

Werner Hegemann and Washington Highlands

I. From Garden Cities to Residential Parks

When emerging as a public and professional movement at the turn of the last century, urban planning has been inspired by a variety of ideas. One of its major ideas was the „garden city“.

Ebenezer Howard’s book, „Garden Cities of Tomorrow“, originally published in 1899, spoke of new cities: located on former farmland, including their own housing, employment and amenities, those cities consisted of about 32.000 inhabitants. As a social visionary, Howard meant for the people to leave the congested city area, where they suffered from high rents, low wages, polluted air and barren surroundings. His garden cities were not for commuting into the metropolis, but meant a better way of living, providing nature, pure air and water, low rents, sufficient wages and social activities.

Therefore, the „garden city“ originally held high hopes of a utopian quality. But when put to the test in the following years, quite different types of garden cities emerged.

The first garden city was set up in 1903 in the United Kingdom: Letchworth, some 30 miles from London. Its architects, Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker, became the fathers of town planning in Britain, from defining its design on to organizing the legal framework. In Letchworth, Unwin and Parker planned an industrial settlement with terraced houses grouped around greens, connected by pedestrian routes. They integrated the factory and preserved natural features. But even its first successor was already different: Hampstead was built for commuters from the beginning. Therefore, a great variety of housing types was offered, grouped at cul-de-sacs to minimize traffic. The houses’ architecture and Unwin, combining irregular curving streets with formal elements, became famous. He created the picturesque, the British prototype of the garden suburb.

Meanwhile, the German example took another turn. In cities barely coping with booming industrialization and a fast growing population, industrial companies started to build model settlements to house their workmen. Set up like rural villages assembling small houses around a marketplace, the lots often provided for self-supporting gardening. Reformers founded building societies and cooperatives to build homes. There, the grounds and buildings were owned by the members, rented out for moderate non-profit prices: small planned suburbs at the city’s outskirts.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the „garden city“ sprang from another origin. The blinding whiteness and classical grandeur of the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 enthused its many visitors with the dream of a city of one design while confronted with the dramatic and haphazard growth of the American city. Local peacemeal projects of lighting and planting contributed to city embellishment, social reformers fought against the congestion of downtown and its overcrowded tenement districts. The enthusiasm for outdoor activities had civic groups campaigning for parks to provide for recreation in the big cities.

The widespread park movement of the latter days of the 19th century provided the setting for the American garden city. Frederick Law Olmsted, the famous landscape

architect, became the architect of the first planned settlement. Since the desire to live in park-like surroundings could be afforded by the upper classes only, he set about this task differently. In Riverside, some 9 miles from Chicago, Olmsted landscaped a park in an informal way, made to mount individual manors and villas like jewels. The gridiron was reformed to a winding pattern of curving roads, the site developed as scenic as possible, signaling romance and privacy. With generous planting and vast public grounds, Riverside became a model for private subdivision.

The number of planned suburbs then increased because of city growth and the closing down of farmlands at the city's outskirts.

With growing industries and immigration, the growth of population changed the city's shape. Zoning began out of need to exclude the laundries from San Francisco's residence areas and bar the shopping avenues of New York City from upcoming back-door sweat-shops. Restrictions of property became acceptable to owners simply to protect financial values, not pleasant appearances.

Though appearances made for further motivation. When industries opened up, old downtown houses underwent conversion to rooming houses for wage-earner families while the downtown retail district expanded, finally securing the success of newly planned exclusive suburban developments.

Private land development prospered. By 1914, real estate developers became interested in planners. With the beginning of World War I immigration was slowed down, bonds and loans promised to be more rewarding than investing in real estate. Therefore, real estate entrepreneurs had to offer quality. Good planning had turned into a financial argument, as was argued at the 8th National Conference on City Planning in 1916.

Because of a growing number of automobiles, land subdivision was no more restricted by immediate access to streetcars or mainlines and financially attractive scenic outskirts of a city region could be developed. The scenic parts untouched by building activities were to be found on former farmland, when the original business like food production was discontinued, developing the land promising better profits.

Each private development added further characteristics to an emerging type of modern subdivision, realizing the garden city-idea as suburban residential parks.

Roland Park in Baltimore MD was set up as early as 1891. F.L. Olmsted Jr. created picturesque sites for fashionable houses by following the natural contours of the land. Streetcar service made commuting to Baltimore's city hall possible in a mere 25 min., allowing year-round residence in contrast to former summer stays. A Club House of 1898 strengthened the idea of a residential community and restrictions became firmly established, securing investments as well as further development.

Forest Hill Gardens, by nine miles within easy commuting distance of Manhattan, was landscaped by the Olmsted Brothers too. But its architect, Grosvenor Atterbury, set out to resemble its architecture to Unwin's, designing grouped houses. Offering a community center and daily activities, it constituted an ideal suburban settlement.

In St. Francis Wood, lying west of San Francisco, sales did not rise until the Twin Peaks Tunnel was opened in 1918, reducing commuting time to 20 min. Finally, insisting on a very fine quality of improvement and conveniences did pay. Landscaped by the Olmsteds, the architect John Galen Howard designed „architectural embellis-

hments“ to spread a unified design within the distinct border of the residential park, where entrance gates bore the name of the subdivision. An owners’ association was entrusted with interpretation and enforcement of the deed restrictions, enhancing the inhabitants’ sense of community, strengthening their willingness to adhere to rules and impositions.

The American type of „garden city“ developed a special sense of community among its inhabitants. Their sharing and organizing interests promoted democracy even when the garden city was downsized to a commuter suburb.

II. Werner Hegemann: Life and Works

As the youngest son of a manufacturer, Werner Hegemann was born on June 15, 1881, in Mannheim, a growing industrial town on the river Rhine, known for its baroque city center. Due to the divorce of his parents, Hegemann was educated at schools all over Germany, taking his final exams in 1901. The death of his father in 1900 left him a young man of independent means under the tutelage of his uncle Otto March until he came of age. March, a renowned Berlin architect, interested him in art history and architecture.

After a term of general studies in Berlin and military services Hegemann studied in Paris and Philadelphia before he finally enrolled for political economics. In 1904 he married the young teacher Alice Hesse and they had a daughter, while living in the bustling town of bohemian Munich. There Hegemann studied with Lujo Brentano and finished his Ph.D. thesis in 1908, dealing with classical finance economies.

The same year, Hegemann and his family returned to Philadelphia for a year of further studies. He took an interest in Philadelphia’s housing conditions, studied its newly established Housing Inspection, visited and reported on New York’s municipal planning exhibition of 1909, organized by the Municipal Art Society and the Committee on Congestion of New York. Those groups and the men involved impressed him with their ideas of reform.

In the summer of 1909 Hegemann became a member of the Exhibit Committee of the „Boston 1915 Exposition“. A city’s philanthropic undertaking to develop Boston into an ideal community by 1915, the movement’s exposition of November 1909 „mirrored a city“, as one visitor put it. Showing the big projects of the City Beautiful from Burnham’s Chicago Plan to Philadelphia’s Parkways, but moreover presenting every group’s efforts for social betterment, the exposition encouraged the citizens to participate and unite in improvement.

At the end of 1909, due to its leading figure, Otto March, Hegemann was called home to be made general secretary of the International City Planning Exhibition of 1910 in Berlin. The exhibition contained Berlin’s newly acquired competition plans, German and international architecture and city planning, successfully attracting a vast national and international public. Hegemann acted as its spokesman and guide, making American works popular. Frederic L. Olmsted’s landscapes and Daniel Burnham’s Chicago Parks became an admired item for developing „Volkspark“ (parks for the people) in German cities.

Hegemann was finally commissioned with the exhibition’s official presentation. He made it a condition to study personally all the European towns which were to be dis-

cussed and composed two volumes on Civic Art. In his voluminous work he began to blend ideas. Hegemann discovered a progressive tradition of social and city planning in Germany to be revived by modern experts, propagating the new discipline. When Frederic C. Howe, Director of the People's Institute, asked around for a German expert to lecture in American cities, it was Hegemann who was recommended to him. And in 1913 Hegemann returned to the US, now alone, since traveling had ruined his marriage. He was to give city planning lectures in about twenty cities. Hegemann made thorough tours of the towns and discussed their problems and opportunities, now emphasizing the City Functional to blend the concepts of efficiency and splendour into one. He advised his audiences to view planning as corporate undertaking. When his tour ended in California, he bought a small motorcar, touring the west coast up to Seattle.

Later on, the municipalities of Oakland and Berkeley engaged him to do a comprehensive planning report, published by 1915. His thorough study stressed the potentials of the East Bay cities. Hegemann suggested a strict hierarchy of items and objects to optimize after careful consideration to effect a better city, ranging from replanning the harbour to comely private rose-gardens.

For his way home Hegemann chose the pacific route, visiting Australian towns and sightseeing in Asian countries. With the outbreak of the First World War the German vessel was prized and its passengers interned in Mozambique. After several months of hunger and diseases Hegemann managed to flee as a stowaway on a norwegian ship, finally stranding at Gulfport MS to make his way back to New York.

From New York Hegemann set out to work as a city planning consultant. When an opportunity to teach planning did not materialize, Hegemann was quite disappointed, having wanted to teach planning since 1913. He was disheartened, seeing America preparing to enter the raging European War, and feeling depressed by the contrast between planning the future and destruction taking place in the present.

With loyalty conflicts, Milwaukee might have felt a good place to be for Hegemann. Three of four of its citizens had a foreign born parent, predominantly German, as was to be seen in German names, newspapers, clubs, institutions and school lessons. At the beginning of the Great War pro-German sympathies boomed. Bazaars were held to collect money for war victims, the upper classes, of German origins too, demonstrated their sympathies while the superpatriots eyed them suspiciously. By the middle of 1916, feelings began to change. Wilson was re-elected in November, 1916, boycotts and damnation started, war bonds were sold by force. As the US entered the war, patriotism took over. People changed their last names, firms and institutions were renamed, even the „Sauerkraut“ was called „liberty cabbage“.

All the while, Milwaukee's industries boomed. Iron, steel and heavy machinery grew due to orders for war. The Ford Motor Co. opened up a new factory in 1916. Even the big breweries expanded by the take-over of southern markets from imported beer until Prohibition was introduced in 1920. By 1921, the Great Depression set in.

Labourers and progressives of Milwaukee in 1910 had elected the first socialist city administration for reforms in public health, franchises, land-use and housing. Two years in office only, their ideas, generally termed „sewer socialism“, for a more regulated use of private property in the interest of the public good, prevailed nevertheless.

When in 1916 former city attorney Daniel W. Hoan was elected mayor of Milwaukee, they gained impetus.

By 1911, the City Club of Milwaukee had been founded to bring the wave of civic reform sweeping the East Coast to the midwestern city. Therefore, the City Club was one to respond to the People's Institute, since Hegemann's profile matched their needs. When the club's Committee on City Planning discussed the engagement of the German planner in January of 1916, it became obvious that knowledge had broadened since 1913. They planned whom Hegemann was to meet – reformers, architects, businessmen –, that he was to stay for three weeks and his report was to be published „in a simple inexpensive publication“ to make it widely known. Their ideas reflect increased interest in the shape and the future of their hometown as well as a general idea of optimizing by planning.

Hegemann explained the „modern starshaped city“ in contrast to the „old concentric city“, recalled an American tradition of planning and pleaded for urban transport and better housing. Betterment was to turn out as beautification as well as efficiency in work, health and finances. His suggestion considered most important today, was to secure open spaces and protect residential districts by interchanging the industrial spread of the coast with land reserved for parks. By developing „extensive cheap factory sites well served by rail and water“, Hegemann wanted to establish a modern harbor to promote Milwaukee's dominant position as a trade center but to prepare for a park system as well, preserving the natural beauty of the lake front and its „beautiful bluffs“.

Working on his report provided Hegemann with contacts and served as an entry-ticket to Milwaukee's professional groups und high society.

He was consulted by Walter J. Kohler, president of the Kohler Co. in Sheboygan. Kohler had been on a trip to Europe in 1912 and was impressed with model industrial villages, especially with Germany's. Returning home, he thought about building his own town to house his workmen and attract immigrants. So Kohler engaged Hegemann, who was enthusiastic about the grounds, „an ideal location for a garden city“. Kohler insisted on engaging a landscape architect too and Hegemann contacted his partner-to-be. Elbert Peets had just taken his degree from Harvard and their cooperation was a precursor for their joint firm, established in 1916. Though Hegemann and Kohler shared the ambition to build a real garden city, they would not agree on the distribution of costs and did not part as friends. In the early 1920s, Kohler had the Olmsted Bros. plan Kohler, partly executed in 1924.

Nonetheless, to fall out with Kohler seems to have done no harm to Hegemann's acceptance in Milwaukee. He made friends and the firm of Hegemann & Peets was signed on to design several private gardens, probably those of the Uihleins' and Fred Pabst's.

Hegemann & Peets moved on to plan what was to become Washington Highlands at Wauwatosa, former farmland at the outskirts of Milwaukee, during the years of 1917-1921. With their part-time staff member, Joseph Hudnut, later Dean of Columbia's and Harvard's Schools of Architecture, they planned Wyomissing Park at Reading PA, a subdivision combining a variety of houses from small-sized to big mansions, alluding to Unwin's style of grouping.

When business became slow during the war and depression years, the partners dedicated themselves to a collection of fine examples of civic art. Disillusioned by the failing social effort, planning by now taken over by lawyers establishing zoning ordinances, in 1922 they presented a volume of about 1.000 illustrations of American and European models, called the „American Vitruvius“. Opposing the traditional Harvard School, the authors once again upheld the idea of inner city beauty, nonetheless stressing the American additions to the planning agenda: civic centers, campus, suburban development and parks. Though at first not regarded favourably, their book acquired an unprecedented reputation when Theodora Kimball recommended it in 1923 for every planners' library.

Meanwhile Hegemann had met his second wife Ida Belle, nee Guthe. A teacher, she was born in Ann Arbor as the daughter of a German-born physicist. Married in 1920, they were to have four children. By the end of 1921 Hegemann and his wife left the US for extended travels in Italy, where their first child, a daughter, was born in Naples.

Back in Europe, Hegemann's Berlin years were dedicated to architectural and political criticism. Hegemann and the architectural review he edited from 1924 to 1933 became unique. The stylistic range and international focus of the architecture reviewed were unequalled among the contemporary reviews as were his provoking literary articles. Moreover he set out to criticize the idealistic traditions of German political thought, debunking national heroes to encourage democracy. When he merged his architectural and political criticism in 1930 in a book on Berlin, this was to be the work he usually is known for, even today.

After another lecturing tour in South America in 1931, he returned to Germany to enforce his former criticism of the national socialists. Having made right-wing enemies since 1924, his publisher pressed him to leave Germany in the early days of Adolf Hitler's regime.

By February of 1933, Hegemann left for Switzerland and made his family follow him, rightly, since Hegemann's books were burned publicly in May 1933 with those of countless other authors. The family's home, a house built after his own design, was confiscated in 1934, Hegemann expatriated in 1935.

When the family had spent a summer in Switzerland, Hegemann desperately seeking work, Alvin Johnson invited Hegemann to teach at the New School of Social Research in New York City. Johnson contrived to come up with a small salary to keep the Hegemann family who arrived at New York City in November of 1933. Hegemann gave courses on planning and lectured on the New York Regional Plan.

Finally in 1935, Joseph Hudnut succeeded in attaining a committee's help, and then was able to appoint Hegemann Associate in Architecture, to work with Henry Wright in Columbia's newly established Town Planning Studio. Because of his broader concept of planning Hegemann fitted well into the new curriculum of planning and a students' project exemplifies modernised suburban planning: a sociological survey, comprehensive execution plans, graded house-sizes and community buildings.

Hegemann tried to resume political criticism to support Roosevelt's New Deal and published a book on „City Planning Housing“ in 1936. He called for a re-evaluation of American tradition, favoring the American vernacular, its regional and historical

styles, ideas he shared with his friend of long standing, the art historian Sidney Fiske Kimball.

When he died prematurely of pneumonia on April 12, 1936, two subsequent volumes were edited by his friends. His wife, Ida Belle Hegemann, left with four minor children, took up teaching again and all of Hegemann's children and grandchildren became Americans.

III. Washington Highlands

If you happen to arrive at Washington Highlands from Washington Boulevard you will recognize its main feature at first sight: the straight boulevard, leading on into the grounds, a „lofty elevation of high hill land“, abundant with trees and greenery. Following the slope into a small roundabout, then uphill to stop dead, it reveals vantage points „where to the East fully half of the City Hall tower presents itself surprisingly over the roofs of the teeming city, while to West the eyes wander over cultivated lands and forest far into Waukesha County“.

This was what Washington Highlands' planner Werner Hegemann meant you to see: the contrast of city scape to the county lands, while at your feet gardens, homes and curving streets disclosed themselves. The first view into the neighborhood was to create an air of wideness and largesse, contrast it to barren city streets. When widening the view again on top of the hill, the onlooker was to realize the neighborhood to be a community in itself while at the same time part of a greater community.

The subdivision's area was formerly known as the Pabst Farm. Frederick Pabst, born in Germany, immigrated in 1848 and served with a shipping company on the Great Lakes. In 1862 he entered into the brewing company he was to develop into the leading producer of lager-beer by 1893 (only by 1902 to be surpassed by the Schlitz Co.). On his farm he grew hops and horses until his death in 1904. After several years of probate the heirs decided to sell the grounds.

The realtors must have been interested since their firm already had invested in these parts of the Milwaukee outskirts. By 1914, Washington Boulevard had been constructed, a wide, landscaped parkway to connect the Washington Park of 1892 by Frederick Law Olmsted & Co. to Milwaukee's business district and its west side boulevard system, initiating construction of fine residential architecture in a then obviously fashionable part on Milwaukee's border with Wauwatosa. While Washington Highlands' 133 acres were part of Wauwatosa WI, they most probably promised paying less taxes when moving there, a further attractive feature of suburban dwellings.

Therefore, the sales-brochure issued by the realtors shows the „direct boulevard connection“ to Milwaukee's business district, aiming at buyers working in the city. For commuting by individual transport, the probable addition of a garage was a general feature in Washington Highlands, even becoming a marketing argument. But all the while the subdivision's value was defined by being served by a streetcar line too. The sales-brochure showed an entrance gate with streetcar, pedestrians and a motorcar, to suggest an overall availability. The realtors might have heard about slackening sales of subdivisions served by individual transport only. Hegemann knew

of St. Francis Wood, where sales did not go up until a long advertised tunnel cut commuting time down to 20 minutes.

When Frederick Pabst had opened up Pabst Avenue in 1891, running through his farm, and granted a right-of-way to transit companies building the streetcar line, the farmland on its northern side had been platted soon after. Its grid pattern stood to enhance Washington Highlands' features further.

Hegemann submitted his first study for the subdivision in June of 1916, negotiations for city sewers began in 1917 and by 1918 the Pabst heirs transferred the land to the realtor's company. Even as early as 1918, a first building permit was obtained, but by 1920 only 10 single-family homes were built. Afterwards sales and construction increased clearly with its peak in 1925 when 65 building permits were given out.

First plans included a school building, probably indicating the subdivision to become part of a greater planned site. But the area finally comprised of residential homes only, except for the existing seminary grounds on its north-eastern corner. The size did not allow nor call for a separate shopping center and Hegemann had to make do without a club house.

Otherwise, the realtors gave Hegemann a free hand. Since he submitted the first study of June 1916, still by himself, Hegemann will be treated as the design's author – though Peets' share concerning practical ideas and artistic details should not be underestimated. Development on a minor scale excluded the grand schemes, the share of parkland forcibly smaller. By landscaping the trough of the creek into Central and South Park Hegemann did not only aggrandize them by their appealing names, but made up for the missing meeting place of a club house. To furnish the oblong shapes of the creek's greens with walkways meant to avoid those pedestrian ways Hegemann often mocked as „pretzelways“, curling around small, stampsized parks. Now these parks provided ideal settings to walk the dog, to meet and talk to your neighbors in short walking distance of every home.

Hegemann is said to have walked the grounds he worked on excessively. By exploring the grounds, Hegemann would have discovered how the view from the farm's hill connected to the city center of Milwaukee, a feature he then set upon enhancing. He will have walked the floodplains of the Schoonmaker creek cutting across the grounds, by then remembering the requirement to develop watercourses into qualifying features for parks for recreation when he had been a member of the jury for the German town of Dusseldorf's first general city plan.

To set off the untouched lands in a unified design he must have explored the contour lines of the land carefully. Knowing the grounds so well, he chose the curve of the main contour line to have it followed by a grand boulevard. Even its eastern dent was defined by two contour lines. When Hegemann had bent the western half of his inner crescent, the „Upper Parkway“, this run was near to identical with the contour line. It provided a flat lane, while the later chosen curve had to mount towards the hill over 30 feet. Thus, the planner's intention might best be seen in the alterations of his first subdivision plan of June 1, 1916 into the lot-line plan of the sales-brochure. Originally, his „Central Park“ was larger and there, Hegemann had inserted a building which probably was designated a kind of small club house. By the plan's later version, we do see the reasons for the redesign. The crescents, now laid out parallel,

increased the lot number from Hegemann's original 19 in block 9 to 23 lots. But more importantly, it allowed for a second block 11 with 10 extra lots, which, bordering the park without a separating road, were of extra financial value.

This shows the planner's difficult course between his ideas of design and adjusting to the managers' estimates. Hegemann had dreamt of a generous subdividing, securing lots of special largeness. At the western and northern fringes only, his layout had seen to smaller lots. Facing the adjacent streets, those still were too big for duplexes or rowhouses to be really attractive to the lesser incomes. By the time the managing firm had revised the layout, lot numbers had increased by a fourth, from 289 to 373. Partly redoubling the numbers (the two blocks of the southeastern corner), the firm added a service drive, making cars, delivery men and servants invisible.

Quite obviously, the managers knew their clients very well. They had to calculate not only the prices the buyers could afford and to cut down lot sizes according to the clients' pecuniary power, but to consider which equipment would be wanted to match prices for a favourable judgment on the buyer's side. Which, at the same time, might mean the contrary: two lots of the later plan comprised of four each of Hegemann's former plan. While meeting a buyers' desire of large grounds (in block 6) was easy, lots adjacent to the park or to be served by an extra lane were more valuable than a planner's vision.

But one should not give in to an artist's purism and condemn the entrepreneur as a disdainful capitalist without rethinking. The realtors had to trim the planners' ideals to reality and they made them work – even if it meant to cut out community buildings and to cut down on largesse and social ideas. Putting progressive planning-ideas to the test and making them work, turned out the realtors as progressive planners, as one of America's foremost planners, John Nolen argued in 1916.

When Hegemann had set out to make his life in the United States in 1915 he only had his rich knowledge of planning but no formal education as an architect whatsoever. And he had to make up for his greatest drawback as a planner: he could not draw. Therefore, in Elbert Peets, he had found a congenial landscape architect who was quite talented, moreover even in sketching and drawing.

Peets (1886-1968), who took his master at Harvard in 1915, seems to have been somewhat dissatisfied with Harvard's obsession with informality. He favoured formal elements and was fond of clipped hedges and trees. He repeated the merging of the formal and informal when designing Greendale WI in 1936, one of the New Deal's Greenbelt towns. For the Washington Highlands sales-brochure he drew the illustrations, showing off a landscape architecture that enhanced the undulations with walls and stairs, decorating the border and the streets with hedges and trees cut exactly to form. Like Hegemann, he loved views, producing continuous interesting vistas and discovering distant views, connecting places to other sites by visual means, symbolizing underlying deeper meaning.

However, Hegemann's special training enabled him to fulfill the commission for a layout of the former Pabst farm quite successfully. By 1913 Hegemann had become an expert in German building reform. He had made a lifelong friend in Raymond Unwin, architect of England's most famous garden cities, had seen his work and studied other European examples. Furthermore, he had made the most of his lecture

tour of 1913 and had been guided through recent American subdivisions by the developers themselves, including Edward H. Bouton in Roland Park, Baltimore and Duncan McDuffie in St. Francis Wood, Los Angeles.

Those in mind, Hegemann defined a new type of the „super-subdivision“ to be introduced to Milwaukee by Washington Highlands. The characteristics distinguishing it from its precursors were the area developed, the capital bound, but most of all the „system of restrictions“, limiting the percentage of the lot area to be built upon, the remainder to be kept as a garden, providing private parks for the homeowners, maintained by an owners' association, and the seclusion achieved by exclusion of traffic and a distinctly designed borderline. The restrictions buyers had to approve of were intended to run into perpetuity, a legal mean to guarantee secure financial development as well as continued unified appearances.

His knowledge of the grounds resulted in Hegemann's consequent exclusion of the grid. The exception being „Betsy Ross place“, parting block 14 and 12 into right-angled blocks, cut straight by the realtors for following the contour would have made a diagonal road producing impracticable lot sizes. But when „Betsy Ross Place“ was sold out quite early, clients seem to have taken their time to get used to deviating appearances, preferring the lots and blocks they were used to.

While the great models usually had romanticized the grid, Hegemann abolished it. Planners elsewhere often had simply loosened the grid, curving the streets but basically adhering to the pattern of right-angled crossings, whereas Hegemann even refrained from right-angled lot-lines. To do away with the obligation of even-sized, flattened lots, cut by right-angled property lines, allowed to make the most of a fetching stretch of land.

Hegemann's first plan combined the short straight axis with a great curving boulevard. Rejecting „conventionality or caprice“, he sought „a careful adaptation to the charming undulations of a beautiful piece of Wisconsin landscape“. The axis continued Washington Boulevard into the grounds, no mere „conventional straight street“, but „designed as a perspective stage setting“, connecting to Milwaukee's largest park, Washington Park, but not to encourage traffic. The curving boulevard underlined the contrast to the city grid, heightened by the informal cross-axis of the creek, and paralleled by another curving road.

In blending the aesthetics of the formal and the informal lay the mastership of Hegemann and Peets. This outstanding mastership enabled them to blend embellishment and economic needs.

To cut costs, cutting and filling had to be avoided, which at a site like this, would have to be done extensively to create even-sized, rectangular lots. But with Hegemann & Peets the layout of streets followed the contours of the land very closely, digging reduced to a minimum. The main streets had not to cross by right-angles, just as the single lanes had not be for traffic, but for defining block-sizes. They combine the lots while the block's borders are determined by contour lines. The outstanding half-round of the grand boulevard provided pleasant access to the hill, followed by an inner half-moon parkway addressing the prominent lots. Moreover, the contour made for bends in the roads, either to provide a smooth grade or to preserve natural features like the elms of „Two Tree Lane“ – later lost to the elm disease. A newspaper

article of the 1970s told of a homeowner of early days who seemed to remember she had proposed to name „Two Tree Lane“ for the elms when even the first plan of 1916 already had shown this name. But it might indicate Hegemann's success in guiding people to identify with their new home.

But moreover, and again uniting economy and beauty, changing the streets' layout from the grid to the curvilinear reduced the street length, even up to a third of the frontlines compared to the grid. Likewise, cutting down street widths enlarged the lots. By reducing streetland Hegemann meant to reduce the share of paved grounds in favour of private greens. Economizing by reducing streetlands was topped by cutting down the number of streets. Again, with Hegemann, that served further ends. To bar oncoming roads and eliminate intersecting was to discourage traffic. There were to be no shortcuts and the automobilist would want to avoid the winding lanes for fear of losing his direction.

Providing a smooth grade made for the distinct bulbous bend in Washington Circle South, thereby descending to a lower elevation through ravines. The unusual bend inspired the local rumor of Hegemann's plan depicting a „Kaiser's helmet“. Most probably the rumour sprang from the decidedly anti-German feelings when the US entered the European war. In August of 1917 the mayor of Oakland had accused Hegemann publicly to be a German spy, handing over all his information on East Bay harbors into the Kaiser's hands to prepare for a German landing. (The „Oakland Tribune“ protested against these accusations, pointing out that the mayor never had engaged in progressive reforms.) But the distinct shape of this boulevard seems to have turned the rumor into local gossip, adding to the local lore.

The contour lines lend a distinct shape to the streets' appearances, distinguishing them from each other. Hegemann rightly denied „the streets of Washington Highlands to be wantonly curved for the mere sake of being different“ nor „following meaninglessly topographical irregularities“. Even the smaller scale of curvature of the western streets makes for continuously changing vistas as they lead from higher to lower elevations, and with tighter density of residences the streetscapes appear no less interesting.

Streetwidths were graded according to their importance, the flow of traffic still being of minor significance. The show-piece, the half-moon boulevard and another three were designed in the fashion of the parkways, with a central area to be planted to drown noises and dust. Planned for smooth walking and driving, without steep raises, they accentuated the prominence of their adjacent lots, while the smaller roads of single lanes signaled privacy.

Economizing determined Hegemann to have Washington Circle laid out in a split-grade level. Again, cutting costs made for an artistic mean which became the desired park-like setting very well. The curving street in split-grade sets off the informal design of irregular lot sizes to their greatest advantage. It made for on-grade access to homes on both sides, accentuating the difference with varied setbacks, allowing for a wide lawn on flat land and a closer setting of the house on hilly land.

Burying the creek had been out of question for Hegemann. The small natural stream had to cross at least six of the lots. There, the small footbridges Peets had rendered quite picturesquely in the sales-brochure, were built to cross the waters, irregularities

put on display for distinction. They lend a „storybook character“ to those homes, as the architects undertaking the registration for the National Register of Historic Places attested them.

Levelling the lots had seemed equally out of question to Hegemann. On the contrary, the architecture and landscaping of undulating grounds was meant to play upon the extraordinary topography. As can be seen in the drawings, done in detail by Peets, the planners envisioned the private homes to be built on terraces, showing off high retaining walls and steep open stairs, overgrown by vines and ivy, alluding to old Italian gardens.

To strengthen this allusion to an old Italian garden Hegemann lent a classical shape to the formal axis. Continuing the axis to Washington Park, the straight street cut across the round-about. But it is not to encourage taking short-cuts: stopping dead at the high point of the hill, it preserves the former apple orchard as a view point, a small park and special asset of the view-commanding lots.

The axis drops ten feet after entering the premises, then rises twenty feet to bridge the creek, rising another hundred feet to the vantage point of „Apple Croft“. To stress the vista, the planners strengthened the perspective effect of distance by an optical illusion, forged by a diminution of the axis' width. The avenue is broader when entering the estate and is narrowed from a 100 to 56 feet in the run to deepen the impression and to heighten the hill.

This perspective effect is heightened by reducing the setbacks from 40 to 30 feet on the west end, and moreover, by planned continuous lines of hedges bordering the street. „The proportions of the Avenue and its planting are patterned upon a plan dear to the great old masters of old Italian garden craft“, Hegemann wrote. Thereby the planners democratized old arts, formerly available only to sovereigns.

Later Hegemann even related to have chosen a special construction for the bridge crossing the creek to save this undisturbed view. But stopping the view along the axis was the possibility of gazing over the creeks' meadow. Again, since mere informality seemed meaningless to him and bare formalism drab, Hegemann aimed at the contrast. Hiding the Pabst Farm's creek underground to gain building sites would have spent enormous amounts on canalization. Adjoining the private parks to the creek, they were made into a meadow: and again, minimizing costs meant to make the most of the design. Serving as a floodplain, the meadow at the same time played on the impression of an unspoiled country-side. Developing the meadow provided for longer pleasure walks than setting aside a central, compact park. To shorten the walker's way to the common greens, two pedestrian routes were laid out for short cuts to the parks. To be social places, willows provided shades for a chat. The parks' walks do allow a feel of nature but the lookout from the bridge above even feeds dreams of bigger parks.

Giving a sense of shelter was induced by several practical means. Only six out of eighteen adjoining streets are continued into the estate, none of them straight, none leading through. These discouraged any motorist looking for a short cut, and without a doubt created nameless misgivings with visitors searching for their host's residence. The slight removal of ingoing streets at crossings on the southern side or a shifting of a branching to midblock discouraged crossing further. Thereby, seven

entries to the residence park were created, enhancing a feeling of inner and outer community.

Bordering lots are smaller, designed for smaller but taller houses. Hegemann originally even might have thought of terraced or rowhouses, allowing those with lesser incomes to share in the opportunities of high grade developments. Finally, the restrictions provided for double and four-flat houses on the outer border, on the condition that they be well adapted to their site and the neighboring homes. Thereby Hegemann and Peets had succeeded in creating a diverse environment, reserving a central area to large and dominant residences, while surrounding it by more modest lots for more moderate prices and multiple-family homes, meant to have families of minor incomes participate in planning progress.

The unbroken fringeline of the estate served as a distinct borderline. The few distinct entrance ways enhanced the shielded character. The gates were to be flanked by decorated gate posts, the border defined by clipped hedges and trees. The main entrance gate was to be marked by „hedges and lindens, both clipped in the stately style of famous old world gardens“.

To resemble them to the gates of an estate, the entries were flanked by posts, pillars of a modest size, but special decoration. The basket of fruits Peets had drawn to crown the pillars, alluded to the roman pine-cone. The ancient pine-cone, sitting on gate posts high above the heads of visitors, was the emblem of sovereignty, signaling its owner's power over his territory. The diminution and conversion to the basket of fruits, an equally ancient symbol of wealth, fertility and abundance, turned it into the picturesque. Done in the fashionable style of its time, resembling the Viennese pre-war art deco, it nevertheless subtly insists on the owners' rights.

So, the straight axis finally can be seen as another symbol of sovereignty within the design. Its classical shape and perspective illusion meant democratizing an aesthetic mean formerly belonging to old world aristocracy. Now new owners were to participate in its scenic beauty, becoming sovereigns on their own grounds.

For Hegemann & Peets creativity meant not to be bent to contemporary fashions, but to choose artistic means deliberately. Combining formal and informal landscaping with an eye to practicability and costs turns out to stress their design instead of damaging it. Hegemann achieved this combination on a relatively small scale, creating a distinctive setting, a unique blending of artistic, social and financial aims into one design. Secured by its progressive deed restrictions and its owners' association, it provided the grounds for a special architecture, awarded with the National Register plaque for good reasons.

March 20, 2006

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