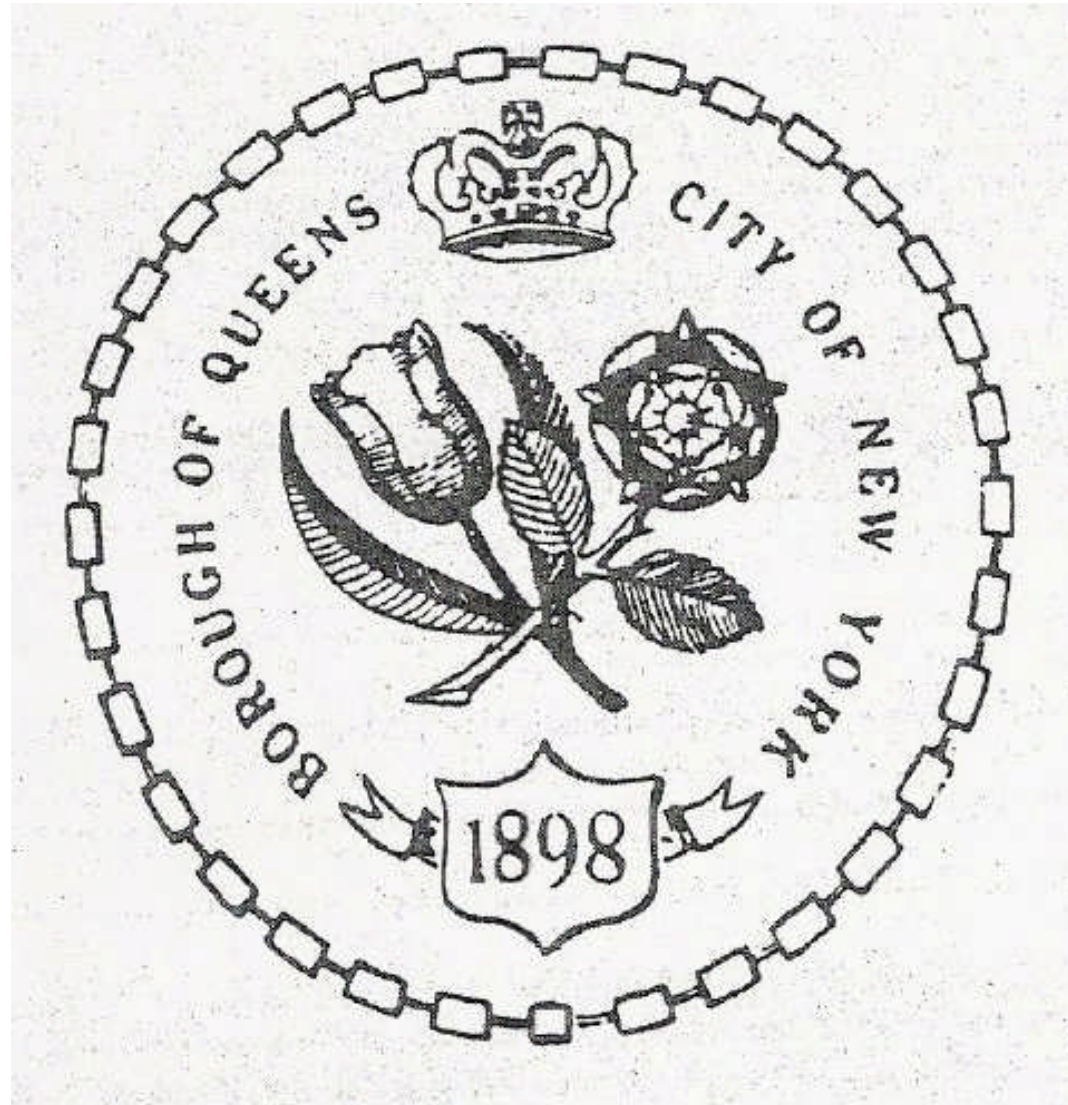
Long Island, New York



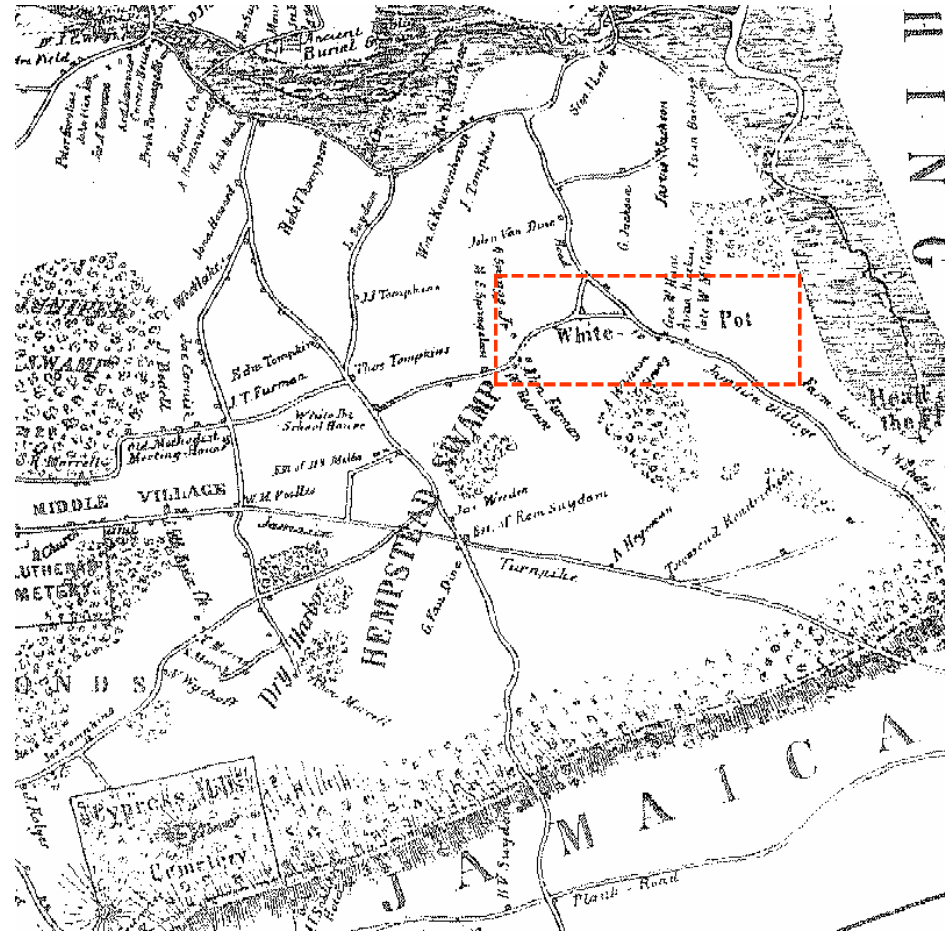
Forest Hills straddles the Terminal Moraine where some of the highest elevations in western Long Island are to be found



Early Dutch map of "Lange Eylandt" (Long Island)



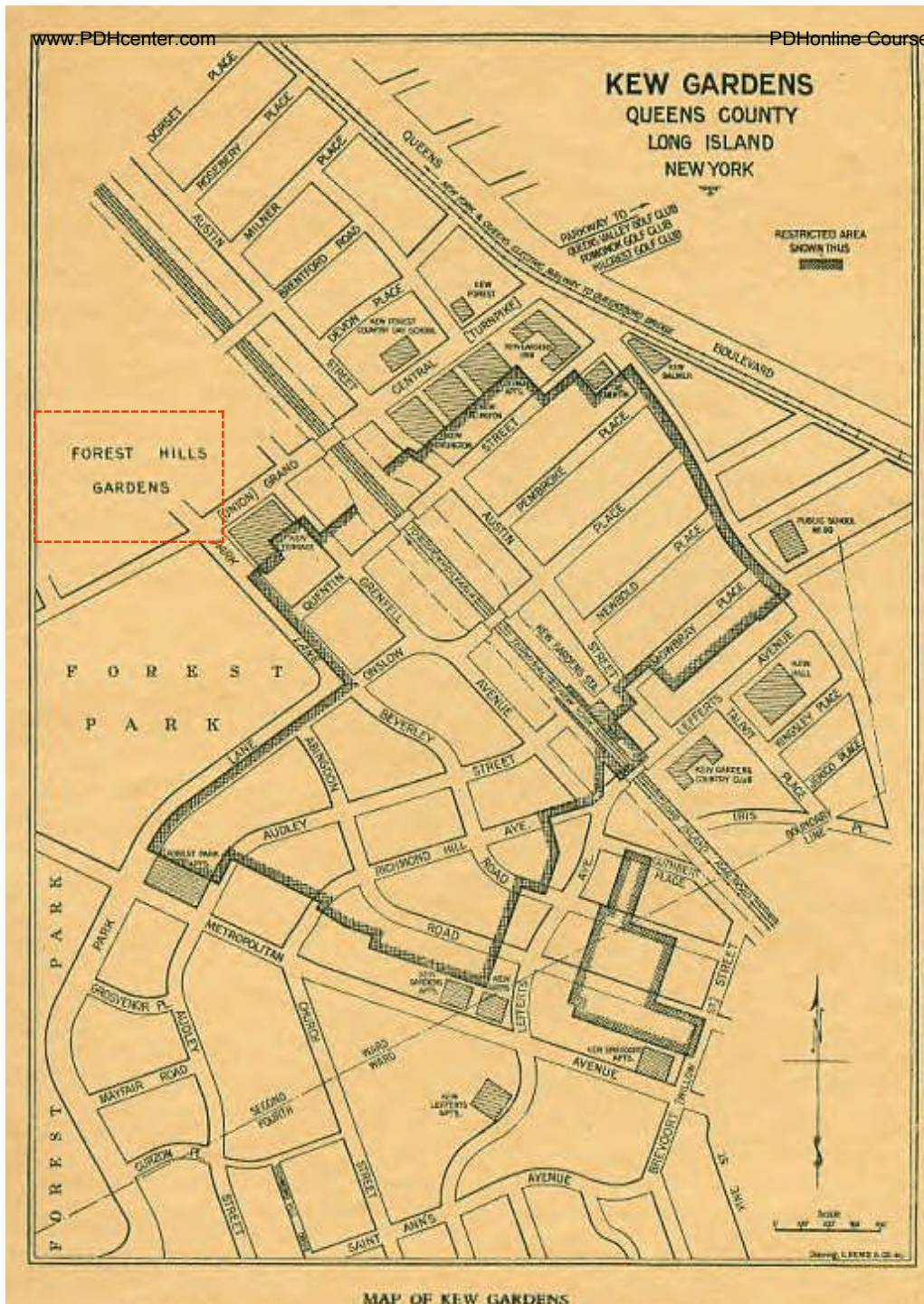
The Rose (English) & Tulip (Dutch) entwined indicating both the Dutch and English origins of Queens on the county's official seal - incorporated as one of the five boroughs of New York City in 1898



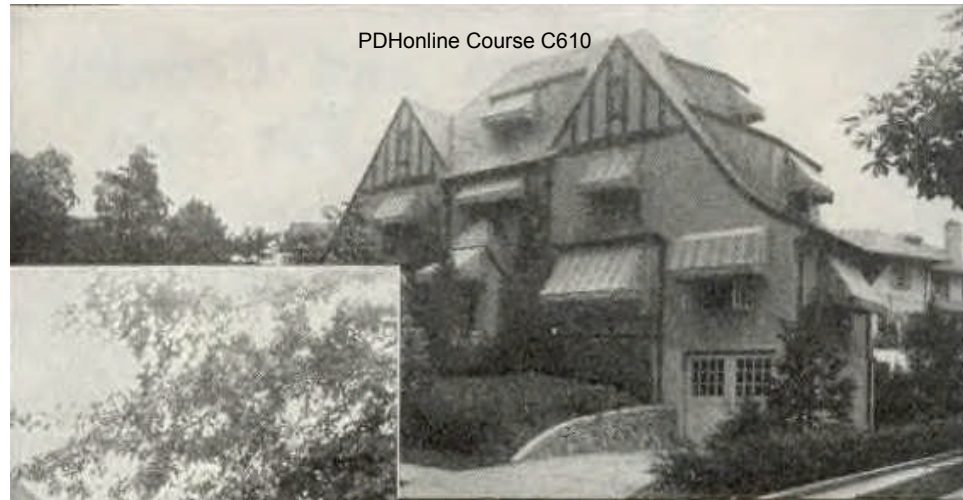
The Dutch (pre-1664) called the area where FHG is located “Whiteput” meaning pit or hollow in Dutch. The English (post-1664) called it “Whitepot” claiming they traded three white pots to obtain the land from the local Indians. There is an ongoing debate as to which story is correct. Most probably, the English corrupted the original Dutch word *Whiteput* to *Whitepot*.



Modern-day map of Queens County, largest borough of NYC in land area. Forest Hills/FHG is located in Central Queens.



Map of Kew Gardens – FHG’s neighboring community to the southeast. It was developed almost at the same time as FHG by *Alrick Man*. Though it was not a “Garden City”, it had many of the elements that are featured in a Garden City. Because it sits directly atop the Terminal Moraine, the geography of Kew Gardens is much hillier than FHG. Union Turnpike defines the southern border FHG shares with Kew Gardens. Both communities make good use of Forest Park (538 acres) which is adjacent to both. Cord Meyer created the name “Forest Hills” due to the area’s proximity to Forest Park and its topography.



Kew Gardens

An *Unusual* Suburb
of New York

Unusual because in 16 minutes you go from the heart of Manhattan to the heart of near-Long Island.

Unusual because in 1915 Kew Gardens started out to be an exclusive, carefully restricted development and has since remained one.

Unusual because its values have always been sound and are steadily and healthily increasing.

Unusual because its *best* property (known as Park Lane and fronting on Forest Park) comes into the market last.

Scattered among many beautiful homes there are a limited number of sites still available. These are the very cream of Long Island home sites—not cheap but promising to increase in value. Restrictions protect these values to the utmost.

If interested in buying and building write

EDGEWORTH SMITH INC.

216 W. 34th Street

Kew Gardens office at Station

New York



**Same house today
(as in previous slide's advertisement)**



Alrick Man



Abingdon Road, Kew Gardens, Long Island



Kew Gardens



Kew Gardens



**Hoffman Boulevard ca. 1910
(later widened and renamed Queens Blvd.)**



Queens Boulevard (before widening)

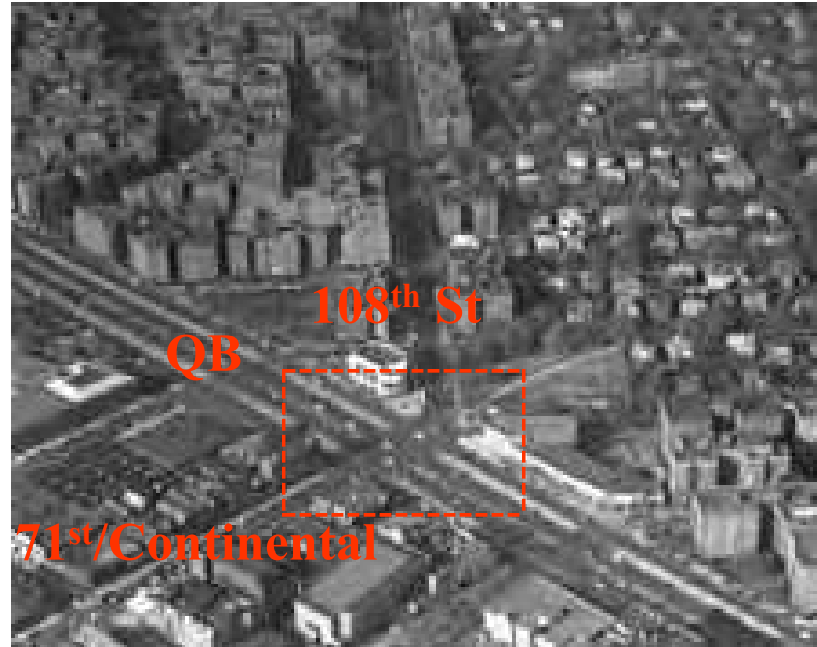




Before construction of the *Grand Central Parkway*, Queens Blvd. was a major east-west route and remains a heavily traveled thoroughfare



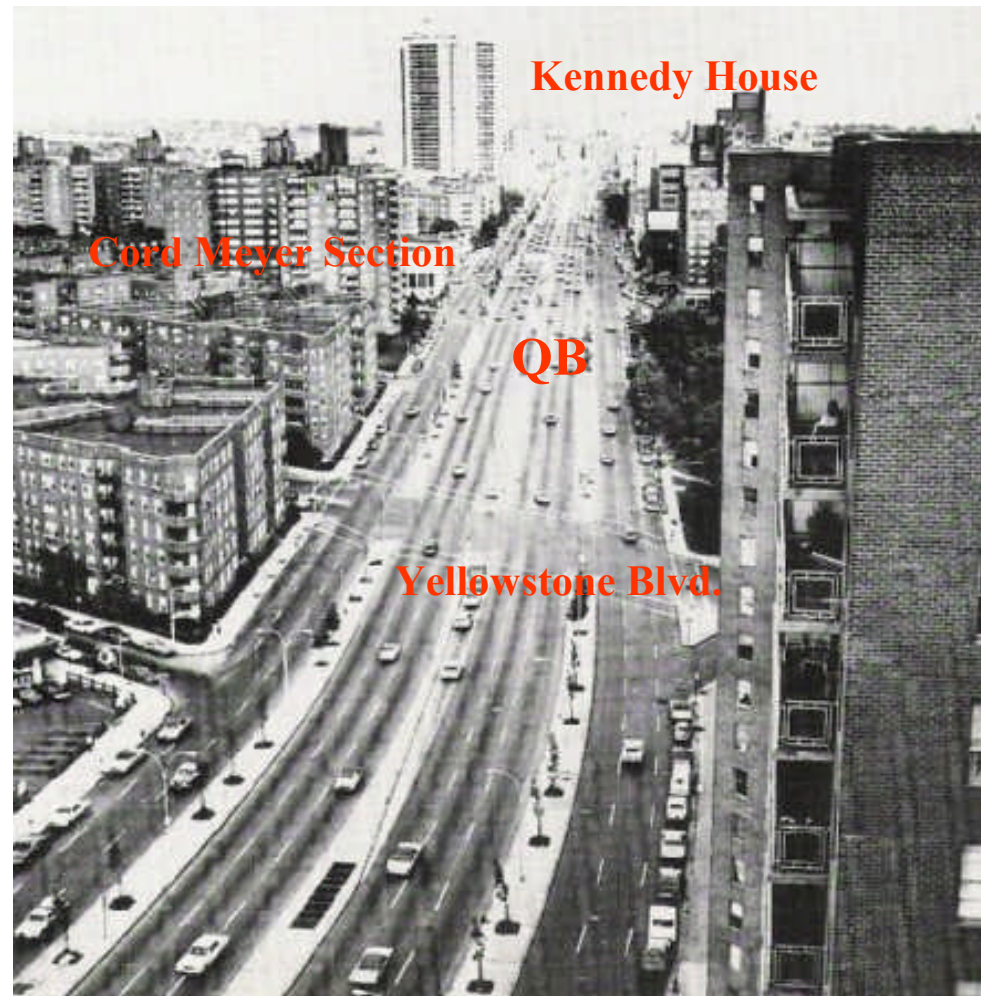
**Queens Blvd. ca. 1950
(Rego Park)**



**Queens Blvd. as seen from an airplane
(intersection of Queens Blvd., 108th Street & 71st/Continental Avenue)**



Looking up (north) 71st/Continental Avenue towards Queens Blvd. from the LIRR station in Forest Hills ca. 1920



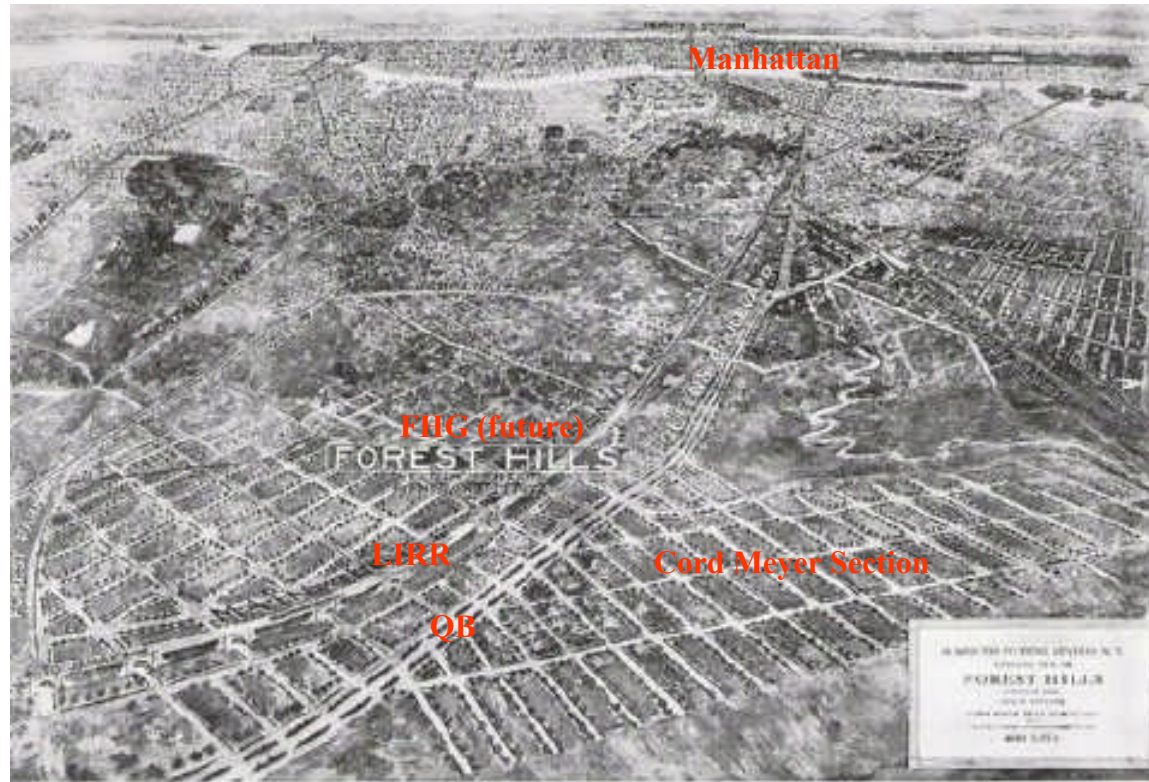
Modern-day Queens Blvd. - a.k.a. “The Boulevard of Death” (looking east towards Forest Hills from Parker Towers) At 200-feet wide, it is the widest thoroughfare in NYC and the most dangerous

High class residences...by the adoption and enforcement of sensible restrictions regarding the class of buildings which can be erected in its limits...with an inseparable bar to deterioration, furnished by the policy of the company, Forest Hills' investors will enjoy the full benefit of those many contributory factors in the advancement of values...constantly growing in value for a monthly payment which is no more than the rent of a flat in the city...practically a Manhattan point

RE: promotional literature excerpt from the *Cord Meyer Development Company* - 1906



Map showing the 600 acres Cord Meyer purchased in 1906 and his planned development for the area formerly part of Newtown/Elmhurst and referred to as “Hopedale” and/or “Whitepot.” In 1908, CM sold 142 acres south of the LIRR to the Russell Sage Foundation for \$6,000/acre – this would become FHG. The area outside FHG is commonly referred to as the “Cord Meyer Section” of Forest Hills - in particular, the northern side of Queens Blvd. The name “Forest Hills Gardens” was derived from Cord Meyer’s re-naming of the area “Forest Hills” - to distinguish it from Elmhurst (formerly Newtown).



Bird's-eye view of Cord Meyer's planned development of Forest Hills (looking west – prior to sale of 142 acres to the Russell Sage Foundation)



By 1924, Cord Meyer had built 340 houses on the north side of Queens Blvd.



De Koven Street, Forest Hills

The Continental Apartments

in FOREST HILLS

IN the attractiveness of their environment, in the arrangement and decorative beauty of the rooms, in their homelike charm and in the careful provision for comfort and convenience, these apartments of 2, 3, 3½, 4 and 4½ rooms, are unusual. Their arrangement around a large central court insures generous light and air and a

pleasant outlook for every apartment. All apartments are equipped with gas refrigeration. Rentals, \$65 to \$146.

Applications for leases are now being signed for immediate occupancy. Drive out to Forest Hills and inspect these model apartments or write for illustrated folder. Open Sundays.

CORD MEYER DEVELOPMENT CO.

One block north of station, Queens Boulevard, Forest Hills

TELEPHONE BOULEVARD 6756

6: William Street
New York City
Tel. Julia 1807





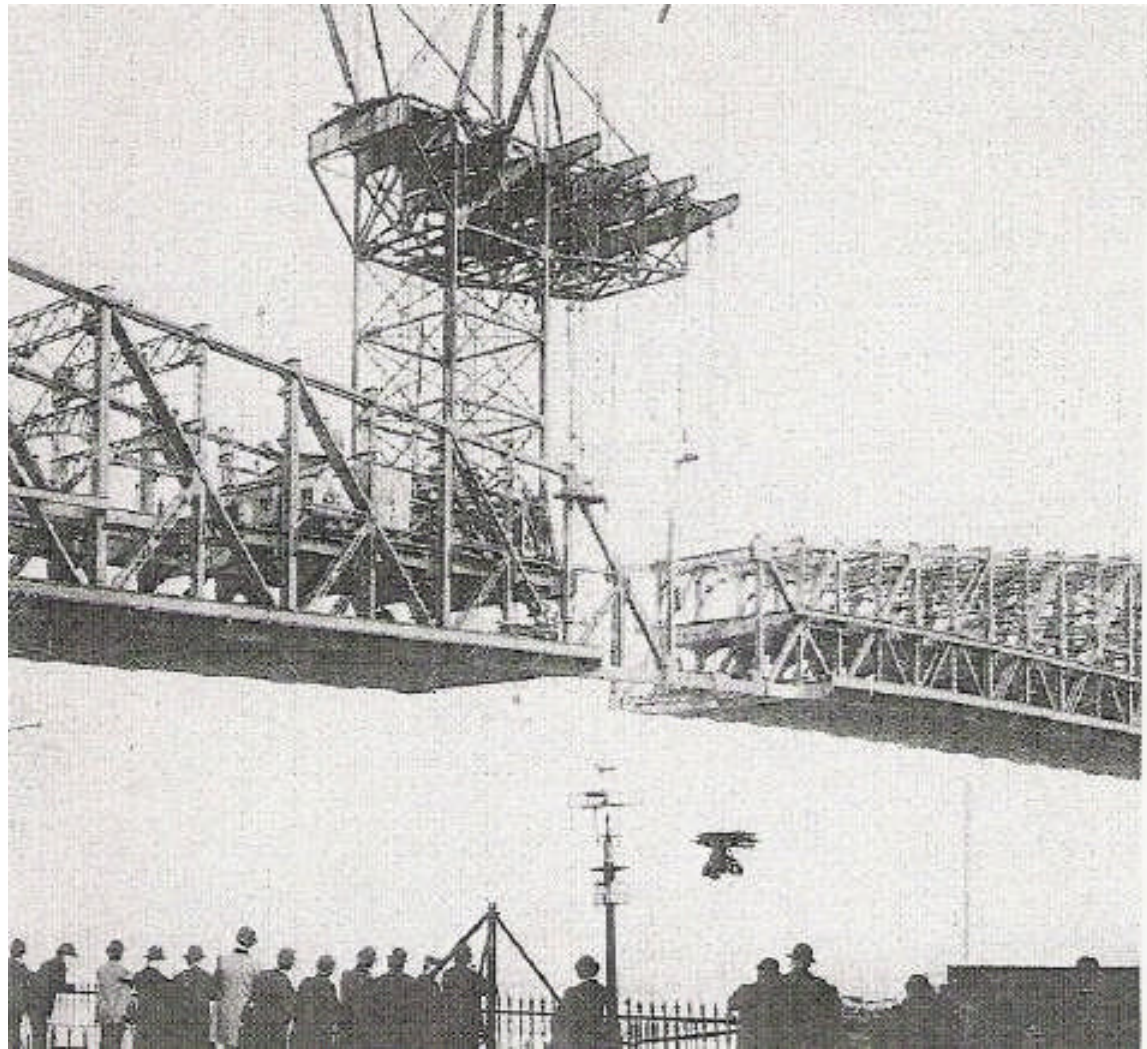
**Ferry Terminal – Borden Avenue
(now the entrance to the *Queens Midtown Tunnel*)**



Ice-bound ferry – the only way across the East River to Manhattan until 1909, when the Queensboro Bridge opened and transformed Queens from a rural backwater to a commuter suburb of NYC. Developers such as Cord Meyer were well aware of the transformation that would – and did, take place. Only a few land-owners such as *Samuel Lord* (of *Lord & Taylor*) owned the majority of the land and refused to sell. In fact, the 600 acres Cord Meyer purchased to develop Forest Hills was derived from the Lord estate.



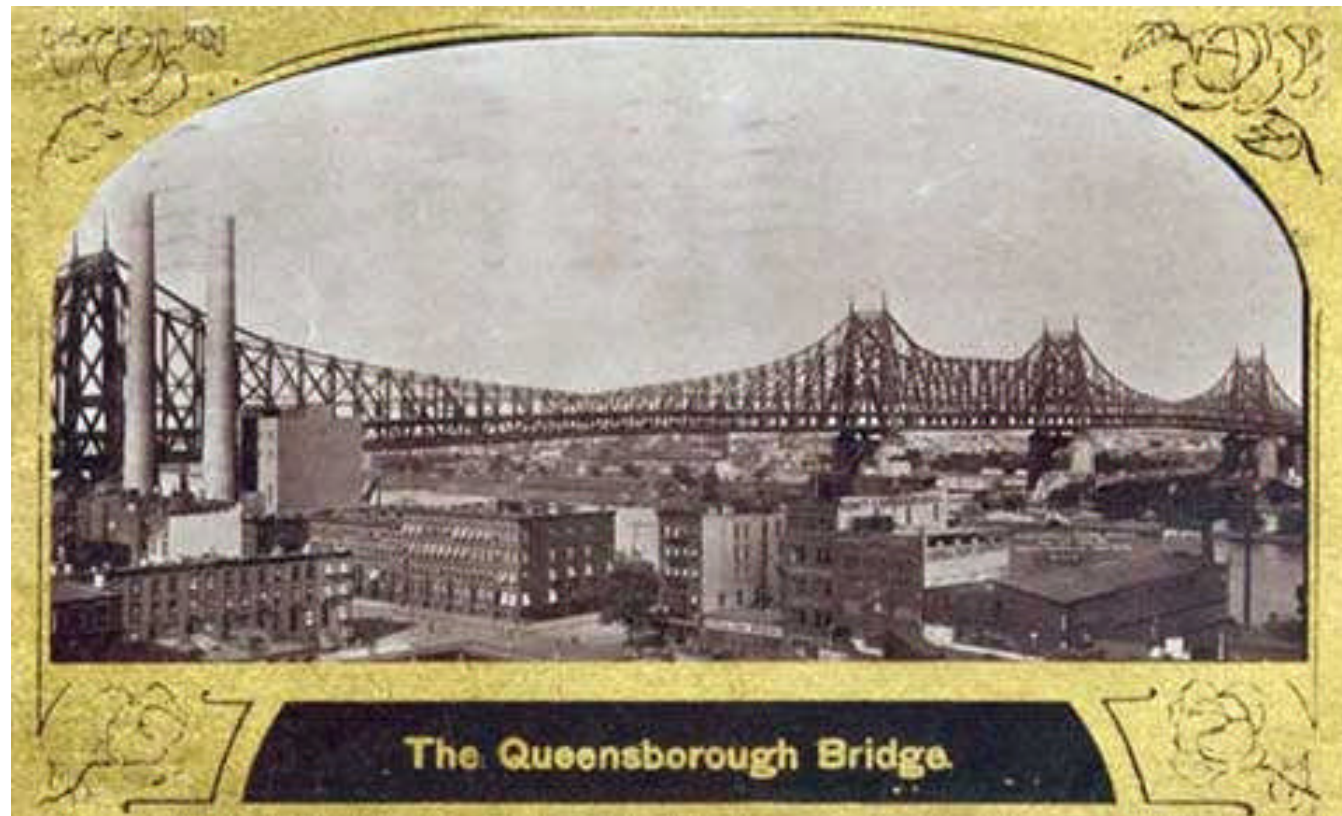
Queensboro Bridge under construction ca. 1908



Joining the cantilever's arms thus ending Queens' isolation forever



Opening-day ceremonies



Traversing *Blackwells Island* from the Queens shore to Manhattan's east-side, the bridge was first named: "Blackwells Island Bridge." The island had a notorious reputation as the "Devils Island" of NYC housing prisons, an insane asylum, leper's colony etc. Thus, Queens real estate interests petitioned NYC to change the name to: "The Queensboro Bridge." It is also known to NY'ers as: "The 59th Street Bridge" (made famous in song by *Simon & Garfunkel*)



Queensboro Plaza (ca. 1910). At left-center is a flagpole. This flagpole was relocated to FHG when the elevated subway lines were built at the foot of the Queensboro Bridge. The flagpole was formerly the mast of the American yacht *Columbia* that won the America's Cup race in 1899.



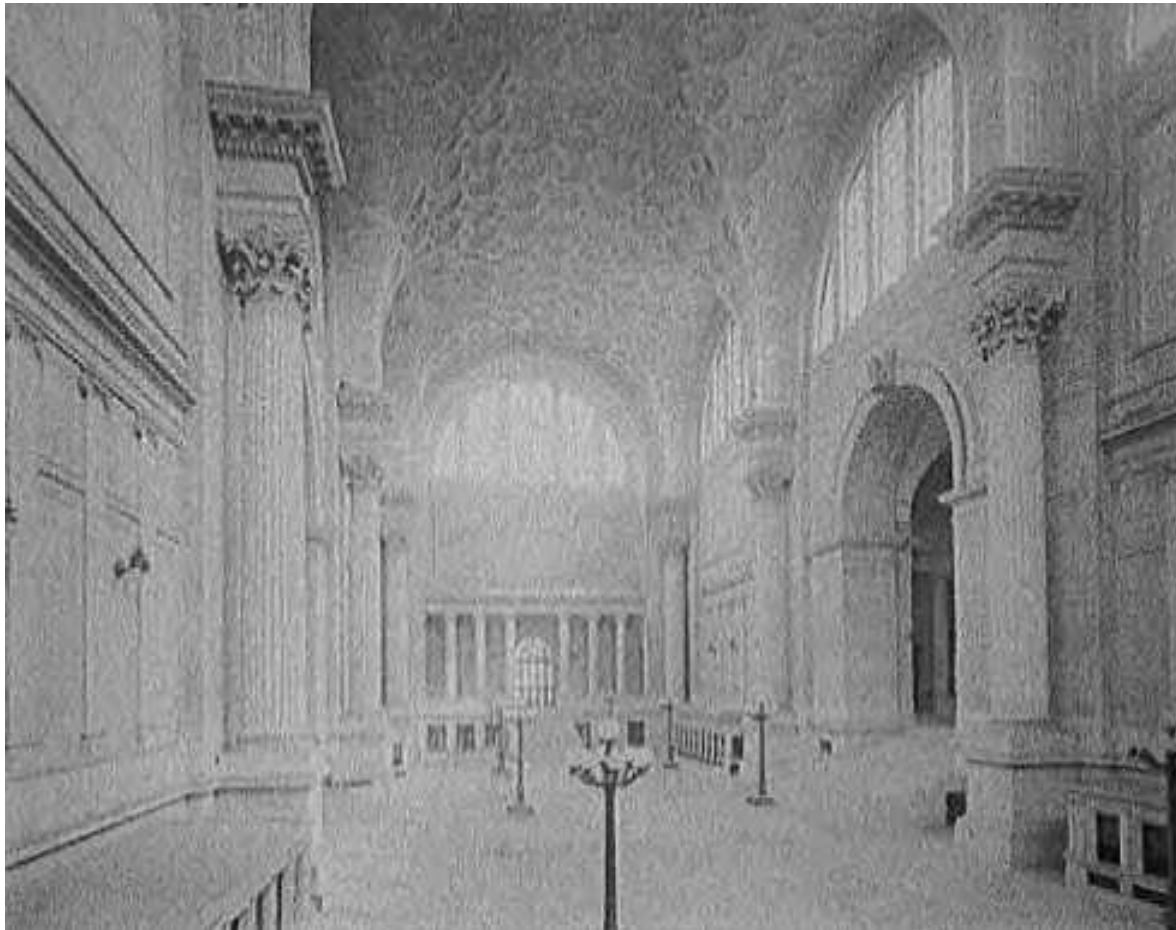
Inscription reads: *This was Queens Plaza before Queensboro (bridge)...in fact, before much of anything* (highlighting the rural nature of Queens before the opening of the bridge). This area would become Long Island City.



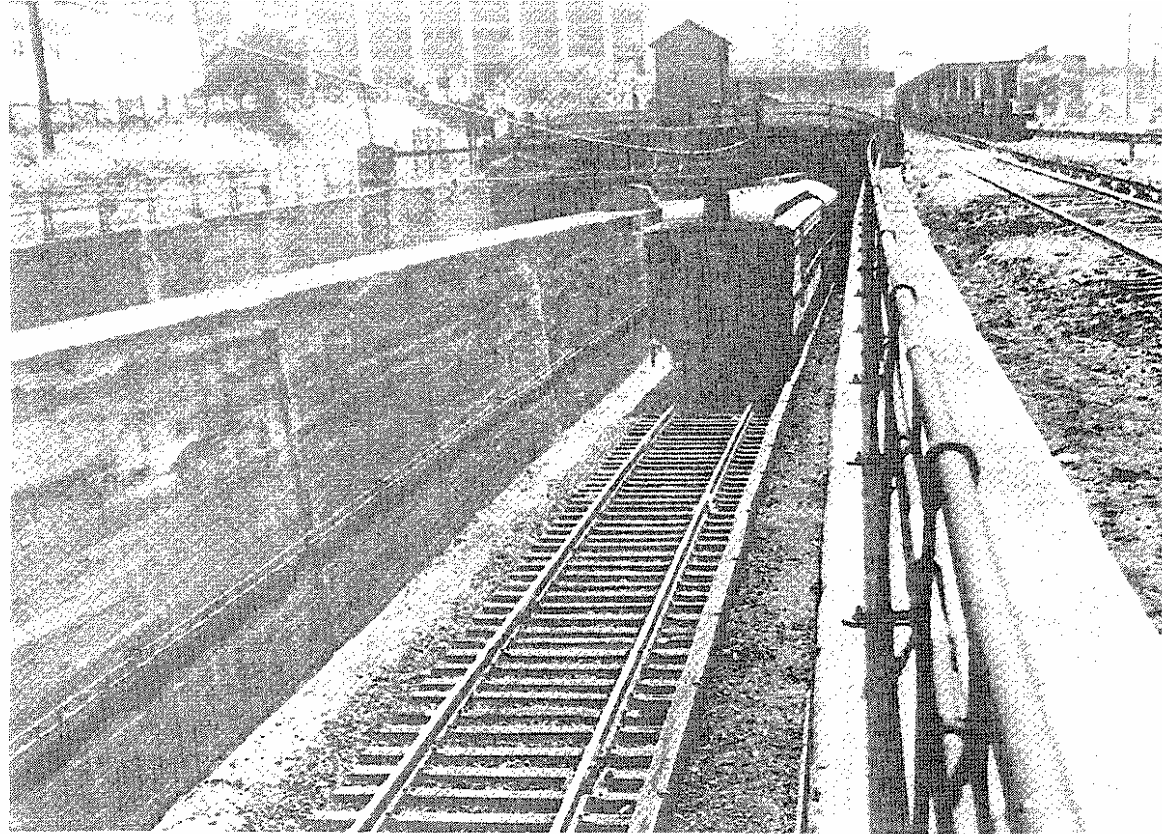
In 1910, Pennsylvania Station opened as a terminal for the LIRR and other passenger railroad lines. With tunnels below both the Hudson and East Rivers and the electrification of the line, Queens and all of Long Island would become commuter suburbs in the years ahead. The original Penn Station was shamefully demolished in 1961, thus creating the modern-day historic preservation movement.



**Penn Station's architectural design was based
on the ancient *Roman Baths of Caracalla***



The fine architectural details of the demolished station were unceremoniously dumped in the Atlantic Ocean



One of four tunnels under the East River serving the Pennsylvania RR and its subsidiary - at the time, the LIRR. Costing over \$1 Billion, the four tunnels provided excess capacity thus making the LIRR of today one of the most efficient commuter railroads in the world. From FHG, the trip takes about 15 minutes. The Sunnyside train yard; through which all trains pass before entering the tunnels, is the largest passenger train yard in the world serving Amtrak, LIRR & NJ Transit.



LIRR Station Kew Gardens. When the LIRR was electrified in 1909, the line was elevated (as in Forest Hills) via an embankment to allow it to run over thoroughfares via trestles. In Kew Gardens, the station is at grade level and runs under adjacent *Lefferts Blvd*.



Built for cars that traveled at +/-30 mph, the *Interboro Parkway* (now the *Jackie Robinson Pkwy.*) wound its way between Brooklyn's *Pennsylvania Avenue* and Kew Gardens, Queens. Running through *Forest Park* and *Cypress Hills Cemetery*, it is still a scenic drive.





The Grand Central Parkway winds its way past Forest Hills



Kew Gardens Interchange
(the Cord Meyer section of Forest Hills can be seen at the top of the photo)

“Our beaches and meadows, formerly the home of the plover or meadow hen, are now being occupied for residential purposes at a rate that dazes the lover of nature”

J.H. Hendrickson, nature enthusiast and Queens resident - 1909



Subway line to Forest Hills & Jamaica under construction, mid-1930s

Investors - Builders - Operators

Look East To Jackson Heights

A Community of Garden Apartment Homes



Manhattan Elevated at 12nd St.
From 12th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

Brooklyn Subway Tunnel East.
From 12th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

Manhattan Elevated at 59th St.
From 59th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

7th Avenue Subway at 12nd St.
From 12th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

Four Long Island R. R. at 12nd St.
From 12th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

The Plaza at Washington Heights.
From 12th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

Washington Heights at 12th Street.
From 12th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

Washington Heights at 12th Street.
From 12th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

Washington Heights at 12th Street.
From 12th Street, take the elevated subway to reach the

**GARDEN APARTMENTS
JACKSON HEIGHTS**

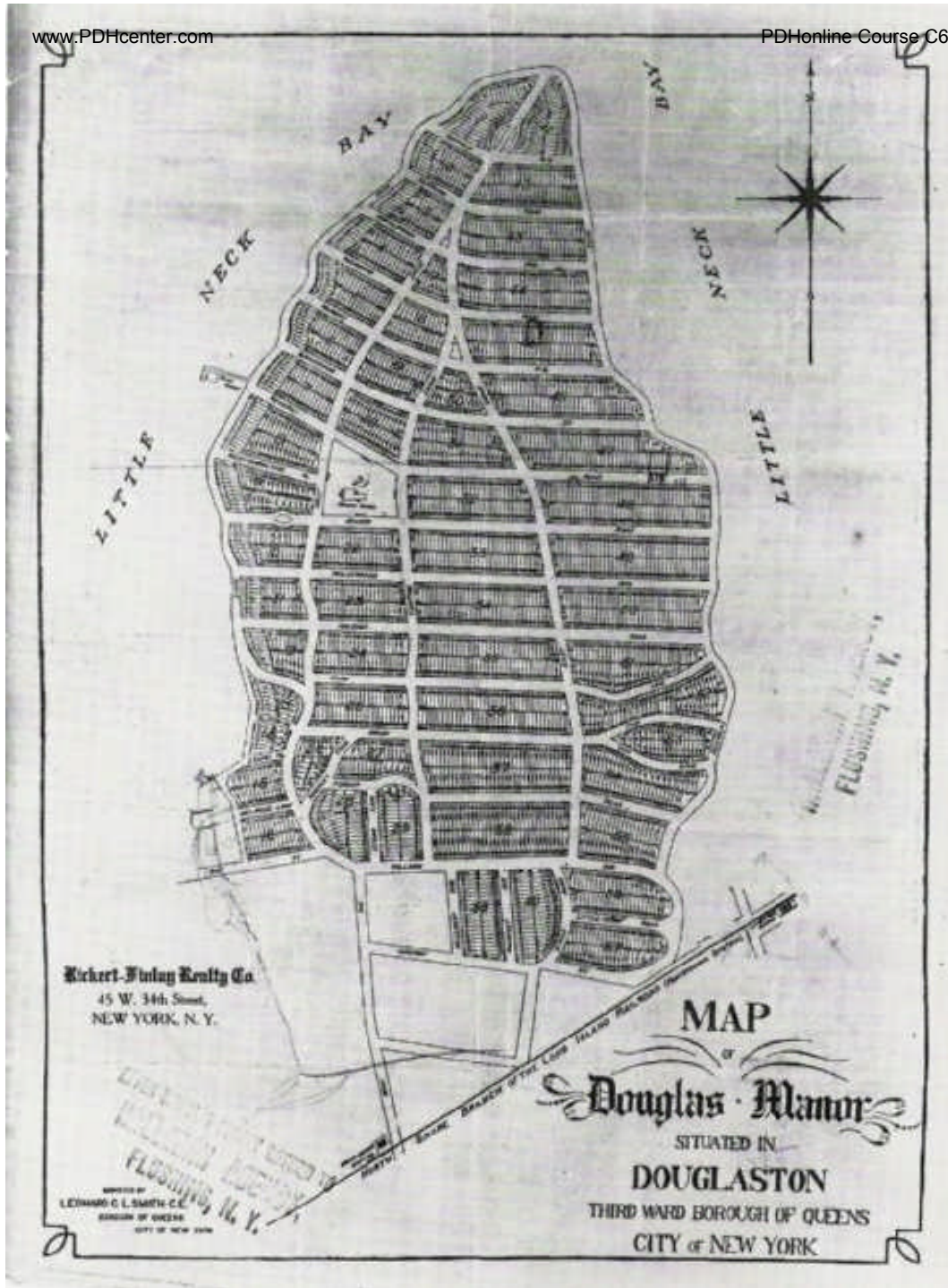
The ideal apartment house. The buildings are set back from the street and the rear yards are treated as a large interior park or garden for rest and recreation.

**6 Rooms and Bath, \$54 to \$64
4 and 5 Rooms and Bath,
\$35 to \$45**

To attract the best type of tenants, we have provided social and recreative features: Tennis Courts, Bowling Alleys, Basket Ball Courts, Playgrounds for Children, Gardens, etc.


TAKE THE SUBWAY
To Grand Central Subway Station, 42d St.
Free Transfers Issued to Queensboro Subway
Direct to 25th St., Jackson Heights
Time 20 Minutes (via Corona Line)

THE
QUEENSBORO CORPORATION
Rental Office opp. 25th St. Subway Sta.
Tel. Newtown—708.



Situated on a peninsula jutting into *Little Neck Bay* (with the *Port Washington Line* of the LIRR passing through its southern section), *Douglas* (now *Douglaston Manor*) is considered (along with FHG) one of the most desirable neighborhoods in Queens/NYC.

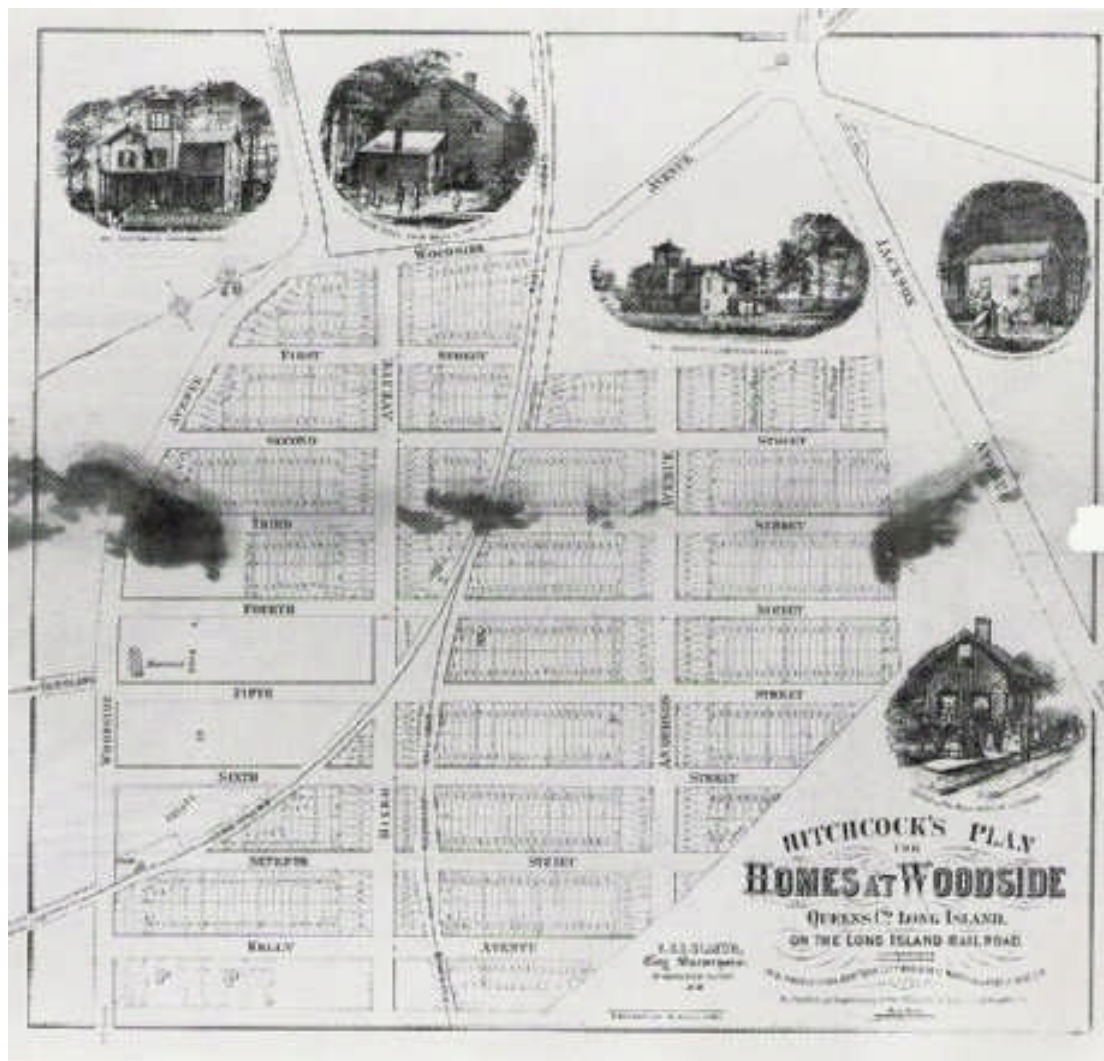
OVER THREE THOUSAND *of* THESE HOMES
Built by us in Richmond Hill, South, during the last four years



**STENBERG BROS
HOMES
ARE GOOD HOMES.**

Highly Restricted Residential Section, Fully Improved. Prices from \$8,200 up to \$15,000.
Homes to be built in Forest Hills Gardens, from \$18,000 up, or to order.

OFFICE:
11106 LIBERTY AVENUE RICHMOND HILL
Telephone Richmond Hill 5936



Can You Pay \$34. per month?

Two-Family Brick Dwellings at Astoria—Queensboro



Look For This Sign
Continue North from Dismars Avenue Subway Station to Dismars Avenue, corner of Second Avenue, to office of Arleigh Realty Corporation.
Open Daily and Sunday; also Evenings until 9:30

THERE ARE THREE PLAIN REASONS WHY greater value for less money can be produced in these attractive homes.

1. Wholesale buying through building material concerns owned by Wm. F. Charles, Builder.
2. Low price land cost and unusual terms for benefit of home buyer, provided by Congressman J. J. Kindred in disposing of a portion of his estate.
3. Fifteen-year amortization mortgages of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, which has financed the project to the extent of \$1,000,000.

Ample lawns, rear yard and garage space; steam heat, tile bathrooms and hardwood floors, copper and slate mansard roofs, copper gutters—all street improvements, sewers, pavements, etc.—installed and paid for by the Company. Some of these houses have garages in structure where grade permits, at a slight increase in cost.

Fifteen Minutes from Grand Central or Times Square
Two minutes' walk from Dismars Ave. Subway Station.

PURCHASE PLAN

Total payment or payments to secure deed.....	\$1.500
Monthly payments to Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. (interest and acct. principal).....	\$42.52
Monthly payments on purchase money mortgage (interest and acct. principal).....	41.57
	\$84.19
Less income from rental of third foot.....	90.00
MONTHLY CASH OUTLAY BY PURCHASER.....	\$34.19

Total monthly payment—water, insurance, taxes (land only)—approximately \$6.00.

In 15 years these payments (considerably less than rental value) will make your home FREE AND CLEAR.

Direction to the Property

Take Interborough or B. N. Y. Subway or Second Avenue "L" to Dismars Avenue Station. Or motor over 39th Street (Queensboro Bridge) and follow left branch of "L" to termination.

If you cannot personally inspect promptly, send for ILLUSTRATED PAMPHLET and record your name for early reservations. Locations granted in order of application.

Sales Contract and Closing Office
Electric Building, Queensboro Place,
L. I. City, Tel. Astoria, 1405-4

Property Office
Corner Dismars and Second Avenue
Look for "Arleigh Homes"
Sign Tel. Astoria 6386.



Tax Exempt

Executive Office
279 Madison Ave., N. Y.

Arleigh Realty Corporation

Wm. F. Charles President & Builder
D. E. McAvoy, Vice Pres. & Sales Director



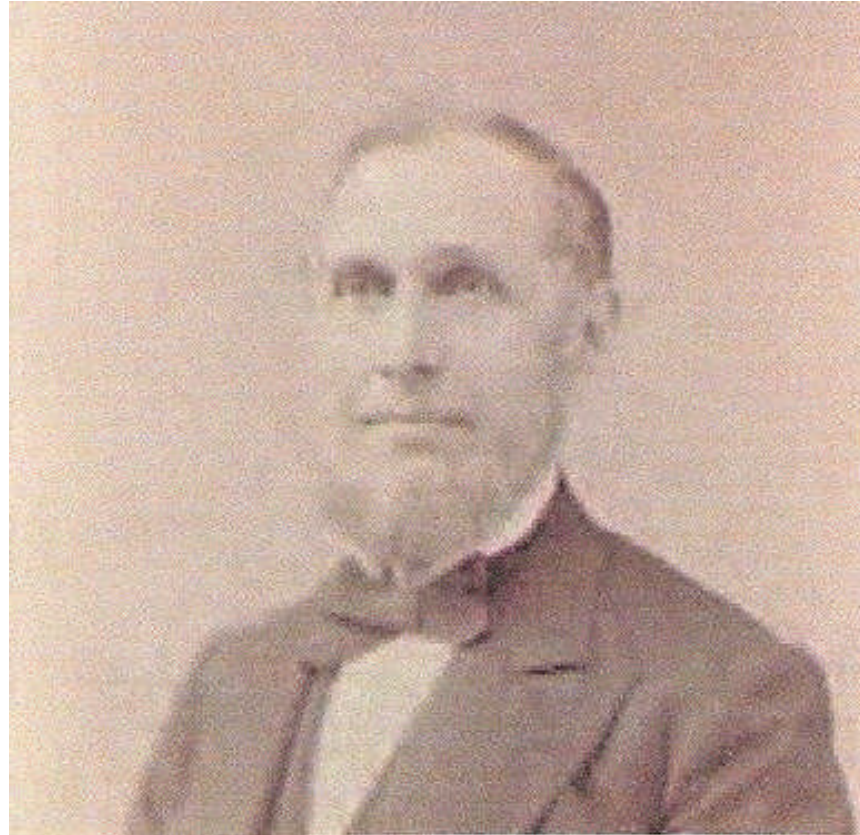
Ad for homes in Astoria (NE Queens)

Part 4

Cast of Characters

“A vacation is the outgrowth of abnormal business practices”

Russell Sage



Russell Sage

One of the unstated motivations for Russell Sage's widow; Olivia Sage, to create philanthropies in his name after her husband's death in 1906 was to help clean-up his name. In his lifetime, he never gave away as much as a nickel of the +\$65 million he made as one of the original "Robber-Barons" of the 19th century. Ironic if you consider how widely associated his name is with philanthropic endeavors.



Russell Sage College – Troy, NY



“I am nearly eighty years old and I feel as if I were just beginning to live”

Olivia Sage

RE: statement made at the first board meeting of the *Russell Sage Foundation*, 1907



In the same league as the *Astors, Rockefellers & Vanderbilts*, Olivia Sage could spend her husband's entire fortune without restriction (they had no children). Inundated by requests after his death, her trusted family attorney – *Robert de Forest*, suggested setting up a charitable foundation and in 1907 it was formed. The first project of the newly formed foundation would be FHG. Many streets and places in FHG are named in her family's honor. She was a founding member of the *Mayflower Society*, being a direct descendant of *Miles Standish* (on her father's side) – one of the original Pilgrims. *Standish Road, Puritan Avenue, Russell Place, Slocum Crescent, Olivia Park* etc. were named in honor of the person who made FHG possible: *Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage*.

“I have had some hesitation as to whether the foundation should be permitted to make investments for social betterment which themselves produce income, as for instance small houses or tenements...I realize such investments may not produce a percentage as large as that produced by bonds or like securities and that the income of the Foundation might be therefore diminished by such investments”

Olivia Sage

RE: use of RSF endowment funds.



Mrs. Russell Sage
She endowed the *Russell Sage*
***Foundation for Social Betterment* with**
\$10 million

“...provided that such investment shall, in the opinion of the trustees, be likely to produce an annual income of not less than 3%”

Russell Sage Foundation Board of Trustees

RE: agreement to invest up to 25% of the RSF principal in any “for-profit” venture at any one time. As the first for-profit project of the RSF, Forest Hills Gardens would be funded with \$2.5 million (25% of Olivia Sage’s \$10 million endowment). The RSF would attract criticism as a charitable organization seeking to make a profit from FHG. To actually construct FHG, the Sage Foundation created the *Sage Foundation Homes Company* (SFHC).

First Citizen of New York



“The tenement districts of New York...places where thousands of people are living in the smallest place in which it is possible for human beings to exist – crowded together in dark, ill-ventilated rooms, in many of which the sunlight never enters and in most of which fresh air is unknown. They are centers of disease, poverty, vice and crime, where it is a marvel, not that some children grow up to be thieves, drunkards and prostitutes, but that so many should ever grow up to be decent and self-respecting.”

Robert de Forest

RE: excerpt from: *The Tenement House Problem: Including the report of the New York State Tenement House Commission of 1900.*

De Forest served as President of the Commission.







“Suggestions for a possible Sage Foundation...social betterment; improvement of the hard conditions of our working classes, making their homes and surroundings more healthful and comfortable and their lives happier; giving more of opportunity to them and their children...tenements in the city and small houses in the suburbs...for the working class on a business basis”

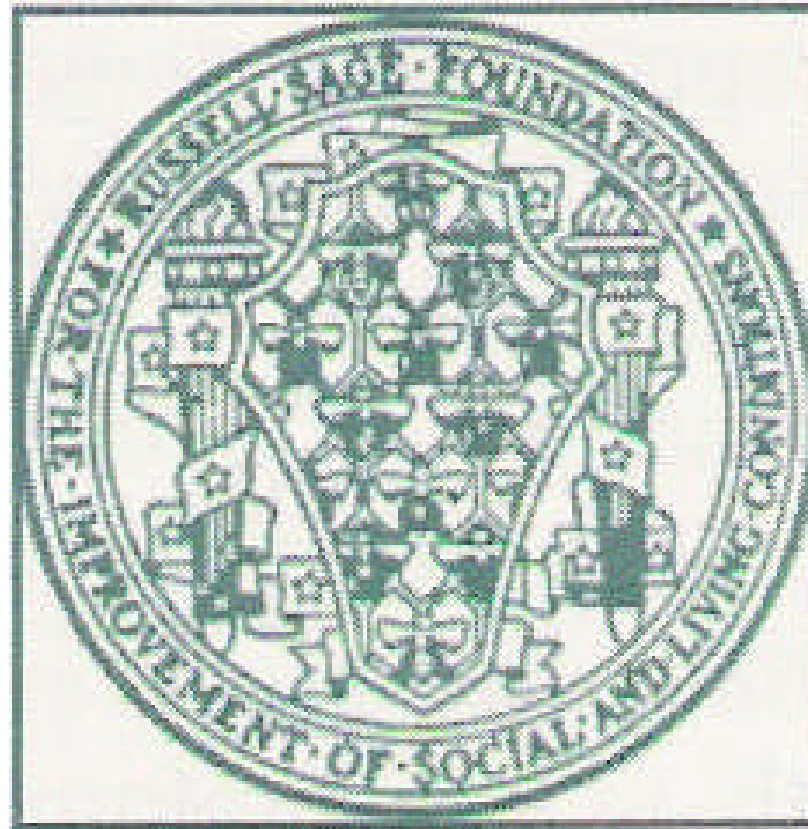
Robert de Forest, 1906

RE: excerpt from memorandum to Olivia Sage concerning the formation of the Russell Sage Foundation. De Forest was a 7th generation New Yorker involved with many charitable organizations and the arts. He was the prototypical “Gentleman Activist” of the progressive era who felt it their moral responsibility to help those less fortunate than themselves. Very often, this took on a paternalistic characteristic.









Research, study, teaching, publication, establish necessary agencies and institutions and aid such efforts already existing and such agencies or institutions already established.

RE: mandate of the Russell Sage Foundation upon its founding in 1907



The initial work of the *Regional Plan Association (RPA)*, including its first regional survey, was funded by the *Russell Sage Foundation* and the similarly real-estate invested Rockefeller and Pratt families. The RPA's first director was *Charles Norton*; treasurer of the Sage Foundation. Serving on the RPA board was Robert de Forest, who owned thousands of yet-to-be developed acres on Long Island. The RPA's first survey of the New York region took as its model a 1907 survey of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which was funded by the Russell Sage Foundation.

Rick

“Now in nearly all our work, I am thinking of the credit that will indirectly come to you...How is Rick to be best prepared to take advantage of what in reputation I have been earning? Reputation coming as the result of what I shall have done, but not coming in my time”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Sr.

RE: son and heir to his father’s name; Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr. – known to his family as “Rick”.

Named “Henry Perkins Olmsted” at birth, he was renamed “Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.” at 2yo after it became apparent he would survive (two male siblings died in infancy prior to his birth in 1870).

Olmsted Sr. married his younger brother’s widow thus, his cousin Charles was also his step-brother.

As such, upon the death of Olmsted Sr., the firm became known as: “The Olmsted Bros.”



Frederic Law Olmsted, Sr.



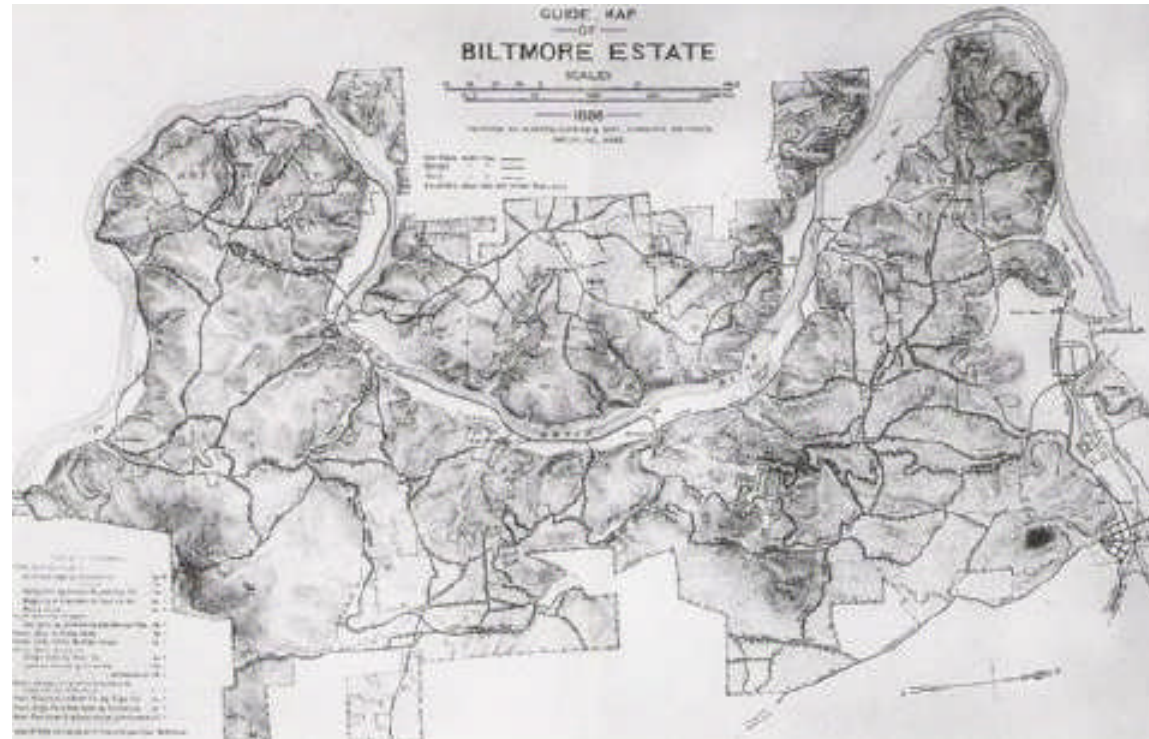
Bridge in Central Park
(*Olmsted & Vaux* Landscape Architects)



“I am anxious to use any advantage that I may have for getting you established favorably...the time may come when the fact that your having been engaged at Biltmore from the start will give you some prestige...According to the way in which you meet them, the place that you will be able to fill in our organization must be judged”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Sr.

RE: correspondence with Rick. Olmsted wanted his son and heir to earn his place in the family business on the Biltmore Estate project which was to be the last great work of Olmsted Sr.’s life. He had taken Rick to Europe to visit palaces and parks and to the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago where he had served as the landscape architect. All his life Olmsted Sr. felt his lack of formal education in horticulture left him too dependent on others. He was determined that Rick would have every advantage he could give him.



After graduating from Harvard in 1894, Rick would have to prove his worth to the family business as an apprentice. The Vanderbilt's *Biltmore Estate* in North Carolina would do just that: prove Rick worthy of his family name.



Young Rick taking a survey



**Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.
ca. 1910 (40yo)**

Part 5

With Due Regard for Profit

“...to set an example to the growing suburban districts of New York and other cities of how the thing can be done tastefully and, at the same time, with due regard for profit”

Robert de Forest, 1910

Dec. 7, 1908

PERSONAL

Dear Mr. Olmsted:

If I mistake not you are interested on the social as well as the aesthetic side of landscape gardening, and this is to ask whether you are, in your judgment, equipped on this side both with knowledge and interest so as to be able to take the part of advising landscape gardener in the following project, which I wish to be at this stage strictly confidential.

I am Vice-President of the Russell Sage Foundation for the Improvement of Living Conditions. We are proposing to go into housing on a fairly large scale, in the suburban district of New York. We have purchased a tract of land capable of layout as we may wish, of about 50 acres in extent,^a and are contemplating the purchase of an even larger tract within the city limits for the same purpose.^b Our plan is not merely to give houses but to lay out these tracts in some way different from the abhorrent rectangular city block, and to make our garden city somewhat attractive by the treatment and planting of our streets, the possibility of little gardens, and possibly some public places. It will be an equation between the cost of attractiveness and cheap rents. Nor are we simply considering the housing of so many people. We would like to set an example to the growing suburban districts of New York and other cities of how the thing can be done tastefully and at the same time with due regard for profit. I believe there is money in taste. We are expecting to do this on a business basis. We have our real estate expert. We also have a consulting architect in the person of my friend Mr. Grosvenor Atterbury. I wish to bring someone in on the landscape garden side, and it would mean a tentative layout after an examination of the tracts in question. Is this congenial to you? Can you undertake it promptly?

Sincerely yours,

Robert W. de Forest

Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.,
Brookline, Mass

There's Money to be Had in Taste

“Russell Sage Foundation has not forgotten the laboring man. It may be ready to announce something for his benefit later on. But the cost of the land at Forest Hills Gardens, and the character of its surroundings, preclude provision there for the day laborer”

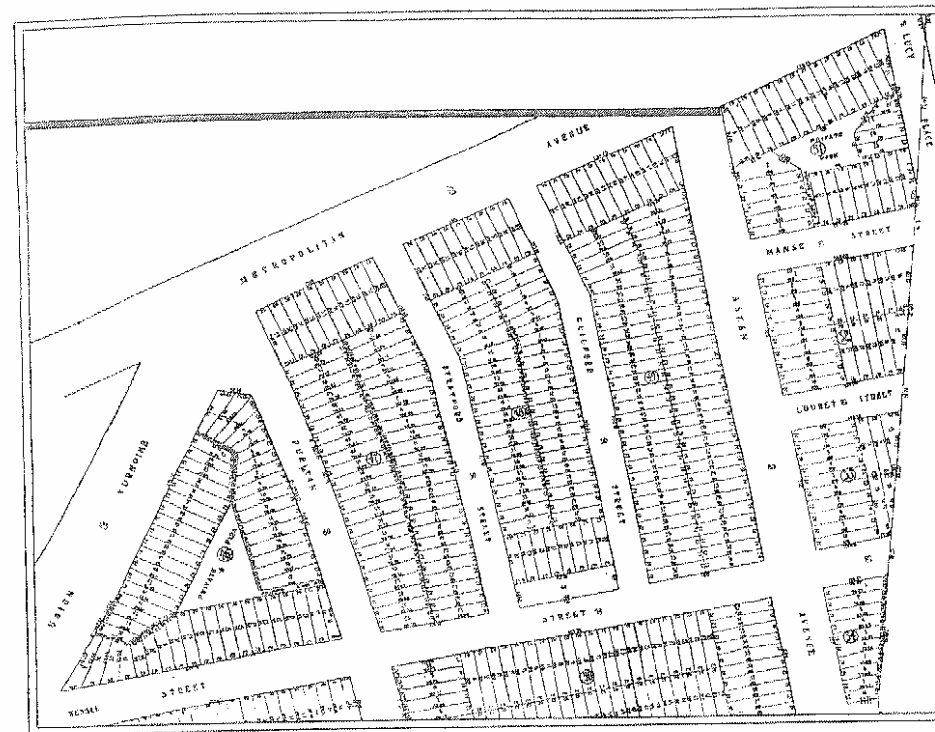
Robert deForest, 1910



Day Laborers

“There is nothing charitable in the providing of a comfortable residential place for present flat dwellers. The town is to be run on the same business principles as any other suburban locality so far as the purchase of land is concerned, but the owner and dweller will reap the advantages of living in a cheerful community laid out to afford equal benefits to all...not intended for the laboring man, whose wages are small...it will not be managed as a charity. Whoever deals with it, whether as a tenant or purchasers, will be expected to pay fair value for everything received”

Robert deForest



MAP 6 (1921). DETAIL. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN KESSEL STREET AND METROPOLITAN AVENUE, WITH PRIVATE PARKS. THE SAGE FOUNDATION HOMES COMPANY NEVER DEVELOPED THE AREA, AND THE LAND WAS EVENTUALLY SOLD TO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS.

This area represents 32 (of 63) acres obtained by the RSF after the initial 142 acres were purchased from Cord Meyer and is where the “Gardens Club” was located (“Tract 2”). It was later sold to private developers and was/is not part of Forest Hills Gardens.

A Beneficial Object Lesson

“How encouraging things are going at Forest Hills. The result is surprising in view of the fact that we have done no general advertising. A large number of the purchasers were pleased with the property. Our first row of houses were sold by the time their roofs were on...I feel confident that the ultimate results will be satisfying and will show that you have created a beneficial object lesson that will be widely used”

John Glenn, RSF President

RE: excerpt from a letter to Olivia Sage – July, 1911. Without advertising, there were 3,000 inquiries prior to SFHC offering lots for sale. By July 1911, 72 individuals had purchased 172 lots. By September 1911, 153 individuals had purchased 364 lots totaling \$479,265 in sales revenue.



**House under construction
ca. 1911**



SFHC truck

Free From Further Payment

In early 1911, the Sage Foundation Homes Company's realty committee met to set a marketing plan. They determined that building lots would be sold in series and construction on a given block would not commence until all the lots on a block were sold. To attract buyers, the SFHC offered generous terms for houses built by SFHC which were priced between \$5,900 to \$15,000. Only a 10% down-payment was required on the price of the lot and the house and the SFHC would secure a mortgage up to 50% of the price on the buyers behalf. For lot purchasers wishing to build homes to their own design, SFHC could/would prepare architectural and landscape plans. For the first 100 lot purchasers, there was no charge for this service. Real estate manager *William Harmon* believed that a slow growth rate was the downfall of many suburban developments whereby interest rates and expenses cut into profits. Thus, he suggested very generous terms of sale. For example, "good risk buyers" were required to put down only 2% with a 4.5% interest rate on the balance which would be due in ten years. To assure buyers in the event of future financial difficulties; for lot owners who could not keep up with their monthly payments, SFHC would sell the property for them and give them an interest in other lots on the property. In the event a lot owner died, the terms were even more generous. SFHC would return to the heirs all money paid to date or, transfer title of the property to the heirs "free from further payment."

“Bouton is getting over-tired from running two places at once...under Bouton’s direction for the time being, working the whole responsibility on him by degrees, gradually but as rapidly as possible”

John Glenn, RSF President – early 1911

RE: excerpt from a letter to Robert de Forest concerning FHG General Manager Edward Bouton who was running *Roland Park* – a suburban development in Baltimore, MD., at the same time he was managing FHG. Olmsted Jr. had recommended him to de Forest based on his experiences dealing with him at Roland Park, but he was spending the majority of his time there rather than at FHG. Needing a full-time GM, John M. Demarest was hired to replace Bouton.





Roland Park House

“...that an immediate and active advertising campaign begin on conservative but aggressive lines”

John M. Demarest, September 1911

RE: upon taking over as General Manager from Edward Bouton, Demarest suggested and implemented a six-week advertising campaign to help boost lagging sales at FHG



Forest Hills Gardens

IS the property of the Sage Foundation Homes Company and is recognized to be the most comprehensive accomplishment in garden city or model town planning yet undertaken in America.

Lest confusion and an indefinite impression exist as to just what Forest Hills Gardens is and represents, and in order to combat any opinion that it has been developed and undertaken with certain charitable or philanthropic objects in view, it is well to state that this is not its aim.

Forest Hills Gardens is a high-class suburban residential community conducted upon strictly business principles. It is a new type of high-class home community not to be confused with the usual ephemeral development filled with absurd fancies and individual idiosyncracies.

It is a successful project along garden city or model town planning lines and contains the basis of a liberal education in this work.

Residents of Queens Borough particularly should visit Forest Hills Gardens and become familiar with this great progressive undertaking, located in their Borough.

SAGE FOUNDATION HOMES COMPANY

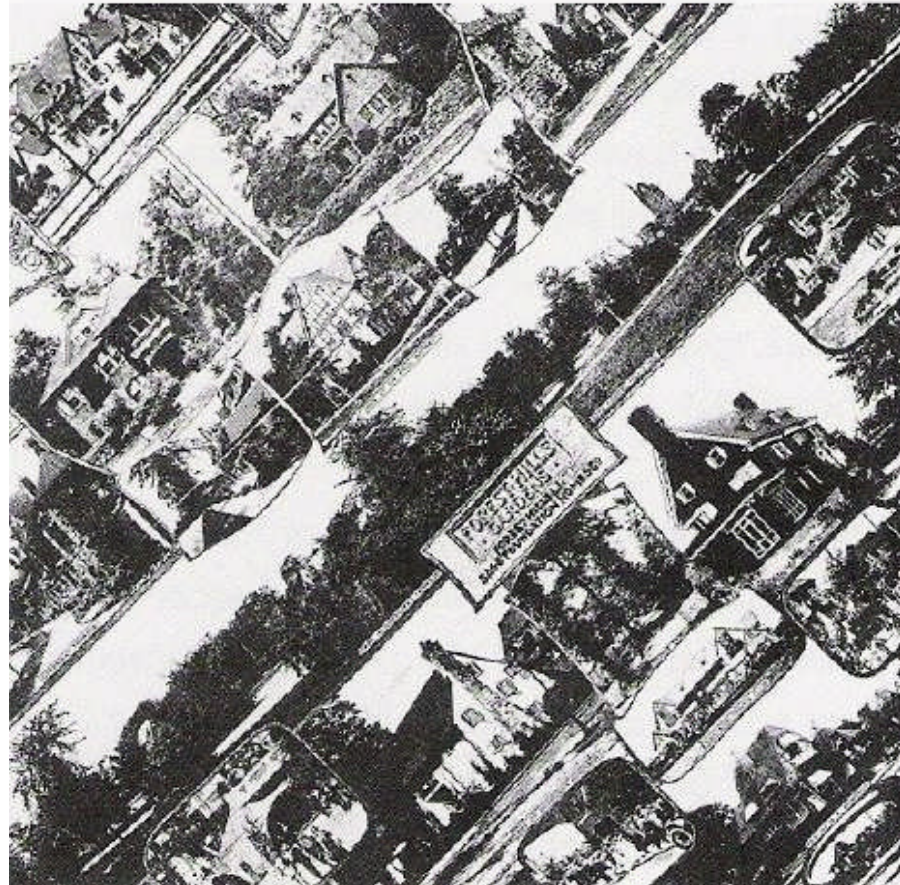
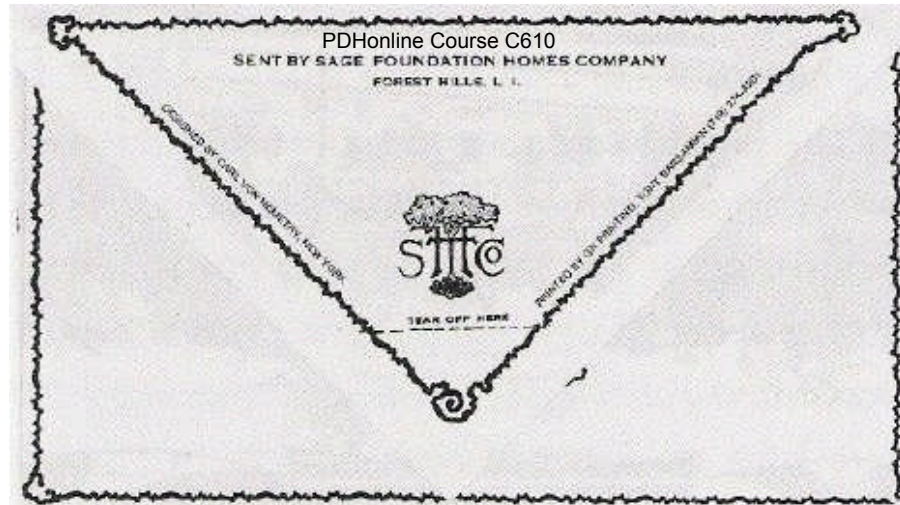
Forest Hills, L. I., and 47 West 34th Street, Manhattan





The property is not cheap as compared with other less carefully planned suburban developments...Forest Hills Gardens IS NOT a low cost development...because improvements are permanent, cost of repairs and maintenance is kept to a minimum and money invested in the gardens yields the greatest return in comfort, beauty, pleasure and satisfaction...a definite plan for the whole...homes of today will be protected and in time become more attractive and more valuable

RE: excerpts from a SFHC advertisement, Fall 1911



“To have to report that the year 1921 was the poorest in the history of the company’s business...how is the company to dispose of any obligations which may rest upon it in respect to continuing physical maintenance...in such a way as to maintain the standards which it has set”

RE: RSF/SFHC concerns over depressed sales (in the wake of WWI) and continuing its involvement with FHG. Also, many FHG residents were getting more and more involved with maintenance and other community issues. It was becoming clear that the RSF wanted out of FHG by the early 1920s.



**Greenway Terrace
(ca. 1920)**



71st/Continental Avenue ca. 1920

“The Foundation is of the opinion that its chief purpose in organizing and developing Forest Hills Gardens has been accomplished”

RE: in May 1922, the SFHC sold its remaining stock to a syndicate formed and led by GM John Demarest and a majority of lot owners for \$1,920,000. This despite Olmsted and Atterbury’s objections. In December 1922, the syndicate organized the “Gardens Corporation” (later called the “Forest Hills Gardens Corp.”).



Greenway North ca. 1920



“In terms of planning, restrictions, maintenance charge, basis of sales, investigations of prospective purchasers etc. it has been entirely successful and has accomplished what the Sage Foundation intended”

Robert de Forest

RE: on January 1, 1923, the SFHC conveyed ownership to the Gardens Corp. of all streets, common lands, sewers and established a maintenance fund. Despite de Forest’s claims of success in achieving the RSF’s goals, they did not turn a profit on their investment and, in fact, lost a total of \$360,800.00 from their total investment of \$2.5 million. In this regard, FHG was a failure and did not set the example for other developers that there was: “money to be had in good taste.” However, world events played a significant part in contributing to the RSF’s financial losses at FHG. In particular, the unforeseen effects of WWI.



Rockrose Place ca. 1925



10 Station Square ca. 1920



Station Square in winter

Part 6

Dream Team

“The most important feature of the development is that it is intended to demonstrate what can be done anywhere...If it proves that the talent of a landscape architect like Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr. of Boston, and of an architect like Grosvenor Atterbury of New York, can be utilized on a suburb of this kind, giving it the intelligent study which is now given to only much more pretentious and more expensive places, and that the money laid-out for that sort of advice is money well expended, a most useful service will have been performed”

Washington D.C. Times, November 1910

“The chief difference between the development at Forest Hills Gardens and any other land development so far undertaken in America is that of design or ‘town planning’...with the project in the hands of such well known men as Messrs. Atterbury and Olmsted, a new, distinctive, and, it is hoped, educational work”

Edward Bouton, General Manager

RE: excerpts from his essay in an illustrated booklet entitled: *Forest Hills Gardens: The Suburban Development of the Russell Sage Foundation*

“Whom no suburban boom companies would consider themselves justified in employing...the general truth of civic development that ‘beauty pays’”

RE: critical praise for the RSF’s employing – at greater expense to themselves, the top men in their field for the design of FHG as well worth the price

On the Landscaping Side

Conrad Uhl's Hotel Bristol,
Berlin unter den Linden 5/6
20 December, 1908

Dear Mr. de Forest:

On my arrival here this evening I find your letter of December 7th, forwarded two or three times.

Nothing could interest me more than such a problem as you have on hand. One of the chief objects I had in view in starting upon my present trip was to get a better knowledge of what the Germans are doing in the systematic control of urban development for the greater well-being of the people. I was going over some of the plans for the suburban quarters of Dresden yesterday with the Stadterweiterungs Direktor, and through him got hold of a book on the Dresden ordinances governing buildings, etc., of such interest that I had it in mind to write and call it your attention in case you did not know it — *Bauordnung für die Stadt Dresden*.

Rather than miss having a hand in your project I would drop my trip at once and return to take it up; but I suppose that such haste is not necessary, and I should hate to miss the further study of German work, especially with such a problem in view. Subject to an earlier summons home my plans are these: — I shall call tomorrow on Dr. Stübben,¹ author of *Der Staedtebau*,² Berlin City Official, and an authority on the subject — and I shall be guided largely by his advice as to the rest of my trip. But I hope to visit again Hamburg and the Rhine cities, especially Frankfort, which appears to be doing a good deal of radical work in controlling suburban growth; and among other cities to visit Darmstadt, where the Grand Duke has taken a keen personal interest in the subject and tried a number of experiments, and where I expect to have an introduction to the Court through some German friends. I want also to see some of the French provincial cities, especially the manufacturing cities. With all the beastly American hustle I can put into it I do not see how I can tear myself away with any satisfaction before the first of February at the earliest. And then I want a week or two in England. The celebrated Garden City is still largely on paper, but I want to look at it, as far as it has got, and also to see Port Sunlight, and one or two other "model villages" again, with new eyes.

Well! You see how I stand. Will March be too late for me to report for duty?

My address is care of the American Express Co., 11 Rue Scribe, Paris.

I see, on referring back to your letter, that although I have gushed at some length I have not answered your question directly. I am, then, in my own judgment equipped with interest in the project, and with a modicum of knowledge, which I am diligently striving to increase. In fact I know very little about it; but I cannot think of any landscape man in America who knows any more, if as much. Sometimes I doubt whether the Germans know as much as one would gather from their writings. (Hush!)

Sincerely yours,

Frederick Law Olmsted



**Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.
(ca. 1910)**



John Charles Olmsted

“Something rather strikingly different in kind as well as quality”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: excerpt from correspondence with architect Grosvenor Atterbury concerning the design of FHG

“...did not expect or attempt to do anything revolutionary or epoch making...to contribute something toward advancing the ‘state of the art’...a mere drop in the bucket...for recognizing market conditions and supplying homes of a kind to meet the purses and wishes of those who could afford to buy in that locality...the enterprise started with certain funds to be invested in a profitable but incidentally beneficial manner”

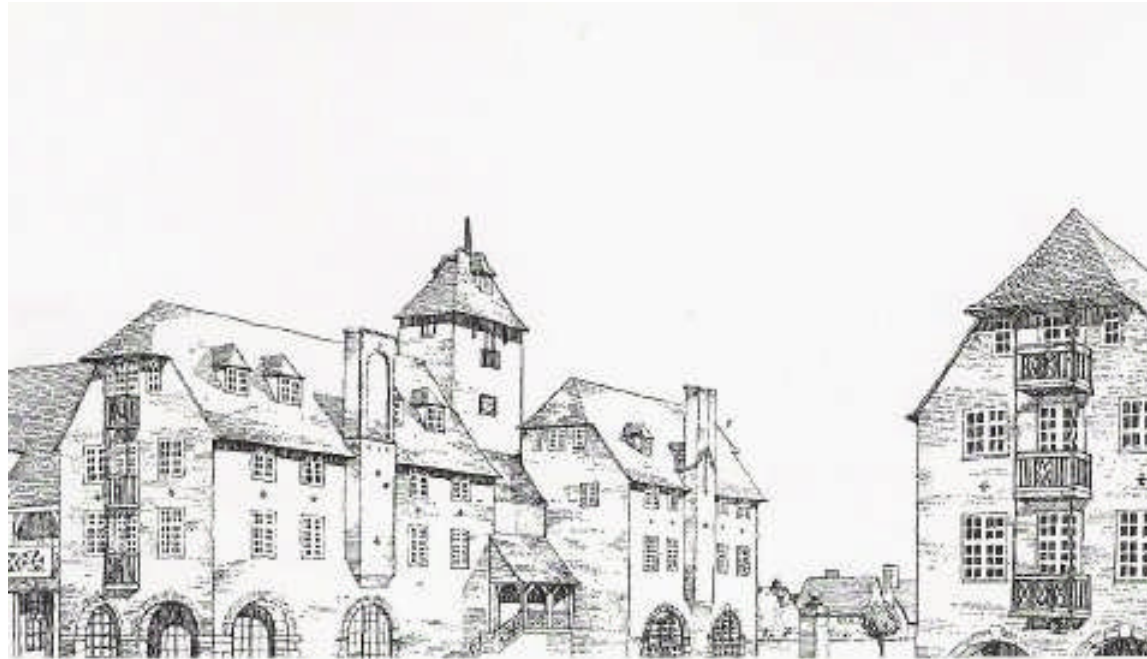
Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: excerpts from a letter to Thomas Adams, an English planner. Olmsted is overtly critical of the RSF – a charitable institution, being involved with for-profit housing for the middle class. He further praised the socialistic financial arrangements for Letchworth and Hampstead Gardens. Robert de Forest felt that the same kind of financial arrangements (i.e. communal ownership of land) would not appeal to Americans.

“To learn from the example of progressive European cities the systematic control of urban development for the greater well-being of the people...their radical work in controlling suburban growth with new ideas”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: his November 1908 tour of planned communities in Europe and the United Kingdom including: *Letchworth, Port Sunlight & Bourneville*



European Village



English Town Square

New York, January 4, 1909.

Dear Mr. Olmsted:

I am just in receipt of your charming letter of December 20, in which you practically plead guilty to my accusation of your being "the man." We will hold things up until you get back, which I hope will certainly be toward the end of February. The English garden cities, though in embryo, are well worth seeing and suggestive. You can readily see Hampstead and Letchworth. We have here fairly complete data respecting them. The more I see of abroad, the less I think we have to learn there, for our conditions are so different, but I do not suppose we should ever be satisfied on this point (least of all you) before seeing what there was to be seen at least to demonstrate the fact that the problem to be worked out here was largely an American one. Methods of land tenure are very different, social habits are very different, and to run counter to ordinary methods of land tenure and social habits, even under the stimulus of continental or English success, would be a very doubtful experiment.

Sincerely yours

Robert W. de Forest.

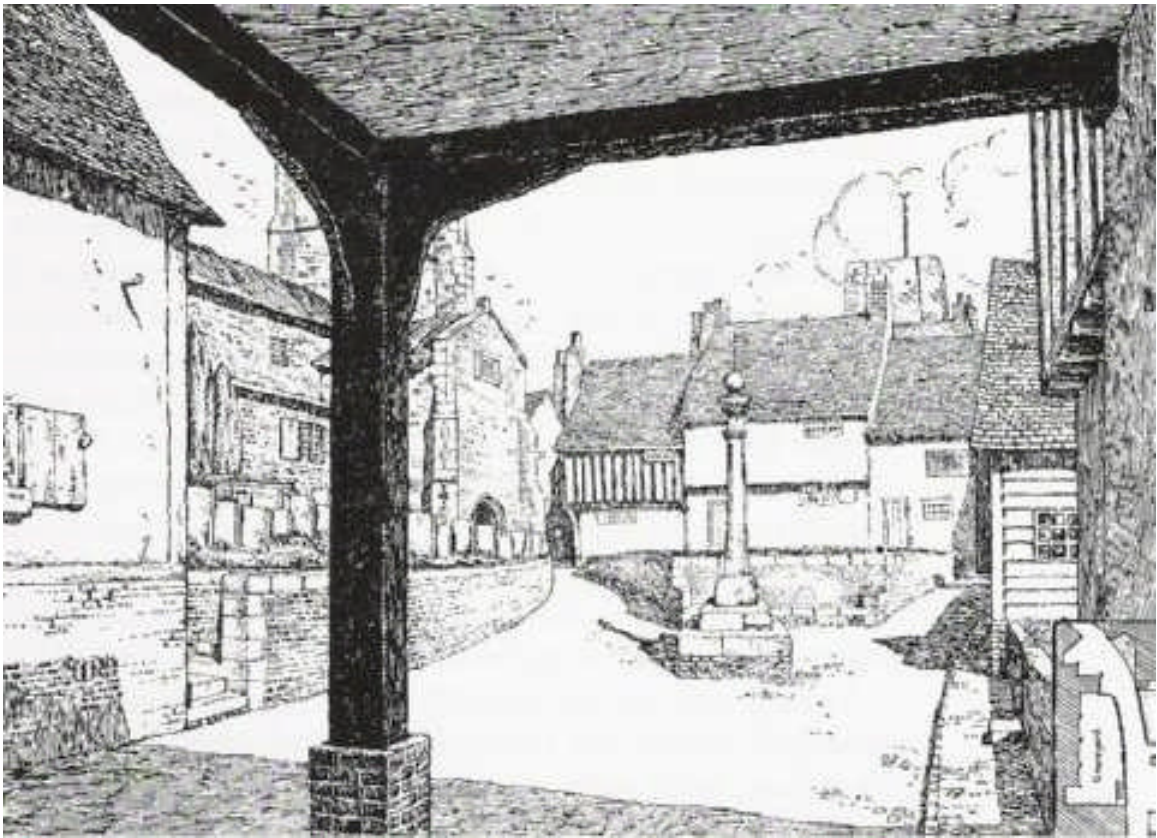
Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted
c/o American Express Co.,
Paris, France

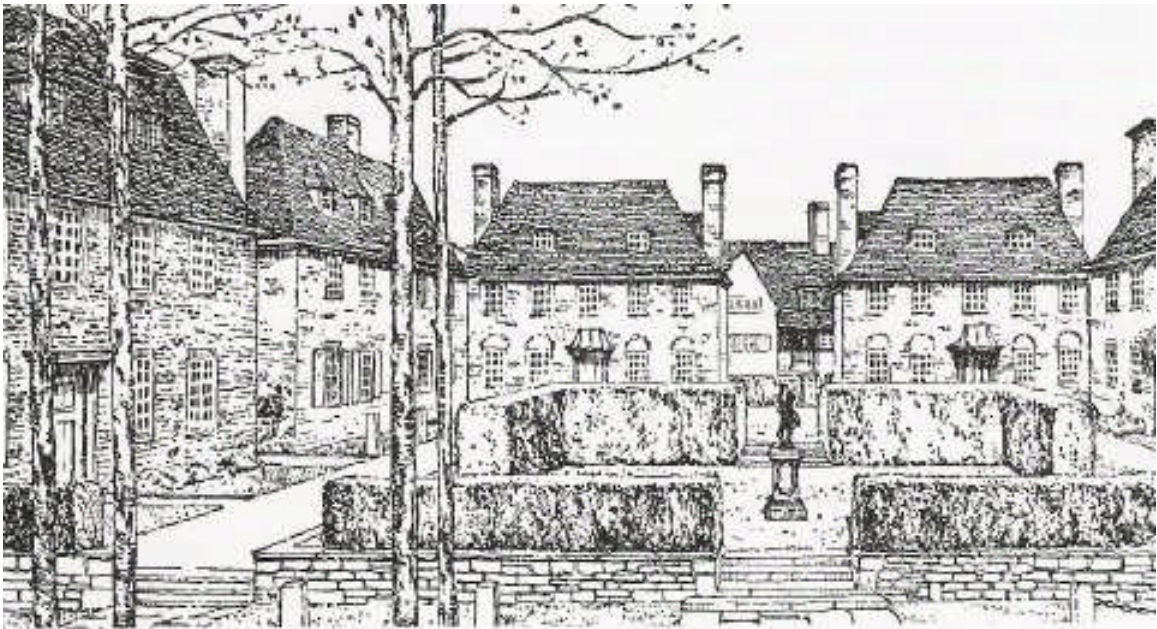
Picturesque Irregularity Could Be Charming

“The kind of accidental plan which has generally resulted from unpremeditated city growth, combining straight streets with subtle deflections, bends and variations in width...picturesque irregularity based on medieval examples could be charming”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr., 1909

RE: excerpt from correspondence with Grosvenor Atterbury concerning his idea for a “free-form” street design for FHG







One Station Square (left) & Ten Station Square (right) under construction ca. 1911



LIRR Station framed by the “High Bridge” portal to Greenway Terrace



**Arcaded storefronts at 10 Station Square
(note the faded appearance of the façade due to direct sunlight)**



High Bridge entry (from Greenway Terrace) to Station Square and Clock Tower (three-sided and adjacent to 10 Station Square)



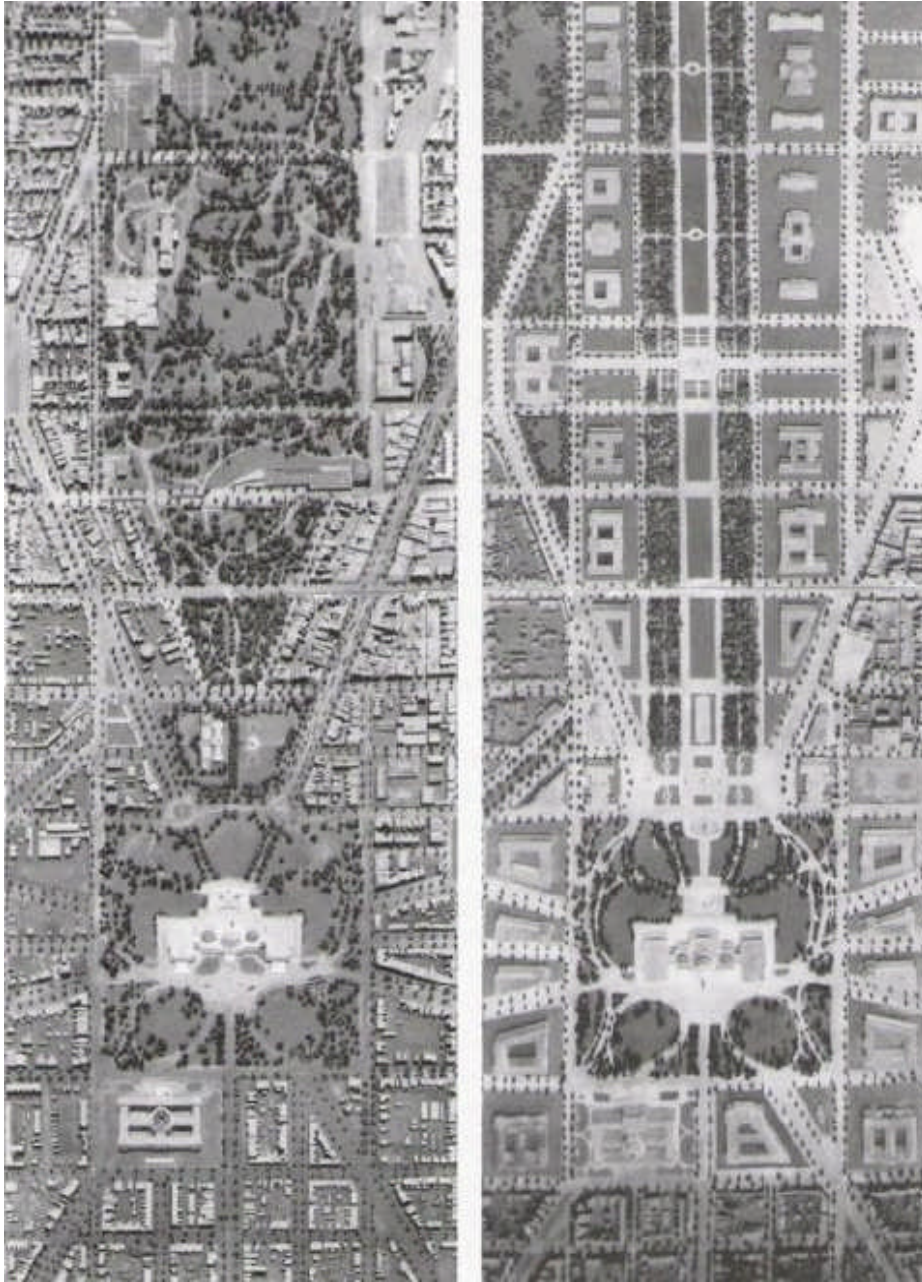
**High Bridge portal (to Greenway Terrace) and adjacent Clock Tower
(as seen from island in the middle of Station Square - east kiosk at lower left)**

“A city plan in Germany included in one unified project not only the layout of streets, but the whole code of building regulations, health ordinances, police rules, and system of taxation in so far as they have a direct influence upon the physical development of the city”

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., 1908

“I am, in my own judgment, equipped with a modicum of knowledge, which I am diligently striving to increase. In fact I know very little about it; but I cannot think of any landscape man in America who knows any more, if as much”

FLO, Jr. to Robert deForest, 1908 - RE: Garden Cities

**Before (1791)****After (1901)**

In November 1895, Rick was invited to join his father's firm in partnership with his step-brother Charles. With his father's health in decline, he played an ever increasing role of responsibility in the firm. In 1899, Rick participated in the creation of the *American Society of Landscape Architects* and in 1901 he taught the first university course in Landscape Architecture at Harvard; his alma mater. Along with architects *Charles McKim* and *Daniel Burnham*, he was appointed that same year to Senator McMillan's commission which oversaw the rehabilitation of the mall in Washington D.C.; a.k.a. "The McMillan Plan" (left). By the time of his involvement with FHG, he was practicing Landscape Architecture for over ten years and was the recognized leader of his chosen profession.

“Experience has taught the fundamental importance of having everything: design, construction, planting, purchasing, maintenance, operations, publicity, sales and all business relations head up to a single General Manager who will have all the strings in his hands all the time”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

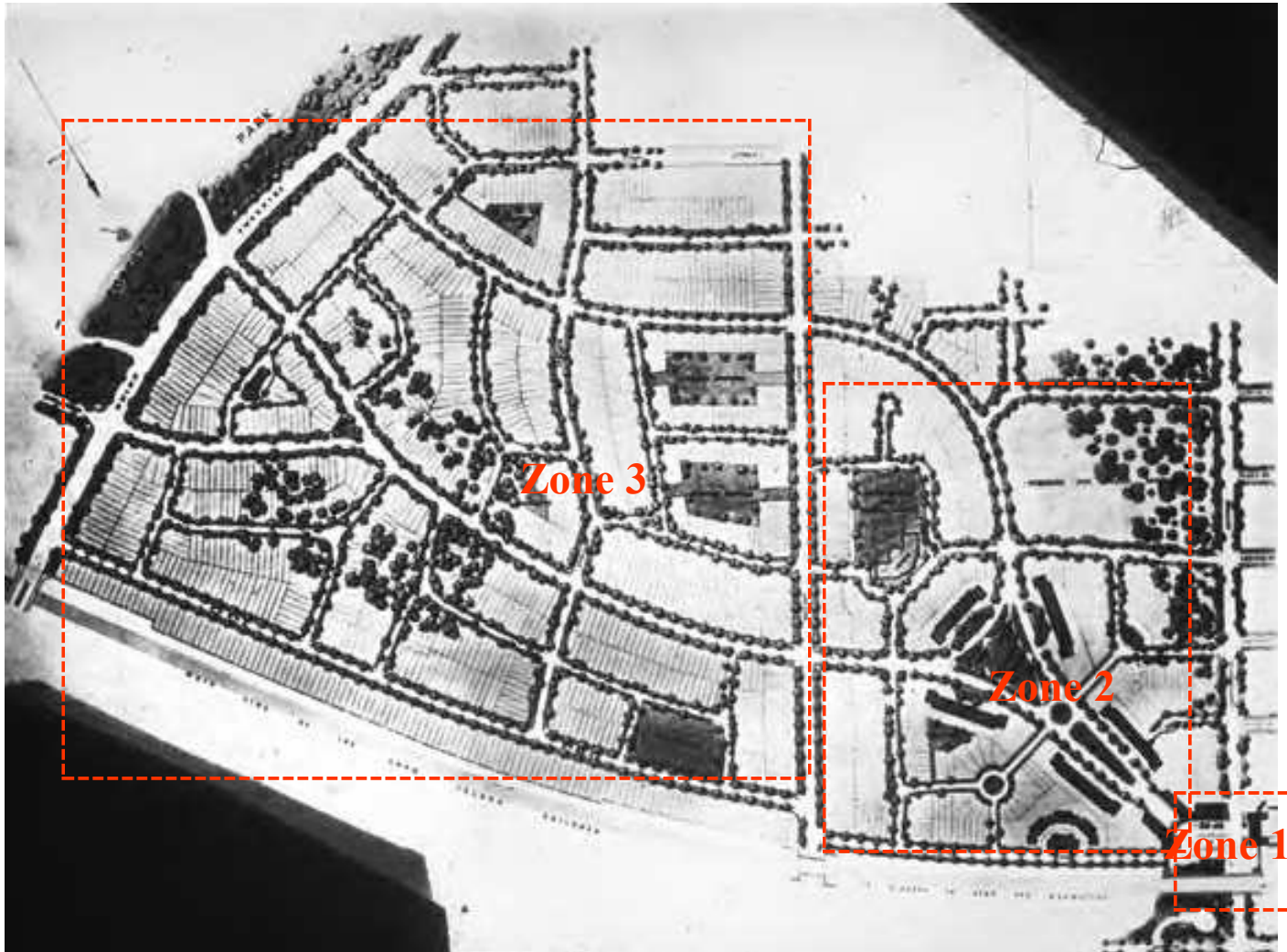
RE: his belief in strong, centralized control

“The foundation of all city planning”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: the importance of the street plan

Olmsted's street plan consists of forty-four(44) roughly rectangular blocks which follow the natural contours of the land. It is broken into three zones with open spaces, streetscapes and massing of architectural elements. By varied and early planting (during construction) of flowers, plants, shrubs and trees, FHG appeared to have developed "organically" rather than in the relatively short time of construction of the first ten building groups. From the commercial zone (Station Square), you enter the second zone via Greenway Terrace with its attached and semi-attached "Terrace Houses." The third zone; a.k.a. "upper gardens", consists mostly of detached houses on larger lots. This area extends eastward from Ascan Avenue to Union Turnpike; FHG's border with Forest Park ("The Country"), and Kew Gardens.



The street plan devised by Olmsted is a compromise between a “free-form” design (such as his father used at Riverside) and a rigid grid plan. It consists of a three-part hierarchal street circulation system:

1) Main arteries for internal Traffic (radiating from Station Square directly but with gently curving lines forming a major and minor east-west axis;

*** Greenway North (70’ wide)**

*** Greenway South (60’ wide)**

2) Secondary arteries for thru traffic;

*** Burns Street (60’ wide – parallel to LIRR – east/west)**

*** Puritan Avenue (60’ wide – at rear of property – north/south)**

3) Neighborhood Streets (discouraged through traffic and allowed for additional plantings via curb plots);

*** 40’ wide typical**

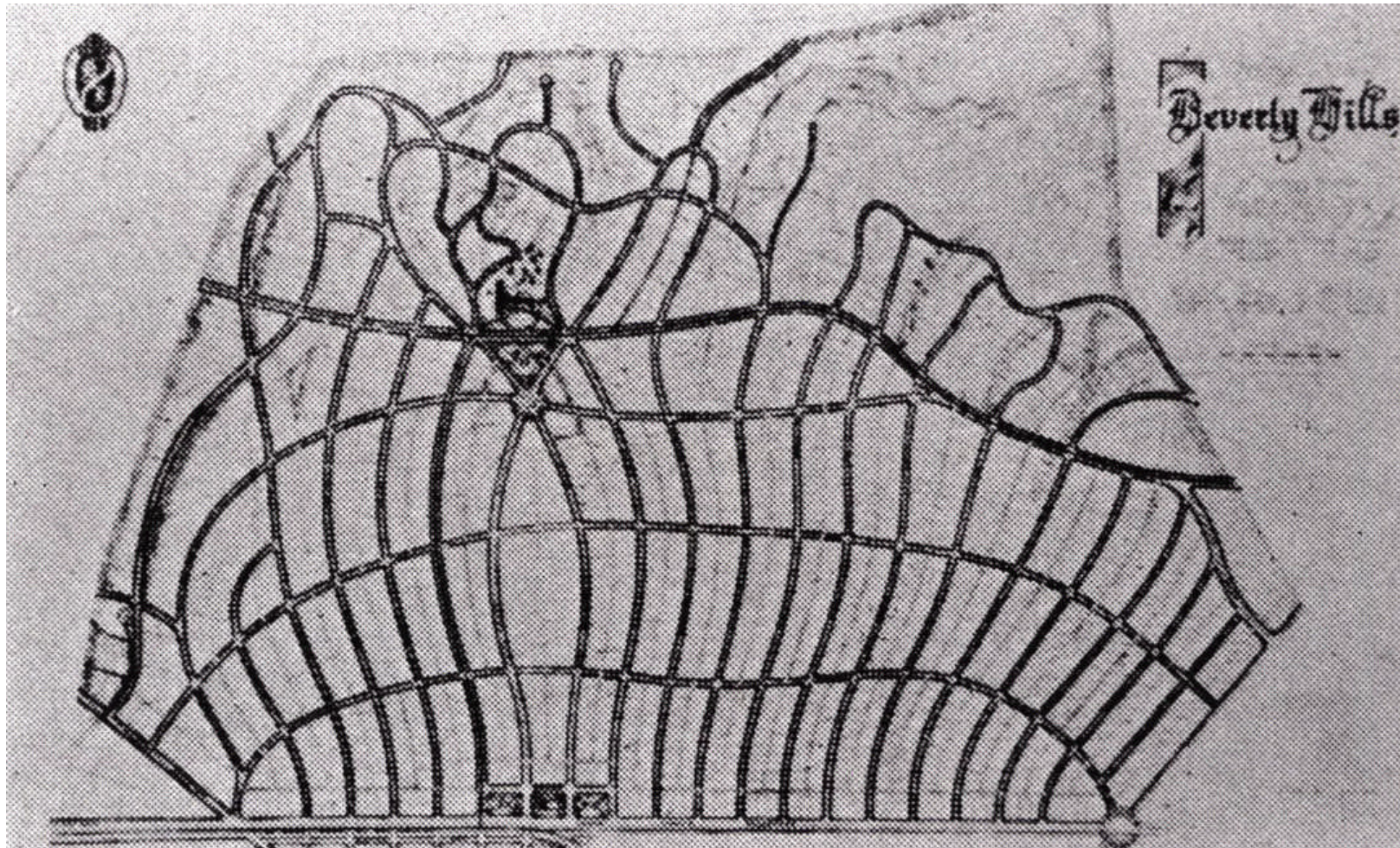
The major north-south through streets: 71st/Continental Avenue and Ascan Avenue - connecting Metropolitan Avenue with Queens Boulevard, required trestles for the LIRR per the tentative NYC street plan. Allowance for this was made a condition of sale by Cord Meyer when he sold the property to the Russell Sage Foundation. Effectively, this requirement never allowed FHG to be a truly private community.



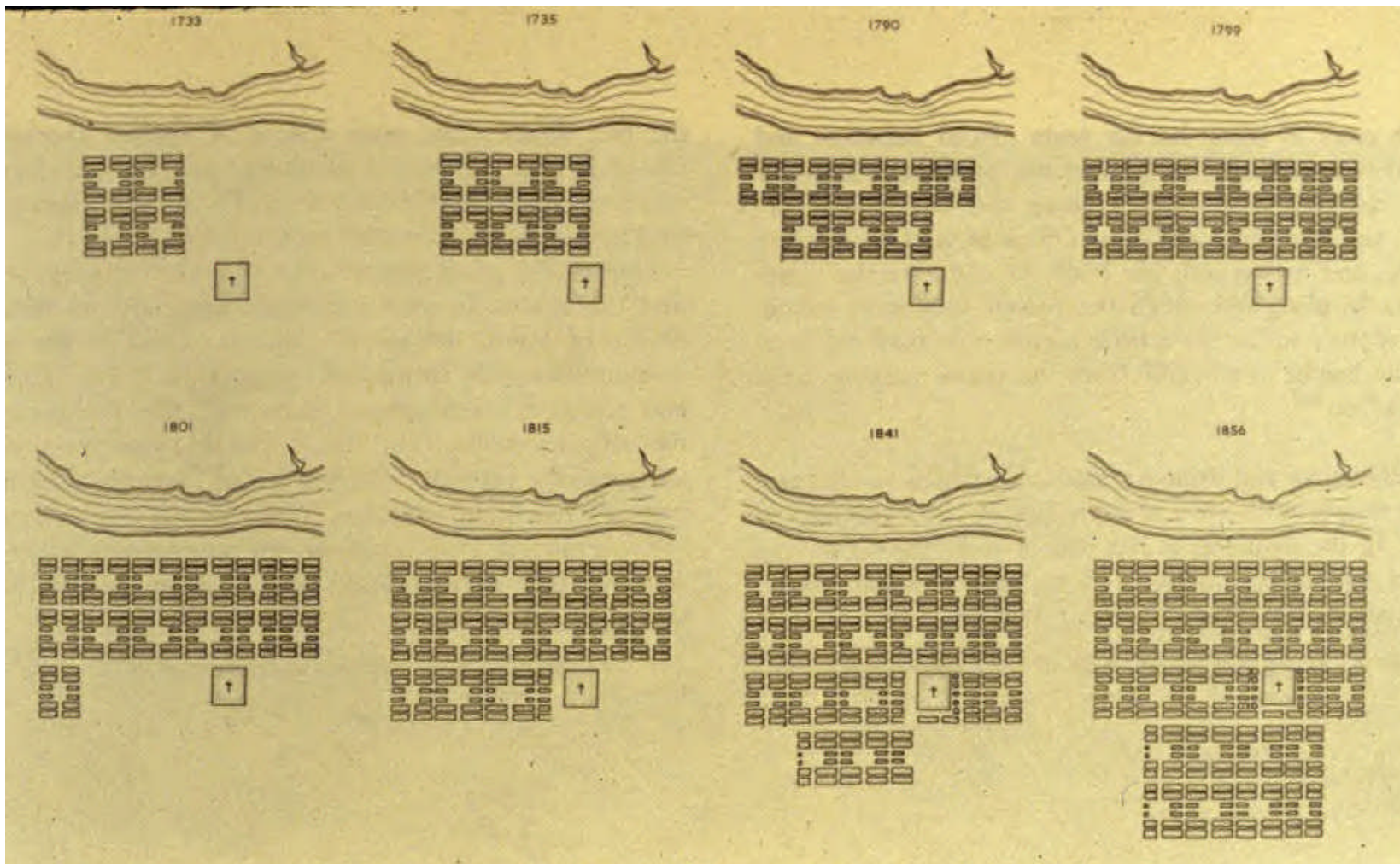
“City planning treats the city as a unit, as an organic whole. It anticipates the future with the foresightedness of an army commander so as to secure the orderly, harmonious and symmetrical development of the community. It makes provision for people as well as industry. It means a city built by experts, in architecture, landscape gardening, in engineering and in housing; by students of health, transportation, sanitation, water, gas and electricity, by a new type of municipal officer who visualizes the complex life of a million people.”

Frederick W. Howe

RE: excerpt from the July 1913 issue of *Harper's Monthly*. Howe was a proponent of Ebenezer Howard's garden city concept



Plan of Beverly Hills, California



The Growth of Savannah, Georgia 1733-1856

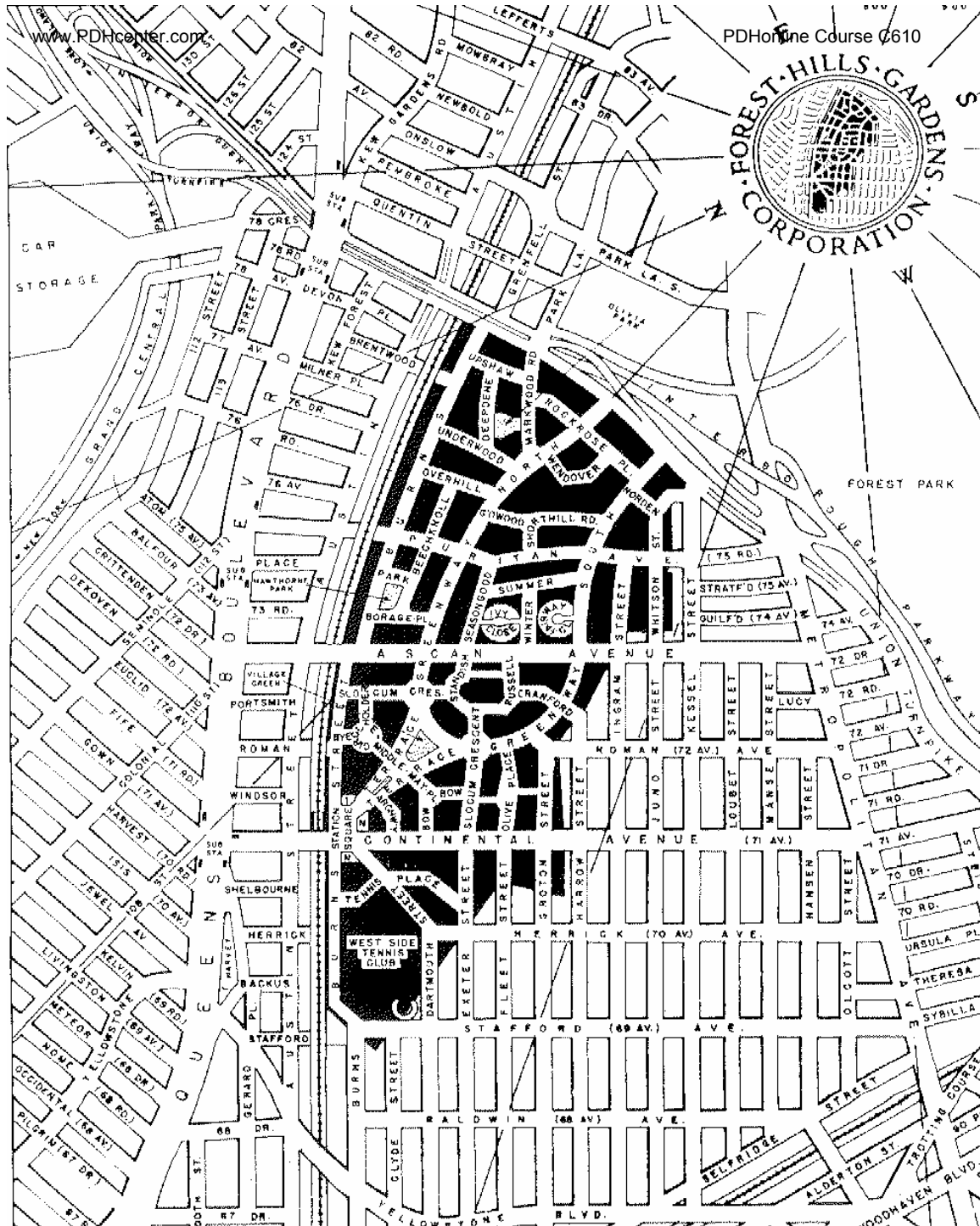


**Map of the City of Savannah and its Garden and Farm Lots
ca. 1800**

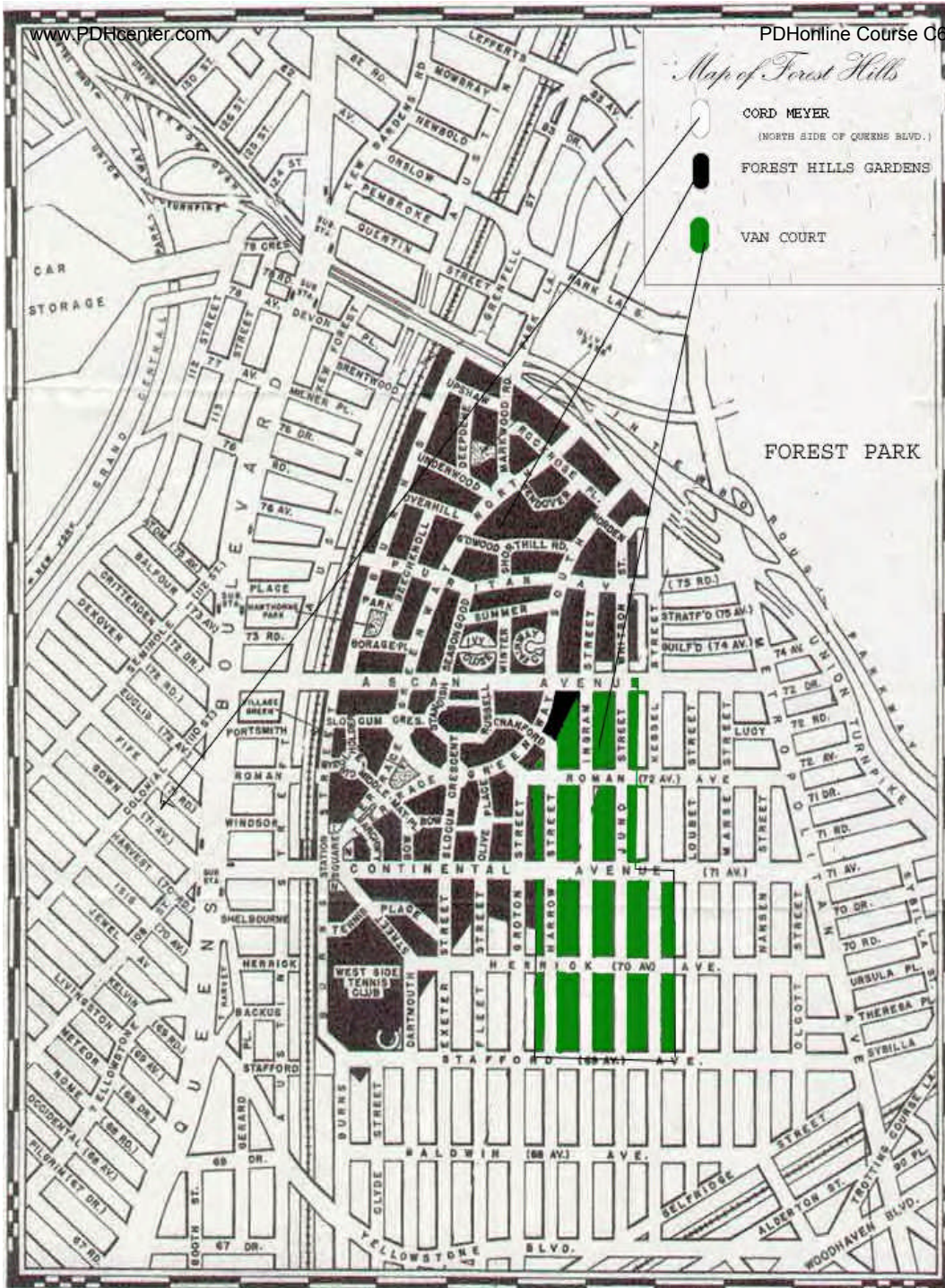
“...were fixed by the location of the bridges under the railroad in accordance with New York City’s tentative street plan covering adjacent territory”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: one of the underlying flaws in the street plan for FHG, but one that could not be avoided. In 1909, the automobile was in its infancy and few; including Olmsted, could foresee the automobile’s future role in American life and culture. Both 71st/Continental & Ascan Avenues are heavily traveled routes used by both cars and trucks.



This 1936 map is used as the official map of Forest Hills Gardens



FHG's northern border is defined by the LIRR, its eastern border by Union Turnpike and its western border by the West Side Tennis Club. Less well defined is the southern border, much of which was intended to be part of FHG (with Metropolitan Avenue defining the southern border, in particular the southeastern section later sold to private developers). About a third of FHG's southern border is shared with the *Van Court Community* (in green on map). Like FHG (in black on map), it maintains covenant restrictions.



Masonry (brick arch) “portal” entry to FHG – either side of 71st/Continental Avenue (southern border – near Groton Street)

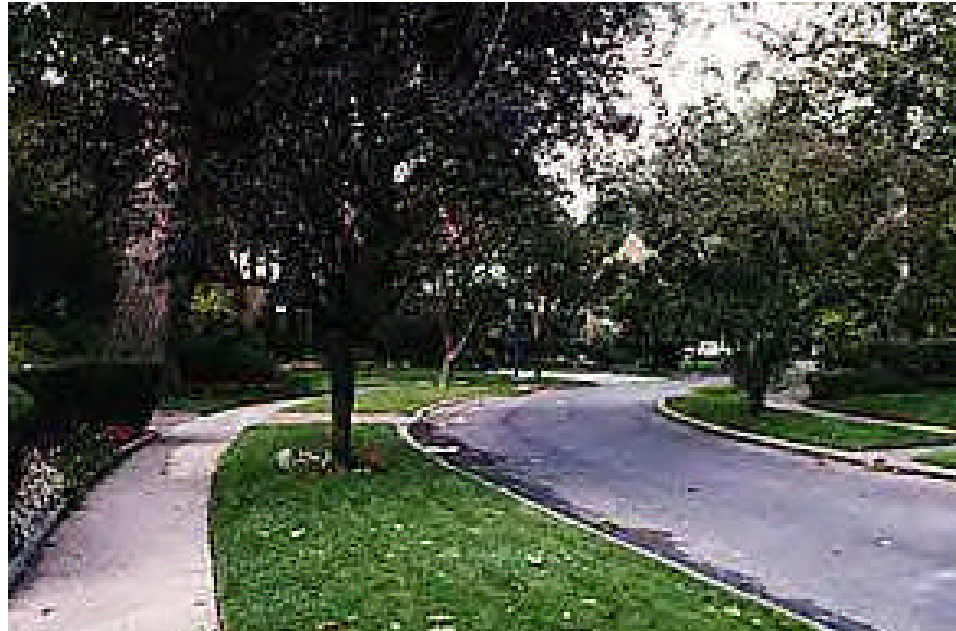


Portal at Burns Street & Union Turnpike (eastern border) entry to FHG

“While not fantastically crooked are never perfectly straight for long stretches...cozy, domestic character of these local streets...additional space to be devoted to the planting spaces and the front gardens which will be one of the characteristic features of the whole development”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

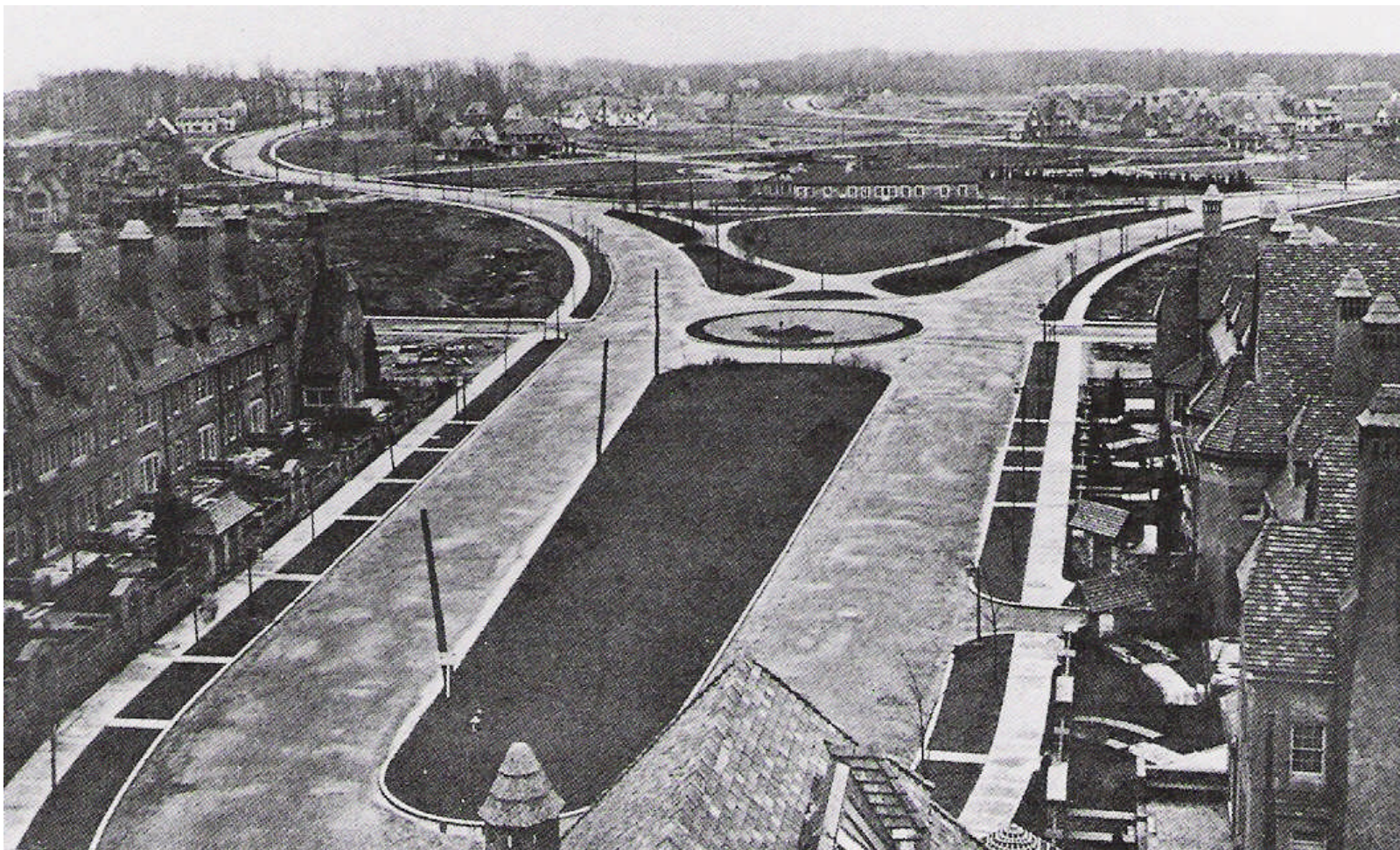
RE: 40' wide neighborhood streets with curb plots for plants/gardens. Many curb plots also feature brick laid in a herringbone pattern such as on Greenway Terrace and Ascan Avenue.



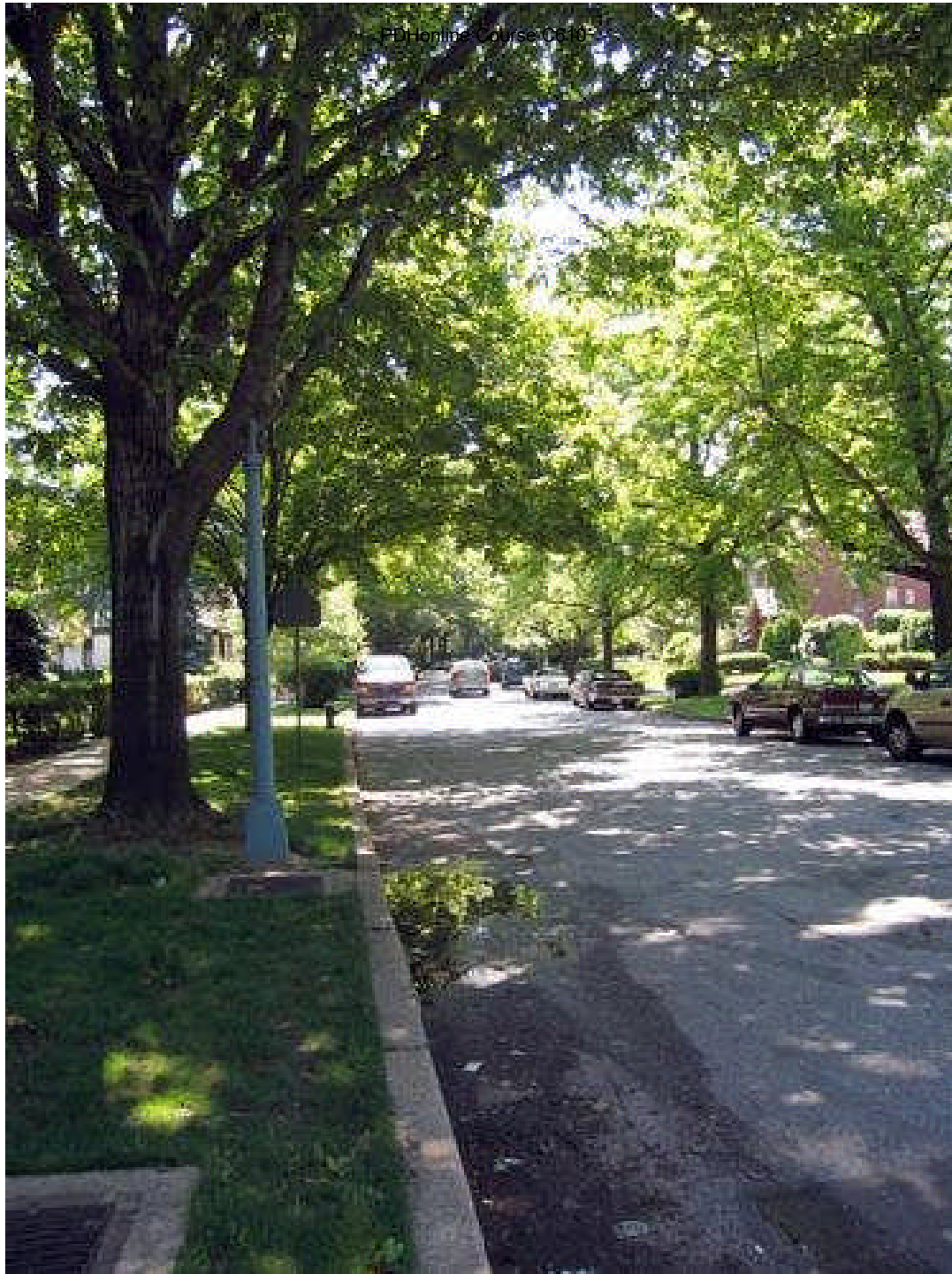
**Tennis Place
(on-street parking not allowed)**



Middlemay Circle



Greenway Terrace ca. 1915 (Greenway North at left, Greenway South at right)



“Aesthetic success is quite as important as more commercial success...doing something a little different that involves the risk of perhaps not attracting would-be purchasers as the result of this difference...quite ready to chance it...let us teach people to like them and take some risk to do so...we decrease the amount of land we have for sale and decrease our profits from that point of view”

Robert de Forest, 1909

RE: correspondence with Olmsted concerning irregular lot sizes and setting aside land for communal parks and playgrounds. With Forest Park in close proximity, only two public parks were included: Hawthorne and Olivia (a.k.a. “Deepdene”). It is not unusual to see a large house with a very small/minimal backyard and the use of “common driveways” for adjacent houses is fairly typical.

“Whatever may be done for the sake of color, enrichment or decoration must be controlled by regard for the composition of these masses and open spaces or confusion will result”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: his belief in the importance of having a clear, dominant idea guide landscape design.

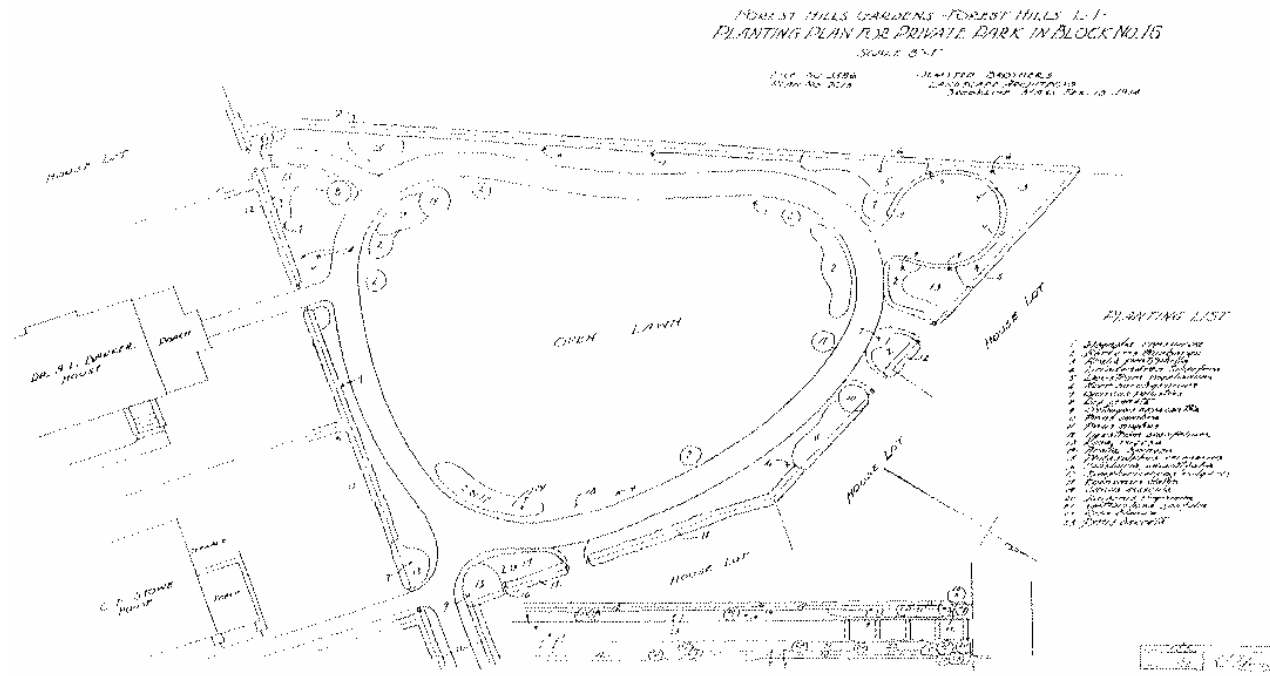
Olmsted experimented with different colors and textural effects for sidewalks and curbs on-site. For example, he had workers scrub the finished concrete surface with wire brushes and applied acid washes to reveal the aggregate. He also commissioned watercolor paintings of flowers to see how they would look in combination.

Secret Gardens

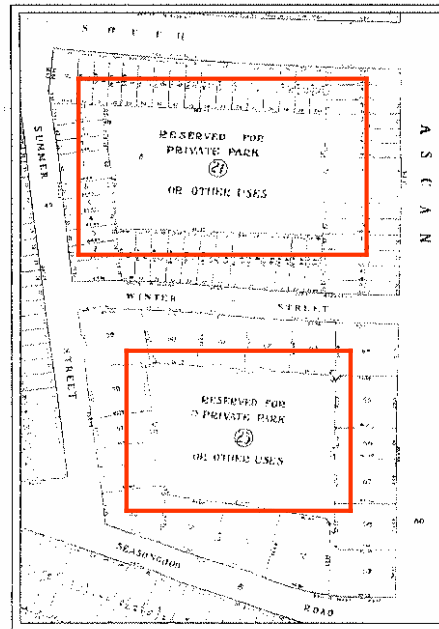
“There are many people who want to try their hand at a garden; more of a garden than is possible on the ordinary house plot, but who either are unable to buy the necessary area or feel too uncertain of their gardening success to risk the additional investments in land...and to increase or decrease this space or finally give it up, just as their experience may dictate”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: creation of private parks on selected blocks. Despite his noble goals, these private parks for “private gardens” proved disappointing and ultimately failed. Residents were unwilling to spend their own money in support of public/communal gardens.

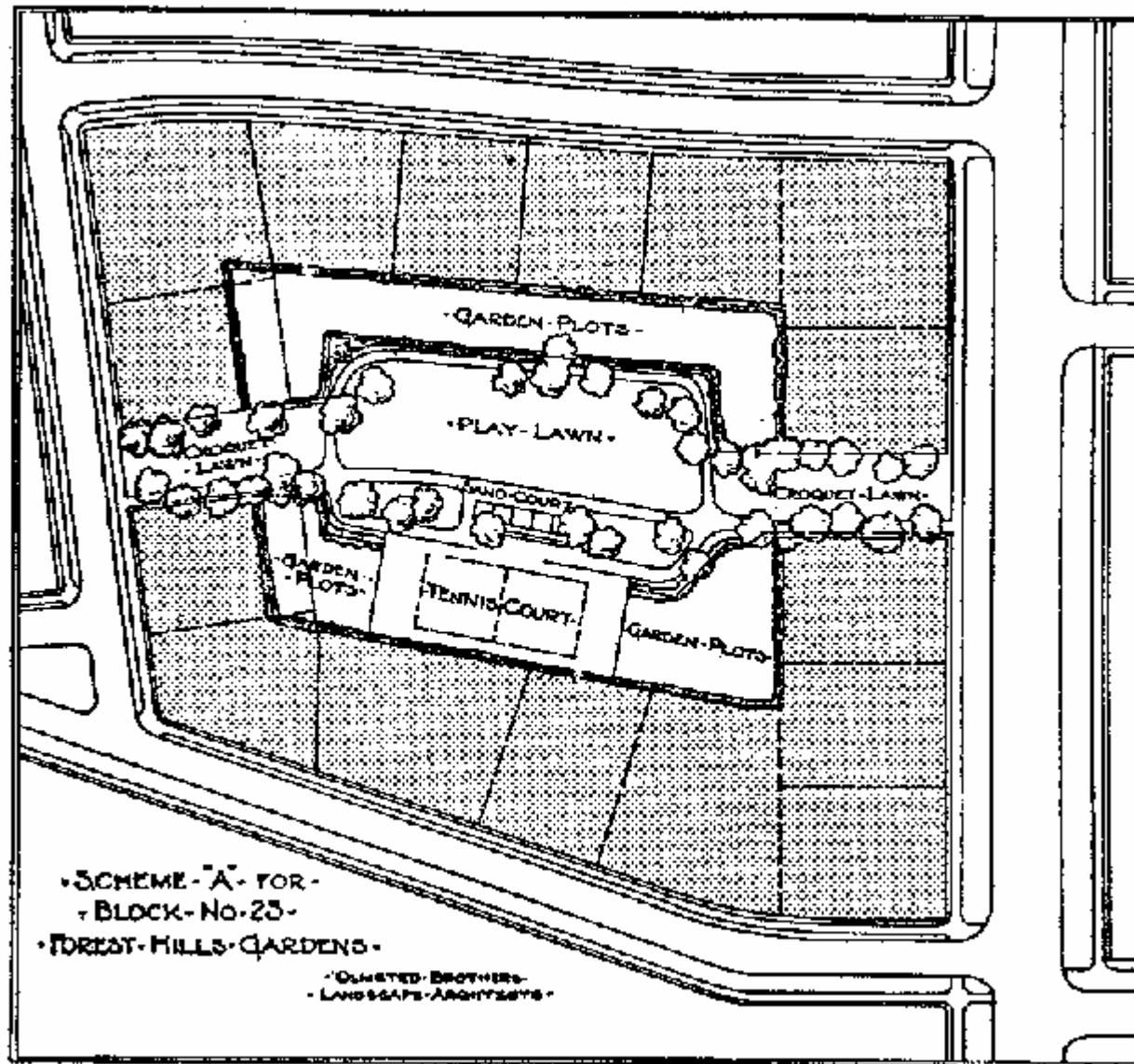


Block No. 15 Private Park Planting Plan

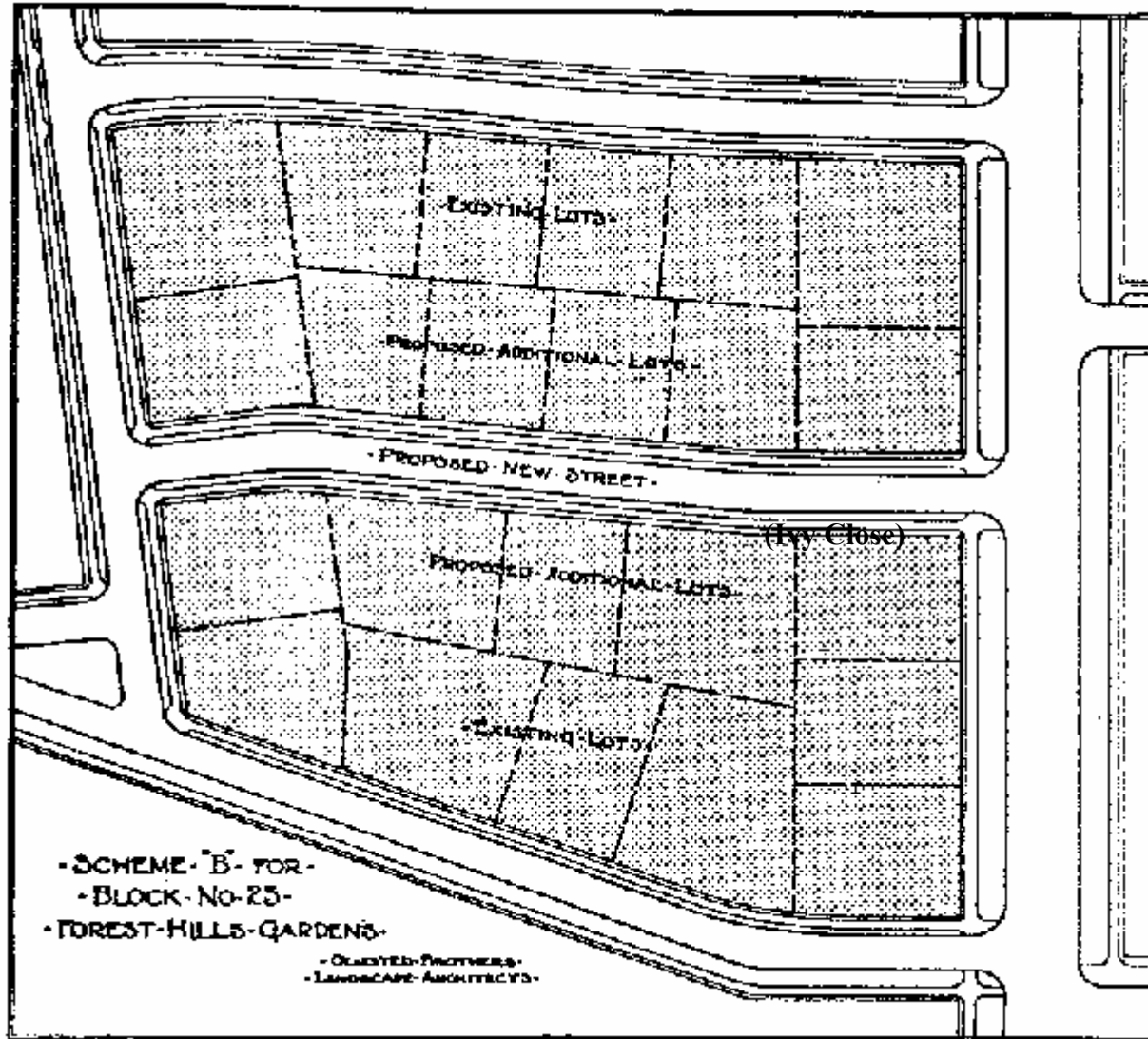


MAT 211912. DETAIL. PROPOSED PRIVATE PARKS BEHIND ASCAN AVENUE HOUSING BLOCKS. THE PARKS WERE NEVER DEVELOPED, AND THE AREAS BECAME FAIRWAY CLOSE AND IVY CLOSE

Never developed as private parks, the block at top became the only cul-de-sac in FHG: *Fairway Close*. The block at bottom was bisected by a narrow street named Ivy Close – one of the most beautiful in all of Forest Hills Gardens.



**Plan for Private Park
(not realized)**



**Plan Realized
w/bisecting street (Ivy Close)**

Where They Are Worshipped

In China, trees are worshipped – so too in Forest Hills Gardens. Olmsted used nature’s full pallet of tree species to make beautiful his street plan for spring and summer bloom and fall foilage effects:

- * Major Streets: American Elms and other large growing trees**
- * Local Streets: tree species providing color throughout the year;**
 - * Magnolia**
 - * Dogwood**
 - * Hawthorn**
 - * Varnish**
 - * Japanese Lilac**
 - * Norway Maple**
 - * Tulip**
 - * Beech**
 - * Sassafras**



**Middlemay Place
(note chains holding branches together)**



Mature trees on Tennis Place







**Ivy covered tree
Middlemay Circle**

Olmsted used seventy-five varieties of shrubs and forty different vines: climbing roses, flowering vines (clematis) etc. Ivy grew freely trellis', walls, fences and trees. Thus, an effective “softening of the architecture” was achieved giving it an aged appearance. In particular, Olmsted gave Fairway and Ivy close very distinctive plantings including;

- * English & Boston Ivy**
- * Junipers**
- * Japanese Holly**
- * Yews**
- * White & Purple Lilacs**



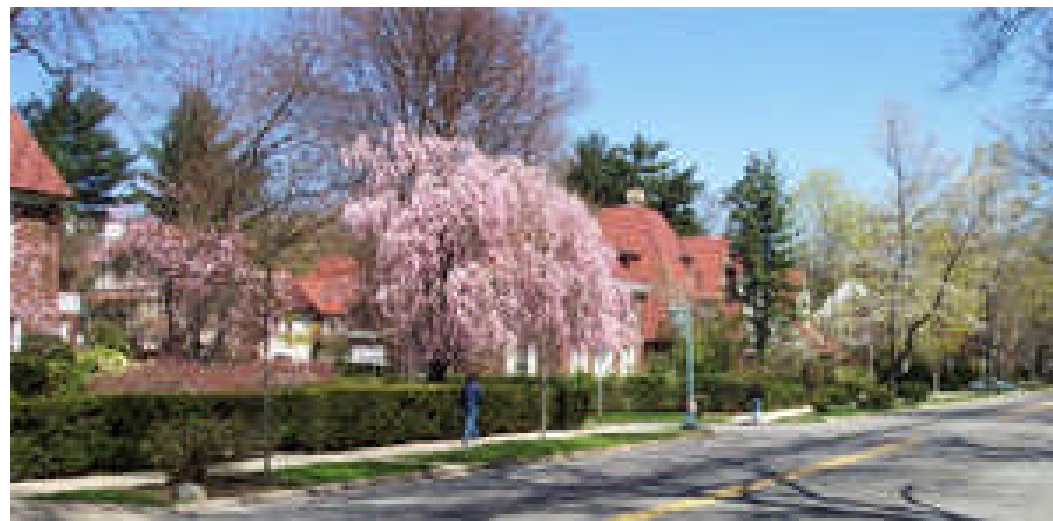
Fairway Close



Ivy Close

“A condition which, in the typical speculative subdivision usually results in a scene of widespread devastation, slow to return to normal”

RE: critical success to minimize the effects of new construction through the use of trees and plantings at FHG



Cherry Blossom in bloom



Re-planted tree – Tennis Place



Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.
1870 - 1957

Society Architect

A contemporary of Frank Lloyd Wright, *Grosvenor Atterbury* was born into a well-to-do family in Detroit, but grew up in New York. After graduating from Columbia University’s School of Architecture, he trained in Paris at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. A talented artist, he began his career with McKim, Mead & White. Well connected in New York City and Long Island, he began to build homes for wealthy clients on Long Island’s “Gold Coast.” In Cold Spring Harbor, Atterbury designed estates for Robert de Forest, his sister Julia and *Nethermuir* – his brother Henry’s estate.

Atterbury and de Forest knew each other from their common social circles and mutual interest in housing issues. Like de Forest, he was a “Gentleman Activist” and sought to use architecture for social improvement rather than social status. He was a founding member of the National Housing Association. From 1907 through the 1920s, the Russell Sage Foundation funded his research in new building technologies such as pre-fabricated concrete which was widely used and experimented with in FHG.

In 1907, Olivia Sage funded the restoration of NYC Hall’s historic “Governor’s Room” and hired Atterbury to oversee the restoration. In 1919, Robert de Forest retained Atterbury to design the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Atterbury was also employed as a consultant for several town plans for working class/company-sponsored housing projects including;

- * Indian Hill in Worcester, Mass. (for the Norton Co.)**
- * Dundalk, MD. (for Bethlehem Steel)**
- * Mocanaqua, PA (for the West End Coal Co.)**



**Bessemer Building, Pittsburgh, PA
Grosvenor Atterbury, Architect**

One of Atterbury's wealthy patrons was the Phipps family. For them, he would simulate very effectively an English country estate in Old Westbury, L.I. In 1906, he designed an innovative housing project in Pittsburgh sponsored by the Phipps: *Phipps Model Tenement*. Later, in 1913, he designed another innovative housing project: *Rogers Model Dwellings*. Atterbury believed that the placement of a building on a site should not be about maximum volume but, rather, about air circulation, natural lighting and sanitation. His designs for worker housing included areas for gathering, recreational areas, reading rooms, roof gardens and playgrounds. He used central courtyards to orient buildings and children away from the dirty, crowded streets that surrounded them. His philosophy for working class housing espoused that it should be attractive, sanitary and economical to build and maintain. To this end, starting in 1904, he began experimenting with pre-fabricated building materials and construction methods working closely with Carnegie Steel to create molds for pre-cast concrete panels. At FHG, such molds were used to create panels 11" thick x 6' wide x full floor height. Into these panels were inserted brick and terra-cotta blocks (covered with pebbledash) to simulate Tudor half-timbering.



Phipps Estate
(a.k.a. *Old Westbury Gardens & Mansion*)



**Coe Estate – Oyster Bay, L.I.
(a.k.a. *Planting Fields Arboretum*)**

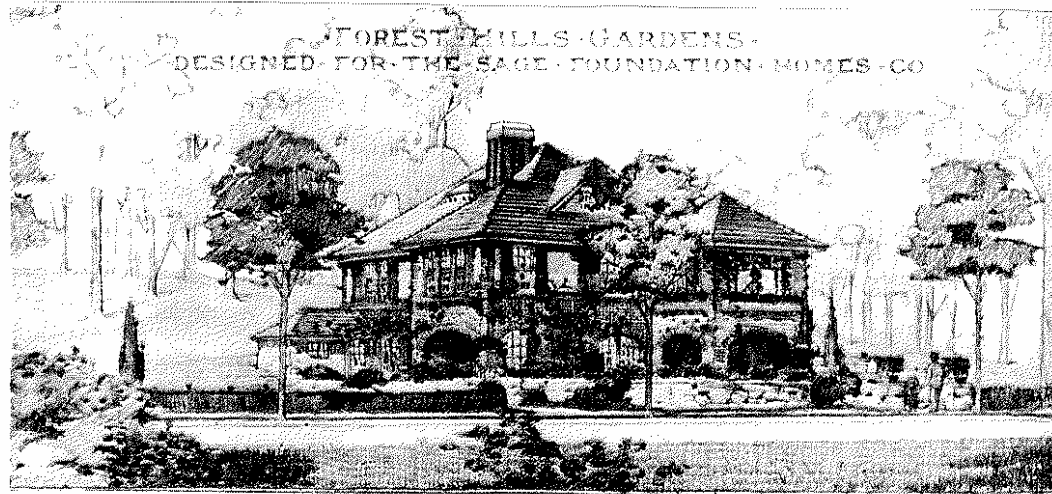
“...in as much as our work is primarily an educational one, I think it would be a very bad example to set to the public...something distinctly reasonable and straightforward, relying upon the detail treatment and architectural effects for the variety and picturesqueness which we want to give to the development...a slightly less, but still distinctly practical and reasonable layout of the next zone adjoining in which I take it the ‘civic center’ or ‘mall’ so called would lie, and a frankly curvilinear treatment in the remoter section where we are placing detached houses only and where such treatment would be largely suggested by the present irregular topography...perfectly possible...such features as you find in some of the foreign model towns, in the shape of circles, terraces and groups of houses in the absolutely informal section devoted to detached houses only...be able to produce very different effects from what would ordinarily be expected and ordinarily result from such a general layout in this country today”

Grosvenor Atterbury, 1909

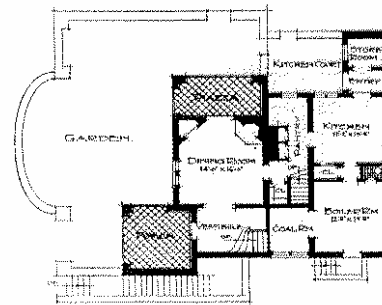
RE: response to Olmsted concerning his ideas for a “free-flow” street plan. Both Ivy Leaguers and of the same class and professional dispositions, Atterbury was the more mature of the two and kept Olmsted on a short leash albeit in a subtle way.



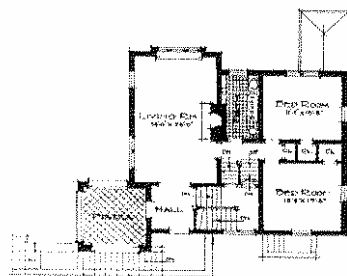
Typical detached house – Upper Gardens (Zone 3)



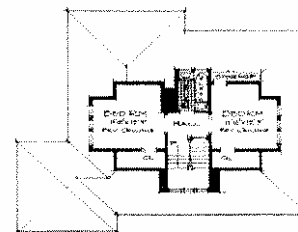
- DETACHED SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE - 1-F-31 -
- 7 ROOMS AND 2 BATHS -



- FIRST FLOOR PLAN -



- SECOND FLOOR PLAN -

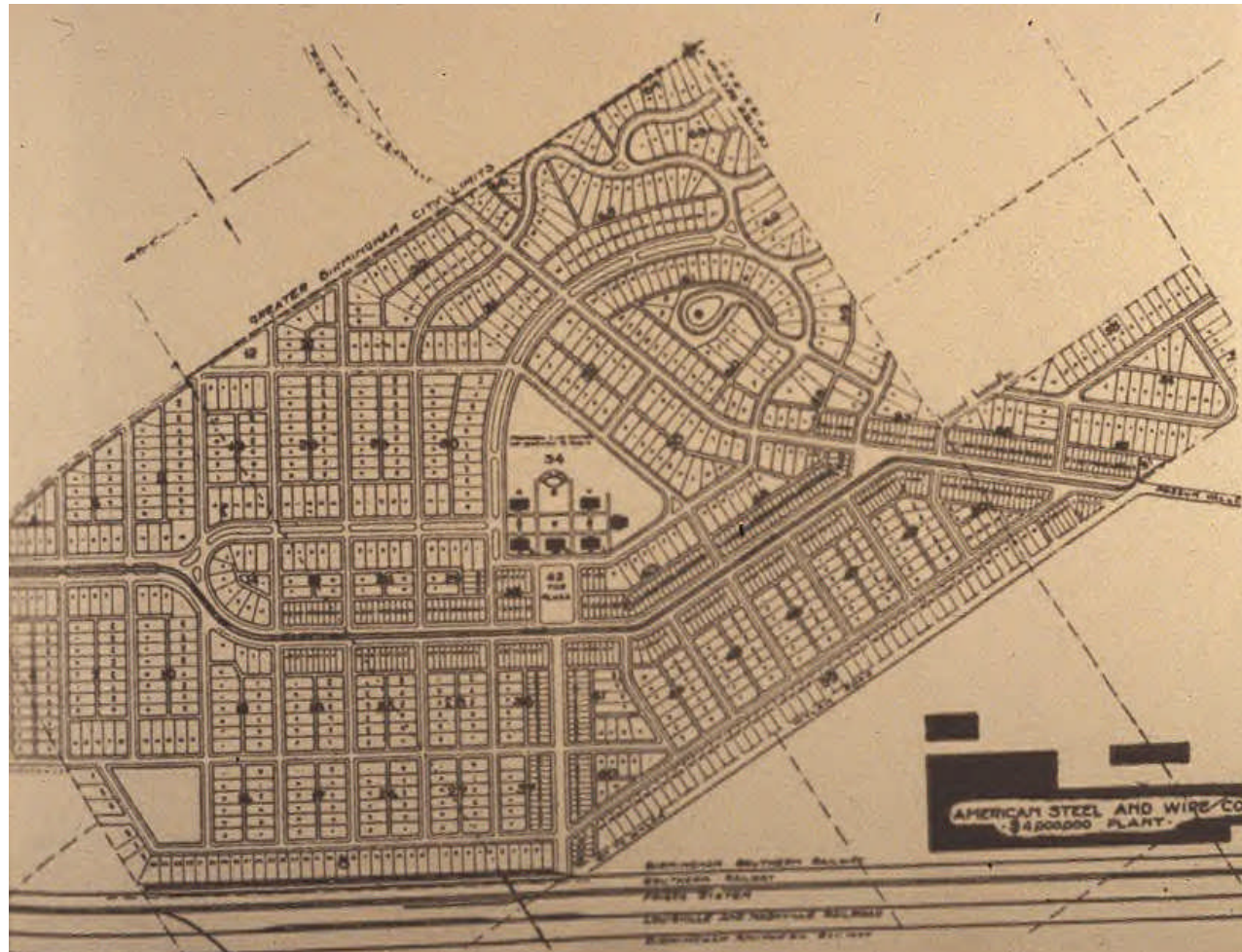


- THIRD FLOOR PLAN -

“It is unfortunate that the somewhat misleading word ‘model’ must be applied to such an eminently practical scheme as this development of the Russell Sage Foundation for the reason that there is a kind of subtle odium which attaches to ‘mode’ things of almost any kind, even when they are neither charitable nor philanthropic...a slightly sanctimonious atmosphere that is debilitating rather than stimulate of success”

Grosvenor Atterbury, 1910

RE: use of the term “model town” in association with FHG. Akin to “company town”, it had negative implications (i.e. Pullman, Ill.) as paternalistic and stifling.

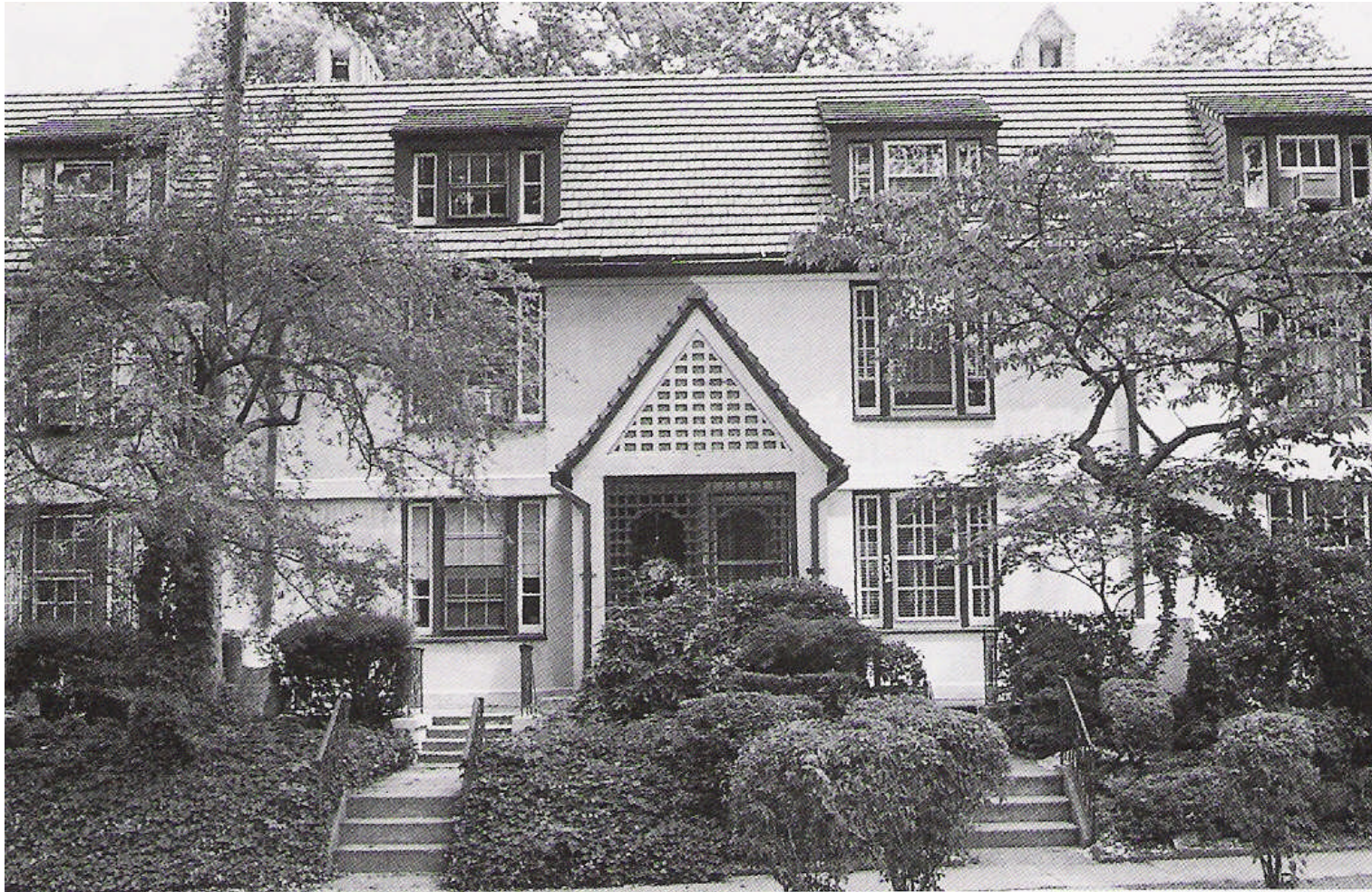


Fairfield, Alabama (1910)
A “Model Town” for the *American Steel & Wire Co.*

“Buildings of tasteful design constructed of brick, cement or other permanent material, even those of somewhat greater initial cost...lesser repair bills than the repulsive, cheaply built structures which are too often the type of New York’s outlying districts”

Robert de Forest, 1909

RE: modern construction techniques to be used at FHG as applied to aesthetically appealing “old world” designs. Besides the innovative use of pre-cast concrete panels at FHG, Atterbury invented *Nailcrete* - a type of concrete which could be nailed into directly. He recognized and revealed the ability of concrete to be molded, colored and textured for aesthetic appeal. He used crushed roof tiles, bright pebbles and bits of quartz and mica to add color and sparkle to the concrete.



Pre-cast concrete grillage at gable end entry – Park End Place

“...demands that the buildings now being erected shall be of such character that they will continue to be appropriate when, as so inevitably and so quickly happens in the vicinity of large American cities, the land shall have become too valuable...valuable buildings being torn down merely because it pays better to throw away the cost which they represent than to sacrifice the greater earning power of the land which they occupy”

Grosvenor Atterbury, 1911

RE: excerpt from his essay: *The Architectural Work*, in an illustrated booklet entitled: *Forest Hills Gardens: The Suburban Land Development of the Russell Sage Foundation*

“...features which make little show above ground but are fundamental to the permanence of a healthy and attractive residence district...in order to set a standard and control more surely the architectural character of the future town”

Sage Foundation Homes Company, 1911

RE: their committing of half their principal for the project: \$1.25 million, to land improvements and the construction of the first ten building groups prior to offering lots for sale. Atterbury would design all of these buildings to “set an example” for future lot owners to follow.

Group One. Station Square, including the railroad station and a group of buildings adjoining containing shops, offices, a restaurant and accommodations for some three hundred or four hundred people, consisting mainly of small non-housekeeping apartments for men and women, in connection with which there is provided a squash court as well as a certain number of small studios.

Group Two. A block of small single-family houses, with thirteen feet frontage, two or three stories in height, containing four rooms and bath.

Group Three. A block of single-family houses of seventeen feet frontage, two stories in height with attic, seven to nine rooms and bath.

Group Four. A block of ten single-family houses, with seventeen feet frontage, two stories in height and containing five rooms and bath.

Group Five. A block of single-family houses with twenty feet frontage, two stories and attic in height and containing six to eight rooms and bath.

Group Six. Three blocks of single-family houses, with twenty feet frontage, two stories in height with attic and containing eight to ten rooms and two baths.

Group Seven. Three blocks of single-family houses with twenty-six feet frontage, three stories in height, containing ten to twelve rooms and baths and toilets.

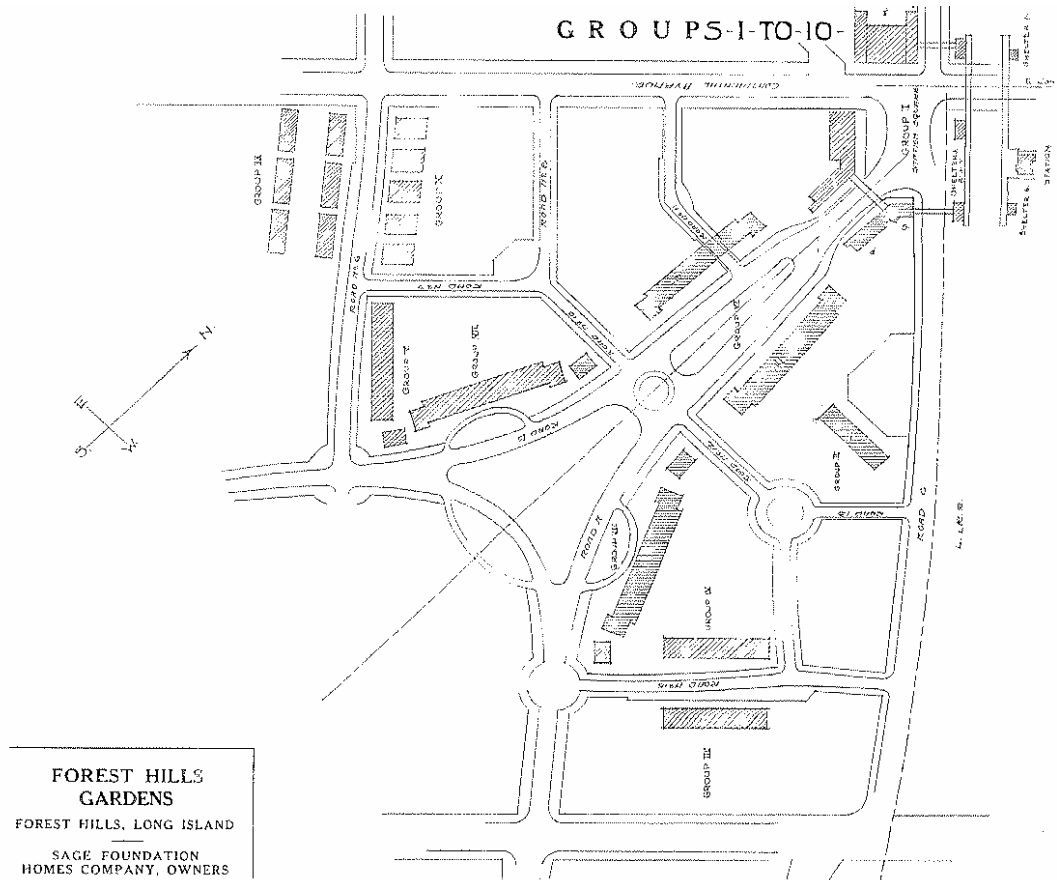
Group Eight. A block of workshops and flats, twenty feet frontage, two and three stories in height, the former containing workshops or stores with three rooms and bath above, the latter workshops and stores on street level and six rooms and bath in upper stories.

Group Nine. A row of semi-detached two-family houses on shallow lots of fifty feet frontage, containing two stories, each unit consisting of six rooms and bath all on one floor.

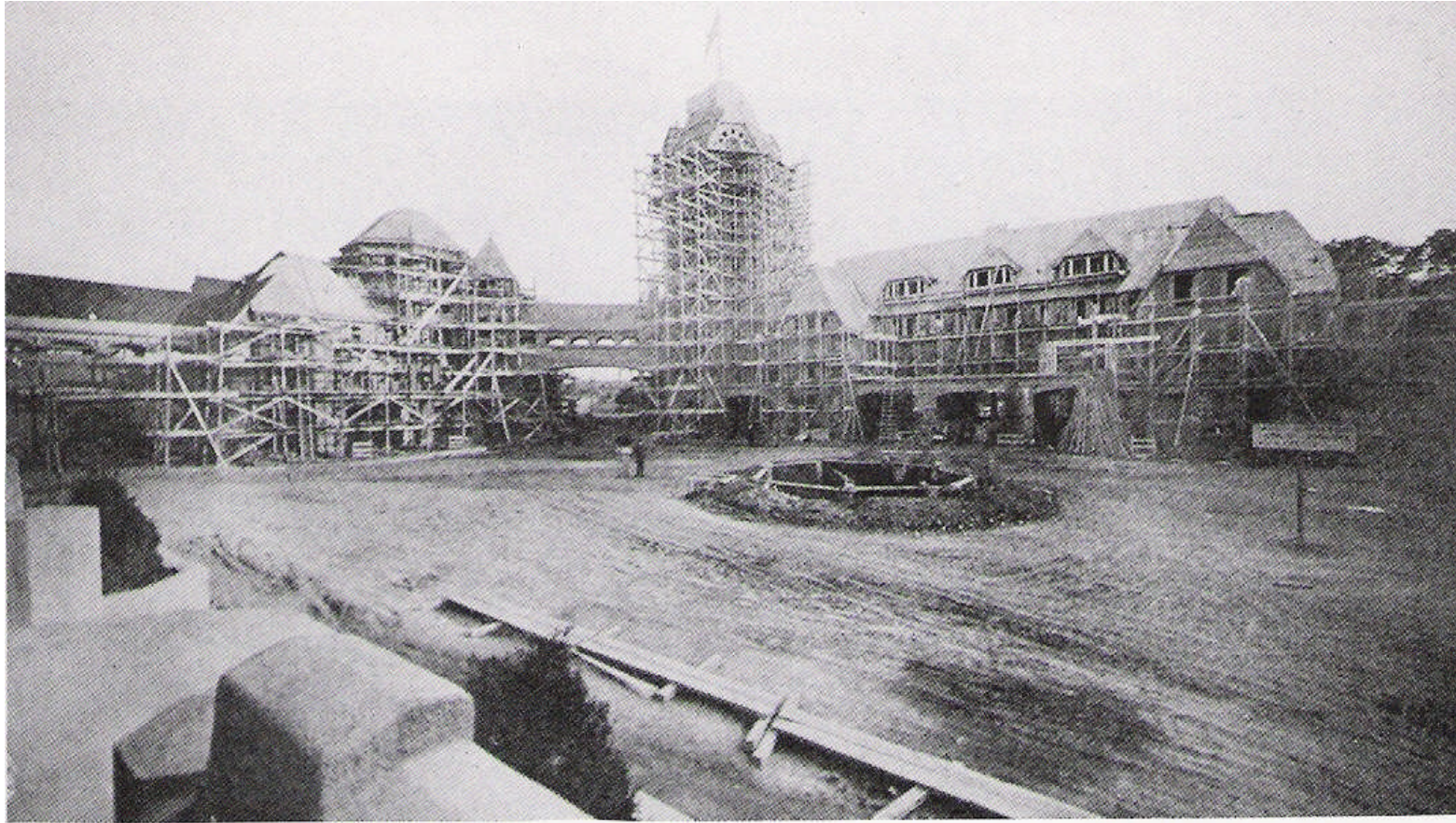
Group Ten. A row of semi-detached two-family houses on lots of twenty-seven feet frontage, two stories in height, each unit containing five or six rooms and bath all on one floor.

“While a very large part of the land area to be developed will undoubtedly be sold without improvements, the Homes Company, in order to set a standard and control more surely the architectural character of the future town, has planned to erect and hold, certainly for a time, a large number of dwellings. To this end, designs have been prepared for an initial operation contemplating different groups of buildings involving an expenditure in land improvement and building construction of a million and a quarter dollars. The majority of the buildings to be erected in this first operation, which will largely be confined to the more expensive and central property, are in the form of contiguous houses; the detached and semi-detached types of dwellings of various grades and sizes being necessarily possible only on less central and lower priced portions of the property...”

Grosvenor Atterbury, 1911



Groups 1 to 10



Group I – Station Square (under construction) ca. 1911



STATION AT FOREST HILLS GARDENS

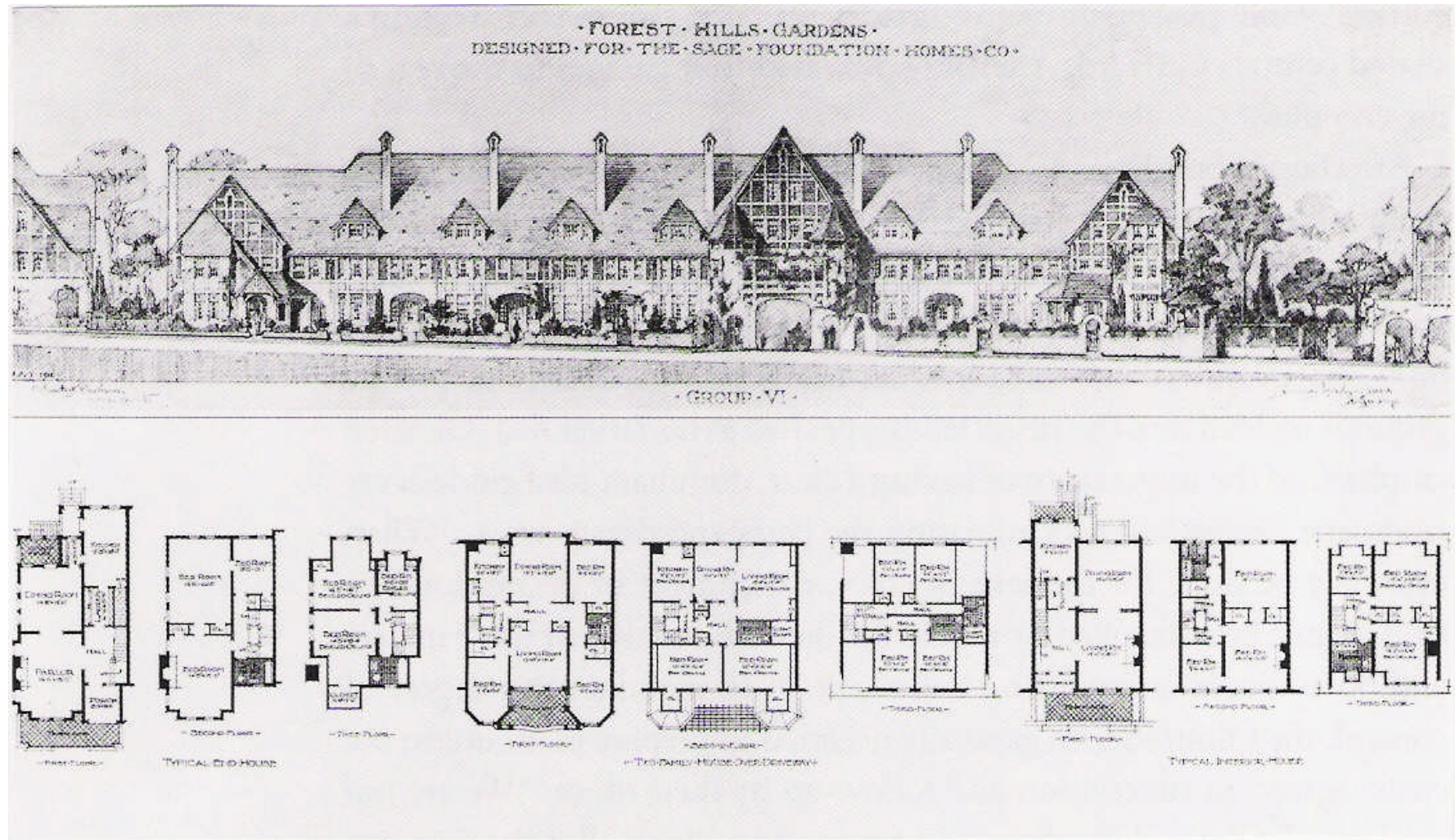
The station is constructed of brick and concrete with tile roof and cost \$50,000, of which the Railroad paid \$10,000, the Development Companies paying the balance. Forest Hills Inn, opposite the station, is of similar construction, and cost three quarters of a million.





“The visitor is deeply impressed with the thoroughness with which things are done here”

RE: visitors comment upon visiting FHG during the first phase of construction



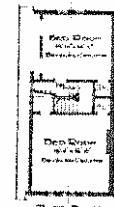
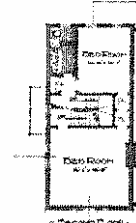
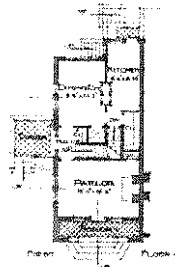
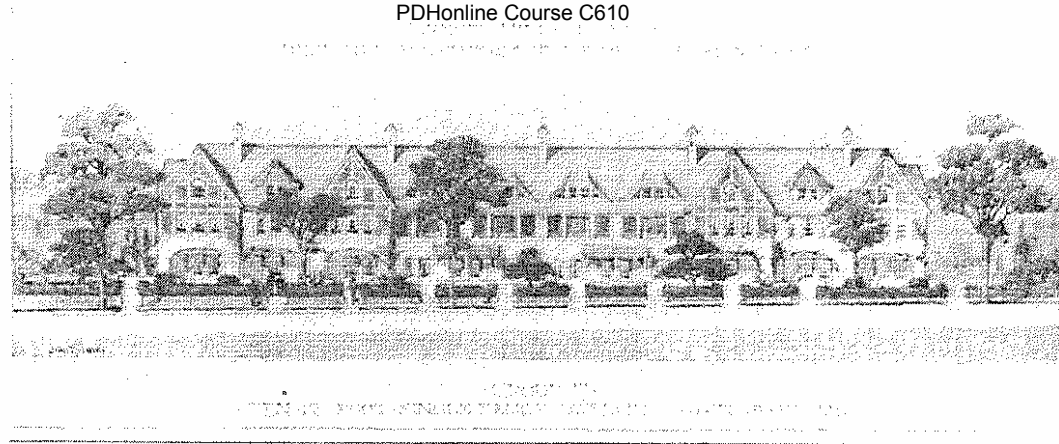
Terrace Houses Plans & Elevation



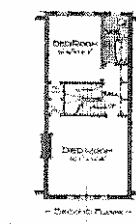
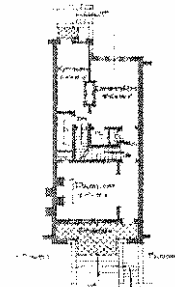


Archway Place – Greenway Terrace

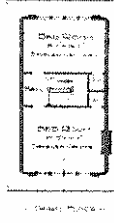
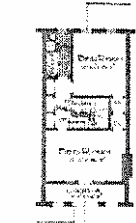
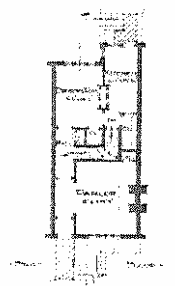




- TYPICAL END HOUSES -



- TYPICAL INTERIOR HOUSES -



- TYPICAL INTERIOR HOUSES -



Front



Rear

Terrace Houses

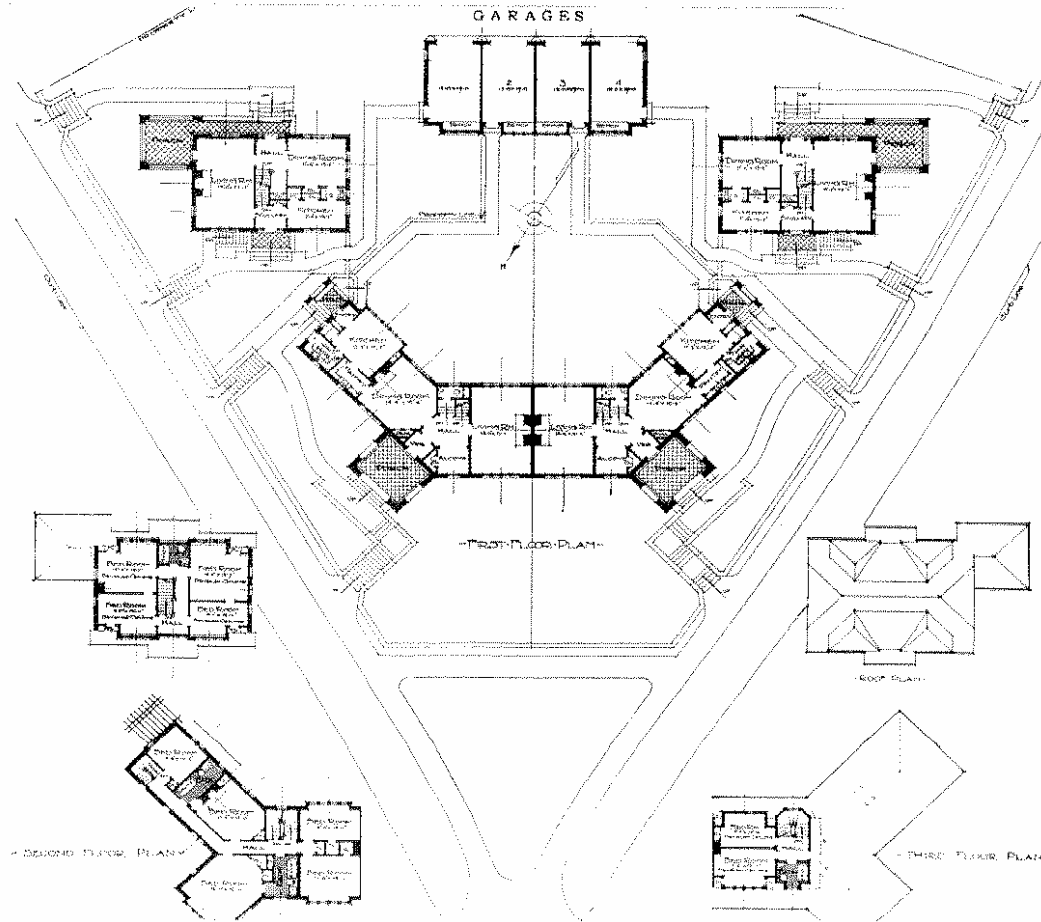
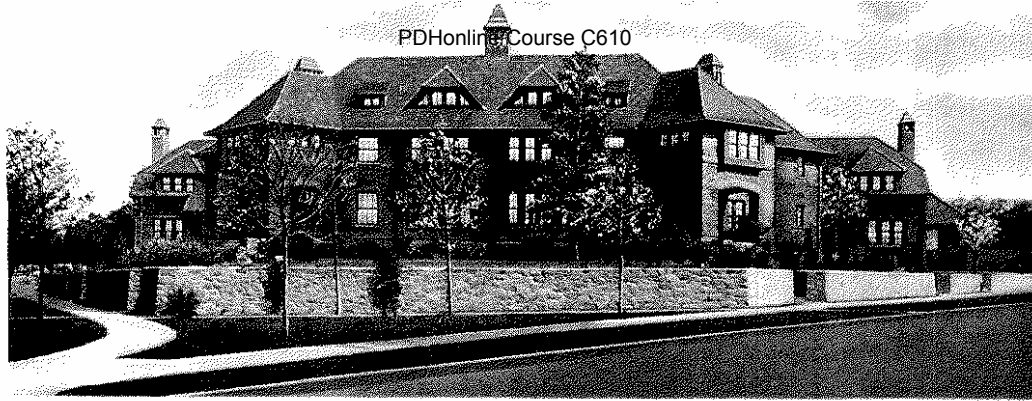








Slocum Crescent



Intersection of Markwood Road (left) & Greenway North (right)



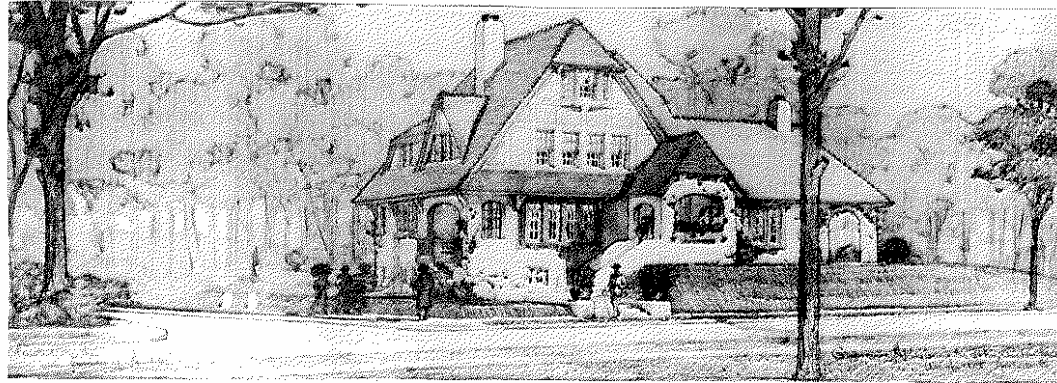




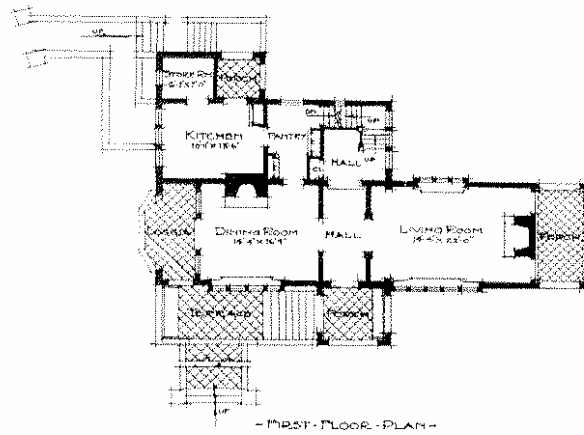
View looking up (east) Greenway North ca. 1920

“The different types of buildings included in these groups cover as wide a range as is permitted by the economic conditions, which necessarily determine also their distribution and location on the property. Adjoining the railroad station and forming the Station Square are three and four story buildings containing stores, offices and restaurants, and in the upper stories small non-housekeeping apartments for both men and women. From this center out toward Forest Park, which bounds the property on the southeast, the houses are planned to correspond to the varying values of the lots, as determined by their size, location and prospect, the larger single-family dwellings containing ten or twelve rooms, the smaller four or five. While they will vary greatly in size, arrangement, cost and architectural treatment, an attempt will be made to make them alike in their domestic and livable character. From an architectural point of view, our greatest opportunity will lie in that great harmony of design which is possible only where the entire scheme of development is laid out and executed under a system of cooperation by the various experts engaged in it.”

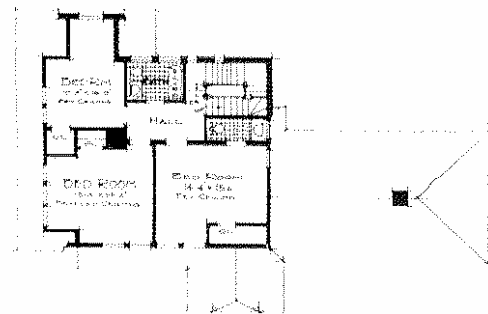
Grosvenor Atterbury, 1911



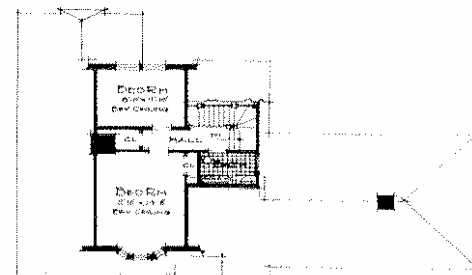
- DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE - 1-F-52 -
8-ROOMS-2-BATHS -
AND-LAUNDRY -



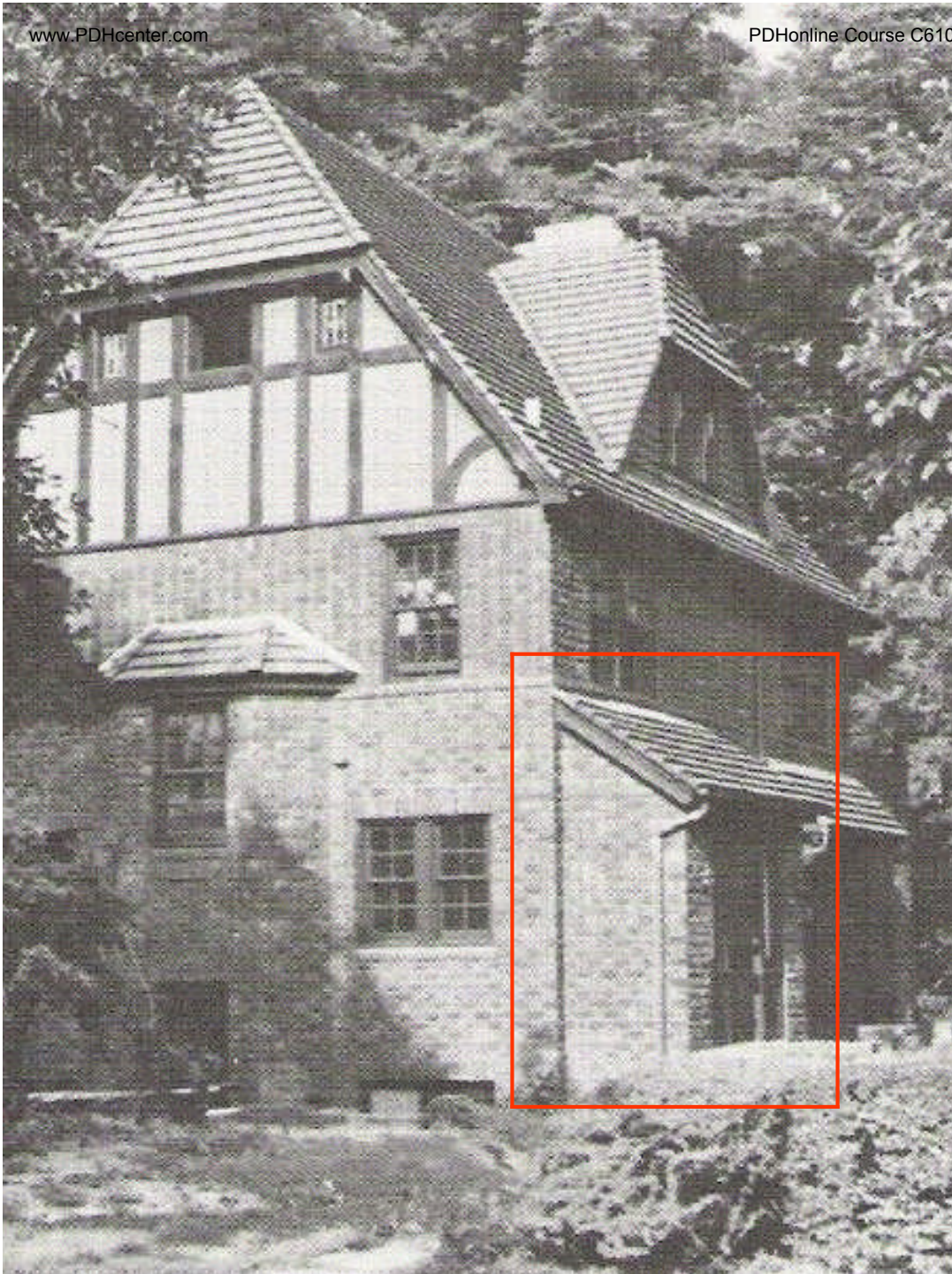
- FIRST-FLOOR - PLAN -



- SECOND-FLOOR - PLAN -



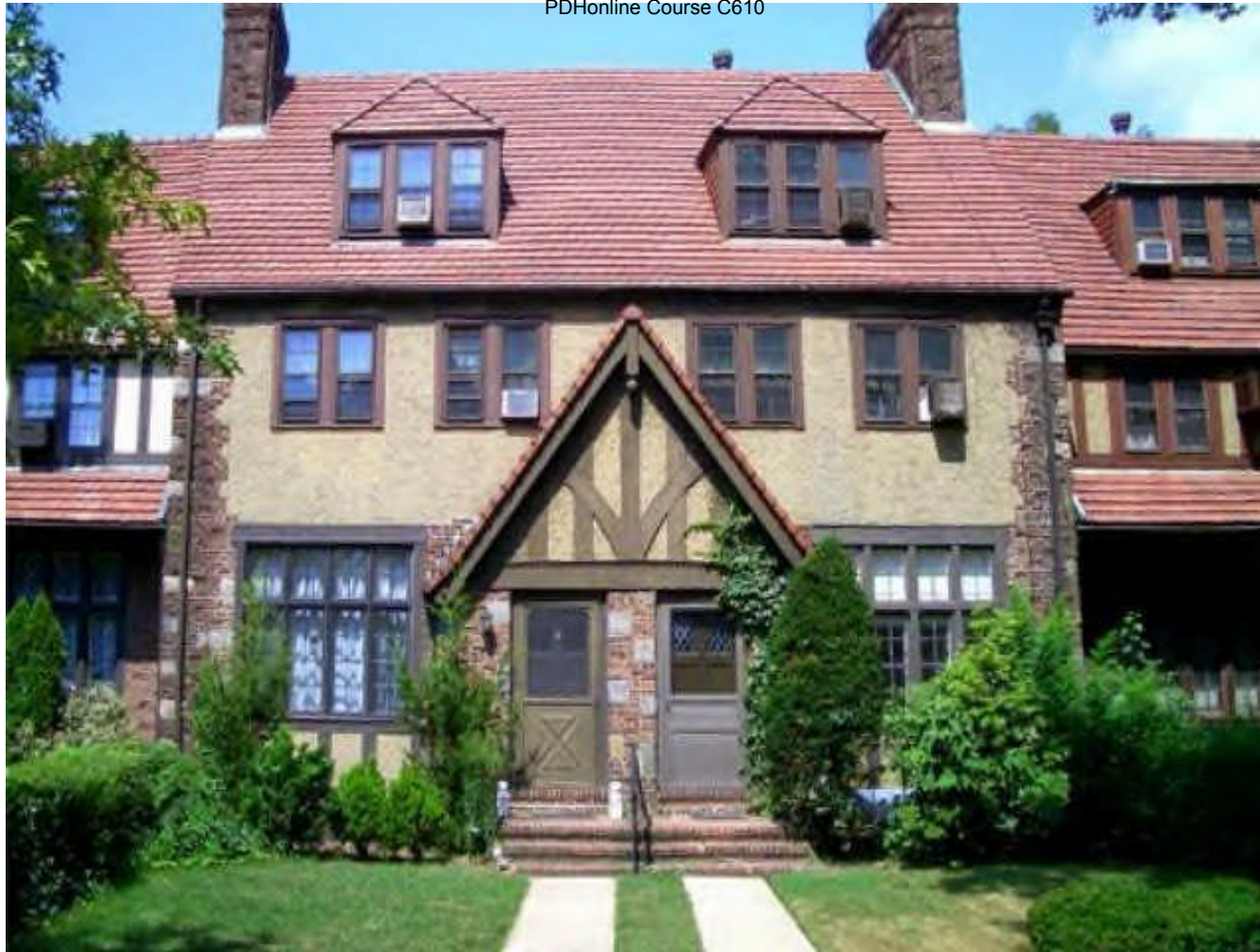
- THIRD-FLOOR - PLAN -



A common feature of many houses in FHG is a side, rather than a front entry as is the case for this house on Puritan Avenue



Another common grouping of houses is known as a “Bracket” such as these houses on Greenway North. It typically includes two or four semi-attached houses at center with two detached houses flanking on both sides with a common drive behind.



Very often, what looks like one large house is, in reality, two or more. These two attached houses project forward with “wings” of two (semi-attached/attached) houses flanking on both sides – like a gold coast estate. A common driveway behind serves all six houses. Except for a front yard, there is no other property.

***“A harmony only conceivable where there is a
fundamental architectural principle”***

Edward Hale Brush, *The Craftsman*

RE: Grosvenor Atterbury’s success at FHG



Grosvenor Atterbury
1867-1954

Part 7

A Few Simple Precautions

“Any other things necessary or desirable to keep the property neat and in good order”

RE: maintenance fund first instituted by the SFHC and maintained in perpetuity by the FHG Corp.

“A very firm and just yet flexible control over the land it sells by means of restrictions in the deed...judiciously framed and discreetly enforced, a very effective control is possible without creating any difficulty in making sales, indeed with a decided increase in selling price to non-speculative investors...marketing policies must control design and construction”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: Olmsted saw deed restrictions as a viable and practical way of maintaining a community’s integrity over the long haul. His hometown of Brookline, Mass. was one of the first communities in the U.S. to institute deed restrictions. As the model for deed restrictions at FHG, Olmsted saw those established by his client Edward Bouton (at Roland Park), as most appropriate. Some of these restrictions, both written and unwritten, would cast a giant shadow over FHG in the years to come.

Reasonable Restrictions

“A pseudo-Swiss chalet/bungalow on one side of you, while a retired barkeep on the other side puts up a Swedish-Renaissance cottage with a Greco-Roman pergola and a catch-as-catch-can roof”

RE: excerpt from: *Why We Have Chosen Forest Hills Gardens For Our Home* (1915). Most residents went heartily along with what they termed: “reasonable restrictions” as being necessary and in tune with the nature of the community.



Tudor rules in FHG

“Satisfactory neighbors, congenial friends with mutual tastes...the company’s restrictions have given us a community of delightful homes and neighbors”

RE: excerpt from: *Why We Have Chosen FHG For Our Home* (1915). Then and now, FHG is a place for conformity; it is not a place where rugged individualists would be very comfortable. This is perhaps one of the reasons why Garden Cities never really caught on in America: they are contrary to the individualistic nature of many Americans.

***“Assuming the possibility of creating a model town,
where can you find the citizens with which to
people it?”***

Grosvenor Atterbury

THE GARY LAND COMPANY

Organized as a subsidiary company of the United States Steel Corporation to assist in the building up of a model city of homes for the employees of the Indiana Steel Company and the other manufacturing industries of the Calumet District.

Offers for sale **FIRST SUBDIVISION OF THE TOWN OF GARY** in the

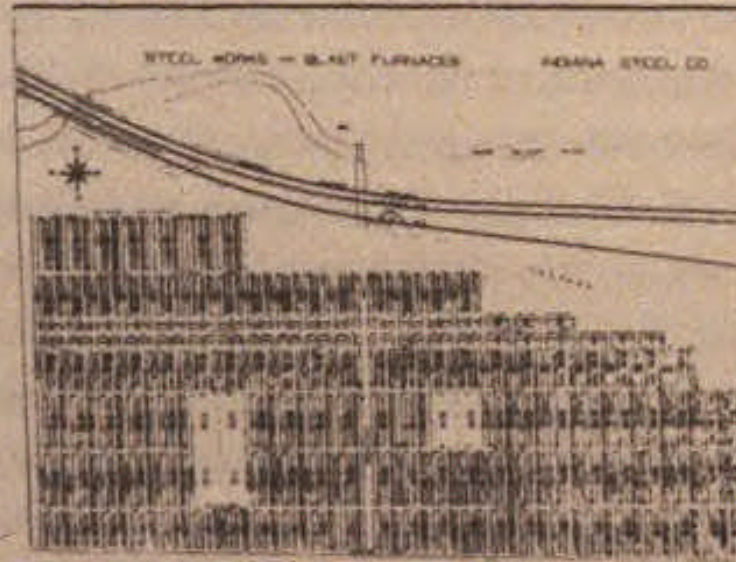
business and residence lots as low as possible consistent with the cost of land and improvements and with no desire of making a profit. The First Subdivision lies entirely North of the Wabash Railroad.

This Company will pave all the streets in the First Subdivision, has constructed sidewalks on Broadway and is building sidewalks on Fifth Avenue. The price of the lots include these improvements in the First Subdivision only.

The Company has now under construction: **A MODERN SEWERAGE SYSTEM, A MODERN WATER WORKS, A MODERN GAS PLANT, A MODERN ELECTRIC LIGHTING SYSTEM.** Every lot in the First Subdivision will be accessible to all these public utilities *this year.*

Nothing under the pavements in the streets. A pavement once down stays down until worn out. No tearing up of the streets. All sewers, gas and water mains in the alleys.

Every lot in this Subdivision accessible to an alley. All alleys in residence district twenty feet wide. Alleys back of Broadway and Fifth Avenue thirty feet wide.



PLAT OF LOTS TOWN OF GARY.

Come to Gary

Become a factor in the building of this model city. Own your own home in Gary. The First Subdivision will have a handsome, modern school building completed this year.

Church Organizations

realize at once that Gary is to start as a substantial community. Several denominations are now arranging for the purchase of lots. Their first undertakings will be with a view of serving a substantial community. They will erect nothing of a temporary nature.

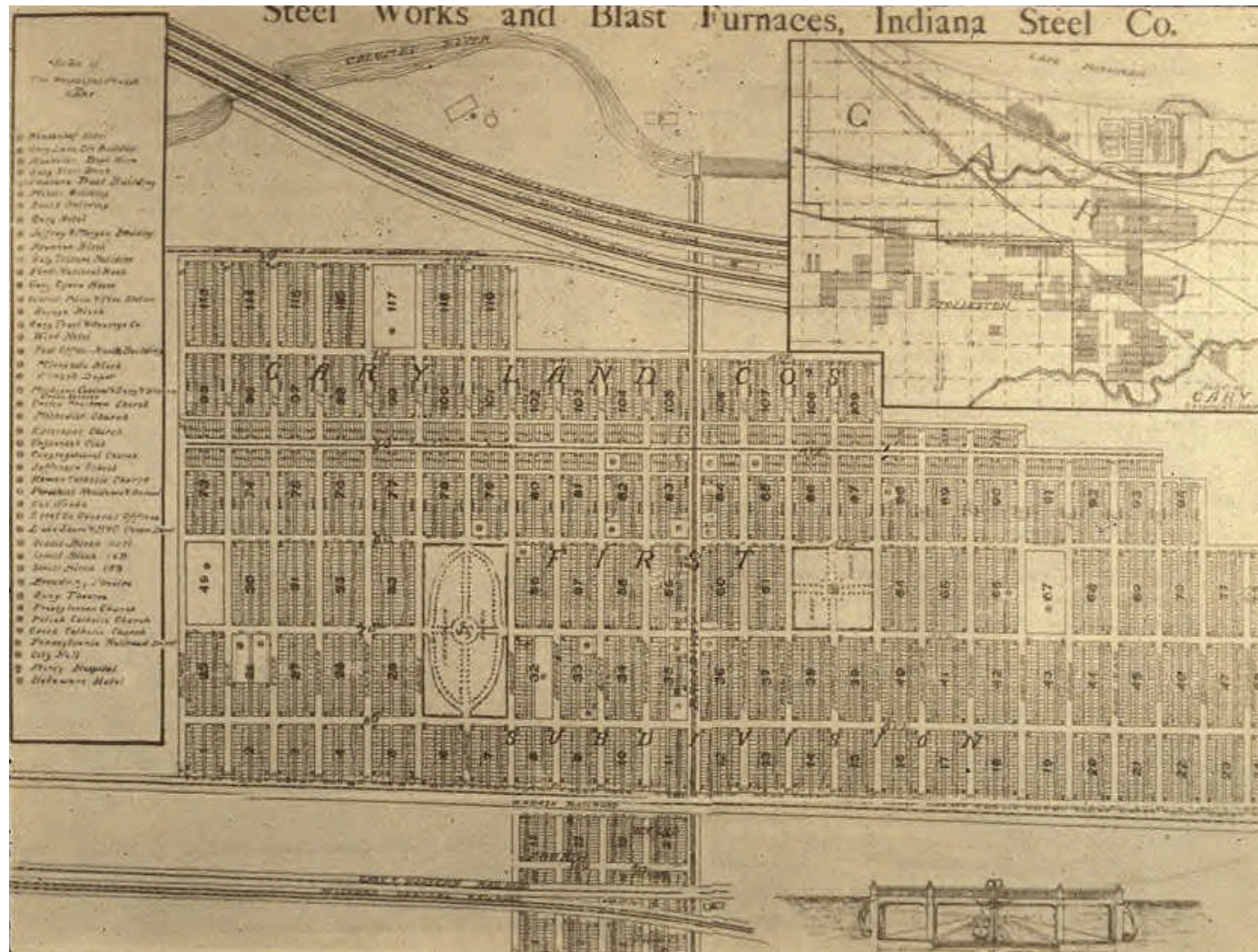
Come to Gary. If you are an investor, think. If you require more, write for our Map and Price List.

OFFICE: POST OFFICE BUILDING, NORTH BROADWAY
THE GARY LAND COMPANY

Model Cities Need Model Men...*In Gary, Indiana for example, the workmen who live in the model houses have been using their bathtubs for coal bins*

Pueblo, Colorado *Chieftain*, November 1910

RE: many failures of paternalistic company towns such as Pullman, Illinois and U.S. Steel's Gary, Indiana (1907)



**Plan of Gary, Indiana
1907**

The Class of Tenants Desired

“The high standard demanded for the character of the purchaser at Forest Hills Gardens...congenial neighbors and varied opportunities for social interaction...that the homes of today will be protected and in time become more attractive and more valuable”

RE: SFHC promotion

The Dean of American Real Estate Developers

“...his exceptional integrity, gifted with artistic judgment, vision, respect for demonstrated competence and a strong interest in the well being of his fellow man...good taste and intelligent unremitting perseverance...one of the most satisfactory clients we ever had, with an exceptional appreciation of good work along all lines and a good judgment of artistic as well as business methods”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: excerpt from a correspondence with Robert de Forest recommending Edward Bouton be hired as General Manager at FHG based on his own experience with him at Roland Park

Gentlemen's Agreement

“...whether the community is to be Jewish or Gentile. It cannot be both and be satisfactory...without prejudice either against or in favor of Jews. On the question of the sale of property at Forest Hills Gardens to Hebrews, no discrimination whatever against or in favor of any race or religion, except as far as may of necessity be involved in considerations vitally affecting the success of the development, the value of the experiment and the interests of the greater number of persons likely to reside there...validity of the experiment, necessary that the methods adopted in the sale of the property shall be sanctioned by the business experience of other land companies...under normal and usual conditions, such as would enable ready comparison to be made with similar developments...however regrettable, the Hebrew and the Gentile do not come together in a natural way as social friends and neighbors”

Edward Bouton, FHG General Manager – 1911

RE: excerpts from a letter to Robert de Forest concerning the restricting of sales at FHG to Gentiles only

Racial and religious restrictions at FHG were never formally put down in writing, but it became well known from the outset that FHG was a “restricted” community – no Jews were allowed, even the most assimilated of American Jews. Blacks were tolerated only as live-in domestic servants. As well, all prospective residents were subject to an “investigation”. Today, FHG - and the borough of Queens, is one of the most ethnically diverse place on earth. In fact, many U.N. diplomats reside in FHG. To maintain ownership of the streets and common property by law, once a year (usually in early July) the streets of FHG are closed off to all but residents and deliveries. Residents and their guests can park on the streets provided the proper decal or visitor’s pass is displayed in their vehicle. All others determined to be in violation of the parking restrictions are “booted” with a substantial fee to have the boot removed.



Parking regulations on FHG's private streets are strictly enforced

Part 8

Community Spirit

“Here, community benefit is placed before anything else...The practical application of the principle of collective planning make the ‘Gardens’ truly unique among American towns”

Mary Eastwood Knevels

RE: as a critic, she was familiar with town planning developments in both Europe and America



“To interpret the community and to create an atmosphere of neighborly feeling”

John Demarest, FHG General Manager

RE: purpose upon founding in 1915 of *The Forest Hills Gardens Bulletin*

“Other communities grow in haphazard fashion. It is our pride that our town has had, from the beginning, a cohesion, an element of unity which like our ruddy roofs ties us together in growth and amity.”

RE: excerpt from the first issue of: *The Forest Hills Gardens Bulletin* (1915)

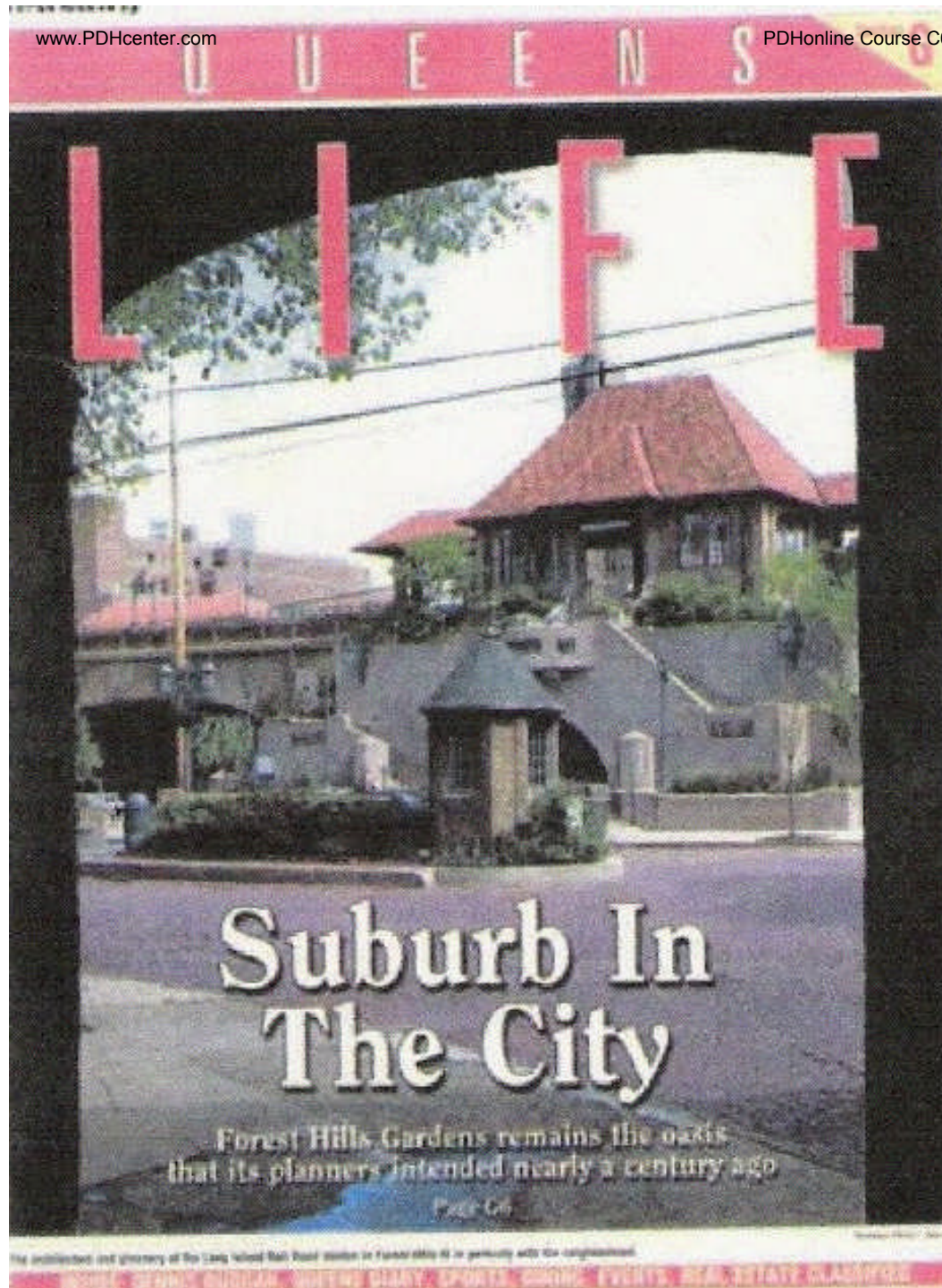
In a Charming Way

“The planting and continuous succession of flowers are a constant delight. You have succeeded in bringing nature and art into harmony in a charming way.”

John Glenn, Executive Director of the RSF & FHG resident – 1913

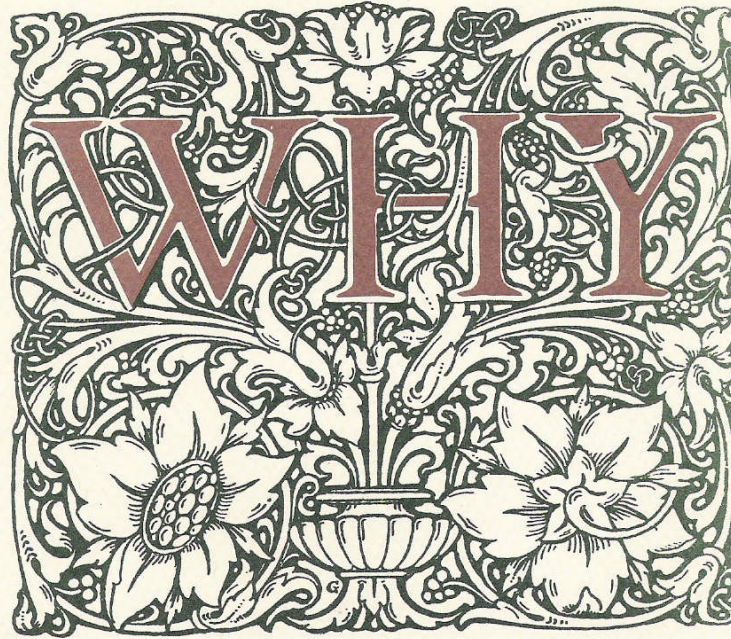
RE: excerpt from a correspondence with Olmsted praising his achievements at FHG

Suburb in the City

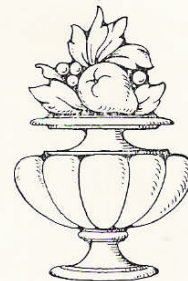


Every now and then, one of the local newspapers runs a story about the “Suburb in the City” – Forest Hills Gardens. It is a common site to see tourists taking photographs in Station Square and adjoining Greenway Terrace. For many, it is a surprise to find such an “idyllic” community in the heart of Queens. In recent years, many people from Manhattan and elsewhere have moved into FHG valuing its eclectic mix of city and suburban life. Because of its physical beauty, conveniences, good schools, easy access to arterial highways and mass transit, it is considered to be one of the most desirable places to live in NYC. Prices for homes and apts. reflect this desirability.

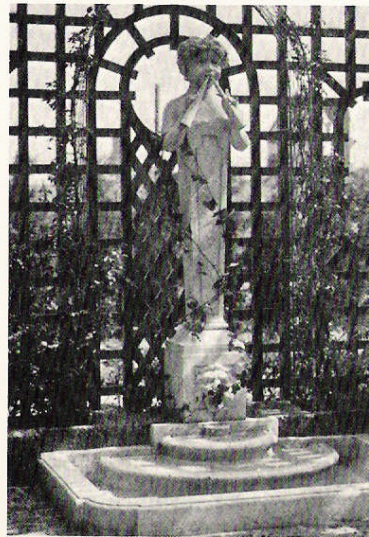
Why?



THIS Booklet, the *spontaneous expression* by the villagers of their local satisfaction, has been arranged by FREDERIC W. GOUDY at the suggestion and with the co-operation of WILL PHILLIP HOOPER. Decorations and types designed by MR. GOUDY and set by BERTHA M. GOUDY at the VILLAGE PRESS, Forest Hills Gardens, New York, in April, 1915.



WHY
WE HAVE CHOSEN
FOREST HILLS
GARDENS
FOR OUR HOME



FOREST HILLS GARDENS · N · Y ·
MCM · XV

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION



THE outer suburbs of any city where lately quiet farms existed, too often consist of files of hard-featured houses multiplied in formal rows. That great cities should produce offshoots and new centers of population is an indication of national well-being, but cannot worthy instead of unworthy houses be built, and so disposed that trees and woodland places remain; houses to be designed and grouped in proper relation to one another, so that each should form part of a well-considered and harmonious scheme?

The pages following are intended to answer a question frequently asked of the residents of Forest Hills Gardens, and to answer incidentally the question in the preceding paragraph.

A Village of Rare Charm

B E C A U S E

We sought a home far from the noise of the city, but close to its advantages; and found it in Forest Hills, where the united efforts of the town—the planner, the architect and the landscape gardner have created a village of rare charm.

ANNA C. PRICE

Realizing that New York City was not an ideal place in which to bring up children and casting about for a suburb within reasonable distance of the Metropolis, Forest Hills Gardens was suggested as having many advantageous features. A residence of nearly three years has more than confirmed the favorable impression gained by first inspection.

C. C. CLOSE

I thought I was happy, flopping around in one New York apartment after another, until I came out to Forest Hills—and then I began to feel sorry for myself. When I went back to New York that night a large, well developed idea had its arms around my neck. A week later I came back, and now we have a dumb waiter and two speaking tubes—and coming out of an evening I begin to thrill before the guard gets the door open.

HOMER CROY

I came to Forest Hills Gardens because I had seen other developments wither and die before they grew to manhood—and I felt sure that the Sage millions would not fail. Therefore, I felt it was a “safe buy.” Because the moment I stepped from the train onto the Station platform and saw the tower, the red roofs, the trees, the vines and the flowers—I knew that it was the place of which I had dreamed. Because I wanted to get out of an apartment and into the open, where my boys could play in safety and where I myself could keep on being a boy; and yet where we could still have the advantage of the city. I’m glad I came.

JOHN H. HAZLETON



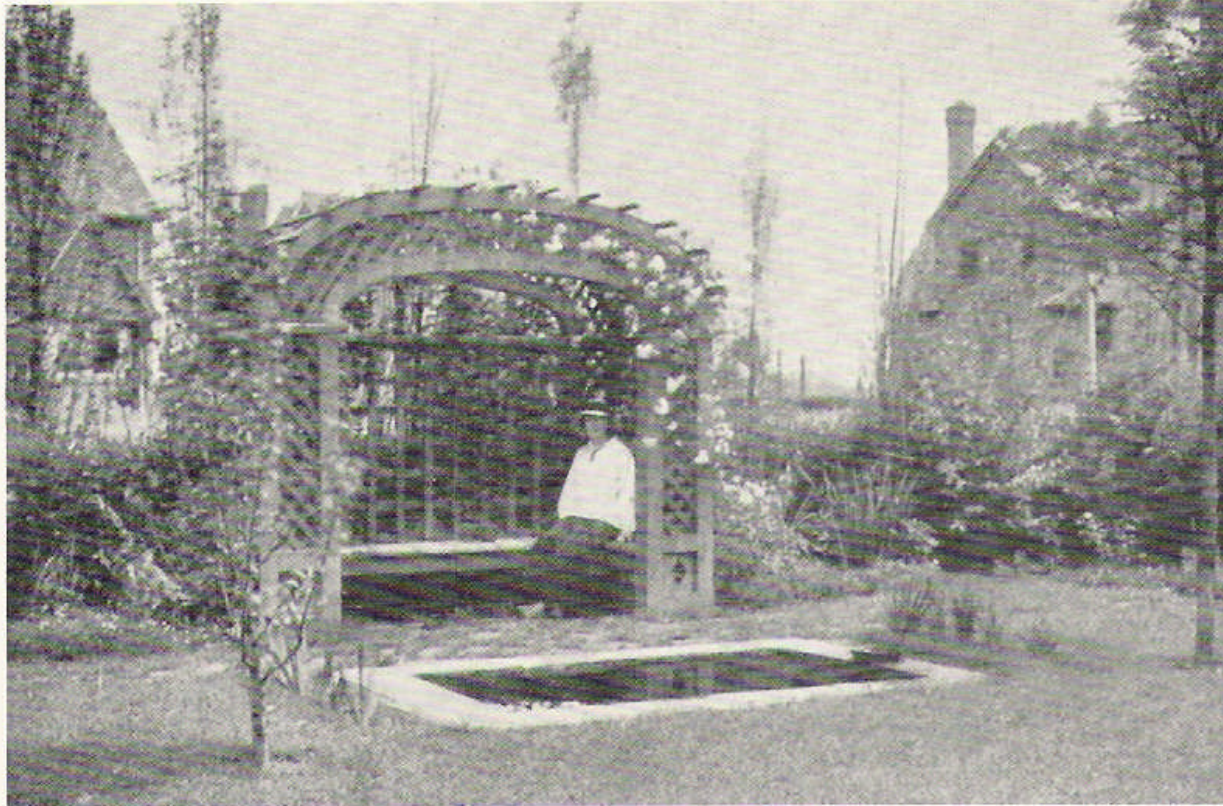
DEEPPENE ROAD. GOUDY AND HULBERT HOUSES

The desire to live on a road with individual characteristics, with wayside greens and flowers, to have unrestricted views of distant country, trees with birds to sing in them, and space for our own flowers and garden, fresh air and a home—Forest Hills Gardens seemed to offer all these. After living here eighteen months we find even more than these—congenial neighbors and friends with mutual tastes.

FREDERIC W. GOUDY

We were looking for an attractive, economical home with some ground around it in a beautiful location convenient to the heart of New York City; and, impossible as it may seem, we found everything, just as we wanted it, in Forest Hills Gardens.

WILLIAM ROSWELL HULBERT



MR. HOOPER'S GARDEN, ON GREENWAY SOUTH

After looking in the vicinity of New York for six years to find a place for a home, after buying lots in two localities, I finally decided that Forest Hills Gardens was my choice, because I liked the place, the people and the prospects. The place—because it's beautiful; the people—because they're interesting; the prospect—because property will increase in value.

WILL PHILLIP HOOPER

WHY I HAVE CHOSEN FOREST HILLS GARDENS FOR MY HOME

I wanted a home where the green earth greeted the eye in the morning; where there were neighbors one could know and likable playmates for my little girl. I wanted it in a community that was somewhat permanent, not fluid, a place where one's attributes could find root in natural social and civic undertakings. I wanted quietness, modest but tasteful surroundings, freedom from the janitor and the elevator, and relief from the subway and the elevated. After the day's work I wanted to hear the voice of the cricket accenting with tranquility the evening's last, slumbrous moments. These things I wanted not farther than a newspaper's ride from Broadway. I have found them all at Forest Hills Gardens.

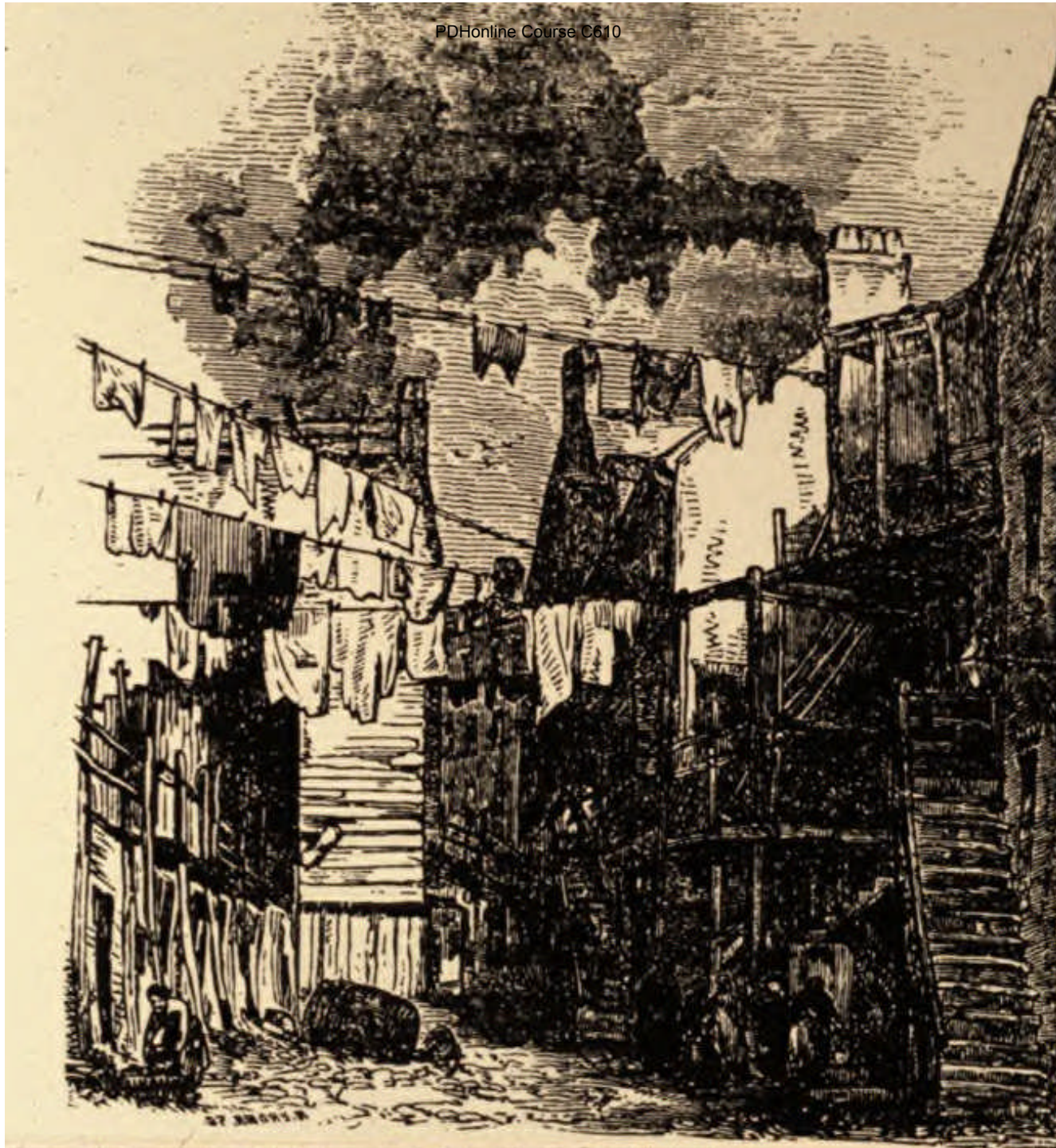
Clarence Arthur Perry

Pioneering Days

“To live in Forest Hills now is to be one of the creators of a town. We are Pilgrim Fathers and Mothers...adventure of colonizing...freed of its ancient hardships”

“I was drawn as a needle to a magnet by the name ‘Sage’; here I knew there would be a square deal...the name Sage seemed to guarantee that promise was equivalent to performance...dealing with a concern as reliable as government”

“Rent paying and living like impersonal sardines stifled us and the clatter of the city wearied us...escape the brick walls and germ laden dust of the city...quietness, freedom from the janitor and relief from subway and elevated”



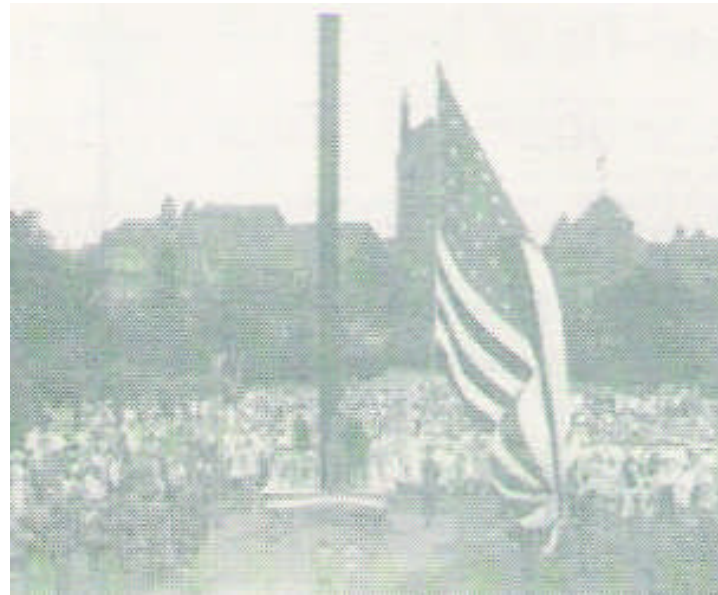
“The advantages of the city and the freedom of the country...proximity to New York and the excellent train service...our children could grow up breathing pure air and play in safety”

There is no single factor that exerts a more powerful influence upon our minds or molds our outlook in life more perceptibly than our surroundings. Our mental attitude is largely a reflection of our environment; if we live amid pleasant and cheerful surroundings our characters become optimistic & self-reliant and we are better equipped to solve the complex problems of our modern existence than those who through circumstance or necessity live in less favorable habitation.

—The COLORIST



Patriotism



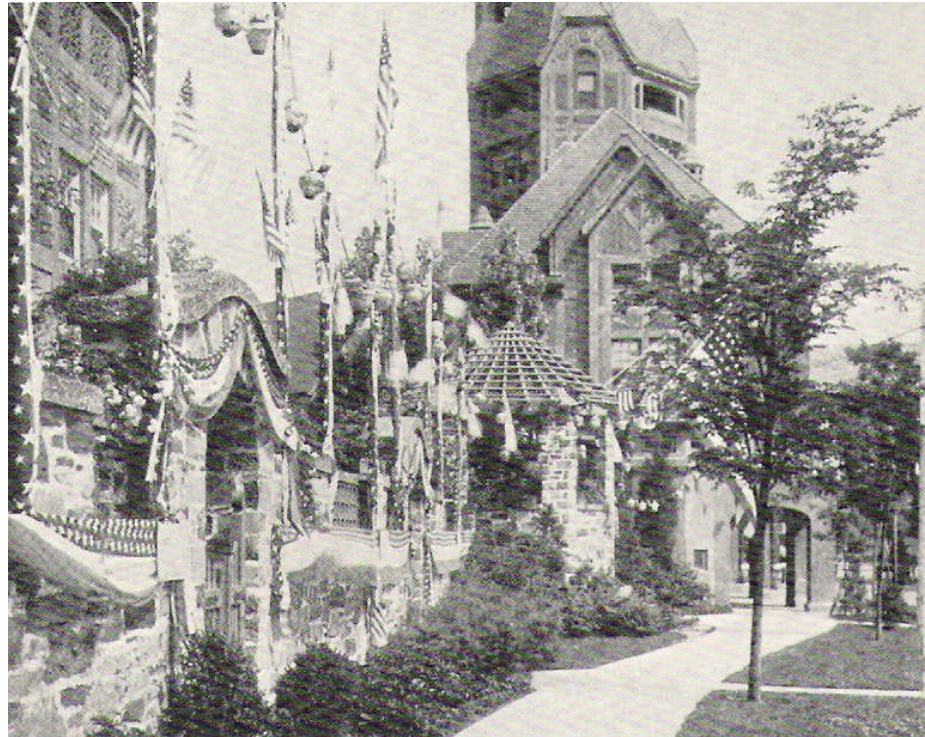
“...that old village spirit which made the strength and ideals of our forefathers. Forest Hills Gardens will help to make the nation great by illustrating the greatness possible to a small village. There is liberty in the curves of our streets and union in our red roofs”

RE: excerpt from the first issue of the *Forest Hills Gardens Bulletin* (1915)

TO THE CITIZENS OF FOREST HILLS GARDENS *Greetings*

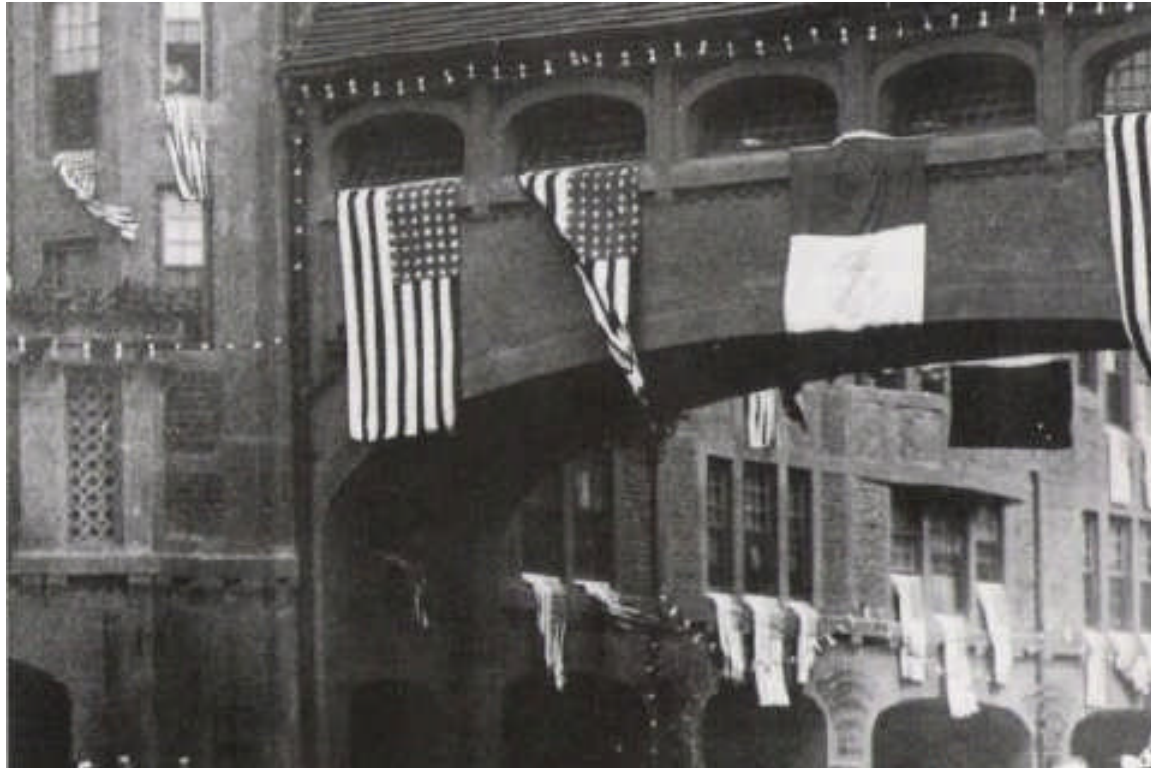


YE people, know that on July 4th, 1915, the whole rights and inviolate liberties of our country have been faithfully preserved for one hundred thirty-nine years; the 4th falling on the Sabbath, it is declared that Monday, July 5th be celebrated with much cheer and orderly merry-making, to wit:
Morning, Baseball, tennis, etc.
Afternoon, Games for children, dedication of fountain in Olivia Park.
Evening, Divers curious entertainments, dancing and sweet music by the 7th Reg. band in the great square by the Station.

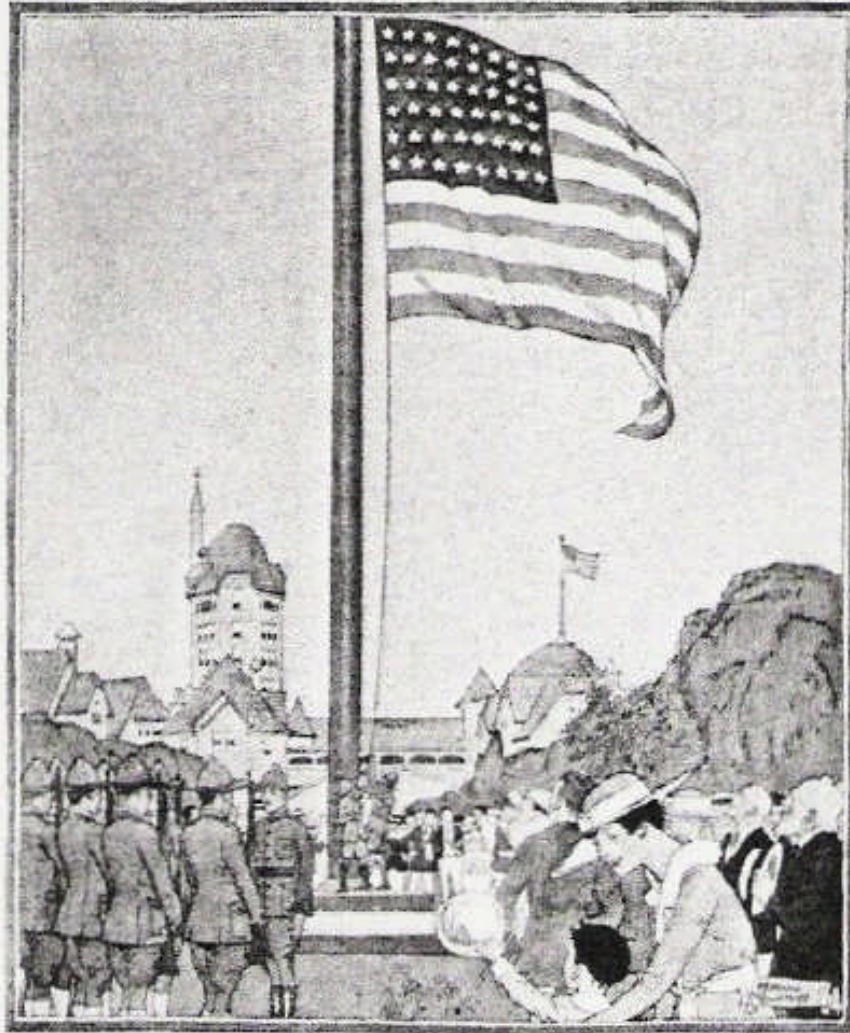


Greenway Terrace on the Fourth of July



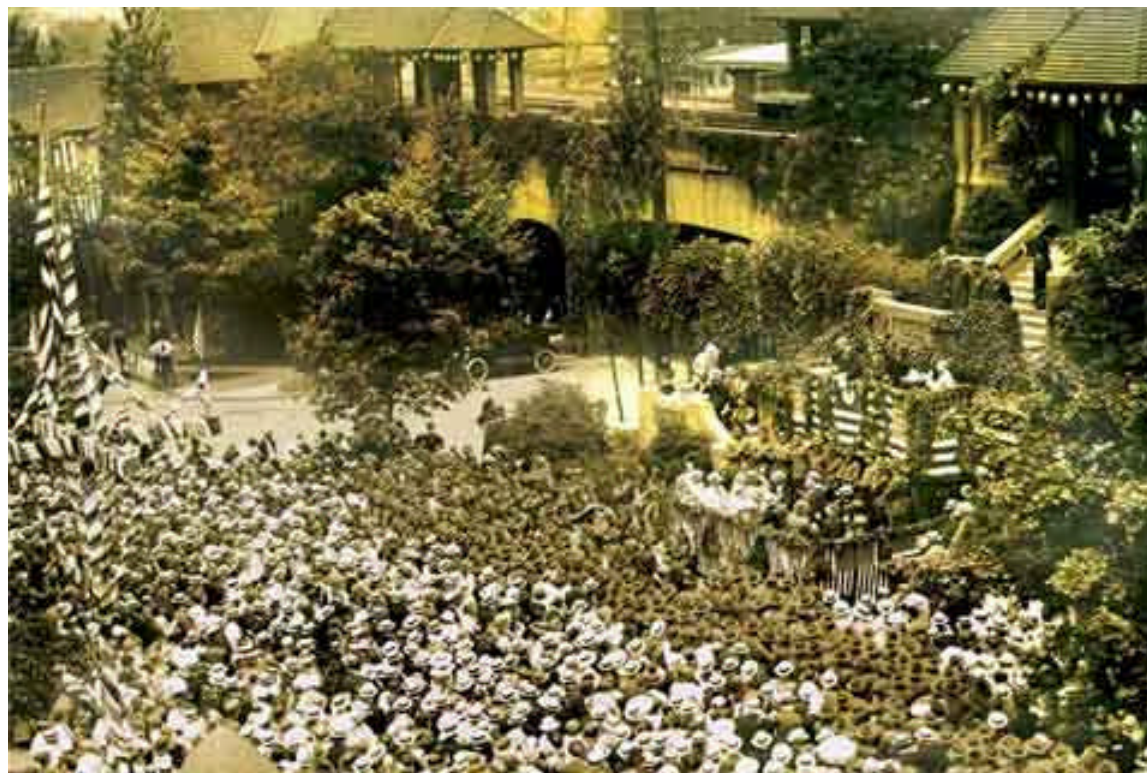


The Great War



FOURTH OF JULY
IN FOREST HILLS GARDENS

Many creative people chose FHG as their home including writers, artists, architects, sculptors, illustrators etc. The poster (left) was created by *Herman Rountree* – a famous artist/illustrator of the day and a FHG resident. In April 1917, the United States entered WWI. War fever was at its height and it served to galvanize the FHG community with a patriotic spirit. For the first July 4th celebration of the war, former President and rough-rider Teddy Roosevelt was asked to make a speech in FHG. TR and his wife had friends in FHG and he accepted the invitation to speak over 500 other offers. That day, he made his famous “100% American” speech from the balcony of the LIRR station to a large crowd gathered in Station Square.



July 4th 1917 in Station Square

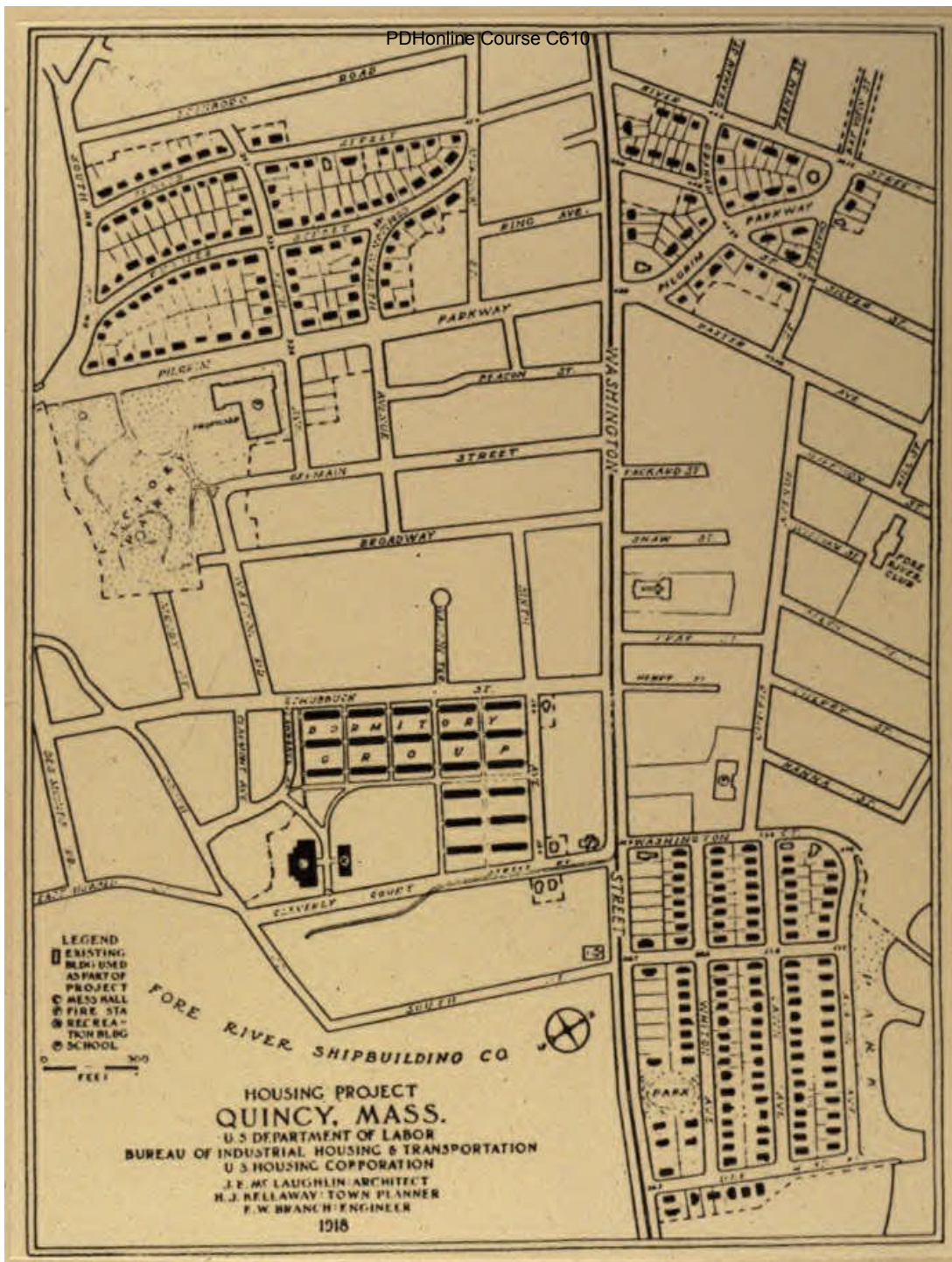


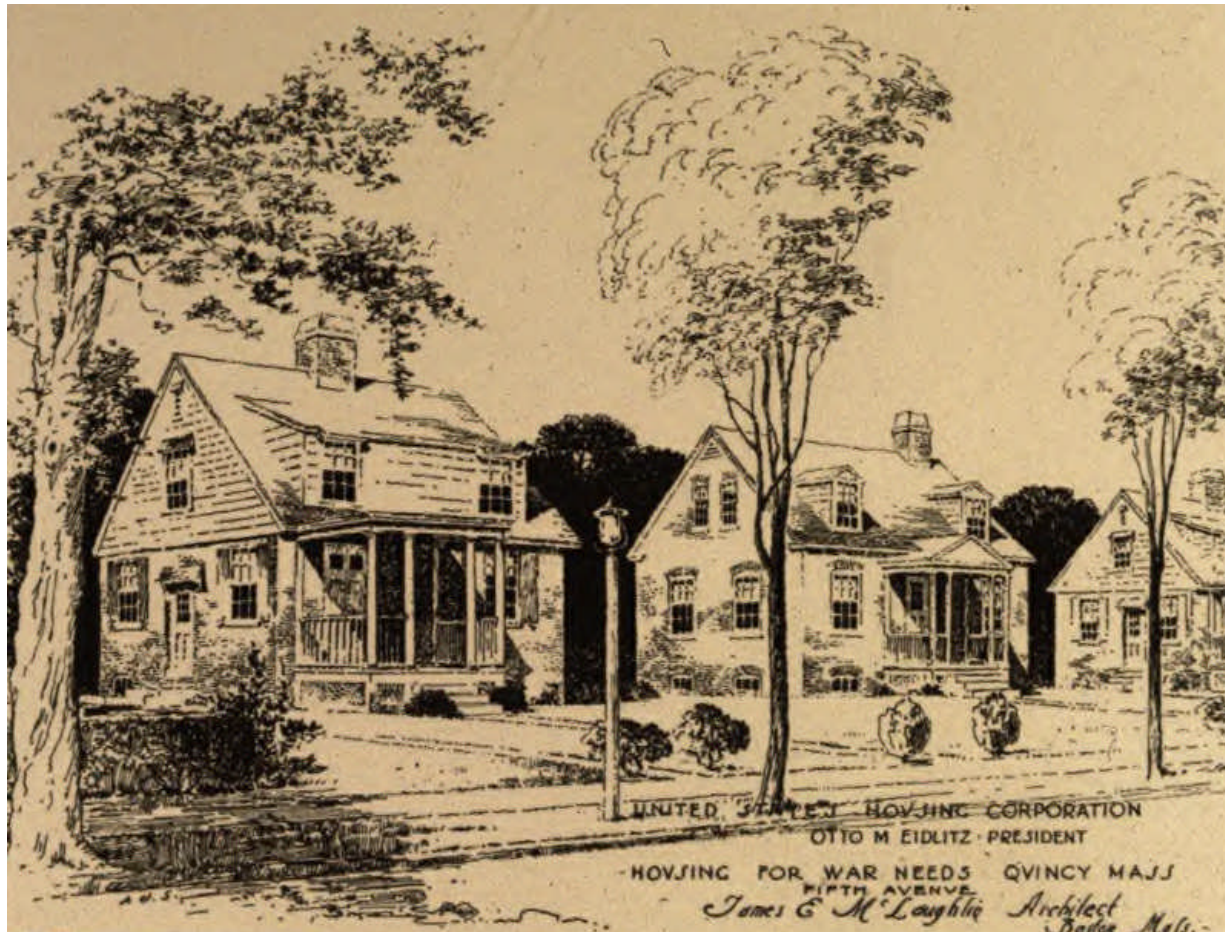
Theodore Roosevelt was a “war hawk” and let his feelings be known to all in his 100% American speech on July 4, 1917 in Station Square. He believed that conscientious objectors should be sent to France to dig trenches under enemy fire and referred to President Wilson as: “A man with the backbone of a chocolate éclair.” He died in 1919 from the lingering effects of malaria (contracted from his service in Cuba during the Spanish-American War) and a broken heart. Quentin; his youngest (and most beloved) son, was killed in a aerial dogfight during the war he was so in favor of. His body was treated with great respect by the Germans and returned for burial at *Sagamore Hill*, his boyhood home.





For the war effort, four million men were drafted into military service. To house this multitude, the federal government would - for the first time, become involved with large scale building projects. A man named *William Starrett* (later given the honorary title “Colonel”) led this effort. He and his brother Paul were principals of the General Contracting firm *Starrett Bros. & Eken*; the most famous contractors of the day and builders of the *Empire State Building* (1931). A generation later, a man named *William Levitt* (of *Levittown* fame) would do what Colonel Starrett did on an even larger scale during WWII.





TO THE RESIDENTS OF FOREST HILLS GARDENS



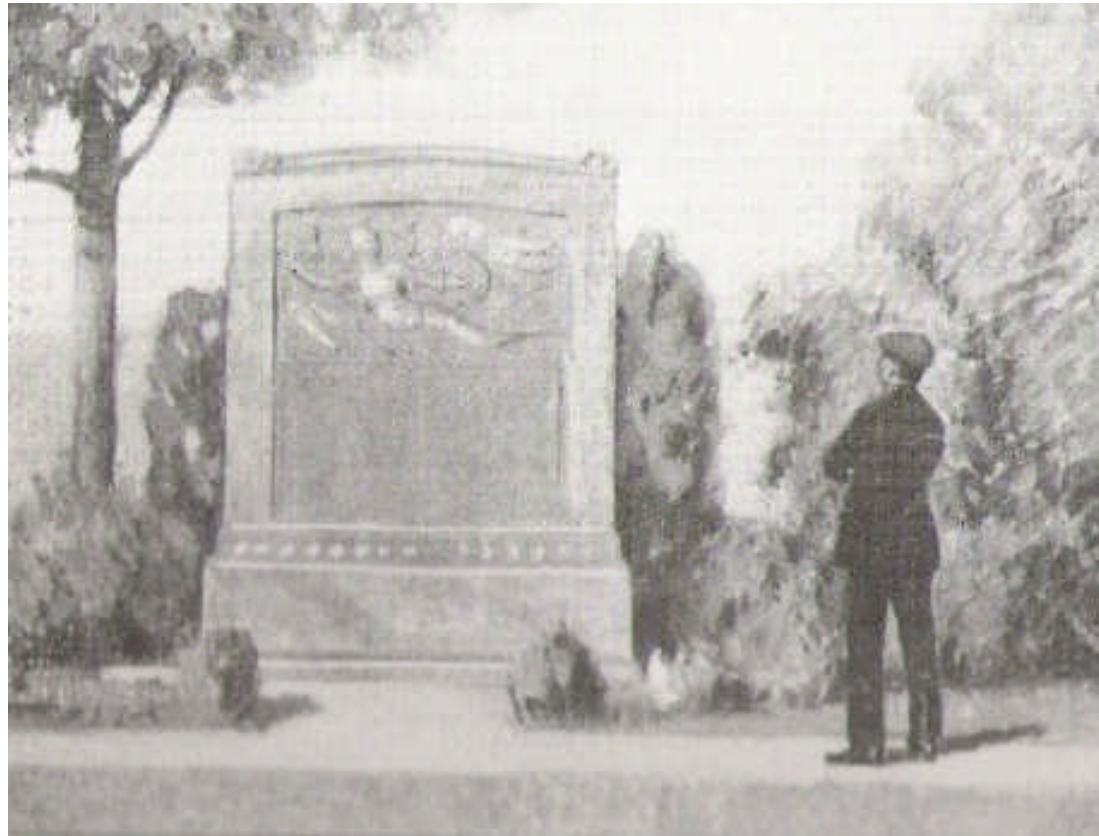
NE hundred forty-four years ago there was founded on these shores a new nation "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." To preserve that liberty we have just waged a war for democracy and human rights, now ended in glorious victory. Let us, therefore, observe Independence Day as in the past with much cheer and orderly merry-making, celebrating the anniversary of the "birth of a new and greater spirit of democracy;" a day that takes on a new significance, standing not only as the foundation-stone of the Republic, but in a larger sense, as a symbol of Liberty throughout the world.

Beginning at nine-thirty in the morning the flag will be raised with appropriate ceremonies. This will be followed by children's games; baseball and an opera in the afternoon; a band concert, community chorus and dancing in the evening.

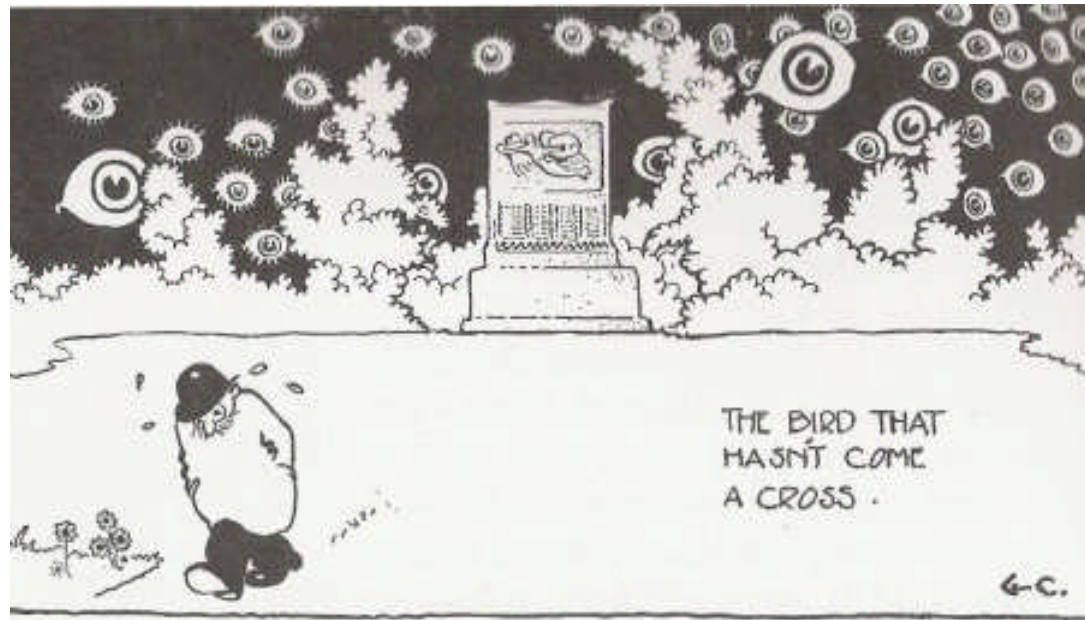
By the Committee

Proclamation of 1920

A Call to Service Overseas



With the war concluded, the patriotic spirit it generated lingered on in FHG. *Adolph Augustus Weinman*, one of the top sculptors in America specializing in bas-relief, proposed a war memorial entitled: *A Call to Service Overseas* – to honor all who served in the armed forces of the United States during the Great War. It would include the names of all who served and a bas relief of “Winged Victory.” Those killed in the war (four) are denoted with a star.



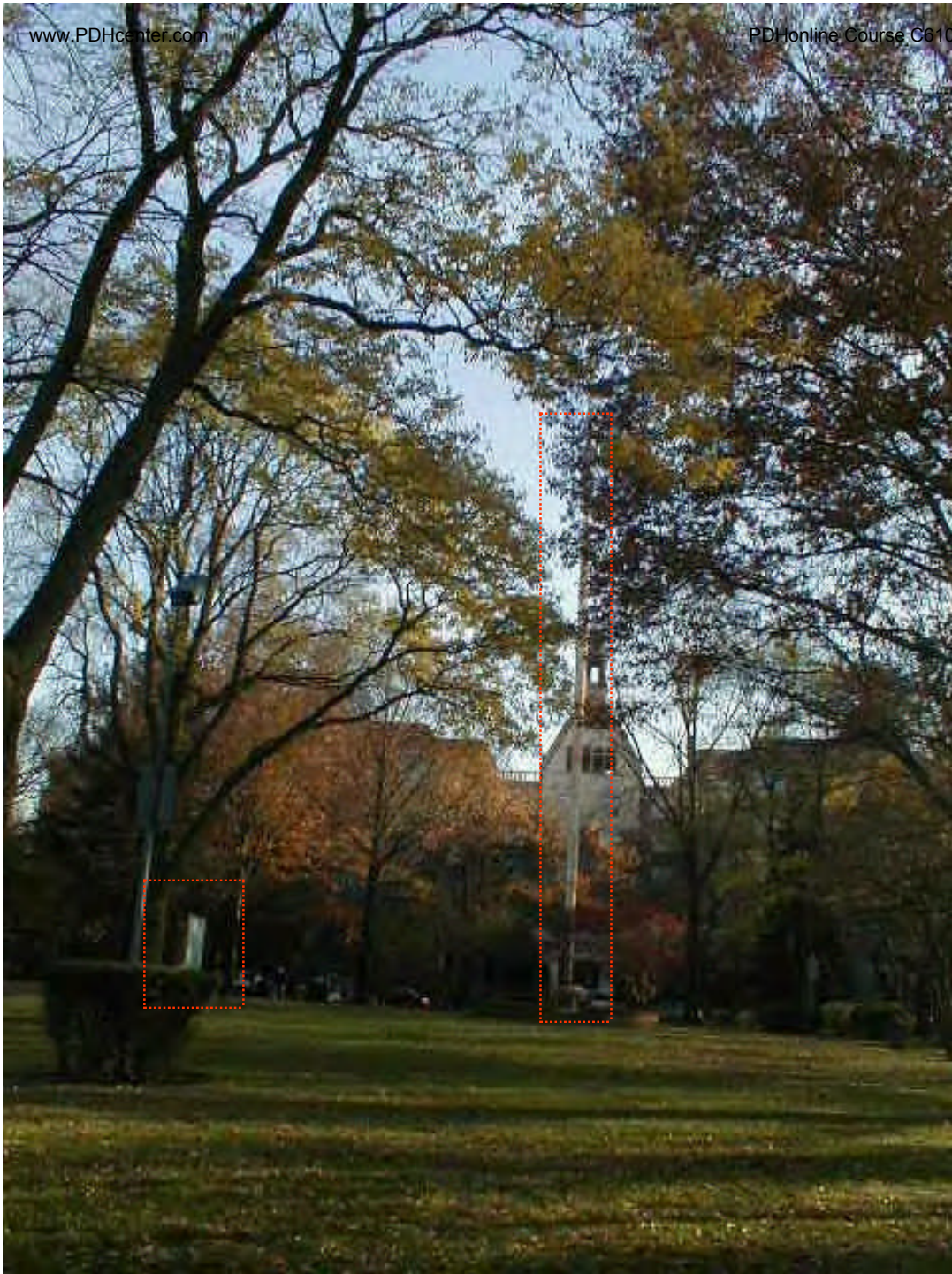
The memorial was estimated to cost \$3,800.00 (A.A. Weinman’s services were provided gratis). However, the committee formed to raise the money had great difficulty in doing so and tried to shame those with “their hands in their pockets” into donating via this cartoon in the FHG Bulletin (Nov. 1919). Ultimately, the memorial would cost \$5,000. Because they had such great difficulty raising the money for the memorial itself, a planned marble bench – for “quiet contemplation,” to be placed just opposite the memorial was never realized.



Great War Memorial Flagpole Green



The memorial was placed in the heart of the community on *Flagpole Green*, near to the flagpole (mast) from the yacht *Columbia* which once stood in Queens Plaza. The largest portion of public space on Greenway Terrace, the green serves as a gathering place for community events such as Children's Day which is held one day each year, usually in June. As a traffic center, Station Square cannot be used for public gatherings as first conceived. As such, Flagpole Green serves this purpose today.



Flagpole Green

**War memorial (lower left), the
flagpole (center) & 150 Greenway
Terrace (behind flagpole)**

I Have Read Your Book and I Have Come to Help



Jacob Riis' book: *How the Other Half Lives*, shocked middle class America in the same way Matthew Brady's photographs of the dead of the battlefield had shocked the public during the Civil War. Progressively minded people like Teddy Roosevelt were deeply affected by it and saw it as a call to action.

BATTLE WITH THE SLUM

Illustrated by scores of original Stereoscopic pictures of New York City life.



Jacob A. Riis

LECTURER

Thematic
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 1905





“He and I looked at life and problems from substantially the same standpoint. Our ideals and principles and purposes, and our beliefs as to the methods necessary to realize them, were alike.”

Theodore Roosevelt

RE: his lifelong friend and Richmond Hill Resident Jacob Riis



Theodore Roosevelt

“To promote and sustain in Forest Hills Gardens in all suitable ways the living and aesthetic conditions for which the Gardens was founded”

RE: establishment in December 1922 of the *Gardens Corp.* (later FHG Corp.) and assumption of ownership on January 1, 1923 of all streets, sewers, common lands and responsibility for administering the maintenance fund and oversight of all new construction



Markwood Road and Greenway North. Note the sign indicating “Private Streets.”

“As there are fewer and fewer bare spaces and more and more houses, we lose the appearance of the country, and it will be necessary to make an effort to keep the village atmosphere...We must cherish everything that keeps our community life distinctive from the big city”

Gardens Corporation

RE: assumption of ownership/responsibility for FHG from the Sage Foundation Homes Company beginning in 1923

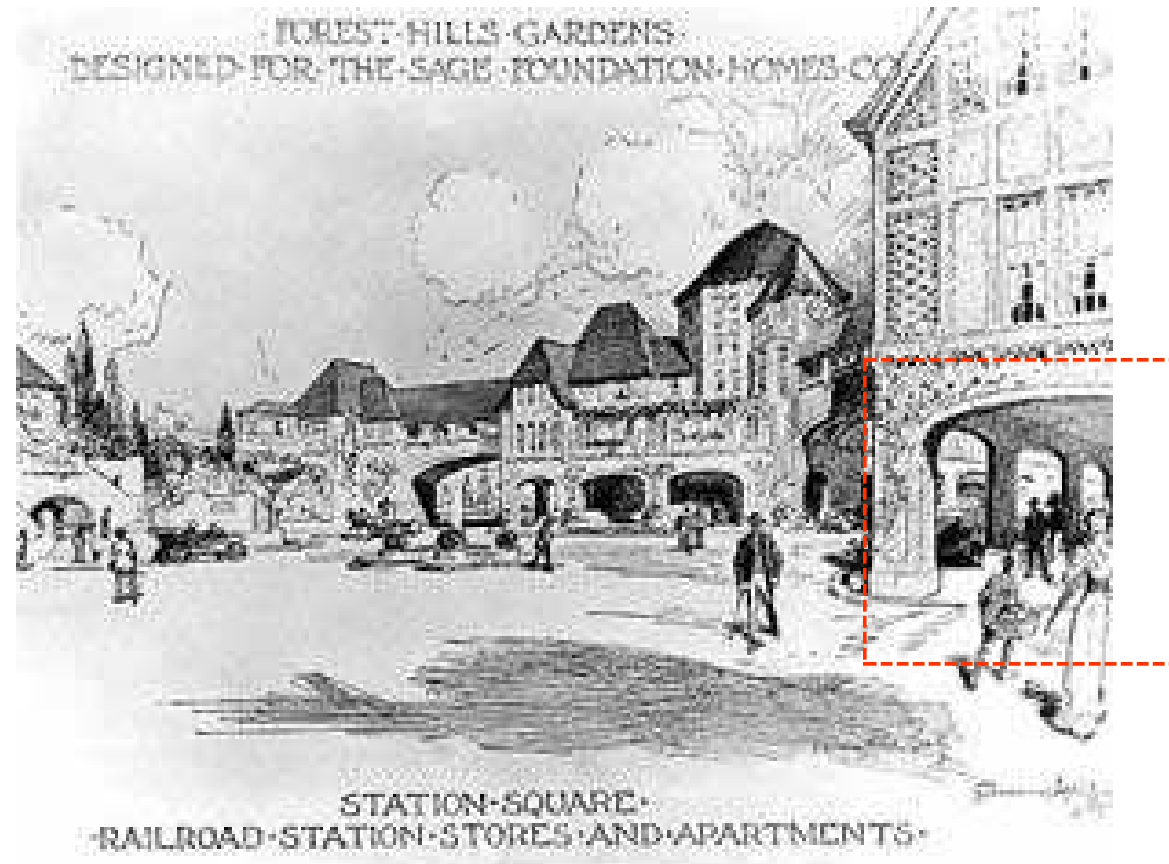
Part 9

Public Places

“Station Square and the Green help to make effective the community spirit which is here. The architecture of the square and the landscape gardening of the Green are strong factors in the centralization of the community life.”

Forest Hills Garden Bulletin

Station Square



In this early rendering by Grosvenor Atterbury, at right is shown an arcade the length of the façade of One Station Square (facing the LIRR station). Only the corner of One Station Square (at 71st/Continental) is actually arcaded. The rest is enclosed with arched, paned windows for a commercial (restaurant) space.



**One Station Square
(a.k.a. “The Forest Hills Inn”)**

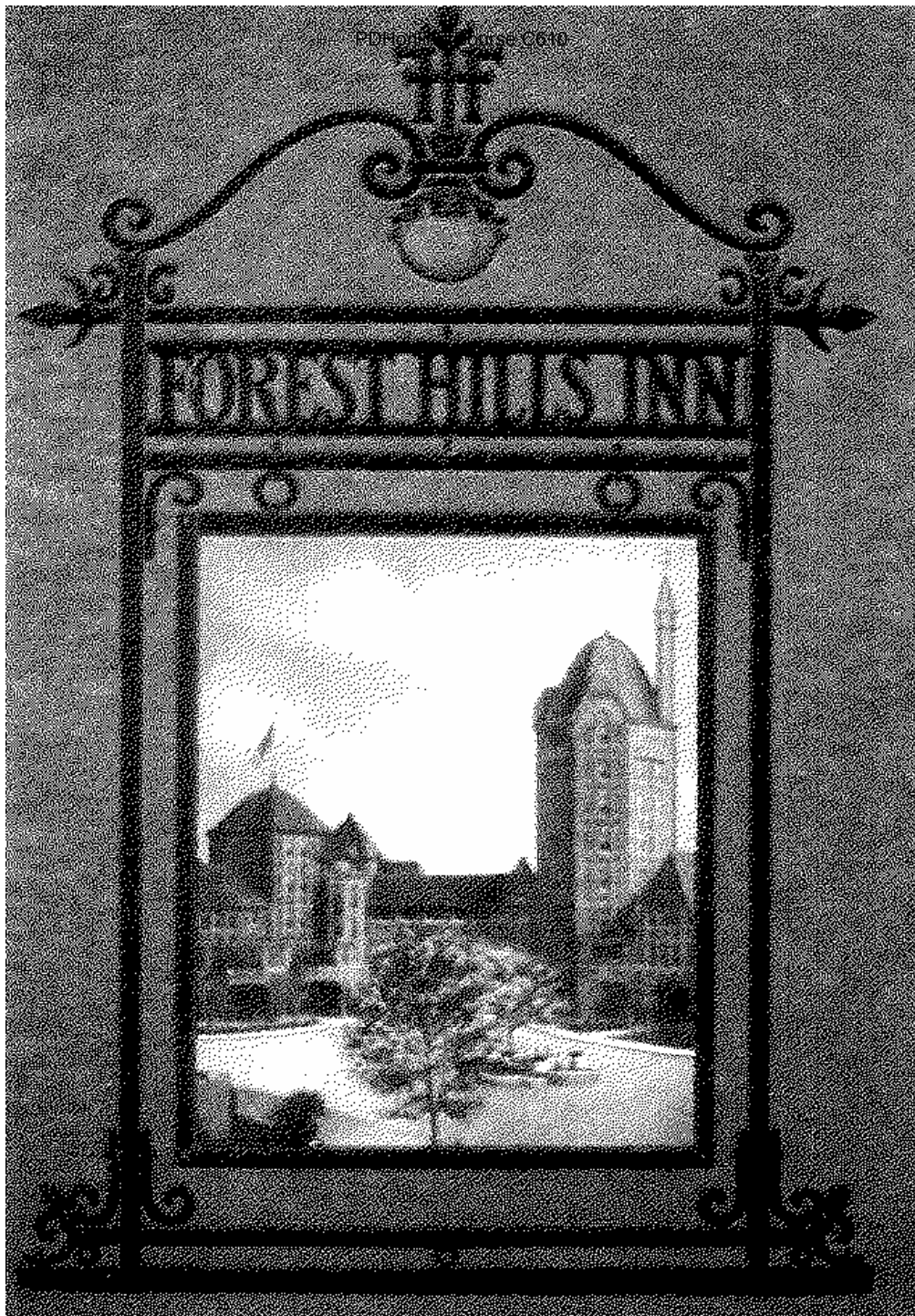


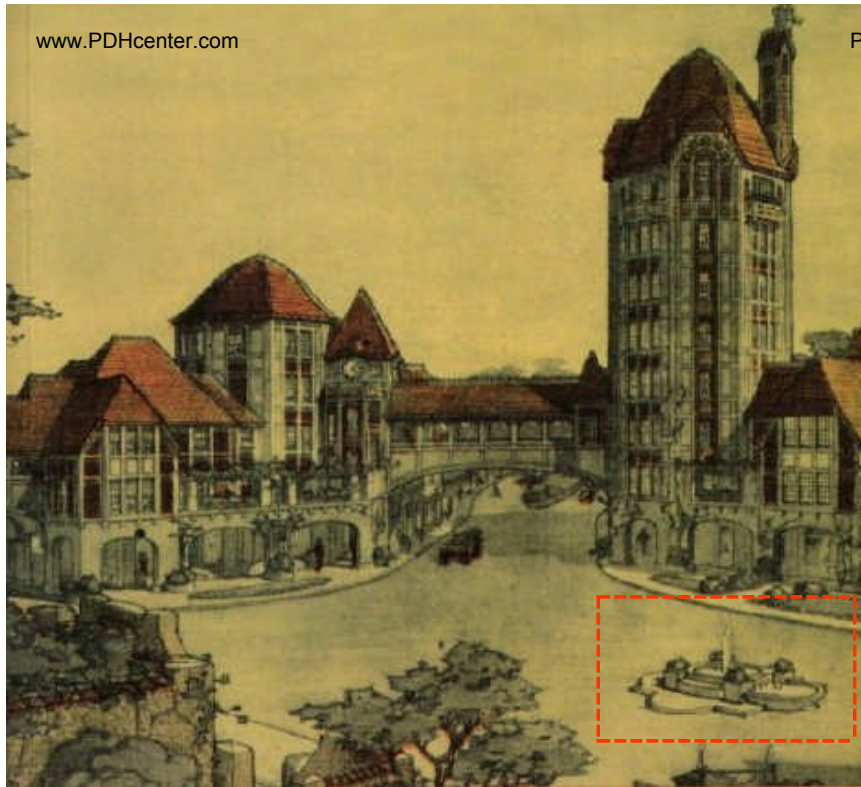


Entry to One Station Square. Originally a hotel composed of three sections:

- **One Station Square (w/tower)**
- **10 Station Square (octagonal roof w/clock tower)**
- **2 Dartmouth Street (“Housekeeping” Apts. – make your own meals)**

The three sections are linked by four bridges; two connecting directly to the LIRR station (at Burns Street) and the other two interconnecting with each other. Thus, at all entries to Station Square, one must pass under one of the arched bridges. In 1967, The Forest Hills Inn was converted to a co-operative and remains so today. It was particularly difficult to convert 1 Station Square & 10 Station Square into apts. since they lacked kitchens – guests and permanent residents took their meals in a common dining room.





Original rendering (left) showing One Station Square (right) & 10 Station Square (left) - view taken from the LIRR station's balcony. Note the small island at center. It had two benches (north & south), a central fountain and two water fountains with pools (east & west) originally. In 1916, the island was extended to include two kiosks; one at the east end & the other at the west end. This allowed for better traffic movement through the square. Two benches were added where the fountain pools were located and a tree was planted in place of the central fountain (right).



**“The Fountain on Central Court and Covered Bridge between Railroad Station and Hotel”
(view looking east (original fountain at center) towards Burns Street/LIRR bridge)**



View looking east. Island and west kiosk right center. High bridge is at right and the Burns Street/LIRR bridge is at left (10 Station square between).



View looking west towards 2 Dartmouth Street and Burns Street/LIRR bridge



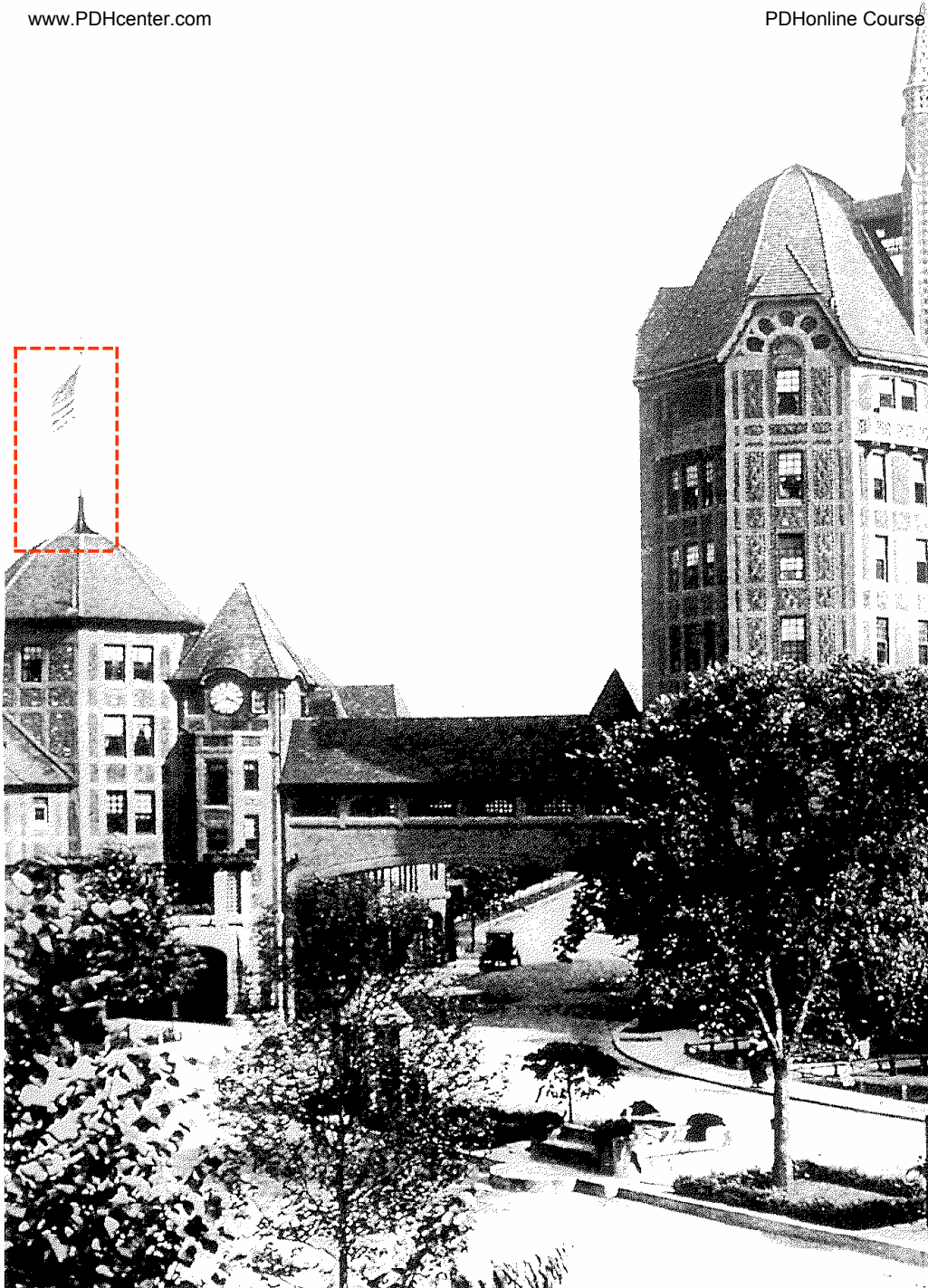
View looking west. East kiosk and island at center, Burns Street/LIRR Bridge at right



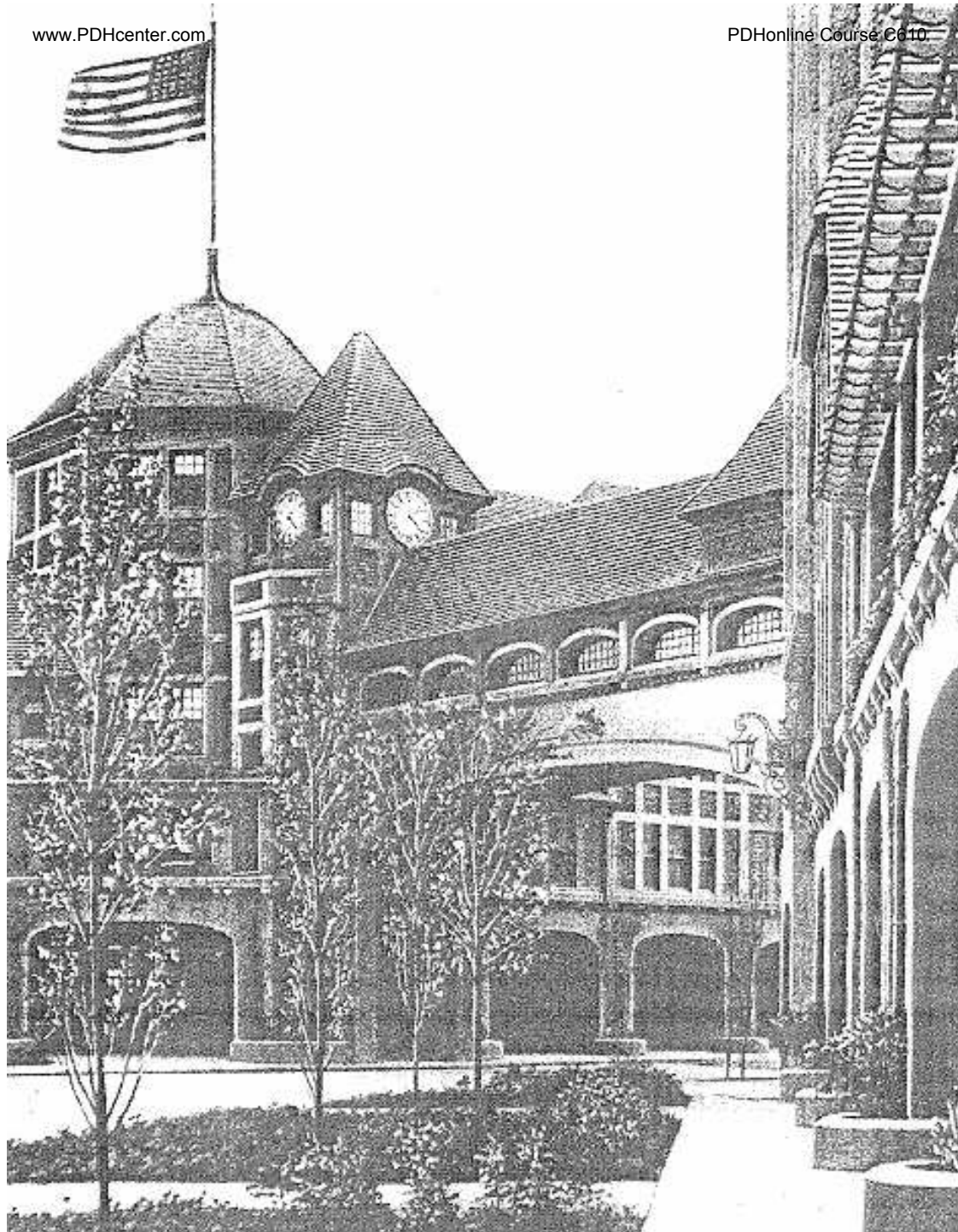
Burns Street/LIRR Bridge (west). The stairs at the left side of bridge are a secondary entrance (to 2nd floor apts. – storefronts at ground level) to 2 Dartmouth Street.



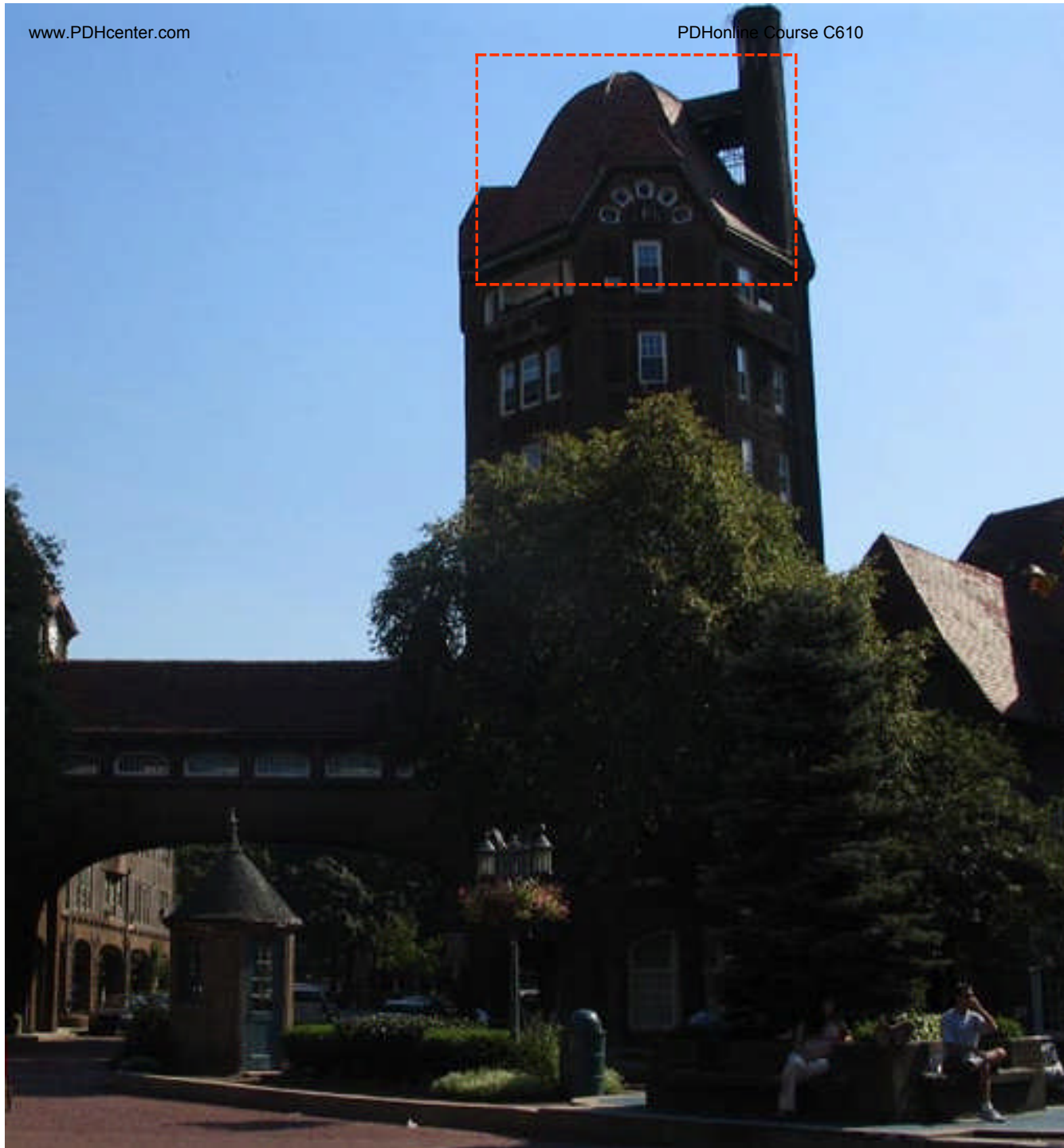
Island and east kiosk (foreground). High Bridge – linking 10 Station Square (left) and 1 Station Square (right), behind with its adjacent clock tower. High Bridge serves as the portal entry to Greenway Terrace.



Note the flagpole atop the octagonal roof of 10 Station Square (no longer there – only base remains)



**Forest Hills Inn at right,
Pedestrian Bridge (High Bridge)
at center and Clock Tower, 1915**



One Station Square’s “Bavarian” turret roof atop tower and adjacent chimney. Variations of this roof can be found on P.S. 101, Church in the Gardens and 150 Greenway Terrace. Station square as a whole is modeled after a medieval Bavarian town square. The island with its east kiosk and high bridge are also shown in the lower portion of the picture. Interesting roofs, dormers, half-timbering and prominent chimneys are hallmarks of Atterbury’s designs in FHG.





View from the Inn's tower looking southeast. Archway Place which links Greenway Terrace and 71st/Continental Avenue is at center.



View looking southwest. Bridge linking One Station Square (left) and 2 Dartmouth Street (right). Originally, this bridge was not part of Atterbury's design. Without it, Station Square was "out-of-balance" and a link was needed between 1 Station Square and 2 Dartmouth Street so it could be provided with hotel services. It was added in the early 1920s. Except for high bridge, all of the bridges into Station Square are "whispering arches" whereby a person facing the bottom of one side of the arch speaking in a normal tone of voice can be heard clearly on the other side.

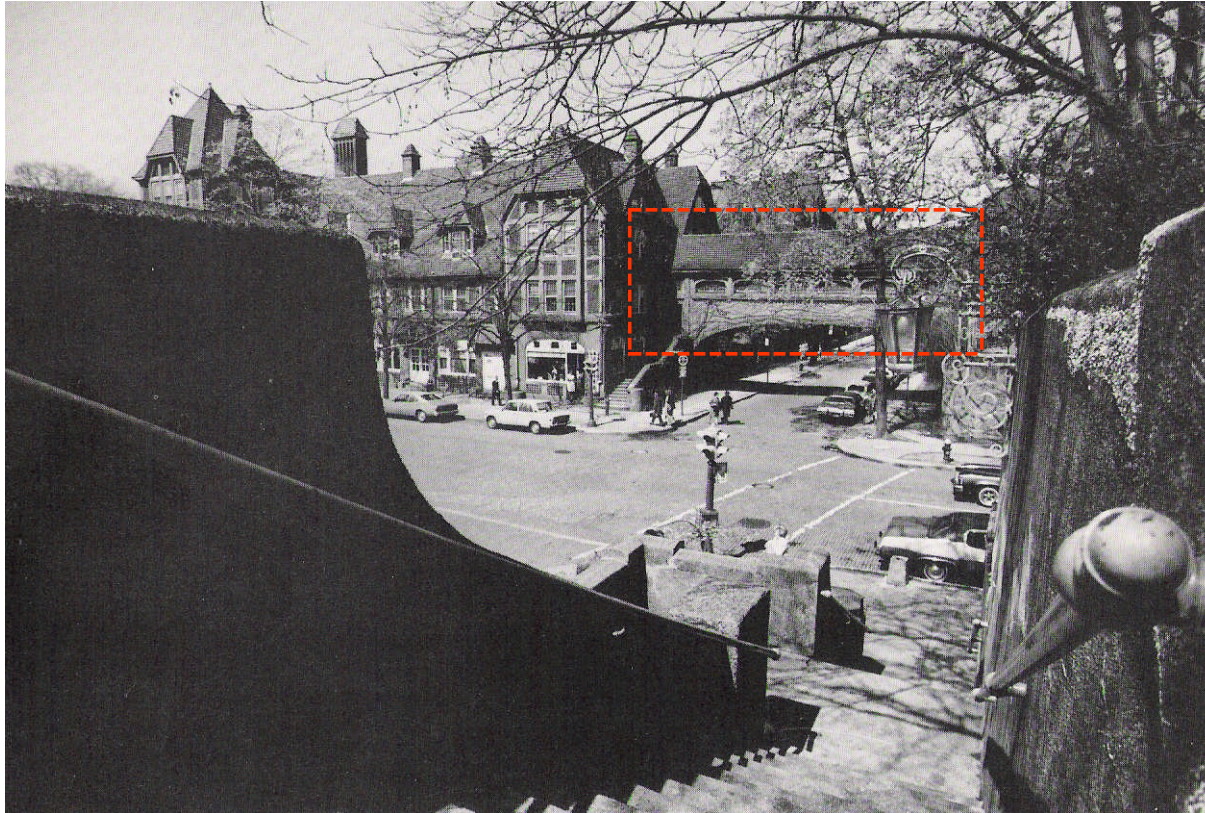


The LIRR station as seen from the entry to One Station Square ca. 1920. The station was built into the railroad embankment which is adjacent to the 71st/Continental Avenue trestle. It was designed by both Atterbury and Olmsted. Its cost of \$50,000 was shared three ways: \$20,000 each by Cord Meyer and the Sage Foundation Homes Company and \$10,000 from the LIRR itself. In the late 1990s, it went through a \$5 million restoration as the result of a community group's petitioning the LIRR and government officials. This organization: *Friends of Station Square*, volunteers its services to maintain the station as the very special entry to FHG it was meant to be.





The building at left is *The Windsor* (2005) – it was a Cord Meyer Development Co. project (outside of FHG). It's apts. feature views looking out over Station Square (foreground) and all of FHG.



Stairs down to Station Square – view from the balcony of the LIRR station. Burns Street/LIRR bridge (west) at center with 2 Dartmouth Street adjacent.



For many years, the stairs from the balcony to 71st/Continental Avenue were closed and the stations retaining walls were held in place by steel beams lest they collapse. The restoration of the late 1990s brought the station back to its original condition (ca. 1915) and handicapped access (ramps) were added for both east (Long Island) and west (NYC) bound passengers.

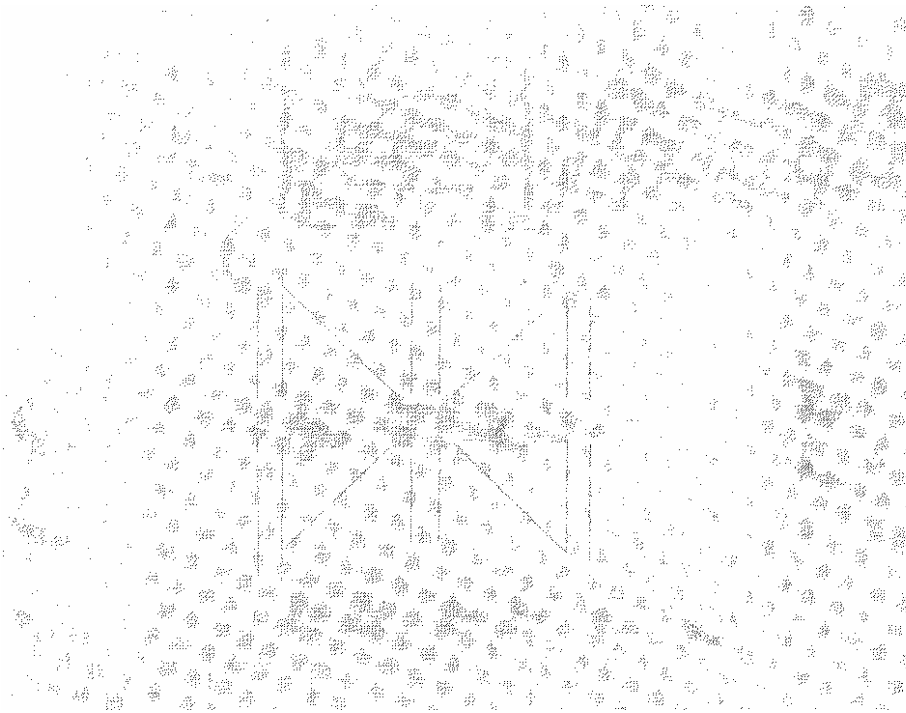


LIRR station today. The balcony is from where TR made his famous speech. The alcove below is a popular place to sit and enjoy Station Square. It is made into a nativity scene each Christmas. On Christmas Eve, a choir sings Christmas carols from the steps of the station to a gathered crowd singing along; a FHG tradition.





Station Square from the east-bound platform of the LIRR station



Unknown for many years, it was revealed that Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr. left a message for posterity in the cobble stones of Station Square: The Union Jack. Not apparent from ground level, the cross of St. George (England) and St. Andrew (Scotland) can be detected from high above such as the Inn's tower or the LIRR station platform/balcony. Of English heritage himself, he also wanted to acknowledge the contribution of England to the garden city movement of which FHG was a part.



The Greenway

Greenway Terrace, a.k.a. “The Greenway”, is the second “zone” from which one leaves the commercial zone: Station Square, and begins their journey to the country (Forest Park). After passing under high bridge and the arcaded storefronts of One and Ten Station Square, an illuminated arts & crafts sign informs you that you are entering an enchanted place: Greenway Terrace. The road splits left (Greenway North) and right (Greenway South) and lining the Greenway on both sides are “Terrace Houses” – attached and semi-attached houses designed by Grosvenor Atterbury as part of the original ten groups built by the Sage Foundation Homes Company. Christ Church highlights the Greenway at its intersection with Middlemay Circle. At the head of the Greenway, Slocum Crescent wraps around 150 Greenway Terrace (a.k.a. “The Leslie”), a beautiful 96-unit apartment building with underground parking that was completed in 1943 after a long court battle with residents.

The Greenway itself is broken into three sections;

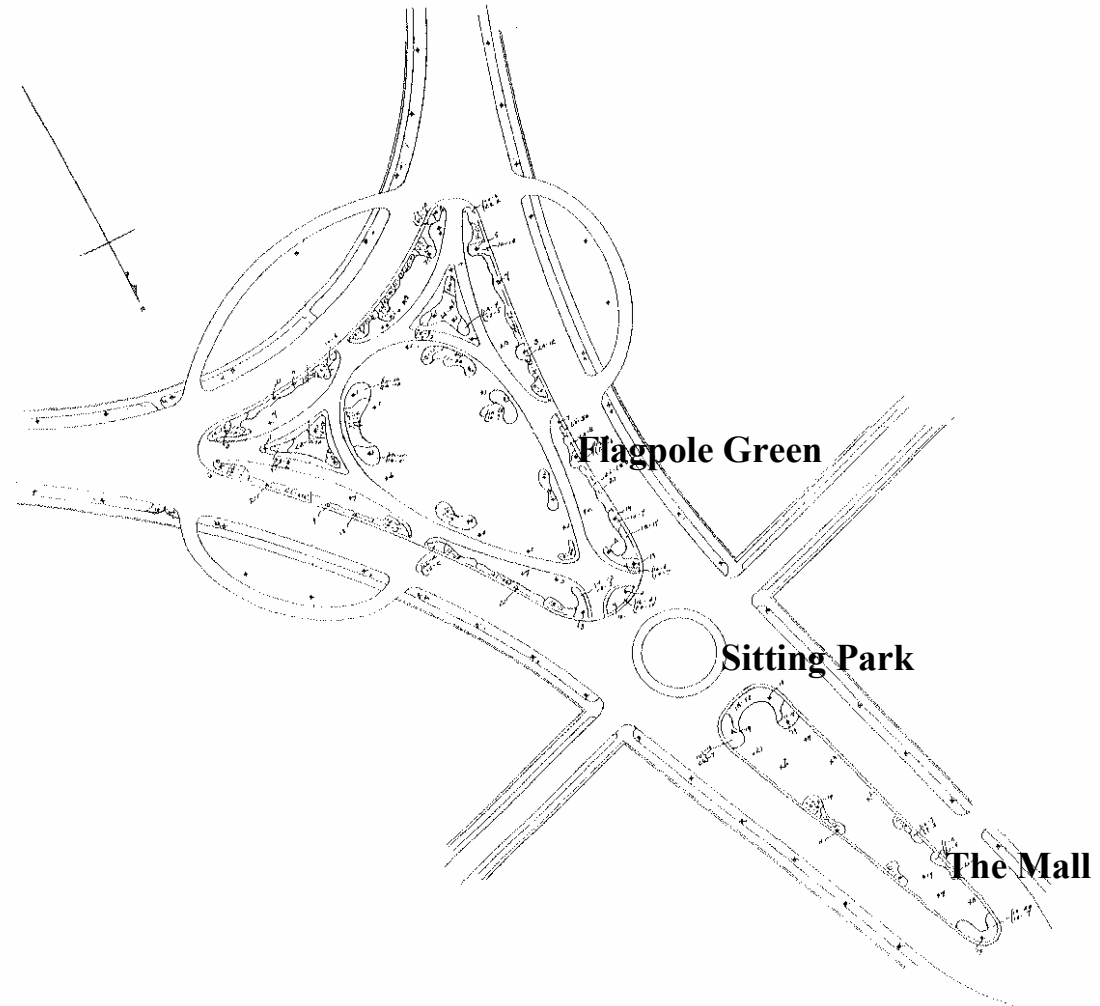
- * The Mall**
- * Sitting Park**
- * Flagpole Green**



High bridge and arcaded storefronts at 10 Station Square (left) & 1 Station Square (right)



Illuminated sign at the foot of the mall welcomes all to “The Greenway” (Greenway Terrace)



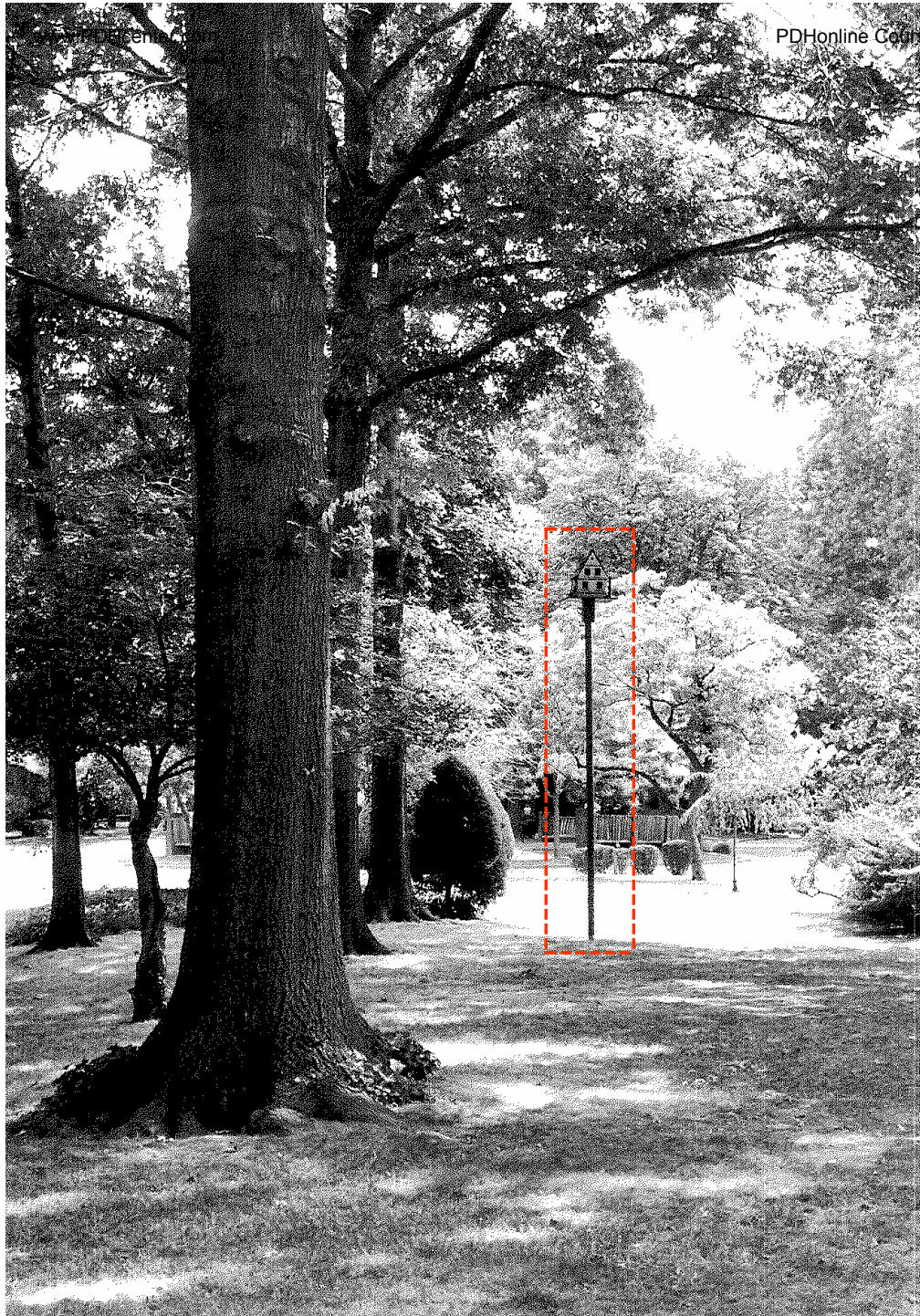
Olmsted's original planting plan for Greenway Terrace



The *Forest Hills Flower Shop & Greenhouse* (8 Greenway Terrace) once stood at the foot of the Greenway (adjacent to 10 Station Square). Though the structure remains sadly, the “Gardens Flower Shop” is long defunct.

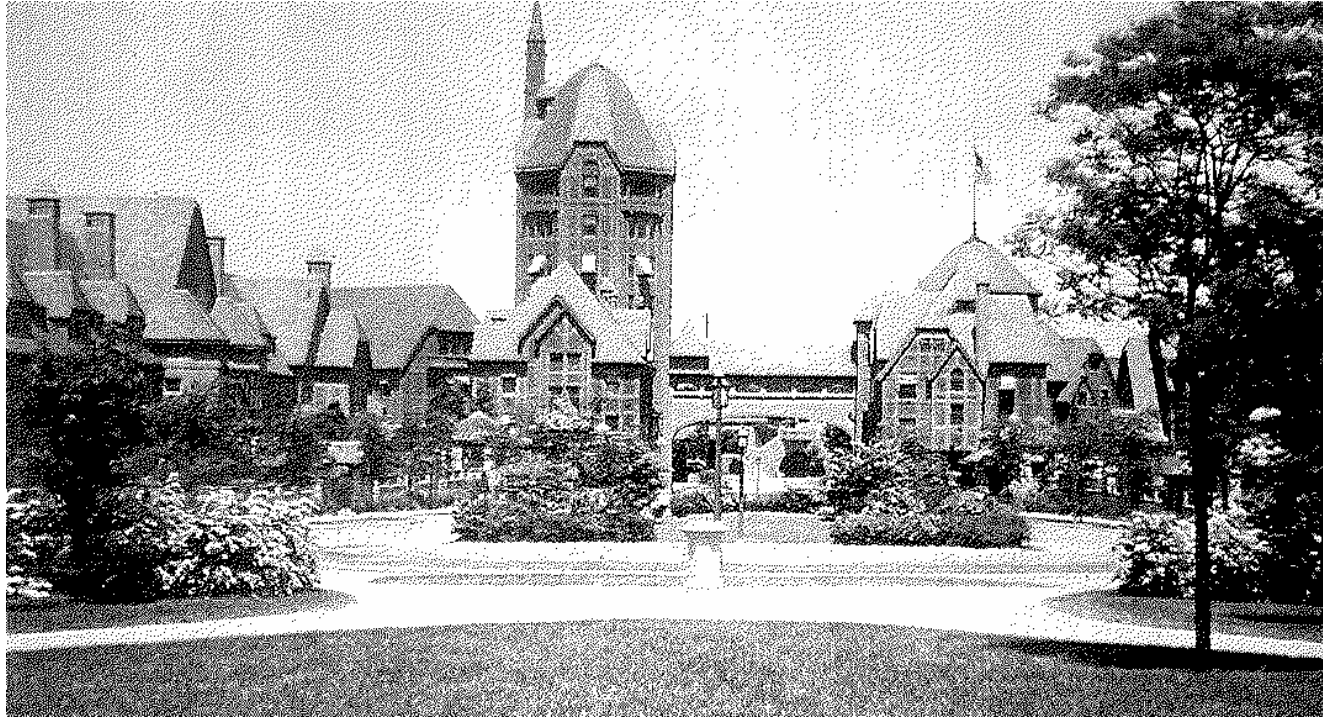


Trellised gazebo adjoining the first (semi-attached) Terrace House (south-side). Note the arched stone below (partially obscured by shrubs), this was a bird bath. A similar trellised gazebo is on the opposite (north-side) of Greenway Terrace.



Looking up the mall towards sitting park. A copy of Grosvenor Atterbury's birdhouse sits atop a tall pole on the mall





Looking down the Greenway (from Flagpole Green) towards Sitting Park, the Mall and Station Square beyond. The circle where Sitting Park is now located was at first a planting bed. In 1915, four concrete benches with Pebbledash finish were added at diagonal points to the Greenway's north-south axis. Sitting park is popular with tourists and residents alike.



Sitting park today



Greenway Terrace (north-side) “Terrace Houses” (opposite mall) ca. 1940. The Tudor-style house at right is a detached house at Middlemay Circle.



**Gardens in front of Terrace Houses
on Greenway Terrace (north-side)
ca. 1920**



Same view today



Fieldstone and stucco Terrace House



**Semi-attached Terrace House
(next to Christ Church)**



**First Church of Christ Scientist (1933)
Greenway Terrace (north-side) & Middlemay Circle**



150 Greenway Terrace (a.k.a. “The Leslie”) Note the stone and brick fence which surrounds the entire building. The stone and red-tile roofed arched entries (two) and brick fence serve to compliment the Terrace Houses which flank the building on both sides. This building serves as the “crown” of Greenway Terrace. It is the only apartment building in the Gardens with an underground parking garage. The building sits on an entire block but only occupies 30% of it.



One of two gated entries



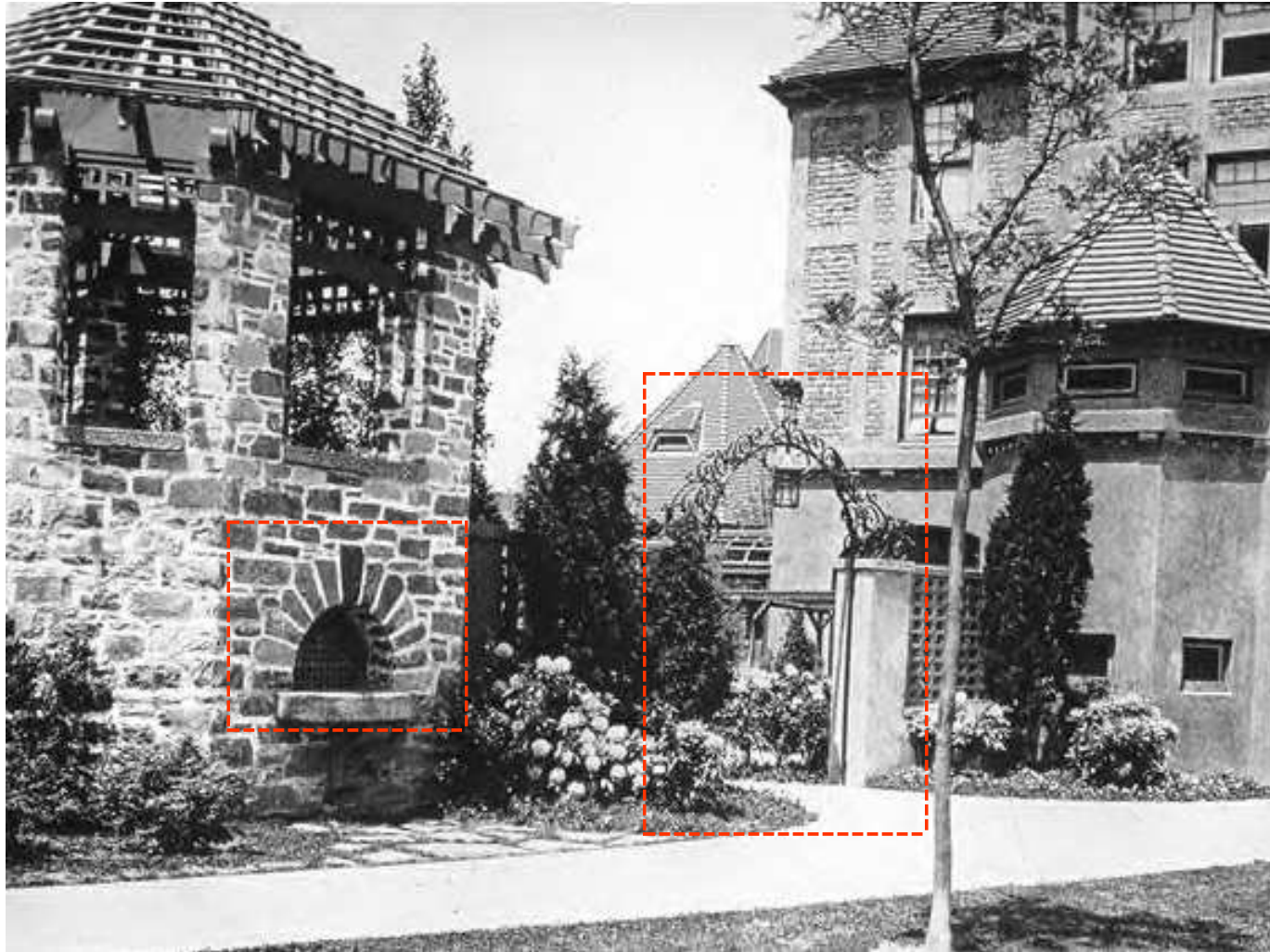
Curvilinear path leading to the Leslie's lobby entry



Rear view of 150 Greenway Terrace. Note the “Bavarian” turret roof – there are four such roofs on this building (two front/two rear)

The Tea Garden

In the early days of Forest Hills Gardens, the Tea Garden was a genteel gathering place for residents of FHG and hotel guests to take an afternoon tea or relax with a cigar after dinner. It was part of the Forest Hills Inn (at the rear) and was accessed via a gate at the foot of Greenway Terrace (south-side). Eleven tennis courts adjoined the Tea Garden and could be accessed through it. In 1931, 20 Continental (a.k.a. “The Inn Apartments”) was built where these tennis courts were formerly located. Though the ornate arched iron gate remains (painted “Peacock Blue”), the Tea Garden is long defunct and remains a throwback to a by-gone era.



Tea Garden entry from Greenway Terrace (south-side). Note the bird-bath in the arched stone of the adjoining trellised gazebo (left)



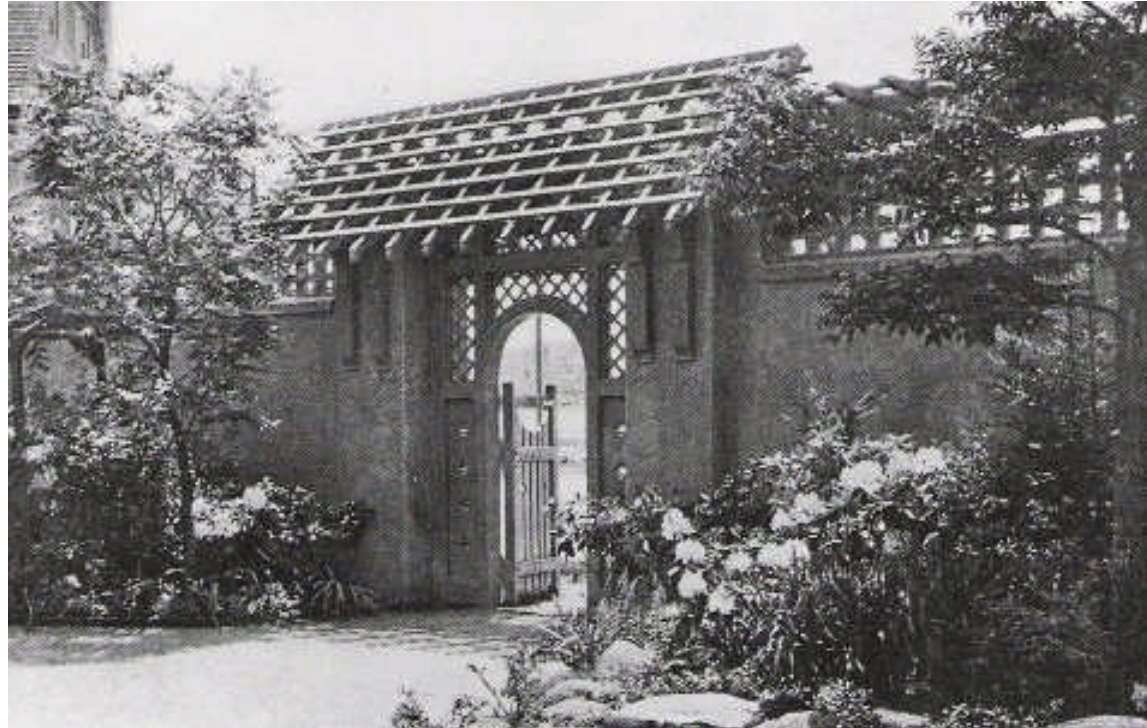
The arched gated entry to the Tea Garden today



The Tea Garden

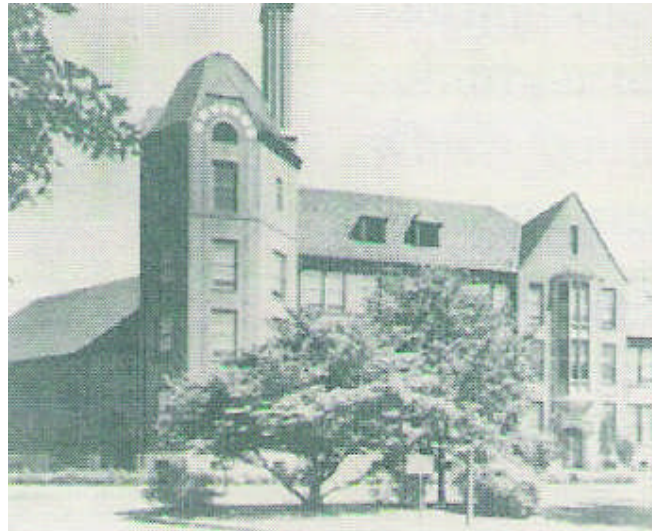


View from the Tea Garden



**Trellised entry to the tennis courts adjoining the Tea Garden
(ca. 1920)**

The School in the Gardens



P.S. 101Q (a.k.a. “The School in the Gardens”) is considered to be one of the best public schools in New York City. Prior to its construction, temporary school buildings occupied the block upon which 150 Greenway Terrace (1943) is now located (Block 12). The Sage Foundation Homes Company offered New York City generous terms to construct an elementary school in the Gardens and, in 1926, the school finally opened after much petitioning by residents and a growing need for it (on Block 10 - directly behind 150 Greenway Terrace). With about 4,500 residents, the school serves the entire FHG community. Built in the “gothic revival” style, it is also in tune with the architecture of the Gardens. The tower; with its copper-clad Bavarian-style turret roof, was meant to compliment the Inn’s tower in Station Square



**P.S. 101Q
(ca. 1926)**



Four-story tower with copper-clad turret roof and prominent chimney



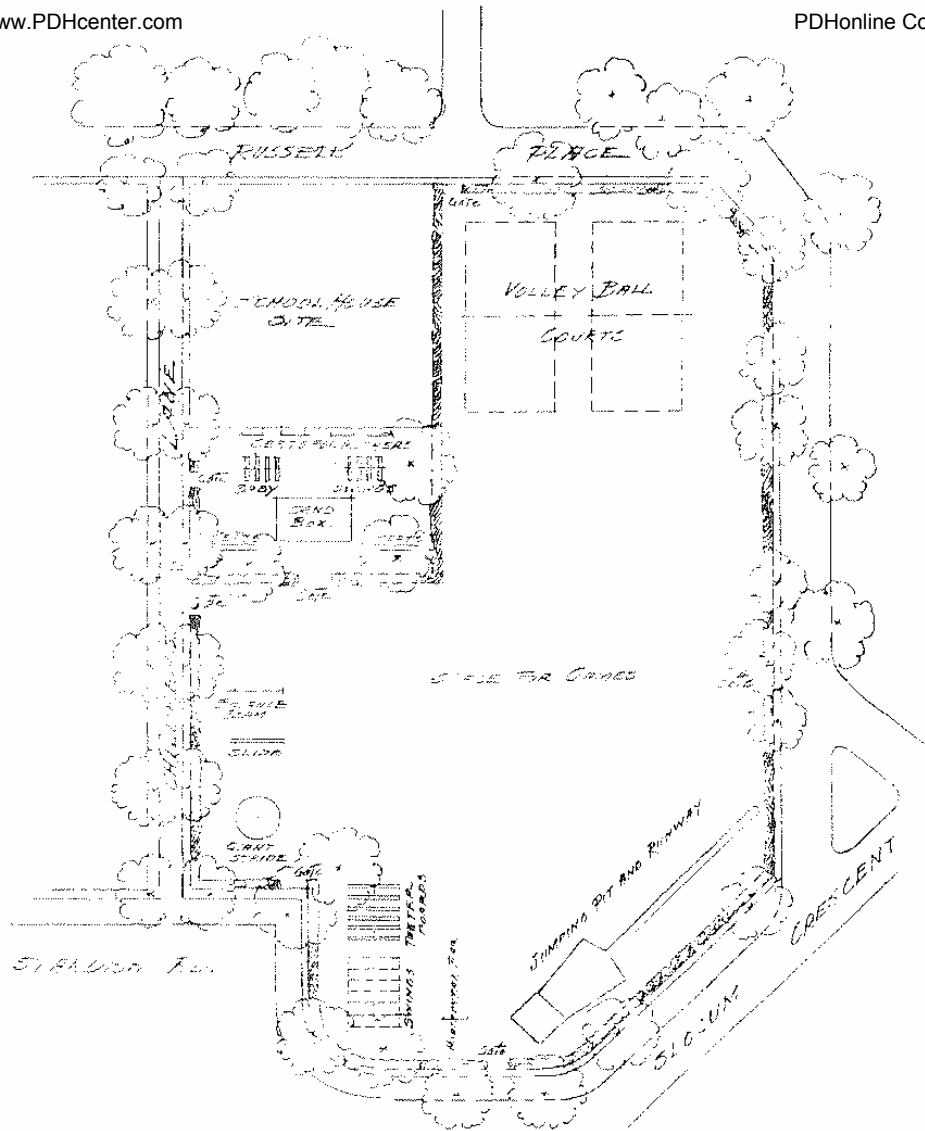
**Gothic revival-style entry
(Russell Place)**







**Schoolyard
(at rear)**



SAGE FOUNDATION HOMES CO
 FOREST HILL - LONG ISLAND N.Y.
 DESIGN FOR PLAYGROUND
 IN
 BLOCK NO. 10.
 Scale 40' = 1"

File No. 3574
 1910

OLMSTED BROTHERS
 Landscape Architects
 120 Broadway
 New York
 Nov. 18, 1910.

Drawn by
 1910
 1910

This was the original plan for Block 10 where P.S. 101 is now located. It included a small school house, park, playground, volley ball courts etc. The building and schoolyard occupies most of the block save for the house lots on Ascan Avenue (a through drive separates these houses from the schoolyard). Russell Place, where the main entry to the school is located, was named by Olmsted in honor of FHG benefactor Russell Sage.



Though located just outside the Gardens (Union Tpke. & Austin Street), the Kew Forest School (background) – a private preparatory school opened in 1918, still serves the Forest Hills/FHG/Kew Gardens communities.

Parks & Recreation

With Forest Park in close proximity to FHG, there was not a need for large tracts of land to be set aside for parks, especially considering the high price the Sage Foundation paid for the land (\$6,000.00 per acre). However, Olmsted set aside two areas for community parks (other than the private parks which failed). Hawthorne Park is situated near Community House (which is part of the Church in the Gardens), behind Ascan Avenue bounded on four sides by Burns Street, Beechknoll Street, Park End Place and Borage Place. It has an ‘X’- shaped path and was graded downwards towards the center forming a depression. In the early years of FHG, the park was flooded in winter and made into an ice skating rink and was also surrounded by benches. Olivia Park – named in honor of Olivia Sage, is deeper in the Upper Gardens; on Markwood Road (near Union Turnpike). It is part of a natural hollow in the topography and provides the children of the Gardens - adults too, an excellent place to test their sleds in winter. Olmsted gave both parks special horticultural treatments including: yellow jasmine, white flowering deutzia, Indian currant and arching evergreens. Hawthorne Park was an oasis of evergreens, large shade trees and flowering shrubs. Olivia Park got special treatment. For springtime bloom: dogwood, cherry, jasmine, spiraea and forsythia. For summer bloom: snowballs, Indian currant and honeysuckle.



**Olivia Park (a.k.a. Deepdene Park)
(view from Markwood Road)**



Hawthorne Park



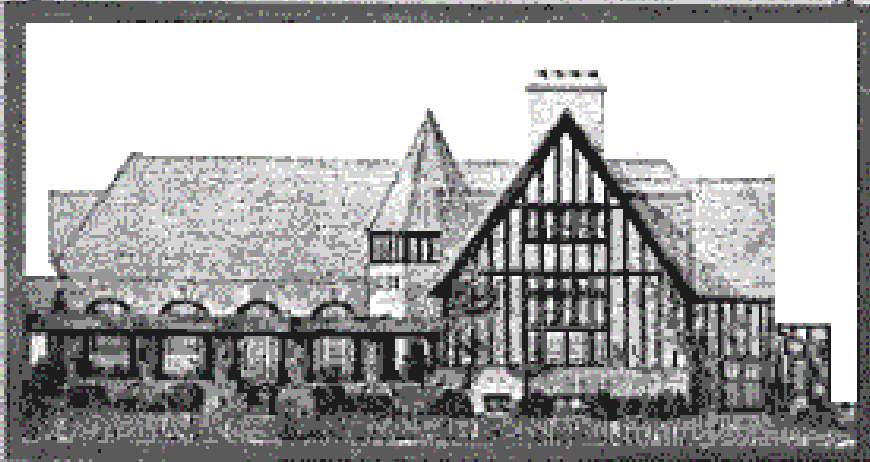
Typical attached and semi-attached houses bordering Hawthorne Park on Beechknoll Street.



**Typical attached “triple-decker” row houses
Burns Street bordering Hawthorne Park**

Community House

Souvenir Program
OF THE OPENING



COMMUNITY HOUSE
OF FOREST HILLS GARDENS



AUGUST 12, 13, 14, 1926

Opened in 1926, Community House was created as a non-sectarian facility for use by all of FHG's residents. It is an annex of the Church in the Gardens and contains an auditorium, gymnasium, classrooms and an indoor pool among other amenities such as after school programs. It was designed by Grosvenor Atterbury and is of the half-timber Tudor style so prevalent in FHG. It is located on Borage Place – at the southwest corner of Hawthorne Park.



Rendering of Community House



**Community House as seen from the southwest corner of Hawthorne Park
(corner of Beechknoll Street and Borage Place)**

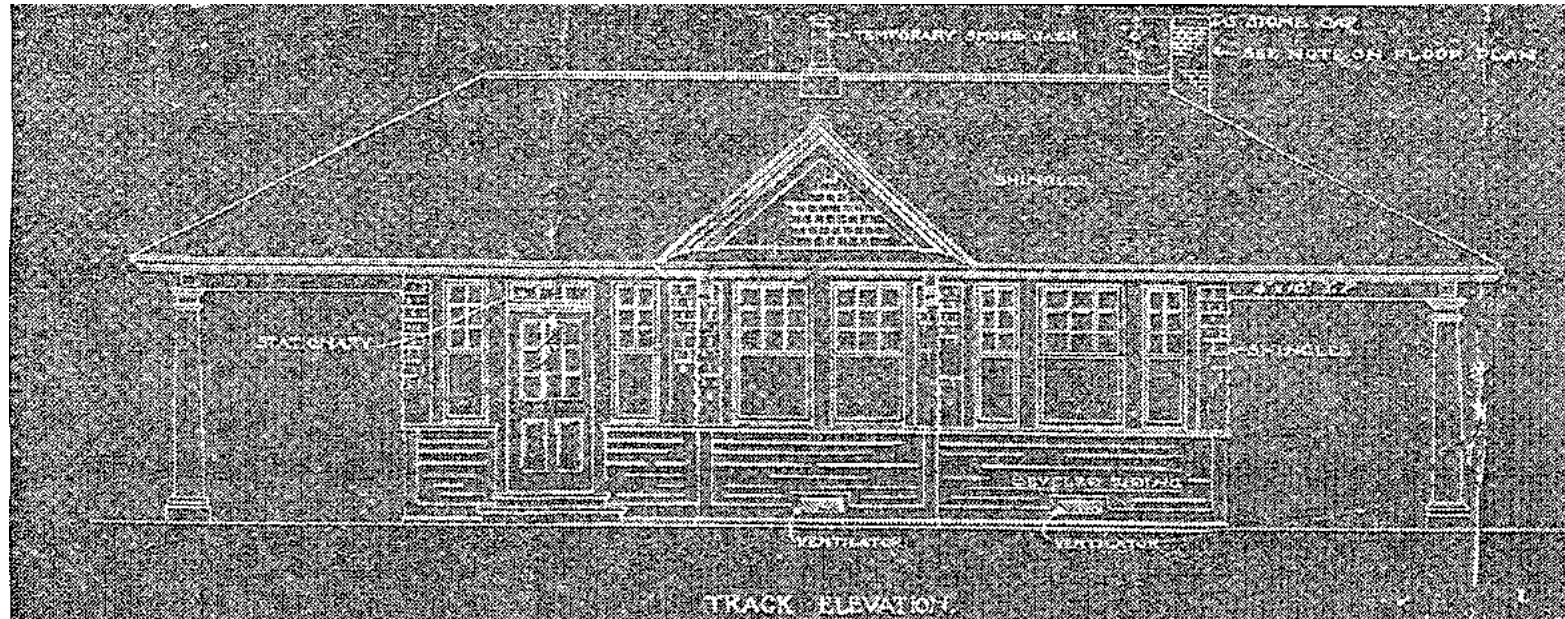


**Community House (right) and Church in the Gardens (left)
(view from Greenway North and Borage Place)**

Part 10

A Railroad Runs Through It

One of the key defining elements of a “Garden City” is a rail line in close proximity. With the opening of Penn Station in 1910 and the electrification and elevation of the LIRR, this key element was in place when actual construction began in FHG in 1911. Besides defining the northern border of FHG, the LIRR makes living in the suburbs possible without a car; not very practical in a typical suburban development. The LIRR station is the “hub” of the community and within easy walking distance from the furthest extents of the community. Aside from the LIRR, the NYC subway (on Queens Blvd.) and several bus lines are nearby. At first, the LIRR was at ground level and steam trains would be flagged down on Austin Street (north-side of RR tracks – parallel to Burns Street) and would stop at 72nd Avenue. In 1909, the line was electrified, elevated and the trestles at Yellowstone Blvd., 71st/Continental Avenue (Station Square) and Ascan Avenue were constructed. The station is served then, and now, by regularly scheduled train service for both east (Long Island) and west (NYC) bound passengers. Unlike Long Island, Queens would have no grade crossings between Jamaica and Penn Station making the trip both safer and quicker. To the east – two minutes away, is the Kew Gardens LIRR station and then Jamaica, the main switching point of the LIRR’s main line. To the west, only the Woodside station lies between FHG and Penn Station (most trains from FHG bypass Woodside). The LIRR is the busiest and most efficient commuter railroad in the world. Typically, the commute from FHG to Penn Station takes about 15 minutes.



Architect's drawing of the original Forest Hills railroad station, July 1906. The station and the tracks for the steam powered train were on street level. The station, which opened in 1908, was at 72nd Avenue and Austin Street. It was a one-story shingled building heated by a pot belly stove. The station became almost immediately obsolete when it was announced that the tracks were to be elevated and electrified



Kew Garden's unadorned grade level station ca. 1910

***“An important gateway for the people of the city to
a great park”***

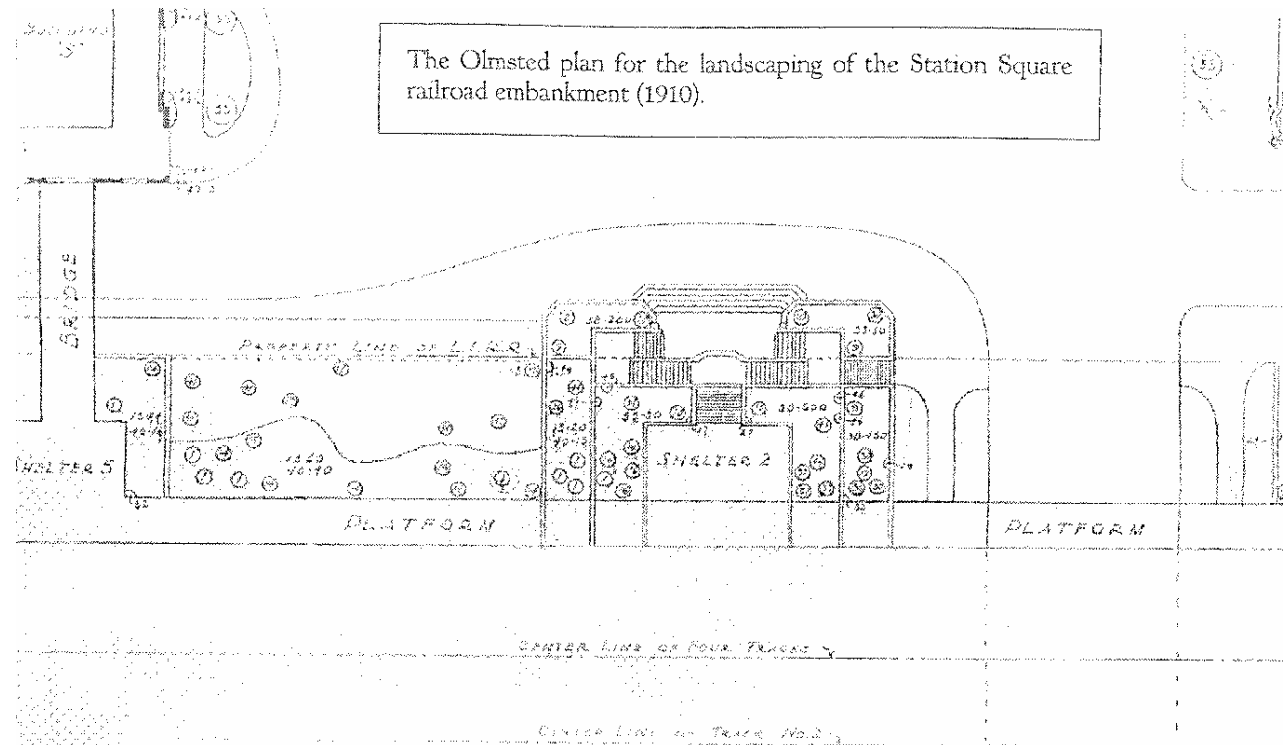
Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: LIRR station at Forest Hills

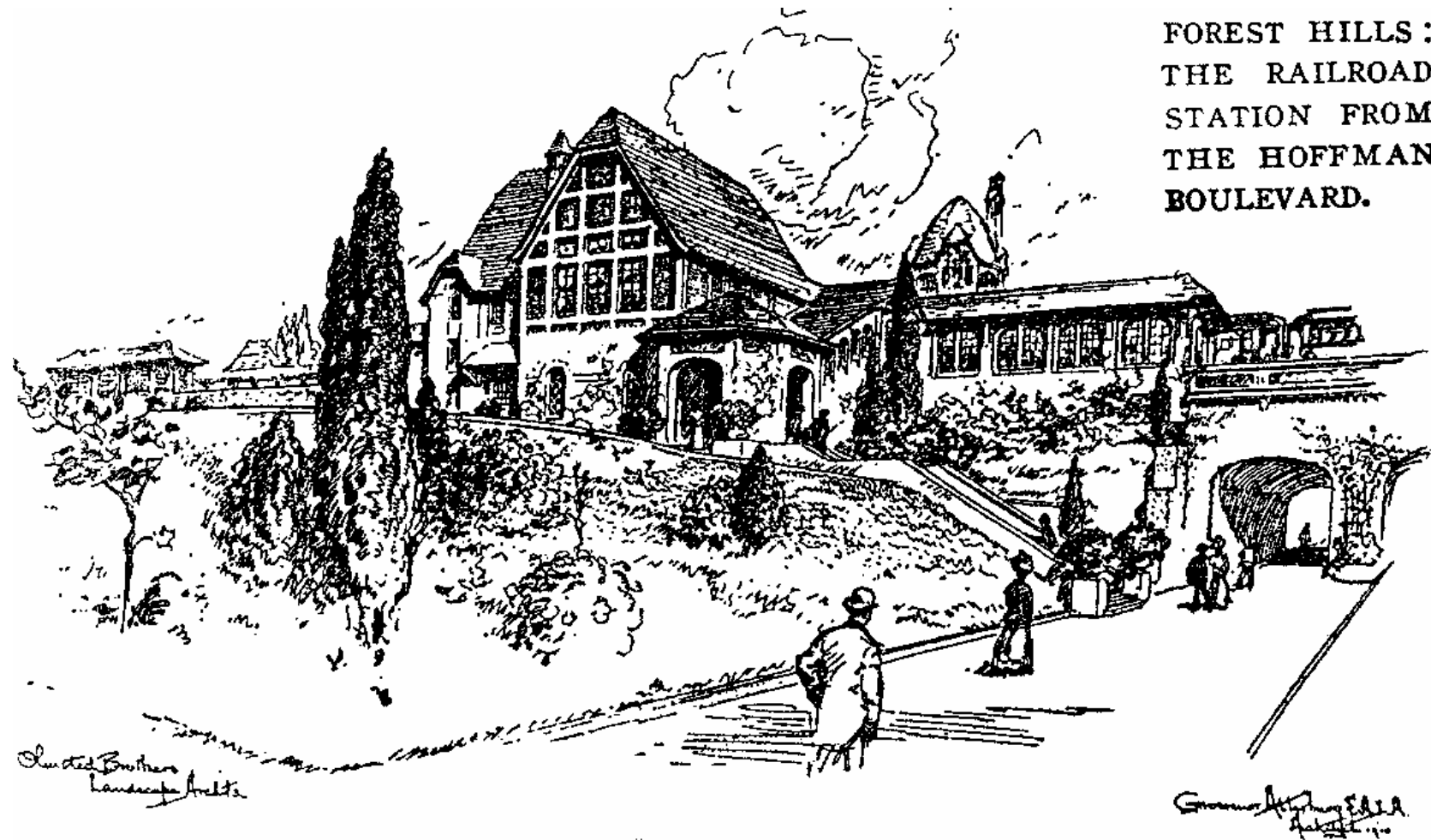


Station Square and the station's balcony – as seen from the LIRR's east-bound platform

Such Extravagant Structures

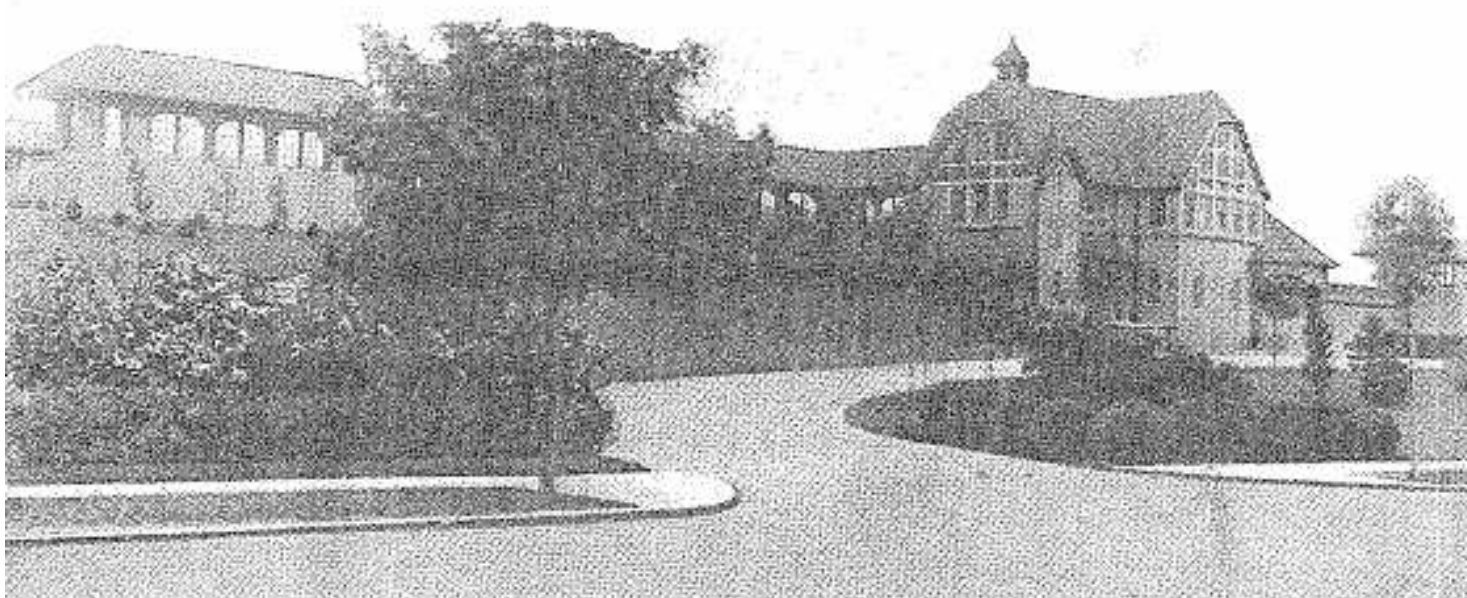


At first, the president of the LIRR resisted the elaborate designs of both Atterbury and Olmsted for the LIRR station to be built into the embankment on the north-side of Station Square. He termed them: “Such extravagant structures”, and did not want to set a precedent for other communities who, in the future, might also seek stations of architectural distinction thus costing them more money to build than a basic station such as the one at Kew Gardens. A compromise was reached and the LIRR, Cord Meyer & SFHC shared the cost of \$50,000 to build the station.

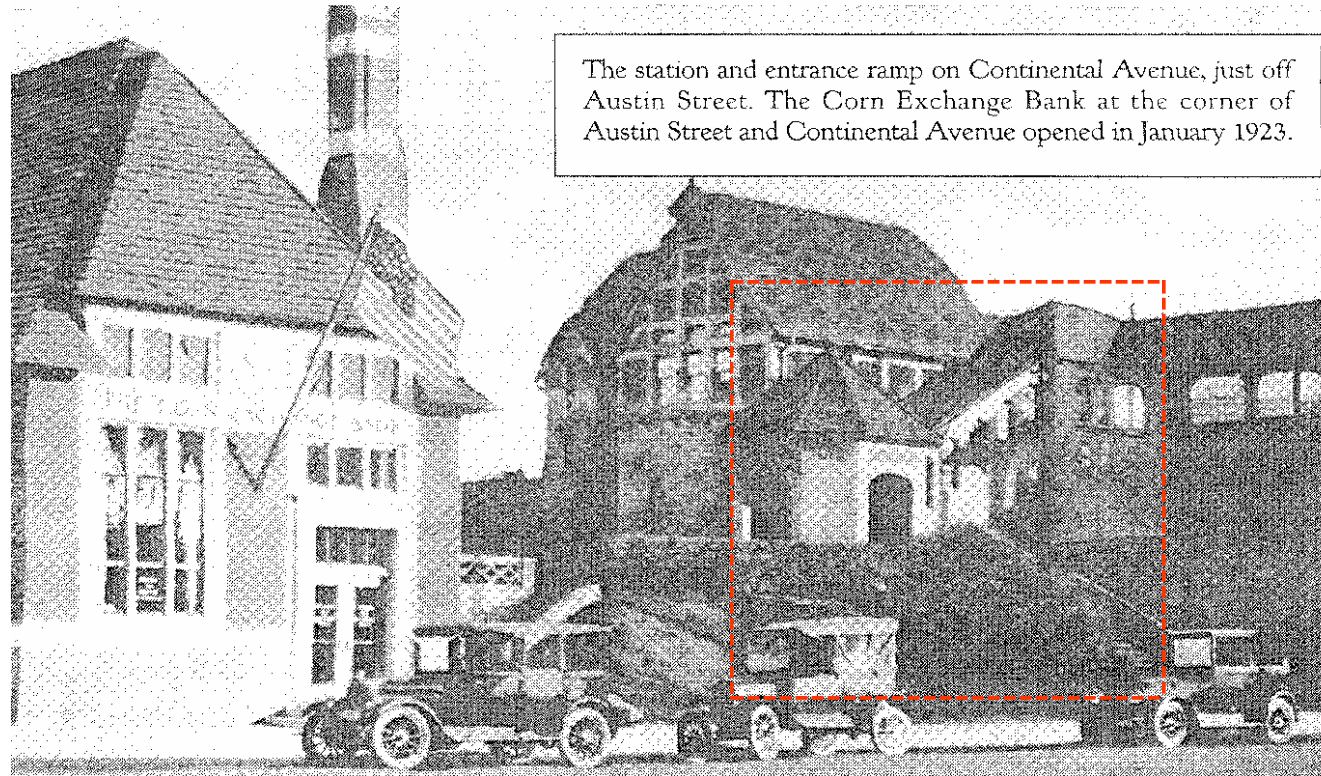


Hoffman Blvd. is now Queens Blvd. Actually, this view is taken from the corner of Austin Street and 71st/Continental Avenue.

Forest Hills station: the driveway, shelters, and station along the westbound (i.e. city-bound) tracks, c. 1912. The photo was taken from the Austin Street exit of the driveway, near 71st Road. The driveway was designed and landscaped by the Olmsted Brothers firm, which did the landscaping for the rest of Forest Hills Gardens. The driveway had a plaza wide enough so that automobiles could discharge or receive their passengers at the entrance stairway to the city-bound tracks.



Austin Street; the commercial district serving the entire Forest Hills Community, was never part of the FHG development so its growth was/is determined by market forces. Though the structures remain (albeit largely obscured from view), the drive is long gone and stores line both the Austin Street and 71st/Continental Avenue sides of the west-bound LIRR station at Forest Hills. Station Square now serves as a drop-off and/or pick-up plaza for both east and west-bound commuters.



Opened in 1923, the Corn Exchange Bank served the farmers still growing corn and other crops in the farmland then surrounding FHG. Long defunct as a bank for local farmers, the building still stands housing commercial stores. The stairway to the west-bound LIRR platform is now sandwiched between commercial stores.



Intersection of 71st/Continental Avenue & Austin Street ca. 1920. Corn Exchange Bank at right (with flagpole).



Intersection of Austin Street & 71st/Continental Avenue. The Corn Exchange Bank is at right (now Boston Market)



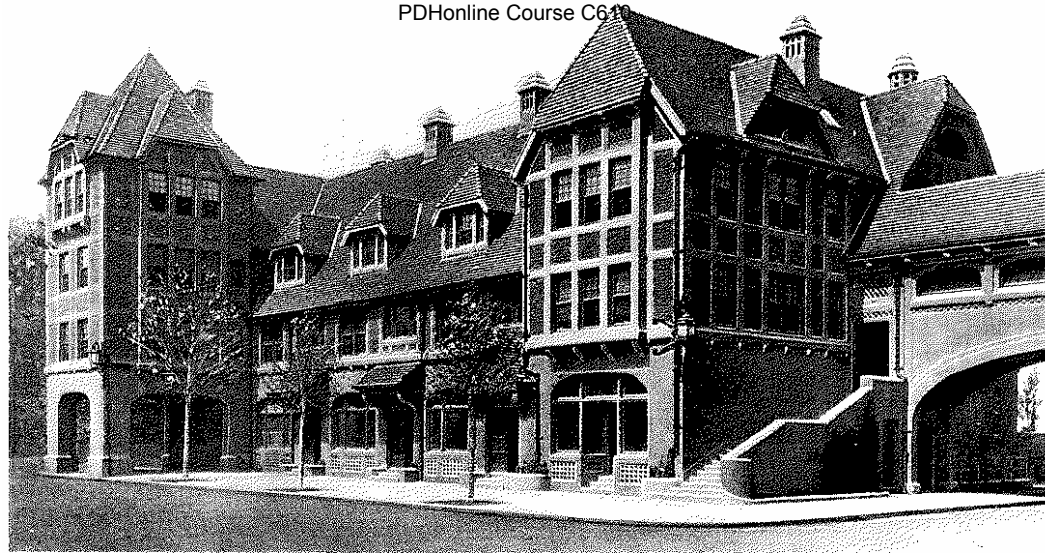
Though the façade and marquee remain intact, the Forest Hills Theater (now defunct) on 71st/Continental Avenue (near Austin Street) now houses commercial businesses on the ground and second level/s.





With rents approaching that of Madison Avenue in recent years, many of the “mom & pop” stores that lined Austin Street have relocated or gone out of business in favor of banks and/or mall-type chain stores. Extending from Yellowstone Blvd. to Ascan Avenue, Austin Street still retains a neighborhood feel at its eastern end (near Ascan Avenue). It is one of the busiest shopping districts in all of Queens serving many neighboring communities. Before its commercialization, Forest Hills residents referred to the shops along Austin Street as “The Village.”

Railroad Wall



Two Dartmouth Street (a.k.a. “The Marlboro”) ca. 1912. The first and only apt. bldg (a.k.a.) “Housekeeping Apts.) planned for FHG was 2 Dartmouth Street. It was/is one of the three buildings making up the Forest Hills Inn (also 1 & 10 Station Square). Grosvenor Atterbury modeled it after a building in the town center of Hampstead Garden Suburb (North London) with small commercial stores at its base and residences above and an arcaded tower with prominent dormers and chimneys. It is linked by bridge to the LIRR station at its Burns Street side and is made of the Pebbledash terra cotta and brick filled pre-fabricated concrete panels used in much of Atterbury’s buildings in Station Square. Because the price of the land negated the kind of density and residents first conceived for FHG, the eleven apartment buildings that were built in FHG provided a means to include some lower cost housing within the Gardens. Except for the Leslie (150 Greenway Terrace), all other apt. buildings are on or near Burns Street which runs parallel to the LIRR tracks. Residents of the homes in the Gardens refer to these buildings as their “Railroad Wall.” They allowed them to be built in this vicinity for the purpose of absorbing the noise generated by the trains. Today, of the 1,600 housing units in FHG, 650 or 40% of all FHG residents live in these buildings which occupy only 15% of the total land area of the Gardens.



The missing bridge (in photo at left) would link 1 Station Square (left) with 2 Dartmouth Street (right).



Bridge entry into Station Square. Linking 1 Station Square (left) with 2 Dartmouth Street (right) For those entering Station Square from the south (Metropolitan Ave.) via 71st/Continental Avenue, this bridge is a familiar sight. Though it looks the same as the other three original bridges from a distance, there are some differences. It is narrower by about a third than the other three bridges and the wood-frame windows have a series of gothic arches, unlike the plainer windows found on the two Burns Street bridges and high bridge at Greenway Terrace. It was added in 1923 and provided a needed link between the buildings and aesthetically balanced all entries into the square.



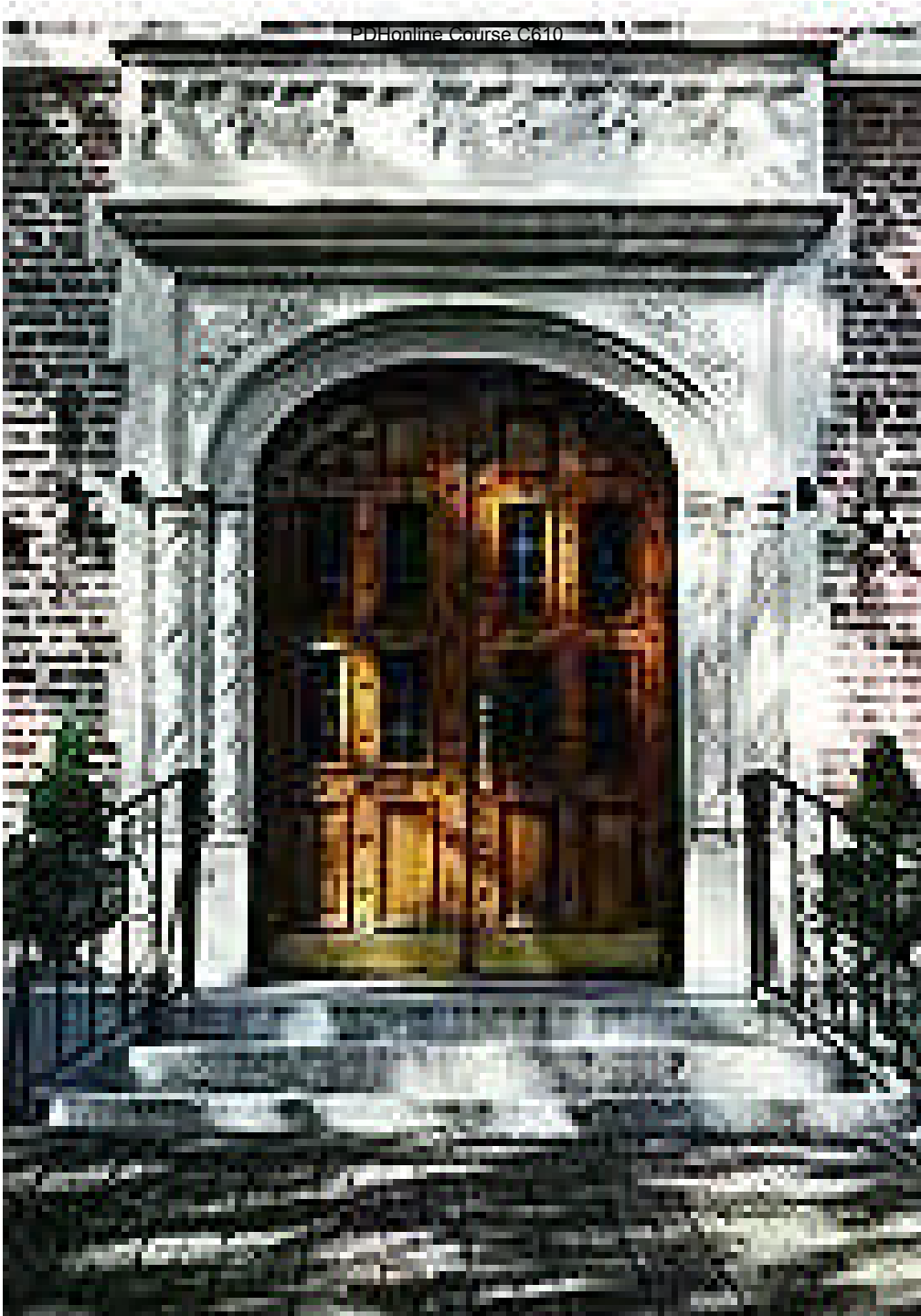
4 Dartmouth Street ca. 1950. Built in 1917, this 67-unit building became the second apt. building in FHG. It shares the same block as 2 Dartmouth Street and 6 Burns Street making this block bounded by Station Square, Dartmouth Street, Tennis Place and Burns Street the anchor for the square and the most densely populated block in FHG. Linked underground with 6 Burns Street, the two buildings comprise the largest co-operative in FHG: Tennis View Apts.



4 Dartmouth Street seen from the corner of Tennis Place (left) and Dartmouth Street (right). Like much of the architecture in FHG, it is of the half-timber Tudor style.

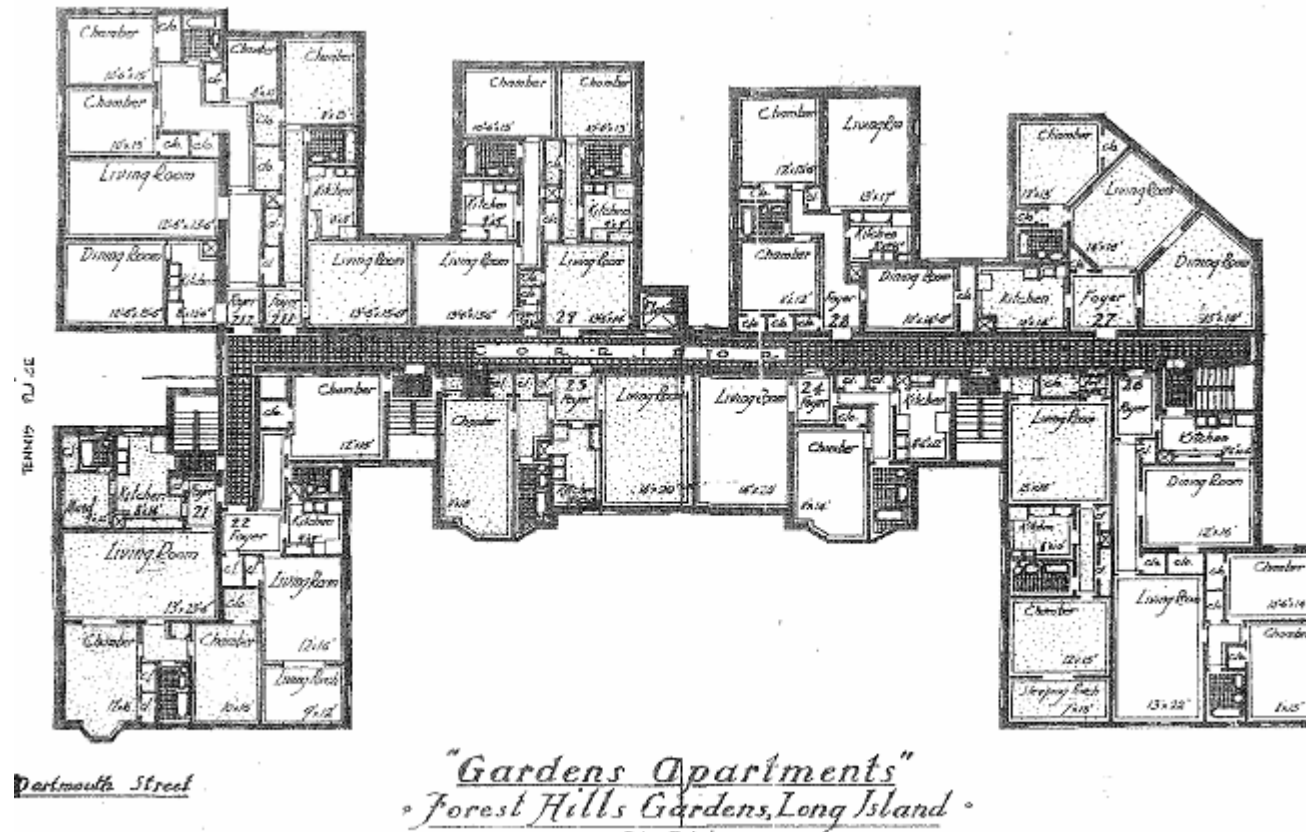


4 Dartmouth Street's entryway





4 Dartmouth Street's sunken lobby



4 Dartmouth Street (a.k.a. “Gardens Apartments”) floor plan. Many of the larger apartments had live-in maids quarters. Note that the bedrooms are referred to as “Chambers” and are small in size.



6 Burns Street. Built in 1920, this 100-unit building fronts on Burns Street and makes a dog-leg around Tennis Place. It shares a common courtyard with 4 Dartmouth Street. Together, they make up the co-operative *Tennis View Apartments*.



A triangular piece of land bounded by Dartmouth Street and 71st/Continental Avenue serves as a private park for Tennis View Apts.



Built in 1922, One Ascan Avenue consists of a central tower with two flanking wings (one fronting on Ascan Avenue and the other on Burns Street). Its most famous resident was inventor/futurist Buckminster Fuller. Now a co-op, it was a luxury rental and is the only building in FHG to provide detached garages (12).



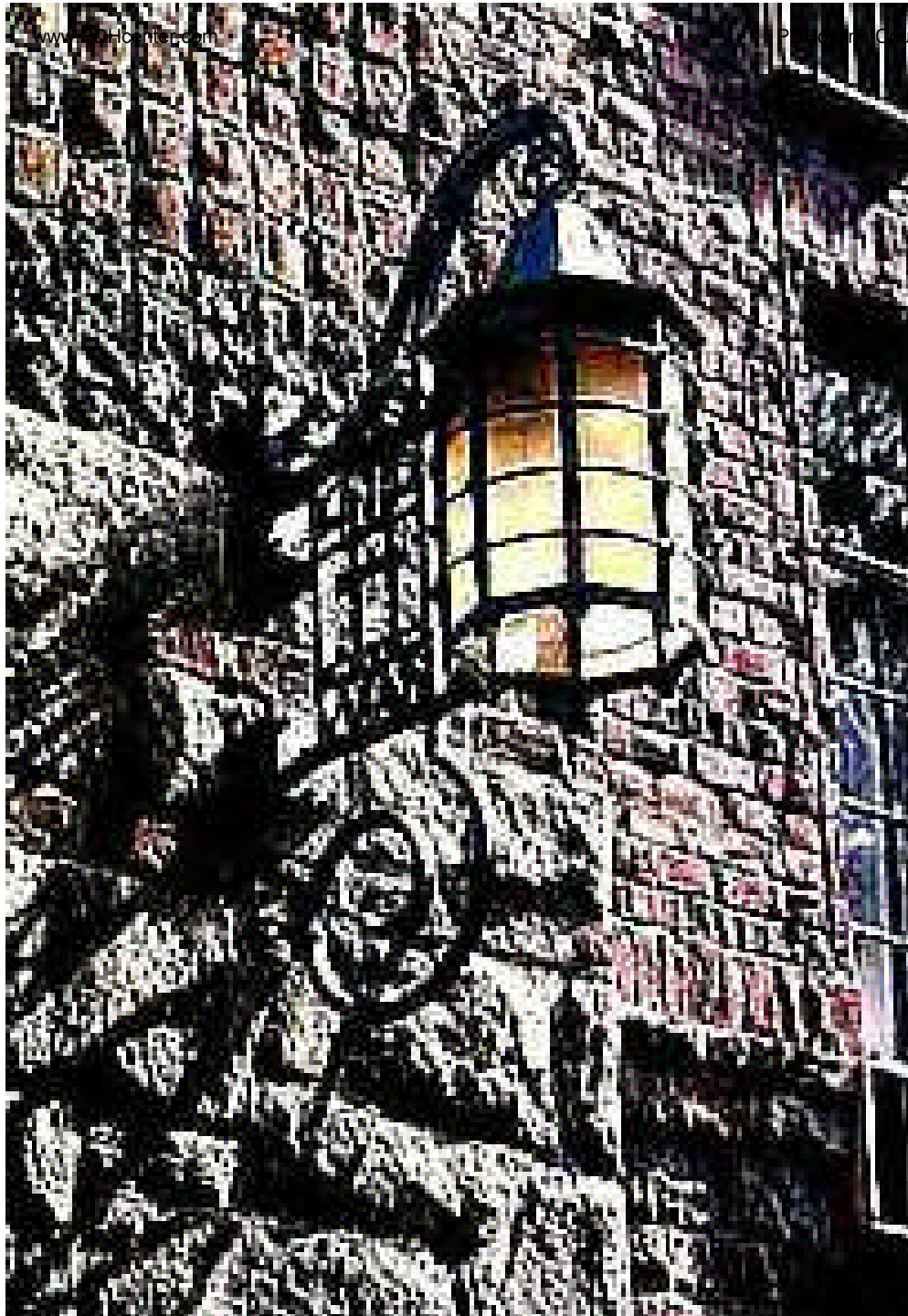
20 Continental Avenue (a.k.a. “The Inn Apartments”). Built in 1931 and adjacent to One Station Square on land the eleven tennis courts occupied (accessible from the Tea Garden). Originally, residents could receive hotel services through a link with One Station Square. The exterior was designed by Grosvenor Atterbury in his familiar Tudor half-timber style. Fronting on 71st/Continental Avenue, the facade takes on a beautiful glow in late afternoon when the sun sets in the western sky.



Tudor half-timbering and “Peacock Blue” ornamental ironwork abound on the façade of 20 Continental



20 Continental Avenue Lobby Entry



**Entryway's lamp-post mimicking the
"Peacock Blue" street lamps of FHG**



20 Continental's Tudor lobby



View from Ascan Avenue

150 Burns Street (a.k.a. “The Grosvenor Square”). Like 20 Continental, this building was built in 1931 and its exterior was designed in the half-timber style by Grosvenor Atterbury. Though Atterbury would remain the chief architect of the Gardens into the 1940s, these two buildings were his “last hurrah” in the Gardens. In recognition of his contribution to the architecture of the Gardens, this apt. building was named in his honor: *The Grosvenor Square*. It fronts on Burns Street and turns the corner onto Ascan Avenue, near to Hawthorne Park. Singer/Songwriter *Burt Bacharach* grew up in this building.

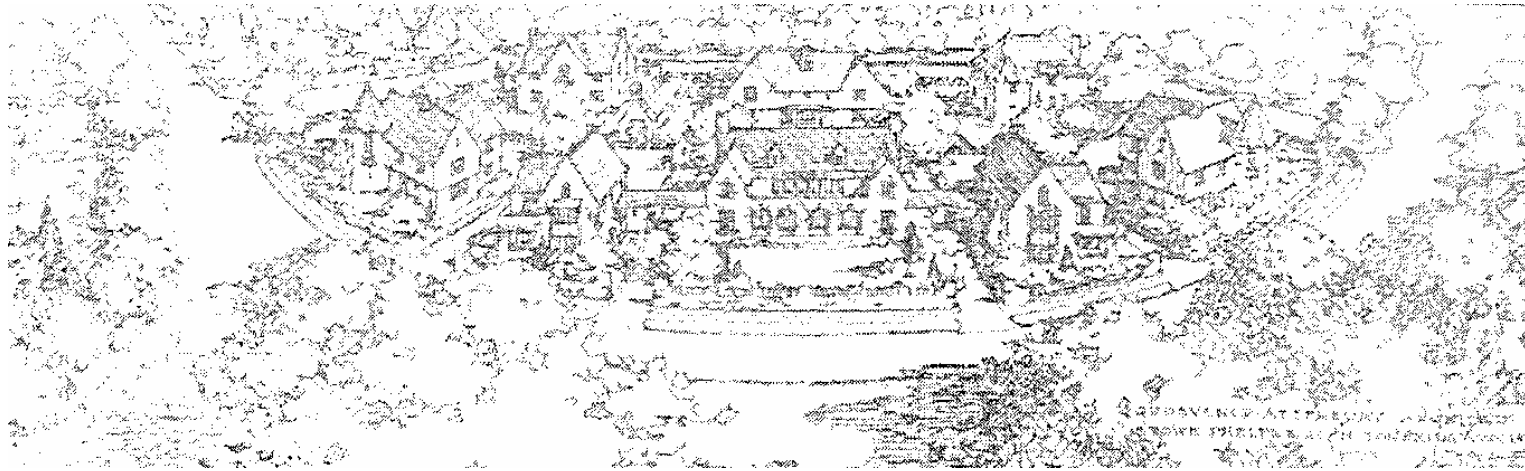
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View from Hawthorne Park

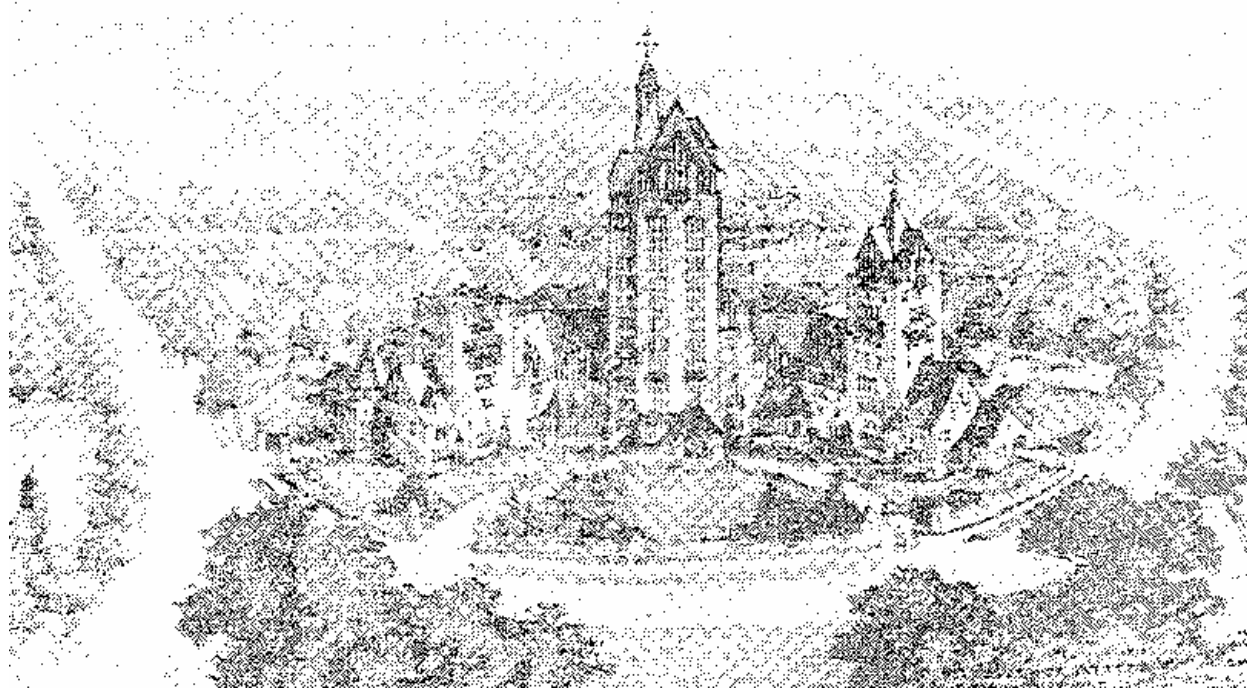


“The Greenway” (1934). Another apartment building of the early 1930s, this beautiful Tudor building features 43 spacious apartments and an arched brick and stucco formal entry. It has the distinction of having two addresses: 10 Holder Place and/or 72-14 Burns Street (the lobby can be accessed from both Holder Place (shown above) and/or Burns Street. It was designed by *Benjamin Braunstein*, a Turkish-born architect who was well known for Tudor-style architecture with Art Deco flourishes. He designed many buildings in Queens and, in particular, the Forest Hills/Kew Gardens area.

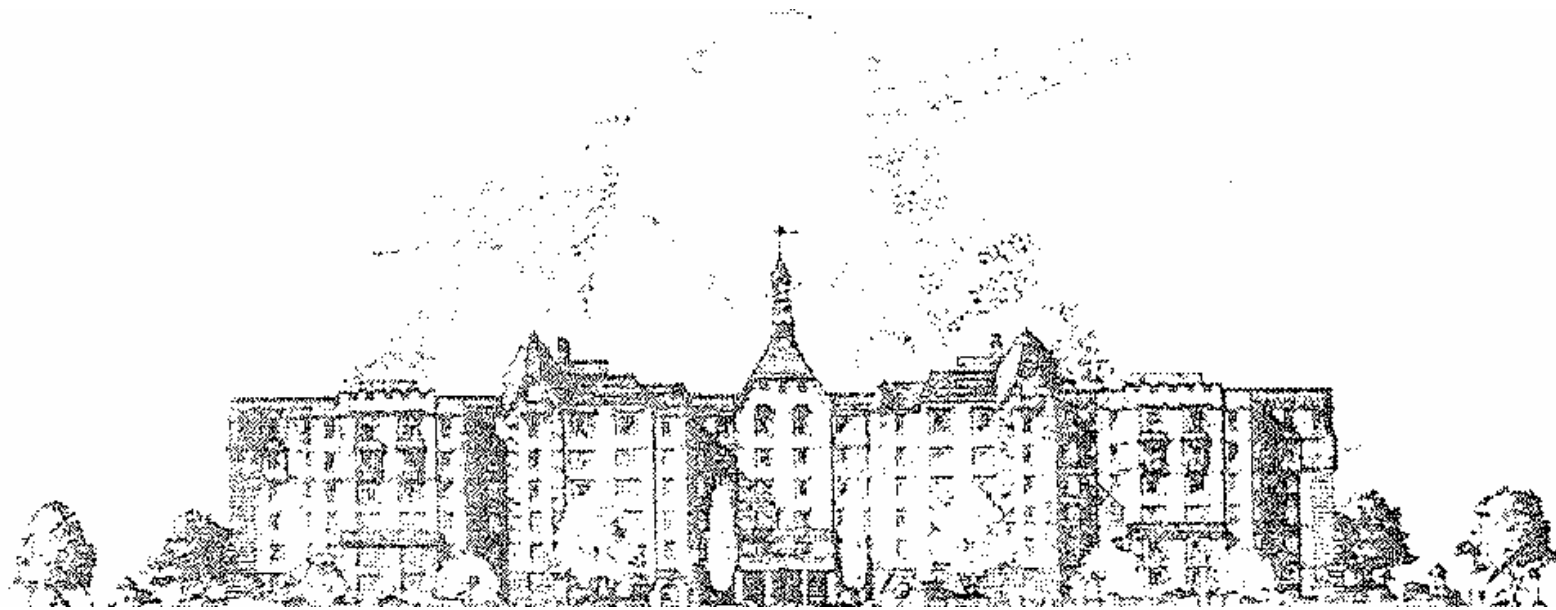
The only apartment building not part of the “Railroad Wall”, 150 Greenway Terrace (a.k.a. “The Leslie), was, ironically, the most controversial one to build. Residents of Greenway Terrace resisted bitterly the Harriss Bros. attempts to develop an apt. building on the block they owned. They wanted Terrace Houses similar to the rest of Greenway Terrace. After many years in court and design overhauls, the 96-unit building was completed in 1943. The underground parking garage was a concession to the residents of the Greenway and the design was subject to approval by the Gardens Corp. One of the Harriss Bros. died before the building was completed thus, his surviving brother named it in his honor: *The Leslie*. The building won a design award in 1943 from the Queens Chamber of Commerce and has the distinction of being Harry Helmsley’s wedding present to his second wife Leona (she has since sold it). Ironically, soon after it opened, some of the very same people who so vehemently opposed it started moving into it and it became known as “the empty-nester building.” With their children grown and without a need for a large house but wanting to remain in the Gardens, the beautiful apts. - many with sunken living rooms, was the logical choice. The building is symmetrical about its centerline with an east and west wing and each wing has one duplex apt. It is considered the most desirable building in the Gardens because of its location on Greenway Terrace, underground parking, design and spacious apts.



**First design concept
(Terrace Houses, 1923)**



**First Harriss plan for Block 12. Three tower complex facing a circular driveway (1925).
(*Atterbury & Tompkins, Architects*).**



**Approved design
1941**











An undistinguished building completed in 1961, 25 Burns Street (a.k.a. “Garden Arms”) would be the last apt. building built in FHG. The land it occupies (behind 10 Station Square) on Burns Street served as a “Victory Garden” during WWII. Like much of the later architecture in the Gardens, it followed the letter of the law but not the spirit.



Aside from the apt. buildings of the Railroad Wall, attached and semi-attached row houses line Burns Street between Ascan Avenue and Union Tpke. forming a barrier to train noise for the rest of the Gardens. A common drive separates the back of the houses from the LIRR tracks. Though they are considered less desirable than houses not in close proximity to the LIRR, they are not-at-all inexpensive to purchase and hold their value just as well as do other properties in the Gardens.

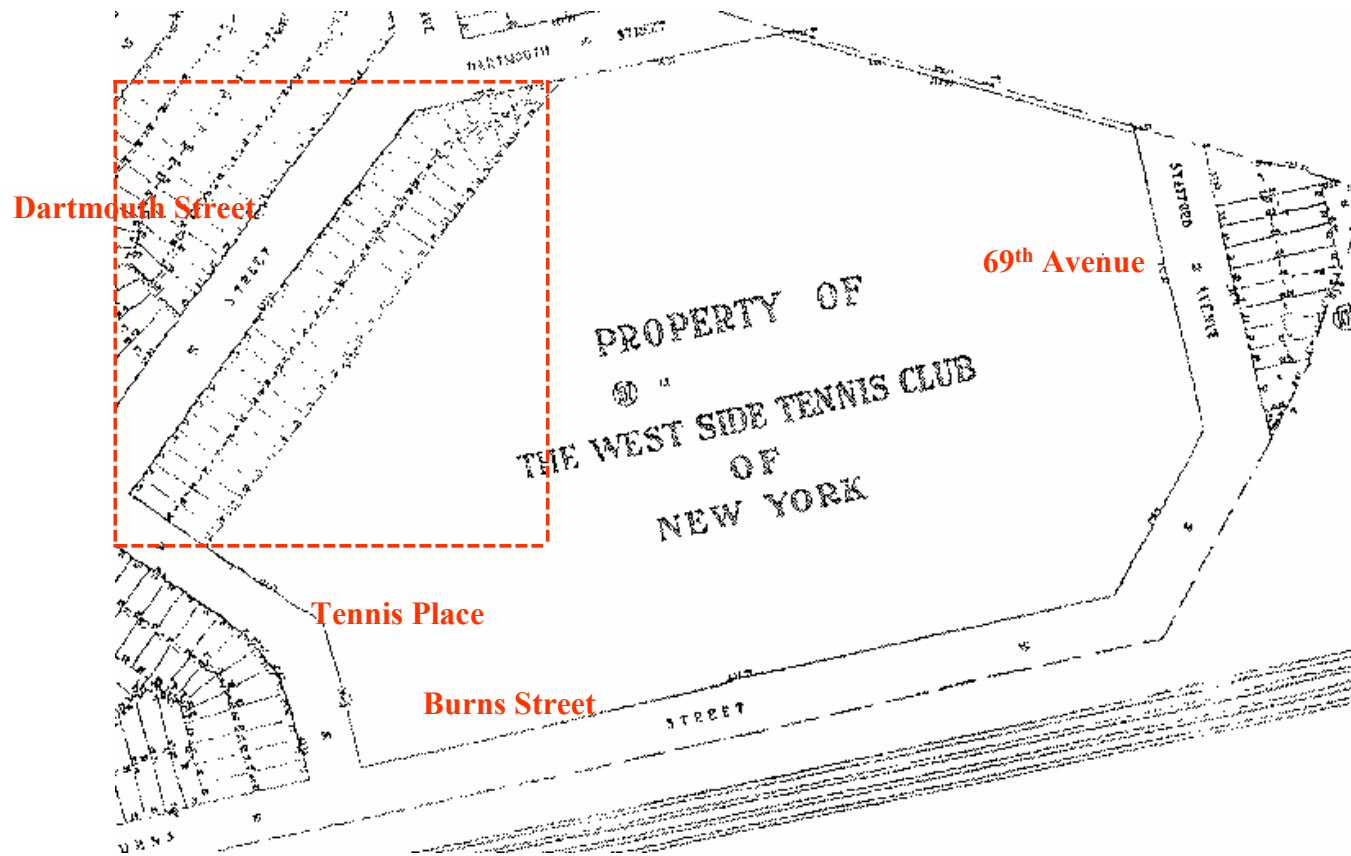


“Triple-Deckers” stretch the length of Burns Street from Ascan Avenue to Union Tpke. blocking out noise from LIRR trains. Area adjacent to Hawthorne Park pictured left and above.

Part 11

Sport of Kings

The West Side Tennis Club was founded in 1892 by thirteen tennis enthusiasts on Manhattan's west side. Seeking a larger facility, the club purchased 10 acres on the western edge of FHG for \$77,000 in 1913 from the Sage Foundation for only a \$2,000 down-payment and 5% mortgage. The Gardens vied with other communities such as Kew Gardens to attract the club to their property. When the selection committee stepped off the train and saw Station Square, they were sold on FHG. The Sage Foundation was glad to get the club because it added a "panache" to the community and many residents enjoyed playing and watching tennis. Also, it defined the western border of FHG and provided a needed buffer from encroaching development. The clubhouse was built at a cost of \$25,000 and the stadium and grandstand (based on the Yale Bowl in New Haven) opened in 1923. In 1914, with the outbreak of WWI, there were no European tournaments thus, the Davis Cup was held at the WSTC with 12,000 spectators in attendance. In 1915, the WSTC held the American National Championship beating out the socially prominent Newport (Rhode Island) Casino to host the tournament. From 1915-1977, the U.S. Championships were held at the WSTC. In 1921, 14,000 spectators watched the ladies championships. Prior to 1955, the club was only open during the summer months. Pneumatic "bubbles" allow for year-round tennis and the club added an outdoor swimming pool in 2001. Though the "open bowl" design of the stadium is considered to be an ideal facility for viewing tennis matches, its capacity (approx. 12,000) and lack of parking facilities nearby motivated the USTA to move to a more spacious and accessible facility in Flushing Meadow in 1978. Since 1978, the U.S. Open tennis tournament has been held in Flushing Meadow at another new stadium: Arthur Ashe Stadium (Ashe won his first U.S. Open at the WSTC in 1968).The WSTC has had a resurgence in recent years after a long decline attracting tennis players and enthusiasts from as far away as New Jersey and Connecticut as members. The stadium is still used as a viewing platform for tennis matches though it no longer hosts concerts due to community objections (the Beatles & Frank Sinatra, among others, performed there).



Only along Dartmouth Street are there house lots on the block occupied by the WSTC (they are single rather than the back-to-back lots as indicated above)



WEST SIDE TENNIS CLUB



GREENWAY TERRACE DURING THE INTERNATIONAL
TENNIS TOURNAMENT



Greenway Terrace (ca. 1915). The Greenway became a parking lot during the summer tennis tournaments

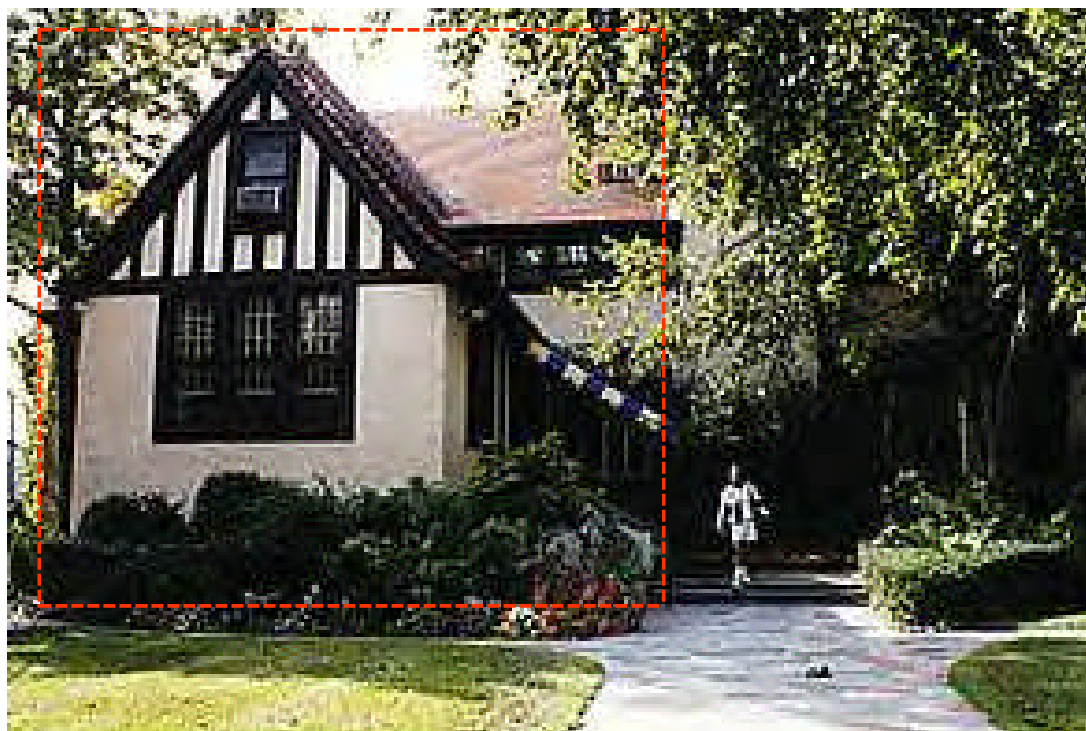
The Clubhouse



Clubhouse (center) and Dartmouth Street houses (top left)



The portico entry compliments the Arts & Crafts architecture of FHG



Through the portico (added to original structure) to the clubhouse entry



“Hall of Champions”



Dining Room



Lounge



The Tudor-style clubhouse and dining terrace
(as seen from the grass courts)

The WSTC can be seen as it was ca. 1946 in the classic movie *Strangers on a Train*.



The Dining Terrace



View from clubhouse of grass courts and stadium beyond



Clay Courts



Courts running the length of Dartmouth Street (at left)



Outdoor swimming pool

The Stadium



**Aerial view of the WSTC and stadium
(ca. 1950)**



Tennis stadium with its eagle flagpoles as seen from rear (69th Avenue)





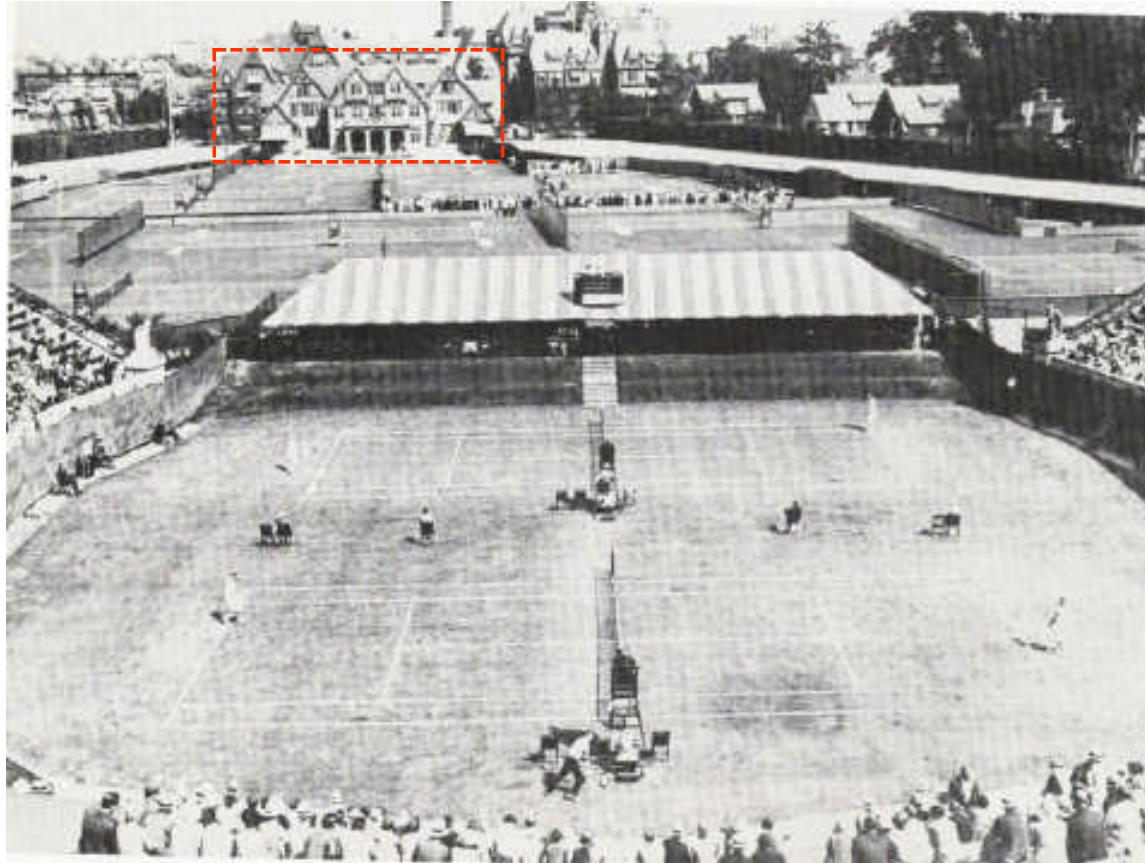
NBC TV trucks parked below the stadium grandstands during the U.S. Open



Live action TV from the WSTC



Press Box



**Though not very comfortable, there wasn't a bad seat in the house
(Clubhouse in upper left)**

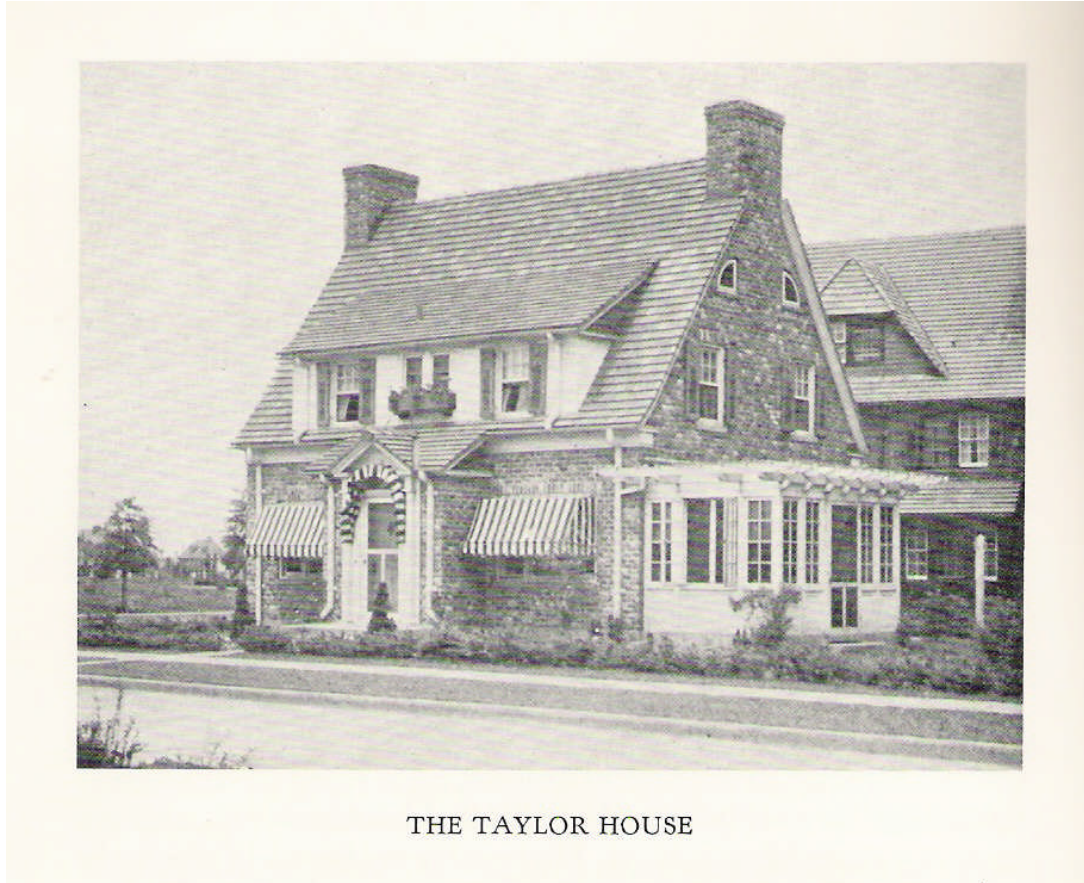




Part 12

A House in the Country

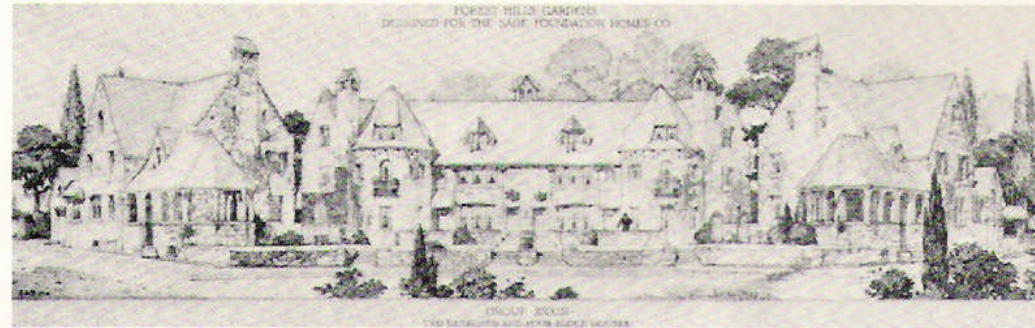
There are about nine-hundred houses in FHG of all sizes and arrangements; attached, semi-attached and detached. In general, the largest houses are to be found in the Upper Gardens – the “third zone”, between Ascan Avenue and Union Turnpike. Many large houses are on small lots and/or share a common driveway in front or a communal driveway behind. Not all houses have garages. The covenant restrictions dictate that the façade be made of masonry or cement stucco – no wood (or alternate material) siding, shingles etc. are allowed. No fences are allowed without special permission and must be approved by the FHG architectural committee as with all alterations to the exterior. Fenestration: windows and doors, must have real or simulated panes separating the glass and roofs must be of a “ruddy red” coloration. Prominent chimneys and interesting roof and dormer designs abound, as does the Tudor half-timber style. Unfortunately, nowadays most of the FHG Corporation’s annual budget is devoted to pursuing litigation against residents in violation of the covenant restrictions rather than maintenance and repair of streets, sewers, utilities etc. For those not in compliance with the restrictions, a parking decal will not be issued to the violator until the infraction is remedied to FHG Corporation’s satisfaction and/or court action will be taken.





THE ROUNTREE HOUSE

This house belonged to *Herman Rountree*, artist/illustrator



GROUP 33. From the Architect's plans



This is a variation on the “Bracket” design. At center are four houses; two attached and two semi-attached houses made to look like one big house. Flanking on both sides are large detached houses which have their own garage on the street. A common driveway serves the other four houses from the rear. It was designed by Atterbury & Tompkins.



Turret-style roof and fieldstone facade



Stone arch entry to rear (right)



Detached house (Bow Street) with attached garage





To the rear of this house on Dartmouth Street are the courts of the West Side Tennis Club. Note the use of stucco and brick and the interesting roof dormer.



Detached colonial on Slocum Crescent



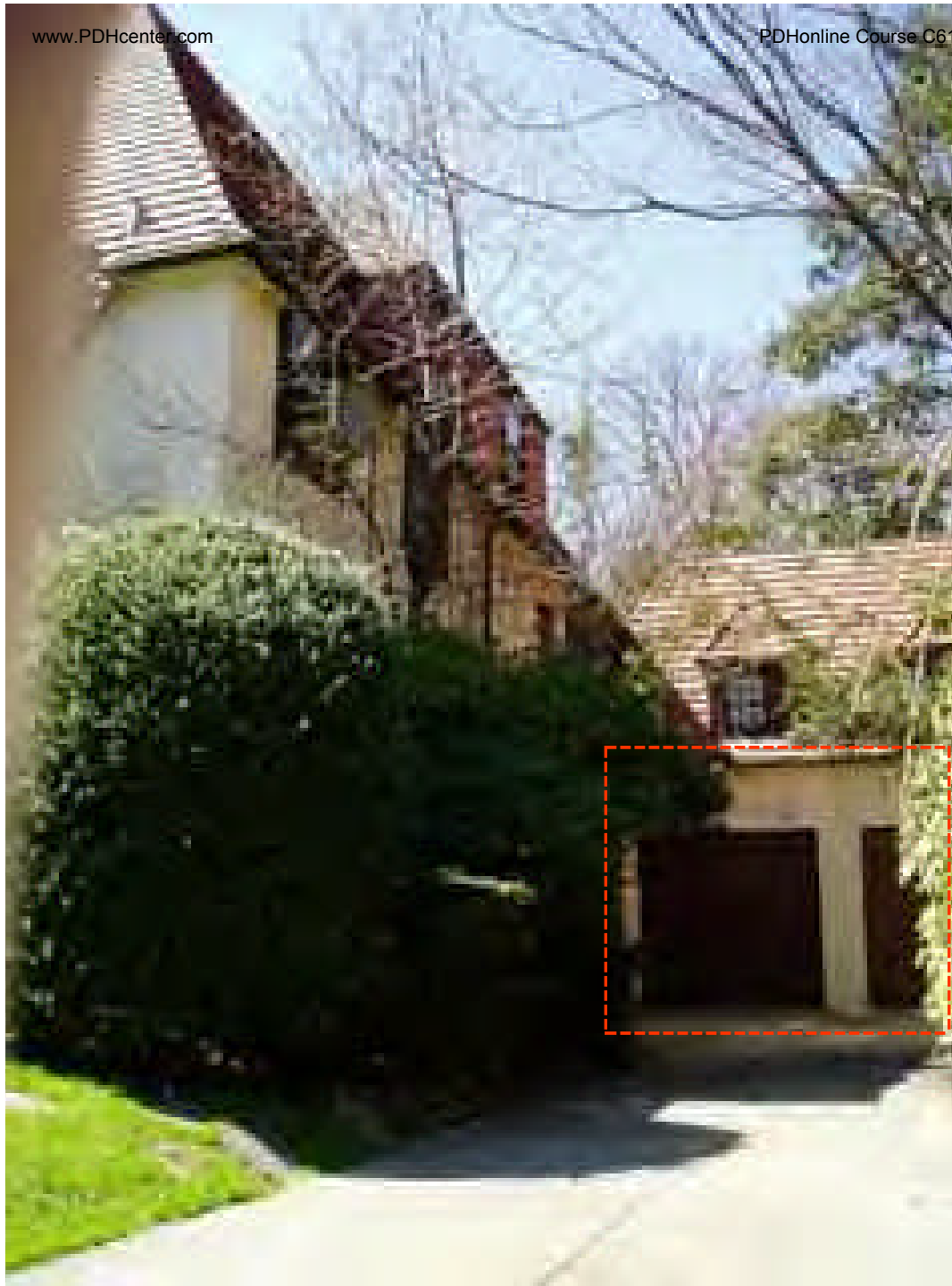
Another house on Slocum Crescent (near Greenway Terrace South)



Like many houses on small lots in FHG, this house has a side entrance (off the driveway at right) rather than a front entrance



Attached and semi-attached stucco row houses on 71st/Continental Avenue. Note the lower dormers (partially below the roof line) and the rounded copper-clad upper dormers and mansard style roof.



Sometimes, as with this house, the garages rather than the houses are attached and share a common driveway. This setup allows for larger houses on smaller lots but can be problematic if you have an inconsiderate neighbor.



Three houses made to look like one (one attached & two semi-attached). Note the “Peacock Blue” trim. Depending on the location, trim colors are either peacock blue, cherokee red, evergreen (as is Group 33), yellow, black or white. Sometimes, 4 or even 5 attached/semi-attached houses look like one very large house or just 2 large semi-attached houses using clever hidden entrances and asymmetrical facades and roofs/dormers.





Six Houses: two attached (center) with two semi-attached and two attached “wings” recessed as in the style of a country estate. Corner of Dartmouth Street & Tennis Place



88 Seasingood Road

This house just off of Ascan Avenue has a brick and stucco low fence



Typical “Bracket” design; two semi-attached houses at center with two detached flanking and a common driveway behind. This grouping is on *Ingram Street*, home to the fictional cartoon character “Spiderman.”

We Are Not Gardeners

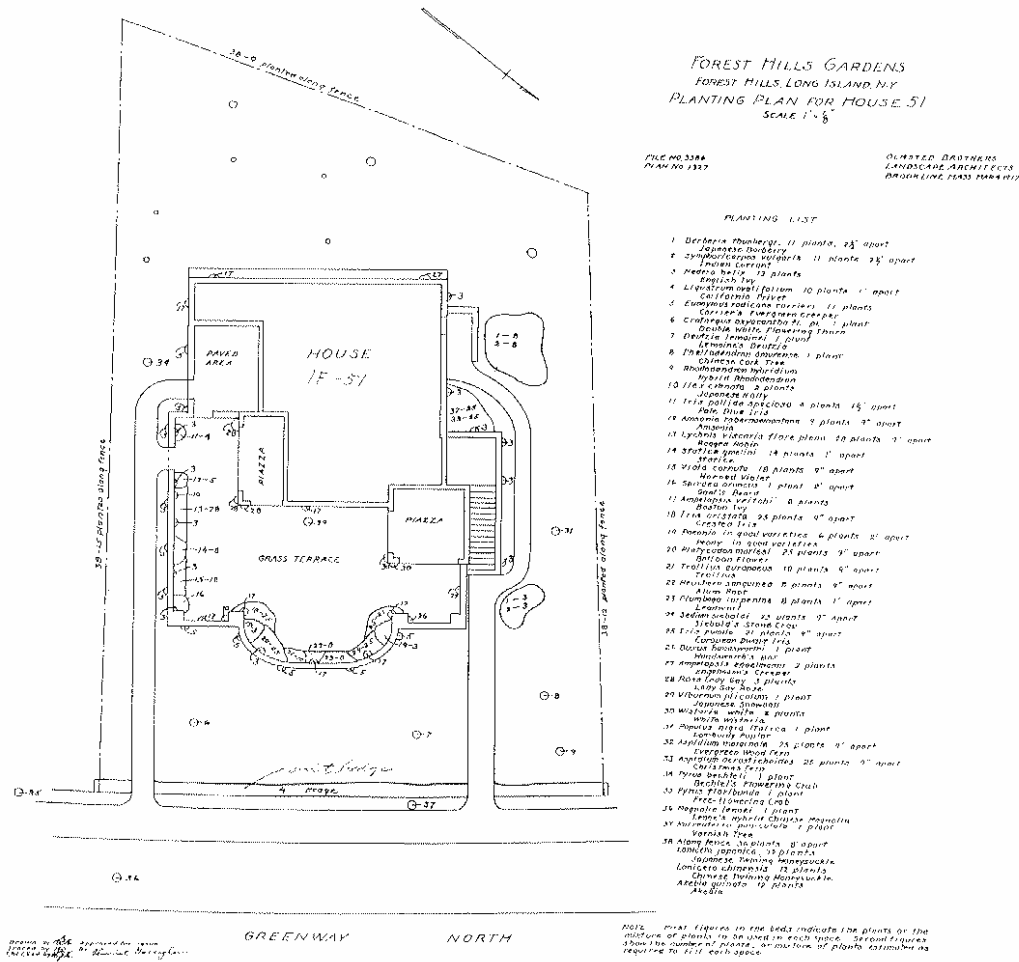
“We are not gardeners...to direct such gardeners or contractors as may be employed as to the proper interpretation to put upon our plans exactly as architects do in the case of buildings...not dealers in plants”

Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr.

RE: horticultural and landscape design for homes in FHG. Fees ranged from \$100 to \$1,000, depending on the work involved. The Olmsted Bros. firm charged a flat fee and would not take a commission on any of the plants, flowers, trees etc. sold to the client.



**“House 51”
(Greenway North)**



Olmsted Bros. Planting Plan
("House 51")







This house on Dartmouth Street is at the western-most extent of FHG



Dartmouth Street – old (left) and new (right) side-by-side



Though there are fewer and fewer, some houses like this one on Puritan Avenue, have an empty lot adjoining (on right side) whereby a house could be built.



Slocum Crescent



Olive Place





Note the “Pagoda” style dormers of this house on Seasingood Road

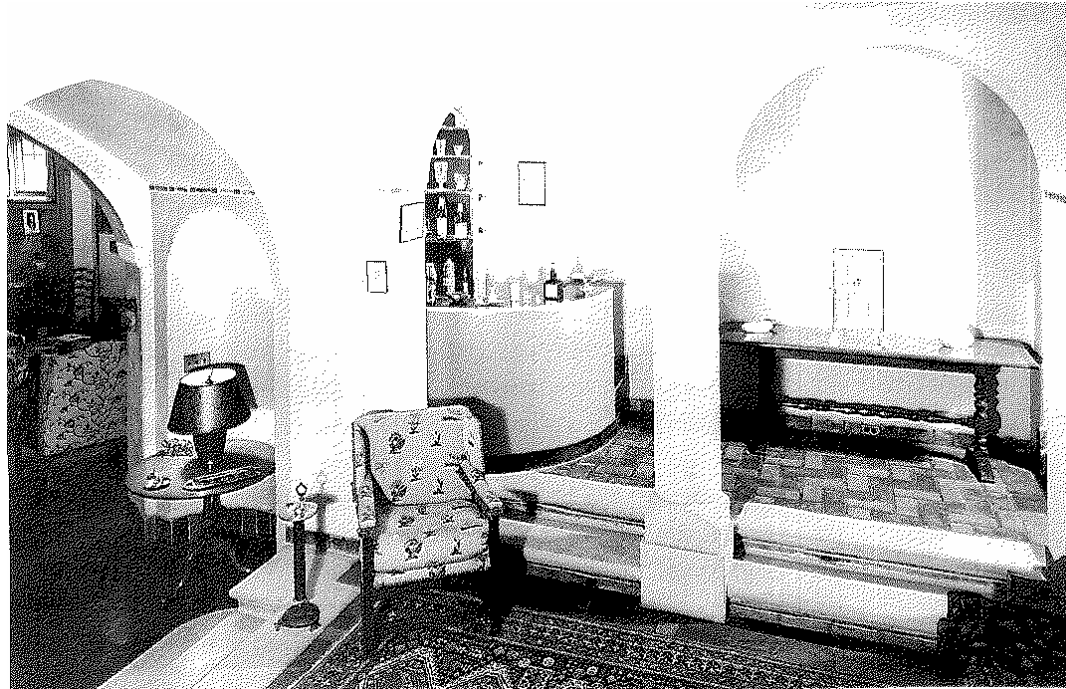
Ambassadors Row

Many of the largest and most prominent homes in Forest Hills Gardens are to be found along a stretch of Greenway North referred to by residents as *Ambassadors Row*. Here, many United Nations diplomats have made their “home away from home.”



Armour residence (a.k.a. “Cranston Tower”)





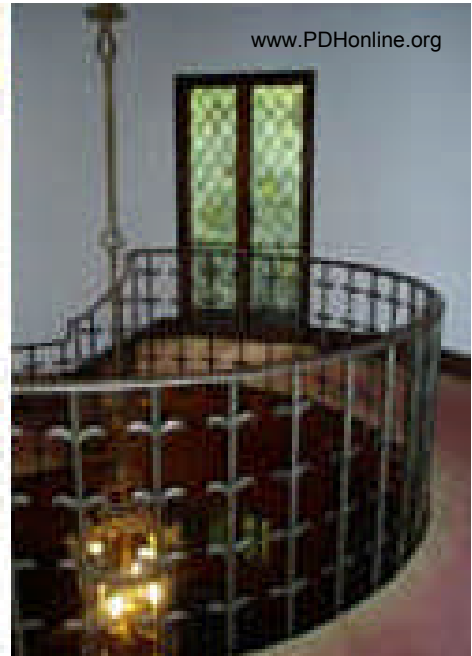
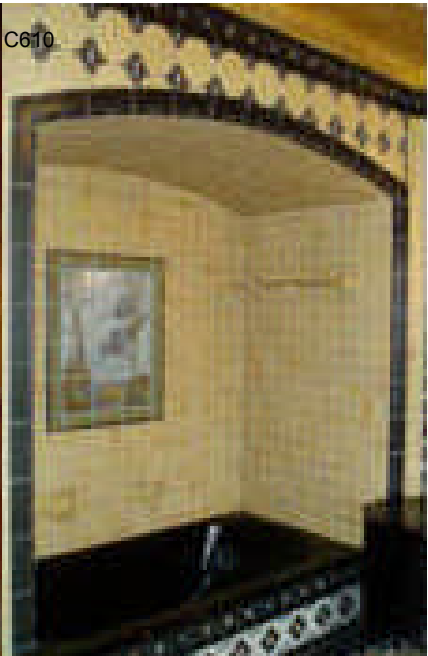
**Armour residence
(interior)**

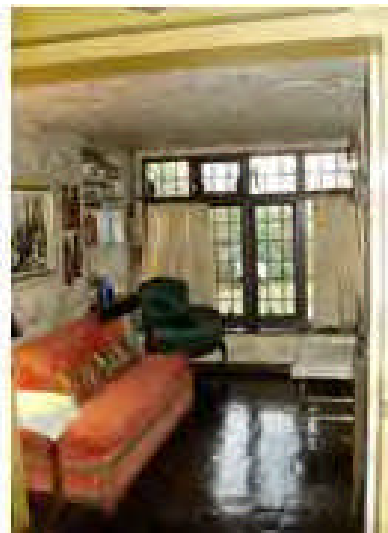
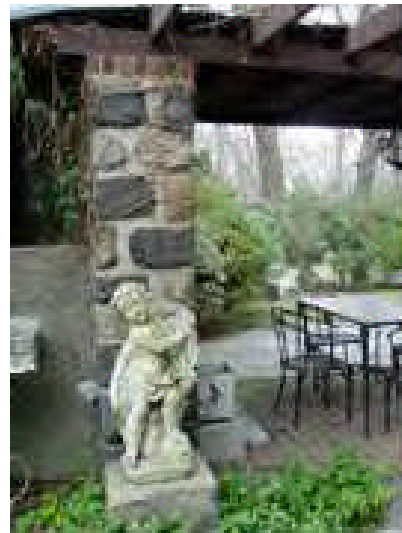












The Letter of the Law

One of the failures at FHG in the post-WWII years was the architectural designs allowed to be built that followed the letter of the law – the covenant restrictions, rather than their spirit. As mentioned, 25 Burns Street (a.k.a. Garden Arms) built in 1961 is a good example of this undistinguished architecture well below the standards the Sage Foundation, Olmsted and Atterbury hoped to establish and maintain. These failures extend to many homes built in the post-war period. They have red roofs and paned glass windows etc., but they are dismal eyesores when compared to the quality of the Tudor and Arts & Crafts architecture that preceded them. However, the FHG Corp. has recognized this problem and determined in recent years to “raise the bar” for approval of architectural plans. They must now meet stringent aesthetic criteria as well as other mandatory requirements. This has helped tremendously to make the new houses built more in keeping with the architectural traditions of the Gardens.











This is the largest house and lot in FHG – on Markwood Road in the Upper Gardens. It was the home of FHG architect Grosvenor Atterbury. His partner - *John Almy Tompkins*, also resided in a private home in Forest Hills Gardens.



Stone and iron fence surrounding the Atterbury House and property

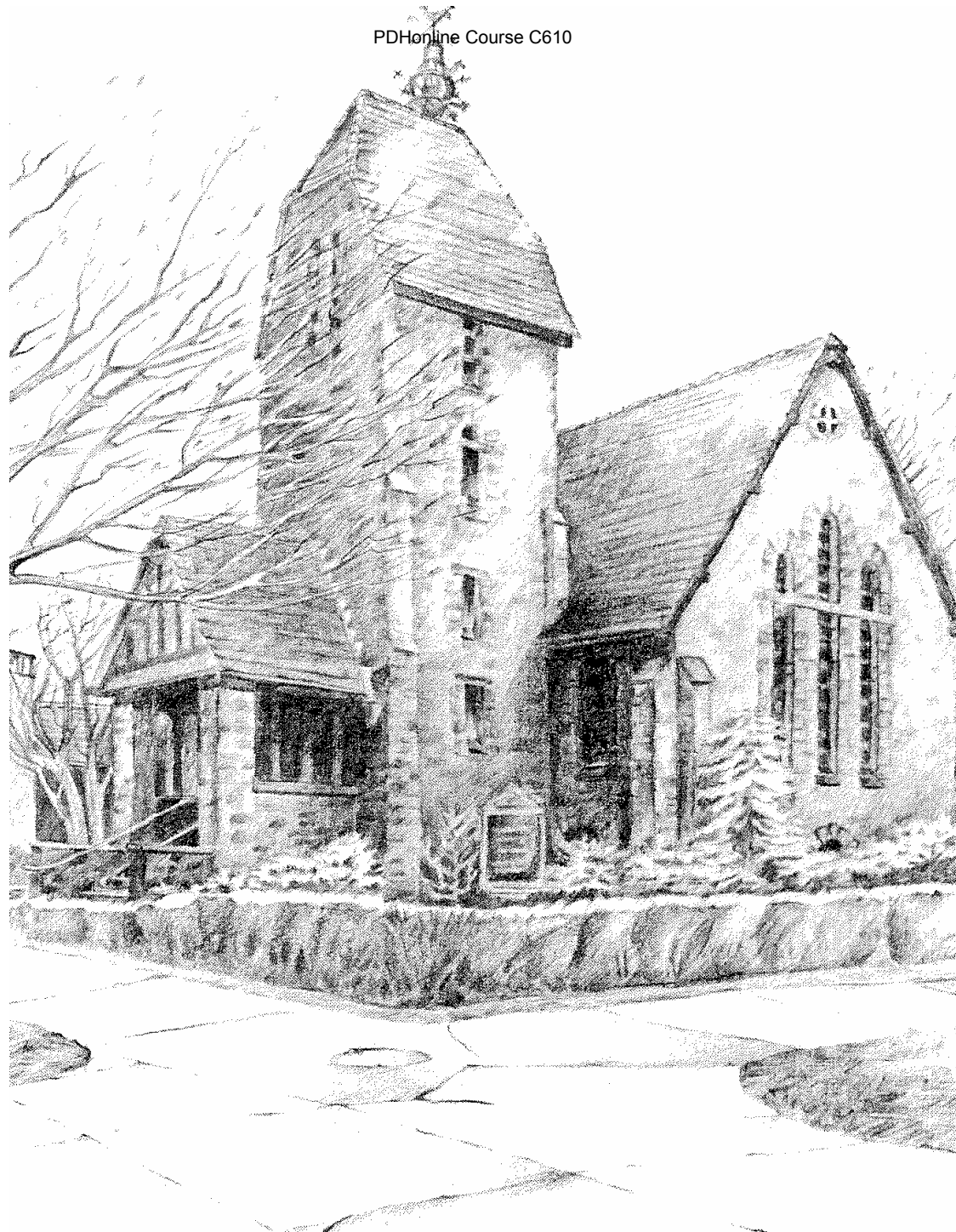
Part 13

Houses of Worship

The Church in the Gardens

On October 13, 1912, the Sage Foundation Homes Company allowed forty Congregationalists to hold their first service in a Station Square storefront at the corner of Dartmouth Street and 71st/Continental Avenue. Organized on March 19, 1913 with thirty-eight members and incorporated on June 5, 1913 as: “The Church in the Gardens”, the congregation moved to a portable chapel near the present site on Ascan Avenue November 9, 1913. On December 12, 1913, the Ecclesiastical Council extended to the Church in the Gardens the Fellowship of Congregational Churches. As such, the church represents many Protestant denominations. Olivia Sage was a deeply religious woman and, as a gift to the community she was so instrumental in creating, she paid for the cost of the building: \$125,000. However, the cost of the land was paid for by the congregation. She hired Grosvenor Atterbury who designed the church in the Norman Gothic style. The church was dedicated and presented on October 10, 1915. In 1920, Susie Smith; a congregant, donated the land adjoining the church on Greenway North and Borage Place to construct Community House which cost \$150,000 (Olivia Sage died in 1918). In 1947, Branch Rickey; owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers, FHG resident and Church in the Gardens congregant, was praised from the pulpit by the church pastor for breaking the color barrier in major league baseball by hiring Jackie Robinson.



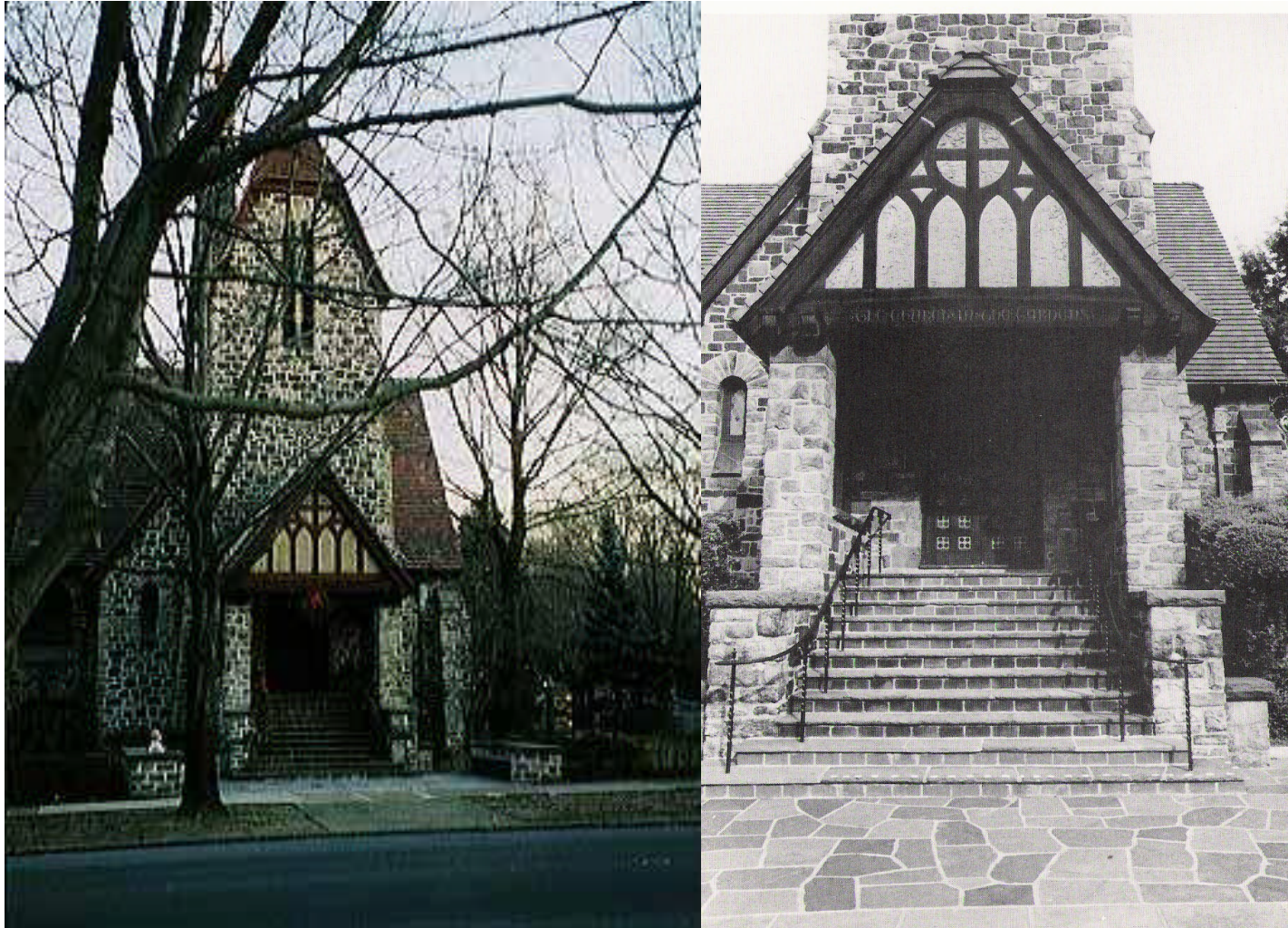












“I hope its doors will always be open to everyone who loves the Lord Jesus Christ and wishes to do his will”

Olivia Sage – October 10, 1915

RE: excerpt from her dedication and presentation speech for: *The Church in the Gardens*



The Nave



The Pews





**View from Ascan Avenue – Church (right) & Parsonage (left)
(ca. 1930)**



**View from Greenway North – Church (left) & Community House (right)
(ca. 1930)**

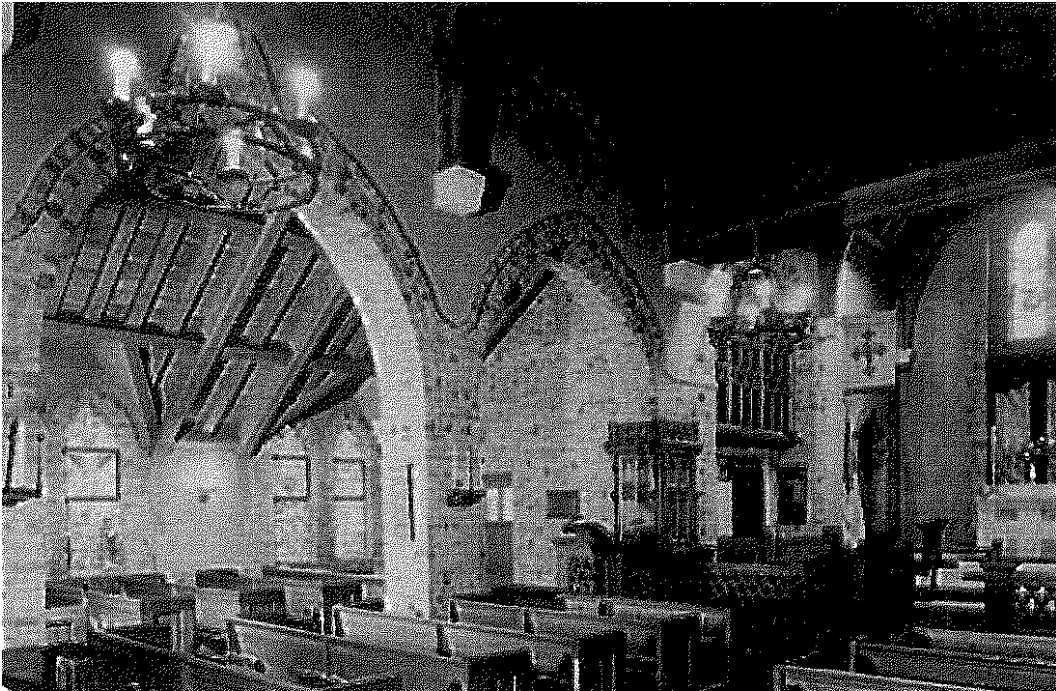
St. Luke's Episcopal Church

At first, a group of Episcopalians residing in FHG met (like the Congregationalists in the community) in a storefront in Station Square then in empty houses courtesy of the Sage Foundation Homes Company. Thereafter, they met in members homes. They organized a congregation on October 18, 1913 and erected a small building on the land they purchased at the corner of Greenway South and Cranford Street. The congregation hired architect Robert Tappan to design a permanent church on the site at a cost of \$70,000. The first service was held in the new church on December 25, 1923: Christmas Day. In honor of Teddy Roosevelt (who died in 1919) – former U.S. President and friend of FHG, the church was dedicated to him. It is of the English style and reminds one of a quaint church in the heart of the English countryside.



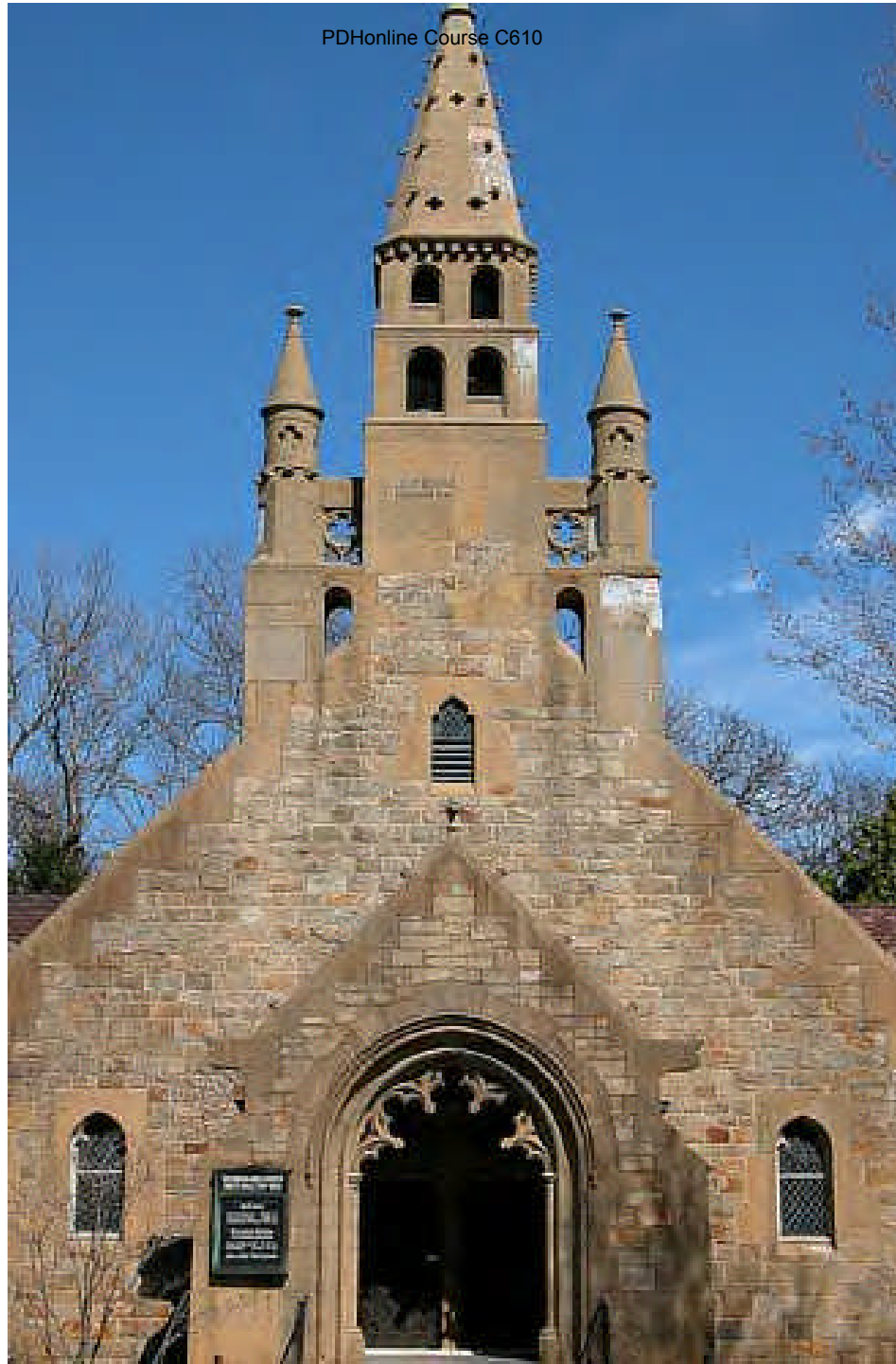






First Church of Christ Scientist

In January 1917, a resident of the Gardens invited a number of Christian Scientists to her home to discuss the desirability of holding services in FHG. The group organized, and shortly thereafter held their first service in a private home on Greenway Terrace. By the summer of 1926, it was evident that the church needed a larger place to meet rather than the basements and storefronts they were then using. For eight years; until 1934, the church used the auditorium of Community House as their meeting place. They had first planned to build their church at 30 Dartmouth Street, but it was realized that the property was too small so it was sold and the present lot on Greenway Terrace (North) and Middlemay Circle was purchased. The architectural firm of Bernhardt & Muller of NYC designed the church and was said to have been “inspired” by a French Gothic church in Brittany in Northern France. The church was built in stages to offset costs as a result of the widening depression. Ground was broken late in 1932 and the cornerstone laid July 13, 1933. Services were first held on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1934. Though the façade and landscaping was complete, the interior was not completed until 1945. The exterior of the church is made of a combination of granite and cast stone walls and a steep sloping roof covered with hand-made clay tiles. Inside is to be found magnificent stained glass, solid oak paneling and furniture, oak roof trusses and ornate lighting fixtures. The Christian Science Reading Room in a storefront at 10 Station Square is an affiliate of Christ Church.

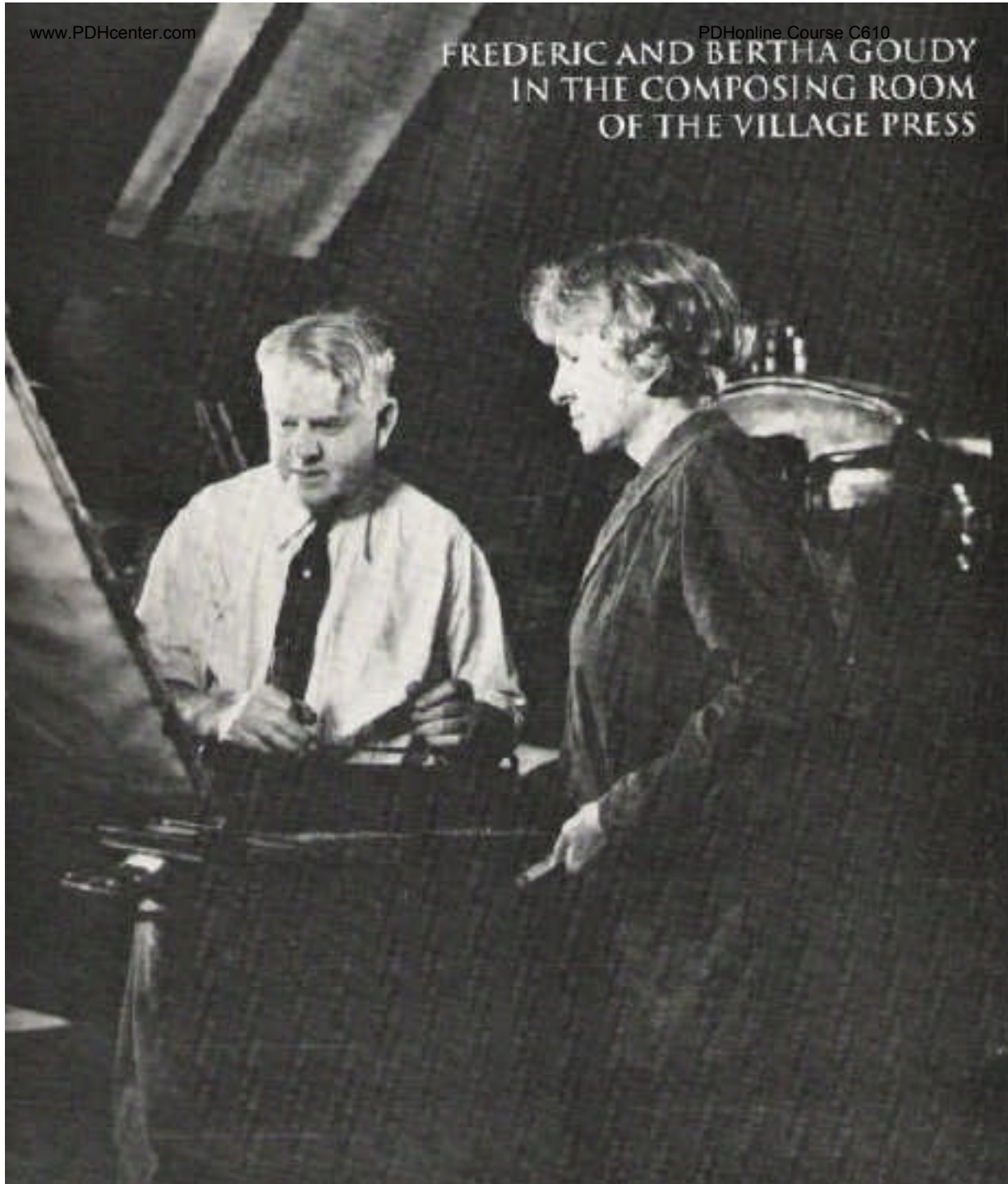




Part 14

Residents of Note

FREDERIC AND BERTHA GOUDY
IN THE COMPOSING ROOM
OF THE VILLAGE PRESS



The Goudy's lived on Deepdene Road and ran *The Village Press* from their home. Perhaps the most famous typesetters and graphic designers of their day, they later moved to Marlboro, NY.



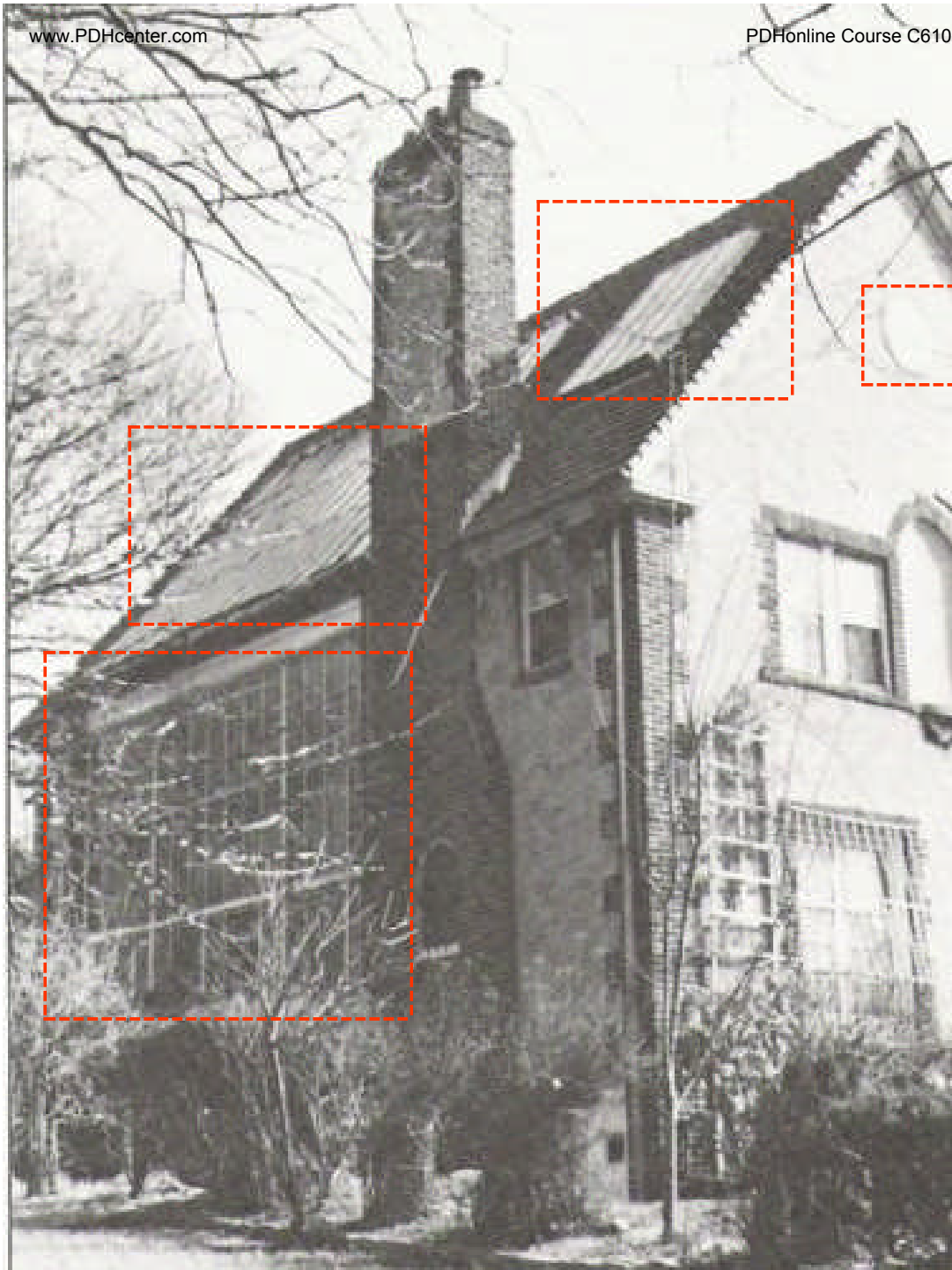
**The Goudy's house at 40 Deepdene Road
(ca. 1919)**



Most of the ornate lamp-posts in FHG feature a pressed metal figure of a printing press in honor of the Goudy's



Adolph Augustus Weinman, Sculptor



Weinman's house and studio was located in the Upper Gardens (234 Greenway South). Note the large glass wall and skylights for his studio. Bas relief "Pegasus" located on front façade (on gable end).



Weinman’s bas-relief (his specialty) “Pegasus” can still be seen on the gable end of the front façade of his former home and studio on Greenway South.

A.A. Weinman was considered to be one of the top five sculptors in the United States in the early 20th century. A German immigrant, he found FHG an ideal place to live and work. His sculptures can be found on many buildings in NYC, the chambers of the Supreme Court in Washington D.C. and *La Pieta* adorning Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Church on Queens Blvd. and Ascan Avenue (just outside FHG). Famous for bas-relief, he is probably most famous for the design of two of the most beautiful coins ever minted by the Treasury of the United States: the *Mercury Dime* and the *Standing Liberty Half Dollar*. Both were in circulation from 1916 through 1945. Weinman's most famous work in the Gardens is the WWI memorial: *A Call to Service Overseas*. There is a bas-relief plaque by Weinman in Community House and his son was also an accomplished sculptor.



**Winged Liberty Dime
(a.k.a. “Mercury” Dime)**



Standing Liberty Half Dollar



***Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Church* (view from Ascan Avenue). Weinman's *La Pieta* bas relief is over the Ascan Avenue entry**



La Pieta (the Pity)



Burt Bacharach
Singer/Songwriter



Dale Carnegie, Author/Motivational Speaker



Thelma Ritter, Actress



Helen Keller. Her house was just outside FHG on Queens Blvd. – near Our Lady Queen of Martyr’s Church, on the site of what is now the *Kennedy House* apt. building



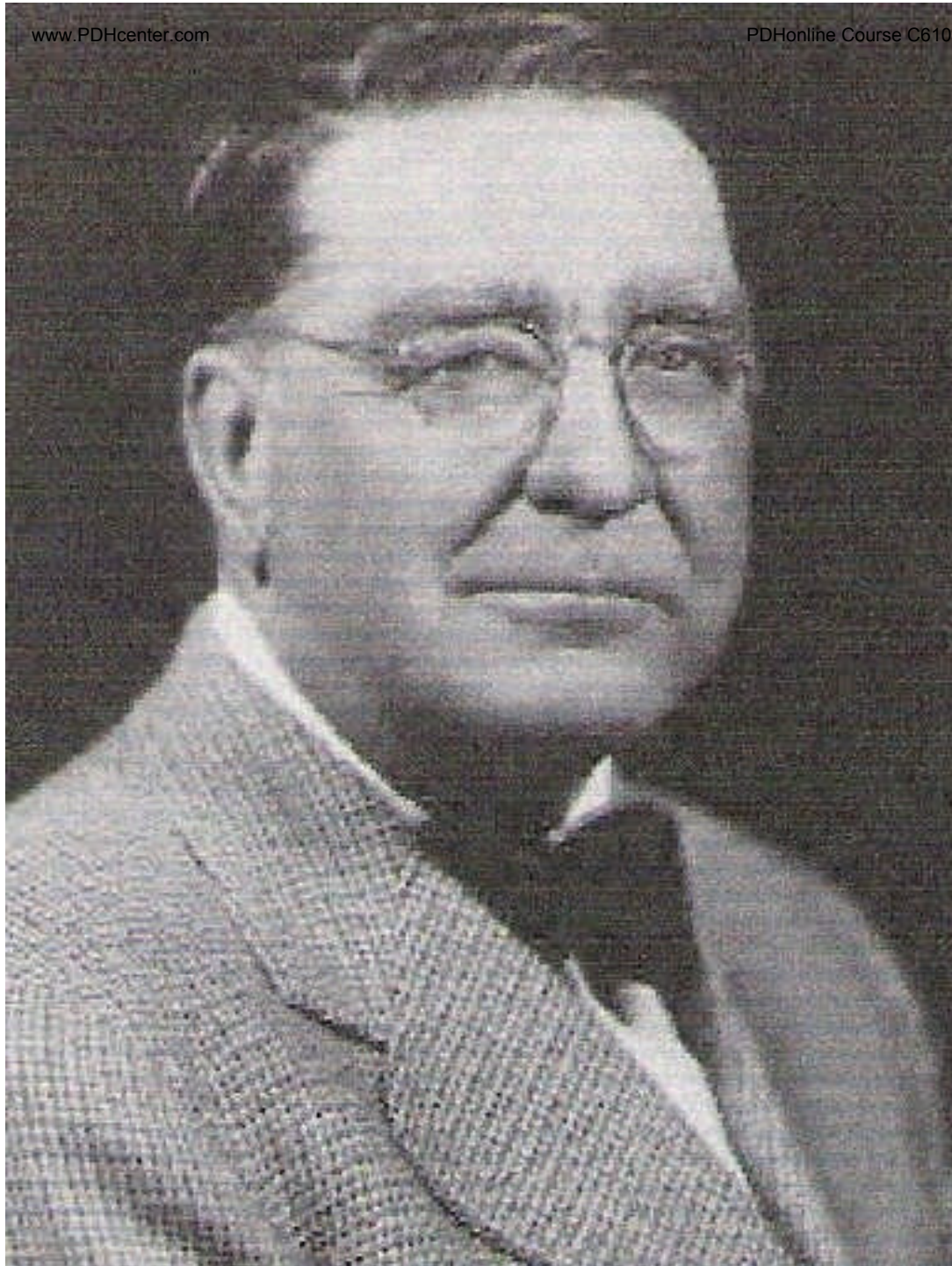
Buckminster Fuller
Inventor/Futurist



Big Band Orchestra Leader



Pia Zadora, Actress



Branch Rickey, owner of the *Brooklyn Dodgers* (later the *Los Angeles Dodgers*)



Jimmy Breslin
Newspaper Columnist



Geraldine Ferraro

Part 15

The Geography of Nowhere

“Our best architects have abandoned the suburbs to the ordinary practitioner and to the speculative builder...the discipline of town planning at the suburban scale has been allowed to die”

Robert A.M. Stern, Architect



Post-WWII suburban development: row upon row of houses with streets that lead nowhere



Tract house of the 1950s



Suburban ranch house of the 1960s



Typical suburban New Jersey house



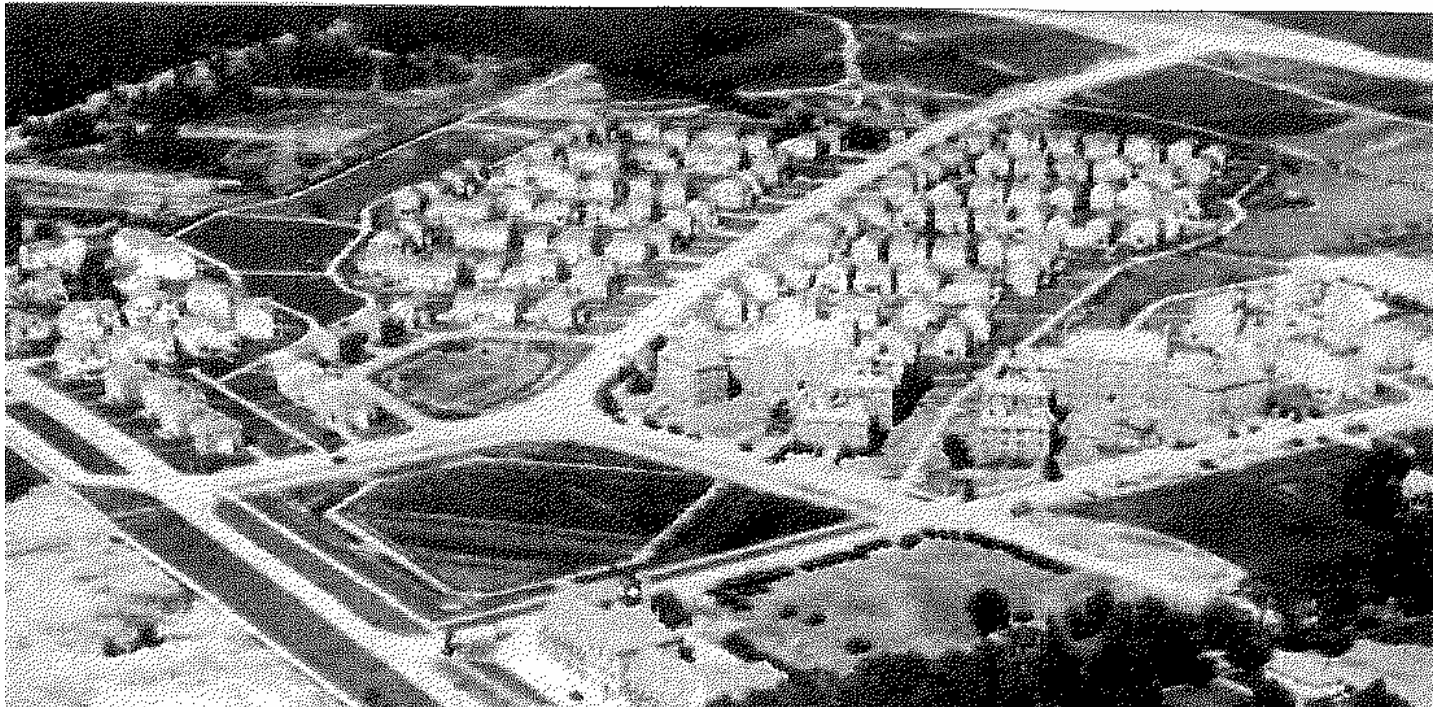
Places like Charleston, SC (above), Savannah, Georgia and FHG have become tourist destinations valued for their beauty and charm, both of which are distinctly lacking in most American communities of the post-WWII era

One of the things people point to as evidence of the failure of FHG and the Garden City movement in America is the fact that so few were built. FHG never proved the financial success developers were watching for and Americans were unwilling to accept socialist ideals such as communal ownership of land. Of the Garden Cities built after FHG *Radburn*, New Jersey is one of the more interesting. The idea was to build a suburb on Garden City principles while accommodating the automobile which, by 1929, had become the means by which people could live in the suburbs in the first place without having to depend on fixed railway lines. Radburn sought to hide the car from view, this proved to be a mistake which William Levitt took note of when he developed Levittown on Long Island in the late '40s. Americans love their cars and want to show them off, not hide them in a back alley. *Greenbelt*, Maryland was a depression-era WPA influenced Garden City featured in a film at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Later examples of suburban developments influenced by FHG and the Garden City movement are *Reston*, Virginia, *Seaside*, Florida and, perhaps, most significant of all: *Disney's Celebration*, Florida.

A Garden City for the Motor Age



Radburn turned its back to the street providing alleys for essential services, deliveries, parking etc. The fronts of the houses faced leafy, manicured paths that led to underpasses so children did not have to cross streets on their way to/from school. The arrangement was flawed in one major way; the plan was designed to hide the automobile from view. Americans are very proud of their cars denoting to some their societal status thus, they prefer to show them off in a driveway rather than hide them. Developer *William Levitt* would remember this lesson well when he built the two *Levittowns* (LI & NJ) in the post-WWII years.



**Radburn, New Jersey
(ca. 1929)**















**Greenbelt, Maryland
(ca. 1938)**



















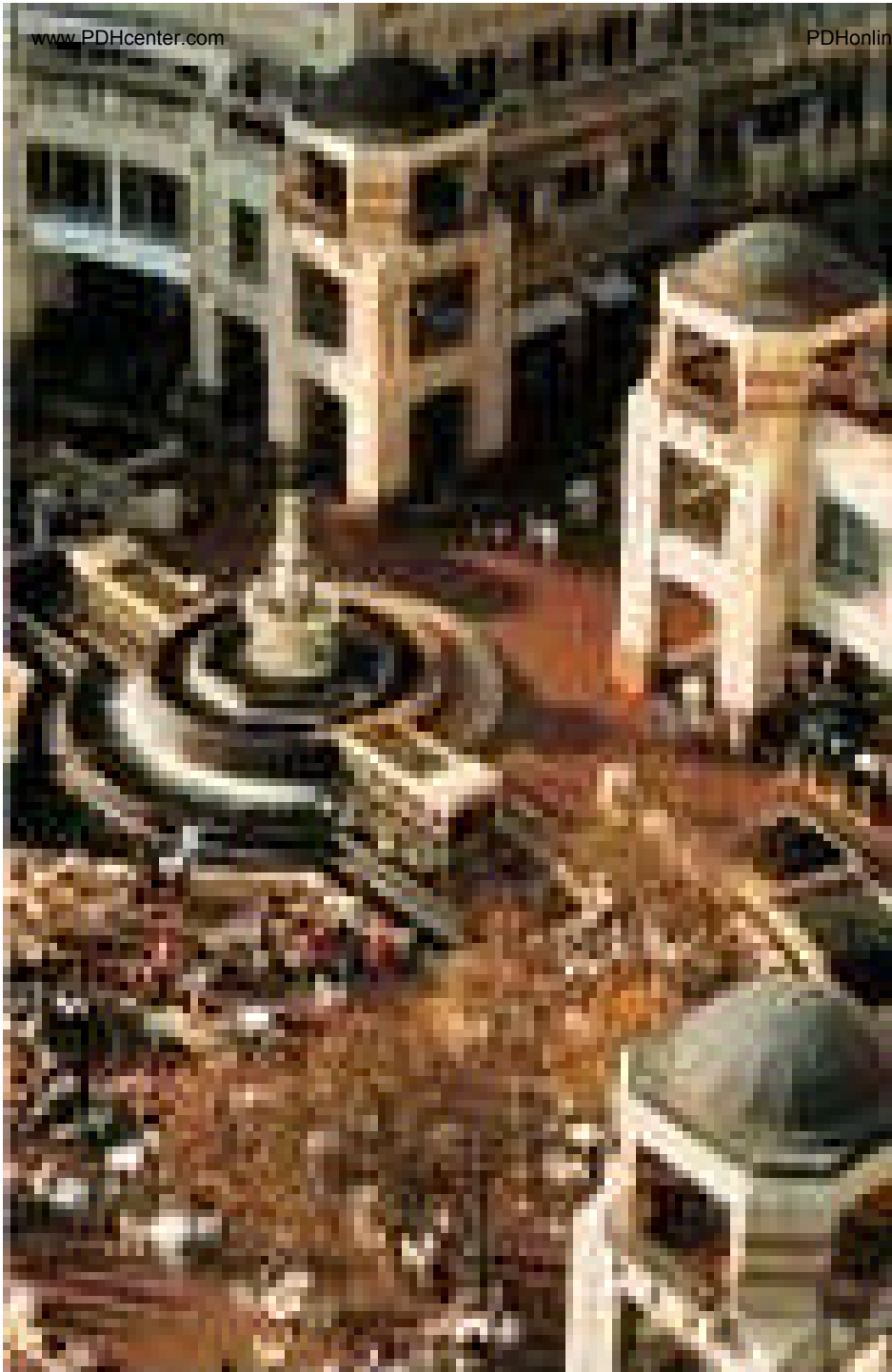




As a popular exhibition at the 1939 New York World's Fair, *Democracy* – a scale model of the ideal future metropolis of the year 2039 – brought key elements of Ebenezer Howard's garden city philosophy together. Within the *Perisphere*, viewers gazed down from a rotating platform upon a greenbelt incorporating 25 satellite towns, surrounding a city two miles in diameter. Zoned into districts separated by spacious parklands freely adapted from Howard's garden city. *Democracy's* 11,000 square miles were to house 1.5 million inhabitants in suburban "Pleasantvilles" or in mixed industrial-residential "Millvilles". At *Democracy's* nucleus, the intersecting point of its vast radial arteries, a single square-sided tower of immense height loomed over a ring of smaller high-rise buildings. This tower was the pillar of "Centeron", the great office complex to which one-quarter of a million *Democracitizens* would commute each workday.



**Perisphere
1939/40 NY World's Fair**



Reston Town Center Reston, Virginia



New Town, Old Ways



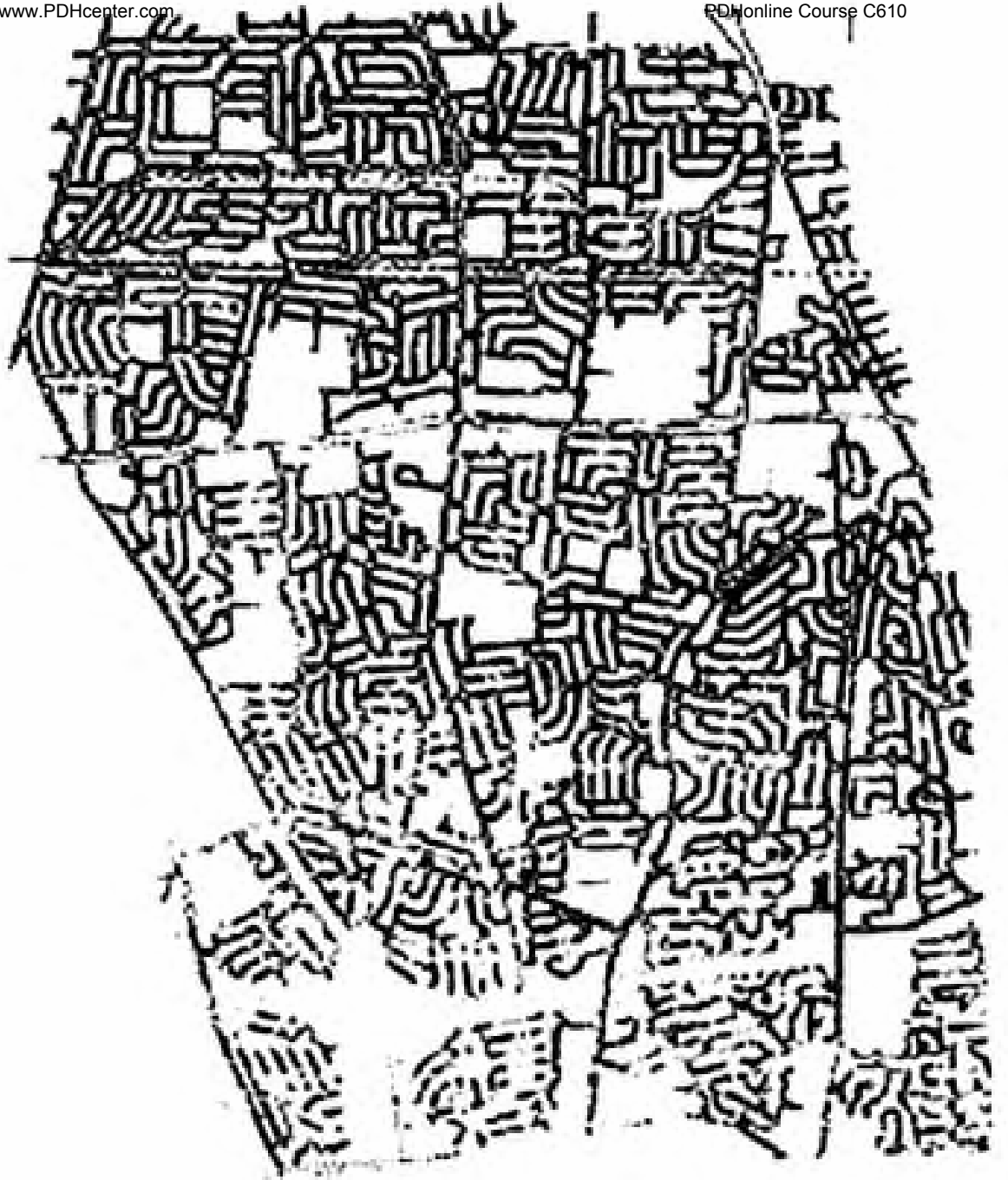
Seaside, Florida



William Levitt



**Aerial view of the potato farm that would become Levittown
(Long Island, New York)**



**Levittown, Long Island
(site plan)**

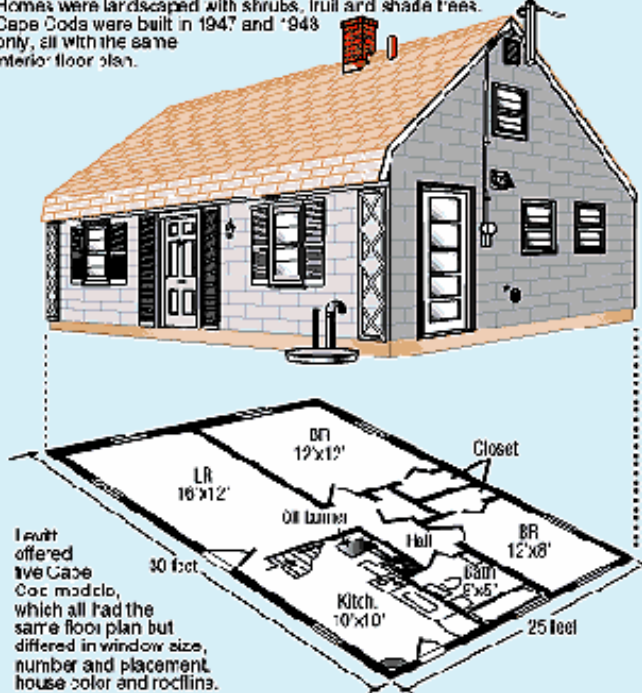




Levitt's Homes A look at the two types of homes Levitt built in the Levittown area.

The 1947 Cape Cod

The Levitt Cape Cod offered 4 1/2 rooms on a 25-by-30-foot slab, with an unfinished expandable attic, and a kitchen full of appliances that included a Bendix washer. The kitchen was in the front - at the time a novel approach - and two bedrooms were in the rear. It rented for \$30-55 per month, depending on the lot, and was offered for sale a year later at \$7,500. Homes were landscaped with shrubs, fruit and shade trees. Cape Cods were built in 1947 and '48 only, all with the same interior floor plan.

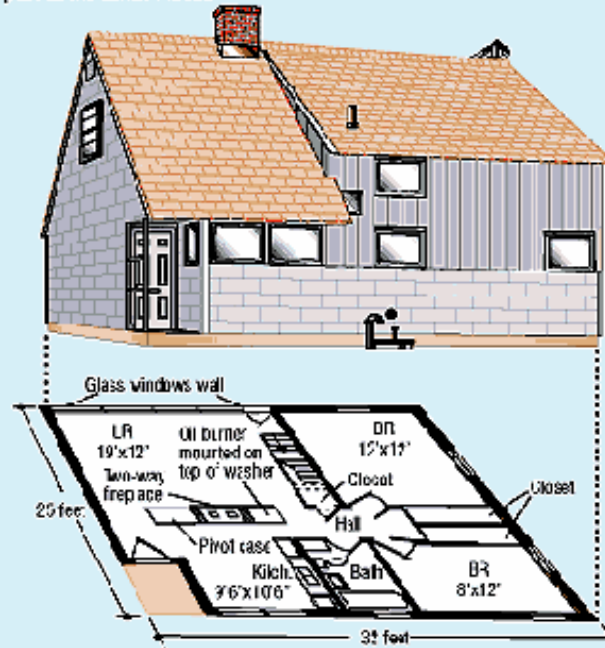


Levitt offered five Cape Cod models, which all had the same floor plan but differed in window size, number and placement, house color and roofline.



The 1949 Ranch

The Levitt Ranch, a so 4 1/2 rooms, was first offered in 1949. It was 50 square feet larger than the Cape Cod and retained the cape's floor plan, keeping the kitchen in the front, but pushing the living room to the rear and bedrooms to the side. The attic was unfinished. There was a two-way hearth between the fully equipped kitchen and the living room. It sold for \$7,993, with a monthly mortgage payment of \$58. The 1953 and 1951 models had the same basic floor plan as the earlier model.



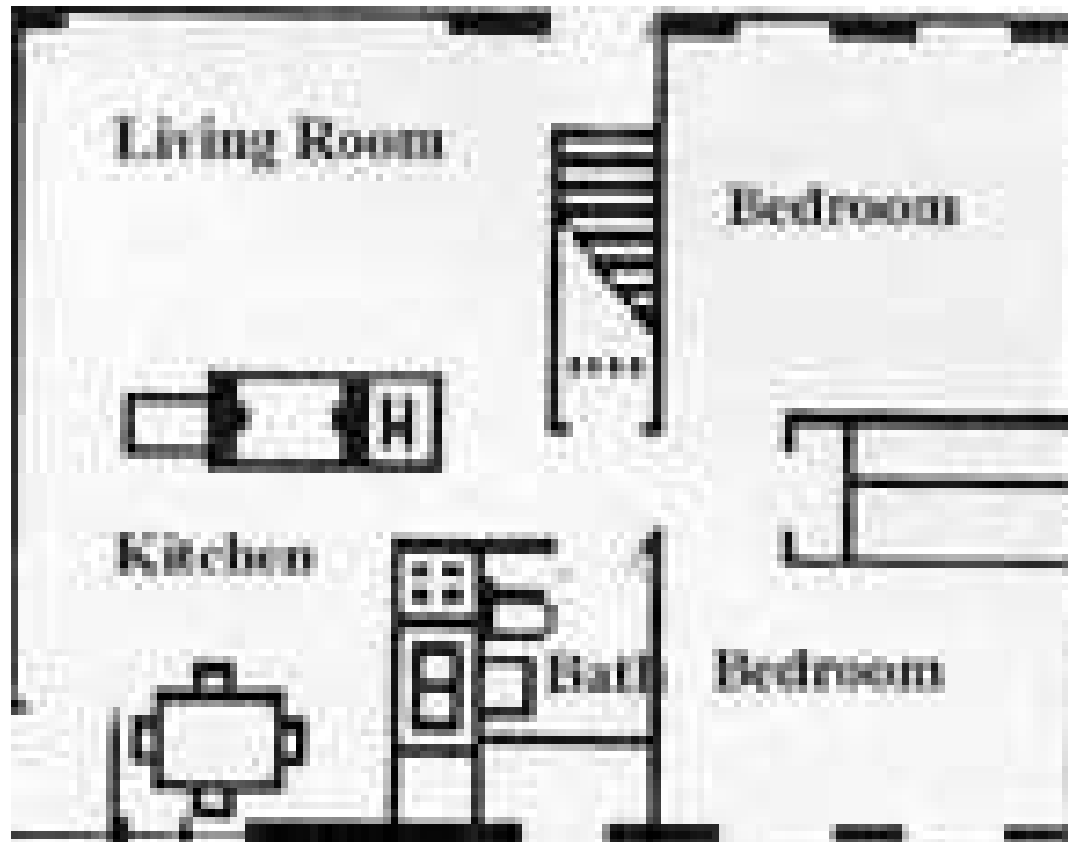
The five 1949 ranch models, while differing in exterior features, all had the same floor plan and each came with a revolving storage cabinet and a 16-foot picture window in the rear of the house.





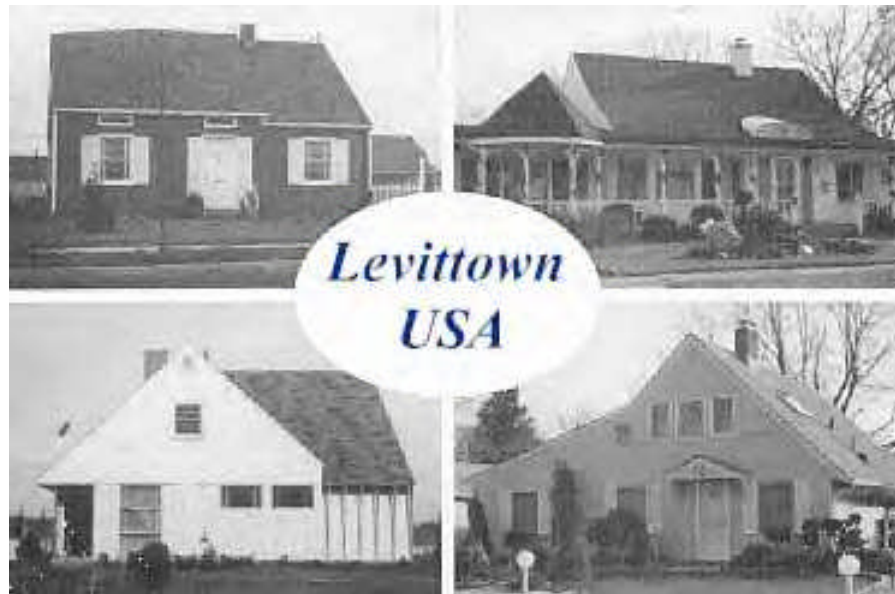














Prominent driveway in Levittown. Lesson learned of what-not-to-do (hide cars) from Radburn, New Jersey.



Mickey Mouse Utopia

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RE: critique of Celebration, Florida









“There is that pioneering mentality. We aren’t here to create Utopia. We’re here to try to make right what went wrong with America’s communities and set a standard for solutions. We are figuring out a better way.”

Celebration, Florida resident