



HISTORY AFIELD

The Minnesota State
Capitol Complex, the 1940s to the 1980s

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This manuscript explores the history of the Minnesota Capitol area from the 1940s until the present. The work was commissioned by the Governor's Office, State of Minnesota to document change in the area over the past generation.

When this inquiry begins around 1944, the Minnesota Capitol, flanked by two modest, neoclassical buildings constructed in the 1910s and 1930s, housed most of state government. The entire complex and its surrounding lawns occupied about 18 acres of an increasingly shabby 19th century neighborhood in St. Paul. As it is defined at present, the Capitol complex is an 80-acre district with boulevard approaches to the east and west, new government buildings on all sides, a commercial and residential neighborhood to the north and west, and a junction box of freeway interchanges around its southern perimeter.

A comparison of the 1940s and 1980s maps tell us that

--more ceremonial space was believed necessary

--more office space has been created

--an orderly plan has been used to arrange these new facilities.

In addition, automotive transportation routes have altered access to the district and its relation to other areas of the city.

These changes in the map are physical evidence of new ideas and priorities for the Capitol district over time. They were created during two fairly distinct periods of activity on the Capitol mall in the past 40 years. The first, roughly from World War II until the late 1960s, was a time of renewed investment after many years of relative inattention to the area. A state Commission was established to oversee development of an expanded Capitol Approach. A landscape and site development plan was adopted. A residential and commercial neighborhood was cleared to make way for the new mall and construction of new Veterans Service, Highway Department and Centennial office buildings. Federal highways I-94 and I-35 were sited and partially constructed south of the Capitol. Essentially, a 19th century cityscape was transformed by the superimposition of 20th century design and forms.

The second phase of the "modern era" on the mall began in the late 1960s. There was less building and more taking stock; the postwar building boom had left lots to think about, particularly in the design qualities of some of the new buildings. The area became a planning district under the oversight of the Capitol Area Planning and Architectural Commission. Strong competitive design procedures

were established to ensure professional and community review of new construction. The automobile continued to drive planning for the area. In its most pragmatic guise, the problem was where to park an ever-increasing number of employees' and visitors' cars. The more abstract problem was how to bridge 'the concrete river' between the Capitol area and downtown St. Paul which had been created by freeway construction. An award-winning design for underground legislative and museum facilities on the mall went up in smoke after several years' debate in the 1970s. Conservation and historic preservation techniques began to displace urban renewal and modernization within the Capitol and its environs.

At this writing, work is still very much in progress in the Capitol area. Years of continued discussion concerning additional government and cultural facilities on the mall culminated in 1980s architectural competitions for new Minnesota Historical Society and Judicial buildings plus a new landscape design linking the Capitol district to its host city. The resulting projects will reconfigure the Capitol district anew.

The State Capitol itself is at the heart of all this activity. The Capitol has been a special place in St. Paul and statewide since construction commenced in the 1890s. The neoclassical landmark was designed by Cass Gilbert, a noted architect of the time; his subsequent commissions included the Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Custom House and the Woolworth buildings in New York.

The Minnesota Capitol building was nine years in the construction, from 1896 to 1906, and it cost 4 1/2 million dollars, an extraordinary sum at the time. Neither the legislature nor the architect skimped on materials or finish work, though the legislature thought about it on occasion. The result was an extraordinary fine building, which excited professional and public attention from the day it opened. The best marbles obtainable went into the facade and the interiors. Sculptor Daniel Chester French was commissioned to create the gilded Quadriga or "Progress of State" grouping above the main entrance and additional individual figures for the exterior. Decorative specialist Elmer Garnsey was brought in to coordinate the interior design. That work included rich ornamental colors and elaborate stencil designs throughout the building, canvases commissioned from Kenyon Cox, Edward Blashfield, Howard Pyle and other well-known painters of the time. Inside and outside of Minnesota the building was, and is, considered to be one of the five or six finest state capitols in the nation.¹

In his book Close-Up: How to Read the American City, Grady Clay, a longtime observer of city planning and urban design, describes some areas of cities as special "epitome districts." Clay defines these epitome districts as

special places in cities [that] carry huge layers of symbols that have the capacity to pack up emotions, energy or history into a small space... The thing

about epitome districts is that they seldom stand still. The symbolic load is forever shifting.²

The following narrative treats the Minnesota Capitol and its surroundings as an epitome district - a special, symbolic place in its community. Its basic functions - seat of government, workplace, tourist attraction, forum for citizen opinion and celebration, neighbor to other urban structures - have remained constant. However, the historical circumstances in which these have been expressed have changed a great deal, especially in the 1940s-1980s period under consideration herein. Government responsibilities and facilities have expanded exponentially, creating all number of space and turf questions. The elaboration of automobile and communications technologies, in infancy around the time of the Capitol's construction, have altered the use and design of space considerably. Notions of beauty have moved a full 180° and back again -- neoclassical to modern to a return to neoclassical traditions and historic preservation. The symbolic load is always in motion, and its physical metaphor is construction.

Chapter 2

The Capitol Approach

Ideas and drawings for a landscaped approach to the Cass Gilbert State Capitol in Minnesota date to the 1890s and 1900s. However, it would be the 1950s before a commissioned landscape design was actually chosen and constructed. In a sense, modern urban renewal supported the realization of a plan which had its origins in the "city beautiful" tradition.

A Brief History of the Capitol Approach

The Capitol Approach plans have a long and complex history. The 1895 architectural competition for Minnesota's State Capitol building did not include any provision for landscaping of the adjoining area. The engineering and surveying drawings sent to competitors depicted a site roughly 8 acres in area, which had been acquired for the new Capitol building. Though the drawings indicate that approximately 4 acres of the area was imagined to be a front approach to the building, instructions to the competitors prohibited any landscape renderings as such. The jurors wanted to see building plans only at that stage.¹

However, the question of a proper setting for the winning building design came up almost immediately following the competition.

Within a month, architect Cass Gilbert, the winning entrant, suggested a change in the site plan in order to achieve a symmetrical Capitol approach based on the existing St. Paul street plan. Apparently, the idea went nowhere at the time. In his History of the Minnesota State Capitol Area, Gary Phelps suggests that negotiations for the Capitol site had been so difficult that Commissioners may have been reluctant to undertake any scheme which required the acquisition of additional property².

Though Gilbert's initial suggestion did not result in any direct action, it did set the scene for intermittent discussion of various Capitol approach plans over the next 50 years. Many participated in these discussions - State legislators, architect Cass Gilbert, the City of St. Paul, community business and civic groups. As many as a dozen plans of one sort or another were proposed between 1900 and the mid-20th century.

For his part, Cass Gilbert lobbied the Legislature, the City and citizens' groups for the remainder of his life in an attempt to get some sort of appropriate approach to his building design realized. The scope and the specific details of the ideas Gilbert proposed varied somewhat over the years of his involvement - 1902 to 1931. However, general design features and overall siting concerns for the Capitol area remained constant. These included a symmetrical plaza, a central main approach from the south, a Cedar Street Mall to the east and a Cathedral approach to the west.

Gilbert assumed that future state buildings should be located in the Capitol area, that there should be a symmetrical arrangement to those buildings and that any future construction should harmonize generally with Capitol materials and design qualities, geneally. Gilbert also advocated a height limitation on Capitol area construction.³

For its part, the Legislature did create a Capitol Grounds Commission in 1907 as the work of the State Building Commission, which had administered Capitol construction, phased out. The Grounds Commission acquired several lots, primarily in the northwest corner of the Capitol area. However, in the absence of an overall landscape plan or of steady appropriations, the Grounds Commission could accomplish little of substance; it was abolished in 1929.

The other major player in this long-running serial was the City of St. Paul. Historically, the community took its role as host city to the Minnesota Capitol with seriousness and dignity. For instance, St. Paul had acquired additional acreage in the Capitol area over the years, also. Between the City and the Grounds Commission, the total Capitol area had been increased to 18 acres by the 1940s. Much of this St. Paul support was located within the city's planning department and among civic groups. These were the people most likely to share many of the general ideas and values which produced Cass Gilbert's Beaux Arts building and his

"city beautiful" plans for a Capitol approach. Besides commissioning approach plans from Gilbert in 1907 and 1931, the City brought in other professional consultants such as planner John Nolen and landscape architect Arthur Comey in 1911 and later planners Edward H. Bennett and William E. Parsons, authors the first St. Paul City plan, in 1922. These consultants used general ideas from Gilbert's drawings and worked them into city-wide plans. Following World War I, proposals for a war memorial on the Capitol grounds in St. Paul intersected with various Capitol approach ideas as well.⁴

Virtually all of the Capitol approach and war memorial ideas suggested in the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s seem to have been proposed on their own merits, so to speak. The State Capitol deserved a fine vehicular approach with pedestrian grounds to match. With regard to World War I memorialization, Minnesotans owed the veterans and the casualties of what seemed the "war to end all wars" a prominent and dignified monument. As these positive reasons for action in the Capitol area gathered steam, a negative situation requiring attention was developing, as well. Increasingly the "near downtown" neighborhood surrounding the Capitol was showing signs of deterioration. The Capitol had been sited in an early neighborhood of St. Paul which included 19th century mansions, workers' cottages and commercial activity within its precincts. As the years passed, residents of downtown St. Paul moved further out to more purely residential areas and early

suburbs. This pattern, a nationwide trend, left the Capitol area to a largely working class population, many of whom were renters. Newspaper stories periodically surveyed conditions in the area. Perhaps the most powerful was a 10-part series published by the St. Paul Daily News in 1929. Under the title "Screen of Ugliness," the News excoriated rundown building stock, visually distracting billboards, and junk heaps in front page pictorial editorials.⁵

1944 - A Capitol Approach Adopted

Matters in the Capitol area area finally came to a conclusion in the 1940s through a conjunction of forces. St. Paul City Planning commissioned yet another study of Capitol approach possibilities in 1944. The idea was to develop a Capitol approach which followed the general ideas outlined by Cass Gilbert without completely reconstructing the city street system. At just about the same time, planning began for federal interstate highways 35 and 94; the interchanges in the Capitol area would define the southern axis and boundary of the Capitol approach, in particular. Finally, newly available federal dollars would enable clearance and construction for both projects in the postwar period.

An article in the March 16, 1944 St. Paul Pioneer Press suggests just how interconnected all these plans were at the time.

Construction of a below grade express highway in front

of the State Capitol is being studied by the State Highway Department, it was disclosed Wednesday afternoon as the St. Paul Technical Committee on postwar planning received reports on proposed projects in the Capitol area....

A[n]... important phase of the development is still to be received by the committee. It is a plan for creation of a war memorial to be located near the Capitol, and to be part of a Capitol Approach plan.⁶

Within a few months of the new highway announcement, St. Paul City planning produced a public report on the war memorial and Capitol approach plan. This, too, was conceived in part as planning for postwar needs. The Planning Board had engaged the services of C.H. Johnston and Associates, well-known St. Paul architects who had designed the Minnesota Historical Society and State Office Buildings flanking the Capitol. In the words of the Report:

...They embrace proposed improvements in the grounds surrounding the Capitol that, in the main, have been urged by the citizens of the state at various intervals since the Capitol was completed and occupied...⁷

Clarence Johnston, Jr., Edward Nelson and Arthur Nichols produced a fan-shaped approach plan which terminated in a semi-circular boundary curve south of the Capitol. Future buildings on the mall were sited along the boundary avenues to the east, west and south of the State Capitol. They based their plan on several basic ideas. One was acceptance of Cass Gilbert's idea for radial avenues toward the St. Paul Cathedral to the west and along Cedar to the east. Another was abandonment of previously proposed suggestions for an approach axis that reached all the way through

downtown St. Paul and across the Mississippi River. Johnston and his collaborators assumed that the proposed freeway would likely be built south of the Capitol, between the approach area and downtown. And they submitted a plan which recognized the freeway as a southern boundary to the Capitol area.

As Johnston and his collaborators were preparing their report for the City Planning Board, Minnesota Governor Edward Thye was busy attending to related matters on a state level. In November of 1944, the Governor appointed a committee to consider plans for the same combination of Capitol approach and veterans memorial concerns that St. Paul already had under study. Thye asked the committee members to prepare a report for the legislature. This was what would come to be known as the State Veteran's Memorial Committee or the Capitol Approach Committee, chaired by Major General Ellard A. Walsh.

The new committee worked fast. Following an initial meeting with Governor Thye in December of 1944, the group had a printed report and recommendations, dated January 16, 1945, ready for the legislature within five weeks. The January 1945 report and recommendations were based on the plans St. Paul had commissioned from the Johnston team.

The culmination of the intense city and state attention to Capitol approach matters in the winter of 1944/45 was the creation of a Minnesota state commission which freely adapted ideas, approaches

) and personnel suggested by the city of St. Paul. The State Veterans Building Commission, chaired by the Governor and directed by Major General Ellard Walsh, was created by legislative statute in 1945. Its responsibilities were to oversee the design and construction of a Capitol Mall and Veterans Memorial. Costs for the project were estimated initially at approximately 4 million dollars - 2 million for the Capitol landscaping and 2 million for a Veterans Memorial Building. The Veterans building design and construction will be considered in the following chapter. For now, we'll remain on the mall.

) As one of its first acts, the Veterans Commission retained the firm of Morrell and Nichols, planners and landscape architects, to fully realize a design for the Capitol Approach. Arthur Nichols had been involved in the City of St. Paul mall commission with Clarence Johnston Jr. the previous year. The 1945 plan produced by Nichols and his associate George Nason called for clearance and development of 53 acres in approach boulevards and lawns. It also designated the sites for future government buildings to the west, east and south of the Capitol. In effect, the Nicholas-Nason plan established the basic design for the Capitol Approach as we see it today - broad avenues, spacious lawns, dignified but unobtrusive plantings.

) Years later, in a 1970 interview, then retired Arthur Nichols spoke about his ideas for the Capitol Mall and about Cass Gilbert's influence on his work for the approach. Nichols

compared the Capitol and another commission he "shared" across a generation with Gilbert at the University of Minnesota.

Gilbert first conceived the University Mall plan in the late 1890s and he also drafted a plan for the Capitol approach area both as he saw them at the turn of the century....

What I did was adapt these to the present...and here I would like to caution people who develop plans for cities or architectural areas... do not try to develop a master plan and say "this is it" and hope you have anticipated the future... Rather, work out site planning that is based on the present, but flexible enough to be changed as the future changes.⁸

Mr. Nichols also remembered legislators' response when he presented his ideas:

The legislators thought I was using up too much space.⁹

However, Nichols persevered

If I'm a crank about one thing, it's this idea that there must be space in any architectural plan... Sure, space costs money, but so does everything else...Lack of space is at the root of much of our social ills...When you pack buildings together, you cramp people...you create tensions and slums and ghettos. People need space. It means freedom and beauty.¹⁰

Arthur Nichols' flexible, pragmatic approach to the legacies of history and the as-yet-unknown needs of the future may explain his success with the Capitol approach. He was part of a collaboration that resolved an urban design problem of 50 years standing on the Minnesota's Capitol Mall. Many of the ideas proposed earlier had

been so ambitious and expensive as to inhibit action.

Clearing the Mall

The Capitol Approach mall was built on the spacious scale that Arthur Nichols had imagined, but it took longer to complete than anyone expected. The Veterans Commission had obtained title to virtually all the residential and commercial property in the Approach area by early 1948. However, the postwar housing shortage complicated relocation of area residents considerably. The negotiations concerning Trinity Lutheran Church, parochial school and parsonage at south and west of the Capitol were protracted as well.

Finding new housing

Several thousand people lived within the area to be cleared for the Capitol Approach and Veterans Memorial. It was primarily a working class neighborhood in the 1940s. The area was right on the bus route to South St. Paul; many residents worked in the stockyards there.

It became necessary to develop a guiding policy regarding relocation of area residents early in 1948. Work on the Approach had gone as far as it could go without actual demolition of buildings. The precipitating event was a January 1948 order to vacate selected premises in the Capitol area by May 3rd of the same year. Demolitions were scheduled through the spring, summer

) and fall to meet State Veteran Building Commission construction goals.

However, tenants of the area reported that they had no place to go. Most were on limited or fixed incomes, and it was difficult to located alternative housing at comparable rents or mortgage rates - especially as prices rose in the postwar years. St. Paul Dispatch reporter Gerald B. Smith visited the area in the first week of January 1948. His story, titled "Ordered Evicted by the State, Hundreds 'Hope for Time'," recounted the concerns of area residents. One of his informants was a retired cook who had worked at a neighborhood school for many years. Now crippled, she observed

)
I haven't left these rooms since I came home from the hospital two years ago...I just don't know who would take in an old lady like me.¹¹

Younger, able-bodied residents expressed the same fear:

This is our big problem now. What are we going to do if we are forced out?¹²

A landlady on Iglehart Avenue noted:

I thought there would be more time in view of the housing situation...I have just arranged to make a new apartment for a young couple that will be moving in on Friday.¹³

) Judging from Smith's story and others, which treated the collision

between the mall construction schedule and housing needs more generally, there was widespread feeling that dispossession was an unacceptable policy. St. Paul Mayor Delaney was quoted as saying:

Most of the people in the Capitol Approach area cannot afford high price housing...It is important that St. Paul find places for these people to live at prices they can pay - even if that means the new housing must be subsidized by the city, the state, or the federal government.¹⁴

Minnesota Governor Luther Youngdahl expressed a dual commitment to Capitol area residents and the new mall construction. This statement, made in January of 1948, is characteristic of his approach to the dilemma.

It is unwise to proceed now with any part of the work which would cause evictions or hardship upon people living in the area affected, but... we should proceed with that part of the work which would not affect housing accomodation of the people.¹⁵

Governor Youngdahl, who was chairman of the Capitol Approach Committee by virtue of his office, took the lead in orchestrating a cooperative modus operandi among the state, county and city agencies responsible for various aspects of mall construction and neighborhood relocation. A moratorium on relocations was declared, effective until May of 1949.

Relocation of area residents posed a problem for Capitol Approach construction through 1949 and 1950. Difficult negotiations with Trinity Lutheran Church continued into June of 1949; the principal

issue was fair market value of the church itself.¹⁶ New vacation and demolition orders in the summer of 1949 produced fresh protests to the St. Paul City Council, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners and the Governor's Office. A temporary solution was found, apparently agreeable to all concerned. The Veterans Commission, the State Housing Administrator and Clapp-Thomssen Company, which managed the property in the Approach area for the state, setup a short-term housing center on Cedar Street. This gave families shelter while new housing was found and permitted demolitions to proceed.¹⁷ Though the specifics are not clear, at least one more contretemps over Capital Area housing relocations and demolition occurred in the summer of 1950, inspiring Veterans Commission vice-chair General Walsh to publically threaten to abandonment of the project.¹⁸

However, people did continue to move out of the area. A July 1950 story in the St. Paul Dispatch noted that many families were eligible for veterans mortgage benefits, and were, in fact, heading for better quarters.¹⁹ The work proceeded without forced evictions.

By 1953, most of the demolition work for the Capitol Approach had been completed, and by 1954, the landscape Arthur Nichols had designed was a reality. Newspaper coverage shifts to a progress that everyone can see:

Visible progress is being made on the multi-million dollar project of removing the "screen of ugliness" from Minnesota's architecturally famous Capitol. ...For years the Capitol was almost hidden from sight by a blighted area of shacks and crumbling old structures. When [the] present project is completed, broad vistas, plazas and several new buildings will replace the old ugliness.²⁰

A considerable amount remained to be accomplished. The Veterans Building and additional office buildings would go up on the greensward, as would a new armory on Cedar Street between Twelfth and Columbus (1962). The City of St. Paul had much to do on its share of streets construction and widening for the Capitol Approach area. John Ireland Boulevard, linking the Capitol and the Cathedral was yet to come, as were other street projects to be coordinated with freeway construction. Though actual costs exceeded early estimates by several million dollars, there appeared to have been little question about the need for additional funds to complete the job as planned. Newspaper features and editorials such as "City's Capitol Approach Best in the US," "The Capitol Approach Must Be Completed," and "Old Dream Nears Reality" expressed strong support for the Capitol Mall throughout its construction.²¹

The Capitol Approach in Relation to the City

The city and the state set off a complex set of interactions when they joined forces to realize long-discussed ideas for the Capitol Mall in the mid-1940s. The close working relationship between the Veterans Commission and St. Paul City Planning continued. Others

developed with agencies such as Housing and Redevelopment, organized to administer newly available federal urban renewal dollars. St. Paul was one of the first cities in the country to seek and obtain urban renewal funds; this was, in part, to fund the costs of Capitol approach work.²²

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the work on the Capitol area was discussed increasingly as a component of broad redevelopment in St. Paul which included federal highway construction, the Mount Airy housing project, new hospital construction to the south and east of the Capitol and the Sears complex northwest of the Capitol.

The Automobile and the Mall

Newspaper coverage of the Capitol Approach changed in interesting ways during the 1950s. As the human story of families vs. bulldozers, which dominated Capitol construction news from 1948 to 1950, faded due to resolution of the relocation issues, the automobile began to occupy column inches that area residents formerly inhabited. The Veterans Commission and the City of St. Paul conducted a parking survey in 1951.²³ Parking lots became a subject, as in this 1953 story in the Minneapolis Tribune. The question was whether they ought to be built on the Capitol grounds.

Off and on there has been agitation - turned aside by the

Commission on esthetic grounds - in favor of building parking lots on the main grounds south of the Capitol building.²⁴

The Veterans Commission staved off the immediate threat. But there were more down the road. By 1954, three new parking lots accomodating 370 cars had, in fact, been built on the Capitol grounds.²⁵ It's easy to understand why cars and parking became a subject at this point in time. Car ownership skyrocketed in the post World War II years. In his study of the St. Paul-Minneapolis freeway, Alan Altshuler notes that Twin Cities auto registrations increased 58% between 1947 and 1950.²⁶

The automobile and its functions appeared in another guise at the edge of the Capitol complex in the late 1950s. Long-simmering debate about the routing of the federal interstate highways 35 and 94 through downtown St. Paul returned to public notice in 1958. The 1958 debate about freeway routing did not alter the configuration of the Capitol complex - nor of the highway itself. Johnston, Nelson, Nichols and Nason had prepared landscape designs around the plan which would, in fact, eventually be built. However, the issues which were raised in the highway debate would reappear a generation later in further planning and design for the Capitol complex and its relationship to downtown St. Paul. For that reason, it makes sense to explore the debate here.

Highway 35 Revisited

St. Paul city and state highway officials began planning for the federal interstate during World War II. As Alan Altshuler notes in his Twin Cities case study, The City Planning Process, the routes selected, to the west and south of the State Capitol, were essentially chosen by highway engineers using highway design criteria. There were public hearings and inter-agency discussions, but no economic studies or detailed social research of any sort was undertaken. George Herrold, St. Paul's longtime city engineer, a man whose training and professional culture were located in the Progressive, "city beautiful" tradition, objected to these automotive intrusions into the urban fabric when the routes were first proposed in the 1940s. However, Herrold was an octogenarian on the point of retirement at the time. His self-presentation in abundant memoranda suggests a cranky personality who may not have had the political skills to persuade opponents, as do the memories of his successors at St. Paul Planning.²⁷ The interstate routes were approved as originally proposed.

As it happened, Herrold and other freeway critics got a chance to restate their concerns in the 1950s. The fracas developed around the new Sears and Roebuck store in the "Western Redevelopment" parcel immediately north and west of the Capitol Approach area. This was a project of St. Paul and federal urban renewal, adjacent

to the Capitol Mall redevelopment. Downtown St. Paul merchants, concerned about a major retailer drawing business away from the central business district filed suit, alleging unfair competition via government subsidy of the redeveloped parcels. The downtown merchants also hired Victor Gruen Associates to evaluate alternative approaches to the proposed federal highway routes. Their fear here was that the highway would cut off state workers from downtown shopping.²⁸ Gruen came up with a northern route which looped around the Capitol in a beltway design, as distinct from the already approved design which cut through the southern edge of the Capitol complex.

Retired, but still active, planner George Herrold made his contributions to the renewed highway discussion through letters, memoranda and the newspapers. These Herroldian remarks appeared in a front page story in the St. Paul Dispatch on September 30, 1958.

We have excellent highway engineers versed in the economics of highway construction, moving dirt, of locating highways across country, around swamps, hills and lakes and through cut-over lands; but they are not versed in the economics of a city - what makes property values, what causes obsolescence, blight, and slums and what keeps customers coming into a retail district.²⁹

The disaffected were successful in getting a hearing for their ideas. The St. Paul City Planning staff produced a 9-page evaluation of the Gruen proposal. However, Herrold and the angry

merchants did not change policy. The Gruen proposal was criticized for "aim[ing] people away from the Central Business District."³⁰ Stating that

the Planning Board finds no factual basis for the Gruen argument that the State's proposed Freeway alignment creates a physical and psychological barrier between the State Capitol and downtown,

the St. Paul City Planning staff reaffirmed its support for the previously approved routes.³¹ Work commenced on the freeway in the early 1960s; the first section was opened in 1967. Reassessment of any physical and psychological barriers imposed by the freeway remained to be considered by another generation, as did George Herrold's concerns for technical decision-making concerning social matters.

A Note on Contemporary Interpretations of Past Planning

Looking backward, we tend to interpret the interstate federal highway system as supremely logical, prescient planning for a mass automobile culture, which we all participate in to some extent today. However, the origins of interstate highway planning predate widespread personal use of automobile almost entirely. The idea of an interconnected, nationwide highways system had its roots in World War I strategy and tactics. On the basis of that conflict, well-designed surface roads and multiple alternatives for long supply lines were believed to be critically important to

modern warfare. Planning for the roads was conducted throughout the 1920s and 1930s as a defense measure, though actual construction was deferred by the Depression and then the second World War. As a post World War II future could be imagined, large scale public works such as the national highways system were viewed as possible antidotes to a widely expected economic nosedive in peacetime. The Capitol Mall itself was seen as a possible component of "a postwar program designed to give employment to returning veterans."³² Prosperity materialized instead.

Chapter 3

Building Boom on the Mall:

New Quarters for Veterans, Highway Engineers
and State Office Workers

Four new buildings were constructed within the Capitol area during the 1950s and 1960s. The State Veterans Service Building was first to go up, followed by the Highway Department Building in 1958, the Centennial Building in 1960, the State Administration Building in 1966. All housed government agencies and services growing at an expansive rate in the postwar years.

The State Veterans Service Building:

A Living Memorial

The State Veterans Service Building, occupied in the spring of 1955, was the first new building to go up on Minnesota's Capitol Mall since the completion of the State Office Building in 1932. Preliminary planning for the Veterans building began before the war was over; this was accomplished through the activities of the State Veterans Memorial Committee, described in the previous chapter. In announcing appointment of an advisory committee (later formalized by statute), Governor Thye observed:

I have received hundreds of suggestions from all over the state that we start immediately to provide a fitting tribute to the veterans of World War II and all previous wars. While other states have taken action, nothing has been done in Minnesota....There can be no nobler form of postwar planning.¹

Committee members representing all areas of the state canvassed for memorial ideas and suggestions in the winter of 1944/1945. The press, veterans organizations and other likely organizations were contacted. Public hearings were conducted. In addition, a sub-committee was formed and empowered to "carefully analyze" proposed suggestions and prepare a "tentative draft...that best represent[ed] the views of the majority".²

The committee reported that

...our investigation makes it clear that sentiment now fails to support many heretofore accepted forms, viz: statutes, shafts, plazas, cenotaphs, concourses, rest areas, designated space in public buildings, the naming of memorial boulevards or parks, or services endowed in the public interest...citizens as well as veterans organizations, favor a utilitarian structure.³

What kind of utilitarian structure might be appropriate? The committee proposed a state war memorial in the form of a veterans service building on the Capitol grounds.

...Thinking in terms of veterans of World War II, obviously the greatest service to them...will be the provision of facilities...in connection with present and future benefits to which they are and will be entitled.⁴

Historically, the report reminded readers, state services and

facilities for veterans had been on the increase since the years following World War I. The proposed memorial building would unite social services now housed in rental quarters with office space, meeting rooms and program space for nationally recognized veterans organizations.⁵ Costs for the new Veterans Building were estimated at approximately 2 million dollars.

Governor Thye discussed the war memorial plans in a statewide radio address on March 29, 1945. At this point, the proposal suggested by General Walsh and the advisory committee had passed the Senate and was awaiting action in the House. Thye described the building as a "living memorial" and went on to observe that it could "meet as well the state's needs for an additional office building." Thye noted that the state was paying \$60,000 in rent to house eight different departments of state government in downtown St. Paul. The Governor expressed his hope that the "homeless" departments, which included Social Welfare and Veterans Affairs, could be housed near the State Capitol at greater convenience to returning soldiers as well as the general public.⁶

The idea and the phrase "living memorial" appeared in spring 1945 St. Paul newspaper stories as well as Governor Thye's speech and the Commission report. A wire service story published in the March 4th St. Paul Pioneer Press surveyed veteran memorial plans nationwide under the title "Living Memorials Favored." The author reported on parks, civic centers, an opera house and more, with

) the note that stadiums and sports arenas seemed to be the most commonly discussed projects.⁷ A second article in the Pioneer Press compared the San Francisco headquarters for the nascent United Nations organization, a World War I memorial building, to the concept under consideration for St. Paul.⁸

The Competition

) The State Veterans Service Building Commission was empowered to conduct a nationwide architectural competition - comparable to the 1893 competition which produced the Cass Gilbert design for the Minnesota Capitol. The usual rules of blind entry and judging, common to architectural competitions prevailed. The judges for the Veterans Building competition were: Leon Arnal from the architecture department, University of Minnesota; Harvey Wiley Corbett of New York and John W. Root of Holabird and Root, Chicago.

) The program for the competition emphasized the two-fold nature of the commission; applicants were asked to do justice to both the memorial and office functions of the proposed building. The site was fixed "to the south and on the axis"⁹ of the new Capitol Approach plan. Otherwise, the only exterior requirement was that of granite building material. The Commission gave competitors considerable latitude in the matter of style and aesthetics. Though requesting form and treatment harmonious to the general scheme and existing buildings, the competition document states:

...the harmony desired is not to be interpreted as meaning literal symmetry with such decorative details as the dome or the classic columns, cornices and other embellishments of the Capitol and its neighboring buildings. The Commission desires a building planned to function easily and effectively, endowed with aesthetic qualities befitting its two-fold purpose....¹⁰

Eighty-seven plans were submitted to the State Veterans Service Building Commission competition. W. Brooks Cavin Jr. of Washington, D.C. was announced the winner in October 1946. The St. Paul Dispatch announced the award under the headline "Modernistic Motif Emphasized in Prize-Winning Building Plan." This is how the Dispatch described Cavin's concept.

..."Modern" with wide-sweeping wings, with complete utilitarian design, with a severity of line and mass describes the plan submitted by W. Brooks Cavin Jr. of Washington, D.C.¹¹

Cavin's design was laid out in four components: an auditorium and museum to the east; an L-shaped one-story section to the west intended to house the state department of Veterans Affairs, a memorial plaza and reflecting pool in between these east/west elements and the completing unit, a long, narrow 3-story office space spanning the memorial plaza and connecting the east/west sections of the building.

Mr. Cavin relocated in the Twin Cities on the strength of the Veterans Service Commission and associated with Ingemann and

Bergstedt, Architects of St. Paul in fulfillment of the competition requirements that a successful out-of-town architect affiliate with a Minnesota firm. Though the Commission reported that a complete set of drawings, plans and specifications had been prepared and approved by 1949¹², the building was not actually begun until 1953-54.

And it took a long time to get the building built. Housing relocations, construction delays and increasing costs on the Capitol Mall contributed to the initial delays. Also, the State Legislature appropriated approximately one million, half the estimated cost, to realize Cavin's design. The west wing, center colonnade and memorial plaza were built first. The Department of Veteran Affairs moved into the partially completed building in April of 1955. The three-story addition and finishing work on the public spaces in the east wing were left to later.

The building opened to somewhat mixed reviews. The St. Paul Dispatch quoted officials to the effect that

[T]he practicability and beauty of the completed structure will make it one of the finest veteran buildings in the nation...¹³

At the same time, Rep. Clarence Langley, Red Wing, characterized the building as a "monstrosity" from the standpoint of utility¹⁴ though a beautiful monument to servicemen.¹⁵ The dim lighting of a

corridor and the proportion of office to conference space had inspired Langley's comments. In answer to Langley, architect Cavin took the occasion to urge completion of the design; that would make a "great difference in general composition." Governor Orville Freeman took a similar tack, requesting \$1,300,000 of the 1955 legislature to finish the Veterans Building.¹⁶

Though the reflecting pool, a memorial rose garden and public statuary were installed at the Veterans Building in the 1950s and 1960s, it would be almost 20 years before the connecting office section was constructed. Spanning a new era on the mall, the matter came before the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board in 1970. The CAAPB was the successor to the State Veterans Memorial Commission which administered the building competition Cavin had won in 1946. The connecting office section was authorized; the work was completed in 1973. The auditorium originally planned for the building has not been built to date.

The statuary and other art works commissioned for the Veterans Service Building were a special feature of Brooks Cavin's design. Though very much in keeping with the attention to fine arts in public places which distinguished Cass Gilbert and Elmer Garnsey's work on the Capitol building, the mid-20th century works created for the Veterans building were quite different in style and content from those up the hill. Four contemporary pieces were created for the Veterans Building. Two were exterior statues - a

bronze fountain piece entitled "The Promise of Youth" by sculptor Alonzo Hauser and a marble figure "Earthbound," the work of John K. Daniels. Painter Bernard Arnest executed a mural in the west lobby depicting modern combat conditions. Peter Dohmen designed a free-standing marble mosaic for the east lobby.

The "Promise of Youth," a naked figure at the center of the petalled fountain, created something of a stir at the Veterans Building Commission. Architect Brooks Cavin tells a marvelous story about the Commission's initial rejection of the work and its subsequent installation some years later.

When the competitions for the Veteran's Service Building showed a floral form in the reflecting pool, my thought was that in the morning the petals would open, the spray would come on, and at night they would close. And in the winter time they would stay closed in the dormant position. And so, I had planned, I think four works of art, so I searched out and made recommendations to the Commission artists for each one. And I learned about Alonzo Hauser, and talked with him. As we talked, immediately he said, well let's put a figure in it. Well, this makes it a work of art instead of just a mechanism. So he started making this small scale, first lots of sketches and then the seated figure that was attractive composition from any point of view, not just a front and back. And he planned these petals that would just enclose the figure in the dormant position. So he made a little clay model.

And at one of the meetings of the Commission, at the end of the agenda, when he called on me for this presentation. Hauser had arranged these petals so they would open; he had it sitting in a little basin and there were little pipettes all around it. He would raise a hot water bottle, and the spray would come on; they all thought this was fine. But there wasn't anything in the minutes about it, because it was after the meeting closed.

I then told Lonny Hauser to proceed with the full scale. So he made a full scale model, and at this point I thought it appropriate to bring the Chairman of the Commission out to see it. Well, he came out to Lonny's studio and he

stopped and said "absolutely not." I said "what is the matter" and he said "we will not have a naked woman there, if you change that to a kneeling soldier hurling some sort of weapon; that will be alright". Well, I was just shocked, because neither Lonny nor I had thought of it as the naked woman only as a lovely female figure. And I said "I'm sorry, General, but I must insist that this be brought before the Commission." Well, generals don't like to be talked to that way, I understand.

Anyway, at the next session, [we went] through the entire agenda, and the last item was this fountain figure, so he turned the meeting over to the Vice Chairman and he said "I move that the fountain be approved and the figure be disapproved." Ken Law said "Well, what is this all about?" He said, "We won't even discuss it - just vote." So it was voted down. Obviously, he had talked with enough members so that they were prepared to turn it down. I was really crushed. I was terribly dejected, and I think that shows in my notes of the record of the Veterans Service Building.

Anyway, I felt that time would resolve this. So I personally authorized Lonny to have it cast in bronze...I felt very strongly about this. ...And after a number of years the Chairman retired to Florida for health reasons, and another person was the Chair and I asked him if we could put the figure in place and let the Commission view it. I said there will be no press present, and I don't think they know what they have turned down. So he agreed to this. We put it in place, pushed the button and very slowly the petals opened up, the spray came on and he walked all around the pool, looked at it from every angle and says "This is lovely" and they reconvened and approved it.

But then, about two years, later a little man came into my office just fuming; he was from the State Treasurers Office. And I said "What's the trouble?" and he said "Well, you've co-mingled funds." I said "First of all, what does that mean?" And he said "you're mixing up private and state funds." "In what way?" He said, well, you submitted a statement for \$700 or whatever it was for the casting, and that was for private state funds going back to you privately, I said "Well, this was funds that I had advanced; had not put any interest or markup on it I was just getting reimbursed for what the state would have paid for this anyway. No, that's co-mingling. Well, anyway, it didn't go beyond that.¹⁸

More Offices Go Up On The Mall

Three more buildings rose within the Capitol complex in the next 10 years: the Highway building completed in 1958, the Centennial Office Building completed in 1960 and the State Administration Building of 1966. All were built in response to pressing need for governmental work space.

None is as well-documented as Brooks Cavin's design for the Veterans Building. Nor, frankly, is any as distinguished architecturally. The following entries summarize available information concerning the three office buildings.

The State Highway Building

Though the 1947 Legislature authorized acquisition of a building site for the new highway building, it was 1956 before construction began. The building occupies a site on John Ireland Boulevard immediately south of the State Office Building and west of the Capitol; this is in accordance with the Johnston-Morrell - Nichols-Nason site plans for the Capitol mall development. Completed in 1958 at a cost of eight million, the building was designed by Ellerbe and Company, St. Paul.

In addition to liberal use of specialized marbles throughout its interior, artworks depicting engineering activities and symbols

were commissioned for the public areas of the building. Approximately 2000 staff members working in 13 locations throughout the Twin Cities were united for the first time when the building was ready for occupancy. Highway or, as it is now known, the Transportation Building houses one of three cafeterias on the Capitol grounds used by state legislators, employees and visitors.

Originally planned to be six stories, two additional stories were authorized in 1957 to accomodate the expanding interstate highway program. Thereby, apparently, hangs a tale. Several encountered in the course of this research remember the dramatic, and later regretted, end of session vote in which the additional stories were authorized. Former Governor Elmer Andersen's account of the event appears in Chapter 4. Rodney N. Searle, who served in the Legislature from 1956-1980, remembered the construction of the Highway Building from another angle. In his recollection, the department never asked legislative permission to build the building; they had their own dedicated funds.¹⁷ Searle compared the Highway Department to the University of Minnesota in its semi-independent funding and relation to the Legislature.

The Centennial Office Building

Still more space was needed to shelter the state bureaucracy in the late 1950s. Taxation, education, conservation and public welfare were in need of new quarters. (Readers may remember

welfare as a potential tenant at Veterans; apparently there wasn't enough room in the uncompleted structure further south.) The Centennial building, authorized in 1958 and completed in 1960, was erected on the east side of the mall immediately south of the Minnesota Historical Society. The architects for the building, which slopes down the Cedar Street incline from four to six stories, were Thorshov and Cerny of Minneapolis. Like all the newer buildings on the Capitol Approach, it is faced with granite.

Though named in honor of Minnesota's territorial anniversary, 1858-1958, the notable story behind this building was its modern, forward-looking interior design. The entire interior was designed for internal flexibility; each floor had the same basic public areas, offices and conference spaces and utility hook-ups. All the office partitions were movable, enabling reorganization as necessary. This was a matter of some pride at the time, noted in official publications and the like.

There have been changes at Centennial in the interim. An impromptu tour of the building in October 1987 and talks with employees in the Minnesota Planning, Information and Taxation departments provided an update. The open floor plan is discernible throughout areas visited and is being preserved and updated in contemporary remodelling. However, at some undetermined, point in the past 20 years, many private offices and semi-permanent partitions were, in fact, put in. Much of the current work is a "restoration" of sorts.

State Administration Building

The State Administration Building at 50 Sherburne Avenue, north of the Capitol, was completed in 1966, Ellerbe of Minneapolis, architects of record. Very little documentation on this building has surfaced in the course of this research. Apart from its sheltering qualities and the fact that it occupies space in the Capitol district, the structure is somewhat peripheral to the concerns developed in this narrative.

Note: Little survives in the way of state documentation concerning 1950s and 1960s building construction on the mall, generally. George Iwan, Minnesota Department of Administration, says that truckloads of old records were carted out of the DOA offices between 1968 and 1972. Much of the description herein is based on a souvenir guidebook to the Capitol Area produced by the Department of Administration in 1963.

Conclusion

The final products of 15 years work on the State's "front yard" were a landscape design which spatially defined the southern approach to the Capitol and an orderly, aesthetic plan which was, in fact, honored in the construction of additional government buildings in the area. Since the new construction brought several

thousand state workers into the area over about 10 years, one can appreciate the possibilities for considerable chaos in the absence of this or another strategy.

The Mall and the buildings around its perimeters span several generations in terms of architectural taste, professional training, and construction dates. Arthur Nichols, one of the senior architects of the Mall, was a pivotal figure, pragmatically adapting the "city beautiful" ideas Cass Gilbert articulated early in the century and defining sites for buildings which would be designed in a different idiom. For Nichols, this was a late commission in a neo-classical career; for Cavin, Ellerbe, Thorshov and Cerny, these were early and mid-career works in the modern aesthetic.

Chapter 4

New Forms and New Problems

The late 1960s and early 1970s, the period following the construction of the new office buildings flanking the Capitol Approach, was a transitional time on the mall. Citizens and habitues took stock of the work that had been done under the Veterans Service Commission. Historical preservation joined urban renewal as a force in the area. The State Veterans Service Commission (also known as the Capitol Area or Approach Commission) disappeared entirely, to be replaced by a new body, the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission. The Minnesota Historical Society formally joined the Capitol oversight community as well; the players already included various legislative committees concerned with space and financial allocations, the Department of Administration staff, and, in a changing role, St. Paul City Planning.

Mixed Reviews for the Mall

The approach area lawns carved out in the 1950s have inspired sufficient affection that many legislators and state employees seem to question the need for further improvements, the 1985 landscape competition notwithstanding. Brooks Cavin's design for

the Veterans Service Building has been described as the "only recent building that approaches Gilbert's talent"¹ in the Capitol area. However, the Centennial and Highway Buildings have received harsher reviews. The Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota describes the Centennial Building as a "horizontal box"; the Highway building comes off as "the Corporate International style of the 1950s made monumental"². Built without the benefit of the national competitive processes which produced architectural designs for both the Capitol and the Veterans Service Building, the two newest additions to the mall didn't measure up to an evolving, though perhaps not explicitly stated, set of expectations about the area.

The Highway Building authorization offers an illustration of the issues and forces at work. The Minnesota Capitol Official Guide and History, published by the State Department of Administration in 1963, notes:

Originally planned as a six-story structure, rapid expansion of the Interstate freeway program begun in 1956 caused the 1957 Legislature to authorize an additional two stories, resulting in an eight-story structure with ground floor and three basement levels.³

This quiet, factual observation cloaks a dramatic end of session finesse on the part of the Highway Department and a lot of second thoughts in other quarters. The building is widely considered too tall for its site on the mall.

Elmer L. Andersen, then a Senator and a member of the finance committee, remembers how the legislative decision was made:

...It was in Building Committee at the very end of the session. And late one night when Mike Hoffmann [Commissioner of Highways] saw that it was going to go, it was going to be in the building bill, he came in and said 'you know, gentlemen, I have to tell you, it's just not adequate now....' The needs have so grown and complications in highway maintenance and so on. He gave a big spiel....'We need... more floors.' And no one, to our discredit - I was one of them - none of us raised the questions, well, is this going to be disproportionate? What is this going to do to the appearance of the mall? It was just dreadful no one thought of that....⁴

Another body had to be consulted about the additional stories to the Highway Building as well. That was the Veterans Service Building Commission, charged with responsibility for all mall construction during this period. However, Commission members were asked to consider the most basic site placement concerns only: was the Highway Building located with proper regard to the Nichols-Nason landscape plan for the Capitol Approach? The architectural qualities of this building, and later the Centennial building, were not reviewed.⁵

The results were generally acknowledged to be unhappy shortly following occupancy. Senator Gordon Rosenmeier of Little Falls, a senior legislator of the time, described the buildings as "atrocities" in 1968 hearings which were reported in the St. Paul newspapers.⁶

One consulting firm working on Capitol area design suggested demolition of both as early as 1969. The 1950s authorization process provoked some fundamental questions, too. Were the legislative committees and the Veteran Service Commission, as organized, up to this sort of challenge in architecture and politics? Did it matter that there hadn't been an architectural competition for Highway or the Centennial? Would the resulting buildings have been better designed and received? For those concerned about the decision-making process or the results, the products stood right across the mall, perennial reminders.

The "mall buildings" issues in the 1950s and early 1960s revolved around the problem of identifying and handling architectural or aesthetic questions in governmental decision-making. A related, but more purely political problem came up in the 1960s. Allegations of political patronage in the letting of state construction contracts were made in the 1966 general election campaign. The Capitol area work and expansion of public college and university facilities statewide accounted for millions of dollars in contracts in the 1950s and 1960s. The state's procedures for selecting architects and the extent to which campaign contributions may have factored into professional contracts were the issues of particular concern.⁷ Some observers, including St. Paul civic leader Pierce Butler, flatly alleged that there was a direct relationship between contributions and Capitol area contracts.⁸ The Democratic administration of Governor Karl

Rolvaag and the Walter F. Butler Construction Company of St. Paul were named specifically, though no wrongdoing was established.

The aesthetics of the 1950s construction and the politics of 1960s contracts both contributed to a widely shared sense that new measures might be in order for Capitol Area construction, in particular. A coalition including St. Paul Planning officials, lawyer Pierce Butler (a cousin to the construction company Butlers), MHS Director Russell Fridley and concerned legislators lobbied Governor Harold LeVander in 1967. They had a plan in hand. Motivated by the contemplation of his cousin's difficulties and the wind-down of the Veterans Service Commission as the mall and the Veterans Building were completed, Butler had sketched the outlines for a new public Commission with broad powers over planning, design and construction in the Capitol area. Somewhat to the surprise of Butler himself, the proposal passed in the extra session of the 1967 legislature. The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission was born.⁹

As outlined in the original legislation, the 7-member Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission was a successor to the State Veterans Building Commission. Its primary duties were:

- 1) to prepare, prescribe, and from time-to-time amend a comprehensive use plan for the Capitol area.
- 2) to secure by competitions, plans for any new public building.¹⁰

The governor was to appoint 3 members from the general public, as was the Mayor of St. Paul. In its first years, the governor chaired the commission; later, the chairmanship was transferred to the lieutenant governor.

The CAAPC spent its first year or so finding its way. There was considerable uncertainty concerning its role in relation to the various legislative oversight committees, the state Department of Administration and various other interested parties in and out of state government. Also, it took some time to figure out how to begin working on a comprehensive plan for the Capitol area. There was no history to guide Commission members beyond the mall landscape plans. What were the area's boundaries, its needs and its possibilities - in social, as well as geographic and architectural, terms?¹¹

Like most new creatures (of the state or otherwise), the CAAPC was tested in its infancy. Spring and summer of 1968 brought two particularly challenging events to the Commission's doorstep. The first was Governor Harold LeVander's proposal to close the Governor's Reception Room in the State Capitol to the general public. The second was a controversy over a gas station; the question - remember that the CAAPC was the product of years of struggle over unsightly commercial development within sight of the Capitol - was whether Shell could build a brand new station one block away. Both stories generated headlines. Corroborative

research - investigation of additional documentary sources and oral history interviews would be necessary to fully develop both examples, but here are the outlines. First history, then gas.

The Governor's Reception Room

Governor Harold LeVander (R 1967-1971) surprised many in March of 1968 by proposing that the ornate Governor's Reception Room in the Capitol be converted to a private office. The panelled room, hung with massive historical paintings commemorating events in European settlement of the region and Minnesotans' Civil War service, had been open to the public since the Capitol itself opened for business in 1905. St. Paul Dispatch reporter Bob Whereatt outlined the situation in a March 12th story headlined "Governor Needs More Space."

Governor Harold LeVander needs more office space and a private office that is centrally located to his staff, his press secretary said today in answer to questions about closing the ornate, historic reception room to the public.

The room with its expensive gold leaf ceiling, big glass chandeliers and historic paintings, would be taken over by the governor as his private office, according to recent plans...recommended by the state architect....

[The governor's press secretary] said nothing in the reception room would be changed or moved, with the exception of an oval mahogany table. That would be replaced with a larger, more functional table for large conferences.¹²

Though the conversion plan called for public access at lunchtime

) and whenever the governor was out of the office, response was swift and negative. In a letter to the Governor, Russell Fridley, director of the Minnesota Historical Society, protested that it was

an unwise and ill-advised decision....If any room in the Capitol has established itself as worthy of preservation for the enjoyment of the public, it is this one.¹³

Four members of the joint legislative committee on allocation of space within the Capitol went to the newspapers along with Fridley. State Senator Gordon Rosenmeier's remarks averred

a lack of understanding, a lack of good taste and a lack of humility on the part of this administration.¹⁴

) Robert Goff, a member of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission, planned to take the issue straight to the Commission.¹⁵ There was a potential for awkwardness here since Governor LeVander chaired the Commission, and he hadn't brought the matter before its members.

Every historic preservation effort has its benchmark - the destruction of the Metropolitan Building in Minneapolis in 1961, the saving of the old Federal Courts (now Landmark Center) in St. Paul in the 1970s. For the Capitol, it seems to have been the Governor's Reception Room in 1968. It brought people such as Goff, Fridley, and various legislators together across institutional lines, and in this case, they won their point.

Persons as diverse as present Governor Rudy Perpich, longtime Minnesota Historical Society director Russell Fridley, and civic leader Pierce Butler date the beginning of an historical sensibility regarding the Capitol to the Reception Room controversy.¹⁶

The Shell Station

A second controversy over public aesthetics within the Capitol precincts occurred in the summer of 1968. The issue was a proposed gas station at the corner of Rice and University, one block from the State Capitol. This time, Governor LeVander appears as a champion of planning and review. The Governor, titular head of the newly formed Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission, argued that no new building in the area should be permitted until the Commission had a chance to prepare a comprehensive master plan, as charged by the Legislature. In the absence of a current plan, Joseph Summers, corporation counsel for the City of St. Paul, could find no reason to deny the permit.¹⁷

Broadly speaking, the most important aspect of the story was probably public consideration of appropriate structures within a newly defined Capitol Area, which surrounded the Cass Gilbert structure on all sides. This 360° perspective marks a departure from the "south-up-the-slope" view of the Capitol from downtown St. Paul which had prevailed for so many years. However, the

intermediate level of discussion took other directions.

At the bottom of events in St. Paul in August 1968 was the basic interchange between Shell and the State of Minnesota concerning private property rights and public zoning prerogatives. 'We bought it, we paid for it; why can't we build on it as we choose? Your "ugly or inappropriate" is our "highly visible" - a necessity to our free enterprise business.' A Republican politician with a practical appreciation for mid-winter car starts suggested that Shell build a station 'harmonious' with its surroundings, and so on.¹⁸ The discussion was a classic of its kind. The general script has been a staple of community development since Rockefeller and Goodwin took on the historic district in Williamsburg Virginia in the 1930s. It's been hard to fit gas stations into such plans generally.

Plot line #2 developed around a state/city tiff concerning jurisdiction and policy in the Capitol area. St. Paul officials were still smarting about parking lots that had been put in on the mall in 1966. The state had requested the rezoning permits after the blacktop went on. What were they doing there in the first place? The city and the state had agreed to keep that particular section of the Capitol Approach in lawns.¹⁹ This was a "defacement" of the mall. Corporation Counsel Joseph Summers as much as said: who cares about a commercial structure in a commercial neighborhood west of the Capitol when the Capitol Area

Commission is falling down on its job in the front yard? Besides, if Governor LeVander hadn't been so slow to appoint Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission members, the group would be a lot closer to a zoning plan by now and this whole business might not have happened.²⁰

The St. Paul City Council considered the Shell station permit twice in August of 1968; they found for Shell both times. Deputized by the CAAPC to do all in his power to delay construction until a comprehensive plan was in place, Governor LeVander conducted at least part of his discussions with top Shell executives in the newspapers. Toward the end of the month, the State Highway Department came up with a traffic study of the Rice- University intersection as a precondition to any curb cuts for the gas station.²¹

In the end, the Shell station dropped out of the discussion entirely. It never did get built. However, it seems to have left a legacy. The CAAPC's 1970 master plan included some very specific zoning language for service stations in the University-Rice neighborhood.

Automobile servicing permitted provided such services are entirely within an enclosed structure.²²

The gas station incident could be described as a pragmatic success for the young CAAPC, but "rocky start" is probably more accurate.

This back-handed editorial in the St. Paul Dispatch neatly summarizes the issues and also the strong support which both St. Paul newspapers demonstrated for planning in this controversy.

God bless Shell Oil

While state and city governments have sat on their hands and made little effective effort to make a plan for development of the Capitol Approach area as well as the whole city of St. Paul, Shell Oil has gone ahead with plans to try to construct a gas station on the northeast corner of Rice Street and University Avenue.

And in so doing, Shell has finally moved the Governor and the city into a debate about just what in hell's going on in this town in terms of long range planning.

...attractive cities don't happen by accident.²³

Comprehensive Planning for the Capitol Area

The CAAPC, headed by Governor Harold LeVander and vice-chair Elmer L. Andersen, published its first comprehensive plan in 1970. While describing the Capitol area as "a vast improvement over the blight encountered in the area a mere twenty-six years ago," the Commission's report found much of concern.

Remaining blighted structures, incompatible land uses and unrestrained advertising rob the Capitol of the dignity befitting the governmental process.²⁴

The State office buildings were "visually disunified." The mall had become a set of "islands" designed to accomodate surface parking. Traffic was awful in the area. The Sears Roebuck complex to the west, Bethesda Hospital to the north, Ramsey County Hospital to the east plus surrounding residential and commercial

needed to be considered in relation to the Capitol.²⁵

The area described in this list of concerns surrounded the Capitol on all sides. On the city map, its boundaries were Jackson Street or the 35E expressway to the east, the Arch Penn expressway to the north, Marion Street to the west and the I-94 expressway to the south. The Commission's first approach was to analyze and zone the entire district, parcel by parcel. The area was divided into Design District "A", essentially the Capitol and the Approach area and Design "B", which took in the residential and commercial district north and west of the Capitol area. Permissible land uses, building requirements, landscaping and sign controls were stipulated throughout both areas.

The Commission also proposed a basic plan for overall development of the Capitol area. The plan included the depression of University Avenue immediately north of the Capitol, pedestrian access and park-like settings on the mall, the need for expanded Minnesota Historical Society and Judicial facilities - elements which remain constant in Capitol Area planning over the years. The plan noted perennial parking problems and the pressure on office space in and around the Capitol. Those were constant, as well, but these were more conditions to be resisted than dreams to be realized.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, CAAPB was deeply engaged in

) zoning and urban renewal plans for the residential and commercial area north of the Capitol. The Board's 1970 and 1975 comprehensive plans proposed ambitious residential and commercial redevelopment in Design District B based on a combination of wholesale clearance with some selective rehabilitation. It was very much in the "rebuild from the ground-up" tradition of the approach construction south of the Capitol in the 1950s in some respects. Like that work, the north Capitol plans were developed in collaboration with the St. Paul HRA and were dependent on the availability of leveraged federal funds. A 1974 plan for the area was budgeted at \$14 million dollars. Federal policies and allocations were receding in this area, however; it became tougher to put together the funding packages.

) Hometown critiques were on the rise, as well. On at least two occasions in 1970 and 1973, north Capitol area residents expressed their concerns about the consequences of neighborhood redevelopment and relocation to the CAAPB. On both occasions, Commission officials expressed reassurances. In a 1973 public meeting Rudy Perpich, then Lieutenant Governor and Commission chair, noted that "twenty years ago my parents were given \$500 and told to move off their property." He promised that it wouldn't happen in the Capitol area.²⁶ In December 1974, a lead editorial in the St. Paul Dispatch posed a series of questions in response to a then current CAAPB - St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority plan for the north Capitol area.

Is such an extensive renewal project necessary? Although the homes and apartments in the area are old, many appear to be well maintained. Is there any real justification for destroying all of them?

What will become of the people who live there? The project would require relocation of 103 families and 79 individuals. Is it possible for the HRA to find housing of comparable quality and convenience in a price range that these people can afford?

How will this project affect downtown St. Paul? One of the few benefits the city derives from having the Capitol is business for downtown stores, hotels, restaurants and bars. Is it sound economics to construct a self-contained business area adjacent to the Capitol?²⁷

Times were changing; these question hadn't been asked in the 1950s by the newspapers or area residents.

A Emerging Historical Perspective on the Capitol Area

Bit by bit, incident by incident, a new set of concerns was emerging in Capitol-area decision-making. The governor's Reception Room, the Shell gas station, well-maintained older homes - each in some way was about the relationship of the past to the present in a highly visible section of the city. While change is rarely neat and proportional, these new concerns in the 1960s and 1970s signalled a shift in focus within the community and the Capitol Commission. Preservation and rehabilitation began to rival large-scale redevelopment as an approach to the urban fabric generally and to St. Paul's Capitol area in particular.

Signs of this shift appear in the language of 1969 legislation

which strengthened and extended the CAAPB's powers. In addition to its comprehensive planning and architectural competition responsibilities, the Board was to:

- preserve the dignity and beauty of the Capitol and the buildings immediately adjacent to it;
- protect, enhance, and increase the open spaces within the Capitol area when deemed necessary
- establish a flexible framework...in keeping with the spirit of the original design²⁸

Another indicator of increasing historic awareness appeared in the late 1960s and early 1970s as well. That was the consultation and participation of the Minnesota Historical Society in Capitol area decision-making. As the historical qualities of Capitol area structures and decorative arts were increasingly recognized, Director Russell Fridley and his staff were asked to advise governmental groups charged with Capitol oversight. Fridley played a public role in the LeVander Reception Room set-to and was also active in the formation of the CAAPB. Fridley and Dean Myhr of the State Arts Board proposed a program of preservation and rehabilitation at the State Capitol in this period.²⁹ In 1972, Governor Wendell Anderson extended the Society's formal responsibility for art works at the Capitol to include the historic and architectural elements of all public areas in the building by executive order.³⁰

The Historical Society's profile rose for another reason, as well. The organization needed more space. The CAAPB's initial comprehensive planning responsibilities included provision for Minnesota Historical Society expansion on the Capitol Mall. Both aspects of the Society's role will be explored in the following chapters.

Chapter 5

Minnesota II: The Capitol Building Annex

One of the broadest and deepest paper trails across Minnesota's Mall concerns a 1970s building that didn't get built - Minnesota II, an underground annex to the Capitol. The basic ideas for the project developed out of CAAPB reports published in 1970 and 1974. Much of the Capitol Mall planning and politicking in the mid-to-and late 1970s revolved around the annex idea.

Planned for the lawn immediately south of the Capitol, the below-surface structure was to house legislative hearing facilities, historical exhibitions, a cafeteria and a parking ramp. The project went as far as a nationwide competition; the winning entry won a citation from Progressive Architecture as well as the jury's nod in Minnesota. Associated in many minds with the interests and political career of State Senator Nicholas Coleman (DFL-St. Paul), Minnesota II was a staple of Twin Cities newspaper coverage in its time. Though the Capitol Annex never went up (or more accurately down) planning and public response to the annex convey important ideas about the Mall and its uses.

The scrunch continues

As much of this narrative has suggested, those charged with oversight for interior space within the Capitol complex have been chronically preoccupied with the office needs of an expanding government; those responsible for the exterior landscape have been preoccupied with the availability and the aesthetics of automobile parking. In a sense, the proposed Capitol annex featuring legislative, parking and visitor facilities brought all these concerns together.

Minnesota II had its origins in discussions of a legislative office building that dated to the 1950s and 1960s. The Capitol Improvements Commission, a committee of the legislature, had considered the possibilities quite seriously in 1959 through 1961, though no action was taken. A second legislative group, the Legislative Building Committee, passed the issue on to the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission as part of the enabling statute in 1967.

The need for some sort of additional space seemed clear. Though occasional references to majority clout color newspaper accounts of the "space race" within the Capitol precincts,¹ severe crowding was largely a bi-partisan experience. Even the sub-basement of the Capitol became coveted territory by the late 1960s. St. Paul Dispatch reporter Robert Whereatt developed the theme humorously

in an August 1969 story.

Americans, it is said, have won the space race; they got to the moon first.

But the real test - the more earthly practical test - is: who will be the first to get to the sub-basement of the Minnesota State Capitol Building?

You can talk about your NASA, your Saturn rockets, your astronauts...[b]ut does all that get a guy office space? Does it give a state senator a place to sit? Does it give a legislator a desk and a file cabinet and a private telephone?²

The 1973 legislature appropriated \$100,000 toward a study of the government functions and facilities throughout the Capitol complex. The study, a project of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission, was conducted out of Lieutenant Governor (and CAAPC chair) Rudy Perpich's office. To no one's surprise, the Commission's final report, completed in 1974, characterized the workaday situation as a "space crisis"³ which "tends to disrupt the orderly functioning of state government."⁴ What was a little surprising was the reported willingness of Highway, Revenue and other administrative agencies to consider relocation outside the Capitol complex⁵. Apparently, the situation had reached such a pitch in some offices that minimal workplace comfort was now in competition with direct access to the legislature, constitutional officers and the governor.

The Commission report recommended creation of additional office space through either new Capitol area construction in conformance

with the comprehensive master plan or location of alternative office space at a greater distance. The Commission also emphasized the need for permanent, continuous planning for Minnesota government space and facilities, suggesting a new division within the Department of Administration for this purpose.

The idea of an "off-campus" office park near the Capitol received the most play upon release of the CAAPC report. Vice-chair Robert Goff was quoted late in 1973, suggesting that the St. Paul Union Depot might be an appropriate site for development and selective relocation of state offices,⁶ and there was some exploration of possibilities along those lines.

However, the idea that took hold over the next couple of years was for a Capitol area legislative office building. By 1974, the general concept for a new building in the Capitol area was well along. A legislative committee was appointed to work with the Department of Administration on guidelines for a CAAPB-administered architectural competition.

From the beginning, the annex was imagined as a multiple use building which would combine legislative, historical and visitor facilities in some fashion. However, the specifics changed in the course of discussion. For example, legislators devoted considerable attention to office space at an early stage of annex planning. Some of their ideas were quite expansive. A St. Paul

Dispatch story in April 1974 reported that:

Legislative space [in the proposed building] has astounded some observers. For example, the vice chairman of the Senate Rules Committee - not the chairman - would be given space for himself and seven staff members. Currently, he has only two staff members.⁷

Response to that sort of wishful thinking was severe; the legislators were accused of creating "a monument to themselves," "palaces" and the like.⁸

In (a limited) defense of the legislature, one can imagine that people who were doing the public's business without private telephones or desks in quarters acknowledged to be cramped and inconvenient might possibly have gone a little spooony when given the opportunity to plan new space. Also, the possibility of annual legislative sessions was a very much a part of the office building planning throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The growing press of business was harder and harder to handle in biennial sessions; extra sessions were becoming more frequent. If the legislature was crowded in its present arrangements and calendar, what would it be like to move to annual sessions? What kind of staff and facilities would be necessary under those circumstances?⁹ The formal authorization for annual legislative sessions was made in 1972, effective 1973-74. There was understandable concern about the implications in subsequent years.

As it worked out, legislative offices were not part of the final Capitol annex project. The legislature and other parties agreed to a "public facilities" plan for the building featuring legislative hearing rooms, historical exhibition space, cafeteria and parking. This was a proposal of Senate Majority Leader Nick Coleman; the general idea was to consolidate visitor services for the legislature and the Historical Society next door.

Three sites for the Capitol annex were considered. Plan A would have placed the building north of the Capitol, across University Avenue between Rice and Park streets. Plan B would have used the present-day site of Leif Erickson Park, west of the Capitol and north of the State Office Building. Plan C located the annex immediately south of the Capitol, underneath the lawn.

In the end, site C on the Capitol Mall was chosen. Additional research into verbatim committee and legislative session discussions is necessary to recover the structure of language and argument. But the outlines of the legislators' choices are fairly clear. In terms of intended uses, a building site immediately south of the Capitol and west of the Historical Society was perfect for the legislative hearing rooms/historical exhibits combination. Both "parent" buildings would have direct access to the annex. Staff and visitors could move about all three buildings easily in school field trips, research and business calls of various sorts. And, of course, there would be no damage or protrusion on the Capitol approach mall with an underground

structure. The mall and the approach vistas, generally, were seen as sacrosanct by many involved in the annex study process, and it wasn't just the southern Capitol vista that came in for protection. A 1975 study for the project advocated sub-surface building on a western site as well, arguing that construction in that location would alter "the current aesthetically pleasing relationship of the Capitol, State Office Building and Christ Church."¹⁰

The idea of underground

The idea for underground facilities on the Capitol Mall dates to 1969 at minimum. In April of that year, the St. Paul Dispatch reported on an Interpro Inc. presentation to the St. Paul City Planning Board. The firm was consulting with the Capitol Area Architectural Planning Commission, and was, apparently, making a courtesy presentation to the Planning Board. The centerpiece of their "very preliminary" scheme for mall renovations was an underground museum on the mall with a sizeable lake, connecting stream and possibly a pine forest. The Dispatch quoted Cliff Johnson, the presenting architect, as describing the late 1960s mall as a partially landscaped "wasteland" inadequate to the magnificence of Cass Gilbert's Capitol. Johnson went on to observe that

It [the mall] is two dimensional. It doesn't do anything for people who go there. Our job is to give people a reason to go there.¹¹

Many of the ideas reported in Interpro's 1969 Planning Board presentation reappear in its 1970 master plan for the CAAPC and subsequent mall discussion, including the suggestion that any construction south of the Capitol should be underground.

Response to the new legislative building: The First Wave

General response to the legislative building - especially the possible underground site south of the Capitol - was divided. While legislative and executive committees within the Capitol area continued to entertain options and make decisions, other legislators, citizens and the newspapers raised all manner of questions about new construction in the area. Governor Wendell Anderson acknowledged the need for additional facilities, but worried about the mall site.

I have some reservations about the mall area. It took 20 years to set up and protect that area.

I'd just as soon not mar the approach area...¹²

William Fallon, former executive secretary of the Capitol Approach Commission which was predecessor to the CAAPC, weighed in with a caveat about sand and utilities routing in the area; these factors had dissuaded Fallon and his colleagues from supporting an underground parking ramp on the mall in the 1950s.¹³

The new building was seen as a Democratic idea generally and a pet

project of Democratic Senate Majority leader Nick Coleman (DFL-St. Paul) in particular, so there was, not surprisingly, a partisan cast to the discussion. The GOP leadership couched its opposition in terms of competing social needs - better provision for the mentally ill, mentally retarded, imprisoned and Social Security recipients.¹⁴ This particular response deserves further research in legislative records. However, there were most definitely competing claims for state construction funds in terms of programs and geography. Any major construction in the Twin Cities had to be weighed against a statewide balance, generally. The competing element which has surfaced in this research so far was the continued expansion of University of Minnesota and statewide higher education facilities in the 1970s.¹⁵

There was Democratic dissension as well. In August of 1976, State Rep. Ray Kemp (DFL - St. Paul) suggested purchase of Mechanic Arts High School and cost effective remodelling there as an alternative to new construction. The school had recently graduated its last class, and Kemp was the first of several over the next few years, including Minnesota Historical Society staff, who would look to the school for additional space within the Capitol precincts. (The "Mechanics Arts option" endured until the school's demolition in the fall of 1987.) Kemp's 1976 proposal was effectively squelched within the CAAPC. The agency had commissioned a 1967 study evaluating the Mechanic Arts possibility; its reported findings were that new construction would run about the same as

) acquisition and renovation of the school.¹⁶

The St. Paul newspapers were not behind the idea for the legislative office building; they were especially critical of the underground aspect. Editorials such as "In the dugout,"¹⁷ "The Underground Palace",¹⁸ and "Coleman and the Mall,"¹⁹ which wished the senator the worst possible luck in his campaign for support among newspaper editors statewide, suggest the flavor of opposition at both major dailies in St. Paul. There was some interest in the Kemp Mechanics Arts proposal at both papers.²⁰ However, the initial cost estimates - in excess of \$20 million - and the generous provisions for legislative office space which were proposed in 1973-74 planning for the building apparently left an enduringly bad taste for the overall project.²¹

No equally passionate defenses of the Capitol annex plans appear in the public record for this period; that language (if it exists) is to be found in yet-to-be researched legislative and committee proceedings.

The Competition

) A national competition for the Minnesota II building design was initiated in the fall of 1976. Conducted by the CAAPB, it was the

first public building competition on the mall since Brooks Cavin won the Veterans Service Building award in 1946. In terms of range of possibilities discussed for the Capitol annex, the building specifications were a compromise. No legislative or staff offices were to be included in the annex; the Minnesota II competition conditions stipulated

legislative hearing rooms, Historical Society educational services and museum space, an auditorium, a cafeteria and parking.²²

However, the site was uncompromising in terms of public discussion; architectural competitors were instructed to plan a facility "under the mall in front of the State Capitol Building".²³

It's hard to locate the persistence of the underground idea with precision, especially given its unpopularity "off-campus." However, participants in the planning process such as former governor Elmer L. Andersen and retired legislator Rodney N. Searle, who was a member of the Legislative Building Commission, remember being impressed with a variety of below-surface designs they'd seen in fact-finding trips to Toronto, Sweden and elsewhere. As Andersen remembers the discussions, it was the lay members, not the architects, who initiated discussion of below surface facilities.

Also, these were the years in which energy crisis or awareness prompted people in northern temperate zones to think much more

directly about heat conservation; earth-sheltered buildings were among the most obvious possibilities to architects and citizens. In addition, there was at least one locally distinguished example of substantially below surface construction nearby - Meyers and Bennetts' award winning design for the bookstore at the University of Minnesota. Though the Pioneer Press identified the University bookstore as an example to be feared, that project did at least take on a similar set of problems in view of the Twin Cities community. Much of the construction was underground. And, like the Capitol complex plans, the University bookstore placed new construction within direct relation to historic structures; at the University, those were on the original campus quadrangle.²⁴

Finally, there is the power of an idea already stated. The Interpro consultants had suggested the idea of underground construction on the mall as early as 1969, and it had become a feature of CAAPB master planning. That seems to have framed discussion in some ways, though it is unlikely that the idea developed as initially intended. The Interpro architects and engineers proposed underground facilities in conjunction with high-profile above-ground landscaping on the mall; they saw the mall expanse as boring, essentially. Underground construction proponents in the 1970s invoked the idea to save that broad expanse of lawn, though other criticisms tend to mask that aspect of the debate.

261 entries were submitted to the Minnesota II competition. The design of Helmut Jahn, then a 37-year old architect with C.F. Murphy Associates in Chicago, was chosen by a jury which combined Minnesota citizens and legislators with nationally known architects and critics. The Jahn entry featured three underground levels for parking, a main floor and a mezzanine. Jahn proposed a terraced, below surface garden, covered with a walk-on glass skylight, as the central organizing space and connector between the annex and the Capitol proper. Jahn's ideas won wide praise among professional architects and designers for their simplicity, humane qualities and ecological sensitivity. His design concept won a citation in Progressive Architecture's annual awards for 1979.

However, public support for the annex remained low. The same March 1977 article which announced Jahn's winning entry in the St. Paul Pioneer Press noted that 59% of those queried about mall construction had opposed the idea.²⁵

Judging from the newspaper coverage, a second round of opposition had begun to mount as the competition finalists' models went on public display early in 1977. John Nichols, a grandson of Arthur Nichols who had designed the post World War II Capitol approach, formed a citizens group opposed to below surface construction in the area. The group pushed for an alternative site entirely, believing any disruption of the Capitol lawn inappropriate.²⁶

Writers of newspaper editorials and letters to the editor redoubled their efforts. Terms such as "monument builders"²⁷ "anti-Capitol bunker"²⁸ "bunker buncombe"²⁹ dominated the discourse.

A new concern entered public discussion of the Capitol annex plans following announcement of Helmut Jahn's architectural award. That was underground water. The general presence of underground water in the mall area had been known for years; it was a condition shared by much of downtown St. Paul. On the Capitol approach, the Highway Building had a regular pumping system to take care of the problem. A 1974 architectural and engineering study examining all three of the sites under construction for the Capitol annex had evaluated the groundwater situation; that report concluded that the water was not a prohibitive factor in site selection. Though state's Environmental Quality Council was satisfied with a 1977 presentation on water table planning and engineering for the Minnesota II design, critics were not. The shibboleth "underground river" entered the mall debate.³⁰

Within governmental circles, the building plan proceeded toward decision. The CAAPB approved the building design without dissent. The project was endorsed by Governor Perpich and by a joint legislative planning committee. But Minnesota II couldn't make it through the legislature.

The end came abruptly. After years of highly public planning and

debate, the underground building was tabled in the 1977 legislature. Senate Majority leader Nicholas Coleman withdrew the bill when the DFL majority in the House voted 2-1 against the project.

It was a thorough defeat. However, Coleman vowed at the time:

If I live a normal life span, I'll get to walk through it.³¹

And there were attempts to reintroduce the idea. In 1978, a well-developed campaign of community support for the building blossomed in St. Paul, presumably orchestrated by Senator Coleman, a public relations specialist in private life. The Chamber of Commerce, the building trades, the state AFL-CIO and central business district leaders endorsed the plan. An even-handed feature story in the Sunday Pioneer Press explored the history and the issues in the Capitol annex debate. Under the headline, "Bunker or Beauty? Mall plan alive," proponents of the building had a chance to restate space needs on the mall and to allay fears of the underground river, above-ground protrusions, dark interior spaces and a vegetative wasteland.³²

In 1979, there was a second boomlet for the mall design. This time, House Speaker Rod Searle (R-Waseca) joined Coleman in a bipartisan effort to revive a scaled-down version of the Jahn design. In the 1978 and 1979 revivals, the focus was more on

Minnesota Historical Society needs and less on the legislative space within the Capitol annex.³³

Neither flurry led to action. No champion for the Capitol annex emerged following chief proponent Nicholas Coleman's untimely death in 1981 at age 56. Renovation of the State Office Building in the 1980s took some of the pressure off the legislative space needs. Planning now in progress for Historical Society and Judiciary buildings in the Capitol area will provide still more workaday public space and amenities on the mall.

However, in historical terms, all of this is quite recent; neither the events nor the issues are necessarily fully resolved. Former Governor Elmer L. Andersen and Rep. Jim Rice, among others contacted for this research, flatly predict that such a building will be built in the foreseeable future.

Chapter 6

Restoring the Jewel

Minnesota's Capitol building inspired fundamental changes in the social and economic organization of its sector of St. Paul in the years following World War II. To meet its architectural magnificence, a residential and commercial neighborhood was cleared. A greensward and facilities for 9-to-5 state office workers replaced earlier uses on this patch of urban land. What was going on inside the building over the years? The interior work included some maintenance, some redecoration, and, in more recent years, historic preservation and restoration.

When asked about legislators' attitudes concerning the historic qualities of the building during his time in government - the 1940s-1950s and 1960s - former Governor Elmer L. Andersen made this assessment.

... I believe from the moment that building was built, it was a precious historic monument to lots of people...and that has been true all the way...

I don't think there are many legislators that haven't arranged to get up where the gold horses are and...the dome and to have a tour of it...

But the pressure of need and...getting work done

would lead some to...rationalize and compromise
and are not quite as historic preservation-minded
as to say it is wicked to do anything.¹

In this chapter, we'll take a look at changing attitudes towards the tastes of the past and the needs of the present at the Minnesota State Capitol.

Housekeeping

From the outside, few changes were discernible in the Capitol over the years since its construction. The immediate neighborhood changed a great deal. The completion of the Cathedral, construction of downtown St. Paul office and service buildings, the post World War II mall and modernity, the freeways—all contributed to a changed vista. However, there were no obvious additions or subtractions to the Cass Gilbert building perched on the slope overlooking downtown St. Paul.

Of course, things were changing behind the glittering horses of the Quadriga. Time, weather and sulphur-tinged air from the rail yards north of the Capitol were quietly staining and eroding the marble. Structural problems, especially in the area of the dome, had caused troublesome damage to walls, ceilings and paintings in the 1910s and 1920s. Refurbishments funded through the 1930s Works Progress Administration apparently contributed exquisite new stencil work in the east vestibule. These patterns are not in the style of Elmer A. Garnsey's originals, but they are such fine

examples of work of their own period that contemporary experts have suggested preservation. This may also have been when crude freehand repairs to rotunda decorations were made. At some unknown point in time, the stencilled ceiling of the first floor west vestibule was painted over with dark blue paint; the entire ground floor received a coat of "institutional green."

Most of these interior changes in the first half-century of the Capitol's life are undocumented and appear to be unselfconscious modernizations or repairs. However, at least one area of the Capitol, the Rathskeller cafeteria in the basement, came under repeated and highly specific attention. The songs stencilled around the cafeteria walls and arches were painted out in the anti-German sentiment of the World War I years. When restoration plans were announced for the Rathskeller mottoes in the 1930s, the Womens' Christian Temperance Union lobbied successfully for changes in language. "Better be tipsy than feverish" was changed to "temperance is a virtue of men." "Guided by thine own judgement indulge in wine and beer after thy fashion" became "guided by thine own judgement eat and drink after thy fashion." According to newspaper reports, Governor Theodore Christianson declined to order all the hymns to wine and beer on the Rathskeller walls bowdlerized. Perhaps his personal commitment to Prohibition was less than 100%?2 At a still later point, all the Rathskeller mottoes - wet and dry - were painted out.

By the time this study commences in the 1940s, legislative work space had spilled out into the public areas of the Capitol. Groupings of legislators' desks and secretarial pools had been set up throughout the second floor corridors and rotunda space. Since the legislature met every other year, permanent facilities seemed unnecessary, but a warren of temporary partitions and office arrangements existed throughout the 2nd and 3rd floors to serve statewide representatives without local offices. Former Governor Elmer L. Andersen remembers what it was like when he entered the Minnesota Senate in 1949:

There were rooms in which there might be four or five desks - each Senator having a desk, a rolltop desk or some kind of a desk. And there was a Senate pool. No one, well, I guess the chairmen of some committees had secretaries assigned to them, but those secretaries also worked in what was called the secretarial pool. I don't recall anybody that had a private office.

There certainly wasn't much in the way of facilities of any kind. When people would come up for a hearing of the committee, they just stood up. They would stand around the room. Oh, it was very inadequate. Sometimes, they just overflowed and would be out in the corridor. It's interesting, when you live under certain conditions, you just kind of expect that is the way conditions are supposed to be and you may object to them, but you don't think about what it would take to change them.³

The press quarters in the rotunda were among the more public makeshift arrangements in the building. Architect Brooks Cavin remembers that area about the same time.

I can remember my first impression of the interior of the Capitol. The press had taken over the second

level...There were plywood 4 x 8 sheets put up to create little cubicles for each newsperson. And that whole area was just filled with these little shacks.⁴

No photographs have been located of this scene as described; however, Cavin's words suggest ice-fishing houses scattered across the cool and gleaming marble floor.

From The Inside Looking Out

Seen from a 1980s perspective - in the midst of an historic preservation movement of which the Minnesota State Capitol is a part - the interior accretions that Anderson, Cavin and other sources describe call for reversal and restoration as soon as possible. They appear now as affronts to the building, though it is unlikely that any deliberate insult was intended by pre-restoration maintenance and legislative staffs. The Capitol was and is a working office building. Government services and needs for space have expanded throughout the 20th century.

While Elmer Andersen and others who frequented the Capitol in those years recognized the postwar office arrangements as unsightly, the record suggests that many took an alternative view. The official historic quality of the Capitol was located in its exterior facade. So long as that didn't change, the Cass Gilbert building was being respected. St. Paul Pioneer Press staff writer Richard E. Wanek put it this way in a January 1955 article commemorating the 50th birthday of Minnesota's State Capitol.

Except for furnishings, lighting and a few other concessions to modernization, the building is virtually unchanged today. Contemporary pictures of the Capitol at its opening look as though they could have been taken yesterday.⁵

The available pictorial record of the Minnesota Capitol supports this exterior emphasis. Hundreds of shots taken from the "southern approach" and aerial perspectives dominate the visual record, decade after decade. Comparatively speaking, there are relatively few interior views, though this changes somewhat in the 1960s and 1970s as a broader appreciation for the historic qualities of the building develops.

Especially significant interior spaces such as the Governor's reception room, the legislative assembly rooms, the rotunda and the Supreme Court retained their basic decor and many - though not all of their original - furnishings through these years. However, the language used in 1960s descriptions of the Governor's reception room suggests that, even in this deeply symbolic space, decent respect for historicism was colored by decidedly different contemporary tastes. A 1965 newspaper feature article which describes the reception room as "beautifully-ugly" notes:

Some [visitors] even move close to one or two of six large paintings adorning the room in order to see through glare so often reflected off the oil-painted surfaces.⁶

In this piece, the room is a backdrop or stage setting for human interest stories about the mechanics of the building and longtime

employees. The decor itself is not appreciated for its own sake. A 1968 article about Governor LeVander's office conversion plan for the reception room strikes a similar note.

The reception room is described by Capitol guides during tours, perhaps with some exaggeration, as "the most beautiful and ornate room in the building and one of the most beautiful and sumptuous rooms in any building in the world."⁷

Transition: Sweeping in the Old and the New

How did any kind of restoration effort get started under the circumstances described above? A mix of local and national developments influenced modernization and preservation activities within the Capitol of the late 1960s and 1970s. These ranged from state and national legislation concerning historic structures to new construction, daily politicking and everyday maintenance in St. Paul.

In terms of legislation, the U.S. Congress passed the Historic Preservation Act in 1966. This legislation expressed an emerging appreciation for historic structures nationwide, and it also established the framework for economic policies which would support rehabilitation of the already-built environment. In a nation that had been quick to tear down and rebuild, even before 20th century urban renewal policies, this appreciation for existing buildings stock marked a new departure. No building that loomed as large on this newly-recognized historic landscape as a

Cass Gilbert State Capitol was likely to be overlooked. On the state level, Minnesota's Historic Sites Act of 1965 had listed the Capitol and other sites as places of historic value. A local landmark became, in a sense, a national treasure.

On a more prosaic level, needed repairs to the Capitol building forced consideration of historic and housekeeping matters in these years. The list was long. The gold horses of the Quadriga needed repair; the legislative office arrangements that Elmer L. Andersen remembers had become impossible; the Supreme Court and the Senate chambers were looking shabby; the marble building facade was dirty; exterior statuary, interior paintings and stencilling were in need of repair. Also, the new Administration Building on Sherburne Street, 2 blocks north of the Capitol, was completed in 1968, which contributed to considerable moving about and jockeying for office space in this period.

The upshot was that a major reorganization within government coincided with major housekeeping for an historic structure. In terms of the Capitol, the immediate result was a cacaphony of competing interests, ideas and strategies regarding space and decor. For example, the Governor's Reception Room incident in the spring of 1968, discussed in Chapter 4, was partly about historic space and public access, and it was partly about whether Secretary of State Joseph Donavon and other constitutional officers would remain in the Capitol or relocate at a greater distance. As it happened, the Secretary of State's office was moved to the State

Office Building and the governor's staff expanded into the additional space.⁸

In their joint memorandum on preservation and rehabilitation of the State Capitol of 1969, co-authors Russell Fridley of the Minnesota Historical Society and Dean Myhr of the State Arts Council struck the public access note as well. All of their suggestions regarding decorative arts within the historic chambers and corridors of the Capitol were couched in terms of public interest and visitation. They took on the rotunda press area facilities, still an eyesore, as well.

Press Area. This area needs a great deal of attention. We appreciate the problems regarding the non-availability of space. However, the plywood walls that encase the press area, and the existence of anybody occupying that area...completely eliminates the original purpose of that area - an access to the open terrace in the front by the Capitol building. It furthermore reduces almost all of the natural light into that area of the Capitol...is there a possibility...of designing some type of portable units for the press...that could be kept there while the legislature is in session, but taken out for the other 19 months while the legislature is not in session?⁹

The legislative committees overseeing Capitol remodeling in this period considered everything from the perennial press problem to computer space, air-conditioning and the restoration of carriage entrances. The contracts let for work on the Capitol in the late 1960s and early 1970s fall into three broad areas: general remodeling of offices and work space; remodeling and redecoration of historic interiors and carefully researched restorations of the building fabric and of some art work.

Additional research is necessary into the particulars of the remodeling and redecoration contracts. However, it appears that one set of contracts (done by Toltz, Hall, DuVall and King 1968-) concerned general remodeling and building operations - air-conditioning and heating systems, replacement of all the windows throughout the Capitol, and considerable work on office space throughout the building. These were the "space race" years mentioned in the previous chapter. New office space was created throughout the Capitol basement. Many existing offices were substantially renovated - both in the body of the structure and in public corridors which had been pressed into use over the years. Those records which are available suggest some giving with one hand and taking with the other. For example, while some public corridors in the north and east wings were further entrenched as private office space, others were restored to public use.¹⁰

A second set of contracts were let for repairs and redecoration in the Supreme Court and the Senate Chambers. The elaborately researched fabric and paint matching techniques we might take for granted today were not employed; these were not yet commonly done. However, there is a genuine concern for historic forms in accomplishing the work. A 1972 report from architect Brooks Cavin to Minnesota Historical Society director Russell Fridley conveys the prevailing approach to historic evidence and contemporary tastes.

...It is my judgement that the general lighting scheme,

the color scheme, and the relocation of the voting panels and the page wall panels has [sic] been very thoughtfully worked out and is consistent with the original work in so far as can be determined from early pictures and descriptions.¹¹

Cavin was writing as an official, though unpaid, consultant. Governor Wendell Anderson had given the Minnesota Historical Society review powers over Capitol renovations earlier in the year. Cavin served as an advisor to the Society in these matters, working with state officials and contractors.

The third area of work in the Capitol during these years was for literal restoration of historic materials - the marble and granite facade and art works throughout the building. Brooks Cavin, architect of the modern Veterans Service Building south of the Capitol, received the first restoration contract - to repair and conserve the exterior of the building - in 1974. In the years since the 1946 design competition, he had become involved in historic restorations for the Minnesota Historical Society, the City of St. Paul and other clients in addition to contemporary design commissions.

As Cavin remembers it, loss of an arm triggered the entire exterior restoration project.

One of the legislators was outside the Capitol Building when this thump occurred about 20 feet from him. The arm of the figure overhead had broken off. I was asked to come up and see about that. There were some thoughts that a sonic boom had done it, all sorts of things like that. My hunch is that probably one of the high school kids on the tour had broken away from the group and had

climbed down and stepped on this arm and broken off. Because, it was more than 3-inch diameter, and it was a clean break.¹²

A broken arm may have been the precipitating event, but once people looked up, much more damage was apparent. The face of the figure in the keystone arch at the main entrance to the Capitol was eroded beyond recognition. The figure "Wisdom" had lost her right hand and much of her splendid definition. The entire statue was pitted and coarse. The statues were taken down, cleaned and repaired in the workshops of St. Paul Statuary; missing parts were replaced and restored as necessary.

At the time of the Capitol masonry work, restoration techniques were relatively new to all involved. Cavin consulted with half a dozen managers of similar public buildings in Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore, and Atlanta before treating the marble and granite facade of Minnesota's Capitol. He also brought in a consulting engineer from Vermont for a point-by-point analysis of the Capitol's condition.¹³

When asked in 1987 about the restoration techniques employed at the Capitol in the 1970s, Cavin observed,

At that time, there was very little known about the appropriate way to clean marble buildings...marble is porous and if you use acid on that, it would get into the pores of the marble and continue to work slowly, and the surface would deteriorate rather rapidly...so we tried use of steam, tried the use of some detergents and they didn't do, really, anything. So, the secret, it's almost too simple, just to soak it thoroughly and then, use a moderate

spray or pressure spray.¹⁴

Cavin also supervised restoration of interior artwork at the Capitol in the late 1970s. There again, part of the challenge was to figure out an approach without some of the tools or knowledge which have developed in the intervening years. In the absence of the color analysis techniques now available, the artisans working with Cavin had to exercise cautious judgment in the restoration of stencil work throughout the first floor corridors. An entire passageway had been painted over a solid blue, covering over Elmer Garnsey's elaborate stencil work. The need to remove the blue "overcoat" was clear enough, but how to know when to stop? If the restoration staff went too far, they'd take the 1905 color coat beyond the shade applied and, possibly beyond recovery of the stencil for new patterns.

Materials which were originally used, but are no longer considered safe or appropriate posed problems as well. For instance, literal restoration of the Minnesota Capitol interiors would employ lead paint. Though these paint formulas were certainly used by Cass Gilbert and Elmer Garnsey in the original decor of the building, they are no longer acceptable for health reasons.¹⁵

Everything seemed to be happening at once in the Capitol repairs, renovations and restorations of the 1960s and 1970s. At one end of the spectrum, one can see historic preservation procedures and outlooks developing. Cavin and others were applying conservation

and restoration techniques as the preservation of public buildings was getting started nationwide. Longstanding difficulties of turf and aesthetics such as the press corps' shantytown in the Capitol rotunda were resolved. That area was cleared, and the press moved to renovated quarters in the Capitol basement in 1971. Many of the Legislators serving on the joint subcommittee on Capitol remodeling became quite involved in the restoration aspects. This exchange occurred in a 1970 meeting of the committee:

Rep. Dirlam: Plywood city on the third floor has
come out during this interim.

Chairman Dosland: I was up on the third floor today
and looked around...It really is
beautiful....¹⁷

At the other extreme, many of the last "modernizations" were being installed in public areas of the building in the same years. It was the last gasp of a sensibility which appropriated public corridors for secretarial pools, closets for offices and bricked up marble arches for storerooms.¹⁸ The purpose was to keep as much of state government as possible in the building. Neither the demands of government nor those of the building were well-served.

The legislature's acceptance of auxiliary space elsewhere and the growing interest in historic preservation within and without government have freed the Capitol to become public space again. The restoration initiatives begun in the 1970s have become increasingly standard procedures in the 1980s. The Minnesota Historical Society coordinates a long-established public tour

program in the Capitol. As of the mid-1980s, its staff researches all aspects of the artistic and architectural history of the structure. The MHS, the CAAPB, the Department of Administration and legislative committees share authority and responsibility for aesthetic and working operations throughout the building. (Note: This group's cooperation on interior restorations is limited to the Capitol building at present.) As of 1984, the Capitol has a restoration architect - Foster Dunwiddie of Minneapolis. A preservation and planning study prepared at Miller Dunwiddie Associates in 1984 is the blueprint for sustained work, the first overall plan of its kind for the Cass Gilbert Capitol.

Governor Rudy Perpich announced a commitment to fully restore the public areas of the Capitol in September 1984. At the time, Perpich characterized the building as "Minnesota's most important symbol, and one of the state's most beautiful buildings." But, he observed, "its beauty has been marred over the years by structural changes, especially interior changes."¹⁹ Much of the renaissance within the building is due to Governor Perpich's support. Historically, no other Minnesota governor is associated with the Capitol building and its environs to such an extent. Under his administration, major repairs have been made; a paint analysis has been instituted throughout the building; the Governor's Office has been fully restored; the west side of the grand hall on the ground floor has been cleared of partitions and offices. Interestingly, the Governor himself sometimes doesn't care for the results of

painstaking research into past practices. In a 1987 interview, while showing a visitor the restoration of the Governor's private office adjacent to the better known reception room, Perpich observed:

This room is now back to - Everything in it is back to 1904, including this desk, John Johnson's desk....

Compared to what it was when I walked in here, it's fantastic. I don't care for the color [of the walls], but that was the original color, and I wanted everything original.²⁰

The Governor's conviction that restoring the wall color to conform with the original is more important than personal taste marks a very clear departure from pre-restoration thinking at the Capitol.

Chapter 7

Second Building Boom on the Mall:

New Historical Society, Judicial and Landscape Plans

The Capitol grounds were a quiet place for several years following the underground building controversy. One suspects that both actors and observers needed time to recuperate from the fracas over Minnesota's front lawn. The Capitol building itself came in for increased attention following the annex controversy. These were the years of the exterior marble cleaning, repair and restoration of artwork and the beginnings of carefully documented restorations throughout the public areas of the building.

The possibility of new construction on the mall reentered public discussion around 1983. In the words of CAAPB executive secretary Gary Grefenberg:

For eight years there has been hardly any movement at all. Now everything is bubbling to the surface.¹

Grefenberg's remarks appeared in a November 1983 feature article detailing plans for: new landscaping on the mall, new designs for freeway bridges linking the Capitol area and downtown St. Paul, renovation of the State Office Building, and new facilities for the Minnesota Historical Society and state judiciary.

Each of these projects followed, in some fashion or another, on earlier events and planning for the area over the past generation. And each except the State Office renovations was addressed in a series of three new national architectural competitions on the mall in the 1980s. The competitions, administered by the CAAPB between 1984 and 1986, resulted in awards for expanded Minnesota Judicial facilities east of the Capitol on the site of the present Minnesota Historical Society, an entirely new Minnesota History Center south and west of the Capitol Approach area, and redesign of the mall.

As the outcome suggests, circumstances of the 1980s competitions were complex, largely because of siting questions. Over the years the logical, especially desirable sites on and adjacent to the mall had been taken. Once the legislature agreed to construct new facilities for both the Historical Society and the judiciary, it became a challenge to locate the buildings satisfactorily within the government complex. Legislative, planning, historical and judicial personnel held widely differing views on preferred sites. A welter of solutions was proposed and widely reported.

The 1980s competition are current events, not yet history. The dust has barely settled, and any fully rounded perspective on these matters is some years off. However, the general outlines of the second building boom on the mall are clearly discernible. The Minnesota Historical Society's plans for new construction set things off.

Minnesota Historical Society

As the Society's inclusion in the 1970s Capitol annex plan suggests, the need for expanded Historical Society facilities had been recognized for some time. The Historical Society moved from its State Capitol quarters to an entirely new building across the street at Cedar and Aurora in 1917, and it kept acquiring new responsibilities and collections throughout the 20th century. By the 1960s, an addition had been built to the rear of the Cedar Street headquarters to house the burgeoning stacks for reference library holdings. A warehouse several miles east of the Capitol area had been purchased to house the special collections - manuscripts and archival materials, artifacts of all sorts. Quite apart from the acquisition and development of new sites such as Ft. Snelling statewide, core staff and the Society's basic holdings were dispersed among several locations in the Twin Cities. To cap it all off, there was very little room in the 1917 building, originally planned as a library and archive, to put up exhibits and display objects of public interest. Capitol Area Architectural Planning Commission member Robert Goff put it emphatically in a 1968 meeting, saying that the museum

stinks as it is now. It's less than negative - it's a virtual waste of time to take children through as it is now.²

Goff's blunt remarks were delivered in a meeting about possible remedies, and he emphasized that he did not hold the Society

responsible for its constricted quarters.

The general possibility of additional Historical Society facilities on the Capitol mall was a feature of the earliest master planning done for the area. Interpro's 1970 Comprehensive Plan for the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Commission included the following:

The conceptual design of [the mall] should strengthen the south vistas to and from the capitol building and provide for the involvement of people in a culturally related way...A future history center providing for the display of Minnesota artifacts would be a feature compatible with this concept and one worthy of further study.³

In consultation with the CAAPB and the legislature, the Society developed a general plan for its own expansion. This was based on continued occupancy of the Cedar Street building plus takeover of the Mechanics Arts High School site next door. The Clarence Johnston Sr. building was generally acknowledged to be one of the finest structures on the Capitol mall, and there was room to expand in the same block. Society staff lobbied successfully for this general plan, and, by early 1984, a national architectural competition administered by the CAAPB was in process for renovations and new construction immediately behind the Cedar street building. Costs for the new Historical Society facilities were estimated at approximately \$34 million.⁴

A legislative subcommittee reviewing documents for another major

project on the mall - a new judicial department complex which would unify a state court system spread out among seven locations in St. Paul - redirected both projects.

Enter the jurists

Essentially, a House subcommittee on Appropriations, chaired by Phyllis Kahn (DFL-Minneapolis), threw the Historical Society and the judiciary into competition with one another for a place on the mall. The subcommittee had been reviewing site selection documents prepared for the new judiciary building, on a parallel track to the MHS expansion.

The court's architectural consultants, Leonard Parker and Associates, had examined 13 possible sites for a new judiciary building in the Capitol area. Their study indicated that, had the site been available, the MHS location would have received the highest rating possible. As it was, the Chief Justice Amdahl and many others favored Cass Gilbert Park, northeast of the Capitol, of the available options. Kahn's legislative subcommittee took a somewhat surprising step and declared the site occupied by the MHS available for discussion at the very least.

The legislators' action set in motion a chain of events that interrupted a national design competition already in progress, led to dramatic and widely reported negotiations among state and city officials over several months' time and ultimately forced

relocation outside the Capitol Mall upon the Minnesota Historical Society.

The Minnesota Court system was just as hard-pressed as the Historical Society, and its claim to mall space in the Capitol area master plans was as long-standing.⁵ The legal workload had been increasing exponentially, just as all other government functions had, in the post World War II years. Minnesota jurists put out a series of feelers throughout those years. Chief Justice Charles Loring got front page attention in the August 12, 1952 St. Paul Dispatch when he raised the issue of expanded court facilities, but it didn't lead to action in his time.⁶

Present Supreme Court Associate Justice Lawrence R. Yetka described several other explorations in a 1985 article on the judiciary's search for quarters for The Hennepin Lawyer.⁷ At one point following World War II, Yetka, then a state legislator, remembers exploring the possibilities for new judicial facilities south of the Capitol; the veterans had the site sewed up, as it happened. Yetka's colleagues in this trial balloon were Peter Popovich and D. D. Wozniak, both of whom are judges now, as well. Yetka also chronicled the revival of discussions concerning new facilities under Chief Justice Oscar Knutson in the late 1960s and the appropriation of planning money in the early 1970s. In Yetka's account, the inability to find a satisfactory balance between continued use of the historic Supreme Court chambers in

the Capitol and new facilities elsewhere scotched the 1970s initiative.⁸

In the absence of any new centralized facilities, the courts leased space at nearby William Mitchell School of Law and various downtown St. Paul locations. The law library was split between Capitol chambers and renovated space on University Avenue. However, the effects of 1977 judicial reorganization in Minnesota and the insertion, in 1983, of an appellate review system in between the existing county and Supreme Court(s) made expanded facilities imperative. 'Makeshift' couldn't be made to work any longer.

The argument ensues

The grand question 'who got to be where on the mall?' was worked out in widely reported negotiations throughout the spring of 1984. As one interested bystander observed, the initial proposal to evict the Historical Society "was kind of shocking".⁹ At the outset, the courts professed to be no more interested in occupying 690 Cedar Street than the Historical Society was in leaving it. The justices and the Society had, in fact, coordinated signals concerning their respective expansion plans prior to announcement of the MHS design competition. The judiciary had just gone through the process of selecting their own preferred site north of the Capitol, and the Society's building didn't seem right for

their needs.

In the ensuing discussion, Mayor George Latimer of St. Paul pushed for a downtown History Center site. The Historical Society threatened to move to Ft. Snelling. Governor Rudy Perpich was on record as favoring a resolution which would leave the Historical Society in place on Cedar Street and provide new facilities for the Judiciary north of the Capitol. A compromise along those lines was worked out late in March. However, the Legislature wouldn't go for it. The Judiciary got the Cedar street site, and, after over a year of study, the Historical Society selected the old Miller Hospital site at 10th and Summit, just south and west of the Capitol Approach, for its new building.¹⁰

Much of the 1984 relocation discussions occurred in the context of the Capitol Area master plans. 'Here's the plan; here are the sites in which building construction is even imagined to be possible; where can these two buildings go?' For instance, adherence to the plan prevented either the courts or the Society from building on the site of Cass Gilbert Park, which was the first or second choice for both organizations. The judiciary wanted it initially and was forced, in a sense, to accept the MHS site. The Minnesota Historical Society saw the promontory northeast of the Capitol as its most attractive possibility once the need to move was established. That plan was blocked by the governor and CAAPB, who were committed to open space and non-competitive building heights immediately adjacent to the Capitol.¹¹

There was an intellectual side to this discussion; it wasn't all mapwaving. Two arguments were offered in support of the courts' occupancy of 690 Cedar. David Bishop (IR - Rochester) led the drive to evict the Historical Society citing the idea the Capitol ought to be flanked by legislative and judicial buildings. In his estimation, this was an opportunity to arrange a "perfect symmetry" of governmental functions located in the neoclassical State Office and Minnesota Historical Society buildings.¹² Associate Justice Lawrence Yetka developed the second - the assertion that the Minnesota Historical Society was originally planned as a judicial facility and was simply returning to its ordained function. The primary sources need to be consulted, but this appears to be a resuscitation of accurate historical information by Yetka, and possibly Popovich and Wozniak, which simply had had no utility for many years.¹³

The building design awards

In the end, Minneapolis architects Hammel, Green and Abrahamson won a reorganized design competition for Minnesota Historical Society facilities on the Miller Hospital site. In their design, the core collections and programs of the Historical Society will be united in one complex which features galleries, teaching and research centers, and a central plaza. A second Minneapolis firm, Leonard Parker and Associates, won the Judiciary competition with a design which adds a semi-circular office building and courtyard

to the existing structure at 690 Cedar Street. Both designs have well-received.¹⁴ There's a certain symmetry to the Parker award since that firm's consulting report on possible sites for the Minnesota Judiciary Building set the House Appropriations Subcommittee and much else in motion. Both designs are now in planning stages.

The 1986 landscape competition

The third of the ambitious 1980s projects on the Capitol mall was an international competition for complete redesign of the area. The project had its origins in the Governor's commitment to the Cass Gilbert Capitol and the CAAPB's charge to protect and enhance the Approach grounds. Forty years after the Nichols-Nason plan, a fresh look on the mall seemed to be in order. In addition, the freeways at the southern boundary of the Capitol Approach were generally acknowledged to need special attention; the "concrete river" really had separated the Capitol and downtown St. Paul, as postwar critics had predicted. It was left to a succeeding generation to devise solutions.

Background

The CAAPB inherited its landscape design responsibilities directly from the State Veterans Service (a.k.a. the Capitol Area Improvements) Commission, which oversaw design and construction of

the Capitol Approach and the Veterans Service Building in the 1940s and 1950s. The same Minnesota law that created the CAAPB dissolved the earlier commission and transmitted a general responsibility for the Capitol Approach to the new agency.¹⁵ Subsequent legislation has strengthened the initial charge considerably.

The CAAPB paid close attention to the mall and other open space in its master plans and project activities. The statutory charge to:

preserve the dignity, beauty and architectural integrity of the...Capitol grounds

and to

protect, enhance and increase the open spaces within the Capitol area¹⁶

formed a backbone of the CAAPB program.

Minnesota's "front lawn" was never overshadowed by other responsibilities for early zoning work, urban renewal plans in the north Capitol area, the building competitions and Capitol renovations.

In the 1970s, the Board oversaw the construction of Leif Erickson Park, immediately north of the State Office Building and west of the Capitol. Cass Gilbert Park, north and east of the Capitol, was constructed in the same period. Streets throughout the Capitol area were closed to provide more green space, more extended pedestrian walks and less unsightly surface parking.

Iglehart Avenue plus portions of Wabasha and Aurora were vacated in the 1970s. Between 1983 and 1987, additional street closings have occurred: East and West Park streets (1983); additional sections of Wabasha (1983) and Aurora (1987), Fuller Avenue between Rice and Park streets (1985), Columbus Avenue in front of the Veterans Service Building (1987).¹⁷ The Centennial parking ramp went up in 1974, to house some of the autos evicted from the disappearing mall streets.

Landscape design - pure and applied - is omnipresent in the CAAPB records and reports, as well. The Board's consultants worked up various plans over the years. Interpro Inc. started the ball rolling in 1969 with a proposal which included an underground museum, a pine forest and possible razing of the Centennial and Highway buildings.¹⁸ Landscape architect Dan Kiley of Vermont suggested a series of ideas for the mall in his consulting relationship to the Board. At one point in the 1980s, graduate students at the University of Minnesota used the Capitol Approach as a design practicum.¹⁹ Taken as a group, these plans and drawings are a mini-course on landscape architecture over the past 20 years. Most important design conventions or fashions of the period seem to be represented.

However, two central concerns about the Capitol Approach mall run through all of this design work. One is a growing sense that the mall is too spare in some way. Cliff Jackson of Interpro Inc.

described the area as a "wasteland" in 1969²⁰. CAAPB chair and Lieutenant Governor Marlene Johnson called it "cold", "uninviting" and "hostile" in a 1986 interview about Capitol Mall planning.²¹ Another continuous element in contemplation of the mall was a search for a design connection with downtown St. Paul. In its 1970 comprehensive plan for the CAAPB, Interpro proposed a "spine" of shops and commercial support activity along Cedar Street to reconnect the Capitol area and the central business district across the freeway.²² St. Paul Mayor George Latimer's 1984 suggestion that the Minnesota Historical Society relocate downtown came out of the same concern.²³ The University students considered the same problem. They designed their studio projects around two historic elements: Cass Gilbert's ideas and the freeway.²⁴

The mall was coming in for more regularly scheduled public use in the 1980s. That shaped perceptions about landscape as well. The prime example is Taste of Minnesota, the outdoor food and music festival over the July 4th holiday, which attracts thousands to the Capitol Mall. A project of the Downtown Council in St. Paul, the festival had become an annual event since its first trial in 1983. The needs of such a large festival inspired additional thinking about mall design.

The new competition

In September of 1984, Governor Rudy Perpich announced plans for "parklike" or formal garden development of the Capitol Mall featuring sculpture, fountains, reflecting pools and possibly an amphitheater. The governor explained that he wanted to:

continue the process of creating the Capitol campus that architect Cass Gilbert first envisioned.

and observed that

We have a unique opportunity, both in the interior and in the campus area itself, to make this area very, very special.²⁵

In some respects, this was a companion proposal to the Governor's Capitol restoration commitment earlier in the same month.

The bones of these ideas were already in the CAAPB master plan, but Perpich asked for acceleration of the process. Under the direction of Lieutenant Governor Marlene Johnson, the staff at CAAPB began to work on mall landscaping more intensively. At first, it was imagined that the work would be done more or less locally, in consultation with the staff and commission members. However, the focus and level of work shifted in midstream. Plans for landscape adjustments in the immediate area of the Capitol became redesign of the mall. The CAAPB launched an architectural competition for the Capitol Mall in 1985, alongside work-in-progress for the Judiciary and Historical Society buildings.²⁶

The CAAPB took several relatively unusual steps in preparing for

the competition. The Board commissioned an historical study of architect Cass Gilbert's plans for the Capitol Mall over the years.²⁷ They convened two public symposia in the fall of 1985 to discuss design issues and public uses of the mall. Speakers included writer and analyst William H. Whyte, John Stilgoe of Harvard and designer Jaquelin Robertson from New York.²⁸ There were also plans to actively recruit international entrants; those were scaled down following public criticisms.²⁹

In keeping with the ideas which had been discussed over the past 20 years, the competition was announced as a search for an "urban landscape design plan",³⁰ not simply a Capitol Approach plan. Competitors were asked to consider a broad range of conditions and concerns - architectural quality of the State Capitol; the needs of occasional, high-density public festivals such as Taste of Minnesota; the solitary dog walker; political rendezvous; the concrete river of the freeway. Specifically, entrants were asked:

1. to develop all of the Capitol grounds...as a civic space dedicated to political activity, mutual interaction...and recreation...
2. to provide an appropriate setting for the Minnesota State Capitol...a significant architectural monument which demands an environment of equal artistic distinction.

3. to reconcile two conflicting objectives in organizing the space adjacent to the Capitol Building...At times the space has to accomodate some 3,000 people...and support vehicles...At other times, the same space must be attuned to...small groups and individual strollers and...the view toward the city....

4. to convert the transitional open space between the city and the immediate surroundings of the State Capitol into a multi-purpose esplanade inviting public uses winter and summer.³¹

The winning entry was submitted by two young designers - David T. Mayernik and Thomas N. Rajkovich, in association with Hammel, Green and Abrahamson of Minneapolis. Their design features a public square immediately south of the Capitol, a series of formal gardens and strolling areas throughout the mall area, and ornamental bridges spanning the freeway into downtown St. Paul. In addition to the Capitol Grounds competition award, the Mayernik and Rajkovich design has received honors for its achievements in the classical design tradition.³²

Now in the planning stages, the Mayernik-Rajkovich landscape design has received mixed reviews. It has been praised as a "bold and refreshing step back into history" by admirers of the

neoclassical style and supporters of public amenities on the mall, generally.³² However, there are questions about the expense of realizing the project, estimated at \$15 million; the 1987 legislature declined to appropriate funds for the working drawings and site preparation. And many have questioned the advisability of putting anything on the lawns in front of the Capitol.³³

A limited summation

The starting point for this inquiry into the recent history of the Capitol area was the creation of an enlarged and defined mall following World War II. The 1986 Capitol landscape design is the obvious heir to the work of the Veterans Service Building/Capitol Approach Commission. However, the History Center and the Judiciary buildings are heirs as well, largely through the planning and design standards Minnesota has established for its Capitol district. The course of the second building boom projects in a political process which operates by different rules remains to be seen, but architectural review and an overall site plan definitely have become components of the decision-making.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Architect Brooks Cavin uses a beautiful phrase in his story of the set-to with Commission Chair Ellard Walsh over the naked lady statue at the Veterans Building. Cavin says that he "felt time would resolve this."¹ A sense of time, moving at its own stately pace pervades much of this Capitol chronicle. Sometimes it moves very slowly indeed. It took 40 years of talk and planning following the Capitol's dedication to determine a suitable approach. It appears that the idea couldn't make it on its own in the first half of the century. When coupled with a memorial to a second World War, the needs of an expanding state government, and fear of postwar depression, it became possible to fix upon a plan and an appropriation.

Once an approach plan was agreed upon, it became the first of many transformative changes over the next 40 years. Researchers customarily linger over the Cass Gilbert Beaux Arts ancestry of the Nichols-Nason plan for Minnesota's State Capitol and present it as a partially realized "holdover". Yet, it makes as much sense to consider the Nichols-Nason plan a product of its own time in the mid-20th century. The primary design problem the architects were asked to engage was highway placement. In terms

of pure line, the approach and lawns seem thoroughly in keeping with the 1930s design tradition of civic architecture and public spaces which survived into the postwar period. Also, this 20th century view of the 1944/45 plan seems much more constant with the flexible pragmatism of its senior designer, Arthur Nichols. Though obviously proud to have shared this and other design problems with Gilbert, Nichols does not present himself or his work as 'guardian of the flame'.²

Research into Capitol area planning and design - even in a relatively brief 40-year span - demonstrates again and again that ideas about what is appropriate to the space emerge, alter and persist over decades. They are shaped by immediate needs, future plans, current fashions and more enduring symbols of civic government.

From the outside, the Capitol looks substantially the same as it always has. State government is conducted in chambers our grandparents would recognize in spite of the redecorations. Citizens tour the building by the thousands, as they have since 1905. Thousands more congregate on the lawn each year - sometimes in political activity, sometimes for celebration, always to use the Capitol as a unifying symbol for their gatherings.

For all that, the Capitol and its environs are contested space - who gets an office or a desk or building nearest the seat of

power? In what proportions does the mall belong to people, benches, trees and automobiles? When are lawns open and inviting; when are they a wasteland? How much space does the legislature or the judiciary or the historical society need? When is new modern and convenient, and when is it a desecration? When is 'antique' a compliment, and when is it dowdy and shabby? Each of one of these questions has provoked considerable attention over the past 40 years. And the internal definitions assigned to the language of the arguments have changed in several cases, as well.

The structures we create to handle such changes in style and meaning are as important as the passage of time in resolving matters of dispute. In this sense, the planning commitment pioneered by the Veterans Service Commission and later consolidated by the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board is a landmark in its own right. In 1968, when the new CAAPB was struggling to define and to exert its powers in the Shell gas station controversy, the St. Paul Dispatch chided that "attractive cities don't happen by accident."³

The planning functions and architectural competition procedures instituted for the Capitol Mall have not eliminated accident or wild cards as factors in the shape of the area's history. Any number of contemporary and historical forces may impinge on planning and building processes, and do, as the Capitol annex and the recent siting struggle over judicial and historical facilities

demonstrate. However, the overall site plan and the competition processes have held firm as channels for discussion, appropriations and mortar.

In the period under study, the major shift in Capitol planning and procedural focus has been from the new to the old. Forty-five years ago, the Capitol area was the site of neighborhood clearance and rebuilding from the ground up. In the following decades, buildings of modern design went up around the perimeter of the Approach. At present, the area is a hotbed of historic preservation and appreciation. A considerable program of restoration and conservation for the Capitol has been undertaken since 1974, and more work is in the offing following the Governor's commitment to restore all the ceremonial and public areas of the building.

The post World War II activities in support of the new Capitol Approach offer an illustration of the shift. St. Paul Planning photographed rundown 19th century houses in the Capitol neighborhood to accompany the Morrell-Nichols approach plan in 1944. In the eyes of the planning staff and their contemporaries, these were clearly blighted structures which obstructed the view of the Capitol. Their recommendation was razing. Forty years later, we can see the charming lines of the homes and a lost opportunity to rehabilitate an urban neighborhood to match its greatest single structure in the same photographs.⁴ In his

discussion of the "epitome district" concept, those areas of cities which embody complex layers of symbols for residents and visitors, urban analyst Grady Clay notes that, "one generation's epitome district may become the next generation's candidate for oblivion"⁵ This Capitol example is reversed, but Clay's observation holds its point.

The 1980s architectural competitions underscore this new historicism in terms of contemporary design for the Capitol Mall. Leonard Parker and Associates' design for the new judicial facilities is in a style reminiscent of 1930s public architecture; their work has been especially praised for using the "classical tradition intelligently and skilfully."⁶ The Minnesota History Center plan, by Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, is a modern design, but it refers to traditional styles in many of its details and building shapes. David T. Mayernick and Thomas N. Rajkovich's new mall landscape design is a straightforward, 1986 interpretation of neoclassical garden plans, materials and "furniture".

The symbolic forms in the Minnesota Capitol area have shifted 180°. The reasons are complex and hardly specific to Minnesota. However, Governor Rudy Perpich, an active proponent of historic preservation himself, has explained his own commitment to the past in direct, specific terms.

I come from an area that is...industry - mining - very destructive. It became obvious to me that we were pushing

our whole history...into oblivion. As the mining occurred, they just kept knocking everything down in its path...the schools...the railroad depot which was kind of the center of the city....We were so accustomed to the scarring of the environment that it was almost a way of life....I could just see all that happening.

...The turning point here at the Capitol, the one that really got me started...was that they were going to put partitions here in the Governor's reception area.⁷

On the Iron Range or in the Capitol city, the built environment conveys a great deal about what we value. That may be the collective memory embodied in public buildings such as schools, depots or government chambers or the demands of an extractive industry. In all cases, the results are the product of continuous decision-making processes; these are often contentious in form and unexpected in their effects, but rarely accidental.⁸

NOTES

Chapter 1

¹See Neil Thompson's Minnesota's State Capitol. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1974.

²Clay, Grady. Close-up: How to Read the American City. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1980, 38.

Chapter 2

¹Gary Phelps, History of the Minnesota State Capitol Area (St. Paul: CAAPB, 1985)

²op. cit., p.8

³Mark Haidet, research memorandum, "Cass Gilbert and the Capitol Approach - A Brief Chronology", March 11, 1986. Courtesy of author.

⁴See Phelps, op.cit., for a more complete chronology of Capitol Approach ideas throughout this period.

⁵See St. Paul Daily News, February 14-29, 1929.

⁶"New Highway in Front of Capitol Proposed" in St. Paul Pioneer Press, March 16, 1944.

⁷A Suggested Plan for the Minnesota Capitol War Memorial Plaza: A postwar program for a memorial to the Veterans of all Wars (St. Paul: The City Planning Board, 1944), unpaginated.

⁸"Architect is Space Apostle" in St. Paul Pioneer Press, January 11, 1970.

⁹ibid.

¹⁰ibid.

¹¹"Ordered Evicted by the State, Hundreds 'Hope for Time'" in St. Paul Dispatch, January 8, 1948.

¹²ibid.

¹³ibid.

¹⁴The quote is from "Capitol Approach" in the St. Paul Pioneer

Press, August 8, 1948. See newspapers in January-February 1948 for general coverage.

15"Avoid Capitol Eviction" in St. Paul Dispatch, January 21, 1948.

16Report of State Veterans Service Building Commission July 1, 1948 - June 30, 1949 (St. Paul: The Commission, n.d.), 2.

17Report, July 1, 1948 - June 30, 1949, op. cit., 3. Note: The residents' protests are not conveyed in any detail in the report, nor have news stories been located around that time. Data may appear in the minutes of the St. Paul City Council or Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.

18"Threat to Abandon Approach Plan, Due to Protests Voiced" in St. Paul Dispatch, July 17, 1950.

19"Capitol Mall Work Will Proceed" in St. Paul Dispatch, July 11, 1950.

20"Capitol Bursts Shell of Ugliness" in St. Paul Dispatch, October 12, 1954.

21See "City's Capitol Approach Best in US" by Jackie Germann in St. Paul Pioneer Press, January 13, 1963; "The Capitol Approach Must Be Completed" in St. Paul Pioneer Press, January 10, 1953; "Squalid Surroundings Disappear" in Minneapolis Tribune, July 5, 1953; "Old Dream Nears Reality," also Minneapolis Tribune, July 5, 1953.

22See "Youngdahl Urges U.S. Aid..." in St. Paul Dispatch, September 8, 1949 and also Alan Altshuler, The City Planning Process (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), 49.

23"Capitol Approach Survey Slated" in St. Paul Pioneer Press, April 8, 1951.

24Minneapolis Tribune, July 5, 1953 op.cit.

25St. Paul Dispatch, July 6, 1954.

26Altshuler, op.cit., 21.

27See Herrold, George, Capitol Approaches St. Paul, Minnesota 1903-1956, MS. and St. Paul Dispatch, September 25, 1958. See also Altshuler, op.cit., 40-48. He and I reached our conclusions in this matter independently; it seems important to mention this aspect since Gilbert/Herrold occupy so much space in the Capitol Mall canon.

²⁸See Altshuler, op.cit., for a good discussion of these issues, also St. Paul City Planning Papers at Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

²⁹St. Paul Dispatch, September 30, 1958.op.cit.

³⁰An Evaluation of Victor Gruen Associates Proposed Realignment of Interstate Route 392, in St. Paul City Planning Papers, Minnesota Archives, St. Paul.

³¹Evaluation Gruen, op. cit.p5.

³²A Suggested Plan, op.cit., unpaginated.

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²ibid.

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⁴ibid.

⁵Recommendation for a Veteran's War Memorial on the Minnesota State Capitol Grounds, (St. Paul: Governor Thye's War Memorial Advisory Committee, January, 1945) unpaginated.

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⁸"Frisco Ideal for Parley" by L.D. Parlin in St. Paul Pioneer Press, April 29, 1945.

⁹Program of the Competition for the Design of the Proposed State Veterans Service Building in St. Paul, Minnesota, (St. Paul: Minnesota State Veterans Service Building Commission, 1946), 13.

¹⁰ibid.

¹¹"Modernistic Motif Emphasized in Prize-Winning Building Plan" in St. Paul Dispatch, October 24, 1946.

¹²Report of the State Veterans Service Building Commission, 1945-1949 (St. Paul: The Commission, n.d.), 7.

¹³"State Vets Office Has Moving Day" in St. Paul Dispatch, April 1, 1955.

¹⁴"Veterans Building Described as 'Monstrosity' Is Ready for Use," Minneapolis Tribune, April 4, 1955

¹⁵St. Paul Dispatch, April 1, 1955 op.cit.

¹⁶Minneapolis Tribune, April 4, 1955, op.cit.

¹⁷Interview Rodney N. Searle (untaped), August 25, 1987. Notes in Governor's Office Collection.

¹⁸Interview W. Brooks Cavin, October 7, 1987. Governor's Office Collection.

¹⁹Minnesota Capitol Official Guide and History (St. Paul: Department of Administration, 1963)

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¹David Gebhard and Tom Martinson, A Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Presss, 1977), 88.

²ibid.

³Minnesota Capitol Official Guide and History (St. Paul: State Department of Administration, 1963), 26.

⁴Interview, Elmer L. Andersen, October 16, 1987. Governor's Office Collection.

Note: Andersen remembers 3 floors instead of 2, but all else in his account jibes with documentary evidence and the recollections of another informant, Rodney N. Searle, then a junior legislator in the House of Representatives.

⁵See Interview, Brooks Cavin, October 7, 1987, Governor's Office Collection and Homer Clark, quoted in Phelps, op.cit., 48.

⁶See Minutes, Senate Committee on Finance, Subcommittee on State

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9Butler, op.cit. See also Minutes, Senate Subcommittee on State Departments, op.cit.

10"Legislative History, Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board" in CAAPB Files.

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12"Governor Needs More Space" in St. Paul Dispatch, Tuesday, March 12, 1968.

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²⁸"Legislative History", CAAPB Files, op.cit.,3.

²⁹Memorandum to Senator Stanley Holmquist, April 28, 1969 in MHS Archives, Administration of State Capitol Files, 1969-1982. 30.F.8.4F. Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

³⁰Executive Order No. 31. Providing for the Assigning of Certain Authorities to the Minnesota Historical Society in MHS Archives, Admin. State Capitol Files, 1969-82, 30.F.8.4F, Minnesota Historical Society Archives, St. Paul.

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²"Capitol in Own 'Space Race' in St. Paul Dispatch, August 25, 1969.

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⁵See CAAPB Report 1974, op.cit., and "Capitol Exodus Gets Backing" in St. Paul Pioneer Press, October 14, 1973.

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21See Dispatch, April 30, 1974 op.cit.

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¹¹Brooks Cavin, letter of June 25, 1972 to Russell Fridley, in MHS Capitol Site Files, op.cit.

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⁶"Loring In Favor Of Capitol Approach Judiciary Building" in St. Paul Dispatch August 12, 1952.

⁷See Lawrence R. Yetka, "Minnesota's New Justice Building - A Will-o'-The Wisp?" in The Hennepin Lawyer, July-August 1985, 16-30.

⁸Yetka, op.cit.27.

⁹Interview, Elmer Andersen, op.cit.

¹⁰See Yetka, op.cit.; St. Paul Pioneer Press, March 18, 1984 op.cit. plus "Perpich to end debate over home for court" in Minneapolis Tribune, March 16, 1984; "Historical Society is Capitol winner" in St. Paul Dispatch, March 27, 1984; "Panel expected to OK Historical Society Ouster" in St. Paul Pioneer Press, April 5, 1984 among other March-April 1984 new stories.

¹¹See St. Paul Pioneer Press March 18, 1984 and Minneapolis Star and Tribune March 16, 1984 op.cit.

See also CAAPB file memoranda March and April 1984. CAAPB files.

¹²See Pioneer Press, March 18, 1984 op.cit. To get to the bottom of the "tripartite" idea, which appears to be a genuine invention of tradition, it would be necessary to consult Bishop and to trace the legislative discussion more fully. Rep. James Rice, a participant in the 1984 decision-making, invoked the concept quite forcefully, though not contextually, in a 1987 interview for this research; additional follow-up with him might shed additional light on this and the judicial "homecoming" interpretations, as well.

¹³Yetka, op.cit. Again, this is an interesting matter historically. Who resurrected this idea, or was it current in the courts all along? Elmer Andersen suggests in the oral history interview given for this research that Popovich and Wozniak, both politically experienced former legislators, may have had much to do with the orchestration of this issue. The historical society as originally judicial data does not appear to be well-known generally.

¹⁴See "Judicial building holds promise of first-class work" in St. Paul Press Dispatch, January 25, 1987 and "Feats of one week to beautify for years" in Pioneer Press, August 13, 1986.

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¹⁶CAAPB, Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area 1980 to 1990, adopted 1982, 9.

¹⁷Memorandum to file, November 4, 1987. CAAPB Files.

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