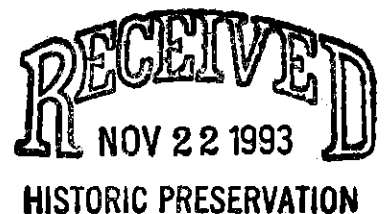


**Draft**  
**Cultural Landscape Report:**  
**Independence Mall**

**Independence National Historical Park**

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**



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Cultural Landscape Report:  
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**8 November, 1993**

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# **1. Management Summary**

## **Background and Purpose**

Although Independence Mall was relatively recently completed, the understanding and reasons for decisions about its development are beginning to slip beyond living memory and thus the grasp of all who must currently think about and make decisions regarding the mall's future.

As a result of the current site utilities project for the Independence National Historical Park, which will necessitate large-scale excavation, relocation, and reinstallation of many elements throughout the entire park, a new General Management Plan (GMP) is being prepared. This Cultural Landscape Report, which examines the history, intent, function and significance of one part of the park - Independence Mall - has been written to support the GMP.

The primary purpose of this report is to provide park personnel and planners the information they need to make decisions about the future of the mall. To support this, a historic record has been assembled, and important concepts, designs, and features of the built landscape of the mall have been identified and evaluated.

To understand the mall, it is important to make a distinction between the unquestioned significance of the park as a whole and what it symbolizes, and the mall as an individual place and a design. Americans instinctively understand the meaning of Independence National Historical Park, and as visitors they learn of the role of Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. The three-block mall, a creation of the twentieth century, is not part of the history of the revolution and the formation of the new nation, and it is therefore necessary to evaluate it on its own merits as a designed landscape.

## Administrative Context

[to be completed]

- establishment of state park (mall)
- establishment of national park; its significance
- ownerships and jurisdictions (Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, the parking garage, the Free Quaker Meeting House; the mall)
- transfer of mall to INDE
- mall listed as noncontributing feature in the National Register nomination for the entire park

## Methodology and Scope

This cultural landscape report consists of two components: historical research, and analysis and evaluation. A third component that is often a part of such reports - recommendations - will be part of the General Management Plan currently underway for the park.

The mall's history is an integral part of the history of Independence National Historical Park. Two well-documented studies have been completed within the past decade on the park's development history. In 1985, architectural historian Constance Grieff, of Heritage Studies, Inc., wrote the park's administrative history, Independence: The Creation of a National Park. An edited version was published under the same name by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1987. In 1989, Grieff's student assistant, Katherine Kurtz Cook, completed a thesis, The Creation of Independence National Historical Park and Independence Mall, for Penn's Graduate Program in Historic Preservation. Because these reports are available in the park's archives, this study summarizes and lends new emphasis to that existing information on the mall's background.

The study team consulted a number of materials and persons during the research phase of this project. Primary among them were the library and archival collections at Independence National Historical Park. The archives contain the papers of many of the key individuals in the development of the mall; oral interviews of such persons; the files, correspondence, and reports issued by the Independence Hall Association, which was the seminal organization behind establishment of the state and national parks; newspaper clippings that describe efforts to establish the mall from approximately 1920 to the present; and manuscripts of and authors' notes from previous studies of the development of the park. All of these were important to establishing a chronology for development of the concepts for the mall.

The park library contains thousands of photographs of the original neighborhood of Independence Mall and of the progress of demolition and construction of the mall. Photographs and, in some cases, original drawings of various proposals for the mall were invaluable to the progress of the study.

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission generously located and lent photographs, plans, and publications describing the development of the mall and redevelopment of the adjoining neighborhood. The limited time available for research did not allow original research in the City Archives where the City Planning Commission and Fairmount Park Art Association records and reports are housed.

The firm of H2L2, formerly Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson - who were the primary designers for the mall - generously gave the team access to their correspondence files from the design and construction period. H2L2 is unusual among design firms in that it has conscientiously and systematically preserved drawings and documents describing its work.

Finally, the team was fortunate to interview a number of individuals who were directly involved with the design and development of the mall. These people gave us an understanding of design intent and political influences that could not have been gained from the historical record alone.

The second part of the report - analysis and evaluation - is based on the development history of the mall and on field work. This phase began with an examination of the construction and as-built drawings of the mall, provided by the Technical Information Center of the Denver Service Center, which holds the originals. The Eastern Team of the Denver Service Center developed and provided a computer-generated base map of current conditions of the mall.

Two groups were assembled for analytical site visits. The first comprised NPS landscape architects and architects who critiqued the mall as a design and evaluated how well the design has met the original intent and how well it serves current purposes.

The second group comprised key park staff who have day-to-day knowledge of how the mall functions as a public space. The group provided detailed information and generated a list of issues related to the use of the mall. A similar list of issues generated in July, 1993, as part of the Statement for Management for the park, was also used by the study team.

A narrative site analysis and annotated map of current conditions were developed as a result of these sessions and of numerous site visits conducted at various times of the day, in order to observe a variety of patterns of use. Modifications to the original design, circulation, spatial relationships, conditions of landscape features, vistas, and uses are

described for each block of the mall. The neighborhood context as it influences the mall also is described.

This report was a cooperative project undertaken by Independence National Historical Park historians, landscape architects of the Division of Park and Resource Planning, Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, NPS, and the INDE General Management Plan team of the Eastern Team, Denver Service Center. Preparation of this report followed the standards and guidelines provided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation; NPS-28, Chapter 7 (draft of February, 1993); and National Register Bulletin Number 18, "How To Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes."

## **Study Boundaries**

Independence Mall is a 15.54-acre component of Independence National Historical Park. The mall covers three city blocks in Philadelphia's Old City section, from Chestnut Street north to Race Street, and from Fifth Street west to Sixth Street. Although buildings and uses beyond the three blocks were considered in this report in terms of their impact on the mall, it is the three blocks that are the topic of this report.

## **Summary of Findings**

Independence Mall, completed in 1969, is the product of more than a half century of proposals and efforts to establish a fitting setting for Independence Hall and to revitalize the surrounding neighborhood for business and residential uses.

Independence Hall itself was the subject of a number of rehabilitation and restoration efforts dating from 1802, that were founded in deeply held patriotic sentiments for "the most venerable of our national monuments." The most ambitious effort took place between 1900 and 1922, sponsored by the American Institute of Architects. As the restoration was nearing completion, Philadelphia architects and civic leaders began to voice concern about the character and condition of the neighborhood surrounding Independence Square, which were increasingly perceived as being incompatible with the shrine.

The neighborhood was once the center of Philadelphia's commercial, banking and insurance industries. As the city expanded westward, however, and especially after city government was moved from Independence Square to Center Square in 1895, the neighborhood began to decline. Although the district continued to be an active business center, the influence and scale of the businesses changed. The ornate nineteenth century buildings that had been occupied by powerful corporations began to be subdivided for

small businesses and workshop-scale industries, and a general air of senescence became apparent.

In a remarkable combination of patriotism and pragmatism, the desire to provide a safe and proper setting for Independence Hall was wed to the realization that a grand public gesture could be the foundation for economic redevelopment of the neighborhood, and these were the dual foundations for the idea of a mall stretching north from the hall.

The City Beautiful movement of the early twentieth century and the historic preservation movement of the mid-century were the influences that most clearly shaped the idea. City Beautiful advocates suggested the betterment of aging and congested cities by the addition of grand public works such as formal parks and long boulevards lined with public buildings designed in the newly popular Beaux-Arts, or neo-classical style. The Benjamin Franklin Parkway, a wide swath cut on a diagonal through a densely developed corner of Philadelphia was a classic and influential City Beautiful project, as was the Delaware River (now the Benjamin Franklin) Bridge, a grand new entrance to the city. The historic preservation movement focused on selective preservation of singular, pre-eminent, generally representing the Colonial and early Federal period. Both movements were driven by citizens and professionals alike, and it was this combination that would prove so important to the implementation of Independence Mall.

From 1915 to 1952, a dozen proposals were offered by architects and landscape architects, patriotic societies, commercial interests, and civic-minded citizens to demolish one to three blocks of the existing neighborhood and establish a mall.

Despite their efforts, by 1935, twenty years had passed since the original proposal had been made, and no progress toward realization of a mall was apparent. Shortly after passage of the Historic Sites Act that gave the National Park Service primary responsibility for the nation's historic sites, the first call was heard for the federal government to step in and establish a national park in Philadelphia's historic area. Again, little progress was made until the onset of World War II, when concern was heightened over the safety of Independence Hall.

A group of concerned architects and outstanding civic leaders then founded a civic organization called the Independence Hall Association (IHA), specifically to spearhead the establishment of a park. When the federal government continued to hesitate, the IHA prevailed upon the Governor and legislature of Pennsylvania in 1945 to fund the acquisition, development and construction of the mall, which was designated Independence Mall State Park. The Commonwealth and the City of Philadelphia jointly oversaw implementation, with the new Philadelphia City Planning Commission taking the lead in directing planning and design. Due to the work of the IHA, the designation of Independence National Historical Park was secured in 1948, but the National Park Service, which planned and developed the parkland which lies largely south of Chestnut Street, had no role in planning or developing the mall.

All the proposals for the mall except the last were founded in the tenets of the City Beautiful movement, and detailed in the Beaux-Arts style, despite the fact that as the century aged, the ideas lost their freshness and meaning. By 1952, when the final master plan was presented, the influence of the International Style and of the government clients was clearly apparent in changes to the concept for the mall. The plan retained its now archaic Beaux-Arts structure but was detailed in the language of the International style. The subsequent, lengthy seventeen-year period between schematic plans and final completion of construction also meant that the concept and its execution were revisited many times, resulting in three remarkably different blocks, two of which bear only a slight resemblance to the original concept. In addition to stylistic weaknesses, the process of design-by-committee, and the absence of a strong program for its use are the primary reasons underlying a form that has been widely criticized through the years. Criticism has focussed on both the design qualities and also the perceived lack of utility of the mall as a public park.

As its backers had prophesied, the mall became the key to redevelopment of east Philadelphia. Indeed, the idea for a mall became part of the larger redevelopment plans prepared by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. By the 1960s, the Redevelopment Authority was acquiring and demolishing most of the blocks that adjoin the mall. Replacing the hundreds of nineteenth-century buildings that had contained small businesses and workshops were mid-rise office buildings covering partial or entire blocks. Ironically, while the mall was the nucleus for this massive urban redevelopment, the resulting adjacent land uses generate few people who use or populate the mall, and this is the primary reason for the deserted nature of the two northernmost blocks.

The key finding of this study is that the design of the mall is not nationally significant according to National Register criteria. It lacks the characteristic features that would make it an outstanding or even typical example of the design and social movements that shaped it. So many designers were involved through the years that the most notable of them had only minor or passing roles in the evolution of the design. It is not considered to represent the best work of the designers who made major contributions to it. One important new element on the mall - the Liberty Bell Pavilion - is fewer than 20 years old, and it is too early for an objective evaluation to be made of it. And there has been a recent loss of conceptual integrity for two of the three blocks.

National Register criteria measure only the narrow realm of the tangible. And so although the physical design is not significant, the development of the idea for giving new meaning and value to Independence Hall by enhancing its presence visually and symbolically, as well as the process leading to its realization are a remarkable story of sentiment, drive and political will on the part of the designers, urban planners, antiquarians, civic leaders and patriotic societies who worked together for fifty years. The vision and commitment of Judge Edwin O. Lewis, Roy F. Larson, D. Knickerbacker Boyd, Edmund Bacon and dozens of other individuals are the most important story.

The design was and is less important than the idea for a mall. There was nothing inherently wrong with the many proposals that caused them not to be implemented; nor was the final plan the inevitable and only design solution. When the right combination of leaders and public agencies finally came together, the plan in play at the moment was built. Although it was the proposals from the first 30 years of discussion that had generated the interest, none were realized, and almost any of them could have served the purpose.

The final design did not achieve distinction, yet the mall has fully met the original goals set by those proponents. Independence Hall is no longer threatened by fire; it has a dignified setting; the mall serves as the grand approach that was envisioned from the Ben Franklin Bridge to the heart of the historic district; and the public investment in the mall played a key role in spurring redevelopment of Old City and Society Hill.

In addition, the mall and the rest of the national park are the only major green space in the central city, and the mall's openness, if not its design, is a striking and conspicuous contrast to the dense urban fabric of Old City. Drivers and pedestrians on the streets that surround and cross the mall recognize that this is a special place that demarcates Independence.

A key question for the future is whether any program or design can make a meaningful difference in the volume of the mall's use as long as the adjacent land uses fail to generate users. Consider Rittenhouse Square and the Washington National Mall - whose goals and designs have little in common, but which are continually filled with people. The people are there because of the adjacent land uses. That said, a thorough understanding of the sentiments, goals and influences that converged to produce the current concept and design for the mall lead to a greater appreciation for the mall, and help to inform future decisions.

## **2. The History of Independence Square**

### **Creating a Shrine: Patriotism Fosters Preservation**

**"Let the rain of heaven distill gently on its roof and the storms of winter beat softly on its door. As each successive generation of those who have benefitted by the great Declaration made within it shall make their pilgrimage to that shrine, may they not think it unseemly to call its walls Salvation and its gates Praise."**

**Edward Everett, July 5, 1858**

**"I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live... all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence."**

**President Abraham Lincoln, February 22, 1861**

**Independence Mall State Park has its roots in many public spirited movements and commercial developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Philadelphia began to awaken to the significance of the State House shortly after it was left vacant in 1799, with the legislature's move west. Later, the Industrial Revolution and the enormous**



technological development of the late nineteenth century brought factories, railroads, and congestion to the center of the city and drove its affluent citizens to the more pleasant suburbs. Older cities across the nation suffered the same decline. It became the mission of twentieth century patriotic and civic groups, as well as urban planning professionals and the National Park Service, to rescue historic vestiges and restore the health and beauty of the cities' older neighborhoods. To achieve this, they had to make compromises and come to understandings with politicians and the commercial sector for the alliances and the balance such a massive effort required.

Such powerful sentiments from Edward Everett and President Abraham Lincoln reflected a mounting public appreciation for America's heritage during the nineteenth century. By mid-century, Independence Hall had begun its rise to the status of a national shrine. Here, in Pennsylvania's State House, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution of the United States had all been conceived. Philadelphians likewise began to see Independence Hall as a national shrine, but only after one crisis or anniversary after another awakened them to the significance of their historic property. (As quoted in Edward M. Riley, "The Independence Hall Group," in Historic Philadelphia, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Vol. 43, Part I (Philadelphia, 1980), p.35)

When the State government moved to Lancaster in 1799, the State House--today's Independence Hall--stood vacant and neglected for three years, until portraitist and founder of the American Museum, Charles Willson Peale, applied for and received a lease to set up his large natural history collection and hang his numerous Revolutionary War portraits. Peale arranged his museum on the second floor after restoring the original long gallery space. Although he showed an appreciation for the history that had taken place in the building, he supported the City and County Commissioners' decision to demolish the State House wing buildings, arcades and attached committee room--which had housed significant meetings to forge the nation's early documents and policies, as well as the first library of Congress--in order to put up modern fire-proof structures designed by the prominent architect, Robert Mills, for the safe storage of municipal records. Ironically, this concern about fire would, a century later, fuel the movement to tear down buildings in the Independence Hall neighborhood to create a safe setting for the national shrine. (Ibid,31)

Philadelphians have long taken pride in having rescued Independence Hall from the hands of land developers. Pennsylvania's Assembly voted in 1816 to tear down all the buildings on the Square and sell off its lots to help finance the new state house in Harrisburg. Philadelphia reacted with indignation and tendered \$70,000 to buy the Square. The very same year, however, the County Commissioners authorized a remodeling of the Assembly Room. All the interior paneling and decoration was stripped away before most patriotic citizens realized what happened. John Trumbull, who was working on a painting of the signing of the Declaration, wrote to his wife in January

1819, "the alterations which have been made in the Room in which Congress actually sat on the famous 4th July are such that the picture cannot be hung in it." (Riley, 31)

Reaction to the destruction of the Assembly Room took years to grow, but in 1824, at General Lafayette's ceremonial return to Philadelphia many people turned out for events there, and saw the drastic alterations there for the first time. The city went to great lengths to make the Assembly Room a patriotic showplace for the occasion. "The Hall of Independence has been fitted up in the most splendid manner," the National Gazette reported. Scarlet and blue drapery studded with stars hung at the windows. William Rush's statue of General Washington stood centered on the Speaker's platform and portraits depicting Pennsylvania and Revolutionary War heroes filled the room. It was a grand reception lasting a full week and involving large crowds.

The celebrations in Lafayette's honor ignited in Philadelphia renewed efforts to protect Independence Hall as a shrine, as well as a few biting comments about the earlier Assembly Room "modernization." (Riley, 33, 36) ) In 1829 The Saturday Evening Post labeled the gutting of the Assembly Room as being "in violation of every principle of good taste." (Riley, 31) Three years later an English visitor to the State House found the 1818 desecration hard to believe:

Some Goth in office modernized the room, for the purpose, as I was informed, of giving his nephew a job, and tore down all the old panelling and pillars which supported the ceiling, and substituted a coating of plaster and paint. It is a matter of surprise to me that the inhabitants ever permitted such a profanation, being generally so proud of their revolutionary relics and duds of arms. (Ibid)

In addition to the verbal reactions, the City authorized the reconstruction of the State House steeple in 1828, with an unprecedented interest in reproducing the historical version. They hired prominent architect William Strickland to design a "restoration of the spire originally erected with the building, and standing there on the 4th July 1776." (Riley, 34) By today's standards Strickland's steeple only followed the general design and was not very exact, but it did mark the nation's first attempt at historic restoration.

Two years later the City Councils set about to restore "the Hall of Independence" to its "ancient Form". They hired the prominent architect John Haviland to study the problem and execute the restoration. Philadelphians seemed pleased that the city had repaired the room where the Declaration had been signed, but were quick to lose track of its maintenance. A proposal to City Council in 1836 explained that the room had stood unfurnished "almost as a lumber yard" for two years because no historic furnishings could be located. Such problems were resolved, however, and for the remainder of the century the room served the city as the space to hold levees for distinguished visitors. (Riley, 35)

## Context: Historic Preservation

Prior to the late 19th century, historic preservation was the hobby of an economically advantaged elite concerned with providing educational opportunities for the newly enabled tourists roaming the country. Concerns with the preservation of America's past trace back to the mid-19th century but have only grown within the last century to define the focus of an entire profession.

Early preservation efforts focused on the importance of single sites or buildings which "evoked memories of events or persons associated with the nation's colonial and early federal history" (Cook, 168). Though narrowly defined in its original mission, the scope of historic preservation has now grown to include entire towns, valleys, and regions. Historic preservationists now think about settlement patterns, landscapes and their components, all of which become pieces of a larger whole.

The importance of telling American history through the remnant historical fabric fueled early interests in historic preservation around the turn-of-the-century. Industrialization had altered American living standards, providing unprecedented amounts of free time for education and entertainment. In addition, the industrialization of a once-rural economy contributed to an increased appreciation of the past. Americans at the turn-of-the-century could still reminisce about living without the machinery, pollution, immigration, and accelerated pace of life as they moved through a fully mechanized society. These sentimental reflections of past lifestyles combined with the recently invented notion of "free-time" contributed to a growing interest in America's older structures, especially those dating from the Colonial period.

In addition to the fundamental change in the American psyche, changes in transportation revolutionized the

methods and patterns of movement across the country. The advent of the car and the development of a network of highway systems enabled millions of Americans to travel great distances in relatively short periods of time. The car and its attendant transportation network also dramatically altered the American landscape. Added to the economic and cultural changes wrought by the industrialization of a once rural land, the network of highway systems which traversed the hinterland along with gas stations crudely inserted into what were once urban pedestrian settings, altogether transformed the country. (Hosmer, 1-3)

Historic preservation may have been rooted in a genteel affection for specific properties and notions of education or civic improvement but it became institutionalized through the involvement of the federal government in the 1930s and 40s. Under Horace Albright's direction, the Historic Sites Act was passed in 1935, providing the first formal mechanism for the preservation of historic resources. New Deal programs, like the Civilian Conservation Corps, fanned a growing interest in preservation:

Throughout the United States the writers who were preparing the American Guide Series, the researchers who were compiling the Federal Records Survey, and the architects who measured structures for the Historic American Buildings Survey--all acted as missionaries who gave American history a new dimension" (Hosmer, 5-6).

The involvement of the federal government in preservation certainly gave credibility to the movement. However, the examples of preservation provided by the restoration of colonial Williamsburg and Henry Ford's

Greenfield Village provided the examples against which preservation efforts would be measured for many years (Hosmer, 4). Both restoration projects established a standard for preservation involving period reconstruction at a lavish expense which required the expertise of large professional staffs. Williamsburg and Greenfield Village also provided the training ground for a entire generation of architects interested in preservation and restoration. (Hosmer, 4)

In Philadelphia, early historic preservation concerns focused on Independence Hall. Attempts were

made to restore portions of Independence as early the 1830s. When the city's municipal functions moved from Independence to Centre Square, the first full scale restoration of the building was attempted. Several additional restorations followed. Throughout the following decades, civic organizations expressed repeated concerns for the safety of the building from fire and the importance of preserving one of the national most sacred shrines. (Cook, 171-2) And, like others throughout the country, Philadelphia's prominent citizens formed a series of organizations concerned with the protection and preservation of Independence Hall.

Early in the 1850s the City and County Councils went a step further and voted to celebrate every July 4 "in the said State House, known as Independence Hall." At the same time they brought the Liberty Bell down from the tower to the first floor hall for visitors to appreciate and invited the thirteen original states to a conference in Philadelphia to consider building on the square one or more monuments to commemorate the Declaration of Independence. Although nothing came of the idea, the Mayor did open the Assembly Room up to the public in 1855, making way for a broad-based interest in the buildings. Donations began to pour in, forming the beginning of a collection of relics. From this point forward Independence Hall took on a new significance. No longer would it be permissible to lease the cellar as a dog pound or sell refreshments within its hallowed halls. (Riley, 34-6)

Perhaps because of the traumatic impact of the Civil War, however, conditions in the building slipped during the following decade. In 1863 Select Council authorized laying a marble floor and refurbishing the furniture because the building's condition was "such as to reflect discredit upon the city of Philadelphia." (Riley, 38) By 1868 the city's growth and expansion forced the government to consider provisions for more space, as Independence Square's buildings were no longer adequate, and City Council authorized the demolition of all the buildings on the Square save the Hall, and their replacement with new court and office buildings.

This drastic measure aroused such intense protest from Philadelphia's citizens that the State legislature intervened and forced the city to consider Centre or Washington Square as sites for their new municipal center. For the first time Independence Square as a whole received attention as an historic property. (Ordinances and Joint Resolutions of the City of Philadelphia from January 1 to December 31, 1868, 571-573, as cited in Riley, 39)

Preparations for the nation's Centennial in 1876 brought on a new flurry of patriotic concern. Common Council voted to make Independence Square and buildings a memorial forever, and the Mayor appointed a restoration committee headed up by antiquarian Colonel Frank M. Etting. The committee found the Assembly Room filled with portraits and "dilapidated furniture rejected by former Councils." They set about to restore the entire first floor of the building, with special attention to the east room. Etting was no specialist in preservation so his basis for the restoration strike us today as surprising. On the word of his friend Horace Binney, who claimed to remember the room before the 1818 "modernization," Etting added four pillars which later research proved not to be part of the historic setting. The renovation also included the removal of red paint on the Chestnut Street exterior and many layers of paint on the interior first floor walls, which unveiled the beautiful carved woodwork of the original construction. (Riley, 38)

At the completion of their work the committee submitted a report to the Mayor recommending a museum to hold the relics collected for the Centennial. In 1873 the

report was approved and the National Museum founded as a repository for the extensive collection underway for the Centennial observance. Much of that collection today rests with the collections of Independence National Historical Park.(Riley, 39)

Until the turn of the century the focus of patriotic interest remained the first floor and the Liberty Bell. As the nation recovered from the Civil War these two symbols of democracy and freedom took on new meaning. Requests from other cities to borrow the Bell for special events --for the 1885 World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans and for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago--brought added attention to the City's historic resources and a revived sense of civic pride to Philadelphians.(John Paige, "Liberty Bell, Special History Study," 35-38) By the time the new City Hall on Centre Square was ready for occupancy in 1895 and the Hall emptied of its tenants, momentum had hit its stride for a complete restoration of Independence Hall group to their appearance during the American Revolution. (Riley, 39)

On the day after Christmas, 1895 City Council passed an ordinance setting in motion the restoration. In March 1896 the Philadelphia Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution signed on to sponsor a restoration in Independence Hall which would last two years. The DAR's project began with the upstairs Governor's Council and then proceeded to the downstairs. The extensive restoration included removing the Mills fireproof office buildings flanking the Hall, in order to reconstruct the wings and connecting arcades. To study and execute the restoration work they hired the prominent Philadelphia architect T. Mellon Rogers, whose interpretation for this restoration can only be called an approximation. Nevertheless it provided a wider lens for the city on the value of preserving Independence Hall's setting as part of their national shrine.(Riley, 39)

The Colonial Dames at the same time had contracted to put Congress Hall's second floor under restoration. The contract with the city specified restoration for the Senate chamber and one of the committee rooms. In 1900 the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) took an interest in participating in the Congress Hall restoration and produced a comprehensive report, including a "meticulous study" of the building's documentary evidence and restoration proposals, which they presented to City Council. The report, however, was put on hold for ten years while the architects lobbied the city for funds to proceed with their recommendations. City Council finally budgeted the project in 1910 and it reached completion for a ceremonial rededication on October 26, 1913. (The Philadelphia Record, Oct. 26, 1913, as given in Riley, 40)

During this extended period of building restoration the grounds of Independence Square underwent major changes still generally intact today. The renovations included the c. 1901 demolition of a building on Sixth Street south of Congress Hall constructed in 1867 as a courthouse. Its removal suggested an attempt to reenact the original legislation of

## Context: The City Beautiful Movement and the New American City

The decades between 1898 and 1930 ushered in an age of unprecedented public awareness and interest in civic design and planning in America. Professional and lay interest focused on civic projects of "great beauty" where beauty was narrowly defined and frequently contrasted to "ugliness". That which was beautiful or ugly became analogous, in a Biblical way, to good and evil. Architectural styles during the period adhered to a "classical ideal" which was characterized by the frequent use of classical ornamentation, large massive forms, and pristine white buildings. Unlike the products of Beaux-Arts methodology, form was not always a product of function. Designers aligned with the City Beautiful Movement were more concerned that the product address the strict aesthetic concerns of the day. Urban gestures were typically big and bold, creating dramatic statements with parkways and malls that cut through existing city fabric.

Any discussion of the City Beautiful movement must begin with the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1898. The designed team assembled in Chicago to design the fairground provided the first national example of professional collaboration on any project of such scale. Architects such as Burnham and McKim joined with landscape architects such as Olmsted and artists such as Gaudet to create a "Great White City" along the Chicago lake front. The size and scale of the structures in general, and the Court of Honor in particular, were highlighted by electric lighting, creating an enduring impression of "unimaginable opulence" on those who attended the Fair (Newton, 367). Lavish press coverage brought images of the Fair even to those who did not experience its splendor first hand.

Equally important as the Fair itself were the writings of journalist Charles Mulford Robinson, in which which he set down the philosophical foundation for the City Beautiful movement. Robinson's descriptions of the Fair and later discussions about improving cities were published in the Atlantic Monthly. The overwhelming reader response to these articles prompted him to produce his first book, The Improvement of Towns and Cities, or the Practical Basis of Civic Aesthetics in 1901, and his second book, Modern Civic Art, or the City Made Beautiful in 1909, thus coining the movement's "watchword" (Newton, 415). Robinson had clearly discovered and contributed to the prevailing American passion for urban "beautification" and was able to articulate its characteristics and requirements.

The widespread interest in the City Beautiful was accompanied by a rampant desire by communities across the country to stake out their own monumental civic plans. Plans for improving the older urban areas of the northeast were developed, along with the plans to completely alter newer cities like San Francisco (1906 plan) and Manila (1905). Perhaps the most significant of these efforts was the work of the McMillan Commission in 1901 to revive, preserve, and eventually implement, with as much integrity as possible, L'Enfant's plan for Washington. In reinstating the L'Enfant plan for Washington, the Commission preserved the major sight lines from the White House, the central mall, and many of the open spaces recommended by the earlier plan but lost over the years to thoughtless infill development.

Philadelphia was not immune to the great tide of civic pride and interest in urban beautification which swept the

country in the early 20th century. Although William Penn had bequeathed a clear plan for city growth which distinguished Philadelphia from most American cities of the time, the notion of civic improvement must have been a powerful attraction for the city's residents. It was during this period of city planning that the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Philadelphia was designed. Like many of the planning efforts associated with the City Beautiful, the Parkway was a bold statement in the city. It literally slashed through the uniform grid established by Penn to create a powerful connection between Fairmount Park and City Hall, and the plan called for it to be lined with new, uniformly designed civic buildings.

In addition to the Parkway, a number of early ideas for improving the area surrounding Independence Hall took shape during this period. Concerns about the "ugly" and deteriorating neighborhood opposite Independence Hall filled the minds of prominent residents. Civic-minded citizens, concerned with creating an appropriate "setting" for Independence Hall which

reflected its national significance worked with designers to give form to their ideas. The renowned Beaux-Arts architect Paul Cret and landscape architect Jacques Greber collaborated, independently, with prominent Philadelphia citizens to design a plaza or "forecourt" which might establish the proper setting for Independence Hall. Both the Cret and Greber plans bear a strong resemblance to the Columbian Exposition's Court of Honor. In time, ideas for a mall creating an axial link between Independence Hall and the newly opened Benjamin Franklin Bridge displaced the early concepts for a one-block plaza.

In Philadelphia, as elsewhere in the nation, lay people and professional designers were concerned with the need to improve the urban landscape. Collaborative teams worked to create plans to replace the often deteriorating urban fabric with monumental civic projects. Beauty was as much a moral standard for urban centers as an aesthetic. Massive classical structures and lengthy promenades were merely the tools with which to achieve the effect.



1736 for the yard which mandated "That no part of the said ground lying to the southward of the State House as it is now built be converted into or made use of for erecting any sort of buildings thereon." This stipulation had been made to preserve the setting as "a public open green and Walks forever." (As quoted in Riley, Independence National Historical Park, National Park Service Historical Handbook Series No. 17, 1954, 38).

The landscape of the square had evolved over time, beginning with Samuel Vaughan's extensive design for gravel walks, trees and shrubbery in 1784. In 1812 the seven-foot wall enclosing the yard was taken down to three feet to improve air circulation. From that point the square became more visible and accessible. For the Centennial new entrances were cut through the wall and wide flagstone walks laid across the grounds in almost every direction, encouraging public use of the park.

The current landscape of the square is a product of a 1915-16 redesign, and it reflects the mind-set of the early twentieth century planners and civic-minded citizens who aimed to assure a suitable setting for the Independence Hall group of buildings. After the effort to carry out a complete restoration of Independence Square had been underway for some time, thoughts on expanding Independence Hall's setting to include the area north of Chestnut Street were expressed for the first time. (James Sullivan, "Historic Grounds Report, Part I, State House Yard, Historical Data," June 1959, pp.2,6,14,17-19.)

## **The Evolution of a Concept**

Early in the twentieth century a groundswell of ideas for improving American cities emerged from the 1893 World's Exposition in Chicago. After nearly four decades of phenomenal growth following the Civil War, the nation's cities were suffering a sharp decline, and the beautiful designs created by Daniel Burnham for the exposition became a model for planners and architects to dispel increasingly ugly urban conditions.

Philadelphia was no exception to the malaise of urban life. With the development of the railroads the affluent began to abandon the city for the suburbs, leaving commerce and industry to fill in behind. In the old section of town the beautiful Georgian homes became cigar factories, markets, sweat shops and slums. Trolley tracks and overhead wires crisscrossed the city along typically narrow Philadelphia streets. During the Depression this blight was heightened by businesses folding, leaving buildings vacant and vulnerable to fire and vandalism.

Philadelphia from its earliest days was a city moving west, and by the early Twentieth Century most of the wealthy residential and business interests had left Old City. As the eastern end of town progressively suffered more neglect and decline, Independence Square began in the 1890s and 1900s to receive the attentions of patriotic societies and

the AIA in efforts to restore its historic appearance. The restorations were well underway and the city had begun a long-range plan to revitalize its urban environment when the first plan to improve Independence Hall's northern setting emerged in 1915,

It would take another thirty years before the seed idea for an improved setting blossomed into the legislation for Independence Mall State Park in 1945 . During that time many people voiced their opinion and offered their designs, and many others did the extensive politicking needed to actualize such a massive project.

By 1905 Philadelphia had launched its plan design to spruce up the city for the forthcoming Sesquicentennial of the American Revolution in 1926. Two king-pin construction projects, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and the Delaware River (now Benjamin Franklin) Bridge, were funded to provide the city with spectacular new approaches. Independence Square also was the focus of attention, at least with the Philadelphia chapter of the AIA and the several patriotic groups involved with the restoration of the Independence Hall group of buildings and the landscape of Independence Square.

The first plan to improve Independence Hall's northern setting came from two AIA members who noted in hindsight that the fire hazard from the buildings along Chestnut Street was the critical factor for their inspiration. Later, after the city's first impressive improvement projects reached completion, momentum picked up to develop a beautiful and stately setting for the nation's most valued shrine of democracy.

In 1915 two prominent Philadelphia architects, Albert Kelsey and D. Knickerbacker Boyd, collaborated on a design for the half block from Chestnut to Ludlow Streets just north of Independence Hall which they titled, "Preliminary Study for the Dependencies and a New Setting for Independence Hall." Boyd and Kelsey both were members of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), the AIA, and the T-Square Club. Boyd was the president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Sons of the Revolution and chair of its committee on preservation of historic monuments, which was busy pursuing the Independence Square restorations. These two men were in the thick of both the city planning and patriotic efforts of their day. (Kelsey obits, Philadelphia Inquirer, May 9, 1950; Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, May 8, 1950; "A Brief Sketch of D. Knickerbacker Boyd," American Stone Trade February 5, 1912, INDE Archives, Boyd Coll., Box 1; Boyd's recollections as given in "Liberty Bell Shrine Plan Hers, Says Mrs. Stotesbury, Public Ledger, May 27, 1924, INDE Archives, IHA Scrapbook, v. 1)

Existing records do not indicate whether the Kelsey-Boyd plan received any widespread attention at the time but an explanation of the study drawn up by Kelsey in 1929 sheds light on the driving reasons for their initiative.

## 1915: The Earliest Plan for a Mall

The earliest proposal for formal treatment of the land north of Independence Hall was made by two Philadelphia architects, Albert Kelsey and D. Knickerbacker Boyd, who developed a study for a "new setting" for Independence Hall. Their client, if any, is not known, although the plan may have been an outgrowth of the AIA-sponsored restoration of Independence Hall that was underway at that time. Boyd was an officer and a fellow of the AIA, and his work may have been pro bono.

Boyd was a graduate of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and Kelsey was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's architecture program, chaired at that time by Paul Cret. Kelsey also had collaborated with Cret on numerous competitions and participated in the planning of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. That their plan strongly reflected the tenets of Beaux-Arts design was therefore to be expected.

The plan included an open "reviewing square" stretching north from Chestnut Street. A "Colonnade of the Signers" was to be located at the northern end of the square, parallel to Ludlow Street, (about one third of the way to Market Street. This two-story, brick, classical revival structure was intended as a reviewing stand and a viewing point from which visitors could contemplate Independence Hall and civic events taking place there. At the end of two curving arcades - reminiscent of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello - pavilions would house "relics and records" of the colonial

era. Each of the colonnade's thirteen arches were to shelter a statue of one of the signers of the Constitution, and statues of Jefferson and Hamilton would stand in front of it, facing the Washington statue which stands on the opposite side of Chestnut Street. The square itself was lined on the east and west by formal gardens and fountains, and sheltered with rows of trees lining the streets.

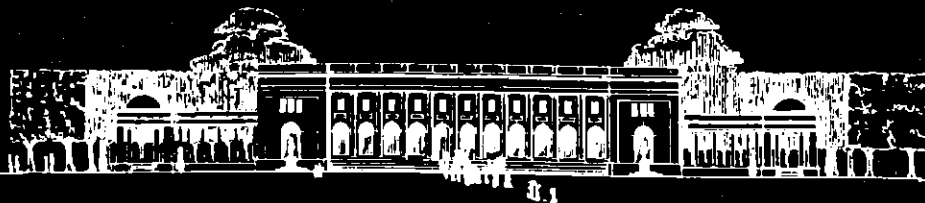
The intent of the study was first, to provide "a fitting setting for Independence Hall;" second, to clear the block in order to protect the hall from the fire hazard posed by the aging nineteenth century buildings; third, to provide an uncongested place for public events; and fourth, to allow "beautification and the refreshment of this parched and ugly quarter."

In a narrative written some years later about the proposal, Kelsey noted that only part of the block was to be developed because the acquisition cost for the entire block was too great and because "Independence Hall was not large enough to be seen at its best from a distance and across such a wide square as would be created." [kelsey memo]

Although the plan was not implemented, versions of the colonnade, the importance of the number 13, the statuary, the symmetrical bosques of trees, and the Beaux-Arts detailing would be reflected in many subsequent plans for the mall. The four rationales for clearance and redevelopment also would be voiced again and again.

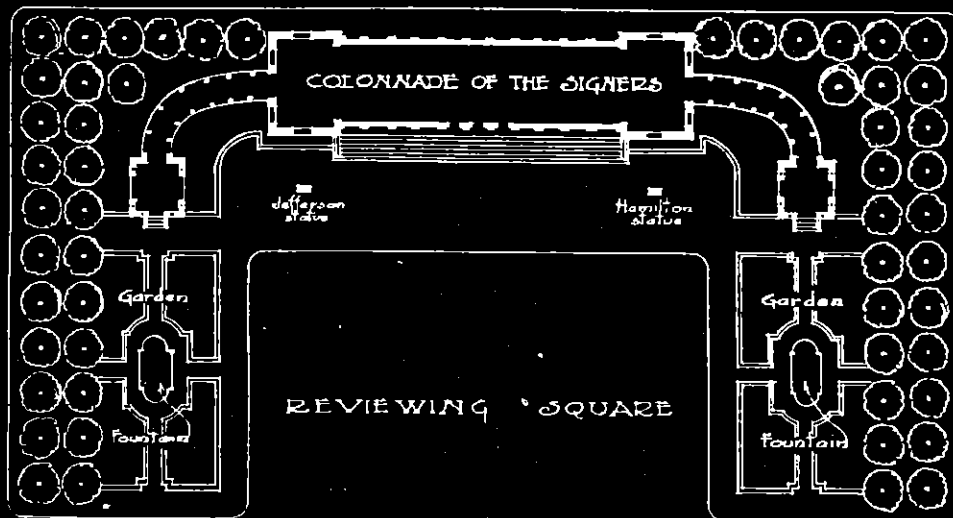
[Caption for Plan:

"A Preliminary Study for the Dependencies, A New Setting for Independence Hall," by Albert Kelsey and D. Knickerbacker Boyd, April 29, 1915] [INDE archives]



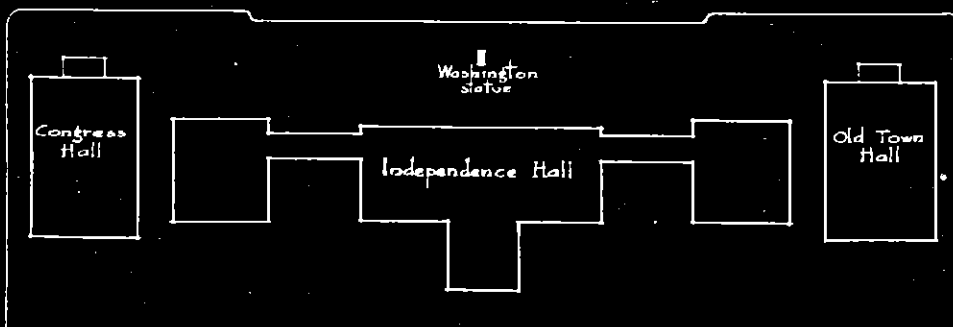
STATUES OF THE SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE TO ADORN THIS RED BRICK BUILDING

LUDLOW STREET



CHESTNUT STREET

SIXTH STREET



FIFTH STREET

# PRELIMINARY STUDY FOR THE DEPENDENCIES AND A NEW SETTING FOR INDEPENDENCE HALL

ALBERT KELSEY AND D. KNICKERBACKER BOYD  
ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS

April 29, 1915

## Context: Beaux-Arts Design Comes to the States

The Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris for centuries represented the traditions of French academic training. By the late 19th century, American designers were receiving a good portion of their training in Paris at the Ecole, and they exported the Ecole's design style and method to their homeland. The Ecole had "trained hundreds of young Americans and inspired curricular reforms in most America architectural schools" by the turn-of-the-century (Brownlee, 2).

The Beaux-Arts architectural style is expressed most frequently in its reliance upon classical notions of symmetry and harmony of architectural elements. Beaux-Arts academic training relied on Renaissance forms which, in turn, were expressed in built projects (Jordy, 347). Thus, most Beaux-Arts designs are characterized by their classical references, providing ornamental relief to large civic structures but also determining the form that such structures might assume. To quote Scully, Beaux-Arts training did not advocate "complete originality" but believed in "the individual manipulation of forms within a common formal vocabulary, which had been the Renaissance way" (Scully, 136). Colonnades were frequently used to shape outdoor plazas. Hard, paved surfaces reminiscent of the Campidoglio provided an appropriate surface for civic functions. Statuary was prominently displayed to reinforce the historic significance of the site. Supporting structures typically reinforced the classical design of the Beaux-Arts plaza. On a larger scale throughout a city, grand avenues were punctuated with rond-points, fountains, squares, or other moments of relief to reduce their long axial movement to an appropriate scale for pedestrians and cars.

Graduates of the Ecole produced designs with heavy Renaissance overtones. Beaux-Arts architects tended to focus on

projects with a strong civic or municipal function, such as museums and libraries, or on those spaces designed for ceremonial functions, such as the Washington Mall (Scully, 140) with its great axis. Parkways, malls, and plazas were frequently used to create visual connections between important city structures. Indeed, the sight lines created by the Champs Elysee, or its local counterpart, the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, were designed to highlight civic structures. Architects such as Maybeck, Hunt, Richardson, and Sullivan brought a strong Beaux-Arts classicism to their designs.

The impact of the Ecole's influence on American architecture was felt locally as well as nationally. Philadelphia was home to several graduates of the Ecole whose prolific design careers had a profound impact on the city's design. Among these architects, Paul Philippe Cret, who has been said to be "the most important Beaux-Arts writer and practitioner in America" (Brownlee, 5), was involved in numerous local projects. Cret received a Beaux-Arts training in both his home of Lyons and in Paris before becoming a professor of design at the University of Pennsylvania in 1903, and the patron of the local T-Square Club atelier. He was a renowned speaker and writer on the subject of Beaux-Arts training and the merits of its designs. His involvement at the University of Pennsylvania and as a member of the first team appointed by the Fairmount Park Art Association to oversee the design of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and its supporting buildings illustrates his influence on all of the major projects of his day. Cret's contribution to Philadelphia was not limited to the Parkway but also included the Old Federal Reserve Bank, the 9th Street Post Office, and the Benjamin Franklin Bridge--all prominent commissions of the day.

The design of the Parkway also brought the French landscape architect and city planner Jacques Greber to Philadelphia. Like Cret, Greber was a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and was a key participant in the design of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. He later went on to gain international acclaim and to develop city plans for Marseilles, Rouen, and others. (Brownlee, 30).

It was the work on the Parkway that brought Beaux-Arts planning and design into the heart of Philadelphia, connecting the center of the city with the romantic landscape of Fairmount Park. During this period, the influence of both Cret and Greber was manifested in a Parkway reminiscent of the Champs Elysee, with classical structures flanking its path into the city.

It was during this period that the first concept for an approach connecting the new Benjamin Franklin Bridge -- a grand gateway to the city with the nation's

most historic shrine -- Independence Hall -- was proposed. The mall concept developed as a substantial civic space thrust into the midst of a fairly continuous urban fabric. It is worth noting that many of the designers responsible for the early concepts came to the project after completing the Parkway. Albert Kelsey, Greber, and Cret had all worked on the Parkway project, and each of the concepts generated for the mall reflected the Beaux-Arts training of these designers. Although neither Kelsey's nor Greber's association with the project endured, Paul Cret continued to exert his influence over the designs through his former student and professional partner, Roy F. Larson. Following Cret's death in 1945, Larson continued the traditions established by Cret's firm, although in a vocabulary that reflected more modern attitudes toward architecture and urban design.

In 1915 Mr. D. Knickerbacker Boyd and I prepared the accompanying preliminary design for a fitting northern approach to and setting for Independence Hall, though two factors of even more urgent need prompted the study. One was the fire hazard, that still exists from some of the old buildings across Chestnut Street and from the temporary reviewing stands that from time to time are built with their backs to Independence Hall instead of facing it; and the other was the congestion of traffic at this point whenever a ceremony takes place, which is worse now than it was then.

To remove the fire hazard and to obviate congestion, we felt that a dignified open space should be created - a surface large enough for the drawing up of troops, without interfering with the circulation of traffic on Chestnut Street.

Kelsey closed his statement with the observation that while their scheme required more study, they felt it still, fourteen years later, seemed sound. He also emphasized that he felt that creating the setting was "in fact an urgent municipal improvement of the very first importance."

Kelsey wrote this 1929 description to include it with the publication of the 1915 plan in the Public Ledger. The reprinting of the plan he hoped would assist "in focusing attention on downtown Philadelphia." ( Kelsey's text is in INDE Archives, IHA records, Boyd Collection, Box 1, 1915 Colonade Plan)

Kelsey and Boyd by 1929 were still active and prominent in their profession. Boyd had besides developed a reputation as a city planner. With the city's blight on his mind Boyd wrote a summary of his views on the loss of the streetscape opposite Independence Hall. Some of the buildings slated for demolition were "virtually vacant" or "old fashioned" and to his thinking they "would not be a great loss." Demolition, however, in both Boyd and Kelsey's mind, was to be limited to that which would allow the best perspective for the Independence Square setting, particularly in respect to scale.

Kelsey's 1929 statement explaining their rationale behind the limited demolition and development recommended in their 1915 plan contrasted dramatically with another proposal introduced only a year or so earlier (c. 1928) by Dr. Seneca Egbert, a civic-minded Philadelphian and Professor of Hygiene at the University of Pennsylvania, who wanted to see three full blocks north of Independence Hall, from Chestnut Street to the Delaware River Bridge plaza, cleared and developed as an appropriate setting for national shrine. Egbert's radical treatment, in fact, may have been why Kelsey and Boyd reissued their plan, as Boyd explained in an accompanying letter to the Ledger's editor that he thought it would be "a matter of especial interest...at this time in connection with the many possibilities of rejuvenating and developing the downtown section of

Philadelphia." (Boyd to Owen Connor, July 25, 1929; INDE Archives, IHA records, Boyd Collection, Box 1, 1915 Colonade Plan)

Although no records have turned up to suggest this cause and effect, nor to show how much publicity Dr. Egbert's plan generated, Kelsey and Boyd probably knew of his proposal through their own associations with the University of Pennsylvania. Both men had attended the University (Kelsey graduated from the school of architecture in 1895) and were acquainted with its Dean of Architecture, Paul Phillipe Cret, who for five years, 1905-1909, had worked with Kelsey on numerous competitions. These close associations between the Penn faculty and the alumni community evidently did help to generate new ideas and designs throughout the growth of the park movement. (Cook, 26; "Dr. Seneca Egbert Dies in Wayne at 77," Philadelphia Inquirer, Dec. 7, 1939, U. of PA Archives, clippings; Grief, p. 64; D.K Boyd obit., INDE Archives, Boyd Papers, Box 1, New Clips)

Jacques Greber, a French landscape architect, also had close ties with the University of Pennsylvania and professionally with both Kelsey and Paul Cret in the planning for the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, which Greber designed for Philadelphia's Sesquicentennial plan. In 1924 the City asked him to submit a design for Independence Hall's setting, evidently anticipating it would coordinate with his concept for the west end of town.

Greber produced a more expansive scheme for the Hall's setting than had his architecture associates. His design for Independence Square, which envisioned grand colonades stretching along Fifth and Sixth Streets to Walnut, raised strong and immediate opposition, but for the section north of Chestnut Street, which covered the entire block from Chestnut to Market Streets, where Greber wanted all structures cleared to erect a "Great Marble Court" for the Liberty Bell Altar, memorial halls and statues, won some support, at least as a "further insurance against any loss from fire," (Cook, p. 30; The reference to the design's usefulness as a fire protection was made by the founder of the Colonial Dames, Anne Hollingsworth Wharton, as quoted in Public Ledger, May 27, 1924, INDE Archives, IHA scrapbook.)

One fortuitous side-effect of Greber's 1924 plan was the united opinion among the preservationists, architects and patriotic societies that Independence Square should not be part of the design option. Beside their consensus that Greber's proposal for the Square was a travesty on the historic setting, they were adamantly against his idea to move the Liberty Bell out of Independence Hall. In the patriotic moment the Public Ledger went so far as to solicit opinions from several prominent Philadelphia architects-- among them D.K. Boyd of the 1915 plan-- on how they felt about a foreign architect designing American shrines and monuments. They all agreed that American architects would do the job better. Perhaps this sentiment influenced Boyd twenty years later when he assisted in choosing Roy Larson's plan for the Independence Hall Association proposal. (Ibid.)



## 1924: The Influence of the Parkway

In anticipation of the 1926 Sesquicentennial of the American Revolution, French landscape architect, **Jacques Greber**, prepared drawings for both Independence Square and the first block north of Independence Hall. His extensive estate design and city planning practice was characterized by projects in the Beaux-Arts style. Greber had been a primary planner of the much-admired Benjamin Franklin Parkway and the City Planning Commission may have desired a similar approach in the oldest section of the city.

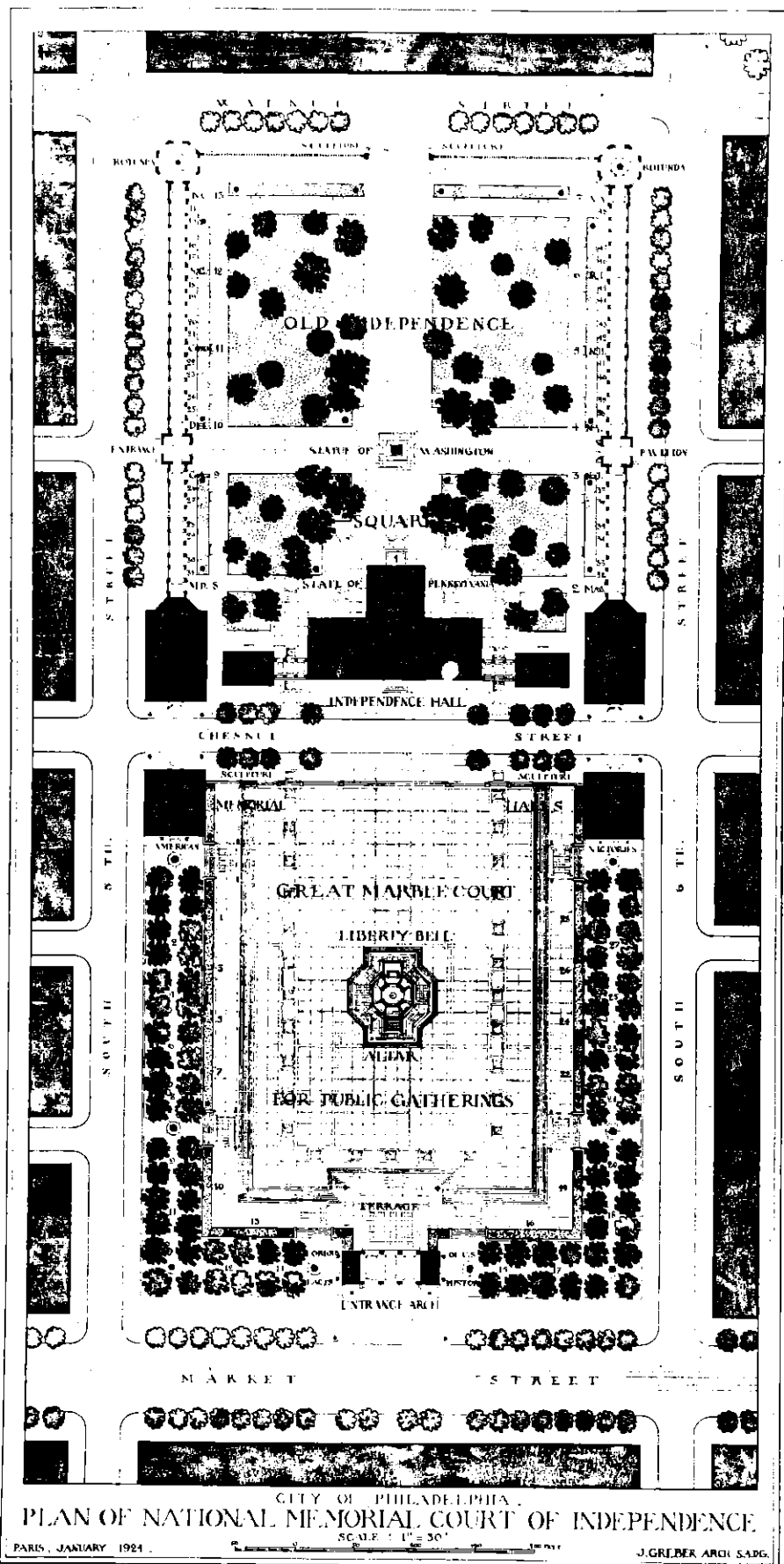
Greber's plan for the first block included a number of the elements that Boyd and Kelsey had detailed, but broadened the scope and increased the grandeur.

Taking up most of the full city block was the "Great Marble Court." This was centered on the relocated Liberty Bell, housed in an "Altar," or a temple reached by climbing 13 steps. An entrance arcade on Market Street, two memorial halls at each corner of Chestnut, many pieces of sculpture, and bosques lining Fifth, Sixth, and Market Streets were the other major elements.

As was the case with Boyd and Kelsey's plan, this (and a subsequent Greber scheme) would not be built, but many of the elements would recur in other plans; and the marble court and the relocation of the Liberty Bell would actually be implemented a half-century hence.

[Caption for plan:

"Plan of National Memorial Court of Independence," by Jacques Greber, January, 1924.]



As the restoration of the square's grounds and buildings reached completion, Greber's plan ironically coalesced and cemented the public opinion in favor of preserving Independence Hall and its Square as a memorial to the founding of the nation. From this date forward no other plans for Independence Hall's setting included changes to the square. ("Liberty Bell Shrine Plan Hers, Says Mrs. Stotesbury," Public Ledger, May 24, 1927, INDE Archives, IHA Scrapbook)

**Paul Phillipe Cret** sketched designs for the Independence Hall setting around 1928 at the request of a patriotic group. Cret's two schemes covered the same half-block area proposed by Kelsey and Boyd's study. As architects, they spoke the same language, but their proposals limiting the size of the hall's northern setting soon were overshadowed by a growing sentiment beginning in the late 1920s for a grander scale to commemorate Independence Hall.

In addition to his prominence as Dean of the Architecture School at Penn, Paul Cret was Philadelphia's best known Beaux Arts architect. Soon after he took his position at the University in 1903, Cret entered a series of commissions in association with Albert Kelsey, among them the Pan-American Union in Washington, D.C. which they won in 1910. From 1920 to 1926 he worked with Ralph Modjeski to execute his design for the Delaware River Bridge as the dramatic new entrance to Philadelphia's historic section.

Little is known about Cret's participation in the planning for Independence Hall's setting other than the recollections given by his future partner, Roy F. Larson, in a 1969 interview. Larson remarked that in 1928 a patriotic group--either the Daughters of the American Revolution or the Colonial Dames-- asked Cret to "make a study for the improvement of the area just north of Independence Hall." The renderings of two schemes are the only reflections of Cret's ideas. (Diane Maddex, ed. Master Builders A Guide to Famous American Architects. National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1985, p. 183; Grieff, p. 64; Cook, p. 32; George B. Tatum, Penn's Great Towne, U of P. Press, 1961, p. 129; Cook, p. 26.)

No information as yet has revealed whether these plans won support or interest when first presented, but the fact that he was presented the drawings again in the 1930s suggests a renewed appreciation for Cret's concept. The fact that Kelsey and Boyd also revived their drawings at around the same time likely indicates the hard times their architectural firms suffered during the Depression, and the promise of future revenue from the new federal recovery programs. It also suggests that the city was anticipating improvements to Independence Hall's north setting. ( Lysbeth Borie, D.K. Boyd's daughter, mentioned his troubled business during the depression. Interview, March 22, 1969, p. , CUOHP, )

Around 1928 Seneca Egbert made the first proposal to extend Independence Hall's setting north for three city blocks , encompassing what later would be named Independence Mall. The idea came from a most unlikely candidate--Dr.Egbert was a

## 1928: Beaux-Arts Nonpareil

At the request of a ladies' patriotic society, architect **Paul Phillippe Cret** studied the possibilities for a square opposite Independence Hall. He submitted two proposals, both for the entire first block, and both centering on a large, sunken, plaza intended to be a place from which people could gather and view the historic buildings. The 1928 drawings seem not to have survived, but 1933 perspective drawings record the proposals.

The plans differed primarily in the form of their arcades: the first calling for a long, circular arcade extending from Chestnut Street as deep as Ludlow Street, with each Chestnut Street terminus marked by a ceremonial pavilion. The second plan showed a more simple linear arcade along Ludlow Street. Both plans included deep bosques of trees along Fifth, Sixth and Market Streets, and both included

monumental statuary and a flight of steps leading from Chestnut Street down into the plaza.

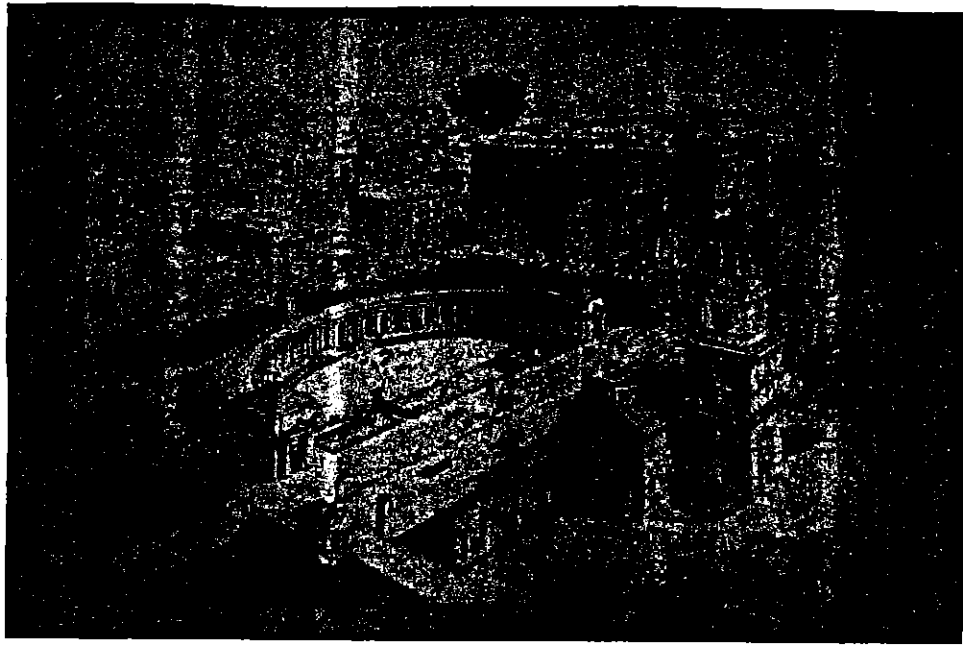
Lowering the vantage point and thereby increasing the apparent height of Independence Hall, as well as keeping the vantage point close to the Hall, would have enabled the Hall to be dominant over its setting. Cret might have been responding to a sense that these "domestic" sized buildings, which had been constructed in a dense neighborhood of similarly sized buildings, never had been meant to be viewed from a distance. [leatherbarrow, p18]

Lowering the viewing plaza was a subtle idea that was not repeated in any subsequent plan, despite the concerns about the spatial relationship between Independence Hall and a long mall.

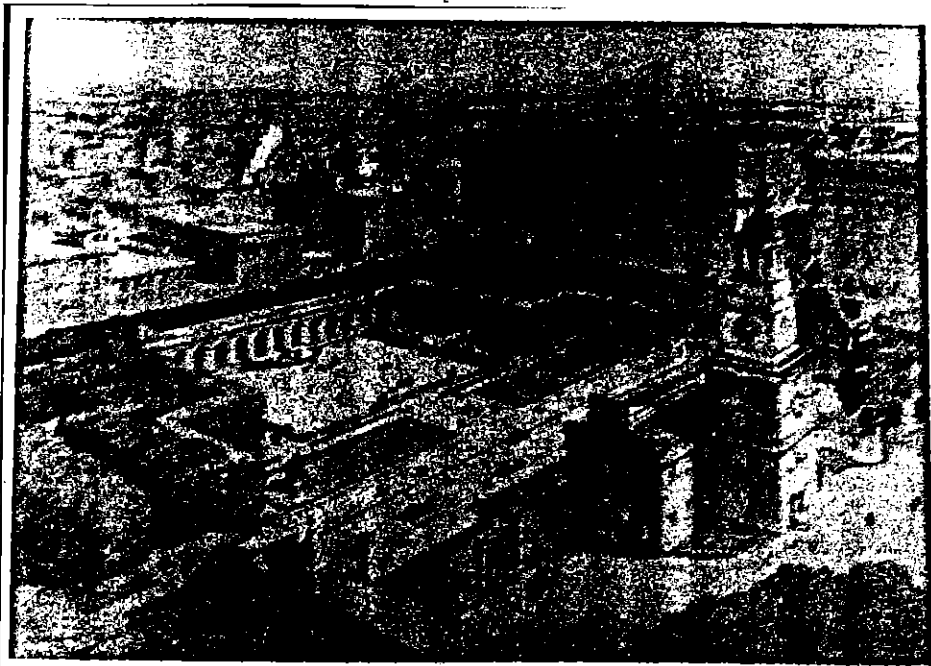
[captions for perspectives:

"Design for Extension of Independence Square, Scheme A," by Paul Cret, 1933"

"Design for Extension of Independence Square, Scheme B," by Paul Cret, 1933.



IV-6 "Design for Extension of Independence Square, Scheme A", Paul Cret, 1933, courtesy of The Athenaeum of Philadelphia.



IV-7 "Design for Extension of Independence Square, Scheme B", Paul Cret, 1933, courtesy of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

Professor of Hygiene at the University of Pennsylvania. Described in his obituary as a civic-minded man, Egbert otherwise had no other known connections with patriotic groups, city planning, or architecture. He, of course, worked at the University where Paul Cret was based and where many of the key figures for the development of the Mall took their education, but there is no information to indicate he had associations that would prompt him to think about Independence Hall's surroundings. (Phila. Inquirer, Dec. 7, 1939, UofP Archives, Egbert file)

In an undated written description of his plan Egbert defined his central idea for "the development of a Concourse or Esplanade between Independence Hall and the plaza at the west end of the Delaware Bridge that should serve as a permanent and impressive sesqui-centennial memorial of the historic events incident to the founding of the Nation." Nothing came of this proposal, but a few years later, during the next mayor's administration, Egbert reintroduced his plan, perhaps in response to the publication of the City Planning Commission's first report in 1930 which detailed its Fifty-Year Plan. Egbert apparently had no drawing for his proposal; instead, he wrote a six-page description detailing his plan, which he continued to promote at intervals until his death in 1939. ("A Colonial Concourse," undated and unsigned but with pencil notation identifying it as Seneca Egbert's, INDE Archives, IHA, Boyd Collection, Box 1; Phone conversation with Jefferson Moak, Philadelphia City Archives, October 14, 1993)

Dr. Egbert in some ways was a visionary. While his specific recommendations for on-ground features had little impact on the mall's final design, several of his broad concepts eventually were manifested, by coincidence or more likely, by influence. We know from George Nitchze's testimony that Egbert's plan was the inspiration for him when he proposed the same three blocks as a national park in 1935. The Independence Hall Association archives contain a copy of Dr. Egbert's long detailed description of his plan, which suggests it was referred to during the development of park plans over the next two decades. ("Dr. Seneca Egbert Dies in Wayne at 77," Philadelphia Inquirer, Dec. 7, 1939, U. of P Archives; Egbert's written description of his plan is located in the INDE Archives, Boyd Collection, Box 1, 1915 Colonnade Plan file. Neitchze's comments are in, "C. William Duncan, "Conversion of Historic Midcity into National Park Advocated," Evening Ledger, Jan. 17, 1935, UofP Archives.)

Dr. Egbert's idea evidently came as a reaction to City Council's vote in 1925 to cut a new street through to Market Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets from the Delaware River Bridge plaza. As the Philadelphia Bulletin in 1936 explained:

The Egbert Plan springs primarily from the fact that some years ago, when Councilman Charles B. Hall was pushing various proposals for the improvement of the city, there was put upon the city plan a proposed boulevard or highway, to be known as the Randolph boulevard, extending from Race to Market streets, and from Spring Garden to Vine Streets. It was intended at the time as an

## **Circa 1926-1928: A Layman Initiates a New Pattern -- in Form, Scale, and Citizen Leadership**

That the city beautiful movement was widely admired and popularly accepted is illustrated by the proposal offered by **Dr. Seneca Egbert**, a professor of hygiene at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Egbert's proposal, inspired by the Sesquicentennial and by his interest in American history and the public welfare, was far bolder in its scope and intent than the earlier plans had been. In its basic elements, his proposal thus set the parameters for all subsequent plans.

Although no drawing remains (and perhaps no drawing was ever made), the proposal was widely reported at the time and promoted by Dr. Egbert until his death in 1939. He proposed demolishing three entire city blocks, from Chestnut to Race Streets, and from Fifth to Sixth Streets. Running north/south through the center would be a new broad pedestrian walk, "possibly as broad as Broad Street," to be called the "Colonial Concourse." Fifth and Sixth Streets would also be widened.

The first block was to be divided into two parts. The half opposite Independence Hall would be developed by the federal government as "Constitution Square," taking the form of an arch over the concourse, and with adjacent gardens. On the Market Street side, the city would work with two of the original states to erect monuments or memorial buildings.

On the opposite end of the proposed mall, facing the Benjamin Franklin Bridge plaza, there would be space for Commonwealth offices to be built, representing Pennsylvania's role as one of the original states. On each side of the concourse on the second block, five plots would be allocated to the remaining original states on which each would erect a replica of one of its colonial buildings to serve as a museum

and archives of its role in founding of nation. The concourse-side facades of these buildings would be unified by arcades and balconies, and the balconies would provide seating space for 10,000 viewers of civic events. Three pylons or sculptures would also be sited here to commemorate the Revolution, the Civil War, and World War I. [Egbert, p4]

Egbert's goals for the mall were to reduce the fire hazards to the Independence Hall group, provide a permanent Sesquicentennial memorial, and establish a place for patriotic gatherings: "America's Forum, where every Fourth of July thousands of persons could assemble to listen to a patriotic address, usually by the President of the United States, and where, on all occasions, special celebrations associated with the history of the city, state and nation could be held." [Phila Bulletin]

In addition, his interest was clearly civic-minded: he envisioned a clean, green, open area that would eliminate the tangle of deteriorating buildings and the congestion of narrow streets. In promoting the venture, he was careful to point out that its cost would be offset by the financial return the city could expect from the enhanced value of adjoining properties, making him one of the earliest, if not the first backer to make this connection.

A modern observer has written of Egbert's plan that although

no urban precedents existed in either Philadelphia or America (except perhaps the Mall in Washington, DC) ... examples did exist in France and Germany, representing generally a political or

social power that was centralized and absolute - monarchy - just the opposite of what the Independence Hall group represented ... The relationship between IH and this vase area was to be maintained on the basis of stylistic continuity - the architectural sameness of buildings from the same era (all but three of which would have been replicas). A little world enclosing a bygone time and culture was to be created in a space which was itself an urban form that belonged to another age and culture.

Egbert's plan was original, bold and impressive, but it was also anachronistic and foreign. This did not, however, prevent it from commanding attention in the years that followed, nor did it prevent it from suggesting to other planners similar ideas. (Leatherbarrow, p.21,22)

Key elements of Egbert's proposal were carried forward through subsequent schemes, and finally were implemented. These included the three block scope of the mall, the center axis, the permanent gathering place, and the widening of the streets. Just as importantly, he foresaw the means to final implementation: linking the mall's development to financial return, and securing intergovernmental cooperation in the project.



approach to Delaware Bridge. (Bulletin, April 14, 1936, INDE Archives, IHA Scrapbook; research provided by Jefferson Moak, Archivist, City Archives).

Egbert thought he had a better way to improve the approach and memorialize Independence Hall as well. He recognized that the rapid growth of automobile use in the 1920s and the opening of the Delaware River Bridge in 1926 posed a real problem of traffic congestion in the narrow streets of the eastern end of town. In his c. 1930 outline Egbert stressed that, "The importance of relief to traffic congestion at the Philadelphia end of the Bridge which the plan for the Concourse offers should not be overlooked or minimized," and then proposed "the widening of the roadways of Fifth and Sixth Streets for Vehicular traffic." This street widening on Fifth and Sixth was achieved nearly twenty-five years later as part of the mall's plan.

Egbert also wanted to widen Chestnut Street but his primary reason was fire protection for Independence Hall. Like Kelsey and Boyd, Egbert envisioned an area set aside across from the Hall for parade spectators to gather, an idea that has been realized. Egbert's plan called for a pedestrian walkway for "patriotic and eventful assemblages, processions and pageants," a concept later redefined and implemented on the second block by Roy F. Larson, the architect in charge of the Mall's design and development. ("A Colonial Concourse", INDE Archives, IHA, Boyd Coll., Box 1; Interview, Bob Breeding, Oct. 1993; Roy Larson, H2L2 files)

Egbert's arguments in support of his plan were echoed by future promoters of the mall. He claimed that the Concourse development would increase assessments and therefore tax returns for the three blocks and would "almost certainly tend to maintain and even to increase property values both to the east and south of it and to the westward as far as Seventh or Eighth Street." He was a forerunner of Edmund Bacon, Philadelphia's City Planning Commission director from 1949 to 1970, in eloquently trying to focus attention on the future redevelopment of the eastern end of town where the concentration of historic sites stood. "Philadelphia should especially endeavor to resist the present tendency to draw all mid-city business to the neighborhood of Broad and Market Streets or west of this to the vicinity of the new railroad stations soon to be erected," he argued, and stressed that the square mile of city space between the River to Ninth Street and Spring Garden to South Street was rich in historical associations and business opportunities. Such rhetoric found its way into many of the future plans of the Independence Hall Association and the city, in conjunction with the proposals for Independence Mall and National Park and the Old City Redevelopment Area. (Egbert, "A Colonial Concourse,"

Egbert also urged the consolidation of the many different Commonwealth offices "scattered throughout the city" into one new state office building on the third block. Judge Lewis vigorously promoted a state office building during the development of Independence Mall State Park after 1945, not in, but bordering the park, as president of the Independence Hall Association. The building finally was constructed thirty years

after Egbert's proposal, but at Broad and Spring Garden Streets. (Egbert, "A Colonial Concourse;" Tatum, Penn's Great Town, p. 135. need ref. for Lewis' fight for a state office bldg.)

A lengthy article in the Public Ledger for November 13, 1930 heralded the news, "Experts Offer 50-Year Plan of Beauty and Utility for City." The cover photograph featured **Jacque Greber's** revised plan for a "Court of Honor," for the block north of Independence Hall. The City Planning Commission responsible for the report endorsed Greber's plan as "highly desirable and utilitarian." (Clearly the issues raised in 1924 about his nationality had not deterred the CPC.) The Planning Commission's report also brought out the fact that the proposed construction of Randolph Street as a new approach to Independence Hall (which had prompted Seneca Egbert's plan) had been abandoned, with the thought that the widening of Fourth and Seventh Streets would solve traffic congestion problems. (Public Ledger Nov. 13, 1930, INDE Archives, IHA Scrapbook.)

Thus the decade of the Depression got underway in Philadelphia. For the duration the city was rich in schemes but poor in pocket. The federal government's expansion during the Depression to provide more jobs and support worthy projects proved a source of inspiration for new and grander proposals for Independence Hall's setting and neighborhood. So also did the enormous historic restoration project underway as of 1926 at Williamsburg, Virginia. (Charles Hosmer, ...; Fairmount Park Art Association Annual Report, 1944; Grieff, p 68.

Major changes for the National Park Service suggested new opportunities as well. The 1935 Historic Sites Act gave the NPS the freedom to make cooperative agreements with the owners of important historic sites, permitting a more flexible menu for historic preservation. In 1933 the transfer of all the military sites and monuments formerly under the War Department into the National Park System immediately placed the Service as the nation's leader in historic preservation and a potential partner in the establishment of parks. (Grieff, pp 68-69. Grieff also pointed out that flexibility hinged on whether Congress made appropriations to fund the preservation effort.)

D. Knickerbacker Boyd kicked off the decade with a proposal for Independence Hall's setting in May 1930. The Public Ledger headlined, "New Public Park Urged in Center City," and reported Boyd's speech at a Chestnut Street Association meeting, where he expressed a new vision: this time Boyd proposed a park for the entire first block opposite the Hall, and buildings "in harmony with the shrine" lining either side of it. While there is no record of why he made this plan, or of the plan itself, it can be assumed that in some way it related to the Chestnut Street Association's efforts to improve the business environment in the area. (Public Ledger May 8, 1930, INDE Archives, IHA Scrapbook.)

## **1930: Variations on a Theme -- Greber's Second Proposal**

**Jacques Greber** revised his plan of 1924 as part of the City Planning Commission's new fifty-year plan for Philadelphia. A narrower marble court was now surrounded on three sides by four-story neo-Palladian brick buildings, lined with a one-story arcade. This particular ensemble was called the "Court of Honor," a reference to the 1893 Chicago Exposition. The block of buildings effectively limited the view of Independence Hall, which would only be

seen from an entrance archway on Market Street. The idea to move the Liberty Bell was eliminated, due to extreme public sentiment against relocation. [Cook, pp 30,31]

Such proposals for replacement of the existing 19th century neighborhood fabric with somewhat grander 18th century facsimiles would frequently be seen in subsequent plans.

[caption of drawing:

"Sketch of Memorial Court of Independence," by Jacques Greber, August, 1930]

Greber 1930



IV-4 "Sketch of Memorial Court of Independence", Jacques Greber, August 1930, INHP Archives.

Chestnut Street was showing new life and the Association was trying to encourage improvements to "maintain and enhance the beauty of the street." A massive new federal Custom House was under construction on Second Street which developers hoped would revive the neighborhood. In 1932 a committee of real estate investors chaired by Emerson C. Curtis hired architects to design a small park on Third Street to improve the Custom House surroundings but being "in the depths of the depression" they decided to defer its construction.

Early in 1933 they reconvened to expand the proposed plan to include "Curtis Mall" (named for the publisher, Cyrus K. Curtis, who pledged \$250,000 towards its realization), which included a tree-lined roadway from Independence Square east to the new Custom House. The plan described the mall as "encompassing the First Bank of the United States and the Carpenters Hall and border on the Second Bank of the United States". In an apparent reaction to the large federal projects and other government spending during these Depression years, Curtis vowed that the land "would be acquired through donations, grants, and easment rights without the City, State or Federal Government putting up one single dollar." (Grieff, p.67; Cook, pp. 39-40)

Although this park proposal offered no plan for the mall area, its concept to carve a park out of the blocks to the east of Independence Hall to include key historic sites of the neighborhood remained the seed for many proposals to follow, including the legislation establishing Independence National Historical Park. It helped the park movement in general to broaden its vision to consider new options for the protection and improvement of Independence Hall's setting.

At some point during the decade, the architectural firm of Folsom and Stanton produced a "Sketch Plan of Suggested Improvements"(undated) that may have been the first proposal to suggest a park on the blocks both to the east and also to the north of Independence Hall. This sketch called for a total leveling of the two blocks to the north and east of Independence Hall. The plan showed planting on the first block north of Independence Hall and sketched buildings along a central plaza for the second block.

One of the partners, William Stanton, served as city planner from 1933 to 1935 and during this period may have become aware of and interested in the several development proposals for the east end of town. While the Folsom-Stanton plan was included in the records of the Independence Hall Association, there appears to be no written comment on its merit or on its history, and its design is not readily traced in the final plan for the Mall. (Cook, p. 35)

In 1935 George E. Nitchze proposed a national park for the three blocks north of Independence Square. It was the first call for a national park in Philadelphia and only two years behind the establishment of the first national historical park in the nation, at the Revolutionary War encampment at Morristown, New Jersey. Titling his proposal, "United States National Park of Independence Hall," Nitzche tied the shrine and federal

## 1935: The First Proposal for a National Park

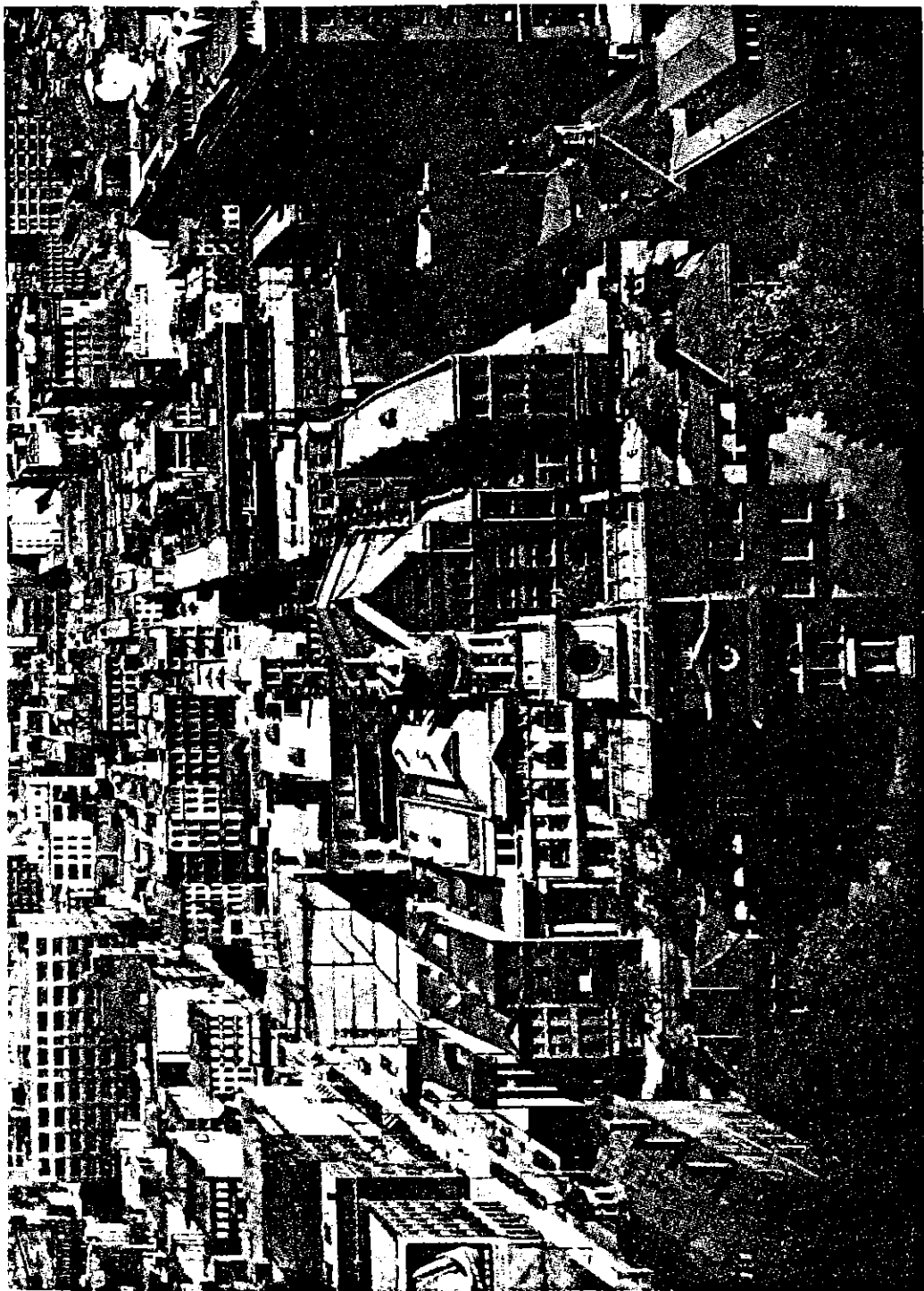
Continuing the trend for citizen involvement in city planning, George E. Nitzsche, an attorney who was Recorder at the University of Pennsylvania, proposed that Independence Square and the three blocks from Chestnut Street north to Race Street become a "United States National Park of Independence Mall."

Nitzsche was well aware of Dr. Egbert's proposal as well as the other early schemes. Observing both the enormous amounts of money being spent by the federal government on Depression relief, and also the opportunities posed by the new Historic Sites Act, he recognized that although "years ago, such a project would have been considered impossible," the time was right to move ahead with it. His motivation was civic, expressed in terms of both patriotism and city planning. "Independence Hall is undoubtedly the most revered building in the United States and one of the greatest historic shrines in the world. It should have a setting worthy of its pre-eminence.... A stranger arriving here for the first time now cannot help forming a most unfavorable impression of the city when the first objects to strike his eye are the hideously ugly and dilapidated

buildings in these blocks, with hundreds of "For Rent" and "For Sale" signs everywhere."

Nitzsche had no new drawings prepared, but advocated the realization of Dr. Egbert's plan, only differing on the branch of government that would implement it. He believed that only the federal government could feasibly complete such a large project.

In addition to being the first to propose that the area become a national park, he was also the first to speak of the potential impact that the park could have on the surrounding neighborhood. He wrote that "The plan suggested also would have a tendency to transform a section in the heart of Philadelphia in which there are many unsightly and unprofitable buildings and many narrow streets and alleys. Indeed, some of these sections might again become residential, especially for inexpensive apartment houses and hotels." [Evening Bulletin, 1/17/35] This definition of a mall as providing both a fitting setting for Independence Hall and also a starting point for the rebirth of the neighborhood continued to be the foundation proposals for the area.



*Courtesy of the Fairmount Park Art Association*

*View of Independence Square from the south, showing Mall area*

government together. Nitchze prepared no drawings to illustrate his ideas but the press gave him ample space to explain his concept.(Grieff, p.65, 68; Cook, p.32)

Like Egbert, his self-proclaimed mentor, Nitchze held a position at the University of Pennsylvania, as its recorder. He had graduated from Penn's law school in 1898, when classes still were held in the new courthouse on Independence Square, and thus had witnessed over several student years the restoration of Independence Hall, that he now aimed to enhance with a dignified approach under federal ownership and protection.

At the University today Nitchze's life is described in a full box of archival records which indicate that he was a strong public relations personality, an antiquarian, founder of the University archives, and a man interested in colonial history and restoration. His legacy at Penn is sound. His role in the development of the park movement reflects the strength of his record at Penn.(Phone interview with Mark Frazier Lloyd, Archivist, U.Of P. Archives, October 5, 1993)

Nitchze spoke forcefully for his plan, declaring that "about two-thirds of the properties in these three blocks are in bad repair, [and] many are empty." He saw only benefits in the plan to tear down the three blocks and create a landscaped central promenade for a dignified approach from the city's new Delaware River Bridge. (as quoted in Cook, p. 33)

Adapting ideas from Egbert's plan Nitchze proposed that the buildings lining Fifth and Sixth Street be replaced by Colonial-style replicas of famous buildings in the thirteen original colonies. This expansive construction program partially saw completion with the addition of several architecturally- regulated new office buildings along Independence Mall during the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, although they were built in a modern style.

Also in 1936, the Philadelphia Board of Trade called for a Carpenters Hall Park as part of a larger plan to rejuvenate the area east of Tenth Street between Spruce and Arch. Although foremost a proposal for the area east of Independence Square, this plan also envisioned a "Constitution Gardens," in anticipation of the Constitution's approaching Sesquicentennial year, for the first block north of Independence Hall. The Board asked Albert Kelsey and D. Knickerbacker Boyd, of the 1915 plan, to design the space. "Constitution Gardens" was intended to commemorate those who died for their country. (Interview, Roy F. Larson, Columbia U. Oral History, 1973, p. 3 Larson to date is the sole source for Boyd and Kelsey as the architects for the "Constitution Gardens" plan.)

By May of 1936 the plan had sufficient support for the introduction of a bill proposing a national park at Carpenters Hall. Both Seneca Egbert and George Nitchze lent their support and advice, but the plan failed to pass in Congress. (For a more detailed description of this complicated park effort, see Cook, pp. 36-38 and Grieff, pp. 69ff.)



## **1936: Commercial Interests Weigh In**

In an ambitious plan to rejuvenate Old City, the **Philadelphia Board of Trade** expanded Dr. Nitzsche's national park proposal to include not only the block north of Independence Hall, but also those blocks stretching east from Independence Hall to the new Custom House at Second and Chestnut Streets. The Board was able to generate enough interest that a bill (ultimately unsuccessful) was introduced in Congress in 1936 for the establishment of a national park.

For the north mall, architects **Albert Kelsey** and **D. Knickerbacker Boyd** prepared a plan called "Constitution

Gardens." The plan featured a sunken plaza and gardens intended as a memorial for soldiers "who made the supreme sacrifice in defense of their Government." The sunken plaza seems to repeat Cret's earlier proposal, while the form in general is quite similar to Greber's 1930 scheme. The text and the perspectives that illustrate the Board's promotional pamphlet indicate widespread demolition and replacement of the existing buildings on blocks adjacent to the proposed national park with large new buildings intended to house specific trades or industries. [Board of Trade report, quoted in Cook, p38. Report and renderings are missing from INDE archives]

[caption for plan:

"Constitution Gardens," by Albert Kelsey and D. Knickerbacker Boyd, for the Philadelphia Board of Trade, 1936



The Board of Trade's Planning Committee had grand ambitions to rebuild Philadelphia's older section. The sponsor of the Carpenters Hall park effort, A. Raymond Raff, not only was Collector of the Port, but also President of the Carpenters Company and a former contractor. He and his associates envisioned widespread demolition to make room for new construction. On the block north of Independence Square large square buildings would go up to support specific trades or industries. The plan showed similar new block-like buildings housing different businesses throughout the area. This proved to be the proposal for Independence Hall's setting which most blatantly favored the future of the business sector as its primary motivation. (Cook, pp. 38-39)

According to his own recollection in a 1969 interview, Philadelphia architect Roy F. Larson began around 1935 to sketch his ideas for redeveloping the historic neighborhood around Independence Hall. He produced various versions, but the 1937 drawing became important as the plan he presented to the Municipal Improvements Committee of the AIA's Philadelphia Chapter, after he became its chair in 1938. "But I didn't have too much success with them," Larson recalled, "because of course the Institute at that time was not too active in this kind of venture." (Larson interview, 1969, p. 6)

Larson had long held an interest in civic improvements and in Philadelphia's history. Coming from Chicago he had been exposed in his youth to the City Beautiful movement at its source." Then, on scholarship during World War I Larson had traveled on the East Coast to see "the old cities in this country." He saw Boston, Portsmouth, Philadelphia, Richmond and the Williamsburg area. In Philadelphia he met a "great interpreter and collector" of the city's colonial history, and this piqued a lifelong interest in what remained of Philadelphia's early past.

After serving in the war, Larson studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania under Paul Phillip Cret, and then in 1926 became his partner. Two years later Cret began work on his design for Independence Hall's northern setting, but, Larson remembered, "we in this office, ... didn't think of this improvement in depth at all" at the time. Soon after, however, Cret was preparing the drawings dated 1933 and with several other proposals in the public forum, Larson began around 1935 to contemplate his own ideas. He drew inspiration from roaming the streets in the neighborhood: "I... was rather shocked by the poor condition, the obsolescence around Independence Hall and the historic buildings, Christ Church, also south of Independence Square, the old Society Hill area that was rapidly deteriorating, ...It was rather sad to see ..." In particular Larson remembered how apologetic he felt when showing a Danish visitor the historic area

The buildings around Independence Hall were fire hazards, some of them. Most of them were obsolescent as I said, most of them particularly immediately north, and oftentimes they were unoccupied above the first floor. The first floor right across from Independence Hall was occupied by hot dog shops, hamburger joints and this kind of thing.

"So I used to play with it, just as a sort of an extracurricular," he recalled. "just for my own satisfaction, hoping that maybe we could create some interest here in the city in doing something about it." His first presentation as chair of the AIA's municipal improvements committee in 1938 got nowhere, but in a decade would be the basis for the creation of Independence State Park, and the basic form for final design development. (Larson interview, 1969, pp 5-6)

While Larson's sketch incorporated earlier concepts, it also exceeded them all in its size and scope. Like the 1935 Carpenters Hall Park plan, Larson projected open space both to the east and north of Independence Hall, but he also envisioned clearing the blighted city blocks beyond the Delaware River Bridge plaza, taking the mall all the way north to Spring Garden Street, and linking it with the city's Franklin Square just west of the plaza as part of a grand sweep of open space. It offered a radical treatment for an urban problem which Larson felt had gotten out of hand, while it focused on the preservation and enhancement of historic sites within the area. (Larson's eastern park area featured the First and Second Banks, Carpenters Hall, and the Merchant's Exchange. Grieff, Illus. 10, opp. p. 67)

Around 1938 Charles Abell Murphy began promoting his ideas for an Independence Park. Taking a page from the successful doings at Mount Vernon and Valley Forge, Murphy tried organizing an "Independence Park Ladies' Association." to assist in "the preservation and restoration of that hallowed area of Independence Hall," He also wanted to see the Robert Morris house (where President Washingtons and Adams had lived while Philadelphia served as the nation's capital in the 1790s) rebuilt on Market Street near Sixth, and a patriotic display of statues depicting Revolutionary War generals placed in a colonnade on the first half of the block to Ludlow Street. There is no evidence to suggest his plan won any support. (Cook, p, 33)

One last proposal for Independence Hall's setting did gain attention before the outbreak of World War II intervened. It came from Struthers Burt, a prominent Philadelphian who had recently achieved high visibility from his efforts to expand Grand Teton National Park by gaining Rockefeller support and backing. At his return to Philadelphia Burt saw the need for a national park in the Independence Hall area. In 1939 he proposed to the National Park Service a project that would raze three city blocks in a radius around Independence Square, leaving only the historic structures standing.

Although at first encouraged by the interest generated, Burt dropped his plan once he reached the conclusion that the cooperation needed for such a major project was not likely to be found in Philadelphia. Perhaps he was influenced by the opinion of Fiske Kimball, the respected director of the Philadelphia Art Museum and member of the Park Service's Advisory Board, who maintained that the city and Carpenters Company were not likely to give up their property to a federal project and that real estate speculators might exploit the mall scheme. (Grieff, pp. 69-70)

## 1937: Beaux-Arts on Steroids - the Basic Form Takes Shape

A junior partner in Paul Cret's firm, Roy F. Larson, expanded on Cret's earlier proposals in a scheme prepared for the Committee on Municipal Improvements of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, of which Larson was chair. He hoped to engage the committee in supporting the idea of improvements around Independence Hall. [Cook, p.34] Larson was concerned about the deterioration of the neighborhood, noting later that "it was rather sad to see this old area which had such significance in the independence of the country [in such poor condition." [Larson interview, p5] Having come from Chicago, which was "really on the move," he felt that Philadelphia "was very conservative about doing anything about the area, historical areas in particular, and the improvement of the central city." [Larson interview, p2] And, as one of Larson's future partners, Robert Breeding, has noted, "back in the 30s when there wasn't much to do, architects invented projects." [Breeding interview] The committee declined to become involved, but the proposal became a deep and abiding interest of Larson's, and he would work on it for years at his own expense, not winning a contract for its design until 1950. [Larson interview, p.6]

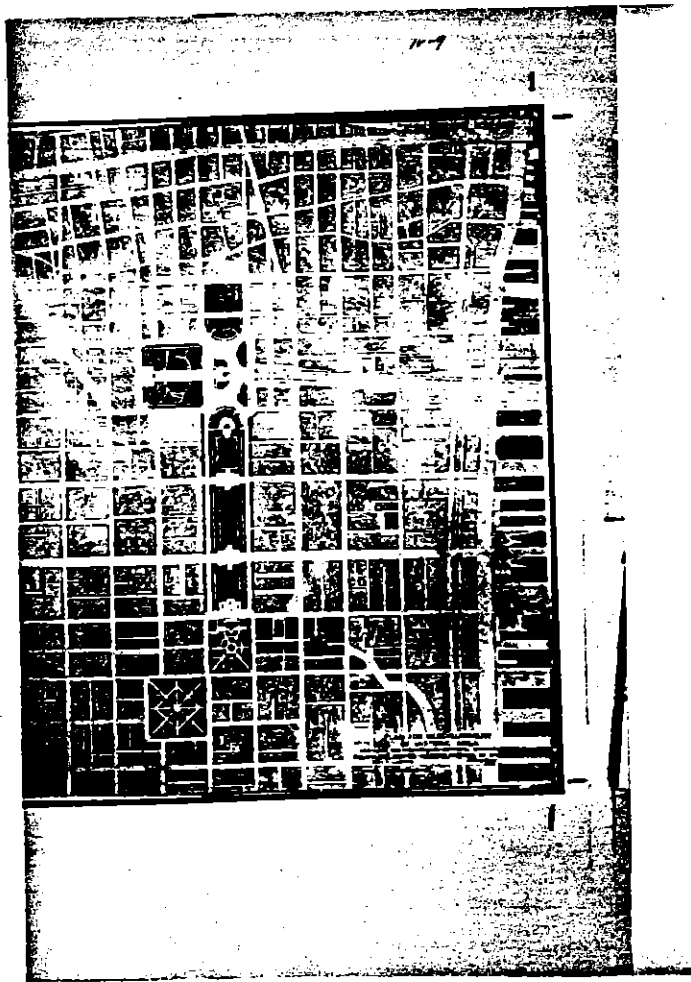
Larson's plan drew from the already large number of precedents, and in essence, "grew" Cret's semi-circular one-block scheme to Egbert's three-block length. A central lawn extended from Chestnut Street to the Benjamin Franklin Bridge plaza at Race Street, flanked by walkways and bosques of trees. Like Jack on the bean-stalk, Cret's semi-circular terminus was pushed all the way to Race Street, where a bosque curved at the end of a radius emanating from an obelisk.

Most notable was Larson's development of a composition that would have related the proposed mall to the bridge plaza and to Franklin Square, establishing a monumental entrance to the city. (Larson also incorporated the Board of Trade proposal for a second mall extending east from Independence Square to Third Street.) Perhaps because it incorporated the biggest ideas of its predecessors; perhaps because no subsequent proposals were offered by other interested persons; or perhaps because Larson would become part of the inner circle of people who saw the idea for a mall through to completion, this plan would determine the basic form for the mall.

[caption for plan:

"Plan for Redevelopment of Historic Area," by Roy F. Larson, 1937"

Larson 1937



1V-9 "Plan for Redevelopment of Historic Area" prepared for  
Committee on Municipal Improvements  
Philadelphia Chapter-American Institute of  
Architects, Roy F. Larson, 1937, INHP Archives.

Kimball at the time had plenty of experience to base such an opinion. In 1938 he brokered the deal to rescue the Old Custom House-- known today by its historic name, the Second Bank-- from sale by transferring it from the Treasury Department to the National Park Service, and then finding the Carl Schurz Association to lease the building to keep it in good maintenance. The arrangements had not been easy so he was well aware of the many hurdles that lay in the path of protecting Philadelphia's most historic neighborhood. (For a detailed account of this preservation effort, see Grief, pp. 70-71)

The decade of the 1930s closed on an ominous note with the outbreak of World War II in Europe. The storm clouds put a temporary halt to plans and proposals to improve Independence Hall's neighborhood. Throughout the 1930s the vision for the setting had been expanding with the growth of the National Park Service and federal involvement in historic preservation. By 1939 it was generally accepted among people of influence that something needed to be done, something dramatic, to turn the area around, but there seemed to be no consensus on how this should happen. At this point not all the proponents were even aware of one another, and the proposals came and went. (ft. nt: See below for Judge Lewis' comments on Philadelphians' tendency not to cooperate on projects.)

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 broke that stalemate and galvanized Philadelphians to protect their national historic shrine at Independence Hall. The patriotic group Sons of the American Revolution, which had supported the Independence Square restoration efforts earlier in the century, provided the leadership for the proposal that led to the coalition of park proponents into the Independence Hall Association in 1942. The Independence Hall Association spearheaded the park movement which culminated in the establishment of Independence Mall State Park in 1945 and Independence National Historical Park in 1948.

The two key catalysts for this new and effective association were D. Knickerbacker Boyd and a newcomer to the scene, Judge Edwin O. Lewis. Boyd of course had been actively promoting the protection and improvement of the Independence neighborhood for more than twenty-five years before he conceived the plan to organize a larger united effort. After making his sketch with Kelsey in 1915 and again for the Constitution Gardens in 1936, Boyd joined forces with Judge Lewis in the Sons of the Revolution when Pearl Harbor altered the perception of danger for Philadelphia and its national shrine.

At that time, Lewis was president at the time of the Sons' Pennsylvania chapter and felt his group "had some responsibility to take some steps to protect Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell." He had seen France shortly after World War I and remembered the damage. Lewis appointed a committee to study the problem and put Boyd as chair. Boyd persuaded the Insurance Company of North America to pledge money to build a steel and concrete vault under Independence Hall where the Liberty Bell could be lowered in case of bombings. (Lewis Interview with Melford Anderson, August 7, 1956, in Bar Harbor, Maine, p. 7)

Under Boyd's initiative the Sons committee widened their goals to include the improvement of Independence Hall's neighborhood. Around this time, probably through his association with the AIA, Boyd approached Roy F. Larson and asked him to join forces to launch a larger effort that would include the many groups throughout the city that had shown an interest in the history or redevelopment of the area. Boyd suggested that Lewis be the leader of this new group. (Grieff, pp 76-7; Grieff made a common mistake when she identified the patriotic group as the Sons of the American Revolution. Lewis later explained in a letter that Sons of the American Revolution was a more recent, breakaway group from the parent Sons of the Revolution. It was as members of the Sons of the Revolution that he and Boyd worked to protect the Hall. Lewis interview, 1956, p. 7; Larson interview, Jan. 1969)

After several preliminary meetings and a careful selection of invitees, civic and professional, the Independence Hall Association got off the ground in June 1942 at the American Philosophical Society. Fifty-seven people showed up and responded to the call to action. Boyd and Lewis made an excellent team. Both had charisma and charm, energy and perserverence. Both belonged to numerous civic and patriotic groups--they were joiners and doers. Admittedly biased, Boyd's daughter spoke admiringly of her father's "great vision and tact," his wit and good humor, his graciousness and his deep interest in history. These combined to make him an eloquent and popular speaker, an important talent for any group with a cause. (Borie interview, c. 1970, p. ; see Grieff, pp.76-79 for a detailed description of the founding of the IHA)

By his own admission Judge Lewis had not been aware until the war that so many earlier efforts and designs for the Independence Hall area had already been presented. The fact that such a prominent and well-connected Philadelphian was unaware of the long history of proposals suggests the difficulty advocates for Independence Hall's setting had been facing when trying to win support from the community at large.(Lewis, 1970 interview, p. )

But Boyd's choice of Judge Lewis to head the group effort was brilliant. He recognized Lewis' talents, his connections, his high visibility, his aura of authority as judge, his credibility as president of the SAR and vice-president of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Boyd played a back seat to Lewis but he was the one who took care of the organizing, networking ,brainstorming and drudge work for the creation of the Independence Hall Association in the spring of 1942 and during its first years as the Executive Secretary, until he suffered a fatal heart attack at his desk, while working on Association business, on February 21, 1944. Boyd died with his boots on and Lewis stepped right into them, taking the full weight of the Independence Hall Association's leadership. ( Interview, Lewis with Eleanor Prescott, Columbia U. Oral History Program (CUOHP), January 16, 1970, pp 1-17; Larson Interview, p. ; Grieff, p. 87; for a fascinating record of Boyd's organization and careful tracking of the Association's business, see his confidential list of members who he rated on five counts: continuous support, especially helpful services, speakers at other meetings, securing new members,



## 1942: Consensus Reached for a Three-Block Length

The Independence Hall Association was formed in 1942. The Association's stated interests were protection of Independence Hall from fire (a realistic concern given previous neighborhood fires that had threatened the hall, as well as the awareness that London was burning and American defenses were inadequate against a possible German invasion); and improvement of the neighborhood around the hall, through

... demolition of hazardous buildings adjoining historic structures, the elimination of dangerous occupancies, and the general cleaning up of the surroundings. Such clearing up...would make possible the creation of parks, playgrounds and landscaped

environments that would not only protect but provide adequate settings for these shrines, and would rehabilitate the neighborhoods, make for better health and safety of the citizens, and cause the buildings thus protected and set apart to become the mecca for many more millions of people from all over the United States. [Boyd: Committee, page 1]

Cognizant of these aims, Roy Larson presented four alternative plans for a mall to the group, ranging from the demolition and redevelopment of the half block opposite Independence Hall, stretching from Chestnut Street to Ludlow Street, to demolition and redevelopment of all three blocks from Chestnut to Race Streets, a plan that essentially duplicated his 1937 proposal. The group, agreeing on the necessity to make no small plans, adopted the most aggressive proposal as its official plan.

[Caption for plan:

"Preliminary Studies by Independence Hall Association, Stage 3," prepared by Roy F. Larson, December, 1942.]

and sponsors for resolutions. Only three--Judge Lewis, S.K. Stevens, state historian, and Charles Baydock, member of the executive committee and an engineer-- of the 36 members listed filled all five categories. "Confidential List Those Most Interested in the Independence Hall Association to Nov. 10th, 1943," INDE Archives, IHA , DKBoyd Papers, Box 1)

Edwin Lewis was not a native Philadelphian, but he built a successful career in the city by preparing a careful groundwork, mindful of his "lacking of native roots." He grew up in Richmond, Virginia, and began at thirteen to serve as clerk in the law offices of his father's friends. In 1896 he moved to Philadelphia and got a job as a newspaper typesetter while he was tutored for admittance to the University of Pennsylvania's law school. His newspaper jobs, his tutoring, and his first year of law school all kept him in the Independence Square neighborhood until 1900, when the law school moved to its new building at 34th and Chestnut.

Looking back Lewis placed a great deal of store in his early years as the foundation of his later success. He saw his four or five years with the newspapers as the source for his liberal education. It put him in contact with important writers and important events of history. He learned to work hard for long hours and be rewarded by the stimulation and the satisfaction of completing a job well. (Interview, 1970, p.9)

At law school Lewis "was active in everything." He served as president of the Hale Law Club and the Southern Club, treasurer of the Democratic Club, and editor for the University's newspaper, the Daily Pennsylvanian. For the paper he did weekly interviews with the University's officers, who remained in the Independence Square neighborhood. These interviews often led to conversations about Independence Hall and Independence Square, giving him another point of reference for his later work to improve the neighborhood. (Interview, 1970, p. 10; 1956, pp. 3-4)

Once out of law school in 1902 Lewis immediately joined a law firm. More importantly he plunged into Philadelphia politics, reasoning, "a young lawyer in a large city, lacking the native roots, he hasn't got a big acquaintance." So he got started by looking up the Democratic leader in his district and introducing himself as a young lawyer who wanted to be active in politics and anxious to help. Within two months he had been nominated by the party for the State Senate. This was a way to get Lewis known and he took full advantage of the opportunity. "It gave me the chance to make speeches all over Germantown, Chestnut Hill, West Philadelphia," he recalled. The next year he was nominated to a city office and again campaigned widely. "I got lots of business from that," he recalled in 1970, "So when I got through there I was well known."

Building on this network, in 1903 he accepted the job as secretary to the City Party, an independent party, and for two years "ran the whole blame thing, organized the mass meetings, hired the taxicabs, arranged for the speakers, made alot of speeches myself, and by the end of 1905 I was known all over the city." That put him in position to be

elected in 1907 to City Council where for two years he became "what they called the independent leader."

These were the formative years of Lewis' career as a trial lawyer, which he practiced for just over two decades until elected in 1923 to judgeship. He was so well-connected by then that both parties voted him to the job and for four subsequent elections returned him unanimously to his seat. Judge Lewis retired in 1957 as President Judge, Common Pleas Court #2, Philadelphia County, after thirty-four years on the bench. During the last seventeen he was an active promoter for the improvement of Independence Hall's neighborhood and in 1970, shortly before his death, he was still using his influence and persuasion to see that Independence Mall's federal courthouse on Sixth Street remained in the Congressional budget. ( Interviews with Lewis, 1970,pp 10-15; and 1956, pp. 5-6; Grieff, pp 75-76)

An important ingredient in Lewis' success was his confidence in social circles. Fortunately he enjoyed parties and excelled at entertaining. In his law school days he joined dancing groups and a fraternity. Roy Larson first met him as a fraternity brother; Lewis entertained his chapter and occasionally after they ran into each other socially. By the time he became president of the Association, Lewis was summering in fashionable Northeast Harbor, Maine, and taking a February vacation in Palm Beach, Florida. Besides his judgeship, he wore many hats which suggested his social ease and leadership. For the publication of a 1944 speech Lewis listed his titles as,

He is General President of the Society of Sons of the Revolution, Governor General of the Society of Colonial Wars; Vice-President of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Vice-President of the Colonial Society of Pennsylvania; President (since 1918) of the Board of Managers of the Moore Institute of Art; a Director of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and a member of the Virginia Society of the Cincinnati. ("The Spoliation of American Cities," [1944], p1, INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8)

In his interviews Lewis remembered all the great figures on the stage as his old friends. Although such recollections strike readers as hubris, Lewis' social circle unquestionably ran in the upper echelons, among the people of influence. His correspondence--consistently addressed to U.S. presidents, congressmen, attorney-generals, to corporation directors, governors, and mayors-- indicates that he operated on the management levels and left the nuts and bolts work to his able committee members. This social and leadership aptitude was, as Larson recalled, the very quality that led them to ask Lewis to be President of the IHA. (See INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Boxes 8 & 9)

Lewis' anecdotal accounts of Association business suggest his aptitude for making prominent guests feel welcome and receptive. His attention to detail and aesthetics for Association events wedded well with his pure pleasure in orchestrating the moment.

With relish he remembered the time the Association invited President Truman to Philadelphia:

I got Mr. Truman up here and gave him a luncheon in the Philosophical Hall. I'll never forget, it was a beautiful luncheon. It was all white and pink and at every place I had a big ripe persimmon, all peeled, and I ripened them all myself by the radiator. I bought 90 or 100 of them, and you have to ripen them, you know, by a radiator, and every persimmon was just juicy. And looking around the room and the white tableclothes and that lovely pink persimmon there --I was quite proud of it.(Lewis interview, 1970, p. 25)

The careful planning for Truman's visit payed off. "I became quite friendly with him and his wife," he recalled, "and we never had ...a vote against any bill in Congress or legislature."

During the first years of the Independence Hall Association Lewis lavished attention on Congress. "We went to Washington. We used to give dinners at the Congressional Hotel for the Congressmen," he recalled. First fifty showed, and by increments it grew to as many as 125 for lunch. And then Lewis organized official visits of Congressmen to Philadelphia, where he always planned a special dinner in their honor. Somehow he also managed to arrange for a generous benefactor to pick up the tab. (Interview, 1970, p.21; phone interview, Toogood with Clifford Lewis, September 28, 1993)

Finally, Lewis believed in himself and tried never to take on a task he didn't think he could master. Thus when in June of 1942 he was asked to be president of the group which became the Independence Hall Association, he accepted it "with the determination that the plan should be put through." Not wanting to be associated with a failure, Lewis kept his eye always on the goal. He recognized it would be a huge task that would take some twenty years to accomplish, especially because in his opinion "Philadelphia was notorious for not working together. There was no cohesion, you know, among the leading men in Philadelphia".

(Lewis interview, 1970, p. 17; 1956 interview, p. 10)

Judge Lewis did give credit to others for the success of the national park and state mall in his interviews. He remembered ten or more dedicated volunteers who would go anywhere and do anything for the cause. Foremost among them was the librarian of the American Philosophical Society, Dr. William E. Linglebach. "Dr. Linglebach and I were the driving men," he told the interviewer in 1970. (p. 23) Other key people included David Boyd, Roy F. Larson, Grant Simon, and Charles Jenkins, president of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Not immodest, however, Lewis remembered that "I was the man that pushed all these little pegs." (Lewis interview, 1970, p. 21)

It is interesting to see how Judge Lewis perceived the Association's situation and the individuals who worked with him. Despite such singleminded and egotistical perceptions --supported by Roy Larson's impression that Lewis had "not been a very generous person" in crediting the many people involved with the park projects--the Judge did provide the leadership needed to unite the many advocates for improving Independence Hall's setting and to steer, as well as hammer, the movement through the many hurdles and disappointments on its path to ultimate achievement. (Larson interview, 1969, p. )

Virtually everyone interviewed about the development of Independence National Historical Park and Independence Mall State Park agreed that Judge Lewis served an essential role and deserved much of the credit for both projects. Perhaps no one sang his praises better than David Boyd's daughter, Lysbeth Borie, who for twenty-some years worked with Lewis in the IHA. When asked who deserved the accolades, she responded that they should fall

...without a doubt completely and directly on Judge Lewis, because he gave up 25 years of his life ...never discourage,[sic] and with great force: he's an eloquent speaker and he also has a delightful humor, very persuasive. He went again and again to Harrisburg and to the federal government. Often he took a committee with him. But on his shoulders alone, for the performance, I would give full credit. He never was discouraged. Whenever there was a change of governor or Congressman, Senator, he was right there to relate all over again the importance and to persuade them into our camp. (Borie Interview, c. 1970, CUOHP, p. 24)

State congressman Isidor Ostroff, who pushed for a national park in the area before the IHA even was organized, grew to love Lewis as a second father. He, too, had nothing but admiration for him:

I had to admire the way he played off Republicans against Democrats and Democrats against Republicans, making the other fellow feel that he'd better do something about it before the other party got credit for doing the thing, and he did it skillfully. He handled the political situation in this entire project like a master of a great orchestra. (as quoted in Grieff, p. 74 later in Grieff's text, p. 410 she notes that Martin Yoelson recalled that Ostroff had been "crowded out," she presumed by Judge Lewis.)

And Edmund Bacon, Philadelphia's leading city planner in Lewis' day and nationally-known architect, responded when asked in 1970 if the presence of such a strong figure as the Judge's was a hindrance to the successful development of the Independence Hall area:

No! How ridiculous. It's obviously an enormous help. It wouldn't have been anything, the whole thing, without him. It wouldn't have been a

darned thing. He's one of the relatively few examples of a real honest to God giant. And quite a selfless man really. It wouldn't have been there at all. I think that his contribution is just unbelievably good. I think that he was very strong minded and stubborn on things that he felt were essential, and I think he was quite pliant and reasonable and really flexible on many of the things that he was going to --was willing to accept that weren't automatically in accord with his value system. (Interview, Edmund Bacon, CUOHP, 1971, p. 33)

## **Independence Mall State Park is Established**

When the Independence Hall Association formed in the Spring and Summer of 1942, the United States government and the nation were deep in the war effort. The patriotic urge to protect Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell as symbols of American freedom helped to unify the effort to create a safe and dignified setting for the shrine. With volunteer participants from 52 civic and professional organizations, the Association set up committees and subcommittees to research and plan the park effort. A bill in Congress, H.R. 6425, had been on the docket since January, introduced by representative Leon Sacks, at Fifth Ward committeeman Isidor Ostroff's initiative. This bill proposed a commission to study a national park for the area east of Independence Hall. The Association soon drafted and had ready a new bill with wording to include the three-block north mall. (Both Grief, pp. 77-79; and Cook, pp. 45-52, cover the creation of the Association in detail; Cook points out that Ostroff's purpose for advocating the park was in his words, "the improvement in housing"; the IHA's committees were: Research and Planning, Finances, Public Relations, with a subcommittee on Exhibitions, and Charter. For a list of committee members in September 1942, see INDE Archives, DK Boyd Papers, Box 1, IHA-Boards and Committees.)

By the close of 1942 the Association had met with National Park Service Director Newton Drury and Herb Kahler, acting chief historian, to discuss the Park Service's earlier aim to have Independence Hall named a National Historic Site. In December news had arrived of President Roosevelt's special wartime exemption to allow this designation and the City's ordinance authorizing it. According to the 1933 Historic Sites Act, Independence Hall thus became eligible for federal funds for its preservation and beautification. (Grief, p. 80-81; Cook, p. 57)

Also by this time, the Association's Research and Planning committee had met twice, considered four plans for the park area, and picked the most expansive one which included all three blocks to the north and a small mall to east of Independence Hall. The Association's officers, Judge Lewis, David Knickerbacker Boyd and Roy F. Larson, had also collaborated on an article to publicize the Association and its proposals for a

national park. (Grieff, Independence, pp. 79- ; Cook, pp.51-3 describes the first two Research and Planning meetings in August and October, 1942.)

On January 1, 1943 the Association distributed a fund-raiser position statement, "The Reawakening of the Spirit of American Liberty in Philadelphia," in which it proudly took credit for being "instrumental" in bringing about the passage of a City Council ordinance which authorized the cooperative agreement with the Federal Government for the National Historic Site designation. The Association was about to incorporate as a non-profit organization, making contributions to it tax deductible. The Association was considering urging the demolition "at the proper time" of the buildings "for some distance North and East of Independence Hall," and in their place substituting "parks and open spaces...to remove the present fire hazard of adjoining buildings and emphasize the dignity of Independence Hall as the Nation's outstanding Shrine of Liberty."

In this paper the Association explained how it had been busy seeking a broad base of support from "patriots, historic and civic organizations, and with building owners, companies, and individuals concerned with the Colonial Philadelphia neighborhood" in the hope of reestablishing "the entire area as an attractive part of our City with enhanced spirit, valuation, and credit to both City and Nation." To achieve this goal the Association needed to raise funds, as it was "clear that no Federal or City funds will likely be available ...until after the termination of the War." (INDE Archives, IHA, DK Boyd Papers, Box 1, Correspondence; this statement evidently was Boyd's product, as it closed inviting people with requests for further information to contact him.)

During 1943 the Independence Hall Association proceeded to study the physical setting of the three blocks north of Independence Hall. In January George E. Nitchze who in 1935 had recommended a national park for those same blocks, turned in a report as chair of the "Facts and Figures" subcommittee of Research and Planning that estimated the Federal Government would need to appropriate five million dollars "to provide a suitable approach to Independence Hall." At David Boyd's request, he went back and examined the three city blocks again in March, when he "found conditions there even more deplorable than before." He went on to explain,

The section is getting to be more and more of an eyesore, and is a disgrace to the city. Many of the buildings have been removed, and there are now quite a number of vacant lots. Several of the buildings are in the process of being torn down. A great majority of the buildings in question are either for sale or for rent, many are entirely vacant, and most of those occupied on the first floor have the upper floors for rent.

After going over the ground again, I think I am justified in saying that more than 50% of the properties are now either vacant lots and properties for sale or for rent. I think it is also fair to state that at least 80% of the properties are in very bad repair or beyond repair.

In Nitchze's estimation more than 65% of the buildings in these three blocks were owned or controlled by banks, trust companies, estates, trustees, and a few building and loans. "Most of these institutions would probably consider themselves fortunate to be able to unload at any price, since most of the properties undoubtedly have been white elephants for many years." Concluding his report, he warned that it was "essential to guard against (in the near future) unscrupulous real estate operators" such as the ones who charged "outrageous prices...for worthless and run down properties" purchased for the Delaware River Bridge construction over a decade earlier. (George E. Nitchze, Chairman, Sub-Committee on Facts and Figures of the Committee on Research and Planning, to D. Knickerbacker Boyd, Executive Secretary, IHA, March 24, 1943, INDE Archives, Boyd Papers, Box 1, IHA Corres.)

In April 1943 the Association opened an exhibit in Congress Hall on Independence Square. Prepared by its Public Relations Committee chaired by M. Joseph McCosker, Director of the Atwater Kent Museum, the exhibit presented the history of Independence Hall as well of the movement to enhance its setting, including the Association's current proposals (as developed by Larson in 1942). The Association's aim was to publicize its plan to put Independence Hall "into a proper setting, by removing unsightly buildings that were long out-moded and have ceased to be useful." Judging from the broad attendance over its four-month run, the exhibit was a promotional success. (as quoted in Grieff, pp.81-82; Cook, pp. 53-54; Cook points out here that the committee considered the benefits from the 37-block demolition in St. Louis's older riverfront section for the creation of the Jefferson Memorial, when it planned this exhibit. Judge Lewis had visited and reported on the St. Louis project as early as October 1942.)

Throughout the year the Judge politicked for the bill pending in Congress to create a commission to study the national park idea. President Roosevelt, however, had placed a hold on spending for national parks for the duration of the war and the Bureau of Budget was therefore dead set against hearings for the bill. Even with the assistance of his best contact in the administration, fellow Philadelphian Francis Biddle, Attorney General of the United States, Lewis saw no progress from Congress. Recognizing the financial binder, the Judge at the close of the year arranged for the Association to underwrite all the expenses of the investigating committee." (Lewis to Dr. Newton B. Drury, Director, National Park Service, May 17, 1944; Lewis to Attorney General Francis Biddle, January 6, 1944, INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, 1944 Corr.; Grieff, pp.82-85)

The Judge may have been following advice that George Nitchze had given during the February 1943 "Facts and Figures" subcommittee meeting, when he harkened back to counsel received many years earlier in Washington (perhaps when promoting his 1935 proposal), that the federal government would more than likely support the national park bill "if the City of Philadelphia, the State, or some of our philanthropic citizens would



stand part of the burden" of expense. (Minutes of the "Facts and Figures" Committee, February 15, 1943, INDE Archives, IHA, Box 8, Facts and Figures file.)

Judge Lewis applied this concept to a housing project scheme he became deeply interested in during the year. Instead of waiting for federal dollars, he promoted the involvement of large insurance companies in the renewal of the Independence Hall neighborhood. First he looked into Penn Mutual and other state-based companies, but finding the way blocked by legal technicalities, Lewis took an Association delegation to New York City in July to visit two large insurance firms, one of which -- the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States -- had his friend, Thomas I. Parkinson as its president. Soon after, Equitable officers took a tour of the Independence Hall neighborhood as guests of the Association and committed to the construction of a housing project just east of the Hall. (INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, "Facts and Figures" file, Minutes of meeting of the "Facts and Figures" subcommittee held at the Art Alliance, February 15, 1943, p. 2; John A. Stevenson, President, Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company, to J. Alden Tift, June , 1943, ; Thomas I Parkinson, President, The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States, to Lewis, February 11, 1944; (Pennsylvania Senator) Frank Edmonds to Lewis, Feb. 28, 1944, INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, Corresp.. In his letter to the Judge, Edmonds noted that he had been in correspondence "with our mutual friend" Parkinson of the Equitable. Lewis later indicated that both New York insurance companies agreed to invest in Philadelphia housing projects. Lewis to Ibid.)

The Judge had evidently done research on the subject and probably had received input from Association member Isidor Ostroff, who in 1938 had tried to interest real estate developer Albert Greenfield in housing projects for his district as a Pennsylvania legislator. Lewis had on file material on New York's successful housing renewal efforts under its city planner Robert Moses, and also a copy of the June 1943 federal legislation S.1163 "To encourage the development of good neighborhood conditions in towns and cities by private enterprise..." Such background preparation must have contributed to the Association's success with Equitable late in 1943. (INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, Corresp., 1944)

Lewis by the close of 1943 had also laid the groundwork to get financial support from Philadelphia for the national park plan. In a letter of January 10, 1944 Lewis sent Mayor Samuel a draft of a request to City Council to make a \$25,000 appropriation to be placed in the mayor's hands "for the furtherance of the plans of the Independence Hall Association to bring about the creation of Independence National Park in Philadelphia." Although the Council turned down the proposal, the Mayor supported the idea. ( Lewis to Samuel, January 7, 1944, INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, Corr, 1944)

Only days before, Lewis had been keynote speaker at an event which appears to have been a critical juncture in the park movement. At the request of architect Sidney Martin, President of the influential Fairmount Park Art Association (FPAA), both Lewis

and Roy F. Larson spoke at the FPAA's 72nd annual meeting on January 5, 1944, to update them on the Association's progress. In his speech, which he titled, "The Spoliation of American Cities," Lewis appealed to the audience's patriotic and civic pride and invited them to join the effort to "bring about proper recognition of the importance of this ancient area and...arrest the further decline of these blighted sections" by setting apart the "area north of Independence Hall, running to the bridge [as] Independence National Park". ("The Spoliation of American Cities, An Address by Judge Edwin O. Lewis," [n.d.,1944], pp 3-11; Larson in his 1969 interview praised Martin: "he made a great contribution, I think, to moving this along. p. 17)

Coming shortly after his success with arranging Equitable's commitment to building a housing project, it is not surprising to find much of Judge Lewis' speech focused on the need for improving the Hall's neighborhood. "Our city is becoming a slum," he warned, "made so by abandoned real estate...The environment of Independence Hall is a disgrace to Philadelphia. It is a reflection upon our intelligence and our patriotic spirit ..." The Judge pointed out that all American cities were suffering the same problem because of the widespread flight to the suburbs. "We should not devote our time to the fringe of the garment and neglect the body of it," Lewis enjoined. (Ibid., pp. 6,9)

Interestingly, the Judge blamed federal government policies in large part for the city's ruin. As Lewis saw it, they put the federal government in business while driving Philadelphians out of business, which left buildings vacant and exposed to deterioration. Federal housing projects cost taxpayers money and took properties off the city's tax rolls, and the federal "taxation without limit" had almost bankrupted the cities. (Ibid, pp.7-8 )

Clearly Lewis by the opening of 1944 already had some deep reservations about the effectiveness of federal dollars and was pursuing other avenues, including the idea of bringing New York's Robert Moses to Philadelphia, as part of his larger scheme to improve the Independence Hall setting.

Roy Larson followed Judge Lewis' FPAA speech with his slide presentation which showed the blighted neighborhood and studies he had made for the proposed mall north of Independence Hall. Later Larson recognized the significance of the moment: "I really feel that that [meeting] really [sic] ignited the spark. That set the thing going. It was presented to a fairly large audience of rather responsible people in the city, and I think the real movement ...got going after that meeting." (Larson interview,1969, pp.15,18. Larson noted in this interview that Lewis' speech but not his own were published by the IHA. p. )

The Fairmount Park Art Association subsequently published the Judge's speech in its annual report, but this audience, while influential, was not large. Positive feedback and requests for the speech led Lewis to publish it in the Spring as an Independence Hall Association pamphlet. He mailed the pamphlet out to friends and associates across the

country and filed a variety of responses, all which suggest that Larson sensed the night correctly. Arthur Adams from Trinity College in Hartford, for instance, wrote Lewis:

"I enjoyed the jokes, of course, for they are good ones. However, they did not blind me to the serious and important themes you discussed. I am heart and soul with the aims of the Independence Hall Association. What it seeks to accomplish seems so important that there can be no question of its being carried out. So I am in entire sympathy with that part of your address."(Adams to Lewis, 1944, INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, 1944 Corr.)

The force of Judge Lewis' speech, the timing of its publication and its effective distribution helped to revitalize the movement at a time when morale had suffered from the repeated postponements of the bill in Congress and when one of its key patrons, D. Knickerbacker Boyd, passed from the scene. (Boyd died on February 21, 1944, within hours of collapsing at his desk while working on IHA business. Grief, p87; Cook, pp. 111-112, points out that one small city paper, the Philadelphia Journal, voiced a negative reaction to Judge Lewis's proposal for a national park, labeling it a "huge real estate promotional scheme.")

Roy Larson's presentation at the FPAA meeting also began to stir up public interest. Writing to the Judge in June 1944, Larson enclosed a copy of an article he had been asked to write on the Independence Hall improvements for the City Planning edition of Realtors Magazine. Larson also sent copies of The American City and The Engineering News, which were running articles on the same subject. Since the January presentation Larson had been invited to give his illustrated talk to about ten organizations and societies and, he reported to Lewis, "in almost all instances there was enthusiasm for the work of the Association." (Larson to Judge Lewis, June 7, 1944, INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, Corr. 1944)

With the mounting interest in the project, the Independence Hall Association and Fairmount Park Art Association decided to collaborate on a brochure about the proposed redevelopment of the historic area. The editorial committee of Roy Larson, Henri Marceau and Joseph P. Sims, Chair, gathered material and wrote the formal report which provided the context and specific goals of the movement. In the Foreword FPAA president, Sidney Martin, pointed out the Commonwealth's plans to spend millions of highway dollars to improve the approach to the Delaware River Bridge, which, he felt, emphasized "most dramatically the possibilities for a great Mall" to connect the bridge with "America's most historic building." (Independence Hall and Adjacent Historic Buildings, A plan for Their Preservation and the Improvement of their Surroundings. Prepared and Published by the Fairmount Park Art Association in Collaboration with the Independence Hall Association, Philadelphia, 1944, p. .)

## Context: Urban Renewal and the American City

The common perception that American cities were riddled with a disease whose symptoms included poverty, violence, and decay was one which resonated throughout the early 20th century. Indeed, Lewis Mumford documented the prevailing concern over urban conditions in The Culture of Cities in 1938, saying that:

industry had 'laid its diseased fingers on the new cities and stultified the further development of the old ones'. In America as in England the cities of the industrial age were 'man-heaps, machine-warrens, not organs of human association'. These cities, Mumford insisted, were the products of mechanical growth, or blind individualism: not of anything that might be called intelligent forethought. (quoted in Schaffer--article by Hammack, 139).

The phenomenal pace of urban expansion in the late 19th century and early 20th century contributed to the pervasive sense that American cities were badly in need of repair and, perhaps, drastic surgery. The medical analogy drawn between the human body as a biological organism with individual parts that, when connected, contributed to the function of a larger whole was one that became a metaphor for city planners and lay people, alike. By the mid-twentieth century, building and housing stock in American cities had aged for more than a century with little or no rehabilitation. Businesses were expanding as rapidly as cities and private investment was concentrated on those projects that insured future economic growth. Much of the urban expansion and construction of infrastructure during the 19th century was tailored to meet the needs of the private interests funding the projects.

The transformation of America's economy from its rural foundation to an international industrial complex was complete by the early 20th century. Industrialization rapidly changed the face of the country and dramatically quickened social change. The population explosion of the early 20th century exceeded growth in and the rehabilitation of housing stock, exacerbating the growing national uneasiness and the sense that the urban "monster" was out of its cage (Marx, The Machine in the Garden).

By the 1930s, 38% of American housing was considered to be sub-standard, and a majority of that inadequate housing was concentrated in urban areas. New Deal programs of the 1940's did remediate some of the poor housing conditions, but programs to improve the living standards of lower and middle income white residents did little to improve the economic inequity between ethnic and racial groups (Hammack in Schaffer, 208). An additional outcome of New Deal programs was the increasing decentralization of urban areas with the construction of new communities outside the congested city centers (Hammack in Schaffer, 214).

In Philadelphia, the 40s and 50s were a time of great collaboration between design professionals. The University of Pennsylvania provided a fertile laboratory for updating professional thinking about the relationship between design disciplines, especially architecture, urban design, and city planning. Edmund Bacon, Louis Kahn, and Oscar Stonorov, then working out of the University, were visionaries interested in a "new" kind of urban renewal that outlined a holistic approach to city planning, recognizing that good housing, economic revitalization, and urban improvement all went hand-in-hand. Their participation in Philadelphia's planning brought national and

international attention to the city in the 1950s and 1960s.

By the 1960s, racial tension, crime, unemployment and housing conditions were seen as symptoms of the general urban blight inherent in 19th century growth patterns which allowed industry to vie for prime city locations while city dwellers were left to tenement houses (Bauman in Schaffer, 231-233). Planners and architects of the 1960's, like their brethren from the 1920's, viewed cities as biological organisms besieged with cancerous growths and congested arteries. Inflammatory press, combined with fears of widespread violence, encouraged the cooperation of diverse interest groups advocating the improvement of the city's physical infrastructure. Local redevelopment authorities, empowered by newly enacted state legislation, provided powerful tools in the fight: the power of eminent domain, federally underwritten tax incentives, and low-interest, tax-free bonds (Bauman in Schaffer, 234). Initially created to remove slum housing from the urban landscape, they also empowered city governments to address the larger issue of urban decay, of which poverty was a symptom (Time, 61).

Major cities across the country were embarking on massive urban renewal and redevelopment plans. Boston, Washington, New York, Chicago, and St. Louis were all financing multi-million dollar redevelopment projects designed to rid their cities of deteriorating, inhumane living conditions while simultaneously boosting economic prosperity for their downtowns. Indeed, the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis, Missouri set a precedent for federal expenditures for urban renewal. Like the blocks cleared for Independence Mall, the land acquired for the western gateway (37 city riverfront blocks) was completely leveled for the construction of the formal park, which now includes the St. Louis Arch (DOI, 50 and Time, 61).

Of these efforts, the renewal plan for Philadelphia received national and international acclaim. Covered in international journals and popular press, Philadelphia's approach to urban renewal was considered a unique solution to urban blight. Unlike other renewal projects, in which entire city sections were razed to accommodate pristine inner city office parks, Philadelphia used the city's existing neighborhoods to structure the redevelopment plan. The Philadelphia Comprehensive Plan (published in 1960), divided the city into manageable projects in order to facilitate financial backing with the goal of minimal dislocation of residents and preservation of the city's many neighborhoods: Mill Creek, Center City, Market East, and Society Hill. Some of Philadelphia's (and the nation's) most notable professionals lent their efforts to the plans, including Kahn, Bacon and Storonov. As Director of the Philadelphia Housing Authority (and, later, the City Planning Commission), Bacon's work on the project received international attention.

The Philadelphia plan, often credited to Bacon's perseverance, was hailed as a successful solution to the difficulty of revitalizing older urban areas. Unlike the renewal efforts of St. Louis or San Francisco, it maintained and reinforced the distinct neighborhoods of the city as the building blocks for a larger whole ("The Philadelphia Cure"--13)--including, for example, the character created by the architectural and spatial relationships between structures so important to the Society Hill Greenway plan. The neighborhood approach to city planning addressed the broad patterns of decay while retaining the identity of individual sections such as Society Hill. Places such as Penn Center, Market East, and Independence Mall were identified in the plan as anchors for neighborhood renewal, critical to the economic revitalization of key sections of the downtown (Bacon, 10/8). Finally, the Philadelphia plan was an early testimony to Bacon's collaborative spirit, which

seems to have been an integral part of its success. Bacon carefully manipulated the planning process to control the quality of infill development, using the

talents of Kahn and I.M. Pei to incrementally increase the character of renewal in Philadelphia.

Readers were offered several recent precedents--the Indianapolis Mall, Williamsburg, and the Aloe Plaza in St.Louis--as sources to draw on and invited to consider the proposed improvements for a Mall to the north of Independence Hall and a lesser one to the east of Independence Hall. The report also effectively used photographs to show the "impossibility of an adequate view of these buildings [on Independence Square] from the north."

The report informed readers that the Independence Hall Association's recommendations considered all former plans and incorporated some aspects of them and proposed a "united effort to put these ideas into concrete form and to bring about their realization," even by expanding to a "national participation." (pp. 12 and 14)

The report eluded to three important steps already achieved: The establishment of Independence Hall as a National Historic Site in May 1943, the introduction of a bill in Congress (H.R. 2550) to investigate the matter of the establishment of a national park in the old part of the City of Philadelphia, and the preparation of studies for the redevelopment of the historic area. (Ibid., pp.13-14 ; INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, Corr. 1944)

The plan itself was described in a section called, "Development of the Historic Area." While no author was given, there is little doubt that Roy F. Larson, the principal architect for the design and member of the editorial board, wrote it, and he revised his 1937 and 1942 schemes into a modified version for publication in the report.

Nowhere in Larson's text, or in the report's entirety, is there mention of the term "national park." Lewis' speech (published separately) did use the term but only earmarked the three-block mall north of Independence Hall as the national park, and made no mention of the plan's eastern section discussed in Larson's text. The two presentations reflect, perhaps, the different mindsets of the two men, one bent on wooing support for a national park for the Independence Hall area, the other focused more on the design elements.

Shortly after his January 5, 1944 speech Lewis learned of a setback in the plan to have Equitable build a housing project in the Independence neighborhood, which forced him to redouble his efforts in Harrisburg. Early in February the Judge got word that a technicality in the state's constitution blocked the use of out-of-state insurance companies to invest in Philadelphia redevelopment. For the rest of 1944 Lewis lobbied with the Governor and Pennsylvania legislature to pass the necessary amendment to the constitution. ( Robert T. McCracken to Lewis, March 18, 1944; Lewis to Governor Martin, March 24, 1944; Edward Martin to Lewis, March 27, 1944; Edmonds to Lewis, Mar 27, 1944; Lewis to McCracken, March.28, 1944, Edmonds to Parkinson, Apr. 5, 1944; "Judge Lewis Joins Move to Ease Insurance Law Curb on Housing," Philadelphia Inquirer, March 31, 1944, in INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, 1944 Corr.)

In March Lewis arranged with the Association's attorney to draft a letter from the mayor to the governor in behalf of the amendment. The phrasing of the conclusion suggests that the Judge contributed the descriptive context stating the goal as "the elimination of antiquated and unsightly structures, especially in our central [i.e. Independence Hall] area." (see previous footnote for citation)

While Lewis continued to work with the state and the city, he kept a close eye on the national park legislation awaiting hearings in Congress. The news repeatedly was delay, excuses, promises and more delay. In January 1944 he wrote a brief note to Attorney General Francis Biddle "Can you find time to prod a little the chairman of the House Committee on Public Lands to have him fix a hearing for H.R. 2550?" He told Biddle about the Association's pledge to pay for the commission's work, and passed on the same information in letters to others. He took several trips to Washington and met with Chairman Peterson of the House Committee on Public Lands, who felt the Bureau of Budget should be asked to withdraw "its rather negative report on the bill." In May Lewis wrote Congressman James Gallagher, who had introduced H.R. 2550, repeating his hope that Chairman Peterson would give the OK to the bill, and come with his committee to Philadelphia as promised. The Association's legislative head Isidor Ostroff also lobbied with letters and visits for the park bill during the year. Promising news came in August that Interior Secretary Ickes supported the national park proposal, but the year passed with no change in the status of the bill. (Lewis to Biddle, Jan. 6, 1944; Lewis to Drury, May 19, 1944; Lewis to Honorable James Gallagher, May 19, 1944, INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, 1944 Corr.; Grief, pp.84-86)

Two and a half years had passed for the Judge without tangible results in federal legislation. At the opening of 1945 Lewis' frustration level was high. In an interview of 1971(?) Lewis recalled that his friend and Pennsylvania legislator Lambert Cadwalader, hearing his problems with Congress, suggested that he try the State. While the records do not support this recollection, they do show a surprisingly abrupt change in the Judge's correspondence. On January 5, 1945 Lewis reported some hope of progress in Congress. "I have definite assurance from our Pennsylvania Democratic leaders in Washington that the bill to set up the commission to investigate and lay out the proposed Independence Hall National Park will be passed early in this new congress," and five days later, on January 10, 1945, he wrote to Governor Martin, asking for

about 15 to 30 minutes of your time on a matter which I think will strongly appeal to you. You have already made a wonderful record as a Governor of vision, praised even by the Democrats with whom I have talked and I am sure what we have to say to you will open another avenue for far-sighted action in line with your message to the Legislature. (Lewis to Dr. Francis S. Ronalds, Coordinating Superintendent, Morristown National Historic Park, January 5, 1945; Lewis to Martin, Jan. 10, 1945, IHA Papers, Box 8, Corr 1945-52; Grief, p. 88)



## 1944: Gilding the Dandelion

Members of the Independence Hall Association enlisted the influential Fairmount Park Art Association in support of the cause of redevelopment of the historic area. In 1944, the FPAA published a pamphlet entitled "Independence Hall and Adjacent Historic Buildings: A Plan for Their Preservation and the Improvement of Their Surroundings."

By this time, both organizations were thinking on a grand scale. Within the pamphlet were photographs and descriptions of three sites which the backers of the project considered to be important precedents for their proposal. The Palace Green in Williamsburg was noted for being "approximately the same length as proposed Independence Mall." Aloe Plaza, in St. Louis, showed "a major improvement in the heart of a big city." The Mall in Indianapolis, was simply noted for its size. [FPAA-1944, p24-26.] The pamphlet reported that "millions have been spent to recreate by restoration and reconstruction the Colonial Capital of [Virginia]. In St. Louis many city blocks of buildings have been demolished to create a memorial plaza. Indianapolis, too, after the last war created a mall of great length and breadth to honor her soldiers, sailors and marines." [FPAA-1944, p20]

Despite personal reservations about extending the mall to three blocks, Roy Larson further developed and revised his 1937 and 1942 plans for the mall in order to publish an updated version in the pamphlet. He narrowed the central lawn and widened the flanking bosques of trees. A semi-circular plaza reminiscent of Cret's 1928 proposal was to be located across Chestnut Street from Independence Hall, lined with a bosque and "architectural motifs", and including monuments to Colonial and Early Republic heroes. Larson wrote that, "this plaza will give a setting for the Hall and serve as a background for

memorials to some of the more important of the Revolutionary figures. The entire development [of three blocks] will in fact provide many sites for monuments to Colonial and early Republic heroes. On either side of the greensward under the parallel rows of trees will be sitting spaces for adults and small recreational areas for children." [FPAA-1944, p22]

A gap in the semi-circular bosque allowed a view to and from the second block. This block was to be "useful as well as beautiful," in that many service functions would be located here, not the least of which was a rare (for that time) underground parking garage. At the corners of Fifth and Market and Sixth and Market, "in order not to disrupt entirely the commercial continuity of Market Street," he added two buildings: one to be used as a visitor reception center and one as a restaurant. He proposed that outdoor eating and refreshment terraces under the bosques would be operated in connection with these buildings. At the southeast corner of Sixth and Arch, he proposed that a museum or relocated historic building be added to balance the Free Quaker Meeting House, which would remain on the mall at the corner of Fifth and Arch. And in order to "bring life into this part of the city and [make] this a Square of real use to the citizens and visitors," he proposed outdoor flower and vegetable markets on the terraces near the Arch Street end of the block. [FPAA-1944, p23-25]

The third block would be similar to the others, ending in a circular plaza that provided "an excellent location for a terminal motif which might take the form of a great national monument to the Declaration of Independence." The memorial was intended to "close the long axis between it and Independence Hall."

The plan, incorporating many elements from the plans of the previous forty years, strongly reflected the City Beautiful and Beaux-Arts precepts that the backers believed were appropriate to the project. Clearance of three city blocks was a big, bold gesture, and the serene lines of the plan were clearly meant to contrast to the "ugliness and evil" of the existing neighborhood. The axial symmetry, grand forms, extensive vista, and classical ornamentation were typically Beaux-Arts in style.

As the pamphlet noted, this was the culmination of a "quarter-century [of] growing concern for the safety of the historic buildings and an increasing

desire to improve their setting. Philadelphians have watched the decline of Old Philadelphia and have come to realize that improvements of major proportions must be undertaken to rehabilitate and preserve this fascinating area." (FPAA-1944, p9)

The beautifully published and illustrated pamphlet became an important tool for the Independence Hall Association in promoting its proposals to other organizations, the public, and government agencies. [cook, p57] Larson's plan thus became so widely known that, at least conceptually, it would become the defacto plan for the mall.

[captions for plan and rendering:

"New Approaches to Independence Hall," prepared by Roy F. Larson for the Fairmount Park Art Association, 1944.

"Air View Showing Proposed Mall," [unsigned?] Fairmount Park Art Association, 1944.

"Proposed improvement to the north of the Independence Hall Group," rendering by Darwin H. Urffer, in FPAA, 1944  
[all: INDE archives]

Lewis thus set the stage for one of his most dramatic performances with a formal request and high flattery. The governor promptly agreed to the meeting. Lewis invited a long list of prominent Association members and friends to go along, including Roy Larson, Atwater Kent, Jr., John Story Jenks, and Sidney Martin. On January 19th they boarded the train for Harrisburg armed with brochures and statistics, all which had been gathered with a national park in mind. At their return the deal was made, at least verbally. In an interview Judge Lewis recalled that the governor had taken him aside and assured him of his backing for the project. (Lewis to Martin, Jan. 12, 23, 1945; working list of people invited; INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8, Corr. 1945-52; Lewis interview, 1970, p. 19).

Probably at Governor Martin's request, Lewis on January 23 drafted a long, descriptive proposal for the creation of "a State Park immediately north of Independence Hall and running to the Delaware River bridge." He coaxed the governor that if adopted "under your leadership, [the project] would send an inspiring thrill throughout Pennsylvania, and would lead all of our people in Philadelphia to unite for civic improvement." (Lewis to Martin, January 23, 1945, Ibid.)

Within weeks Association member and attorney, Robert McCracken, sat down to write Governor Martin in support of the scheme. He had learned from Judge Lewis of the Governor's "very great interest" in the Association's proposal and wished to assure him that the project "would not be dispossessing people of their residences," as the entire three blocks had only nine dwellings, only three of which were occupied. After an eloquent summary of the benefits from the proposed park, McCracken explained,

This is not written in any sense as a request for anything. It represents only an outburst of enthusiasm which I have the temerity to pass on to you. Some times, when wandering around the beautiful cities of the Old World, with their carefully planned vistas, squares, parks and boulevards, I have had a dream that the day might come when my own City would have something of the same kind to show." (McCracken to Honorable Edward Martin, Governor of Pennsylvania, February 16, 1944, INDE Archives, IHA, Box 8, Corresp. 1944)

Such keen anticipation of the park's creation as a civic improvement was widespread. As the war's end came in sight, patriotic sentiment again added energy to the movement. The Judge suggested to the governor that by asking for park legislation "as a State Memorial to our war heroes," the bill would "meet with unanimous response." (Lewis to Martin, Ibid.)

With peace in April 1945 the federal legislation began to move and by September had passed unanimously in the House. The very next month Pennsylvania's legislature passed a bill authorizing \$4 million for the development of the north mall as a state park. The following month, the U.S. Senate passed the national park bill.

But when Congress learned of the state's Independence Mall park questions arose as to whether it was in competition with the federal park. More than a year passed before Congress sorted out the confusion and enacted P.L.711 on August 9, 1946, establishing a seven-man Philadelphia National Shrines Commission with Judge Edwin O. Lewis as chair. (Grieff, pp.88-89)

While waiting for the state and federal governments to commit to the park proposals in 1945, Judge Lewis kept busy with a number of projects. He fervently supported the proposal made by David Stern, publisher of the Philadelphia Record, to establish the United Nations in Philadelphia, with headquarters on the north mall across from Independence Hall. Lewis encouraged Association members to join in support, noting that Stern's proposal was "an outgrowth of the efforts of the Independence Hall Association to properly set apart and protect Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell."

In March, with swelling public support, the Judge through his executive secretary Lysbeth Borie, invited sixty organizations to attend a meeting on the subject in the mayor's reception room. In April Governor Martin sent out a letter to all governors in the United States proposing and urging that "a theme center of a beautifully landscaped mall, stretching from Independence Hall shall be dedicated as the Peace Center of the World." The committee appointed to work on the idea chose Belmont Plateau instead, but the publicity during the year gave the Association's mall project a high profile. (John P.H. Hallahan to J. David Stern, March 15, 1945; Lewis to IHA, Mar. 8, 1945; Lysbeth Borie's "Summary of Invitation Issued to Meeting Friday March 16"; Lewis form letter of March 12, 1945; Lewis to Dr. Robert L. Johnson, Temple University, April 25, 1945; Edward Martin to Honorable Bernard Samuel, Mayor of Philadelphia, April 13, 1945 enclosing letter to governors; Mary Y. Van Gilder (Lewis' secretary) to Mrs. Henry Peter Borie, September 17, 1945, INDE Archives, IHA, Box 9, Correspondence United Nations in Phila.)

At his return in May Lewis received a short letter from Roy Larson to explain, "I have always felt that a model of the redevelopment of the Independence Hall area would be one of the most effective ways of presenting the proposals of our Association." He enclosed a price quote for its construction and concluded, "the expenditure would be very much worthwhile." By October the model had been built and was on display in the main floor court of the John Wanamaker store, and printed leaflets explaining the Association's purposes had been provided for the visiting public. In November Association members learned that the model had created "extraordinary interest" at Wanamakers and that it was next scheduled for the Franklin Institute for several weeks before becoming a permanent exhibit, courtesy of the City, in Old Congress Hall. (Larson to Lewis, May 1, 1945; Lysbeth Boyd Borie, Acting Secretary, to IHA, Nov. 5, 1945, INDE Archives, IHA, Box 8, Corr. 1945-52. This is probably the model Larson later displayed in his firm while in charge of the design for Independence Mall.)

Roy Larson's plan for the mall was also published that summer in a feature article in the Inquirer titled, "Providing Proper Setting for Independence Hall," written by Penn Mutual Insurance Company's president, J.A. Stevenson, who was featured as a "Devoted Civic Leader." Stevenson sent his article to Judge Lewis for review before its publication, but the Judge had only high praise for its contents. Such support helped keep the project on the mind of the legislators in Harrisburg. (Everybody's Weekly Section, Philadelphia Inquirer July 1, 1945, INDE Archives, Architects' Office, Box 6, File Phila. Misc. Pub.; )

In September the Judge sent the New York Herald Tribune's editor, Howard Skidmore, news of the latest developments, as well as a bundle of information on the Association's activities, "past, present and future," for an article he planned on Philadelphia's national park. With prescience, or perhaps for political pressure, the Judge included the three-block mall to the north of Independence Hall in his description of the national park. (Lewis to Skidmore, September 25, 1945., INDE Archives, IHA, Box 8, Corr. 1945-52)

The Governor's endorsement of the state park early in November 1945 proclaimed Independence Hall "the greatest historical shrine in the Western Hemisphere," and boasted, "Pennsylvania and Philadelphia will now proceed to do what the Federal Government, for generations, has neglected to do." A full nine months later Congress finally enacted the national park legislation, and on November 15, 1946, Judge Edwin O. Lewis chaired the first meeting of the federally-chartered Philadelphia National Shrines Park Commission.

For the Judge and the Independence Hall Association the Shrines Commission represented a transition between the largely volunteer park movement and the salaried professionals who took over the administration of the state and national parks. With the movement to establish park land for Independence Hall's setting completed, the civic and patriotic effort gave over a large share of its leadership role to make way for federal, state and municipal staffs responsible for the final plans and designs. What had primarily been the domain of the Independence Hall Association now became the state and national governments' within an urban context emerging from the newly established Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (1945) and the recently reorganized (1942) and revitalized City Planning Commission. (Independence Crier, Election Day, November 1945, p. 1; Isidor Ostroff and his committee of park advocates established this small neighborhood newspaper in early summer, 1945 and looked to Judge Lewis among others for support. Ostroff to Lewis, June 18, 1945, INDE Archives, IHA, Box 8, Corres 1945-52)

Not until May 1949 did the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia finally sign an agreement which set plans going "for the construction and development of a State park" on the three blocks north of Independence Hall. The official explanation for the delay, once Governor Martin approved an allocation of \$3 million for the park on August 12, 1946, was that the Department of Forests and Waters responsible for the

project had been waylaid by "its very heavy work load in connection with the desilting of the Schuylkill River." (The Independence Mall. A Report of the Joint State Government Commission to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Session of 1951, pp. 5 & 8, INDE Archives, INHP, Architects Office, Box 6, "Phila. Misc. Pub."

From Judge Lewis and Isidor Ostroff's point of view, however, politics soon entangled the state and national park projects to the point of alarm. These long-time advocates for the Independence Hall setting mounted another campaign to keep the effort moving, and in the process, the two former associates found themselves at odds with each other. The Judge's time as chair of the Shrines Commission took most of his attention but once again it appears that he was the facilitator for getting the state park project back on track.

On the heels of Governor Martin's announcement of the state park Isidor Ostroff began optimistically to push political buttons to ensure neighborhood improvements. On November 29 he wrote Mayor Samuel that "the work of the Commonwealth and the Federal Government will be impeded and grossly interfered with unless the City also takes an active part in what goes on." Speaking as the editor of The Independence Crier, the local newspaper he and his neighborhood committee had just organized, Ostroff asked the Mayor to sponsor an ordinance creating a "Colonial Zone" in the Independence Hall area. Ostroff evidently had been influenced by Harold Nicholls, Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania, whom he quoted from a recent speech given at the Independence Hall Association meeting as saying, "Philadelphia has standing what Williamsburg had to create." In Ostroff's mind the ordinance would keep new construction in harmony with the historic elements by requiring Art Jury and Zoning Commission approval. This "Colonial Zone," Ostroff felt, would make "a center of interest so noteworthy that it will attract visitors from all over the world." (Ostroff to Samuel, November 29, 1945)

Delays with the national and state parks continued. Lewis voiced his annoyance and frustration with Congressman Bradley who, he felt, had "been playing politics with the Independence Park project for years," successfully holding up in Congress "indefinitely" the bill for the historical commission. Although tempted many times to give a speech "denouncing the present attitude of Congressman Bradley, and praising Governor Martin for sponsoring the Park," the Judge had decided "the time was not ripe." (Lewis to George Bloom, May 27, 1946, INDE Archives, Ibid.)

Lewis, in fact, took another tack, one which had so often proved successful. On February 20, 1947 he led an influential delegation to Harrisburg to meet with the Governor. After the meeting reporters learned from the Judge that he had personally contacted Governor Duff to discuss the state park project that Governor Martin earlier had approved, when the Governor suggested calling a conference of city, state and federal representatives. The discussions had proved fruitful; Governor Duff pledged that the mall project would be built and promised \$4 million for its construction, leaving for future budget decisions

another \$4 million needed to complete the work. (Daily News, Feb. 20, 1947; Inquirer, Feb. 22, 1947; Bulletin, Feb. 22, 1947, clippings, INDE Archives, IHA, Box 9,)

In an interview with the Inquirer two days later, Lewis gave his next strategy. "We hope to arrange a luncheon meeting in Philadelphia soon at which the Governor, Pennsylvania's two U.S. Senators, Francis J. Myers and Edward Martin, federal and local officials can be present," which anticipated continuing teamwork from both politicians and government employees at all levels for the benefit of his cause. Judge Lewis' tactics took a comprehensive view of the park effort; he seemed to see the landscape as one: one park project, one focused effort to turn Old City around and improve the setting for Independence Hall. (Inquirer, Ibid.)

Such a broad view meant contention for the Judge both from within and without his ranks. Roy Larson, for one, disagreed with the Judge's preference for large-scale demolition within the boundaries of the proposed national park, and feared that the Judge might compromise "the simple, dignified and comprehensive plan for a Mall to the north and a Park and Mall to the east of Independence Square" with new land acquisition proposals, which would create "many little areas and minor avenues going in all directions, and the large ideas almost dwarfed by minor details." Larson suggested that instead of recommending larger federal acquisitions, the Historical Commission should recommend that federal and state governments cooperate to create one park incorporating north and east malls (an idea that came to pass in 1974 when the north mall was transferred to the NPS.)

Lewis replied that he still intended to promote an enlarged park east of Independence Hall, retaining the historic structures and demolishing the rest. To avoid future disagreements on the subject the Judge hired Grant Simon as the architect for the national park design and relegated Larson to planning solely for the state mall. (As quoted in Cook, pp. 112-113; Lewis interview, 1970, p. )

Judge Lewis in 1956 indicated that Larson was not alone in his criticisms of the scope of the plan. "I recall some very acrimonious discussions. Some thought the City would lose so much taxes by the extensive demolition," he told Superintendent Melford Anderson in an interview during the early phase of the Mall's construction. "Many of our friends in the movement urged upon me and upon others that we confine our efforts to creating a small park immediately north of Independence Square running from Chestnut Street to Ludlow Street. They thought that that would be sufficient to remove the immediate fire hazard to the north and that that was all we should attempt," he explained, but "That didn't seem to me to be worthwhile, and I knew that was not what was intended by the persons in the Independence Hall Association who had attended the first meeting." (Interview and discussion between Judge Edwin O. Lewis and Melford O. Anderson, Superintendent of Independence National Historical Park, August 7, 1956, at Bar Harbor, Maine, p. 13.

Instead, the Judge chose to think big. He had concluded early in the movement, when concern for other historic buildings such as Carpenters Hall and the First and Second Bank of the United States began to be addressed, "anything that might be done had to be rather big in order to accomplish the purpose that I had in mind, which was to transform that section of the city and bring it back into a state of improvement rather than decadence." In 1970 the Judge remembered telling the opposition, "You've got to cut such a swathe in here that it will lead to the rebuilding to the river." (Lewis interview 1956, pp. 13-14; interview 1970, pp. 18,34 for two similar river quotes)

Lewis thus was right in step during these post-war years with the Redevelopment Authority, which his efforts helped to create, and the City Planning Commission's sweeping plan for the future. (See above for Lewis' efforts in the realm of housing which led to his support in the creation of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and below for more on CPC's five-year plan.)

Judge Lewis' position represented the consensus of the park movement and had sufficient support to fend off persistent objectors to the Independence Mall concept. On February 25, 1947, the day after receiving Larson's letter about the design modifications, Lewis and Harold Noble of the Fairmount Park Art Association met with the Market Street Business Association, a group who persevered with their opposition to the north mall until their buildings came down around them early in the 1950s. Always courteous, the Judge invited them to attend the Shrines meeting on March 11, which they did, but to little avail. Morris Passon, their attorney, spoke in behalf of the business association's concerns, but his requests were countered with reasons to retain the mall plan--to bolster the economy of the area, to eliminate hazardous buildings, and to not waylay the project so late in the planning process. Philadelphia architect Louis Magaziner was there too, as a paid representative of the businessmen, but his voice for reducing the scheme to a half-block park north of Chestnut Street even evoked opposition from Roy Larson who stood up to defend his mall design. (Cook, p. 114; GRIEFF, pp.92-93)

Charles Peterson, National Park Service architect assigned to assist the Shrines Commission, also came out in opposition to Judge Lewis in April 1947, with a preliminary report to Director Newton Drury. Founder of the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1933, Peterson had made a reputation for himself on a national level within the field of historic architecture and historic preservation. Judge Lewis, however, had at first resisted his appointment as Shrines commission architect, preferring his own choice of Grant Simon. Perhaps he sensed that Peterson would be difficult to influence. When Peterson's report came out in April, it commenced a long battle over the issue of large scale demolition within the national park. (GRIEFF, pp.91ff)

Peterson adamantly came out against the large landscaped mall concept advocated by the Shrines Commission, and proposed the first block of the north mall as the best location for an interpretation center and parking lot for visitors to Independence Hall. He lined up two professional opinions to support his position that Independence Hall



needed "not so much open and vacant space," but "an architectural setting of a sympathetic character." (As quoted by Grieff, p.98) Dr. Hans Huth of the Art Institute of Chicago wrote, "I hope they won't pull down too much in Philadelphia. I [would] hate to see Independence Hall in splendid isolation, landscaped like a rest room," and Dr. Turpin C. Bannister, dean of the School of Architecture and Fine Arts, Alabama Polytechnic Institute and chair of the American Institute of Architects' National Committee for the Preservation of Historic Monuments, gave this statement about the north mall:

The proposed creation of a grand mall on the axis of Independence Hall in Philadelphia threatens to disrupt the eighteenth century character of this unique building. This is not to say that the present adjoining buildings form a suitable setting for the cradle of the republic, but it would (be) equally inept to impose a grandiose neoclassical or Grand Prix parti on it. (As quoted in Grieff, pp. 96-97 and Cook, pp. 116-117)

National Park Service historian Roy E. Appleman, who also was on assignment to help the Shrines Commission, supported the idea of having the federal government own the first block north of Independence Hall to locate a visitor center and parking lot there. The Shrines Commission discussed the proposal while reviewing their report in October 1947, and rejected the idea. The Judge feared that it might jeopardize the state project, and as Grieff noted, the Commission followed his lead as usual. Once again Roy Larson's mall design remained intact and the Judge's goal to effect a monumental change to revitalize the neighborhood came closer to the mark. (Grieff, pp. 93, 104-5: Grieff also notes Appleman's assessment that the Judge was the Shrines Commission.)

By October the Shrines Commission position in favor of two large malls to the north and east of Independence Hall had received widespread publicity through two models that illustrated the proposal. In the Spring the Independence Hall Association had reopened its display of Roy Larson's model in Congress Hall, and in September the City Planning Commission unveiled its enormous scale model, part of the "Better Philadelphia Exhibit" that took up an acre of floor space at Gimbel's department store.

The exhibit was part of the Planning Commission's new plan for the city, and it was viewed by more than three-quarters of a million people. The CPC's design for the Independence Hall area coincided with the Shrines Commission and Independence Hall Association's recommendations for the north mall. The City Planning Commission also designated the area between the Delaware River and Seventh Streets, and between Lombard and Vine Streets as the Old City Redevelopment Area. By this designation Old City was eligible for redevelopment which, by Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority guidelines, meant massive demolition as a means to bring "new life to blighted areas." (Grieff, pp. 99-100; Cook, p. 141; quote from CPC Annual Report, 1948, as cited in Ibid., p. 142.)

On December 29, 1947 the National Shrines Commission submitted its seven-volume, illustrated report on the proposed national park to Congress, marking the end of an important planning phase for the area. The mayor and planning commission endorsed the Shrines Commission's recommendations that identified five areas for purchase in the Independence Square neighborhood, excluding the north mall. The report drafted a bill for Congress naming specific historic elements to be acquired and specifying that the commission report would be the planning document for developing the national park. (Grieff, pp. 105-107)

It was Judge Lewis who wrote the first draft of recommendations for the commission report and in later years he remembered himself as its principal author, with the exception of the historical narrative. The effort seemed to be coming together at last, with the mall back on course, the city and Shrines Commission allied for redevelopment of the entire area of Old City, and a sense of post-war optimism and patriotism in the air. (Grieff, p. 104, 116)

The bill for the national park was introduced on January 20, 1948 and signed by President Truman on June 28, 1948, a remarkably speedy trip through Congress considering the legislative history of the bill to establish the commission. In March subcommittee meetings had gone well in Congress. A large Philadelphia delegation went down to attend. Judge Lewis testified and the Congressmen responded with enthusiasm. This was one of his finest moments; he spoke eloquently on the patriotic meaning of Independence to the American people. He cited a fire that had broken out weeks earlier on Chestnut Street, across from Independence Hall, and reminded the Congressmen that such dangers needed to be cleared away from the nation's great historic sites. Demolition continued to be the commission's recommendation for ridding the neighborhood of the run-down buildings that posed the threat. (Grieff, p. 116-118)

Within a week the subcommittee, with their wives and several Park Service officials, came to Philadelphia to see the historic area for themselves. Judge Lewis served as host, with nearly every architect and principal in the park movement escorting the group through Old City. The fanfare included lunch at the Union League and dinner at the Barclay Hotel. Everyone joined in the enthusiasm, reinforcing the Philadelphians' expectations for the future of the area. (Grieff, pp. 118-119)

Funding for the national park, however, had to wait for the next Congress' appropriation bill, and during the lull in activity the city and state began to move on the north mall project. In January 1949 the City Council's Public Works Committee held hearings on the proposed joint city-state agreement to develop the mall. Representatives of the Market Street merchants again showed up to testify against the demolition of their business community. Morris Passon found the mall design "grandiose," while Louis Herbach of 522 Market thought it would make Independence Hall "look like a peanut in a two-block vista." Judge Lewis spoke in the mall's favor, pointing out that the Pennsylvania legislators were unanimously behind it and that funds were already

available. Albert Greenfield, a Shrines Commission member and Philadelphia real estate developer, defended the mall as a means to raise city revenues, presumably from new business and new construction that would follow the improvements, and Congressman Hardie Scott, who had introduced the national park bill, warned the committee that any delays on the mall plans might be interpreted in Washington as bad faith in Philadelphia. (Grieff, pp. 120-121)

In 1982 Edmund Bacon recalled that one of the unspoken issues that drove the mall project at this time was the potential flight of three major businesses, employing up to 15,000 people, because of the continuing deterioration of the neighborhood. As funding already was a tricky item, with an uncertain future tied to the legislature's willingness to impose a gas tax, such economic considerations must have strongly weighted the decision. The committee voted in favor of the city-state agreement and days later, on January 18, 1949, City Council passed an ordinance authorizing it. When Governor Duff and Mayor Samuel signed the agreement on May 24, 1949, the project officially was underway. (Grieff, pp.121- 123; Inquirer and Bulletin, February 22, 1947, INDE Archives, IHA, Box 9, clippings, discuss Governor Duff's \$4 million appropriation and the gas tax needed for the additional \$4 million projected for the project's completion.)

Subsequently two of the three major companies, Rohm and Haas and General Accident, did commit to the future revitalization of the Independence Hall neighborhood. Their continued presence in the neighborhood helped to make the mall feasible, credible, and promising. (Grieff, pp. 121-2)

The three block mall concept finally had received official recognition and approval. It took twenty years to gain this high ground and would take nearly another twenty for the mall construction to reach completion.

## **Independence Mall State Park Is Constructed**

From the outset the Independence Mall project was beset by delay and controversy. Before the agreement was even signed by the state and the City of Philadelphia in May 1949, merchants had organized in protest, a foreshadow of their long battle to modify the scope of the plan. The cooperative agreement spread the responsibility for the project between two state agencies --the Department of Forests and Water and the Department of Public Highways--and two city offices --the City Planning Commission and the Philadelphia Parking Authority. This long-distance, shared authority caused repeated delays while awaiting approvals, and numerous problems associated with staff and the coordination of complex plans.

The project also required annual Pennsylvania Assembly appropriations which regularly put the project's issues and delays up for criticism and hampered the flow of progress. The use of layers of consultants and contractors under the principal architectural firm Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson set up a logistical assignment that required great patience and cooperation, as well.

As a product of years of civic and patriotic society lobbying, the mall project had high visibility and a direct relationship with the federal project establishing Independence National Historical Park. Judge Lewis, as head of both the Independence Hall Association and the Advisory Commission for Independence National Historical Park, maintained a strong proprietary interest in the mall project, lending a hand whenever he could, directing comments or complaints sent to him, and always placing pressure where needed to keep the project on schedule. Lewis attended meetings for both parks and acted as an informal liaison between the two projects, especially during the early years of the mall's construction when the role of the National Park Service in the undertaking yet needed definition. The necessary phasing of the mall kept these issues alive longer than they otherwise would have been, so that the Judge had frequent reason to facilitate in his persistent, sometimes heavy-handed, way.

The mall was a massive project that fit into an even larger city plan to redevelop Old City. The Philadelphia Planning Commission under Executive Director Edmund Bacon, had strong opinions and their input on design elements at least once put a hold on the progress of the project.

Because of the delays over funding the project was completed in phases according to appropriations. The second block, between Market and Arch Streets took the longest to design and build largely because from the outset it had the most new construction and because it took many years to settle two issues --whether or not to have an underground garage and, depending on that determination, what the surface design above it would be. Blocks one and three at either extremity of the mall breezed to completion in comparison.

Parking was a theme for planners in all sections of Philadelphia. For nearly thirty years automobile congestion had been a major issue in the park proposals. Both the state park and the national park planners hoped to arrest some of the parking problems by designing appropriate spaces to get cars off the streets. A 1946 study showed that the demand for parking in the Independence Hall exceeded the number of available spaces by at least 1000. The big issue that arose for the mall project, however, was whether the underground alternative was a feasible and desirable alternative. (The Independence Mall A Report of the Joint State Government Commission (1951),p 11)

From the beginning Judge Lewis stood in the way of the underground parking. "I never favored a garage," he recalled in his 1970 interview. "I'd had it all investigated ...and I knew all about underground garages," and so he had concluded that it wouldn't pay to

## Context: Edmund N. Bacon

A native Philadelphian, Edmund Bacon's concern for Philadelphia's growth surfaced early in his professional training. As a student of architecture at Cornell in 1932, he focused his senior thesis on "Plans for a Philadelphia Center City" (Time, 69). Bacon's interest in city planning continued under the tutelage of Eliel Saarinen at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. After a brief stint as city planner in Flint, Michigan, Bacon returned to Philadelphia to be the Director of the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) in 1936. Bacon soon acted upon his long held belief in Philadelphia's potential for renewal, joining with architect Oscar Stonorov to mount a major public exhibit demonstrating their ideas for Philadelphia's redevelopment, using graphics and a model replete with moving parts (Time, 69). Appointed Director of the City Planning Commission in 1949, Bacon capitalized on the public support generated by the exhibit to create and implement a redevelopment plan for the entire city. Clearly, Bacon's approach to urban redevelopment, renewal, and revitalization distinguished him from his contemporaries while establishing his position as a visionary leader in city planning. His involvement in the redevelopment plan for Philadelphia in the 60s placed the city at the international forefront of city planning efforts.

Ed Bacon's thoughts about city planning reflect the teaching of Saarinen, and were reinforced through his involvement with Louis Kahn and Oscar Stonorov in the 1950s and 1960s. Together, this trio of architects collaborated on housing projects, dreamed of projects yet to be commissioned much less built, and formed the Citizens' Council on City Planning to encourage public demand for urban renewal.

Like both Kahn and Saarinen, Bacon considers planning and design as inseparable tools with which to solve urban problems. Bacon does not distinguish between city planning, architectural design, and historic preservation--for the Philadelphia "group" (Bacon, Kahn, Stonorov) the city was a unit, a biological entity which could not grow without the contribution of all the design professions. And, as with any living organism, cities have a past, present, and future. Bacon's planning philosophy views each stage of development as an integral part of the whole. Moreover, Bacon sees urban history as a continuum of change in which preservation, or should we say conservation, of historic resources is an integral part of Bacon's past and present planning efforts. Bacon still asserts that his concern for the historic properties in Society Hill and the conservation of such properties was a primary goal of the Comprehensive Plan. (Bacon interview, 10/8)

Bacon continues to be best known for his widely praised work as the Director of the City Planning Commission, where he was instrumental in the creation of the Philadelphia Comprehensive Plan (1960). Aside from overseeing its creation, he provided the momentum and sheer willpower to assure its realization. Bacon worked closely with architects, Commission staff, state and federal agencies, and city residents to leave no detail unattended and to ensure the support necessary to remake the face of the city.

His work with the Philadelphia plan was regarded as a model of city planning success both nationally and internationally. The November 16, 1964 edition of Time magazine sports Ed Bacon on the cover, along with an extensive article on the plan. Life Magazine devoted two entire issues to American city plans in 1965 and detailed

Bacon's plans for Philadelphia in its issue on "Cities of the Future" (Dec 1965). Internationally, professional journals were evaluating the singular success of the Philadelphia plan when compared to their burgeoning planning projects ("The Phila Cure..."). Both Bacon's contribution to the plan and the plan itself were hailed as significant contributions to city planning.

Given Bacon's mission of realizing the

Philadelphia plan, his endless energy in soliciting support for the plan, and his attentiveness to every design detail related to the redevelopment areas, Bacon must be recognized as a powerful, if not the most powerful, force behind the creation of a unique renewal plan referenced around the world as a model for the successful integration of economic, architectural, and conservation goals.

build it and it would block the streets. The garage issue wouldn't go away like other problems the Judge had tackled over the years, and "it delayed completion of the Mall at least three years. Made me mad as hops" he recalled. Finally he accepted the inevitable: "But Madova [Parking Authority chair] ...and ...Bacon of the Planning Commission said [they]...wanted a garage, and they asked me to withdraw my opposition as I finally did." (Lewis Interview, 1970, p. 28)

Roy Larson, senior partner for Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson, maintained control of the project throughout, although the firm's correspondence shows that other firm members--Penrose Hough, F.Spencer Rouch and Gerald Cope--played important support parts in the work, especially in the 1960s after the major design elements had been approved. (H2L2 files, as cited below, and Interview with Robert Breathing, Oct. 1, 1993)

In 1950 the Redevelopment Authority completed a study of the blocks just east and west of and including the mall, and found they contained only 1000 residences. The neighborhood had nearly completely been taken over by industrial and commercial interests, a fact that in some ways made the job of uprooting the businesses in the 137 buildings on the three-block mall project less wrenching. On the bright side, as the Mayor told City Council that the Philadelphia City Planning Commission's Chairman foresaw that the mall would "serve as a major stimulus to the revitalizing of the eastern part of the Central City." (Mayor to CPC, 12/2/48, H2L2 files, Box 318, CPC)

#### Stage One: The First Block, 1950-54

Construction for Independence Mall got underway in 1950 with the demolition of the first block buildings. The Commonwealth had the responsibility of widening Fifth and Sixth Streets to provide a better approach to the Delaware River Bridge and to Independence Hall, as well as the future maintenance of the mall. By 1948 the state had already assessed the value of the real estate, figured the purchase price, added up the legal, appraisal, negotiation and engineering fees, and estimated the demolition expenses, to come up with the block's total approximate cost of \$3,258,000. Joint Study, pp.5,8, 10.)

But by Spring 1950 the protests and demonstrations that had made the news in 1949 began to reach a new political dimension. In March Louis Coplan, who owned a furniture store at 513 Market went to Washington D.C. to register his concerns with Senator Francis J. Myers. In a follow-up letter he reflected "it was extremely encouraging to find you so receptive" and mentioned he was also encouraged that the senator seemed to feel a "satisfactory compromise" could be worked out for everyone concerned. Evidently having also talked to National Park Service officials, and with sufficient confidence in the senator's support, he informed him that he had told the Market Street Business Association's attorney, Mr. LaBrun,

## 1952 to 1969: Final Plans Emerge

After a four-year delay, the City and the Commonwealth signed an agreement to cooperate in development of the mall and the renovation of the streets surrounding it. The state would be responsible for acquisition and demolition of the existing buildings, for funding new construction, and for street widening. The city, through the City Planning Commission (CPC), would contract for and oversee preparation of plans, subject to final approval by the Commonwealth. As it happened, state representatives were little interested in design decisions for the mall, except in terms of holding down the cost. Perhaps this was because this urban park was an anomaly in the system of rural state parks, and foreign to the agency's mission. The state's obligation to proceed with the project was also subject to annual appropriations, and the difficulty of obtaining the large sums necessary from the legislature meant that completion would take many years. These delays, as well as the number of individuals and organizations involved in decisions, allowed the original concept to be changed dramatically by the time that construction was completed seventeen years later.

In 1950, the CPC retained Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson - the firm formed by the junior partners of Paul Cret, who had died in 1945 - as the prime consultant for the design of the mall. Roy Larson was the partner in charge. [Cook, p80-82]

Larson submitted a master plan for all three blocks in 1952. In concept, it retained the essential gestures of his 1944 plan, including the central lawn, the flanking walkways and bosques of trees, and the buildings housing the reception center and restaurant. The proposed museum of the earlier plan was now to be a bus station for the use of visitors. He had also added two service buildings on block one, and a fountain on block

two. The outdoor eating facilities and the farmers' market were eliminated. All the buildings and walls were to be brick with marble details, linking them visually to the Independence Hall group.

The vocabulary and detail of the design were greatly changed, however, from that of the 1944 plan, that had currency for so long. There were three primary reasons for these changes.

Before 1945, Judge Lewis and, to a lesser extent, the members of the Independence Hall Association and the Fairmount Park Art Association, had been both the driving force behind the proposal for a mall and the client for its design. The 1944 Larson plan reflected a unanimity of vision among those key participants. Now that the state and the city had the responsibility for seeing it through to completion, however, a number of other people gained tremendous power and influence over the completion and execution of the plans.

In addition, ideas about design had changed a great deal since 1915 and the first Beaux-Arts plan for the mall. Beaux-Arts Classicism had been fading from popularity since the 1920s, gradually replaced by influences from the International Style, which was characterized by asymmetrical organization of planar spaces and an absence of ornamentation.

Finally, the core concept, "a fitting setting for Independence Hall," expressed primarily with a three-block long axis, was too weak to determine any particular scheme for its realization. Combined with the lack of a strong and detailed program for use of the mall, the result was that the 1952 concept would be abrogated through the ensuing years of design and construction.

The plans described below are those that



were actually constructed. Yet each was one of perhaps dozens that were developed by Larson and his firm for each block. For the benefit of decision-makers such as Judge Lewis, Bacon, Mayor Richardson Dilworth, members of the various associations, and government officials, an enormous model of the mall stood in the drafting room of Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson during the duration of the project. The luminaries could bend over and peer through the miniature front door of "Independence Hall," or stand on "Race Street" and gaze up the "mall" at the tiny tower. As the plans changed, new pieces would be built to replace those that represented discarded ideas. [breeding] In a way, the plans below represent a snapshot of the development of each design at a particular time when the tumblers fell into place and a decision was made to freeze and build it.

#### The First Block

The changes in vocabulary and detail can be seen clearly in the plan for the first block.

The new participants in the implementation of the mall brought new ways of thinking. Primary among them was Edmund N. Bacon, who became Executive Director of the City Planning Commission in 1949, thereby effectively gaining approval over the mall's design. Bacon has recalled that "I had a very central role in [the design of the mall] from the very beginning...I didn't really like the French Louis XVI aspect of the original design of Larson's, and I am a modern architect, and I was anxious to make it some kind of a statement about contemporary attitudes." [Prescott interview, p20]

Cautious about going up against a concept that had the agreement of all concerned, Bacon consulted George Howe (architect, with William Lescage, of the seminal PSFS building, a masterpiece of the International style). Bacon has noted that "at that period,

everybody was committed to Bauhaus. We felt that symmetry was fascist and imperialistic." [DG interview] Howe reassured him, however, by calling his attention to the plan for the Place Royale and the Place de la Carriere, in Nancy, France. As Bacon later wrote, this urban space "proves that even when the architectural expression is limited to a predetermined formula, a great and beautiful work may be accomplished through the manipulation of the elements of mass and space and the skillful deployment of detail." [Bacon, Design of Cities, p175] The squares are characterized by a symmetrical arrangement, long vistas, a central axis, and bordering allees of trees. Bacon kept the image of Nancy in mind throughout the multi-year design process, and, once having made the decision, hewed to a simple, straightforward and symmetrical concept. [DG interview]

Howe was given a credit as "consultant" on the cover sheet of the construction drawings for the first block, yet it is unclear whether his influence extended beyond the single consultation that Bacon remembers.

Bacon recalls a smooth working relationship with Larson during the design period for the first block. [prescott interview, p21] Perhaps that is because Larson, himself, had changed in his thinking about design and style. After the death of his mentor, Paul Cret, and the establishment of the successor firm, Larson recognized that clients, projects, and programs had changed, and that the direction of the firm also must change. He consciously hired young architects who had been trained in the International Style, and sought out new clients who were interested in a contemporary approach. [breeding interview]

Of the three blocks, the first remained the truest reflection of the original concept of axial focus on Independence Hall, although most of the Beaux-Arts

components of earlier concepts had been eliminated so that the plan became simple and almost austere.

All the primary plan elements and the major circulation were oriented along the north/south axis, and the block was divided into three primary parts: a central, broad plane of lawn extending from Chestnut Street to Market Street, and on each side of the lawn, a long, raised, walled terrace. A 25'-wide flagstone walkway separated each terrace from the central lawn, and provided the primary north/south circulation. A double row of sweetgums lined each walkway, and provided further definition between the ceremonial lawn and the more informal terraces.

The terraces were the only site where small-scale detailing occurred, and these more humanly-scaled elements - intended to delight and refresh - were well hidden from the grand lawn and the surrounding streets by enclosing brick walls. The terrace plans included benches, modern low-level lighting, and plant beds in modernistic shapes. Urns with bas-relief scenes of events from the nation's early history topped the walls.

Circulation to and within the terraces was intended to be subordinate to that of the central space - access to the terraces was limited, and internal circulation was deliberately complicated by the benches and plantings.

In contrast to the monoculture planting adjoining the lawn, the beds contained mixtures of nine different species of trees and two shrub species. The firm of Wheelwright, Stevenson and Langran is listed on the construction drawings' cover sheet as landscape consultant, and it is likely that their role was limited to plant choices only, since Larson is remembered to have controlled every detail of this block, even undertaking some of the drafting. [breeding]

At Chestnut Street, a 60'-deep rectangular, brick-paved plaza replaced

the semicircular plaza of the 1944 plan, and was intended to provide space for public gatherings. Near Market Street, a small, federal-style utility building was located at the corner of each terrace.

All the plan elements: the lawn - four and a half times longer than wide - the flagstone walkways, the sand/clay paths adjacent to them, the sweetgum allees, the walls of the terrace, and even the curb around the lawn were intended to reinforce the axillarity of the block and strengthen the focus on Independence Hall. Views across Fifth and Sixth Streets and even views from the lawn to the less formal components on the terraces were intended to be veiled by the walls, the allees and bosques, and the street trees.

Although the insistent axis and the absolute symmetry remained, the more decorative, typical Beaux-Arts elements that characterized all the earlier concepts and indeed, Larson's concept of 1944, were eliminated. Gone were the arcades, semi-circles, statuary, and multiple foci. Although the final form for the first block - completed in 1954 - was a hybrid of styles and influences, it was the most simple and beautifully realized of the three blocks. There was widespread agreement that the block had achieved the goal that it be a fitting setting for Independence Hall.

[caption for plan:

use as built dwg for first block, with name of plan, number of plan, names, dates]

[DSC TIC]

#### The First Half of the Second Block

The second block was planned and completed in two segments over sixteen years. The first plans were approved by the City Planning Commission in 1953, but construction was not finished until 1969. The delay was due to controversy over the inclusion of an underground

parking garage and the difficulty of obtaining adequate appropriations for construction from the state legislature. Because of the architectural elements to be included on it, it was clear to backers that this would be the most expensive block to build, and so a decision was made to delay the full block until after the first and third blocks were constructed and in use, demonstrating to the legislators that their money was being well-spent. [breadding]

The first segment, stretching from Market Street north 200' to the former Commerce Street, was completed in 1957. This segment was essentially a non-controversial continuation of Larson's design for the first block, although there was a shift in materials and detailing.

Here, the central axis continued at the same width as the first block, yet was paved in a serpentine pattern of granite pavers, rather than planted in lawn. In addition, a large square pool of water was centered within it. Larson had intended that statuary be placed in the pool, and the fountain's jets were sized and placed in order to play over the statuary. Against his instincts, Larson agreed that the fountain should be installed even though the statuary had not been contracted. When the state later vetoed any expenditures for statuary, the fountain began to receive wide criticism for the weakness of its display. [larson interview] In 1969, the fountain was completely redesigned by Larson, and the massive jets of what is now known as the Judge Lewis fountain were added as the final construction project on the mall.

In this segment, raised terraces again flanked the central space, but the seating arrangements and planting beds within them were fully rectilinear, Larson's firm having become more "Miesian" by this point. [breadding interview] Far fewer plants were used here, both in species and in number, and these terraces have always had an abandoned character.

The luxuriant allee of trees seen on the first block and originally projected for this block is also absent, apparently because of the amount of space occupied by the pool. Only three trees were placed on each side of the central fountain, and as individual specimens planted in a harsh environment, they are perennially unhealthy and have had little visual impact.

[caption for plan: use as-built planting plan]  
[DSC-TIC]

### The Third Block

Design on the third block began in 1960 and construction was completed in 1963. By this point, after having experienced the first block, Larson had come full circle in his thinking about the mall and essentially had abandoned the concept of a central axis focussed on Independence Hall. He came to the conclusion that each block should have its own distinctive character. The goal for the third block was that it be a place of retreat and rest for visitors. [breadding]

In keeping with his decision to make a break, Larson associated himself with one of the most prominent and original landscape architects of the period: Dan Kiley. Robert Breadding, now a senior partner at H2L2, and at that time, a designer and draftsman on the project, recalls that Larson and Kiley worked together to develop the concept, [breadding] while Edmund Bacon has recalled that the actual design was essentially Kiley's. [prescott interview, p23] As always, Judge Lewis had a strong hand in discussions: having recently returned from a trip to Spain, and impressed by the use of water features there, he directed that fountains be emphasized for this block. [breadding]

In its form and detailing, it is clearly typical of Kiley's work, and yet it does seem to have responded to the original axial concept, providing the most liberal, and yet the most complex interpretation

of that concept. Additionally, in its de-emphasis of the axis, its arrangement of solids and voids, and in its hierarchy of spaces and detailing, it was the obverse of the first block, providing an amusing and ironic reference to that grand space.

In light of the lack of program and also the great distance of this block from Independence Hall (and the unlikelihood of a successful visual focus on the hall), Kiley chose to reference William Penn's remarkable plan for the city of Philadelphia - the "greene countrie towne" - with its system of gridded streets and its five public squares that divided the city into neighborhoods. [Process Architecture, pp106,107]

The third block was unified by both a complete ground plane of brick and also a canopy of densely-planted honey locusts. It was between the ground plane and the canopy that a complex, interlocking pattern of spaces and materials defined a repeating series of openings that were meant to be experienced as one moved through the block. The entire block was divided and re-divided into increasingly fine spaces by a hierarchy of fountains, benches and planting beds.

The north/south central axis was still apparent, although it was reduced to 50' in width, and punctuated by three large fountains that served as local foci. Each fountain had a large central plume of water which then sheeted across four massive slabs of granite and into a still pool over tiny black glass tiles. While water can be considered to be transparent, the wide plumes effectively obscured any vista to Independence Hall. The downplaying of the central axis by its narrow width, the local foci provided by the fountains, and their careful detailing, thus was the effective reverse of the Larson concept.

The extensive bosque of trees (which, because it was a grid, did not have the north/south orientation of the plantings on the first two blocks) began on either

side of this axis, and continued to the edges of the block. There were openings in this "architectural forest" only to demarcate the eight places where it was possible to enter the block from the surrounding streets. Six of these openings were additionally marked by planting beds containing groves of magnolias. (These beds were originally intended to be fountains, but the large number of fountains was vetoed by the state, which was, as it turned out, correctly concerned over the long-term maintenance of so many fountains.)

On each side of the central axis, four smaller fountains also punctuated the flow of space. A series of marble benches was aligned on alternating sides of both the three large and the eight small fountains, relating the fountains to each other.

Between the small fountains and Fifth and Sixth Streets, four additional planting beds served to step down the scale between the more architectonic and more intensively-detailed central area and the street, again providing the obverse of the Larson concept that was realized in the first block.

As on the first two blocks, a brick wall with marble coping entirely surrounds this block, although here, the wall is low enough that it is possible to see into the center from the surrounding streets as well as to see surrounding buildings from the center of the block. This again, may be in recognition of the fact that the block was too far from Independence Hall for a strong vista.

While this block seems to be related more to Kiley's previous work than to any sense he may have had of Philadelphia, it mediates between the monumentality and regularity of the first two blocks and the smaller, more intimate spaces that were the hallmark of the colonial city.

[caption for Plan: use as-built planting plan]

[DSC-TIC]

The Second Half of the Second Block

In the mid-1960s, agreement among the Commonwealth, the city, and Judge Lewis was finally reached that a parking garage would be constructed under the second block. While underground garages were not so rare as they had been when Larson first proposed one twenty years earlier, the technology for covering them was not yet well developed: drainage and the depth of planters were issues; and the lack of funds prevented using the best technology. [breeding] Thus, the need to severely restrict planting over the garage forced yet another change in the original concept: abandonment of the central lawn and the flanking bosques of trees.

The need for an architectural, rather than a landscape treatment for the block was also consistent with a change in thinking about the block's function that had gradually developed since the completion of the first block. There was a growing need for a space for large public gatherings that could take the pressure off the first block, and the long delay in building the second block meant that it could be designed to serve that need.

This second and final segment of the second block was located between the vacated Commerce Street (which had been the northern boundary for the first segment, completed in 1957) and Arch Street. The underground parking garage ran from Commerce Street to a point 200' south of Arch Street. On the surface, the banks of stairs to the south and north of the arcades mark the limits of the garage, which is unseen.

Perhaps because the plan was to be predominantly architectural, Dan Kiley dropped out, and Larson later hired the firm of George Patton and Associates as the landscape architect for this block.

Patton's participation was limited to choosing plants, however, since the locations were dictated by the architects. [arnold interview]

This segment of the second block was the subject of some particularly acute design disagreements between Larson and Bacon. There was agreement that the block would be used as "a place for great outdoor gatherings, celebrations, spectacles, folk drama, and musical presentations." There was also agreement on "the concept of treating the roof of the garage as a plaza, a platform for public events, with an architectural screen superimposed to form an enclosure and an interruption to the great length of the mall." The screen would be "as transparent and elegant in its proportions as possible, so that it would not be (or appear to be) a partition dividing the Mall in three parts. Continuity of them all with a unity of landscape and architectural features was sought after, even though variety was introduced to give interest." [larson memo, pp1,2]

Larson's proposal for a screen was a semi-circular colonnade, which was thought to work better for staging performances, and to provide a change from the rectilinearity of the rest of the mall. Bacon preferred a rectangular colonnade, feeling that it would be less likely to constitute a second focal point that would compete with Independence Hall. (The rectilinear form would also have been similar to that used at Nancy). After numerous meetings among the architects, the City Planning Commission, and the Art Commission, chaired by Bacon, Bacon prevailed. [larson memo, pp2-4]

For reasons that have gone unrecorded, neither scheme was built, and instead, two unconnected colonnades were built, not to provide a backdrop for performances, but to house exhibits or tables of food and crafts during festivals, in effect, a modern-day shambles, [breeding] and a way to recapture

Larson's 1944 idea that this block be a place for fun and entertainment. Each colonnade contains thirteen arches, a reference the original thirteen colonies.

Between the two colonnades lies a long, narrow, marble amphitheater (its material perhaps a resurrection of Greber's Great Marble Court). Behind the colonnades, parallel to Fifth and Sixth Streets, are a series of niches which were meant to be utilized to commemorate the nation's founders. [larson interview, p38] The niches also screen the parking garage ramps from the view of persons on the interior of the block.

As is the case with the first segment of this block, there is minimal planting here. In this case, the restraint was dictated by the expense of preparing planting pockets over the garage. None of the hawthornes here have thrived.

North of the amphitheater, down a series of steps and separated by what seems to have been (yet is not) a right-of-way, are two walled gardens. The

garden on the northeast corner is that of the Free Quaker Meeting House. The garden and its wall were added when the building was relocated thirty-three feet to the west because of the widening of Fifth Street. On the northwest corner, a garden which was subsequently dedicated to Andrew Hamilton by the American Bar Association was densely planted with birches and American Hollies. In a reference apparent in plan view but not on the ground, the size of each garden matches the size of the modules of the third block. The two gardens are separated by a flagstone court the same width as that of central axis of the third block. Here, red oaks are densely planted, perhaps a reaction to the hardness of the rest of the block.

This block, more than any other, was the result of design by committee. Roy Larson later carefully reflected that "everybody seemed to want to have a hand in it, and sometimes I feel that perhaps there were too many cooks, which may have resulted in a broth which is not quite as palatable as it might be." [larson interview, p32]

[caption for plan: use as-built planting plan]  
[DSC-TIC]

## 1975: Abrogating the Three-Block Axis

After protracted controversy over moving the Liberty Bell, agreement was reached between the city, the Commonwealth, and the National Park Service that the expected flood of visitors for the 1976 Bicentennial would render the existing location in the stairwell at Independence Hall inadequate, both in size and in circulation.

New sites, including the first or third blocks of the mall, the new visitor center at Third and Chestnut Streets, and Independence Square, had been proposed at various times as far back as 1924. Each site was unsuitable to various interest groups, for various reasons, but in 1975 - the eleventh hour for new construction - the decision was reached that a place on the first block would be satisfactory.

The contract for design of a pavilion to house the bell was awarded to the firm of Mitchell/Giurgola, with Romaldo Giurgola as partner in charge. The criteria for the building directed that it be located close to Independence Hall yet not compete with it, instead becoming part of the vista; that it shelter visitors waiting to see the bell; and that the bell be visually accessible at all times and accessible to the touch. [Grieff, p230]

After many studies for locating the pavilion at different points on the first block, some of which recalled the schemes for colonnades that had been proposed during the previous half-century, and some of which would have introduced asymmetrical elements and circulation into the block, a location that produced the clearest relationship to Independence Hall and the least destruction of the existing landscape was

chosen. [Giurgola, pp.3-6] The site was directly on the central axis of the mall, and adjacent to Market Street.

A simple building with a purposely anonymous form was developed to shelter the Liberty Bell and accommodate a dignified and effective program, the expression of which was visible and understandable from the outside. At the north end, visible from Market Street, was a large room in which people could gather. Two hallways along the exterior wall of the pavilion were developed with the thought that waiting lines were inevitable, and that the most dignified way for visitors to wait in line was in a spacious place, with views to the outside, without forcing the line to wrap back on itself, causing one to spend twenty minutes "looking at the nose of another person coming in the other direction." The bell was located in a second room, spacious enough for people to gather around it. Glass walls on three sides meant that the bell would be always visible, and the size of the southern glass wall would allow one to see the bell against Independence Hall in its entirety. [Giurgola, pp7,8]

While the floors and walls of the interior walls are panelled in oak, Giurgola sought a simple and non-committal exterior material that would not call attention away from the glimpses of the warmly-lit and glowing interior and the bell itself. Lead-coated copper has served that purpose, but its cold color has made it seem foreign to its environment and caused the pavilion to be less well-received than it might have been.

Siting a structure - even one as light-filled and open as the pavilion - directly

on the axis increased the visual isolation of the second and third blocks and exacerbated the sense that they are no-man's land. Ironically, however, the pavilion's siting at the very place where Kelsey, Boyd, Greber, Cret, and Larson

had once proposed architectural elements served the same purpose that they had sought: the closing of the vista to and from Independence Hall at a distance that seemed appropriate to the hall's scale.

[Caption for Photograph: The Liberty Bell Pavilion]  
[Caption for Plan: use current first block base map]



"that you would be very happy to arrange a meeting at Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia, at which time several representatives from the Department of Interior would be glad to sit down with a committee of ours to thoroughly discuss the important matter of saving the destruction of Market Street between Fifth and Sixth." (Louis Coplan to Senator Myers, Mar. 21, 1950, INDE Archives, Architects Office, Box 6)

No more is known about Coplan or Senator Myer's effort but it is clear that the State fought back. In March 1951 a Joint State Committee was appointed to study the problem of the completion of the first block, when all but three properties had been razed, and in June 1952 Pennsylvania's Attorney General hired an attorney from Philadelphia, Richard H. Woolsey, to tend to the "acquisition of 143 properties which will be razed" to complete the project. The State clearly intended to play hardball. (Cook, p. 81; "Woodside Ignores Staff Hires Lawyer for Mall Project at \$40,000 Fee" Inquirer, June 27, 1952, INDE Archives, Architecture File, Box 6)

Judge Lewis had much to say about the Market Street Business Association, especially during the project's first five years. "We had to encounter the most strenuous opposition from this group," he recalled in 1956, just after the first block was completed, "and it delayed the accomplishment of the Mall for several years. It was only recently that the opposition has been pretty much dissipated." As late as 1954, however, they had won the ear of Governor Fine, who asked Judge Lewis to delay the condemnation of the buildings along the north side of Market for at least a year to spare him any embarrassment with the Business Association. Taking a long view, Lewis continued,

First we had the merchants on the south side, then we had the merchants on the north side, then we had the owners of the Rhodes building, north of Commerce Street, and then we had the owners of the Rumph building up beyond Arch Street, all of them opposing our efforts and quietly working through their counsel and politicians to oppose us, and it required quite a good deal of determination. (Lewis Interview, 1956, p. 19)

Judge Lewis had frequently demonstrated "a good deal of determination" before and would again. He clearly felt his mission was the best for everyone: "we stuck to our purpose and represented to these gentlemen that some day they would be glad that they had moved, that they would be amply compensated." (Ibid)

Compensation is a relative term. Paul Jones, writing for the Evening Bulletin in March 1952, pointed out that the majority of buildings still lining the north side of Market Street (the south side had been razed), all appeared to date to the mid-nineteenth century, following an 1856 fire which wiped out the earlier streetscape, and were "fine examples of Philadelphia commercial brickwork." Judging from the Baxter's Panoramic

Business Directory illustration of 1856, these four-story structures indeed would have lent, by today's standards, a fine architectural horizon. The merchants of 1952 just wanted to these buildings to continue to be the sites for their livelihoods. (Jones, "Then and Now--Almost Alike," Evening Bulletin, March 17, 1952, as quoted in Cook, pp. 121-122.)

The business association saw the potential for the neighborhood's revival. Although the Independence Hall Association and city planners had identified the area as a blighted, neglected slum, the businessmen countered with the high volume of commerce they enjoyed despite the decline in the neighborhood. They had a point, according to Katherine Cook, who observed, "Although the area's importance as a financial and commercial center had declined with the westward move of City Hall, it continued to be an active business district housing financial institutions, retailers, wholesalers, light manufacturers, and distributors." (Cook, p. 13)

Many of the first block business owners therefore would not hear Lewis' compensation line and held out against the Commonwealth's efforts to acquire their property. In June 1950 the Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Forests and Waters, Captain Daniel Miller, writing in Secretary Draemel's absence, explained that the demolition of three buildings on Ludlow Street was "of a token nature only to bring the few recalcitrants into line." This roughshod tactic did not work, however, so in November the Secretary ordered the condemnation of the remaining thirty-seven buildings on the block. By December 17 the Sunday Bulletin was able to report promising progress--all the properties on the block with the exception of three had been acquired. (Miller to J.M.O'Brien, Mgr., INDE Project, June 15, 1950, INDE Archives, Ibid.; Inquirer, November 26, 1950, clipping, INDE Archives)

During 1950, Edmund Bacon had begun organizing his part of the project, to hire the architect to design the mall. Considering Roy Larson's long history with the park movement and the choice of his design by the Independence Hall Association, the choice of his firm, Harbeson Hough, Livingston, Larson, was obvious. By October 18, at a well-attended meeting about parking for the mall, a decision had been reached that Larson could proceed with the architectural plan. The parking issue it was decided, could be fitted into the plan later in the development. (Office memo, W.E.Murphy to J.M. O'Brien, Independence, Oct. 13, 1950; Memo to the files by Asst. Project Manager M.O.Anderson, INDE, about State Mall (Parking), Oct. 18, 1950, INDE Archives, Architects Office Files, Box 6)

From the beginning one of the big problems for the Commonwealth was their limited budget. While this was a reality, it also may have served as a cover for any part of the plan they found objectionable. Certainly the dry tone of the letters sent, the insistent reminders that the future was uncertain, and the apparent element of indifference to the project as reflected by their not securing any office in Philadelphia to supervise the

work as late as the Spring of 1952, suggests that certain well-placed people did not feel very cooperative. In Judge Lewis' recollection, Secretary of Forests and Waters Samuel S. Lewis presented some of the problem. "Lewis from New York...wasn't reliable, and he did all he could to block it. He did nothing for two years. He just completely laid down on the Mall." Secretary Lewis, in the Judge's opinion, simply "wouldn't spend" the money appropriated for the project.(Secretary M.F. Draemel to Bacon, June 30, Aug. 28; Secretary Lewis took over for Secretary Draemel in January 1952, O'Brien to Samuel S. Lewis, Jan. 22, 1952, INDE Archives, Ibid.; Lewis interview, 1970, p. 28.)

In an effort to inspire more cooperation, Judge Lewis publicized an arrangement he and his friend Parkinson from Equitable Insurance--"one of the country's biggest life insurance companies"-- had made that promised a new housing project for the neighborhood (probably the one not built from the Judge's 1945 efforts) at the completion "of most of the Mall." This meant "the possibility of a multi-million dollar apartment development," a carrot that most merchants would sit up and notice.(Bulletin, May 6, 1951, INDE Archives, Press Clips)

The Judge also grew impatient with the demolition company clearing the First Block, and so much as threatened that he would see to it they would have no future contracts with the state or federal governments if they didn't get the job completed. This was in the Spring of 1952, more than two years after the mall's official launching.(Lewis to President of Central Wrecking Co., March 10, 1952, INDE Archives, Architects Office, Box 6)

While the battle with demolition unfolded, Roy Larson (or one of his staff) began preparing his thoughts for the Mall, putting in outline form on November 6, 1950, five categories to consider. He listed:

I. Purpose

- A. Remove hazardous and obsolescent structures around historic buildings.
- B. Provide proper setting for historic buildings.
- C. Provide proper approach from new highway system to Independence Hall.
- D. Give the area new life.

II. Design of Mall

III. Future Structures Facing Mall

IV. Coordination of design of Mall with Federal project east of Independence Hall

V. Unifying redevelopment east and west of mall with the Mall."

Remarkably, this list could have come straight from the Independence Hall Association's founding goals as well as from the proposals of most of the earlier proponents. ("Independence Mall" Nov. 6, 1950, was not signed except by the firm's name. H2L2 files, Box 318, Independence Hall file)

## **Context: Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson Architects**

The firm now known as H2L2 was founded in 1907 as Paul Cret, Architects. The firm continued to be associated with Cret until his death in 1945 when his surviving partners regrouped under the name of Harbeson, Hough, Livingston, and Larson. In 1976, the firm adopted the current name of H2L2.

H2L2 has always been recognized as a leading regional architectural firm based in Philadelphia, with projects scattered all over the mid-Atlantic area. Under Cret's direction, the firm was responsible for a number of prominent local commissions, including the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, management of the Parkway project, the Old Federal Reserve Bank, the old Post Office, and the Folger Shakespeare Library.

In recent decades the firm has maintained its place as an important contributor to regional architecture. Current commissions include campus master plans for Penn State University, additions to Swarthmore College, corporate headquarters in for Philadelphia businesses, interior renovations for private offices, and the rehabilitation of the Philadelphia Bourse. The firm has received a number of recent regional awards for their designs, including those from the Philadelphia Society of Architects and the Philadelphia Chapter AIA for the design of the Philadelphia bourse, the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, and the Philadelphia Electric Company, among others.

The local and regional prominence that Cret established for the firm (Cret was himself a leading Beaux-Arts architect and an individual recognized nationally in academic circles for his writings on Beaux-Arts style) was continued through the work of his partner Roy Larson.

Roy Larson, a student of Paul Cret at the University of Pennsylvania and, later, Cret's partner, gained local recognition during his graduate studies, receiving several awards for design excellence. In addition to honors received at the University of Pennsylvania, he was awarded the Medal of the Societe des Architectes Diplomes at the Beaux-Arts Institute. His local reputation was further enhanced when he placed first in the Cope Prize Competition for the Franklin Square Plaza of the Delaware River Bridge. (Harbeson, 6-9) Throughout his career in Philadelphia, Larson was active in professional associations and community projects. He was chair of the Committee on Municipal Improvements of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA in the 1930's and active on numerous boards and in several citizens actions groups throughout from the 1930's well into the 60's.

The firm's association with Independence Mall dates back to the first ideas for a plaza celebrating Independence Hall in the 1920's. Paul Cret was one of the first designers to produce visions of a forecourt or plaza framing Independence. Cret produced several designs for the mall in the early 1930's which by that time extended the original forecourt into a larger two-block mall. Larson became involved in the project during the 30's and in 1937 produced a plan to extend the mall a full three blocks along an axis between Independence Mall and the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, which Cret designed. Larson's involvement with the project lasted for three decades through its final implementation in the mid-1960's. Indeed, his firm, then known as Harbeson, Hough, Livingston, and Larson was responsible for the design of all three blocks of the mall.

Larson had other professionals working directly with him. In 1950 he hired the firm Wheelwright, Stevenson & Langran, Landscape Architects, to select the plants for the first stage of the project. He also had counsel from Ed Bacon's chosen advisor, architect George Howe of Yale University. While Howe evidently had only slight participation in the mall design, he was included in a joint general information statement written around 1952, and issued by Larson's firm. The statement was prepared at the time when the first block demolition was reaching completion, and it described the two stages of the project. The "First Stage," covered the first block and the "Second Stage" carried the mall design to Vine Street "as originally proposed by the Independence Hall Association and endorsed by the City Planning Commission." Clearly Larson contributed this attribution, paying tribute to his own sense of history. ("Independence Mall,Description" H2L2 files, Box 318)

Edmund Bacon had just begun his twenty-one years as Executive Director of the City Planning Commission and he saw the responsibility to oversee the design of the mall as a serious one. Although he had some doubts about the concept, he knew that it was far too late to open new discussions. Bacon later spoke of how he "regarded the thing (plan) as an historically determined thing before I started work," and how that feeling had kept him from making any attempt to oppose or change the mall's basic form as designed by Larson. He was intensely involved in details, however, choosing to "spend money or stretch it as far as I could to try to make it as good as I could having at first accepted it." (With the exception of his own acknowledged campaign to change Larson's round amphitheater to a square form on the second block, this observation on his philosophical outlook appears to be substantiated in all other sources. For this research numerous letters of Bacon's attest to his cooperation and support for the mall effort. Bacon interview with Grief, Sept. 17, 1982, pp.9,14. Bacon discusses the round v. square issue in the 1970 interview, pp.23-24 )

As a city planner, Bacon had a vision that embraced both the Independence Mall and Independence National Park projects. He wanted the east end of Philadelphia to experience a comeback, much as Seneca Egbert and others had espoused. Bacon wrote

Before the whole [park idea] started, the city had moved westward over the previous 200 years and the whole economic trend was west, west, west, and in the wake of the westward movement was a sea of black, and all around Independence Hall were underwear manufacturing places, and things like that, and the whole thing was totally a one-way street. And there was no way anybody thought you could arrest the westward movement of the center of economic activity. (Bacon interview, 1970, p. 18)

With Bacon, Larson and Lewis -- all men with a sense of history and a vision for the future that included the Mall -- the project had force. As with the Independence Hall Association phase of the movement, they carried this conviction for the final construction stage to grand exhibits and city-wide meetings to show off the mall model

and to promote the plan. With Association member Arthur Kauffman's "interest and cooperation," a large luncheon was held in Gimbel's William Penn room on March 18, 1952, with Judge Lewis as host, to view the final plans of the mall through Roy Larson's slide presentation. Typical of Judge Lewis' comprehensive scheme for the area, the program also included a review of the progress on Independence National Historical Park. (Copy of invitation, INDE Archives, IHA Papers, Box 8)

That month, on a Saturday morning, Charles Peterson attended a meeting in Larson's offices to meet with Larson, Bacon, Howe, Roach, Stevenson and Langren. They looked over "an extensive collection of models and drawings" and over conversation Peterson learned that the garage between Market and Arch was then planned "to be on two levels and to hold about 800 cars." (Resident Architect to Superintendent, March 3, 1952, INDE Archives, Ibid.)

Getting these planners all out on a Saturday morning suggests either considerable enthusiasm, or perhaps some time constraints. By October 20, 1952 delays in the progress of the first block became apparent in Larson's letter to Judge Lewis: "I know you are concerned with the lack of progress on the Mall Site, as I have been." He went on to explain some of the delays, which involved an electrical engineers' strike and indecision as to the size of the reservoir to hold water as a fire protection for Independence Hall. (Larson to Lewis, Oct. 20, 1952, H2L2 Files, Box 318, Independence Mall)

Larson saved the biggest problem for last. The Commonwealth needed National Production Administration approval on the specifications and plans before they could go out for bid. Although the state's project supervisor had already written the N.P.A., Larson anticipated "it may require a visit to Washington on the part of those interested in the Mall to convince N.P.A. of the importance of getting construction underway." Nothing more needed be said to the experienced lobbyist and long-time park movement leader. (Ibid.)

The State Legislature threw the next curve ball. On May 6, 1953 the Philadelphia Inquirer reported that the mall funding had been cut one and a half million dollars, or by one-third. Judge Lewis cried fowl and called it a "breach of faith". Although the records at this point are silent, Lewis no doubt boarded a train for Harrisburg. By September of the same year the construction of the first block finally had begun. (Inquirer as clipping, INDE Archives; F.S.Roach to S.Hunter, Peale Museum, Sept.16, 1953, H2L2 Files, Ibid)

At the close of 1953 and beginning of 1954 newspaper articles began to give optimistic reports about the completion of the first block. Attention soon after shifted to very real issues still lingering over the parking garage for the second block, a subject Judge Lewis discussed in a Bulletin editorial in May and then brought up in the next Advisory

Commission meeting (May 28) for the national park, where the Commission resolved that Pennsylvania should make surveys to determine the cost of the garage.

### Stage Two, Blocks Two and Three, 1954-1967

By October 1954, Larson's firm had prepared a survey for the southern end of the second block, the section between Market and Commerce Streets. It showed that all buildings had been taken down. These plans evidently were slow in coming, as Larson the next month told his partner "Secretary Lewis gave me hell for not getting the plans up to Harrisburg for signature." The Secretary wanted to get it under contract before the end of the year, probably with fiscal year budgeting in mind. Larson also made a brief note of the Secretary's position about the completion of the first block, "There will be no ceremony," which suggests the possible strained relations developing between the project funder and its designer. (Survey, Oct. 11, 1954; Memo Larson to Roach, Nov. 12, 1954, H2L2 Files, Box 318; )

On the first day of the New Year, January 1, 1955 the news came out of the opening of the first block to the public. True to the Secretary's word, there was no ceremony, at least not until July 4th, when the block was formally dedicated. The remainder of the year had little news, except the ongoing debate over the mall's proposed underground garage.

That debate continued into 1956 with occasional rumblings in the newspapers. In October Roach wrote a long letter to Clifton H. Franks, Esq., Chief of Land Acquisition, Department of Forests and Waters to discuss and juggle funding estimates to complete the second block. He couldn't come to any solid figures because the plans still remained in the air. The garage issue had not been resolved and construction could not get underway until it was. (Roach to Franks, Oct. 19, 1956, H2L2 files, Ibid)

Early in 1957 when Bacon was still trying to work out the financial adjustments needed to get progress going on the Mall, Lewis Mumford, visiting professor in Regional Planning at the University of Pennsylvania, entered his opinions into the public forum. In three articles published by the New Yorker Mumford took on the two park projects in Old City, in a sweeping overview. He frowned on the grandiose statement of the mall which to him seemed incompatible with Philadelphia's tradition of "ample squares, uniform roof lines, and its intimate gardens," and he seemed to be alluding to Judge Lewis' strong influence over the planning of both parks when he admonished the generic planner to observe Philadelphia's architectural tradition, and "not that imposed by the servants of an absolute monarchy seeking to translate into space the mysteries of absolute power and centralized political power." (As quoted in Cook, p. 132)

Mumford's mind was on Philadelphia's character as he saw it, and the mall invaded the sense of intimacy he liked best about the city. He recommended instead connected

enclosures with shrubbery and trees providing a screen to create a sense of outdoor rooms, perhaps enlivened with a series of fountains to add "an animation and a vitality it now lacks."(Ibid.)

Such commentary from a professor of regional planning in a national publication may well have reached the desk of Dan Kiley, the prominent landscape architect who Larson hired as consultant for the third block around 1957, as the article hit the press. Certainly Kiley's design, when completed in 1959, had a striking number of features Mumford so whimsically longed to see in the Mall.

If Mumford was thinking of Judge Lewis in his remarks about power, Lewis showed no signs of recognition. He announced to the press in June 1957 that he would resign from the bench to run for governor if the mall's funds were scuttled. Declaring that the state's GOP leaders were "determined to defeat the appropriation," Lewis said he would, as gubernatorial candidate, fight "to defeat the medieval influence that misguides the Republican Party."(Philadelphia Inquirer, June 14, 1957, INDE Archives, Press Clippings)

Two weeks later on June 30th, 1957, the second completed portion of the mall, from Market to Commerce, was dedicated. The same day Carl Krakover, chairman of the Philadelphia Parking Authority, announced his support for the underground garage and made a public pitch to the neighborhood businesses to get involved in its favor. Krakover was an important ally for Larson and, as Lewis admitted in 1970, his strong opinion finally helped the Judge to give up his opposition to the idea.(Bulletin, June 30, 1957, INDE Archives, Press Clips; Lewis interview, 1970, p. 28)

As disappointing as Krakover's position must have been, the Judge's spirits no doubt soared in July 1957 when the Bulletin announced that the large fountain on the just completed south end of the second block would be named after him. That summer and into the Fall, however, the neighborhood was noisy and dirty with the demolition crews clearing the block between Commerce and Cuthbert Streets. Just weeks after the wreckers finished, the papers announced that the State had approved the second block garage, but above ground.(Bulletin July 11, October 22, 1957, INDE Archives, Press Clips; aerial photo, Oct. 4, 1957, INDE Photo files.)

Bacon closed out 1957 with a December 20 letter to Larson confirming a telephone conversation. Larson would check into the architect's fee for moving the Free Quaker Meeting House, and make sure plans showed the decision to preserve the catacombs under it after it got moved. Larson would design the building on the other end of the Arch Street facade to look like a certain bank in Princeton, if it met Larson's approval, and would look into getting a better water volume for the fountain. Bacon for his part would set up a meeting with the Parking Authority to discuss the garage.(Bacon to Larson, Dec. 20, 1957, H2L2 Files, Box 318, Independence Mall, Corresp., 1955-Dec 1963)



## Context: Dan Kiley

Few American landscape architects have received the level of international acclaim that has graced the professional life of Dan Kiley. Educated at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard in the mid-thirties, Kiley was at the forefront of a truly modern American landscape design movement, with Garrett Eckbo and Dan Rose as contemporaries. After graduation, Kiley first worked for Warren Manning in Cambridge, but soon established his own office in Vermont in 1940. His professional contributions included service on many of the nation's top advisory organizations, including Kennedy's Advisory Council for Pennsylvania Avenue (1962-5), the National Council for the Arts and Government (1965), and the Washington Redevelopment Land Agency, Board of Design (1967-9), along with a host of regional and local councils.

Kiley's designs are characterized by an understanding of formal garden design techniques and a reference to past forms which is distinctly modern. Kiley's projects reflect a clear knowledge and manipulation of historic design tools. Indeed, many of his designs--though quite modern--are characterized by strongly organized spatial relationships, major axial patterns, plant materials massed to form orchards, groves, or bosques, walks, terraces, and water elements of all scales. Kiley, himself, acknowledges an appreciation of the formal design vocabulary of French and Italian Renaissance gardens. The design vocabulary may be familiar but the resulting language created through the juxtaposition of elements and the ordering of space are quite distinct in each Kiley project. For example, an allee of trees may stretch its linear form across a green, framing a view but not a pathway. A linear fountain element reminiscent of the Canal Garden at the Generalife may be placed at the edge of a bosque of trees arranged in a grid

pattern. And, everywhere, geometric forms placed in juxtaposition with each other order spaces.

A review of Kiley's projects reveals their reference to antiquity, whether it is the carefully crafted outdoor rooms of the Miller and Hamilton houses, or the massive water promenades of the US Air Force Academy which at once recall both the grand water features of Italian Renaissance gardens and the form and pattern of ancient Moorish gardens, in a remarkably modern context. The quiet interludes created by tranquil water features in the Stokes house design are almost Eastern in their character.

Dan Kiley has distinguished himself not only from his predecessors but also his contemporaries, and successive generations of landscape architects. Unlike both Rose and Eckbo, Kiley's commissions included some residential design projects but his greatest contributions to the profession were the grand public and private projects that punctuate the urban landscape of American cities. Like his colleagues, he brought the International Style to his residential designs but, more importantly, to the 20th century urban park. His contribution to public spaces through the numerous public works (National Gallery East Wing, Oakland Museum, John F. Kennedy Library, Dulles Airport, and Chicago Filtration Plant) and corporate parks (Ford Foundation) brought modern landscape architecture into the mainstream design vocabulary.

Kiley's designs may transcend time with their allusions to the past, but his landscapes are not about the past. His designs make use of modern materials -- linear slabs of concrete for benches, cast concrete fountain shapes -- to create outdoor furnishings. The lack of ornamentation -- the simplicity of detailing elements -- clearly separates

Kiley from his predecessors. Kiley's designs make formal statements using trees, shrubs, and ground cover rather than relying on structural elements to frame spaces. He is careful, as is exhibited in his collaborations with Saarinen at the Miller House and the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (St. Louis Arch), to create a harmony between architectural structures and landscape features. His designed spaces are not meant to "showcase" the built environment but to become inseparable from it. In the Hamilton house, the exterior becomes an extension of the interior spaces, so that one flows into another with little visual separation. Windows open the exterior walls to carefully framed views and outdoor rooms. His design for the Oakland Museum's rooftop park literally unites

the building and the landscape, evoking images of the Villa Medici with the descending terraces of plantings which wrap the museum in a living envelope. In almost every project, except the design for the third block of Independence Mall, Kiley's designs provide a complete setting for a house, corporate building, public institution, or public art. His design for the third block of Independence Mall floats freely in the urban landscape, anchored only tangentially to adjacent buildings and removed from its association with Independence Hall by the two blocks between Chestnut and Arch Streets. The third block of Independence Mall, unlike any other commission, concentrates less on creating outdoor "rooms" and lacks an architectural focus. (Process Architecture)

Early in 1958, Pennsylvania's legislature passed \$7,000,000 to complete the Mall. Soon after, the Inquirer reported that already the state and Philadelphia had spent more than \$11,000,000 on the project--nearly a third more than the original estimate, and less than half the mall was completed. And yet there was not enough to proceed, it appears, for in July the City announced it would push for more funds and in November, with finances apparently resolved, the final plans for the Mall were approved by the Planning Commission. (Feb. 4, March 12, July 15, November 5, 1958, INDE Archives, Press Clips)

The city had to lend more money to the project in 1959 to help it towards completion. By May Dan Kiley, Roy F. Larson and Penrose K. Spohn were on their way to Harrisburg to show Secretary of Forests and Waters, Maurice D. Goddard, the preliminary plans for the third block. In June the Planning Commission gave the plans their blessing and Roach sent them back to Harrisburg for Secretary Goddard's approval. (Evening Bulletin, April 30, 1959, INDE Archives, clips; Spohn to Goddard, June 18, 1959, H2L2 Files, Box 318, Ibid.)

By the end of Fall 1959 the buildings on the south side of Race Street had been pulled down, prompting a reporter to comment on the new view to Independence Hall. The space, however, was quickly filled for use as a parking lot. (Bulletin, Oct. 27, 1960, INDE clipping file; the parking lot shows in an aerial photo of February 2, 1960, INDE Photo Files)

The third block demolition reached completion in February 1960, but construction was delayed until Larson's firm could clear up some specific concerns raised by the Department of Forests and Waters about Dan Kiley's plan. In March, Penrose K. Spohn wrote a landscape architect in Worcester, Pennsylvania, looking for some answers. The Department, being practical, wanted to make sure they would not inherit a landscape problem, as they had responsibility for the future maintenance of the block as part of the 1949 agreement. Were the trees too close together? And what was the current status of the mimosa web worm; did it pose a danger to the planned honey locusts? (Spohn to Walter Skoglund, March 7, 1960, H2L2 Files, Box 318, Redevelopment Project, South Center City, 1956-60)

The answers probably took no more than Spohn's suggested telephone reply, for within the week the City Planning Commission approved the Third Block plans. That day, on October 18, 1960, the Bulletin reported, "Fountains at Mall Approved, Will Symbolize Penn's Plan." In the vein of Mumford's recommendations nearly four years before, this block would relate to Philadelphia's historic urban plan. "The plan is symbolic of William Penn's gridiron and park system plan for old Philadelphia, drawn up nearly 200 years ago." The block's many fountains were to "represent downtown area squares, or park areas." The large center fountains represented Penn Square (which then was under active redevelopment under the City Planning Commission), and the smaller fountains the satellite squares of the original city plan. (Bulletin, Oct. 19, 1960, INDE Archives, Press Clips)

With the third block under construction, the plans for the second block once again became the planners' foremost interest. The block was cleared, but only the south third of it had any park features. Cars continued to park on the Arch Street third. It was time to resolve the controversial garage issue and decide the surface treatment.

Beginning on January 4, 1961, and continuing almost on a weekly basis the planners met for over a month pounding out the issues. Larson pursued his scheme for a round amphitheater in which to have outdoor pageants by getting advice from a New York actress "prominent in theater." Sketches of his ideas were sent to Dan Kiley's office for comment and returned with "a few minor amendments." (In a memo of April 7, 1961 Roy Larson made a careful list of these meetings--Jan. 4, 10, 25, Feb. 7,8, Mar.7, 21--which pertained to the subject of round or, as Bacon preferred, square lines for the theater.; Larson to Clarence S.Stein, FAIA, Jan. 19, 1961, discussing Miss Aline McMahon's possible assistance, H2L2 Files, Box 318, Ibid.)

Larson had committed many years to this design and he felt confident of his preference for the round shape, even in the face of adamant insistence from Ed Bacon that the design was not acceptable. Bacon did not object to the amphitheater, only to its shape, and insisted that it be square. Each presented their arguments before the Philadelphia Art Commission of which Larson was chair, and its Executive Secretary reported on February 9 that the Commission "disapproved the square form of treatment and ... the circular form was preferred." Larson had separate models of the Mall for the round and square schemes to show the Art and Planning Commissions, but, according to Larson's recollection, Bacon forced the issue by not giving the Planning Commission a choice. In order to resume progress on the project, Larson finally conceded. (Larson Memo of April 7, 1961, Ibid.; Bacon, Interview, 1970, p. 25)

Presumably to allow non-controversial work on the block to begin, the Planning Commission in February 1961 gave approval to the "schematic plan," and in April contractors began to prepare the Free Quaker Meeting House for its journey 33 feet west and 8 feet south of its site to allow the widening of Fifth Street and the sidewalks on Arch Street. (Roach to Kiley, Feb. 23, 1961, H2L2 Files, Box 318, Ibid.; Charles E. Peterson, "Notes on The Free Quaker Meeting House, Fifth and Arch Streets, Philadelphia, Built 1783-4, Compiled for Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson, Architects to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania..." September, 1966.

President John F. Kennedy spoke to a roaring crowd that blanketed Independence Mall's first block for the Fourth of July celebration in 1962. It was the first time in forty-eight years that a President had addressed a crowd at Independence Hall and the first large-scale public event on the Mall. "The esplanade was carpeted with humanity --an estimated 85,000 ..." the reporter noted. "The sweeping Mall, with its walks and walls and benches, proved its worth.." Photographs showed the Judge Lewis fountain in full spray with President Kennedy's helicopter parked in the large, empty paved lot north of Commerce Street. The mall had won positive review, even though the raw edges of

macadam on the second block served as a reminder of the progress that awaited completion. (Inquirer July 5, 1962, INDE Archives, Press Clips.)

In June 1963, the State legislature voted to designate the south plaza of the second block the "Edwin O. Lewis Quadrangle." The Judge that year was eighty-four and still going strong. (Bulletin June 26, 1963, Ibid.)

The day after Christmas 1965 the Sunday Bulletin ran a special, "Mall Growing Into Nation's Beauty Spot," which covered details on its history and its future. It noted that the underground garage for 450 cars would be completed late in 1966.

In October 1966 the Mall project was nearly finished and Ward Welsh gave a summary of the project. "In a blazon of brickwork, the State is entering the homestretch this fall on a project conceived 30 years ago." He reported that the 650-car, three-level underground garage would be as long as a football field and 200 feet wide and would include in its second level below ground an area of some twenty feet beyond the parking for storage or a fallout shelter. When completed at Christmas it would cost \$5.1 million. The city would lease it from the state and in turn would employ a parking company to operate it. (Welsh, "Independence Mall Project Nearly Finished," Inquirer Oct. 2, 1966, INDE Archives, Clippings.

The final surface treatment over the garage he described as a plaza with "handsome brick arcades" to the east and west "designed by ... Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson simply to frame the plaza. Each arcade is a profusion of 104 20-foot arches accented by marble," he noted, and quoted Larson as crediting "a young British architect," Gerald Cope, for the design. Welsh noted that the "emphasis throughout has been on landscaping and colonial brick" and that a half million hand-molded bricks had been special ordered for the project from the Alwine Brick Co., in New Oxford, PA, "to capture the unique appearance of colonial brick."

Only two features remained to be completed--the Free Quaker Meeting House's restoration and the Judge Lewis fountain. Both had been priced out and were ready to begin. (The restoration to cost \$290,000 and the fountain \$254,000)

Using language from the 1736 legislation that had set aside Independence Square as a public park, the Commonwealth dedicated the mall with this inscription:

The People of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have set aside this ground on the 179th anniversary of our independence as a public green and walk forever, dedicating its use to the inspiration provided by Independence Hall, within which American patriots founded our nation and conceived our government upon the indestructible spirits and principles of liberty.

Research did not uncover information on any special dedication events that gave the space meaning for the citizens of Philadelphia. Its completion in 1967 seems almost like a parenthesis, rather than an ending, for the following years brought many maintenance problems that the Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson firm had to manage through the contractors who had executed the plans. (Lewis in his interview, 1970, p. 31, complained about the continuing problems with the Lewis fountain. and H2L2 correspondence deals with water problems for the garage and trees over it.)

Only three years passed before the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania decided the Mall should be given to the United States. In February, 1972, the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin reported that "State Seeks US Takeover of Mall Park." No negotiations or bills to propose the idea had been introduced but the National Park Service Advisory Board had endorsed it, and, the reporter added, "the National Park Service has it in its master plan." According to regional director Chester L. Brooks, appropriations for the park had already been obligated. Maurice Goddard, who had been Pennsylvania Secretary of Forests and Waters during much of the \$14 million development of the mall, said that it "would be a logical and appropriate thing to do," and that it should be done for the Bicentennial as the "state's contribution to the total Independence Hall complex." Goddard also noted that maintenance would be "easier and cheaper" under one management. He also wished to save the state "a costly burden" of \$150,000 a year in maintenance. Already the mall had cost the State about \$14 million, half of which went merely to acquiring the land. Goddard pointed out that the \$7 million the state spent to acquire the mall exceeded the price for Pennsylvania's entire ten million-acre forest holdings. (Evening Bulletin, 2/16/72, INDE Archives, *ibid.*)

Goddard may have been approached by representatives of the NPS before he made this announcement, for that year the park, advisory commission, and the city were trying to decide on a new location for the Liberty Bell that would reflect its importance, while relieving Independence Hall of the heavy traffic it drew as the home of the foremost American icon. The idea of relocating the bell to the mall received a positive reaction from state officials. The Pennsylvania legislature passed a bill late in 1973 favoring its relocation, and in 1975, completed the arrangement that transferred, in fee simple, the small piece of land for the pavilion. The remainder of the mall is held by the state and leased to the NPS for \$1 annually. When the development bonds that financed its construction are retired in 1998, the NPS will purchase the mall for \$1. (Grieff, pp.434-6; Inquirer July 18, 1974; Bulletin, July 13, 21, 1974; INDE Archives, *Ibid.*)

The contract to design the Liberty Bell Pavilion was made with the firm Mitchell/Giurgola early in 1974. The NPS set the terms of the design and Romaldo Giurgola worked well within these parameters. When completed for the midnight ceremony to move the Liberty Bell into its new home on January 1, 1976, the Liberty Bell Pavilion already had won many friends and many enemies. The primarily glass building featured the connection between the Bell and the Hall, but it also forever altered the long vista of

## **Context: Romaldo Giurgola, partner--Mitchell Giurgola**

Romaldo Giurgola, a native of Italy, came to the United States to teach architecture at the University of Pennsylvania in the 1950's. He established a firm with his partner Ehrman Mitchell in New York. In 1967, he became the head of Columbia's department of architecture.

Giurgola's contribution to modern architecture is unquestionable. His involvement with the University of Pennsylvania in the 1950s exposed him to the work of Louis Kahn, Oscar Stonorov, and Edmund Bacon. His lectures and writing all reveal a personal philosophy of design based upon his exposure to classical Italian design mixed with a heavy dose of modernism. Giurgola's designs have achieved international recognition in professional journals. His commissions have resulted in structures all over the world.

Giurgola's architecture reflects an interesting mix of the classical designs of Palladio indigenous to his home in Northern Italy with the modern influences of Kahn, Saarinen, and Aalto. His early professional work with Adalberto Libera exposed him to the Italian rationalist movement. Though his designs clearly reveal an affinity for Kahn's appreciation of history, Giurgola refers to Alvar Aalto as one of the greatest influences on his design development. Giurgola feels that Aalto's designs reflect an eclecticism born of "a strong recognition of local aspirations as well as the influence of the landscape and the arts." According to Giurgola, Aalto's style is well grounded in theory and philosophy, responding to indigenous landscapes and culture, rather than fashion. (Hamann, 51-2)

As a designer and teacher, Giurgola stresses the importance of ideology to the creation of architecture. His professional approach incorporates three "constants, namely the focus on people,

space as the direct architectural response to their aspirations, the question of form and content as related to taste, and finally the notion of teamwork in the studio and in the office" (Giurgola, 14). For him, the architect's task is to elicit from clients ideas which then order the design, creating a solid program.

For Giurgola, architecture is the tool which unites civilization with the landscape. It reflects "the collective cultural aspirations of a society toward a better life and a world of stability and mutual respect" (Giurgola, 15). Architecture becomes the conduit with which these collective cultural aspirations manifest themselves in the physical environment. As such, it must not neglect tradition and history as a continuum over time. As a physical expression, architecture must provide a holistic solution to functional problems which unites site, planning, and design.

Within the last thirty years, Giurgola's commissions have brought him to the attention of the international community. His projects, like the Penn Mutual Building and the Australian Parliament House in Canberra, and his interest in creating designs which respond to the cultural dynamics of each place have brought him to the forefront of international architectural circles. His ability to integrate site and building result in designs like the Parliament House in Canberra which become powerful icons in the landscape. The response of the international architectural community is evidenced in the number of journal critiques, interviews, and articles devoted to reviewing his projects.

Independence Hall that was the basic concept of the original three-block Mall. (Grieff, pp. 434-6)

Judge Lewis lived to see the transfer of the Independence Mall State Park to the National Park Service in 1974. It completed a campaign he had been advocating for nearly thirty years. As if he could now let go, the Judge died two months after the bill was passed, at the age of 95. He never knew about the plans to move the Liberty Bell out of Independence Hall to enshrine it in a glass house, but this had been one of his dreams. In 1970, four years before the design was under consideration, he recalled, "Now I wanted to take the Liberty Bell out of Independence Hall and put it in a glass building so tourists can go around it..." Here was the man of dreams who saw all but the last before his death. (Lewis interview, 1970, p 33; phone interview with Caywood, October 1993.)

Such dreams inspired the park movement that led to the creation of Independence Mall State Park and Independence National Historical Park. The people who led the movement to preserve Independence Hall and give it a fitting setting provided the needed vision, ingenuity, and perseverance to see the dreams come true.



### **3. Analysis of Current Site Conditions**

#### **Introduction**

Current conditions on and around Independence Mall are a tangible basis for understanding and evaluating the site and its significance. The previous chapter described the events and influences leading up to the development of the mall and portrayed its design intent and appearance when originally completed, between 1957 and 1969. Findings of a recent field survey and an examination of the current conditions of the mall are detailed in this chapter. The character of the mall today is described in terms of the physical changes that have occurred since completion; the general condition of original features; the character and influences of the adjacent buildings and surrounding neighborhood; and current issues relating to design, use, and management.

Over the past 24 years Independence Mall has been tested both as a commemorative setting for a World Heritage Site and also as an urban park in the center of a major city. The first block functions in both capacities, while the two blocks to the north of Market Street (henceforth referred to as the 'northern blocks') do not. Many factors contribute to the striking difference between the two parts, including the scale and design of the space; the appearance and vitality of surrounding buildings and uses; accessibility; and the condition of landscape features.

[Illustration: Pull-out site map the entire mall]

## **The Character of the Mall Today**

The Mall today continues to comprise three distinct unintegrated spaces: well defined and used to the south of Market Street, ambiguous and often deserted space to the north. They are separated by three heavily trafficked city streets and have discrete orientations and foci.

The original design of the mall has undergone two major modifications since the National Park Service began to manage it in 1975. The construction of the Liberty Bell Pavilion on the first block in 1975, and the modification to the third block in 1991, have had strong impacts on the spatial organization, use, and appearance of these spaces. The addition of the Liberty Bell Pavilion to the north end of the first block has strengthened that space's connection with Independence Hall and its overall axial organization; but the pavilion dilutes the already weak axial connection between the second and third blocks and Independence Hall. The second block has had no major structural changes since its construction, but the dysfunctional fountain contributes to it being an uninviting and unused space. The third block never had a strong association with Independence Hall due to its remoteness and lack of external orientation. The improvements to this block in 1991 have made it safer and more inviting. It is still unintegrated with the rest of the mall or Independence Hall, however.

The only unifying design features of the three blocks remain the low brick and granite walls, that also reflect the material and details of the walls surrounding Christ Church Cemetery, and the flagstone paving and street trees around the outer perimeter of the three blocks.

The impetus for the mall's transfer from the Commonwealth to the federal government in 1974 was not based on an the usual National Park Service criteria for acquiring or accepting new lands (such as compelling resource protection issues), but focused largely on the need to relocate the Liberty Bell to the first block to accommodate more visitors; as well as the NPS' ability to maintain the mall more effectively than the state was able, given the remoteness from any other state facilities. (Grief, p.229). Customary studies that usually accompany or lead to the establishment of new units in the system were not part of this transfer, and no subsequent goals or vision for the mall have been officially established or adopted.

The park does not disagree with the general intent of the original 1950s and 1960s goals for the mall: for the first block - a "fitting setting" for Independence Hall; for the second block - a place for diverse gatherings and events; and for the third block - a place for visitors to rest. These statements are too general to guide policies for use or modification for the mall, however. Additionally, they do not reflect the level of priority the park places on each block or give criteria for measuring the success of the park's management of the mall.

Revised management objectives were developed for the entire park in summer, 1993. The following objectives apply directly to Independence Mall and guide its treatment.

**Park Setting**

To maintain a visual connection between the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, and the vistas of the mall in a manner that respects the park's historical significance and dignified setting.

**Visitor Experience**

To foster a strong feeling of safety throughout the park so that visitors can fully enjoy their park experience and the surrounding urban environment.

**Special Uses**

To encourage and permit those activities that are directly related to the park's purpose, significance and management philosophy.

To allow for other activities, in designated park locations, that do not detract from the visitor experience and do not denigrate park resources.

The following block-by-block evaluation then, is based on these objectives, general principals of urban design, field observation and issues that have been identified by park staff. Independence Mall is evaluated on how it relates to Independence Hall and functions as a setting for visitors, and as urban park in the downtown of a major city.

[Illustration: Site Analysis Map of First Block]

**The First Block**

**Changes Since Completion**

This block, completed in 1954, has retained its simple design and axial focus on Independence Hall. All plan elements and primary circulation continue to be oriented along the north-south axis. With the addition of the Liberty Bell Pavilion on the north end of the lawn, the block is now divided into four primary parts: a central, broad plane of lawn extending from Chestnut Street to the pavilion, raised walled terraces on either side of the lawn, and the pavilion and its associated forecourt.

The Liberty Bell Pavilion was conceived and built to house the Liberty Bell in anticipation of the crush of forty million visitors expected during the Bicentennial. The pavilion was designed by Romaldo Giurgola, Mitchell Giurgola Associates and was completed in 1975. The 4280 S.F. building is a long, low-lying building with its axis perpendicular to that of Independence Hall. The principle construction materials are glass, concrete block faced with granite and stainless steel, and a lead coated copper roof. A glass wall looks out toward Independence Hall and the bell tower, the Liberty

Bell's original home. The Bell Pavilion was planned not to intrude on the historic setting.

The park and Giurgola jointly developed the program for the building:

- It was to be located on the first block but not intrude on the historic setting;
- Independence Hall was to be in the line of sight of visitors standing at the bell, so that both could be seen together;
- The public was to be able to see the Liberty Bell 24 hours a day, even when the building was closed;
- The public was to be able to receive a message about the Bell even when the building was closed;
- The Liberty Bell was to be safe from attack;
- The building was to be able to handle large numbers of visitors with little delay;
- The building was not to attempt to mimic eighteenth century architecture; and
- The building was to be of low profile so that it had minimum adverse impact on the view of Independence Hall.

The building largely has accomplished these objectives, although its appearance has been controversial. Yet the 1986 Architecture in Parks, National Historic Landmark Theme Study identifies the pavilion as one to consider for landmark status in architectural significance as it nears 50 years of age. In addition, one and one-half million people currently visit the bell each year, more than any other park building. (INDE SFM, p. 144)

The area around the pavilion is paved in brick and slopes gently into the building from the flagstone walkways, in order to accommodate large crowds around the pavilion. The forecourt garden is enclosed by a 4'-6" granite wall capped with lead coated copper, matching the detailing of the pavilion. The wall's low height allows visitors outside to see the bell, but keeps them from pressing up against the glass wall. It also maintains the direct sightline from the Liberty Bell to Independence Hall. Two large wings of yew and boxwood sweep from the primary walkways on a diagonal toward the pavilion. These planting beds guide pedestrians toward the pavilion and encourage them to stay off the lawn.

The two original service buildings on either side of the pavilion were restored and doubled in size in 1986 to accommodate restrooms. Ramps on the south side of these

buildings provide barrier-free access to the side terraces as well as the restrooms. This modification was minor and has no impact on the design of the first block.

The double row of sweetgums lining these walks declined from soil compaction and have largely been replaced with red oaks on an as needed basis. Compaction of the clay and sand paving running in which the trees were planted was the primary problem for the sweetgums, and it has been replaced with a permeable aggregate material. The sand and clay paving in the terraces was also replaced, but with brick paving in a basketweave pattern.

### Spatial Organization

The first block remains the best articulated space of the three in terms of its design and use. Its strong axial organization has been further reinforced with the addition of the Liberty Bell Pavilion. The scale and proportions of all landscape features: the lawn, central flagstone walkways, the aggregate pathways adjacent to them, the red oak allee, and the walls of the terraces strengthen the focus on Independence Hall and the central spine.

The success of this space as a setting is particularly apparent at night. With the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall illuminated, and the surrounding buildings (especially the Penn Mutual Buildings) veiled by darkness, Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell come into crisp focus and elicit the strong feelings associated with these powerful symbols.

### Condition of Landscape Features

Generally, the vegetation that has not been replaced on the first block is showing signs of fair to poor. The planting beds in the side terraces contain mature small scale trees and shrubs that may be nearing senescence. The Euonymus fortunei groundcover in the planting beds appears to have severe leaf damage in addition to paths worn through several areas. All planting beds adjacent to the walls of the terraces, both inside and outside, maintain only sparse vegetation: these areas are trampled by children playing on the walls. The lawn is well maintained and in good condition.

The three original lighting standards and fixtures used on the first block remain. These include simple modern fixtures along the main walkways, colonial-style fixtures and posts on the terraces, and modern 1950's "mushroom" low level fixtures on the terraces. The modern fixtures along the main walks have two internal lamps: only one lamp in each light is working. The colonial-style fixtures are very large and out of proportion with the height of the standards. None the low lights on the terraces are working. Lighting on the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall are emphasized by the dark lawn area and may be enhanced by the subtle lighting of the walkways and terraces.

### Vistas and Views into and out of the Block

Vistas between the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall are paramount to the success of the space, and the lawn area provides a "kodak setting", a suitable photographic foreground and a strong cognitive image for visitors. This visual connection remains strong today, reinforced by the well maintained lawn, the allees of red oaks, and the walls and dense shade of the terraces. Outward views and distractions from traffic on Fifth and Sixth Streets are well-screened from this space. In addition, night lighting creates dramatic views to and from the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall.

The high walls around the terraces' exteriors block views into the space from Fifth and Sixth Streets. The walls on the inside of the raised terraces are low enough to be seen over while seated in the terrace area: a great vantage point for watching activity on the lawn.

### Use

The first block is a very lively space. The Liberty Bell Pavilion is the most heavily used building in Independence Park, with 1.5 million visitors a year. In addition to intense visitor use, the shady side terraces attract local workers and passersby who use the space extensively for meeting and eating in good weather. The foodcourt and cafe at the Bourse, as well as several street vendors add to the activity level of this space.

Organized games and activities are not permitted on the lawn due to the distraction it would cause to visitors in the Liberty Bell Pavilion, and the high priority of maintaining the lawn in excellent condition.

The park, and particularly the first block of the mall, is a magnet for special events, demonstrations, and political and religious assemblies due to its strong symbolic association with freedom and democratic ideals. The park approves dozens of requests for special use permits every year and strives for balance between individual visitor use and such special events activity, during which the size and noise of crowds could be disruptive to ongoing interpretive activities. The average annual park visitation associated with special events is 155,000, 8% of which comprises ceremonies and events at the Liberty Bell Pavilion and viewing stands for parades along Chestnut Street. Ceremonial events include activities as varied as visits from dignitaries, commemorative events such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, naturalization ceremonies, military reenlistments, press conferences, and photography for movies and weddings.

Organizers of demonstrations associated with first amendment rights typically prefer or insist on using the first block, in order to be as close to the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall as possible. These activities are generally enjoyed by visitors as reminder of the rights guaranteed to Americans.

Similarly, Independence Hall is favorite parade terminus for groups of all types. The

parades themselves remain on Chestnut Street, but viewing stands, announcer platforms and broadcasting equipment are set up along the adjacent sidewalks, and spectators often spill over onto the lawn.

[Illustration: photo of German-American parade]

The first block is a successful urban square. Because of its location between the two most heavily visited sites in the park, and because it is a pleasant and accomodating space, it is always animated with people: groups of small children, workers eating lunch; and hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world.

[Illustration: Site Analysis Map of Second Block]

## **The Second Block**

### Changes Since Initial Construction

Although extensive design changes to the northern two-thirds of the second block of Independence Mall were made prior to its construction, no major modifications have been implemented since its completion in 1967. The only change to the block occurred when the Judge Lewis Fountain replaced a smaller fountain in the pool on the southern forecourt in 1969, ten years after that section had been completed. The pumps for the Judge Lewis fountain failed in 1986. In 1987, \$100,000 was spent on repairs in preparation for the Bicentennial of the Constitution, but the pumps failed again later that year. Later, plans for a Constitution Memorial in this space, including a new fountain, were developed as an outgrowth of the Bicentennial, funded by donations to the Friends of Independence. These plans were never implemented.

In 1975, two series of commemorative bronze plaques were added to the floor of the east arcade for the 200th Anniversary of the convening of the Continental Congress. Fifty individual plaques along "Signers' Walk" that commemorate the signers of the Declaration of Independence were donated by the Franklin Mint. Each pavilion in the arcade is also dedicated to one of the original states, in order of its admission to the Union. Each is marked by its seal, in the form of a metal banner and a bronze plaque, and the entire arcade is called the "Promenade of the States." This was sponsored by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Bicentennial Council of the Thirteen Original States, and the Independence Hall Association.

In the past two years, two ramps have been constructed for barrier-free access. A permanent concrete structure was nicely integrated through one of the breaks in the exterior wall along Sixth Street and leads to the arcade level of the central plaza. A more temporary wooden structure, also on Sixth Street, gives access to the lower level of the central plaza. These ramps provide the only unimpeded access in and out of these two levels and they are both on the west side.

In 1976, the American Bar Association dedicated a plaque in memory of Andrew Hamilton in the west garden near Arch Street. The high walls around this garden made it an ideal space for criminal activities, and the garden is now sealed off behind a locked gate and used for badly needed storage for maintenance equipment.

### Spatial Organization

This block can be described as a complex of hard architectural spaces defined by paving materials, elevation changes, and walls. It is divided into three primary spaces: the southern forecourt with the Judge Lewis Fountain; the central plaza, called the Judge Lewis Quadrangle; and the northern garden level. Two east-west crosswalks separate these areas and provide the most direct, though not easily found, access into the block from Fifth and Sixth Streets. The three prime spaces are further divided into multiple levels and smaller enclosed spaces by flights of steps, and arcades.

The forecourt, built shortly after the first block and some ten years before the remainder of the second block, mirrors the first block's dimensions, but not its detailing. On the first block, the central spine is clearly defined by the strong allee of shade trees on its edges. In the forecourt, the small number of smaller trees are too weak in impact to frame the central space, and the axial concept does not translate through from the first block.

Although the organization of the forecourt has not changed since the addition of the Judge Lewis fountain to the original pool, the fountain's subsequent breakdown does affect the sense of organizational balance and how people use and move through the space. Without the massive waterjets, this former focal point no longer directs attention, draws people in, provides a view from the terraces, masks traffic noise, or provides relief from this otherwise hard, hot, noisy space.

The central plaza - the Judge Lewis Quadrangle - was built on the roof of the underground parking garage, a condition that required the abandonment of the planting design that characterized the first block. It is an ambiguous space. It was intended to be the locale for festivals and other large events, yet it is subdivided into a number of spaces so small that they impede use.

At the center is a long, narrow court, surrounded on three sides by flights of wide marble steps that lead up to the arcade level. Each arcade is an unsettling combination of two rows of overly tall pavilions joined by one miniature arcade with the scale of a catacomb. Behind each arcade, a narrow space bounded by the perimeter wall is hidden from both the streets and the interior. The perimeter wall comprises a series of alcoves that were once intended for memorial statuary or plaques, but that are used for benches. The space is too isolated and austere for safe and comfortable use. On the Fifth Street side, the sense of isolation is increased by the 5' grade change from the arcade level to the street.



The row of thirteen flagpoles across the north end of the central plaza was meant to visually connect the two arcades, and it forms a subtle back edge to the amphitheater. The center pole, however, is located directly on the north-south axis and is visually disturbing when viewed from points north.

Down a second flight of steps is the third segment of the block - the northern garden level. The 7' high walls around the two gardens clearly terminate the north end of the block. The walls and the dense red oaks flanking them form a narrow, well defined northern entrance to the third block.

The Free Quaker Meeting House, built in 1783, is the only historic building remaining on the mall. It has little relationship to the mall, however, as it is not accessible or even visible from the interior of the block. Hidden behind the garden wall, it is perceived only as the north east corner of the block.

The variety of paving materials and patterns reinforces the division of the block into three unrelated spaces. The flagstone of the perimeter walks is carried into the block at the entrances.

The serpentine pattern of 4x4 granite pavers in the forecourt around the fountain resembles waves and adds some playfulness to an otherwise static space. The marble grid inlaid with brick on the upper level of the central plaza helps to break down this large surface. And the dull, exposed aggregate concrete paving of the lower amphitheater plaza contrasts with the bright marble steps that surround it.

#### Condition of Landscape Features

Although this block is complex, it is generally solidly constructed. The major structural problem is the rotating of the alcove walls at the northern end of the central plaza, due to the failure of some of the cantilevered roof members in the garage below this can also be seen at the southern end of the marble steps, which are beginning to separate from the plaza. Unevenness in some paving surfaces and the poor condition of vegetation are the two most general problems throughout the block.

The red oaks along the crosswalks at the northern entrance and around the perimeter are generally healthy, and provide the only shade on an otherwise hot and arid block. There does not appear to be any pattern to the location of unhealthy, missing or replaced trees. The amur corktrees flanking the fountain in the forecourt area are in poor health, as are all trees and ground cover in the terraces. No irrigation system was provided at the time of construction, and these trees, isolated one from the other, are stressed from lack of water and their undersized planting pits. The few hawthorns that remain in the planters between the alcoves in the arcade areas are nearly dead. The American Bar Association garden is somewhat overgrown, but the hollies and birches are in good health. The Free Quaker Meeting House garden is well maintained.

As is the case with the first block and third blocks, the exterior brick and marble walls and the flagstone paving are showing wear. The flagstone is particularly chipped near the entrances, where vehicles are likely to park when loading and unloading for festivals or special events. The exterior, terrace, and garden walls are in need of cleaning and repointing.

The granite pavers in the forecourt and the brick pavers in the terraces are uneven surfaces. There are not any exposed edges or abrupt changes that would cause a tripping hazard, however.

The lights on the second block are primarily the same mix of colonial midlevel fixtures throughout and modern lowlevel lights in the terraces. Huge fixtures that resemble the colonial ones hang under the arcades. Lighting on this block at night is poor, due to many broken or missing lamps, and creates security problems that are exacerbated by the many hidden spaces.

Wooden and metal benches in the terraces are similar to those in the terraces of the first block, with the addition of a center armrest, probably a design change to discourage sleeping on the benches. The only other benches on the block are the marble slabs in the niches, and these are in good condition: they have not received much wear and tear as they are seldom used and are resistant to the elements.

#### Vistas and Views into and out of the Block

There are no interesting views or important vistas to or from this block. The views to and from Fifth and Sixth Streets are blocked by the exterior walls and arcades, particularly in the central and northern sections. The view into this space from the third block is framed by the garden walls and red oaks. The axial view of Independence Hall exists but is weak because of the distance from the building and the intrusion of the Liberty Bell Pavilion.

#### Use

Uses on the second block are local in nature and are not necessarily related to the park's mission. The park considers it important to have a space that will accommodate crowds away from the primary park resources, however, in order to avoid crowding. Many groups are specifically interested in using this space, as opposed to other open spaces in the city, because of its proximity to Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. An average of 124,000 people attend special events such as festivals, rallies and performances here each year. The rest of the time, the block goes virtually unused.

Although the space will hold approximately 20,000 people, insufficient power supply and inadequate lighting pose special problems for big events. The power service was not designed for modern lighting and amplification, and generators must be brought in.

Poor lighting means that events must end half an hour before sunset so that crowds can disperse safely, yet this does not allow enough time for cleanup. There are no bathrooms or water service on this block, making cleanup more difficult. The marble is particularly hard to clean when food is spilled, and it chips easily. The glare problem on the marble steps is particularly dangerous when the area is filled with crowds. The arcades, intended to accommodate exhibits or vendors of food or crafts, have open rafters that are attractive to pigeons.

The block seems to repel users. The side entrances at either end of the east/west crosswalks are difficult to find, and convenient only to the garage stairwells on the perimeters. The multiple levels and confusing subdivision of spaces obscure north-south circulation through the space. When the sun is out, the amphitheater steps also become a hazard as glare from the marble makes the edges indistinguishable.

This block remains an uninviting and disconnected space with little life, a disfunctional organization, and an intimidating scale. Without the attraction of music or large scale events, passersby do not venture in, and visitors to the Liberty Bell Pavilion or Independence Hall are not likely to stroll north across busy Market street unless their bus is parked on Arch Street.

[Illustration: Site Analysis Map of Third Block]

### **The Third Block**

#### **Changes Since Initial Construction**

Both the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Park Service have had difficulty maintaining the original, extensive brick-paved ground surface of the third block. Perhaps because of the severe compaction of the demolition debris which constitutes the subgrade, and the likelihood that the old basements of former buildings are retaining water, the root system of the 508 closely planted honey locusts grew primarily in the very shallow sand bed below the brick surface, and continually raised the walkways. This created a tripping hazard and led to a number of tort claims against the National Park Service. Beginning in 1985, the park's annual operating budget decreased, and the park was forced to cut back on maintenance. Park funds were directed to areas of highest public use, and the third block deteriorated further. By 1988, all entrances were posted with signs warning of dangerous conditions. In August of 1990, in response to media attention on neglect of Independence Hall and the third block, Congress appropriated \$0.3 million for third block repairs. Park staff developed and implemented a "10 year interim solution" pending determination of what the third block should become.

The modifications to the third block included replacing over 90% of the brick surface with lawn and asphalt walkways; removal of every other honey locust; installation of an

irrigation system; replacement of benches and lighting fixtures; and planting the inoperable fountains with ornamental plants.

### Spatial Organization

The organization of landscape elements in this space remains the same, but the hierarchy and flow of spaces have been completely altered. The new walkways and lawn areas define strong circulation ways where previously fountains, planters, and entries were the only spatial organizers.

The original central axial space was previously the primary space and was defined by patterns in the brick, a break in the massing of trees, and the three major fountains. Now, asphalt walks and lawns define new local spaces.

The eleven fountains, now planters, have not been operable since 1988. The ornamental shrubs and grasses that replaced the water jets do not provide as strong a focal point but do suggest some movement.

The wide marble steps leading into the space from the side streets are still demarcated by the original magnolia groves and are further accentuated with a landing of the original brick (relaid on a more stable subbase). A clear hierarchy of circulation has not been established by the width or material of the new walkways, perhaps because more users of this space are traversing east to west rather than down the central spine.

Contoured wooden benches with a natural finish have replaced the marble benches and are now arranged around the three main fountains along the promenade and in pairs along the lateral walkways. Seating now turns its back on the eight smaller fountain structures.

### Condition of Landscape Features

The perimeter walls, exterior walkways and remaining trees are the only original features; all other landscape elements have been replaced. The brick walls with marble coping appear to be in good structural condition, although generally in need of cleaning and repointing. The flagstone perimeter walkway is showing some signs of stress and chipping, particularly at the entrance on Arch Street. The surviving honey locusts show varying degrees of health, and they have shown little response to the renovation two years ago, probably because subsurface problems could not be corrected without removal of all the trees. Nor was the soil substantially amended at the time of the rebuilding. The red oak street trees and magnolia groves are in fair condition.

Lighting on the third block is currently provided at a safe night level. The original modern globe fixtures were replaced with a similar model during the renovations. These fixtures and posts are different than those used on the first and second block and are an

improvement in terms of scale over the predominant colonial fixtures.

#### Vistas and Views into and out of the Block

Axial views toward Independence Hall are weak. Even in the best conditions, the silhouette of Independence Hall is obscured by the combination of distance and the backdrop of the Penn Mutual Towers.

The low walls surrounding the block have always allowed some views in and out, and with the clearing of 50% of the trees, the interior views of this block have opened up and result in a more secure space. Views into the block are also more open and inviting.

#### Use

Although the changes to the third block have made it much more inviting and safe, it continues to be substantially unused. Its only real use is as a picnic area for the school and tour groups that are directed here by the park. Few office workers from the surrounding buildings use this as a lunching spot as there is no convenient location to buy food: the nearest takeout restaurant is a food vender at the corner of Sixth and Market Streets.

## **External Influences on the Mall**

### **The Surrounding Neighborhood**

The character and uses of buildings and neighborhoods surrounding the mall have a tremendous impact on its success as an urban park.

Independence Mall is situated on the western edge of the Old City section of downtown Philadelphia, an historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In fact, demolition for the mall, and subsequent demolition for renewal of the adjacent blocks, actually established the western edge of Old City. What remains of Old City continues to be one of Philadelphia's richest neighborhoods in terms of history and architectural diversity. Its history dates to the city's beginnings, and its architecture includes examples from nearly every building type erected since the mid-eighteenth century. By today's preservation and interpretive standards, this enhances the visitor experience at the park.

The neighborhood's mixed uses include commercial, office, and residential, many adapted from former commercial, factory and warehouse buildings. Small museums, art galleries, theaters, historic sites and churches are abundant and add to the liveliness of the neighborhood as well as its physical character. The historic fabric of three- to six-

story buildings is largely intact from Front to Fourth Streets and Vine to Walnut Streets, with the exception of those demolished for the Benjamin Franklin Bridge ramps and plaza (ca. 1922), which sever the northernmost east/west blocks from the neighborhood. Later, as part of the city's 1963 Independence Mall urban renewal initiative, 480 structures were demolished. In most cases, mid- to high-rise buildings taking up entire blocks were erected on their sites. [Cook, p.160]

Urban renewal also resulted in the demolition and redevelopment of the neighborhood west of the mall, and it now comprises a mixture of office, retail and institutional uses.

Redevelopment of the blocks immediately adjacent to the mall is the best reflection of urban renewal. Large, modern buildings dominate the surrounding neighborhood, and they effectively cut off Independence Mall from the remaining core of the distinctive Old City district. The diverse and lively mix of uses that is characteristic of Old City has not had an influence on the mall as an urban park because of the wide barrier created by the ring of massive buildings around the Mall.

To the north of the mall is a no-man's land of bridge and highway approach ramps and associated heavy traffic. The redesign of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge plaza to connect the bridge to Interstate 676 has ended the plaza's function as the foot of the grand approach to Independence Hall.

The current effects of the surrounding uses on Independence Mall reflect the concerns and the recommendations of the American Institute of Architects, as stated in a 1955 report written by George Howe on the use of lands facing Independence Mall. The report emphasized the need to encourage a rich mix of uses "so the memorial areas will become a source of daily instead of occasional inspiration in the leisure hours of the surrounding inhabitants..."

In an argument against the colonial-style detailing for new buildings that proponents were attempting to write into Redevelopment Authority policy, Howe also insisted that

these nineteenth century buildings (in the surrounding area), unlike the Colonial pastiches [of the twentieth century], do harmonize with the old buildings being preserved in the old buildings being preserved in the Historical Park. They harmonize with them by right of historic contrast and creative evolution. To wander among structures of successive styles and periods is to feel the exhilaration of moving in architectural history. The nineteenth century buildings were designed by some of the most dedicated and original architects our country ever produced ... So we should follow the genius of our time in recommending to prospective builders the character of the architecture they should create. Their buildings should be 'modern' in design, as that term is comprehensively understood, and tall within limits. Tall buildings are necessarily the expression of economic health... [Stern, p229]

Stylistic requirements did not become part of the ordinance governing the redevelopment area, and the architecture of the surrounding buildings reflects Howe's recommendations. A limitation of 45' in height within 25' of the building line did become law, however. The low height of adjacent buildings affects the mall visually because it is too low to properly frame the width of the space. It affects the use of the mall because smaller buildings do not generate enough users to populate the park. The surrounding buildings do not incorporate the "rich mix of uses" for which Howe had hoped, and this lack of vibrant surroundings also contributes to the light use of the two northern blocks of the mall.

### **Inventory of Buildings Surrounding the Mall**

The mall is flanked to the east and west by mid-rise buildings erected, with the exception of the First Pennsylvania Bank Branch, the Bourse and the Lafayette Buildings, subsequent to the mall's development. The uses are primarily private and federal office space. The buildings or properties and their relationships to the mall are described below, starting at Independence Hall and moving clockwise around the mall. The Penn Mutual building towers, located behind Independence Hall on the south side of Walnut Street, are included because of their strong impact on Independence Hall's ability to function as a focal point.

[uncompleted as of 11/3: will be added to final draft]

### **Circulation**

One of the contributing factors to the lack of integration and the light use of the northern blocks is that the shape and north/south orientation of the mall conflict with the dominant east/west flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the area.

The mall was developed along a north/south axis for two reasons: to clear the nineteenth century buildings that were opposite Independence Hall's front facade on Chestnut Street; and so that newly-widened Fifth and Sixth Streets could serve as a connector from the city's grand new entrance - the Benjamin Franklin Bridge - to the historic district and Independence Hall itself.

The concept of a vehicular approach was dramatic and valid when originally suggested in the 1920s. By the time that the mall was constructed, however, the bridge was only one among many entrances to the city, and there now are a half-dozen ways to approach the historic district. This has caused problems in orienting and directing arriving visitors. And even if Sixth Street were the primary approach to the park, the design of the mall would exacerbate the orientation problem, because the continuous wall and the trees on the perimeter of the park tend to block views of Independence Hall from Fifth and Sixth

Streets, so that no approach sequence is possible.

From Independence Hall to the bridge plaza, the mall crosses four heavily trafficked east/west streets. The streets break the mall into poorly-related segments, and noise impedes conversation and interpretation along the perimeters of the blocks. The traffic on Chestnut Street is a constant danger to pedestrians crossing from Independence Hall to the Liberty Bell, for two reasons: the siting of the hall and the bell at the middle of their respective blocks encourage mid-block crossings; and the turning lanes from Sixth Street onto Chestnut and from Chestnut onto Fifth are poorly designed and poorly signalled, causing confusion and confrontations between drivers and pedestrians. The 100' width of Market Street, as well as its heavy traffic, discourage pedestrians from crossing to the second block. And during times when attractive events are taking place on the second block, the design of the mall encourages mid-block crossings here, as well.

For pedestrians, the north/south axis never worked as a formal approach to Independence Hall, simply because there is nothing on or adjacent to the northern blocks which generates pedestrians who might wish to approach the hall from the north. Visitors have little occasion to use all three blocks as an approach to the hall or to the park in general. At best, they start at the middle of the second block and enter the mall at the first block.

Most individual visitors arrive by car, and park wherever possible, rather than in a single spot from which they can be oriented and directed. Visitors who park their vehicles in the garage below the second block walk up the stairs to Fifth or Sixth Street, proceed along the outer sidewalks and funnel into the first block at the Liberty Bell Pavilion. Groups of visitors who arrive by bus are often dropped off directly in front of Independence Hall. Visitors who start their tours at the visitor center, three blocks away at Third and Chestnut Streets, approach Independence Hall from the east, along Chestnut Street. Those who travel by subway arrive at the corner of Fifth and Market Streets and walk directly to the Liberty Bell or proceed south on the outer sidewalks of the first block. The light internal pedestrian circulation that does traverse the northern blocks comes from visitors travelling to and from tour buses that park on Arch Street.

In general then, visitors traveling to Independence Hall and the park have little cause to approach through the second or third blocks of the mall. Further, city residents and neighborhood workers may traverse the mall incidentally but far more frequently use the sidewalks surrounding the mall. Again, this is primarily because there are so few generators of pedestrians adjacent to the northern blocks, and because the primary, everyday, pedestrian circulation pattern is east/west along the major streets. The mall is effectively inaccessible to pedestrians from the north due to the bridge ramps and associated traffic congestion on Race Street. Residents of Old City, to the east, rarely use or even walk through the mall as the large buildings surrounding the mall create a psychological barrier. Mid-block access to and from Fifth and Sixth Streets and the interior areas of all three blocks of the mall is indirect. And there are no diagonal



crossings from the block corners (as are used on Washington and Independence Squares, for example) that would encourage people to short-cut through the blocks.

The approach from the east along Chestnut Street is the most pedestrian-friendly of the east-west streets: the east-west axis of Independence National Historical Park on the southern edge helps to define this as a special place for a distance of several blocks, even without a terminal view. The southern end of the mall is the most open and inviting entrance and the walkways on either side of the lawn provide a straightforward internal circulation. The approach from the west is via Chestnut, Market and Race Streets. These heavily traveled arteries are bordered by undistinguished commercial, government and office buildings of a larger, less pedestrian-friendly scale than the neighborhood to the east. Traveling by foot or vehicle from the west along these routes there is no sense of approach: The mall could easily be passed by on Market or Race Streets and go unnoticed.

In general, the external circulation and major approaches to the Independence Mall do not contribute to its activity, liveliness, form or function.

### **Recent Area Improvement Initiatives**

Several city-sponsored and private initiatives may have physical and economic impacts on the the neighborhood surrounding Independence Mall.

- A special services district directly to the west of the mall was created by the city as a privately-directed municipal authority to provide a cleaner, safer area for public use.
- The Market Street East Improvement Association, a business association working with others in a public-private partnership, has renovated the Market Street streetscape from Sixth Street to City Hall and created a privately funded "Marshall Corps" to clean and monitor the street and provide assistance to shoppers and tourists.
- The Historic East Street Committee, a private organization supported with a grant from the Commonwealth, is working to revitalize east Market Street from Fifth to Front Streets.
- The 1993 completion of the nearby Pennsylvania Convention Center (Twelfth and Arch Streets) will likely increase visitation to the park. It was also the impetus for the City Planning Commission's "Destination Philadelphia" report, that notes the park as the most-visited attraction in the city, and proposes physical and programmatic improvements in the area.

## **Summary of Issues**

The management, use and design issues outlined below are a summary of how well or poorly the mall currently functions. The list is a combination of issues that were identified at a management objectives workshop for Independence National Historical Park, conducted in July, 1993, and two site visits with National Park Service park staff and landscape architects in September, 1993.

The issues identified during the site visits are the key issues that relate to each block and are organized accordingly by block. The issues identified at the workshop are more general, park-wide issues and are listed by topic heading.

### **The First Block**

Because of the presence of the Liberty Bell, this block receives the heaviest use of any location in the park, and has particularly high maintenance needs. In addition to visitors walking to and from the bell and Independence Hall, it receives heavy use from school children for lunching, blowing off steam, and regrouping.

The block is labor intensive in terms of trash collection, restroom upkeep, and replacing trampled plant material.

Because the vista between the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall is of utmost important, the lawn is an important component of the setting, and receives much maintenance attention. While the park does not attempt to keep people off the lawn, organized games are not allowed to take place. On the terraces, the combination of the dense groundcover and a constant food supply makes a prime habitat for rats.

The block is at capacity in the number of visitors and uses it can accomodate. Therefore, the park tries to strike a balance between the day-to-day use of visitors, and the special uses such as demonstrations and parades that make the scene exciting and help to illustrate the meaning of the park, but that also may be disruptive for everyday visitors. The park assumes that the public should continue to have unimpeded access to the mall.

The Park supports in principle and in action the right of groups to be able to exercise first amendment rights through demonstrations, rallies, vigils, and similar events. Organizers of such activities understandably wish to locate events as close as possible to the Liberty Bell or Independence Hall. The design of the block makes it difficult to accomodate both the events and ordinary visitation and interpretation as well. Therefore, the park tries to persuade organizers not to locate between the Bell and Independence Hall during the Park's normal

operating hours, and instead, to locate on the second block.

- In addition to daily visitors and special demonstrations, all parades in the city, except the Mummers' Parade, go by or end at Independence Hall. The parades themselves are on the city-managed street, but the park must accommodate bleachers, the reviewing stand, broadcasting equipment and delivery trucks on the first block opposite Independence Hall. Six to eight parades take place a year, and while they add excitement and activity, they have special needs that cannot currently be accommodated.

Most parades are televised and require electrical needs that are not satisfied in this block (or any of the three). Special above-ground lines must be run, and, lacking a separate meter, the park picks up the expense of the power.

Most parade floats today come with their own amplifiers, and noise is a problem for regular interpretive activities within Independence Hall and on the first block.

The perimeters of all three blocks are flagstone, and although delivery trucks for the parades and special events are required to plank the stones, many do not, causing the stones to break. There are no physical limits, such as bollards, to control the trucks, and this requires the assignment of scarce park staff to supervise them.

All users, including vagrants, are tolerated in the park as long as they do not threaten people or property. At night, the terraces are officially, but not physically, closed. Regular ranger patrols move out "campers", but this use is difficult to control. Incidents of violence and vandalism increase whenever the bar at the Bourse is operating.

Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell are not physically protected against terroristic attacks such as trucks carrying bombs.

## **The Second Block**

The uses on the second block are frequently local in nature, and have little to do with the park's mission. Festival, pageants, races, etc., are assigned to this, rather than to the first block, and the park considers it important to have a space that will accommodate large crowds and noisy events away from the primary park resources. An average of 124,000 people attend such special each year. The rest of the time, the block is infrequently used.

As is the case with the first block, the space does not easily accommodate special uses, although it was originally designed for such events. The power system is not adequate for modern lighting and amplification, and generators must be brought in for special events. Poor lighting means that events must end half hour before sunset so that crowds can

disperse; however, this leaves too little time for cleanup. The absence of bathrooms is an obvious problem, and the absence of running water makes cleanup even more difficult, both for event organizers and for park staff.

No charge is made to organizations for the use of the block, yet the park subsidizes use through supervision, patrolling, and cleanup.

The marble amphitheater at the center of the block is too long and narrow to accommodate the theatrical presentation for which it was designed. The marble itself is hard to clean, chips easily, and is blinding, causing people trip on sunny days. The steps are especially dangerous when filled with crowds. The unrelieved hard surfaces of the block in general amplify street and event noises. The lack of plant materials and shade make this an extremely hot place during the summer.

The odd sizes of the arcades and the resident pigeons make the arcades difficult and unhealthy to use for tables of food or crafts, as they were originally intended.

The great width and heavy traffic on Market Street act as a natural barrier for people on the first block, and the park has observed that only music seems to draw people to the second block.

The Judge Lewis Fountain has not been operable since 1987. Even if reparable, it cannot meet current life/safety standards. When it operated, it caused many management and maintenance challenges. Submerged pump motors posed an electrocution hazard. Swimmers, bathers, and clothes washers were a constant enforcement problem, and the debris they left behind clogged and burned out the pumps. Children and others found the upper level of the fountain an attractive diving platform, despite the low level of water in which to dive.

Both the park and surrounding neighbors wish to see a water feature on the block, but one that eliminates inherent design problems.

The block was built at a time before there was an awareness of accessibility needs. Stairs and several level changes pose a challenge for people with disabilities. Two temporary ramps have been installed but give only limited access to the interior.

The underground parking garage is also inaccessible - because there is no elevator, people with disabilities must enter and exit on the same narrow ramp that cars use.

The block cannot be physically closed at night, and the many walled, isolated spaces on this block have always encouraged vagrants and illicit activity. The alcoves behind the arcades are invisible from Fifth and Sixth Streets, and even from the amphitheater, and become quite dangerous. The Andrew Hamilton garden, with its 7'-high walls, recently had to be gated and locked to eliminate the serious problems that took place there. Poor night

lighting exacerbates security problems.

- The Free Quaker Meeting House - the only building that remained on the three blocks following demolition - is sealed off from the mall by a 7' wall and is physically and visually unrelated to the rest of the park.

- The two PECO substations must continue to be accommodated on this block.

### **The Third Block**

- The primary issue for this block is its isolation from Independence Hall and the vibrant activity there, and the inability of this block's adjacent uses to generate users to populate the block.

- The only program given by the Commonwealth and the City at the time this block was designed and built was for a resting place for visitors. The block's isolation has always prevented the successful fulfillment of that program. Maintenance and safety problems also inhibited use, and the recent redesign of the block by the NPS is considered to be a temporary solution to make the block useable or to serve until it is reprogrammed.

- All eleven fountains are inoperable.

- This block is not accessible to people with disabilities.

### **General Issues for the Mall**

#### **Visitor Use and Services**

- Buses park illegally on the east/west streets, blocking views, creating noise and pollution, and causing safety problems.

- Visitor walking patterns lead to dangerous mid-block crossings.

- Parking for cars and buses near the park has reached its capacity.

- Visitors concentrate in and overcrowd the space between the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. There is a peak flow in visits before 2:00 each day that affects resources, and the space has reached its carrying capacity.

- The park boundary is undefined; there is no one "entrance;" and this makes visitor orientation difficult.

- People are uncomfortable around the park and are concerned about their safety.

- There is a need for park information and visitor orientation at other Philadelphia attractions and sites.

- There are inadequate restroom facilities throughout the park.

### **Park Management and Administration**

- There is the potential for terrorism against resources.
- There is a need to develop a vision and a plan for the mall, as there is both internal and external confusion about its use. The vision needs to balance twentieth century urban uses with more traditional historical park uses. In addition, there is a need to look at zoning around the mall to understand its relationship to park goals and objectives. The park is in an urban environment with its associated opportunities and problems.
- There is now uncontrolled parking on park property by contractors, caterers, and park vehicles, that creates problems for the visitor experience, resource protection, and maintenance.
- There is no screened or secure space for storage of landscape maintenance supplies and equipment.

### **Design**

- The design of walks and gates in the park encourages street crossing in mid-block.
- Heavy traffic and vehicular circulation patterns bring noise and air pollution.
- The park needs accessible building and facility designs to meet visitor and interpretive needs.
- There is a need to find anti-vandalism design ideas that are compatible with historic character.
- There is a need to define and develop sustainable design guidelines and policies for the park.

## 4. Significance and Integrity

The conclusion of this study is that Independence Mall is not a nationally significant example of an urban or commemorative park according to criteria set by National Register Bulletin 18, "How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes," and by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and subsequent guidelines define National Register eligibility criteria for designed historic landscapes. These criteria are the primary measures against which the National Park Service evaluates properties for significance in order to inform decisions regarding the management of the properties. A designed historic landscape "must possess the quality of significance in American history, architecture (interpreted in the broadest sense to include landscape architecture and planning), archeology, engineering and culture and integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association," and also meet the four criteria which are examined on the following pages. [National Register Bulletin 18, p6]

Independence Mall has not yet achieved the 50 years of age that would allow it to qualify for nomination to the National Register. The first block - the earliest to be completed - was finished in 1954. The most recent segment to be completed - the southern portion of the second block - was finished in 1969. In order to merit the Special Justification that would qualify it despite its relative youth, the mall would have to meet Criterion F, describing "a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance;" or Criterion G, describing "a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance." [National Register Bulletin 18, p9] The finding of this report is that the mall does not meet either criterion. The purpose of the report and of the evaluation below is not to qualify the mall for listing on the National Register, however. Instead, it is to use National Register criteria - recognized as the best and

most-widely accepted objective measures - to assess the mall's place in American social history and the realm of design, and to determine whether the mall has potential significance.

National Register criteria measure four aspects of cultural heritage:

## **Criterion A**

This criterion applies to properties that are associated with events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of American history, and it is not applicable to Independence Mall. While the significance of neighboring Independence Hall is undisputed because of the events related to the American Revolution and the founding of the nation, those associations do not apply to the mall. Some buildings on the mall's three blocks, such as the President's house, undoubtedly were the sites of meetings, discussions, and similar occurrences. These buildings were long ago demolished, and even the buildings which replaced them were demolished, leaving a blank slate on which the mall later was constructed.

## **Criterion B**

This criterion applies to sites associated with the lives of persons significant in America's past. The mall does not meet this criterion, which usually is applied to homes or other sites with direct associations with persons such as political leaders, writers, or artists.

## **Criterion C**

This criterion applies to properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or that represent the work of a master; or that possess high artistic values; or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Independence Mall can be considered to be the product of the City Beautiful movement of the early twentieth century, the historic preservation movement, and the city planning and urban renewal policies of the post World War II period. In addition, parts of the mall were influenced and/or designed by outstanding architects and landscape architects. Yet it lacks the characteristic features that would make it an outstanding, typical, or even contemporaneous product of each of the applicable design and social movements. So many designers were involved through the years that the most notable of them had only minor or passing roles in the evolution of the design for the mall. And it is not



considered to represent the best work of the designers who contributed to it. And there has been a recent loss of integrity for two of the three blocks.

As approximately a dozen plans drawn for the mall over a half-century show, the proposal for a mall was rooted firmly in public and professional enthusiasm over the possibilities suggested by the City Beautiful movement. Early plans, particularly those of Kelsey and Boyd, Greber, Egbert, and Cret were generated at a time when architects and laymen were examining the city for signs of blight and prescribing grandly-scaled remedies intended both to root it out and also to raise the civic environment to a new plane. Proposals for a mall were contemporaneous with projects such as the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, and the 50-year plan for the city. These projects, as well as proposals for the mall, included typically grand City Beautiful gestures, such as massive clearance of a neighborhood popularly considered to be disorderly, ugly and outdated; overscaled spaces; large forms; ceremonial structures; extensive vistas; and classical ornamentation.

As was common in most civic proposals of the first third of the twentieth century, the style in which all the mall proposals (but the final) was designed was Beaux-Arts. A remarkable number of the designers taught at, were trained at, or were associated with the Beaux-Arts architecture program at the University of Pennsylvania. The many proposals for the mall included, in various combinations, ceremonial as opposed to functional uses of spaces; statuary; architectonic planting design; classical ornamentation; axial symmetry; and extensive use of water features.

Because most of the creators of these plans persevered in their interest and promotion of these concepts for the rest of their long lives, many of these gestures persisted in plan after plan. Remarkably, some were actually included in the final plans and constructed, 50 to 60 years after they were originally proposed: long after the City Beautiful and the Beaux-Arts eras had faded away, and long after the freshness and authenticity of the original ideas and impetus had evanesced.

Remaining in the final 1952 plans were the axial symmetry; a single insistent vista of Independence Hall; overscaled and ceremonial spaces; and water features. Eliminated were typical Beaux-Arts elements such as representative and monumental statuary, and curvilinear arcades. This was because at a very late date (considering the extended period of design development), the ideas and elements of the International Style were overlaid on the original concepts. Rectilinear forms, grids, the lack of directed circulation, and the absence of ornamentation, are characteristic of the mall as constructed. Colonial revival detailing that referred to Independence Hall also was added into the mix in the form of brick paving, brick walls with marble coping, and reproduction street lights.

The mall as constructed is thus a hybrid public space that fully reflects neither one nor the others of the styles in question. It cannot be considered to be a significant

representative work of the City Beautiful movement, of Beaux-Arts design, or of International Style design.

The mall was an important element in the urban renewal of the eastern end of Philadelphia. Its importance is as a place and as a public investment, however, rather than as a designed landscape. It is clear from both written records and the oral histories of the key participants in the planning and implementation of the mall that its function as a basis for renewal was always understood to be equal to its importance as a project honoring a set of eighteenth century buildings. Backers frequently prophesied the mall's future utility "in maintaining and increasing real estate values in its vicinity." [Egbert] Judge Edwin Lewis exhorted civic organizations to insist "that the Park is created and that around that park in future years there be built beautiful housing developments and other structures that will take the place of the decaying mercantile establishments that no longer can be made to pay in downtown Philadelphia. [Lewis, Spoliation, pp25,26] Charles Peterson, in answer to a question about the purpose of the mall, replied that, "Judge Lewis wanted to hit this end of town so hard that it would turn around, and it did." [dg interview]

The idea for the mall ultimately became part of the urban renewal plan for Old City and Society Hill - a plan which was itself a well-known and highly influential work. In a retrospective evaluation of the mall's role in the renewal, former city planner Edmund Bacon reflected that, "It was a gutsy opening wedge; it was the first thing that happened and it opened up the whole process" for redevelopment of the historic area of Philadelphia. [dg interview] But the certainty that it would be built, and decisions about its size, form and location were givens by the time that Bacon and the City Planning Commission began to develop the Philadelphia plan in the late 1940s. Bacon became a nationally-recognized leader in city planning, but was not the originator of the concept for the mall. Rather, he was an intensely involved client.

The design for the mall was also conceived by others, and it was an anomaly in terms of Bacon's plan for Philadelphia. Bacon's plan was characterized by selective demolition; intimately scaled walkways connecting historic buildings in renovated neighborhoods; and small parks. The "clear and clean" method of urban renewal typically used in other cities - and used in Philadelphia only for Independence Mall - were not a part of Bacon's site-sensitive approach. Although Bacon had an important role in review and modification of the final design of the mall, the first proposal for the mall as an anchor for what would be later called "renewal" had been made some 35 years earlier. And so although it was constructed coincidentally and concurrently with the products of Bacon's plan, the mall cannot be considered to be significant for any association with that plan.

The mall is a product of the notions of historic preservation that prevailed in the 50 years during which it was planned; but which were losing currency and credibility by the time it was under construction. Characteristics of the movement included interest in

single buildings as opposed to districts; interest in sites related to colonial and early federal history, as opposed to more recent history (with the singular exception of the Civil War); subjective consideration of buildings for aesthetic, rather than historical values; and the idea that history was best represented as a point in time, rather than through the confusion of continuum (a notion made manifest at Colonial Williamsburg and in Independence National Historical Park's east/west mall, stretching from Third to Fifth Streets).

The first proposals for a mall were founded in the desire to preserve Independence Hall (considered to be the nation's most historic shrine) not only from a fire which might jump from adjacent buildings, but also from an incompatible setting.

Improvement of the Independence Hall area ... will restore that part of the city which is rapidly declining. It will rehabilitate and revive the historic precincts which are now in such condition as to shame any American. The [demolition and replacement] will protect the historic monuments from ever again, in generations to come, being endangered by such hazardous and unattractive surroundings. [FPAA-1944, p14]

Preservation and restoration of Independence Hall itself had been the focus of activity of a number of patriotic societies from the Centennial onward, and the provision of a fitting setting was understood to be an outgrowth of such sentiments and activities. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the Independence Hall neighborhood was considered by citizens and designers alike to be "parched and ugly," [Kelsey] with what was regarded as a disorderly collection of old fashioned buildings. As the city's center of commerce and banking continued to move west, away from the neighborhood, and as existing buildings were subdivided for smaller and less lucrative businesses and workshops, few observers saw a sparkling future for the area. And until the 1960s and the Bacon plan for the residential rebirth of Society Hill, there was no precedent for renovation of old buildings and districts, as opposed to their removal and reconstruction.

Backers of the mall proposal often cited as precedents the two most notable, (although dissimilar) "historic preservation" projects in the nation - Colonial Williamsburg (1920s and on) and the Jefferson National Expansion Monument in St. Louis (1930s and on). Both involved extensive demolition of 19th century buildings. In Williamsburg, all buildings which did not represent "Colonial or Classical tradition" were removed. [Cook, p169] In St. Louis, 37 city blocks that had contained the buildings most closely associated with westward expansion were completely demolished, with the aid of a designation under the Historic Sites Act of 1935 that freed federal funds for urban renewal and a modern memorial. [Shaping the System, p50] At that time, these were the only well-known models for treatment of a historic district.

Contemporaneous criticism of the demolition came from the businessmen and property owners who were to be displaced, and a handful of architects interested in specific 19th

century buildings, rather than the fabric of the neighborhood. [Cook, pp 111-136] Even the National Park Service, involved in planning the national park south of Chestnut Street, reflected the prevailing notion that preservation was only for early building. (This had already been made manifest at Colonial and Morristown National Historical Parks.) Director Conrad Wirth wrote a damning letter regarding three nineteenth-century buildings within Independence boundaries that interested architects had particularly wished to see spared from the general demolition, stating that "... extensive historical and planning research has been made over the past ten years without coming up with anything concerning them of sufficient importance to justify their retention ..." [Wirth, quoted in Cook, p130] The three buildings included Frank Furness' massive Guarantee Bank, the Jayne Building, considered to be a prototype of the modern skyscraper [Peterson-FPAA, p27] and the cast iron Penn Mutual Building. Superintendent Melford Anderson wrote of the buildings that

...their fundamental interest is architectural and has no basic relationship to the park story - America's political development between 1774 and 1800 ... As for the Jayne building, there are other examples of early skyscraper development in Philadelphia [Melford, quoted in Cook, p127]

All three buildings were eventually demolished, along with all other post-federal buildings within park boundaries.

Charles Peterson, then of the NPS, and the strongest voice for preservation of at least some of the nineteenth century buildings, is similarly an example of the subjective approach to preservation that was common at that time. In his first report to the director on the plan for the national park (1947), he wrote

It will be generally agreed to in principle that ugly modern buildings in this area should be removed to improve the setting of the historic buildings. There will, however, be differences of opinions as to the extent to which this should be carried. When one building is pulled down, there is another immediately behind it which is often less attractive. If the pulling down is kept up long enough it will leave the historic buildings standing in large open spaces like country churches, a condition which their designers did not plan for. And ugly buildings will still frame the park area. [Peterson, Shrines Report, p.13]

By the early 1950s, as demolition of the first block of the mall began, attitudes toward historic preservation were beginning to change, however. Cities such as Charleston and New Orleans had instituted historic districts in the 1930s, to enable preservation of entire neighborhoods, and their success was becoming visible. There was a growing recognition that such areas had economic value as well, and the Philadelphia City Planning Commission's plan for east Philadelphia, and particularly Society Hill, called for retention and restoration of hundreds of eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings.

The architectural community began to raise concerns that were belated, but an indication of the development of professional thinking about neighborhoods and context. Philip Johnson wrote that, "If we in the United States are to join in the cultural life of the Western World, we cannot allow the whims of commerce to dictate what buildings will be preserved for the common heritage and what will be destroyed." [Philip Johnson, letter to Judge Edwin O. Lewis, President, IHA, 9/19/56. INDE Archives] Yale Professor Carroll L.V. Meeks wrote that

The Independence Hall project is one of the outstanding examples of national interest in the preservation of our architectural heritage, but it differs from the Williamsburg and Old Deerfield projects in that it is located in a city which has grown continuously; hence it is highly artificial to restore the area back to a given date as though there had been no subsequent development ... the preservation of our architectural heritage is not limited to specific periods but should be a record of continuing development ... I hope that this broader point of view may come to prevail among preservationists everywhere. [Carroll L.V. Meeks, letter to Edwin O. Lewis, 9/25/56. INDE Archives]

In its guise as three cleared city blocks, the mall is indeed a physical manifestation of mid-century attitudes toward preservation, attitudes that, in Philadelphia at least, were strongly affected by economic goals. Those attitudes were already beginning to change dramatically, however, and the broader point of view for which Meeks hoped did come to prevail. This leaves the mall as an isolated manifestation of the convergence of patriotic sentiments and economic goals, not unlike a piece of flotsam washed high on the beach on an unusual winter tide. The mall cannot be considered significant for this association, however, any more than a vanished city in Viet Nam is significant for its association with an attitude expressed as "destroying the city in order to save it."

A number of distinguished landscape architects and architects were associated with the conceptual development and final design of Independence Mall from 1915 to 1974. Their contributions to the evolving design of the mall varied in influence, however, and the built design of the mall is not considered to represent the best work of the final designers.

As described in Chapter 2, several important designers made contributions to the fifty-year dialogue on the design of the mall. Jacques Greber and Paul Cret are particularly notable, and isolated elements of their single-block proposals were adapted into the final plan. The first block of the final plan reflects the open central space flanked by bosques of trees that were suggested by Greber's and Cret's plans. More important primary components of their concepts, such as the changes of grade, use of structures, and detailing, were not retained in the final plan, however, and so these designers' influence cannot be considered to have been strong in the final form of the mall.

Roy Larson, remembered locally as an able and sincere architect, devoted many years of his professional career to the realization of the mall. As the designer for the 1942 and 1944 concepts which finally brought Commonwealth designation for the Independence Mall State Park; the principal designer of the 1952 master plan; the plan for block one; the series of plans for block two; and as the partner-in-charge overseeing Dan Kiley's design for block three, Larson had the strongest influence of any of the designers on the final form of the mall. Larson was perhaps the most able and creative of Cret's former partners and he was prominent in Philadelphia - both as an architect and as a member of the circle of achievers who made things happen. A search of contemporaneous and subsequent critical literature has not uncovered evidence indicating that Larson was recognized nationally, however, either in terms of leadership in design through practice, teaching, or writing, or in the importance of his commissions. Therefore, the mall cannot be considered significant for its association with Larson.

Dan Kiley has long been recognized for the leadership and influence of his built works of landscape architecture. These commissions, primarily in urban settings, translated the language of the International Style for landscape architects, and led the way to a modern integration of buildings and landscape.

Compared to the characteristics of his other designs, Kiley's plan for the third block is atypical, and this is not his strongest work.

The most important and typical characteristic of Kiley's design is harmony between buildings and landscape features, often so interlocked spatially and visually that they are inseparable extensions one of the other. The third block lacks a building, and the required visual reference to Independence Hall, a quarter-mile away, could not serve as the tangible element which was a necessary part of Kiley's palette for this design. The buildings across Fifth and Sixth Streets are too remote and low in height to provide a reference or frame. Nor could the park spaces north and south of the third block serve this function. Lacking a [tie-down][tangible reference], the third block became directionless, and the site floats freely in the larger urban setting.

Kiley's work is also characterized by his ability to frame internal spaces with plant materials, establishing successive rooms in the landscape. On the third block, however (prior to the 1991 changes), there was a sense that the space had sprung a number of leaks. The continuous brick groundplane and the continuous tree canopy failed to define a series of spaces, and instead established only the single space between the ground and the canopy. The numerous fountains acted as central foci, rather than as edges or definers of rooms. And the grid of trees tended to act as a sieve, allowing views and movement in all directions, rather than in the ordered, referential, meaningful manner found in Kiley's other work.

The Liberty Bell Pavilion provides a good example of the importance of the National Register requirement that 50 years must pass before significance is assessed. The

pavilion is the work of Romaldo Giurgola, a recognized leader in architecture, who has been influential through his practice, teaching and writing. The pavilion has been controversial since it was constructed, receiving a level of public comment that is unusual for any building, although perhaps not so unusual for a building that is so much in the public eye. Most of the comment has been disparaging, and it has been likened to a subway station or a fast food stand. It is probable that this shockingly contemporary building is prejudiced by comparison to its comfortable surroundings, just as the PSFS building and the Guggenheim Museum startled the public when they were first erected in neighborhoods of older fabric.

In 1993, the pavilion is 18 years old, and it is far too early to determine whether it will someday be significant for its association with Mr. Giurgola, or whether it will someday have achieved significance on its own due to symbolic value that may accrue to it. The 1986 "Architecture in the National Parks: National Historic Landmarks Themes Study" does identify the pavilion for consideration for landmark status in architectural significance as it nears 50 years of age, however.

The third possibility for significance under Criterion C is that a design possess high artistic values. In what must have been a [disappointing event] for the designers and backers of the mall, who had devoted so many years to its realization, the concept and the design received little approbation from contemporary observers.

Charles Peterson, at that time the NPS' architect in charge of planning for the national park, solicited comment and included it in his report to Congress. Hans Huth, of the Art Institute of Chicago, wrote, "I hope they won't pull down too much in Philadelphia. I [would] hate to see Independence Hall in splendid isolation, landscaped like a rest room." [Peterson-Shrines, p13] And Dr. Turpin Bannister, Chair of the AIA National Committee for the Preservation of Monuments, wrote that

The proposed creation of a grand mall on the axis of Independence Hall in Philadelphia threatens to disrupt the eighteenth century character of this unique building. This is not to say that the present adjoining buildings form a suitable setting for the cradle of the republic, but it would [be] equally inept to impose a grandiose neoclassical or Grand Prix parti on it. [Peterson-Shrines, p16]

In a series of articles written for The New Yorker in 1956 and 1957, Lewis Mumford examined the question of what activities and architecture might be appropriate for a historic neighborhood, and determined that the concept for a grand, formal mall was not.

Referring to the "domestic scale" of Independence Hall, he noted its "Georgian decency and quiet dignity, without a touch of the grandiose." But he lamented that "even those who plainly love and honor these buildings have, in their conception of an appropriate

setting, done violence to the architectural genius of these buildings [by adding] the sort of princely generosity of space that baroque architects quite naturally accorded to a king's palace." [Mumford, 11/17/56, p150]

Assailing the three-block axial concept for the mall, he noted that "the very length of the approach will impose upon this unassuming Georgian building an aesthetic burden that only a vast palace or temple of far greater architectural merit could hope to carry off. One will be looking at the Hall through the wrong end of the telescope." The origins and historical references of the concept were also suspect to him. [Mumford, 2/29/57]

Too much space has a peculiar effect upon a reasonably well-educated architect; it induces sensations of grandeur, and it reminds him, automatically, of the long, axial approaches, like those at Versailles and Karlsruhe, that were used with such formal distinction by the great Bavarian architects ... [This tradition was] imposed by the servants of an absolute monarchy seeking to translate into space the mysteries of absolute power and centralized political control. Was it not in revolt against that absolutist tradition in politics that Independence Hall itself acquired its special meaning for Americans? [Mumford, 2/29/57]

When Mumford visited Roy Larson's office in 1956, he saw a master plan that still called for a constant treatment for all three blocks. While granting that the executed design for the first block was pleasant, he questioned the validity of the unifying concept, noting that the "three separate blocks are neither functionally nor visually one; not even from the spire of Independence Hall could they be seen as they appear on the architectural rendering of the project, with the traffic arteries that cut across the vista artfully presented without any hint of traffic." He regretted that the functions that would have made the mall more pleasant to use, such as the restaurant and visitor center, had been eliminated from the plans, and noted that redesign to allow "cross-walking by people who do not intend to go to Independence Hall would increase the utility of these three blocks of park as recreation space." [Mumford, 2/29/57]

In light of the east-west streets that so completely separate one block from the next, he suggested that the designers "organize and furnish them in such a fashion as to give each its individual content instead of trying to relate them visually to the historic buildings they lead to." [Mumford, 2/29/57] As design proceeded through the next decade, this is in fact what actually took place. However, the designers' reluctance to abandon the original organizing concept of axial symmetry limited the options for developing individual designs for each block. Jane Jacobs later referred to "the city's grand Independence Mall" as a "new vacuum uninhabited by any recognizable form of society, even Skid Row." [Jacobs, p100]

Jacobs' censure was far stronger than subsequent use of the mall by visitors and residents warrants. Yet at least two of the people most closely involved with the mall



were left with mixed feelings in terms of its success as a design. Designer Roy Larson and Judge Lewis were almost entirely pleased with the outcome of their many years of effort, the mall having fulfilled their goals of providing a setting and approach for Independence Hall and acting as an anchor for revitalizing the neighborhood. However, Roy Larson, noted that,

It's unfortunate in a way that it was done in fragments. I think maybe that it would have been better if we had been able to build the whole mall at one time, because this meant that each parcel that we designed and finally detailed, we went through innumerable conferences with innumerable groups, and it's difficult to please everybody in designing a project of this magnitude, and sometimes it was quite frustrating because of this. I don't think any great creation can ever be done by a committee or a group of committees. How different it would have been if we had been able to design the north mall under one contract, it's difficult to say. It might have had greater unity, but on the other hand, it might prove in the end the fact that it is really three separate elements which have their own distinctive character. This, in the end, will accrue to its benefit and appeal. [Larson interview, pp32-33]

And Judge Lewis, who more than any other individual, had caused the mall to be extended from one to three blocks (over Larson's early objections), looked back and said, "I sometimes wonder if I've created a Frankenstein's monster, whether it's used enough to justify [the extra blocks]... I go by there and I see it all empty and think, 'Now what did you create that for? Maybe you overdid it.'" [Lewis interview, p.31, 33]

## Criterion D

This criterion applies to properties that have yielded or are likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. Independence Mall represents the third developed use of this land. It replaced three fully developed blocks of 19th century urban uses, which had themselves replaced the residences, gardens, and commercial and small-scale industrial buildings of the colonial and early federal periods.

A great deal of archeological information has been lost in the demolitions and rebuildings. When demolition for the mall took place in the 1950s, no archeological investigation was performed, and no care was taken to protect subsurface resources. On part of the second block in particular, excavation for the three-level underground parking garage destroyed all subsurface resources. Similarly, the water reservoir constructed under part of the first block for fire fighting purposes destroyed subsurface resources. Construction drawings for the mall note that all 19th century foundation walls were excavated to a depth of six feet below the surface, and basements were filled in with rubble.

Recent experience with the northern sides of the 600 block of Market Street (the federal courthouse) and the 400 block of Chestnut Street (the Omni Hotel), both of which were similar in having contained nineteenth century buildings and uses that had replaced eighteenth century buildings and uses, suggests that the third and part of the first blocks may retain archeological information. Eighteenth century privy pits and wells, serving as sources of descriptive refuse of those generations, were found to have been sheared off and effectively sealed just at the basement level of the nineteenth century buildings. When excavated just prior to construction in the 1970s and 1990s, these pits contained valuable evidence of the history of the neighborhood and the lives of the former residents.

The mall's potential to yield information has been compromised. Should disturbance of these blocks below the level of the 19th century basements be deemed likely to cause adverse effects, archeological investigation would be conducted. Because the current landscape on the surface of this site cannot be considered to be significant however, Criterion D is not applicable.

## **Integrity**

Although questions of integrity are moot, since the mall is not considered to be significant, a summary of changes is an important part of the record for this designed landscape.

The integrity of the design concept of the first block was radically affected by the 1975 placement of the Liberty Bell Pavilion in the middle of the axis. The insertion of this major architectural feature, containing the most important symbol of the American Revolution, established a second focal point and an effective visual and functional terminus to the mall at Market Street, rather than at the Benjamin Franklin Bridge plaza, as was the original intent.

With the exception of this prominent addition that alters the spatial integrity of the block, all the individual original elements of the block are intact and in good condition, as described in Chapter 3.

The second block is little changed since its completion in 1969. All its original elements are intact, although many are showing wear, as noted in Chapter 3.

The third block is the most dramatically changed since its completion in 1963. Following years of problems (described in Chapter 3), the landscape was redesigned and rebuilt in 1992, and this change effectively reduced the integrity of the original design.

The primary change is to the circulation system and thus to the spatial relationships that were suggested by Kiley's original plan. In Kiley's plan, the ground plane was completely paved, and circulation through a succession of spaces was suggested by architectural elements such as planters and fountains that were placed at regular intervals. In the adaptation, most of the formerly paved groundplane has been changed to lawn, and distinct paved pathways through the lawn both suggest the means of circulation and also redefine the spaces.

Approximately 50% of the honey locusts were removed, on an "every-other" basis. The remaining pattern of trees is therefore a diagonal grid, rather than the rectilinear grid of the original.

The original marble benches that were located in such a way as to visually link the large and small fountains were removed, and replaced with "Lutyens-style" wood benches which now line the new pathways. This use of furniture is also out of keeping with Kiley's typical designs.

The eleven fountains were planted with species that suggest falling water, including willows and ornamental grasses. The fountain structures and their plantings continue to be the most prominent architectural elements on the block and thus continue to serve as their original intent as local foci.

Should there be a decision to do so, the original design could be reconstructed, since a complete set of working drawings exists. The only elements which would be salvageable, however, would be the perimeter walls, the perimeter flagstone, and the stone components of the fountains. Although some of the honey locusts and magnolias are in good condition, the great majority are in decline. The necessary subsurface preparation that would correct the drainage problems that were the cause of the failure of the original design would mean the removal and replacement of all the remaining trees.



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