

CITY COMMISSION DISCUSSES ZONING OF NEW BUILDINGS

Stabilizing of Property Values by Protective Measures Is Object

POINT TO PRESENT LOSS

Points Made in Argument For Zone Classification

ZONE or district classification of properties is upheld as factor in increasing assessable values. Philadelphia Housing Commission estimates loss to city, through absence of such restrictions, amounts to millions of dollars.

City's income through tax returns suffers accordingly. Zoning commission considers stabilization of property values by prohibiting encroachment of industries into home sections.

Advisory committee on municipal finances in 1912 suggested classification of buildings into various types or classes and preparation of "factor of value."

City Parks Association holds property values are being impaired by extension of Chestnut street canyon, due to encroaching skyscrapers. Assessment of property abutting on ground secured for municipal parks, parkways and similar neighborhood improvements is suggested as a means of revenue increase.

Excess condemnation in street opening in built-up sections recommended, with subsequent profitable resale or rental on long-term lease.

Stabilizing of property values by prohibiting the encroachment of industries into home sections, with a consequent decrease in residential values through obnoxious proximity and increased fire risk is under consideration by the commission on zoning and districting the city, appointed early in the present month by Mayor Smith.

Members of the commission are also endeavoring to ascertain what amount of realty values has been lost to Philadelphia because of the absence of these restrictions. According to the Philadelphia Housing Commission, this loss amounts to millions of dollars, while the city's income through tax returns has suffered correspondingly.

The zoning commission was organized October 4. It was authorized by Councils last spring, and was the outcome of a suggestion embodied in the "smothered" report of the advisory committee on city finances, which was conferred with Mayor Blankenburg in 1912 on the financial requirements of the city.

One of the principal suggestions made by the committee is the idea which the zoning commission now has under consideration with a view to increasing the municipal resources.

The committee recommended the adoption by the Board of Revision of Taxes of several features of the New York system of assessing realty, among which is "the classification, so far as seems wise and practicable, of buildings into various types or classes and the preparation of a 'factor of value' for each class, so that the construction cost of any building of a particular class can be readily ascertained by multiplying the proper factor by the total number of square feet of floor space or by the total number of cubic feet of contents of the building."

PROTECTION NEEDED

Following the suggestion the City Parks Association in its annual report, issued March 20, 1915, makes the following comment:

"Into the midst of the most exquisite portion of any of Philadelphia's justly famous and world-known suburbs any kind of industrial establishment may at any moment be injected. There is now no effective protection. Not only cities and towns, but suburban counties, need this power of protecting residential areas, and hence residential values, by means of residential zoning."

The canyon-like effects resulting from failures to zone districts and the consequent occupancy of sections devoted to business houses by office skyscrapers come in for criticism by the same body. Other impending consequences, including the depreciation in property values, are cited as follows:

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

"The Legislature should enable the cities of Pennsylvania to deal with this destructive agency—destructive to health and life and ultimately of property values—and to deal with it as each section of each city may require. It should, consequently, authorize the division of cities into districts and confer power on each city to adopt for each district such regulations as may be most appropriate for it."

Assessment of property owners for improvements is another municipal revenue suggestion made by the City Parks Association. "When a park or parkway is opened in suburban territory," it urges, "it is obvious that in the course of five or ten years the abutting properties enjoy a great enhancement in value, caused primarily by the expenditure of the taxpayers' money for the park or parkway. The creation or construction of such improvements is, therefore, regarded in many States as an advantage to the owners of the property so benefited, who are, therefore, compelled to pay in proportion to the benefit. Such payments are usually spread over a period of some ten years, the payments thus being made to follow, not precede, the accrual of the benefit."

"The method of excess condemnation is that used generally in European cities in reconstruction projects. When a new street is opened through the built-up portion of a city, not only the property actually required for the street itself, but additional property on each side, is taken either by purchase or condemnation—expropriation, as it is called in Europe—and the excess property is then either resold or rented on long-term leases. In this way frequently the whole cost of such new thoroughfare is paid out of the profits of the resale of the abutting ground without any permanent charge on the city's treasury."

BAPTISTS HEAR ADDRESS

New York Divine Speaks to State Convention Here

An address on "The Supreme Peak of the Christian Church" by the Rev. Charles L. Goddard, of New York, one of the leading divines of the Baptist Church, closed the morning session of the Pennsylvania Baptist general convention, which is holding its ninth annual meeting in the Chestnut Street Baptist Church, Chestnut street, near Fortieth.

The remainder of the day is devoted to reports of special committees, routine business and election of officers for the ensuing year. The Rev. Russell H. Correll will deliver the closing address of the convention this evening at the devotional service which opens at 7:30 o'clock.

AMERICAN LEGION FIGHTING "TO AVENGE THE LUSITANIA"

Staff Signal Sergeant Describes Famous Battalion Recruited From Every State in Union

"Down With German Menace!" Slogan of Men Now Enlisted Under British Flag

By HARRY NORTON

(Mr. Norton is a Philadelphian and staff signal sergeant in the United States army. He describes in his story. The attempt to get something other than conscription out of his life led him to seek service in many lands. He fought the Spaniards in 1914; he dodged bullets from the half-naked Filipinos during the uprising in the islands, and then came back to civil life. The present war caught him, and it was during a lull in waiting to go to the front, on September 24, that he wrote this story from Liverpool. Frequently he rose to heights of individual emotion, such as when the man who sent the signal to Admiral Dewey to open fire on the Filipinos when they landed, while his meritorious service on the staff of General MacArthur, Harrison Grey Otis and Elwell S. Otis and under General Funston, also attracted attention.)

The Ninety-seventh Overseas Battalion of the British army, organized as the "American Legion," under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Wade L. Jolly, of Philadelphia, is awaiting orders in England for embarkment to the French or some other theater of war. As soon as the last batch of recruits is brought up to the standard, the command, "The best body of troops" Sir Sam Hughes, Canadian Minister of Militia, ever saw, will be sent into action.

AMERICAN LEGION

When the troops, gathered from every corner of the United States and Canada, go into battle against the Germans the letters from their caps and collars because the State Department of the United States prohibited the use of the name. Instead, their cap and collar badges will bear the legend "Acta, non verba" (action, not words), which was adopted as the battalion's motto.

Unique in its polygenetic muster roll, the ninety-seventh battalion is the first body of Americans to enroll to fight side by side with English troops under the British flag since the "Boston tea party." There are hundreds of former American citizens, soldiers of fortune and adventure, miners from Alaska, students from the University of Pennsylvania, Yale and Cornell; whalers from the Siberian coast, homesteaders from the Northwest, society men from Washington, D. C.; wealthy Boston shoe manufacturers, men in every position in life. A canvass of the men revealed their motives for enlisting. Epitomized, it is:

"To avenge the Lusitania, and to stamp out the German menace to civilization."

Colonel Jolly, leader of this grim battalion in British lands, the command of the detachment on his merits. A board of British army officers, consisting of General Lissard, General Gwatkin and Colonel Thompson, selected him after a detailed examination in which the battalion's officers were chosen from eighty eager applicants.

Colonel Jolly, whose home is at 1215 South Broad street, Philadelphia, served fourteen years as an officer in the United States Marine Corps, seeing action in the Boxer uprising and at Vera Cruz. He retired from service in 1912 to enter the contracting business in Philadelphia and helped in the construction of the Curtis Building and other large structures.

Major A. Ransome, of Portland, Ore., served in the Philippines in the Fourth United States Cavalry in 1898-9, and was a colonel under Villa in Mexico, where he had mining interests. Major W. E. Guthrie, of Washington, D. C., a graduate of Georgetown University, was an officer of marines and of the Philippine constabulary for eighteen years. Captain John Manning saw active service in the Philippines during his fifteen years in the United States army. Lieutenant Roberts served in the Seventh United States Cavalry. West Point graduates are numerous among the officers.

The machine-gun section is commanded by Lieutenant A. A. Allenbach, of Pottsville, Pa. He succeeded Captain Tracy Richardson, a soldier of fortune, who was left in Canada to undergo an operation. Richardson, who was a former Mexican general, previously enlisted with the Princess Patricia and received twenty-four shrapnel wounds in one battle. Sergeant Major Alexander Robertson was in the famous retreat from Mons with the Second Scottish Guards and was "gassed" by the Germans.

WAS 1500 STRONG

Recruiting for the battalion began in Toronto last December, and by February it had a strength of 1500 men. Although they were promised to be sent to the battle front by the middle of March, time passed in monotonous drill, and many of the original volunteers transferred to other outfits that were sailing. The Mexican trouble, then came and others left for the Mexican border. In June the battalion was sent to Alder shot, a training camp near Halifax, Nova Scotia, causing a further depletion in ranks. Three hundred of the best drilled were transferred to the Fourth Pioneer, who were sailing.

For a time it looked as if the "American Legion" was to be disbanded, but when it was found they could go into service under their new motto, two other American commands, the 212th and 237th battalions, re-

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HEADS AMERICAN LEGION Lieutenant Colonel W. L. Jolly, commander of the Ninety-seventh Overseas Battalion

recruited at Winnipeg and Halifax, respectively, were merged into the Ninety-seventh. It sailed the middle of September on a Liverpool containing 2000 troops bound for Liverpool.

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CANNED SONGS OF THE PAST RECALL STRANGE PHILADELPHIA COMPOSER

Many Remember "Silver Threads Among the Gold," but Who Can Say Who Wrote It?—Other Phonograph News of Week

By the Phonograph Editor

Romance lurks behind many a song. It adopts queer guises. It goes in purple—or in rage, to put it melodramatically. The sentimental circumstances surrounding some of the most popular ballads of the United States are that way. And never more so than in the curious life and equally curious death of Hart Pease Danks.

Not many Philadelphians, in likelihood, remember Hart Pease Danks. But his name, if not his life, is brought to the minds of some by the announcement by the Columbia Company of a new record of an old song. It is "Silver Threads Among the Gold," recorded in England by the British cellist, W. H. Squire. Danks composed that song.

About thirteen years ago, this obscure writer of melodies, whose principal piece has strangely outlived him in general recollection, was found dead in his little obscure home in Race street. At the foot of his diminutive cottage organ, where he did all his composing, lay the body of a man who had written a song that simply will not die. Post-mortem formalities showed that he had been poor, miserably poor, so poor that a local song publisher, a friend of many years, had to gather together some money to have Danks buried properly.

He had made a fortune out of "Silver Threads," but it went the way of the wind, leaving him with only the rags of his old rags at his death. Last year in Boston another man died. He always made the claim that he composed the famous song. The question was never really resolved, but to those Philadelphians who recall him Danks's right of authorship was never doubted.

Danks's collaborator on the song, Eben Eugene Rexford, died the year before, leaving much longer. Only yesterday news of his death in the West reached this city.

"Silver Threads" was first brought into this city by the immortal Dumont's Minstrels at their old Edwinton street house. For many years it was the most beloved of tunes played on the children's hand-operated music boxes, a dear relic of late Victorian days. It later was introduced into vaudeville, and as an old-time number at roaring melodramas of the National Theater type it always got more than the customary "hand." But the final act given it by fame was when it was actually dramatized and played by Edward Jones, who sang its weather-beaten measures often.

By a curious coincidence the composer of the words, Eben Eugene Rexford, died yesterday at his home in Shiloh, Wis. His authorship of the lyric also was disputed, but the assertions of rival claimants for the honor of long drawing out the sweetness of the "lyric" were never buttressed by convincing proof and Rexford in later years had an undoubted mastery of the situation. His song, however, of poems and was widely known in another field, having been

one of the pioneers and most competent writers on horticulture and amateur agriculture.

But who remembers Hart Pease Danks?

Songs of the past, songs worth keeping for their associations, if for no other reason, are plentiful in the phonographic lists. The Columbia has an interesting offering in Maggie Teyte's singing of "Home, Sweet Home." The parallel between the fate of a composer, John Howard Payne, whose life has been immortalized in the movies by no less a celebrity than D. W. Griffith, and that of the forgotten Danks, is too striking to pass unnoticed. Payne perished wretchedly in poverty, after years of waiting. Few know who he was, yet his melody is still with us.

Another good oldtimer produced by the Columbia is "Abide With Me," the famous hymn, sung by Louis Graveure, the foreign baritone.

Edison is on hand with several other mellow-flavored songs. One of their records is "Old Black Joe," by Stephen C. Foster, a composer who has happily escaped the oblivion of Payne and Danks, sung by Christine Miller, contralto, while "Songs of Other Days" embodies in a melody by the Metropolitan mixed chorus such ancient characters as "Yankee Doodle" (the George Cohan version), "Little Annie Rooney" and the like.

"Songs of the Past" is what the Victor Company calls its recent collection. Nos. 11 and 12 are combined on both sides of a twelve-inch record sung by the Victor mixed chorus. Coon songs, minstrel ditties, a sentimental ballad of 1904 and an Irish hit are included. Do you remember "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," "Push Them Cuddles Away" and "Ta-Ra-Ra Boom-De-ay," the last named Lottie Collins's greatest hit for glory? They are all comprised.

"Lead, Kindly Light" (to switch from, say to grave in our final this week) has been recorded for the Victor by Geraldine Farrar, who, presumably, will come here, this winter with the Camparini Chicago Opera Company. The combination of artist and subject is an unusual one.

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Except in average attendance, which was cut down by the closing of the schools during the infantile paralysis epidemic, all departments record healthy progress, but the outstanding feature was the increase in membership of men's classes.

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