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"Harmony in
Diversity"

PORTLAND CITY CLUB BULLETIN

"Active
Citizenship"

VOLUME III

PORTLAND, OREGON, MAY 25, 1923

NUMBER 35

FRIDAY, MAY 25

Hotel Benson, 12:10, Sharp

OFFICIAL DISCUSSION The Laurgaard Plan by City Planning Commission

Speakers

A. E. DOYLE

E. B. MACNAUGHTON

Members of the Commission

J. P. NEWELL

Consultant

O. LAURGAARD

City Engineer

THE following letter has been received from A. F. Flegel, vice-president of the Commission: "Replying to your letter inviting the City Planning Commission to accept the time available at the City Club meeting Friday noon, May 25th, to discuss the Laurgaard Plan in all its details, I beg to advise you that the invitation is accepted, and the City Planning Commission will be represented by Mr. J. P. Newell, consultant, and Messrs. A. E. Doyle and E. B. MacNaughton, members of the Street Committee of the Commission."

MAKE THIS A BIG ATTENDANCE AND GUEST DAY—COME EARLY!

WHY IS A SCHOOL SURVEY NEEDED?

Published in full below is the supplementary report of the City Club Committee on Education which was approved by the Board of Governors last week and submitted to the School Board on Wednesday, May 16th. The report gives a detailed account of the reasons for advocating a survey of school needs and summarizes the results such a survey would bring to the community.

To the Board of Governors:

The City Club Committee on Education agrees with the School Board that a school housing problem of serious proportions exists, but the issue has been raised between a majority of the school directors and others equally concerned with the welfare of our schools, regarding the need of a scientific survey as the basis for solving the school housing problem. The issue is as to the sound and businesslike method to be employed for its solution.

During the past year, the School Board has presented to the public various programs of expenditure to meet the immediate needs of the district which have varied from seven to eleven million dollars as indicated by the following tabulation:

Estimates of Needs

School Board's estimate April, 1922.....	\$7,000,000
School Board's estimate May, 1922.....	8,000,000
School Board's estimate April, 1923....	8,500,000
Report of Board's Committee, May 16, 1923.....	10,791,000

The report which contains this last estimate carries a list of seventeen frame buildings, not provided for in the estimate, one of them three stories high and designated by the report as "dangerous." Are not some of the other sixteen also dangerous? And does this not raise the question whether even the latest and largest

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Semi-Annual Dues Payable Now!

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*"To inform its members and the community in
public matters and to arouse them to a realization
of the obligations of citizenship."*

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APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following applications have been received and will be presented to the City Club, Friday, June 1st:

WM. L. BREWSTER,
Lawyer, 1025 Gasco Bldg.
IRA G. HEDRICK,
Hedrick & Kremers, Engineers.

Proposed by R. E. Kremers and E. O. Sisson.

At least two new members from each City Club member during the coming year is the goal which the Membership Committee has set out to obtain. It is surprisingly easy to interest wide-awake citizens in the City Club. Try an invitation on your friends.

Statements for City Club dues were mailed on May 1st.

Representatives of the City Club were in attendance at the Community Chest meeting, Monday night.

The Recreation Committee of the Chamber of Commerce is again making arrangements to have committees of the various organizations visit the city auto tourist camp this summer. The City Club has accepted the week beginning July 9 to send its delegates to the park. This is the same action that was taken last year.

The appearance of the City Planning Commission before the City Club on Friday is probably the first official discussion of the Laurgard Plan which that body has given before a civic organization. The questions raised by the City Club Planning Committee two weeks ago will be answered in detail on Friday and other features of the Plan explained. The Governors especially urge the members to bring guests to this meeting. City Planning problems have always interested Club members and no better arranged program on a more vital community problem has been offered to the membership than the one this week.

The City Club of Chicago is also taking an active interest in City Planning. Last month a meeting of representative organizations was called to confer upon the subject of a metropolitan plan. As a preliminary to the conference the City Club had prepared a report demonstrating the need for a regional survey. The result of the meeting was to appoint a committee of twenty-one to recommend a method by which planning for the entire metropolitan area may be successfully undertaken. The Club's work is a fine example of clear-headed civic action.

Portland Municipal Terminal No. 1, known as the Fifteenth Street Terminal, is within easy trucking distance of the center of the city. Has berthing space for five vessels.

Site contains 15.2 acres, quay dock construction with two piers, three transit sheds 935x100 feet, 330x176 feet and 500x187 feet respectively, with warehouse in rear of dock, 190x200 feet.

This terminal is used primarily for Inter-coastal shipping. It has a sprinkler system, and all modern devices for the convenient handling of cargo.

Why Is School Survey Needed?

Continued from page 1

estimate really covers the immediate needs?

Not only has there been this wide variation in the lump-sum program but the record of performance shows a still wider variation in individual items. Exhibit "A" of the City Club report submitted May 4, 1923, shows: first, that many items of the program comprehended by the bond issue and tax levy of a year ago were not carried out and that other projects were undertaken which were not included in the original program; and second, that the probable cost of the undertaken projects have on the average exceeded the estimates by fifty per cent.

Request Made Year Ago

There is no implication that these large discrepancies mean that the school district is not receiving full value from the various contracts which have been let, but they do demonstrate that the estimates made in June last were not based on adequate or complete data as to the conditions and needs to be met. They also conform the recommendation made by the City Club and other organizations in June, 1922, for the immediate undertaking of a scientific survey of school needs. This request for a survey was again brought to the School Board's attention by the City Club and representatives of other civic organizations in the Fall of 1922, at a time when only a small portion of the 1922 funds had been committed to specific projects. The Board, however, took no action on the recommendation, although the probable need of a further and even more extensive building program has been apparent from the Board's own estimates.

The record of the Board's estimates and performances as outlined above would seem to be ample justification for a scientific survey. Additional argument for a survey may be found, however, in the fact that the Board's report is not sufficiently informative as to the relation between immediate needs and future needs and between replacement demands and the needs for added facilities. Furthermore, the Board's report does not include a program of financing, and does not give any evidence that the Board has even considered the possibilities of placing the district again on a pay-as-you-go basis, whereby the recurring building needs would be cared for by tax levies.

Layman Cannot Make Survey

A survey of the kind required cannot be made by untrained volunteers or committees of in-

terested citizens, by committees of representative civic organizations, or even by committees of the School Board itself. The layman may, of course, determine that a school is over-crowded, that a given building may not be safe or adequate under existing conditions, or that more space should be provided for recreation and proper growth, without being competent to advise as to what type of building should be built to meet the particular need.

Any citizen may visit the Linnton School, for example, and satisfy himself in three minutes' observation that the school is inadequate and in many respects unsatisfactory for the purpose; but it requires more than an amateur investigator to determine the character, size and location of the school which ought to be built to replace it, and that would be adequate for the requirements of the school population in the immediate vicinity during the coming years.

It would be folly in such circumstances for either the City Club or any other organization to attempt a "personal survey" as suggested by the Board. That is necessarily the function of experts. In any adequate survey, full use would of course be made of the present professional staff of the public schools; but experience elsewhere indicates that to be really effective the survey must be made under the direction of an expert who has devoted his main attention to problems of this sort.

Why a Survey Is Needed

The Survey needed would proceed on the Theory:

1. That the community wants adequate school facilities;
2. Is willing to pay for them;
3. Is determined to have them;
4. Is entitled to adequate information as to existing and probable future conditions; and
5. Wants a program laid out for it upon which it may rely for the fulfillment of the above ends.

With apparently only a few of our existing schools considered by the Board to be adequate or satisfactory such a survey requires and should produce:

1. An exhaustive examination of existing resources and facilities, and the nature and extent of their shortcomings;
2. A determination of the order in which new structures or additions should be built in order that the needs of the district may be taken up

and met in the order of their importance.

3. A thorough study and determination of the style of each building, the type of construction and the number of class rooms and accessory rooms, which would enable an architect familiar with school design and costs to plot each building, calculate the cubage, and give an accurate estimate of cost.

4. An expert study of the types of structures required to meet progressive educational policies for different degrees of educational development and for given conditions as to prospective population, including among other things the following important elements:

- (a) Building for safety.
- (b) Building for health, recreation and community needs.
- (c) Building for economy.
- (d) Proper location of major schools.
- (e) Size and extent of new districts.
- (f) Analysis of building methods and policies.
- (g) Possibility of modernizing old buildings.
- (h) Extent to which fire proof buildings may be necessary or proper under the varying conditions.

5. A thorough analysis of the fiscal policies of the district to determine:

- (a) Adequacy of present revenues from taxation for maintenance and operation.
- (b) Extent to which provision should be made in tax revenues for current additions to school buildings.
- (c) Character and extent of bond issues necessary to make up past deficits in school buildings and the conditions under which such bond issues should be authorized.
- (d) Necessary provision in annual budget for replacement and depreciation of existing plant and equipment.
- (e) Such remedial legislation as may be necessary to adjust the conditions as found to the policy determined upon as necessary for the future maintenance of the schools.

The above is an outline of some of the facts of major importance that would be disclosed by a scientific survey. In substance as stated in the Club's letter to the School Board, the survey would enable the community to know beyond question when, where and what it should build and the reasons therefor, as well as such changes in financial and other policies as may be necessary to adapt the existing conditions to a progressive and businesslike program for school development.

If you want an application sent to a prospective member, call the Executive Secretary, BR-wy 8079. He will present the application in person, if it is desired.

FIRE HAZARDS STUDIED

Forest fire fighting methods, at once surprisingly new and original to the average layman, were explained in a delightful manner at the City Club last Friday by Julius V. Hofmann, director of the Wind River Experiment Station for the government. That the time could be foretold several days in advance when atmospheric conditions would be favorable to forest conflagrations was one of the facts that the speaker stated had been worked out through experiments. On a day of low humidity smoldering fires flare up and spread rapidly, while a relatively high humidity causes fires to burn slowly. Such information, timed correctly, is invaluable in fighting fires.

"Fire is the greatest enemy of the forests," said Mr. Hofmann. "Our timber must be restocked or lumbering becomes merely mining and makes the lumber industry a transient one. There are certain natural laws which help in reforestation. In the northwest, particularly, seedlings grow rapidly immediately following a burn, but if another fire occurs three years later the second growth is destroyed. For this reason all slashings should be burned within the first year after logging, to allow the seeds, long dormant in the forest mat, to germinate.

"Eighty per cent of all forest fires are caused by human beings, hence, the need for constant and insistent public education on fire prevention."

Mr. Hofman stated that had the low humidity conditions of last May and June continued until July, the Northwest would have suffered one of the worst forest fires in its history. Lack of moisture in the air brings fire dangers. It is now possible through the Wind River Station to issue warnings to the lumber industry of days when fires will spread. The speaker gave a thrilling account of the application of his experiments in the Herman Creek fire last summer.

In fighting fire with fire, the back-fire method is used, but the success of this method largely depends on knowing that the back-fire will not spread and become as dangerous as the main blaze. Knowledge of the climatic factors is the key, according to Mr. Hofmann's experiments.

Seattle is making another attempt to secure the commission-manager form of government. Fifteen freeholders were elected at a general city election on May 8, with instructions to prepare a new charter for submission to the voters in the spring of 1924.